

**THE IMPACT ON AND THE RESPONSE OF THE ECWA TO THE  
VIOLENT ACTIVITIES OF BOKO HARAM IN NORTHERN NIGERIA**

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## **DECLARATION**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work and that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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## **ABSTRACT**

In this study the impact on and the response of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) to the violent activities of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria is highlighted. An historical overview of the ECWA and Boko Haram in Nigeria is also provided. Their leadership structures, the aims and objectives, the ECWA mission statement, articles of faith and practice, and the ideology, theology and philosophy of Boko Haram are described.

Relevant and suitable theological concepts and theories on religious violence are given and the reasons behind the sudden rise of the Boko Haram sect in Northern Nigeria are explored. One of Avery Dulles's five classical models of the church [Church as Servant] is used in order to highlight the theological concept on violence that best describes the context of the ECWA's operations. Forgiveness is essential in the life of a Christian and in this study the focus is on forgiveness and reconciliation in the context of conflict and suffering. The prejudice or scapegoat theory is used to understand who is blaming whom for his frustration and who the scapegoat is. The effect of Boko Haram's violent activities on the ECWA in Northern Nigeria and how the ECWA responded to the violence is explored. Evidence of how the ECWA lost many of its members as a result of Boko Haram's violent activities is provided. Many ECWA churches and properties were destroyed and many members were displaced due to Boko Haram's frequent and devastating attacks on churches in Northern Nigeria. It is shown that the social and spiritual lives of both adults and children were adversely affected by the violent activities of Boko Haram. The factors that gave rise to the Boko Haram sect in Northern Nigeria and its rejection of Western Education, unemployment, poverty, parental negligence, illiteracy and the demand for Nigeria to be Islamized, are also discussed.

In the conclusion various recommendations on how ECWA can respond to conflict and suffering are made.

## OPSOMMING

In hierdie studie word die impak op en respos van die Evangeliese Kerk Oorwin Almal (EKOA) op die gewelddadige aktiwiteite van Boko Haram in Noord-Nigerie belig. 'n Historiese oorsig van EKOA en Boko Haram in Nigerie word verskaf. Voorts word die leierskapstrukture, die mikpunte en doelwitte, EKOA se missie verklaring, geloof en praktyk, en die ideologie en filosofie van Boko Haram ook belig.

Voorts word die relevante en toepaslike teologiese konsepte en teorieë van godsdienstige geweld wat die betweegrede agter die skielike groei van Boko Haram sekte in Noord-Nigerië is, verduidelik. In die studie word twee van Avery Dulles se vyf klassieke modelle van die kerk (die kerk as instelling en die kerk as dienaar) gebruik ten einde die teologiese konsep van geweld te belig wat die konteks van EKOA operasies die beste beskryf. Vergifnis is essensieel in die lewe van 'n Christen en daarom is die fokus in hierdie studie op vergifnis en versoening in die konteks van konflik en lyding. Die vooroordeel of sondebok teorie word gebruik om te wys wie vir wie vir sy frustrasies blameer en wie die sondebok wserklik is.

In die studie word die effek van Boko Haram se gewelddadige aktiwiteite op EKOA in Noord-Nigerie asook hoe EKOA op die geweld antwoord, belig. Verder word bewys gelewer dat EKOA baie van sy lidmate verloor as gevolg van Boko Haram se gewelddadige aktiwiteite. Baie EKOA kerke en ander eiendom is vernietig en baie lidamte is misplaas as gevolg van Boko Haram se herhaalde aanvalle op kerke in Noord-Nigerie. Voorts word aangedui dat die gewelddadige aanvalle van Boko Haram die lewens van die EKOA se kinders en volwassenes op sosiaal en geestelik vlak negatief beïnvloed het. Die faktore wat aanleiding gegee het tot die opkoms van Boko Haram in Noord-Nigerië en hulle verwerping van Westerse Onderwys, werkloosheid, armoede, ouerlike nalatigheid, ongeletterdheid en die eis dat Nigerie vermoslem word, word ook belig.

Die studie word afgesluit deur 'n aantal aanbeveling oor hoe die EKOA op die konflik en lyding kan reageer.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Who gave me the opportunity to come to Stellenbosch University, and granted me success to complete this study; To the loving memory of my late parents, Siman Dombong Langmar and Mrs. Wopkat Siman Dombong; to my beloved wife, Henrietta John Dombong; to the ECWA and the people of Nigeria.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ABC	American Broadcasting Company
AQLIM	Al-Qaeda in the Land of Islamic Maghreb
AIM	Africa Interior Mission
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
BBC	British Broadcasting Cooperation
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CCHE	Center for Children Health Education
CJTF	Civilian Joint Task Force
COCIN	Church Of Christ in Nations
CSW	Christian Solidarity Worldwide
DCC	District Church Council
ECWA	Evangelical Church Winning All
EE	ECWA Executive
EMS	Evangelical Missionary Society
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCA	General Church Assembly
GCC	General Church Council
GFC	Global Fund for Children
HRW	Human Right Watch
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IMN	Islamic Movement in Nigeria
IPT	Investigative Project on Terrorism
ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
LCB	Local Church Board

LCC	Local Church Council
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NIV	New International Version
SIM	Serving In Mission
START	Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USCIRF	United States Commission on International Religious Freedom
WRVH	World Report on Violence Health

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

---

#### 1.1 Background and Motivation for the study

This researcher seeks to investigate the impact of the violent activities of Boko Haram and the response there to by the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Northern Nigeria. Since violence is the fundamental issue to be addressed in this study, it is critically important that the background of this phenomenon be highlighted. In light of this, pertinent issues will also have to be raised for example: what is the character of religious violence?

How does the ECWA understand its role, and respond to the violent context in Northern Nigeria emitted by the Boko Haram? By implication, the focus of this study will be on how religious violence from the Boko Haram poses a challenge to the missional operations of the ECWA. Iwara (2006:153) notes that,

Religious violence has been responsible for the collapse of many nations in many parts of the world. Responsible manipulation of religious has also been found to be behind the rapid growth and might of some powerful nations today. In Nigeria, experience shows that the incidence of religious violence has become a yearly ritual, often leading to the destruction of lives and property, the loss of precious time, money and energy. This way of handling religion leads to self-destruction, backwardness and abandoning the word of God.

Religion could serve, and has indeed served as an instrument of social harmony in many civilizations. Paradoxically however, it has also served as the motivation for violence, hence it is referred to in some literature as a ‘double-edged sword’ (Maregere 2011:17-23; Obasi 2009). Usman (2013:41) argues that, “religious violence in Nigeria cannot be said to be entirely religious, most of it has ethnic, economic, or political underpinnings”.

The ECWA is one of the largest church denominations in Nigeria, reaching about seven million people. Besides the ECWA, there are other Christian denominations in Nigeria, like the Anglican Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Baptist Church, the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN), the Redeemed Christian Church of God, and the Christ Apostolic Church, to mentioned a few. The ECWA church is a partner church of the International



Christian Mission organization; Serving In Mission (SIM formerly the Sudan Interior Mission). The ECWA church was founded in May 19, 1954 when the SIM related churches (initially in Nigeria) came together to form an indigenous body (Maigadi 2006:140). I will elaborate further in chapter two.

Since then mission stations, Bible schools, academic schools, and medical programmes have been transferred to ECWA leadership. Throughout Nigeria but especially in the central region, the Churches are growing rapidly. Some churches have experienced as much as 400% growth. Since, the ECWA believes belief in Jesus is the only way to be saved, it can, according to Bevans and Schroeder (2004:45), be viewed as exclusivist in its theological position.

Therefore the ECWA takes the position that Muslims must be converted to Christ. Like the early church, the ECWA believes that belief in Christ is the only way to experience salvation. Wink (1992:152) asserts that the early Christians proclaimed that, “there is Salvation in no one else” (Acts 4:12). Wink believes that “Salvation” in this case is an anthropological, not a theological term, and refers to human survival in the face of human violence (1992:152).

## **1.2 Motivation for the study**

Motivation for this study derives from the researcher’s awareness of Boko Haram’s violent attacks on Christians and churches in Northern Nigeria. The researcher was a victim of Boko Haram’s violent attacks. The ECWA, if not the largest, is one of the larger Christian denominations in Northern Nigeria and has a membership of over six million. The ECWA president, Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Gado, in an interview pointed out that Boko Haram targets the ECWA church and the state:

It is hardly news that the Boko Haram sect has been targeting churches for suicide bomb attacks in parts of the North, which has resulted in deaths and destruction. However, by design and not mere coincidence, some churches appear to have been more at the receiving end than others (*Vanguard News*, July 15, 2012).

This research is aimed at exploring the impact on and the response of the ECWA to Boko Haram’s violent activities. Gado attests to this when he states, “many people have been killed, many others are in the hospital,” (*Vanguard News* July 15, 2012). The ECWA president made this remark after four or five churches had been destroyed by the Boko Haram sect in Kaduna State.

### 1.3 Statement of the Problem and Focus

Awojobi (2014:145) notes that since 2009 when Boko Haram initially started with its insurgency and in the aftermath of the killing of Mohammed Yusuf, the leader of the sect, the activities of the sect have continued unabated despite the relentless effort of the government to curtail their criminal activities. Chukwurah, *et al* (2015:372) state that, “From the activities of the Boko Haram<sup>1</sup>, Nigeria has now been certified as a fully-fledged terrorist state, a classification that brings untold disgrace or hatred on us all”. King (2011) observed, “More than 200 members of the Islamic Boko Haram sect stormed Damaturu town in Yobe State, Northern Nigeria like a swarm of bees, and at the end of their four-hour rampage, some 150 people had been killed - at least 130 of them are Christians”. This highlights the gravity of the issue of religious violence committed by Boko Haram on Christian churches and in this particular case, the ECWA church.

In light of this, the researcher seeks to address the following fundamental question: In what way does violence committed by the Boko Haram affect the ECWA in Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi and Yobe States in Northern Nigeria? In other words, this study seeks to enquire how ECWA is affected by the violence from Boko Haram. The question can also be posed thus: How and to what extent does violence committed by Boko Haram impact on the life and activities of the ECWA?

At issue here is religious violence and how it affects the missional operations of the ECWA. To what extent does it affect the missional operations of the ECWA? Hence, the researcher will seek to understand the character and nature of the violence committed by Boko Haram. The issue that will be addressed is: How does the ECWA respond to this violence?

### 1.4 Prior Study

Even though, various studies have been conducted on the violent activities of Boko Haram and their impact on Northern Nigeria’s economy, no study has been conducted on the impact of Boko Haram’s violent activities on the ECWA in Northern Nigeria.

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<sup>1</sup> Today a major player in exacerbating Nigeria sectarian violence is the Muslim sect called Boko Haram which is strongly opposed to Western values and forms of education and generally shares a Taliban ideology. In recent years, members of Boko Haram have raided schools, churches, and government offices in their fight to carve out an Islamic enclave in northeastern Nigeria. Such terrorist attacks have had a strong effect on the country’s economy since farmers in the area are frightened away from growing their crops (see Smith, 2015:6, 7).

Chukwurah, *et al* (2015:371) observe that Boko Haram has created widespread tension across Northern Nigeria and between various ethnic communities, interrupted commercial activities, frightened off investors and caused great concern among Nigeria's northern neighbours. Chukwurah *et al* (2015:372) have also drawn attention to the fact that attacks by Boko Haram have affected economic activities in Maiduguri, Kano, Yobe and many cities in Northern Nigeria and many residents have fled their homes while others relocate and do not go about their normal business.

Anthony (2014:484) opines that the ongoing insurgency has had a significant negative impact on the regional economy in Northern Nigeria. He argues that the Lebanese and Indian expatriates who established businesses in Kano going back decades, have relocated to Abuja and Southern Nigeria. Otoo (2015:2) expresses his concern on the effect of Boko Haram on Nigeria's children. Especially those in the north-east live in constant fear due to Boko Haram's terrorist activities. He explains further that most children in the affected area find themselves severely traumatized, while many are wounded or forced to live on the street.

Adejoh & Fada (2014:57) conducted research on the impact of the Boko Haram's terrorism on Yankari Game Reserve. As a tourist in Bauchi in Northern Nigeria, he attests that Boko Haram's violent activities have affected citizens, public property, and business places in Northern Nigeria. The attacks have drastically affected business activities, human and economic development with major emphasis on the tourism sector.

## **1.5 Aim, Objectives, Presuppositions and Hypothesis, Research Questions, Theoretical Framework**

### **1.5.1 Aim**

The aim during this study is to investigate the impact of the Boko Haram's violent activities in northern Nigeria on the ECWA church.

### **1.5.2 Objectives**

The objectives during this study are:

- (i) To explore how Boko Haram activities affect the work of the ECWA church in Northern Nigeria.

(ii) To investigate the reasons why Boko Haram is carrying out such violent activities in Northern Nigeria.

(iii) To seek to understand how the ECWA church is responding to the Boko Haram's violent activities.

### **1.5.3 Presupposition and Hypotheses**

During the study the following assumptions were made:

(i) Boko Haram seeks to establish the Islam religion and practise hegemony over Christian Mission in Northern Nigeria.

(ii) Boko Haram is not interested in any religion apart from the Islamic religion.

(iii) Boko Haram has a growing connection to transnational terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Al-Shabbab as a form of survival strategy.

### **1.5.4 Research Question**

The fundamental question to be addressed is: How have the violent activities of Boko Haram impacted on the ECWA church in Northern Nigeria?

A subsequent question is: How is the ECWA church responding to the effects of the Boko Haram's violent activities in Northern Nigeria?

Sub-questions:

(i) What influences Boko Haram to direct violence to the ECWA?

(ii) How does Boko Haram's violence affect the missional activities of the ECWA?

(iii) How does the religious violence experienced by the ECWA influence their attitudes toward Muslims in Northern Nigeria?

### **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

The following theories will inform this study:

(i). A theoretical and theological view of mission under the "Cross". Bosch (1991:525-526) argues that the death of Jesus on the cross should not be isolated from his life. He emphasizes

that the scars of His risen body do not only prove his identity, but also constitute a model to be emulated by his followers.

The proposal here is that the ECWA church could learn from the lesson of the Cross in order to overcome the challenges posed by the Boko Haram's violent activities being witnessed in northern Nigeria. The ECWA Church needs to emulate Jesus's example and to stand under the Cross-where all our sins come to light and where we in our humanity are crucified with Him. He has commissioned us to follow His example.

(ii). A theoretical and theological view of mission as "Reconciliation". Skreslet (2012:34) asserts that reconciliation as a master-theme within mission theology could be reinforced and broadened by pairing it with related concerns. He also says that peacemaking is a way of talking about the practice of reconciliation in particular situations of conflict and violence. Skreslet's reminder that Jesus was a victim of violence and betrayal shows that reconciliation is a critical dimension of the church's mission "as spirituality, as a ministry, and as a strategy" (Skreslet, 2012:34). In this study it will be posited that reconciliation is one of the models that the ECWA church can use when dealing with Boko Haram.

(iii). A theoretical and theological view of "Fundamentalism". Avalos (2005:78-80) cites Marty's definition of fundamentalism as "a strategy or set of strategies by which beleaguered believers attempt to preserve their distinctive identity as a people or group". Marty believes that violence is mostly due to "fundamentalist" versions of religion. Gregg (2013:8-9) observes that literature on fundamentalism identifies the following two causes:

First, fundamentalists react to the rise of secularism. Fundamentalists perceive the effect of secularism on religion and feel that they are being forced to the margins of society and political life, which they believe should be governed by religion. Secularism and fundamentalism are both ideologies, complex systems of beliefs that aspire to shape political and social action. As such, secularism and fundamentalism are in direct competition with one another. (Gregg 2013:9).

Gregg (2013:9) argues that what gives rise to fundamentalism are new interpretations and practices that emerge from within a particular religious tradition and that challenge more conservative understandings of the faith.

In trying to understand how the ECWA relates to Boko Haram, the researcher will use the Bevans and Schroeder Exclusivist model as a lens. According to Bevans and Schroeder

(2004:45), Exclusivism is a position that some Christian denominations hold. They declare that no one can be saved except through Jesus Christ. As will be shown in its Constitution, the ECWA proclaims that Jesus is the only way to Salvation (John 14:6). Hence the researcher will seek to understand whether this position influences the church's relationship with Boko Haram.

Likewise, with regard to Boko Haram, the researcher will try to understand their relationship with the Christians, in this case, the ECWA, and will use Bourassa's and Arthur's conceptual theory known as "Prejudice/Scapegoat theory" (2006:1). Bourassa and Arthur define prejudice theory: scapegoat theory as a process through which frustration and aggression are directed at a group that is not the causal agent of the frustration.

### **1.7 Methodology and Approach**

This is a qualitative study based on secondary data. Secondary sources of data including books, journal articles, book chapters, newspapers, magazines, seminar papers, internet sources and other literature relevant to the thesis has been utilized and the necessary acknowledgement given. During the study the historical method of research and analysis was employed. Reports on political violence and Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria were also used. The study is also descriptive in nature as it is built on the findings of earlier work done in the field of Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria.

### **1.8 Potential impact**

The findings of this study could help Muslims and Christians to see the need for inter-faith dialogue. There is a need for religious tolerance for the sake of peace, since both religions preach peace. Christians and Muslims need to tolerate each other's religion for peace to reign. It is important to note that both religions share a common ancestry humanly and theologically. On the human side both religions share a common parentage of faith, as evidenced by the common names that are regularly used by Christian and Muslim people. For instance, Dauda which is the equivalent of the Christian David, and Ibrahim instead of Abraham.

Theologically, Christianity and Islam believe in the same God (although called by different names). There is also commonality around moral values. For instance, Christians as well as followers of Islam are opposed to sexual promiscuity.

## **1.9 Research Limitation**

This study is limited to the impact of Boko Haram's violent activities on the ECWA and its activities in Northern Nigeria.

## **1.10 Definition of Terms**

The operational definitions for key concepts in this study are as follows:

### **1.10.1 Impact**

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000:367) defines the word "impact" as the force or action of one object hitting another: a powerful effect that something, especially something new, has on a situation or person.

### **1.10.2 Violence**

World Health Organization in their report on violence (2016) defines violence as: "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation" (*World Report on Violence and Health*, 2016).

*The WRVH* (2016) mention three categories of the victim-perpetrator relationship. The first is self-directed violence, which refers to violence in which the perpetrator and the victim are the same individual. The second definition, according to the report, is "interpersonal violence" which refers to violence between individuals. This is sub-divided into family and intimate partner violence and community violence. The third as defined in the report is "collective violence". According to the report, collective violence is "violence committed by large groups of individuals and can be sub-divided into social, political and economic violence" (*World Report on Violence and Health*, 2016).

Steven and Lockhat (cited in Thesnaar 2011:27) define violence as any relation, process, or condition by which an individual or group violates the physical, social and or psychological integrity of another person or group.

## **1.11 Chapter Outline**

Finally, this study is outlined as follows:

### ***1.11.1 Chapter One***

In Chapter One the background information, the motivation for the study, the statement of the problem and focus, the prior study, aim with the study, objectives of the study, presupposition and hypothesis, research question, methodology and approach, potential impact, research limitation, and theoretical framework are given. The terms used are also defined.

### ***1.11.2 Chapter Two***

In Chapter Two there is an historical overview of the ECWA in Nigeria. The structural framework of ECWA leadership from GCC, DCC, LCC, and LCB, ECWA Constitution, ECWA aims and objectives, ECWA mission statement, ECWA articles of faith and practice are discussed.

### ***1.11.3 Chapter Three***

In Chapter Three Boko Haram is discussed, its leadership, theology and politics. Theological concepts and theories on religious violence are also discussed as well as what motivates Boko Haram to commit violent deeds. Religious violence is defined, and the ECWA's Biblical fundamentalist position as exclusivist as well as Boko Haram's fundamentalist position will be explained. One of Avery Dulles' five classic models of the church, which can fit in the context of ECWA's operation, namely the church as servant is used to address the theological concept. The focus is on forgiveness and reconciliation in the context of conflict and suffering and finally there is an attempt to define the concept of terrorism and prejudice/scapegoat theory.

### ***1.11.4 Chapter Four***

In Chapter Four Boko Haram's violent activities against the ECWA church in Northern Nigeria are discussed. In addition the impact of Boko Haram's violent activities on the ECWA Church, the killing of ECWA members, and the destruction of ECWA churches in Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi, and Yobe states will be explored. The effects of the violent activities of Boko Haram are discussed, for example the loss of family members, the destruction of property, the displacement of people, and the effects on the social life and spiritual life of ECWA members. The response of the ECWA to Boko Haram. Finally, the challenges the ECWA faces in countering the onslaught of the Boko Haram will be identified.



### ***1.11.5 Chapter Five***

In Chapter Five the implications of the violent activities of the Boko Haram on the ECWA in Northern Nigeria are reflected on. Recommendations to both the ECWA and other church denominations regarding how to respond in the context of conflict and suffering are made.

## CHAPTER TWO

### AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE ECWA

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#### 2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter the background information, the motivation for the study, the statement of the problem, the prior study, the aim and objectives of the study, the presupposition and hypothesis, research questions, methodology and approach, potential impact, research limitation and theoretical framework are presented.

In this chapter an historical overview of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), its structural framework, the leadership of the General Church Council (GCC), the leadership of District Church Council (DCC), the leadership of the Local Church Council (LCC) and the leadership of the Local Church Board (LCB are presented. The ECWA Constitution, its goal and objectives, its mission statement, and its articles of faith and practice are presented.

#### 2.2 An Historical Overview of the ECWA

The ECWA<sup>2</sup> as stated in Chapter one, is one of the largest denominations in Nigeria. Its members are drawn from almost all the ethnic groups in Nigeria. However, exact figures with regard to membership are not available but Maigadi (2006:7) estimated the membership to be 6 million people with 1,600 indigenous missionaries serving within Nigeria and some other countries like the USA, the UK, Israel, Gambia, Malawi, Togo (Maigadi 2006:7).

A spokesman for the (SIM) Sudan Interior Mission now known as Serving In Mission (2016), states:

The founders of the “Sudan Interior Mission” arrived in 1893, called to reach Nigeria’s far north with the Gospel. Not until the late 1930s, however, was missionary work permitted in this area. A center was established in central Nigeria in 1902. Since

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<sup>2</sup> The ECWA is a Christian organization started by the SIM missionaries formerly Sudan Interior Mission, now Serving In Mission since 1893. ECWA formerly, Evangelical Church of West Africa, but recently changed its name to Evangelical Church Winning All. Seeing that the ECWA church denomination is not only in West Africa, but has entered into many countries other than West Africa, there **was a** need to change the name.

then, SIM has worked in over 30 Nigerian language groups. The ECWA, growing out of SIM's work claims more than 6,000,000 worshippers (SIM 2016).

Maigadi (2006:73) states that, the mission originated from the prayer of a Scottish-Canadian, Margret (Craig) Gowans, and the sacrificial work of three young men, Walter Gowans, Rowland Bingham and Thomas Kent. According to Maigadi, Margret had a heart for God's mission in the world. Maigadi notes that her daughter, Annie, was a missionary to China while Walter, her son, went to Africa just because of her great concern for the salvation of the people of the Sudan in Africa. Maigadi asserted that since Margret was unable to go to the Sudan herself, she organized a prayer group to motivate missionaries who volunteered to go. The three young men mentioned above were called through her organized prayer group.

To confirm what Maigadi said about Gowans's heart for God's mission for the world, Bingham<sup>3</sup> (1943:13) states:

It was the impassioned pleading of a quiet little Scottish woman that linked up my life with the Sudan. She invited me to her home for lunch, after a meeting where I had been speaking in the City of Toronto. There, in the quietness of her parlors, she told the story of her home and unburdened her heart. Scarcely a couple of years before, God had invited that home, called a loved daughter, and thrust her forth as a witness for Him to far-away China. She went on to tell how Christ had come to the home a second time and had chosen her eldest boy to be an ambassador to the Sudan.

Bingham's testimony about Margret is encouraging. Mission is the heartbeat of God and God desires that every creature hear and benefit from the Gospel. Jesus Christ himself emphasized

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<sup>3</sup> Roland Victor Bingham, born in 1872 became a man of many achievements as a pioneer missionary, journalist, editor, minister, and leader of various Christian enterprises. The second of seven brothers and one sister, his homeland was Surrey South England. It was in his town of birth, East Grinstead, that the China Inland Mission was formed in 1865. Bingham's father operated a brickyard and sawmill, along with other building operators. He father died from vaccination poisoning during a small scare. Roland, at the age of thirteen, left home to help his mother by earning his own living as a pupil/teacher.

Three years later when he was sixteen, he left England for Canada. He was converted the year before in a Salvation Army service, and shortly after arriving in Canada became a Salvation Army officer. A few years later, after speaking at a meeting in Toronto, he was invited to lunch at the home of Mrs. Margret Gowans, a quiet Scottish lady. She told of her eldest son's call to be an ambassador of Christ in the "Sudan." Bingham had studied mission fields of the world and became convinced that the Sudan, with an area larger than India and some sixty-to-ninety-million people without a gospel witness, was the place that needed him most.

He called on Mrs. Gowans the next day to say that he expected to sail in two weeks' time to join her son, Walter, in Britain and to go on with him to Africa (See Edwin L. Frizen, Jr. 1992. *75 Years of IFMA: The Nondenominational Missions Movement*. Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association, Pasadena: California, William Carey Library).

this need when he said, “the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few” (Matthew 9:37-38; Luke 10:2).

Panya (1994:1) commenting on the three young Sudan Interior Mission pioneers who were so dedicated to the vision of the missionary call, notes:

The three young Sudan Interior Mission pioneers who were dedicated to the vision of the missionary call and who in their twenties left their home countries, the USA, Canada, and United Kingdom and headed to West Africa. Walter Gowans, Rowland Victor Bingham and Thomas Kent arrived in Nigeria on 4 December 1893. Walter Gowans and Thomas Kent died of malaria and were buried in the Nigerian jungle less than a year after their arrival and Rowland Bingham was left alone to work. He also barely survived a serious attack of malaria.

According to Maigadi, “After the death of his colleagues, Rowland Bingham returned to Canada in 1895, discouraged but not hopeless.” He wrote:

My faith was being shaken to the very foundation. First, I had gone out, as I thought, trusting in promises of healing that seemed explicit, clear and plain in Bible, and yet I left buried in the Sudan two of the most faithful Christians with whom I had ever to do....Many questions faced me. It did not occur to me then that my interpretation of the promises had been mistaken (Turaki cited in Maigadi 2006:79-80).

Sometimes people resist the gospel not because they think it false, but because they perceive it as a threat to their culture especially the fabric of their society and their national or tribal solidarity. Bingham returned to Canada and reported the deaths of Walter Gowans and Thomas Kent to Margret. It is said that Margret responded as follows: “Well, Mr. Bingham, I would rather have had Walter go out to the Sudan and die there, than have him home today, disobeying his Lord” (Bingham 1943:25).

Maigadi states that Margret was able to see what others could not see. Maigadi maintains that the death of her son was not a tragedy for her but the fulfillment of what God had intended. Although discouraged, according to Maigadi, Bingham confirmed that he was not giving up the original vision he and his colleagues had. He decided to form a reliable mission board in Canada to be responsible for the mission to the Sudan (Maigadi 2006:80).

The determination of Bingham never to give up the original vision as described by Maigadi holds many implications for missions today. Other missionaries can derive inspiration from the trials Bingham endured and gain insight from his reaction to some perplexing missiological problems.

Todd notes that Bingham returned to Canada and in 1900 he made a second journey to Nigeria, but this second venture failed due to sickness. According to Todd, Bingham returned to Nigeria in 1901 for a third time and began work among the Nupe tribe. By 1902, so Todd asserts, the first station was opened (Bingham cited in Paul Todd, 2006).

Bingham (1943:41) describes the conditions in which Titcombe found himself when Dr. Stirrett arranged with one of the natives in Egbe to let him partition off a corner in his hut for a place to live, as terrible. According to him, he took a minister friend to visit the tribe where Titcombe lived, and he noticed that the minister took a large block of camphor from his pocket, pressing it closely to his nose during the whole time of their stay. Bingham notes that Titcombe stayed in that hut with the “native” for a year but was still alive (1943:41).

Titcombe teaches us something about missionary work as he learnt about the culture so that he could find common ground with the people. Communicating effectively needs contextualization. It is the context that gives meaning and colour to a mission. Like Paul who to the Jews, became as a Jew, and to the Gentiles, a Gentile. All this is done for one supreme purpose, that he might win men to Christ (1Cor. 9:19-23).

Bingham (1943:42) asserts that, on the occasion of his visit to Egbe in 1914, Titcombe had arranged his Bible Conference when he had the joy of participating in a baptismal service. Bingham testified about the conference that over one hundred converts who had been examined with the greatest care publicly followed their profession of faith in Christ with baptism. However, the peak of the fruit of the ministry became a reality when Titcombe baptized 10 men and 3 women during the first baptismal service in 1909 at Ogga (Oniyarabi 2009:1).

One can see from the story so far that before SIM became what is today called the ECWA, they suffered and endured. The conditions under which they worked were hard but they endured and finally realized their dreams.

Confirming what Maigadi, Panya, and Todd said about the missionaries whose dream brought about what is called the ECWA today, Gary R. Corwin (1998:1) states:

Rowland Victor Bingham was the cofounder and longtime director of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). Born in Eastern Grinstead, Sussex, England, Bingham immigrated to Canada at age 16 and sailed for Africa in 1893 under the nascent SIM to open a way to the unreached people of the interior. Within a year both of his colleagues, Walter Gowans and Thomas Kent were dead from fever and he himself had returned to Canada in broken health. In 1898 the SIM was reconstituted as the Africa Interior Mission (AIM), with Bingham serving as its director. After a second failed attempt in 1900, a third attempt in 1902 succeeded and led to the establishment of the mission's first station at Patigi, Nigeria in March. In 1906 the mission returned to "Sudan<sup>4</sup> Interior Mission" as its official name (Corwin, 1998:1).

As a result of the opening of the first station at Patigi, Maigadi notes that the gospel spread to parts of Yoruba land, the whole Middle Belt and the Hausa land over a period of thirty-six years (Maigadi 2006:85). Corwin, observing the fruit of the hard work of Bingham, notes:

By the time of Bingham's death, the SIM had grown into what was arguably the largest Protestant presence in Africa - 400 missionaries, with hundreds of churches established. Under Bingham, the SIM became a somewhat unique representative of the faith mission movement, more about the need for missionary support and more thoroughly internationalized than the British model of Hudson Taylor and China Inland Mission, and more broadly evangelical and more socially involved than many American faith missions. Perhaps most outstanding among the missiological legacies Bingham left through the SIM were his emphasis on teaching and promoting missions among the newly established churches of Africa, his utilization of thoroughly international teams, and his holistic model of missions outreach, which addressed social concerns as part of the process of discipling believers into churches equipped to carry on Christ's commission (Corwin 1998:1).

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<sup>4</sup> The Sudan, literally meaning, "the land of the black," extends in a belt 600 miles wide, for 3,000 miles across Africa, more than one-third as large as the United States, and embraces a population of more than sixty millions of people. Not one missionary lived within its borders, and the Gospel was unknown throughout its vast area. Could anyone, appreciating the infinite value of a soul, look out upon this great field and consider unmoved, the well-nigh hopeless destiny of its dying millions? While the church was just concluding the first century of modern missions, was it possible that this vast, unreached field should continue unoccupied? It is not surprising that young men with the missionary purpose of going not merely to those in need, but to those who needed them most, should have laid upon their hearts a burden for the Sudan" (Bingham, 1943: 156).

Agreeing with Corwin that Bingham had worked hard, Todd notes that, “Since then the SIM has pioneered in 30 language areas, much of the Islamic north has opened to the Gospel through medical ministries” (SIM 2006:2). According to Todd, in 1954, the SIM - related churches came together to form an indigenous body known as the Evangelical Church of West Africa, now known as the Evangelical Church Winning All, (ECWA). In the following years, Todd said, “mission stations, Bible schools, academic schools, and medical programmes transferred to ECWA leadership” (Todd 2006:2).

The SIM observes that, ECWA churches are growing rapidly throughout Nigeria, especially in the central regions, where some churches have experienced as much as 40 per cent growth in the last several years. The SIM confirms:

Even churches in the strong Islamic centers are growing steadily. Currently more than 5000 congregations can be counted with an established attendance of over five million. ECWA now has more than five million worshippers all together. The church is engaged in theological education, medical ministries, radio ministries, publications for outreach and discipleship, rural development, urban ministries, and cross-cultural missions (SIM 2016:1).

According to the SIM (2016:2) to supplement government publishing and retailing requirements in 1974, the SIM literature ministry, and about 30 bookstores and the producers of *Today Challenge Magazine*, were incorporated into an indigenous organization called ECWA Production Limited. On November 19, 1976, the ECWA accepted responsibility for all the remaining SIM ministries.

Harold Fuller, former SIM Acting Deputy Director (1966-1968), Deputy Field Director (1968-1972), and Field Director 1973-1977), sums up the development of the ECWA as follows:

Taking over responsibility means taking over the leadership. It is a change of leadership, of authority, of responsibility. It is the next step in establishing the kind of indigenous church that is our goal. From pioneer days we have been working toward a self-governing, self-propagating, self-supporting church in Nigeria. The transfer was a major step in that direction. Preaching the gospel and winning people to Christ was the first. That was followed, on the organizational level, by local churches. Then came regional bodies, and finally, the national organization (Maigadi, 2006:60).

Maigadi (2006:61) observes that the SIM made a conscious effort to establish a particular kind of indigenous church, which turned out to be the ECWA. Maigadi perceives the SIM's efforts to fall into two stages. The first stage according to Maigadi is the proclamation of the gospel of Christ to win converts. He notes that when people were won to Christ, they were organized into worshipping communities, that is local churches. The local churches were then organized into regional bodies known as District Church Councils (DCC). Another stage observed by Maigadi was the institutionalization of the district into a national organization, the ECWA (Maigadi 2006:61).

The ECWA is a growing and a well-organized denomination that comprises of several ethnic groups. ECWA inherited a good legacy from the SIM missionaries. After accepting the responsibility from the SIM, the ECWA has developed the inherited properties she took over from the SIM.

Akanet (2007:34) who observes the activities of the ECWA after taking over from the SIM, commends it for developing the theological institutions after the take-over from the SIM. According to him, the ECWA has established many congregations in different parts of Nigeria. They also run a university, which they named Bingham University after one of the Founding Fathers of the ECWA. Akanet also notes that the ECWA runs three seminaries, four theological colleges, one college of education, five theological training institutes and seven vernacular Bible schools (Akanet 2007:34).

The reasons for establishing these institutions, according to the SIM, were the need for the translation of the scriptures into various local languages, and pastors and leaders who can meet the spiritual needs of an increasingly educated church body (SIM 2016:1). The SIM maintains that churches in the north frequently suffer severe opposition from the Muslim majority. Turaki (2010:127) notes that when the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) the Serving In Mission wanted to enter Muslim Hausa land, Lugard granted them permission conditionally. Turaki maintains that contrary to Lugard's wish, Hausa Mission visited Kano where the emir ordered their rejection.

### **2.2.1 The Colonial History of the ECWA**

According to Turaki, the colonial administration attempted to control the Christian missionaries and sent out memoranda and government circulars to all residents and district officers regarding how to check their activities (Turaki 2010:131). Turaki asserts that the



imposition of the colonial regulations were on itinerancy, evangelism, visitation, preaching, church planting, mission stations, religious instruction and schools, and relations with Africans. Turaki posits that the policies of the colonial brought about some unity among the Christian missions. Turaki therefore maintains that the missionary societies in Northern Nigeria met for the first time at Lokoja in 1910 to deal with government policies. According to Turaki the Memorandum of the Missionary Conference of 1913 at Lokoja partially reads as follows:

The Conference views with deep concern the attitude taken by some government officials, in denying to native Christians the right enjoyed by natives professing other religions:

1. By ordering the destruction of native Church buildings erected by natives at their own cost;
2. By allowing public works on Sundays;
3. By prohibiting or discouraging Christian natives from following or teaching their own religion (Turaki 2010:131).

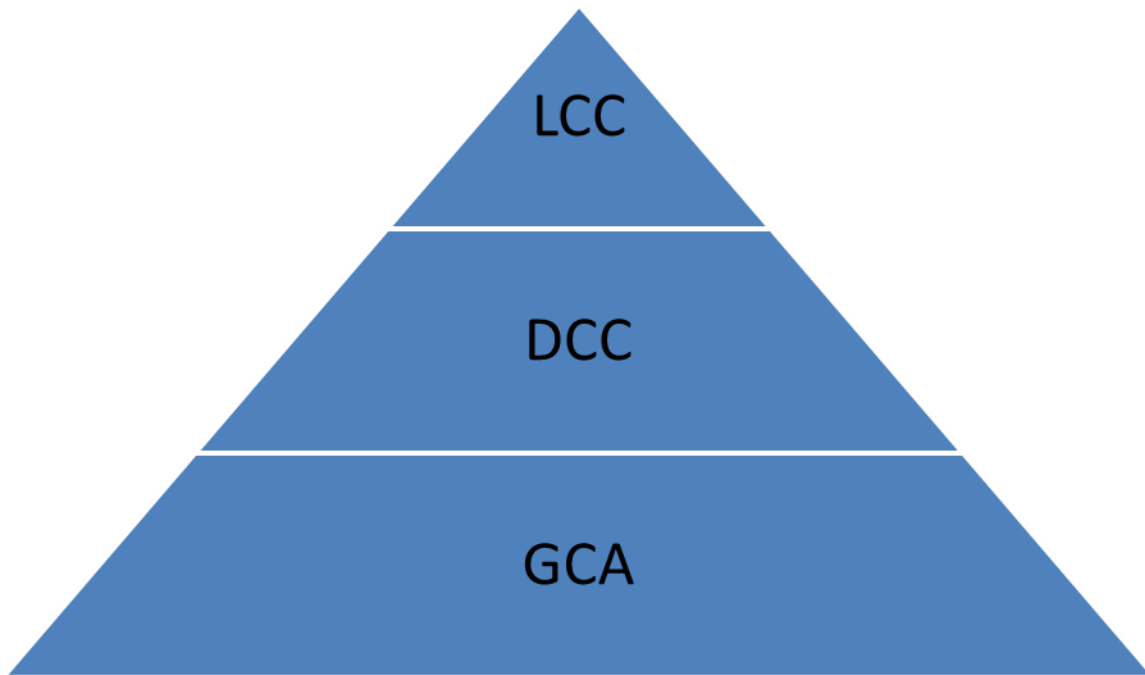
According to Turaki, Christian missions reacted by making charges against the colonial administration for imposing the regulatory policies on them. Turaki notes the following charges:

1. That the Colonial Administration prohibited missionary work in the Muslim areas contrary to the British common law of religious freedom and toleration.
2. That the Administration aided the advancement of Islam into the non-Muslim areas and that Muslim missionaries and traders were allowed to propagate the Muslim faith anywhere.
3. That British colonization of Northern Nigeria gave impetus to the rapid spread of Islam beyond the confines of the Muslim areas.
4. That the quarter-mile rule and the Township Ordinance were the means of keeping missionaries out of urban centres and that this negatively affected the relationship between the missionaries and their converts.

5. That the Administration had prevented the mission from preaching publicly and that it was often very difficult to obtain permission to plant churches and build new mission stations and schools.
6. That the Administration favoured Muslims over African Christian converts and that sometimes Christian converts were persecuted by colonial officers.
7. That the Administration was anti-Christian and pro-Muslim.
8. That Lugard had been friendly with the missionaries and that he never opposed missionary work but rather encouraged it.
9. That the post-Lugardians did not understand Lugard's policies; instead they promulgated anti-Christian policies.
10. That the Muslim Emirs were friendly toward the Christian missions and would have allowed missionaries in their territories but for the opposition of British colonial officers (Turaki 1999a: 215-216 in Turaki 2010:131-132).

### **2.2.2 Structural Framework of the ECWA 1893-1954**

According to Maigadi (2006:136) the original purpose of the institutionalization of all the various SIM churches in Nigeria was to form the ECWA Christian fellowship based on common belief in the centrality of Jesus Christ in Salvation history. Maigadi asserts that this seems to provide the ECWA with a unique Christian self-identity in contrast to unbelievers (Maigadi 2006:137). The ECWA's original intention as Maigadi puts it, was that "with the passage of time, authority and responsibility would come from the local churches and the organizational structure of the ECWA would be an inverted pyramid type as below" (Maigadi 2006:137).



**Figure 1 Organizational Structure the ECWA**

Source: (Maigadi 2006:138).

The pyramid model of organizational structure as Maigadi further explains, was that the General Church Assembly (GCA), the District Church Council (DCC), and the Local Church Council (LCC) would play a supporting role so that the Local Church Board (LCB) could fulfill the mission of Christ on earth (Maigadi 2006:139). What this implies, is that the local churches are in the centre of decision-making. This is an important issue in indigenization, allowing local people to take control of church affairs.

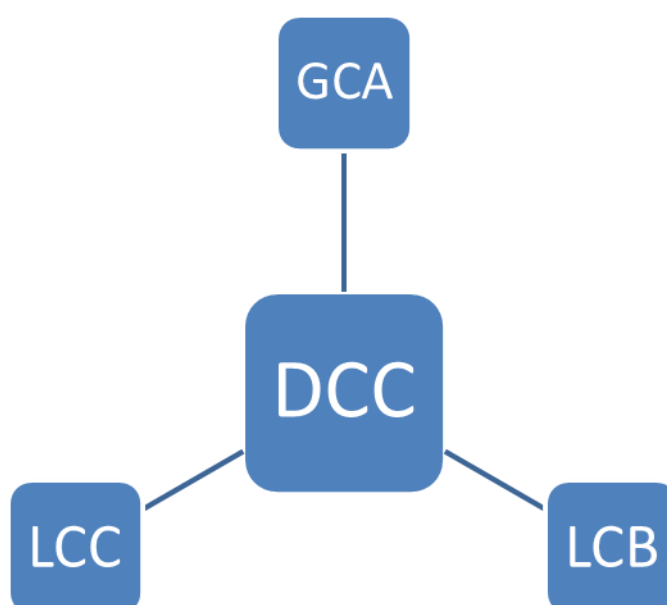
### **2.2.3 Structural Framework 1954-1967**

However, Maigadi asserts that the original intention namely to give local churches decision-making power was never realized (Maigadi 2006:139). According to Maigadi, the first ECWA Constitution was approved and immediately became operational after the amendments were made at the Egbe Conference. With the adoption of the Constitution, Maigadi notes that the ECWA was now partially an autonomous church in Nigeria (Maigadi 2006:140).

Following the amendments made at Egbe Conference, as Maigadi further asserts, the General Church Assembly (GCA) was then established as an advisory body to the Association of the

Evangelical Churches of West Africa, which comprises four levels of administration (Maigadi 2006:139). These are:

1. The Local Church Board (LCB)
2. The Local Church Council (LCC)
3. The District Church Council (DCC)
4. The General Church Assembly (GCA).

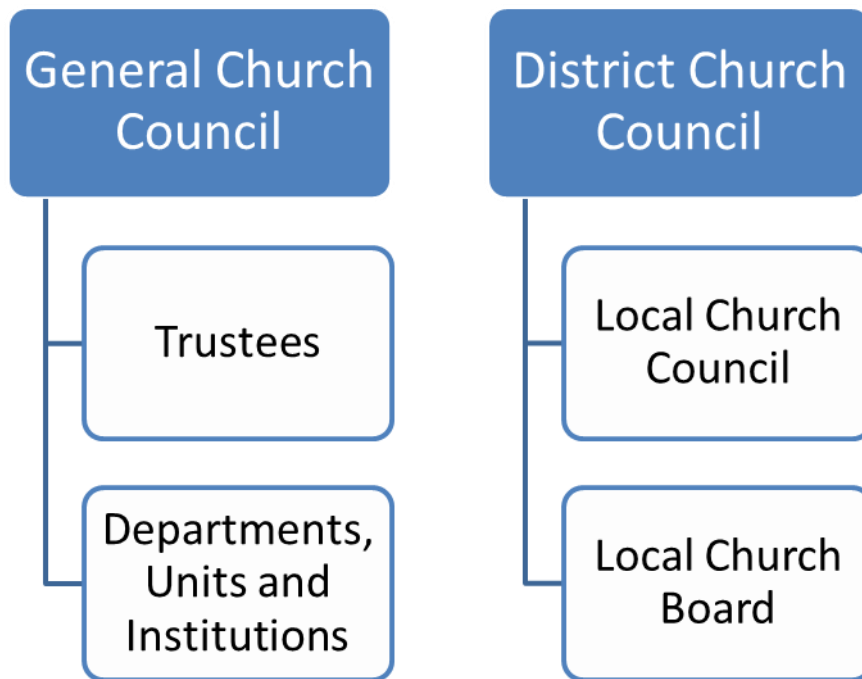


**Figure 2 Levels of Administration 1**

Source: (Maigadi 2006:140).

### **2.2.4 Structural Framework 1967 to the present**

According to Korosi (2007:5) the ECWA follows a Presbyterian system of government. The ECWA comprises of the General Church Council, Incorporated Trustees, the District Church Council, the Local Church Council, the Local Church Boards, the Departments Units/Institutions, the registered members and elected or appointed officers of the different government bodies. The researcher being an ECWA member, argues that ECWA operates a hybrid of the three types of church government (Presbyterian, Congregational and Episcopal).



**Figure 3 Levels of Administration 2**

Source: (Maigadi 2006:155)

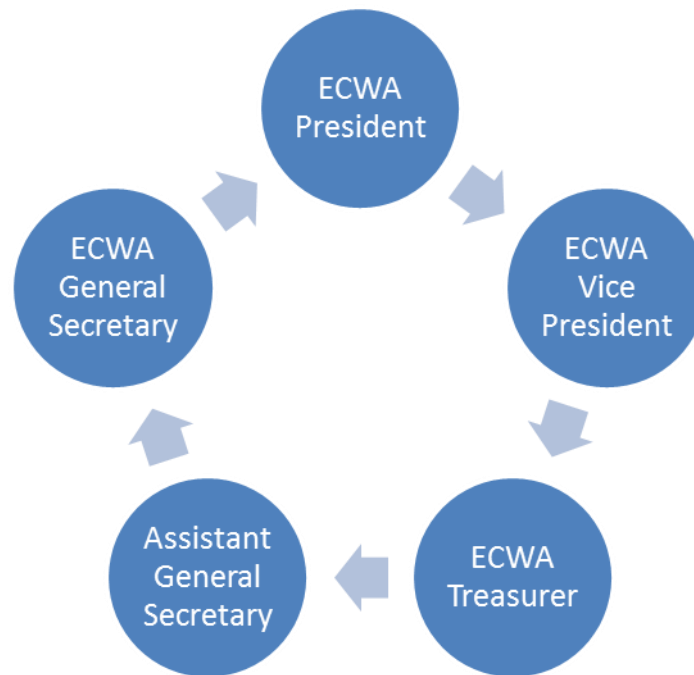
The General Church Council (GCC), the highest decision-making body, holds its council meeting once a year for about five days in the month of April. The participants at these council meetings are ECWA Executive, ECWA Trustees, the District Church Council (DCC) Chairmen, secretaries and delegates. The departments and units are there as observers. Maigadi (200:45) observes that power in the ECWA is concentrated in the District Church Councils and General Church Council. Local Churches and their pastors have little, if any; say in the decision-making of the church. Maigadi (2006:45) notes that those holding administrative positions have more economic advantages than their colleagues in local churches.

### **2.2.5 Hierarchy of Leadership**

The institutional model is most visible in the church when one looks at the structure of the offices and the hierarchy of the church, this hierarchy and the church's doctrine have been carried down throughout Christian history.

### 2.2.5.1 The ECWA Executive (EE)

The ECWA leadership exercises an executive role in the organization. The ECWA leadership comprises the ECWA President as the leader, the ECWA Vice President is the number two, and the ECWA General Secretary is the number three, the Assistant General Secretary is the number four and ECWA Treasurer is the number five. The first four leaders are ordained ministers but the ECWA Treasurer is a layman.



**Figure 4 Hierarchy of leadership at GCC Level**

### 2.2.5.2 The ECWA District Church Council (EDCC)

The leadership at the DCC level comprises of the DCC chairman, the DCC vice chairman, the DCC secretary, the DCC assistant secretary, the DCC delegate and the DCC treasurer. Apart from the DCC delegate and the treasurer who are laymen, the rest are ordained ministers.

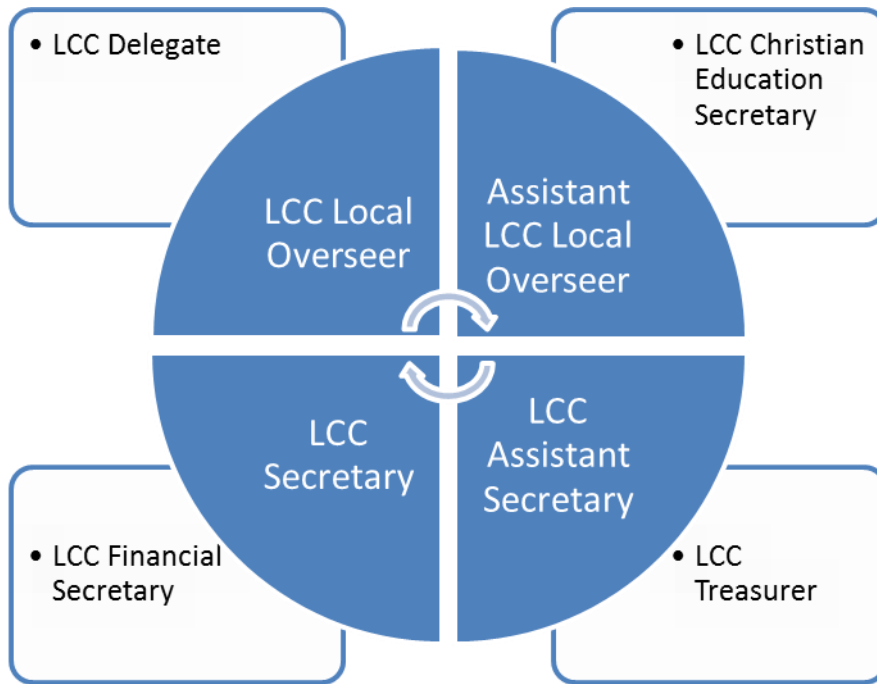


**Figure 5 Hierarchy of leadership at the DCC Levels**

### **2.2.5.3 LCC Leadership Structure**

The leadership of the local church council comprises of the following functionaries:

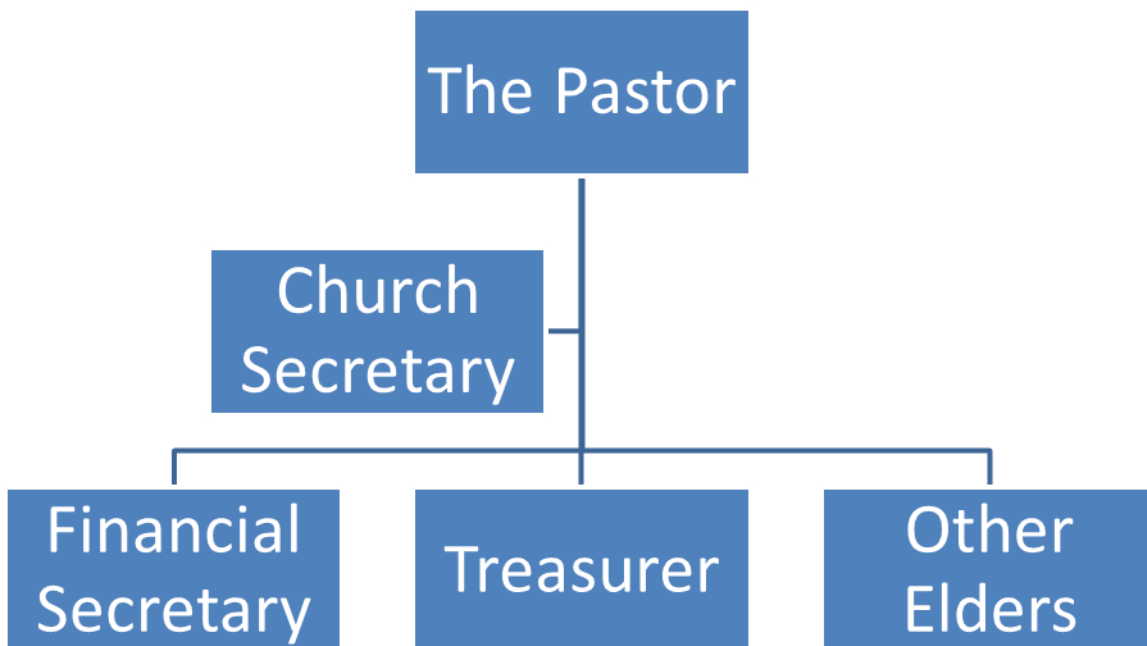
The Local Overseer as the chairman, the assistant local overseer, the LCC secretary, the assistant secretary, and the Christian education secretary are positions occupied by the ministers while the position of the LCC delegate, financial secretary, and the treasurer are positions occupied by laymen.



**Figure 6 Hierarchy of leadership at LCC level**

**2.2.5.4 Local Church Board Leadership**

The pastor is the chairman of the Board while the elders assist the pastor in the ministry. The elders assisting the pastor are the church secretary, the financial secretary, and the church treasurer, while others could be elected when the need arises.



**Figure 7 Hierarchy of leadership at LCB levels**



## 2.2.6 The ECWA Constitution

The ECWA has a constitution<sup>5</sup> that guides the administration of the church. This constitution is reviewed every ten years. So far there have been five constitutional reviews. These reviews affected the administration and structure of the ECWA. They have tended to strengthen centralization. The ECWA Constitution (2000:1-5) reads:

We the members of ECWA, having inter alia surrendered ourselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ have sincerely, firmly and solemnly resolved to be knitted and united together into a strong body of Christ under a common, bond of love with a common purpose of glorifying God and emitted to the Holistic Ministry of the inspired and infallible word of God by the enabling Power of the Holy Spirit, do hereby proclaim and give ourselves the following Constitution.

The ECWA as a denomination not only declares its submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, but also resolves to be united together as one body in Christ Jesus. Christians are called to be one in Christ. John 17:22 reads: *I have given the glory You gave Me, so that they may be one as We are one.*

### 2.2.6.1 The Supremacy of the Bible

The constitution further declares that “No section or part of this Constitution shall contradict the teaching of the Scripture. Therefore, the provisions of this institution shall be interpreted under the authority of the Holy Bible” (ECWA Constitution 2000:2).

### 2.2.6.2 Goal and Objectives of the ECWA

1. The singular goal of ECWA Church is to glorify God. This Goal shall be achieved through the following Objectives:
  - a. To preach and teach the Bible, the inspired and infallible Word of God.
  - b. To maintain a strong body of Christ’s followers for the advancement of the public worship of God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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<sup>5</sup> Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) at [ecwafoundationoflife.com/ECWA%20constitution](http://ecwafoundationoflife.com/ECWA%20constitution)

- c. To promote evangelistic, educational, medical welfare work of the Church and further these interests through publications, radio, television, pulpit ministry, or other means consistent with the character and purpose of the Church.
- d. To prepare, examine, accept and engage pastors, teachers, evangelists and missionaries, and to receive and allocate funds for the support and maintenance of such persons and their work.
- e. To feed the hungry, clothe the poor, support and enrich the needy both physically and spiritually.
- f. To purchase, lease or otherwise acquire lands, buildings, investment and property of any kind, movable or immovable, or any interest in the same, for, or in connection with the purchases above-mentioned or any of them.
- g. To lease, mortgage, sublet, exchange, erect building upon or skill otherwise deal with or dispose of all or any parts of the property above-mentioned for any of the purposes aforesaid.
- h. To enter into any arrangement with the Government of Nigeria or with any other governments or authorities, states, local, municipal or any other and to obtain from such governments or authorities all rights, concessions and privileges as may be conducive to the above-mentioned purposes, or any of them.
- i. To help the Governments, federal, state or local to promote a just, peaceful and prosperous united Country for the up-liftment of the welfare of its people and to the glory of God.
- j. To join hands with the Governments of the lands in promoting moral and physical development of all Nations.
- k. To do all or any of the above things as Principal Trustees or Agent, or otherwise and either alone or in conjunction with any other Church Company, undertaking, or body or person or persons and either by or through agents, trustees, or otherwise.
- l. To do all such other as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the objectives mentioned above.

### 2.2.6.3 The Mission Statement of the ECWA

The mission statement of an organization is critical to realizing its goal and objectives. With regard to the relationship between a mission statement and purpose of mission, Nel states: “the founding of the mission of the congregation is about the grasping of the church’s purpose, and more specifically the purpose of the congregation both as part of the body of Christ on earth and as part of a specific denomination, within a very specific content” (Nel, 2015:250). Nel says further, “the mission statement is, after all, to a great extent the description of the congregation’s identity” (Nel 2015:250).

The ECWA mission statement as enshrined in the constitution reads:

... to reach the world around us, equip believers and become a family of believers providing acceptable and belonging by loving one another through the love and glory of God. Our focus is to provide believers with significance, value and belonging irrespective of their background, race, sex, color or nationality (ECWA Constitution 2000:5).

The task of world evangelization has been the greatest challenge confronting the church. God desires that every creature should hear and benefit from the Gospel. Jesus Christ himself emphasized this need when he said, “the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few” (Matthew 9:37-38; Luke 10:2). The aim of Christian mission is the proclaiming of the gospel to the unconverted everywhere, according to the command of Christ, with a view to the establishing of an indigenous church.

The ECWA in its ten years’ strategy plan also states:

The ECWA exists to glorify God and to achieve His purposes by communicating the Gospel to the lost, disciplining and equipping believers, organizing them into local churches and caring for the needy in the world through advocacy and social services (ECWA Ten Years Strategy Plan, 2007:15).

According to the ECWA ten years’ strategy plan this objective can be achieved through the followings:

1. Preaching and teaching the Bible, the inspired and infallible Word of God,

2. Maintaining a strong body of Christ's followers for the advancement of the public worship of God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord; and
3. Promoting the evangelistic, educational and medical welfare of the ministry, or other means to reach the Muslim communities (ECWA Ten Years Strategy Plan, 2007:15).

Finally, the ECWA has articles of faith and practice that state their position on the Bible. The statements of the ECWA in their articles of faith and practice reflect an exclusivist position. The exclusivist position of the ECWA is reflected in Article vii of Faith and practice.

#### **2.2.6.4 The Articles of Faith and Practice**

The articles of faith and practice of the ECWA church as enshrined in the constitution assert:

**(i) The Scriptures:** The sixty-six books of both Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, without error in the works of the original writings, the complete revelation of God's will for the salvation of men and the divine and the final authority for all Christian faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:13).

**(ii) God:** There is one God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, infinite in being and perfection. He exists in three Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are co-equal and co-eternal (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 1:1-13; Heb. 1:15, 19).

**(iii) Jesus Christ:** Jesus Christ is very God and very Man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a perfect, sinless life; He died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins, according to the scriptures. He rose bodily from the dead and ascended into heaven, where He is now our High Priest and Advocate at the right hand of the Mighty on High (Luke 2:3-35; Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Heb. 1:3; 1 John 2:1-2).

**(iv) The Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the God-head Who regenerates (that is, gives new life to anyone who is dead in sins and trespasses, exercises saving faith in Jesus Christ - Rom. 8:11; John 6:63a indwells (that is, resides in everyone who truly believe in Jesus Christ - John. 14:16, 17; Rom. 8:9,11,15; 1 Cor. 6:19); baptizes (that is, places every true believer into the Body of Christ, thus joining each believer to Christ in a mystical union - 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26,27; Rom. 6:3,4) seals (that is, by the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer, the

divine mark of ownership is eternally placed to indicate that the one indwelt is God's own eternal possession - Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30); and fills those who believe (that is, empowers those yielded to God in daily conduct and service - 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16,22-25; Col. 3:17). The Holy Spirit's ministry is to glorify God in the life of the believer as He guides instructs, empowers, and gives spiritual abilities for service (John 3:3-6; 1 Cor. 6:19; 12:13; Eph. 5:18; Acts 1:8).

**(v) Angels:** God originally created an innumerable company of sinless, spirit-beings, known as angels. They are messengers of God to help His people in all ages. One Angel, high in rank, however, sinned through pride. He is known as Satan. A great company of other spirit beings followed suit in Satan's fall. They became active agents of Satan known as demons (Is. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; 1 Tim. 3:6).

**(vi) Man:** Man was created in the image and likeness of God but in Adam all mankind fell into sin with the result, that all men are sinners by nature and action. All men are depraved and without hope apart from the grace of God (Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:17; 6:5; Rom. 3:10-19).

**(vii) Salvation:** Salvation is received by faith alone in the God-man, Jesus Christ, apart from works. Christ died as a substitutionary sacrifice to redeem us from our sins if we believe in Him. His shed blood and His resurrection provide the only ground of justification and salvation. Only those who receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and are truly Christians, even children of God. There is no salvation for those who die outside of Christ. (See Acts 4:12; John 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:21; John 1:12; Rom. 5:8; John 2:18; John 3:18).

**(viii) Assurance and Eternal Security:** Everyone who truly believes in Jesus Christ's atoning work and has appropriated this benefit personally to life is assured of salvation both now and forever. Those so assured are eternally kept saved to the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (Col. 2:2; 1 John 5:13; Heb. 6:11; 10:22; John 5:24; 10:28; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).

**(ix) Sanctification:** That is, believers setting apart unto God is three-fold; positional at the point of conversion; progressive on a daily basis as we walk the Christian pilgrim way; and ultimate which is experienced in the hereafter when each believer

enters into the presence of the Lord (John 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:16-7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 10:10,14; 1 John 2:15-17; 3:2).

**(x) The Church:** The Church, embracing all true believers, is the Body and Bride of Christ, formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (that is, the placing of individual believers in the Body of Christ). The local church is intended to be a local organized representation of the mystical Body of Christ, and should be composed only of true believers (Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 12:13; Phil. 1:1; Eph. 1:20-23; 4:3-10,30; Col. 3:14-15).

**(xi) Ordinances:** The Ordinances of the Church are the Lord's Supper and Water Baptism by immersion, which, are to be observed by the Church during the present Age. These are designed to strengthen the believer spiritually and to be a public witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. They are not a means of salvation. (Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 8:36-38; 10:47-48; 16:32; 18:7-8; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

**(xii) Christian Life and Service:** Men are saved unto good works (Eph. 2:10; Titus 3:8) and faith without works is dead (James 2:17). Therefore, Christians are called to a holy life of service and testimony in the power of the Holy Spirit, which service includes the propagation of the Gospel message to the whole world. The Holy Spirit bestows by own sovereign will, diverse grace gifts upon all who believe in Christ for enablement in service for God's glory. Christians will have to give account of, and receive rewards for their faithful service at the judgment seat of Christ (Acts 1:8; 1Cor. 3:12-15; 2Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11; 1Pet. 1:15-16).

**(xiii) Spiritual Gifts:** These are bestowed freely as determined by the Holy Spirit on believers and not by the will or desire of man. These graceful (unmerited favor) gifts are meant for the edification of the body of Christ and for service to the glory of God. In this age, God has given for the building up of the church the following grace gifts among others: faith, administration, care, pastor/teacher, evangelist, wisdom, knowledge, discernment (Rom. 12:6; 1Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11). Some of the spiritual gifts listed in scripture, for example, tongues; healing, etc. are sign gifts. However, an undue emphasis on possessing any of those sign gifts as a means or prerequisite for salvation or mark of Spiritual superiority is unscriptural and is rejected (John 6:3-16; Acts 1:8; 1Cor. 14:1-40).

**(xiv) The Blessed Hope:** The blessed hope of the church is the personal, imminent and pre-millennial second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the rapture of the believers, both the living and the dead. The hope must have a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer (John 14:1-3; 1Cor. 15:51-52; 1Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; 2Pet. 3:11).

**(xv) The Tribulation:** In the end times shall come a period of divine judgment upon the whole world which day after day, continues to ripen for judgment (Matt. 24:15-21; Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:1-17; 19:21b).

**(xvi) Resurrection:** All the dead will eventually resurrect bodily at the end of times, the believers into everlasting blessedness and joy with their Lord, the unbelievers into judgment and everlasting conscious punishment (John 11:25-26; Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; 1Cor. 15:20-22; 2Cor. 5:8; 2Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:11-15).

It is clear from the Articles of Faith that the ECWA is exclusive with regard to Salvation in that they believe that members of other sects or religions who do not believe in Jesus Christ will not inherit eternal life. Exclusivism is not particular to any religion, instead, it is a position held that one religion is true and others are false. In Chapter Three this issue will be developed further with a view to determining the ECWA's response to the violence of Boko Haram

## 2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter there is an historical overview of the ECWA, the structural framework, the ECWA Constitution that contends the supremacy of the Bible, the goal and objectives, the mission statement of the church, and the articles of faith and practice of the ECWA. In the next chapter is an historical overview of Boko Haram, the goals of Boko Haram, and the theology and political power of Boko Haram. The theological concept and theories on religious violence will be explored.

## CHAPTER THREE

### BOKO HARAM, CONCEPTS AND THEORIES WITH REGARD TO RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE

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#### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter an historical overview of the ECWA in Nigeria, the structural framework, and the leadership structures of the GCC, DCC, LCC, and LCB are presented. The ECWA Constitution, aim and objectives, the and the ECWA articles of faith and practice are highlighted.

In this chapter an historical overview of the Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, the founder of Boko Haram, the leadership structure of Boko Haram, the goal, the theology and politics of Boko Haram, and the theology and philosophy of Boko Haram are presented.

The relevant theological concepts and theories on religious violence that explain the rise of the Boko Haram sect and the incessant violence it commits on the ECWA in Northern Nigeria are explored. Religious violence is defined and the ECWA's biblical fundamentalist position as exclusivist, Boko Haram's fundamentalist position and finally the concept of terrorism and prejudice/scapegoat theory are also defined.

#### 3.2 An Historical Overview of Boko Haram

According to Campbell (2014:1), "Boko Haram" is the popular moniker/name for an Islamist movement that calls itself the "Sunni Community for the Propagation of the Prophet's Teaching and Jihad". A report from *Fars News Agency* states that Boko Haram, just like ISIL<sup>6</sup>, is considered to be one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world (*Fars News Agency* 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016). According to the report, the Global Terrorism index, the Takfiri group actually killed more than 6,000 people just last year (2015) (*Fars News Agency* 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016).

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<sup>6</sup>The group known variously as ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant), ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) or Simply Islamic State is, originally, an offshoot of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. However, while it shares a similar ideological outlook, ISIL has adopted a different strategy from its predecessor. What distinguishes the new armed group is its capture and occupation of swaths of territory, stretching from the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria's largest city, eastward beyond Tikrist, Saddam Hussein's war-ton hometown in Iraq (Piven ,B. 2014. Who, what and where is ISIL? Explaining the Islamic State. September, 18)



The exact date of the emergence of the Boko Haram sect is mired in controversy, especially if one relies on media accounts (Onuoha, 2010). However, Colonel Mohammed Yerima, the Nigerian Director of Defense Information says that the sect has existed since 1995, under the name of Ahlulsunna wal'jama'ah hijra (*This day News*, 31 July 2009:4). However, Mellgard (2015:5) states that Boko Haram began in the 1990s in Northern Nigeria in a very different form. According to Mellgard (2015:5) they eventually settled in Maiduguri, the capital of Bornu State. Boko Haram, according to Ford (2014), was started by Mohammed Marwa, who was born in 1927. Ford notes that Marwa moved to Kano in what is today Northern Nigeria, and began a career as a preacher. He moved from the town of Marwa in Northern Cameroon to the city of Kano in 1945 (Ford, 2014).

Falola (1998:143) describes Marwa as follows:

He was a qur'anic teacher and preacher. Forceful, persuasive and charismatic, he rebelled against many popular opinions in Kano Islamic circles, denouncing certain parts of the Holy Qur'an and even criticizing Prophet Mohammed. He was alleged to have replaced the name of the Prophet Mohammed with his own in personal copies of the Qur'an ... He was opposed to most aspects of modernization and to all Western influence. He decried such technological gadgets as radios, wristwatches, automobiles, motorcycles, and even bicycles. Those who use these things or who read books other than the Qur'an were viewed as hell-bound 'pagan'.

Ford (2014) notes that Marwa was at first ignored by Nigeria's political leaders, but as his sermons became increasingly anti-government in the late 1970s, the government cracked down on him. The crackdown culminated in an uprising in 1980, when Marwa's followers in Kano began rioting against the government (Ford, *National Interest* June 6<sup>th</sup> 2014). Isa (2010:326) describes the Maitasine movement as representing a radical shift from other forms of Islam because it varied from established or accepted beliefs and theories, especially with regard to Islamic beliefs and injunctions.

Isa (2010:326) asserts that the Maitasine movement believed that it should be constituted only of genuine Muslims and righteous servants of God. The Maitasine members, according to Isa, rejected other Muslims for having gone astray while maintaining that their beliefs are the most realistic because they revolve around the 'Quran only'. It is a tendency towards an

obsession with the Quran and the rejection of the Hadith and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad and other related sanctioned sources of Islamic law (Isa 2010:326).

Isa maintains that the members of the Maitasine movement live in secluded quarters isolated from other members of society while rejecting everything that is European or Western, especially education, schools and material things like radios and wristwatches. Isa asserts that they are opposed to affluence and as such condemn material wealth and the rich (Isa 2010:326).

According to Innocent and Ibietan (2012) “Boko Haram is an indigenous salafist<sup>7</sup> group which turned itself into a jihadist in 2009”. Mellgard (2015), further explain that they developed within a specifically Salafi-jihadi ideological context, which focuses on rejecting the authority of the Nigerian state. Ford (2014:24) asserts that Boko Haram has been a growing force in Nigeria for over a decade and has deep roots in the country’s social development going back even further.

Khan and Hamidu (2015:23) define the term Boko Haram as “Western or non-Islamic education is sin”, it is a combination of Hausa and Arabic words, coined in 2002 at Bornu, a northern state of Nigeria. However, a statement allegedly released by the acting Boko Haram leader, Mallam Sanni Umaru, rejects such a notion by stating:

Boko Haram does not in any way mean ‘Western education is a sin’ as the infidel media continue to portray us. Boko Haram actually means ‘Western Civilization’ is forbidden. The difference is that while the first gives the impression that we are opposed to formal education coming from the West, which is not true, the second affirms our belief in the supremacy of Islamic culture (not education), for culture is broader, it includes education but is not determined by Western education” (*Vanguard News*, 14 August 2009).

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<sup>7</sup> A militant group of extremist Sunnis who believe themselves **to be** the only correct interpreters of the Koran and consider moderate Muslims to be infidels; seek to convert all Muslims and to insure that its own fundamentalist version of Islam will dominate the world. A school of Sunni Islam that condemns theological innovation and advocates strict adherence to Sharia and to the social structures existing in the earliest days of Islam. Source. American Heritage ® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright ©2011 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

### 3.2.1 The Founder of Bolo Haram

The sect, as Khan and Hamidu (2015:24) state, originated with the objective of preaching and teaching how to practise Islam, has been in existence since 1995, operating under the name Al-Shabbaab, Muslim Youth Organization, with Mallam Lawal as the leader. Mohammed Yusuf took over the leadership of Boko Haram when the leader Mallam Lawal left to continue his education. Yusuf argues that Western education amounts to unbelief as he states in his tape of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006:

We are ready, to debate any one on this creed, Western education is destructive. We did not say knowledge is bad but that the unbelief inside it is more than its usefulness. I have English books in my possession, which I read regularly. I did not say English amount to unbelief but the unbelief contained therein and the polytheism inside. In the process of becoming educated, you become a mushrik (idolater). This is our only fear ... Destruction is destruction, whoever it comes from. Because it is the White man that brought it, does it amount to civilization? Yes, our own is traditional, as you call it, but yours is ‘shirkasiation’ (Yusuf *tape*, 30 June 2006 in Onuoha, 2014:18).

I have doubts about this the assertion of Yusuf’s regarding Western education which he sees as destructive. He uses Western civilization to communicate, so why is he against it? It is doubtful that Boko Haram is fighting against Western education as they suggest, it is rather fighting for the Islamization of Nigeria.

It is recorded that Mohammed Yusuf officially founded the group in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri with the aim of establishing a Sharia-based government in Bornu State (Freedom, 2015:56). During his research, Freedom (2015:56) discovered that Yusuf was born on 29 January 1970 and hailed from Girgir village in the Jalasko local government area of Yobe State. He had four wives and 12 children. About his education, Freedom said that Yusuf was a secondary school dropout who received a Quranic education in the Chad and Niger Republics, where he imbibed his radical ideology.

Adegbulu (2013:266) describes Yusuf as a semi-illiterate who went to Chad and Niger Republic to study the Qur’an. In a 2009 BBC interview, an analyst describes Yusuf as being well educated and reaffirms his opposition to Western education. Yusuf rejected the theory of evolution, said that rain is not “an evaporation caused by the sun”, and that the Earth is not a sphere. (Mellgard 2015) states:

Yusuf taught that partisan government, democracy, and Western-style education - including any subject perceived to contradict the Quran - are exploitative and colonial impositions intended to degrade Muslim society, traditions and values, and convert Muslim to Christianity. This draws on a deep-seated suspicion of democracy in northern Nigeria, a disdain for Western education and the assumption that Islamic education and Sharia are superior (Mellgard 2015:15).

Mellgard portrays Yusuf as an Islamist, determined to impose Islamic hegemony on Northern Nigeria. His leadership allegedly increased the group's political influence and popularity. Onuoha (2014:15) notes that Yusuf believed in what he preached and constantly exhorted his followers that the road will be rough and tough, and that only a select few who persevere and are rightly guided by Allah, will make it. To prove that Yusuf was serious about his belief, Onuoha maintains that part of his sermon on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2006 read as follows:

In this dawah we agree that we are going to suffer as Bilal was dragged on the ground just as Ammar Ibn Yasir was tortured, just like a spear was thrust unto summayyah's vagina. These are trials we are awaiting ... These are the hurdles we want to cross. Anyone who dies in the process goes to paradise. This is our dawah (Onuoha 2014:15).

Onuoha further asserts that Yusuf prepared the minds of his followers for the possible consequences of their decision if they joined his movement through his sermon, as follows:

In the process they will abuse you, call you names and some of you may even die. They will shoot some of you, and we will just pray "may Allah give you aljanna" [paradise] and proceed without any Qualms. Can we endure? We ought to endure. May Allah give us the will to endure? This is how our dawah is. Patience: this is what we need, brothers. In addition, perseverance upon the truth. Allah is watching us. Victory is certain. What we lack are the helpers. We are not yet primed for victory, but we are working towards getting ready for victory. This is what we are looking for, brothers. This is an incipient dawah, but it cannot be crushed. It cannot be killed. If we stand by what the Prophet says we should stand by, even if we die in the process, this dawah will continue - even after a hundred years. Once the truth comes out, you are in trouble (Onuoha, 2014:15).

According to Onuoha (2014:52), Yusuf and his successor Shekau were not anti-modernists like Maitasine. To understand the position of Yusuf and Shekau on modernity, Onuoha notes that they declared that Muslims should use science and technology developed in the West, but they should reject only the un-Islamic ideas mixed with Western education:

The Prophet Muhammad said in his hadith concerning people of the Book, “if they bring to you anything that is agreeable in Quran, accept it; but if they bring anything that contradicts Islam, reject it; and if they bring anything that neither contradict nor support the Quran, it is your choice to accept or reject it.”...Western education is the body knowledge that comes to us through European colonialists, and included learning medicine, technology, Geography, Physics; and so on ... They can all be used if they do not clash with the teachings of the Prophet (Onuoha, 2014:52).

If this assertion regarding Yusuf and Shekau, Boko Haram’s founder and leader is true then using the name Boko Haram for this Islamist sect is not correct. The name should have been “Christians Haram.” That would better reflect their attitude towards Christians.

Campbell (2014:2) describes Yusuf as a charismatic preacher who organized his community in the city of Maiduguri around 2003. According to Campbell, Yusuf sought to establish God’s kingdom on earth by isolating his community from other members of society. Campbell asserts that although Yusuf’s movement was hostile to the Nigerian state and rejected Western education as non-Islamic, it remained generally non-violent.

In support of this assertion, Ford (2014:2) also explains that, in the beginning, Boko Haram was radical, but not yet violent. Ford argues that Boko Haram became violent in 2009, when the members according to Ford (2014:2) decided they were going to refuse to obey a law requiring motorcycle riders to wear helmets. This was on the grounds that it was somehow un-Islamic. Ford notes that the arrest of several members sparked a riot against the Nigerian police that left a staggering 800 people dead (Ford, *National Interest*, June 6<sup>th</sup> 2014). Wall (2015) asserts that, in the ensuing conflagration, Nigerian security forces captured Yusuf, the leader of Boko Haram, tortured and killed him.

Khan and Hamidu believe that the execution of Yusuf and other sect members seemed to be part of the game plan of the government and security agencies to put an end to the political turmoil in the North (Khan and Hamidu 2015:24). This strategy, according to Khan and Hamidu, backfired as hundreds of police and military officials were targeted and brutally

killed in Northern Nigeria as revenge for killing their leader. These scholars note that churches were set on fire, and the deaths of a considerable number of Christians were reported. They observe that Abubakar Shekau has led Boko Haram since July 2019, and was working primarily through intermediaries. Individual cell commanders have a great deal of autonomy in day-to-day operations (Khan and Hamidu 2015:24).

Owolade believes that the Western influence of British colonialists was the cause of the divisions among the people of Northern Nigeria, who were once united by Islam (Femi Owolade 2014). Owolade furthermore argues that the dissatisfaction with Western influence also led to the emergence of Islamist fundamentalists among the people of the northern Nigeria.

### **3.2.2 The Leadership Structure of Boko Haram**

Boko Haram has a leadership structure that helps them to achieve their goals and objectives. Onuoha (2012:134) notes that Yusuf, the erstwhile leader of the Boko Haram, did not complete his secondary school education, but later received Koranic education in Chad and Niger Republic, where he became radicalized and famous for his radical views on Islamic issues expressed on local television stations.

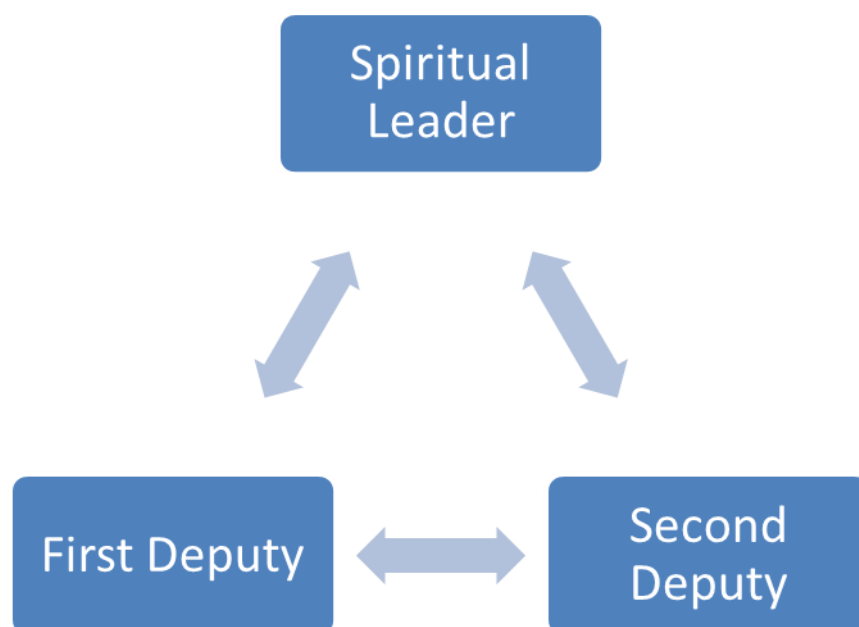
According to Babalola (2013:16) before the death of Yusuf in 2009, he established a structure wherein each state had its own Amir commander or leader. Babalola notes that the Amir administers the local governments and reports to the supreme leader. Below the local government, according to Babalola, are the remaining followers. Babalola maintains that Boko Haram organized itself according to various roles, such as soldiers and police officers, among others (Dawah Coordination Council of Nigeria, 2009). Babalola (2013:16) cites Onuoha 2012 who claims the political vacuum that exists due to little or no impact of a central authority necessitates the structural leadership that Boko Haram provides in Northern Nigeria.

Although Shekau is seen as Boko Haram's most visible leader, Zenn (2014:23) maintains that Boko Haram and Ansaru operations suggest that Shekau is not the only leader. Zenn in his article "Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria," discusses Adam Kamar who he says may have been in contact with Osama bin Laden; Abu Mohammed, who he describes as kidnapping cell targeted foreigners in Northern Nigeria; and Kabiru Sokoto and Habibu Bama, who he says attacked churches in Nigeria's Middle Belt region

(Zenn, 2014:23). Whitlowzw (2015:1) notes that the Boko Haram terrorist group has a complicated hierarchical structure and states that:

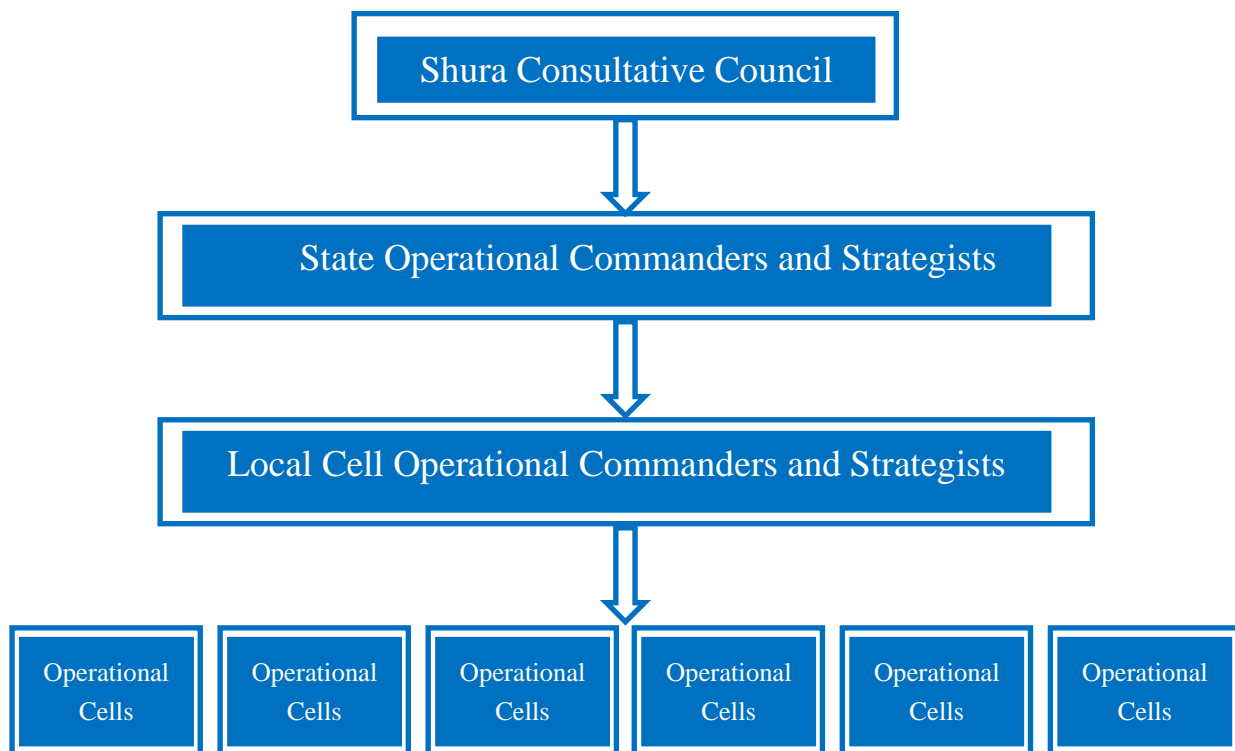
At the top of their organization is the leader, who sets goals, and has the final say in the organization. Abubakar Shekau, an ethnic Kanuri, is considered Boko Haram's leader. Below him are well-organized layers and hierarchical cells that make up the support and organizational structure. The cells are made up of multiple support sections including sympathetic Islamists in Northern Nigeria, which include various smaller institutions, parts of the Nigerian government, and security forces. The second most important section of power below the leader is the decision-making body of 30 members, which is called the Shura Council (Rampage<sup>8</sup>, July 12 2015).

Whitlowzw asserts that Boko Haram has a complex structure with contributory support cells, the size of which is difficult to determine. According to Whitlowzw, each department has responsibilities and tasks. He further explains that some focus on the group's internal support including the support of the families of suicide bombers, and medical care, while others are tasked with publicity, missions, and financial acquisition (*Rampages* July 12 2015).



**Figure 8 Boko Haram hierarchy of leadership (*Top and Bottom*)**

<sup>8</sup> <http://rampages.us/bokoharam/wp.content/uploads/sites/7589/2015/07/bokoH-1.png>



Maclean and Abrak (2016) note that the leadership of Boko Haram is in crisis (*Vanguard News* 5<sup>th</sup> August 2016). Maclean and Abrak further assert that the Boko Haram, besides Shekau, has a new leader called Abu Musab al-Barnawi (Maclean and Abrak *Vanguard News* 5<sup>th</sup> August 2016).

The *Vanguard News* reported that Shekau denied the claim that al-Barnawi is the new leader. According to Maclean and Abrak, Shekau claims that it was a coup to overthrow his leadership (*Vanguard News* 5<sup>th</sup> August 2016). Maclean and Abrak note that “Isis rejected Shekau because of Boko Haram’s deadly attacks on Muslims (*Vanguard News* 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2016). Maclean and Abrak further explain that in the recording on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2016, the man purporting to be Shekau said that al-Barnawi was “an infidel” preaching “false creeds” (*Vanguard News* 5<sup>th</sup> August 2016). There was an audio message that has been circulating in Maiduguri about the killing of the third in command’s followers which Maclean and Abrak draw our attention to by stating:

Boko Haram’s “spiritual home,” says that the group’s third-in-command, a man known as Mamanmunari, had reported Shekau to the head of ISIS for “killing his own followers, particularly commanders, who are fighting for him just because they



question his attacks on Mosques and markets ... but Shekau refuses”(*Vanguard News* 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2016)

Iaccino (2016) notes that Shekau released a 24 - minute clip recently vowing he would continue to fight. According to this report, the video came days after Boko Haram’s ally, the ISIS terror group, replaced Shekau with Abu Musab al-Barnawi, former Boko Haram spokesperson (*International Business Times*, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2016). Iaccino identifies four reasons why Shekau was replaced by al-Barnawi, namely:

- i. In 2015, rumours spread that Shekau had been killed or replaced; he has not made a verified video appearance for a year. The rumours could undermine the group’s operation and the loyalty of other cells.
- ii. Shekau is known to prefer Boko Haram’s autonomy from foreign Jihadist groups.
- iii. The fact that some Boko Haram members left the group to form other splinter groups has cast doubt over his leadership.
- iv. Shekau has been criticized by many Boko Haram members and ISIS itself for among other things, killing Muslims and allowing the use of children in suicide bombing missions (*International Business Times* 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2016)

### **3.2.3 The Goals of the Boko Haram**

Campbell (2014:2) notes that Boko Haram’s combination of a sectarian agenda with violence is distinctive. He therefore argues that Boko Haram’s goal is to create God’s kingdom on earth through justice for the poor achieved by the rigid application of Islamic law, or Sharia. Anything that gets in the way of this goal must be destroyed. Campbell continues that violence, for Boko Haram, is not a perversion of Islam; it is a justifiable means to a pure end (Campbell 2014:2). Campbell asserts that Boko Haram adheres to the strict Wahhabi<sup>9</sup> understanding of “taw hid” (the oneness of God or monotheism). Campbell furthermore, explained the rhetoric of the Boko Haram by stating that:

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<sup>9</sup> Wahhabi is the reactionary branch of Islam said to be ‘the main source of global terrorism.’ The followers of Wahhabism claim that they are trying to purify Islam, and see themselves as devotees of early Muslims and their practices. However, it is a mistake to include Wahhabis within the framework of mainstream Sunni Islam, as their interpretations and methods differ significantly.

a secular nation promotes idolatry, that is, state worship. The pledge of allegiance to the flag and the singing of the national anthem are manifestations of such idolatry and hence punishable by death. For Boko Haram, the state is a nest of corruption that exploits the poor. The state is formed and sustained by Western values and education, both of which are against the will of Allah (Campbell 2014:2)

Walker (2012) and Oriyommi (2011) observe that Boko Haram wishes to overthrow political rule in the community of northern Nigeria which they believe has been seized by corrupt and false Muslims and to establish a fundamentalist interpretation of Sharia (Islamic law) across all of Nigeria. Boko Haram also opposes Western influence in Africa at large and has allied itself with several militant organizations to fight the government and the church in Northern Nigeria.

Minchakpu (2014:6) argues that the bombing of Churches in Northern Nigeria, is a clear indication that Muslims desire to wipe out Christians in order to enable them to establish an Islamic state. (*Today Challenge Magazine* Vol.11 No.1 July, 2014).

*Intersociety* (8 May 2016) states that, “Bomb-Terrorism through Boko Haram insurgency was extensively used by the referenced fundamentalists of the north for purposes of uprooting and decimating Christian communities in the core north and actualization of the northern presidency. These are the core objectives of the Boko Haram insurgency as part of its Islamization of Nigeria project. Most, if not all Christian communities in Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba States, have been uprooted and decimated, leading to “fleeing of over 1.3 million Christians, burning, destruction or closure of 13, 000 churches and Christian schools and killing of at least 11,500 Christians” (Source: *Open Doors*; an anti-Christians persecution group: May 8, 2016).

### **3.2.4 Boko Haram Theology and Politics**

Boko Haram, according to *START*<sup>10</sup> (2014:3, does not engage in any form of nonviolent or conventional political activity although it does denounce all forms of government that do not adhere to an Islamic system. Thurston (2016:5) notes that the Boko Haram’s theology and politics encompass more than hatred for Western influence. Thurston (2016:5) sees Boko

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<sup>10</sup> *START* means Study of Terrorism And Responses to Terrorism.

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism And Responses to Terrorism (*START*) is a university-based research center at the university of Maryland and is committed to the scientific study of the causes and human consequences of terrorism in the United States and around the world.

Haram's worldview as the fusion of two broader ideas. Firstly, there is a religious exclusivism that opposes all other value systems, including rival interpretations of Islam. He maintains that this exclusivism demands that Muslims choose between Islam and a set of allegedly anti-Islamic practices: democracy, constitutionalism, alliances with non-Muslims, and Western-style education. Secondly, he notes that there is a politics of victimhood.

Thurston asserts that Boko Haram claims that its violence is a response to what it seen as a decades' long history of persecution against Muslims in Nigeria. Boko Haram sees state crackdowns on the sect as the latest manifestation of such persecution (Thurston 2016:5). Thurston further asserts that theologically, Boko Haram resembles other "Salafi-jihadi" movements around the world<sup>11</sup> (Thurston 2016:9). He claims that Boko Haram was also shaped by local dynamics of preaching and politics. According to him,

prior to its reincarnation as the Islamic State's West Africa Province (Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiya), its official name was Ahl al-Sunna li-l-Da'wa wa-l-Jihad. Ahl al-Sunna, or "people of the Prophet's Model," is a synonym for "Sunni," but for Boko Haram the phrase has special resonance: they consider themselves some of the only genuine representatives of Sunni Islam (Thurston 2016:9).

Zenn (2015:7) has identified three important elements from which Boko Haram draws its strength, ideology, ethnicity and the international training. Zenn explains that the Boko Haram's ideology draws on deep Nigerian, African and increasingly international Islamist roots. Zenn (2015:7) describes Boko Haram's strength as rooted in the Izala Movement from which Boko Haram's founder, Mohammed Yusuf, withdrew in the 1990s.

Regarding the second strength of the Boko Haram sect, which is ethnicity, Zenn explains that they have used traditional tribal governance structures to foster close connections with the local Kanuri ethnic group in the Lake Chad region, which is their stronghold. In respect of the third strength of the Boko Haram, he maintains that other jihadi groups in Africa train and support their members, enhancing their ability to execute sophisticated attacks (Zenn 2015:12).

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<sup>11</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, vol. 29, No.3, 2006 pp. 207-239; and Bernard Haykel, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action" in *global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) pp.33-57

Confirming Zenn's argument that Boko Haram has international links with Al Qaeda, Ford (2014:2) asserts that its new leader, Shekau, is an unyielding proponent of using terrorist tactics to advance his radical agenda and he has plugged Boko Haram into an International network of terrorist organizations, such as Al Qaeda. He argues that Boko Haram has received training from Al Qaeda operations on how to use explosives and execute mass casualty terrorist attacks (Ford, *National Interest* June 6<sup>th</sup> 2014). Isa (2010:328, 329) argues that Boko Haram should be classified with established Sufi Sunni movements such as the following:

- I. The Tijjaniyyan<sup>12</sup> and Qadriyya,<sup>13</sup> which have spiritual and commercial links with other Sufi orders in West and North Africa.
- II. The Wahhabi Izala movement, which runs a charity and first aid organization and has links with the Saudis.
- III. The Salafiyya movement, which runs schools, internet cafes and business outlets,
- IV. The Militant Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) (formerly under the banner of Muslim Brothers), which not only has a website, runs schools and clinics and publishes newspapers, but also possesses the attributes and deposition of an organization like Hezbollah (with which it is linked and which operates like a state within the state in Lebanon).

### 3.2.5 The Ideology and Philosophy of the Boko Haram Sect

Mohammed (2014:2) described Boko Haram as a violent Sunni jihadist group founded by cleric, Yusuf, who was previously a leader within a Salafist group in 1990s, and was inspired by 14<sup>th</sup> century fundamentalist scholar, Ibn Taymiyyah. Mohammed argues that Boko

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<sup>12</sup>Turaki states that, Ahmed Al-Tijani, who founded this brotherhood in Morocco in 1781, was said to have had a direct communion with the prophet of Islam. The brotherhood treated all its members as equal and had a broader-based fellowship than the elitist Qadriyya. The Tijaniyyas considered themselves to be superior to other brotherhoods. More radical than the Qadriyya, they believed that Islam should be spread by force and not only by persuasion. Their commitment to activism attracted commoners and young people. This brotherhood flourished in the west of the region and also had an influence in Kanem-Bornu in Northern Nigeria (Turaki 2010:41)

<sup>13</sup> According to Turaki, this brotherhood developed out of Sufism, the Islamic mystical movement, and was introduced to Hausa land by Al-Maghili in the fifteenth century. The Qadriyya believed in mystical communion between their leaders and Allah. They taught purity and a simple lifestyle, which could be attained by creating an Islamic society, ruled by the will of Allah, and they emphasized rigorous study of the scriptures and other intellectual pursuits.

The Qadriyya who believed strongly in the conversion of non-Muslims, encouraged the jihads of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the West Africa region (Turaki 2010:41).

Haram's alliances with al-Qaeda-linked groups, such as al-Qaeda in the Land of Islamic Maghreb (AQLIM) have strengthened its interpretation of violent jihad<sup>14</sup> and has also increased the scope of its targets and areas of activity beyond the borders of Nigeria (Mohammed 2014:2).

Boko Haram's ideology is often described as comprising two stances: opposition to democracy and rejection of Western-style education (Thurston 2016:5). The Boko Haram sect operates on their ideology and philosophy. Boko Haram was founded as a Sunni Islamic fundamentalist sect, influenced by the Wahhabi movement, advocating a strict form of Sharia law (Thurston 2016:5). Danjibo (2009:6) explaining further about Boko Haram's ideology, states:

The ideology and philosophy of the movement can best be understood by explicating the two words - 'Boko' and 'Haram'. In Hausa, the word 'Boko' is an equivocal term, which means either 'western' or 'foreign'; while the word 'Haram' is an Arabic derivative meaning 'forbidden'. Piecing the two words together, Boko Haram means 'to forbid everything western and western education'. The intent is to replace modern state formation with the traditional Islamic state because western values run contrary to Islamic values. Umina Mohammadiya (Muslim faithful) and Dar-ul-Islam (the Islamic community) cannot be compromised in the face of western influence. Evil in society, according to the sect, is as a result of the embrace of western civilization, and in order to curb such evil, an Islamic society must be entrenched by destroying modern state institutions. The philosophy goes hand in hand with the entrenchment of Sharia law in society. Hence, police formations, government establishments, and

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<sup>14</sup> Over time what had been an incidental, qualified part of the Quranic message, and the earliest Islamic worldview became an independent force on its own, so much so that some have declared Jihad to be a sixth pillar (beyond the standard five) that defines Islamic belief and practice (Juergensmeyer, *et al*, 2013:133). Muslims according to Juergensmeyer, *et al*, are told that idolaters must be fought, polytheists leveled, and that the reward for those who struggle will be paradise. (Nevertheless) the messenger and those who believe with him struggle with their possessions and their persons. Therefore, the good things are for them, and they are the successful ones. God has prepared garden Under which rivers flow, Where they will abide. That is the great attainment (Surat at-Tawbah, Quran 9:88-89) (Juergensmeyer, *et al* 2013:133, 134).

Juergensmeyer *et al*. defined Jihad as religiously sanctioned and regulated warfare with the objective of augmenting the territory of Islam or defending it from an invader. In the Quran, Jihad is presented as part of a contract between God and man (Juergensmeyer *et al* 2013:227).

Allah has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth in return for paradise; they fight in the way of Allah, kill and get killed. That is a true promise from Him in the Torah, the Gospel and the Quran; and who fulfills His promise better than Allah? Rejoice then at the bargain you have made with Him; for that is the great triumph (Quran 9:111; translation by Fakhry) (Ibid.:227).

The basic goal of Jihad is to raise the Word of God to the highest (Quran 9:41), and in order to accomplish this, Jihad must be qualitatively different from other forms of warfare (Juergensmeyer *et al*, 2013:227).

properties become the target of destruction by the sect. In a way, these youths, though misguided, are not far from reality (Danjibo 2009:6).

However, Boko Haram's intent is to replace modern state formation with the traditional Islamic state simply because they feel western run countries to be contrary to Islamic values.

Boko Haram believes that it is permissible to kill everyone who rejects its own interpretation of the Quran” <sup>15</sup>(*Faith Foundation* 2, October 2015). Danjibo (2009:7) asserts that “ideologically, any member who fought and died for the cause of an Islamic/Sharia state by destroying modern state formation and government establishment will automatically gain “AL Janna” (paradise or heaven). Thurston (2016:12) notes that Boko Haram's members consider themselves arbiters of who is a true Muslim. According to Thurston Boko Haram like other Salafis, rejects other approaches to Islam.

Thurston maintains that Yusuf regarded his mission as one of purification: “We call the Muslim community to correct its creed and its behaviors and its morals... and to give children a correct Islamic education, then to undertake Jihad in the way of Allah”<sup>16</sup> (Thurston 2016:12).

According to Zenn (2015) Boko Haram draws its ideological legitimacy from the Qur'an and Islamic scholars as well as more recent rhetorical support from ISIS. He says that it attracts a large pool of barely literate recruits who are easily indoctrinated, while Muslims from Nigeria and neighbouring countries can be attracted by the call for a new Caliphate and the promise of justice. *Tell Magazine* (10 August 2009:34) portrays the Boko Haram's ideology<sup>17</sup> and philosophy as follows:

The mission of the sect was to establish an Islamic state where ‘orthodox Islam’ is practised. Orthodox Islam according to him (Yusuf, leader of the sect) frowns at Western education and working in the civil service because it is sinful. Hence, for their aim to be achieved, all institutions represented by government including security agencies like police, military and other uniformed personnel should be crushed.

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<sup>15</sup> Shekau's rhetoric is particularly graphic: “Now our religion and our way of worship is nothing but killings, killings, killings and killings! Kill and slaughter but don't eat them” <https://www.thescoopng.com/take-up-knivesstart-slaughteringpeople-text-of-shekau-latest-scary-video-message-nsfw/>

<sup>16</sup> Abu Yusuf Muhammad bin Yusuf, *Hadhihi 'Aqidatuna wa-Manhaj D'watina* (likely Maiduguri, 2008 or 2009), 5-6.

<sup>17</sup> Ideology here means a person's ideas insofar as they give structure to beliefs and behaviors in the political, cultural, religious, and moral domains of life (Wildman 2011:5).

Mohammed emphasized the need to isolate Muslims from secular society, to purify Islam of Western and secular influences and to implement Sharia law in its entirety (Mellgard, *Faith Foundation* 2 Oct. 2015). Mellgard explains further that Yusuf's group was one among many at the time that believed that if Sharia law was implemented, corruption and inequality would be eliminated.

Thurston brings to our attention that for Yusuf loyalty to Islam means rejecting democracy and Western-style education:

What will make you a soldier of Allah primarily? You make a complete disavowal of every form of unbelief: the constitution, the legislature... worshipping tombs, idols, whatever. You came to reject these in your speech and your body and your heart. Moreover, Allah and His Messenger and the believers, you love them in your speech and your body and your heart<sup>18</sup> (Thurston 2016:12).

In the words of Sani (2011) Boko Haram emanated from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. According to Sani, their school of thought considers anything Western as an aberration or un-Islamic. Sani asserts that they also propose that interaction with the Western World be forbidden (Sani 2011:50).

### **3.3 Definition of Religious Violence**

The ECWA finds itself in a context of violence. Karkkainen (2013:316) describes violence as an inclusive sense that includes not only killing but also any damage, physical, psychological, emotional, social, or similar, against another person or group of persons. He therefore, defines violence as “a harm done to another human being (or group of people or even the whole humanity) with evil intentions or at least without thinking of the best interests of the other (Karkkainen 2013:322). Thesnaar (2011:27) asserts that violence is not a friend to society and argues that it can therefore become epidemic. He furthermore argues that every human being has the capacity to be both victim and perpetrator of violence (2011:27).

Wellman (2004:291) defines religious violence as “a term that covers phenomena where religion in its diversity, is either the subject or object of violent behaviors; religious violence, becomes then violence covered, motivated, or induced by the reaction of adherents to either

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<sup>18</sup> Recording of commentary by Muhammad Yusuf on Hadhihi ‘Aqidatuna, undated (likely 2008 or 2009): sunnahization, “LITTATIN HAAZIHI AQEEDATUNA- 010a.wmv,” You Tube video, December 7, 2011, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWf\\_wa2rfsKw&list=UUdXgmSgdkq3HIwFnZcYuweA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWf_wa2rfsKw&list=UUdXgmSgdkq3HIwFnZcYuweA).



own or others' religious beliefs, values, norms, doctrine or set actions." Juergensmeyer, Kitts and Jerryson (2013:135) note that violence must also be traced through its implication in the political order, not least in the way that it was managed for the preservation of the empire so that the rulers of various Muslim empires, non-Muslim counterparts elsewhere, became the sole legitimate purveyors of violence.

Juergensmeyer outlines the differences between religious violence and secular violence. According to him, "religious wars may have longer time lines than secular wars; religious violence can be carried indefinitely into the future" (Juergensmeyer in Avalos 2005:85). Avalos explains further that Juergensmeyer's assertion about religious violence may be fostered by the certainty that the believer knows the mind of God. According to Avalos, the common trait among religious warriors is the belief that contemporary religions are corrupt and so one must fight for a restoration of the "true" religion (Avalos, 2005:85).

Avalos accepts the fact that much of religious violence is a reaction against secularism as Juergensmeyer rightly asserts, but argues that religious violence occurred long before secularization became an issue in the world. He gives the example of the Christians, who thinking that Judaism and Islam were forms of the "true religion" were justified in replacing Judaism and Islam by means of violence (Avalos, 2005:85).

Having defined religious violence, the concept of terrorism will now be discussed.

### **3.4 The Concept of Terrorism**

According to Mannik (2011:152), terrorism originates from the Latin word "terrere" that means 'to frighten.' Mannik further notes that terrorism obtained its modern form 'terrorism' during the Reign of Terror in France from 1793-1794. The academic consensus regarding terrorism as cited in Mannik (2011:153, 154) is as follows:

Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individuals, groups, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat - and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organizations), (imperiled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target



(audience(s), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought (Mannik, 2011:153, 154).

Terrorism<sup>19</sup> is not a new phenomenon in human experience. Violence has been used throughout human history by those who chose to oppose states, kings, and princes. Terrorism however is characterized by the use of violence against civilians, with the expressed desire of causing terror or panic in the population.

Jenkins believes that the term “terrorism” has no precise or widely accepted definition. According to him, if terrorism were a mere matter of description, establishing a definition would have been simple: Terrorism is violence or the threat of violence calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm - in a word, to terrorize - and thereby bring about some social or political change (Jenkins in Kegley, 1990:28). Jenkins identifies the core of this and suggests that, “Terrorism can be objectively defined by the quality of the act, but not by the identity of the perpetrators or the nature of their cause” (Jenkins in Kegley, 1990:29). Hoffman mentions specific elements into his definition of terrorism when he states:

We may therefore now attempt to define terrorism as the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change. All terrorist acts involve violence or the threat of violence. Terrorism is specifically designed to have far-reaching psychological effects beyond the immediate victim(s) or object of terrorist attack. It is meant to instill fear within and thereby intimidate, a wider ‘target audience’ that might include a rival ethnic or religious group, an entire country, a national government or political party or public opinion in general. Terrorism is designed to create power where there is more or to consolidate power where there is very little. Through the publicity generated by their violence, terrorists seek to obtain the advantage, influence and power they otherwise lack to

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<sup>19</sup> Any incident of terrorism is a kind of performance violence – a dramatic act meant to achieve an impact on those who witness it – but the performative character is heightened when it is associated with religion (Juergensmeyer, Kitts, and Jerryson 2013:280). What makes the terrorism of recent years significant is the breadth of its audience, a scope that is in many causes virtually global (Ibid.:290). The forms of religious terrorism that emerged at the beginning of the twenty-first century have been global in at least two senses. Both the choices of their targets and the character of their conspirational networks have often been transnational (Ibid.:291).

Terrorism is both complex and emotive because it combines so many different aspects of human experience, including subjects such as politics, psychology, philosophy, military strategy and history. Terrorism is also emotive both because experiences of terrorist acts arouse tremendous feelings, and because those who see terrorism as justified often have strong feeling concerning the rightness of the use of violence (see United States Institute of Peace [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org))

effect political change on either a local or an international scale (Hoffman, 1998:43, 44).

Going by the definition given by Hoffman, terrorism can be understood as the power and publicity that is used to influence change. The issues of power and publicity should not be overlooked since the power of terrorism is derived from responses to the act and not the act of terrorism itself, it is also believed that this power is the power to terrorize and cause fear. Terrorism therefore, describes any act of violence perpetrated against designated targets mainly civilians, for political, ideological, religious, or other motives.

Scholars like Chukwurah, Eme, and Ogbeje have described terrorism as a global phenomenon which they believe is a deliberate and systematic use of violence to destroy, kill, maim and intimidate the innocent in order to achieve a goal or draw national/international attention or make demands which ordinarily would not be granted by an army or government (Chukwurah, Eme & Ogbeje, 2015:371). Obioma (2009) rated Boko Haram as the most bloodthirsty and destructive both in terms of its demonic brutality, mindless savagery and increasingly, scope of operation.

Bagaji, *et al.* (2012:36) asserted that the concept terrorism dated back to the first organized human interactions. These scholars that terrorism can be traced back to the period when Jewish zealots used terror to resist the Romans by killing many Roman soldiers and destroying Roman property. They also state that it can also be traced to the time when Muslims used terrorism to fight each other (Shiites versus Sunni) and the crusaders. It was a period in religious circles when dying in the service of God, dying while killing the assumed enemies of God (Allah) loomed large (Report 1984) (Bagaji, *et al.*, 2012:36).

Boko Haram's violent activities have created palpable fear and a sense of insecurity in the polity. Security of lives and property plays a major role in the development of any country. Without it, a country will never develop. According to Chukwurah *et al.* (2015:372) the Boko Haram have created widespread tension across Northern Nigeria and between various ethnic communities, interrupted commercial activities, frightened investors and generated concern among Nigeria's northern neighbours. Ajayi (2012 in Ilechukwu, 2014:26) notes that:

Terrorism derives from the word terror, which conjures up an image of fear and trepidation. It is an act intended to instill fear and submission in the targeted victim(s). It is usually unprovoked, random and unpredictable while its commonest form is

bombing. It can also take the form of hijacking of commercial aircraft, kidnapping, assassination, gun attacks arson and frontal assaults on important state institutions. The essential purpose of terrorism is the desire to draw attention to and/or gain sympathy for a cause. The perpetrators are usually religious fundamentalists, extremists of the right and left governments and underground organizations (Ajayi 2012 cited in Ilechukwu, 2014:63)

Bozimo when explaining terrorism, asserts that the history of man and his interaction with fellow men in his total environment is inundated with terrorism in all its forms. She further defines terrorism as the calculated use of violence and non-violence, or threat or both to intimidate, to frighten, oppress, and suppress people into submission, usually for the purpose of achieving certain goals (Bozimo 2010, cited in Ilechukwu, 2014:63). The US Federal Law states that,

The term ‘terrorism’ means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. (...) The term ‘international terrorism’ means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country. (...) The term ‘terrorist group’ means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism (US Code, Title 22, & 2656F (d) cited in Schinkel, 2009:180).

Crenshaw cited in Forest and Giroux (2011:5) defines terrorism as a tactic that uses violence or the threat of violence as a coercive strategy to cause fear and political intimidation. It was a feature of resistance movements, military coups, political assassinations, and various intra- and inter-state wars that affected most African states at some point during the continent’s transition to independence and the subsequent post-Colonial period. Crenshaw notes that terrorism was not “an isolated phenomenon” for African states or the region more broadly (Crenshaw cited in Forest and Giroux, 2011:5). According to Forest and Giroux (2011:10), in the last 15 years, African countries have not only struggled against domestic terrorism, they have also been challenged by the emergency transnational terrorist groups that have used Africa as a theatre to carry out attacks against both domestic and international targets as well as to develop and maintain operations.

Juergensmeyer (2013:281) argues that any incident of terrorism is a kind of performance violence, a dramatic act meant to achieve an impact on those who witness it, but the

performative character is heightened when it is associated with religion. Juergensmeyer believes that the assaults of September 11, 2001 in America were not only tragic acts of violence, but also spectacular theatre.

### **3.5 The ECWA's Biblical Fundamentalist Position identified as Exclusionist**

According to Volf (2011:224), exclusionists believe that their religion is the only "true" religion. However Volf posits that most of the religious exclusionists do not necessarily think that other religions are completely false. Volf maintains that exclusionists consider that the followers of other religions may have some knowledge of God and moral values (Volf, 2011:224).

As noted in Chapter Two, the ECWA believes that Salvation cannot be obtained in any other way than through belief in Jesus Christ. This seems to be compatible with the type A Christology of Bevans and Schroeder (2004:40), an exclusionist Christological position that conceives that Jesus alone is the Saviour.

In the light of the ECWA's exclusionist position on Salvation enshrined in its constitution and its articles of faith, it will be argued that the exclusionist position falls within type A Christology. The ECWA is exclusive in the sense that it holds a position that other sects or religions will not lead to eternal life; or in other words, that Jesus Christ is the only true way to God. Exclusionism is the belief that only one religion is true, and that others opposed to it are false.

Bevans and Schroeder (2004:40) believe as do many some Evangelical Christians, that the explicit confession of Christ is the only way to Salvation. They quote the Lausanne Covenant which reads: "there is only one Saviour and one gospel (Gal. 1:6-9)" and that "those who reject Christ repudiate the joy of Salvation and condemn themselves to eternal separation from God (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)" These authors furthermore maintain that, "in 1989, the Manila Manifesto reaffirmed that mission was an urgent task, and that "other religions and ideologies are not alternative paths to God, and that human spirituality, if unredeemed by Christ, leads to God but to judgment, for Christ is the only way" (Bevans and Schroeder, 2004:40).

In support of Bevans and Schroeder's assertion, Crampton (2002:1) notes that exclusionism has been the view of Reformed and Biblically orthodox churches through centuries. He describes exclusionism as the teaching that "Jesus Christ is the only Saviour and it is essential

for one to believe in him in order to be saved.” Crampton argues that those who are not elected may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved (Crampton, 2002:1). Crampton therefore states that:

Much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature [general revelation], and the law of that religion they do profess...And, to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested...But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace...They who, having never heard the Gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him cannot be saved...neither is their Salvation in any other, but in Christ alone, who is the Saviour only of his body the church (Crampton, 2002:1).

The Christian church has always taught that Jesus is the only way to God. Exclusivism refers to the position that asserts the Christian doctrine that only faith in the Jesus Christ of the Bible leads to Salvation or heaven. Bevans and Schroeder therefore argue:

Those who ascribe to such an exclusive understanding of Christ’s role in the history of Salvation would look on present efforts of interreligious dialogue as either futile or dangerous - futile, for they believe they have nothing to learn from such conversion and cooperation, and dangerous because they do violence to the imperative of biblical witness. Dialogue is acceptable only “when its aim is to learn to know other people...Then dialogue serves as the way by which people of other faiths are led to accept God’s revelation in Jesus Christ. Christ must be preached. Precisely with this in mind it is of great importance for Christians to get to know fellow people” (Bevans and Schroeder, 2004:40).

According to Crampton (2002:1) “exclusivists argue that a positive response to general revelation is simply insufficient to ensure Salvation from a biblical perspective.” Exclusivists appeal to multiple Scriptures to support their view, including John 14:6; John 3:16-18; and Romans 10:13-15.

Since the ECWA believes that Salvation can only be obtained through Jesus Christ, their exclusivist position has a bearing in their attitudes of hostility towards Boko Haram’s beliefs.

### 3.6 Boko Haram's Fundamentalist Position

Ellens (2007:201) argues that fundamentalism can be found in every form of religion in the world. According to him, it can be identified as well, in political movements, ethical systems, scientific perspectives, and every type of profession in which humans engage. Ellens (2007:204) defines fundamentalism as “a psychology that insists addictively that its view of reality and truth is the only authentic one, and is the whole truth.

Therefore, according to Ellens (2007:204) an perspective other than a fundamentalist perspective is willfully false, ignorant, and dangerous to the truth. Ellens argues that it is for the good of the non-fundamentalists that the fundamentalist truth be imposed upon them. His reason is simply that religious fundamentalists think that they are doing the will of God and a favour to all humankind when they bring humanity under the umbrella of fundamentalism (Ellens, 2007:204). In this respect, Ellens provides an example as to what a fundamentalist position entails. Sunni Egyptian fundamentalists shot and killed their president on October 6, 1981 and believed they were carrying out a jihad that was mandated by God (Ellens, 2007:208).

Ellens asserts that Islamic fundamentalism is an attempt to reaffirm the foundational principles that they think shaped original Islam and should shape the structure and laws of Muslim society (Ellens, 2007:209). He also observes that “all Muslims hold to the authority and life-shaping claims of their sacred scriptures, but the fundamentalists have an exclusivist and literalist interpretation of the message, mandates, and moral program of the Quran, from which they derive a rigorist pattern for social and political regulation of life in Islamic nations” (Ellens, 2007:209).

Danjibo (2009:4) describes fundamentalism as an eclectic word that can be viewed from three perspectives. According to Danjibo, the first perspective of fundamentalism is a cognitive understanding where the word is associated with a closed personality type that expresses exclusivity, particularity, literality and moral rigor. Danjibo describes the second perspective of fundamentalism as coming from a cultural, theological framework where the word expresses opposition to religious and cultural liberalism in defence of orthodoxy and religious traditions. The third perspective according to Danjibo is from a social movement perspective, and denotes organizational and ideological difference from other types of religious movements (Danjibo, 2009:4).

According to Komonchak, Collins, and Lane (1993:212), fundamentalists derive inspiration for their violence from “the authority of the Scripture and the necessity of righteous living” and they also lay emphasis “on right doctrine and the necessity of organized warfare against the forces of modernism” (Komonchak, Collins, and Lane, 1993:212). In line with Komonchak, Collins, and Lane, Avalos believes that fundamentalist violence is a response to modernity, changing global economics, and shifting political relationships (2005:80). Avalos agrees with Marty that many Muslim militants are reacting against colonialism or secularization, but argues that the Muslim militants do so because modernism and secularization threaten fundamental scare resources such as salvation and sacred space that have been manufactured by their Islamic belief system (Avalos, 2005:80).

Glock and Stark (2005:78) argue that religious particularism is very likely to result in religious hostility. These scholars define particularism as “the belief that only one’s own religion is legitimate...to the particularistic mind there are not faiths, but one true faith” (Avalos, 2005:78). They believe that particularism and exclusivism are partly the cause of violence since the two religions espouse beliefs that others do not (Glock and Stark in Avalos 2005:78). According to Avalos and Stark conclude their argument as follows: “if the faithful would heed the message ‘Love thy neighbor as thyself,’ an account such as ours could not have been written” (Avalos, 2005:79).

Supporting this assertion, Dahiru (2016) argues that it is not enough to proclaim Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance, but that this teaching must be deepened by teaching young children to love and tolerate other people of different beliefs. In particular, he suggests that the curriculum of the various Islamiyya should be revised extensively to include the teaching of love and tolerance so that the next generation of Muslims will be largely saved from radicalization (*The Sun News* July 6, 2016).

Dahiru states that radicalization starts in the home, with negative utterances by parents against people of other faiths. It is reinforced later in life by the reading and digestion of poisonous literature which teaches hate and intolerance of people holding views which differ from yours. This produces generations of potentially radicalized Muslims with some only putting into practice what has been imbibed over time in the form of Boko Haram terrorist acts (*The Sun News* July 6, 2016).

Thurston (2015:1) notes that Boko Haram is famous for holding two ideological stances, which he identifies as: “rejection of secular government and opposition to Western style



education". Underlying the rejection of both democracy and Western education, Thurston mentions another concept of the Boko Haram as; 'al-wala'wa-l-bara', which according to him, for Boko Haram means exclusive loyalty (al-wala) to "true" Muslims and disavowal (al-bara) of anyone the Boko Haram considers an infidel (Thurston, 2015:1).

ABC News reports that Boko Haram considers all who do not follow its strict ideology as infidels, whether they are Christians or Muslims (ABC News 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016).

According to Chothia, the followers of the Boko Haram sect are influenced by the Koranic phrase that says, "anyone who is not governed by what Allah has revealed is among the transgressors," (Chothia, 2012). Chothia maintains that there is a version of Islam that makes it "haram" or forbidden for Muslims to take part in political or social activity associated with Western society. Boko Haram supports this view. The forbidden activities according to Chothia (2012) include voting in elections, wearing shirts and trousers, or receiving secular education.

Avalos (2005:291) argues that Islam is a fundamentally violent religion. He therefore presents the example of Hnanisho (ca.700) who according to him, was quoted in the thirteenth century as saying that Islam "is a religion established by the sword and not a faith confirmed by miracles." Avalos (2005:295) notes that Islamic violence is neither a modern reaction against colonialism nor some unusual feature of the religion.

Avalos believes that violence forms the initial premises of Islam, be it in the Qur'an or in the life of Muhammad, who continues to be a model for Muslim behaviour. He further explains that violence was permitted when carrying out the agenda of Muhammad, and that it is an allowable interpretation of certain passages in the Qur'an and the Hadith, and that this is also believed to be so by those who carry out violent acts today (Avalos, 2005:295).

According to Thurston, Shekau responded to the French newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*'s cartoons of the Prophet, by stating:

Anyone who insults our Prophet is an unbeliever. Anyone who doubts is an unbeliever. Anyone who boasts of this is an unbeliever. Oh people of the world, repent to Allah, Most High and if not, you will see what you see...Our Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, has said, "No one rules but God" (Qur'an 12:40). In addition, He has said, "Whoever does not rule by what God has revealed, they are the



unbelievers” (5:44). In addition, He has said, may He be glorified and exalted, “O you who believe, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies (*awliya*). They are allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you, he is one of them” (5:51). He is one of them (Thurston, 2016:14).

Thurston therefore explained further that, loyalty to Islam does not only apply to worship but also understanding politics which is inseparable from what it means to be authentically Muslim (Thurston 2016:14). Boko Haram’s fundamentalist position is that there is no true religion except theirs and that whoever rejects it shall be killed. This therefore tends to influence the attitude of aggression towards the ECWA which believes Salvation is through Jesus alone. The exclusivist position of the ECWA and the fundamentalist position of Boko Haram seem to leave no room for tolerance and co-existence.

### **3.7 Theological Concept of Violence**

Volf (2011:221) argues that humans have no right to violence apart from the consideration of a just war. In the light of this, Karkkainen (2013:322) asserts that he is fully in support of Volf’s argument. Karkkainen adds that he takes his cue from the vision in Revelation 19:

The end of the world is not violence, but a nonviolent embrace without end, which leads to the conflation rather than separation of the images of the “victorious rider on the white horse” and the “sacrificial Lamb”: “The world to come is ruled by the one who on the cross took violence upon himself in order to conquer the enmity and embrace the enemy. The Lamb’s rule is legitimized not by the ‘sword’ but by its ‘wounds’. ... with the Lamb at the center of the throne, the distance between the ‘throne’ and the ‘subjects’ has collapsed in the embrace of the triune God (Karkkainen, 2013:322).

Chapter 19 of the Revelation to John tells of the conclusion of the extraordinary vision that was given to John. It is a vision that foretells the end of Satan and the dominions he holds.

### **3.8 Theories of Religion and Violence**

Various scholars hold theories with regard to religion and violence and why Boko Haram continues to engage in the violence which affects the ECWA (and other churches). These will be explored in this section.

### 3.8.1 The Origins and the development of the Scapegoat

The term scapegoat<sup>20</sup> has traditionally been accepted as referring to one of the two goats which were received by the Jewish high priest in Jerusalem on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) in ancient Israel. According to the New World Encyclopedia (2015:1) the original context of the term scapegoat was a Jewish purification ritual described in the Book of Leviticus, wherein a goat was symbolically infused with the transgressions of the community and driven into the wilderness.

In Christian thought, as is further explained in the New World Encyclopedia, Jesus Christ came to be seen as a scapegoat, whose sacrificial death led to the purification of the human community. Edersheim (1986:139) elaborates on the “scapegoat” ceremony from the Law of Moses as one of the most puzzling rites of all times, admitting that “Everything about it seems strange and mysterious.” Edersheim furthermore asserts that the word scapegoat has two meanings, claiming that the most common is “one that bears the blame for others” who may or may not be guilty, and the other one according to him, is the ceremonial goat which he notes seems to be more of an “escape goat” and which ends up going free (Edersheim, 1986:311, 312).

Edersheim explains that the ritual involves a goat upon whose head is symbolically placed the sins of the people. This takes place during the ceremony<sup>21</sup> for Yom Kippur” (the Day of

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<sup>20</sup> In ancient Greece, the scapegoat was a person rather than an animal, and was often beaten or killed, and sometimes exiled, in order to transfer the guilt or sin of the community, or to ward off or end a famine or plague. Again, like the Hittites, the Greeks chose the most expendable or marginalized in society, usually a criminal or poor person, and also dressed them in finery for the event. The paradox of dressing a marginalized person in finery was that in theory averting the misfortune or devastation appealed to the sacrifice of a valuable person in society. However, the upper class refused to participate in such a manner and so the expendable person was dressed as such. For criminals, this was often a better fate than the alternative, as the scapegoat sometimes had a chance of escape (Westbrook & Lewis, 2008:417-422). The manner in which the regulations for scapegoats were carried out in Israel, is of interest to the Bible student. When the second Temple was in existence, the two goats chosen had to be alike in value, in size, and of the same color. The lot that was to decide the goat for the Lord and that for Azazel, consisted of two small tablets of box or ebony wood, later of gold, kept in a wooden chest. On one tablet were inscribed the words, “For Yahweh” and on the other, “For Azazel.” After shaking the chest, the high priest put his hands into the urn and drew out both tablets, one in each hand. The tablet in his right hand was placed on the goat at his right, while that in his left hand was laid on the goat at his left (C. D. Ginsburg, Leviticus, pp.149-50).

<sup>21</sup> The rite was described in Leviticus 16:18-22: And he shall go out unto the altar that [is] before the Lord, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar round about. In addition, he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy [place], and the tabernacle for the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send [him] away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

Atonement). Edersheim further explains that on the Day of Atonement<sup>22</sup>, which is the holiest day of the year, there are several rituals to be performed (usually in late September or early October), but there is one which especially deals with making atonement for the sins of the people (Edersheim, 1986:311). Edersheim notes that two nearly identical he-goats are chosen from the congregation of the children of Israel and presented to the high priest and then the high priest casts lots to determine which is for Jehovah and which for Azazel (Leviticus 16:2, 7, 8, where Azazel is often translated scapegoat (Edersheim, 1986:312).

The goat selected for Jehovah was sacrificed for a sin offering to atone for the sins of the people, and its blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat (Lev. 16:9, 15-16). Afterward, according to Edersheim, the high priest laid both hands on the head of the living goat chosen for Azazel and put upon him all the iniquities of the children of Israel and as prescribed by the law, an appointed man would lead the goat into the wilderness, to a land not inhabited, and there release the goat (Edersheim, 1986:312).

The lesson to be learned here is that the ceremony at that time was not that the goat was released to freedom. The Easton Bible dictionary (1897) explains that:

...the man in whose charge the goat was sent out, while setting him free, was instructed to push the unhappy beast down the slope of the mountainside, which was steep. On one occasion the scapegoat returned to Jerusalem after being set free, which was considered such an evil omen that its recurrence was prevented in the future by the death of the goat (Easton Bible Dictionary, 1897).

If this quotation explains the origin of the custom of sending the goat to its death correctly, it at least explains the interpretation of the symbolism of releasing the goat<sup>23</sup>. Christians believe

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<sup>22</sup> The Day of Atonement was the most important in the Mosaic system, because on that day the removal of sin was given its highest expression. The situation can best be explained thus. In Israel many sins were committed willfully and unwittingly. For the first kind there was no sacrifice possible (Psalm 51:16); for the second type of trespass and sins offerings were specified according to the nature of the offense, when the sinner was aware of his sin. However, when the sinner remained unaware of his guilt, no offering was brought and those sins remained in a sense unaccounted for. If this condition were to be unrelieved, the sacrificial system would fall short of its ultimate purpose. To meet this pressing and ever present need in Israel the Lord instituted the Day of Atonement with its impressive ritual (cf. Keil and Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch in Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, II, and 394-95).

<sup>23</sup> There are two practical lessons to be learned from the ceremony of the two identical goats. The first lesson to be learned is that it can be difficult to judge between the two nearly identical goats, which represent Christ, and a false Christ. To Jews Jesus Christ appeared to be a false Christ. Luke 11:14-15 reads: "Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. But some of them said, by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons." By crucifying Jesus some of

that the Law of Moses was given to symbolize Christ. Apostle Paul, for example explained that the Law of Moses “was our school master to bring us unto Christ” (Gal. 3:24) the “shadow of good things to come” (Hebrew 10:1). The scriptures make it clear that Christ suffered for our sins and paid for them in full. That is the whole point of the Atonement, and that is a core belief of true Christians. The scripture proclaims, “Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted” (Isaiah 53:4).

### **3.8.2 Prejudice/Scapegoat Theory**

Throughout human history, differences in cultures and appearances have been attributed to intrinsic spiritual evil and more recently to genetic inferiority. These prejudices often lead to the creation of scapegoats, people or groups of people that bear the blame for the plights of others and society’s problems.

These scholars define Scapegoating as “the process through which frustration and aggression are directed at a group that is not the causal agent of the frustration. Scapegoat theory emerged during the 1940s as a way for social psychologists to explain why prejudice and racism occurs” (Bourassa and Arthur, 2006:1).

In Scapegoat theory it is argued that prejudice occurs because members of dominant groups use discrimination against members of weak target groups to vent their frustration and disappointment (Breckler et al, 2006:359). Frazer (1922:159, 170), investigated Scapegoating at different levels of human gathering (society, tribe, village, town) and conceived of scapegoating as a “process in which...the evil influences are embodied in a visible form or are at least supposed to be loaded upon a material medium, which acts as a vehicle to draw them off from the people.”

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them thought they were doing service to God. It is stated in John 16:2 that, “They will be put out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God.” Like the Boko Haram who believe that killing infidels through Jihad is a service being rendered to Allah (God). Even though the Jews were fulfilling the scriptural prophecy, they chose poorly between Barabbas and Christ. Jesus warned Christians not to be deceived by false Christ who will show great signs and wonders, and that will possibly deceive the very elect (Matthew 7:15).

According to Glick (2002:113) Scapegoat<sup>24</sup> theory refers to the tendency to blame someone else for one's problems. Glick believes that it is a situation which leads to feelings of prejudice toward the person or group that one is blaming. Glick notes that scapegoating serves as an opportunity to explain failure or misdeeds, while maintaining one's positive self-image. He explains further that if a person who is poor or doesn't get a job that he or she applies for can blame an unfair system or the people who did get the job that he or she wanted, the person may be using the others as scapegoats and may end up hating them as a result (Glick, 2002:114).

Lindzey has thrown more light on the scapegoat theory which he also called frustration-aggression theory of prejudice, that encompasses a similar pattern of human behaviour in which a minority group, falsely held responsible for some individual's or societal problem, is mistreated and ostracized (Lindzey, 1950:296). According to Lindzey, scapegoat theory posits that prejudicial individuals harbour aggression that is not, or cannot be, directed at the appropriate source and instead redirect it toward a weaker minority group (Lindzey, 1950:296).

Allport (1954) and Berkowitz, (1962) give one of the oldest explanations for prejudice. They believe that people become frustrated during difficult economic times and vent their frustration on weak, scapegoat targets (Breckler, Olson and Wiggins, 2006:360).

Back (1977:129) argues that the environment where a person is brought up, contributes to the way he reacts to situations around him. He furthermore, asserts that "Frustration creates a readiness for aggressive acts. Previously acquired aggressive habits can reinforce this readiness. Environmental stimuli play an important role in actually eliciting the aggression. They are not essential for the probability of its occurrence" (Back, 1977:129). Girard (1987:74) defines the phenomenon of scapegoats, especially when they are blamed or punished not merely for the 'sin' of others ... but for tensions, conflicts, and difficulties of all kinds." Girard therefore, believes that scapegoating<sup>25</sup> is especially a simple process. He categorizes them as follows:

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<sup>24</sup> Scapegoating, of course, is biblical in its origins. A scapegoat is a sacrificial object, whether animal or human, through which a community seeks to purge itself of its sins. The transgressions of a community are first projected onto the scapegoat when the scapegoat is then, expelled or destroyed, so are the transgressions of the community that were symbolically projected onto the scapegoat.(Lev.16).

<sup>25</sup> Girard sees the identification of a victim as a scapegoat as having the significance of a revelation. Once understood, the mechanism can no longer operate; we believe less and less in the culpability of the victims. Deprived of the food that sustains them, the institutions derived from these mechanism collapse one after the

1. There is a crisis, whether real or imagined, that grips a society or a group of people;
2. A process whereby someone, an individual or a minority, is single out and accused;
3. A public humiliation of some sort;
4. The whole process is characterized by delusion: scapegoating must not be regarded as a conscious activity, based on a conscious choice. The very fact that it can be manipulated by people who understand its operation - politicians, for instance - supposes a basic lack of awareness in the passive subjects of such manipulation. Scapegoating is not effective unless an element of delusion enters into it (Girard, 1978:74).

Going by the definition and the explanation of prejudice/Scapegoat theory by the various scholars, scapegoat then can be understood as a person, group, or entity that is targeted for blame for something he or she was not responsible. According to Ogege (2013:86) frustration - aggression theory emphasizes the differences between what people feel they want and the discrepancy however, marginal, between what is sought and what they get, the greater the violent reaction. Ogege (2013:86) believes that a group is most vulnerable to embark on violent destruction behavior or be a ready army to be used to cause crisis in the face of these frustration expectations.

Ogege asserts that in a situation where the legitimate desires of an individual or group is denied either directly or by the indirect consequence of the way a society is structured, the feeling of frustration can compel such persons or group to express their anger through violence that is directed at those perceived to be responsible for their misfortune or others who are indirectly related to those frustrating their expectations (Ogege, 2013:86).

When thinking of Boko Haram, prejudice/scapegoat theory is better understood against the backdrop of the widespread poverty and unemployment in Northern Nigeria. Boko Haram believes that their poverty is caused by Western influence.

According to Juergensmeyer *et al*, Rene Girard has developed one of the most fruitful and challenging approaches to understanding the multifarious and complex relationship between violence and religion (Juergensmeyer et al. 2013:533). Juergensmeyer further asserts that

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other about us. Whether we know it or not, the Gospels are responsible for this collapse (see Girard 1986:101, *The scapegoat* Translated by Yvonne Freccero. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press).

Girard argues that the main source of human violence is competition. Competition to Girard is mimetic desire, which is a cause of rivalries and violence (Juergensmeyer et al. 2013:534). Juergensmeyer *et al.*, therefore, quote Girard as saying:

We are competitive rather than aggressive. In addition to appetites we share with animals, we have a more problematic yearning that lacks any instinctual object: desire. Literally do not know what to desire and, in order to find out, we watch the people we admire: we imitate their desire. Both models and imitators of the same desire inevitably desire the same object and become rivals. Their rival desires literally feed on one another: the imitator becomes the model of his model, and the model the imitator of his imitator. Unlike animal rivalries, these imitative or mimetic rivalries can become so intense and contagious that not only do they lead to murder but they also spread, mimetically, to entire communities (Juergensmeyer *et al.*, 2013:534).

Nell cited by Thesnaar has also taken note of Girard's concept of the circle (Thesnaar, 2011:27). Thesnaar therefore, argues that in this case, the perpetrators use violence to satisfy their demand and then the victims employ violence to retaliate which if care is not taken, will result into a cycle that may be go out of control. We can agree with the explanation of Girard namely that we imitate what we see in others.

In fact, our desires are not actually our own as argued by Girard, but the desires we have copied from others. The more we imitate each other, the more alike we become. We vie for the same things and we become rivals. According to Avalos (2005:76) Girard "argues that all sacrificial rituals require two substitutions". Avalos explains Girard's argument by stating that:

A community identifies a victim upon whom it will exhaust its aggression. However, such a victim, being a member of the community, is usually not actually sacrificed. Instead, a ritual or surrogate victim from outside the community substitutes for the original victim, who then represents all the members of the community. For example, in Genesis 22, Abraham is told to sacrifice Isaac. However, Isaac is the "insider" and the animal is the "outsider" that substitutes for Isaac. The outsider can also be seen as a monstrous double of the insider victim (Avalos, 2005:76).

Avalos concurs with Girard that there must be a cause of conflict that leads to sacrifice. The reason for this is manifested in that "rivalry does not arise because of the fortuitous



convergence of two desires on a single object; rather the subject desires the object because the rival desires it” (Avalos, 2005:76). Avalos also argues that Girard’s theory has numerous flaws if it is meant to outline the most fundamental mechanism for religious violence (Avalos 2005:77). Avalos sees religious sacrifice as depending on certain prior religious beliefs that have created a need for sacrifice. He believes that, any sort of secular sacrifice may not always be morally equivalent to religious sacrifice (Avalos, 2005:77).

Avalos argued that Girard failed in his application to the biblical texts (Avalos 2005:77). The point of contention according to Avalos, is that Girard offers a sacrificial and arbitrary reading of biblical text because Amos, Isaiah and Micah denounce the Hebrew sacrificial system. He also states that “the eroding of the sacrificial system seems to result in the emergence of reciprocal violence” (Avalos, 2005:77).

According to Echebarria (1997:1), Scapegoat theory emerged during the 1940s as social psychologists began their first attempts to conceptualize racial prejudice. Allport as cited in Lubek, notes that social psychologists regard their discipline as an attempt to understand and explain how the thought, feeling and behaviour of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of other human beings (Lubek, 2000:320).

One way in which we can understand violence as perpetuated by Boko Haram is the scapegoat theory... Boko Haram tends to see its problems as emanating from the Christians (ECWA). It blames the ECWA for the killing of their members by security agents, government marginalization, poverty, unemployment and Western Education.

### **3.9 The Factors that Influence Boko Haram to commit violence**

Facts have been established on the impact and effects of Boko Haram’s violence on the ECWA. In this section the factors that have influenced Boko Haram to commit violence on the ECWA are highlighted. Various scholars have attempted to give us the reason why Boko Haram has committed violence in Northern Nigeria, especially on the ECWA.

For instance, Casimir *et al.* (2014:59) argue that “the causes of Boko Haram insurgence which has continued to spread to other West African countries, making it a transnational violent conflict had been the cause of speculation by scholars in Africa and across the globe.” Ewuzie cited in (Casimir, *et al.*, 2014:59) believes that the phenomenon is a religious and sectarian problem caused by a fringe sectarian questionable interpretation of the basic tenets of Islam. Aliyu *et al.* (2015:315) argues that,



The Boko Haram conflict started over disagreement on the issue of Mosque management in Monguno in 2008 between the Izala sect and Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad, leading to the death of 67 members of the group. Its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, made a declaration with regard to pursuing the matter through legal means.

Thurston (2016:28) described the Boko Haram as representing an ugly paradox:<sup>26</sup> its ideas have limited appeal but significant staying power. Thurston argues that the ideological level of Boko Haram, its violence, is framed by two themes, theme one is an exclusivist claim to represent true Islam, and theme two is the grievances against the state and non-members of the sect.

Thurston further explained that Boko Haram “has paired Salafi theology with a commitment to jihad and has anchored this global ideology in a particular reading of local politics, viewing decades-old inter- religious conflicts in Nigeria, the contentious career of Yusuf, and the sect’s clashes with the military and the civilian joint task force (CJTF) as part of a unified narrative of anti-Islamic violence” (Thurston 2016:28). Influenced by its religious ideology, Thurston asserts that the Boko Haram sect has inflicted massive brutality on Christians and their places of worship (Thurston 2016:28).

Agbibo opined that Boko Haram became a full-fledged insurgency agent following confrontations between the group and the Bauchi State charged with the responsibility of enforcing a newly introduced law that required motorcyclists in the entire country to wear crash-helmets (Agbibo 2013:73). Members of the Boko Haram refused to obey this law. The refusal to obey the newly introduced law by the Boko Haram’s members led to a violent confrontation between the state’s enforcement agency and Boko Haram that led to the death of 17 Boko Haram members in the crossfire (Agbibo, 2013: 73 cited in the United States Institute of Peace, 2012:52). Aliyu et al.(2015:315) noted that the killing of the Boko Haram’s leader (by the security agents) was considered as the major factor that precipitated the sudden transformation of Boko Haram into a ferocious violent group attacking the Nigerian state (Aliyu et al, (2015:315).

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<sup>26</sup> A paradox is a statement that contradicts itself and yet might be true (or wrong at the same time). Some logical paradoxes are known to be invalid arguments but are still valuable in promoting critical thinking.

### 3.9.1 Rejection of Western Education

The reason the Boko Haram sect rejects Western education according to Danjibo, is that Boko Haram sees the evil in society to be the result of the embraces of Western civilization and believes that in order to curb such evil, an Islamic society must become entrenched by destroying modern state institutions (Danjibo, 2009:7). According to Danjibo, the police, government establishments, institutions and properties, even churches which they believe to be part of Western civilization became the targets of destruction (Danjibo, 2009:7).

The COCIN President, Rev. Dr. Datiri Dachollom (2014:21), described as “fallacy” Bolo haram’s claim that they are out to fight western education. Datiri asks why Boko Haram has not waged war against the Muslim Emirs, governors and elites some of who have attended and their children attend first class and world rated schools all over the country (*Today’s Challenge Magazine* July 2014). Datiri argues that, “Even though the Boko Haram claims that their war is against western education, yet they thrive on using the very components and products of western education and civilization:, communication and internet facilities and weapons”( *Today Challenge Magazine*, July 2014).

Many researchers carrying out studies on Boko Haram’s activities in Northern Nigeria make an implicit assumption that the factors causing the rise of Boko Haram were the result of state neglect, but central to this argument is poverty and unemployment. Isa argues that: “The rising popularity of militant Islamist movements in Northern Nigeria can be attributed to a combination of factors including: increasing inequality, injustice, poverty, failed social services as well as failed structural adjustment programmes” (Isa, 2010:329).

### 3.9.2 Poverty and Unemployment

Odiadi argues that poverty, unemployment, religious intolerance, ethnic rivalry, growing acculturation, resource agitations, and ignorance are responsible for violent conflict in Nigeria (Anyadike 2013:20 cited in Odiadi 2012:52). Mohammed (cited in Casimir *et al.*, 2014:59) believes that Boko Haram arose from socio-economic sources rather than religious or ethnic reasons (Casimir, *et al.*, 2014:59). Casimir, *et al.*(2014:60) argue that, “an exposition of Boko Haram sect origin and background outlines how the phenomenon of failed leadership and weak institutions in the northeastern part of Nigeria gave rise to street begging by children who became unemployed and were recruited by politicians to act as thugs to carry out mayhem and violence against their political opponents.”

Onuoha (2014:6) argues that unemployment and poverty are direct causes of youth radicalization, privation and other frustrating condition of life render youth highly vulnerable to manipulation by extremist ideologues. Akinbi (2015:36) like Odiadi, argues that poverty, unemployment and ignorance contribute significantly to the spread of Boko Haram activities in Northern Nigerian. The point of his argument is that when a young man is poor, illiterate and unemployed he becomes a clean slate for any kind of brainwashing that is more potent when it comes from religion aided by culture.

Awoyemi also believes that these young people lack the intellectual power to question logically or criticise what they are told. The brainwashing provides them with a quasi-equivalent of employment, and thus they become engaged in acting out what they have been brainwashed to believe (Awoyemi 2012:24).

The unemployment rate in Nigeria has continued to increase despite the abundant human and natural resources available in the country (Adebayo 2014:482). Adebayo laments that unemployment has become a major problem in the lives of Nigerian youth. One can only agree with Adebayo that unemployment poses a serious risk to the Nigeria society.

Many people proffer reasons for the emergence of the Boko Haram. For instance, some believe that Boko Haram insurgents emerged because Nigeria has become a failed, or failing state. Some scholars blame it on poverty and poor governance, and yet others argue that it is frustration-aggression that caused the emergence of the Boko Haram. Unemployment is devastating to both the youth and the society as a whole. The phenomenon of youth unemployment should be looked into without hesitation since it can lead to violence.

Adebayo therefore asserts that unemployment causes frustration, dejection, desperation and dependency on family members and friends who also have their own problems to contend with (2014:482). Adebayo sees frustration and desperation as something that daily torments the unemployed and creates a fertile ground for crime to thrive (Adebayo 2014: 482).

Khan and Hamidu (2015:30) also see poverty and unemployment as one of the causes of Boko Haram's violence in Northern Nigeria. Khan and Hamidu argue that poverty is one the major triggers of the turmoil and conflicts that Northern Nigeria is facing. If poverty and unemployment are the causes of Boko Haram's violence, then there is need to address the issue of poverty because as Myers (1999:12) in agreement with Robert Chamber's 1980s proposal and John Friedman description of poverty in 1990s says, poverty is "a system of

entanglement and the lack of access to social power.” According to Myers, Jayakumar weighed poverty from a Christian perspective and describes it as a “system of disempowerment that creates a relationship the fundamental causes of which are spiritual” (Myers 1999:12).

President Bush (2002) stated: “We fight poverty because hope is the answer to terror...We will challenge the poverty and hopelessness and lack of education and failed governments that too often allow conditions that terrorists can seize’ (*White House news release*, 22 March, 2002). William Elegbe, the Research Director of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group complained about the level of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy, and states that:

The increasing poverty in Nigeria is accompanied by increasing unemployment. Unemployment is higher in the north than in the south. Mix this situation with radical Islam, which promises a better life for martyrs, and you can understand the growing violence in the north. Government statistics show that the northern states have the highest proportion of uneducated persons. If you link a lack of education and attendant lack of opportunities to a high male youth population, you can imagine that some areas are actually a breeding ground for terrorism (William cited in Rogers 2012:4).

Many scholars thus argue that poverty is the factor that influenced Boko Haram to commit violence. Thurston agrees but argues that economic deprivation alone cannot explain why violent movements grow in some places and not others, or why some movements develop particular worldviews (2016:7). He asserts that some people think that Boko Haram responded to the perceived political marginalization of the North and particularly the Northeast. With regard to the election that brought President Goodluck Jonathan to power in 2011, he said that many northern Muslims were indeed offended by Jonathan’s victory which sparked riots that led to the death of over 800 people. (Thurston 2016:7). Thurston argues that Boko Haram was formed even before Jonathan’s victory.

Christians do not see the poverty situation as the product of any sort of grievance that should affect them. This is what a clergyman in (Onuoha 2014:98) said: “Poverty is like a common cloth in Nigeria; in fact, most Africans wear it, so they cannot bring the issue of too much poverty in their areas”(Onuoha 2014:98). Poverty can be one of the factors causing Boko Haram to commit violence but the issues surrounding what Christians view as an Islamization agenda by Muslims cannot be accounted for.

### 3.9.3 Illiteracy

At a gathering of Nobel Peace Prize laureates, South Africa's Desmond Tutu and South Korea's Kim Dae Jong opined: 'at the bottom of terrorism is poverty', and Elie Wiesel and the Dalai Lama concluded: 'Education is the way to eliminate terrorism' (Jai 2001:7).

Danjibo (2009:7) notes that the majority of the followers of the late Muhammad Yusuf were illiterate youths who engaged in petty trading or had dropped out of school. Ilechukwu (2014:66) believes that there is ignorance or half knowledge of the true teaching of the very religion that Boko Haram claims to be defending. His argument is that if Marwa, Yusuf, Shekau, and other leaders of the sects members had been well informed enough about Islamic teaching, they would have realized that at no time did the prophet or his companion attack anybody who has declared himself as non-Muslim. Omotosho (2005) asserted that Boko Haram was involved in preposterous acts because of their ignorance of the Islamic teaching.

It has been argued by many scholars that poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment are the fundamental causes of terrorism. Dahiru (2016) agrees that the said factors may be responsible for the hopelessness among people affected, thereby making them vulnerable and susceptible to radical ideology that teaches acts that constitute terrorism. Dahiru agrees that these factors generally contribute to the rise in terrorism but disagrees that they are the fundamental causes and states:

Boko Haram and the other terror groups came about as a result of radicalization and as a consequence of hate preaching, violent and intolerant extremist teachings, not only found in the doctrines of deviant sects and other Muslim groups but also in mainstream Muslim theology in the name of Islam. Some of these teachings promote negative comparative religious studies and outright hate (*The Sun News* July 6, 2016).

This researcher agrees with Dahiru that poverty is not the major factor that led to the emergence of Boko Haram. Dahiru (2016) argues that a background check on some of the leading figures of the Boko Haram sect shows individuals that are well educated, from privileged backgrounds and that some were born and bred in very advanced Western countries. Therefore there should be a doubt as to whether illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment are truly responsible for terrorism as others claim (*The Sun News* July 6, 2016). Dahiru does not believe that poverty led to Boko Haram's violence.

According to Mantzikos (2013:7), “the reason why Boko Haram became radicalized was that some politicians in Bornu State who were apparently using the sect members as thugs became frightened when they suddenly became too powerful for them and therefore, had to invite the government to deal with them. Former Bornu State Governor, Ali Modu Sheriff, has been linked to the sect in this narrative - which he has strongly denied.”

According to Mantzikos, Boko Haram are said to be generally frustrated with the situation of things in the country, especially with the position of Northerners and Northern Muslims in the configuration of political and economic power in Nigeria (Mantzikos 2013:7). In this view, Boko Haram terrorism is simply displaced aggression.

### **3.9.4 Parental Negligence**

Some scholars argue that the parents’ negligence of their children could lead to violence. Khan and Hamidu (2015:31) argue that, given the culture of polygamy, parents have little or no time to devote to their wards. They assert that children’s school fees are often not paid and they are pushed out to fend for themselves.

Umaru (cited in Khan and Hamidu 2015:31) saw the parental negligence and asserts that, “these children bereft of parental love and care, nurtured bitterness against their parents and therefore became readily available for exploitation by wicked elements”. Khan and Hamidu believe that these kinds of children are used by the Boko Haram to commit violence. According to them, “some of them are used for attacking homes, shops, banks, and to rape innocent women in return for modest financial inducements” (Khan and Hamidu 2015:31).

Onuoha, in support of the arguments of Umaru, Khan and Hamidu, also argues that children are denied parental care and because of this, they form the majority of recruits of extremists, such as Boko Haram and Kala Kato, among others for they are used as tools in religious biased violence (Onuoha 2012 cited in Ilechukwu, 2014:65). Onuoha further explains that children often camp in shacks like Almajirai<sup>27</sup> and left with little or no food, forcing them to roam the streets begging for alms (Ilechukwu 2014:65). Onuoha (2014:71) asserts that Almajirai can easily be motivated to engage in looting and killings during ethno-religious clashes since they are hungry and angry and they wish to pay society back.

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<sup>27</sup> Many people conceive of young Almajirai as ‘neglected’, ‘exploited’ or ‘abandoned,’ as “an eyesore or a pest” (Tilde, 2009), and as a “generation lost” (Ekaette, in Abubakar, 2009). Hausa meaning: “those who have left their home in search of knowledge” (Onuoha, 2014:67).

Onuoha argues that the claim that the Almajirai participate in violence, whether interreligious or sectarian, has been investigated, but only on one occasion which he asserts was in the aftermath of the Maitasine crisis of the 1980s (Onuoha 2014:72). Onuoha posits that a The Federal Government-Constituted Tribunal of Inquiry established that children aged 10 to 14 years unaccompanied by their parents, were amongst Maitasine's followers. Onuoha blames the parents for their negligence and for not training and caring for their children. He asserts that "children's alienation from home and society provides the cognitive opening that extremist ideologues exploit in the process of recruitment and radicalization (Onuoha 2014:6).

According to Al Jazeera *News* and Agencies, an estimated 38 children have been used in carrying out suicide attacks in the Lake Chad basin so far this year 2016, bringing to the total number of 86 children used in suicide attacks since 2014 (Al Jazeera News and Agencies, 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2016).

### **3.9.5 Boko Haram's Attempts to Islamize Nigeria**

Scholars' arguments as to what causes Boko Haram to commit violent acts against Christians especially the ECWA church are definitely inconclusive. For instance, McDonnell (2010) states that Boko Haram issued a statement: "In August 2009, Boko Haram itself released a statement in which it declared "total jihad in Nigeria," threatening to Islamize and enslave the entire nation (something it may have picked up from the terrorist training camp in Sudan.)" The statement continued:

The Boko Haram is an Islamic Revolution the impact of which is not limited to Northern Nigeria, in fact, we are spread across all the 36 states in Nigeria, and Boko Haram is just a version of the Al Qaeda that we align with and respect. We support Osama bin Laden, we shall carry out his commands in Nigeria until the country is totally Islamized, which is according to the wish of Allah (*Front-page magazine* 28 January, 2010).

Datiri (2014:21) presenting a 13-point Communiqué at the end of the 84<sup>th</sup> GCC, states:

Muslims should note that they cannot and will not Islamize nor achieve their jihadist movement. "It is manifestly evident that Boko Haram is a terrorist, militant, fundamentalist Islamic rebel group. It is a jihad group and their objective is mainly to Islamize Nigeria by attacking Christian communities, slaughtering and using specially



made swords to slice off heads, matcheting, killing and removing the vital parts of the body for ritual purposes, looting, the abduction and rape of Christian girls and women (Today's Challenge Magazine, July 2014).

Minchakpu (2014:6) believes that Boko Haram wants to establish an Islamic theocratic state. He lists the number of churches burnt in Kaduna State as follows:

In Kaduna State, churches were also bombed in the cities of Kaduna and Zaria. Some of the churches bombed included: St. Rita's Catholic Church, Malali; St. George's Catholic Cathedral, Zaria, and ECWA Church, Wusasa, Zaria...So also, St. Andrew's Protestant Church, Jaji Military Cantonment was bombed, and just so another Pentecostal Church was bombed in the city of Kaduna...So, who is making claims that this is not a war against the Church and Christians in Nigeria? In Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory, a Catholic Church was bombed in Madala, a suburb of the city...And then the recent attack at Nyanya in which most of the victims are Christians in hospitals (*Today's Challenge Magazine*, July 6, 2014).

Onuoha like other scholars, believes that Boko Haram wishes to establish Islam in Nigeria. Onuoha (2014:3) in his research on why the youth join Boko Haram, asserts that the core objective of Boko Haram is to replace the secular Nigerian state with a regime adhering to strict Islamic Sharia law, applicable throughout the entire country.

This researcher argues in support of the assertion by the scholars who believe that the Muslims in Northern Nigeria desire to wipe out Christians in order to establish a Islamic theocratic state. The killing of Christians in the name of blasphemy against Mohammed are a sign that Boko Haram and Northern Nigerian Muslims want to Islamize the country.

Thurston (2016:17) argues that Boko Haram presents itself as the victim of state aggression and the voice of a larger, and aggrieved, Muslim constituency. According to him, Yusuf's "Open Letter to the Federal Government of Nigeria," a lecture delivered shortly before Boko Haram's uprising in June 2009, linked his complaints against the Bornu state government to what he saw as a pattern of anti-Muslim violence in Nigerian. Thurston notes that Yusuf mentioned famous Muslim-Christian clashes namely the 1987 riots in Kafanchan, Kaduna State, and the 1992 killings in Zangon-Kataf, Kaduna; and cyclical violence in Plateaus State,



dating to 1994.<sup>28</sup> Yusuf concluded: “The government of Nigeria has not been built to do justice...It has been built to attack Islam and kill Muslims.”<sup>29</sup>

Regarding opposition to democracy, it was not enough to criticize the state’s persecution of Muslims. Al-wals’ wa-l-bara’ and izhar al-din demanded an aggressive defence of Islam, because Islam’s enemies were on the move:

The believer will not leave his faith. Likewise, the infidel and the hypocrite will not give up his polytheism and his craftiness. Allah Most High has said, “Many of the People of the Book wish to turn you back to unbelief after you have believed” (Qur’an 2:109)...Meaning if you don’t follow their goal, you cannot be reconciled with them. There is nothing that can allow you to get along with the infidel and the hypocrite unless you become exactly like them<sup>30</sup> (Thurston 2016:17).

According to Dahiru (2016), several reasons have been advanced by analysts and experts as to the cause of terrorism and the rise of terrorism organizations like the Jama’at Ahi as-Sunnah lid-Da’wal wa’l Jihad commonly known as Boko Haram, Islamic state of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al-Shabbab, to mention but a few (*The Sun News* July 6, 2016).

Khan and Hamidu (2015:24;25) argue that Shekau, the new leader of the Boko Haram, who is mentioned in a You Tube Video released in 2012, gave three reasons for their attacks. He stated them as follows:

1. To avenge the killing of their leader and other sect members in July 2009 by the Nigerian Police;
2. To avenge the ill-treatment the Christian have been meting out to Muslims and Islam in Nigeria; and
3. To correct the present secular constitution which he described as un-Islamic.

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<sup>28</sup> For background, see Human Rights Watch, “Leave Everything to God’: Accountability for inter-Communal Violence in Plateau and Kaduna States, Nigeria December 2013, [http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/nigeria1213\\_ForUpload.pdf](http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/nigeria1213_ForUpload.pdf); and Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious politics and Secular Ideologies* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2001)

<sup>29</sup> Muhammad Yusuf, “Open Letter to the Federal Government of Nigeria,” June 12, 2009; Muhammad Bukar, “waazin sheikh Muhammad yusuf 1,” You Tube video, February 17, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f89PvcWSRg>.

<sup>30</sup> Yusuf, “Open Letter.”

As a result of the above three reasons, Boko Haram carried out violent attacks in Northern Nigeria which claimed thousands of lives and properties (Daily Trust May 16, 2013:30).

### **3.10 Conclusion**

In this chapter there was a discussion of Boko Haram, its leadership, goals, theology and politics. Religious violence was defined and the ECWA's biblical fundamentalist position was identified as exclusivist using Bevans and Schroeder's approach. Scholar's views on Boko Haram's fundamentalist positions were listed as well as the factors which motivate Boko Haram to commit violent. The concept of terrorism and the theory of religious violence were also highlighted.

In the next chapter the impact of Boko Haram's violence and the response of the ECWA to the violence will be discussed. The focus will also be on the impact of Boko Haram's violence on churches in Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi, and Yobe States. The killings and the displacement of Christians in these states, and the response of the ECWA to the violence will be discussed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE IMPACT OF BOKO HARAM'S VIOLENCE AND THE RESPONSE OF THE ECWA

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#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the impact of Boko Haram's violence on the ECWA is highlighted. Besides impact, the effects of Boko Haram's violent activities on the ECWA, the killing, the destruction of ECWA churches in Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi, and Yobe states, the loss of family members, the destruction of property and the displacement of people are also dealt with. The effects on children, youths and adults, the effect on social life and on the spiritual life of ECWA members is explored. The factors that influence Boko Haram to commit violence, and the response of the ECWA to Boko Haram in the context of violence is discussed. The theological concept of violence is explored. One of Avery Dulles' five classic models of the church, "the Church as Servant" is used to highlight ECWA's operations in the context of suffering. Forgiveness and reconciliation in the context of conflict and suffering is also highlighted.

#### 4.2 The Impact of Boko Haram's violent activities the ECWA

Boko Haram's violent activities have a variety of devastating effects<sup>31</sup> on the ECWA church, ranging from physical- to social and psychological effects. The impact of Boko Haram's violence has been divided into three categories namely the killing of ECWA members, the destruction of church structures, and the displacement of people.

Sauer and Howell (2010:23) argue that religious persecution is an unjust action against a believer or group of believers of a certain religion or worldview. Explaining it further, Sauer and Howell assert that religious persecution has religion not ethnicity, gender, or political persecution as its primary motivation, though other factors can be involved. The persecution of Christians, according to them, is a form of religious persecution in which victims are targeted primarily because they are Christians (Sauer and Howell 2010:23).

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<sup>31</sup> A change is the result of an action or other cause, result, consequence, upshot, out-come, out-turn, sequel, reaction, repercussions, reverberation, ramifications. At [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)

The ECWA has grown in Nigeria since its beginning in 1893 particularly in northern region along with other denominations that have been in existence since 1857 (Mulders 2016:36). The Christians are the minority compared with the Muslims. There are nineteen northern states and there is a high concentration of Christians in seven states. The states are Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Kogi, Nasarawa, Plateau, and Taraba. Christians are in the majority in six northern states but their existence is under threat because of the persistent violence by the Boko Haram sect. Boko Haram operates within an existing culture of violence through religious political and territorial issues.

According to Kirk, (1997:40) human beings have been created to enjoy fellowship with God, with one another, and with creation; but rather, they have constructed an order of violence - anger against and rejection of God's just claim on their lives. He maintains that there has been brutality, disorder within human communities, and violation of the environment, Humans are always on the edge of self-destruction (Kirk 1997:40).

Violence is an unavoidable feature of human experience, even and perhaps especially, in human religious context. Human beings have the capacity to be violent and to destroy creation, animals and particularly other human beings.

#### **4.2.1 The Killing of ECWA Members in Plateau State**

Many ECWA Pastors and some church members were killed by the Boko Haram sect in Plateau, Bauchi, Kaduna, and Yobe States during their ferocious attacks on Christians in 2008. *One News Now* (2008) reports that:

The murderous rioting sparked by Muslim attacks on Christians and their property on November 28-29 in Jos, Nigeria, left six pastors dead, at least 5000 other people killed and 40 Churches destroyed, according to church leaders. More than 25,000 persons have been displaced in the two days of violence, according to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) (*Compass Direct News* 20<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2008).

The report continues to state that:

Among Christians killed was Joseph Yari of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), Angwan Clinic, Tudun-Wada in Jos on November 28, his wife Mary Yari told *Compass*, he had returned from his workplace along Ibrahim Taiwo Road saying he was going to a Baptist Church that Muslims were setting on fire. "Shortly after my

husband left, I heard anguished cries, only to be told that my husband had been shot dead on the premises of the church.” Mary’s grief notwithstanding, she said she had forgiven the killers, as “they were ignorant of the crime they have committed because they do not know Jesus Christ.” According to Emmanuel Kyari, pastor of Christ Baptist Church, Tudun-Wada, told *Compass* that Joseph Yari died helping other Christians who repelled Muslim fanatics bent on burning down his church building. “Yari was standing beside my wife when he was shot by Muslims.” (*Compass Direct News* 20<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

The following report shows that people were killed, houses were destroyed and thousands were displaced. Galadima (2014) lists and comments on some ECWA pastors who were students at Jos ECWA Theological Seminary and that were killed by the Boko Haram sect:

Pastor Ephraim escaped with his family but decided to go back and warn members to leave the area because of the danger. After he and a church elder warned believers, a Muslim mob attacked them with machetes, killing Ephraim and gravely wounded the church elder. Pastor George was encouraging Christian refugees to hold fast to their faith despite the Boko Haram threats. He was targeted and later killed by the terrorists and buried in a mass grave. George’s wife was, according to Galadima, expecting at the time, and Boko Haram killed this brave believer before he met his son or daughter. Shem, an ECWA church pastor, was, according to Galadima (2014), killed by Boko Haram while traveling from a church in Jos to another part of the city. Galadima suspected that Shem could have been carrying his Bible because he was interned at the church and that is why Boko Haram could pick him out of a crowd (*Mission Network News* 6<sup>th</sup> October 2014).

Bunga reporting to the *Morning Star News* stated: “Pastor Joshua M. Nanawas killed in Bassa village in 2013; and Pastor Yakubu Waziri, was killed at Jos main market while taking his son to school on January 8, 2011. He served in Bani Kauwa II in Kasuwan Magani of the mid-central region” (*Morning Star News*, October 29, 2015).

Otufodunrin (2010:15) stated that,

The ECWA Church on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2010, reported that some of its members were missing and appealed to security agencies to help locate them. “Many of our members whose houses were burnt have to date not been found, despite all

efforts by the church and their relatives to find their bodies, or to locate them ” said Anthony Farinto, national President of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA). The ECWA strongly suspects that many of the dead bodies were hurriedly buried in mass graves by the Muslims including some of its members who were murdered within the Muslim neighborhoods” (*Compass Direct News* 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2010).

Boko Haram’s violence in Jos Plateau State claimed scores of lives. The ECWA Executive solicits for prayers for its members who went missing during the attacks. The General Secretary of ECWA states:

Please, pray for the following brethren from Jos Jarawa where members were worshipping on the Sunday when the Muslims attacked: Azi Matthew Dandi, Francis Dung, Luka Musa, Yohanna Francis, Odun Ilesemi, Bobi Tangale, Ibrahim Azi, Gideon A. Nyako, Emma Kaze Peter, Azi Atsi, Felix. We are not presently sure of their whereabouts (*Christian Quoter*, January 28, 2010).

#### **4.2.2 The Killing of ECWA Members in Kaduna State**

A report from *BosNewsLife African Service* states that:

The suspect Muslim assailants killed as many as 32 villagers in three predominantly Christian communities, in Sanga Local Government Area in Kaduna state. Two pastors were among those killed just after midnight on September 17 in Karshin Daji town, Christians said, while 15 others were reportedly injured and 15 houses burned down. Pastor Ezra Ibrahim of the ECWA was killed and Reverend Julius Jako of the ECWA church was slain alongside his wife and daughter, said 60-year-old Danjuma Awe, an elder of the ECWA church in Karshin Daji (*BosNewsLife African Service*, September 30, 2014).

According to (*NAIJ.com news*, 2012), two lives, those of an adult and a child were lost in ECWA Good News church, Wusasa Zaria. Abdias (2012) reported that, “In the predominantly Christian area of Zaria known as Wusasa, a suspected Islamic extremist crashed a car against a barricade at an ECWA church at around 9 am, setting off explosives that killed at least 24 people and wounded 125, according to one unconfirmed report citing an anonymous state official. A few minutes later suspected Islamic extremists set off explosives at Christ the King Catholic church in the Sabon Gari area of Zaria” (*World Watch Monitor* 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2012). Bunga reported in the *Morning Star News* that Pastor Yunana Kinge was

killed in Rafin Pa, Zonkwa of the ECWA's mid-central region on June 25, 2012 (*Morning Star News* 29 November, 2015).

#### **4.2.3 The Killing of ECWA Members in Bauchi State**

*Morning Star News* (2015) reported that "Amid ongoing dangers, Christian leaders in Nigeria this month recalled the exemplary faith of indigenous missionaries who gave their lives in areas overrun by Islamic extremist militants."

According to the *Morning Star News*, President Muhammadu Buhari told an India-African Summit on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> of October, 2015 that the Islamic extremist group Boko Haram has been contained to "Sporadic" attacks in remote areas, but the leadership of the ECWA, were reported to be lamenting to the *Morning Star News* on how ECWA missionaries sent to those areas have suffered (*Morning Star News* 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2015). According to the ECWA leadership,

These missionaries have been labouring in dangerous, remote mission fields, far away from modern civilization". Elijah Ipole head of media for the ECWA's Evangelical Missionary Society (EMS) said: "Some have had to bury their loved ones while in mission fields. Some have had their properties looted or completely destroyed by the enemies of the Gospel" (*Morning Star News* 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2015).

Established in 1947 to empower indigenous African missionaries to take over mission work from foreign missionaries in Nigeria the EMS has lost five of its leaders to Boko Haram and other jihadists in the last four years. This is according to ECWA President (*Correspondence* 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015). One of them, the Rev. Isma Dogari, was murdered in Bauchi State in 2011. An EMS report describes his death as follows:

The Muslims took him to a mosque just by the roadside and, once inside, gave him a Koran and told him to denounce Jesus and live. However, he refused and told them, 'You need Jesus Christ in your lives'. They then plugged his eyes, brought him out of the mosque, took him under a tree and asked him again to denounce his faith and live, but repeatedly he told them, 'You need Jesus'. At this point they stabbed Rev. Isma Dogari with a knife, slaughtered him and burned his corpse (*Nigerian Correspondence*, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015).

This report paints a picture of how the Christians are suffering persecution at the hands of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria. The immediate source of the persecution of the early Christians apart from family and work was the Roman State. Each succeeding emperor believed himself to be divine, the incarnation of the spirit of Roma. Therefore, all citizens were bound each year to burn a pinch of incense at the statue of the reigning emperor and to declare 'Caesar is Lord'. Christians who refused to do so, lost their jobs and were even killed. This is the situation of Christians in Northern Nigeria.

#### **4.2.4 The killing of ECWA Members in Yobe State**

Mansir (2012) in his report to the *Morning Star News* about the destruction of the ECWA church in Peri village in Potiskum, capital city of Yobe state, on Christmas eve lamented: "Six members of the church including the Pastor were killed and several others were seriously wounded by Boko Haram". In confirmation of this, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Yobe, the chairman, Idi Garba who is also one of the Pastors of the ECWA churches in Yobe (2012), notes that many members of the ECWA church Peri are still missing because of the attack.

#### **4.2.5 The Destruction of ECWA Churches in Plateau State**

ECWA churches in Plateau State have been subjected to atrocities. the ECWA President, Jeremiah Gado, in an interview stated:

Boko Haram destroyed ECWA churches because it is one of the strong denominations in the North. They think that if they uproot the ECWA church in the North, they can declare Islam. They are targeting our churches because we are strong. We are an indigenous church. We did not come from anywhere. We started here. That is why they are targeting our churches. They are trying to eliminate these churches to scare us into running or migrating to another place, but we are going nowhere (*Vanguard* July 15, 2015).

Stephen, former Director of the EMS of the ECWA in support of the assertion by Gado, lamented: "Many of our churches have been burnt, many communities where our missionaries are working have been ransacked, and the people displaced as a result of the insurgency." He further said that, "Physically, we are affected negatively but in terms of the real truth, the church is the people that have come to know and accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour, not the building" (*Today Challenge Magazine*, July, 2014:33).



*Human Rights Watch*<sup>32</sup> (2005) reported that several churches were destroyed in Yelwa Shendam in Plateaus State by the Boko Haram on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2004. According to the report, among the churches destroyed were the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) Bishara No.1 in the new market area, the ECWA Tudun-Wada and COCIN church. According to the report, the ECWA Secondary school Yelwa was also destroyed on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2004 (Human Right Watch 2005).

Thurston (2015) reported that on Sunday July 12, 2015, a bomb attack on the Evangelical Church Winning All, the ECWA Gospel Church No.1 building in Tudun-Wada Angwan Yashi, Jos was averted when explosives were discovered in the church toilet prior to Sunday service. *Morning Star News* (2015), reported that, “A crowd of Muslims attacked the Evangelical Church Winning All, ECWA Good News church Jos after an attack at the Mosque. The attacks on the church building occurred at about 11 p.m.” (*Morning Star News* July 7, 2015).

According to Alaha (2010) four Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) buildings in Rokokos in Jos, were destroyed in the 2008 crisis, but rebuilt and again destroyed in the last crisis. He listed the affected churches as ECWA Jos Jarawa and ECWA Mai Adiko. He noted that a similar invasion took place at the ECWA church Nasarawa Gong in Jos (*Compass Direct News* 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2010).

Alaha stated that “the Jos crisis was a well-planned, long-timed and systemized approached jihad. He said that in 2009 during the Boko Haram crisis in Bornu state, the chief Imam of Bauchi Sheikh Mohammed Bala Ahmed, disclosed to the press that the Bok Haram fighters were a group of 3,800 Nigerians, trained as fighters in Sudan, with a mission to invade Jos”( *Compass Direct News* 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2010).

The cleric said that since the Jos fight had waned, the Taliban had decided to train others in the bush in Bauchi and other places. Alaha argues that

They therefore turned this violent spirit on the city during the last Bauchi Boko Haram crisis. These trained fighters are the reason why the Jos crisis cannot end. These Taliban-trained fighters brought into our dear city of peace insist on trying out their acquired killing skill. Until this root is traced and totally excised, we see our city

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<sup>32</sup> Human Right Watch is an international non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on human rights.

still smoking in their hands even without provocation. There is no denying the fact that some innocent Muslims were also affected by the Taliban modus operandi but this could have been avoided if the Sunday morning attack did not happen (*Compass Direct News* 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2010).

Otufodunrin (2010) reported on how Muslim youths attacked Christians and destroyed their places of worship in Jos on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010:

Police said violence was triggered by an unprovoked attack by Muslim youths on worshippers at the St. Michael Catholic church in Nasarawa Gwong, in the Jos North Local Government Area. Burned buildings including the Christ Apostolic church, Assemblies of God church, three branches of the Church of Christ in Nigeria and two buildings of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) (*Compass Direct News* 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2010).

#### **4.2.6 The Destruction of ECWA Churches in Kaduna State**

Christians throughout the Sharia states in the north faced post-election violence in 2011. In Kaduna State, Muslims destroyed 409 churches and over 2,000 homes. Mindy (2012) interviewed a member of the ECWA church in Malumfashi who said the attackers took the church by surprise. According to the member, the church was destroyed, classrooms, offices, the pastor's residence and all material documentary history of the church, including its 1936 certificate of occupancy, were destroyed. Members meet in the original church, a low-slung colonial building with a tin roof they converted into a Sunday school hall. Concerning the ECWA Good News Church Wusasa Zaria, a report from the Lagos-based *Newspaper Vanguard* states:

Acting Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Abubakar, said that only sixteen persons were killed in the attacks. Vanguard Newspaper gathered that the first attack was at a children's Sunday school at ECWA Church, Wusasa, and Zaria, which left the Sunday school teacher and ten children dead. Four children playing outside the church were among the first victims of the blasts at the church, a witness said that five men ran up to the church and hurled homemade bombs through its open door. They were allegedly chased down and reportedly beaten to death. Police could not confirm this. (Vanguard (18 June 2012) 48 killed in Kaduna, Zaria church attacks).

An eyewitness reported that the gate was completely shattered. They said the children and the church suffered severe damage. Other properties including the Pastor's residence were razed to the ground as a result of the force of the explosion. Members of the congregation also suffered various degrees of injury (*World Watch Monitor* 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2012)

Thurston (2012) reported on Haram's violent activities against the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in a different location at a different time. Thurston said that on April 8, 2012 a suicide bomber detonated a car bomb at the ECWA Good News Church in Kaduna. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2012, suicide bombers from Boko Haram attacked ECWA Good News Church in Zaria.

ECWA General Secretary, Kunhiyop (2014) said, "Muslims say they don't want the Christian presence of an ECWA church on Aminu Street in Kaduna. When the church was built, Kaduna was about 60 percent Muslim and 40 percent Christian. Now it is almost 100 percent Muslim. Therefore, the ECWA church relocated after the seventh time Muslims set it on fire. The church tried to stay there, but the destruction was too much so they rebuilt in the southern part of the city" (*Christianity Today Magazine* October 16, 2014).

#### **4.2.7 The Destruction of ECWA Churches in Bauchi State**

Bauchi state was also affected by the atrocities committed by Boko Haram. For instance, Mindy (2012) interviewed an ECWA minister, Muhammad Dan-Amarya, who resides in Bauchi. He recalls the recent damage by Muslims who rioted against Christians following the last April 2011 election of President Goodluck Jonathan: "Thirteen churches were attacked and many homes especially Christians homes, and Christian shops...destroyed".

Dan-Amarya notes that Muslim attackers destroyed 92 Churches, 104 homes, and 54 businesses in Bauchi State in April, 2011. The attackers according to Dan-Amarya, included local "fanatics and terrorists" and members of Boko Haram. Dan-Amarya said ECWA church No.2 in Tafawa Balewa was struck by the terrorists (*World News* February 27, 2012).

Minchakpu (2012:34) reports: "Early morning attacks in Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi State on Sunday (Jan. 22) left at least seven Christians dead and a church building destroyed. Regarding the attack on the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), ECWA No.2, residents of Tafawa Balewa said that the attack was carried out by Islamic extremists alongside members of the Boko Haram sect, and that the church building and surrounding houses were bombed (*Compass Direct News* 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2012).

CSW (2012:35) reports that, “On Sunday, 22 January, in Bauchi Metropolis, Bauchi State, bombs were planted at the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), ECWA No.2 in the railway area and our Lady of St. Laurelton Catholic Church, Fadama Mada, which sustained minor damage to their walls. There were no injuries or fatalities as the bombs exploded in the early hours of the morning (*Christian Solidarity Worldwide* 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2012).

#### **4.2.8 The Destruction of ECWA Churches in Yobe State**

Obateru and Dakat (2012) in their report about the destruction of churches and displacement of ECWA members and Christians of the other denominations in Yobe State lamented: “How does it feel becoming a refugee in your own country having been forced to flee your state of origin? Not because you or your people are engaged in a war with another community or by a disaster, which has displaced everyone, but because of the faith you profess? (*Vanguard News* January 22, 2012).

Mulders (2016:15) in her research discovered that Potiskum was severely affected by the 2011 crisis and subsequent Boko Haram insurgency. Potiskum according to Mulders, is in the Southern Yobe state which Christians constituted. In 2011 an estimated 15% of the population of Southern Yobe were Christian but now due to Boko Haram’s persistent violent activities only 3.5% are (Mulders 2016:15). Mulders asserts that half of the churches have been closed and the attendance has decreased up to 75 per cent and many Christians have fled to other states in order to save their lives. Mulders explains further that:

The history of southern Yobe and Potiskum tells us that southern Yobe was never part of the Kanem-Bornu Empire or conquered by the Hausa-Fulani Jihad. A hundred years ago, Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) missionaries brought the gospel, and the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) church was established. After independence, Muslims dominated Yobe State government and institutions resulting in Christians being marginalized and discriminated with regard to education, politics and employment, and Sharia is applied (Mulders 2016:15, 16).

Adegbulu (2010:23-24) argues that the terrorists are monsters created by inept and corrupt leadership which presides over a rotten system that deprives people of their means of livelihood and causes them to starve in the land of plenty. It is a land of paradox where government imports what the country has in abundance and exports what it does not have. To stem this ugly tide, therefore, government efforts at fighting corruption must be stepped up by

way of meting out harsh penalties to looters of treasuries thereby making them serve as deterrents to others.

Onapajo and Usman (2015:119) termed Boko Haram as an enemy to both Christian and Muslim communities, and observed that it is important for both religious communities to perceive the Boko Haram group as an enemy. These scholars suggest that, instead of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria killing and destroying each other's properties, they should explore ways of building a common front against Boko Haram (Onapajo and Usman, 2015:119). This is the situation hundreds of Christians from Yobe State have found themselves as they escaped to different parts of the country following the onslaught against them by the Boko Haram sect.

According to Obateru and Dakat(2012) "The Boko Haram sect had given Christians in the northern part of the country a deadline to vacate that part of the country and they made good their threat by descending on churches and Christians in some parts following the expiration of the ultimatum" (*Vanguard News* January 22, 2012).

Worst hit are Christians in Damaturu and Potiskum in Yobe State where the activities of the sect have been upbeat for some time now. Obateru and Dakat note that, the Christians-men, women and children ran for their lives following the spate of killings of Christians and the destruction of the churches in Damaturu and Potiskum. According to them, about 500 Christians have found their way to Plateau State where they are taking refuge in churches, homes and ECWA guesthouses (*Vanguard News* January 22, 2012).

Usman Mansir (2012), a resident of Peri, reported to *Morning Star News* by phone that the Boko Haram entered the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Peri village close to Potiskum, the capital city of Yobe State, on Christmas eve and set the church ablaze. Minchakpu (2011) reported: "Tudun-Wada Gobbiya Kazar village of Yobe State was attacked on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 when its Christian village head, Bitrus Ramako, was killed. Until his death he was a member of the ECWA church in Gobbiya. Muslim assailants set fire to his house after killing him and then raided the entire village, forcing the Christian villagers out" (*World Watch Monitor* December 2, 2011).

### 4.3 The Effects of Boko Haram's Violent Activities on the ECWA

Pertaining to the effects of the Boko Haram's violence attacks on Christians and places of worship, experts <sup>33</sup> say that the recent recurring explosions in Nigeria not only killed hundreds of innocent people, but also caused mental problems, suicides and constant fear both in the survivors and other residents of the country. The Cable refers to Mr. Samuel Jinadu, a clinical psychologist at the Centre for Psychological Medicine, Synapse Services, Abuja, who commented on the far-reaching effect of violence. According to him while anxiety and insomnia are symptoms of post-traumatic stress, other mental problems emerge later (*NAIJ News* 2014).

Jinadu believes that in the face of such danger people become suspicious of one another, adding that the blasts affect everyone and cause mass fear. In his opinion, the mental damage caused by the insurgents is much worse than a wound, and the affected victims need serious rehabilitation and help (*NAIJ News* 2014).

#### 4.3.1 The Loss of Family Members

Since the emergence of the Boko Haram sect in 2002 thousands of human lives have been lost during their attacks. The *Vanguard newspaper* puts the death toll at more than 12,000 with more than 8,000 injured or maimed and thousands of other innocent Nigerians displaced (*Vanguard* 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2014). As a result of Boko Haram's violent activities, many Evangelical Church Winning All's members have lost their breadwinners. As stated in Chapter Three, many breadwinners have died leaving their families behind. Many women have become premature widows as a result of Boko Haram's violent activities and many parents have lost their children.

The violent activities of the Boko Haram have much larger and more complex implications than was commonly perceived. Their persistent attacks have a negative impact on the ECWA Church in Northern Nigeria. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), (2016:4) puts the estimated number of Christians who were killed between 2006 and 2014 at 11,500, Christians who have been displaced at about 1.3 million, and churches destroyed at about 13,000. Expressing concern on this, Adebayo (2014:484) therefore states that:

Many children have died, and many have been become orphans due to the Boko Haram onslaught that killed their parents and guardians, while such children continue

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<sup>33</sup> NAIJ.com@4<http://www.com/68977.Html>google vignette

to suffer deprivation. Many families have been scattered, and their ambitions cut short. In terms of properties, the scenes of each bomb blast present a scenario of massive waste and destruction.

Scared of being killed many ECWA Christians were forced to convert to Islam or to relocate to the predominantly Christian states. On the issue of Boko Haram's killing, Morgan T.C (2014:1) quoted the Nigerian officials. He said, "Boko Haram has killed at least 2,000 Nigerians in the first six months of 2014 alone." Morgan gave the estimate of displaced people to be 650,000 people who fled Northern Nigeria to escape violence.

The general secretary of the ECWA, Kunhiyop (2014:2) attests that:

Churches have been destroyed and need rebuilding. We have orphans who need to go to school. One Nigerian ECWA missionary was in a bus when a Muslim man pointed a gun at him and said, "Choose to remain a Christian and be killed, or convert". The missionary refused to convert and the Muslim man shot and killed him. He left his wife and five children now in school (*Christianity Today Magazine*, 16 October, 2014).

Boko Haram's violent attacks have left many children orphans, men and women have ended up as widows and widowers. The pain of losing either children or parents, affects individuals concerned socially and emotionally. Children are deprived of parental care, protection and love.

The Human Rights Watch (*Daily Trust* May 16, 2013:30) said that over 6,600 people have been murdered during Boko Haram's violent activities since 2009. Many people have migrated from "battle front" areas, which has also caused a lot of accidents that have left many church members injured and dead.

#### **4.3.2 The Destruction of Property**

The Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) and her members have lost properties worth millions of Naira to the Boko Haram. Many public and private properties including houses and places of worship have been destroyed. Some families did not lose their lives but lost their properties and some had their houses burnt. Elaigwu (2012:7) notes that many people have migrated due to Boko Haram's violence, many victims have been maimed for life and properties worth billions of naira have been vandalized and razed. According to Mulders,



(2016:25) between 2000 and 2014, about 1.3 million Christians left their place of residence and integrated into communities in Middle Belt states or Southern Nigeria because of Boko Haram-related violence. In 2015 Mulders asserted that nearly half a million Christians were still displaced by Boko Haram and over 40,000 of them, mainly by attacks by Fulani herdsmen (Mulders 2016:25). Besides killing and the destruction of property, the Boko Haram sect has a devastating impact on material life.

Alubo (2011:235) argues that both the immediate victims who flee as well as other victims who did not flee but remain in their destroyed places, suffer material loss. Alubo asserts that displacement brought loss and it also made the sustenance of material life unsafe in many ways. He observes:

First, food security was jeopardized as people either could not grow crops or had to migrate to safety far away from the farms. In either situation, but particularly for those forced to flee, food security became a major issue. Secondly, people were hamstrung with regard to meeting other needs as crops could not be harvested, let alone sold. In effect, the main sources of income became unavailable. This means that other needs such as school and hospital fees, which are regularly raised as part of deregulation and commercialization, become more difficult to meet and this has a profound implication on education and material life. Thirdly, the crises reveal the interdependence of rural life and how threats, from any side, invariably affect the other (Alubo 2011:235).

Not only did Boko Haram inflict visible violence on human life and property, its violence has also taken a toll on material life. Alubo observes the devastating effects of violence on efforts to build the peace and bring about reconciliation (Alubo 2011:235).

#### **4.3.3 The Displacement of People**

One of the social effects that Boko Haram's violence has is the displacement of people from their historical native homes and land. Many people including men, women and children have been displaced, many have been traumatized and their future shattered by the Boko Haram sect. Other survivors whose houses have been burnt and part of their families killed have also been displaced with all the unsavory attendant consequences. Many ECWA families have become refugees in their own country.



The social dislocation and displacement affect ECWA church members of all ages. Minchakpu (2011) reported that Boko Haram members had rampaged in the Yobe state town of Geidam and destroyed all Christians-owned businesses. Five of the church buildings in town were ruined, and the violence displaced about 700 Christians” (*World Watch Monitor* 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2011). According to Mulder, between 2000 and 2014, over 13,000 churches were abandoned, closed and destroyed in Northern Nigeria (2016:25).

Abah (2013) in reporting on the internally displaced people says, “Thousands of displaced people are living in states or villages affected by the violence”. Solomon Jinga, 41, Pastor of the ECWA church in Gobbiya, told *Compass* that displaced Christians are living outside their village without any form of assistance (Minchakpu, 2011). Pastor Solomon maintained that “these 60 members of my church are now homeless, and they cannot return to the village because of the incessant attacks on them”. Khan & Hamidu (2015:34) lamenting over the condition of the displaced persons, states: “as a result of such forced migration, people could no longer settle down to farming activities and earn a decent living.”

Sexual violence is a tool used during the Boko Haram’s attacks on the ECWA church, as is the systematic abuse perpetrated against women and girls during the group abducts (HRW, 27 October 2014). Women and girls face a greater risk of gender-based violence (GBV) as a result of their displacement, whether in camps or in host communities, and particularly at night. Another implication of the Boko Haram’ violent activities is that many who run for their dear lives and became internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have no access to adequate shelter. The longer they remain in displacement, the greater the risk that their property will be damaged or destroyed.

Boko Haram and its variants have really wreaked havoc the ECWA church. The impact of the insurgents is devastating; various Christian and Christian communities have become refugees in their ancestral land, and homes, churches, and business places are destroyed. Christians are traumatized and displaced. John Hunt, an SIM Acting Nigerian director (2015), saw the condition of the displaced people when they took a trip to ECWA churches which were destroyed in Gongola, lamented: “Buildings are one thing; the human suffering another.” There was a report of people separated from families, not knowing if their loved ones were alive or dead, of hunger, and loss of property and livelihoods.

Klauser (2012:65) notes that the violence caused by Boko Haram has definitely sent many families and organizations into deep mourning as they ponder over the loss of those whose

lives were cut short so unexpectedly. Muanya, in response to the effects of Boko Haram's violence on Nigeria's Children, lamented:

This article pierces at the very heart of the monumental devastating humanitarian crises and untold hardship being suffered by innocent men, women, children and young people across northern Nigeria especially in the northeastern part of Nigeria. It has highlighted the misery and suffering unleashed on the most vulnerable groups; women and children in the troubled region. Entire communities and populations have been displaced from their ancestral homeland and made refugees (IDPs) in their own country. We have seen so much bloodshed in our land. This is very disheartening. Our tears are overflowing. This terror unleashed by the insurgents has shaken the very fabric of our society to its foundations, sowing seeds of suspicion, hatred and revenge (Effects of Boko Haram on Nigeria's children (*Global Fund for Children*, February 22, 2012 p.4).

According to Awojobi (2014:149), thousands of people are being displaced due to the persistent attacks by the dreaded Islamic sect called Boko Haram. He maintain that rape instils fear in women and dissuades them from moving around. According to him many women have fled to neighboring states for fear of rape by the Boko Haram (Awojobi 2014:148). Ogege asserts that people are no longer free to go about their economic activities for fear of being killed. This is made worse as thousands of people have migrated to neighbouring states (Ogege 2013:86).

Families are sometimes disorganized especially by the absence of real parents. Chinwokwu and Arop lamented on situation of children who are left without guardians or anyone to fend for them while young girls and women are forced into sexual trades (Chinwokwu & Arop 2014:47).

#### **4.3.4 Effects on Children, Youths and Adults**

The effects of the Boko Haram's violence activities on the ECWA church members are highly diverse and complex. The effects include feelings of fear, anger, anxiety, and depression. Young people are especially affected. Haruna (2013:92) notes that many young Christians in Northern Nigeria are full of anger and are seeking revenge. Otoo (2015:1) stresses that a lot of children in Nigeria, especially those in the northern and northeastern parts, live in constant fear due to Boko Haram's terrorist activities, which include abduction

and kidnapping of girls and women, use of teenage (and young) girls as suicide bombers, and wanton killing and destruction. Otoo (2015:2) says that beyond the widespread displacement, many children are killed or orphaned by these terrorist acts. Most children in the affected areas find themselves severely traumatized, while many are wounded or forced to live on the streets.

Abah (2015:2), a founder and Executive director of the Centre for Children's Health Education (CCHE), Orientation and Protection, stated that, "currently a lot of children are suffering and many more are being killed or abducted, and the air of panic and even helplessness continues to rise across most parts of Nigeria, in tandem with the escalating violence. But we will not relent in our efforts and with the support of our partners such as the Global Fund for Children (GFC), in bringing help to these innocent and at-risk children of Nigeria."

Researchers have found that violence and war have negative effects on the children, and these is sleep disorder, fear, and panic, poor performance and involvement in criminal violence (Sagi-Swartz, *et al*, 2008). Children are found to be victimized by or witness to different kinds of violence and wars especially in the community where the family lives.

Chinwokwu and Arop lamented that, "The threat and the experience of war and political violence are generally regarded as very distressful and traumatic for women, children and the aged of all sexes" (Chinwokwu & Arop 2014:44). According to Chinwokwu & Arop (2014:44), it has been found that political violence and war have negative effects on the children, and these include heightened aggression and violence, revenge seeking, anxiety, depression, withdrawal, sleep disorders, fear and panic, poor school performance and involvement in criminal violence.

#### **4.3.5 The Effect on Social Life**

The activities of the Boko Haram insurgents have worsened the existing hostility in the relations among the already polarized population along ethnic and religious affiliations. Prior to the current indiscriminate violent attacks, the insurgents attacked security and institutions but later directed their attacks against the Christians.

The relationship between Christians and Muslims has been strained and communities divided. Many people do not associate with those of other faiths. The Boko Haram attacks have led to counter attacks: Christians against Muslims, and Muslims against Christians. These negative

feelings according to Mulders, developed under the impact of riots, killing, acts of terrorism, attacks on church buildings, destruction, abductions, forced conversions, condescension, name calling, and discrimination in employment, at the market and in school (Mulders 2016:27).

Akinbi (2015:41-42) observes that the dangerous nature of the insurgency launched by the group, has pitched Christians and Muslims against each other, owing to the wanton destruction of churches in Northern Nigeria and lack of respect for the secularity of the nation. Akinbi describes the situation as upsetting the religious harmony in the country as according to him, if pushed to the wall, Christians will attack Muslims in other parts of the country. (Akinbi 2015:41,42).

Even before the emergence of Boko Haram, the relationship between Christians and Muslims was not perfect. There was the ‘Sharia Crises’ in Kaduna State in the year 2000 and this was closely followed by the ‘Miss World’ crisis in 2002, Christians and Muslims have been living with mutual suspicion. These crises did not only create tension, but also led residents of Kaduna to indirectly adopt segregated living (Alabelewe 2014). The two crises forced people to move their places of worship away from where their fellow worshippers are in minority to where they have people of their faith in the majority. Where such worship places were left behind, they had often served as the first targets during crises.

The social cohesion between the Muslims and Christians has been severely affected. Mutual trust has disappeared and Muslims and Christians have become increasingly separated groups. However the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) Gospel Church Tudun Nupawa in Kaduna donated assorted foodstuffs to the Muslims within its domain in the spirit of the holy month of Ramadan as part of efforts to foster peaceful religious coexistence (Alabelewe 2014).

#### **4.3.6 The Effect on Spiritual life**

The Boko Haram sect has made it explicitly clear that its aim is to Islamize the whole of Nigeria and establish a caliphate base on Sharia (Mulder 2016:30). Many attacks carried out on the ECWA church by the Boko Haram sect aim to scare Christians into abandoning their faith. The Boko Haram and the Fulani herdsmen attacks and the Sharia law being practised in some northern states have similar effects upon Christianity. Mulder (2016:30) notes that

many churches in Northern Nigeria have seen a decline in membership and attendance, those who have stayed show an increased commitment to their faith and church.

The Boko Haram repeated attacks on the ECWA church in Northern Nigeria especially in Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi and Yobe States, pose insurmountable obstacles to church attendance for large number of ECWA members. The impact of Boko Haram's violence activities will affect the spiritual lives of the members and where the threat of attacks persists may lead to their fear of attending church services and weekly activities. ECWA members are overcome by grief at the loss or maiming of their loved ones. Fear may cause ECWA church members to stay away from church activities for long periods.

#### **4.4 The Response of ECWA to the Violence of Boko Haram**

We are living in a society where endemic violence seems to rule the order of the day. Therefore, Christians need to have a robust theological response to the violence inflicted on the church on a daily basis. God intended his children to be active in glorifying him. It is heartbreaking to hear the story of Christians been killed, churches been destroyed, and peaceful citizens exiled, but how much more devastating and tragic for those who are affected. It is right that the ECWA and Christian denominations ask how to respond to this violence in a Christian way. This violence needs to stop for peace to reign so that refugees and those affected can be healed and made safe.

Whether an individual copes with a significant loss or death in a positive and constructive rather than in a negative or destructive manner depends on the types of coping mechanisms used and the quality of support being given.

Wink (1992:191) translates the beatitude about the meek as "Blessed are the non-violence, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). He argues that Jesus' way is not individualistic, but collective; it usually involves the actions of organizations, communities, social classes, or racial groups. Christians are advised not to become involved in violence because it does not please God.

##### **4.4.1 Negative Response**

An essential part of the training Jesus provided to his disciples was preparing them for persecution and their response to it (Matthew 10:16-42). The natural human responses to persecution are worry and fear, leading to the dangers of which Jesus warns the believers,

namely denying Christ, loving one's family or one's life more than Christ, and refusing to receive those who are wanted because of their witness (Matthew 10:33-42).

Windass (1964:152;153) argues that violence grows by a chain-reaction, tending always to increase in intensity. The violent response has an inherent tendency to excess, not to balance but to overwhelm the harm done - a scalp for a tooth, and two eyes for one. He maintains that sometimes the violent response may be submerged, but this does not necessarily mean that it is extinct. Although the teaching and example of Christ continuously calls us away from violence and hatred and bloodshed, the world has a built-in resistance to this call (Windass 1964:126).

ECWA Good News church Wusasa Zaria was bombed by the Boko Haram on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2012, which left 23 people dead. Some Christian youths in Kaduna State seeing the Islamic militants bombing Churches and killing Christians, became frustrated with the government's inability to stop a string of such attacks, responded with reprisals and killed at least seven (*The Christian Science Monitor* June 17, 2012).

In reaction to the action of the Christian youth, Garba asserted: "Until today, Christians living in the predominately-Muslim north have mostly resisted being provoked to violence, responding instead with calls on the government to suppress Boko Haram and reestablish security" (Garba, 2012:1 *The Christian Science Monitor* 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2012). Ignatius Kasuwa, an analyst from Kaduna (2012:1), condemning the reprisal attack said, "The reprisal attack is wrong because the solution to the country's insecurity is ensuring dialogue with the sect members who are attacking Christians and even Muslims" (*Christian science monitor* 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2012).

Condemning reprisals like Kasuwa, Wink (1992:126) also notes that Jesus repudiates violence. He mentions Jesus' disciples, James and John, who wanted to be violent and requested permission to command fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans for not receiving Jesus. Instead Jesus rebuked them. (Luke 9:51-56). Wink believes that the God whom Jesus reveals refrains from all forms of reprisal and demands no victims (Wink 1992:149). Violence is not found in Jesus' mission of Salvation. Wink opined that God does not endorse holy war or just war or religions of violence (1992:149).

Wink (1992:216) argues that violence can never stop violence but its very success leads others to imitate it. Wink's argument is a genuine argument, there is a Hausa proverb that

says, “Abinda hankuri bai baka ba reshin hankuri bazai baka ba”, that is, “What patience could not give you, impatience will not give you either.” That means, we need to be patient and forgive one another in our daily relationship no matter what happened. Sauer and Howell (2010:17) believe that forgiveness and reconciliation is the proper Christian response to suffering and martyrdom. They maintain that Christians must not let evil succeed by responding with violence and retribution, but let the cross of Christ shape their relationships with others.

The former President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Akinola (2006), announced to the Muslim brothers that, “they do not have the monopoly of violence in this nation.” He also demanded protection and compensation for church structures that had been destroyed. McCain (2005:24-35) takes a less retaliatory position, claiming that Jesus’ followers should not seek reprisals for churches being burned down or other acts of violence. Windass states:

Every Christian must have a protester in his heart; anyone who has not learned to weep over the savagery and hatred of modern war can hardly claim to have made any contact with the mind of Christ. The horror that the Christian feels is not that of being killed, but that of killing; not that of being a martyr, but of being a murderer; not the fear of suffering with Christ, but that of crucifying him afresh in the person of our fellow men. This is the backbone of our tradition, and must be the backbone of an informed Christian conscience (Windass 1964:129).

Jesus’ rejection of violence cannot be ignored. It was a rejection rooted in history, and it had profound historical consequences. Kunhiyop responds as follows:

I encourage people by reminding them that a church is not made of blocks and buildings, though we attach ourselves a lot to such. The church is made up of people who believe in Jesus Christ. Members need to teach each other to defend themselves and take care of their own security because the government cannot. If you see gunmen coming to attack, you call the police. However, by the time the police come the gunmen have already finished you. When people in one torched village called police around 2 am., the police said they did not have a vehicle and gas so they did not come. This happens all the time. You cannot be sure whether you will be alive tomorrow or whether you will return from the office. This summer a bomb exploded about a block from my place, we could have been destroyed. I tell leaders, “Be ready.



Your life could be taken anytime (*Christianity Today Magazine*, 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2014:1)

Kunhiyop added that when he was growing up, the belief was that if you are slapped on one cheek, you turn the other cheek, a passive response. Now the young people are saying, “These guys come and kill us in our churches, destroy our churches and buildings. Are we just supposed to watch them? We are not going to take this sitting down. We are going to fight back. They destroy our church; we destroy a mosque. They kill our people; we want to go and kill them”(Christian Today Magazine 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2014).

Gado’s (*Vanguard News* 2012) response to the reprisals that followed the bomb attacks in Kaduna, is “that those burning churches and going after Christian are doing so because they sincerely believe they are offering God a sacrifice. Nevertheless, what is happening should not take us by surprise because Jesus prepared us for what is happening, but we should not respond in kind. We do not want reprisal; we do not want revenge because God says, “leave vengeance to me”.

Gado appealed to the youth, young men and young women of the ECWA Church in this manner:

Do not take the law into your hands. The God that we serve is going to fight for us; our God is not dead. If people fight for their gods, our God will fight for us. Leave the fighting to God. God’s way of dealing with it will be sweeter and more devastating than the way we will deal with it. He appeals to the youth again and said please and please, do not do anything that will not be a good testimony to what Jesus said would happen (*Vanguard News* July 15, 2012).

Jennings (2008:42) notes that in 1Peter we read the Apostle’s instruction to follow Christ’s example and suffer for doing good:

When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to Him who judges justly” (2:23). Later Peter encourages his Christian readers to “rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s suffering, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed.

Lamenting that Christians have been attacked and killed without provocation, Pokti still (2012.9) beseeched Christians to refrain from seeking and said, “We also wish to call on



Christians to remain calm, and not to embark on any act of reprisal or vengeance, as this will constitute a criminal act and a violation of the teaching of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” Wink (1992:186) advised Christians to take a look at Matthew 5:39a, which reads “Do not repay evil with evil.” Wink’s point is that Christians should neither react violently to evil, nor pay back evil with evil and should not let evil dictate the terms of their opposition, and not let violence draw them into mimetic rivalry (Wink 1992:186).

Wink quotes the early theologians and states:

Justin Martyr is representative when he declares, “we who once killed each other not only do not make war on each other, but in order not to lie or deceive our inquisitors we gladly die for the confession of Christ.” For we no longer take up ‘Sword against nation,’” wrote Origen, “nor do we learn war anymore,’ having become children of peace, for the sake of Jesus.” Tertullian was, if anything, more adamant: Christ, “in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier.” “But how will a Christian man war,” he asks, “nay how will he serve [as a soldier] even in peace, without a sword, which the Lord has taken away” (Wink, 1992:209;210).

The teaching of the early theologians here is that Christians should not become involved in the army because this may lead them to participating in war, which they consider as against the teaching of the Bible. They see Christians as children of peace do not learn war anymore for the sake of Jesus.

Bamidele (2015) reported that ECWA President Gado, while addressing the General Church Council (GCC), at the ECWA International Conference Hall in Jos, stressed that the lives of Christian leaders in the North were constantly under threat while some northern ruling elite “hide under Sharia Law to discriminate against Christians and the property of Christians”(Daily Times 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2015).

Gado taking a swipe at the Kebbi state government said:

A typical example is in Birnin Kebbi, the capital, where the only parcel of land on which Christians are allowed to build churches is denied an access road. The ECWA is worst hit by this systematic religious and ethnic cleansing in the north. The level of persecution of Christians in Northern Nigeria is perhaps second to none in Africa. In some parts of the north, villages that are wholly or largely owned by Christian are denied government services such as access roads, education, health care, employment,

political representation, commerce, security and agriculture (General Church Council 16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2015).

The General Church Council of the ECWA noted that after so many years of devastating effects of Boko Haram on government properties, security outfits and especially on the church of Jesus Christ, the Federal Government is making history with the ongoing military operations aimed at routing this evil terrorist group on Nigerian soil. Council commended the Nigerian security operations and the multi-national Joint Task Force. Council called on them to adhere strictly to the rules of engagement in the course of carrying out their duties and prayed that God will preserve, protect, and grant them total victory (GCC meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015).

Umeagbalasis et al (2016 as cited in *Open Doors*; an anti-Christians persecution group: 2016), states that terrorism through Boko Haram insurgency was extensively used by the referenced fundamentalists of the north for purposes of uprooting and decimating Christian communities in the core north and for the actualization of the northern presidency. These are the core objectives of the Boko Haram insurgency as part of its “Islamization of Nigeria project” (source: *The Nigerian Voice*, 8 May, 2016). The state of the church in Northern Nigeria can be described as follows:

The council members of ECWA church in their 62<sup>nd</sup> General Church Council meeting frowned at the way and manner Christians especially in northern Nigeria are being treated at best as second-class citizens or at worst worthy of death of the kind not even dogs are subjected to. The guarantee of worship by the constitution of Nigeria seems to be only for some and not others (GCC meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015).

While expressing concern regarding the level of destruction caused by the Boko Haram insurgents in the Northeast, Gado (2015) notes that Christians suffer series of attacks often pre-planned and well-coordinated. He also asserts that often Christians in the North are forced to convert to Islam (*Daily Times* 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2015). McElrea (2001:5) advised that Christians should not take revenge, but leave everything to God who is the only perfect judge. McElrea states that:

If there is to be vengeance for human sin it is for God to mete it out, for God is the only perfect judge... To take revenge and demand a pound for a pound is to go down a blind alley. No good ever came from it. It simply multiplies evil. It also presupposes

that the one who takes revenge is morally superior to the one avenged (McElrea 2001:5).

As the ECWA responded negatively because of human nature, they saw the need as followers of Jesus Christ, to show love to their enemies.

#### 4.4.2 Positive Response

Galadima (2014) was impressed by the love Christians are showing to the Muslims and said, instead of falling into a cycle of hatred and violence, Christians in Nigeria are doing the opposite. They reach out to their Muslim neighbours in love and kindness (*Mission Network News* 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2014).

Galadima describes one situation where a mission partnered with the ECWA church to provide food, water, medicine, and other supplies to a mainly Muslim refugee camp. While distributing the supplies, ECWA students engaged in conversation with some of refugees and began to develop friendships. According to Galadima, a Muslim man called one of the students and said, ‘Look, I am tired of this religion, I want to be a Christian,’ shares Galadima. That man and his entire family came to know Christ, and the ECWA church connected them with discipleship materials so they could grow in their relationship with the Lord (*Mission Network News* 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2014).

Galadima concluded, “The Nigerian church is doing its best to stand strong” and demonstrate the compassion of Christ” (*Mission Network News* 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2014).

In the wake of the October attacks in 2015, John Hunt initiated the need to help the displaced people, giving them food, clothing, blankets, shelter, and medical care. The assistance was sent through the Stefano’s Foundation<sup>34</sup> which distributed the relief items to the displaced people in the camp because of the security situation. Alabelewe (2014) reported that the Imams were invited to the Sunday church service at the ECWA Gospel Church Tudun Nupawa in Kaduna South Local Government Area of Kaduna State by Rev. Yunusa Nmadu

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<sup>34</sup>Stefano’s Foundation Project - Legal Aid; Media Awareness; Rehabilitation and Reconstruction; Trauma Counseling; Widows Support. Their Aims and Objectives are: 1. Show God’s compassion – by visiting prisoners of faith and prisoners of conscience in Nigerian prisons. 2. Serve God’s church and speak as God’s Advocate – by lobbying for Christians in difficult situations around the areas of persecution, by involving government and local authority. They have successfully defended many Christians, secured fairer treatment for them in their communities and been instrumental in resolving conflicts that could otherwise have escalated. 3. Share God’s love – through our involvement with Christians who are being unjustly treated. The Website is [Stefanofoundation.org](http://Stefanofoundation.org)

who said the invitation was not to change their faith but to worship with them and build love between Christians and Muslims (*Sunday Magazine* 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2014).

This is an example of religious dialogue. Here is the biblical teaching on how to respond to violence. For instance 2 Corinthians 12:10 reads, “That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” Clinton asserts that in this bible passage Clinton asserts that the Apostle Paul includes five forms of weakness (Clinton in Eitel 2008:55). Clinton divides the five forms into two sections and illustrates them as weakness, distress, and difficulties which he said, could be caused by life in general or others while, insults and persecution is another form which he said are specifically caused by other people (Clinton in Eitel 2008:55).

Clinton suggests that Christians should respond by blessing those who are doing violence, be content that this is of God, endure the pain with faith and persevere in being faithful to the gospel. Paye has also notes that the Bible reveals that there were times when the Church responded to persecution by flight; avoidance and/or engagement (Paye in Eitel 2008:57). Paye argues that whenever the Scriptures portray Jesus or the Apostolic church intentionally leaving an area or people because of opposition it means flight. His second argument is that passages where the biblical characters knew of possible persecution and avoided such areas, can be seen as examples of avoidance. Finally, Paye asserts that the most common response of the church to persecution is engagement (Paye in Eitel, 2008:57,58). The engagement according to the explanation of Paye, can be understood as the Church interacting with her opponents through proclamation of the gospel even in the face of persecution.

#### **4.5 The Challenges for the ECWA**

To understand ‘religious violence and ‘love your enemies’ is a very important Spiritual challenge. The Biblical command to love your enemies and to pray for those who persecute you is humanly impossible, but with the grace of God it can be done.

The ECWA needs to take a fresh look at Jesus’ teachings. He taught his followers to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9), and advocated active peacemaking in His life and ministry in the gospel, particularly in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:79; 14; 7:50; 10:5-6; 19:38, 42; 24:36). He also taught that his disciples should love their enemies (Matt.5:43-48).

ECWA President, Rev Dr. Jeremiah Gado (2014:20), while donating relief materials to the victims of the Nyanya bomb attacks in the various hospitals in the Federal Capital Territory

(FCT) Abuja, explained that both religions preach peace and lamented that the bombers have selected to carry out the destruction of lives and property as well bring terror to the nation in the name of Islam (*Today's Challenge Magazine* July, 2014).

Gado argued that those throwing the bombs are doing it in the name of Islam and the most affected persons are Christians. He noted that both faiths had been placed a challenge regarding how to respond to that act of terror, especially as it was clear that the perpetrators aimed to divide the nation (*Today's Challenge Magazine*, July 2014). Gado (2014:20) advised that the Christian and Muslim communities should not respond by blaming each other for the violent attacks of Boko Haram because doing so would distract them and the attackers would achieve their goal.

ECWA members are faced with various challenges. One is the challenge to cope with the trauma inflicted on the Christian community by Boko Haram's violent activities. There are processes that according to Thesnaar, will help in dealing with the challenges faced by the ECWA (Thesnaar 2011:32). The processes as are, 1. suffering causes the victim to be powerless and helpless, 2. expression and nomination and 3. liberation from suffering (Thesnaar 2011: 32, 33). Thesnaar argues that "victims often experience that they are entirely controlled by the nature of the situation, leaving them feeling totally powerless" (Thesnaar 2011:32). According to Thesnaar, suffering does not provide the victim with any room to express himself or herself and in this case, Thesnaar posits that the victim is in a sense forced to be silent.

Regarding the expression and nomination, Thesnaar explains that empowering victims by putting words to their feelings will help them to break the silence they were caught in (Thesnaar 2011:33). Thesnaar further asserts that the victims are ready to be liberated from their pain as soon as they succeed in communicating something of their suffering and focus away from themselves on change (Thesnaar 2011:33). Thesnaar believes that the possibility of liberation from suffering is when victims begin to look the past in the eye, face the truth, remember it and continue on their journey of hope and meaning (Thesnaar 2011:33).

What ECWA members lost during the attacks including loss of lives and property has a devastating effect on their hearts. It is important that they be given trauma counselling to deal with emotional challenges.

#### 4.5.1 The Muslim - Christian Relationship

There is great need to try to understand more deeply the nature of the relationship between Muslims and Christians<sup>35</sup>, since each religions seem to be influenced by its own conception of reality.

Smith (2014:1) opined that throughout nearly fifteen centuries of Muslim-Christian encounter, individual adherents of both traditions often have lived peaceably with each other. Things have certainly changed. Smith (2014:1) observes that in recent years relationships between Muslims and Christians across the globe have become increasingly polarized, fanned by anti-Islamic rhetoric and fear mongering. According to Smith, a number of verses in the Qur'an call for treating Christians and Jews with respect as recipients of God's divine message. However, Muslims have found it difficult not to see Christians as polytheists because of their doctrine of the Trinity. Christians as Smith asserts, have also viewed the Qur'an as fraudulent and Muhammad as an imposter (Smith 2014:1).

Weimann (2004:17) argues that there is formation of independent stereotypes about other within Muslim and Christian communities. Weimann elaborates on his argument by stating that:

If you ask a Christian in Nigeria about which group constitutes the majority of the population in the country, it is likely he will tell you that the Christians do.. If you ask a Muslim, he will tell you, of course, the Muslims. The Christian will go on and tell you that the Muslims (being a minority) have always tried to dominate the country. The Muslim will emphasize that the Muslim majority is being denied their rights in the present dispensation, and that the "Christian" media are trying to drag the Muslims' reputation in the mud (Weimann 2004:17).

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<sup>35</sup> Many areas of Africa, of course, are suffering greatly today as a result of deteriorating conditions and relations between Muslim and Christian groups, one obvious example is Nigeria. Since 1990 conflict between Muslims and Christians in Northern Nigeria has become violent and often deadly. The full picture is complex and related directly to the British Colonialist venture in Nigeria. The relations between the two communities are based not only on religion, but more specifically are the result of a combination of economic, political, and religious factors.

The British captured the Sokoto Caliphate in 1903, after which it became known as the Northern Protectorate, which in 1960, became part of the independent Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Hausa-Fulani, the dominant leadership, were Muslims, and the ethnic minorities were primarily Christians. This racial-ethnic divide remains as the major identifier of groups today, even though issues of conflict may have nothing specifically to do with religion. Interfaith conflict in Nigeria in the contemporary period took a more serious turn when, in 1991, some Muslims objected to Christian's evangelization efforts and fighting broke out. These troubles have continued regularly, often with orgies of killing and looting, much of it unrelated to religion or ethnicity (see Smith Jane Muslim-Christian Relation 2015:6).

The problem of which group constitutes the majority of the population shows the different assessments of the mutual relationship by the two groups (Weimann 2004:17,18). Weimann believes that the dispute between the two religion is not about religion, it is about land ownership and resource control, political power and participation (Weimann 2004:18).

To gain a platform for communicating the gospel message, Lindley and Wall therefore, assert that Christians must interact with Muslim friends, neighbours, or co-workers and even strangers (Lindley and Wall in Eitel 2008:205). Lindley and Wall further note that such interaction should be built on models provided by Jesus himself, Paul and other men of faith. Lindley and Wall believe that a comfort in this time of violence and growing hostility is that Jesus preaches peace to Christians and Muslims alike, putting an end to the hostility of both through the cross (Lindley in Eitel 2008:211).

According to Lindley and Wall, peacemakers work to promote the reconciliation that Paul describes, recognizing that it is only possible through God's work through Jesus, not man's. . In interacting with the Muslims Lindley and Wall opined, Christians must avoid using violent words while simultaneously adhering to biblical models of communication and service. In this respect, so he argues, they will more quickly usher in the peace of Christ to a broken situation (Lindley and Wall in Eitel 2008:212).

#### **4.6 Healing and Trauma as a Challenge**

The ECWA should deal with traumatization because of continued violent attacks of the Boko Haram by loving and caring for those that are in trauma. The ECWA as a church needs to provide leadership and guidance to members on how to deal with and respond to the violence. Persecution is a well-known characteristic of the early church. The ECWA should design a programme that will help its members who experienced suffering and trauma during Boko Haram's violent attacks. Wan and Fancher believe that those who experienced suffering and trauma of immense proportions needs a carefully designed approach that will be most effective for ministry in their region (Wan and Fancher in Eitel 2008:283). The leadership of the ECWA should strive to address the core issues of its members who have experienced suffering and trauma in order to establish a foundation for the health and vitality of the church of the next generation in Northern Nigeria.



#### **4.6.1 An Ecclesiology in a Context of Violence and Suffering: Missiological Imperative**

How can the ECWA understand itself in the context of conflict in Northern Nigeria? Various scholars have proposed models as to how the church ought to understand itself. In his book, “Models of the Church” Dulles proposes five classic models or theological perspectives by which the nature and mission of the church can be understood, namely the Church as Institution, the Church as Mystical Communion, the Church as Sacrament, the Church as Herald and lastly, the Church as Servant.

For the purposes of this study, one of Dulles’ models namely “the Church as Servant,” will be considered as it seems to be more appropriate in the context in which the ECWA operates. What now follows is an elaboration on this model:

##### **4.6.1.1 The Church as Servant**

Dulles’s model of Church as Servant is relevant to this study. Dulles illustrates that the model of the church as servant is a very important feature of the Church of the New Testament. Dulles draws attention to the fact that the church as servant model is important in the context of an active relationship between her and the world (Dulles, 1974:83). Dulles illustrates this point by referring to Christ as the One who came into the world to serve and not to be served (Dulles, 1974:85).

Dulles’s models seem to set the church in a subordinate role to God in serving humanity in the world just as Jesus washed his disciples’ feet and commissioned them to do as he did (John 13:1-17). Hear what Jesus said in verses 4 and 5 of John 13 “Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you”. (NIV)

The ECWA in this case, should consider itself as part of the total human family, sharing the same concerns as the rest of men. Following in the footsteps of Jesus, the suffering servant, the ECWA should announce the coming of the kingdom in not only words, through preaching and proclamation, but also more particularly in work, in her ministry of reconciliation, of binding up wounds, or suffering service, of healing. Jesus was the man for others, so must the ECWA be the community for others.



The Church must offer itself as one of the principal agents whereby the human community is judged by the enduring values of Jesus's Gospel, namely freedom, justice, peace, compassion and reconciliation. Dulles quotes Cardinal Cushing of Boston as follows :

Jesus came not only to proclaim the coming of the kingdom; he came to give himself for its realization. He came to serve, to heal, to reconcile, and to bind up wounds. Jesus we may say is in an exceptional way, the Good Samaritan. He is the one who comes alongside of us in our need and in our sorrow; he extends himself for our sake. He truly dies that we might live and he ministers to us that we might be healed (Dulles, 1974:86).

In a second section of this dissertation he argues that the Church must be the body of Christ, the suffering servant (Dulles, 1974:86). According to Dulles, the message of Cardinal Cushing of Boston, applies to the individual Christian, who is called to be a man for others. Dulles that the fundamental mission of the church is reconciliation because it is the overcoming of the various alienations that vex humanity today (Dulles, 1974:90).

To go by the statement of the Cardinal that Jesus came to serve, to heal, to reconcile, to bind up wounds, means that those who claim to be his followers need to follow in his footsteps. Dulles's model of the church as servant stresses one fact, namely the church's mission is to serve others. We are called to help one another, to suffer for one another, and even to be available for one another.

The ECWA as suffering servant ought to focus on serving the Lord, who himself was victim of violence, pain and suffering. Bosch describes this perspective with Salvation as goal as follows:

Those who know that God will one day wipe away all tears will not accept with resignation the tears of those who suffer and are oppressed now. Anyone who knows that one day there will be no more disease can and must actively anticipate the conquest of disease in individuals and society now. In addition, anyone who believes that the enemy of God and humans will be vanquished will already oppose him now in his machinations in family and society. For all this has to do with Salvation (Bosch, 1991:400).

The ECWA can learn from the servant leadership of Jesus Christ who served to the point of death just to save humanity. The ECWA as a mission church needs to seek reconciliation

with the Boko Haram and also endure the hardship imposed by them. The ECWA should also remember that the church's mission is to suffer for one another in order to save the lives of those who have been chained by the devil.

#### **4.7 Forgiveness and Reconciliation in the Context of Conflict and Suffering (As a Challenge)**

The message to the church today must include the concept and experience of a suffering church. Suffering in the context of this study, refers to enduring physical pain, injustice, physical ailments, and separation from loved ones, discomfort and tribulation as a result of violence. Musk (2003:232) explaining conflict and suffering, asserts that they are inherently a part of Christian ministry, which should be practised in our world today as follows:

Christ's call to Saul of Tarsus is to conflict and suffering. He confides to Ananias that the transformed Pharisee is 'my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show how much he must suffer for my name' (Acts 9:15-16). In turn, the apostle passes on the same. He writes from prison to the believers whom he has founded in the faith: 'For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have' (Philippians 1:29-30) (Musk, 2003:232).

The concepts forgiveness and reconciliation will be explored in more detail below. The views of scholars will help us understand forgiveness and reconciliation better and their importance in the lives of the followers of Jesus Christ.

Gort, Jansen and Vroom, (2002:104) define reconciliation as a way of processing towards the restoration of mutually amicable relations between individuals or sections of a population. According to these scholars reconciliation means simply the cessation of a situation of conflict and disrupted relations between individuals or groups. The presupposition behind the Christian concept of reconciliation according to these scholars, is that a real and comprehensive restoration of mutually amicable human restoration and healing of the relation between God and humankind has definite, immediate implications on the social, economic and political levels (Gort, Jason and Vroom, 2002:104).

Meyers (1999:119) describes reconciliation as often being very hard to achieve.. According to him, reconciliation is very hard because the most frequent reason for declaring someone

“other” is that, harm has been done to you and your community. Myers agrees with Mira Slav Volf’s definition of reconciliation that, “the beginning of reconciliation and hence the path to justice and peace is the embrace of the other, in spite of all that the other has done.” “There can be no justice without the will to embrace” (Mira Slav Volf cited in Myers 1999:118). Dawson cited in Helmick and Petersen (2001:230) argues that reconciliation can take place when one brings his broken heart to God and honestly confronts the past for healing to take place. Dawson believes that before we even contemplate forgiveness, we need to face what really happened and bring it to the foot of the cross (Helmick and Petersen, 2001:230, 231).

Schreiter cited by Skreslet (2012:33) believes that reconciliation in the context of missiology has significance “not only as a way of speaking of God’s good news for the world, but as a way of doing mission itself”. Skreslet therefore, views reconciliation as Biblical and Apostle Paul’s messages in Ephesians 2:13-22; Romans 5:8-11; Colossians 1:19-20 as examples by saying that according to Paul, not only do Jew and Greek find their essential unity in Christ, but that the cross of Christ is the means by which humanity and everything else in the created order have become reconciled to God (Skreslet, 2012:34).

Skreslet also draws attention to the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 and Matthew 5:44 to show how important the ethic of reconciling love and forgiveness is in Christian mission. In the resurrection story, when Jesus appears, according to Skreslet, “the disciples are confronted with their sense of loss and guilt (Skreslet 2012:34). Nevertheless, Skreslet argues that the encounters between Jesus and his disciples are moments of healing and he further holds that Jesus implicitly demonstrates his willingness to forgive his remorseful disciples while offering them encouragement for the future (Skreslet, 2012:34).

The message here is that no matter the violence committed, there should be reconciliation and forgiveness following the example of Jesus who was a victim of violence and betrayal and who shows by his actions how reconciliation can permeate the church’s mission as a spirituality, as a ministry, and as a strategy. Karkkainen (2013:364) defines reconciliation<sup>36</sup> as healing and bringing together broken relationships. In view of this, he further argues that reconciliation of the metaphors have the potential of being inclusive and comprehensive, encompassing ideas. He describes the ideas as:

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<sup>36</sup> Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and reconcile to your brother; then come and offer your gift (Matthew 5:23-24).

Cosmic reconciliation, the Hebrew notion of Shalom, the overcoming of barriers between Christians, the work of the Church in the world, peacemaking, movements towards ethnic reconciliation and the renewal of ecological balance between humanity and its natural environment (Karkkainen, 2013:364).

For Christians to be identified with Jesus as Saviour there is need for them to emulate his constituted model by their self-emptying and humble service. Bosch's emphases on Jesus's cross was that it stands for reconciliation between estranged individuals and groups, between the oppressor and the oppressed (Bosch, 1991:526). Bosch argues that reconciliation is not a mere sentimental harmonizing of conflicting groups, but demands sacrifice from both the oppressor and the oppressed.

He believed that reconciliation should bring an end to oppression and injustice, which should lead to commitment to a new life of mutuality, justice, and peace (Bosch 1991:526). According to Bosch (1991:526) "in addition to reconciliation, then, the cross missiologically also means a ministry of love of enemies, of forgiveness." Segundo argues, "that loving is worthwhile, whatever it may cost in self-giving and even in death" (Bosch, 1991:526).

Sauer and Howell (2010:46) believe that the cross of Christ is an exemplary model or a pattern of ministry in which we are invited to participate in the suffering of Christ for the sake of His name. They argue, "the fact that Christians experience persecution in itself is not a mark of Christian spirituality and maturity, but the way in which they endure and choose to respond to it" (Sauer and Howell, 2010:84).

According to these scholars therefore due to its internal solidarity and ethic that is visibly friendly to people outside, the persecuted Church of Jesus Christ gains credibility in its visibility due to its love of the neighbour and its foregoing of all violence (Sauer and Howell, 2010:84). Practicing such a response to persecution is difficult, but Christians can only do so with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Volf (1996:290) argues that the drama of Salvation starts and ends with violence. He asserts that without violence, Salvation's central act is unthinkable. Citing his example from the New Testament, Volf notes that:

When Jesus Christ enters the stage of history, King Herod, fearing for his throne, slaughters the innocents to eliminate a potential rival (Matthew 2); on the last pages of the Bible, when history finally comes to an end, a great war takes place in which Jesus

Christ casts the beast and the false prophet into the fiery lake and kills their followers with the sword of his mouth (Revelation 19). In addition, in the central act of the New Testament drama, the rulers of this age plan and execute the brutal murder of Jesus Christ using a mock trial to give it political legitimacy (Volf, 1996:291).

Volf believes that a Christian perspective on violence must be won by reflecting on attitudes to violence in this whole drama of Jesus Christ's coming into the world, his living in the world and his judging it (Volf, 1996:291). Volf sees the cross of Jesus as breaking the cycle of violence. He argues that Jesus has provided the ultimate example of his command to replace the principle of retaliation ("an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth") by hanging on the cross with the principle of nonresistance ("if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also") Matthew 5:38-42 (Volf, 1996:291).

Volf further explains that by suffering violence as an innocent victim, Jesus took upon himself the aggression of the persecutors; he broke the vicious cycle of violence by absorbing it upon himself (Volf, 1996:291-2). Discouraging retaliation or revenge, Volf refers to Jesus who refused to be sucked into the automatism of revenge, but sought to overcome evil by doing good - even at the cost of his life.

Volf (1996:292) argues that the accounts of Jesus's death agree that he suffered unjust violence. Volf sees Jesus as a scapegoat. Jesus was hated without cause and he was an innocent victim – this is not to say that he was an arbitrarily chosen victim. Volf furthermore asserts, "In a world of deception and oppression, Jesus' innocence, his truthfulness and his justice were reason enough for hatred. He notes that Jesus was a threat, and precisely because of his threatening innocence, he was made a scapegoat (Volf, 1996:292).

Jesus is our greatest example of true forgiveness. He forgave the people who wrongfully harmed him to such an extent that at the cross, he even asked his Father to forgive them (Luke 23:34). Forgiveness is unconditional and a complete letting go of the wrong done to you a not keeping of an account against someone or something. According to Volf, the one way to embrace the evildoers is to act as if their sin was not there. Volf advised that Christians should see Jesus on the cross as their model (Volf, 1996:294). For Volf, Jesus on the cross as model means Christians should say of the perpetrators, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Moltmann cited by Volf (1996:122) says:

With this prayer of Christ the universal religion of revenge is overcome and the universal law of retaliation is annulled. In the name of the Crucified, from now on only forgiveness holds sway. Christianity that has the right to appeal to him is a religion of reconciliation. To forgive those who have wronged one is an act of highest sovereignty and great inner freedom. In forgiving and reconciling, the victims are superior to the perpetrators and free themselves from compulsion to evil deeds.

Christ's crucifixion was more than simply another instance as of an innocent person's suffering. Volf believes that forgiveness is necessary but doubts if it will suffice. He therefore states:

Forgiveness is the boundary between exclusion and embrace. It heals the wounds that the power - acts of exclusion have inflicted and breaks down the dividing wall of hostility. Yet it leaves a distance between people, an empty space of neutrality that allows them either to go their separate ways in what is sometimes called "peace" or to fall into each other's arms and restore broken communion (Volf, 1996:125, 126).

The reason why we can embrace perpetrators in forgiveness, according to Volf, is that God has embraced them through atonement (Volf 1996:295). The cross of Christ should teach us that the only alternative to violence is self-giving love, willingness to absorb violence in order to embrace the other in the knowledge that truth and justice have been, and will be upheld by God (Volf, 1996:295)

Jesus died a violent death. Most if not all the apostles also ended their lives in martyrdom. James died in Jerusalem at the hand of Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1-2). His brother John most likely died in enforced exile on the Island of Patmos. Peter and Paul are believed to have been executed during the violent Neronian persecution of mid-first century AD (*Christian Solidarity Worldwide* 2015).

Reconciliation is very important in the life of every human being. If Christians claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, there is a need to follow His example because He reconciled Christians with God. Deyoung points us to the fact that reconciliation is necessary for people holding different opinions. and states that:

In 1990s, Muslim and Judaic religious leaders in Palestine and Israel developed a draft of "a first-time-ever treaty or covenant between Judaism and Islam." This occurred quietly out of sight of the official negotiations led by U.S. President Bill

Clinton between the political leaders of Israel and Palestinian. The Sheikhs and Rabbis envisioned “a parallel track of peacemaking that focused on religion” in the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis. The religious leaders “hoped that the public events surrounding this, and the accompanying symbolism, such as the jolting effect of chief rabbis and sheikhs embracing, would create a religious-psychological breakthrough that would generate its own momentum of peacemaking (Deyoung, 2007:150).

Even though the parallel religious process was not implemented, Deyoung believes that the idea must become reality in the future if peace is to come to Jerusalem. Deyoung urges that similar initiatives are needed around the world in this new millennium (Deyoung, 2007:150). Deyoung sees reconciliation as very important and therefore advises that reconciliation be pursued across the divide in religion. He believes that religious ideology is the source of the tensions in too many situations (Deyoung, 2007:150).

Following the greatest example of Jesus Christ, the request is that Christians should forgive as God did. God not only releases us from what we did wrong, but he also no longer remembers it (Hebrews 8:12). God is just and therefore all sin must be accounted and paid for. No additional offering is required because Jesus’s death on the cross completely fulfilled the requirement for the penalty of our sins. In the same manner, we need to forgive people without holding a record against them. The Apostle Paul admonishes Christians with the following words from Scripture<sup>37</sup>:

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe you with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony (Colossians 3:12-14).

For Christians, Scripture guides our interfaith conduct. When we forget to look to Scripture as a guide, either fear and suspicion or cliché and shallow pronouncements become our default approach.

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<sup>37</sup> How can Christians follow Scripture now? How can Christians remain compassionate, kind, humble, meek, patient, forgiving and loving in the context of recent persecutions of them by Muslim extremists?



The argument of this study is that forgiving someone does not mean that we agree with the wrong he or she committed or that we allow the wrong to continue, but rather, forgiveness means that we do not keep resentment or bitterness in our hearts towards that person for what he or she did. Sauer and Howell (2010:16) have developed a theology of mission under the cross, which according to them, has gone largely unnoticed internationally. These authors therefore, argue that suffering and martyrdom characterize the mission of the church, which takes place in the interim between Christ's ascension and second coming.

According to Sauer and Howell, the cross is the sign of the hidden reign of Christ during that period of hostile onslaught between the times (Sauer and Howell, 2010:16). They maintain that the Church is embattled and tempted to fall away, but has the promise of triumph if it remains faithful to Christ (Sauer and Howell 2010:16). According to Sauer and Howell, Young has also traced God's mission in suffering and martyrdom which he argues is a kind of suffering that is instrumental in advancing God's kingdom (Sauer and Howell, 2010:16). Korosi (2007:8) admonishes those who lost their loved ones and had their properties destroyed by Boko Haram insurgency to remember Jesus's Words to his followers in John 16:1-4:

All this, I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of the Synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or Me. I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you (John 16:1-4 NIV) (Korosi 2007:8).

Jesus wants his disciples to know the extent of hatred and persecution they will face in the world after He has gone to prepare a place for his followers. Therefore, those who think they are hated by the Boko Haram and Muslims in general are reminded by Korosi that John 15:18-21 reads :

If the world hates you, keep it in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.



They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me (John 15:18-21 NIV) (Korosi, 2007:9).

Jesus faced grave injustice with sacrifice. Therefore with prayer and forgiveness in our hearts, let us go forth to conquer injustice in our time by the courage not to demand retribution, but rather to repay injury with blessing and hate with love. Juergensmeyer et al. (2013:544) assert that forgiveness is most important to overcome the temptation of vengefulness. Vengeance can never be a Christian's response to the violence of Boko Haram. Christianity as we know, is a religion of universal love. The ECWA must be ready to forgive and to open the way to reconciliation and peace among religions, ethnic groups and nations.

The killings the destruction of Christian properties by Boko Haram should not take the ECWA by surprise since this is the fulfillment of the Scripture. If such thing did not occur, the Words of Jesus would not be taken seriously.. Christians (ECWA) should not be discouraged by what is happening, but rather take consolation. Viola (2009:190) asserts that the Church, as an organic movement of followers and disciples of Jesus Christ, must remain committed to ushering in restoration, wholeness and mercy to a broken world in a way that is contextually relevant. Carroll (2005:10) notes that the church as an ethical community is called to witness in the time and place in which they find themselves.

Stott (1986:315) sees the cross of Jesus Christ as a symbol of patient endurance. Peter's instructions to his readers in first Peter 2:18-23, especially verse 20, attest to these as follows: "But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God," Stott argues that undeserved suffering is part of the Christian calling, since Christ himself suffered for them, leaving them an example that they should follow in his steps (Stott, 1986:315).

Stott also sees the cross of Christ as a path to mature holiness. He further asserts that Jesus' suffering on the cross was the testing-ground in which His obedience became full-grown (1986:316). Stott (1986:316) argues that if suffering was the means by which the sinless Christ became mature, then Christians in their sinfulness are in more need of it. He further believes that just as suffering led to maturity through obedience for Christ, so it leads to maturity through perseverance for Christians.

The Book of James urges Christians to be joyous in their trials in these words:

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finishes its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything (James 1:2-4; cf Romans 5:3-5) (Stott, 1986:316).

The contextualization approach is to teach Christians how to relate to Muslims with great knowledge and respect for the Hausa culture. Weimann (2004:20) argues that there is need to understand the other community out of its own context.

Therefore, the Church needs to be aware of its local and synchronic context and respond appropriately to the injustices of conflict in a way that engages coherently with postmodernity, which is daily becoming an even stronger social force. If the ECWA believes in the peace of Christ and in the truth of Christian Scripture, then it is precisely in the context of suffering and conflict that the applicability of their faith will be tested. If their belief in the Words of Scripture melts before the real world of conflict and if these Words cannot be applied, then they become irrelevant and good only for illusory comfort in time of peace.

The views of scholars on the theological concept of forgiveness and reconciliation through the cross having been stated, this study will now be concluded.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

To summarize, the Boko Haram's violence experienced by ECWA in Northern Nigeria in recent times has several partly overlapping sources. Millions of other Christians and non-Christians for that matter, have suffered or died similar deaths in every century. A quick glance at the website of Christian Solidarity Worldwide<sup>38</sup> (CSW) will reveal and indicate places in the world where fellow Christians are currently suffering from persecution. The rise of the so-called Islamic State and its offshoots in Syria, Yemen, Libya, Somalia and Boko Haram in northern Nigeria has focused the world's attention on the violence of extremism in a religious form.

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<sup>38</sup> (CSW) is a Christian organization working for religious freedom through advocacy and human rights, in the pursuit of justice. Christian Solidarity Worldwide works in over 20 countries across Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, defending everyone's right to freedom of religion or belief. Three-quarters of the world's population live in countries with severe restrictions on their religious freedom – in fact, religious freedom is one of the most widely-violated human rights in the world (see CSW website: [www.csw.org.uk/about.htm](http://www.csw.org.uk/about.htm)).

The Boko Haram and its variants have really wreaked havoc in the states targeted so far. The impact is devastating, various communities have become refugees in their own country; hamlets and homes are destroyed under the Boko Haram violent activities, churches destroyed, both pastors and the members of the congregations are traumatized and displaced. It is apparent that Boko Haram started as a peaceful Islamic religious sect within Nigeria's northeastern state of Bornu. Aliyu, *et al* note that an attempt at enforcing the compulsory use of motorcycle crash helmets by riders who were mostly members of the Boko Haram even though the policy was not strictly enforced in other parts of the country, was seen as an act aimed at the group (Aliyu, *et al* 2015:315). They believe that it is because of this unfortunate development that Boko Haram has now been transformed into one of the most feared groups in the world.

In the following chapter the implications of the Boko Haram's violent activities will be discussed. Recommendations on what can be done to avoid the recurrence of such violence will be made.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THE IMPLICATIONS OF BOKO HARAM'S VIOLENT ATTACKS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

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#### **5.1 Introduction**

In conclusion, the historical background of the Evangelical Church Winning All, (ECWA) was given in Chapter Two and that of Bolo Haram in Chapter Three. The theological concepts and theories on violence were also discussed. In Chapter Four the impact and effect of Boko Haram's deeds and the response of the ECWA were described. Finally, in this present chapter the implications of Boko Haram's violent attacks are dealt with and general recommendations are made for the church in Northern Nigeria.

#### **5.2 Implications of Boko Haram's attacks**

The death of many ECWA Christians implies that Boko Haram considers the ECWA as its enemy. There is a need for the leadership of the ECWA to take the initiative to re-discover martyrdom as a Christian virtue; and a need to educate and inform the members of this tradition as a way in which it can respond to suffering. The implications of Boko Haram's violent activities on the political economy of Northern Nigeria are immense. Khan & Hamidu (2015:33-34) list the effects as loss of family members, destruction of property, increase in the incidence of forced migration, decrease in economic activities and many others.

In the preceding study it is shown that the violent activities of Boko Haram are many. Thousands of ECWA displaced families have migrated to neighbouring states. A common sight in states or villages affected by Boko Haram violence is the need for shelter, food, clothes and other items for survival. The implication of this migration is that people can no longer settle down to farming activities and earn a decent living.

Trauma is another implication for displaced ECWA families. The devastating reality of having husbands, wives, parents, children and relatives absent for years without knowing whether they are dead or alive has resulted in the victims becoming poor, uncertain, unhappy and fearful.

Boko Haram's violent activities have resulted in a rise in structural unemployment, especially amongst the youth. Boko Haram's violent attacks on the church have adversely affected the Northern Nigeria economy and social fibre. As they continue with their violent attacks, the economy is disrupted.

Orhero (2015:9) asserts that the insecurity caused by the Boko Haram insurgency has crippled the economy of the north. Orhero observes that economic contributions to the north have been withdrawn, resulting in the economic downturn. The reason for the crippling of the economy in the north, according to Okereocha as cited in Orhero (2015:9). is that Boko Haram not only attacks churches, but also commercial places like markets, parks, government agencies and banks.

Aliyu *et al.* (2015:314) agree with Orhero and Okereocha in respect of the crippling of Northern Nigeria's economy and state the following:

Economically, activities of the insurgency have almost crippled daily economic activities in many parts of the Northern states. Both the government and individuals have been affected especially in places like Kano, Maiduguri, Damaturu where many business outfits have closed their shops due to incessant attacks by the insurgents. For example, since the security situation in the country has taken on an ugly dimension, many commercial banks have been attacked and robbed of various sums of money. This has led the banks to resort to reducing their daily working hours and they are sometimes forced to remain closed in order to safeguard the lives of their staff and public funds.

The killing of Christians and the burning of several church buildings by the Boko Haram have weakened the passion of Christians with regard to Muslim evangelism and instead have created hatred in Christians towards Muslims. Christians and Muslims have started living in clusters and particular sectors have come to be associated with specific religious categories because of incessant attacks by the Islamic sect called Boko Haram.

On the matter of Christian and Muslim relations, Jennings cited in Eitel (2008:38) quotes the Book of 1 Peter<sup>39</sup> that he believes provides relevant instructions, imagery and encouragement for the ECWA and other Christian faith communities. According to Jennings cited in Eitel (2008:38) 1 Peter provides Christians with advice on how they should deal with violence, suffering, and death at the hands of militant Muslims (Jennings in Eitel 2008:38).

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<sup>39</sup> See 1 Peter 1:2, 3, 11, 19, 21; 2:24; 3:18; 4:1 in this regard

### 5.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- (i) The ECWA develop coping mechanisms - “a theology of the cross<sup>40</sup>,” “a theology of suffering,” and “a theology in the context of conflict”.
- (ii) Seek mediators who will try to facilitate dialogue with Boko Haram leadership.

The ECWA needs to thoroughly analyze at a deeper level the challenges the church is facing presently in Northern Nigeria because of the Boko Haram’s emotional and socio-cultural levels.

The ECWA as a denomination should briefly consider the fact that they are called to share in the life of Christ, and that the sharing includes everything from good days to the suffering. Jesus warned us that if the world was going to reject him, so too would we be rejected if we choose to carry our own cross for his sake. Peter reminds us that Christ left us an example that we are to follow him in all his suffering. The beauty of accepting this call to suffering is the fact that God’s wisdom is foolishness to the world. Hence, we are to rejoice in the suffering because it speaks of a greater hope and ultimately, addresses the issue of our faith; after all faith is the substance of things hoped for.

It is true that the ECWA lost many of its members during these horrible attacks by the Islamist sect, Boko Haram. The ECWA should receive this as God’s grace for them out of His own hands. The ECWA can also learn from Bonheoffer cited in Sauer and Howell (2010:86). He says:

Every Christian has his own cross waiting for him, a cross destined and appointed by God. Each must endure his allotted share of suffering and rejection. However, each has a different share: some God deems worthy of the highest form of suffering and gives the grace of martyrdom, while others he does not allow to be tempted above what they are able to bear.

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<sup>40</sup> The cross of Jesus Christ is an exemplary model or a pattern of ministry in which we are invited to participate in the suffering of Christ for the sake of his name. The cross of Christ should teach us that the only alternative to violence is self-giving love, willingness to absorb violence in order to embrace the other in the knowledge that truth and justice have been, and will be upheld by God. (Chapter 4, p 110 -111).

Reese cited in Eitel (2008:235) posits that Christians were unjustly accused of all sorts of crimes such as atheism, cannibalism, orgies in worship, incest, and political subversion. Reese argues that Christians were accused of atheism because they refused to worship idols and worshipped an invisible God. Christians were accused of cannibalism because they were said to eat the flesh of their God and drink his blood at their secret Eucharist; Christians were accused of orgies in worship because they greeted one another with a holy kiss; they were accused of incest because they called each other brother and sister; they were subversion because they refused to sacrifice to Caesar as Lord (Eitel 2008:235, 236).

The ECWA should be encouraged by the life of Ignatius who was condemned to death by imperial authorities in about the year 107. According to Gonzalez (2010:52,53), Ignatius had heard that Christians in Rome were considering the possibility of freeing him from death, and objected their move because he was ready to seal his witness with his blood and any more on the part of Christians in Rome to save him would be an obstacle to his goal.

Gonzalez further explained that Ignatius wrote to the Christians in Rome saying: “I fear your kindness, which may harm me. You may be able to achieve what you plan. But if you pay no heed to my request it will be very difficult for me to attain unto God” (Gonzalez 2010:53). According to Gonzalez, Ignatius demanded a prayer that would give him strength to face every trial, not to be freed from it and states that:

...so that I may not only be called a Christian, but also behave as such....My love is crucified... I no longer savor corruptible food... but wish to taste the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ... and his blood I wish to drink, which is an immortal drink... When I suffer, I shall be free in Jesus Christ, and with him shall rise again in freedom... I am God’s wheat, to be ground by the teeth of beasts, so that I may be offered as pure bread of Christ (Gonzalez 2010:53).

Polycarp’s life in the context of suffering is another source of encouragement to Christians (ECWA). When asked to curse Christ so he would be free to go, Polycarp replied: “For eighty-six years I have served him, and he has done no evil. How could I curse my king, who saved me?” (Gonzalez 2010:54). According to Gonzalez, when the judge threatened him with being burned alive, Polycarp simply answered that the fire that the judge could light would last only a moment, whereas the eternal fire would never go out (Gonzalez 2010:54).

The ECWA should develop a concerted response in terms of vision, plans and actions to deal with the impact of Boko Haram's violence, effectively support affected members, work towards peace and promote social cohesion between different groups in society.

The most effective way the ECWA can revive the spiritual lives of her members whose lives have been weakened because of the Boko Haram' violence attacks, is to teach theological truths through discipleship and nurturing relationships. Spiritual concepts should be developed within the framework of the questions and the concerns of daily life. The ECWA's discipleship in this context should focus on helping her members to know God in the midst of conflict and suffering.

The ECWA should be strong advocates to the governments and other policy bearing bodies to promote a culture of peace and understanding among Christians and Muslims. The ECWA, being a responsible member of society, cannot distance itself from the issues facing its members and remain silent. ECWA should be an agency for change by collaborating with individuals and organizations working in the areas of building peace.

The attitude of the government, the church, Nigerian society, and the international community should be that Muslims and Christians can live together to exercise their human rights and their freedom of worship. Usman (2013:49) feels that there should be dialogue with Boko Haram. Agbiboa (2014:21) believes that the counter-terrorism efforts against religious terrorism in Northern Nigeria will be ineffective; therefore the ECWA must see the need for investing in inter-religious dialogue between Muslims and Christians. There have been calls by northern leaders to resume dialogue with the Boko Haram as the current military approach has not been effective enough in curbing the group (Abbah et al 2012; Adebayo, 2012, Sunday Trust, 29 April 2012).

Nigeria authorities should implement durable solutions to cyclical conflicts in Plateau and Kaduna, which are key symbols and targets in Boko Haram's efforts to exploit Nigeria's history of inter-religious violence.

The ECWA should think of building their Pastorium outside the church compound since the pastors are the target of every religious crisis in Northern Nigeria. The ECWA can also address the humanitarian needs of the internally displaced members and ensure that the necessary conditions are established to enable these internally displaced members to return to their homes.



Part of the ECWA mission statement in its ten years strategy plan no.3, states that the church should promote the evangelistic, educational and medical welfare of the ministry, and use other means to reach Muslim communities (ECWA Strategic Plan 2007:15). Therefore, the ECWA, instead of showing hatred to the Muslims for committing violence on Christians, should rather show love to achieve its mission statement. The Bible says, “Love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). Leviticus 19:18 also says, “You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.” God even emphasizes in Deuteronomy 32:35-36 that,

Vengeance is mine, and recompense. Their foot shall slip in due time; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things to come hasten upon them.’ For the Lord will judge His people and have compassion on His servants when He sees that their power is gone, and there is no one remaining, bond or free ( Deuteronomy 32:35-36, NKJV).

The Rule of Law and the Fundamental Human Rights as enshrined in the Nigerian constitution should be respected by the government. Christians like any adherents of faiths should be allowed to practise their religious freely anywhere and at any time. The ECWA should respond to the Boko Haram’s violence with compassion, but suffering for Jesus requires additional responses. The mature Christian knows that all suffering can become meaningful. No one wishes to suffer, but many Christians who have suffered do not regret it. God also suffers because the people he created suffer and he suffers for their redemption. The suffering of God in Christ can shape our thinking on the suffering of other churches.

In order to avoid terrorism and violence in the future, the problem of youth unemployment should be seriously looked into by the Nigerian government. The rate of poverty and unemployment, as suggested by many scholars, needs to be brought down (Odiadi 2012:52; Onuoha, 2014:6 Khan and Hamidu 2015:30 and Akinbi 2015:36). The Nigerian government should prioritize expenditure in favour of poverty alleviation measures including the creation of job opportunities. Less unemployment will reduce violence in the country.

There is a saying that, “An idle heart is a devil’s workshop.” If the youth are employed and are busy with their jobs, how can the devil use them for evil? The anti-corruption war by President Buhari should be intensified by enacting a law that will sanction whoever is found guilty of corruption.

## 5.4 Conclusion

In this study it is illustrated that the ECWA has been a victim of Boko Haram's violence on many levels. The victimization of the ECWA must be seen in the wider context where Boko Haram has aligned itself to Al-Qaeda and seeks to establish a Caliphate.

It was also highlighted that the activities of the Boko Haram have led to the poverty and unemployment of the Northern Nigerian people and declining morality in both the Nigerian state and the lives of individuals in Northern Nigeria.

It was also illustrated that Boko Haram has targeted Christians whom they perceive as enemies that do not share their faith and religious ideology. The attacks on Christians and their places of worship by Boko Haram have created social tension and disharmony between Christians and Muslims in Northern Nigeria. It has also been argued through the insights of various scholars that Boko Haram wishes to overthrow the Nigerian government through Jihad and establish an Islamic state.

The marginalization of Christianity in Northern Nigeria is happening not only in the states that implemented the Sharia law, but also in the Middle-Belt where the Sharia law has not been implemented. The violence against Christians in Northern Nigeria has resulted in thousands of people being killed, and a large number of Christian properties being destroyed, including 13,000 churches that have either been destroyed or closed down because of the violent activities of Boko Haram.

It has also been established that Boko Haram's attacks have affected the social lives of the ECWA church and other denominations in Northern Nigeria where Christians fear to move around and to participate in any worthwhile activities. It was argued in this study that the Boko Haram insurgents are angry with the Nigerian security agency for killing their leader. Others blame this anger on poverty and unemployment that causes young people to involve themselves in violence because of frustration. One may ask, what are their grievances and frustration with the government agency to do with the ECWA?

Prejudice theory: scapegoat theory, can be applied to Boko Haram's violence against the ECWA. They transferred their grievance against the security enforcement agencies that killed their leader and their frustration with regard to poverty and unemployment to Christians, and especially the ECWA. Glick's (2002:113) explanation of the scapegoat theory can be used to

explain the situation ECWA finds itself in with regard to the violence caused by Boko Haram.

ECWA members are therefore urged to take up the cross of Jesus actively, willingly, and corporately, in order to implement the mission of Jesus. This call includes remembrance of those persecuted with prayers and assistance. Wolyniak has noted a suggestion that may be applicable to a church that finds itself in the context of conflict and suffering. Wolyniak posits that, “when faced with violence, opposition, aggression, and open hostility, the church needs to rethink its purpose and objectives in such a way that the message goes out through loving hands and kind deeds, not in retaliation or retreat” (Wolyniak in Eitel 2008:150).

A theology of suffering, of loving in the midst of stressful cultural and political issues, needs to be developed and understood by those who live in a hostile environment. The ECWA’s message to its members must include the concept of the suffering church and its would-be ambassadors. Since the functions of the church are to teach, sanctify and govern, the ECWA should be the school that instructs its members regarding the truths they need to know for the sake of their eternal salvation. The ECWA also needs to cooperate with other stable organizations so that the church of Jesus Christ can perform its mission. It is the responsibility of the ECWA to unite people of many nations into well-knit communities of conviction, commitment, and hope.

Christians are servants who are joined to Jesus. Jesus is not only Saviour and Lord, but He is the example and model. From this perspective, there is a balance between the theology of glory and the theology of the cross.

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