

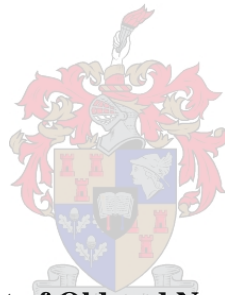
**The Abuse of Power and Sexual Violence: A Close Reading of 2 Samuel 11  
against the Background of Boko Haram Atrocities in Nigeria**

**By**

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**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of  
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## DECLARATION

I, Bulus Audu Makama, do hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and it has not been submitted previously in its entirety or in part at any university or college for a degree.

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Bulus Audu Makama

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to God Almighty for his provisions and for enabling me to complete this research. I also dedicate the thesis to my late father Pastor Audu Makama, my mother Saratu Makama and to my beloved, caring and matured wife Hannatu Bulus Audu Makama as well as my lovely children, Abijah and Aristobulus for their love, concern, sacrifice, prayers and moral support.

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With sincerity of heart, like Samuel, I say, “Ebenezer, Thus far the LORD has helped us.” Nonetheless, there are also a number of people who have motivated me and contributed to the development of this thesis.

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## ABSTRACT

This research is stimulated by the current abuse of power and sexual violence associated with Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria during the last two decades. The concern for peaceful co-existence, gender equity, and health in Nigeria as well as globally also constitute a motivation for this research.

This study narrates and examines the abuse of power and sexual violence through a close reading of the textual detail in 2 Samuel 11:1-27 mostly within its literary context and against the background of Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria.

Sexual violence including rape is a forced sexual act which often includes degrading jests on women, name-calling, unwanted touching and use of pornography, violates human dignity. In the attempt to perform a sexual act, or any act of forced, unwanted or unlawful sexual activity without a person's consent, the perpetrator commits sexual violence mostly a result of abuse of power.

The background to the study in Chapter One considers the socio-cultural, religious, Islamic, and political context as well as the common unit of gender construction in Northern Nigeria. The problem statement, hypotheses, aims and objectives, design and methodology of the research are also outlined. Causality theory by Rachel Jewkes is adopted to highlight the main causes of sexual violence.

Furthermore, the study gives a description of the abuse of power and sexual violence inherent in Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria as part of the hermeneutical frame of reference of the research in Chapter 2 which also presents a review of literatures on abuse of power and sexual violence as attested in Boko Haram activities. A definition of salient terms such as abuse, power, sexual violence and atrocity is provided along with a brief history of Boko Haram and its initial non-violent phase, violent acts, and current acts of terror through sexual violence. Again, examples of violent behaviour and the reasons for sexual violence by Boko Haram are considered.

In Chapter Three, the study focuses on a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 that is sensitive to the presence of overt and covert manifestations of abuse of power and sexual violence in the biblical text, with special reference to verse 27.

In fulfilling one of the aims and objectives of this study, Chapter Four offers a humble contribution to the Nigerian discourse on a theological ethical response to the effects of abuse

of power and sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram. The study critically contextualized the reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 as a theological ethical response to the challenges posed by Boko Haram atrocities, and argues that women are not necessarily culpable when it comes to the abuse of power and sexual violence directed against them.

The study submits that despite the Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria, life beyond Boko Haram and peaceful coexistence between opposing parties is possible. The thesis therefore calls for a self-evaluation in order to understand Boko Haram atrocities and think afresh about how to influence others whose mind-set derives from the same context and concept. Patriarchy which silences the voices of women in the society should be redefined by taking into consideration Jewkes' causality theory of intimate relationship in order to alleviate the plight of women who suffer from trauma, Sexual Transmitted Diseases (STDs), stigmatization and many more health challenges as a result of sexual violence.

## OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsing is aangewakker na aanleiding van die huidige magsmisbruik en seksuele geweld wat geassosieer word met die gruweldade van Boko Haram in Nigerië oor die afgelope twee dekades. 'n Versugting na vreedsame naasbestaan, gender-gelykheid en gesondheid, beide in Nigerië en globaal, het ook gedien as motivering vir hierdie navorsing.

Die studie ontplooi en ondersoek die magsmisbruik en seksuele geweld aan die hand van 'n toegespitsde lees van die teksdetail in 2 Samuel 11:1-27, hoofsaaklik binne die literêre konteks en teen die agtergrond van Boko Haram se gruweldade in Nigerië.

Seksuele geweld, insluitend verkragting, behels gedwonge seksuele handeling wat dikwels neerhalende grappies, skelname, ongewenste aanraking en die gebruik van pornografie insluit, en wat menswaardigheid skend. Deur pogings om seksuele handeling uit te voer of af te dwing, of ongewenste of wederregtelik handeling sonder toestemming, pleeg die misdrywer seksuele geweld meestal as gevolg van magsmisbruik.

Die agtergrond tot die studie skets in Hoofstuk Een die sosiokulturele, religieuse, Islamitiese en politieke kontekste, asook die tipologie van gender-samestelling in Noord-Nigeriese gemeenskappe. Die probleemstelling, hipoteses, doelwitte, navorsingsontwerp en metodologie van die navorsing word ook in hierdie hoofstuk uiteengesit. Die kousaliteitsteorie van Rachel Jewkes word toegepas om die hoofoorsake van seksuele geweld te beskryf.

Die studie gee vervolgens 'n beskrywing van die magsmisbruik en seksuele geweld inherent in die gruweldade van Boko Haram in Nigerië. Dit vorm deel van die hermeneutiese verwysingsraamwerk van die navorsing in Hoofstuk Twee, wat 'n oorsig bied oor die literatuur oor magsmisbruik en seksuele geweld, soos by Boko Haram-aktiwiteite gemeld. 'n Definisie van sleutelsterme soos "misbruik", "mag", "seksuele geweld" en "gruweldaad" word aangebied, sowel as 'n kort geskiedenis van Boko Haram, sy aanvanklik nie-gewelddadige fase, gewelddade en huidige terreurdade deur middel van seksuele geweld. Weer word voorbeelde van gewelddadige optrede en die oorsake rondom seksuele geweld ondersoek.

In Hoofstuk Drie vernou die fokus van die studie tot 'n toegespitsde lees van 2 Samuel 11, wat sensitief is vir die teenwoordigheid van openlike en versluisde vergestaltings van misbruik van mag en seksuele geweld in die Bybelse teks, met spesiale verwysing na vers 27.

Ter bereiking van een van die doelstellings van hierdie studie, bied Hoofstuk Vier 'n nederige bydrae tot die Nigeriese diskoers oor 'n teologies-etiese respons tot die gevolge van magmisbruik en seksuele geweld wat voortvloei uit Boko Haram se gruweldade. Die studie kontekstualiseer die lees van 2 Samuel 11:1-27 krities, as 'n teologies-etiese respons op die uitdaging van die Boko Haram gruweldade, en bied die argument dat vroue nie noodwendig strafbaar is in gevalle van magmisbruik en seksuele geweld wat teen hulle gemik word nie.

Die studie suggereer dat ten spyte van die gruweldade van Boko Haram in Nigerië, daar tog 'n moontlikheid is vir vreedsame naasbestaan tussen opponerende faksies. Die tesis doen daarom 'n beroep op self-evaluering met die doel om Boko Haram se gruweldade te begryp, en om opnuut te besin oor hoe om persone met 'n denkraamwerk soos die geweldskonteks en -konseptualisering, te beïnvloed. Die patriargie wat die stemme van vroue in die samelewing stilmaak, behoort herdefinieer te word, deur inagnome van Jewkes se kousaliteitsteorie van intieme verhoudings, om verligting te bied in die lot van vroue wat slagoffers is van trauma, seksueel oordraagbare siektes, stigmatisering en vele ander gesondheidsprobleme wat resulteer van seksuele geweld.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### FOCUS AND OUTLINE

#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to this study and a description of the socio-cultural, religious and political landscape of Nigeria as well as the Islamic influence on the country and issues of gender construction. The chapter also highlights aspects of causality theory by Rachel Jewkes and a definition of hermeneutical cycle as part of the methodology applied in the research.

#### 1.2 Research Background

Nigeria is commonly referred to as a giant of Africa not just because of its population but also because it is the largest growing economy in the continent. Nigeria is the most populous country on the African continent and it came into being in 1914 when the two protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were amalgamated by Sir Frederick Lugard (Crowder, 1978:11; Diamond, 1988: xi). Burns<sup>1</sup> (1972:16) describes Nigeria as a republic in West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea, which was divided into of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1900 and united as a colony in 1914. Nigeria gained independence from Britain as a member of the Commonwealth in 1960 (but its membership was suspended between 1995 and 1999 following human rights violations (Smith 2015: xiii; Arnold, 1977: xiii). The Eastern Region seceded as the Republic of Biafra for the duration of the severe civil war (1967-1970) while the country with the largest military in West Africa was ruled by military governments from 1966 to 1979 and from 1983-1999. The country consists of a belt of tropical rain forest in the south with semi-desert land in the extreme north and highlands in the east. English, Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba are the chief regional languages (Burns, 1972:16) and the country's main religions are animism, Islam and Christianity (Arnold, 1977: viii). The currency is the naira and the main export is petroleum. The country of about 178.5 million people (2015) is made up of thirty-six (36) states with Abuja as the federal capital city. Nigeria occupies an area of 923 773 km<sup>2</sup> (356, 669 sq. miles).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A. Burns 1972. *History of Nigeria*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 16. Alan Burns was born in 1929 in London and died on 13th February 2014. He attended Taylor's School, London and Middle Temple, London. He was called to the bar in 1956. He was a Professor of English at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (1977-1991). To read more about Burns, see: Alan Burns Biography - London, Calder, Writing, and Allison - JRank Articles <http://biography.jrank.org/pages/4193/Burns-Alan.html#ixzz3p1gyD9Ba>.

<sup>2</sup> World Population Review 2015. Available at: <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/nigeria-population/> (accessed 12th May 2015).

In short, Nigeria is a former British colony which became economically strong after independence, and it is a multi-cultural society with many languages and religions. Today, Nigeria is experiencing a number of challenges ranging from social, cultural, and religious to political. This is because in the last two decades, a religious sect known as Boko Haram has been terrorizing the citizens of the country and their neighbours.

This research therefore is stimulated by the current abuse of power and sexual violence<sup>3</sup> related to Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria during the last two decades. The concern for peaceful co-existence, equity in gender, and health in Nigeria as well as globally is the motivation behind this research.

With regards to patriarchy<sup>4</sup> (one of the many challenges experienced by women in Nigeria), Allanana (2013:1) states, “In Nigeria, it is observed that the womanhood is reduced to a mere infidel and a second-class citizen, hence, there is the commonality of general belief system that the best place for women is in the kitchen.” This trend has brought about tremendous misrepresentation of women’s right at the level of the family down to the circular society. Thus, it is clear that patriarchy is the rule of the fathers, that is, of men over women and of husbands over wives and children (Haas, 1995:321). Based on the above, Allanana (2013:117) submits that patriarchy oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions.

### **1.2.1 The socio-cultural profile of Nigeria**

Falola (2001:5) writes that Nigeria, which is one of the largest and most important countries in Africa, is rich in traditions and customs, both indigenous and modern. His volume titled *Culture and Customs of Nigeria* is a concise, authoritative and up-to-date discussion of Nigerian culture, and it introduces to a Western audience the complexity of the Nigerian society and the emerging lifestyles among its various peoples.

In his discussion of culture in Nigeria, Osuji (2014:20) describes Nigeria as a multi-ethnic society whose people cherish their traditional languages, music, dance and literature. Nigeria comprises of three main ethnic groups namely the Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo as well as hundreds of other smaller ethnic groups. Culture is related to education and for this reason, the importance of education in the history of Nigeria cannot be over emphasised. Education and

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<sup>3</sup> Phiri (2000:94) defines sexual violence as “any forced sexual ability, including rape that often includes degrading jests on women; name-calling, unwanted touching and using pornography.”

<sup>4</sup> For her part, Thatcher (2011:26) notes that patriarchy is a term used in description of the multiple structures, beliefs and practices which ensure that men exercise power over women and their household.

culture in Nigeria play vital roles in the development of the country. The *Nigeria Daily* newspaper (2015:8, 3) reports that,

Formal education in Nigeria is traceable to the efforts of European Missionaries around 1842. Education at this time was regarded as of fundamental importance for the spread of Christianity. Thus, education introduced at these early stages was interwoven with Christian evangelism. The missionaries established and ran the early schools in Nigeria. They also designed the curriculum for such schools and devoted their meagre resources to the opening of schools for young Nigerians.

### **1.2.2 Religion in Nigeria**

Religion as belief in and worship of a supernatural being is as old as the history of human beings in Nigeria but the country's main religions are the traditional religions, Islam and Christianity (Enang, 2003:759). Galadima (2000:690) notes that, "Though as a secular state, Christianity (50%) and Islam (40%) are the major religions, with (10%) still adhering to traditional religions. Evangelicals are 15% of the population." He further recalls that Islam arrived in the north from the eleventh century and modern Christianity was introduced on the coast in the early nineteenth century by Anglicans, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics. While giving an overview of New Religious Movements in Nigeria, Hackett (1987:1) states that Nigeria is a land of great ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, which is characterized by three religious traditions – Christian, Islamic and traditional religions. Similarly, while commenting on New Religious Movements and Society in Nigeria, Ludwar-Ene (1991:31) shows that the study of new religious movements (NRMs) in Nigeria has become of increasing interest today, both in academic and pastoral circles. The reason for this interest is clear. Nigeria has one of the largest groupings of NRMs in sub-Saharan Africa, second only to South Africa in the entire continent. The available literature, therefore, is understandably large and growing rapidly.

Furthermore, Nigerians believe in the Supreme Being, for whom the ethnic groups have different names. Some of the best-known include Allah (Hausa), Olodumare (Yoruba), Chukwu (Igbo), Abasi Ibom (Efik, Annang, Ibibio), Shekwai (Nupe, Gbagyi), Kasiri (Surubu, Binawa, Pitawa, Dungi), and Owo (Igala) (Enang, 2003:759). In the last two decades, Nigeria has witnessed various religious disturbances some of which have threatened the existence of the country as a nation, and could be described as either intra-religious or inter-religious (Omosho, 2003:58). However, one can say these disturbances are more of politico-tribal than religious in nature, even though some people may see them as religious simply because the disputing groups adhere to different religions.

Gaudio (2014:9, 2) who posts the cityscape of Abuja comments that the geo-sectarian rivalries that beset the Nigerian nation-state have roots in British colonial policies and have been exacerbated in recent decades by the global circulation of Christian and Islamic missions and militancies. Sadly, one persistent spot of communal violence is the so-called “Middle Belt” region, which lies between the North and the South (Abuja, the capital, is located in this region but is administratively distinct from the states that surround it). Political and economic competition between predominantly Christian ethnic groups, many of whom are farmers, and the mainly Muslim Hausa and Fulani, who are largely traders and herdsman, has increased for decades resulting in occasional violent eruptions, but lately the violence has become more frequent and vicious.

It is understood that in the past there was peaceful co-existence among the diverse religious adherents in Nigeria but of recent frequent clashes resulting in violence and riots have become the order of the day in the country.

### **1.2.3 Islamic influence in Nigeria**

Islamic religion in Nigeria has a long history especially in the north with its spread dating back to the eleventh century (Mustahar, 2015).<sup>5</sup> The religion started in the area around the present day Borno State, Northeast of the country and later emerged in Hausaland in the northwest with its influence being stronger in Kano and Katsina. Islam was for some time the religion of the court and of commerce, and it was spread peacefully by Muslim clerics and traders. However, in the early 1800s, Islamic scholar Usman Dan Fodio launched a jihad against the Hausa Kingdoms of Northern Nigeria (Mustahar, 2015).

According to Enang (2003:762), Islam has little influence in the west and the Middle Belt. Today however, Islam in Nigeria influences government decisions for example in the area of offering support to pilgrims to Mecca and the establishment of *Sharia* courts. History and statistics show that Islam came to Northern Nigeria as early as the ninth century, and it was well established in the Kanem-Bornu Empire during the reign of Humme Jilmi. It was adopted as the religion of the majority of the leading figures in the Bornu Empire during the reign of Mai (King) Idris Alooma in the 16th century. Alooma introduced Islamic courts, established Musjids and set up a hostel in Makkah for pilgrims. Islam came to Hausaland in the 14th century and spread to the major cities of the north by the 16th century, later moving into the

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<sup>5</sup> D. Mustahar 2015. “Islamic Focus Nigeria.” Available at: [http://www.islamicfocus.co.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1000&Itemid=24](http://www.islamicfocus.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1000&Itemid=24) (accessed 5th August 2014).

countryside and towards the Middle Belt uplands, and arriving in the south-western Yoruba-speaking areas during the time of Mansa Musa's Mali Empire in the 13th century. The Muslims in Nigeria are mainly Sunnis following the Maliki School, and research has shown that at present, many northern states have adopted the *sharia* law (Islamic Focus Nigeria, 2015).

Evidence also shows that Islam holds sway over the government in Nigeria. This has resulted in the call for the adoption of the *sharia* law in the country generating tension and resistance mostly on the part of Christians. Violent crises and killings therefore erupted in the country especially in the year 2000 which probably aided the emergence of the Boko Haram sect.

#### **1.2.4 Political landscape of Nigeria**

The name Nigeria is a foreign one which was first suggested in 1898 in an article published in *The Times* by Flora Shaw who later became Flora Lugard to refer to the "Niger Area" in the then British protectorates along the River Niger (Adogame, 2011:176). The period of expanding British rule (c.1880-1914) also marked a breakthrough in the history of Nigerian Christianity but since 1960 when Nigeria gained independence there has been repeated conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the country (Adogame, 2011:176).

Smith (2015: xiii) observes that the Biafra War which was a civil war that began after the south-east region declared an independent Biafra in 1967-1970 had a religious element – the predominantly Christian (Catholic and Anglican) Igbos in the southeast, afraid of domination by the Muslim north, sought to secede as an independent republic. After the civil war ended, the erstwhile military Head of State General Yakubu Gowon tried to pursue a policy of reconciliation, but a long series of military rulers, mostly from the north, that lasted until 1999, with only a short interruption from 1979 to 1983, brought new conflicts (Adogame, 2011:176).

The political landscape of Nigeria can easily be traced from the British colonial rule from which Nigeria got its independence on 1st October 1960. Diamond (1988:71) notes that constitutionally Nigeria had a federal structure at independence, but it was a structure troubled with tensions and contradictions from the beginning. Thus, after independence, the political landscape of Nigeria remained attached to that of its colonist. Nigeria is said to be a federal republic currently under a strong presidential administration, a National Assembly made up of two chambers—a Senate and a House of Representatives—and a judiciary. It has 36



administrative divisions known as states each of which is divided into local governments. Thus, Nigeria is a democratic state with three tiers of government: national, state, and local.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.2.5 Gender construction in Nigeria**

The common unit of gender<sup>7</sup> construction in Nigeria is patriarchy which cuts across social life, culture, religion, politics, and almost every day activity. This is because tradition is deeply entrenched in peoples' minds and the willingness to change is lacking. Meyers (2014:8) states that the term patriarchy denotes the social-science concept of male dominance formulated by nineteenth-century anthropologist as an attempt to understand the history of the family. However, Tribble (2009:397) argues that the meaning of patriarchy varies; and the adjective designates speech/oral text and written text that are male-centred and male dominated. To Haas (1995:321), patriarchy can be defined in morally neutral terms as simply the rule of the fathers – men over women and husband over wives and children. Meyers' (2014:9) definition of patriarchy as the rule of the fathers is in line with Haas' definition. Haas<sup>8</sup> (1995:321) considers the assumption that the patriarchal culture instituted in the Old Testament is a moral evil, an evil that the coming of the fullness of redemption in Christ has abolished. This assumption differs from Meyers' (2014:9) view of patriarchy as the rule of the fathers over their households.

Tribble (2009:397) argues that understanding patriarchal language is related to the concept of gender which pertains to grammar, sexual identity and social construction. From the above definitions of patriarchy, it appears that Tribble's view has more implications for exegetical tasks as it states the meaning of the concept among other things. Her definition indicates that patriarchy has to do with marginalization in daily living and the domination of women and children in the household by men in a clear display of masculinity. Le Roux (2014:24) affirms that while patriarchy upholds the power of men, interventions and resolutions that challenge and change patriarchal institutions and societies are often not embraced. This is the reason that in contexts where patriarchy dominates and where women are subordinate to men, abuse of power and sexual violence are more likely and prevalent, especially in contexts where women fear the use of violent means by men. If this happens, men are able to control women's

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<sup>6</sup> Innocent Osuji 2014. "The Nigerian Culture and Traditions: Nigeria the Giant of Africa." Available at: <https://osujinnocent.wordpress.com/nigeria-independent/the-nigerian-culture-and-traditions/> (accessed 12th September 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Gender is a social construct; it is a category used by human beings as a way of dividing the world they perceive around them and making sense of it (Thatcher, 2011:18).

<sup>8</sup> Guenther Haas is a Professor of Religion and Theology at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ontario L9K 1J4.

behaviour and maintain control of social institutions. The above observation is similar to the situation of the common form of gender construction in Northern Nigeria which is patriarchy (Odoemene, 2012:226-227; Allanana, 2013:115-116); some women are controlled totally by men under the guise of patriarchy (Ackermann, 1993:22).

On a critical note, one can say patriarchy as a rule by men over their households promotes marginalization and exploitation of women and children in Nigeria. It can also be said that poverty is in a way a by-product of patriarchy today since many women are denied access to education, employment, and some key positions in their communities as a result of culture or patriarchy (Ackermann, 1993:22; Ituma, 2013:499-501).

### **1.3 Focus and Problem Statement**

The central focus of this study begins with the observation that Boko Haram started with peaceful criticism of societal ills but it eventually reverted to violent resistance and sexual violence. Abuse of power and sexual violence, conflicts, wars, hostility and injustice perpetrated by Boko Haram are the greatest challenges confronting Nigeria in the present decade (Kajom, 2015:14; Smith, 2015:59). Although peace talks are being implemented to counter the abuse of power and sexual violence in the country, current efforts are not very successful.

In the light of this reality, the present study poses the following research question:

How can a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 inform a theological response to the abuse of power and sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria?

### **1.4 Theoretical Hypotheses**

The theoretical hypotheses which guide the present research assume:

- i. That 2 Samuel 11 is an example of abuse of power and sexual violence that gains new relevance if interpreted within the context of Boko Haram activities in Nigeria (primary hypothesis).
- ii. That causality theory can be used to engage with 2 Samuel 11 in the light of abuse of power and sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria (primary hypothesis).
- iii. That the complexity of the multi-cultural contexts in Nigeria creates much conflict potential as recent history has indicated, since there are over 400 different languages and cultural groups that try to co-exist peacefully in one country (Gat & Jakobson,

2013:287).<sup>9</sup> To a large extent, the country's cultural diversity was ignored by the late 19th century British colonial empire which created an administration and education system according to Western/British culture and which Boko Haram is violently opposed to (secondary hypothesis).

- iv. That the religious division between Christians (50%) and Muslims (40%)<sup>10</sup> in Nigeria is one of the main reasons for the emergence of Boko Haram sect; its fundamentalist interpretation of the Quran and the *sharia* laws form the foundation of Boko Haram (secondary hypothesis).
- v. That patriarchy as a most dominant unit of gender construction in Nigeria is reflected in the way in which the leaders of Boko Haram abduct young girls and force them into marriage (for the payment of dowry) and to become suicide bombers (secondary hypothesis).

### 1.5 Research Aims and Objectives

- i. To describe the abuse of power and sexual violence by the Boko Haram members in Nigeria as part of the research's hermeneutical frame of reference.
- ii. To conduct a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 that is sensitive to the presence of overt and covert manifestations of abuse of power and sexual violence in the biblical text with special reference to verse 27.
- iii. To make a humble contribution to the Nigerian discussion of a theological ethical response to the abuse of power and sexual violence in general.

### 1.6 Research Design and Methodology

To accomplish the above aims and objectives, this study will engage in:

- i. The thesis makes use of a literature study of relevant research. It also uses a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 that takes into consideration literary, historical and theological aspect of the text. Again a literary study of the abuse of power and sexual violence against the background of Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria will be considered (Mouton, 2001:56). Due to the nature of conflict and security concerns on Boko Haram, this research will adopt a qualitative, historical and descriptive method to explain the

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<sup>9</sup> A. Gat and A. Yakobson 2013. *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism*. London: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>10</sup> B. Galadima 2000. "Nigeria," in Scott A. Moreau (ed). *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 690-691. Professor Galadima has served for many years as the provost/president of the largest evangelical graduate school in Nigeria, the ECWA Theological Seminary, popularly known as JETS in Jos.

reasons for the abuse of power and sexual violence based on the causality theory by Jewkes.

- ii. A close reading of 2 Samuel 11. Close reading according to Clines (1983:33) is a careful and minute scrutiny of all aspects of the text's language, style, metaphors, images and their relation to one another. The research procedure therefore will place emphases on the world of the text (literary characteristics), on the world in front of the text (theological and ethical characteristics), and on the world behind the text (historical characteristics).
- iii. The application of causality theory. The research employs Jewkes' (2002:1423) causality theory to explain the connection between and the reasons for the abuse of power and sexual violence by interpreting the text in a way that would explain the context. The causes of sexual violence can be described in terms of a constellation of factors as itemised by Rachel Jewkes (2002:1423) and can be seen below.

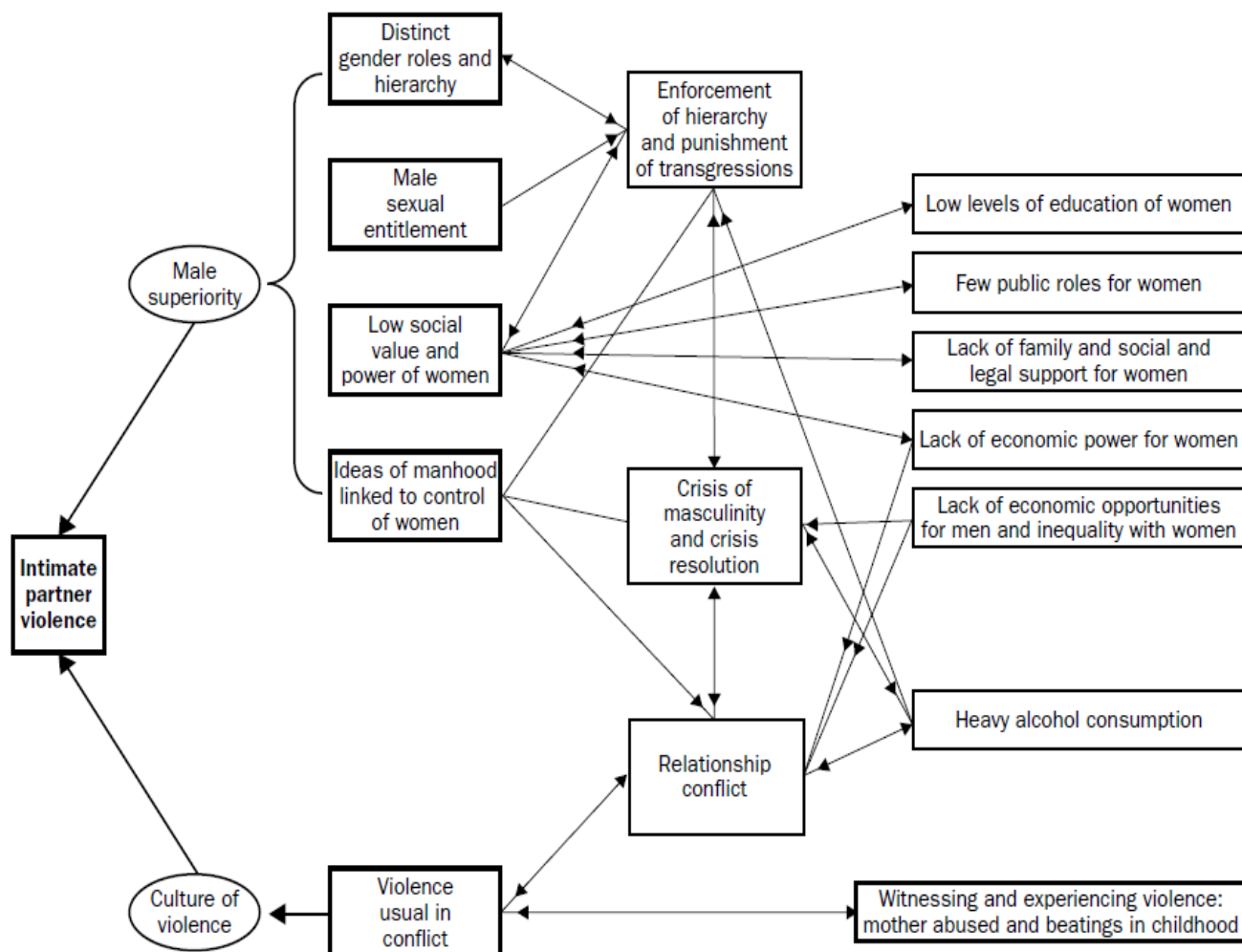
The core reasons for the constellation of factors are:

- A- Culture of violence
- B- Patriarchy

The above constellation of factors means that if a context is set up in terms of patriarchal values and if conflict is traditionally or culturally resolved through violence, then, there will be sexual violence. As such, since patriarchy is the common unit of gender construction in Northern Nigeria, conflicts are traditionally or culturally resolved through violence or sexual violence. For this reason, Boko Haram is an example in the Nigerian context. Others factors include a) poverty, culture and the ideology of male dominance; b) power, and sexual identity; c) women and power; d) relationship conflict; e) alcohol; and f) social norms (Jewkes, 2002:1423).

Causality theory as will be used in this research to define patriarchy is illustrated with the diagram below. The diagram explains the intersectionality, multiplicity and interactivity of the variables of gender, culture, race, age, class, ability, social norms and many other constellations to the causes of sexual violence (Deckha, 2008:266).

Theoretical framework on sexual violence adapted from Jewkes (2002:1426) on underlying causes of intimate partner violence.



The diagram above shows that the causes of intimate partner violence are complex. Two factors seem to be necessary in an epidemiological sense which includes the unequal position of women in particular relationships and in society and the normative use of violence in conflict. Without either of these factors, intimate partner violence would not occur (Jewkes, 2002:1426). These factors interact with a web of complementary factors to produce intimate partner violence. This shows that ideologies of male superiority legitimise disciplining of women by men, often for defying traditional gender roles, and the use of force in this process. Therefore, within such ideologies women are often defined as appropriate vehicles for reconfirmation of male power. The diagram also shows that many of the complementary factors are inter-related; however, the efforts are not unidirectional (Jewkes, 2002:1426-1427).

## **1.7 Causality Theory on Sexual Violence (Rachel Jewkes)**

According to Jewkes (2002:1423), causality theory refers to the connection between abuse of power and the reasons for sexual violence. The causes of sexual violence are discussed below.

### **1.7.1 Poverty**

Poverty is a state of being poor, deficient, and in want or need (Jewkes, 2002:1424). By implication, poverty and associated stress are key contributors to intimate partner violence. An influential theory explaining the relation between poverty and intimate partner violence shows that it is mediated through stress. Since poverty is inherently stressful, it has been argued that intimate partner violence may result from stress, and that poorer men have fewer resources to reduce stress (Jewkes, 2002:1424). In addition, this finding has not been supported by results from large studies of intimate partner violence in Thailand in which several sources of stress reported by men and their relation with intimate partner violence were analysed. It is observed that violence is associated with the product of inequality in form of advantage to either party (Jewkes, 2002:1424).

### **1.7.2 Poverty, Power and Identity**

The intersection between poverty, power and identity is identified as one of the causes of sexual violence (Jewkes, 2002:1424). In any setting, ideas vary on what it means to be a man and what constitutes successful manhood. Jewkes (2002:1424) argues that men living in poverty were unable to live up to their ideas of “successful” manhood and that in resulting climate of stress they would hit women. Male identity is said to be associated with experiences of power. This shows the need for the renegotiation of ideas of masculinity and recognition of the effects of poverty and unemployment on men in the prevention of intimate partner violence (Jewkes, 2002:1425).

### **1.7.3 Women and power**

Jewkes (2002:1425) points out that the issue of women and power observed at the level of female empowerment seems to be protective against intimate partner violence. By this, Jewkes means power can be derived from many sources such as education, income, and community roles and not all of these convey equal protection or do so in a direct manner. In many studies, high educational attainment of women was associated with level of sexual violence, while cross-cultural research suggests that societies with stronger ideologies of male dominance have more intimate partner violence. Ethnographic research suggests that protective effects of social

empowerment extend outside the home. Women, who have respect and power outside home through community activities, including participation in microcredit schemes, are less likely to be abused than those who powerless (Jewkes, 2002:1425).

#### **1.7.4 Relationship conflict**

Phiri (2000:94) notes that the frequency of verbal disagreements and of high levels of conflict in relationships is strongly associated with physical violence. Phiri (2000:94) adds that physical violence includes slapping, punching, kicking, shoving, choking, stabbing and shooting, perhaps using weapons like guns, knives, fakes, hammers or axes, etc. Physical beating often ends in the women being hospitalised, sometimes being permanently disabled, and even in her death. In South India, pertinent factors include dowry disputes, female sterilisation, and inability to produce sons, whereas factors in South Africa include women having other partners, alcohol consumption, and arguing about a partner's abuse of alcohol (Jewkes, 2002:1425).

#### **1.7.5 Alcohol**

Alcohol is another causality of sexual violence. Alcohol consumption is associated with increased risk of forms of interpersonal violence. Specifically, heavy alcohol consumption by men (and women) is associated with intimate partner violence. Research on the social anthropology of alcohol drinking suggests that connections between violence and drinking and drunkenness are socially learnt and not universal. This implies that it is likely that drugs that reduce inhibition such as cocaine would have similar relations to those of alcohol when it comes to intimate partner violence, but there has been little population-based research on this subject (Jewkes, 2002:1425).

#### **1.7.6 Social norms**

Jewkes (2002:1425) defines social norms as the way people live; people's values and norms vary across cultures. Many researchers have described intimate partner violence as a learned social behaviour in both men and women. Jewkes (2002:1425) further explains that the sons of women who are beaten are more likely to beat their intimate partners and, in some settings, to have been beaten themselves as children.

On the other hand, it is observed that many cultures condone the use of physical violence by men against women in certain circumstances and within certain boundaries of strictness. As such, in these settings so long as restrictions are not crossed, the social cost of physical violence

is low. Jewkes (2002:1426) submits that this tolerance may result from the fact that families or communities do emphasise the importance of maintenance of the male-female union at all costs.

On the issue of sexual abuse of children, LenkaBula (2002:60) demonstrates that a number of factors contribute to the sexual abuse of children. These factors include gender injustice, patriarchy, misuse of power, lack of self-confidence by perpetrators of sexual violence and the culture of violence. These factors are aggravated by socio-political, economic, and socio-religious contexts such as poverty and unemployment, violence and prevalence of HIV/AIDS, as well as hopelessness and lack of meaningful lives resulting from injustice.

### **1.8 Scope and Limitation of Study**

The scope of this research covers a discussion of the abuse of power and sexual violence in the light of a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 against the background of Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria. Though many things have been written about Boko Haram, this research aims to identify the causes and effects of abuse of power and sexual violence by the members of the Boko Haram sect. The research aims to add own voice to the discourse against the abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria in order to create a space for peaceful co-existence between issues of gender and religion in Nigeria. Irrespective of the prevailing circumstances, this research supports the promotion of peace in terms of socio-cultural and religious issues, and sustainable development within the Nigeria society, ultimately, at the regional level.

The research employs a qualitative method approach, causality theory, hermeneutical cycle and close reading as against the quantitative approach that is used in empirical research. This is because the research is non-empirical; as such, it will review some available literatures on the subject matter.

### **1.9 Significance of the Study**

This research does not dispute established facts about the nature of the violent activities of Boko Haram; rather it aims to broaden the horizon of on-going discussion with a contextual analysis of abuse of power and sexual violence against women. Although the continuous neglect of issues of abuse of power and sexual violence in the context of Boko Haram is one challenge in dire need of many answers, this research does not pretend in any way to provide all the answers. However, the research in a way seeks to contribute to the quest for peace in Nigeria at the local and national level and in the context of the regional and global arena.



## **1.10 Definitions of Key Concepts**

In the following paragraphs, some salient concepts used in this study will be clarified.

### **1.10.1 Power**

The term power refers to social, physical effectiveness or a phenomenon which brings about states of affairs and which be located on a continuum between the extremes of force and authority. The idea of having “power-over” is to be contrasted with “power-with.” Power over is domination and where there is domination there is subjugation. Hence, domination requires violence or the threat of violence to maintain itself, while the idea of exercising “power-with” is the power of an individual to reach out in a manner that negates neither self nor the other. Power is said to prize mutuality over control and operates by negotiation and consensus (Thatcher, 2015:26)

### **1.10.2 Sexual violence**

Phiri (2000:94) defines sexual violence as “any forced sexual ability, including rape that often includes degrading jests on women; name-calling, unwanted touching and using pornography.” To Obinna (2013:7), sexual violence is an attempt to perform a sexual act, or any act of forced, unwanted or unlawful sexual activity without a person’s consent. Sexual violence could also be defined as any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting including but not limited to home and work (Krug *et al*, 2002:150).

Scheffler (2014:582) notes that, “violence permeates virtually every chapter of Deuteronomy, and not only the deuteronomic Code of Chapters 12–26.” In the Deuteronomic Code, violence appears in the paraenetic (advisory) sections of Chapters 1-11 as well as the appendices, and is even not absent in Moses’ Song (Chapter 32) which primarily deals with God’s loving care for Israel (Scheffler, 2014:582).

### **1.10.3 Patriarchy**

According to Ackermann (1993:22), the term patriarchy stands for the legal, economic and social system that validates and enforces the sovereignty of the male head of the family over its other members. Family members in classical patriarchal systems refer to the wives, children and slaves that are within a particular household. Meyers (2014:8) considers patriarchy in terms of the social-science concept of male dominance formulated by nineteenth-century anthropologists as an attempt to understand the history of the family. To Haas (1995:321),

patriarchy can be defined in morally neutral terms as simply the rule of the fathers – men over women and husband over wives and children. Simply stated, patriarchy is the rule by men over women and children in a household. The term patriarchy is from patriarch, *arche* in Greek, meaning rule of the *pateres* (fathers). It is a type of “power-over” situation, and the term is used in description of the multiple structures, beliefs and practices which ensure that men exercise power over women (Thatcher, 2015:26).

#### **1.10.4 Boko Haram**

The name Boko Haram refers to an Islamist terrorist group in Nigeria which is also formally known in Arabic as *Jama'atu Ahlus Sunnah, Lid Da'awati Wal Jihad*. Its members who are committed to the Prophet's teachings for the propagation of Jihad have been active in Nigeria since 2009 (Smith, 2015: x). The phrase Boko Haram is from Hausa language and refers to the Islamist insurgency in Nigeria. The most commonly accepted translation is “Western” or “non-Islamic” education is forbidden or is a sin.” However, the name could have a wider meaning since “*boko*” may also be interpreted as “Western deception” (Smith 2015:212). The group is active mainly in the north of Nigeria, and seeks to impose Islamic law as the only law in Nigeria. Boko Haram use their knowledge of Quran to indoctrinate their followers, guns and other sophisticated weapon as their source of power in perpetrating their evils.

The name Boko Haram was given to the insurgents by outsiders and not by the Islamists themselves, and Nigerian authorities as well as the news media continue to refer to it as such. The insurgency has changed into an umbrella-like structure in recent years with various cells that may or may not work together, and Boko Haram has come to stand as a catch phrase that describes the various cells (Heras, Barkindo & Zenn, 2013:48; Smith, 2015:212).

#### **1.10.5 Hegemonic and masculinity**

Hegemony is a concept that is derived from Antonio Gramsci's analysis of class relations referring to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life (Connell, 1995:77). The term hegemony is from the Greek *hegemon*, ‘leader’, and hegemony occurs when one group exercises control over another group (Thatcher, 2015:146). The term masculinism is the attempt to counterbalance feminism by reaffirming the rights of men or it could refer to theories that are thought to promote the interest of males (Thatcher, 2015:146). In Connell's (1995:67) view, masculinity is a modern term which assumes that one's behaviour results from the type of person one is. That is to say, a non-masculine person would

behave differently such as being peaceable rather than violent, conciliatory rather than dominating, uninterested in sexual conquest, and so forth.

Hegemonic masculinity therefore can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, and which guarantees or is taken to guarantee the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Connell, 1995:77).

#### **1.10.6 Salafism**

Salafism is the term used to refer to a strict, fundamentalist interpretation of Islam that advocates a return to a purer form of the faith. Boko Haram's original leader, Mohammed Yusuf, was a Salafist. Thus, under his leadership before his death in 2009, Boko Haram was a Salafist-like sect based at Yusuf's mosque in Maiduguri (Smith, 2015:213).

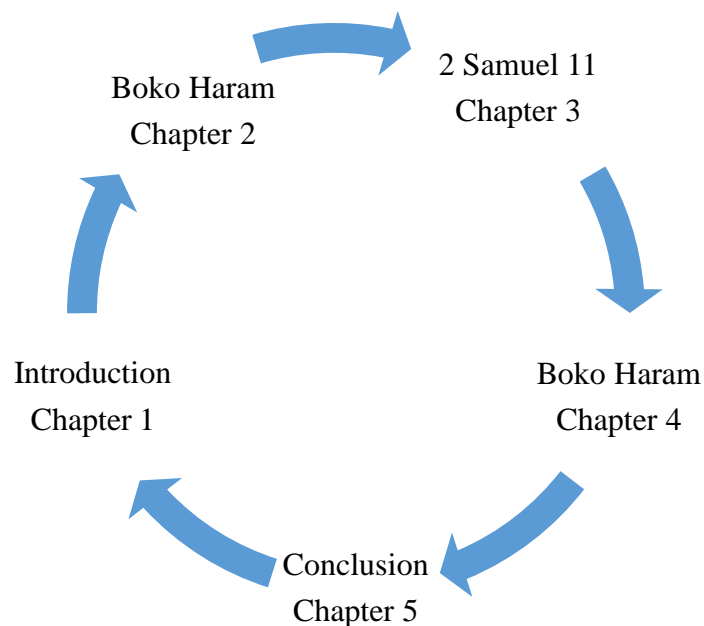
#### **1.10.7 Rape**

Rape is any form of forced or coerced sex or what is considered as a violent abuse of power in a sexual way (Du Toit, 2005:253). Du Toit (2005:254) observes that men are by far the main perpetrators of both violent crimes in general and of rape in particular while the victims of rape are almost always female.

According to Jewkes and Abraham (2002:1231), rape is committed when a man has intentional and unlawful sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent. This includes the application of force or threats, abuse of power or authority and the use of drugs among other things. For this reason, rape does not only attack the body but it also threatens the innermost core of the human being (Claassens, 2015:1).

#### **1.10.8 Close reading**

A close reading is a careful and minute scrutiny of all aspects of a text's language, style, metaphors, images and their relation to one another (Clines, 1983:33). A close reading could also mean an approach to a biblical text that involves careful observation, as if with a magnifying glass, of the details of the text. It pays attention to the literary characteristics of the text verse-by-verse with sensitivity to the context that produced the text as well as the context in which it is now read.



### 1.11 Hermeneutical Circle

Hermeneutical circle refers to the understanding of the most fundamental tenet of hermeneutics that has a circular structure. Oeming (2006:7) observes that like all other forms of understanding, the process of understanding the Bible is intimately tied to a process of communication.

Four factors are involved in hermeneutical circle namely:

1. The author, who aims to communicate an insight or experience from his world (context);
2. The text, which contains, at least partially, what the author intended to communicate;
3. The reader, who initiates contact with the author and his world by dealing with the text and its world. It remains to be seen whether modern readers of the ancient text are capable of re-actualizing the intention of the author at all, or whether they are doomed by the 'abyss of history' or mistaken as the written intention within the context of their own interest;
4. The subject matter which connects author, text and reader. This logical structure is referred as the hermeneutical square (Oeming, 2006:7).

This is to say that the various theories within both philosophical as well as biblical hermeneutics can be systematized and presented within the structure of this hermeneutical

square. Thus, this research will adopt the hermeneutical circle as part of the methodological framework.

### **1.12 Summary and Conclusion of Chapter One**

Having considered the background of this research, the research is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 covers the background, preliminary literature, the research problem, research questions, theoretical hypotheses, aims and objectives, the research methodology as well as the conceptual framework of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a description of the abuse of power and sexual violence prevalent in Boko Haram's atrocities in Nigeria. It examines some literatures on the history and origin of Boko Haram, its initial phase of criticism and non-violence before progressing to attacks against women and young girls. The chapter also examines similar trends to Boko Haram with insight from Africa and beyond as well as the current acts of terror through sexual violence by Boko Haram with examples of their violent behaviours especially on women.

Chapter 3 focuses on of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 employing close reading as a methodology of the research. The chapter offers a demarcation of the pericope and the translation of the text/textual criticism of 2 Samuel 11:1-27, the history of the research of the pericope, a verse-by-verse discussion and a review of the interpretation of verse 27 in recent commentaries.

Chapter 4 explains the present research contribution as a Christian to the abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. The chapter also considers the abuse of power and sexual violence as part of military activity, the abuse of power and sexual violence caused by religious fundamentalism, and gender and health issues in relation to abuse of power and sexual violence in Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria.

Chapter 5 is the final chapter and it contains the conclusion, summary and recommendations for further studies, based on the research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A DESCRIPTION OF ABUSE OF POWER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVALENT IN BOKO HARAM ATROCITIES IN NIGERIA

#### 2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provides the background for the whole study. It presents the motivation behind the research, taking into account a description of the social, cultural, religious and political landscape of Nigeria as a background for understanding the prevailing trends of sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram.<sup>11</sup> This chapter will describe and review some literatures on abuse of power and sexual violence in Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria. The chapter will conceptualise some terms, such as abuse, power, sexual violence and atrocity, for a better understanding of the topic. A brief history of Boko Haram and its initial phase of non-violent acts, the phase of violent acts and the current acts of terror in the light of sexual violence shall be considered along with examples of violent behaviour and the reasons for sexual violence by Boko Haram.

Abuse is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (OED, 2015) as improper usage, a corrupt practice or custom especially one that has become chronic. It is also the non-therapeutic or excessive use of a drug or the misuse of any substance especially for its stimulant effects. Abuse could also mean sexual violation including rape, sexual assault or maltreatment especially of a woman or child. In Merriam Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus (2007:4), abuse is defined as a corrupt practice, incorrect or improper use, misuse of drugs. The word could also mean to put something to a wrong use or use so as to injure or damage; mistreat.

The Oxford English Dictionary also defines power as the ability to act or affect something strongly, physical or mental strength, might, vigour, energy or effectiveness. Power could mean in a certain sense a movement to promote the interests or enhance the status or influence of a specified group (OED, 2015). In another sense, power means the deliberate exercise of physical force against a person or property or physically violent behaviour, treatment. In law, it is the unlawful exercise of physical force or intimidation by the exhibition of such force (OED,

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<sup>11</sup> Boko Haram members believe in the sovereignty of Allah and as such, everyone should undergo Islamic education instead of western education. In their opinion, western education corrupts the society and human beings and only Islamic education can help humanity to be better people who will make a better society. The group, whose ultimate aim is to Islamise Nigeria, is convinced that secular education (*boko*) and Westernised elites (*yan boko*) are the twin problems of the Nigerian state (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:51).

2015). Power could also mean the ability to act or produce an effect. It is a position of ascendancy over others – authority, one that has control or authority especially a sovereign state, physical might, mental or moral vigour also refers to power (Merriam Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2007:627).

In addition, the adjective sexual means relating to or arising from the fact or condition of being either male or female; predicated on biological sex; also of relating to or arising from gender orientation with regard to sex or the social and cultural relations between the sexes (OED, 2015). Violence on the other hand is defined as undue constraint applied to nature, a trait, habit and others so as to restrict the development or use, or to alter unnaturally. It also refers to improper treatment or use of a word or text, misinterpretation, misapplication, alteration of meaning or intention. From the aforementioned definitions of the words sexual and violence, sexual violence therefore would mean, “Any forced sexual ability, including rape that often includes degrading jests on women; name-calling, unwanted touching and using pornography” (Phiri, 2000:94). To Obinna (2013:7), sexual violence is an attempt to perform a sexual act or any act of forced, unwanted or unlawful sexual activities without a person’s consent.

Although the word atrocity refers to an atrocious deed, it is an act of extreme cruelty and heinousness by an individual. It is savage enormity, horrible or heinous wickedness (OED, 2015). Atrocity could also mean crime against humanity (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 2015). The term is from atrocious, meaning savagely brutal, cruel, or wicked and refers to inspiring horror, dismay or disgust (Merriam Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2007:48).

However, to understand violence in the Old Testament, Scheffler (2014:585-589) highlights five forms of violence in Deuteronomy as follow:

- i. Violence that refers to war situations (example: the *herem* in Deuteronomy 7 and the rules for war in Deuteronomy 20).
- ii. Violence through capital punishment “most often by stoning” most noticeable is Deuteronomy 13 (found also 17:2–7).
- iii. Violence as a “minor transgression;” this includes flogging (e.g. Deut 25:1–3).
- iv. A form of violence as means of punishment which involves the mutilation of the human body as in “an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand and foot for a foot” in Deuteronomy 19:20.

- v. A form of violence to animals (Deut 20) as in the slaughtering of the heifer in Deuteronomy 21:1-8.

In this research, the term “abuse of power” connotes a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person or persons. It could also mean the misuse of power by one person over the other which is likely to occur in situations where one person has power over the other. Abuse of power could occur where one person is dependent on another for their physical wellbeing or due to power relationship in society such as between a professional worker and a service user or between a man and a woman. It could also occur between a person of the dominant race/culture and a person of an ethnic minority or between a king and his subjects, as in the case of David and Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:1-27).

However, power is seen as a key or crucial concept to the study of sexuality and gender (Thatcher, 2011:26). Thatcher points out that there are contradictory meanings associated with power. Power operates on three discernible levels viz., the level of relations between men and women (gender); the level of interaction between social institutions and individuals; and the transformative level where relations of power can become relations of mutuality. Thatcher (2011:26) maintains that in relations of gender, “power-over” often takes the form of patriarchy. For this reason, power-over in the gendered sense can protect women from predation (as in honour killings when a woman is shamed), but such protection comes at a very high price. From the above explanation, one can say that patriarchy is a source of power (Thatcher, 2011:26) and that it is a form of power which ensures that men exercise power over women and their household. According to Kajom (2012:107), when power is abused and misused, then, justice, peace, human rights and trust are replaced by fear, and human power no longer serves or works for the dignity of all. Writing in relation to peace initiative, Kajom (2012:107) affirms that when misused, power can fuel violence.

In this chapter, the term power is not used to refer to what is known as “powers of the universe,” natural forces or forces of the cosmos, but power that is abused in respect to sexual violence. Kajom (2012:108) speaks of three types of power – ideological power, remunerative power and punitive power. Ideological power is the power of ideas; remunerative power is the power of the economy; and punitive power is the power to destroy, the power of force or the power of violence such as that of Boko Haram. Thus, a society can be structured in such a way that either one or all of these types of powers prevail. In a nutshell, power can be seen as a



purposeful, deliberate act of abuse and ability, such as the ability to rule, to control, and to continue to control.

## 2.2 Brief History of Boko Haram

The history of Boko Haram or *Jama'at ahlal-sunna li-da'wa wa-l-qital*<sup>12</sup> as it also known is difficult to establish. The group is a militant sect driven by the ideology of fanatical Islamic practice. The sect currently executes violent attacks against the Nigerian state specifically in the North and with fresh threats to extend its attacks to the South. Aghedo and Osumah (2012:853) show that Boko Haram pursues the agenda of Islamizing Nigeria regardless of the nation's secularity, and it repudiates democracy and Western education especially the Darwinian Theory of evolution. As already stated above, the name, Boko Haram means, "Western education is evil" in the Hausa language. The group's issues have been controversial, as a faction of the group focuses on local grievances while the other seeks contacts with outside terror groups (Johnson, 2011:25).

Like its grievances, the origin of Boko Haram is controversial. Zenn et al (2015:47) offers a review of the emergence of Boko Haram in Nigeria thus:

Most studies of Boko Haram date the emergence of the group to the period when it launched its first attack and became an insurgency, in September 2010. Its official founding was under Mohammed Yusuf in 2002. This, however, neglects the history and organisation of the group before Mohammed Yusuf and then Abubakar Shekau took over its leadership. This failure to dig deeper into the incubation of Boko Haram has obscured the fact that ideological radicalisation has been an on-going process in Nigeria, intensified by the 1979 Iranian revolution, the implementation of *Sharia* Law in twelve northern states since 1999, and the 9/11 attacks in the US.

Aghedo and Osumah (2012:858) trace the existence of Boko Haram to the mid-1990s. The group then operated under the name of *Ahlulsunna wai'jama'ah hijra* and later thrived under various names such as the Nigerian Taliban and *Yusufiyyah* sect. Agbiboa (2013:433) writes that Boko Haram was first led by Mohammed Yusuf until he was killed by state security forces just after the sectarian violence in Nigeria, which claimed over 1 000 lives in July 2009. Yusuf was born on 29th January 1970 in Girgir village in the Jalasko Local Government Area of Yobe State Nigeria. He had four wives and 12 children. The young Yusuf was a secondary school dropout who received a Koranic education in the Republics of Chad and Niger where he imbibed his radical ideology. Agbiboa (2013:433) further notes that Mohammed Yusuf

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<sup>12</sup> The name *Jama'at ahlal-sunna li-da'wa wa-l-qital* means followers of the prophet and the group is also sometimes called the Nigerian Taliban because of the claim to being inspired by the Islamist militants in Afghanistan.

received instruction in *Salafi* radicalism and he was greatly influenced by Ibn Taymiyyah, an Islamic scholar (*alim*) from Turkey. The sect claims to have over 40 000 members in Nigeria and some neighbouring African countries such as the Republics of Chad and Benin, and Niger Republic as well as in far way Somalia and Mauritania.

Campbell (2014:20) also describes Boko Haram as a radical Islamist movement shaped by its Nigerian context and reflecting Nigeria's history of poor governance and the extreme poverty in the north. The movement became noticeable in the year 2001 and it is unique in the sense that it combines a sectarian, radical Islamic agenda with violence. Its stated goal is the establishment of a *sharia* state, but it shows little interest in actual governing or implementing economic development. Onuoha (2010:54-57) also points out that in August 2011 the commander of the US Africa Command, General Carter Ham declared that Boko Haram has ties with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Somalia's al-Shabaab.

On the origin of Boko Haram, Aghedo and Osumah (2012:858) observe that demographically most of its members are drawn essentially from Islamic clerics and students, professionals and students of tertiary institutions in Borno and Yobe states particularly the University of Maiduguri, Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri, and the Federal Polytechnic, Damaturu. Other members include school dropouts who enrolled with the sect for Koranic education. Some members of the state security agencies are also members of the sect and help the group with training. Agbibo (2013:433) affirm that members of Boko Haram comprise of university lecturers, bankers, political élites, drug addicts, unemployed graduates, *almajiris* (Koranic school children), and migrants from neighbouring countries. The group members are also drawn from the Kanuri tribe, and roughly four per cent of the membership comes from the North-eastern states of Nigeria.

At its inception, Boko Haram had Mohammed Yusuf as its leader (Agbibo, 2013:433). He died after the July 2009 riots, allegedly in the hands of the police. Schneider (2015:9) notes that Mohammed Yusuf, a charismatic *Salafist* literalist preacher in his early 30s founded Boko Haram and became its leader as a radical Islamic sect in 2002 (Zenn et al, 2015:47). Like Agbibo (2013:433), Schneider (2015:9) attests that in 2009, Nigerian security forces extra judicially killed an admirer and would-be emulator of Afghanistan's Taliban during a crackdown on his sect. After the death of Mohammed Yusuf, Mallam Sanni Umaru became the acting leader. Since that time, several persons have claimed to be the leader of the group at various times. Mallam Abubakar Shekau is currently the spiritual head of the sect, while

Mallam Abul Qaqa is its spokesman (Agbibo, 2013:433). It has been observed that members of Boko Haram pay daily levies to their leaders. The levies provide the group with basic source of funding but they also obtain funds through loots from attacks on banks and donations from politicians, government officials and organisations within Nigeria (Aghedo & Osumah, 2012:858). Furthermore, Onuoha (2010:54-67) notes the allegation that the sect secures financial support from outside the country. For instance, in 2007, Mohammed Yusuf and Mohammed Bello Damagun (a Muslim cleric who supposedly belonged to the “Nigerian Taliban”) was arraigned in the Abuja Federal High Court for receiving monies from al-Qaeda operatives to recruit and train terrorists in Nigeria.

It was also alleged that Damagun received a total of US\$300 000 from al-Qaeda to recruit and train Nigerians in Mauritania to carry out terrorist activities (Onuoha, 2010:54-67). Similarly, Yusuf reportedly received monies from al-Qaeda operatives in Pakistan to recruit terrorists who would attack the residences of foreigners especially Americans living in Nigeria. In addition, Agbibo (2013:435) reports that Boko Haram derives funds from robbing local banks. An example is the incident on 12th January 2010 in which four Boko Haram members attempted to rob a bank in Bakori Local Government Area of Katsina State, according to the local Police Commissioner Umaru Abubakar.

On 4th December 2011, the Bauchi Police Commissioner, Ikechukwu Aduba, claimed that members of Boko Haram had robbed local branches of Guaranty Trust Bank and Intercontinental Bank. Again, on 10th December 2011, Mohammed Abdullahi, the Central Bank of Nigeria’s spokesman, claimed that at least 30 bank attacks attributed to Boko Haram have been reported as of 2011 (Agbibo, 2013:435). Besides bank robberies and individual financiers, Forest (2012:72) attests that there have also been rumours of Boko Haram’s involvement in trafficking of illegal weapons and drugs although there is no firm evidence to support such claims. Nonetheless, irrespective of the sources of Boko Haram’s funding, individuals who support the group do so largely because they find some significance in the group’s radical jihadist ideology. When this ideology resonates with individuals with access to resources, it clearly benefits the group’s operational capabilities. Therefore, a thorough analysis of Boko Haram’s ideology is necessary.

Boko Haram does not appear to be a homogeneous group, as it has been speculated that the members are splintered into two factions. A former Bauchi State Governor, Mallam Isa Yuguda, announced that one faction of the sect distorts the true teaching of Islam, while the

other faction is a band of criminals who are out to destroy the country for selfish reasons (Omonobi, et al 2011:1, 5). The sect deploys various tactics, methods and weaponry in its mobilisation of violence. Its weapons include cudgels, bows and arrows, cutlasses, guns and bombs. It is reported that the sect runs an illegal bomb-making factory at various locations such as Shuwari in Maiduguri and in Ibrahim Rintiya Street in Kaduna (Olatunji, 2011:2). Onuoha (2010:54-67) confirms that the group Boko Haram also launches attacks against high-profile places such as government establishments, security outfits and stations, markets, banks, shopping complexes, palaces, drinking spots and churches.

The sect began its offensive operation in the towns of Geiam and Kanamma in Yobe State on 24th December 2003 when it launched an attack against police stations and public buildings and hoisted the flag of Afghanistan's Taliban movement over the camp. However, its action was crushed by a joint operation of soldiers and police (Onuoha, 2010:54-67). Thus, by 31st December 2003, Boko Haram members had dispersed into other northern states from Yobe State, and claimed responsibility for serial bomb explosions in several states in Northern Nigeria namely Borno, Yobe, Gombe, Adamawa, Kano, Bauchi, Plateau, Kaduna, Niger, Kogi, Benue and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Human Rights Watch estimates that over 935 persons have been killed since 2009 in Boko Haram-related attacks. In 2009, Boko Haram insurgents killed 250 persons, and this figure rose to 550 in 2011 in 115 separate incidents. In the first three weeks of January 2012 alone, 253 lives were lost in 12 Boko Haram attacks while a total of 185 policemen and civilians were killed in the 20th January 2012 bomb blasts, which targeted mainly security formations in Kano, the deadliest single operation so far (Aghedo & Osumah, 2012:859).

According to Aghedo and Osumah (2012:859), Boko Haram appears to represent a unique problem in several respects compared to other insurgent groups in the country. First, the group is more sophisticated, coordinated, menacingly daring and seemingly genocidal in its campaigns. Unlike the earlier rebel groups (*tijaniyya*), it deploys violence against public and private enterprises as well as public figures and innocent ordinary citizens especially non-indigenes and Christians in the North. More strikingly, it uses suicide bombers, hitherto unknown in the country. Second, Boko Haram has strong links with foreign actors which assist it in the areas of sponsorship and training. Third, unlike other insurgent groups in the past, Boko Haram's goals, demands and grievances are controversial. They are not clearly articulated in any known document yet. Aghedo and Osumah (2012:860) observe that Boko

Haram's much touted Islamisation mission in the country does not seem to enjoy popular support even from its immediate constituency. For example, a number of notable Muslim clerics in the North have openly denounced Boko Haram as extremists (Aghedo & Osumah, 2012:860).

### **2.2.1 Non-violent phase of Boko Haram**

Boko Haram as a sect started out as a purely Islamic group without violence. The group initially was like an opposition party who criticised the Nigerian government in a peaceful way. Also, at their emergence they were like a group of Islamic students who used to gather regularly to receive Islamic teaching from an Islamic scholar. Eventually their peaceful criticism of societal ills and the government changed and the disposition of the group became questionable for three reasons. First, the sect does not only target non-Muslims; it fights the government as well. This is evident in the group's bombings of the United Nations (UN) House in Abuja and other non-governmental structures. Second, it is discovered that the sect also has non-Muslim members. Most people believe that the Boko Haram crisis, which continues to ravage Nigeria to date, started formally in 2009 with the sectarian religious violence between rural Islamic groups in Plateau state. Third, the group does not spare even prominent Muslims, as it had attacked mosques and killed Islamic religious leaders in the past (Aghedo & Osumah, 2012:865).

On 24th December 2003, Boko Haram militants launched an attack on a police station and public buildings in the towns of Geiam and Kanamma in Yobe. A joint operation of soldiers and police was deployed swiftly to crack down on them. The security operatives allegedly killed 18 members of the sect and arrested several others. This bloody repression, rather than demobilize the militants, spurred them to regroup (Aghedo & Osumah, 2012:865). On the initial phase of Boko Haram, Onuoha (2010:56) observes that on 21st September 2004, the militants again launched attacks at Bama and Gwoza police stations in Borno State. Later, the police launched a counter-attack during which 24 members of the sect were reportedly killed and 22 rifles and large quantities of ammunition were recovered. In addition to repression, the activities of the group have also attracted greater security attention and surveillance. Onuoha (2010:56) reports that in 2007, the then Umaru Yar'Adua presidency ordered the national security agencies to contain the violent activities of the group. Police and other forces were deployed to crush the 26-27th July 2009 revolts in Bauchi, Borno, Yobe and Kano states. In the July 2009 riots in Borno State, the joint operations of the police and military were coordinated by the Borno State special Security Task Force, code-named Operation Flush. On

28th July 2009, the Security Task Force targeted the residence of Boko Haram's leader Mohammed Yusuf in Maiduguri in a heavy bombardment, which resulted in Yusuf's arrest. It is alleged that he was later extra-judicially murdered by the police.

Onuoha (2010:60) argues that the death of Yusuf and some other Boko Haram militants in the bloody encounter heightened the scale of the insurgency. In Kano State, the police killed three of the fundamentalists and arrested 33 others. A dusk-to-dawn curfew was imposed in Damaturu and Potiskum in Yobe State as a result of the 2009 riots. Surprisingly even with this uprising, the sect claimed to have legitimate grievances against the national security agencies. Aghedo and Osumah (2012:856) also claim that the heavy-handed approach of the security agencies exacerbates the insecurity and that the Nigeria Police Force is responsible for hundreds of extra-judicial killings annually. Several members of Boko Haram have been executed by the security agents with impunity. According to Agbiboa (2013:433), the 2009 massacre by the security agencies was so severe that the government ordered that the police personnel who killed Yusuf and the military commander of the troop that killed 42 other Boko Haram insurgents be prosecuted. Since then, clashes between Boko Haram militants and security operatives have persisted. At various locations, heavily armed soldiers, anti-bomb police squads and men of the State Security Service have patrolled the major cities in the North and security checkpoints have become common sights in high profile places in the region because of the fear of Boko Haram.

In another report, Agbiboa (2013:433) relates that Boko Haram became a full-fledge insurgency following violent clashes in 2009 between the Islamist group of the state's security agency in Bauchi charged with the responsibility of enforcing a new law of wearing crash helmets by motorcyclist in the country. Nevertheless, aside from the application of violence, governments at the state and federal levels have made overtures and reconciliations to Boko Haram Islamic militants. For example, Onuoha (2010:62) shows that the former Borno State governor, Sheriff, allegedly paid the sum of ₦100 million (₦160=USD1) to pacify the sect when their leader was executed in 2009. On 16th July 2011, the current governor, Kashim Shettima, also called on the sect to come forward to engage in dialogue with the government. In addition to the presidential committee set up to deliberate on the insurgency, a Northern Peace Conference and a meeting of all former national security advisers have been held in response to the terrorist activities. In the quest for peace, over 1 000 illegal aliens from Chad, Niger Republic and Sudan have been deported from Nigeria, and a Terrorism (Prevention) Act

(2011) is now in place. The federal government has also ordered the trial of the police officers and military commander of the squad allegedly responsible for the killing of some Boko Haram members in 2011 (Aghedo & Osumah, 2012:865).

Furthermore, Aghedo and Osumah (2012:866) acknowledge that in December 2011, a state of emergency was declared by the federal government in 15 local government areas in six northern states. Former President Jonathan forcibly retired the Inspector General of Police and his six deputies on 25th January 2012 due to the scandalous escape from police custody of Kabiru Abubakar Dikko (a.k.a Sokoto) 24 hours after he was arrested. Dikko was the alleged mastermind of the 2011 Christmas Day bombing of St. Theresa's Catholic Church at Madalla near Abuja in which 43 persons died. He was later re-arrested in February 2012. His confession to police complicity in his earlier escape led to the dismissal and prosecution of some top police officers. However, it remains doubtful that these measures would prevent the terrorists from attacking the state with devastating consequences (Aghedo & Osumah, 2012:866).

### **2.2.2 Violent acts of Boko Haram**

Nigeria has suffered due to various assaults on its citizens recently especially in the last two decades, and this illustrates how power has been abused in the society. An important aspect of this study is to describe the abuse of power and the indignity of sexual violence as perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria. The name Boko Haram is derived from a combination of the Hausa word for "book" (*boko*) and the Arabic word for "forbidden" (*haram*), and it means "Western education is sinful" or "Western education is forbidden" (Forest, 2012:1; Agbiboa, 2013:433). The group itself rejects the designation "Western education is forbidden." Instead, it prefers "Western culture is forbidden." The group, whose ultimate aim is to Islamise Nigeria, is convinced that secular education (*Boko*) and Westernised élites (*yan boko*) are the twin problems of the Nigerian state (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:51).

According to Forest (2012:65), the group predominantly confronted Christians with clubs, machetes, and trivial weapons as part of its strategy to provoke sectarian violence. Its members have been unleashing a regular campaign of bombings and kidnappings especially of young girls for their personal and emotional satisfaction. They also engage in shootings mostly in North-eastern Nigeria, and at times, they drive by on bikes and cars while shooting sporadically into communities that have refused to subscribe to their philosophies.

Boko Haram by definition claims to be Salafist.<sup>13</sup> Members are devoted to “an ascetic and fundamentalist interpretation of early Islam. It is also jihadist in nature, indicating a commitment to actively promote its cause” Maianguwa and Agbiboa (2014:51). Before the uprising of 2009, the group’s founder, Mohammed Yusuf, declared, “We are for jihad, and our jihad is intended to make us Muslims return to the sole state of Islam.”<sup>14</sup> Boko Haram also backs an ultra-Salafi ideology that regards women as inferior to men and considers Christian women, in particular, as “members of an infidel outcast.”<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, Boko Haram formally calls itself:

“*Jama’atul Ahul Sunnah Lidda’wati wal Jihad*” which means “people committed to the propagation of the Prophet’s teachings and *jihad*.” As its name suggests, the group is adamantly opposed to what it sees as a Western-based incursion that threatens traditional values, beliefs, and customs among Muslim communities in northern Nigeria. In an audiotape posted on the Internet in January 2012, a spokesman for the group, Abubakar Shekau, even accused the U.S. of waging war on Islam... the group is largely a product of widespread socio-economic and religious insecurities and its ideology resonates among certain communities because of both historical narratives and modern grievances.<sup>16</sup>

It is observed that attacks on schools in North-eastern Nigeria by Boko Haram are rampant. According to Agbiboa (2014:56) in July 2013, members of the group stormed a boarding school in Yobe State and set on fire 29 students and one of their teachers. In 2012, the group distributed pamphlets and videos and delivered sermons throughout Northern Nigeria, calling for girls to be denied modern education and promising to abduct “infidel women as slaves.”<sup>17</sup> In March 2014, about 85 secondary schools were closed and over 120 000 students were sent home by the Borno State government following increasing attacks on schools by Boko Haram. Furthermore, Agbiboa (2014:52) notes that on the night of 14-15th April 2014, Boko Haram gained worldwide publicity and social media activism (through the “Bring Back Our Girls” campaign) when it kidnapped over 200 schoolgirls writing their final exams in the town of Chibok in Borno State. The Nigerian government’s delay to take any action in response to the Chibok abductions, combined with the confusion over the actual number of girls kidnapped,

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<sup>13</sup> Atta Barkindo, Benjamin Tyavkase Gudaku and Caroline Katgurun Wesley 2013. “Our Bodies Their Battleground.” The term Salafist (from Salafism) is the fundamental aspect of Boko Haram’s ideology. Salafism as a word comes from the first generation of Muslims collectively referred to as al-Salaf alSaleh meaning pious predecessors which could include the companions, the followers of the prophet, and the followers of the Prophet.

<sup>14</sup> Jacob Zenn, Atta Barkindo and Nicolas Heras 2013. “The Ideological Evolution of Boko Haram in Nigeria: Merging Local Salafism and International Jihadism.” *The Rutsi Journal*, 158 (4), pp. 46-53.

<sup>15</sup> Barkindo *et al* 2013. “Our Bodies, Their Battleground: Boko Haram and Gender-based Violence against Christian Women and Children in North-Eastern Nigeria since 1999.” Nigeria’s Political Violence Research Network (NPVRN) Working Paper No 1, 16. Available at:

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/research/3117403> (accessed 5th July 2014).

<sup>16</sup> Barkindo *et al* (2013).

<sup>17</sup> Barkindo *et al* (2013).



drew widespread local and international condemnation.<sup>18</sup> Drawing insights from Africa and beyond, this research critically examines the disturbing trend of Boko Haram's relentless attacks against women and young girls, especially in the north-eastern Nigeria. The ramifications of these attacks on the right to the education of women and young girls in Northern Nigeria as well as the far-reaching impacts on their physical and psychosocial well-being are condemnable.

According to Agbiboa (2014:434) the extrajudicial killing of Mohammed Yusuf, Boko Haram leader while under police custody in 2009 provoked pre-existing animosities toward state security forces. After the killing of their leader, members of Boko Haram re-emerged from a one-year retreat in 2010 with an expanded list of "enemies" including secular schools, churches, mosques, media houses, communication centres, cinemas, marketplaces, universities and the United Nations (UN) headquarters in Abuja. While the group has continued to attack this wide range of targets, in recent times, it has modified its tactics and adopted the kidnapping of women and young girls as a strategy.

#### ***2.2.2.1 Boko Haram's attacks against women and young girls***

Boko Haram's kidnapping of women and children may be seen as a reaction on their side to counter similar tactics by the Nigerian state (Zenn & Pearson, 2014:45-59). It is observed that from December 2011, the Nigerian police began to detain the wives and children of militant leaders possibly to force Boko Haram to the negotiation table. Among the over 100 Boko Haram family members arrested were relatives of Boko Harams leader, Abubakar Shekau.<sup>19</sup> In January 2012, the Boko Haram leader warned that his group would begin to kidnap the wives of government officials in response to the government clampdown and arrest of the wives of group members. The Boko Haram members threaten that, "Since you are now holding our women, just wait and see what will happen to your own women, to your own wives according to *sharia* law" (Zenn & Pearson, 2014).

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<sup>18</sup> D. Agbiboa 2014. "In Nigeria, Parents Tormented by Stumbling Search for Girls Kidnapped by Boko Haram; Mothers and Fathers Mourn as Trail Goes Cold for Abducted Girls; No Answers in Sight to Brutal Militancy of Abubakar Shekau." *The Wall Street Journal*, 8th May. Available at: <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ukzn.ac.za:2048/docview/1522506005/70164AE099504046PQ/102?accountid=11921>(accessed 3rd July 2014).

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Pearson and Jacob Zenn 2014. "How Nigerian Police also Detained Women and Children as Weapons of War." *The Guardian*, 6th May. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/06/how-nigerian-police-also-detained-women-and-children-as-weapon-of-war> (accessed 15th July 2014).

So far, the most widely publicised kidnapping operation led by Boko Haram was the abduction of over 200 girls from Chibok. The Guardian Newspaper of 6th May (2014:6) reported that in an hour-long video released on 5th May 2014, the Boko Haram leader threatened that he would sell the Chibok girls in the market as slaves and wives. In another video tape released by the group on 12th May 2014, about 130 of the kidnapped girls were shown “dressed in conservative Muslim attire in an unidentified rural location” (Guardian Newspaper, 6th May, 2014:6). However, besides the threats to sell the girls off as wives and slaves, the Boko Haram leader also demonstrated a “willingness” to negotiate the release of the girls with the Nigerian state under the strict conditions that dozens of its militants held in Nigerian prisons be released.

The campaign against Boko Haram has become an international initiative. Initially, the government of former President Goodluck Jonathan was very slow in responding to the Chibok kidnappings (Maianguwa & Agbibo, 2014:52). However, the situation changed after the “Bring Back Our Girls” campaign went viral on social media and inspired an unprecedented local and global outrage that forced the government to seek regional assistance and welcome international support from the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), France, Canada, Israel and China. In an effort to locate the kidnapped girls, the United States sent drones and manned reconnaissance planes over the country as well as neighbouring Chad and Niger (Maianguwa & Agbibo, 2014:52). In addition, British, French and Israeli teams have also been providing specialist and technical assistance on the ground. Nonetheless, as at the time of writing, the schoolgirls are yet to be found. More worrisome is the fact that Boko Haram has continued its campaign against women and young girls with boldness, reckless abandon and impunity (Maianguwa & Agbibo, 2014:52), that is, despite the commitment of the international community.

Shortly after the Chibok incident, Boko Haram is believed to have kidnapped 20 more girls from a village called Garkin Fulani (Agbibo, 2014:52). Furthermore, on 5th May 2014, suspected Boko Haram militants kidnapped at least eight girls from two villages near Chibok.<sup>20</sup> It is not yet clear whether the kidnapped women and young girls have been subjected to sexual violence, maimed, killed or even recruited into the Boko Haram camp. However, there is strong evidence that Boko Haram has killed civilians, raped women, stolen goods and money from

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<sup>20</sup> D. Agbibo 2014. “World News: Boko Haram Insurgent Kidnapped More Girls in Nigeria.” *The Wall Street Journal*, 10th June. Available at: <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ukzn.ac.za:2048/docview/1534220803/70164AE099504046PQ/57?accountid=11921> (accessed 3rd July 2014).

traders (mostly women), forced young girls into marriages and forcefully converted several Christian girls and women to Islam.

According to Agbibao (2014:52), a female barrister Aisha Wakil (fondly called Mama Boko Haram), a long-time friend of Boko Haram, claims that she spoke with the group about the situation of the Chibok schoolgirls. She says Boko Haram confirmed that most of the girls are well, but that some of them have fallen sick. Wakil also claims that there is a change in attitude among the leaders of Boko Haram and that the group confided in her that it is ready to release the girls if 70 of its imprisoned members are released. She adds that Boko Haram also wants to be given amnesty, rehabilitated and allowed to return home. However, even this claim is uncertain and few believe Wakil's testimony. Doubt remains regarding the group's willingness or even "readiness" to give up on its demands for the implementation of nationwide *sharia* law and the eradication of Western civilization in Nigeria. Indeed, this would be counter to Boko Haram's mission statement, which clearly indicates that "they will never accept any system of government apart from the one stipulated by Islam because that is the only way that Muslims can be liberated" (Agbiboa, 2014:53).

#### ***2.2.2.2 Similar trends of Boko Haram: Insights from Africa and beyond***

The prevalence of abuse of power and sexual violence in Africa and beyond especially on the part of military men during war periods cannot be overemphasized. Marks (2014:2) notes that military campaigns are often accompanied by "a shadow sphere of coercive sexual relations and sex economies under duress." While military fighters, mostly young men, may buy into their group's ideology and hierarchy, it is incredibly difficult to keep them in the bush, living a life of violence and insecurity without access to sex, women and the social trappings of manhood (Marks, 2014:2). As such, women and girls fulfil a crucial military, social and logistical role. In Central Africa, for example, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has abducted "wives" for its commanders in raids spanning almost three decades (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:53).

The situation of the Nigerian girls compared to those of other African countries in conflict. The cases of Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Republic of Congo and Liberia offer us some insights into what the Chibok girls might be experiencing, possibly in Sambisa Forest along the border between Borno State and Cameroon (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:53). During the course of Sierra Leone's protracted conflict from 1991 to 2001, various atrocities were committed by the fighters, with civilians being the primary targets. In particular, the so-called "fine girls" were

vulnerable to kidnappings and sexual violence during the war. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), the Sierra Leone Army (SLA), the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces and the Westside Boys “regularly kidnapped girls and young women, forcing them into sexual servitude for the forces, or into marriage with commanders” (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:53). Witness (2001) attests that in Sierra Leone, women, young and old, were beaten, mutilated, raped, and killed by child soldiers and their adult commanders. For the rebels, sexual violence became a weapon against the civilian population, used to demonstrate their power and impunity.

According to Schneider (2015:9), Boko Haram started in Nigeria but it is now a problem to Cameroon as well. From early 2013, Boko Haram as a group began to spread into Northern Cameroon as well as some border areas of Chad and Niger. In February 2014, Boko Haram or a fragment group called Ansaru kidnapped a French tourist from Cameroon’s Far North Region as part of its attacks. As already observed, Nigeria remains the centre of Boko Haram activities. However, the histories, peoples and cultures of much of Northern Nigeria, the three northern regions of Cameroon, parts of western Chad and southeast of Niger all within West Africa are deeply linked to one another. Together, these regions form an area roughly the size of Ghana that in many ways has more in common with itself than with the rest of their respective nations.

It is also observed that as Boko Haram grew, it was bound to spill over to Cameroon, Chad and Niger. In the course of 2014, Chad, whose capital N’Djamena is little more than 30 km from Nigeria, and Cameroon were pulled into the fight. In late July of that year, Boko Haram launched one of its most high-profile attacks by kidnapping the traditional ruler of the Cameroonian town of Kolofata and the Deputy Prime Minister’s wife. In August 2014, Boko Haram had overrun and declared an emirate in Gwoza, a Local Government Area (LGA) of Borno State in Nigeria on the Cameroonian border. With this spread and the control of a territory very close to Cameroon estimated to be the size of Rwanda by Boko Haram in Nigeria, Cameroon had no other option than to act (Schneider, 2015:9).

A study by Denov and Maclure captures the ordeals of captured girls who survived the Sierra Leonean war. One interviewee describes the physical consequences of being raped repeatedly at a young age. The older men had the power to say, “this girl is mine, this one is mine” (Denov & Maclure, 2006:9). After they captured women, they would rape them. A young girl reported, “I was raped the moment they captured me at 12 years old... and I bled and bled... I could not walk. The man who raped me later carried me on his back” (Denov & Maclure, 2006:9). Apart

from sexual violence, many girls were coerced into becoming the sexual property of specific males in the group, and this sometimes offered the girls some protection. This phenomenon was commonly known as “bush marriages” or “AK-47 marriages,” as one abducted girl recalls: “I was married in the bush, for it was more advisable to have a husband than to be single.” Women and girls were seeking the attention of men especially strong ones for protection from frequent sexual harassment (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:53).

If Nigeria’s Boko Haram is similar to these established rebel groups, then, the likelihood that they will continue to capture girls and women to entrench their camps is rather high. Boko Haram’s repugnance to secular education, in particular, the education of the girl-child has been compared to the practice of other militant Islamist groups in Pakistan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Mali and Algeria (Mainanguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:54). A helpful reminder is the case of Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani girl who, in 2012, survived a shot in the head by the Taliban for upholding girls’ right to education in Islam. It is also reported from Pakistan that an extremist group called *Tanzeem-ul-Islami-ul-Furqan*, founded in 2014, has been issuing threats against educating girls in the Panjgur district of Balochistan. Like Boko Haram, *Tanzeem-ul-Islami-ul-Furqan* has issued letters to all private schools in the district, warning them to shut down girls’ schools or face the group’s wrath (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:54).

In Somalia for example, an Al-Qaeda-inspired Islamist group Al-Shabaab has been linked to the training of Boko Haram militants. Al-Shabaab is another group that has a tradition of forcefully abducting children including girls, and conscripting them to fight, among other things (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:54). In 2012, Somalia’s task force documented 43 cases of girls taken from camps for internally displaced persons, schools and villages.<sup>21</sup> Reflecting its own sordid history of kidnapping young women and children, Al-Shabaab justified the Chibok abductions as a consequence of the Nigerian government’s abuses against Muslims. From the above example, Al-Shabaab submits that Boko Haram’s actions are more humane than the government’s mistreatment of Muslims in Nigerian jails (Maianguwa & Agbiboa, 2014:54).

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<sup>21</sup> Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict (2013) “Somalia.” Available at: <http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/countries/somalia/> (accessed 14th July 2014).

### 2.2.3 Current acts of terror through sexual violence by Boko Haram

The current act of terror through sexual violence by Boko Haram is visited mostly on vulnerable Christian women either because of their religious belief or because they are accused of attending western styled schools. Some of the women abducted by the terrorists are threatened with death if they refused to convert to Islam. Based on interviews with victims, witnesses, medical staff, journalists, and government officials, as well as an analysis of credible media and other reports, Human Rights Watch estimates that Boko Haram has abducted at least 500 women and girls since 2009 from more than a dozen towns and villages in Borno and Yobe states (Zenn & Pearson, 2014:46-57).<sup>22</sup> Victims interviewed by Human Rights Watch said they were abducted at home, working on their farms, at school, traveling on roads, or during attacks on their village.

The victims described seeing scores of other women and children in Boko Haram camps, ranging from infants to 65 year olds, but were unable to ascertain how many of them had also been abducted and how many were family members of the combatants. The abduction of schoolgirls from the Government Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State on the night of 14th April 2014 is the biggest single incident of abduction by Boko Haram as of the time of writing this thesis.<sup>23</sup> According to a 20th June 2014 report by Nigeria's Presidential Fact Finding Committee on the Chibok attack, Boko Haram abducted a total of 276 schoolgirls, 57 of whom have since escaped while 219 are still unaccounted for.<sup>24</sup> The abductions sparked

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<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth Pearson and Jacob Zenn 2014. "Women, Gender and the Evolving Tactics of Boko Haram." *Journal of Terrorism Research*, 5/1, 46-57. The authors also report a distinct increase in gender-based violence as part of Boko Haram's strategy in the same period. They conclude that since the beginning of 2013, gender has become an essential component of Boko Haram's strategy, noting that Boko Haram sometimes abducted women for tactical purposes, such as luring security forces to an ambush or forcing payment of a ransom, or a prisoner exchange. In other cases, especially when violence was directed at Christian women, the motive appeared to be retributive or punitive, designed to breed fear and drive women and their families out of their homes.

<sup>23</sup> Pearson and Zenn (2014:46-57).

<sup>24</sup> Talatu Usman 2014. "Presidential Committee on Chibok Schoolgirls Submits Report." *Premium Times*, 20th June 2014. Available at: <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/163201-presidential-committee-chibok-schoolgirls-submits-report.html>. (accessed 7th August 2014). The Presidential Fact-Finding Committee was inaugurated by President Jonathan on 6th May 2014, to investigate "the mass abduction that took place in the small hours of the 14th of April, 2014, at Government Secondary School, Chibok, in Borno State." The committee had six terms of reference: to liaise with the Borno State Government and establish the circumstances leading to the school remaining open for boarding students when other schools were closed; to liaise with relevant authorities and parents of the missing girls to establish the actual number and identities of the girls abducted; to ascertain how many of the abducted students have returned; to mobilize the surrounding communities and general public on citizen support for a rescue strategy and support; to articulate a framework for a multi-stakeholder action for the rescue effort; and to advise Government on any matter incidental to the assignment. The chairman, in his address at the presentation of the committee's report to the president on 20th June 2014, confirmed that 276 students were abducted, 57 of which had so far escaped. He however recommended that the committee's report and findings should be kept confidential so as not to "jeopardize on-going rescue efforts and also the possibility

national and international protests, bringing much-needed attention to the vulnerability of Nigerian women and girls to abduction.

On the current acts of terror by Boko Haram, Schneider (2015:16) further notes that Nigerian, Chadian, Nigérien and Cameroonian forces have made substantial advances in the battle against Boko Haram since February 2015. Although it is reported that Boko Haram has killed 500 people in Nigeria during President Muhammadu Buhari's first month in office. As at the time of writing this research, there is no doubt that the number of people killed by Boko Haram might have increased since the sect has continued their attacks using mostly female suicide bombers.

### **2.3 Examples of Violent Behaviour by Boko Haram**

The Boko Haram sect employs various tactics, styles and weaponry in its mobilisation of violence. The sect is known for launching attacks against high profile places such as government establishment, security personnel and stations, markets, banks, shopping malls, palaces, drinking spots, churches and even mosques, as observed earlier. This research shall discuss some examples of violent behaviour by Boko Haram, in particular, examples of sexual violence against women by the insurgents.

#### **2.3.1 Abduction and the experience of Chibok schoolgirls**

Chibok is a town in the North-eastern part of Nigeria where Islam is undoubtedly the dominant faith. Chibok is mostly a Christian community though it includes a large number of Muslims as well. Its Christian heritage has its roots in the arrival in 1923 of missionaries from the church of the Brethren, a protestant denomination in Nigeria (Smith, 2015:174). The Christian background of Chibok could be the reason for the high concentration of the attacks and sexual violence against it by Boko Haram. The most recent attack on Chibok involved the abduction of almost 300 young schoolgirls on 14th April 2014 (Smith, 2015:171).

Human Rights Watch interviewed 12 young women and girls who escaped from Boko Haram's custody after the school attack (Segun, 2014). On the day of the abduction of the Chibok girls, many of the students had sat for their West African School Certificate examinations but on the evening of the attack, none of the teachers, the principals or any other administrative staff was

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of compromising National Security matters." The government has not made the report public at time of writing this project.

within the school premises.<sup>25</sup> According to Audu (2014:7), the Chibok School was reopened in April 2014 after the closure of Borno schools in March, but because the school served as a centre for the Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations, female students lived in dormitories while male students came in daily for the month-long examinations.<sup>26</sup> The young women and girls described hearing gunshots some kilometres away between 11:30 p.m. and 11:45 p.m., and soon after, witnessed the men entering the school compound on motorcycles. An 18-year-old lady described what happened after Boko Haram gathered the young women and girls together:

Two men told us we should not worry, we should not run. They said they had come to save us from what is happening inside the town, that they are policemen. We did not know that they were from Boko Haram. The rest of the men came and started shouting “Allahu Akbar” and at that moment we realized, they were Boko Haram. We were told to be quiet. One of them told us that the horrible things we heard happening elsewhere, like burning houses, killing people, killing students, kidnapping people, would happen to us now. We all started crying and he told us to shut up.<sup>27</sup>

The only guard, a civilian, who had been posted at the gate fled as soon as he saw the Boko Haram fighters approaching the school. According to the teenage students, the lack of security made it easy for the fighters to overrun the compound, seize the young women and girls from their dormitory, and organize their transport. The Boko Haram men did not arrive with adequate number of vehicles, therefore, they tried to arrange for more.<sup>28</sup> The students said they believed the primary objective of Boko Haram’s attack was the theft of a brick-making machine as well as food and other supplies. However, this apparently changed once the men realized they had access to the young women and girls and faced little resistance.

Unlike most of the other abductions by Boko Haram that Human Rights Watch has documented, the group in this case did not discriminate on the basis of religion, but abducted all the students including Muslims. The students described how the men shot in the air and then threatened two Muslim students, and instructed them to show them where the brick-making machine was, otherwise they would kill all the students, starting with the Muslims, the escapees

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<sup>25</sup> West African School Certificate examinations are administered by the West African Examination Council for students in English-speaking West African countries after six years of secondary education. The Council awards certificates to successful candidates. Human Rights Watch interview with victims (names withheld) in Yola on 21st June 2014, 22.

<sup>26</sup> Ola Audu 2014. “Nigerian Government Confirms Abduction of Scores of Female Students by Boko Haram.” *Premium Times*, 18th April. Available at: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/158785-nigerian-government-confirms-abduction-scores-femalestudents-boko-haram.html> (accessed 7th July 2014).

<sup>27</sup> Segun *et al* 2014. Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Yola, 21st June 2014, p. 22.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*



told Human Rights Watch. After looting and burning the school grounds, the men took as many students as they could fit into one truck.<sup>29</sup> The remaining young women and girls were forced to walk for about 10 miles at gunpoint on the route to Boko Haram's Sambisa Forest camp, until they could be accommodated in other vehicles that later arrived. Three girls, for whom there was still no room, were released. Some of the schoolgirls escaped by jumping off the back of trucks, or hanging on tree branches and jumping down when the trucks had driven off. They sustained injuries including sprains and fractures. Others escaped when the convoy stopped to top up food supplies; the girls asked to go to the bathroom and then fled. They returned home often days later with the help of local residents. Following the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls and the return of few, some of the parents of the girls who are still missing died due to trauma (Ameh, 2014:8-10).

In yet another report, Odebode (2014:7) attests that the relative ease with which it carried out the Chibok abductions appears to have encouraged Boko Haram to step up abductions elsewhere. On 16th April 2014, six women and two children were again abducted from Wala village and taken to a camp in Sambisa Forest. Five other women from Gujba village in Yobe State were reportedly abducted on 25th April, while eleven teenage girls were also abducted during attacks on Wala and Warabe villages in southern Borno State on 6th May.<sup>30</sup> In early June, suspected Boko Haram gunmen reportedly kidnapped 60 women from Kummabza in Damboa, Borno State (Ola, 2014:6).<sup>31</sup> There were also numerous abductions before Chibok including a February 2014 raid on Konduga, a village 35 kilometres from Maiduguri, during which 20 female students attending the Government Girls' Science College and five female street traders were abducted. The Konduga attack left more than 53 people dead. Boko Haram also reportedly abducted at least 20 women from the Fulani ethnic group from Bakin Kogi, Garkin Fulani, and Rugar Hardo villages near Chibok on 6th June 2014 (Abubakar, 2014:9).

Human Rights Watch reported that in another incident, some local residents and media reports indicate that the capture of the Fulani women, who are Muslims, was a kidnap for ransom, and

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Lanre Ola 2014. "Gunmen Abduct Eight More Girls in Northeast Nigeria: Police." Reuters, 6th May. Available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/06/us-nigeria-girls-idUSBREA450IO20140506> (accessed 7th August 2014).

<sup>31</sup> Ola Audu 2014. "60 Women Feared Kidnapped." *Premium Times*, 20th June. Available at: <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/163569-60-women-feared-kidnapped-boko-haram-attacks-borno-Human-villages.html> (accessed 7th August 2014).

was different from the previous pattern of abductions.<sup>32</sup> Boko Haram reportedly demanded 800 cattle in exchange for the women's return to their homes.<sup>33</sup> Boko Haram has also abducted numerous men and boys especially young men of fighting age. Witnesses told Human Rights Watch that the men and boys are often given the option of joining the group or being killed. Other men seemed to have been targeted for abduction because of their specific skills or occupation, which filled a need in the insurgents' camp. This was the case of a 46-year-old pharmaceutical salesman abducted from Buni Yadi in March 2014 while he was sitting outside his shop with a group of friends. A neighbour who witnessed the abduction described what happened thus:

Armed men rode up on motorcycles and ordered him to load all the drugs in his shop into his car. An aged neighbour who tried to flee when he saw their guns was told not to run because they had come only for the medicine seller who according to them had a duty to use his skills to serve God in their camp (Human Rights Watch, 2014:25).<sup>34</sup>

The above shows how brutal the members of Boko Haram are to people who fall into their hands. In another scenario, a 20-year-old woman who was abducted in May 2013 when she ran into a roadblock mounted by insurgents at Firgi near Bama told Human Rights Watch that:

The blockade was up to 40 vehicles long. When the men in military uniform separated the Muslims from the Christians, we knew then they were Boko Haram. All young men including Muslims were told to either join the insurgents or be killed. They slit the throat of some of the men, saying they would not waste bullets on them. Christian women wearing pants were shot in the leg and left to die. Older Muslim men and women wearing Muslim veils were released to go, while the rest of us were driven to their camp in Sambisa Forest.<sup>35</sup>

### **2.3.2 Abuses suffered during abduction by Boko Haram Members**

It is reported that the 30 women and girls interviewed by Human Rights Watch were subjected to a variety of abuses including physical and psychological suffering during and after their abduction, sometimes for refusing to convert to Islam. They were also subjected to forced labour including forced participation in military operations, forced marriage to their captors, and sexual abuse including rape (Human Rights Watch, 2014:25). While some women and girls seem to have been taken at random, the majority appeared to have been targeted, and they are notably students and Christians. Fourteen women and girls who had either escaped or were

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<sup>32</sup> Human Rights Watch Telephone Interview with Human Rights Worker and Journalist. Maiduguri, 10th June 2014.

<sup>33</sup> Ndahi Marama 2014. "20 Kidnapped Women: Boko Haram Demands 800 Cows as Ransom." *Vanguard*, 12th June. Available at: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/06/20-kidnapped-women-boko-haram-demands-800-cowsransom/#sthash.4GpVy1H8.dpuf> (accessed 8th August 2014).

<sup>34</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Witness (name withheld). Yola, 21st June 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014

released from Boko Haram camps in the Sambisa Forest and Gwoza Hills as well as other witnesses described how they and others at the camp were routinely forced to cook, clean, and perform household chores while in Boko Haram custody in the camps (Human Rights Watch, 2014:25). In 2010, a woman who had been abducted and held for three days by Boko Haram in 2009 told Human Rights Watch in Maiduguri that she had been forced to wash the bloodied clothes of insurgents killed in the July 2009 violence.<sup>36</sup> Other abducted women and girls were forced to participate in military operations to support the group. A 19-year-old who was held in several camps in the Gwoza Hills for three months in 2013 was forced to participate in attacks and to carry ammunition for her captors:

At first, my job in the camp was to cook for the 14-man group until a month later when I was taken along for an operation. I was told to hold the bullets and lie in the grass while they fought. They came to me for extra bullets as the fight continued during the day. When security forces arrived at the scene and began to shoot at us, I fell down in fright. The insurgents dragged me along on the ground as they fled back to camp.<sup>37</sup>

The victim described another operation:

On the way back from another operation, I was told to approach a group of five men we saw in a nearby village and lure them to where the insurgents were hiding. Afraid because of the killings I had witnessed during the operation, I told the young men, mostly teenage members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (JTF), that I needed their help. When they followed me for a short distance, the insurgents swooped on them. Once we got back to the camp, they tied the legs and hands of the captives and slit the throats of four of them as they shouted “Allahu Akbar.”<sup>38</sup> Then I was handed a knife to kill the last man. I was shaking with horror and couldn’t do it. The camp leader’s wife took the knife and killed him.<sup>39</sup>

Another victim told Human Rights Watch that although she was spared work because she had a three-month-old baby when she was abducted in April 2014, she witnessed others being forced to work. She described seeing some of the Chibok schoolgirls being forced to cook and clean for other women and girls whom the insurgents had chosen for “special treatment because of their beauty.”<sup>40</sup> In Gwoza, an area of Borno State where the hilly terrain makes vehicular traffic almost impossible, abductees described having to carry the loot stolen by the insurgents from villages and towns they had attacked. A 15-year-old girl abducted from her home in Pulk,

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<sup>36</sup> Human Rights Watch. 2012. “Spiralling Violence: Boko Haram Attacks and Security Force Abuses in Nigeria.” 11th October 2012, pp.45-46.

<sup>37</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014.

<sup>38</sup> Allahu Akbar is an Arabic phrase, meaning, “God is great.”

<sup>39</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld), Abuja, 23rd June 2014.

<sup>40</sup> Human Rights Watch Telephone Interview with Witness (name withheld), Abuja, July 2014.

near Gwoza noted how tired she was after walking for hours through the night with a bundle on her head:

They added more and more piles of clothing and other items stolen from homes and shops they looted before setting on fire each village they passed until I thought I would collapse from the weight of the load. I was relieved when two more girls were abducted in another village. They took over some of the goods I was carrying.<sup>41</sup>

### **2.3.3 Targeting Christian women and girls to force them to convert to Islam**

On targeting of Christian women and girls for forced conversion, Olorok (2014:4) reports that the Chibok students interviewed by Human Rights Watch said that nearly all of those abducted from their school, located in a predominantly Christian area of Borno State, were Christians. This assertion is supported by Christian leaders who say that 90 per cent of the abducted girls were Christian. In the video released by Boko Haram after the Chibok abductions, scores of the students were seen chanting in Arabic, as Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau declared that the young women and girls from Christian homes would be sold as slaves in the market (Oladipo, 2014).

Overall, the majority of the abductions documented by Human Rights Watch and many of those credibly reported in the media took place in the predominantly Christian area of southern Borno State. Of the 30 victims of abduction interviewed by Human Rights Watch, 29 were Christians; most appeared to have been targeted because of their religious affiliation. Many were threatened with death if they refused to convert to Islam. Most of those interviewed attested that they saw either Christian women and girls being singled out for abduction or Muslim women and girls being allowed to leave shortly after abduction, while Christians were not. According to the former abductees interviewed by Human Rights Watch, unmarried Christian women and girls seemed particularly vulnerable to being held captive for longer periods than those who were married, who were more frequently released after telling Boko Haram they had converted to Islam.<sup>42</sup> Some Christian women and girls, according to one well-documented

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<sup>41</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld), Lagos, 25th June 2014.

<sup>42</sup> A 2013 study by Nigeria's Political Violence Research Network (NPVRN) found that "with the emergence of Boko Haram, there was an increase in GBV [gender-based violence] against Christian women and children in all the six states of the north-eastern region." Atta Barkindo, Benjamin Gudaku, and Caroline Wesley 2013. "Our Bodies, Their Battleground: Boko Haram and Gender-based Violence against Christian Women and Children in North-Eastern Nigeria since 1999." A Working Paper for the Nigeria's Political Violence Research Network NPVRN, 24-25. Available at: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/research/3117403> (accessed 10th September 2014).

report, endured the destruction and looting of their businesses, forced conversions and marriage to Muslim men, or they were simply murdered.<sup>43</sup>

Witnesses and victims of ten different incidents of abduction told Human Rights Watch how insurgents separated Christian and Muslim women, releasing those confirmed to be Muslims and abducting the Christian women. A 22-year-old woman who was stopped at a Boko Haram roadblock near Bama in April 2013 described this dynamic:

As soon as our bus stopped, the insurgents shouted “Muslims, stand on this side. Christians, you infidels, stand on the other side.” Ten people, including the driver, stood on the Muslim side, while I and seven other passengers were in the Christian group. When two men in our group were shot, three of the women began to scream and they were shot in the legs. I quickly shut my eyes and mouth. They told everyone else, including the Muslims, to get back in the bus, but along the way they saw military men ahead, ordered us out, and drove off. I was lucky to escape before we reached Boko Haram’s dreaded camp.<sup>44</sup>

This was the experience of most vulnerable women who are mostly Christians. Human Rights Watch (2014:29) reported that a 23-year-old woman described how, after being abducted with her 47-year-old mother in November 2013, they were threatened with death unless they converted to Islam:

We returned to our village to get food after an attack, thinking the insurgents would have left after one week, but several of them grabbed my mother and I. They had guns and took us to a house in the hills where we met four other people who had been taken—two girls and two boys, all between 13 and 17 years old. The insurgent leader addressed us saying ‘today we’re going to convert you to Islam, then you can choose any one of us to marry, and we’ll give you a place to stay.’ My mother and I were already married so we refused but when they threatened to kill us, my mother advised we should agree because I was in the early stages of pregnancy and was too sick to eat. We were made to recite some words in Arabic and showed how to pray. Then they let us go after three days because my mother promised we will convince our husbands to become Muslims. I don’t know what happened to the other four abducted boys and girls we met in the camp. They were still there when we were allowed to leave.<sup>45</sup>

The above shows the experience of some the abductees who were force to convert to Islam. One woman held by Boko Haram in a camp near Gwoza also described how Boko Haram combatants placed a noose around her neck and threatened to behead her when she refused to renounce her religion. She told Human Rights Watch:

I was dragged to the camp leader who told me the reason I was brought to the camp was because we Christians worship three gods. When I objected to his claim, he tied a rope around my neck

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<sup>43</sup> Barkindo *et al* (2013).

<sup>44</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014.

<sup>45</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Yola, 9th August 2014

and beat me with a plastic cable until I almost passed out. An insurgent who I recognized from my village convinced me to accept Islam lest I should be killed. So I agreed.<sup>46</sup>

In another development, Human Rights Watch (2014:30) relates the story of a 19-year-old student who was abducted along with four friends when travelling home from school and who told of how pretending to be a Muslim led to her release:

Our friend told them we were all Muslims, and when they asked for our veils, our friend opened her bag and handed each of us her veils. They took us to their camp and watched us join the Muslim prayers for two days before we were released. The leader gave us gifts of cloth fabric and cash, as we left admonishing to always wear veils as good Muslim women.<sup>47</sup>

In cases where forced conversion did not lead to the release of abductees, it usually led to “marriage” to members of Boko Haram. A 15-year-old girl described how a commander in the camp threatened to whip two abducted girls until they agreed to renounce Christianity:

Although we were not whipped, the daily pressure became unbearable, so we agreed (to convert) after five days. On that day, the leader handed us green coloured hijabs, gave us new Muslim names, and instructed the other women in the camp to daily teach us Arabic words. A week later, he performed a ceremony, reading out words in Arabic language, and then announced that we were now wedded: my companions to two insurgents in the camp, while I became his wife.<sup>48</sup>

Several witnesses described how abducted married women or those abducted with children were often released when they told Boko Haram they had converted to Islam. According to a 38-year-old victim who was abducted in April 2014 with five other Christian women and two infants:

As soon as the armed men stopped our vehicle, the men and women identified as Muslims were released to go. They began to insult those of us that confessed to be Christians, calling us pagans, and drove us to a camp in Sambisa forest. They asked us to join the hundreds of women we saw in the camp cooking and cleaning for Muslim prayers or we would get no food. One woman told us we would be spared if we converted to Islam, and she taught us to pray in Arabic language. After watching us pray for four days, they extracted our pledges to instruct our husbands to accept Islam, then drove us to a nearby town. We were each given different sums of money to transport us back home.<sup>49</sup>

The above episode indicates that Christian women suffered more humiliation in the hands of Boko Haram than women identified to be Muslims. Abductees interviewed by Human Rights Watch said they had to comply with Islamic dress codes such as wearing of veils or the *hijab*.

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<sup>46</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Lagos, 25th June 2014.

<sup>49</sup> Human Rights Watch Telephone Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 26th July 2014.

When they agreed to convert to Islam, they were given Muslim names by Boko Haram or Boko Haram sympathizers.

### **2.3.4 Abducted women, forced into marriage**

Human Rights Watch spoke with six victims and witnesses who had been forced to marry or had witnessed women and girls being forced to marry Boko Haram combatants. Spokespersons for the group have frequently expressed an aversion to Western-style education for girls, preferring instead that the girls attend Koranic schools or marry. In the May 2014 video, Abubakar Shekau boasted that the Chibok students would be given in marriage to his group members: “We would also give their hands in marriage because they are our slaves. We would marry them out at the age of nine. We would marry them out at the age of 12” (Oladipo, 2014).

Four Christian women and girls told Human Rights Watch how they were forced into marriage after their abduction in late 2013. One was abducted while working on a farm in Gwoza; another was taken from her home near Gwoza when insurgents could not find her father, a pastor, who was their target. The other two girls were taken from their home in the same area, together with their brother’s wife who later managed to escape as the insurgents led them from the house. When one of the girls, a 17-year-old farmer, complained to a Boko Haram commander that they were too young for marriage, he pointed at his 5-year-old daughter and said, “If she got married last year, and is just waiting till puberty for its consummation, how can you at your age be too young to marry?”<sup>50</sup>

Another girl held by the insurgents for one month told Human Rights Watch,

When I insisted that I could not marry at 15, the leader, though already married, declared he would marry me himself. He made us recite some words in Arabic after him, handed us new veils, and declared we were now married (Human Rights Watch, 2014:33).

A 19-year-old girl who was held in a Boko Haram camp in Gwoza told Human Rights Watch that she was offered thousands of naira as dowry to marry one of the insurgents:

I refused the dowry, asking them to go pay to my father if they wanted to marry me. An insurgent who knows my family accepted it on my behalf. He told me he was afraid I would be killed if I continued to refuse. I became confused at the implication of being married to a Boko Haram member, so I pretended to be very ill, and the wedding was postponed until the return of the camp leader, who was travelling to meet the group’s overall leader in the Sambisa camp. He ordered that I should be taken to the hospital in the local town for tests before his return. It was the break I myself had been praying for. I threatened the woman sent to take me to a hospital

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<sup>50</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Lagos, 25th June 2014.

in town that I would scream and expose her to Civilian JTF. She quickly walked away as I made my escape.<sup>51</sup>

The victim who escaped almost three months after her abduction described how Boko Haram combatants took revenge for her escape against her family and Christian community:

Insurgents disguised as Civilian JTF accused my brother to security forces of being a member of Boko Haram, and he was arrested. He spent two weeks in detention before the leadership of our church was able to convince the military authorities of his innocence. But when the insurgents realized he had been released, they attacked and burnt my family home and all four churches in my village. My entire family was forced to leave the village. Even now I am still afraid, she explained.<sup>52</sup>

#### 2.4.1 Western education

Western education has a long history in Nigeria and it has played a major role in the development of the country. In Northern Nigeria, western education is not well accepted like Koranic education. Zenn *et al* (2015:49) state that the teachings of Mohammed Yusuf (founder of Boko Haram) gained particular attraction in predominantly Muslim Northern Nigeria because of the pre-existing perception that Western education had been introduced into the area by British colonialists to corrupt Islamic morals and to perpetuate Western hegemony among Muslims. Zenn *et al* (2015:49) show that centuries before the arrival of the British, the expansion of Islam from the El-Kanem-Bornu Empire which, at its height, incorporated parts of Chad, Libya, Niger and Cameroon into part of Northern Nigeria ensured that the religion was rapidly integrated into political practices and court systems in the region. As a result, by the seventeenth century, Islam was well established in many Northern Nigerian cities. Political leaders also played a significant role as they advanced their careers by waging successful jihads, building new mosques and Koranic schools, and recruiting Islamic scholars into their courts, training young people as Jihadist. Literacy in Arabic began to take root in the nineteenth century, and Islamic education began to influence social and political life.

Isa (2010:332) argues that the issue of schooling is particularly salient to understanding the ideology of Boko Haram. The Hausa word *boko* (book) means the ability to read and write, especially in the Western styled educational system, as distinct from the Islamic educational system that existed in Northern Nigeria before being dislodged by colonialism. Isa (2010:32) further explains that the term “*boko*” also implies a sense of rejection and “resistance to

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<sup>51</sup> Human Rights Watch interview with victim (name withheld). Abuja, June 23rd 2014. The exchange rate of the Nigerian currency is ₦162 to 1USD.

<sup>52</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014.



imposition of Western education and its system of colonial social organization, which replaced and degraded the earlier Islamic order of the jihadist state.” Further, Islamic scholars and clerics who once held sway in the caliphate state and courts assigned the term *boko* to northern élites who spoke, acted, ruled and operated the state like their Western colonial masters (Isa, 2010:32). It is not uncommon to hear in discussions among Islamist scholars and average northerners that poverty and collapsed governance, the bane of the region, can be blamed on the failures and corrupt attitudes of *yan boko* (modern élites trained in secular schools) who have acquired western education and are currently in positions of power. As such, the system represented by the *yan boko* is unjust and secular, and has no divine origin. It is un-Islamic, which in turn accounts for its incompetence and corruptness (Isa, 2010:32).

To counter western education, Muslim fundamentalists turned to the *almajiri*<sup>53</sup> system of education in which young children are attached to a Koranic teacher who emphasizes mainly repetition learning of the Koran, with informal and fairly open criteria for admission, as opposed to the Western-oriented education system in which access is restricted because of formal entry requirements. Islamic schools offer a kind of education which leaves students virtually unemployable in an increasingly globalized economy in which Western education (communication, mathematics, sociology, political science, history, and others) is vital (IRIN, November 24:2011). In essence, acquisition of Western education was actively promoted in Nigeria during the colonial and post-colonial era as a means of achieving a better standard of living, and an opportunity for uplifting one’s position and access to power (Isa, 2010:32). However, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the structural adjustment programs under the Babangida (former president of Nigeria) administration affected Nigeria’s northern communities the most because lack of education and infrastructure was worse there. A new form of neo-liberal market economy was ushered in that privatized the state and resulted in university-educated graduates struggling to find employment. Employment became a matter of patron-client relationship, coupled with access to state power (Isa, 2010:32). From this research, one can say western education in Northern Nigeria suffers negation and rejection because of the belief that it preaches Christianity.

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<sup>53</sup> *Almajiri* is a name that describes a disciple of an Islamic teacher in a Koranic school. *Almajiris* are in general children between three to fifteen (3-15) years of age.

### 2.3.5 Rape of and sexual violence against women by Boko Haram

Human Rights Watch (2014:33) documented eight cases of sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram combatants. Five victims, ranging in age from 15 to 22 years old, described their ordeal, while the three other assaults were described by witnesses. Four of the sexual assaults occurred after the girl or woman was forced to marry a Boko Haram combatant. Before “marriage,” commanders appeared to make some effort to protect women from sexual assault. However, in two cases, insurgents took advantage of the absence of a commander and sexually abused abductees who were yet to be “married.”

An 18-year-old victim described how a Boko Haram combatant sexually abused her when she went to use the bathroom:

I did not know he followed me when I walked a short distance away from the tree under which we slept. He grabbed me from behind, roughly fondling me while trying to take off his pants. I screamed in fright and he hurriedly left me as I continued to shout for help.<sup>54</sup>

Another woman who was raped in 2013 in a Boko Haram camp near Gwoza described how a commander’s wife appeared to encourage the crime:

I was lying down in the cave pretending to be ill because I did not want the marriage the commander planned to conduct for me with another insurgent on his return from the Sambisa camp. When the insurgent who had paid my dowry came in to force himself on me, the commander’s wife blocked the cave entrance and watched as the man raped me.<sup>55</sup>

A 15-year-old who was abducted in 2013 and spent four weeks with Boko Haram told Human Rights Watch:

After we were declared married I was ordered to live in his cave but I always managed to avoid him. He soon began to threaten me with a knife to have sex with him, and when I still refused he brought out his gun, warning that he would kill me if I shouted. Then he began to rape me every night. He was a huge man in his mid-30s and I had never had sex before. It was very painful and I cried bitterly because I was bleeding afterwards.<sup>56</sup>

A 19-year-old woman who was married and had children described how she and one other woman were raped after having been abducted with four other women in April 2014:

When we arrived at the camp they left us under a tree. I managed to sleep; I was exhausted and afraid. Late in the night, two insurgents shook me and another woman awake, saying their leader wanted to see us. We had no choice but to follow them, but as soon as we moved deep into the woods, one of them dragged me away, while his partner took the other woman in

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<sup>54</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014.

<sup>56</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Lagos, 25th June 2014.

another direction. I guessed what they had in mind and began to cry. I begged him, telling him I was a married woman. He ignored my pleas, flung me on the ground, and raped me. I could not tell anyone what happened, not even my husband. I still feel so ashamed and cheated. The other woman told me she was also raped, but vowed never to speak of it again as she was single and believes that news of her rape would foreclose her chances of marriage.<sup>57</sup>

Rape is the common oppression that many abducted women suffered under Boko Haram. The women abducted hardly escape rape from their abductors. A 20-year-old woman abducted in September 2013 told Human Rights Watch that the insurgent she was “married” to wore a mask all the time, even when he raped her. Even though she had since escaped, she said,

I am still afraid to go anywhere because he could be any one of the people around me. Every time I see a huge dark man, I jump in fright that it might be him coming to get me back. I stay awake some nights because I dream of those terrible weeks I spent in their camp.<sup>58</sup>

A November 2013 study published by Nigeria’s Political Violence Research Network (NPRV), a non-governmental organization, on violence against Christian women in Northeast Nigeria documented 17 cases of women and girls who had been raped. The cases included the rape of six women who said they were repeatedly raped for two weeks in May 2013 by insurgents holding them in a house in Maiduguri. The men cited the women’s religion as a reason for the abuse (Barkindo *et al*, 2013:25). Other credible news of rape have been reported in the Nigerian media including the case of a 44-year-old businesswoman who was allegedly raped by teenage combatants while she was held in their camp for not giving money to their “cause” (Idris and Sawab, 2014).

A social worker who has worked extensively with families affected by Boko Haram’s violence said he believes that the rape of abducted women and girls has been underreported, given the culture of silence, stigma and shame surrounding sexual abuse in the deeply conservative and religious areas of Northern Nigeria.<sup>59</sup> He described how he counselled several victims whose relatives insisted on sending them to other towns so that the family would not be hated by their neighbours. According to this social worker, the conduct of the victims’ family members at times intensified the trauma faced by the victim. In one such case, the husband of a victim abducted in Adamawa State refused to touch his wife after she was raped by an insurgent in a Boko Haram camp in Gwoza in December 2013.<sup>60</sup> Researchers from the NPVRN confirmed

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<sup>57</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Yola, August 9, 2014.

<sup>58</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Lagos, 25th June 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Human Rights Watch, Interview with Social Worker. Abuja, 14th June 2014.

<sup>60</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Civil Society Worker. Abuja, 14th June 2014.

that many victims were unwilling to open up about their horrific experiences because of the stigma associated with rape.<sup>61</sup>

### 2.3.6 Women and girl insurgents

There is little confirmation of the presence of women and girls in the ranks of Boko Haram. While former abductees interviewed by Human Rights Watch described the presence of hundreds of women and children in Boko Haram camps, it was unclear if they had been abducted or if they had voluntarily joined their family members involved in Boko Haram activities (Human Rights Watch, 2014:36).

A few of the known wives of Boko Haram commanders were themselves implicated in abuses. One abductee described to Human Rights Watch how the “wife” of a Boko Haram cell leader cut the throat of a young man whom she had been forced to lure into an ambush planned by the insurgents.<sup>62</sup> Another abductee described how a woman working with Boko Haram had beaten her grandmother:

My grandmother’s only offence was answering a local Muslim woman roughly. How could we know she was a Boko Haram agent? When she returned with two insurgents who began to hit and kick my grandmother, I came out to help her and they took me away.<sup>63</sup>

Earlier in June 2014, a female suicide bomber reportedly died along with a soldier during an attempt on the 301 Artillery Regiment Quarter Guard in Gombe, a North-eastern state that had previously not witnessed insurgency-related violence (Odebode *et al*, 2014). The July 2014 arrest in Katsina, northwest Nigeria, of a 10-year-old girl who was allegedly strapped with explosive materials is fuelling fears that Boko Haram is increasingly using women and girls who can easily evade detection to carry out attacks (Omona & Audu, 2014). According to a report released by Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict in September 2014, forces on both sides of the conflict have enlisted children; during a 10th of July attack on Marte, Borno State, witnesses claimed that girls as young as 14 were among the attackers. The Watchlist

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<sup>61</sup> Barkindo *et al* (2013). In January 2014, a 43-year-old woman reportedly ignored the risk of stigma when, in a bank in Maiduguri, she saw the 26-year-old man she alleged had abducted and raped her repeatedly. She held tightly to him as she screamed her allegations publicly until security forces arrested the suspect. Kareem Haruna, “Our Ordeal in Hands of Rapists in Boko Haram Camps.” *Leadership*, 9th March 2014. Available at: <http://leadership.ng/features/353367/ordeal-hands-rapists-boko-haram-camps> (accessed 8th August 2014).

<sup>62</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja, 23rd June 2014. The wife of the same leader, a 23-year-old woman, nicknamed Yakawada, was described by the abductee as having stood by when she was raped by a subordinate of her husband.

<sup>63</sup> Human Rights Watch Interview with Victim (name withheld). Abuja 23rd, June 2014.

report also said that Nigerian security forces have caught children as young as 12 fighting alongside members of Boko Haram.<sup>64</sup>

A sample of sexual violence: Boko Haram abductions of women and girls, April 2013 – July 2014<sup>65</sup>

<b>Date</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Town(s)</b>	<b>Nature of the attacks</b>
April 27, 2013	Borno	Kawuri	Three women and at least 10 men were abducted by insurgents, but were soon released when the insurgents ran into a security road block
May 1, 2013	Borno	Maiduguri	Six Christian women were abducted and held for two weeks within a hideout and repeatedly raped
May 7, 2013	Borno	Bama	Twelve people, four women and eight children, were abducted at a police barracks during an attack on security establishments
May 9, 2013	Borno	Konduga/Bama	Six young women and girls, students of Government Girls Science Secondary School, were abducted with three men and taken to Sambisa Forest park

<sup>64</sup> “‘Who Will Care for Us?’ Grave Violations against Children in North Eastern Nigeria.” Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, September 2014, p. 27 <http://watchlist.org/who-will-care-for-us-grave-violationsagainst-children-in-northeasternigeria/> (accessed 10th September 2014).

<sup>65</sup> Sourced from incidents of abductions documented by Human Rights Watch from interviews with victims, witnesses, and from media reports available from open sources, p62-63.

May 15, 2013	Borno	Firgi/Bama	A woman and several other travellers were abducted by insurgents and taken to Sambisa Forest park
July 20, 2013	Borno	Barawa/Gwoza	A girl was abducted by two insurgents during an altercation with a female Boko Haram informant.
August 9, 2013	Borno	Maiduguri	An unknown number of Christian women were abducted from a private students' hostel
September 17, 2013	Borno	Maiduguri-Damaturu Highway	Twenty women were abducted when Boko Haram laid siege, killing more than 160 people
September 28, 2013	Borno	Uvaha/Gwoza	Nine girls were abducted during Boko Haram attacks on several villages and were taken to Boko Haram camps on Gwoza Hills
November 11, 2013	Borno	Benisheikh/Maiduguri-Damaturu highway	Two women were abducted by suspected Boko Haram sect members when they stopped a passenger vehicle
December 11, 2013	Borno	Bulabulin Ngara	Nine female traders were abducted with 27 other young men by suspected Boko Haram members
December 20, 2013	Borno	Nuhu Muhammed Army Barracks Bama	Eighteen people, wives and children of soldiers, were abducted

February 12, 2014		Konduga	Twenty-five women and girls (twenty students, five street traders) were abducted when gunmen suspected to be Boko Haram terrorists attacked Konduga town
April 14, 2014	Borno	Chibok	Two hundred and seventy-six girls were abducted at the Government Secondary School, Chibok, following a violent attack of the town
April 16, 2014	Borno	Wara/Gwoza to Biu	Six women and two children abducted at Wara town while travelling from Gwoza to Biu, for a wedding.
April 25, 2014	Yobe	Gujba	Five women were abducted during an attack on the town in which three civil servants were killed.
May 6, 2014	Borno	Warabe and Wala	Eight girls, aged 12-15, were abducted. The girls were allegedly taken away in trucks, along with looted livestock and food
June 5, 2014	Borno	Chibok	Twenty women and three men were kidnapped in Garkin Fulani settlements, some eight kilometres from Chibok, Boko Haram allegedly demanded 800 cows as ransom for the women

June 20, 2014	Borno	Kummabza/Dambo	Sixty women, girls, and infants, as well as thirty-one boys, were abducted by gunmen suspected to be members of the Boko Haram
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## 2.4 Reasons for Boko Haram Violence

Various reasons have been offered for Boko Haram violence in Nigeria. Boko Haram has twisted the history of ‘*boko*’ (western education) in Northern Nigeria. The sect has shaped the history by arguing that the acceptance of western education was what led to Nigeria’s adoption of colonial concept of the state, the destruction of the pre-existing Islamic order, and the “poverty and suffering” experienced by Northern Nigeria today (Zenn *et al*, 2015:490).

To Forest (2012:9), Boko Haram’s ideology is an articulation of the group’s vision of the future, a vision which its adherents believe cannot be achieved without the use of violence. To the sect members, these ideologies typically articulate and explain a set of grievances including socioeconomic disadvantages and lack of justice or political freedom that is seen as legitimate among members of a target audience, along with strategies through which the use of violence is meant to address those grievances. For this reason, this research will consider some common reasons for Boko Haram violence which include the formation of western education, patriarchy as the common unit of gender construction in Nigeria and religious fundamentalism.

### 2.4.2 Patriarchy and Boko Haram violence

Patriarchy as defined by Thatcher (2011:26) means a practice which ensures that men exercise power over women and their households. According to Allanana (2013:117), the word patriarchy has been recreated in the past two decades to analyse the origin of men’s oppression of women. It is a system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions. With these definitions, one can say that upholding patriarchy is one of the reasons for Boko Haram violence in Nigeria.

Patriarchy, gender and sexual violence are interconnected when it comes to Boko Haram activities in Nigeria. Barkindo *et al* (2013:6) affirm that gender roles are context-based and are learned through socialization. On the issue of gender in Boko Haram’s ideology and culture, Zenn and Pearson (2015:6) note that gendered norms have been adopted by the sect leaders, who have listed among the values to be opposed, “the rights and privileges of women, the idea



of homosexuality, lesbianism, rape of infants, blue films, prostitution and beauty pageants, all associated with western ideals.” According to Barkindo *et al* (2013:6), the biological differences between males and females are universal, whereas the gender roles are quite different and may prescribe all aspects of social life ranging from access to resources, societal and domestic responsibilities, and patterns of courtship. Gender roles may change over time but they are reflections of long-standing expectations that a society holds about men, women, boys and girls (Barkindo *et al*, 2013:6). Based on this conception of gender and violence, gender-based violence is violence directed against women based on their secondary status in society. It includes any act by males or male-dominated social institutions that inflicts physical or psychological harm on women or girls because of their gender. It is violence intended to establish or reinforce gender hierarchies and perpetuate gender inequalities including harmful traditional practices targeting women such as honour killings, acid throwing, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

According to the Women Refugees Commission, about six out of every ten women experience physical or sexual violence in various parts of the world.<sup>66</sup> In conflict situations or other humanitarian crises such as the on-going brutal conflict in Syria, the risks to women and girls are aggravated. With the collapse of moral and social order that occurs in these situations, women and girls are especially defenceless against physical abuse and exploitation, rape and human trafficking, mostly because of patriarchal influence. Women have excessively become victims of various forms of violence which are often reinforced by existing socio-cultural norms. Such violence often doubly affects women, first, through the experience of violence and its aftermath and, second, through the reactions of their families, predominantly the men, to their status as survivors of sexual crime.<sup>67</sup> Gender-based violence can be classified broadly into the following categories:

- Overt physical abuse (includes battering, sexual assault, at home or in the workplace);
- Psychological abuse (includes deprivation of liberty, forced marriage, sexual persecution, at home or in the workplace);

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<sup>66</sup> Women Refugee Commission 2013. “Gender Based Violence.” Available at: <http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/programs/gender-based-violence> (accessed 22nd September 2013).

<sup>67</sup> UNIFEM, (2002). “Trafficking in Persons: A Gender Perspective.” UNIFEM Briefing Kit, October 2002 Available at: <http://www.unifem-eseasia.org/Resources/Traffick2.html> 20th September 2013 (accessed 5th October 2013).

- Deprivation of resources needed for physical and psychological well-being (including healthcare, nutrition, education, means of livelihood); and
- Treatment of women as commodities (includes trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation).<sup>68</sup>

In Nigeria, as well as most of Africa, gender-based violence is legitimized by norms, out-dated beliefs and practices.<sup>69</sup> The British Council affirms that most structurally motivated gender violence emanates from social norms which define what constitute abuse of women both at the private and public levels.<sup>70</sup> Thus, gender violence occurs in both the “public” and domestic spheres. Such violence not only occurs in the family and in the general community, but it is sometimes also perpetuated by the state through policies or actions of agents of the state such as the police, military or immigration authorities. The above observation is partially centred on patriarchy as a common unit of gender construction in Nigeria.

#### 2.4.3 Religious fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism has served as one of the many factors in the spread of Boko Haram violence in Nigeria. Forest (2012:76) submits that Boko Haram’s ideology is embedded in a deep tradition of Islamism, which is but one of several variants of radical Islamism to have emerged in Northern Nigeria. Boko Haram is reportedly influenced by the Koranic verse which says, “Anyone who is not governed by what Allah has revealed is among the transgressors.”

Furthermore, Boko Haram members and supporters no doubt believe that the political and socioeconomic changes in Nigeria have corrupted the Islamic society. For example, Boko Haram’s founding leader Yusuf reportedly declared, “Our land was an Islamic state before the colonial masters turned it to a *kafir*<sup>71</sup> land. The current system is contrary to true Islamic beliefs.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, Chalk (2004:419) shows that throughout the Muslim communities of Northern

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<sup>68</sup> Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights 2003. Available at: [http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/svaw/advocacy/modelsessions/what\\_is\\_GBV.PDF](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/svaw/advocacy/modelsessions/what_is_GBV.PDF) (accessed 12th November 2013).

<sup>69</sup> R. Arisi, and P. Oromareghake 2011. “Cultural Violence in Nigeria.” *African Research Review Ethiopia* 5(4), Serial No. 21, July 2011.

<sup>70</sup> British Council Report 2012. “Gender in Nigeria Report 2012: Improving the Lives of Girls and Women in Nigeria.” Available at: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ng/gender2012> (accessed 2nd August 2013).

<sup>71</sup> *Kafir* is an Arabic word for a non-Muslim especially one of different faith.

<sup>72</sup> Ahmad Salkida. “Sect Leader Vows Revenge.” *Daily Trust*, 27th July 2009. Available at: <http://wwwrn.org/articles/31419/?&place=nigeria> (accessed 2nd August 2013).

Nigeria today, there is a sense of unease and insecurity about the spiritual and moral future of their children as well as concern about the fading influence of religious leaders such as the Sultan of Sokoto. The Sokoto Caliphate of the 19th century is remembered by locals as a fairly well-structured political system which melded politics, society, and Islamic education. In 1903, it was rapidly replaced by a Western European, Christian power with very different ideas about the relationship between governance and religion.

Thus, a core element behind Boko Haram's ideological resonance is the fact that since the beginning of the 20th century, the historic Dar-al-Islam (house of Islam) built by Usman Dan Fodio has been ruled by non-Muslims. As noted previously, radicalization among Nigeria's Muslim communities is not exclusive to Boko Haram. To the contrary, there have been many groups throughout the country's history that have professed a belief system that rejects the *status quo* and actively aspires to an ideal past or anticipated future, and have incorporated violence as a means to achieve those aspirations. Many, but certainly not all of these groups, have been Islamist, meaning they have wanted that all Muslims be ruled by Muslim rulers and *sharia* laws.

Forest (2012:55) argues that, "tribalism and reactionary fundamentalism" produces militants,

who detest modernity. Also they dislike secular, scientific, rational and commercial civilization created by the Enlightenment as it is defined by both its virtues freedom, democracy, tolerance, diversity and its vices such as: inequality, hegemony, cultural imperialism, and materialism.

From the above observation, it is clear that the understanding of religious fundamentalist teaching is one of the major reasons for Boko Haram violence.

In order to understand the emergence of Boko Haram, one must probe the reasons why its ideology has found resonance among a small but increasingly capable group of young men in Nigeria. Forest (2012:73) claims that grievances and opportunities have laid the groundwork for Boko Haram to find some traction for its cause. These include rampant corruption among a political and wealthy elite class that has heavily invested in the *status quo*; communities that see themselves politically and economically disadvantaged and marginalized; lack of critical infrastructure and basic support services; a history with long periods of military dictatorship and political oppression; and a system in which entrenched ethnic identities are politicized and constrain opportunities for movement and meritocratic advancement.

In addition to these grievances, which are prevalent throughout the country, there are also specific political and socioeconomic frustrations found predominantly in Northern Nigerian communities. Poverty, unemployment, and lack of education are much higher in the north than in other parts of the country (Forest, 2012:73). A recent report by the National Population Commission found that literacy rates are much lower among states in the North, and that 72 per cent of children around the ages of 6-16 never attended regular schools in Borno State where Boko Haram was founded (Forest, 2012:73). As noted above, one can assume that the lack of quality education is a core structural obstacle for individuals seeking a better future for themselves and their families.

Furthermore, Bonat (1995:195) observes that the deregulation of the nation's economy also set the stage for the sharp decline in farming in the north, as the government disposed of all land and programs it had maintained to support agricultural activities in the area. Climate change and the country's increasing dependence on oil revenues also shaped the fortunes of the agricultural sector in the North. All these socioeconomic changes combined to produce a sense of insecurity and vulnerability among Northern Nigerians, and particularly in Muslim communities. This, in turn, offers insights into why Boko Haram's ideology has resonated among many including frustrated university graduates who find legitimacy in their argument that Western society has failed them; their aspirations cannot be met by the system that is currently in place. Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter reveal that terrorist organizations are usually driven by political objectives, and in particular, five have had enduring importance such as regime change, territorial change, policy change, social control and *status quo* maintenance (Kydd & Walter, 2006:52).

Onuoha (2010:57) asserts that the ideological mission of Islamic fundamentalists is to overthrow the Nigerian state and then impose strict Islamic *sharia* in the country. These objectives have led to the formation of terrorist groups in Nigeria and throughout the world. A research by Eidelson and Eidelson (2003:192) identifies what it calls belief domains that also propel groups and individuals toward conflict including superiority, injustice, vulnerability, distrust, and helplessness. Thus, it appears that several of these ideological components can be identified in the case of Boko Haram – the desire for policy change and social control; a religiously-based sense of superiority; distrust of authorities; perceptions of injustice; and shared feelings of vulnerability particularly with regard to socioeconomic and religious spheres of Nigerian life. In support of Eidelson and Eidelson, Thurston (2011:1) attests that Boko

Haram has an entrenched sense of victimhood and now sees the state as both the main persecutor of true Muslims and the major obstacle to true Islamic reform.

## 2.5 Summary and Conclusion

The kidnap of hundreds of schoolgirls by Boko Haram as highlighted in this chapter is one of the central features of jihadist groups – the oppression of women and their continued relegation to an inferior status to their male counterparts.<sup>73</sup> The vulnerability of women and girls in Northern Nigeria to radical elements and criminals is partly due to religious convictions/laws, cultural traditions and the socio-economic status of women in the region. Diamond (1987:5) argues, with particular reference to Northern Nigeria, that, “Rigid interpretations of Islam and powerful cultural traditions interact to produce a pattern of gender stratification so extreme as to literally imprison virtually the entire female population in northern Nigeria.”<sup>74</sup> If the Nigerian government is to protect the girl-child from groups such as Boko Haram, efforts must be made to challenge and punish such inhibiting cultural and religious practices. The government will need to act in accordance with the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security to liberate girl-children from such oppressive cultural and religious traditions, and to provide them with basic socio-economic security, human rights and educational needs. The important issue of protecting and assisting the victims of Boko Haram is also worth emphasising.

On the current Chibok situation, it could be assumed that although the girls are probably alive, their physical health and psychosocial well-being would surely have deteriorated. This is not hard to imagine considering not only the insights drawn from the case of the Sierra Leonean civil war, but also the brutal manner in which these girls were captured and the agonizing conditions under which they are likely to be held. The pains and trauma experienced by the parents of the Chibok girls are incomparable, but this aspect often receives less attention. Reportedly, eight parents of the abducted schoolgirls died of trauma three months after their daughters were abducted.<sup>75</sup> The tragedy reinforces the urgent need for the Nigerian state and its foreign backers to devise a way not only to rescue the Chibok girls, but to render to them

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<sup>73</sup> Hirsi Ayaan Ali 2014. “Boko Haram and the Kidnapped School Girls.” *Wall Street Journal*, Eastern Edition, pp. 2-4. 9th May. Available at: <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ukzn.ac.za:2048/docview/1522645280/7A658D7F2FA841BBPQ/45?accountid=11921> (accessed 3rd July 2014).

<sup>74</sup> Larry Diamond 1987. “Muslim Hausa Women in Nigeria: Tradition and Change by Barbara J. Callaway.” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 25 (4), 5.

<sup>75</sup> Comrade Godwin Ameh 2014. “Eight Parents of Chibok Girls Die of Trauma.” *Daily Post*, 5th July 2014. Available at: <http://dailypost.ng/2014/07/05/eight-parents-chibok-girls-die-trauma/> (accessed 6th July 2014).

and their family members the necessary medical, human rights, psychological and social support.

Indeed, from the discussion above, it is evident that the war against Boko Haram cannot be won in classic military terms alone. Besides the training, equipment, international support and hopefully greater intelligence sharing and cross-border co-operation, some other things need to be done in order to proffer meaningful solution to the lingering act of terror by Boko Haram in Nigeria. Schneider (2015:11) has rightly noted that the military alone cannot defeat Boko Haram. This research agrees that the possible strategy to be adapted to stop Boko Haram from its present atrocities must include the provision of the right atmosphere for good governance, cultural change, economic development, educational advancements and social development the Nigerian government.

The next chapter will attend to a close reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27. A demarcation of the pericope shall be made and even though the focus is on verse 27, the reading will be carried out in the context of the chapter as a whole. Therefore, the history of research of the pericope shall be considered as well as the translation of the text/ textual criticism, verse-by-verse discussion of the text and the perspectives on verse 27 in recent commentaries as used in the present rereading of the past will be proffered for a better understanding of the topic.

## CHAPTER THREE

### A CLOSE READING OF 2 SAMUEL 11: 1-27 IN RELATION TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE

#### 3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter of this study describes the abuse of power and sexual violence which mark Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria as part of the hermeneutical frame of reference of this research. The chapter also reviewed some literatures on abuse of power and sexual violence inherent in Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria while conceptualising the terms such as abuse, power, sexual violence and atrocity for a better understanding of the discussion. A brief history of Boko Haram, the initial phase of non-violent acts as well as the violent acts and current acts of terror coupled with sexual violence are discussed. In addition, examples of violent behaviour and the reasons for sexual violence by Boko Haram are considered.

As a point of departure, this chapter will focus on a close reading of the textual detail in 2 Samuel 11:1-27 mostly within its literary context. The chapter will consider the demarcation of the pericope of 2 Samuel 11 even though the focus is on verse 27. A translation of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 will be adopted based on the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the New International Version (NIV) and the Jerusalem Bible (JB). More importantly, the history of research of the pericope, a verse-by-verse discussion and the perspectives on verse 27 in the recent commentaries as used in the present rereading of the past will be carried out.

As already mentioned in the first chapter, a close reading, according to Clines (1983:33), is a careful and minute scrutiny of all aspects of the text's language, style, metaphors, images and their relation to one another. A close reading could also mean an approach to a biblical text that involves careful observation, as if with a magnifying glass, of the details of the text. Thus, the only way to get a grasp of the uniqueness of the text is through a close reading of the text itself (Lawrie, 2005:74), as a close reading pays attention to the literary characteristics of the text in a verse-by-verse discussion with sensitivity to the context which produced the text as well as sensitivity to the present context. This is done by paying attention to individual words, syntax and order in which sentences and ideas are made known as they are read within the period it covers.

However, a close reading is not enough, for instance, to understand the meaning of each individual word. One has to see how the meaning of the word could change by its place within the whole. In addition, one has to examine the theme of the text, its tone, its imagery, its

dramatic structure, and so on (Lawrie, 2005:72, 74). For this reason, the practice of close reading is some time deplored because of its association with the New Criticism school of critics of English literature and because of the extravagance of some of its practitioners (Clines, 1983:33).

In this research, a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 will be done as an intertextual engagement. Intertextuality presupposes textual interactions of the text at different levels in order to show how one text possibly echoes the thought of another as a matter of grammatical interrelatedness or even ideological similarity within the interface between structure and the context.

Furthermore, 2 Samuel 11 will be considered from an intertextual dimension in which the text is read by considering its translation and textual criticism. A verse-by-verse discussion will also be considered so as to see the possible arrangement and flow of thought of the pericope. The chapter will also closely consider the textual situation of 2 Samuel 11 within the whole book of 2 Samuel, as well as the immediate pericope in which it is found in the canon. The structure of the text shall be explored in order to understand its theological context. Thus, close reading connotes an exegetical approach to the pericope as well as one of the methodologies employed in this research.

The next section will examine the pericope of 2 Samuel 11:1-27. The various approaches to the demarcation of the text by different scholars will be appreciated, and at the end of each section, a short summary of the reasons for the beginning and for the ending of 2 Samuel 11 in verse 27 shall be presented.

### **3.2 Demarcation of the Pericope of 2 Samuel 11:1-27**

It is observed that over the years, scholars have attempted to demarcate the text of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in various ways for different reasons. In this section, verse 27 will be interpreted in the context of chapter 11 as a whole as used in the past. Brueggemann (1990:34-40) demarcates 2 Samuel chapters 9-20 with the title, the family. He outlines chapters 9-14 as “David: the king and the men,” therefore, chapter 11:1-27 falls within the section titled, “David: The king and the men.” Cartledge (2001:495) structures the narratives based on the chapters in the book, and 2 Samuel 11:1-27 is outlined as a section titled, “David commits adultery,” whereas in Gordon’s (1986:224) view, 2 Samuel 11:1-27 falls within the narrative of David king of Israel which he demarcates from 2 Samuel 5:1-20:26. For Bergen (1996: 295), 2 Samuel can be divided into two sections – Section One comprises of 2 Samuel 2:1-20:26 (David reigns as a king) and Section Two is 2 Samuel 11:1-27 (David does evil in the Lord’s sight). Anderson



(1989:150) categorically titles 2 Samuel 11:1-27a as David, Bathsheba and Uriah. Notably, chapter 10 which is titled, “David conquers an Amorites-led coalition (10:1-19), comes before 11:1-27, while Chapter 12 (i.e. 12:1-14) comes after 11:1-27, “Nathan announces the Lords judgement and forgiveness (Bergen, 1996:368).

Lasor *et al* (1996:183-188) subscribes to the demarcation of the book into “David’s exercise of kingship” (2 Sam 5:11-24:25) and “David’s compassion and cruelty” (2 Sam 9:1-12:31). In David’s exercise of kingship which is 2 Samuel 5:11-24:25, Lasor *et al* (1996: 183) states that the landscape of these chapters is a panorama of peaks and valleys. With vigour and pathos, David’s years in Jerusalem are recounted as a series of lofty success and profound failures. Two major questions dominate the scene: How will the monarchy fare? Who will succeed the celebrated king?

On another demarcation which is titled “David’s compassion and cruelty” (9:1-12:31), Lasor *et al* (1996:185) observe that the transition from charismatic to dynastic leadership was not resolved by David’s ascent to the throne. Another unit is 2 Samuel 11:1-12:31 which Lasor *et al* (1996: 187) regard as “abuse of power.” This unit records an episode during the Ammonite war (11:1-27) which showed another side of David. Invading armies, especially the Assyrians, usually timed their campaigns between the latter rains in March and the grain harvest in May and June. The roads were dry enough to be passable, and the soldiers could sustain themselves on their enemies’ ripening crops and new-born lambs and calves. However, while David’s armies were on the march, the king remained in the capital, and his illicit encounter with the lovely Bathsheba occurred. This episode followed by Nathan’s parable, entails a subtle yet forceful rebuke of David and is convincing evidence of the crucial role of the greater prophets in the life of Israel (12:1-15).

Buttrick (1962:2004) titles 2 Samuel 9-20 “The events of Davidic court.” The section relates the story of how David reinstated the estate of Saul to Mephiboshet, as well as the king of Ammon’s humiliation of David’s envoy which led to repeated long wars with the Ammonites and their allies, the Assyrians, in chapter 10. It was during one of these wars that David plotted the death of Uriah the Hittite, one of his officers, with whose wife, Bathsheba, he had committed adultery. After her husband’s death, Bathsheba became David’s wife (chapter 11). When Nathan the prophet denounced David for the murder of Uriah, David repented, but the child who was born as a result of the illicit love died (Buttrick, 1962:2004). Solomon was David and Bathsheba’s second son (chapter 12). Amnon, the firstborn of David, raped his half-

sister, Tamar whereupon her brother, Absalom, killed Amnon in revenge. The section continues to chapter 20 where Sheba, a Benjaminite, rallied the northern tribes in a revolt against David, but the army of Joab successfully subdued this rebellion. All the aforementioned incidents are consequences of the thing that David had done that displeased the Lord.

In another demarcation of 2 Samuel 11, which Hertzberg (1964:305) titles “Uriah’s wife and the birth of Solomon,” 2 Samuel 11; is placed within the pericope of 2 Samuel 11:2-12:25. The demarcation of this pericope omits verse 1 of 2 Samuel 11 which says that, “In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.” Having omitted verse 1, the demarcation continues from 2 Samuel 11:2 to 2 Samuel 12:25. Barker and Kohlenberger III (1994:454- 456) seem to differ from other scholars in their demarcation of 2 Samuel 11 into two namely “David’s sin against Bathsheba” (11:1-5) and “The murder of Uriah” (11:6-27). In these units, verse 27 contains the only reference to “the Lord” in the entire 2 Samuel 11:1-27. David would later confess that his sin with Bathsheba is known to God and is therefore deserving of divine judgement (Psalm 51:4).

Birch (2005:126) designates 2 Samuel 9:1-20:26 as the succession narrative or court history of David. Most scholars agree that this narrative segment existed independently prior to its incorporation into the larger narrative of the books of Samuel. However, recent arguments have been advanced against considering 1 Kings 1:1-2 as the continuation or conclusion of this narrative. There is a general consensus that, with these chapters, the narrative makes a sudden and dramatic shift in its portrayal of David. The key to this shift is 2 Samuel 11:1-12, which recounts David’s adultery with Bathsheba and his confrontation by Prophet Nathan.

David’s repentance spares his own life, but Nathan announces God’s judgement of violence on David’s family. The remaining narratives provide detailed accounts of the tragic consequences of David’s sin such as Amnon’s rape of Tamar (13:1-22), Absalom’s killing of Amnon and banishment (13:23-39), Absalom’s rebellion and David’s humiliating retreat from Jerusalem (chapters 14-17). Some other consequences include the defeat and death of Absalom; David’s overwhelming grief (chapters 18-19), and continued rebellion in the kingdom (chapter 20). Birch (2005:127) shows that the literary style of this unit is subtle and sensitive. It focuses on human agency in these stories of tragedy in David’s family; yet, it makes clear in understated ways that God’s providence encompasses even these painful human moments (cf. 2 Sam 11:27b; 17:14b).

Newson *et al* (2012: 159) rereads the narrative based on 2 Samuel 11-12. In their narrative, David's most famous wife was Bathsheba, who was also the wife of another man whose story begins 2 Samuel 11. It seems the narrator portrays David, albeit subtly as a consummate usurper of kingdoms and wives. At the beginning of 2 Samuel 11, we read that David noticed Bathsheba bathing, and that she purified herself (probably from her menstrual period). The significance of this information is that when David and Bathsheba had intercourse, she had just menstruated, therefore, it is clear that David was responsible for her pregnancy since her husband was absent from her at that time. Bathsheba is pictured as almost entirely passive in this episode except for her first-person message to David ("I am pregnant" in 2 Samuel 11:5), she is always spoken of in the third person.

Newson *et al* (2012: 159) assert that the only hint that Bathsheba might have cooperated willingly in her predicament was her initial act of bathing in a place where she could be viewed by the king walking on his roof which was not common in the Middle East. Nevertheless, the text offers no judgement on Bathsheba for that singular act. The narrative does not seem to hold Bathsheba responsible for her action with David, and the punishment that is meted out, that their child should die, is aimed by Yahweh and Nathan at David, not at Bathsheba. Her feelings are not ignored completely; it is said that David comforted her in her grief.<sup>76</sup>

The reason why the demarcation of this pericope begins from 2 Samuel 11:1-27 is because the text covers the episode of David, Bathsheba and Uriah which is the concern and focus of this research (Anderson, 1989:148-150). The episode took place after the Ammonites-Aramean wars which were less political although to Joab, they were fighting for their people and God which means cities of God (Anderson, 1989:149). It is clear that the narration of David, Bathsheba and Uriah ends in 2 Samuel 11:27, and as such 2 Samuel 12 and the subsequent chapters are the records of the result of this episode. For this reason, the demarcation of this pericope has to end with verse 27 of 2 Samuel 11 which says, "But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD," and which is the focus of this research.

In short, one can say that the demarcation of the pericope of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 is significant in the sense that it states and serves as the limit and the boundary of the text. The demarcation of the text is for a clear understanding of the pericope as clearly observed and supported by different scholars (cf. Birch, 2005:127). This is to say that the demarcation of a pericope plays a vital role in explaining the reasons for beginning and ending a particular text in a particular

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<sup>76</sup> The grief mostly refers to David's and not Bathsheba's which is what the narrator describes at length.

way. Most scholars agree on the demarcation of the pericope of 2 Samuel 5:1-20:26. For example, Gordon (1986:224) claims that 2 Samuel 11:1-27 falls under the narrative of “David king of Israel” which has 2 Samuel 5:1-20:26 as its broader context (cf. Bergen, 1996:295; Birch, 2005:126).

The event of 2 Samuel 11 happened at springtime when kings went out to war, but King David remained behind in Jerusalem. One can observe certain thematic coherency in the narration from verse 1 to verse 27. The translation of the text/textual criticism of the pericope will stop at verse 27 which is the main focus of this research. A different narration in the next chapter after verse 27 (chapter 12) begins with the verse which says, “When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord” (NRSV). The translation of the text/textual criticism is meant to consider each verse in the chapter in the New Revised Standard Version, the Old Text versions, the New International Version and the Jerusalem Bible.

### **3.3 Translation of the Text/Textual Criticism of 2 Samuel 11:1-27**

This translation tries to highlight some important points in 2 Samuel 11:1-27 that we need to closely study in order to see the various rendering of the words and problematic phrases or verses in the passage. Old Text versions are classified as ‘a’ referring to the LXX, MT, MSS, the Vulgate and others. The New Text versions are classified as ‘b’ referring to the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the New International Version (NIV), and the Jerusalem Bible (JB).

- 11:1a “In the spring”<sup>77</sup> (Anderson, 1989:150) – The NIV has the same translation as NRSV while JB reads, “at turn of the year”<sup>78</sup>.

- 11:1b “...of the year, the time when kings”;<sup>79</sup> The NIV – “at the time when kings”; and JB says “the time when kings.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> a. Literary, “At the turn of...” (Anderson, 1989:151).

<sup>78</sup> b. The NRSV and NIV have the same translation but JB which goes with the old text versions, “at the turn of,” differs.

<sup>79</sup> a. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg read, הַמְלָכִים “the kings” with many MSS (Manuscripts) G; the Septuagint (LXX) Tg (Targum) and Vg (Vulgate); The MT has הַמְלָאֲחִים “the messengers”; cf. also GKC, section 23g (Anderson, 1989:151).

<sup>80</sup> b. The NRSV, NIV and JB differ in their translations of “the time when kings go out for war” but have the same rendering of “the time when kings” except that the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg which has “the messengers” as its translation.

- 11:1c “go out”;<sup>81</sup> the NIV says “go off” while the JB translation is “go.”<sup>82</sup>

- 11:1d “... to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel<sup>83</sup> with him; they ravaged the Ammonites,<sup>84</sup> and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. The NIV – “to war, David sent Joab out with the king’s men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.” The JB reads, “go campaign, David sent Joab and with him his own guards and the whole of Israel. They massacred the Ammonites and laid siege to Rabbah. David however remained in Jerusalem.”<sup>85</sup>

- 11: 2a “It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof<sup>86</sup> of the king’s house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful.” The NIV has “one evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof,” while JB has “it happened towards evening when David had risen from his couch and was strolling on the palace roof.”<sup>87</sup>

- 11: 3a David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, “This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.”<sup>88</sup> The JB records “David made an inquiries about this woman” while the NIV said “and David sent someone to find out about her.”<sup>89</sup>

- 11: 4a “So David sent messengers to fetch her,<sup>90</sup> and she came to him,<sup>91</sup> and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.)<sup>92</sup> Then she returned to her house.” The JB

<sup>81</sup> a. For the elliptical expression, see Williams, *Syntax*, section 589 (Anderson, 1989:151).

b. The NRSV, NIV and the JB differ in translation from the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg which have no record of “go out.”

<sup>83</sup> a. This phrase is missing in the Syr. (Syriac) while 1 Chronicles 20:1 has “the land of the Ammonites” as the object of the verb (Anderson, 1989: 151).

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> b. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions have the same translation of “David sent Joab, and David remained in Jerusalem.” Both translations differ in the record of “officers, king’s men, guards” and in “besiege” as some have “destroyed and massacred.”

<sup>86</sup> a. Most textual witnesses including the MT read מֵעַל הַגָּג “from the roof” but in different positions. McCarter (279) regards this as an indication of its secondary nature, and therefore he omits it, perhaps rightly (Anderson, 1989:151).

b. The NRSV and JB render the phrase as “from his couch” while NIV has “from the roof” like the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions. There is consensus that the episode took place in the evening but the choice of words is different in the translations. The NRSV, NIV and JB translations agree that David saw a woman bathing, and that the woman was very beautiful.

<sup>88</sup> a. 4QSam (Samuel MSS from Qumram Cave IV) and (also Josephus, Ant. 7.131) add נִשְׂא כְלָיו יוֹאָב “the armour bearer of Joab” but this seems to be an explanatory gloss.

b. It is clear that David made inquiries about the woman and he was told that, “she is Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.”

<sup>90</sup> a. G (Septuagint LXX) suggests וַתְּבוֹא אֵלָיו “when he went into her”; this is what we would expect in normal circumstances and therefore the G (Septuagint) reading is less likely (Anderson, 1989:151).

b. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions relate that after enquiring about the woman, David sent for her and he slept with her, unlike the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions which read, “when he went into her.” Note that the NRSV translation says, “and he lay with her.” Again, the NRSV, NIV and JB versions record that the woman was purifying herself and she went back to her home after the incident.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> a. According to Leviticus 15:19ff., the time of uncleanness lasted seven days; the action therefore took place when the actual menstruation was over (hence the bath), towards the end of this week or immediately after it.

translation reads, “Then David sent messengers and had her brought,” but the NIV says, “Then David sent messengers to get her.”<sup>93</sup>

- 11:5a “The woman conceived;<sup>94</sup> and she sent<sup>95</sup> and told David, ‘I am pregnant.’” The NIV and JB translation read, “The woman conceived and sent word to David, ‘I am pregnant, and I am with a child.’”

- 11:6 “So David sent word to Joab, ‘Send me Uriah the Hittite.’ And Joab sent Uriah to David.” JB and NIV differ slightly but the same message, “David sent a message to Joab, Sent me Uriah the Hittite.”<sup>96</sup>

- 11:7a “When Uriah came to him,<sup>97</sup> David asked how Joab and the people fared”<sup>98</sup> The NIV and JB – “When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was, how soldiers were and how the war going.”<sup>99</sup>

- 11:7b “... and how the war was going.”<sup>100</sup> The same translation is in the JB and NIV.<sup>101</sup>

- 11:8a “Then David said to Uriah, ‘Go down to your house, and wash your feet.’ Uriah went out of the king’s house,<sup>102</sup> and there followed him<sup>103</sup> a present from the king.” The NIV has

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Based on the participial construction, it is impossible to connect the “purification” with the “uncleanness” just brought about by the adultery. In that case, a consecutive imperfect would have stood here. It would be possible, though improbable, for the sentence to begin with “although she was just...” (Hertzberg, 1964:306).

b. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions offer no translation of “then David sent messengers and had her brought” or “to get her” as in the JB and NIV.

<sup>94</sup>a. The MT has, “she sent and told” (Anderson, 1989: 151).

b. The NIV and the JB are in agreement while the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions say, “she sent and told.” The NRSV agrees with the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg version, “She sent and told David, I am pregnant.” The JB translation is, “I am with child.”

<sup>95</sup> a. Ibid.

<sup>96</sup>a. No translation is found in the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions but the NRSV, NIV and JB versions are in agreement that David asked Joab to send Uriah the Hittite to him.

<sup>97</sup>a It is no coincidence that the same expression is used here as is used about his wife in verse 4 “*bo’elaw*” (Hertzberg, 1964:306).

<sup>98</sup> a. The same word, שלום “peace, welfare, and many others,” is used in both cases as well as before “the army” (הָעָם) (Anderson, 1989:151).

b. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions have similar renderings unlike the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions, which give a summary as “peace, welfare” and “the army.” The NRSV, NIV and JB versions are slightly different in presentation.

<sup>100</sup> a. GL (LXX MSS, Lucianic recension) and (similarly Josephus, Ant. 7.132), perhaps rightly, supply Uriah’s reply, “All is well, he said;” this may reflect וַיֹּאמֶר לְשָׁלוֹם which may have been omitted by *homioarchton*. The testimony of 4QSam (Samuel MSS from Qumram Cave IV) is ambiguous (see Ulrich, Qumram Text, 186-87) (Anderson, 1989:151).

b. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions of the text have the same rendering, but differ from the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions which contain some omissions and ambiguities.

<sup>102</sup> a. McCarter (280) reconstructs a plausible alternative reading, based mainly on some Greek MSS (Manuscripts), “he marched out with the weapon-bearers” (וַיֵּצֵא אִתָּרֵי וְנֹשְׂאֵי הַכְּלִים) (Anderson, 1989:151).

b. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions differ completely from the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions. The JB has “Go down to your house and enjoy yourself,” unlike others that read, “Go down to your house and wash your feet” (NRSV and NIV).

<sup>103</sup> a. Ibid.

the same translation as RSV. The JB has, “David then said to Uriah, go down to your house and enjoy yourself.”<sup>104</sup>

- 11:9a “But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king’s house with<sup>105</sup> all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house.” The JB translation reads, “Uriah however slept by the palace door with his master’s bodyguard and did not go down to his house.”<sup>106</sup>

- 11:10a “When they told David,<sup>107</sup> ‘Uriah did not go down to his house,’ David said to Uriah, ‘You have just come from a journey.’” The JB translation says, “This was reported to David; ‘Uriah did not go down to his house.’ So David asked Uriah, ‘Have you not just arrived from a journey?’”<sup>108</sup>

- 11:10b “Why<sup>109</sup> did you not go down to your house?” The JB translation reads, “Why do you not go to your home?”<sup>110</sup>

- 11:11a “Uriah said to David, ‘The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall<sup>111</sup> I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife?’” The JB translation says, “But Uriah answered, ‘Are not the ark and the men of Israel and Judah lodged in tents; and my master Joab and the bodyguard of my Lord, are they not in the open fields?’”<sup>112</sup>

- 11:11b “As you live,<sup>113</sup> and as your soul lives,<sup>114</sup> “I will not do such a thing.” The translation is the same in the NIV, JB and RSV.<sup>115</sup>

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b. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions text offer no translation while the NRSV, NIV and JB versions have, “David then said to Uriah, go down to your house and enjoy yourself.”

<sup>105</sup> a. The לָּ “all” is omitted in the GL (LXX MSS, Lucianic recension) (Anderson, 1989:151).

<sup>106</sup> b. The JB translation differs from NRSV and NIV versions and also from the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions which include, “all.” The JB has, “with his master’s bodyguard.”

<sup>107</sup> a. For the expression, see n. 10:5.a. 4QSam (LXX MSS Lucianic recension) reads וְנִדְּבַר “it was reported,” which may be a *hoph* form (Anderson, 1989: 151).

b. The new version in the JB reads, “This was reported to David.” The NIV says, “When David was told” while the NRSV is, “When they told David.” The NIV and NRSV appear to be similar in their translation.

<sup>109</sup> a. Some MSS (Manuscripts) add the conjunction, and read וְלָּ “and why”; so also does the GL (LXX MSS, Lucianic recension) (Anderson, 1989:151).

110b. The NIV and RSV versions look similar in their translations of, “Why didn’t you go home” except that “house” replaces “home” in the NRSV. The JB’s, “Why do you not go to your home?” is translated differently in all the versions.

<sup>111</sup> a. On the lack of the interrogative particle, see GKC, section 150a (Anderson, 1989:151).

b. The NIV differs from the JB but is similar to the NRSV’s, “Uriah said to David, the ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my Lord’s men are camped in the open fields.”

<sup>113</sup>a The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions t read, *hayyay*; the MT could be the remains of a pronoun *anoki* which was added (GK Gesenius-Kautzsch, Hebrew Grammar, 2nd English edition, rev. by A.E. Cowley, 1910 section 135f.), (Hertzberg, 1964:306).

<sup>114</sup> a. The MT has וְלָּ “by your life,” which is regarded as a corrupt abbreviation of וְלָּ “by the life of Yahweh” or “as surely as Yahweh lives”; see also GKC section 149a, c. The MT reading appears to be tautological (Anderson, 1989: 151).

b. “As Yahweh lives, and as you yourself live, I will do no such thing” (JB). “As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing” (NIV and NRSV).

- 11:12a “Then David said to Uriah, ‘Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.’ So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day,<sup>116</sup> Then David said to him, ‘stays here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back.’ So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next day” (NIV).<sup>117</sup>

- 11:13 “David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house. At David’s invitation he ate and drank with him, and David made him drunk” (NIV).<sup>118</sup>

-11:14 “In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. Next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent by Uriah” (JB).<sup>119</sup>

- 11:15a “In the letter he wrote, ‘Set<sup>120</sup> Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.’” The NIV says, “In it he wrote, ‘Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die.’”<sup>121</sup>

- 11:16a “As Joab was besieging<sup>122</sup> the city; he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant warriors.” In the JB, we have, “Joab, then besieging the town, posted Uriah in a place where he knew there were fierce fighters.”<sup>123</sup>

- 11:17 “The men of the city came out and fought with Joab; and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite was killed as well.” The JB translation reads, “The men

<sup>116</sup> a. Following GL (LXX MSS, Lucianic recension) and Syr (Syriac) in taking וּמָחָרְתָּ “but the next day” with what follows, and reading קָרָא “he invited” for אָקָרָא in verse 13, perhaps the latter emendation is not necessary (cf. 1 Sam 4:20; Isaiah 6:1; for further references, see Fokkelman, *King David*, 450).

b. The RSV, NIV and JB translations look similar, but differ from the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions, “he invited.” “So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next” (NIV). “On the next day,” occurs in the NRSV translation. “So Uriah stayed that day in Jerusalem” (JB).

<sup>118</sup>a. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions omit this verse. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions all have these rendering except for minor differences. The NIV differs from the JB and NRSV in, “But in the evening Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master’s servants; he did not go home.” The two other translations have, “Uriah went out and lay on his couch... but did not go down to his house.”

<sup>119</sup>. Again, the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions omit this text. The NRSV, NIV and JB translate it as, “David wrote a letter to Joab and send it by Uriah.”

<sup>120</sup> a. We read the *hiph impv* הִבֵּא “send” with GL (LXX MSS, Lucianic recension) (*eisagage*), of which MTs הָבִי “give” may be a corruption (Anderson, 1989:152).

b. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions use the word, “send” while the NRSV, NIV and JB versions use, “set,” “station,” and “put,” respectively. This is a command from David to Joab to make sure that Uriah died in the battle.

<sup>122</sup> a. McCarter (281) reads בָּשָׂר “as he kept watch” with 4QSam (Samuel MSS from Qumram Cave IV), the reconstruction of which is somewhat uncertain. The MT has the common verb בָּשָׂר “when he had watched” or “having watched” (Anderson, 1989:152).

b. The clause “Joab, then besieging the town” is rendered similarly in NRSV and JB. The NIV has, “So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were.” The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions have, “as he kept watch, when he had watched or having watched” which totally differs from the RSV, NIV and JB versions but denote almost the same thing.



of the town sallied out and engaged Joab; the army suffered casualties, including some of David's bodyguard; and Uriah the Hittite was killed too.<sup>124</sup>

- 11:18 "Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting; Joab sent David a full account of the battle" (JB and NIV.)<sup>125</sup>

- 11:19 "... and he instructed the messenger, 'When you have finished telling the king all the news about the fighting.'" In the JB translation, we have, "To the messenger he gave this order: 'when you have finished telling the king all the details of the battle.'"<sup>126</sup>

- 11:20 "... then, if the king's anger rises, and if he says to you, 'Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?'" The JB says, "The king's anger may be provoked; he may say, 'Why did you go so near the town to fight?'<sup>127</sup> Did you not know they would shoot from the rampart?"<sup>128</sup>

- 11:21a "Who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbaal?<sup>129</sup> Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?" then you shall say,<sup>130</sup> 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead too.' The JB is similar to the NRSV and the NIV.<sup>131</sup>

- 11:22 "So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell." The NIV reads, "The messenger set out, and when he arrived he told David everything Joab had sent him to say."<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>124</sup>. No translation is found in the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions offer a translation but differ in, "some of the men in David's army, bodyguard, and people fell." The NRSV, NIV and JB read, "Uriah the Hittite was killed too."

<sup>125</sup>. Again, the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions text offer no translation of this verse. In the NRSV, NIV and JB versions, the verse is translated to imply that Joab sent David a report of what transpired especially about the death of Uriah, his target.

<sup>126b</sup>. The NIV has, "He instructed the messenger: when you have finished giving the king this account of the battle. The NRSV, NIV and JB translations differ slightly in the phrase, "this account of the battle."

<sup>127a</sup>. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions attach this part to verse 22 in the LXX Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint). The clauses 20b, 21a which now follow are connected with this in the LXX Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint) and, as in the MT, are placed between 20a and 21b. However, it is improbable that Joab should anticipate every single detail of David's reaction to the messenger. The confusion may have arisen from the twofold occurrence of the sentence "why did you go so near...?" (Hertzberg, 1964:307).

<sup>128b</sup>. The question "Why did you get close to the wall?" differs in the NIV from the other two translations – the NRSV and JB.

<sup>129a</sup>. Some G MSS (Septuagint, LXX Manuscripts) adopt "Jerubbaal" יְרֻבְשֶׁת which was the original form of Gideon's other name (see Judges 7:1). Cf. also comment on 2:8 (Anderson, 1989:152). BH (*Biblia Hebraica*, ed. Rudolf Kittel, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., A. Alt and O. Eissfeldt, 1952).

<sup>130</sup> a. This clause was lost when the sentences were changed around.

b. The name "Jerub-Besheth" is used in the NIV, but "Jerubbaal" is the preferred rendering in the NRSV, JB and Old Version text translation. The translations also say, "Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead too."

c. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg texts do not have this translation. The JB and NRSV agree in their rendering of the statement.

- 11:23 “The messenger said to David, ‘The men gained an advantage over us, and came out against us in the field; but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate.’” The NIV differs slightly.<sup>133</sup>
- 11:24a “Then the<sup>134</sup> archers shot<sup>135</sup> at your servants from the wall.” The JB translation differs.<sup>136</sup>
- 11:24b “Some of the king’s servants are dead;<sup>137</sup> and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.”<sup>138</sup>
- 11:25a “David said to the messenger, ‘Thus you shall say to Joab, Do not let this matter<sup>139</sup> trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another.’” The NIV says, “Do not let this matter upset you.”<sup>140</sup>
- 11:25b “Press your attack on the city, and overthrow it. And encourage him.”<sup>141</sup> The JB translation: “Storm the town in greater force and overthrow it. That is the way to encourage him.”<sup>142</sup>
- 11:26 “When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him.” The JB translation reads, “When Uriah’s wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband.”<sup>143</sup>
- 11:27 “When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.”

Commenting on verse 27, Barker (1994:456) points out that this is the only reference to the “Lord” as such no matter how honourable and magnanimous David’s action may have appeared

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<sup>133</sup> . The messenger said to David, “The men overpowered us and came out against us in the open, but we drove them back to the entrance to the city gate.” The JB and NRSV are similar in their translation.

<sup>134</sup> a. For the irregular forms in the MT, see GKC, section 75rr (Anderson, 1989:152).

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> . The JB translation, “But the bowmen shot at your bodyguard from the ramparts; both the translations looks similar in, “Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.”

<sup>137</sup> a. The GL (LXX MSS, Lucianic recension) gives the number of the dead as about eighteen men, but this is, most likely, an explanatory addition (Anderson, 1989:152).

<sup>138</sup>b. The NRSV, NIV and JB versions do not give the number of the dead as in the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg translation which gives the number of the dead as about eighteen men.

<sup>139</sup> a. For the unusual use of the object marker (תָּא), see GKC, section 1171 (Anderson, 1989:152).

<sup>140</sup>b. The JB translation reads, “Do not take the matter to heart.” This is similar in meaning to the NRSV, NIV and JB translations. The LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg text does not have this translation.

<sup>141</sup> a. McCarter (284) omits the phrase, וַיְחַזְקֵהוּ with the GLMN (LXX MSS, LXX MS, Codex Coisilianus, LXX MS, Codex Basiliano-Vaticanus), perhaps rightly so (Anderson, 1989:152).

<sup>142</sup>b. The NIV translation has, “Press the attack against the city and destroyed it. Say this to encourage Joab,” but differs from the JB and NRSV.

<sup>143</sup> b. The NRSV and NIV agree in their translation except for the phrase, “made lamentation,” which has the same meaning as mourned.

to some, what David did “was evil in the eyes of Yahweh” (NRSV, NIV – “displeased the LORD”). The Lord had looked at David’s heart (1 Sam 16:7) and seen the king’s act as the despicable deed that it was. Moreover, Bergen (1996:368) shows that the closest parallel to the writer’s description of the Lord’s reaction to David’s behaviour is found in the Torah’s expression of the Lord’s response to Onan’s sexual misconduct in Genesis 38:10.<sup>144</sup> The Bible reports that Onan died for his misbehaviour. Although David’s punishment had not yet been revealed by the writer, his penalty is expected to be more severe than that of Onan.

Thus, it should be noted that the NIV translation of 2 Samuel 11:27, “After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the Lord”<sup>145</sup> differs from the JB’s, “When the period of mourning was over, David sent to have her brought to his house; she became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done displeased Yahweh.”<sup>146</sup> In the following section, the history of the interpretation of the pericope will be reviewed including the literary and the theological considerations.

### **3.4 A Brief Historical Background of 2 Samuel 11:1-27**

The book of Samuel tells the story primarily of three individuals – Samuel, Israel’s last judge; Saul her first king; and David the founder of a dynasty that would endure for over three centuries (Dillard, 1994:135). Thus, the book of Samuel in general is a book about transition, that is, transition from theocracy to monarchy. Under theocracy, God had provided the periodic leadership needed by the people; but leadership is now being institutionalized and it would become hereditary. Dillard (1994:136) observes, like some other biblical historians, that the author of the book of Samuel remains anonymous. Samuel was originally one book but probably because of the great length of the material, the book was divided in the Septuagint into two parts (called 1 and 2 Kingdoms). Therefore, the current study highlights the background of 2 Samuel from the literal, theological and historical perspectives.

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<sup>144</sup>a. The apparently deliberate parallel between Yahweh’s reactions to David and Onan reinforce the notion that David, like Onan, was improperly acting within the context of a *go’el* relationship with a woman (Bergen, 1996:368).

<sup>145</sup> a. The MT refers to “Yahweh” (Anderson, 1989: 152).

<sup>146</sup>b. The JB and the LXX, MT, MSS, Vg and Tg versions text have, “Yahweh,” meaning what David had done displeased Yahweh, unlike the NRSV and NIV translations that have “Lord” as seen in verse 27, “The thing that David had done displeased the Lord.” During the period of the monarchy, “Yahweh” was referred to as the God of the Israelites. For this reason, the JB and NRSV are closer to the original text in their translations.

### 3.4.1 Literary background

The books of 1- 2 Samuel are masterful examples of ancient Hebrew narrative art. The books possess all the characteristics of a timeless literary classic: a magnificent central plot involving kings, international wars, ambition, murder, deception, and sexual intrigue; complex character portrayals; skilful use of varied setting from mountains to deserts; and masterful use of wordplays and allusions (Bergen, 1996:30-35). The books also provide a historical and theological account of the Hebrew nation during the judgeship of Samuel and during the reigns of Saul and David (Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282). An account of the rise of the Israelite monarchy in about 1 000 BC in order to stress the importance of being faithful to God's covenant is presented in 1 and 2 Samuel.

To Cartledge (2001:12), the period described in 1-2 Samuel covers roughly a century, beginning with Samuel's birth probably in the 1070s BC and ending just before David's death, often dated at 961 BC. This was a coincidental time for the growth and development of small states in the Levant, as both Egypt and Mesopotamia, the traditional power brokers of the region, were experiencing periods of internal unrest and external weakness.

The books of 1-2 Samuel are commonly classified as Historical books. It is not surprising that many scholars state that the main purpose for this pair of books is that of conveying history. Bergen (1996:28) observes that, several different significant threads within the mosaic of Israelite history are traced in the books of Samuel by considering the following:

1. Chronicling crucial events in the downfall of the Aaronic priestly line of Ithamar;
2. Relating significant and characteristic events from the lives of the post-Mosaic Levitical judges;
3. Providing historical details relevant to Israel's transition from judgeship to kingship;
4. Detailing events from the reigns of Israel's first two kings;
5. Documenting the establishment of Jerusalem as Israel's capital;
6. Documenting the establishment of the Davidic dynasty as Israel's sole legitimate dynasty;
7. Providing details of the life and faith of David, Israel most famous king;
8. Documenting events associated with the growing rift between Judah and Israel.

The above stated events cover the period of 1 000 BC to 540 BC, the return of exile.

### 3.4.2 Theological background

The text of 2 Samuel 11 proves that God is faithful despite the unfaithfulness of his people. To Bergen (1996:43), the books communicate and reinforce religious beliefs within the writer's community. The books were written to support the teachings of the Torah as well as provide guidance and hope for Israel's exilic community. Israel's Exile in 586-540 BC can be attributed to the sin of disobedience and David's adultery with Bathsheba. God demands obedience, but King David broke the covenant and the stipulation which says, "thou shall not commit" adultery and murder (Exod 20:14; 13). In this episode, David was not above the judgement of the covenant violation (2 Sam 11:2-12:25). The thing (adultery and murder) that David had done displeased the Lord (2 Sam 11:27). The great disobedience, that is, the sins of Israel and the "thing" that King David had done contributed to the reasons for the Exile as stated above.

### 3.4.3 Historical background

Douglas and Tenny (1987:1282) observes that the record of 1-2 Samuel covers the period from the end of the era of judges (c. 1000-540BC) to the end of the Davidic period (c. 970 BC). Thus, 2 Samuel 11 must have been composed sometime after the division of the kingdom (c. 930 BC), and possibly as late as the period of the Exile (c. 550 BC).

On the other hand, there is little external or internal evidence that points to the authorship of the books of Samuel. Although Jewish tradition ascribes the authorship to Prophet Samuel, it has been noted that all of the events after 1 Samuel 24 occurred after Samuel's death (Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282). The statement of 1 Samuel 27:6, "So on that day Achish gave him Ziklag, and it has belonged to the kings of Judah ever since," is taken by some to refer to a date in the divided kingdom. Others insist that the statement should be later than the end of the reign of David. Another suggestion on the authorship of 1-2 Samuel is that some Judean prophet wrote the books shortly after the division of the kingdom (Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282).

Veijola *et al* (2005:837) attest that the two books of Samuel belong to what is known as the Hebrew Canon's "earlier prophets" (Joshua to 2 Kings). The books derives their name from Samuel, who in these books appears variously in the role of prophet, priest, and judge, and whom together with Nathan and Gad, the rabbinic tradition held to be the author of 1-2 Samuel (cf. Chron 29:29 as stated above). The Septuagint groups the books of Samuel and Kings together as the Four Books of Kingdoms (*Basileion*); the Vulgate calls them the Four Books of Kings (*Regum*). Veijola *et al* (2005:837) submit that the division of Samuel into two books is

attested only after 1448 BC and actually it derives from the Septuagint (and the Vulgate; Bible version).

### **3.4.4 Composition and literary structure**

Regarding the composition and literary structure of 1 and 2 Samuel, Newson, Ringe and Lapsley (2012:150) assert that 1 and 2 Samuel are a goldmine for readers interested in women in ancient Israel. One can say that many of the narratives are more centred on women in these two books. There are stories about royal women involved in events that had major political repercussions throughout Israel, but there are also narratives in which non-royal women play significant roles. Some of these women include Hannah, the medium at Endor, and the two “wise women” from Israel’s villages (Newson, Ringe and Lapsley 2012:150).

Birch (2015:118) argues that the books of 1 and 2 Samuel witness one of the most crucial periods of transition in power and change in the story of ancient Israel. At the opening of 1 and 2 Samuel, Israel is a loose federation of tribes, experiencing both external threats from the militarily superior Philistines and internal crisis because of the corruption of the priestly house of Eli at Shiloh, where the Ark of God was maintained and covenant traditions were preserved. However, at the conclusion of 2 Samuel, an emerging monarchy is firmly in place under David.

The text of 2 Samuel 11 is a narrative literature of the final stages of the Israelites-Ammonites war which provides the framework for the scabrous story of David’s adultery with Bathsheba and the murderous intrigue that followed. Gordon (1986:252) states that this narration is basically domestic concern. While typical of the chapters which make up the so-called “succession narrative,” this is particularly justified here because of the long-term repercussion which is the business of the “succession narrative” to describe and enlarge upon. Gordon (1986:252) further explains that because of David’s behaviour in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah, the David of 2 Samuel 12-20 is a man under judgement, reaping publicly, through his family, the fruit of his private sin.

In another account of 2 Samuel 11, Collins (2004:240) highlights that like many people in position of power, from ancient times to the present day, David also had other conquests in mind. The story of his encounter with Bathsheba is set in the spring of the year, “when kings go out to battle.” King Saul had been killed in battle, but David is wise enough to retire from fighting in person and he seeks other outlets for his energies. Bathsheba bathes where she can be seen and David commits adultery with her. Uriah her husband, carries the instructions for his own murder even though David does not initially want to have the man Uriah killed; as

such, he tries hard to cover up his adultery by getting him to sleep with his wife. Uriah was resilient about his own piety and respect for tradition, thus, he refuses to sleep with his wife while his companions are on a military campaign. David's last resort is to instruct his general Joab to set Uriah up to be killed in battle, and after an appropriate interval for mourning, he takes Bathsheba to be his wife (Collins, 2004:240).

Chapter 11 of 2 Samuel is said to deal with four episodes which form the structure of the narrative. In the present form of the narrative, verse 1 serves as an introduction that also provides the historical setting. The first episode is David's affair with Bathsheba (vv. 2-5), followed by David's effort to tackle the unpleasant consequences created by his adultery. The second episode is found in verses 6-13 which narrates in a lively and moving manner how the king's attempts to deceive the cheated husband stumbled on an unsuspecting Uriah's loyalty and uprightness (Anderson, 1989:152).<sup>147</sup> The third episode is in verses 14-25 which depicts both David's scheme to murder Uriah and its eventual implementation. Essentially, it was a murder dressed up as a hero's death. This method must have been chosen because it provides a convenient final solution (Anderson, 1989:152). The fourth episode is in verses 26-27a which concludes this series of events, both tragic and unpleasant. The culprits receive their immediate "reward" and they get each other; Bathsheba becomes David's wife.

From the literary point of view, verses 1-27 are fairly self-contained and form a single narrative unit, but theologically, they require chapter 12 for their completion because the story ends with an unrepentant David and without any divine judgement or critique of his behaviour (Anderson, 1989:150-152). McCarter (1984:290) however claims that chapters 11-12 are yet another contribution from the same prophetic author who produced 1 Samuel 8:11-17 and similar passages. In his view, that chapter 11:1-27 may have been "received intact in the prophetic writer's source" while his own contribution may well be confined to 11:27b-12:26 or 11:27b-12:15a (McCarter, 1984: 291).

To Noth (1943:434), literary readings of the books of Samuel are primarily diachronic attempts to interpret the text of 1-2 Samuel through either its prehistory source or identifiable pre-Deuteronomistic documents. This interpretation can be done through one or more redactions, that is prophetic and or Deuteronomistic or through recovering a superior text from one damaged by haplography and other variations of textual transmission. Many later studies of Samuel, however, have focused more on the present shape of the MT (Masoretic Texts) and on

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<sup>147</sup> Anderson (1989:152) remarks that, "Uriah drunk is more pious than David sober."

narrative method (Noth, 1943:434). Some of these analyses provide a synchronic reading of the text; other readings have attempted to blend modern literary analysis with diachronic observations.

On the dating of the David and Bathsheba episode, one can suggest that the episode occurred in the early monarchy (ca 1000 BC) but was written down during the later monarchy (ca 600 BC) or exilic period (586 – 540 BC). Gordon (1986:252) argues that spring was the time for launching military campaigns, when the winter rains had stopped and the male population was not yet involved in harvesting (cf. 12:24x [LXX]; 20:22, 26; 2 chapter 36:10). Walton recounts that the campaign described in this chapter is launched on the one-year anniversary of David's first sending delegation to Hanun, the new king of the Ammonites as found in 2 Samuel 10:2. The first delegation was treated shamefully by Hanun (10:4), and as such, the timing of the present delegation leaves no doubt of a retaliatory purpose. In simple terms, the spring of the year was a typical time for military campaigns in the ancient Near East. The winter rains have stopped and the labour-intensive harvest time has not yet arrived; thus, able-bodied men are available for military exploits (Walton, 2009:457).

McCarter (1984: 306) argues that, the latter narrative of 2 Samuel 11 may have come from a prophetic group, and it probably incorporates an older story which is contained in 11:2-27 and 12:15b-25. This older narrative lacks any explicit ethical and theological evaluation of David's behaviour. Therefore, one can say that the episode was first made known through oral tradition before it translated into a written tradition in about 1 000 BC to 540 BC to give clarity on the history of Israel's exile.

Theologically, it can be said that the passage of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 describes the conceiving of sin, the concretization of sin, the accomplishment of sin and the consequences of sin. The books of 1 and 2 Samuel are described as part of the Deuteronomistic History (Dillard, 1994:145). The series of books from Joshua through Kings that applies the laws and worldview of Deuteronomy to the history of the nation are often classified as the Deuteronomistic books. The influence of Deuteronomy can be observed in Samuel especially at the level of phraseology and vocabulary. To Dillard (1994:145), three important theological concerns of Deuteronomy that play an important role in Samuel are as follow:

Deuteronomy envisaged a day when Israel would have a king (17:14-20) and set forth the principles under which a king should rule. Israel did eventually ask for a king "like the nations



around them” (Deut 17:14; 1 Sam 8:5, 20), and the books of Samuel record Israel’s initial experiments with monarchy.

Deuteronomy also spoke of a day when Israel would have rest from enemies that surrounded her (12:12); then God would choose one place to which his people would bring their offerings in worship (12:1-14, 20-25). The books of Samuel record the transition from the itinerating tabernacle to the first hints that a temple would be built (2 Sam 7:1-2).

Deuteronomy also presented a God who responded to his people: with blessing when they obeyed, but in judgement when they did not (chapter 28). Throughout the narrative of the books of Samuel, the reader sees divine blessing and judgement in action.

To be precise, it is observed that disobedience and the sin of the Israelites were reasons for their exile. The story of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 tells of a sin committed by the most celebrated royal king of Israel (David). The episode of David and Bathsheba becomes pivotal to the David kingship and dynasty. This singular act of David with the disobedience and other sins of the Israelites led to 70 years of Israel’s captivity in Babylon. For Bosman (2014:243), the exilic period in the history of Israel goes thus: The northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE and the Southern kingdom of Judah in 701, 597, 586 and 582 BCE by Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians, and the early Jewish communities by the Romans after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE and the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 CE. However, God continued his gracious purpose towards his chosen people and kings (Dillard, 1994:145).

The text of 2 Samuel 11 also relates Israel’s war with the Ammonites waged in Rabbah the capital of Ammon. The incident is interwoven with the sexual encounter between David and Bathsheba and Uriah’s death. Bergen (1996:361) sees Chapter 11 of 2 Samuel as a watershed in the biblical writer’s presentation of David’s life. Up to this point, David has been portrayed as the ideal servant of the Lord, scrupulously obedient to every point of the law, and zealous in his execution of each command. David’s obedience resulted in the fulfilment of Torah promises and an outpouring of blessings on Israel beyond any previously known scale. Perhaps the most significant of the Torah promises fulfilled through David was the establishment of a dynastic covenant with messianic and eschatological implications.

Bergen (1996:361) observes that in chapter 11, David becomes for a moment a rebel against the Lord’s covenant, with devastating consequences. David’s twin sins of adultery and murder rent the tapestry of blessings woven so carefully in the previous narratives. Some scholars agree that 2 Samuel tells a brutal and shocking narrative which exposes King David’s twofold crime,

even though the chapter does not call the ugly deeds of the king by names (Sternberg, 1987:190; Bergen, 1996:361). Although David repented of the sins he had committed, irreparable damage had been done; the dynastic covenant promises graciously given to David remained, but the Torah blessings resulting from obedience vanished. In the place of blessings, David began to experience the stern curses of the Torah including loss of family. In all of these happenings, David extended the metaphorical comparison between his life and the life of Israel; David lost his prestige and homeland through sin, so also would the nation.

It has been observed that some interpreters of 2 Samuel 11 notably Kyle McCarter argue that chapters 11 and 12 are so different in tone that they could not have belonged originally to the surrounding text but were added later, perhaps by a “prophetic school” that remembered the works and the words of Nathan (Cartledge, 2001:495). Cartledge (2001:495) asserts that, there is indeed an obvious shift in the way David is portrayed, for in chapter 11, his deepest and darkest weakness comes to the fore, virtually eclipsing the shining image of the righteous warrior that dominate the earlier Davidic stories.

According to Abasili (2011:7), David’s first action in the narrative is to send Joab, his servants, and all Israel to bring his war against the Ammonites to a logical conclusion by overthrowing Rabbah the capital, but “David remains in Jerusalem.” The question is why must King David remain at home at this auspicious moment when the defence of his kingdom and indirectly of his thrones was at stake? Indeed, endless reasons and arguments can be adduced to explain David’s decision to stay at home while all Israel fought the Ammonites, but one fact remains indisputable, that is, the centrality of this decision to the entire narrative. There is no doubt that David’s decision to stay in Jerusalem is what set the entire narrative in motion.

Further, the narrator of 2 Samuel 11 writes that the king, having stayed away from the battle, is enjoying a relaxing day including an evening rest; but that is not all. After his evening rest, the king begins strolling on the roof of his palace (Abasili, 2011:7). Bergen (1996:364) explains that David walks around on the roof of his palace which was located probably on the highest ground within the old Jebusite fortress, so that from his rooftop he would have had a commanding view of the city. The narrator does not stop to tell us whether this is a routine practice of the king, rather he hastens to focus on one of the many things that the king’s eyes chance upon – “a woman bathing.” Remarkably, the narrator only offers necessary information about her, which is vital for the continuation of the narrative – “the woman was very beautiful (11:3).” This beauty is understood to be a biblical Hebrew description reserved for people of

striking appearance, for example, Rebekah (Gen 24:16; 26:7), Vashti (Est 1:11), or Esther (Est 2:7).

Garland (2008:23) attests that male-dominated cultures like Bathsheba's and our own today teach women that they are responsible for men's lust. Just as in the Susanna experience, the biblical story of Bathsheba's bath itself mentions the woman's nakedness, the enticing effect it has on the voyeur, and the subsequent attempt at rape (Gunn, 1996:75). This story is said "to be utterly unpleasant (*sic*), so much that even serious and sophisticated scholarship did little to do justice to the detail of the text" (Gunn, 1996:75). For this reason, women may think and they may have been told that their behaviour evokes the response in men, that somehow they have telegraphed availability messages. As a consequence, when men lust after them, some women feel guilty. Somehow, they think they have caused the sexual harassment, the unwanted sexual come-ons or touching, or even rape. Others may suggest to an abused woman that she was a victim because of the way she dressed or carried herself or looked at a man, or maybe she should not have been where she was in the first place as in case of Bathsheba (Abasili, 2011:1-7).

Although the sexual encounter between David and Bathsheba and its implications in 2 Samuel 11-12 has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention, exegetes have often arrived at two divergent and opposing interpretations of the pericope (Abasili, 2011:1). On the one hand, several scholars have placed the burden of seduction on Bathsheba and argued that she was not raped by David (cf. Garland, 2008:23). Abasili (2011:1) notes that some scholars such as George G. Nicol argue that Bathsheba by "bathing in such close proximity to the royal palace was deliberately provocative." In the same vein, Abasili's interpretation of 2 Sam 11-12 describes Bathsheba as a "willing and equal partner." He argues that the strong political desire to become the king's wife made Bathsheba take her bath at an opportune position and time (in Abasili, 2011:1). On the opposite end of the divide, scholars such as Richard M. Davidson, David and Diana Garland, Larry W. Spielman and J. Cheryl Exum argue that Bathsheba was a victim of David's rape and/or abuse (Abasili, 2011:2).

Furthermore, Abasili (2011:2) attests that Richard M. Davidson likened the intercourse between David and Bathsheba to that between an adult and a minor whose consent is of no consequence and concludes that Bathsheba was a victim of David's "power rape." To some scholars, there can be no valid mutual consent in face of the great power gap between David and Bathsheba. Thus, "seduced by his own power not by Bathsheba, David conquers

Bathsheba.” There can be little doubt that the various studies have shed considerable light on 2 Sam 11-12 and contributed to a better understanding of the pericope (Abasali, 2011:2). Nevertheless, the often-contradictory interpretations continue to raise questions in the mind of the reader. Which of the interpretations is “right,” or is the text so ambiguous that it permits many legitimate interpretations at the same time? These questions make a case for a re-examination of the pericope (Abasali, 2011:2).

In 2 Samuel 11:27, the main word class used is a verb (action word) and mostly in the past tense. However, we see nouns and adjectives qualifying actions in the text. A question is asked: How do the eight commentaries on 2 Samuel interpret the conclusion to this narrative “But the thing David had done displeased the Lord”? (Abasali, 2012:3). What is that thing that David had done that displeased the Lord? In answering this question, commentators differ in their views. For example, Walton (2009:459) ends his commentary at 2 Samuel 11:26 which says Bathsheba mourns for her husband Uriah. Walton (2009:458) also explains that the reason for Bathsheba’s bathing in a place where she could be seen is not explored by the narrator, whose only concern is with the irresponsible action of the king. Concerning the thing that David did to displease the Lord, Walton does not state clearly whether what David did was evil or good; rather, he said the king was irresponsible.

However, unlike Walton (2009:458) who admits that the king was irresponsible but ignores 2 Samuel 11:27b that says, “The thing that David had done displeased the Lord,” Cartledge (2001:495) clearly shows that David committed adultery with his heading on 2 Samuel 11:27. He views 2 Samuel 11:27 as a memorable verse that marks the turning point in the life of David, as he finally meets an enemy he cannot defeat, that is, the devil (Cartledge, 2001:495). Cartledge (2001:511) acknowledges that we can hide our sins from others but not from God and that, “the thing David had done was evil in the eyes of Yahweh.” Thus, chapter 11:27 is a bridge between the rest of 2 Samuel 11 and chapter 12 which contains the outcome of what transpired in chapter 11.

For Birch (1998:1283), 2 Samuel 11:27 is a shift in David’s story that may be described in a variety of ways – from public to personal, from power to vulnerability, from blessing to curse and from gift to grasp. This is to say that David started well, but got it wrong by committing adultery with Bathsheba and killing Uriah her husband. His action was indeed evil in the sight of the Lord. Bergen (1996:368) argues that regardless of how honourable and magnanimous David’s actions may have appeared to some, what David had done was evil in the eyes of

Yahweh and displeased the Lord. David's behaviour towards Bathsheba and Uriah was certainly atrocious and it generated violence in his house.

In another commentary, Brueggemann (1990:278) identifies two events that occurred after Uriah's death:

- Bathsheba mourned Uriah her husband and David married her.
- Bathsheba bore David a son.

These two events were seen as evil and displeasing to the Lord. One can say that the statement, "But the thing David had done displeased the Lord" serves as a verdict on David's case. Anderson (1989:161) argues that it is possible that the statement, "But the thing David had done displeased the Lord" was intended as a deliberate contrast to David's words addressed to Joab in verse 5. Gordon (1986:256) prefers a more literal rendering which brings out, perhaps, the correspondence of both verses: "Do not let this matter be evil in your eyes" (v. 25a) and this "thing that David has done was evil in the eyes of the Lord" (v. 27b). It is less certain that the meaning of "be evil in your eyes" is the same in both contexts of verse 25 and verse 27 of 2 Samuel 11.

It is possible that the story in 2 Samuel 11:1-27 was received intact from the prophetic writer's source and that his own contribution is confined therefore to chapter 11:27b-12 or even 11:27b-12:15a, which many scholars regard as secondary, that is, in relation to 11:1-27a (McCarter, 1984:291). To Yee (1988:240), there is an ambiguity in the narrative technique that the author used in 2 Samuel 11 particularly in verse 27b. In particular, the literary ambiguity which scholars tend to focus on in 2 Samuel is the ambiguity between character action and motive. On the use of ambiguity in 2 Samuel 11:14-27b, Yee (1988:244) remarks that:

We draw summary attention to the motivational ambiguity in the remaining narrative: Was Joab aware of the affair? What were his feelings regarding the death sentence of one of his men which was issued by his king (11:14-18)? What really was behind his instructions to the messenger in his battle report to David (11:19-21)? Why did the messenger deliver another set of reports (11:23)? Did he know of the affair and consequently the true reason for Uriah's death? Was Bathsheba's time of mourning for Uriah merely *pro forma*, since she plotted all along to become the king's wife? Or was her grief authentic? Did she know that David instigated the death of her husband, and if so, how did she feel about becoming the wife of his murderer (11:26-27)?

It seems that the only unambiguous statement in the narrative is its concluding one, "The thing that David had done displeased the Lord" (11:27b). The rest of the text, however, precludes definitive answers to the question of the characters' motives for each of their actions.

Yee (1988:246) further submits that the intentions of the author of 2 Samuel 11 are not expressed but implied. Thus, he outlines the following techniques to show the ambiguity in the table below:

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>INTENTION</b>
David sends for Bathsheba	To have sex with Bathsheba
David sends for Uriah	To persuade Uriah to have sex with Bathsheba
Bathsheba washes herself ritually	Insuring David's paternity
Uriah is encouraged to "wash his feet"	To relieve David of his paternity

The above outline shows that the author did not only contrast Bathsheba and Uriah but also Uriah and David using precisely the same vocabulary. The history of research on 2 Samuel 11:1-27 shows that the text covers a period before, during and after the Babylonian captivity. The pericope lies within the Deuteronomistic History that is from the book of Joshua through 2 Kings (Dillard, 1994:135; Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282). The Deuteronomic History contains a record of events that led Israel into Babylonian exile in 586-540 BC. Deuteronomistic History contains a reflection on Israel's history. In this history, the past is considered, the future scanned and the sequence of events explained in order to provide a practical guide for human activity (McCarthy, 1965:131). The Deuteronomistic History stands out as a record of the turning points in Israel's history, that is, the beginning and the end of the conquest, and of era of the judges and monarchy. The Deuteronomistic History therefore calls attention to the significant changes in Israel's circumstances and serves to explain how the trend of events came to be.

Like some other scholars (cf. Dillard, 1994:135; Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282), Noth (1943:434) views Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings as part of a Deuteronomistic History written in Judah after 562 BCE, which is the last date mentioned in 2 Kings 25:27 and before the return from the Babylonian exile in 540 BCE. The aforementioned document is seen as an attempt to justify to the exilic generation the reasons for the destruction of the northern and the

southern kingdoms. During this period, Israel had sought after other gods and had not held to the ideal of one central sanctuary despite frequent warnings by the prophets (Noth, 1943:434). Deuteronomistic History shows how, in so many instances, the Israelites disobeyed Yahweh their God, the one who liberated them from the bondage of Egypt. First, the people rejected God as their king as they demanded for a human king. Therefore, God gave them Saul as a leader/king as they requested. Saul did not do well and he was rejected by God (1 Sam 15:22-23). Although Samuel did well as a judge/prophet and as a priest in his time his children did evil before the Lord and they were rejected by God.

David whose great grandparents were Boaz and Ruth and father was Jesse (Matthew 1:5-6) and who was then anointed as the king of Israel became renowned in his own time. He was called the man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14; 16:7; Acts 13:22; cf. Dillard, 1994:140-145). David was a warrior, the one who killed Goliath (1 Sam 17:51), and the conqueror of the sea people (the Philistines). David was also recognized as the choirmaster and writer of many Psalms – he was known as a harp player, shepherd and poet, and an armor bearer of King Saul (1 Sam 16:16-19). He is also known as the author of 73 of the 150 Psalms in the Bible with Psalm 23 being one of his best-known Psalms. Nonetheless, the man David committed the sins of adultery and murder despite his celebrated achievements in the past. From David's pedigree, we can deduce that regardless of who we are, because we are human, we are liable to sin. Even though he is faithful, God did punish David for his sins declaring that the sword would never depart from David's house because of his iniquity (Dillard, 1994:137-143).

For the sins of Israel, the nation became divided in 922 BC and God handed the people into the hands of their enemies beginning from the Assyrian invasion in 721 BC to the Babylonian exile in 586 BC which lasted for 70 years (Jer 25:11, 12, 20-38; 29:10; Dan 9:2; Zech 1:12; 7:5). It is important to note that scholars differ in their views of the statement, "But the thing David had done displeased the Lord" (McCarter, 1984:291; Brueggemann, 1990:278). While some agree that what David did was evil, others ignored verse 27b without any comment. The Bible is the word of truth and states clearly that David displeased the Lord with his misdeed against Uriah and Bathsheba. Robinson (1993:205) views this episode as a lesson about what Genesis 3 taught about sin, that is, the conception of sin, its concretization, and its consequences. Sin is conceived in the heart and concretized in actions in one's life. After sin is committed, it actually affects the sinner's relationship with himself, his neighbours, and his God.

In this research, the Deuteronomistic History refers to a group of Old Testament books (Joshua to 2 Kings) that covers the period of the kings or monarchical period. It is also referred as the “so-called” Deuteronomistic History because it is not clear if it existed as a separate document in which the story of David, Bathsheba and Uriah the Hittite is described (cf. Dillard, 1994:135; Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282). In short, the Deuteronomistic History explains why Israel as a nation had to go into exile and the sins of David with Bathsheba and Uriah served as powerful evidence of the extent of the disobedience that led to the Babylonian exile.

Having considered the history of research of 2 Samuel 11:1-27, this research agrees with Dillard (1994:136) and Douglas and Tenny (1987:1282) regarding the authorship of 1 and 2 Samuel. Both scholars agree that the author is known or thought to be a Judean prophet who wrote the books after the division of Israel in 921 BC. The research disagrees with the assertion by Veijola *et al* (2005:837) and Birch (2015:118) that 1 and 2 Samuel belong to what is known as the Hebrew Canon’s “earlier prophets.” On the composition and the literary structure of 1 and 2 Samuel, the research agrees with Newson, Ringe and Lapsley (2012:150) that the books are a goldmine for readers interested in women in ancient Israel, a point which is overlooked for instance by Birch (2015:118) who only notes that the books witness transition of power in ancient Israel.

Regarding sexual violence and murder in 2 Samuel 11:1-27, the research disagrees with the views of some scholars that the David, Bathsheba and Uriah event is justifiable and that Bathsheba was the brain behind the episode because she decided to bathe where she could be seen by the respected king David (Gordon, 1986:252; Collins, 2004:240; Garland, 2008:23). By contrast, Anderson (1989:152) and Bergen (1996:361) have rightly shown that David and Bathsheba were culprits in the event and that what David did was commit a twin sin of adultery and murder which was evil and displeasing to the Lord. Cartledge (2001:495) and Abasili (2011:7) also rightly note that 2 Samuel 11 portrays David’s deepest, and darkest weakness. David’s decision to remain behind in Jerusalem while his army went to war triggered the entire narration and his sin. On the other hand, this study disagrees with Abasili (2011:1) that the strong political desire to become the king’s wife made Bathsheba to take her bath at an opportune position and time. Rather, Bathsheba was a victim of power rape, and David’s sin of adultery and murder was evil, for the Lord was displeased.

The history of research on 2 Samuel 11:1-27 shows that the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah were sins against God which caused God to be displeased with David, the man



after his own heart (1 Sam 13:14) and the famous king of Israel. In the Decalogue, it is clearly stated that, “thou shall not commit adultery” and “thou shall not commit murder” (Exod 20:14, 13). By committing adultery and murder, David broke these commandments and disobeyed God. Clearly, David as the king of Israel misused his power by committing adultery with Bathsheba the wife of his loyal servant Uriah both of whom the king should have protected. As a king, David had power to protect Uriah and his wife Bathsheba, but he misused the power meant for protecting the people to maltreat them to the point of killing Uriah an innocent man. Thus, for the sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah, King David the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the conqueror of Goliath broke God’s commandments (Gunn, 1996:75).

Having considered the trends from the history of research about 2 Samuel 11:1-27; the next section will focus on a verse-by-verse discussion of the pericope. The interpretation of each verse by different scholars shall be considered in light of the perspective of this research. The verse-by-verse reading will help to uncover the meaning of each verse in the pericope.

### **3.5 Verse-by-verse Discussion of the Text**

The text under study is presented in a verse-by-verse discussion in this section. The discussion is divided into two parts namely the conception of sin in 2 Samuel 11:1-3 and the concretization of sin in 2 Samuel 11:4-27 (Robinson, 1993:205).

#### **3.5.1 The conception of sin in 2 Samuel 11:1-3**

Sin is conceived in the heart through temptation as in Genesis 3:2-15. According to Robinson (1993:205), all temptations involve three stages: the object or the person who tempts the sinner appeals to the sinner as being highly desirable; the sinner finds this object easily obtainable; his action leads to undesirable consequence. In this episode, from verse 1, David finds that it was easy for him to take advantage of Bathsheba since his servants and “all Israel” were away to the battle against the Ammonites.

In verse 1, “the turn (or “return) of the year” is usually thought to refer to the spring but some exegetes take it to denote “the time of year at which the Aramean marched to the aid of the Ammonites” (Anderson, 1989:150-153). However, it is regarded as a general reference indicating the period between the heavy winter rains and the harvest, which is springtime. This would be an appropriate time for military exploits (cf. 1 Kgs 20:22, 26). Anderson (1989:153) cautions that one should not make too much of the variant readings “kings or messengers” since they may be no more than orthographic variants of  $\text{מַלְאֲכָיִם}$  in 2 Samuel 10:17; as a secondary

linear vocalization. The comment that David remained in Jerusalem for reasons unknown is not necessarily a condemnation of his action. However, this act of remaining behind caused him to seize a woman, Bathsheba, who was the object of his desire and seemingly passive in her seduction to commit adultery with her before proceeding to kill her husband Uriah in order to cover up his sin (Dillard, 1994:142).

According to Anderson (1989:150-153) the exact status of Joab's "servants" is not further defined but a number of more specific descriptions have been proposed, for example, "his own guards" (JB), "his officers" (NRSV), or "the king's men" (NIV). However, all these suggestions belong to the realm of informed speculation. Rabbah (meaning "the great one") was the capital city of the Ammonites, located in the area of the present day Amman, the capital of the kingdom of Jordan.

Further, Berger (2009:437) notes that the central flaw that emerges from David's conduct in chapter 11 is his lack of empathy, borne of the distance he has placed between himself and his subjects. This is the unmistakable theme of the king's innocent condemnation of himself in the following chapter in which the rich man in Nathan's parable "did not show compassion" (2 Sam 12:6), and the text emphasizes this failure repeatedly and consistently throughout the chapter. Berger (2009:437-438) also summarizes 2 Samuel 11:1-4 to mean, "when 'kings' normally go to war, this king stays home and sends all his subjects to fight; and while strolling on the roof after an afternoon nap, he becomes attracted to Bathsheba and sends for her."

Verse 2 suggests that David might have had his bed on the roof (1 Sam 9:25), and from this relatively high position he would have had a good view of the neighbouring houses and courtyards. Abasili (2011:8) explains that there is no real reason to assume that Bathsheba actually intended to be seen by the king, and that by mentioning Bathsheba's beauty the narrator shows that among all the things that David must have seen while strolling on the palace roof only the bathing woman caught his attention (Abasili, 2011:8). Exum (1996:47) is alarmed that while a woman is touching herself, a man is watching; he sees her but she does not see him. Therefore because Bathsheba was seen bathing, she was summoned by the king. It is thus the woman's fault that the man's desire is aroused.

Verse 3 shows that David sent someone to inquire about the woman. According to Abasili (2011:8), there are indications that at the moment David saw Bathsheba, he became aroused and strongly desired her sexually. This is suggested by the increased pace of the narrative. David immediately asked for the woman's identity, "And one said; is not this Bathsheba,

daughter of Eliam the wife of Uriah the Hittite? (vs. 3b).” It is rather surprising that David recognized the woman’s beauty but did not recognize her identity at the same time. This is probably the narrator’s way of making two striking points.

First, it is evident that there was no prior relationship between David and Bathsheba. Each person lived in his/her world. David up to this point did not know Bathsheba and only saw her per chance while strolling on the palace roof. Second, the question in verse 3b underlines the woman’s identity – daughter of Eliam the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Without prejudice to Bathsheba’s patronymic identity, of particular importance for our analysis is the identification of Bathsheba as the “wife of Uriah the Hittite”; an identity that is repeated four times in the pericope (see 11:3d, 26, 12:9c, 24a) and which buttresses the importance of Bathsheba’s marital status in the story.

Anderson (1989:150) points out that “Bathsheba” probably means daughter “of Sheba” or “... of oath” but the second element (שֶׁבַע) is ambiguous. It could also be associated with the Hebrew word for “seven” (שֶׁבַע), hence, the name could also mean “the daughter born on the seventh day.” It is unusual that Bathsheba should be identified not only by her husband’s name but also by that of her father, as if the latter had a special significance for our story. If indeed her father, Eliam, was the son of Ahithophel of Gilo (2 Sam 23:34), then she would be the latter’s granddaughter. However, this identification is rather weak. The “wife of Uriah” is mentioned also in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1:6 (Anderson, 1989:150).

Uriah the Hittite was a member of the élite group of thirty men (2 Sam 23:39), and he probably belonged to Jerusalem’s nobility which may have had Hittite associations (cf. Ezek 16: 3). By the time of David, the great Hittite empire in Asia Minor was no more but its remnants survived in the form of the Neo-Hittite states in Syria, governed by a Hittite ruling class (cf. 1 Kgs 10:29). Uriah’s own name, אֲיִרְיָהּ is a good Yahwistic name, meaning, “Yahweh is my light” (Anderson, 1989:150-155). This may imply that he was born in Israel unless he had changed his original name at some later stage.

In verse 4, we see that Bathsheba’s purification has created certain exegetical problems. The NRSV rendering “now she was purifying herself after her period” implies that David had also disregarded the ritual law (Lev 15:24) since in the ancient Near East menstruation usually entailed cultic uncleanness (Anderson, 1989:150-152). However, it seems more likely that this digressive note was intended to stress that it was a favourable time for conception, and that Uriah could not have been the father of the child that was eventually born.

### 3.5.2 The concretization of sin in 2 Samuel 11:4-27

The temptation conceived as sin by King David in this section (2 Sam 11:4) now begins to take shape. The narrator states that David finally satisfied his thirst for Bathsheba, an action that marks a turning point in the Davidic character and kingship. According to Abasili (2011:9), it is normal in the Hebrew Bible to describe sexual intercourse, though sometimes carried out with elaborate preparations, in briefest statements (Gen 19:33, 35; 34:2; 38:18; Deut 22:25). What is remarkable here is the brief and action-packed nature of the statement of four verbs together – “sent... took... came... and lay.” There can be little doubt that the choice of verbs announces the speedy pace of the action described. In this way, the narrator makes it obvious that David’s passion does not permit the enticing of Bathsheba with seductive words; rather, he used his status and authority as king to get what he wanted.

David, in spite of his prestige as king and in spite of Bathsheba’s marital status therefore went ahead to have sexual intercourse with her (Abasili, 2011:9). Furthermore, it is worthy of note that the syntactical structure of the narrator’s description of David’s intercourse with Bathsheba is as follows: (i) David sent messengers, (ii) and he “took” her; (iii) and she “came to” him (iv) and he “lay with” her (2 Sam 11:4). This is a syntactical structure made up of four verbal clauses all of which employ *qal wayyiqtol*s to announce a series of related and speedy events. The action described by each verbal clause is presented as the temporal and logical consequence of the preceding action. Therefore, there can be little doubt that these syntactic elements have a causative relationship (Abasili, 2011:9).

After the sexual encounter, Bathsheba returned to her house, and as far as David was concerned, the relationship apparently had ended. However, very soon, there arose far-reaching consequences which influenced many lives and, perhaps, altered the course of Israel’s history.

Of verse 5, Gordon (1986:253) states that at the time of the Bathsheba affair, there was a death penalty attached to the sin of adultery in Israelite law (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22; cf. also the trial by ordeal in Num 5:11-31). When Bathsheba discovered her predicament, she sent word to David, “I am pregnant.”

In his discussion of verse 6, Gordon (1986:253) matched verses 6 to 13 together. In these passages, absolute dishonesty marks the account of David’s terrible attempts to pass off Bathsheba’s child as Uriah’s. The shamelessness of the king’s behaviour contrasts with the noble figure of the wronged Uriah, several times referred to as “the Hittite” (vv. 3, 6, 17, 24), as if to emphasize that whereas the king of Israel was so obviously lacking in principle, the

same could not be said of this foreigner. Uriah was possibly a resident alien or the descendant of one. His name, in any case, incorporates a short form of the name of Yahweh.

In verse 7, it seems that the apparent reason for Uriah's recall to Jerusalem was to bring first-hand information about the progress of the Ammonite campaign, while the real motive was to deceive Uriah so that he might appear to be the father of the child (Anderson, 1989:154). The phrase "to wash one's feet" may simply denote a necessary refreshment after a long journey (Gen 18:4;43:24) but it could be also an indirect reference to sexual intercourse, as implied by verse 11 (Anderson, 1989:154).

Anderson (1986:154) notes that if soldiers on active duty were expected to observe sexual abstinence (Deut 23:10; Matt 11; 1 Sam 21:5), then, Uriah in obeying David's suggestion would have committed a serious breach of the ritual law. This is partly supported by Uriah's determined resistance to David's suggestion. Although we do not know the legal consequences of such an infringement of "war regulations," it is possible that this also may have been an attempt to eliminate Uriah by legal means, at the same time, attributing the paternity of the child to him. The fact that the ark accompanied the army (v. 11) suggests that this military activity was still regarded as a sort of "holy" war, governed by its own strict rules, in spite of the changes brought about by the monarchy.

In verse 9, there is no indication that Uriah had become suspicious of David's motives due to court gossip (Anderson, 1989:154), and that his own claim in verse 11 should not be taken at face value. It seems that he spent the night in the guardroom of the place (1 Kgs 14:27-28).

In verses 10-11, David demanded to know why Uriah did not go to his own house. Uriah's reply to David's question was considered an attempt at cajolery to the extent that the king did not again try the persuasive power of words on him. Uriah's sense of propriety was religiously based (Gordon, 1986:254). He first mentioned the ark, which accompanied the army in their campaigns as the visible guarantee of Yahweh's presence with them (cf. 1 Sam 4:3ff.), then he pleaded that he needed to maintain solidarity with his fellow soldiers in the field. The occurrence of the word booths suggests connection with a military encampment (1 Kgs 20:12, 16). Theories that assume that the first half of the verse refers to the celebration of the Feast of Booths (cf. Lev 23:33-36) by the rest of Israel not engaged in the fighting, or that the MT *sukkot* actually refers to Succoth in Transjordan introduce problems foreign to the passage. It is possible to interpret Uriah's words to mean that the national militia (Israel and Judah) was being held in reserve, encamped in booths, while Joab and the professional troops (NRSV –

“servants of my Lord;” NIV – the “Lord’s men”) were in the open field, suggesting synonymous parallelism. When Uriah placed himself on oath (with the phrase, “as you live”), David had few schemes left.

In 2 Samuel 11:11, in an effort to deflect responsibility for Bathsheba's pregnancy, David tried to induce her husband to go home to her (Berger, 2009:438), Uriah declined to do so and sharply condemned precisely the sort of non-empathetic conduct that David had been displaying:

The Ark and Israel and Judah are located at Succoth and my master Joab and Your Majesty's men are camped in the open; how can I go home and eat and drink and sleep with my wife? As you live, by your very life, I will not do this! (2 Sam 11: 11).

Uriah refused David's suggestion to go home therefore the king sent him to carry his own death sentence to Joab on the battlefield (11:14-15).

Of verses 12-13, Gordon (1986:254) remarks that although a little saturated with wine, even when Uriah was muddled he was not angry (Gen 19:30-38). Therefore, “Uriah drunk is more pious than David sober.” Here, verse 12 may be joined with verse 13 to read, “On the next day, David invited him” (NRSV); this agrees better with David's earlier statement in verse 12.

In verse 12, David persuaded Uriah to spend another day in Jerusalem, which was unusual (Judg 19:3-5). Clearly, David's real motive was to get the intoxicated Uriah into Bathsheba's bed; paradoxically, it might have saved Uriah's life (Anderson, 1989:155).

In verses 14-15, we are not told whether the letter written by David and given to Uriah was sealed or whether Uriah could read. The essential point is that ironically Uriah was the bearer of his death warrant. Gordon (1986:255) attests that even if the letter was unsealed, Uriah would possibly not have read it anyway due to obedience. Joab was given a difficult task; he had to engineer Uriah's death in a battle and ensure that any other loss be minimal (vv. 20-21). However, it is unlikely that Joab, at this stage, knew the reason for Uriah's elimination.

Verse 16-17 – Having received his instructions and inspected the defences of the city, Joab assigned Uriah to a sector which was manned by Ammonite “crack troops.” This movement of men may have provoked an Ammonite counterattack during which Uriah and some of his comrades were killed (Anderson, 1989:155).

In verse 18-21, to be sure that David would be annoyed at the loss of other troops the text asks whether the Israelite military manuals did not illustrate the folly of approaching too close to

city walls (Gordon, 1986:255). The text likened Uriah's death to the story of Abimelech's inglorious end at the tower of Thebez which was orchestrated by a woman with a millstone (Judg 9:50-57). If the king did become enraged as he surely would, he was then to be told about Uriah's death.

Verse 22-25 – The messenger's report to David appears to be an improvement on Joab's message. Uriah's death was mentioned directly so that David had no chance to flare up the way Joab expected that he might (Gordon, 1989:255). However, the LXX (Septuagint) has a longer version of verse 22, in which David reacted angrily to the initial report and repeated the reference to Abimelech's misfortune at Thebez, making Joab a minor prophet.

In verse 25, David sent a consolatory message to his commander in the field, unpleasantly attributing the deaths of Uriah and the others to "the vicissitudes of war." "Do not let this matter trouble you," he admonished Joab in a statement which is more elaborate in verse 27 (Gordon, 1986:255). According to Berger (2009:440-441), "it is only when the king completes his indignant, long-winded response to 'all the matters of the war' that the messenger is to say, with almost mocking brevity, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite also died.'" With this phrase, it becomes clear that when the text spoke of Joab relaying to David "all" that transpired on the battlefield, ironically, it meant to exclude the matter most important to the king – the death of Uriah. That information was to be saved for later, for the purpose of pacifying the king's anger.

Verses 26-27 indicate that Bathsheba observed the customary period of mourning which probably lasted for seven days (Gen 50:10; 1 Sam 31:13). It can be recalled that at the death of Aaron and of Moses the people mourned for thirty days for each of them (Num 20:29 and Deut 34:8, respectively; Anderson, 1989:155). Gordon (1986:255) argues that it is impossible to tell how much affection Bathsheba felt for her husband before or since her infidelity.

Throughout the horrible story, the inner thoughts and feelings of the central character remained a closed book. However, Yahweh's attitude is described in an unhopeful final sentence which points forward to the rebuke and discipline of chapter 12 and, indeed, to the series of woes that are visited upon David and his family in the chapters that follow. Anderson (1989:161) argues that it is possible that the statement in verse 27b was intended to provide a deliberate contrast to David's words addressed to Joab in verse 25.

### **3.6. Literary, Historical and Theological Perspectives on Verse 27 in Recent Commentaries**

The current study highlights literal, historical and theological perspectives on verse 27 in recent commentaries as used in the present to reread the past.

#### **3.6.1 Literary perspective (text)**

The literary interpretation refers to the world of the text. On a literary level, verse 27 shows that regardless of how honourable and magnanimous David's actions may have appeared to some, what David did was evil in the eyes of Yahweh (NIV says it "displeased the Lord"). Just as Onan's sexual misconduct caused him his life (Gen 38:10), David's penalty though not yet revealed by the writer would be expected to be equally severe (Bergen, 1996:368). The text shows on a literary level that David married Bathsheba only after the death of Uriah.

#### **3.6.2 Historical perspective (context)**

The historical context refers to the world behind the text, and this passage confirms the common practice in the Old Testament of mourning the dead which included weeping (Hebrew *baka*, cf. Jer 22:10; Ezekiel 24:17; Bergen, 1996:367). Wailing is expressed as a mournful, high-pitched cry. Official mourning varies as in the case of the mourning for Aaron and for Moses (Num 20:29; Deut 34:8) Historically, Bathsheba mourned for her husband Uriah before David married her.

#### **3.6.3 Theological perspective**

A theological view of the text refers to the world in front of the text, as shown by the concluding verdict of the narrative of verse 27, "this thing was evil in the eyes of Yahweh." Uriah had refused to do "this thing" (vv. 11), which meant only sleeping with his wife but "this thing" in verse 27 is much deeper. It is the murder of the very one (Uriah) who had been loyal to the king. God was not happy with David for his actions in the Bathsheba and Uriah case (Anderson, 1989:161).

#### **3.6.4 Deuteronomistic History**

As noted earlier, it is assumed here that the period when 2 Samuel 11 was written tallies with the period of the Deuteronomistic History which spans the book of Joshua through 2 Kings (Noth, 1943:434). The period recorded transitions and various successions in Israel's history as a nation (1 000-540 BC). The period further recorded the many sins and disobedience of Israel including the people, successive kings and even King David the man after God's own



heart (Dillard, 1994:146). The kings that reigned after David also sinned against the Lord and this continuous sin, and disobedience to God resulted in the division of the nation, the fall of Samaria the Northern kingdom in 921 BC, the fall of the Southern kingdom and the exile in 586 BC, and the return during the Persian period in 540 BC (Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282).

Knoppers in Cezula (2006:16) affirms that, “The ‘deuteronomistic history’ is a unified product of an exilic historian who uses the available sources and supplements them with his own compositions in order to support his interpretation of Israel’s history.” Mckenzie in Cezula (2006:16) also shows that, “deuteronomistic literary activity began during the time of Hezekiah and continued into exile” and that scholars differ on particular details about the Deuteronomistic History, but agree that the final product was finalized during the exile.

Regarding the Deuteronomist, Cezula (2006:75) notes that the period was:

Pro-Davidic but anti-kingship; divine justice cumulative sin and communal retribution; emphasizes the history of sin and retribution; explanation of the destruction of Judah and temple as starting point. The period was more separatist than unifying (anti-foreigner anti-northerners); at the end hope revealed with the Jewish fold Jehoiakim; more emphasis on the Sinai covenant; more emphasis on the pagan cult abominations; emphasizes the land that the Lord gave to their fathers; describes events in a neutral, objectives fashion example, 1 Kings 14:25.

The above represents an ideological summary of the Deuteronomist without giving contextual differences between the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler.

On 2 Samuel 11:27, one can say that the literary, historical and the theological perspectives of the pericope form the Deuteronomistic History. Literally, what David did was evil before the Lord, historically, Bathsheba mourned for her husband’s death which is an act of obedience to the practice of the Old Testament, and theologically, God disapproved of David’s adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah the Hittite. These perspectives were noted within the Deuteromistic History. Simply, the sins of adultery and murder by king David and the sins of disobedience to God’s commands by the Israelites as recorded within the Deuteronomistic History were reasons for the exile in Babylon in 586-540 BC (Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282).

To Berger (2009:437-438), when David learnt that his plan had been executed, he offered no comfort to the mourning “wife of Uriah.” Rather, he waited for the end of the mourning period before summoning the widow abruptly to his home where she would bear the ill-fated child (11:26-27).

Barker and Kohlenberger III (1994:380) maintain that the Deuteronomic theme of blessing for obedience and curses for disobedience is advanced in the books of Samuel. In other words, to

the extent that David understood that his role as human king was to implement the mandates of the Divine King, that is, Israel's true ruler would the blessings flow (cf. 2 Sam 6:11-15, 17-19; 7:27-29). When David therefore deliberately flouted God's will, it was certain that he would be under the curse (cf. 12:1-18). Although the Davidic covenant was eternal in the sense that his line would continue forever (cf. 2 Sam 7:12-16, 25-29; Ps 89:27-29, 33-37), it was also conditional in that individual beneficiaries would be punished when they sinned (cf. 1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; Ps 89:30-32; 132:12). Theologically, when David disobeyed God by committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering Uriah, the Lord was displeased with him (2 Sam 11:27). David had to be punished by God for his sins.

Gordon (1986:256) notes that verse 27b is remarkable because it is one of those few points in the so-called Succession Narrative where the attitude or activity of God is noted as having a determinative effect on the external events been narrated (2 Sam 12:1, 15, 24ff.; 17:14). As a rule, English translations make no attempt to represent the correspondence between David's message to Joab in verse 25 and verse 27b. Translated literally, verse 25 reads: "do not let this matter be evil in your eyes," while a literal rendering of verse 27b says, "But the thing that David had done was evil in the eyes of the Lord." According to Anderson (1989:161), it is less certain that the meaning of "be evil..." in the statement "do not let this matter be evil in your eyes..." (vv. 25a) and the clause "... was evil in the eyes of the Lord" (vv. 27b) is the same in both contexts.

From the above, we see that in 2 Samuel 11:1-27 Israel went out to war while David the king remained in Jerusalem, and that the Deuteronomistic History recorded various events that led to Israel's conquest and fall. While at home, the king a renowned warrior became lustful as he watched a woman bathing. David sent to enquire about the woman and found she was Bathsheba the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Without minding the consequences, the king sent for Bathsheba and committed adultery with her. After a while, Bathsheba informed David of the result of his adultery with her in a message that says, "I am pregnant" (11:5). The king tried to cover his sin, but Uriah refused to yield to David's plan as if he knew something was wrong. David then killed Uriah through his general Joab the accomplice.

After the death of Uriah, David seemed to be happy as he said to Joab through his messenger, "Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another; press your attack on the city, and overthrow it" as an encouragement to Joab (11:25). Bathsheba, having mourned for her husband, was summoned by David and she became his wife, and bore him a

son. However, God was displeased with David for his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. For this reason the narrator of the text recorded in verse 27, “But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD” (RSV and NIV).

Now that Uriah was dead, David could take Uriah’s widow Bathsheba as one of his legal wives, as he did in the case of Abigail (1 Sam 25:39-42; cf. Robinson, 1993:209). However, in verse 27, the whole act of David is brought under prophetic condemnation: “But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.” It is clear that in the Bible, both the Old Testament and the New Testament hold love for God and love for fellow human beings together so that one without the other is impossible (Robinson, 1993:210). As such, David’s loyal love (*hesed*) towards God, if real, should have been reflected in his relationships to his fellow humans especially to his subjects. However, in this episode, David failed. Instead of protecting the life of his subjects, he himself as a king organized their destruction. What David did shows that when living in God’s fellowship one becomes a source of blessing to others, but when living in sin one is prone to become a source of suffering to others.

It is worthy of note that when a person dies, people often ask, “why did this happen?” Some try to put the blame on the person himself or on others or regard the death as a mystery from God. We ought to realize that very often we ourselves are the cause of the death of others. For example, Abel died because of Cain’s sin, Uriah and his fellow soldiers died because of David’s sin. This point is applicable to us today, for we become responsible for the deaths of many millions of people who die of hunger in Third World countries, of people who die in traffic accidents, due to drug abuse, in man-made wars such as Boko Haram violence as discussed in Chapter Two, of people who die from water and environmental pollution, and of people who die as a result of power abuse by those in authority.

### **3.7 Summary and Conclusion**

A close reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in this chapter has enabled us to employ a synchronic and diachronic approach to evaluate the definition of salient concepts within the text. The close reading entails practical criticism that is usually mentioned alongside new criticism, even though they differ. In a close reading, a text may be about a certain topic, but what is presented in the text depends on how the topic is addressed, that is, on the formal selection and combination of elements. As such, the content is seen only through the form and never without it (Lawrie, 2005:75).

This chapter has reviewed the history of research on 2 Samuel 11-27 considering the type of literature, the time of narration and the theological function of the narrative. A demarcation of the pericope and the reasons for the demarcation are provided using a synchronic reading to understand the basis of similarity in both the form and the content of the text. Additionally, the translation of the text, criticism, and verse-by-verse discussion of the pericope are considered.

In the verse-by-verse analysis, it has emerged that the interpretation of the passage is somewhat complicated because the motives behind the actions of both David and Bathsheba, and the legal and social background of our narrative remain unknown (Anderson, 1989:155). It is understood that adultery was viewed as a serious offense (Lev 20:10) and it was highly likely that wives who committed adultery were divorced and perhaps humiliated, but they were not put to death during the pre-exilic period (Hos 2; Jer 3:6-14).

Moreover, it is clear that the outcome would have been different if Bathsheba were a victim rather than an accomplice. Even if the death penalty was mandatory for men who were caught in adultery, it is highly doubtful that there existed any court in Israel which could prosecute and convict a king. Thus, Uriah could hardly have been a real threat to David, unless the legal implications were more serious than those described above or if only the husband not the community was entitled to bring the charge (Num 5:11-15). Again, one could hardly understand why David felt it necessary to eliminate Uriah, especially since this murderous act could not remove the divine judgement. It is possible that the only obvious gain was the outward protection of Bathsheba and David's honour.

Furthermore, the death of Uriah the Hittite appears almost pointless and the callous scheme itself is exceedingly despicable. It is ironic in the extreme that the one who ought to be the guardian of the people's rights and justice should murder his loyal servant and cause the death of other faithful soldiers in order to protect his honour which he himself had already violated. Of course, it is unlikely that David intended the death of the other casualties but the implementation of his deadly plan necessarily involved the death of innocent Israelites (2 Sam 11:24). However, after the tragic event, David's cynical comment when he comforted Joab by saying that the loss of men was an inevitable part of the fortunes of war ("do not let this matter be evil in your eye" in v. 25a) appears unwholesome.

Clearly, the most serious charge against David was that he was more concerned about the protection of his badly dented image and honour than sustaining the divine law. It seems that as far as David was concerned, the deterrent value of the divine sanctions was zero, at least in

this situation. David the king of Israel, the man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14) was not afraid to commit murder by proxy to cover his evil act with Bathsheba. Despite David's weakness and sins some scholars have attempted to compare him to Abraham. For instance, Rudman (2004:240) shows that:

While David cannot quite be called the father of many nations like Abraham, he does, in effect, become the father of those who rule it, founding a dynasty which, agreeing to the biblical narratives, maintained power for the next four centuries.

Furthermore, this study holds that 2 Samuel 11:1-27 lies between the Deuteronomistic History and Patriarchal history, that is from the book of Joshua to 2 Kings as proposed by some scholars (Veijola *et al*, 2005:837; Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282). On the other hand, the research faults the view that only acknowledges the period of the event as springtime without determining the period in Israelite history (Gordon, 1986:252; Walton, 2009:457). In addition, the reading subscribes to the view that the pericope was written after the exile though it traces back the trend of events that led to the division and captivity of the Israelites by the Babylonian within a period that is referred to as the Deuteronomistic History (1 000-540 BC), as already observed.

On the issue of whether David raped Bathsheba or not, the research agrees that David's lordship of the sexual encounter, which centres on the power difference between him and Bathsheba, creates an opening for an indirect non-physical use of compulsion by David (Abasili, 2011:14). However, to conclude that he raped Bathsheba in the biblical Hebrew understanding of rape would be to push the evidence too far and read too much of our contemporary conception of rape into the biblical text. If one considers the situation critically, it would be observed that the type of physical force implied in the biblical Hebrew concept of rape is absent in 2 Samuel 11:1-27. For this reason, the sexual encounter between David and Bathsheba is not a biblical rape but an abuse of power by the renowned king David.

As already observed, concerning sexual violence and murder in 2 Samuel 11:1-27, the research rejects the argument that the David, Bathsheba and Uriah event is justifiable and that Bathsheba was the brain behind the episode because she bathed where she could be seen by the respected King David (Gordon, 1986:252; Collins, 2004:240; Garland, 2008:23). However, the research agrees that both David and Bathsheba were culprits in the event and that "the thing that David had done" was a twin sin of adultery and murder which was evil and displeasing to the Lord who at no point commended the actions of these two people (Anderson, 1989:152; Bergen, 1996:361).

The research also agrees with Cartledge (2001:495) and Abasili (2011:7) who submit that 2 Samuel 11 portrays David's deepest, and darkest weakness; David's decision to remain behind in Jerusalem while his army went to war was the root cause of the entire narration and the sin committed by the king. On the other hand, the argument that the strong political desire to become the king's wife made Bathsheba to take her bath at an opportune position and time (Abasili, 2011:1) is not convincing.

In sum, this research submits that Bathsheba was a victim of power rape and that the acts of adultery and murder by David were evil and the Lord was displeased with him. Hence, the reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in this chapter recognizes the occurrence of sexual violence in the pericope. As already highlighted, King David misused his power by committing adultery with Bathsheba and by killing Uriah. However, a significant lesson from King David's plight is that confession and repentance after conviction are important for restoration to fellowship with God. Eventually, David demonstrated his remorsefulness by writing Psalm 51 after prophet Nathan related a parable to him about his transgression before the Lord (2 Sam 12:1-13).

Chapter Four will contextualize the reading of 2 Samuel 11 as a reception of the text now and some important elements from the pericope. The chapter will state the contribution of this research to a theological ethical response to abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. The chapter will also consider abuse of power and sexual violence as part of military activity; abuse of power and sexual violence caused by religious fundamentalism as well as gender and health issues in relation to abuse of power and sexual violence in the Nigerian context.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **TOWARDS A THEOLOGICAL ETHICAL RESPONSE TO ABUSE OF POWER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter engaged in a close reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 which entailed a demarcation of the pericope, the translation of the text/ textual criticism, history of the research of 2 Samuel 11:1-27, verse-by-verse discussion of and perspectives on verse 27 in recent commentaries as used in the present to reread the past. However, the main reason for the close reading of 2 Samuel 11 is to develop a theological ethical understanding of and response to the abuse of power and sexual violence inherent in Boko Haram activities.

The present chapter contextualize the reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 and its reception in the Nigerian context. It will serve as a theological understanding and ethical appropriation of the contribution of this research towards a Christian response to abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. The chapter will also consider abuse of power and sexual violence as part of military activity, abuse of power and sexual violence caused by religious fundamentalism, and gender and health issues in relation to abuse of power and sexual violence. The used of power in sexual violence by Boko Haram operatives has been a challenge in the last two decades to Christians in Nigeria especially in the northern part of the country. One can say that this challenge is as a result of the gendered views of men and women which are inherently linked to the potential for violence.

#### **4.2 Abuse of Power and Sexual Violence as Part of Military Activity**

Abuse of power and sexual violence as part of military activity is one of the most recurring wartime human rights abuses. According to Leatherman (2007:53), sexual violence in armed conflict has long been part of the spoils of war. Sexual violence is viewed as one of the most frequent wartime abuses of women and girls that has remain a critical women's human rights issue deserving our attention today but certain analytical problems are involved (Alison, 2007:75). It is observed that despite development in human rights discourse and international law, abuses continue and there remains a certain poverty of explanations.

An area of concern regarding sexual violence is the need for further development in the way that masculinities, sexual violence, and the intersections with construction of ethnicity feature in wartime (Alison, 2007:75). This research attempts to address these intersections, because to try to prevent such terrible violations a clearer understanding of the causes is in many ways

more important than changes to international laws. This chapter begins by examining some of the reasons for and the functions of wartime sexual violence, focusing in particular on issues relating to masculinity and ethnicity. Subsequently, the reality of wartime sexual violence will be examined, beginning with a critical engagement with the discourse of women's human rights and revisiting some of the theoretical points raised about Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria.

Throughout human history, sexual violence against women by military men in "wartime" or during violent conflicts has occurred as a "weapon of war" (Odoemene, 2012:226). This scenario has long been considered an unfortunate but inevitable accompaniment of conflict. For instance, in the two "great wars," sexual violence was a weapon of terror employed by the German soldiers who marched through Belgium in World War I, and during World War II, sexual violence was perpetuated by the militaries of both the Allied and Axis armies (Odoemene, 2012:226). Similarly, in the Old Testament, violence was depicted as cruel, brutal and severe. The most prominent manifestation of this severity is found in Deuteronomy 7 regarding the *herem* (or ban) which demands the total destruction of the enemy and its property after a military victory (Scheffler, 2014:583). This includes using the execution of women and children, and sometimes animals, as a weapon of warfare.

There is no doubt that sexual violence during armed conflict is an age-old phenomenon (Le Roux, 2014:27). For example, in the fourteen century European leaders forbade soldiers to commit sexual violence, although this was rarely enforced, and sexual violence was often regarded as a major incentive for soldiers to enlist in the army (Le Roux, 2014:27). In recent times, abuse of power and sexual violence are viewed as an inevitable by-product of war. However, the recent atrocities of war in Bosnia, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Liberia, and Bangladesh, and so forth have led to the awareness that sexual violence against women is an inherent part of armed conflict and a strategy in warfare (Le Roux, 2014:27).

Thus, rape has been used as a strategy in many conflicts such as in Korea during the Second World War and in Bangladesh during the war of independence as well as in a range of armed conflicts in Algeria, India (Kashmir), Indonesia, Liberia, Rwanda and Uganda (Krug *et al*, 2002:157). In some armed conflicts, for example, in Rwanda and the states of the former Yugoslavia, rape has been used as a deliberate strategy to subvert community bonds and perceived enemies, and as a tool of ethnic cleansing.



In a similar vein, Jewkes (2002:1236) attests that the wars in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda attracted international attention, as rape was used as a deliberate strategy to undermine community bonds, to weaken resistance to aggression, and to perpetrate ethnic cleansing through impregnation especially in the former Yugoslavia. Watts and Zimmerman (2002:1236) attest that rape during wartime is a common phenomenon. For example, estimates of women raped by Serb soldiers during the 1992-95 conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina vary from twenty thousand to fifty thousand (20,000-50,000).

During wartime, girls are subjected to severe violations of their human rights through forced recruitment, killing, maiming, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, abduction, forced marriage, and increased exposure to HIV/AIDS. Many are also forced to participate in brutal acts of violence. In the aftermath of conflict, girls arguably bear a form of secondary victimization through socio-economic marginalization and exclusion, as well as ongoing threats to their health and personal security (Denov, 2001:3).

In East Timor for example, there were reports of extensive sexual violence against women by the Indonesian military. Similarly, a study in Monrovia, Liberia found that women under 25 years were more likely than those above 25 years to report experiences of attempted rape and sexual coercion during the conflict (18% compared to 4% of older women). Women who were forced to cook for a warring faction were at significantly higher risk (Krug *et al*, 2002:157).

Another inevitable consequence of armed conflicts is the ensuing economic and social disruption which can force large numbers of people into prostitution, an observation that applies equally to the situation of refugees fleeing armed conflicts or natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes or powerful storms. Refugees fleeing conflicts and other threatening conditions are often at risk of rape in their new setting (Krug *et al*, 2002:157). Data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for instance, indicates that among the ‘‘boat people’’ who fled Vietnam in the late 1970s and early 1980s, 39% of the women were abducted or raped by pirates while at sea – a figure that is likely to be an underestimation. In many refugee camps including those in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, the occurrence of rape is found to be a major problem (Krug *et al*, 2002:157).

According to Le Roux (2014:27), there are many causes of and factors that contribute to sexual violence against women in areas affected by armed conflict. These include factors applicable to contexts of armed conflict namely patriarchy and gender inequality, military masculinity and other factors, as well as factors that play a role in sexual violence against women even in the

aftermath of armed conflict such as social, legal, economic and political factors. Of these many causes of and factors that contribute to sexual violence during wartime, patriarchy plays a direct role.

Responding to the question of why soldiers rape civilian women, Baaz (2009:490-500) differentiates between and simultaneously refers to two intertwining discourse on rape – rape which is sexually driven by the male libido, and rape as a nonsexual expression of anger and rage. On the other hand, a distinction is often made between rapes that are somehow morally defensible, ethically palatable, and socially acceptable and therefore, not really rapes in the eyes of the perpetrator, and rapes that are considered evil, unacceptable, nevertheless, understandable.<sup>148</sup>

Odoemene (2012:229) points out that armed forces and sexual violence resound in other global contexts and seem to be a common narrative in war situations, where rape is commonly expected and seen as inevitable, because it connotes revenge and triumph for the winning side in wartime. Soldiers see the rape of the women of their vanquished male enemies as a reward. Thus, rape in this sense serves a dual purpose – it represents the spoil of war and the spread of a symbolic message of dominance to the vanquished party. The above characterization is particularly accurate and true of Ogoni atrocities in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria (Odoemene, 2012:229).

Like in the Boko Haram case, sexual violence is also attested to be a strategy used against Igbo civilians during the Nigerian Biafra war in 1967-1970, though the incidents were not always understood as sexual violence (Odoemene, 2012:226). Similarly, Human Rights Watch (HRW) has documented ninety-six cases of rape by Serbian and Yugoslavia forces against Kosovar Albanian women. These violations were not rare and isolated acts committed by individuals; rather, they were used deliberately as an instrument to terrorize the civilian population and push people to flee their homes. Citing various experiences of women in civil wars, Sideris confirms that women were raped in the Mozambican conflicts while some men were forced to “participate” in raping of their wives or even daughters, as in the Sierra Leonean conflict (in Odoemene, 2012:226).

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<sup>148</sup> M.E. Baaz 2009. “Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Force in the Congo (DRC).” *International Studies Quarterly* 53, 497.

Clearly, women were often used as or seen as “spoils of war,” whose sexual violation serves as a “weapon of war” against the enemy in violent conflict situations. This is true for example, in the case of the Ogoni of Nigeria which is similar to the Boko Haram situation. What differentiates the Ogoni experience from others around the world including those mentioned earlier is the fact that sexual violence committed in the name of “nationalized conflicts” in Ogoniland was committed allegedly with the “active complicity” of the Nigerian state just as the sexual violence committed by the Boko Haram (Odoemene, 2012:226).

While research has proved that members of the armed forces are noted as a major driving force behind the perpetrators of sexual violence, it has been argued also that masculinity is a major driving force behind the perpetration of abuse of power and sexual violence (Odoemene, 2012:229). As noted above, the rape of women and of men is often used as a weapon of war to attack the enemy typifying the conquest and degradation of its women or captured male fighters (Krug *et al*, 2002:149). Additionally, rape is used to punish women for transgressing social or moral codes such as those prohibiting adultery or drunkenness by women in public. Since coerced sex is common during wartime, it may be seen as a form of sexual gratification by perpetrators though its underlying purpose is frequently the expression of power and dominance over the person being assaulted (Krug *et al*, 2002:149).

#### **4.2.1 Hegemonic masculinity and sexual violence during wartime**

The study of masculinity has demonstrated that there are multiple masculinities that vary over time and space. According to Alison (2007:75), hegemonic masculinity is conceptualised as norms and institutions that seek to maintain men’s authority over women and over subordinate masculinities. The term implies control but even oppression is in some sense integral to masculinity that provides a framework for placing men above women and to those males whose manhood is for some reason denied.

The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been formulated in the last two decades and it has influenced considerably the recent thinking about men, gender and social hierarchy. Accordingly, hegemonic masculinity has provided a link between the growing research fields of men’s studies (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005:829). It is also known as masculinity studies and critical studies of men, and is studied with associated issues such as popular anxieties about men and boys, feminist accounts of patriarchy, and sociological models of gender. Hegemonic masculinity therefore has found uses in applied fields ranging from education and anti-violence work to health and counselling (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005:829-840).

Connell (1995:196) notes that sexuality is another significant element that is integral to masculinity. In the last century or more, homosexuality been perceived in Western countries as the most threatening challenge to hegemonic masculinity. It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that “homosexuality” as a distinct identity and social type in western societies became clearly delineated and heterosexuality became a required part of maleness.

On the other hand, military masculinity is an extreme form of hegemonic masculinity due to military acts of sexual violence during armed conflict (Le Roux, 2014:30). For example, military recruits are socialised to become soldiers that blindly obey orders and kill. Instead of seeing the military as a venue through which boys can achieve their natural potential as men, it is understood that men/boys and women/girls learn to be masculine and violent in the military through methods specifically designed to create soldiers who are able and willing to kill to protect the nation. As such, militarization requires the production of different heterosexual violent masculinities which include both general and foot soldiers (Odoemene, 2012:229). To a large extent, this process is so effective that the soldiers become de-individualised and desensitised in such a way that they can disassociate themselves from their deeds, which arguably facilitates extreme acts of sexual violence especially among women (Le Roux, 2007:30). The assumptions of hegemonic masculinity become naturalised through social hierarchies and cultural mediums as well as through force. However, women may challenge ideas of male supremacy and some men do not subscribe to the practices and values of hegemonic masculinity (Alison, 2007:76).

Furthermore, it is understood that hegemonic masculinity is always in a tense and potentially unstable relationship with other masculinities. Certain attributes of hegemonic masculinity seem to be quite enduring such as physical strength, practical competence, sexual performance, and the ability to protect and support women whilst others are more contingent (Alison, 2007:76). It can be further argued that an expectation of a certain level of aggression, tied to expectations of physical strength and sexual performance, is another enduring element whilst an expectation of non-aggression is an enduring element of femininity though such expectations frequently do not reflect the lived reality of actual men and women. The expectation of aggression is tied to socially sanctioned and institutionalised use of force, with the military as the ultimate exemplar of masculinity. Thus, soldiering is characterised as a manly activity which historically has been an important practice constitutive of masculinity.

From the above, it is evident that connections between masculinity and being a warrior are widely cross-cultural, and cut across historical periods. Although women are capable of aggression and violence, most societies implicitly condemn female aggressiveness, and socially approved use of force or violence remains largely performed by men in jobs associated with masculinity such as the army, police, prison officers (Alison, 2007:76). The much greater public shock in reaction to a woman's involvement in the 2003 sexual torture of male Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib than to her male comrades' involvement in the same act indicates the continued naturalisation of men as perpetrators of sexual crimes and the naturalisation of women as non-aggressive even when they are soldiers (Alison, 2007:76). Le Roux (2014:30) attests that different military masculinities exist within different militaries, as each is influenced by the religions, cultures and contexts represented within the group. On the other hand, even though one finds an intersection of different masculinities within the military, a dominant hierarchal distinction between masculine and feminine is present in all militaries. In other words, since femininity is traditionally associated with care, peacefulness, and life-giving character while masculinity is associated with protecting, warring and killing, such associations render women and girls particularly vulnerable to rape as a weapon of warfare (Odoemene, 2012:229).

Regarding hegemonic masculinity and sexual violence in Boko Haram operations, Zenn and Pearson (2015:5-9) state that Boko Haram ideology cast men in hyper-masculine combat role as their duty is to oppose the west violently. Thus, unarmed men, youths, women, cripple and underage individuals are relieved from battle and constitute illegitimate targets. Again, Muslim women as opposed to Christian women have customarily been spared even in situations where Boko Haram has targeted Muslim men (Zenn & Pearson, 2015:5-9). An example is the attack on a college in Yobe State in September 2013 in which Muslim women were spared but Christian women were abducted and some were killed. In that incident, all male students who were mostly Christians were killed, but female students most of whom were Muslims were spared. This binary understanding of gender norms presents gender-based violence as a display of power. In such a situation, abuse of Christian women both serve to mark their difference from Muslim women and to strike at Christian men for their inability to protect their women (Zenn & Pearson, 2015:5-10). From the above analogy, one can say that Boko Haram's act of terror is in conformity with hegemonic masculinity and sexual violence committed during wartime.

#### **4.2.2 Patriarchy and gender inequality during wartime**

The Boko Haram acts of terror can be linked also to patriarchy and gender inequality because patriarchy, as rule over women and children by men, constructs women and femininity, men and masculinity, and the relationship between men and women, which is what allows sexual violence against women to become an effective weapon of war. Civilian patriarchal structures and associated cultural practices create the context for sexual violence against women during armed conflict (Le Roux, 2014:27). Thus, in the context of a powerful patriarchal structure, girls become mere “property” of males, with their bodies being used as resources to be exploited and even as gifts and rewards during wartime (Denov, 2001:12). This is to say that in patriarchal societies, inequality is established and is enacted in beliefs and practices that construct women as property. Women are also considered as tools of communication and culture keepers, and as effective weapons of war. This is a reality because in patriarchal societies a woman’s worth and standing within the society are determined by her relationship to the men in her family, that is, the father, brothers, husband and sons, because women are seen as the property of men. For this reason, the value of a woman as seen by these men is closely linked to sexual purity and sexuality, fertility and virginity (Milillo, 2006:199).

In a patriarchal society, it is understood that many cultural practices and traditions are related to the purity of women, and the importance of good sexual behaviour by women if they are to be respected or to have self-worth is emphasised. Patriarchy does not only reflect badly on a woman if she does not adhere to these constructs of sexuality but, more importantly in the eyes of the community, it reflects badly on her male family members. This emphasis on virtue and family honour serves to objectify women, as their actions and experiences are evaluated based on the effects on the men in their lives, not on their own lives (Tushen, 2000:816). It is observed that in contexts of armed conflict, women are viewed as the property of men and denied sexual subjectivity. They are abused and devalued, as their bodies are used as objects and effective weapons by aggressors to target male enemies. As such, the abuse becomes an effective way of indirectly attacking the enemy because it strikes on the sensitive issues of their male honour and dignity (Le Roux, 2014:28).

Feminist biblical scholars argue that patriarchy in the Bible silences the voice of women, whether as victims of rape or as agents in their own right (Nadar, 2006:78). We do not hear women voices; everything about men is filtered through the voice of the narrator, who is male. Nadar (2006:79) therefore suggests a solution to rape. She says, “To prevent rape, we need to challenge social beliefs and cultural values that promote and condone sexual violence. The

silence surrounding rape by society at large, including the church, denotes its acceptance and allows it to continue.”

From the above suggestion, it is clear that transformation of the way the Bible is read is needed, not only within the academic circle but also in our communities of faith; otherwise, the justification of rape and abuse of women will continue to be perpetuated (Nadar, 2006:80).

On the other hand, using abuse of power and sexual violence as a weapon of war serves to communicate a clear message to the enemy in various ways. As men are generally seen as the protectors of women, sexually violating an enemy's women is a way of humiliating him, implying that he is weak, incapable and incompetent, and thereby wounding his masculinity (Seifert, 1994:59). Sexually violating the enemy's women also serves to devalue the women especially in cultures that cherish constructs of the sexual purity of women. The message to the enemy is that his women are no longer pure and are valueless. In cases of forced impregnation, reproduction is hijacked, which serves as a means to pollute or deconstruct a specific ethnic group. The act introduces a specific power dimension into the equation as the aggressors send a clear message of their dominance to the enemy. The fact that women's bodies can be used in this manner underscores how women become objectified (Le Roux, 2014:29).

It is observed also that attacking women during armed conflict is a way of fighting what is termed a “dirty war” (Seifert, 1994:206). The goal is not to defeat the enemies by vanquishing their army, but rather to defeat them by deconstructing and destroying their culture and the social fabric of the society. If this is the case in wartime, then, women become a primary target due to their cultural position, role and importance in the family, community and society (Seifert, 1994:64). Sexual violence then carries an important and symbolic meaning, which at times can be even more offensive and stronger than actual defeat. It is understood therefore that because of women's role as biological reproducers of the collectivity, reproducers of the boundaries of the collectivity and transmitters of its culture, and signifiers of ethno-national difference they become targets in attempts to destroy collectivity or assert dominance over it (Alison, 2007:80). Targeting women is therefore an indirect way of targeting the opponents, as the social fabric of their community is being destroyed.

Furthermore, women as caregivers play a central role in the family structure. They are tasked with keeping family unity, and on the whole, are mostly responsible for community cohesion. When women are killed or sexually violated during armed conflict, social cohesion is endangered. Even those that survive abuse of power and sexual violence by militants are unable

to function as they used to. Women who survive sexual violence are traumatised physically and psychologically and only few can perform all their expected tasks and roles. Their inability to fulfil their practical roles, coupled with their physical and emotional destitution, contributes to the upheaval and even devaluation and dissolution of the entire community (Seifert, 1996:39). The ability of the community to function properly is curtailed, as sexual violence against women erodes the economic and social foundations of communities. Thus, targeting the body of women is a symbolic attack on the group, as the sexual violation of the women of a community, culture or nation is regarded as a symbolic violation of the body of the community, culture or nation (Seifert, 1996:39).

Odoemene (2012:227) argues that the fact that sexual violence is often gendered, specifically targeting women makes it a product of patriarchal social hierarchy. Patriarchy produces a strict distinction between two kinds of persons – a subject who is male and does things or who is expected or entitled to do things to others, and the objects, that is, females who have things done to them or who are expected to have things done to them. From this assertion, one can assume that in patriarchal societies, women are treated as mere products or objects. In another sense, violence against women during wartime is sometime directed inwards; killing the “women in them” becomes necessary for soldiers in their attempts to live up to the myths of militarized manhood (Odoemene, 2012:229).

From the above discussion, one can understand why these acts of abuse of power and sexual violence by the military during armed conflict are so extreme in their violence and cruelty. The reality is that women are subjected to mutilation, the ablation of genital organs and severe suffering whereby spears, knives, boiling water, acid, and so forth are thrust into their genital organs as weapon of warfare (Le Roux, 2014:30). To this end, the extreme forms that sexual violence takes in certain armed conflicts such as Boko Haram’s abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria lead one to believe that hate and a furious determination to destroy women are sometimes a factor. This kind of attitude that is possibly promoted by the emergence of a form of hyper-masculinity appears in violent and militarised societies. To some extent, the attitude can be seen as a by-product of patriarchy as it portrays the existence of male dominance against women in the society. Consequently, the acts of terror against women on the part of Boko Haram can be viewed as an expression of male dominance which is rooted in patriarchy.



### 4.3 Abuse of Power and Sexual Violence Caused by Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism connotes the strict adherence to any set of basic ideas or principles. It refers to the belief that there is one set of teachings that contains the basic, inerrant truth about humanity and God; that this essential truth must be strictly adhered to; and that those who believe and follow the teaching have a special relationship with God (Vandenberg, Wamser & Hibberd, 2011:230). In other words, fundamentalism tends to be separatist, that is, it makes “us” versus “them” judgements, and is less likely to seek truth or answers from other nonreligious sources.

According to Vandenberg and Gribbins (2011:106), religious fundamentalists in various religions have three common central beliefs namely: (i) the teaching of “the must return to the basics of their faith.” (ii) There is an absolute standard truth for example the Bible, the Torah, or the Quran that is contested by evil. (iii) Religious fundamentalists have a special relationship with their deity and assist their deity in fulfilment of God’s purpose for humanity. Thus, religious fundamentalism is understood as an organizing framework for addressing the moral dilemmas of life, including how one treats others, with ever-present implications for one’s own afterlife. For this reason, beliefs or behaviours contrary to the veridical teachings are heretical threats that influence fundamentalist’s attitudes and behaviour towards others.

Consequently, adherents of Islamic fundamentalism generally emphasize the literal authority of the normative texts of the Quran and Hadith (Islam: II, 2) and affirm the need to restore an ideal state of primitive Islam, which to them was prefigured in the age of the prophet and his companions (Wielandt, 2009:290). Unlike mere conservatives, they reject most of the Islamic traditions that have developed historically as degenerate and erroneous. Above all, Islamic fundamentalism rejects categorically the notion of autonomous human reason and morality. This is because autonomous human reason and morality entered the Islamic world under the influence of the European enlightenment, together with all the products of secularization most particularly in secular states (Wielandt, 2009:290). Islamic fundamentalism therefore aspires to reconstitute a state which is defined as Islamic by its adherence to *sharia* in countries where no such state presently exists.

From the above discussion, one can say that the way some religious fundamentalists preach and interpret the scriptures to their followers is a contributing factor to the abuse of power and sexual violence that ensue. For example, the interpretation of the Quran by some Islamic fundamentalists to justify *sharia* appears to be one of the reasons behind Boko Haram activities.

It has been noted in literature that all radical Islamic movements share a common hostility to Western influences and their perceived corruption of Islamic societies; such influences are viewed as a continuation of colonialism and imperialism by other means (Sookhdeo, 2007:335). To some Islamic fundamentalists, the West is responsible for the decline and loss of Islamic empires such as Mughals, the Ottomans and Safavi Iran, that is, for blasphemously destroying the God-ordained order of the world in which Muslims ruled over non-Muslims. Such fundamentalists believe that Western civilization is to be blamed for the corruption of that which is good in the world and for encouraging the evils of secularism, atheism, alcoholism, drug abuse, sexual permissiveness, family breakdown and many other societal ills. For this reason, they denounce globalization, capitalism, secularism, materialism, consumerism and other Western concepts. In the history of Islam, Prophet Mohammed strongly opposed commerce and trade in Arabia, believing them to be the cause of social ills. In essence, Islamic fundamentalists hold that Western values must be rejected as they lead to moral chaos and threaten Muslim identity and self-esteem (Sookhdeo, 2007:335).

Furthermore, Moaddel and Talattof (2000:9) assert that popular *jihad* was a sore point in Muslim-Christian history and a source of often-strident Western criticisms of Islam. History relates that in his effort to spread Islam, Muhammad held the Quran in one hand and the *scimitar* (sword) in the other, and pursued wars of conquest against the Qureish (a tribe that controlled Mecca and its Ka'aba and was descendant from Ishmael) other Arabs tribes, the Jews and Christians. To Islamic fundamentalists, Islam was an intolerant religion, and Muhammad himself plotted the assassination of his enemies and was cruel to his prisoners. Based on this view, the Boko Haram atrocities are to a certain extent justifiable (Moaddel & Talattof, 2000:9).

Islamic fundamentalists also assert that Islam alone could save humankind from its “rubbish heap” of godless ideologies. Islam could explain the harmony between “nature” and its functioning on the planet earth. Thus, Muslims are made to believe that there is no god except “Allah” alone who should be called the Lord and worshipped in faith, practice and law (Moaddel & Talattof, 2000:17). As part of Islamic fundamentalism, Wahhabism,<sup>149</sup> which is “the total commitment to the prophet’s teachings” in the contemporary era, is portrayed as largely misogynist (DeLong-Bas, 2007:123). In other words, Wahhabism denies women their

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<sup>149</sup> Wahhabism has been identified by governments, political analysts, and the media as a major “Islamic threat” facing Western civilization and the inspiration for Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida network. Wahhabism is described as extremist, misogynist and militant in nature (DeLong-Bas, 2007:3).

human rights, insisting on strict gender segregation, forbidding women access to public space, and subjugating them by considering them inferior to men. DeLong-Bas (2007:123) explains that under Wahhabi regimes, it is assumed that women have second-class citizenship, if not slave status.

Critics of Wahhabism point to extreme examples such as the Taliban and Saudi Arabia's requirement that women should wear full *burga* or *abaya* covering them from head to toe, leaving barely enough room to breathe. Moreover, banning women from driving or being recognized as heads of households, and the Taliban's determination to forbid women to go to school, work, or seek medical care are regarded as evidence of Wahhabism's oppression, suppression and repression of women in accordance with an extremely conservative interpretation of Islamic law (DeLong-Bas, 2007:123).

#### **4.3.1 Boko Haram and religious fundamentalism**

The philosophy of Boko Haram is rooted in the practice of fundamentalist orthodox Islam whose interpretation of Islam detests western education and employment in the civil service (Onuoha, 2010:57). The view explains why the sect is popularly known as Boko Haram which literary means "Western education" is a sin or is forbidding as already observed in Chapter Two. Although the philosophical worldview of Boko Haram is uncertain, its mission is quite obvious, that is, to overthrow the Nigerian state and impose strict Islamic *sharia* law on the entire country (Onuoha, 2010:57).

The rise of Boko Haram coincided with adoption of *sharia* in the 12 northern states of Nigeria, and was to some extent a by-product of Islamic fundamentalist (Zenn & Pearson, 2015:5-9). From the above observation, one can say that the version of the *sharia* law supported by Shekau one of the leaders of Boko Haram promotes narrow gender roles for men and women, enforcing strict rules on women's dressing and sexual conduct thereby instituting other discriminatory and abusive practices against women. These abusive practices range from the enforced segregation of schoolchildren to the public flogging of women for fornication (Zenn & Pearson, 2015:4-11).

It is reported that a member of Boko Haram stated that the group's mission is to clean the Nigerian system which to them is polluted by western education and to uphold the rule of *sharia* over the whole country (Hazzard, 2009:24). The Boko Haram sect members are motivated by the conviction that the Nigerian state is filled with social vices, and the best thing for a devout Muslim to do is to "migrate" from the morally bankrupt society to a secluded place

in order to establish an ideal Islamic society devoid of political corruption and moral deprivation. To Boko Haram fundamentalists, non-members are considered *kafirai* (unbelievers; those who deny the truth) or *fasikun* (wrong-doers/sinners).

Furthermore, Boko Haram values oppose the rights and privileges of women, the idea of homosexuality, lesbianism, rape of infants, pornography, prostitution, beauty pageants and all that is associated with Western ideals (Zenn & Pearson, 2015:5-9). Boko Haram draws its members from disaffected youth and unemployed graduates, although it does have some well-educated, wealthy and influential people as members. Its members usually wear turbans, grow full beards and live within the communities (Onuoha, 2010:57). Boko Haram has over two hundred and eighty thousand members (280,000) across the 19 states of northern Nigeria, and in Niger, Chad and Sudan (Onuoha, 2010:58). The number of members was a 2010 estimation and could have increased as of the time of this writing.

From the above observation, it is assumed that Islamic fundamentalism is restricted mostly to Northern Nigeria (Adesoji, 2011:100). Although this could be explained in terms of the dominance of Islam and its adherents in the region, it could also imply the prevalence of factors and circumstances that made the north to be vulnerable to extremism such as poverty and illiteracy, the existence and seeming proliferation of radical groups, and recurrent violent religious crises. However, beyond the ethnic reaction to the recurring religious crises in Northern Nigeria, there is no apparent ethnic consideration in the emergence and operation of Boko Haram (Adesoji, 2011:100)

#### **4.3.2 Sharia law in Nigeria**

*Sharia* law, according to Kalu (2010:88), is the wool and weft of the Islamic faith and the core of its ethical system. Its complexity lies in its two sources which are divine and human. *Sharia* law, therefore, is the divine tenet in the Quran and Prophet's Sunnah. It contains revealed principles, exhortations and laws. The Sunnah is the elaboration and exemplification of the content of the Quran. Thus, an ethical decision is made by asserting that *sharia* has been in effect even during the time of the Prophet.

*Sharia* law also has a human component which is derived from the writings of Muslim scholars and sages. Kalu (2010:88) maintains that there is a certain variability or flexibility "*muruna*" and evolution "*tatawwar*" in *sharia* because *sharia* is not an inherited code that devotees merely apply. For example, it has been possible for various communities in Nigeria to

acculturate and craft codes to solve their problems as each seeks the best means of applying the divine aspect of the *sharia*.

Furthermore, the interior of *sharia* demands that judges should contextualize rulings “*mazahib*” (Onuoha, 2010:57) because the flavour of the practice of *sharia* in different contexts is compelled by the prophet’s self-understanding, peculiar circumstances, changes in human conditions, and experience. For this reason, *sharia* law is not a fixed code but a dynamic process that enables ancient knowledge to be applied in a modern setting. Thus, *sharia* law can be defined as both strict and flexible because it is based on absolute principles and yet it responds to changing conditions and human experiences (Kalu, 2010:88). *Sharia* law combines the seemingly incompatible twin impulses of primitivism and pragmatism, that is, the ability to hold in tension other worldly aspirations and this worldly shrewdness. To Kalu (2010:88) the primitivistic impulse or the idealistic side of *sharia* is the determination of its adherents to return to the first things; to be guided solely by Allah’s will in every aspect of their lives.

According to Adesoji, (2011:110) *sharia* law was a major challenge that the central government of Nigeria faced since the return of civil rule in 1999. At that period, *sharia* law was introduced in some northern states with Zamfara State being the trailblazer in the adoption. Going by the constitutional provision, the adoption of *sharia* meant the existence of dual legal systems in states that adopted it. This implies the adoption of a state religion by those states which is contrary to the provision of Section 10 of the 1999 constitution. The constitution states expressly that, “the government of the federation or of a state shall not adopt any religion as a state religion.” Even with the adoption of the *sharia* law in some northern states, Boko Haram has criticized its limited application claiming that it is being politicized (Adesoji, 2011:110).

We should note also that the debates over *sharia* law came up when a new constitution was being considered in the late 1970s (Smith, 2015:75). At that time, local *sharia* courts dealing with civil matters and personal status law already existed, but some influential people from Northern Nigeria pushed for the creation of a Federal *Sharia* Appeals Court, and this led to a bitter dispute between Christian and Muslims as a new constitution emerged. The issue arose again after the 1999 return to civilian rule, with northern states moving to incorporate *sharia* criminal law in the country. Smith (2015:76) observes that the move was a combination of political opportunism on the part of local politicians and sincere campaigning by Islamic reformers.

Kalu (2010:88) notes that pragmatism is the willingness to work through social and cultural forces, and it explains why *sharia* is practised differently in various cultures. It is also argued that *sharia* evokes moral principles that are eternal and resonate with Christian and secular principles. However, it seems that major problems arise when *sharia* is not properly indigenised, when codes woven in some contexts are applied with flexibility in another context without local initiative.

From 1999 to date, *sharia* law has become an official policy across most of the northern states in Nigeria at varying levels, though it is selectively enforced. While a number of people have been sentenced to death by stoning for various crimes including adultery, it seems such sentences have all been overturned or reduced later. At least two amputations have been carried out – a man convicted of stealing a cow had his hand cut off in 2000 while another man's hand was amputated for the theft of a bicycle (Smith, 2015:76). More recently, after Nigeria's federal government enacted a law outlawing homosexuality in 2014, *sharia* authorities in the north carried out a witch-hunt, resulting in a number of people being flogged for being gay, while some protesters demanded that they be stoned to death (Smith, 2015:76).

In another development, Smith (2015:76) reports that following the sign of tensions that had begun to build up in the early 2000s, a comment in a newspaper column triggered a riot in the northern city of Kaduna that killed approximately 850 people. The newspaper columnist had insinuated that the Prophet Muhammad would have been happy to select a wife from the Miss World beauty pageant that was to hold in Nigeria. However, many saw this comment as blasphemous, aggravating existing ethnic and religious division in Kaduna. Again, Nigeria featured much in the global news in 2003. This was because some women were condemned to be stoned to death with regular stones for alleged adultery (Kalu, 2010:87). A riot also erupted in which many were killed and churches torched in some parts of Northern Nigeria because of a beauty pageant that was staged during Ramadan. An article appeared in a newspaper, *This Day*, that some thought ridiculed the Prophet Muhammad (Smith, 2015:76). The apparent reasons were the rise of a violent face of Islam and the enactment of "*sharia* states" in the northern part of the country in 2002. It has been observed that Muhammed Yusuf the founder of Boko Haram came of age in the course of these agitations for the *sharia* law (Smith, 2015:76; Onuoha, 2010:56).

From the above discussion, it can be inferred that *sharia* is a prescriptive divine law rather than existentialist ethics. To Kalu (2010:88), *sharia* does not permit the relativist, liberal theology

of Christians. Like the Talmud, its application is choreographed systematically through a maze of authoritative voices in an exegesis that uses human wisdom to explicate the divine without injury to the former.

To sum up, one would agree that *sharia* is an agent of social control that leaves the socialization process to the Quran and blends the restrictive and deterrent models with punitive instruments (Agbibo, 2013:436). As an example of punitive instrument, judges in Sokoto, Nigeria argued that through an unflinching application of Hadad, *sharia* law would extol virtue “*ma’rufat*” and cleanse the society of vices “*munkarat*” (Kalu, 2010:89). Advocates of the *sharia* therefore claim that it would help uproot prostitution, theft, social violence and hedonistic lifestyle, and that *sharia* may even be an antidote to the peril of HIV/AIDS.

#### **4.4 Gender and Health Issues in Relation to Abuse of Power and Sexual Violence**

The effects of the abuse of power and sexual violence on gender and the health of many individuals are diverse. For example, the internal displacement of people affected by sexual violence as a result of Boko Haram activities has a huge detrimental effect on maternal health care provision. In Borno State which is hard hit by Boko Haram operations, health care services have collapsed as doctors, nurses and pharmacists have fled for their lives from the brutal violence unleashed by the Boko Haram militants.<sup>150</sup>

Ojora-Saraki (2014:1) observes that the overall health care system in the parts of Nigeria affected by Boko Haram uprisings continues to suffer a growing health crisis. The sick are forced to trek vast distances to receive medical attention while vaccination programs for children are compromised. People are forced to cross into neighboring Cameroon in search of treatment, with pregnant women and the sick using donkeys and auto-rickshaws to negotiate the difficult terrain. This grueling trek takes its toll because by the time the sick reach hospitals across the border, they are in a worse state, and many die.

##### **4.4.1 Effects of abuse of power and sexual violence on health**

Health is not merely the absence of disease but it has to do with wellbeing and the possibility of flourishing. As such, girls who are affected by Boko Haram’s abuse of power and sexual violence suffer severe physical and psychological health problems or post-conflict trauma. Some possible health problems that result from sexual violence include chronic headache and

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<sup>150</sup> T. Ojora-Saraki 2014. “Health Care Workers Need Security in Northern Nigeria.” Available at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/toyin-ojorasaraki/health-care-workers-nigeria\\_b\\_5692218.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/toyin-ojorasaraki/health-care-workers-nigeria_b_5692218.html) (accessed 15th September 2015).

stomachache, problems from war-related wounds and beatings, malaria, tuberculosis, cholera, diarrhea, parasitic infections and malnutrition. Girls also experience gender-specific health problems that directly relate to wartime sexual violence while gynecological problems as a result of rape include genital injury, infections, vesico-vaginal fistula, and complications from self-induced or clandestine abortions. In addition to the suffering of women due to abuse of power and sexual violence in wartime, there is the increased risk of HIV/AIDS (Barkindo *et al*, 2013:7). It is reported that women abducted and raped in conflict situations are often infected with HIV by their captors. For example, during the 2010 Boko Haram uprising in Jos in central Nigeria, women and girls suffered the worst form of sexual abuse. There was the case of about twenty women and girls captured by the Boghom people and taken to a village called Kangyal in Kanam Local Government Area who suffered the worst form of sexual abuse as their captors took turns to rape them every evening for three months. When they were eventually rescued, five out of the twenty sick females were pregnant and tested positive to HIV/AIDS.

Furthermore, the effects of insecurity on education, population displacement and governance have made access to healthcare become much harder in places such as Borno State which are already restricted due to the predominantly rural nature of the landscape (Ojora-Saraki, 2014:1). Boko Haram attacks on the educational system have undermined the accurate dissemination of information and the need for women to take ownership of their own bodies. Thus, healthcare challenges in the mainly rural states which have only limited medical resources and facilities this become compounded resulting in large-scale loss of lives (Ojora-Saraki, 2014).

Ojora-Saraki (2014:1) also reports that the Nigerian Commission for Refugees recently made data available which shows that as many as 3.3 million people have been internally displaced in the country. Of this figure, more than 250,000 people have been displaced by violence and fled from armed conflict perpetrated by Boko Haram. A report from the internal displacement monitoring centre shows that at least 37 per cent of primary health facilities in areas under the affected states have been shut down as a result of Boko Haram violence, and in the worst-affected areas none of the facilities is thought to be in operation. Good governance is therefore the key to a lasting solution since the loss of control over territory makes it difficult for state government and civil society organizations to identify functional facilities and deliver high quality maternal, child and adolescent health care (Ojora-Saraki, 2014:1).



#### 4.4.2 Similar health consequences of sexual violence in some African countries

Problems emanating from the abuse of power and sexual violence are not peculiar to Nigeria; they are attested in some other African and Middle East countries such as Sierra Leone, Angola, Rwanda, (Northern) Uganda, Sudan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and many others (Oosterhoff & Oosterom, 2014:1). According to Denov (2001:20), girls that were sexually violated in Sierra Leone for example were at high risk of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. While many girls might have been infected, few that were tested were found to be HIV/AIDS positive. HIV/AIDS represents a major threat to women that are sexually abused and their children, many of whom will become orphans or also die. Many girls enlisted in fighting forces also sustain serious harm from childbearing and suffer gynecological problems because of infections or complications in the birthing process. In Sierra Leone, girls associated with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) were sometimes subjected to extremely dangerous practices such as inducing childbirth by jumping on a girl's pregnant tummy, or binding the legs of pregnant girls in a bid to postpone childbirth (Denov, 2001:20). As consequences of sexual violence during wartime, the above practices often left girls with both short and long-term gynecological problems.

In addition, some devastating psychological after-effects of wartime sexual violence have been reported (Denov, 2001:20). In Sierra Leone, many girls reported experiencing anguish, flashbacks, persistent fears, difficulty in re-establishing intimate relationships, a blunting of enjoyment in life, shame, and being unable to have normal sexual or childbearing experiences. Girls forced to carry and bear the children of their aggressors sometimes suffered serious mental, physical and spiritual harm. In the longer term, the girls are reported to have depression, anxiety, poor self-esteem, and anger. In the aftermath of the conflict, it is noted that some girls used to lament saying, "I feel depressed most of the time. I sometimes feel there is no hope for me I just think of ending my life" (Denov, 2001:20).

Despite the many health problems noted above, services particularly reproductive health services are seldom available to girls. The lack of accessible health facilities and lack of money for transport, medical treatment and drugs have negative implications for the health of survivors of sexual violence which is often poor. An Angolan girl explained the predicament of the survivors thus:

On the days when you have to go to the hospital you do not eat. You need to borrow money to go to the hospital or buy medicines, and you might have to work for the person who lent you

money so as to pay it off... When a person is ill the only thing that matters is money, without money you do nothing (Denov, 2001:20).

Even when services are available, they are often not designed or enough to meet the unique needs of the affected girls. Many sexually abused girls reportedly also avoid seeking medical treatment for sexually related health problems out of fear of being judged and rejected (Denov, 2001:21).

For example, as the genocidal war in Rwanda ended, rape survivors were able to receive extensive medical support with HIV/AIDs care as an antidote to their plight (Oosterhoff & Oosterom, 2014:2). However, the long-term effects of rape on victims in Rwanda include individual acts of aggression against their person and identity, social isolation, and social stigma. Thus, some husbands left their wives who had become victims of rape while some victims were rendered unsuitable for marriage, and many ended up with unwanted pregnancies and babies which means some women resorted to self-induced abortions (Mukamakuza, 2009:17).

From the above considerations, one can deduce that, as a weapon of warfare, sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram and by militants in other countries has serious health implications. The acts of sexual violence therefore should be condemned in the society and especially by all religious leaders in order to promote a healthy environment that is free of discrimination due to gender, culture or religion.

#### **4.5 Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has offered a critical but contextualized reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 as well as a contribution towards a theological ethical understanding and response to the abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. The chapter has also considered the abuse of power and sexual violence as part of military activity in relation to Boko Haram's current act of terror that involves kidnaping, rape, forced marriage and coercing women to act as suicide bombers (cf. 2.2.3 of this research).

It is understood that the abuse of power and sexual violence committed by Boko Haram is to some extent inspired by religious fundamentalism. The narrow interpretations of the Quran and *sharia* law some religious fundamentalists fuel the acts of atrocity perpetrated by Boko Haram. In addition, the various acts of terror which Boko Haram forces unleash on women such as kidnaping, rape, forced marriage and other vices have negative impact on their health. The

negative health impact includes trauma, sexual transmitted diseases (STDs), contraction of HIV/AIDS, and many other health ordeals.

This chapter also highlights the reception of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in the Nigerian context as well as the theological and ethical appropriation of the text. It can be deduced from the reading of the text offered above that the sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram is displeasing to the Lord and is ethically wrong because it also violates human dignity. The main point of view in this research is that patriarchy, religious fundamentalism, and the adoption of *sharia* law by some northern states are some causes of sexual violence in Nigeria. In addition, poverty, power and sexual identity, women and power, and social norms as identified by Jewkes (2002:1423) are among the root causes of the abuse of power and sexual violence by Boko Haram. For this reason, the attitude of those in power especially in respect of how they use or abuse their power as well as their attitude towards social, religious and cultural prejudices that blame female victims of sexual violence needs to be redefined.

The above analogy and its comprehension should therefore contribute to a theological ethical understanding and response to the abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. This research therefore agrees with Alison (2007:53) and Le Roux (2014:27) that sexual violence is one of the most frequent wartime abuses of women and girls and that it is an age-old phenomenon. On the other hand, the research disagrees with Sookhdeo (2007:335) that all radical Islamic movements share a common hostility to western ideals. Rather it is safer to argue that only some radical Islamic movements share such hostility since some others might call for and support western influence (education).

The contextualized reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in this study has shown that even David the most celebrated king in Israel, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the conqueror of Goliath, and the man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14) broke God's commandment (Gunn, 1996:75). The research also shows that women are not necessarily culpable when it comes to issue of the abuse of power and sexual violence, as widely presupposed in Nigeria. The text of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 therefore has been used as a tool to help members of believing communities in areas of conflict in Nigeria to make sense of their situation.

The research therefore submits that reading 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in the context of the theology of the Deuteronomistic History raises an awareness and understanding of why patriarchy, religious fundamentalism, gender construction and poverty are among the root causes of sexual violence attested in Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria (see 3.6.4 of this study).

The next chapter which is the final chapter of this study offers the summary, conclusion and recommendations for future studies on the subject matter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This last chapter provides a summary, conclusion and recommendations for further studies as well as closing remarks on the issues that were addressed in the previous chapters. To achieve this task, the chapter revisits the statement of the research problem or question formulated in Section 1.4, gives a summary of the main work, and draws a conclusion. Lastly, recommendations based on the research findings are provided in the form of suggestions for further research.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Research

This research has attempted to answer the question, how can one interpret 2 Samuel 11 against the background of the abuse of power and sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria. In answering the question, the research also offers possible solutions and recommendations for further studies on how to work towards peaceful coexistence among different religions and create a space for all citizens to flourish. That the objectives of the research are met can be seen in the following summary.

Chapter Two of the thesis described the abuse of power and sexual violence by Boko Haram in Nigeria as part of the hermeneutical frame of reference of the research. The chapter also reviewed literatures on abuse of power and sexual violence associated with Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria. A definition of the main terms used in the study such as abuse, power, sexual violence and atrocity is also outlined. A brief history of Boko Haram describing its development from the initial phase of non-violence, to current acts of terror and sexual violence by the group is presented along with examples of violent behaviour and the reasons for sexual violence by Boko Haram.

This thesis argues that the vulnerability of women and girls in Northern Nigeria to radical elements and criminals is partly due to religious convictions or laws, cultural traditions and the socio-economic status of women in the region. With particular reference to Northern Nigeria, it is noted that, "Rigid interpretations of Islam and powerful cultural traditions interact to produce a pattern of gender stratification so extreme as to literally imprison virtually the entire female population in northern Nigeria" Diamond (1987:5).

The study also submits that if the Nigerian government is to protect girls from groups such as Boko Haram, efforts must be made to challenge and punish some inhibiting cultural and religious practices. The government will need to act in accordance with the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security to liberate girls from oppressive cultural and religious traditions and to provide them with basic socio-economic security, human rights and educational needs, as observed in Section 2.5. As such, the important task of protecting and assisting the victims of Boko Haram is worth emphasising.

On the current Chibok situation, this thesis has shown that although the girls are probably alive, their physical health and psychosocial well-being are sure to have deteriorated. This is not hard to imagine, considering not only the insights drawn from the case of the Sierra Leonean civil war, but also the brutal manner in which these girls were captured and the agonising conditions under which they are likely to be held. The pains and trauma experienced by the parents of the Chibok girls are similar, and this aspect often receives less attention. It is reported that eight parents of the abducted schoolgirls died of trauma three months after their daughters were abducted. This reinforces the urgent need for the Nigerian state and its foreign backers to devise a means of not only rescuing the Chibok girls, but providing them and their family members the necessary medical, human rights, rehabilitation, psychological and social support.

Indeed, from this research it is clear that the war against Boko Haram cannot be won in classic military terms alone. Regardless of the training, equipment, international support and hopefully greater intelligence sharing and cross-border co-operation, some effort needs to be made in order to provide meaningful solutions to the lingering acts of terror by Boko Haram in Nigeria. This thesis agrees that the best strategies to be adapted in order to stop Boko Haram from its present atrocities is for the Nigerian government to provide good governance, economic development, educational opportunities and social development to the general populace.

Chapter Three focused on a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 that is sensitive to the presence of overt and covert manifestations of abuse of power and sexual violence in the biblical text with special reference to verse 27. The close reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 was done with synchronic and diachronic approaches. The chapter discussed the history of research on 2 Samuel 11-27, considered the type of literature, and investigated the probable time the narration took shape and how it functioned theologically. In the verse-by-verse discussion, the interpretation of this chapter was complicated by the fact that the real motives which prompted David and Bathsheba to act in the way they did was not known, neither was adequate information concerning the

legal and social background of the narrative provided. From the research, it is understood that adultery was a serious offense (Lev 20:10). As such, it was highly likely that wives who committed adultery were divorced and perhaps humiliated, but they were not put to death during the pre-exilic period (Hos 2; Jer 3:6-14).

Moreover, it is clear that it would have made a great difference if Bathsheba was a victim rather than an accomplice. Throughout the narrative in 2 Samuel 11 Bathsheba never uttered a single word but David was the prime mover. Thus, the reader inevitably comes to the conclusion that David was held solely responsible for what transpired. Even though it is not clear that David sinned, one can see that God's pronouncement of judgement on him shows that often misuse of power may not be recognised by humans, but God is always watching.

Again, one could hardly understand why David felt it necessary to eliminate Uriah especially since this murderous act could not remove divine judgement. It is possible that the only obvious gain was the outward protection of Bathsheba's and David's honour.

Furthermore, the death of Uriah the Hittite appears to be almost pointless and the callous scheme itself is exceedingly despicable. It is ironic that the one who ought to be the guardian of people's rights and justice would murder his loyal servant and cause the death of other faithful soldiers in order to protect his honour, which he himself had already violated. Of course, it is unlikely that David intended to cause other casualties but the implementation of his deadly plan necessarily involved the death of innocent Israelites (2 Sam 11:24). Moreover, after the tragic event David's unguarded comment when he comforted Joab by saying that this loss of men was an inevitable part of the fortunes of war (2 Sam 11:25a) seems unfeeling.

The study also argues that 2 Samuel 11:1-27 forms part of the so-called Deuteronomistic History that is from the book of Joshua to 2 Kings (Veijola, 2005:837; Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282). The pericope was probably written shortly before or during the exile when Judeans reflected on the events that led to the captivity by the Babylonians (c.586 BCE). Thus, this research agrees that the period the event involving David, Bathsheba and Uriah took place forms part of Deuteronomistic History (Dillard, 1994:135; Douglas & Tenny, 1987:1282). This view is in line with Noth's (1943:434) recognition of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings as part of the Deuteronomistic History written in Judah after 562 BCE.

This study also agrees that whether David raped Bathsheba or not, David's lordship in relation to the sexual encounter, which centres on the power difference between him and Bathsheba, creates an opening for an indirect non-physical use of coercion by David. However, to conclude

that he raped Bathsheba in the biblical Hebrew understanding of rape would be to push the evidence too far and read too much of our contemporary conception of rape into the biblical text. If one considers the text critically, it is clear that the type of physical force implied in the biblical Hebrew concept of rape is absent in 2 Samuel 11:1-27. For this reason, the sexual encounter between David and Bathsheba is not written clearly as rape but an abuse of power by the renowned King David since he had the right to see but not to touch.<sup>151</sup>

Regarding the composition and literary structure of 1 and 2 Samuel, the research agrees with Newson, Ringe and Lapsley (2012:150) that the books are a goldmine for readers interested in the role women played in ancient Israel. However, while Birch (2005:118) is considered helpful to this study, his analysis is limited in that he only mentions that the books witness to the transitions of power in ancient Israel – which of course is inadequate as one can see clearly that there is more to the books, as the close reading of our passage suggests.

This research rejects the view that the David, Bathsheba and Uriah event is justifiable and that Bathsheba was the brain behind the episode because she bathed where she could be seen by the respected King David (Gordon, 1986:252; Collins, 2004:240; Garland, 2008:23). Rather, it agrees that both David and Bathsheba were culprits in the event and that the thing that David had done was a twin sin of adultery and murder which was considered evil and displeasing to the Lord (Anderson, 1989:152; Bergen, 1996:361).

In addition, this study concurs that 2 Samuel 11 portrays David's deepest, and darkest weakness (Cartledge, 2001:495; Abasili, 2011:7). David's decision to remain behind in Jerusalem while his army went out to war was the root cause of the entire story and of the sin committed by the king. If the king had gone to war with his people and not remained behind at home in Jerusalem, this event could not have happened. On the other hand, the research disagrees that the strong political desire to become the king's wife made Bathsheba to take her bath at an opportune place and time since we do not have any record to justify such an assumption (Abasili, 2011:1). It is understood in this thesis that, many readers at first accused Bathsheba in this episode but when given a second reading, verse 27 emphasises that no blame was put on Bathsheba. As such the accusation by the narrator challenges the reader to realise that David did wrong not

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<sup>151</sup> Biblical rape is forced sexual intercourse or other sexual activity on a person without his or her consent while the person being forced cried for help and there was no one to help (Deut 22:25-30). Thus, unlike in the case of Amnon and Tamar (2 Sam 13:12-14), we cannot say that the David and Bathsheba event was a rape since we do not know whether Bathsheba resisted and the episode took place in a patriarchal setting.



Bathsheba. The narration that David “took” Bathsheba, is a possible allusion to rape. If that is the case, then it constitutes an abuse of power and can be seen as a covert violence.

Briefly, the research submits that Bathsheba was a victim of circumstances and that the adultery and murder by David was evil and displeasing to the Lord, as seen above. Therefore, the close reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 reveals that there is an instance of sexual violence in the pericope. It is clear that King David misused his power by committing adultery with Bathsheba and by killing Uriah. This study submits that despite one’s sin, confession and repentance after conviction are important for one to please God. David demonstrated his remorsefulness in Psalm 51 after Prophet Nathan narrated a parable to him about his misdeed before the Lord (2 Sam 12:1-13), as observed in Section 3.7. In spite of David’s punishment, God still bestowed mercy upon him, not wanting him to perish but bringing him to repentance, and accepting the confession that he made in humility and with a true heart. Invariably, God has his eyes upon those who falter so as to draw them back to him.

Chapter Four offers a humble contribution to the discussion of a theological ethical response to the effects of abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. The chapter critically contextualized the reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 as a contribution to a theological ethical response to the problems of abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. Abuse of power and sexual violence are seen as part of military activity and in relation to Boko Haram’s ongoing acts of terror which include kidnaping, rape, forced marriage and using women as suicide bombers, as observed in 2.3.3 and 2.3.6 of this research.

It is understood that atrocities committed by Boko Haram based on abuse of power and sexual violence are to some extent inspired by religious fundamentalism. The Quran and *sharia* law are misinterpreted by some religious fundamentalists to fuel the acts of atrocities perpetrated by Boko Haram. In addition, the various acts of terror against women such as kidnaping, rape, forced marriage and other vices by Boko Haram have had to a large extent a negative impact on their health. This negative health impacts include trauma, sexual transmitted diseases (STDs), contraction of HIV/AIDS and, many other health ordeals.

Overall, Chapter Four has attempted to conceptualise a theological and ethical appropriation of the reception of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in the Nigerian context. This is to say that the sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram is displeasing to the Lord, ethically wrong and against human dignity. The main point in this research is that patriarchy, religious fundamentalism, and the adoption of *sharia* law by some states in Northern Nigeria are at the root of sexual

violence in the region. In addition, poverty, power and sexual identity, women and power, and social norms as identified in Section 1.8 of this research constitute some of the root causes of the abuse of power and sexual violence by Boko Haram.

The above analogy and its comprehension will therefore contribute to a theological ethical response to the effects of abuse of power and sexual violence in Nigeria. This research therefore affirms that sexual violence is one of the most frequent wartime abuses of women and girls and that it is an age-old phenomenon (Alison, 2007:53; Le Roux, 2014:27). On the other hand, the research disagrees that all radical Islamic movements share a common hostility to western influence Sookhdeo (2007:335).

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The main points of view and the conclusion as observed in Section 1.6 of this research could be summed up as follows:

The close reading of the text shows that in 2 Samuel 11:1-27 we find an example of abuse of power and sexual violence that gains new relevance if interpreted within the context of Boko Haram activities in Nigeria. The thesis therefore agrees that causality theory by Rachel Jewkes which enumerates the various causes of sexual violence can be used to engage with 2 Samuel 11 in the light of abuse of power and sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria. As such, the various causes of sexual violence as itemized by Jewkes find resonance in the Nigerian context which Boko Haram operates, as observed in 1.7.

It has been argued that the complexity of the multi-cultural context in Nigeria creates a great deal of conflict potential, as recent history has indicated, since there are over 400 different languages and cultural groups that have to co-exist peacefully in one country (Gat & Jakobson, 2013:287). The cultural diversity of the country was ignored to a large extent by the British colonial authorities of the late 19th century which created an administration and education system according to Western/British culture – which Boko Haram violently opposes today. Therefore, the multi-cultural context in Nigeria where people of different socio-economic and religious backgrounds coexist is responsible to a large extent for the Boko Haram atrocities.

Furthermore, the religious division between Christians (50%) and Muslims (40%) in Nigeria is one of the main reasons for the emergence of Boko Haram. One can say that the Islamic fundamentalists' misinterpretation of the Quran and *sharia* law form the foundation of Boko

Haram. The religious difference and the indoctrination of some Nigerian faithful's who try to defend their religion in time of conflict are part of the reason for Boko Haram's emergence.

Again, the research ascertains that patriarchy as a most dominant unit of gender construction in Nigeria is reflected in the way the leaders of Boko Haram abduct young girls and force them into marriage (for the payment of dowry) and to become suicide bombers. Women are taken mostly as second-class citizens and as weaker vessels in Northern Nigeria's patriarchal context, which explains why their fundamental human rights are often violated. Thus, because women are seen as weaker vessels, they are often taken for granted and forced to serve as suicide bombers.

The research has contextualized the reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 critically in order to contribute to a theological ethical response to the Boko Haram situation in Nigeria. The reading shows that even David the most celebrated king of Israel, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the one who conquered Goliath, and the man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14) broke God's commandment as observed in 3.4.4 of this research. It is argued that women are not necessarily to be blame in situations of abuse of power and sexual violence as widely presupposed in the Nigerian context. Since women form a sensitive unit in the family, their human rights should be respected in both the Church and the society at large. The reading of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 is therefore used as a tool to help Christians in Nigeria make sense of their situation, as observed in 4.5 of this research.

Reading 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in the light of the theology of the Deuteronomistic History raises awareness on why patriarchy, religious fundamentalism, gender construction and poverty are among the root causes of the sexual violence linked to Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria, as discussed in 3.6.4.

This study has considered 2 Samuel 11 as well as the interpretation of Boko Haram atrocities anew. It is understood that even believing and reputable people like King David can fall into sin today. However, no one is above reproach in respect to sexual violence. Having being immersed in the text through a close reading of 2 Samuel 11, one's mind-set is changed not to only criticize the Boko Haram atrocities but also to be self-critical. As such the research submits that the unit of gender construction in the Northern Nigeria context which is patriarchy and religious fundamentalism cause people to be vulnerable to sexual violence.

Since limited research has been done on 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in respect to sexual violence, this thesis has broken new grounds by reading sexual violence in 2 Samuel 11 in relation to the

Nigerian context. The thesis contributes to the quest for solutions to the problem of sexual violence today by taking into consideration the effects and implications of sexual violence within the Old Testament's Deuteronomistic History and in the Nigerian context. It also contributes to the search for a theological and ethical response to Nigeria's Boko Haram atrocities. The text of 2 Samuel 11:1-27 therefore has been used as a tool to help members of believing communities in areas of conflict in Nigeria to make sense of their situation in view of their Christian convictions. The conclusion shows that a close reading of 2 Samuel 11 is helpful to the understanding of the abuse of power and sexual violence by Boko Haram since it raises awareness about the Nigerian context.

The causality theory by Jewkes has assisted in this research to come to a clear and better-motivated conclusion that the culture of violence and patriarchy is to a large extent the motivation behind the current abuse of power and sexual violence associated with Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria in the last two decades. As such, this study contributes to the ongoing universal quest for peaceful co-existence, equity in gender and health by pinpointing the causes of and possible solutions to sexual violence as perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the culture of violence and patriarchy as a constellation of factors in sexual violence suggests that a context which is established on patriarchal values and in which conflict is traditionally or culturally resolved through violence is likely to be marked by a high rate of sexual violence as observed in section 1.6 of this research. For this reason, the study concludes that since patriarchy is the common unit of gender construction in Northern Nigeria, conflicts in the context of Boko Haram for example are traditionally or culturally resolved through violence or sexual violence.

Lastly, one can say that despite the Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria, life beyond it and coexistence among the opposing parties are possible. This study has changed me to change others from their narrow-minded thinking of Boko Haram to the state of humbling themselves to understand that no one is above faltering (or falling into sin). A self-evaluation is called for in order to understand Boko Haram atrocities and think afresh about how to influence others whose mind-set derives from the same context and concept. Therefore, patriarchy which silences the voices of women in the society should be redefined in order to alleviate the plight of women who suffer from trauma, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), stigmatization and many more health challenges as a result of sexual violence.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Further Research**

Since every research aims at contributing to an existing body of knowledge either by supporting the findings of previous research or by producing new thought-provoking data that will challenge the existing paradigm, Rachel Jewkes causality theory will be adapted in part as recommendations for the discourse on abuse of power and sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria. To address the problem of sexual violence in Nigeria now and in the future, the following points need to be considered further studies:

The church and the society should address the widespread poverty, unemployment and socio-political exclusion which make young people vulnerable or prone to sexual violence and the Boko Haram atrocities. The church and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) should embark on effective poverty alleviation and human capital development programmes which can be done through a massive planned investment in public works such as education, health facilities, and power and road rehabilitations. There should be establishment of large scale farming enterprises that would help in creating job opportunities for the teeming number of unemployed youths. The church in Nigeria could collaborate with civil society groups and faith-based organisations to undertake peace education. Agencies that are involved in promoting interreligious cooperation and peace initiative education should be encouraged by the church so as to dilute and frustrate extremist orientations thereby promoting the culture of peaceful coexistence among the citizenry.

Hegemonic masculinity which is characterised as an acceptable male action and response by violent and callous attitudes towards women should be condemned in Nigeria. Patriarchy a rule by men over women and children which allows men to dominate, oppress and exploit women in various structures within the Nigerian society also needs to be redefined. Power and identity as a factor in sexual violence should be dignified and respected by the church and society. The use of sexual violence against women as a weapon of warfare should be condemned in strong terms by the church and society.

Furthermore, the misinterpretation of the scriptures by some religious fundamentalists has detrimental effects on the lives of their followers. The teachings of the Decalogue as found in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy should be upheld within and outside the Christian faith. There should be freedom to practice and belong to a particular religion but an interfaith dialogue among different religious leaders is also necessary. This would entail the engagement of various religious bodies in the promotion of inter-religious negotiation that would create an

environment for honest mediation and peaceful resolution to disputes. Social norms and values that are scripturally based should be sustained or else rejected in the church as well as in the society. The church and society should encourage conflict resolutions in order to create a space where equity, peace and justice will reign in the Nigerian society.

The research recommends that perpetrators of sexual violence and their sponsors be exposed and punished for their misdeeds to serve as a deterrent for others. Female child education and youth empowerment should be encouraged and intensified by various faith organisations in Nigeria. A study on the aftermath of abuse of power and sexual violence committed by Boko Haram atrocities in Nigeria such as ways to help HIV/AIDS victims should be conducted. This will help to ascertain and alleviate the present plight of the victims especially with respect to joblessness, trauma and stigmatization. In addition, the denial of fundamental human rights to people with disabilities should also be rectified.

A study of the causes and effects of sexual violence in the Old Testament especially within the Deuteronomistic History is recommended in order to raise awareness about the nature of sexual violence in the Nigerian context. A close reading of 2 Samuel 12:1-31 could also be made for an understanding of 2 Samuel 11:27 in respect to the statement, “But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord” (NRSV).

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