INFORMATION OPERATIONS AS A VIABLE TOOL FOR COUNTER
INSURGENCY OPERATIONS: AN APPRAISAL OF COUNTER
INSURGENCY OPERATIONS IN THE LAKE CHAD REGION

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This study considers information operations as part of a holistic federal government strategy for lasting peace in the Lake Chad region. In particular, the study analyzes information operations based on two military operations selected as case studies. The research further proffers structural, and doctrinal solutions to security forces' Information Operations processes in LCR. These solutions, are expected to make security forces more effective as part of the regional efforts to bring peace and stability to the NE Nigeria and LCR in particular.

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ABSTRACT

INFORMATION OPERATIONS AS A VIABLE TOOL FOR COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS: AN APPRAISAL OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS IN THE LAKE CHAD REGION, by Major Kehinde Adeniyi, 114 pages.

In October 2014, the countries of Lake Chad Region comprising of Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria decided to improve their cooperation to combat the activities of the Boko Haram Insurgents. The cooperation commenced with the pledging and contribution of troops to re-invigorate the existing MNJTF located in Baga. On January 2015, the BHI overran the town of Baga and took over the MNJTF headquarters. The Baga attack by the BHI threatened Nigeria's territorial integrity as well as the regional stability and security of countries in the LCR. Consequently, the countries in LCR stepped up military responses to contain the threat. This regional initiative sparked joint efforts that led to the establishment of a reinforced MNJTF. The joint effort was to strengthen the force and expand the MNJTF mandate to include counterterrorism and COIN actions.

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made and will yet make. I pray that the completion of this course will be a starting point

for many more significant things in my life.

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ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
BHI	Boko Haram Insurgents
C2	Command and Control
C2W	Command and Control Warfare
COIN	Counter Insurgency
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
FM	Field Manual
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and Levant
IO	Information Operations
JTF	Joint Task Force
JP	Joint Publication
JWP	Joint Warfare Publication
LCR	Lake Chad Region
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
MILDEC	Military Deception
MNJTF	Multi National Joint Task Force
NA	Nigerian Army
NE	Northeast
OPSEC	Operations Security
PSC	Peace and Security Council

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research work contains an analysis of the viability of information operations (IO) in the counterinsurgency (COIN) operations currently ongoing in North-East (NE) Nigeria in general and the Lake Chad Region (LCR) in particular. The researcher will closely examine IO conducted by the Nigerian Army (NA) as well as the multinational joint task force (MNJTF) headquarters, in support of the overall peace strategy within the Lake Chad sub-region. In this paper, the researcher will analyze the contributions of the IO efforts of the COIN operations in the LCR and also identify the extent to which IO activities have complied with known best practices within the operational environment.

The NE geopolitical zone is nearly one-third of Nigeria's land area and comprises six states namely: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe (figure 1). According to the National Bureau of Statistics, NE states comprise 13.5 percent of Nigeria's population.[1] Additionally, the zone shares international borders with three countries namely; the Republic of Cameroon to the East, the Republic of Chad to the NE, and the Niger Republic to the North (figure 2). Boko Haram insurgents (BHI) have increased terrorism in NE Nigeria and to other countries within the LCR. Several analysts

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[1] Abdul-Aziz Nyako, *Concept Note on NE Development Commission: An Institutional Framework for a Sustainable Solutions to the NE National Security Challenge* (Adamawa Central, Nigeria: Nigerian Senate, May 2015), 3, accessed 13 February 2019, http://adamawacentral.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/North-East-Development-Commission-Bill.pdf.

have stated that poverty, longstanding economic disparities within Nigeria, and structural decay are factors underlying the crisis.[2]

The BHI's use of improvised explosive devices (IED) and suicide attacks is typical of international terrorist violence, a style of brutality hitherto alien to the Nigerian State. This brutality continues to confound the Nigerian government, leaving it struggling to define the problem clearly and to devise a comprehensive strategy to the COIN operations.[3] The formulation and implementation of a COIN strategy, however, requires an incisive understanding of the operational environment.
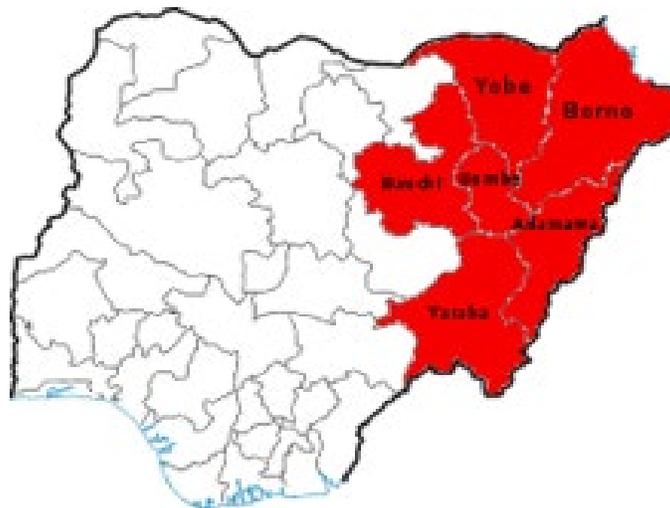
Figure 1.   Map of Nigeria Showing States of Nigeria's NE Region

Source: Wikipedia, "North-Eastern State," accessed 12 October 2018, https://en. wikipedia.org/wiki/North-Eastern State.

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[2] Nkechi Anyadike, "Boko Haram and National Security Challenges in Nigeria: Causes and Solutions," *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development* 4, no. 5 (2013): 12-23.

[3] Ibid.
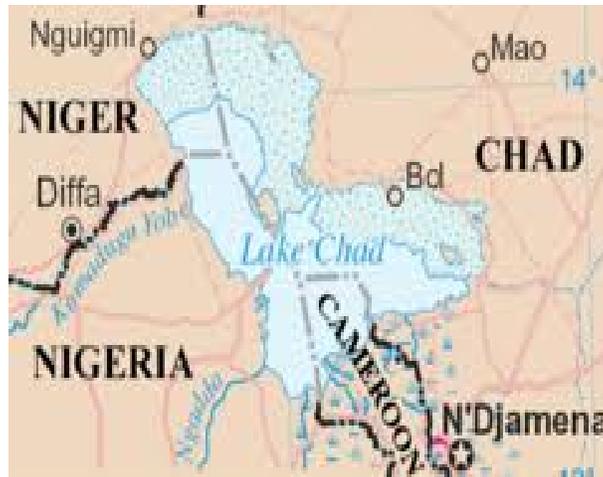
Figure 2.   Map of Africa Showing Countries in the Lake Chad Region

Source: Wikipedia, "Lake Chad," accessed 12 October 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Chad#/media/File:Lakechad_map.png.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to examine the peculiar nature of military operations in the LCR and establish the aspects of friendly IO that need emphasis. Also, the researcher will analyze the friendly COIN IO on both the LCR populace and the insurgents to arrive at ways and means of making the existing IO machinery more capable as part of the process of bringing lasting peace to the LCR.

Statement of the Problem

Since early 2014, the activities and threats of BHI have undergone a significant transformation. The BHI aimed to extend its ideological scope and regional influence. The insurgents have sought to conquer territories and gain control of a substantial number

of municipalities in the NE Nigeria as well as the LCR.[4] It is possibly aiming to establish a caliphate, as declared by its leader.[5] The threat emanating from the insurgents has taken a cross-border dimension by making incursions into the countries within the LCR. Thousands of people have fled across borders mainly from, but also into LCR, posing significant problems for the already fragile region.

The insurgents' deadly attack on MNJTF headquarters in 2015 necessitated the transformation and restructuring of the MNJTF as well as a renewed commitment of all countries within the LCR.[6] The mode of operations changed with a reviewed concept of operations. Consequently, the leadership of the MNJTF introduced the concepts of civil-military activities, media operations, and information operations to complement the existing use of force. To consolidate around the success achieved in the COIN operations within the LCR, there is the need to examine the contribution of friendly IO efforts and also identify the extent to which IO activities have complied with best-known practices within the LCR operational environment.

The researcher believes that the introduction and effective implementation of media and IO to complement the existing use of force in the ongoing COIN operations in

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[4] Anyadike.

[5] Michelle Faul, and Haruna Umar, "Boko Haram Leader: The Battle is Just Beginning," *USA Today*, 31 December 2016, accessed 12 October 2018 https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2016/12/31/boko-haram-leader-battle-just-beginning/96034042/.

[6] Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2016* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 10 October 2018), accessed 10 October 2018, https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/country-chapters/nigeria.

the LCR is a step in the right direction. This will help to achieve the desired results of a peaceful and stable region if adequately implemented.

The author proposes the use of the case studies-based analytical methodology for this research. This methodology provides room for an overview and in-depth analysis of the critical parameters, practices, and factors that feature prominently in friendly IO efforts. In other words, the methodology helps to identify factors that facilitate success or failure of friendly IO in the LCR COIN operations.

<u>Background</u>

Insurgency occurs in most parts of the world in varying degrees and with different impacts. Non-state actors with no direct political powers have demonstrated, in recent years, that by conducting an insurgency, they could achieve devastating effects on high-value targets.[7] These effects are generally out of proportion to their statistical or political power by attracting worldwide publicity, creating widespread panic, and apprehension. The attacks also caused governments to concede to demands of small sub-groups within a society, or endanger international peace and security.[8] Various factors account for the causes of insurgency to include poverty, political criminality, oppression, exclusion, mal-administration, or ineffective governance.[9]

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[7] Michael Nicholson, *International Relations: A Concise Introduction* (London, England: Palgrave Books, 1998), 21.

[8] Ibid., 22.

[9] Obi Nwolise, "Terrorism: An Emerging Threat to Democracy, Good Governance, Deployment, and Security in the 21st Century" (lecture, National War College, Abuja, Nigeria, 31 October 2005).

In Nigeria, BHI has undermined the socio-economic development of the NE geo-political zone, which has had adverse effects on the country as a whole. The spate of targeted killings, kidnappings, and the use of improvised explosive devices for suicide bombings have placed a high demand on efforts of the security agencies to fight the insurgency.[10] Since 2009, Nigeria has experienced a series of insurgent attacks especially in the northern parts of the country with the loss of lives and properties. BHI has continued the attacks, expanding into neighboring Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. The abduction of 276 female students from a secondary school in Chibok and another 110 in Dapchi local government areas of Borno State, Nigeria, brought global attention to the conflict.[11] These abductions also highlighted the BHI's deliberate targeting of non-combatants, including women and children.

In the last nine years, BHI has expanded insurgency operations into multiple West African countries. In 2009, the group officially announced itself an Islamic insurgency, and in 2013 the US formally labeled BHI a terrorist group.[12] In 2015, BHI switched its allegiance from Al Qaeda to Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL)—thus making it a

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[10] Akali Omeni, "The Chibok Kidnapping in Northeast Nigeria: A Military Analysis of Before and After," *Small War Journal* 13, no. 14 (11 April 2017): 3.

[11] Ibid., 4.

[12] Andrew Nicholson, "The Effect of the BHI Group in West and Central Africa" (master's thesis, U.S. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS 2016), 2.

potential global adversary.[13] Today, it is unknown what BHI's goals are outside of establishing a caliphate in northern Nigeria.

In October 2014, the member countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), comprised of Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria, decided to improve their cooperation to combat the activities of BHI.[14] The cooperation was to commence with pledging and contribution of troops to re-invigorate the existing MNJTF headquarters located in Baga, a border town between Chad and Nigeria. The LCBC member countries also agreed on other decisions to ensure that the MNJTF become operational not later than November 2014. The LCBC requested the African Union (AU) and the United Nations to establish an appropriate legal framework for cross-border military operations.[15]

On January 2015, the BHI overran the town of Baga and took over the MNJTF headquarters, which at the time had only the NA deployment. Niger and Chad were reported to have withdrawn their troops because of security concerns.[16] The Baga attack by the BHI threatened Nigeria's territorial integrity and the regional stability and security

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[13] Nicholson, 2.

[14] Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism, *Country Reports Africa Overview 2015* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 2015), Chapter 2.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ikponwosa Omoruyi and Alero Feremigho, "Relevance of International Humanitarian Law to the Deployment of Multinational Forces: A Focus on NE Nigeria," *Nnamdi Azikiwe University Journal of International Law and Jurisprudence* (2015): 20, accessed 13 February 2019, https://www.ajol.info/index.php/naujilj/article/view/136255.

of many people residing within NE Nigeria and the LCR. Consequently, the affected

countries of LCR and Benin stepped up military responses to contain the threat. This

regional initiative sparked joint efforts that led to the establishment of a reinforced

MNJTF under the auspices of the LCR.[17] The joint effort was to strengthen the force and

expand the MNJTF mandate to include counterterrorism and COIN actions.

<div style="text-align:center">

Overview of Insurgency in the North-East
Nigeria and Lake Chad Region

</div>

Boko Haram, a radical Islamist group, has heightened the state of insecurity and

become a dominant destabilizing force in Nigeria and surrounding countries.[18] Formally

known as "Jama'atu Alus-Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad," its origin can be traced back

to 2002 when its charismatic leader, Mohammed Yusuf, organized its members in

Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.[19] Yusuf instilled an extreme Islamic ideology and a

high degree of disdain for Western principles and culture in the group. Boko Haram

translated merely from Hausa to English, means "Western education is forbidden."[20] It

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[17] Human Rights Watch, "West Africa: Regional Boko Haram Offensive," 11 February 2015, accessed 12 October 2018, https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/02/11/west-africa-regional-boko-haram-offensive.

[18] Benjamin Maiangwa, Ufo Okeke Uzodike, Ayo Whetho, and Hakeem Onapajo, "'Baptism by Fire': Boko Haram and the Reign of Terror in Nigeria," *Africa Today* 59, no. 2 (2012): 41.

[19] Mohammed Aly Sergie, and Toni Johnson, "Boko Haram" Council on Foreign Relations, 2015, accessed 13 October 2018, https://www.cfr.org/background/Boko-haram.

[20] Andrew Pichette, *The Rise of Boko Haram: An Analysis of Failed Governance*, Outstanding Gateway Papers, Paper 9 (Bloomington, IL: Wesleyan University, 2015), 2.

intends to establish an Islamic state, impose sharia law in Northern Nigeria, do away with

Western ideologies, principles, and culture, and rid society of bad governance,

corruption, and moral deprivation. The group believes all these are against the tenets of

Islam.[21]

Boko Haram's violence became intense in July 2009 when it commenced attacks,

including the killing of police forces, bombing of government officials, places of

worship, public institutions, and innocent civilians.[22] Although the movement started

with sharp criticism of northern Muslims for engaging in anti-Islamic practices, it

remained mostly non-violent until 2009 when a violent clampdown by the security force

resulted in the arrest of some members of the group including Mohammed Yusuf, who

was subsequently killed by the police.[23] The killing of Yusuf and some sect members

spawned anger within the group, leading to vicious attacks against police forces and

innocent victims.[24] In the aftermath of the violent crackdown, Boko Haram became a

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[21] Sergie and Johnson;" Emmanuel Ikechi Onah, "The Nigerian State as an equilibrium of violence: An explanation of the Boko Haram insurgency in Northeastern Nigeria," *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 14, no. 2 (2014): 69.

[22] Pichette, 1.

[23] Maiangwa et al., 47.

[24] Ibid., 44.

highly destructive and lethal group, killing thousands and displacing millions in NE

Nigeria under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, Yusuf's second in command.[25]

Boko Haram uses brutal tactics such as suicide bombings, assassinations, roadside

shooting, car hijacking, kidnapping, and bomb explosions to wage war against what it

considers as enemy targets.[26] Boko Haram has also destroyed public institutions, police

forces, and government properties. The Amnesty International reported that Boko Haram

fighters have bombed and killed several civilians, burnt villages, and abducted and

assaulted teachers and students during their attacks.[27] According to the *Global Terrorism*

Index 2015 report, Nigeria experienced the most significant increase in terrorist deaths

ever recorded by any country, from 1,595 in 2013 to 6,118 in 2014. These statistics made

BHI, the deadliest terrorist group in the world in 2014.[28]

From the onset, nationals from Niger, Chad, and Cameron traveled to northern

Nigeria, attracted by Yusuf's controversial sermons and meager loans offered to his

supporters. This built the foundation for a multinational sect dominated by the Kanuri

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[25] Sergie and Johnson; Institute for Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index 2015* (Sydney, Australia: Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015), 22, accessed 13 October 2018, http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf.

[26] Benjamin Maiangwa et al., 41; Nathaniel Allen, Peter M. Lewis, and Hilary Matfess, "The Boko Haram Insurgency, by the Numbers," *Washington Post*, 6 October 2014, accessed 15 October 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/.

[27] Amnesty International, "Stars on Their Shoulders, Blood on Their Hands: War Crimes Committed by the Nigerian Military," June 2015, 5, accessed 15 October 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4416572015ENGLISH.pdf.

[28] Institute for Economics and Peace, 22.

ethnic group, stretching across the LCR. While many members came from and still belonged to the rural and weaker sections of NE Nigeria, in its early days, Boko Haram also included children of the Nigerian elite and could count on prominent sponsors among northern politicians and business people.[29] Exploiting the cultural, ethnic, and religious ties that Chad, Niger, and Cameroon share with northern Nigeria, Boko Haram has conducted extensive cross-border smuggling of weapons and supplies, as well as the recruitment of fighters.[30]

Boko Haram's campaign to occupy and control territory in the NE Nigeria escalated in 2015 with attacks in Cameroon, including repeated abductions and mass kidnappings of children.[31] The same year, the border town of Bosso in Niger and the Ngouboua village in Chad came under attack, signaling the spread of violence beyond Nigeria's borders, and making it clear that Niger, Chad, and Cameroon had become part of BHI's battleground.[32] A long-time Al-Qaeda sympathizer, in spring 2015, Boko

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[29] Virginia Comolli, *Boko Haram: Nigeria's Islamist Insurgency* (London, England: Hurst, 2015), 86-92.

[30] International Crisis Group, *Niger and Boko Haram: Beyond Counter-Insurgency*, Africa Report 245 (Washington, DC: International Crisis Group, 27 February 2017), accessed 10 October 2018, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/niger/245-niger-andboko-haram-beyond-counter-insurgency. Following the 2009 Boko Haram uprising in Nigeria, many members of the sect found refuge in the southeastern Diffa region of Niger.

[31] Virginia Comolli, "The Evolution and Impact of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin," Humanitarian Practice Network, October 2017, accessed 14 November 2018, https://odihpn.org/magazine/the-evolution-and-impact-of-boko-haram-in-the-lake-chad-basin/.

[32] Ibid.

Haram pledged allegiance to the Islamic State and changed its name to Islamic State of West African Province.[33]

Boko Haram Leadership

The contention for the leadership of Boko Haram among Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi, and Mamman Nur caused factionalism in the group after the death of Mohammed Yusuf.[34] The potential successors had disagreement over doctrine, ideology, targets, and tactics and this caused a major split in August 2016, leading to the emergence of at least three factions.[35] One faction is led by Abubakar Shekau while the other faction, Islamic State of West Africa Province, is headed by the ISIS-appointed Abu-Musab al-Barnawi, the son of Mohammed Yusuf. The third group is led by Mamman Nur, who is allied with al-Barnawi's faction but not part of the Islamic State. However, with the death of Mamman Nur in August 2018, the group now comprised of two factions led by Shekau and Al-Barnawi respectively.[36]

The mode of operation that the two leaders has adopted is different. For instance, al-Barnawi emphasizes asymmetric attacks on military targets (as opposed to civilians)

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[33] Comolli, "The Evolution and Impact.

[34] Jacob Zenn, "Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria," Africa Special Issue, *Combatting Terrorism Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2013): 23, accessed 28 January 2019, https://ctc.usma.edu/leadership-analysis-of-boko-haram-and-ansaru-in-nigeria/.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Idris Hamza, and Sawab Ibrahim, "Factional Boko Haram Leader Mamman Nur Killed by Own Fighters," *Daily Trust*, 14 September 2018.

and has an operational focus that includes all of the countries in the LCR.[37] Shekau on the other hand has adopted a territorial-based approach to the insurgency with a focus on Borno and neighboring states in NE Nigeria. In terms of personal style, al-Barnawi has appeared in West Africa Province propaganda, although with a veil, and has managed the group's social media accounts. He has media understanding unlike Shekau, but he is not overbearing and does not expose himself to convey his messages.[38]

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this research is to do an appraisal of friendly IO in the COIN operations of the MNJTF within the LCR, in an attempt to combat insurgency within the region. Specific objectives are outlined as follows:

1. To establish the circumstances leading to the formation of the MNJTF by member countries of the LCR.

2. To evaluate the performance of the MNJTF against the threat of BHI in LCR.

3. To appraise the issues, prospect, and challenges of the MNJTF IO.

4. To propose strategies for improving the effectiveness of the MNJTF operations against BHI in the LCR.

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[37] Jacob Zenn, "Making Sense of Boko Haram's Different Factions: Who, How, and Why?" African Arguments, 20 September 2016, accessed 28 January 2019, https://africanarguments.org/2016/09/20/making-sense-of-boko-harams-different-factions/.

[38] Ibid.

To what extent have friendly IO contributed to the success of COIN operations in the LCR?

Secondary Research Questions

Secondary research questions are necessary to analyze the information and address the primary research question. The secondary research questions are:

1. What are the existing COIN efforts in the LCR?

2. What are the effects of the ongoing COIN efforts?

3. How does doctrine describe the influence of IO on the success of COIN operations?

4. Is there any presence of friendly IO in COIN operations within the LCR?

Significance of the Study

Lake Chad Basin is one of the few essential agricultural heritage sites in Africa, providing a source of livelihood to nearly thirty million people in four countries within the LCR.[39] The inhabitants of the LCR are at a critical point of history based on the conflict in the region. The economic, political, and social life of LCR people depends mainly on the stability of the area, which is being shaped by security forces in the region. This research seeks to contribute to the regional efforts towards finding a lasting solution

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[39] Ahmad Salkida, "Africa's Vanishing Lake Chad, In Africa Renewal," *AfricaRenewal*, accessed 12 November 2018, https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2012/africa%E2%80%99s-vanishing-lake-chad.

to the persistent threats of BHI in the LCR. The study will examine current friendly IO efforts in COIN operations within the LCR.

This study is relevant to military personnel, and policymakers at the MNJTF headquarters, as well as Army headquarters, by bringing updates on salient issues regarding the concept of IO and the fight against insurgency. This research is relevant because all the military personnel, especially in the NE Nigeria and LCR, are currently participating in operations against the BHI. The research will also identify some envisaged challenges when conducting IO during COIN operations and identify potential mitigation to these challenges.

Assumptions

1. BHI will continue to pose a threat to security and stability of the LCR.

2. Combating the BHI and its transnational networks are beyond the capability of any single nation. A concerted effort is required from all the affected countries in the LCR as well as other countries of West Africa.

Definition of Terms

Information Operations: Information Operations (Info Ops) is defined as: "Coordinated actions undertaken to influence an adversary or potential adversary in support of political and military objectives by undermining his will, cohesion and decision making ability, through affecting his information, information based processes

and systems while protecting one's own decision-makers and decision-making processes."[40]

Information Protection: Information protection is an active or passive measure that protects and defends friendly information and information systems to ensure timely, accurate, and relevant friendly information. It denies enemies, adversaries, and others the opportunity to exploit friendly information and information systems for their purposes.[41]

Military Deception: Military Deception (MILDEC) can be characterized as actions executed to intentionally mislead adversary decision makers, causing conditions that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission. While MILDEC requires a thorough knowledge of an adversary's decision-making processes, it is important to note that it focuses on desired behavior. It is not enough to simply mislead the adversary or potential adversary; MILDEC will cause them to behave in a manner advantageous to the friendly mission, such as misallocation of resources, attacking at a time and place advantageous to friendly forces, or avoid taking action at all.[42]

Operations Security: Operations security (OPSEC) is a standardized process aimed to meet operational needs by mitigating risks associated with specific vulnerabilities in order to deny adversaries critical information and observable indicators. OPSEC identifies critical information and actions attendant to friendly military

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[40] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, Joint Warfare Publication 3-80, *Information Operations* (Shrivenham, UK: Ministry of Defense, 2002), 19.

[41] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014), 11.

[42] Ibid., 12.

operations to deny observables to adversary intelligence systems. The need to practice

OPSEC should not be used as an excuse to deny noncritical information to the public.[43]

Boko Haram: Hausa word which means "Western education is forbidden."

Boko Haram Terrorist Group: A Jihadist group based in northeastern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger, and northern Cameroon. The group is officially called "Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad," which is an Arabic term meaning the "People Committed to the Propagation of Prophet Mohammed's Teachings and Jihad."[44]

Counter-insurgency: Comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes simultaneously.[45]

Counterterrorism: Actions and activities to neutralize terrorists, their organizations, and networks.[46]

Insurgency: An organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, and challenge the political control of a region.[47]

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[43] Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-13, 12.

[44] Gbenga Adetokunbo Owojaiye, "Regional Military Integration in West Africa: A Case Study of the Multi-National Joint Task Force in the Fight Against Boko Haram" (master's thesis, U.S. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2016), 9.

[45] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 25 April 2018), 293.

[46] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-26, *Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 24 October 2014), 107.

[47] Ibid., 10.

Lake Chad Basin Region of Africa: Refers to the general area around the largest lake in the Chad Basin of Africa; the lake provides water to more than sixty-eight million people living within the four countries surrounding it (Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria).[48]

MNJTF: A combined multi-national organization made up of the militaries of Nigeria, Chad, and Niger, established in 1998 to end transnational crime in the Lake Chad Region. The present AU-backed MNJTF includes troops from Benin and Cameroon.[49]

Terrorism: Any act aimed to cause death or serious bodily injury to civilians and non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating the population or forcing a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act. Alternatively, political violence in an asymmetrical conflict that is designed to induce terror and indiscriminate psychological fear through the brutal victimization and destruction of non-combatant targets.[50]

Limitations

All information in this research is limited to open sources. Therefore, the information on the current organizational structure of the MNJTF, the disposition of the units therein, and the table of organization and equipment, although potentially valuable, is not contained in this thesis. Another limitation is the lack of first-person accounts of

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[48] Owojaiye, 9.

[49] Ibid., 11.

[50] Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-26.

current operations from the Chief Military Press Information Office of the MNJTF headquarters in N'Djamena. A final limitation for this project is the amount of time available for both research and analysis of existing open source materials and the inability to obtain information from members of the MNJTF. Therefore, the analysis and findings from this research will be limited to information from written sources such as books and the reference materials that the researcher mentioned earlier.

Delimitations

The analysis of the MNJTF IO efforts carried out in this research, and the case studies employed are focused on the LCR. The researcher is aware that there are other approaches employed by the government and security forces in the COIN operations within the LCR. The scope of this research is limited to 2015, which was the period of MNJTF transformation until the time of this research. Also, four out of the five countries that make up the LCBC, namely Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger, are currently affected. Another noteworthy delimitation is that this research only considered cases whereby the security forces achieved success during the conduct of the COIN operations. Therefore, ongoing COIN operations during the period of this research work were not considered for evaluating the parameters of friendly IO.

Summary

Chapter 1 forms the basis for this research and sets the stage for the study and analysis of other issues in subsequent chapters. The chapter commenced by providing a brief introduction of the NE geopolitical zone of Nigeria and the LCR. It looked at the surge of insurgency instigated by the BHI and its spillover to the countries in the LCR.

The researcher highlighted efforts to reform and reposition the MNJTF by the countries within the LCR base on the backings of the AU and the United Nations. The chapter stated the purpose of the research, the problem under investigation, gave a background of the study, the primary and secondary questions, and stated the significance of the study. Finally, the researcher defined relevant terms that will enhance readers' understanding of the thesis and highlighted the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The ultimate goal of human society is to establish a stable, peaceful, and secure

environment necessary for growth and development. The quest for realization of this goal

frequently generates social conflicts which arise when people express different opinions

and interests in the process.[51] The scale of conflicts always depends on the peculiarities

of the people, time, and space. Nigeria has had its fair share of social conflicts. These

conflicts are mostly traceable to ethnic differences, political rivalry, religious intolerance,

accusations of marginalization and domination, as well as perceived inequality in the

distribution of the country's wealth.[52] The purpose of this thesis is to examine the

peculiar nature of military operations in NE Nigeria and LCR and to analyze the friendly

IO on LCR COIN operations as part of the process of bringing lasting peace to the

region.

The crisis caused by the BHI is a source of concern for the Government of

Nigeria and other nations, especially in the LCR. The crisis has been brewing and

erupting intermittently for almost nine years and has had significant impact on Nigeria

and other countries within the LCR. Because the activities of the BHI have attracted

global attention, the bulk of information on the state of affairs in the NE Nigeria and LCR

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[51] Anthony Umahi, *Nigerian Army and Internal Security Operations: Problems and Prospects* (National Defense College, Abuja, Nigeria, 2008), 3.

[52] Agbabiaka Hakeem, *Challenges of Internal Security Operations in Nigeria: Appraisal of the Odi Operations* (Abuja, Nigeria: National Defense College, 2007), 2.

is captured by international publications, journals, articles, and books. Most of the writers' views on the activities of the BHI have been based on the role and efforts of governments of the affected nations in combatting the threat posed by the deadly group.

For instance, the Journal of Defense Management article on Nigeria military operations in the LCR by Dr. Chukwuma Osakwe and Ben Japhet provide an informative buildup on some of the military operations that have been conducted by the NA in NE Nigeria and the LCR. The article amongst many others is an informative piece, which only provides an analysis of the Nigerian military role in the fight against insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin, but does not say much about the employment of IO as part of the efforts of security forces in COIN operations in the region.

There is adequate literature available on the subject of IO that are relevant to this study. However, most of the literature does not specifically address IO activities in the LCR COIN operations, but provides an insight on measures that the security forces of MNJTF can adopt to leverage IO tools to improve on its COIN operations and achieve success. The author derives most of the information supporting this research work from International Crisis Group publications, online journals, Institute for Security Studies publications, Defense Management journals, field manuals (FM), and joint warfare publications. The author draws the definition of key terms relating to IO from the FMs, joint publications, and joint warfare publications, but adopts the FM definition of IO.

<center>Forms of Information Operations</center>

According to FM 3-13, IO encompasses attacking adversary command and control (C2) system (offensive IO), while protecting friendly C2 systems from the enemy disruption (defensive IO). Active IO combines the effect of offensive and defensive IO to

produce information superiority at decisive points.[53] British Joint War Publication (JWP 3-80), on the other hand, defines IO as "coordinated actions undertaken to influence an enemy or potential enemy in support of political and military objectives by undermining his will, cohesion, and decision making ability, through affecting his information, information-based processes, and systems while protecting one's decision-makers and decision-making processes."[54] Active IO is an integrated effort that synchronizes the effects of IO element/related activities to achieve specific objectives designated by the commander.[55]

Offensive Information Operations

In offensive IO, a large amount of information is created to block or stop the functioning of adversary's information system. In military campaigns, offensive IO aims to destroy, degrade, disrupt, deny, deceive, and influence adversary decision making.[56] This could be achieved through the use of open-type modern information systems to politically educate and mobilize the populace by sending patriotic messages and setting up databases.[57] At the strategic level, IO will be incorporated into military activities

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[53] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-13 (FM 100-6) *IO: Doctrine, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Directorate, November 2003), v.

[54] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-80, *Information Operations*, (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2002), 2-1.

[55] Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-13 (FM 100-6).

[56] Ibid., 1-14.

[57] Ibid.

directed by commanders to achieve campaign objectives by influencing or affecting key facets of adversary power. Offensive IO could also include confusing or diverting adversary's operations and creating excellent combat opportunity for friendly forces as well as undermining the adversary with false impressions through surprise information attack causing the adversary to make a wrong judgment or take illegal action.[58] Also, using peacetime IO can be used to influence the adversary through regional engagement and influence operations in a bid to shape the strategic environment.

Defensive Information Operations

Defensive IO protects and defends friendly information, C2 systems, and information systems. Active defensive IO assures friendly commanders an accurate common operational picture based not only on military perspective, but also on non-military factors that may affect the situation.[59] Defensive IO is conducted primarily for battlespace shaping, force enhancement, and force protection actions as well as any other information-oriented activity that facilitates the application of combat power. Carefully conceived, coordinated, and executed pre-crisis IO can make an essential contribution to defusing potential crises before they can escalate.[60]

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[58] Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-13 (FM 100-6), 1-14.

[59] Ibid., 1-16.

[60] Ibid.

Nigerian Army Doctrine

The NA doctrine is a body of fundamental principles which provide the foundation for guiding troops' actions in NA operations. Doctrine fosters the initiative required by commanders to become adaptive and creative problem solvers. These principles reflect the Army's collective wisdom regarding past, present, and future operations. They provide a basis for developing new ideas, technologies, and organizational designs.[61] The NA organizes, trains, and equips its personnel to fight and win wars to achieve its constitutional mandates or directed national objectives.[62] Thus, fighting and winning the nation's wars is the very foundation of the NA as a service and constitutes a non-negotiable contract with the Nigerian people. In fulfillment of its mandate, the NA is often required to fight and win wars in a joint effort with the sister services and other elements that further national power.[63]

A critical weakness in the NA war-fighting doctrine has been in the area of conventional warfare.[64] The predisposition of the NA before now has remained with the traditional military mindset. For instance, the structure and training of military forces were not maximized to deal with low-intensity threats and insurgency. Thus, the doctrine does not consider integration and dissemination of intelligence, coherent policy, strategy,

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[61] Nigerian Army Training and Doctrine, *Nigerian Army Doctrine 2016* (Minna, Niger State: Nigerian Army Printing Press Abuja), 9.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid., 12.

[64] Ibid.

doctrine, and tactics concerning unconventional warfare. Most importantly, it lacks a basic understanding of the nature of asymmetric warfare. Also, NA doctrine is silent about the policy relating to the conduct of IO, especially in COIN operations.[65] However, strategy as to the conduct of counterterrorism is covered in the doctrine and will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

<center>National Counter-Terrorism Strategy</center>

The National Counter Terrorism Strategy identifies terrorism as the most potent threat confronting Nigeria in the current security context. The strategy is developed to tackle the menace and assure the citizenry of their safety. It codified the government's priorities and its resolve to protect the citizenry and make conditions unfavorable for terrorists and their sponsors.[66] The implementation of the Nigerian Army Counter-Terrorism Strategy imposes tasks on the security agencies, government, and non-governmental agencies for the achievement of goals in the short, medium, and long terms. The strategy noted the *Terrorism Prevention Act, 2011,* and *Terrorism Prevention Amendment Act, 2013*, which provide for security agencies to deal with issues of terrorism.[67] It is in this light that the NA has developed the unique and effective strategy anchored on "Decimate, Dominate and Occupy" to combat terrorism and insurgency in the NE.[68]

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[65] Nigerian Army Training and Doctrine, 12.

[66] Ibid., 23.

[67] Ibid., 26.

[68] Ibid.

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Although the NA doctrine was silent about the policy and procedure for the conduct of IO, especially in COIN operations, the subsequent paragraphs will examine the British Army IO Doctrine. This is because Nigeria was a former colony of Britain and the NA evolved from the British Army. Additionally, the author believes that the British Army IO doctrine could provide some basic guidelines for the NA in the conduct of IO as well as the requirements for IO staff and tools.

Fundamentals of British Army Information Operations

The British JWP 3-80 identifies the Will and Capability as functions of adversary's effectiveness in IO. Thus, IO focuses on influencing the Will and affecting those Capabilities that directly enhance the application of the adversary's Will. This implies that within the direction and goals of the information campaign, IO is targeted at all audiences at any level capable of influencing the situation whether adversary, friendly, or uncommitted force. In the same vein, within the rules of engagement (ROE) and legal constraints, IO will seek to affect capabilities such as the enemy's command, control, communications, computer, and intelligence (C4I) infrastructure, that enable a decision-maker to enforce and apply his Will.[69]

Information Operations Activities

According to JWP 3-80, IO seeks to affect actions; it helps shape the battlespace, attacks the adversary's cohesion, and protects friendly forces while taking advantage of the situation. It can make use of all military actions to attack or defend Will and

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[69] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 2-1.

Capability integrated with broader military action as part of the campaign plan. Attacks on Capability also affect Will and vice-versa. Therefore, both IO and broader military action must be carefully integrated to ensure that the desired overall impact is achieved. The two main aspects of IO are Influence Activity (IA), which is the primary means of influencing the Will and Counter-Command Activity (CCA), which attack Capability.[70] However, both may have an impact on one another and not be considered exclusive activities.

All activities, be they on Will or Capability, are dependent on the provision of useful information, which is supported and protected by information activity. IA facilitates the conduct of effective operations by providing useful information. It contributes to all military activities as well as seeking to improve the ability to gain, analyze, manage, and disseminate useful information by protecting its integrity through information assurance and computer network defense.

<u>The Relationship Between the Aspects of Information Operation
and Broader Military Activity</u>

JWP 3-80 identifies IA as one of the relationships between the various aspects of IO and military activity. IA involve any action whose primary purpose is to influence Will.[71] Attacks on Will are achievable through the promotion of identified themes to target audience through messages. IA seeks to predispose, convince, deter, disrupt, compel, or coerce target audience to adopt or reinforce a specific Course(s) of Action (or

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[70] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 2-3.

[71] Ibid.

inaction).[72] It also assists, encourages, and reassures those that are following the desired

CoA, rebuild confidence where necessary.

IA can capitalize on, increase the efficiency of, or in most cases remove the need

for attacks on Capability as part of extensive military action. As part of a coordinating

strategy, it focuses on the effect of current actions against Capability to ensure that their

outcome on Will is coherent and supports the Joint Task Force Commander's (JTFC)

objectives. It ensures that a broader military action sends the right message. It also

generates activities such as a show of force and dropping of leaflets which are

specifically intended to promote themes and influence Will. IA must be coherent with the

IO and will be most effective when fully coordinated with it.[73]

Another relationship between various aspects of IO and military activity is CCA.

CCA can be used to disrupt the flow of information to a decision-maker, thereby

influencing his Will, or alter the dissemination of a decision, thus changing the

application of his Capability. CCA sits between IA and broader military activity,

contributing to both, and is concentrated on undermining the adversary's ability to

develop, disseminate and implement sound decisions. It attacks capability and achieves

an impact on both Will and Capability. It also focuses on those capabilities that assist an

adversary in making decisions and then translates those decisions into action.[74]

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[72] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 2-1.

[73] Ibid., 2-2.

[74] Ibid., 2-4.

Key decision-making, communication nodes, linkages, and their associated critical vulnerabilities, are identified and attacked by the most appropriate means. CCA seeks within ROE to disrupt, degrade, deny, deceive, or destroy the adversary's information, command, and associated systems, processes, and networks. Actions are planned and coordinated to ensure that Information Campaign and IA themes are reinforced. In a post-conflict situation, they seek to deny, disrupt, and degrade the Capability of those attempting to undermine political agreements while assisting to regenerate the capability of more positive actors.

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Relationship Between Media Operations
and Information Operations

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According to JWP 3-80, media operations (media ops) aim to promote widespread understanding and support for military operations as well as maintain OPSEC. The purpose of media ops is to communicate information to audiences, through the medium of domestic and international media. The main effort of media ops in any military operation is to communicate the principal themes and messages in pursuit of the end state while remaining sensitive to media interests. They are integral parts of most military operations. Although media ops primarily focuses on the need to maintain domestic public support and hence freedom of action, its impact is much broader.[75]

Media ops will also influence adversaries, allies, and neutral parties. It is therefore essential that media ops and IO staffs work closely together to ensure that the desired

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[75] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 2-1.

messages are put across to the intended audience.[76] This is particularly important concerning local and regional media within the Joint Operation Area (JOA) and to other media sources within the JOA.

Information Operations Staff

JWP 3-80 states that the JTF headquarters has an IO officer supported by an IO cell within J3 Operations Support (Ops Sp). The IO Officer must be of suitable seniority and quality to ensure that the IO requirements are given due weight at the Joint Co-ordination Board and receive the appropriate level of support. His function is to provide advice on IO to the JTFC and plan, monitor, and coordinate Joint Force IO activities on his behalf. As such, he contributes to the mainstream operational planning, execution, and evaluation process, linking closely with all staff functions and advisers. He ensures that IO activity is incorporated into the targeting process, coordinated and deconflicted with other activities, and that assets are apportioned as required.

Information Operations Tools

Information operations can make use of all or any activities capable of exerting influence or conducting CCA which are limited only by imagination and availability. Some of the tools of IO are discussed below in line with the provisions of the JWP 3-80:

Psychological Operations. The purpose of the psychological operations (PSYOPS) is to influence the perceptions, attitudes, and behavior of selected individuals or groups by IO themes. PSYOPS preserve direct control over contents, dissemination,

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[76] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 2-5.

and audience. Thus, effective PSYOPS requires the timely provision of resources such as scientific support, graphics and print capability, broadcasting capability, and other delivery mechanisms.

Presence, Posture, and Profile. The impact that the presence of a force may have on opinions can be significant. Deploying even limited capability to the right place at the right time can add substantial credibility to messages that are delivered through other channels and provide a considerable contribution to deterrence. The posture of ground troops can demonstrate both commitment and intent and must, therefore, be considered and balanced with the ingredients of force protection. At the lowest level, the decision to wear berets instead of combat helmets and body armor can make an enormous difference to the perceptions of both the adversary and the people. The public profile of commanders at all levels will impact on attitudes. The general role of the commander must be carefully analyzed and opportunities used to transmit critical messages.[77]

Operations Security. OPSEC aims to deny the adversary access to essential elements of friendly information, thereby, preventing the adversary from deducing details of friendly activities, including IO, as well as dispositions, intentions, capabilities, and vulnerabilities. OPSEC reduces the quantity of information available to the adversary decision-maker, making it easier to influence his perceptions and making effective decision-making more difficult.[78]

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[77] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 2-5.

[78] Ibid.

Deception: Deception aims to mislead the adversary and thus persuade him to adopt a course of action that is to his disadvantage. It is often most effective when it seeks to reinforce existing preconceptions and perceptions. While OPSEC denies information to an adversary, reducing his capacity to make effective decisions, deception fills the void with information tailored for his consumption leading to definite but incorrect decision-making.[79]

Nigerian Army Counter-Insurgency Operations in the Northeast Nigeria and Lake Chad Region

The first Joint Task Force (JTF) operations aimed at combating the BHI was code named, *Operation Restore Order I*. The operation was established on 12 June 2011 in Maiduguri.[80] Later in the year, the NA launched *Operations Restore Order II* and *III* to provide security against Boko Haram in Bauchi and Yobe states respectively.[81] The mandate of the JTF was to restore law and order to the NE part of Nigeria and Borno State in particular. The task force was composed of a force of 3,872 personnel drawn from the Nigerian Armed Forces, Nigerian Police Force, Department of State Security, Nigerian Customs Service, Nigerian Immigration Service, and Defense Intelligence Agency.[82] In the composition and mandate of the JTF lies the challenge of command and

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[79] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 2-5.

[80] Chukwuma C.C. Osakwe, and Ben Japhet Audu, "Nigeria's Military Operations in the Lake Chad Basin," *Journal of Defense Management* 7, no. 1 (2017): 162.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

control (C2), logistics, welfare, and the danger of fighting in built-up areas (FIBUA), or what the military referred to as urban warfare or operations.[83]

The NA's first significant encounter with urban warfare was in the Niger-Delta during its faceoff with the militants in Nigeria South-south geo-political zone in 2006, and then in the NE Nigeria. Experience from these encounters has shown that the Nigerian military and other security agencies were unprepared to tackle contemporary security challenges, particularly terrorism.[84] However, the military witnessed improvement in their tactics and performance, partly because training in the NA was reviewed in line with the current and emerging security challenges. The NA focused its efforts on training and retraining in the area of anti-terrorism, counter-terrorism, special reconnaissance, IO, management, and training of personnel and associated equipment in close quarter combat, urban warfare, intelligence operations, and amphibious operations.[85]

Operation Restore Order I, II, and III achieved relative progress. The JTF made attempts at restoring normalcy and building confidence in the populace by checking, monitoring, and controlling the influx of illegal immigrants. To an extent, the operation made Maiduguri and its environs untenable for the Boko Haram terrorists, who then

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[83] Osakwe and Audu, 162.

[84] Sagir Musa, "Understanding JTF – Operation Restore Order in Borno State," All Africa, 2 April 2012, accessed 8 November 2018, https://allafrica.com/stories/201204020163.html.

[85] Ibid.

sought refuge in the Sambisa forest where they coordinated attacks.[86] The JTF was able

to destroy some identified improvised explosive device production factories and

recovered arms. However, the relocation of the insurgents to Sambisa forest afforded

them the opportunity to conduct their activities unabated. Thus, security continued to

deteriorate as the insurgents continued their reign of terror in NE Nigeria. This setback

necessitated the establishment of Operation Boyona in 2012 to replace Operation Restore

Order I, II, and III.[87]

The acronym, *Boyona,* represents Borno, Yobe, Nasarawa, and Adamawa

operations. Operation Boyona was jointly conducted by the NA and other services. One

of the operational mandates of Operation Boyona was to destroy BHI camps/bases, fish

out perpetrators and bring them to justice.[88] Operation Boyona achieved its mandate with

the destruction of insurgents' strongholds and bases, mostly located in the desert borders

of Chad and Niger Republics. Some of the destroyed or secured camps included Kerenoa,

Hausari, Marte, Chikun, and Gudu—all in the NE Nigeria.[89]

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[86] Obada Olushola, "Defense Sector Transformation Agenda: Progress and Challenges in the Year 2012" (Nigeria's Minister of State for Defense presentation at the Federal Executive Council Meeting, Abuja, Nigeria, 2013), 17.

[87] Chukwuma and Audu.

[88] Abdul Lateef, "An X-Ray on Operation Boyona," *Nigerian Defense Magazine*, 2013, 21-22.

[89] Ibid.

Operation Boyona was later renamed Operation Zaman Lafiya, meaning "stable peace" with the establishment of the NA's 7th Division in August 2013.[90] Following the organization and re-structuring of Operation Zaman Lafiya, the JTF handed over the responsibility for operational planning and conduct to 7th Division, thereby giving it a close support command structure.[91] Although the close support command structure did not provide for unity of command, it did provide control of the mission area through cooperation and coordination between the services. One of the challenges that confronted Operation Zaman Lafiya was inadequate logistics support. The Army component of the force, which had been in the mission area since 2011, ran short of adequate logistic provisions.[92] Despite the challenges, Operation Zaman Lafiya was able to curtail the activities of the BHI to a reasonable extent through the arrest of some of the insurgent leaders, seizure and retrieval of weapons, and general destruction of insurgents' camps. These successes, however, were limited compared to what should have been achieved through joint or combined operations. In July 2015, operation Zaman Lafiya was renamed Lafiya Dole, meaning "Peace by Force."[93]

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[90] Chukwuma and Audu, 162.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] 'Ibid.

<u>Emergence of the Civilian Joint Task Force</u>

The combination of local and global factors associated with the foundational years of BHI contributed to the stimulation of public support that the group enjoyed at the onset of its war with security forces.[94] The arrest and extrajudicial execution of the leader, Mohammed Yusuf and some of his comrades, also allowed the group to maintain a support base with the locals. The Amnesty International report of 2016 observed the illegal detention and non-prosecution of Boko Haram suspects, including women and children by the security forces.[95] This created distrust and loss of confidence by the locals in the security forces and prompted the civilians, especially in NE Nigeria, to believe that they were caught between two evils.[96] In the article, Lin*king Doctrine to Action: A New COIN Center of Gravity Analysis*, the authors, Peter Mansoor and Mark Ulrich, argued that the population is the key to successful COIN.[97] Both insurgents and COIN employ strategy to separate each other from the population while drawing the population's active or passive support to themselves.[98]

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[94] Akinola Olojo, "Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram," *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies* (2013): 6.

[95] British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), "Nigerian Giwa Barracks, 'A Place of Death' Says Amnesty," accessed 26 January 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-36259126.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Peter Mansoor, and Mark Ulrich, "Linking Doctrine to Action: A New COIN Center-of-Gravity Analysis," *Military Review* (October 2007): 46, accessed 18 April 2019, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_2008CRII0831_art007.pdf.

[98] Ibid., 46.

In its efforts to win the hearts and minds and improve community relations with members of the public, 7th Division NA, in conjunction with a Kaduna-based Non-Governmental Organization, Mallam Garba Foundation, trained and empowered about 116 locals, mostly widows, in skill acquisition and empowerment programs.[99] The security forces also began to conduct humanitarian activities such as sanitation exercises and sensitization workshops with civilians and various community and religious leaders. To combat the housing challenge of the returnees, who fled their homes at the height of the insurgency were facing, the Nigerian military set machinery in motion to assist in building new homes at various towns in the NE Nigeria and assist the Ministry of Agriculture to clear land for planting during the planting season.[100] The commendable efforts of the security forces, improved the situation and won the cooperation of the locals towards the fight against the insurgency.[101]

This renewed determination and confidence by the locals, especially the youth, led to the emergence of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF).[102] The CJTF emerged in June 2013 as a response to the security challenges posed by the activities of insurgents in Borno State since 2009.[103] Another factor that led to the formation of the CJTF, in

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[99] Ndecche Chidirim, and Agbo Njideka, "Appreciating the Nigerian Military," *The Guardian Newspaper*, 20 May 2018, accessed 31 January 2019, https://www. guardian.ng/life/on-the-cover/appreciating-the-nigerian-military/.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

addition to the renewed confidence of the locals in the military, was the brazen style

adopted by the insurgents in the destruction of lives and properties.[104] The young people

realized that the killing and maiming of individuals, bomb attacks, and the burning of

churches, schools, and mosques by BHI, which occurred almost on a daily basis, needed

to stop and that they needed to complement the efforts of the military in the fight against

the insurgents. This bold move, of course, did not go without sacrifice as the insurgents

silenced any courageous individuals who reported their activities to the security

personnel.[105]

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Multi-National Joint Task Force Counter-Insurgent
Operations in the Lake Chad Region

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The multinational joint task force is an offensive and stabilization organization

with the objective of combating BHI in the LCR. The governments of West African

countries determined its establishment under the current structure within LCBC during an

extraordinary summit of the LCBC member states in Niamey, Niger, on 7 October 2014.

On 25 November 2014, the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) fully endorsed its

activation.[106] However, on 29 January 2015, the PSC formally authorized the deployment

of the MNJTF for twelve months. This mandate was renewed on 14 January 2016, for an

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[104] Chidirim and Njideka.

[105] Ibid.

[106] African Union Peace and Security, *AU Communiqué of the 469th PSC meeting* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia African Union Peace and Security, 25 November 2014), accessed 13 February 2019, http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc-469-com-terrorism-25-11-2014.pdf.

additional twelve months.[107] The mandate included conducting military operations to

prevent the expansion of the BHI's activities, conducting patrols as well as stopping all

transfers of weapons or logistics to the group. Others included actively searching for and

freeing all abductees and carrying out psychological actions to encourage defections

within the Boko Haram ranks.[108] The PSC also tasked the MNJTF to undertake specific

actions in the areas of intelligence, human rights, information, and the media.[109]

The MNJTF is divided into four different geographical sectors. Sector 1 is Mora

in Cameroun; sector 2, Baga-sola in Chad; while sectors 3 and 4 are in Baga and Diffa

located in Nigeria and Niger respectively.[110] MNJTF headquarters was relocated from

Baga to N'Djamena in Chad following its re-structuring after it was attacked and overran

in 2015. MNJTF tasked its sectors to provide security along their respective borders. For

instance, Nigerien and part of the Chadian forces pushed south over the border into the

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[107] African Union Peace and Security, "567th PSC meeting on the Boko Haram terrorist group," 14 January 2016, accessed 13 February 2019, www.peaceau.org/fr/article/567eme-reunion-ducps-sur-le-groupe-terroriste-boko-haram.

[108] African Union Peace and Security, *AU Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the implementation of communiqué PSC/AhG/COMM.2 (CDLXXXIV) on the Boko Haram terrorist group and other related international efforts* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia African Union Peace and Security, 6 March 2015), para. 9, accessed 10 October, 2018. http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/report-of-the-chairperson-of-the-commission-on-the-implementation-of-communique-psc-ahg-comm-2-cdlxxxiv-on-the-boko-haram-terrorist-group-and-on-other-related-international-efforts.

[109] Ibid.

[110] International Crisis Group, *Cameroun: Confronting Boko Haram*, Report 241, (Washington, DC: International Crisis Group, 16 November 2016), accessed 10 October 2018. https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon/cameroon-confronting-boko-haram.

Nigerian territory, while the NA and the remaining Chadian units advanced westward from Cameroun. These renewed efforts achieved some degree of success as the security forces from these sectors conducted some operations in selected BHI strongholds resulting in the arrest of several members of the group.[111]

Between June and November 2016, the MNJTF conducted an offensive operation within the LCR, tagged "Operation Gama Aiki" meaning "Operation finish the job." All the sectors were involved in this simultaneous and coordinated offensive action.[112] This led to the displacement of a sizable number of BHI within the Mora sector. Again, the operation facilitated the seizure of the group's stockpile of weapons, freeing of captives, and demolition of some of the group's training sites.[113] This operation also triggered the movement of the insurgents in disarray from their various hideouts in Sambisa Forest towards Lake Chad in the northern part of Borno State around the Nigeria/ Niger border.[114] The division of forces into sectors and manning of these sectors by troops of respective countries provided a robust platform for the MNJTF to check and monitor the activities of the BHI effectively. Furthermore, the MNJTF was able to monitor and assess the performance of coalition forces.

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[111] International Crisis Group, *Cameroun*.

[112] Wendyam Aristide Sawadogo, "Can the Task Force Against Boko Haram Stay on Course?" (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 13 January 2017), accessed 10 October, 2018. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/can-the-joint-task-force-against-boko-haram-stay-the-course.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.
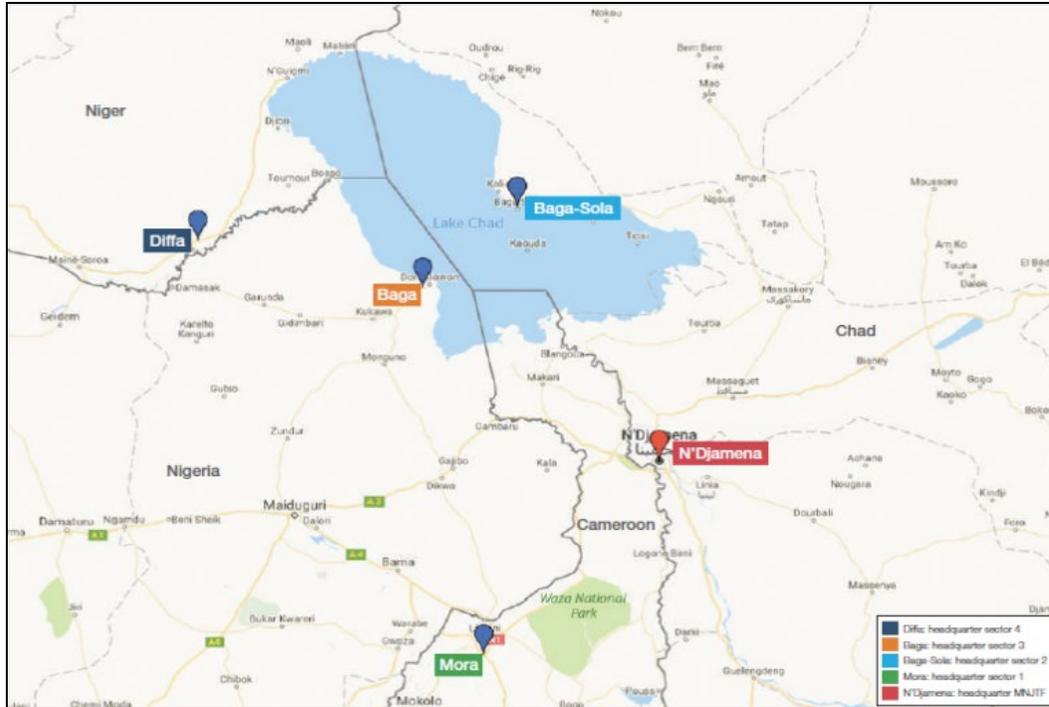
Figure 3.   Map Showing MNJTF Sectors in the LCR

Source: International Crisis Group, *Cameroun: Confronting Boko Haram*, Report 241, (Washington, DC: International Crisis Group, 16 November 2016), accessed 10 October 2018, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon/cameroon-confronting-boko-haram.

Information Operations Conducted in Counter-Insurgent Operations within the Lake Chad Region

Information operations have been conducted by both friendly security forces and the BHI in the LCR. The prevalence of means of communication in the region, and indeed all over the world, makes information superiority important in planning and executing military operations. The author will review literature concerning IO that the BHI and the security forces conducted within the LCR in the subsequent paragraphs.

Boko Haram Insurgents Information Operations

The media and terrorism seem to enjoy what amounts to a symbiotic relationship,

even though terrorists appear to need the media more than the media need the terrorists.

This might inform the reason why scholars have widely cited a former British Prime

Minister Margaret Thatcher as saying that, "publicity is the oxygen of terrorism."[115] The

above assertion underscores the primary objective of the terrorists, which is to spread a

message of fear to many people, including those not directly involved in the attack, and

the media played a very vital role in achieving this objective.[116] Over time, the BHI has

leveraged the media, particularly the social media such as YouTube, Facebook, and

Twitter, to advance their goals and objectives as they engage the state in years of bloody

war.[117] For instance, the BHI employs the media in announcing successful attacks,

recruitments, communication, and strategic planning.[118]

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[115] E.R. Muller, R.F.J. Spaaij, and A.G.W. Ruitenberg, *Trends in Terrorism* (Alphen han de Rijn, Netherlands: Kluwer, 2004), quoted in Anthony Chinedu Ekwueme and Paul Martins Obayi, "Boko Haram Assault on Nigeria: Towards Effective Mass Media Response," *New Media and Mass Communication* 5 (2012): 4, accessed 12 October, 2018. https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/NMMC/article/viewFile/ 2791/2815.

[116] Anthony Chinedu Ekwueme, and Paul Martins Obayi, "Boko Haram Assault on Nigeria: Towards Effective Mass Media Response," *New Media and Mass Communication* 5 (2012): 4, accessed 12 October, 2018. https://www.iiste.org/Journals/ index.php/NMMC/article/viewFile/2791/2815.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Charles Akale, and Kingsley Chigozie Udegnunam, "Media and National Security: An Appraisal of COIN Operations in North East Nigeria," *Humanities, and Social Science* 6, no. 4 (2018): 10, accessed 11 November 2018, http://saspjournals. com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SJAHSS-64-800-807-c.pdf.

Jack Moore noted that the BHI's IO and media strategy has evolved, with more visible online presence after the group pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) early 2015.[119] Although the BHI's social media capacity and capabilities have not yet risen to the level of sophistication of ISIL or Al-Qaeda, there is sufficient evidence that the group is learning and improving rapidly. In a bid to further its IO campaign, BHI uploads videos directly to YouTube to project its propaganda and achievements. Initial versions of these videos often featured the leader of the group, Abubakar Shekau, accompanied by his fighters speaking in Hausa native language for extended periods.[120] Recent videos of similar speeches have included subtitles in both Arabic and English. This may be an attempt to leverage the social media exposure received during the international social media campaign advocating the return of the Chibok Girls School kidnapping victims.[121]

In January 2015, an Arabic-language Twitter feed, claiming to be from the official outlet for a new Boko Haram media group, Al-Urwah al-Wuthqa, was launched, a sign that the group is continuing to adopt best practices from ISIL and al-Qaeda, and is looking to capture the attention of a broader audience.[122] However, Twitter shut down the account after only nineteen tweets. The account posted messages in English, Arabic, and

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[119] Jack Moore, "Twitter Shuts Down Boko Haram Account," *Newsweek*, 25 February 2015, accessed 11 November 2018, http://www.newsweek.com/twitter-shuts-down-boko-haram-account-309320.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid.

Hausa languages, and included images of its attack on Gombe, a town in the NE Nigeria. Its last tweet claimed victory in Baga, Borno State.[123] Despite Twitter's attempts to regulate illegal or terrorist content, BHI may likely open a new account under a different name and continue to improve its ability to communicate to a broader audience.

There is limited evidence that ISIL may be at least indirectly influencing BHI's IO improvements. This is because the BHI twitter feed was promoted by a pro-ISIL operative known on Twitter as Abu-Malik Shaybah al-Hamad, who has claimed to be in contact with the Boko Haram leadership.[124] The jihadist site, *Afriqiyah Media*, an ISIL advocate, has also tweeted BHI's messages. The video released after the Baga attack in early 2015 showed improved high-definition quality with advanced graphics, audio effects, gratuitous violence, scripted choreography, and lens angles suggestive of ISIL productions.[125] BHI has also included excerpts from ISIL videos in its videos. With its inclusion within the ISIL caliphate fold, it is believed that BHI will continue to evolve its social media sophistication.

<div align="center">Security Forces Information Operations</div>

At the onset of its fight against the BHI, MNJTF security forces did not have any solid IO plan. A significant information engagement initiative by the security forces of the MNJTF was witnessed in April 2017 when for the first time, the then Force

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[123] Moore.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid.

Commander, Major General Lucky Leo Irabor, held a press conference at the Hotel

Radisson Blu of N'Djamena.[126] The commander gave an update of the MNJTF current

military operations geared towards complete eradication of terrorism in the LCR. Before

this time, most of the friendly COIN IO were conducted separately by the security forces

of all the countries within the LCR.[127] The NA hierarchy, for instance, set the machinery

in motion through the creation of various centers to facilitate control of information that

could jeopardize operational security.[128] The establishment of the Military Command and

Control Centre in 2015 by the NA paved way for the conduct of IO in the NE COIN

operations.[129] The Military Command and Control Center helped to facilitate the

employment of core capabilities that affect and defend the information and information

systems of the NA.

The establishment of the Nigerian Army Media Centre in November 2015 at the

discretion of the Nigerian Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Buratai is another step

to boost NA's IO efforts in its COIN operations.[130] The Nigerian Army Media Center is

the army media machinery based in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State. It aims to

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[126] Lake Chad Basin Commission, "MNJTF Communicates," accessed 11 November 2018, http://www.cblt.org/en/news/mnjtf-communicates.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ndahi Marara, "Military Bows to Buhari, Moves Command, Control Center to Maiduguri," Vanguard, 8 June 2015, accessed 11 November 2018, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/06/military-bows-to-buhari-moves-command-control-centre-to-maiduguri/.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Akale and Chigozie.

provide real-time and accurate information and serve as a venue for better interaction

with the media and the public, particularly on military operations in the NE Nigeria.[131]

The center relates information to members of the media who are not in the scene of COIN

operation, especially in the battlefront. The establishment of the center serve as a panacea

to unfounded rumor and helps to discredit BHI propaganda.

In the same vein, the establishment of the National Information Centre by the

Nigerian Government as a federal information agency to counter the negative reportage

by certain media organizations has helped to boost NA IO efforts.[132] This has also added

to positive media contents development. The National Information Center has a robust

website that supplied information on all aspects of the Nigeria society including COIN

operations in the NE. The popularization of the site and the agency has helped the public

to always crosscheck information from private media sources with the public sources to

have balanced and holistic details on a given news item.[133] The National Information

Center's timely and sincere release of information has also denied media houses, which

are bent on distorting information to the public to undermine Nigeria's national security

the ability to do so.

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[131] Akale and Chigozie.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid.

Analysis of Information Operations Conducted
in Northeast Nigeria and Lake Chad Region

The organizational and leadership structure of the BHI remain unclear because most studies present contradictory accounts. BHI has managed to keep tight control of information about most of its core affairs, including the exact organizational structure, methods of planning and how the group carries out operations.[134] Organizational complexity and the group's strategies have ensured a high degree of operational security. Meetings between separate cells are kept to the barest minimum, and sightings of the leadership are uncommon. These facts have contributed to the image of the Boko Haram leaders as being elusive and the organization as mysterious.[135]

The operational structure of the insurgents is highly decentralized with regional and sub-regional commanders running daily affairs in their respective areas of responsibility.[136] It is possible that regional and sub-regional cells operate without knowledge of each other's personalities or the overarching strategic direction of the central command. Top leaders and leaders of local cells keep direct communication to a minimum. Individual area commanders enjoy a large degree of autonomy, so long as their actions do not contradict the wishes of the leaders.[137]

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[134] Akale and Chigozie, 23; Daniel Torbjornson and Michael Jonsson, *Boko Haram: On the Verge of Defeat or a Long Term Threat?* FOI-R--4488—SE (Stockholm: Swedish Armed Forces, 2017), 23, accessed 10 November 2018, https://www.academia.edu/35419972/Boko_Haram_--_on_the_Verge_of_Defeat_or_a_Long-term_Threat.

[135] Torbjornson and Jonsson, 23.

[136] Ibid., 26.

[137] Ibid.

Analysts widely presume BHI consists of operational cells that are accountable to a leadership cadre. The group's operational planning and execution, media releases, and the ever-evolving face of the insurgency are reminiscent of historical insurgencies around the world.[138] Though little information is available regarding planning of BHI operations, this author used various reports to form a picture of the flow of operations carried out by BHI, primarily from the IO perspective. BHI's tactics are highly diversified, consisting of firearm and improvised explosive device attacks, kidnapping, assassinations, hostage taking, and the use of suicide bombers. BHI has also engaged in guerrilla warfare across the northern areas of Nigeria and threatened to destabilize the LCR through more guerilla action.[139]

The insurgents are conversant with the desert and the mountains along the regional border since many of the BHI members have lived there at different times. Many of the insurgents easily maneuver through the terrain, and can seemingly appear from and vanish into the bush to conduct an attack and then quickly disperse. Also, BHI continually attempt to undermine security forces' OPSEC by using moles within the security forces. The nature of the BHI and probable collaboration with a small number of members of regional security forces made it easy for the insurgents to obtain information

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[138] Mackenzie Institute, "Terrorism Profile: Boko Haram," 4 December 2015, accessed 21 February 2019. http://mackenzieinstitute.com/boko-haram-3/.

[139] Ibid.

about military action prior to the operations commencing. Also, the group has employed the media to attract national and international attention.[140]

The deliberate employment of IO by security forces in the planning and execution of military operations is barely noticeable. The basics of defensive IO, like information protection and OPSEC, are barely present in the plan. Also, offensive IO, such as information engagement, command and control warfare and military deception, have not been publicly visible.[141] This is because the security forces have not undergone in-depth training in IO and its application in military operations such as COIN operations. In addition to this, there are no clear-cut provisions for the conduct of IO in the NA doctrine. This gap has presented a major challenge to the security forces especially as far as the integration of IO in other modes of military operation is concerned.

Information protection and OPSEC have been a significant flaw in the operations of the security forces since the commencement of the war against the insurgency. The insurgents have boasted of having moles operating amidst security forces.[142] Japheth Omojuwa observed that BHI has informants within the military establishment, regularly supplying information about operations or planning to the insurgent leaders.[143] This

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[140] Abdullahi Tasiu Abubakar, "Strategic Communication, Boko Haram, and Counter-Insurgency," *The Official Journal of NATO Strategic Communication of Center of Excellence* 3 (Autumn 2017): 148.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Sahara Reporters, "Dapchi Girls: Nigerian Activist, Omojuwa, Blames Boko Haram's 'Moles' Within Military," 28 February 2018, accessed 3 February 2019, http://saharareporters.com/2018/02/28/dapchi-girls-nigerian-activist-omojuwa-blames-boko-harams-moles-within-military.

[143] Ibid.

espionage may be another reason for the setbacks being recorded in the war against the insurgents. The security forces have always boasted of having loyal personnel and maintained that it is not divided along ethnic lines. In the final analysis, such moles, if any, could be anyone enticed by the monetary gain to betray the mission of the MNJTF. A case in point was the kidnapping of 110 schoolgirls in Dapchi town in NE Nigeria after the withdrawal of the security force from the school. Boko Haram "moles" inside the military may have instigated and orchestrated the withdrawal of troops from Dapchi town a few days before the kidnapping.[144] More efforts are therefore required in maintaining OPSEC.

Military forces throughout history have employed military deception (MILDEC) to achieve surprise, reduce losses, and win decisive victories. The Battle of Mandalay and Meiktila in Burma during WW II; and Egypt's attack on Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War have been lauded as major victories orchestrated by clever deception.[145] Security forces in the MNJTF, however, have little or no experience with military deception. Most of the operations conducted in NE Nigeria and the LCR have no solid deception plan, but rather emphasize the use of force.

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[144] Sahara Reporters.

[145] Yigal Sheffy, "Overcoming Strategic Weakness: The Egyptian Deception and Yom Kippur War," *Journal of Intelligence and National Security* 21 no. 5 (24 January 2007): 3.

One major difference between conventional war and COIN operations is that victory in the latter is sometimes difficult to define.[146] The security force may eliminate the insurgents while the inhabitants remain alienated, thus giving rise to strings of insurgencies as successive generations rise to fight for the same cause. In spite of growing efforts, the statistics indicating an ongoing insurgency may continually fluctuate as insurgents coerce, convince, incite, and whip up sentiments of the populace by misrepresenting the intentions of the legitimate government. It appears that COIN boils down to a perception war which must be won in the information sphere through innovative and effective IO.

<u>Possible Policy Formulation on Information
Operations for Security Forces</u>

The JWP 3-80 could be used to provide a framework for coordinating IO at the national-strategic, theater-strategic, and operational levels. Apart from giving a clear-cut structure for IO and delineating functions to the organs responsible, policies must also be formulated for consistent message development, alignment of messages at all levels, responsiveness, and the injection of knowledgeable and multidisciplinary staff into the IO aspect of the COIN operations. Also, the NA doctrine must be evolved for IO to include tested guiding principles in the conduct of IO, not only for COIN but other military operations.

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[146] Jens Ringmose, Kenneth Pedersen, and Lars Mouritsen, *The Anatomy of Counterinsurgency Warfare* (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Defense College, October 2008), 12.

Although no work on IO policy formulation peculiar to the LCR or any military operations within the region was found, deliberate coherent message development, responsiveness, and the injection of knowledgeable and multidisciplinary staff as part of an overall IO structure are mainly required in the LCR circumstances. Applicable policies will, therefore, be evolved from the analysis conducted in subsequent chapters of this study.

Summary

This chapter reviewed existing literature on IO and the activities of the BHI in NE Nigeria as well as LCR. The review of the literature shows that a lot has been written about the causes of the crisis, humanitarian conditions, insurgents' activities, federal government efforts, CJTF role, and AU involvement in the reformation of the MNJTF. A gap, however, exists in the description of military operations conducted in the region especially in the area of IO.

The review of literature reveals that in cases of insurgency, like the LCR, military operations cannot be ruled out in arriving at a just end. Though the military may not be the primary instrument of national power, it must be employed in support of other means. A more significant gap even exists in the conduct of IO by security forces of MNJTF as a means of achieving national security objectives in the LCR. While many, even in the NE Nigeria and LCR, support military presence, there is a call for greater effectiveness in the conduct of military operations within the general area.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The objective of this study is to propose a method to facilitate peace and stability within the LCR by using IO to increase the operational effectiveness of the security forces of the MNJTF in the region. Thus, chapter 1 of this research gave a background to the study and outlined questions that the thesis intends to answer. Chapter 2 contained a review of relevant literature. In chapter 2, the author identified a gap in the NA doctrine concerning the IO framework within the context of NA COIN operations. The author examined the friendly IO in LCR and found it inadequate. Chapter 2 also contained an examination of British Army IO doctrine and its relevancy to conduct of friendly IO in LCR COIN operations. This chapter describes the analytical methodology for this research. An explanation of the sources used; the means of information collection; the type of analysis and analytical model employed in the research are included in this chapter. The author also included the discussion of threats to validity for the results of the study in this chapter.

Sources of Data

This research work relied on a systematic review of many primary and secondary sources. Primary sources included information gathered from reports and operational briefs from Nigerian officers in the Army and Air Force who have served in LCR. The author also made use of the reports from company and field grade officers with functional specialties or commands who operated in the region in the last five years. Other primary

sources were the firsthand reports of principal witnesses and on-site agencies in the region.

Secondary sources included information gathered from journals, magazines. and the internet. The author obtained data from the Combined Arms Research Library at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and publications of the International Crisis Group. A close follow-up and analysis of news articles and documentaries from NE Nigeria, and the LCR in particular, also served to help place current trends in the region in historical context, thus facilitating a more precise analysis.

<div align="center">Analytical Methodology</div>

This research employed a qualitative method of analysis. The author developed an analytical framework designed from the doctrinal concepts examined in the previous chapter to evaluate the information gathered in a logical manner. According to Natasha Mack, Cynthia Woodsong, Kathleen Macqueen, Greg Guest, and Emily Namey, in the *Family Health International (FHI) Data Collectors' Field Guide*, qualitative methodology is "a type of scientific research which systematically uses a set of procedures to answer a research question."[147] Additionally, a researcher conducting qualitative study seeks to understand a given research subject or topic from the perspective of the local population involved in the phenomenon or event.[148] The authors

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[147] Natasha Mack, Cynthia Woodsong, Kathleen Macqueen, Greg Guest, and Emily Namey, *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collectors Field Guide* (Durham, NC: Family Health International, 2005), 13.

[148] Ibid.

further note the growing preference for qualitative research methods in social science circles, and attributes the popularity to the culturally specific and contextually rich data it produces. Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative research methods are more exploratory and flexible.[149] The methods of collecting information are also less structured and thus provide a richer set of analyzable data—sometimes even beyond the expectations of the researcher.[150]

<u>Units of Analysis</u>

This research is designed to be broad in concept, but narrow in focus. The nature of the COIN operations within the LCR is a fast and ever-changing one and demands an inclusive and durable concept based on historical patterns.[151] This research examined the peculiar nature of military operations in the LCR, and established the aspects of IO that needed emphasis. Also, the researcher analyzed friendly IO on both the LCR populace and the insurgents to arrive at ways and means of making the existing IO machinery more real as part of the process of bringing lasting peace to the LCR. In analyzing the friendly IO, the researcher considered the role and impact of IO in two significant operations that the security forces conducted in 2015 and 2018. These operations were the 2015 counter-offensive operation against the BHI and operation *Last Hold* in early 2018.

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[149] Mack et al.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Sagir Ishaq, "Nigerian Army COIN Operations: Challenges and Prospects," (paper presented to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), 8 January 2017), 22.

The researcher generally selected these military operations as units of analysis because they changed the course of events in COIN operations in NE Nigeria and the LCR. For instance, the 2015 counter-offensive operation involved the coalition of military forces from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger.[152] Operation Last Hold was selected because of the amount of media attention it attracted as well as its impact on civil-military relations. Each of these attacks showed deliberate offensive operations involving the synchronization of the coalition air and ground forces, unlike other operations that were generally conducted by NA troops. Operation Last Hold was also the most protracted sustained combat operation launched by the security forces in the region.

<u>Development, Explanation, and Scoring of Variables</u>

The literature review established the need for the security forces to direct its energy at gaining and maintaining control over the population and winning its support for the COIN operations in the NE and the LCR. The local people at the initial stage provided the support base for the insurgents and served as a recruiting base for reinforcing BHI manpower requirements. Currently, an insignificant portion of the populace still provide support in the form of intelligence to the insurgents. This study, therefore, considers the populace, the insurgents, and mission success, as the three factors with which to assess and analyze friendly IO. The researcher employed the IO tools such as C2W, information protection, OPSEC, and MILDEC earlier explained in chapter 2 as

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[152] Michelle Faul, "Nigeria Postpones Elections, Focuses on Major Offensive Against Boko Haram," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 7 February 2015, accessed 16 February 2019, https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Latest-News-Wires/2015/0207/Nigeria-postpones-elections-focuses-on-major-offensive-against-Boko-Haram.

the variables for analysis of friendly IO on the insurgents, hearts, and minds as variables on the people, and civil consideration as variable on mission success.

The researcher analyzed MNJTF IO based on the previously mentioned military operations undertaken by security forces in both the NE Nigeria and the LCR. The researcher analyzed friendly IO on the people by assessing the Government of Nigeria's success at winning the hearts and minds of the people; while the impact on the insurgents was that of PSYOP, MILDEC, OPSEC, information protection, and C2 warfare. The researcher employed the civil consideration aspect of the mission variable in converting IO tactical victory to strategic success by the MNJTF and governments of the countries within the LCR. In COIN operations, the population is important—since whoever has the backing of the population has the advantage. Consequently, civil considerations are normally the most important mission variable for COIN. This variable comprises the influence of manmade infrastructure on the conduct of military operations.[153]

<center>Hearts and Minds</center>

The researcher will use Paul Dixon's *division of hearts and minds* into parts as variables to analyze the people factor. Dixon defines hearts as "winning the emotional support of the people and minds as facilitating an environment in which people are pursuing their rational self-interest."[154] The hearts campaign sought to influence the

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[153] Nobleco Tactical, "Counterinsurgency (COIN) Mission Variables – METT-TC," accessed 31 January 2019, http://noblecotactical.com/blog/-counterinsurgency-coin-mission-variables-mett-tc.

[154] Paul Dixon, "Hearts and Minds: British Counter-Insurgency from Malaya to Iraq," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 32 no. 3 (26 June 2009): 7.

populace in support of military operations and the legitimacy of the government. The battle for hearts mostly involved information engagement tasks. The minds campaign focused on giving renewed hope to the people by making them understand that things are getting better in their environment.[155] These tasks include public affairs, essential leader engagement, PSYOP, counter IO and strategic communication.[156] The minds campaign supports the rational self-interests of the people under consideration.

Security forces in conjunction with other agencies assist in setting the conditions for the people to live in peace and harmony. These conditions include security, restoration of essential services, community relations projects, and the promotion of economic pluralism.[157] IO is then used to help translate these actions into hope for a better future for the populace. The researcher scored this analysis on a scale of high, medium, or low-nil presence of each variable. The researcher awarded a high score to IO that achieved the desired result; a medium to the moderate influence; and a low score allotted to negligible or nil influence as regards a particular variable.

In determining what constituted a high or low presence of variables, the researcher considered the outcome of the operations, the role of the local people residing in the towns where the security forces conducted the operations, and the support that the security forces received before and after the conduct of operations. The researcher will enter the respective scores into table 1.

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[155] Dixon.

[156] Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-13 (FM 100-6).

[157] Ibid., 3-12.

Table 1.	Sample Table for Scoring Variables – People						
Factor	**Variable**	**Case Studies**					
		One			**Two**		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
People	Heart						
	Mind						

Source: Created by author with information from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Command and Control Warfare

Command and Control Warfare (C2W) is directed at insurgent C2 systems. It involves the spectrum of offensive action from physical to electronic attack. The aim is to degrade, disrupt, destroy, and exploit enemy C2 system.[158] The researcher analyzed this variable based on level of achieving five different effects or results. Those IO effects are success of security forces in disrupting BHI C2 systems; success at infiltrating insurgents' ranks to exploit their C2 in support of operations; ability to physically attack C2 nodes to degrade insurgent operations; psychological operations that cause a rift within insurgent ranks; and success of cyber-action in exploiting insurgent C2. The researcher did the scoring success on a scale from high to low effect (nil). A high rating implied that friendly IO achieved a substantial disruption of BHI's C2W and that disruption was based on the requirements of JP 3-13

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[158] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3.13.1, *Joint Doctrine for Command and Control Warfare (C2W)* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 7 February 1996).

Information Protection

Information protection ensures that both physical and electronic data and information flow are secure. It includes the security of information and information systems, computer networks, and measures taken to ensure that personnel and equipment are shielded from the enemy's offensive use of the electromagnetic spectrum.[159] In analyzing this variable in the LCR COIN operation context, the author focused on information assurance and the measures put in place to protect personnel, facilities, and equipment from the insurgents' use of the electromagnetic spectrum.

The researcher scored the variable on a scale of high to low. The IO that achieved a high degree of information protection particularly in measures set up by security forces for that purpose attracted a high score. A non-existent measures or successful insurgent efforts to gain control of the electromagnetic spectrum at the expense of security forces attracted a low score.

Operations Security

Operational Security (OPSEC) in the context of this study focused on measures taken to protect essential elements of friendly information from the insurgents and physical security of installations and personnel.[160] It also included the protection of items like maps, vital documents, and operation orders that insurgents could use to analyze friendly capabilities or potential operations. OPSEC also encompasses

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[159] Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-13.

[160] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-80, 27.

counterintelligence and counter IO. Counterintelligence seeks to protect against espionage, sabotage, and subversion while counter IO attempts to mitigate or destroy enemy IO.[161]

In assessing protection of elements of friendly information physical security, counterintelligence, and counter IO in LCR COIN operations, the author awarded scores on a scale of high to low. The researcher gave a high score to IO that focused on vital elements of OPSEC and made provision for countering insurgents' IO and intelligence; and awarded a low score to consistent oversights or operational lapses of security forces that proved inimical to OPSEC.

Military Deception

Military Deception (MILDEC) comprises actions taken to mislead insurgents as to the security forces' capabilities, intentions, courses of action, and operations. It incites insurgents to—hastily reveal their plans, take unmitigated risks, and commit their forces without proper guidance.[162] Deliberate employment of MILDEC by the NA and coalition was a necessary variable for this study.

As with the other variables, assessment of MILDEC was on a scale of high to low. The researcher gave a high score, not necessarily to the frequency of MILDEC, but to its presence and effectiveness, and awarded a low score to non-existent planning or effects of MILDEC on operations. The researcher entered the respective scores of all variables for insurgents' analysis into table 2.

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[161] Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-13.

[162] Ibid.

Table 2.	Sample Table for Scoring Variables – Insurgents						
		Case Studies					
Factor	Variable	One			Two		
		Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Insurgents	Command/Control Warfare						
	Information Protection						
	Operation Security						
	Military Deception						

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Conversion of Tactical Victory to Strategic Success

Friendly IO is a critical line of effort for the strategic success of COIN operations. Chapter 4 of this study considered the aftermath of these military operations to assess how well tactical victories had been converted into strategic success using IO. Accordingly, the researcher analyzed the ability of friendly IO to influence the situation in the region for the long-term peaceful resolution of the crisis using the civil consideration aspect of mission variables as a parameter.

In scoring this variable, the author weighed the resultant effects of military operations against the particular mission and the broader peace and security mandate of the MNJTF in the LCR. The author then awarded a high score to this variable having accomplished the mission and sets conditions for long-term peace in the region. Similarly, the author awarded a low score for tactical victories with no comparable strategic success. The researcher recorded the score of the variable in table 3.

Table 3. Sample Table for Scoring Variables – Mission							
Factor	**Variable**	**Case Studies**					
		One			**Two**		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
Mission	Civil Consideration						

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Validity and Credibility

The thesis proved valid for military operations in the NE Nigeria, LCR, and other geo-political zones within Nigeria with similar situations. Because the face of insurgency is different, the author cannot place a common tag on all insurgencies. However, the analysis encompassed certain factors like culture, root causes, technology, and motivation of insurgents that made insurgencies peculiar. The author acknowledged that modifications may be necessary in certain respects, but there is the confidence that the thesis provided a vibrant approach to making IO active in any COIN efforts of the NA and MNJTF.

One major threat to validity of the thesis was the author's personal bias when making assessment. However, the author was able to mitigate these biases by searching for more information and data on the thesis subject matter. Other threats to validity include the inability to access classified information about the two operations used as case studies, reliance on open source information, and lack of opposing point of view. The thesis credibility is improved based on the author's experience while operating in the area as well as his position within the NA.

<u>Summary</u>

The thesis examined the peculiar nature of military operations in the LCR in order to analyze friendly IO on both the LCR populace and the insurgents. The thesis seeks to arrive at ways and means of making the existing IO machinery more real as a means of achieving the objective of the national governments of the countries operating within the LCR, particularly through security force or military operations against the BHI. By collecting information in a systematic method and applying qualitative analysis to the situation, the author has described the design to put the situation in the LCR in context and evaluate the analysis of friendly IO in the region so far.

The qualitative research methodology used, sought to analyze the friendly IO in the LCR to modify existing IO structures and evolve ways of increasing the effectiveness of military operations as part of a comprehensive government strategy for durable peace in the region. The author will discuss this analysis in detail in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the friendly IO in LCR COIN operations. Three of the secondary research questions in this study have been addressed through the review of the literature in chapter 2. The researcher also synthesized information from various studies to obtain answers to the three secondary research questions. This chapter contains the researcher's analysis for the fourth secondary question, using the analytical model presented in chapter 3.

All recommendations based on the findings are presented in chapter 5 including the possible policies that could be formulated to make IO more active in the LCR COIN operations. This study initially described the nature of military operations in NE Nigeria and the LCR with emphasis on friendly IO. The description included IO conducted by security forces and the insurgents in the region. Chapter 4 contains analysis of those operations to answer the fourth secondary research questions. By combining the analysis of the fourth secondary question which state "Is there any presence of friendly IO in COIN operations within the LCR?" the researcher will present an answer to the primary research question which is "To what extent have IO contributed to the COIN operations in the LCR"?

Given the background narrative, the author will analyze friendly IO in the LCR COIN operations using predetermined variables to analyze two case studies and present information related to the primary research question. The first case study is the counter-offensive operation against the BHI conducted in 2015 by MNJTF security forces. The

second case study examines operation Last Hold conducted in early 2018 by the NA troops.

Case Study of the 2015 Counter-Offensive
Operation Against the BHI

Background

The main objective of the 2015 counter-offensive operation was to eliminate BHI safe havens and escape routes in LCR, completely eliminate the threat of insurgency within the region, and to recapture the town of Baga. The operation was expected to end before the planned Nigeria general election scheduled for 14 February 2015. Baga is a town in Borno State, NE Nigeria. The town is close to Lake Chad, located within the Kukawa local government area and lies northeast of Kukawa town. Baga is about 196 km from Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.[163] Because of the presence of the MNJTF headquarters, Baga was of strategic importance to the BHI. It was the last major town in Northern Borno under the control of the Nigerian government and was a key military base from which government and multi-national forces operated.[164] In January 2015, BHI attacked Baga, seizing the town and the military base used by a portion of the MNJTF. BHI burned the town and massacred two thousand people. This action was, perhaps, the

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[163] Mukhtar Yakubu and Waziri Gazali, "The Dynamics of Fish Trade in North-East Nigeria: A Case Study of Doron Baga," *Berichte des Sondeforschungsbereichs* [Special Research Reports] 268, no. 14 (2000): 83.

[164] Business Insider, "Boko Haram Destroys over 16 Villages in NE Nigeria: Officials," 8 January 2015, accessed 12 February 2019, https://www.businessinsider.com/afp-boko-haram-destroys-at-least-16-villages-in-ne-nigeria-officials-2015-1.

largest massacre by BHI to date.[165] Over twenty thousand people were displaced and

more than six hundred houses razed to the ground during this attack.[166]

Many government officials denied that the fatalities were as extensive as reported.

Nigerian Ministry of Defense reports indicated a large discrepancy stating that no more

than 150 people were killed including the insurgents.[167] Some officials even claimed that

the massacre had never taken place or that the Nigerian military had repelled the militants

from the region. Local officials, survivors, and the international media refuted this claim.

Satellite imagery taken on 2 and 7 January 2015 and released by Amnesty International

showed the degree of collateral damage caused by BHI during the Baga attack.[168]

Nigerian troops completed final preparations for a major counter-offensive

against BHI to recapture Baga town on 23 January 2015.[169] According to leaked security

information, BHI's release of a video clip claiming that it had stockpiled "enough

weapons to take on Nigeria and its neighbors prompted security force action."[170] The

[165] Monica Mark, "Boko Haram's 'deadliest massacre': 2,000 feared dead in Nigeria, *The Guardian*, accessed 12 February 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/09/boko-haram-deadliest-massacre-baga-nigeria.

[166] Business Insider.

[167] Ibid.

[168] Amnesty International UK, "Boko Haram Baga attacks: satellite images reveal destruction," accessed 12 February 2019, https://www.amnesty.org.uk/nigeria-boko-haram-doron-baga-attacks-satellite-images-massacre.

[169] Wale Odunsi, "Military Set for Final Onslaught on Boko Haram Terrorists," *Daily Post*, 23 January 2015, accessed 15 February 2019, http://dailypost.ng/2015/01/23/military-set-final-onslaught-terrorists/.

[170] Odunsi.

video prompted Cameroon, Chad, and Niger to acknowledge the threat of growing BHI power and pledge military support for the operation. In the course of the operation, the Chadian and Nigerian warplanes and ground troops forced BHI to abandon many towns and villages. The French military also aided the counter offensive by providing reconnaissance flights. Although the MNJTF suffered casualties, the security forces neutralized more than three hundred BHI including some top insurgent commanders and captured weapons and equipment that the insurgents stockpiled.[171]

This operation was considered a success because of the re-capture of Baga town and other areas hitherto under control of the BHI. Also, the security forces freed a lot of captives including women and children. British Broadcasting Corporation analyst Tomi Oladipo called the victory a major milestone for Nigeria. BHI had held the town since August 2014.[172] Security forces in the region did not display IO core capabilities during this operation.

<u>Scoring of Variables</u>

Regardless of the fact that no specific IO activities occurred, it is still possible to assess the operation from an IO perspective. The author analyzed information from the case study of 2015 offensive through the framework described in chapter 3. The analysis is described below.

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[171] Odunsi.

[172] Ibid.

Hearts

The hearts campaign sought to influence the populace in support of military operations and the legitimacy of the government. The success recorded during the 2015 counter-offensive against the BHI to retake the town of Baga and other territories occupied by the insurgents within the LCR happened to be as a result of the initial efforts of the security force in winning people's hearts and minds through medical outreach and reconstruction of roads and bridges earlier destroyed by BHI. MNJTF hierarchy saw the need to ensure that citizens in the region were protected against the onslaught of the BHI in the future. In addition to this effort, the volunteer force known as CJTF took an active part in the counter-offensive operations.[173]

CJTF comprised of young people from NE Nigeria. The members of CJTF are self-organized into a voluntary group to complements the efforts of security forces in the fight against the BHI. The 2015 counter-offensive enhanced the goodwill of the governments of the LCR, the MNJTF, other security forces, and the CJTF. The author, therefore, scored the heart variable high for this case study due to the support that the operation received from the locals (see table 4).

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[173] Idayat Hassan and Zacharias Pieri, "The Rise and Risks of Nigeria's Civilian Joint Task Force: Implications for Post-Conflict Recovery in Northeastern Nigeria," in *Boko Haram Beyond the Headlines*, ed. Jacob Zenn (West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center, 2018), 76.

Table 4. Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Studies Against Selected Variables				
Factor	**Variable**	**Case Study One**		
		2015 Counter-Offensive		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
People	Heart			X
	Mind			X

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Minds

The minds campaign focused on giving renewed hope to the people by making them understand that things are getting better in their environment.[174] The BHI invasion of Baga left a devastating effect on the minds of the inhabitants. The insurgents burnt down over six hundred houses, displaced more than twenty thousand people, and killed over two thousand citizens of Baga. This meets the normal definition of a "Mass Atrocity" according to the "Early Warning Project." After the attack, many of the inhabitants supported the counter-offensive including the citizens of neighboring towns who feared a future attack by BHI. People in the region believed if something drastic did not happen to check the excesses of BHI, a similar attack might happen again. In addition, many of the inhabitants of Baga were too traumatized to return. The author, therefore, scored the minds variable high for this case study because of the response of

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[174] Dixon, 353-381.

the locals in terms of their commitment and thinking during the counter-offensive (see table 4).

Command and Control Warfare

The C2W is targeted at insurgent C2 systems. It involves the spectrum of offensive action from physical attack to electronic attack. The aim is to degrade, disrupt, destroy, and exploit enemy C2 system. MNJTF's 2015 counteroffensive achieved disruption of BHI C2 in Baga town. Chadian and Nigerian warplanes and ground troops forced BHI to abandon seventeen towns and villages.[175] French military aid during the offensive also contributed to success through reconnaissance flights. Swift counter-offensive action by MNJTF and other security forces resulted in reports of insurgents going underground. The Nigerian government postponed a planned national election to give the MNJTF time to secure all areas under the sway of BHI.[176] The author scored C2W variable high for this case study. This is because the insurgents lost initiative as a result of the offensive and could not mount any counter-attack as they have always done in their previous operations (see table 5).

Information Protection

Information protection ensures that both physical and electronic data and information flow are secure. Although it is difficult to assess the information protection variable for this operation, it is safe to say information about the operation was secure to

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[175] Faul, "Nigeria Postpones Elections."

[176] Ibid.

an extent. Throughout operational planning, there was no report of any information breach or sabotage. The author nonetheless scored information protection variable medium because despite the fact that the operation was successful, its conduct was made known to the public. It is only fair to assume some level of compromise in information flow, even if this did not have any effect on the outcome of the operation (see table 5).

Table 5.   Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Studies Against Selected Variables

Factor	Variable	Case Study One		
		2015 Counter-Offensive		
		Low	Medium	High
Insurgents	Command/Control Warfare			X
	Information Protection		X	
	Operation Security	X		
	Military Deception	X		

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Operations Security

Operational Security (OPSEC) focused on measures taken to protect the elements of friendly information from the insurgents and physical security of installations and personnel. There was no maintenance of OPSEC during the 2015 counter-offensive operations against the BHI. Leaked classified information disclosed that the security forces were preparing to conduct an operation to seize the weapon stockpile of BHI.[177]

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[177] Odunsi.

Even though this was not the only objective of the operation, it gave the insurgents a clue of the MNJTF intent. The author, therefore, scored OPSEC low for this case study (see table 5).

Military Deception

Military Deception (MILDEC) comprises actions taken to mislead insurgents as to the security forces' capabilities, intentions, courses of action, and operations. The only potential use of military deception in this case study was the previously described leaked security information. This was not a planned deception, only poor OPSEC. Therefore, the author does not consider it as a use of MILDEC. There was no deception plan in this operation designed to catch the insurgents off guard. The author therefore scored the MILDEC variable low for this operation (see table 5).

Conversion of Tactical Victory into Strategic Success

The Baga counter-offensive against the BHI was a tactical victory for the MNJTF. Security forces in the LCR restored normalcy in Baga and the MNJTF headquarters was relocated and reformed. Despite this achievement, BHI continued to launch attacks on the Lake Chad Island making the region uninhabitable once again. A BHI attack on 25 April 2015, killed forty-six members of the security forces and twenty-eight civilians.[178] This led to the evacuation and relocation of about 11,500 locals. Thus, peace and stability still eluded the inhabitants of the LCR. This operation succeeded at the tactical but that

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[178] Agence France-Presse, "Niger evacuates thousands from Lake Chad after Boko Haram attacks," *The Times*, 5 May 2015.

success was not converted to strategic success. The author, therefore, scored the conversion of tactical victory to strategic success low for this operation (see table 6).

Table 6.	Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Studies Against Selected Variables			
Factor	**Variable**	**Case Study One**		
		2015 Counter-Offensive		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
Mission	Civil Consideration	X		

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

<u>Summary of Analysis of the 2015 Counter
Offensive Operations Against BHI</u>

The 2015 counter-offensive against BHI was a victory for the security forces within the LCR.[179] From the analysis, the author scored both the hearts and minds effects on the locals high. This is because the counter offensive facilitated the movement of citizens of Baga and surrounding areas back to their homes. The operation also hindered future BHI incursions as observed through the dedication and commitment of the security forces and CJTF.[180] Without the counter offensive, it would not have been possible to resist BHI terror and the survivors would have remained in displaced persons' camps.

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[179] Samer Muscat, and Tirana Hassan, "Report on anatomy of a Boko Haram Massacre," *Foreign Policy*, 10 June 2015, accessed 16 March 2019, https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/10/anatomy-of-a-boko-haram-massacre/.

[180] Ibid.

Reaching both hearts and minds of local leaders and ordinary citizens was a tremendous by-product of the combined operations.

For the factor identified as "Targeting the Insurgents," the author scored the C2 warfare as high. This is because at the conclusion of the counter offensive, BHI lost the initiative, and coordination between BHI cells was hindered to the point that BHI could not conduct a counter attack.[181] This was contrary to the insurgents' normal mode of operation. Information protection received a medium score from the author. A medium score indicates lack of depth or lasting effects of information protection on the operation. Military and government forces released general information concerning the conduct of the counter offensive to the public prior to the operation. The extent of damage resulting from the release of the information regarding operational planning and preparation is unknown. Also, the author scored both OPSEC and MILDEC low because it was impossible to determine the effects of these variables on the operations. Similarly, conversion of tactical victory to strategic success received a low score because the operation failed to achieve lasting peace in the LCR (see table7).

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[181] Muscat and Hassan.

Table 7. Summary of Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Study One Against Selected Variables

Factor	Variable	Case Study One 2015 Counter-Offensive		
		Low	Medium	High
People	Heart			X
	Mind			X
Insurgents	Command/Control Warfare			X
	Information Protection		X	
	Operation Security	X		
	Military Deception	X		
Mission	Civil Consideration	X		

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Case Study of the Operation Last Hold Conducted in 2018

Background

On 1 May 2018, the NA launched a four-month-long operation in Borno North District named Operation Last Hold. The operation was conducted as part of Operation Lafiya Dole. "Lafiya Dole" in Hausa means peace enforcement. The operation was intended to facilitate the clearance of the Lake Chad waterways of the weeds and other obstacles obstructing the movement of boats and people across the water channels[182]. Another reason for conducting the operation was to facilitate the restoration of farming,

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[182] The Nigerian Voice, "Press Briefing by the Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Ty Buratai on the Planned Conduct of Operation Last Hold from 1 May-31 August 2018," 21 April 2018, accessed 16 February 2019, https://www.thenigerianvoice.com/news/265613/press-briefing-by-the-chief-of-army-staff-lt-gen-ty-buratai.html.

fishing, and other economic activities in the Lake Chad Basin.[183] Operation Last Hold

also intended to ensure the destruction of BHI camps and strong points on the Nigerian

side of Lake Chad Basin and enable the rescue of hostages held by the insurgents.[184] A

secondary goal of Operation Last Hold was to facilitate the re-integration of internally

displaced persons (IDP) to their communities and to restore socio-economic activities in

the Lake Chad Basin.[185]

The operational end-state of Operation Last Hold was total defeat of the BHI.

Planners conceptualized involvement of population influence activities targeted to

improve Civil-Military relations in NE Nigeria and LCR.[186] During the duration of the

operation, the NA engineers made blocks using compressor machines and assisted in

building new homes for the IDPs in various towns. The security agencies also provided

protection throughout the planting period with patrols and escorts up to and during the

harvest season to ensure food sufficiency.[187]

As part of NA efforts to ensure security and stability of the region and minimize

collateral damage, the security forces factored in the safety and well-being of the

inhabitants during planning and asked all civilians to remain vigilant and security

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[183] The Nigerian Voice.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Omar S. Mahmood and Ndubuisi Christian Ani, *Responses to Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Region: Policies, Cooperation and Livelihoods* (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2018), 7.

[186] The Nigerian Voice.

[187] Ibid.

conscious.[188] This was to prevent suspected insurgents from fleeing the area and seeking safe haven amidst communities. According to the NA press release, the commander of the operation, Major General Abba Dikko, during his operational assessment visit noted the cooperation and support of the locals for the conduct of the operation.

The security force activities encouraged return of a good number of locals to their displaced towns and villages. Returnee numbers increased daily through the course of the operation. Security forces also observed increased farming activities during patrols and they made deliberate efforts to secure the locals in their farms and homes by day and night. Active co-operation prompted large numbers of people to come out to clear the roads of trees/shrubs which had overtaken it due to 4 -5 years of neglect. Security forces made efforts with the local union of road transport workers to secure a few commercial vehicles to facilitate the road for movement of the locals for commercial activities.[189]

Locals faced a major challenge during the re-integration process because of non-availability of building materials to rebuild their homes, which were in a state of disrepair. The NA engineer was able to mitigate this challenge. Throughout the conduct of the operation, there was no attack by the BHI.[190]

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[188] The Nigerian Voice.

[189] Private Conversation with Major A. A. Jimoh, (a member of the security force that participated in Operation Last Hold), 30 April 2019.

[190] Ibid.

<u>Scoring of Variables</u>

Hearts

Winning the hearts help to influence the populace in support of military operations and the legitimacy of the government.[191] Operation Last Hold aimed at destroying the BHI's stronghold to rescue hostages that were held captive. The operation was also designed to facilitate the relocation and re-integration of IDPs to their various communities, thereby reassuring them a stable and secure livelihood.[192] The media provided wide coverage for the operation to boost the relationship between the NA and the general public. Of utmost importance was the restoration of fishing, farming, and other economic activities that occurred during the operation as well as building of houses for the IDPs.[193] For these reasons, the author scored the hearts variable for this case study high (see table 8).

Table 8.	Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Studies Against Selected Variables			
Factor	**Variable**	**Case Study Two**		
		Operation Last Hold		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
People	Heart			X
	Mind			X

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

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[191] Dixon.

[192] The Nigerian Voice.

[193] Ibid.

Minds

Winning the minds focused on giving renewed hope to the people by making

them understand that the living environment was improving. The security forces focused

on relocation and re-integration of the IDPs to renew the hopes and aspiration of the IDPs

through the conduct of Operation Last Hold. Security forces prioritized the revitalization

of economic activities in the area so that once the relocation and re-integration was

complete, locals would be able to encourage daily activities and enable self-

sustainability. The author, therefore, scored the minds variable high for this case study

based on the reasons stated above (see table 8).

Command and Control Warfare

The C2W is targeted at insurgent C2 systems. The aim is to degrade, disrupt,

destroy, and exploit enemy C2 system. The continuous pressure maintained on the BHI

during the operation limited their activities even after Operation Last Hold.[194] Due to lull

in the insurgents' activities following the conclusion of the operation. There was also

complete dominance of the security forces in the region. However, given the

decentralized execution which the BHI is known for, as well as the publicity which the

operation received before it was conducted, the author scored the C2 warfare variable

medium for this case study (see table 9).

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[194] Private Conversation with Major A. A. Jimoh.

Table 9.	Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Studies Against Selected Variables			
		Case Study Two		
Factor	**Variable**	**2015 Counter-Offensive**		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
Insurgents	Command/Control Warfare		X	
	Information Protection			X
	Operation Security	X		
	Military Deception	X		

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Information Protection

Information protection ensures that both physical and electronic data and information flow are secure. There was no evidence to suggest interruption in the flow of information during the operational planning stage. Also, the means of communication adopted by the security forces were protected during the operation. The security forces shielded all the information equipment to prevent any compromise by the insurgents. The author scored information protection high because of the high priority the security forces gave to information protection despite the extent of the media involvement in the operation (see table 9).

Operations Security

Operation Security (OPSEC) focused on measures taken to protect the elements of friendly information from the insurgents and physical security of installations and personnel. It also included the protection of vital documents and operation orders which insurgents could use to analyze friendly capabilities or potential operations. While the

security forces ensured the protection of vital documents and physical security of installations, little can be said of overall preparation and planning of the operation. The operation was publicized before it was conducted, and its aims and objectives revealed to the public of which the insurgents are part.[195] These revelations violated OPSEC. Despite the degree of success attributed to the operation, the author scored OPSEC low for the reasons mentioned above (see table 9).

Military Deception

Military Deception (MILDEC) comprises actions taken to mislead insurgents as to the security forces' capabilities, intentions, courses of action, and operations. The announcement of the operation to the public, stating its aims and objectives, as well as the mode of conduct of the operation neglected the principles of MILDEC[196]. Separate exercises should have been conducted to achieve the various objectives stated and not to lump all the achievement of many objectives in one exercise. Thus, the author scored the MILDEC variable low for this case study (see table 9).

Converting Tactical Victory to Strategic Success

Civilians in the NE Nigeria and LCR have been deeply affected by BHI's sustained campaign of suicide attacks, abductions, and massive displacement. Also, the

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[195] *Vanguard Newspaper*, "Army launches Operation Last Hold to restore social-economic in Borno north," 21 April 2018, accessed 15 March 2019, https://www.van guardngr.com/2018/04/army-launches-operation-last-hold-restore-socio-economic-borno-north/.

[196] Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-13, 12

civilians feel that security forces focused more on defeating BHI than protection of civilians. This approach resulted in severe human rights abuses and incidental civilian harm.[197] Security forces conducted Operation Last Hold to break the cycle of violence and restore normalcy. Again, ensuring that the displaced people are relocated and integrated seamlessly in their various communities was the primary focus of the operation. Even if there was tactical victory, the strategic success in this operation was hinged on the successful re-integration of IDPs and guarantee of security and stability of the locals.

Even if the operation was a success, evidence of the number of displaced persons that were successfully relocated and integrated would have made the difference between tactical victory and strategic success. Public dissemination of details about resettlement and reintegration would have implied achievement of strategic success. These details are not available leaving the author to assume tactical victories were not converted to strategic success. Based on this fact, the author scored the conversion of tactical victory to strategic success medium for this operation (see table 10).

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[197] Accidental civilian damage, distinct from violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, is defined as a loss of life, injury, or property loss that occurs as a consequence of legally conducted military or armed group activities during armed conflict.

Table 10. Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Studies Against Selected Variables				
		Case Study Two		
Factor	**Variable**	**2015 Counter-Offensive**		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
Mission	Civil Consideration		X	

Source: Created by author with information from Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

<u>Summary of Analysis of Operation Last Hold</u>

Operation Last Hold achieved its aim and objectives and saw an improvement in civil-military relations. From the analysis, the author scored the hearts and minds variables high because security forces had an overwhelming influence on the locals throughout the operation. Security forces were also able to renew the hope of the locals by successfully relocating the IDPs and restoring the economic activities. Regarding targeting the insurgents, the author scored the operation medium in C2W. This is because BHI has an expanded network and adopted decentralized execution of tasks. Disrupting their C2 structure during the operation might not necessarily mean total disruption of BHI C2 in other areas.

For information protection, the author assessed this variable high due to the presence of adequate security of information equipment during the operation despite the extent of media involvement. OPSEC received low score because of the publicity that the security forces gave to the operation. This publicity had the tendency of compromising critical operational requirements such as the disposition of friendly forces. The author assigned MILDEC variable a low score because the security forces did not take any

action to mislead BHI. One would have expected that the security forces would have conducted a feint operation to confuse to insurgents. Regarding the civil consideration variable, the author scored the operation medium in converting tactical victory into strategic success. This is because there was no report or evidence of the total number of IDPs that the security forces were able to relocate or re-integrate (see table 11).

Table 11. Summary of Tabular Result for Analysis of Case Study Two Against Selected Variables

Factor	Variable	Case Study One 2015 Counter-Offensive		
		Low	Medium	High
People	Heart			X
	Mind			X
Insurgents	Command/Control Warfare		X	
	Information Protection			X
	Operation Security	X		
	Military Deception	X		
Mission	Civil Consideration		X	

Source: Created by author with information from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 November 2014).

Tabular Analysis of Variables

When the results of qualitative analysis have been entered into the table, it became easier to rank the analysis of friendly IO in the case studies and make deductions concerning the current focus of MNJTF's use of IO. Also, the relationship between the mission success variables and other variables revealed trends that called for improved efforts to ensure success in future operations. Tabular results highlighted areas requiring

more work in the IO campaign and made a case for striking a balance, if needed, in future operations. The deductions were then used in chapter 5 to build recommendations that could aid IO doctrine and policy formulation in the future.

Summary

Chapter 4 started with the analysis of two case studies of military operations conducted at different times using selected variables. The results of this qualitative analysis were used to populate an analytical table for further analysis. Through the study of the tabular results, the author was able to make deductions about the current focus and significant limitations of friendly IO in the LCR and highlight necessary IO changes required to increase the operational effectiveness of the MNJTF. The author also deduced from the analysis that the friendly IO targeted towards the insurgents was weak compared to that targeted towards the populace. In the next chapter, this study will be concluded and recommendations made based on the deductions from these analyses.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to examine the peculiar nature of military operations in the LCR and establish the aspects of friendly IO that need emphasis in order to arrive at ways and means of making the existing IO machinery more capable as part of the process of bringing lasting peace to the LCR. This study assessed the MNJTF IO in the NE Nigeria and LCR in the context of the political, social, and economic challenges confronting the region. Chapter 5 concludes the research and makes recommendations for the application of the results of the analysis. The author, in this chapter, also makes recommendations for further study in the insurgency war in the LCR.

Conclusion

In introducing the research topic, the author gave the background of countries that made up the LCR and the role of governments in the struggle against the insurgency in the region. The author also traced the evolution of BHI with particular emphasis on their efficient use of IO and propaganda to achieve their aims and objectives. Stressing the insurgents' IO as a major concern, the author compared it with the efforts of MNJTF security forces in the region and presented the problem statement, which seeks to increase the effectiveness of security forces' COIN operations through a more comprehensive and purposeful IO program.

To achieve the objective and purpose of the study, the author made a broad review of the literature regarding the research topic. The literature review brought out the

evolution of BHI, their mode of attack, and the emergence of CJTF. The author built the

doctrinal framework on a British Joint warfare publication and U.S. FMs. Most of the

COIN operations that the security forces conducted in NE Nigeria and LCR were not

documented from an IO perspective. This constituted a significant gap in the review of

the literature. The methodology for conducting the research was based on the doctrinal

framework established in the literature review. The author created a table based on seven

variables to analyze friendly IO in the LCR. The selected variables were winning the

hearts and minds of the populace, C2 warfare, information protection, OPSEC, MILDEC,

and civil consideration for the employment of IO in converting tactical victories into

strategic success.

The author used qualitative analysis for this research, and developed an analytical

table for review of two case studies based on the selected variables. The tabular results

were then examined to determine the prominence and limitations of MNJTF's IO in LCR.

The significant deduction from the analysis was that insurgent-focused IO is necessary,

but not sufficient for mission success in the LCR. The study, therefore, advanced the

need for a greater IO emphasis on BHI operations and to maintain the current degree of

winning the hearts and minds of the locals. The analysis also identified the efforts of the

security forces in IDP relocation and re-integration in the region. Deductions from the

analysis lead to the following recommendations for improving friendly IO in the LCR.

<u>Recommendations</u>

The analysis in chapter 4 indicated that security forces in the LCR are not strong

in anti-insurgency IO, but good in IO tasks, which are targeted at the people of the

region. Recommendations based on the findings of this study are presented below.

Broad Regional Government Strategy

Relying on military action alone cannot provide a long-term solution to the insurgency problem. Continued assistance from the international bodies such as AU and United Nations for funding of the reformed MNJTF is necessary. Regional governments of LCR must do whatever is fiscally possible to strengthen the MNJTF in the areas of intelligence gathering, active surveillance, and security strategies through international collaboration with developed countries. One form this may take is training and re-training of security forces in capacity building and development. COIN operations must be nested within a comprehensive strategy for the development of LCR. The various governments must make this strategy known to the public, and security forces must be aware of their part in the whole peace process. Only in this way can operations be planned over a synchronized timeline with other governmental agencies to facilitate the achievement of unity of effort.

Winning the hearts and minds is an essential line of effort and is critical to successful LCR COIN operations. It is grossly inadequate to use information engagement to win the minds of the local populace without accomplishing significant infrastructure, social, and economic development projects to complement this effort. The regional governments should therefore not wait for a fully secured environment before embarking on infrastructure development in the LCR. In this case, the author recommends army engineers, who are adequately skilled and can effectively protect their activities, to be employed in developmental projects in the region. This move will not only help win the minds of the people, but will also give the populace a healthy perception of security forces.

Training and Doctrine Review

A significant gap in the NA doctrine is that it does not consider the integration and dissemination of intelligence, coherent policy, strategy, doctrine, and tactics concerning unconventional warfare. Most importantly, it lacks a basic understanding of guerilla warfare and low-intensity conflict. NA doctrine is silent about the policy relating to the conduct of IO, especially in COIN operations. There is, therefore, the need to urgently review the NA doctrine with international provisions and best practices as guides for improvement. While the basic guidelines of the NA doctrine are time-tested, there is the need to refocus the document to better address people, expanded to embrace the complexities of current and future technology, and tailored towards the peculiarities of the historical, cultural, social, economic, and battlespace challenges of NE Nigeria. NA could adopt the British doctrine as a model in this regard.

The MNJTF headquarters should regularly compile reports, observe trends, and make deductions on IO program of all LCR COIN operations. These reports would enrich emerging doctrine and serve as a rich source of reference for future operations. The doctrine could also be double-edged; presenting IO both as a force multiplier, as exists in US Army doctrine, and as independent operations capable of achieving decisive results.

One cannot downplay the place of IO training in military operations. This is because COIN environments make it increasingly difficult to separate the various levels of military operations. Personnel must, therefore, be educated to think beyond tactics in considering the strategic effects of their actions—more aspects of strategic communication, electronic warfare and cyberspace technology should be incorporated into military training of countries in the LCR. Officers and soldiers alike must receive

mandatory training on physical and electronic elements of C2 warfare, information protection, and OPSEC. The rapid contraction of physical space through electronic connectivity makes this an imperative and not an option.

In an operational environment where tactical actions of soldiers can have far-reaching strategic effects, it is necessary for soldiers to have a basic understanding of the operational environment, the mission, and how their roles affect the bigger picture. Therefore, troops must be trained on aspects of cultural awareness. This is because all the countries within the LCR speak different languages and have a peculiar culture. The culture factor is significant to understanding the operational environment. Only with this background can troops effectively act within the principles of IO for the furtherance of the operational mandate.

Instituting an Effective Information Operations Structure

There is little evidence that a formal IO structure exists in the LCR. The military Public Relations Officer is the visible MNJTF entity that handles IO in the region. The Army Communications and Information Systems does little in terms of IO. Therefore, there is the need to establish an adequate IO cell to plan deliberate IO; regularly observe and analyze the operational environment information plan; rapidly synchronize messages; and execute specific information tasks in support of the COIN operations in the region. These structures will make friendly IO more proactive, deliberate, and responsive. It will also help to provide a common operating picture throughout the area of operations.

The power and influence of the media cannot be over-emphasized. In a world where people view perception as reality, any organizations that neglect the media do so at their peril. Security forces are not exempt to this. Although, the relationship between the

press and the security forces is cordial, security forces must further embrace the media

and take full advantage of this relationship to change the tide of events. The BHI has

attracted international attention by embracing the media, who were more than eager to

report stories about their activities and operations. Security forces must do more to send

their stories across for everyone to know the truth. The MNJTF should partner with the

Nigerian Defense Headquarters to take advantage of its media house solely for security

forces' PSYOP. This will help shape the operational environment by publishing

initiatives in the region and emphasizing insurgents' misdeeds and losses.

Establishing Lesson Learned Cell in the Multinational Joint Task Force Headquarters

Establishing a cell for lessons learned at the MNJTF headquarters will help foster

a knowledge sharing culture among the security forces operating in LCR. The cell would

ensure continuous compilation and submission of observations and recommendations

through briefs and reports of conduct of all COIN operations. The cell will provide a

framework to validate, integrate, and evaluate lessons learned and best practices to

resolve any operational issues and implement corrective actions. The cell will also

monitor recommended changes in tactics, techniques, and procedures throughout the

implementation process and evaluate issues to determine if the associated problem has

been solved. This will help facilitate an improved operational performance and behavior

of security forces in the region.

Recommendations for Further Study

Towards advancing the current research, there is a need for researchers to

undertake as further research the synergy that existed between the Boko Haram leaders

and some disintegrative forces within the LCR and international community. These forces for some time have been aiding BHI with finances and weapons to carry out their terror acts, which are currently devastating the NE Nigeria and the LCR. Research efforts should also be geared towards improving IO through OPSEC and information security to reduce the ability of insiders to leak information which is damaging to the security force mission.

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