

Women in Violent Conflicts and the Challenges of Food Security in Northeast Nigeria: The Case of Boko Haram Insurgency

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Abstract : Women are key actors in ensuring food security in terms of food availability, food access, and food utilization in the developing economy, however, they suffer mostly during violent conflicts due to their feminist nature of rearing and caring for their children and relatives. The study was embarked upon to access the effects of violent conflicts posed by Boko Haram insurgency on women and food security in the Northeast of Nigeria. The study made use of secondary data. A time series data collected over a 22 years period were used. The data collected were subjected to descriptive statistics and t-test analysis. The findings of the study established a significant difference in food production (availability) before and after the Boko Haram insurgency at the 1% level of significance. The high level of Internally Displaced Person (IDP) with a high proportion of women depicts a very low level of food accessibility as the men and women has fled and uninhabited their place of abode for over a period of four to five years, thus diminishing their economic power, and the means of acquiring food which invariably endanger food stability and utilization. The study confirmed the abduction and changing roles of women as cooks, porters, spies, partners, and sex slaves to Boko Haram troop members, thus affecting their livelihoods and food security. The study recommends hands-on interventions by the governmental, non-governmental and international agencies to terminate the activities of Boko Haram in the area and restore the food production for enhanced food security.

Keywords : Boko Haram insurgency, food accessibility, food production, food utilization, women's livelihoods

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