

# Lake Chad Basin Region and The Rise of Insurgency: Issues on Governance Profiling

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*Abstract- Insurgency has become a serious threat to the Lake Chad Basin region and this has undermined not only its peace and security but also the socio-economic development of this area. The Lake Chad Basin which stretches Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria has become a hub of insurgency which has witnessed most devastated humanitarian crises manifests in killings, maiming, kidnapping, and force displacement of people, cattle rustling, and other forms of human rights violation. This paper examines the nexus between insurgency and governance in the Lake Chad region. This paper is a qualitative study with secondary source of data obtained from journals, textbooks, internet, newspapers etc. and is contently analysed. A governance and state fragility theory is the theoretical framework within which this paper is anchored. Finding of this paper revealed that the wave of insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin region has connection with poor governance in all the countries of the region which are characterized by weak democratic institutions and governance, brazen corruption, chronic poverty; unemployment, political uncertainties, socio-economic inequality, limited access to basic services and exclusionary governance which has created an environment ripe for insurgency and all kinds of insecurity to thrived. To address these challenges in the Lake Chad Basin region, countries within the region must as a matter of urgency strengthen their democratic institutions to entrench governance that priorities security structure that focuses on economic welfare, emphasising the centrality of human being and human being at the heart of discourse and policy. Additionally, citizen participation in decision making process and collaboration that enhance governance and security in the respective LCBC countries should be entrenched.*

**Key Words:** Lake Chad, Basin, Region, Insurgency, Governance

## I. INTRODUCTION

Although the Lake Chad Basin region has witnessed various degrees of violent conflict of insurgence, there remain significant gaps on the prevalent of insurgency in the region. The magnitude of the uprising of this insurgency has been a serious contending security

issue that has threatened and undermined the very existence of peace, security, and economic development of the Lake Chad Basin Areas. A sub-region which constitutes potential zones for economic expansion and sustainable growth has become an epicentre of insurgencies with violent manifestation from Boko Haram, banditry, kidnapping, arms trafficking, arms robbery, cattle rustling and many others. Lawrence, (2009) aptly described insurgency as an organized crusade aimed at the overthrow of a constituted authority through rebellion and armed conflict. Since 2009, Boko Haram insurgence has attacked the Northeast of Nigeria, capturing territories and spreading to some part of the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) region of Niger, Chad and Cameroon (Oluwadere). Hence, Boko Haram insurgency remains significant security challenges confronting the LCB, one of the most active and deadliest terrorist groups in sub-Saharan Africa (IEP, 2020).

The potential buffer and expansion zones of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria have all been impacted by violent extremism that obstructs state functionality and its capacity and willingness to provide human security (Anikwe, 2022). Tayimlong, (2020), accepted the contestation that the Lake Chad region is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world because of the activities of insurgencies. Insurgencies are serious national security threats because, although they cannot achieve their political objectives (without changing to larger forms of war), multiple and widespread insurgencies can nullify a state's essence, jeopardizing its survival (Lekunze, 2023). Insurgency of Boko Haram has exerted disastrous consequences on communities with many people the majority of whom are civilians have died in attacks, clashes and explosions in the entire LCB region (Anikwe, 2022). This has also led to the disruption of communities and livelihoods in the Lake Chad Basin Area which has created refugee flows, internal displacement and humanitarian crises; as well,

the region trade has also been disrupted and the regional economy destabilized (Sambe 2016, in Galeazzi, Medinilla, Ebiede, & Demidt 2018).

The Lake Chad, once known as “the Pale-Chadian Sea”, was the fourth biggest lake in Africa in 1963 with a surface area of 25 000 km<sup>2</sup> situated in the Sahel region of Africa and bordered by four countries – Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria, and dependent on a basin that includes six countries covered by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), including the Central African Republic and Libya, this lake was one of the largest bodies of fresh water on the African continent, Lake Chad and its ecosystems are of immense strategic relevance for the entire region. It provides in effect water and a livelihood to more than 30 million people, of which the majority earn their living through agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing. This region was also a food exporting hub, playing a key role for food security. The entire basin includes an estimated 47 million people (Abdullahi, 2017). It was created with a technical yet broad mandate to promote the common management of the water and environmental resources in the area of the basin (Galeazzi, Medinilla, & Ebied, 2016). The Lake Chad’s location within the borders separating Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria is geographically significant in West-Central Africa because of its cultural and socio economic prominence as the region’s agricultural heart-land (Okpara, Stringer, & Dougill, 2016).

However, in spite of the enormous agriculture endowment and socio-economic prominence of this region, it has remained underdeveloped and its natural resources remain untapped. The state apparatus to galvanise the Lake Chad cherished heritage for the prosperity of the people remains severely challenged by non-state actors because of the incapacity of the governments to provide governance that can effectively and optimally marshal out the desired human and economic development of the region. According to Sisay, (2015), Good governance plays an essential role in achieving multidimensional poverty-reduction goals. Economic growths help to reduce poverty only in good governance state. The scenario of governances in the various countries that makeup the regions have become a thing of concerns, the fragility of these countries have exposed it’s to all

forms of insurgencies. In fact, insurgency has taken a centre stage in the Lake Chad Basin area; but one fundamental question that begs for an answer is, whether the vulnerability in the region occasioned from governance lag account for the rise in the activities of insurgency being experienced?.

The question above quickly prompted the description that the Lake Chad Area has some characteristic, which make it vulnerable to conflicts of insurgency. Firstly, it is particularly underdeveloped region defined by a weak state capacity to exercise control over the instruments of force, against criminal groups. Secondly, the area is home to an increasing number of young under- or unemployed people who have proved vulnerable targets for those who seek to turn their resentment and despair toward violent and other illicit purposes, especially transnational terrorist groups. Thirdly, there is the evident proliferation of small arms and light weapons in ECOWAS member state resulting from years of protracted conflicts (Kwaja, 2022). Corroborating the foregoing position, the evidences of the regional characteristics are the manifestation of high level poverty, unemployment, corruption, competition for economic and political power among the elites, smuggling of high volume illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. These and many more underscores the context where insurgencies have thrived, sustained and evolved through the exploitation of these socio-economic and political gaps (Abdullahi, 2017).

Similarly, it is unarguably that the Lake Chad region has been characterized by atrophy governance structural and institutional struggle over the scarce resources, environmental degradation political uncertainties and low human development indexes (Ayandele 2021). These underlying failure of governance in the region has increased its fragility and predisposition to violence conflict (Ayandele, 2021). A conflict trap, analyses by Collier (2007) in Sisay (2015) found that countries are prone to civil war and insurgency when faced with a combination of low income, poor governance that is not inclusive, along with high income inequality. Calder, (2004, in Onoja 2023), Onoja, (2013) argues that governance entails projecting human security as political resources, that is, ‘securing security through prosperity’, as most of the huge security budgets provision by the Lake Chad

region would not address the sources of insecurity as it does not create job, put food on the table, increase social spending, improve infrastructure and advance the wellbeing of the people which is a sine qua non of governance. However, this study was conceived on this background to interrogate the relationship between the rise in insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin and the efficacy of governance in the region.

#### Statement of the Problem

The Lake Chad region has been struck by extensive conflict of insurgencies mostly from Boko Haram which has undermined peace, security, socio-economic and political development and has led to vicious humanitarian crises in the region. As at the last quarter of 2020, insurgency had led to the loss of more than 35, 000 lives and displacement of 2.7 million people, with an estimated 9.8 million people in need and 41 million food-insecure people at crisis and emergency level across the affected areas of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria (UNOCHA, 2020).

The increased assaults by the insurgence informed the coordinated policy framework that resulted in joint military operations of Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) between Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, LCBC cross-border collaboration and formation of civilian Joint Task Force (JTF) to tackle insurgency (terrorism) in the region. Despite the brilliant regional structural formations of various security outfits by the LCBC to fight against the insurgency, and the role of governance in addressing the perceived factors responsible for insurgency such as poverty, unemployment corruption, and infrastructure deficits have all created a fertile ground for insurgency to manifest in different forms. IGG, (2020) maintained that member states have continued to rely on military to address governance issues in the region.

Collectively, scholars and commentators have provided insight on the uprising of insurgency in the Lake Chad region with diverse views, some have identified porous border among LCBC states, and other viewed it from the lenses of economic woes of the region, which has created endemic poverty and unemployment, others on religious polarization, ungoverned space, climate change and many more. It

is the realization on the significance of governance that prompted Ugbudu, & Amende, (2015) contention that governance in a state is exercised by the leadership whose responsibility is to manage the state's resources to bring greater happiness for the greater number of people. While, discourses of various scholars on the rise of insurgency in LCBC are considered significance, issue of bad governance of the LCBS received a less degree of coverage from scholars. It is on this basis that this paper examines the nexus between the insurgency and vulnerabilities in the LBCS states occasioned by governance to fill the gaps in the extant literature.

#### Conceptual Analysis and Literature Review

##### Lake Chad Basin Region and the Drivers of Insurgency

To apprehend the degree of insurgency operation in the Lake Chad Basin region, this paper provided scholarly conceptualization of some key concepts such as Lake Chad Basin Commission, insurgency and that of governance.

Lake Chad Basin Commission was established by regional states in 1964 to manage water resources, preserve the ecosystem, and promote peace and security (Fimpong, 2020). Lake Chad is one the largest fresh water providers in Africa, a continent often characterized by its dramatic landscape, large populations, and competition for scarce natural resource (Griffin, 2020).

For Living Water, (2003) the Lake which is located in the semi-arid region of the Sahara Desert is a vital source of fresh water and other resources for human, livestock and wildlife communities. The .main economic livelihood in the basin includes fishing, agriculture and pastoralism. It is believed that over 150, 000 fishermen lives on the lake shores and its islands. Lake Chad Basin Vision (2025) viewed Lake Chad as a region where the regional and national authorities accept responsibilities for fresh water, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation and judicious integrated river basin management to achieve sustainable development. Meanwhile, it is apposite to state that the LCBC was created with broad mandate to promote the common management of water and environmental resources in the area of the basin.

Lake Chad Basin Commission according to Coe & Foley, 2001 as in Nwanegbo, Umara & Ali (2017) is located between latitudes 60 and 340 N and longitudes 70 and 240E and one Africa's Lakes providing fresh water and other resources to more than 20 million people living in Nigeria and Niger- which along with the Central Africa Republic (CAR) (Science in Africa, 2003) is the single most important geographical feature of the area.

Insurgency is an ambiguous concept. For NATO, the key to understanding an insurgency in a given operational environment rests on the ability to analyse the conditions, motivations, and characteristics of this type of political-military conflicts. However, insurgency according to Javed (2018) is derived from the Latin word *insurgere* 'to arise'. It describes a person who uses force to attack or target the established system. Therefore, an insurgency can be seen as an organized, armed political struggle whose goal may be the seizure of power through revolutionary takeover and replacement of the existing government. Most of the insurgencies are an outcome of a deep dissatisfaction and disappointment with the given political and social reality. Insurgency is like war, it has an enduring nature and a changing character. It remains a strategy entailing violence used by the weak and desperate against a power system (Steve, 2012). It is an attempt to press home their demands of taking over the system or have a reasonable share of control over the resources.

The United States Department of Defence (2007) in Olanrewaju, Folarin, & Folarin (2017) defines insurgency as organized movement that has the aim of overthrowing a constituted government through subversive means and armed conflict. This definition presupposes that insurgent groups employ unlawful means towards achieving an end, which could be political, religious, social or even ideological. In another development, Lawrence, (2009) viewed insurgency as an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict? The key distinction between an insurgency and other movement is the decision to use violence to achieved political goals. An insurgency is normally a protracted political and military struggle designed to weaken the existing government's power, control, and legitimacy, while

increasing the insurgency's power, control and legitimacy. The majority of insurgencies have been limited to local regions or specific countries. However with the revolution in communications allow insurgent groups and leader to communicate worldwide to find support for their cause, and to support causes they view as compatible with their goals (Lawrence, 2009). Governance, the concept of governance has not unilateral definition as scholars have viewed it differently. However, reformers in many governments, the civil society and investors increasingly view governance as key to development and conducive investment climate, which in turn has increased the demand for monitoring the quality of governance in a country over time (Kaufman et al, 2005). For Michael, (1984) in Fukuyama, (2013), defines governance as a government's ability to make and enforce rules and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not. What Michael regarded as "infrastructural" rather than "despotic power. Governance means the process of exercise of authority to govern people or regulate public affairs. In another hand, governance relates to effective management of the affairs of a country at all levels, guaranteeing its territorial integrity, and securing the safety and overall welfare of people (Chhotray & Stoker, 2008).

It is also the processes by which authority is exercise in the management of a country's economic and social resources; and the capacity of government to design, formulate and implement policies, and in general, to discharge governmental functions (World Bank, 1994). UNDP (1997), Nwachukwu, & Obiora (2008), in Ugbedu & Amende (2015) on their part have viewed governance as "the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a nation's affairs at all levels. It is a complex mechanisms, processes and institution through which citizens and group articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and obligations, and mediate their differences ". The following characteristic of good governance which are, participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision. The paper adopted the definition of Ugbedu and Amende because it's objectively described the rudiment of governance that is capable dispelling those elements that creates favourable

environment for insurgence to thrive. However, the next paragraph focuses on scholarly views on the validation for the rise of insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin region.

In general, so many scholars have made concerted effort in proffering solution to the problem of insurgency uprising in the Lake Chad region with a special focus on the drivers of insurgency. Scholars like, Nagarajante et al (2018); Bockler (2019), Tallon (2019), Frimpong (2020), and Skah, & Lyammouri, (2020), considered the connection between climate change and insurgencies in the Lake Basin. According to their perception, climate change is a threat stimulus that resonates with others socio-economic, political and environmental pressure to increase the possibility of conflict in the Lake Chad Basin. They argue that as a result of climate change the people living within the region are confronted with limited access to natural resources, with sources of livelihoods such as fishing grounds and land for agriculture and pastoralism. This exposes them to susceptible and easy for enlistment into insurgence groups to secure accessibility to limited resources in the insurgence controlled enclave. They also maintained that drought which is the outcome of climate change significantly increases the likelihood of sustained conflict for particular vulnerable people whose livelihoods depend on agriculture. This argument is significant in this study because it has been able to probe the justification for rising of insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin region which is the key concern of this paper. How this paper becomes necessary in the sense that it perceived the rise of insurgency in Lake Chad from a governance context which the argument above have pay no or less attention.

Viewing differently from the above perspective, scholars like Olu-Adeyemi & Mekanjuola (2019), holds that, evidences linking the threat of insurgency to the porous/undefined nature of shared borderland with Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon. These borders favour illegal arms trafficking; the borderland forested area serve as shelter and factory base of the insurgents; and the borderland ecological factor strengthens insurgent membership and operation in the region terrain. Charas, Shehu, & Muritala (2018), position is in alignment with the above assertion, that trans-border arms smuggling has undermined good

governance and disrupts trade, tourism and investment, economic development and generally subjected democracy and development at risk. However, these positions were able to point out one salient feature or problem associated with the Lake Chad region which is border porosity seen as responsible for the arms trafficking and arms proliferation in the hands of the insurgencies which has given them more impetus to carry out their atrocious activities. Thus, this study believe in porosity of border within the region but the porous border generally is a failure of governance in the management of its territorial border which is essential in national security architecture which is very germane in this present study.

In the work of Nwanegbo, Umara & Ali (2017), considered the state of insurgent in the Lake Chad region from the perspective of poverty. Their study which aligned with poverty and inequality theory maintains that general poverty level in the region is the cause of current insurgency, in addition, to general level of poverty is the downfall of agricultural activities which is the major economic activity in the Lake Chad region, the porous nature of boundaries of the Lake Chad Basin also account for the current rise in insurgents. Seeing it from the challenges of regional peace building in the Lake Chad Basin, the authors believed that Boko Haram is principally responsible for the act of terrorism in the region which originally was created as vehicle for achieving economic development (Kwaja, 2022). The argument of these scholars are very fundamental in this study because it provided analysis on the causes and rise of insurgency in the Lake Chad region but little attention was given to issue of governance which is the super structure that authoritatively allocates the scarce resources of the political system to eliminate and alleviate poverty and promote economic stability; hence this present paper x-ray the perceptive of Lake Chad poor governance and its failure to meet the needs of the populace in relations to rising of insurgency.

Another study conducted by Emeka, (2023) on international terrorism and the pitfalls of the Lake Chad Basin Development Authority, matters arising, situates the causes of terrorism to the geopolitical complexities of the Lake Chad Basin, considering both local and external factors that hinder progress towards

cooperative security arrangement and regional efforts. Historical animosities, linguistic differences and mutual distrust between countries such as Chad, Nigeria, and Cameroon pose challenges to building cooperative security architecture. Additionally, eternal influences particularly France's interests in the region, further complicated the security dynamics. This current study tend to disagreed with the author that geopolitical complexity could be driver of insurgency but accepted the fact that external influence from hegemon can leverage on such complexity to instigate insurgency to achieve their national interest objectives, even at that, good governance can address such challenge of geographical complexity, therefore, it become expedient to interrogate the situation of Lake Chad region occasioned by governance failure of countries of Lake Chad which the above assertion neglected.

It is however the contention of Dagogo, (2022), on conflict and regional underdevelopment, a review of Lake Chad Basin region, established analysis of the historic dynamics of Lake Basin region and the common challenges that Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria face, this brief deconstructs common narratives around "violent extremism" held by the policy community; it provide a more nuance explanation of the drivers of insurgency in the region which is clear that Nigeria's foreign policy has been poised to end insurgency in the region. The opinion above is indispensable because it has attempted to provide solution to the problem of insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin region looking at external projection towards addressing national interest. Again the preceding study only focused on Nigeria's foreign policy while this study cameral scanned transcended Nigeria territory. Be that as it may, this present study tries to solve same problem with a different approach that rest on the governance and its institutions within the Lake Chad Basin region.

In a work title Boko Haram terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin, implication for sub-regional security concluded that the wave of terrorism in the sub-region has a connection to the wave of global terrorism (Oluwadare, 2013). This paper observed that the inherent force of globalization has indeed compressed the space and time with palpable influence on the global land scape but the idea applied one size fits all

approach to situates the menace of insurgencies flourishing in the region to the wave of global terrorism without appreciating the challenge of governance or lack of political will to do what is right by the political class. This prompted a symbolic description by Samuel & Uwak (2015) that the contemporary terrorism in Africa is a latent function of prolonged failure of political leadership to deliver purposeful good governance. Summarily, this paper has pointed out that the rise of insurgency in the Lake Chad region, however, most emphasis are on porous border, ungoverned spaced, climate change, poverty, unemployment and many others. Consequently, no attention or little attention has been given to issue of governance which is relevant in addressing others factors identified in the preceding argument

#### Theoretical Framework

This paper relied on two major theoretical frameworks- the governance theory and state fragility theory. Governance and state fragility theories provide a critical understanding into the relationship between Lake Chad fragility resulted from failure of governance, and the rise of insurgency as the outcome of such failure. Governance theory expounded by Robert I. Paul Collier and Ankehoeffler in the year 2000 highlights the importance of effective governance, rule of law and state legitimacy in the containment of insurgencies. However, governance and state fragility theories are significant lenses in seeing the why and how of insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin region.

#### Governance Theory

Governance theory x-rays the processes, structures, and machinery through which power is exercised in decision making that affect the political system or societies. It focuses on the importance of effective and accountable institutions, transparency, participation and the rule of law to deliver excellent governance. The theory believed that weak governance is characterized of corruption, lack of accountability, abuse of rule law, violation of human rights and inadequate essential services, creates a fertile ground for insurgency to thrive and sustained ( Obayelu, 2019; Adekunle et al, 2019 in Emeka, 2023). The scenario above, properly described the countries of Lake Chad Basin region which has reinforces the contradiction on the argument about the conception of state existence

for humane and humanity and continue to exist for such purposes. Thus, the governance theory failed to provide adequate understanding on the rise of insurgency in the Lake Chad region; hence it is essential to introduce state fragility theory to capture the variable of insurgency.

#### State Fragility Theory

State fragility theory is a fundamental theoretical tool that provides understanding of the challenges of insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin region. State fragility theory was developed by Joel S. Migdal in the year 2004. According to Bello (2022), Joel Migdal observed the relationship among state and society, where there are differences between the formally pronounced policies and the real distribution of state resources. The list of countries included India, Mexico, Egypt and Sierra Leone etc. He traced this disparity to the lack of social control by the government, “the actual ability to make the operative rules of the game for people in the society”. This not only includes existence of government agencies over the territory and extraction of resources but also the ability to appropriate resources and to regulate people's behaviour.

According to Vallings & Moreno-Torres (2005), there is no internationally agreed definition of fragility; states are considered fragile when their government cannot provide the core functions to its people including the poor. The attributes of fragile state emphasizes weak capacity and/or lack of political will to provide services and to sustain development partnership with the community. Furthermore, weak institution are prone to economic decline, poverty, struggle over scarce natural resources, and violent conflict etc. are all ultimate manifestation of state fragility. Okunade, (2022) corroborated that fragile states are marked by low economic growth, low access to infrastructure or absence of basic social services, low levels of life expectancy and high level of infant mortality. It is essential to mention that fragile states are those that fail to meet the essential human needs of their citizens thereby making them vulnerable to security issues, such as poverty, unemployment, environmental conditions, violent attacks, kidnapping, trafficking, displacement, etc. Emeka, (2023), emphasizes that these vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with state makes some of it citizens preyed

to predators like internal conflicts, violence and insurgency/terrorism.

#### Application and Relevance of the Theories

These theories, governance and state fragility are significance in explaining the bane of insurgencies midwifed by Boko Haram that has beleaguered the Lake Chad Basin region made up of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. The region has been victims of governance challenges in the areas of corruption, weak institutions and inadequate provision of public services. These governance deficits have undermined state legitimacy, eroded trust between governed and the government, and created frustrations that extremist groups like Boko Haram exploit (Ukeje, 2018).

It is suffice to note that this region faced various manifestations of state fragility which include political instability, economic disparities, and social division total absence and disconnect of state from sub-units. Such conditions have influence Boko Haram and other extremists groups to exploit grievances, recruit member, and establish their control in the region (Tella, Adedjei & Ayodele, 2020, Emeka, 2023). However, in relation to insurgencies in the Lake Chad Basin region, state fragility theory maintained that fragile states in the Lake Chad Basin region with bad government and weak governance institutions tend to encourage and promote opportunities for insurgent syndicates to establish safe havens and carry out their activities as evidence in the Boko Haram insurgency which has operated for over a decade undermining peace and sustainable development of the region.

In a related development, relating these theories to this study, it is appropriate to say that governance and state fragility theories has succinctly explain the relationship between insurgency and governance in the Lake Chad Basin region. The theories are significant here for their ability to provide insight on the intricate link between insurgency and weak governance. In unison with the above revelation, the followers of Mohammed Yusuf cited corruption and poor governance as motivation for their actions. Thus, Awoyemi, (2012), in Zumve, Ingyoroko, & Akuva, (2013) as in Samuel, & Uwak, (2015), maintained that there is a colony of lumpen proletariat majority of who are not in regular employment who gain their subsistence mainly from crime. These colonies of

destitute that are desolate become major reservoir of foot soldiers for Boko Haram insurgency.

#### An Overview Analysis of Vulnerability Factors in the Lake Chad Basin Countries

For many years now, countries of the Lake Chad region had been enmeshed in the plethora of challenges arising from weak governance institutions that are incapable of optimal policies actions capable of stimulating economic growth and sustainable development of the region. Abiye (2011) noted that emergent militant groups took advantage of government's inefficient action and inaction in dealing with fundamental elements of nationhood such as internal security, resource control, injustice, corruption, poverty unemployment ethnicism, favouritism, marginalization etc. These factors have made insurgency endemic in the Lake Chad area, as explicitly exemplified in Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria.

Cameroon: is one of country that makes up Lake Chad region located in Central Africa in the heart of the Gulf Guinea, Cameroon covers a surface area of 475 000 km and shares common borders with Chad, Central Africa Republic, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria (African Development Bank 2004). Cameroon falls within the bottom 20% in governance matters. In the past decades, and now, Cameroon is among the few African countries under observation for having reached the heavily indebted poor countries initiative completion point (Sikod, & Teke, 2012). The socio-economic context is characterized by poverty as shown by the following indicators: (i) the incidence of poverty at the national level is estimated at 40.2% in 2002; (ii) the sustainable Human Development Index is estimated at 0.499 according to the World Human Development Report 2003 which ranked Cameroon 142<sup>nd</sup> on the global poverty scale (African Development Bank, 2004).

For a long period of time, Cameroon has been a de facto one party state, where citizens have not been free to select leaders of their choice. In the late 90s the Transparency International classified Cameroon as the most corrupt country in the world for two years running. It is no surprise that the level of corruption continues to be very high. Corruption and lack of respect for the rule of law are mutually reinforcing. In

recent times, governance deficiencies such as rule of law corruption and ineffective provision of public services have accounted for large proportion of poverty, income inequality (Sikod, & Teke, 2012)..

The far north region of Cameroon equally faced several governance challenges. One outstanding issue that has been directly linked to Boko Haram insurgency is the youth exclusion from the national public service, particularly from defence and security forces, which the long for. In Kolofata, for instance youths who are from Kanuri extraction lamented the inability of the elites to enable them join national army. Furthermore, according to Transparency International (3013), Cameroon was placed 144<sup>th</sup> out of 177 nations in Corruption Perception Index in 2013, the year Boko Haram marked its presence in the country by kidnapping seven members of a French household in the Far North region. With the above evidential attributes of Cameroon, it becomes easy for extremist in the Lake Chad region to recruits; brain washed this poverty stricken youths to take up arms against constituted authority.

Chad Republic: the Republic of Chad is predominantly a desert/semi-desert land with a population of over 4 million as at 1998 and a battered economy base on mainly cattle and cotton. It has practically not basic necessity of lives like roads, rails, hospital, electricity etc. and since attaining independence in August 1960 from France, Chad had undergone a series of political conflicts emanating from its geo political, ethnic, religious and economic bases (Ejika 1998, in Ibrahim, 2009). However, after many decades of independence, the situation in Chad is still severely unpalatable where at the moment about 11 million live in abject poverty. Since independence, Chad has experienced social unrest, political instability, and conflict with neighbouring Sudan. These conflicts have destabilised the country's infrastructure and combined with an unstable government, have led to a dire humanitarian situation. The Global Development Report 2007 assert Chad as the seventh poorest country in the world and poverty is said to affect 55% of the population, especially in the rural areas ( Oluwadare, 2016). Certainly, it is the failure on the part of government to provide governance that addresses the yearning and aspirations of the people. Hence, it has created a fertile ground for the vulnerable one to exploit and also be



available for recruitment by terror organizations such as Boko Haram.

For instance, according to. Tayimlong (2020), there was discontent with the governance of the Lake Chad province. Western Chad, particularly the Lake Chad province, faced its own context-specific governance challenges which eased the spill over of the Boko Haram insurgency from Nigeria's north-eastern region. It witnessed very limited civil engagement with the government that could bring about any meaningful development. Suffice to assert that Chad is characterised by ineffective public service delivery, the weak state of the social contract between the Authority of Chad and the people of the Lake Province was however a significant driver of radicalisation in the province. It was easy for Boko Haram to lure some of the vulnerable populace to joining the ranks of the insurgency in order to establish a caliphate in which they will be self-governed and have sense of belonging.

Niger: the Republic of Niger, located in West Africa, faces significant challenge in local governance and security (Smith, 2018). It is one of the country that makeup the Lake Chad Basin region that is overburdened with many challenges as a result of poor governance since the attainment of its independence from France in the year 1960. Niger is faced with endemic social vulnerability with enormous social difficulties; endemic unemployment and underemployment, poverty, a low level of education and an inefficient healthcare system with a poverty rate of 48,9% and per capital income of 420 dollars, Niger is one of the poorest nations in the world. In 2015 it was ranked at the bottom of United Nations Development Index occupying 188 places out 188 countries with more than 3.6 million people suffering from food insecurity Iratni (2017). This overwhelming and worrisome scenario of Niger Republic is linked to governance; the government is incapacitated to drives economic growth for human growth and development. Okoroda & Aboribo (20240) bears their mind when they aptly disclosed that governance in Niger Republic has a weak democratic institutions and governance practices in fostering instability. The lack of accountability, corruption and exclusionary governance has eroded public trust in political processes creating an atmosphere that inspired

insurgency and unrest. Chronic poverty and socio-economic inequality exacerbate public grievances while external influences including regional conflicts and international interests, further complicate the country political landscape..

Nigeria: Nigeria is the most populous Black Country in the world known for internal dynamic contradiction and insecurity heralded by bad governance and other related issues. A nation blessed with vast human and material resources continued to wallow in poverty of governance. For instance, Achebe (1983) in his famous pamphlet, the trouble with Nigeria clearly captured leadership, tribalism and false image as one of the greatest rocky foundation that has dare governance in Nigeria. This shaky foundation which took pre-eminence at independence created several overreached which has outlived with many consequences of inability to transform the lives of the poor and the needy. Onah (2005) in Ugbedu & Amende (2015) noted that, the deteriorating trends in Nigeria governance to wit; depressed economy, high poverty rate, unemployment infrastructural decay, endemic corruption, human rights abuses and several manifestation of failing state is a fundamental crisis of governance. This development created room for radicalization as Boko Haram took advantage of corruption and bad governance with the high rates of illiteracy and poverty to radicalise youth and encourage them to join the vanguard. Suffice to say that the failure of governance has created poverty as observed that poverty remains the greatest threat to survival of human rights, democracy and development in Nigeria (Olaniyi, 2015).

It is worthy to note that, the backlashes of the Nigeria bad governance became more pronounce and evidence in the north-eastern part of the country that produced vulnerable large number of population of the youths. Nwanegbo, Umara, & Ali (2017) described the level of poverty in the North East as endemic, which is equated with many other parts of the country is high, in a country where there are an ever-increasing number of energetic youths roaming the street; the spate of vulnerability is presumably very high. Statistical reports from National unemployment rates for Nigeria, it proved that the number of unemployed persons that fluctuates between 31.1% in 2000; 31.6% in 2001; 12.6% in 2002; 14.8% in 2003; 13.4% in

2004; 11.9% in 2005; equally in 2006, it stood 13.7% in 2007; 14.6% in 2008 14.9% in 2009 19.7% (National Bureau of Statistics 2009:238). Yet it is noted that the North East presents a distinctive high record of these poverty and unemployment (Nwanegbo, Umara, & Ali 2017). In the view of Salawu (2010), unemployment increases the number of people who are prepared to kill or be killed for a given course at token benefit. The aforementioned developmental challenges has been evidence characteristic of Nigeria which has joint forces with other countries vulnerabilities within the Lake Chad Basin to reinforce operative terrain for insurgency to thrive and to be sustained. The bellow table is a proved of how fragile the situation of the region that favoured the operation of insurgency.

Table Showing Fragile State Index of LCBC

Country Score	Overall
Cameroon	97.0
Chad	108.5
Niger	96.4
Nigeria	98.5

Source: Extracted from found for peace (2019)

#### Discussion of Findings

This paper Lake Chad Basin and insurgency, perspective on governance periscope the rise of insurgence in the region and the findings of this scan revealed that the upsurge of insurgency in the region is predicated on the fertile ground created by failure of governance to address the vulnerability associated with the region. This, as disclosed in Samuel & Uwak (2015) that the contemporary insurgency in Africa is a latent function of prolonged failure of political leadership to deliver purposeful good governance. Acknowledging the consequents of governance deficiencies in the Lake Chad Area Kwaja, (2020) maintained that the Lake Chad Area has some characteristic, which make it vulnerable to conflicts of insurgencies. It is particularly underdeveloped region defined by a weak state capacity to exercise control over the instruments of force, against criminal groups. Secondly, the area is home to an increasing number of young under- or unemployed people who have proved vulnerable targets for those who seek to turn their resentment and despair toward violent and other illicit purposes. Thirdly, there is the evident proliferation of

small arms and light weapons in ECOWAS member state resulting from years of protracted conflicts.

Consequently, insurgency and governance nexus in the Lake Chad Basin region is further reinforced by the supposition of state fragility theory that states are considered fragile when their government cannot provide the core functions to its people including the poor. The attributes of fragile state according to Vallings & Moreno-Torres (2005), emphasizes weak capacity and weak institution areas prone to economic decline, poverty, struggle over scarce natural resources, and violent conflict etc. Thus, Emeka, (2023), emphasizes that these vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with state makes some of its citizens preyed to predators like internal conflicts, violence and insurgency which has become the hallmarks of the region.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has been able to explore the wave of insurgency in the Lake Chad region and the finding revealed that the extent of insurgence in Lake Chad Basin region has a connection with the trouble of governance in the region, that failure to promote the wellbeing of the people, has created a volatile environment characterised by poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, brazen corruption, inequality, tribalism, decay infrastructures, untold hardship and many other conflicts traps. This vulnerability created as a result of poor governance has oiled the radicalization of these vulnerable youths by extremists, religious and political mechants. However, this paper recommended that, to address these challenges in the Lake Chad Basin region, countries within the region must as a matter of urgency strengthens their democratic institutions to entrench governance that priorities security structure that focuses on economic welfare, emphasising the centrality of human being and human being at the heart of discourse and policy. Additionally, citizen participation in decision making process and collaboration that enhance governance and insecurity traps in the respective LCBC countries should be encouraged

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