



The Impact of Terrorism on National Security in Nigeria

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Abstract

Terrorism is now a worldwide concept, and its prevalence has been aided by globalization. National interests, on the other hand, are the overall safety of the citizens and their property. The activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria have undermined not just the safety and security of its citizens but have also decimated the development of the country. However, the recent insecurity in all the geopolitical zones has also added to the problems confronting the giant of Africa. The paper employs secondary sources of data collection. Findings from the paper revealed that the political and economic impact of terrorism in Nigeria has affected and crippled a lot of businesses permanently in the country. Politically, terrorism in Nigeria has created a divide among the citizens of the country and has also reduced their level of trust and response to the government on the issue. The paper recommends that the Nigerian state must prioritize the security and safety of its citizens irrespective of their region of abode.

Key Words: Impact of Terrorism, National Security and Nigeria.

Introduction

Our world is complicated and fragile because of the obvious interactions between states, non-state actors, multinational corporations, and other organizations that sum up the subject of international relations. This complexity manifests itself within the activities or operations of terrorist groups. Globally, terrorism has become a household word because there is no nation that is completely exonerated from its effects, and globalization has significantly influenced the spate of these nefarious acts, as events in one part of the globe have a direct or indirect impact on others. This explains why terrorism and other forms of trans border political violence are in many ways more threatening and deadly than before, as civilian casualties have been on the increase.

It is, however, difficult to evolve a consensual definition of the concept of terrorism. However, this difficulty emanated from the lack of an unverified perspective among scholars and nations as to what could be regarded as a "terrorist act". Terrorist acts or actions elicit strong feelings and emotions not only from the victim(s), but also from those who witness such an inhumane act. It must be noted that the definition of terrorism is eclectic in nature, but an attempt should be made to examine the etymology of the concept. Hence, terrorism has been described as both a tactic and a strategy; a crime and a holy duty; a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination since it is a function of whose point of view is being represented.



The most significant terrorist act was the vicious attack on the World Trade Centre in the US on September 11, 2001. Although unprecedented in any nation in the world, the attack was carried out by the Al-Qaeda terrorist group, resulting in the deaths of over 3000 people from 88 different nationalities, a 60 billion dollar economic loss, and a severe impact on US national security (History, 2010). As a result, the United States of America launched a global anti-terrorist operation known as the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The operation of this initiative led to the death of Osama Bin Laden, who was the leader of Al-Qaeda in 2011 (CNN, 2022). Similarly, the US also facilitated the death of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi in 2019. These feats were the product of deliberate efforts to reduce the impact of terrorism on the national security of the United States.

In Nigeria, the activities and strategic operations of Boko Haram in the Northern region of the country have caused more harm than good. To begin with, the fatalities and injuries inflicted by terrorism result in enormous economic damage. Secondly, terrorism's negative economic repercussions harm both people and societies. Thirdly, the immediate economic cost of terrorism may be evaluated in terms of the value of lives lost, the number of people forced to flee their homes, and the loss of public and private property. Politically, terrorism is seen as a threat to democracy as it creates a feeling of insecurity and the idea that elected rulers or elected representatives can no longer protect the citizens of their country. Hence, its impact on national security. Having identified these issues, this study sets out to examine the impact of terrorism on the national security of Nigeria. Specifically, the study will examine the political, economic, and social impact of terrorism in Nigeria.

Conceptual Definitions

Terrorism

In our current political dispensation, it is nearly impossible to turn on the television or other forms of media without hearing the word "terrorist" or "terrorism" and its manifestations such as hijacked planes, bombs and explosions, kidnappings for ransom, beheadings, and other forms of inhumane acts. Since the 9/11 attacks, governments have been faced with not just the necessity to create protective legislation against terrorist operations and strikes, but also with the need to respond to people's open, inflated, and media-propelled anxiety. A detailed examination of the etymology of the word "terrorism" might serve to clarify some of the term's meanings. Terrorism is derived from the Latin verb "*terrere*", which means "to make shiver or shake". In other words, terrorism is defined as an armed group's attempt to terrorize or make life difficult for other people inside a specific geographic territory (History, 2022). However, in international politics, the concept's definition has evolved beyond its literal meaning throughout time.

Terrorism can be difficult to describe, despite its ubiquity in contemporary politics. The inclination to characterize terrorism from the perspective of how well or badly it is perceived lies at the root of the diversity in understanding of its meaning. As a result, while some experts see terrorism as a permissible action or activity, others see it as an iniquitous and repulsive conduct that cannot be justified under any circumstances (Aworawo, 2017:18-19). It is critical to recognize that terrorism is a scourge that claims the lives of innocent people, jeopardizes human values, human rights, and freedoms, and obstructs growth and global progress. As a result,



terrorism is regarded as a global scourge that affects all people, as it threatens the entire way of life that we have come to value. It puts our economic and political systems to the test. It weakens the notion of state interaction, eliminates one method, and, worst of all, fails to comply with internationally established conflict resolution standards.

Henry Prunckun and Troy Whitford's work "*Terrorism and Counterterrorism: A Comprehensive Introduction to Actors and Actions*" stands out as one of the best resources for grasping the notion of terrorism. Terrorism was described by these authors from the standpoint of democracy. Terrorism is defined by them as a violent political act committed by a group or lone person in pursuit of extremist goals (Henry and Troy, 2016:5). Political violence is unlawful in nature because it violates democratic rules and is intended against a government (by innocent victims) rather than foreign state armed aggression. They went on to explain that the use of terrorism can be traced back to Sun Tzu's asymmetric warfare doctrine, in which the weaker side exploits the weaknesses of its more powerful adversary government, and that if you "kill one, you frighten ten thousand" through the publicity anxiety that accompanies such incidents when widely publicized.

When Harrison (2015: xix) considers the idea of terrorism, he or she compares it to the study of human conduct. To him, fully comprehending terroristic action necessitates knowledge of radical ideology. Understanding how symbolism is used as a recruitment technique to excuse and justify violence is essential. Induction based on ideology is essential for both individual enlistment and the growth of terroristic groups (Ibid). Anthony Richard's work, *Conceptualization of Terrorism*, provided another definition of the idea of terrorism. To him, the term "terrorism" has been employed for a political purpose for a long time, making it ubiquitous. He goes on to explain that "terrorism is the deliberate use of violence or force with the primary goal of inducing a 'psychological impact' on people other than the immediate victims for a political motive" (Richard, 2015:8).

This definition is based on a lengthy tradition and is, of course, comparable to the one used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the United States. What is notable about this author is that he isolates terrorism from the morally evaluative framework in which it is entrenched, portraying it as a specific type of political violence rather than a moral attribution for a particular actor or agent, or a property of a certain ideology or cause. Instead of announcing a serious condemnation of all terrorism, this defines the notion analytically and forces readers to honestly pick which sorts of terrorism they disagree with.

In his book titled "*Bullet Kills the Terrorist and Insurgent, But Not His Ideas: The Imperative of Deploying Comprehensive Dosage of Non-Kinetic Measures in Nigeria's Counter-Terrorism, Counter-Insurgency Efforts in the North-East*," Nwolise examined the distinction between a terrorist and a freedom fighter. He stated that:

While one is not condoning mass murder, barbarism, or indiscriminate violence, one must note the long-standing logic that violence can be used by the people or any organization fighting for the people, to terminate injustice (especially political inequality) and struggle for the common good (Nwolise, 2019:30).



He therefore concluded that the difference between a terrorist organization and a liberation organization is whether the organization using forceful actions and terror for political, economic, or other purposes is isolated from the masses (terrorism) or operating in the best interest of the masses (freedom fighters) (Ibid). Terrorism, according to Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, is "a worldwide menace, a scourge that must be faced head-on... a breach of our basic human rights, including the right to life and the right to peaceful coexistence. Terrorism is a grave violation of human rights, particularly the rights to physical integrity, life, liberty, and security, and it obstructs socioeconomic progress by destabilizing governments.

Finally, after reviewing various definitions of terrorism, these authors define terrorism as an act of violence perpetrated legitimately or illegally by state and non-state actors with the intent to instill fear, terror, or death, and in pursuit of and promotion of ideology, politics, economic, religious, and social objectives. It has the following components:

- The use of violence or the threat of violence
- An organized group or groups of
- to achieve a particular objective.
- The violence is directed against a target audience that extends beyond the immediate victims, who are often civilians.

These highlights and signposts exclude kidnappings for financial gain and other acts by individuals, even those with political objectives.

National Security

There is no one definition of national security that is widely acknowledged. The several definitions give an overview of the concept's varied applications. A simple definition of the concept of national security reveals that national security is the overall safety of a country and its citizens. National security is defined as the aggregate of the security interests of individuals, governmental bodies, and ethnic groupings that make up a country. Security interests encompass the safety of people and property, as well as the economic, social, and political freedom to pursue lawful goals without hindrance (Eric, 2021). The protection of people and property, as well as the ability to pursue lawful aims, are central to his definition.

National security is defined as the safeguarding and preservation of a country's political independence and territorial integrity. National security is sometimes defined as the safeguarding of national interests, such as national values, political and economic systems, against threats and challenges from inside the country (Braithwaite, 1988:107-127). According to Mandel, national security is defined as the pursuit of psychological and physical safety, which is largely the responsibility of national governments in order to prevent direct threats, primarily from abroad, endangering the survival of these regimes, their citizens, or their ways of life (Ebeh, 2015:4).

Barry Buzan described national security as the dominance of soft and hard security sectors, which encompasses military, food security, environmental security, social security, and economic security, while looking at it through the lens of a multiple security sector. Furthermore, he defined national security as the ability to protect a country from both foreign and internal



aggression (Buzan, 1999:431). Individuals, groups, or states' physical safety, as well as the physical safety of their most prized ideals, are all linked to national security. It extends beyond the military structures and capabilities required to defend sovereignty and territorial integrity to the preservation of the environment. The notion is integrally tied to development and good governance, which include features of human rights, fair play, and distributive justice only to the extent that they contribute to physical safety (Okolie and Nnamani, 2017:93–114).

The right to a sustainable environment, as well as the preservation of cultural and religious belongings, are all part of the new national security paradigm, and both have major consequences for citizens' physical security and the survival of nation-states, both individually and collectively. As a result of this, national security is viewed as the overarching blueprint for a state's survival. Citizens and their means of subsistence in the state; leaders and their regimes and administration; state institutions; state sovereignty and territorial integrity; ethnic and other social groups; the environment and ecosystem in the face of internal and external threats and attacks (Anyandike, 2013:34).

There are many different types of national security in today's political system, including economic security, energy security, environmental security, and even health, women's, and food security. This abundance of definitions hasn't always been beneficial. In some cases, it's just a rebranding of domestic goals in order to divert money away from the Pentagon. It is also reacting to the challenges of a changing international environment in some circumstances. After a review of the concept of national security, the author then defined national security as the safety of a state from all (political, economic, social-military, cyber, and national disasters) that affect the safety of human beings.

The Anatomy of Boko Haram

The term "Boko Haram" was created by combining the words "Boko" and "Haram". The phrase "Boko" refers to western education in Hausa, whereas "Haram" is an Arabic term that symbolically implies "sin" but technically means "forbidden". When these terms are used together in Hausa, it clearly means that 'western education is prohibited' (Ayandike, 2013 and Alozieuwa, 2012). The notorious group is also known as 'Jama *'atuAhlisSunnaawatiwal-jihad'*, which means 'People devoted to the spread of the Prophet's teachings and Jihad', or, more roughly translated, 'Association of Sunnas for the Propagation of Islam and for' Holy War', instead of Boko Haram (Adesoji, 2010:100).

The exact date of Boko Haram's emergence is disputed, but most Nigerian sources agree on a parallel-if not direct-link between individuals involved in the Maitatsine uprising of the 1980s, which was reportedly one of the first attempts to impose a religious ideology on a secular and independent Nigeria. Despite this, scholars believed that a Muslim cleric, Ustaz (Teacher) Mohammed Yusuf, created a religious complex in Maiduguri, BornoState, that included a mosque and an Islamic boarding school (Johnson, 2011). As a result, the Boko Haram organization was founded. The implementation of Islamic Law (Sharia) in 12 northern states since 1999 was deemed insufficient by those represented by Yusuf and his ardent supporters, who claimed that the country's ruling class was tainted by corruption in its entirety, and that even Muslim northern leaders were irreversibly tainted by western-style ambitions (BBC, 2016).



A pure Sharia state, they argue, would be more transparent and just than the current order (Osumah , 2012).

Disgruntled northern youths, professionals, unemployed graduates, Islamic clerics, almajiri, or youngsters who continuously migrate for the purpose of obtaining Quranic teachings in the Hausa language, university dropouts, and certain members of Nigeria's political elite are among the group's members. It also comprises certain personnel from state security services who provide training and relevant intelligence reports to the organization. The group claims to have over 40,000 followers in Nigeria and neighboring African countries such as Chad, Benin, and Niger (Forest 2012:62 and Onuoha 2010:57).

Boko Haram, like a number of other violent groups, maintains its membership under wraps, refusing to reveal its ranks, structure, or manifesto. Even though relatively little is known about the group's inner functioning, a deeper inspection reveals various signs of hierarchical organization. The first known leader of the group was the late Mohammed Yusuf, who was succeeded by MallamSaniUmaru as interim head. Since then, numerous additional individuals have claimed to be the group's leader at various times (Onouha et al., 2018:3–4). In addition to loot from bank assaults, ransoms from kidnappings, and donations from political sponsors and other groups within and outside Nigeria, members of Boko Haram pay daily levies to their commanders, creating a financial basis for the terrorist group.

For example, in 2007, Mohammed Yusuf and Mohammed Bello Damagun were charged with receiving funds from Al-Qaeda operatives at a Federal High Court in Abuja, Nigeria. Damagun, for his part, is said to have received US\$300,000 from Al-Qaeda to recruit and train Nigerians for terrorism in Mauritania (Babalola, 2013). Yusuf, meanwhile, is said to have received funds from Al-Qaeda operators in Pakistan in order to recruit terrorists who would target foreigners' homes, notably Americans residing in Nigeria (Uche, 2021). Nigeria faces a security threat from a terrorist organization. Its first known violent attack, against local structures, police stations, and public buildings in Yobe State on December 24, 2003, killed roughly 30 individuals (Aghedo and Osumah 2012:859). In July 2009, the Nigerian government launched a counter-strategy against the insurgents in order to stop the attacks on police stations and other government buildings, which resulted in at least 700 deaths, mostly among the group's members, including group leader Mohammed Yusuf, who was killed while in police custody (Pothuraju, 2012).

Despite this government crackdown, the group that appeared to have gone into hibernation re-emerged in a much more deadly and highly militarized form, orchestrating a large-scale prison break in September 2010 that saw the release of 700 prisoners, including over 100 of its own members (Makinde 2011). The group's attacks have since increased substantially in frequency, reach, and lethality, and are now occurring almost daily in a majority of the northern states of Yobe, Adamawa, and Maiduguri in Nigeria. The consequences of violent terrorist acts, on the other hand, are visible in the economic breakdown and wanton destruction of lives and property in the country's problematic zone. Since 2009, Boko Haram has carried out sophisticated assaults against a variety of government facilities, including police stations, army barracks, prisons, religious centers, schools, and banks, as well as famous individuals. This, along with the group's heavy-handed counter-insurgency campaign, has resulted in over 350,000 deaths, property devastation, and major displacements across the country (Sanni, 2021).



The Relationship between Terrorism and National Security

In the post-Cold War years, terrorism has become a major worry for the general public. The rising number of people killed or injured in terrorist attacks, the globalization of some terrorist organizations' reaches and networks, and the terrifying prospect of nuclear terrorism have all resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of scholarly articles and conferences aimed at shedding light on the causes of terrorism and how to combat it (Faruk, 2010). Terrorism is defined as the use or threat of violence to frighten and compel a nation's population and government for political or other reasons. Terrorist gains are frequently not in line with the broader national interests of the affected country, posing a threat to residents' well-being and the state's existence.

National security, on the other hand, is concerned with defending a state's sovereignty and national interests as well as essential needs that ensure peace, prosperity, unity, progress, and the general well-being of its population. Consistent use of violence against a state and its population can corrode these essential principles, jeopardizing national security. In contrast, the absence of terrorism improves a nation's and its residents' peace, stability, progress, and overall well-being. As a result, terrorism and national security have an adverse connection.

Terrorism's Impact on Nigerian National Security

- **Political Impact**

Since its inception in Nigeria, terrorism has greatly affected the politics of the country. Nigeria has recently risen to become one of the world's most prominent terror hotspots, both in terms of frequency and complexity of assaults. As seen in the figure below, Nigeria ranks second in the world in terms of the frequency of occurrence of attacks, with over 750 assaults between 2000 and 2013.

Sources: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED),

And, while the degree of complexity of terrorist activities in Nigeria is relatively low, as judged by the frequency of suicide strikes, despite continued government counter-terrorism spending and efforts, the tendency looks to be rising in recent years. The group's importance and strength have swiftly grown from a local terrorist organization to a worldwide organization acknowledged by Al-Qaeda. This is supported by recent patterns indicating ties between Boko Haram and ISIL, a group to whom they had previously declared loyalty.

In reference to the impact of terrorism in the Nigerian political space, it was observed that terrorism has led to an unfavorable impression of Nigeria as a dangerous or "unsafe country" among states in the international system (Sahara Reporter, 2019). Obviously, this has harmed Nigeria's reputation as a desirable foreign investment, travel, tourism, education, and relocation destination. As a result, Nigeria is rapidly slipping into the category of a marginalized country. The nature of terrorism in Nigeria is often regarded to be primarily elite-motivated, stemming from political struggle for resources. According to proponents of this hypothesis, it is extremely difficult for potential terrorist groups or individuals, who are generally impoverished and



illiterate rural people, to collect resources to wage large-scale, long-term assaults against civilians and armed personnel.

Terrorism can erode liberal democratic stability by allowing more extremist factions to acquire a foothold (Andrew and Babara, 2006). A massive terrorist attack and the resulting death toll, which is usually carried out in a destructive manner that attracts media attention and leads to criticism of the government, can erode trust in elected officials. Indeed, ensuring the protection of its population is likely the most basic role of any reputable government, and although some atrocities generate a "protest behind the flag" mentality, recurrent terrorist strikes cause residents to mistrust their leaders and even question their ability. Thus, this lack of trust can persuade voters to support more extremist perspectives who promise law and order, or if they do not see any chance or hope in the government, they tend to seek safety from nongovernmental actors such as gangs or militias.

In addition to that, the impact of terrorism was also felt in 2021 when the United States of America delayed the proposed sale of 12 AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters on the ground of authoritarianism and gross violation of human rights. The sale of this weapon was supposed to help combat terrorist attacks in the country (Usman and Agbakwuru, 2021). Hence, the activities and responses of the Nigerian government in domestic politics have stained the relationship with other states.

The Economic Impact of Terrorism on National Security in Nigeria

The economic impact of terrorism on the national security of Nigeria is an obvious thing for every scholar, researcher, and even residents of the states. Aside from creating an ambiance of displacement, many economic activities in Yobe, Plateau, Adamawa, and Maiduguri have been permanently crippled with no hope of restoration. The lack of a market system for setting the value or compensation for victims of terrorism or violence makes calculating the cost of terrorism challenging. The GDP loss to terrorism in Nigeria for the period of ten years was conservatively estimated at \$565 billion (UNDP, 2019). Beyond the immediate impact, terrorism causes economic difficulties that may not manifest for days, weeks, or months following the terrorist attack. Terrorism's economic impact on growth, investment, consumption, and tourism is a severe danger to Nigeria's economic development and prosperity because most of the resources that ought to be geared towards the development of the country are now being used to protect the lives and properties of citizens. Moreover, terrorist activities have increased the perception among potential investors, leading to a decline in the foreign direct investment (FDI) of the country. For example, in the second quarter of 2021, Nigeria's foreign direct investment fell to 77.97 million dollars. This represents a steep drop of 49.6 percent and 47.5 percent, respectively, from the previous quarter's 154.76 million and Q2 2020's 148.59 million (Oyewkanmi, 2021). However, Nigeria has the highest number of tech start-ups, with most of them operating in Lagos. It was observed that poor infrastructure, education, political instability and insecurity have undermined the activities of most foreign companies investing in the country. The data below reveals the trends of investment in Nigeria before and during terrorist operations in Nigeria.

Source: macro-trends.net.



Terrorism changes financing decisions by shifting investment and consumption practices and redirecting public and private resources away from productive activity and toward defensive measures. The outbreak of terrorism in Nigeria damages capital and decreases the economic potential of Nigeria. Many international investors have either gone to neighbouring countries or returned to their country of residence as a result of the general economic disaster, policy reversals, failure to protect foreign investors' capital, and a lack of purposeful measures to separate business from politics. The consequent geopolitical instability in different zones in Nigeria has been a hindrance to safety, business and investment as well as sustainable livelihood and prosperity.

The increase in the number of IDPs has also impacted on the security of the people and the increase in unemployment of the affected people. It is, however, imperative to understand that the development of a country and its people is anchored on the safety of its citizens. For example, cases of violence like armed robbery, kidnapping, and others that cannot be mentioned have hindered the development of some infrastructures. The country's tourism sector is jeopardized since travellers and potential investors in the business will choose to spend their money in an area where there is serenity and safety rather than a country where they are at high risk of injury or death.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Amidst government assertions that the operations of Boko Haram have been destroyed, devastated, and crushed, the terrorist group has continued to make headlines with assaults on military and civilian populations. It is imperative to emphasize that in recent times, the concept of terrorism has gone beyond the military safety of a country and its citizens. Natural disasters and climate change are now included in the overall comprehensive definition. The study concluded that the political, economic, and social impact of terrorism is much greater in Nigeria because many international businesses have fled the country to establish themselves in countries with better infrastructure and security. Terrorism's larger consequences are also dependent on the economy's capacity to seamlessly allocate capital from the afflicted sectors.

It is significant to note that limiting the political effect of terrorism in Nigeria requires reducing the number of lethality and strikes within their operating zones. The paper recommends that the state must prioritize the security and safety of its citizens irrespective of their region of abode. Doing this will foster development not only within the citizens but also within the state itself. The leadership of the country must also ensure border monitoring and control to reduce the number of terrorist movements. In addition to this, the government must provide employment opportunities or engage the youth with the necessary skills to flourish among their peers. The author is of the opinion that if this can be done, it will reduce the number of youths willing to participate in this inhumane act.



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