



TERRORISM AND COUNTER-TERRORISM IN NIGERIA: CONTEXTUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS.

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Abstract

Terrorism is one of the most complex and complicated phenomena of the contemporary world. There is little agreement on what constitute and who practices terrorism even among the academics. Terrorism is arguably the biggest threat to global peace; it appears in different forms in many parts of the world in pursuit of different objectives. This article reflects on terrorism and counter-terrorism in the context of Nigerian society. The study identifies injustice, poor intelligence gathering, porous borders, climate change, systemic corruption, weak institutional structures, socio-economic and socio-political discontent as some of the contextual and environmental factors that allow terrorism to thrive in Nigeria and also serves as factors militating against government effort in tackling the menace. The study anchored its theoretical analysis on the displacement theory of crime prevention. The data employed for this study are both from primary and secondary source. The primary data were mainly from the questionnaires distributed to the respondents and the in-depth interview with the key informants, while the secondary data were mainly from journals and books. The study concluded that terrorist activities in Nigeria or those perpetrated by Nigerians elsewhere in the world have become a matter of major international concern. The study recommends the carrot and stick approach in the fight against terrorism, strengthening of our institutions; intelligence led policing, enhance intelligence and information sharing within the security structures in Nigeria, fighting corruption to a stand still, poverty eradication among others.

Keywords: Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism, Contextual and Environmental matters.

Introduction

Terrorism is a popular but vague concept. It is one of the most complex and also the most complicated phenomena of the contemporary world. There is little agreement on what constitutes and who practices terrorism even among the academics. The difficulty in defining “terrorism is in agreeing on the basis for determining when the use of violence (directed at whom, by whom, for what ends) is legitimate; therefore, the modern definition of terrorism is inherently controversial (Author unknown n.d). Scholars have conceived over 200 definitions for this concept¹ (Global terrorism index n.d:2). The use of violence for the achievement of political ends is common to state and non-state groups, while the majority of the definitions in use have been written by agencies directly associated with

government, and are systematically biased to exclude government from the definition. Accordingly, Louise (2006)² noted that terrorism appears in many different forms in many parts of the world in pursuit of many different objectives, this according to him is practiced by adherent of many religions and by adherent of none. Still according to Louise³ (2006), the search for the cause of terrorism, like the search for a cure for cancer, is not going to yield a single definitive solution. But as with any disease an effective cure will be dependent on the accurate diagnosis of the multiplicity of risk factors as well as their interactions with one another. The cure is likely to be almost as complicated as the disease. That is why many scholars who research the roots of terrorism are conscious that no single cause exists. As such, to solve the problem of terrorism a



multi-dimensional approach will be required.

The conceptual issues on terrorism and counter-terrorism in Nigeria prompted Adeyemi (2010)⁴ to conclude that although activities of different groups that target civilians are definitely terrorists in nature, but that attempts by the government in Nigeria to use this label is creating some confusion, especially when political opponents, civil society groups, and opponents of government have also been branded terrorists. In the same vein, Abubakar (2010)⁵ pointed out that Nigeria government has refrained itself from branding the activities of groups and associations agitating for purely parochial interest of ethnic, religious and social groups as terrorist, even when they used terrorist tactics to carry out hundreds of asymmetric attacks on civilians and their object and institutions of government, resulting in thousands of casualties and large scale destruction of properties. Based on the above submission, Abdullahi (2016)⁶ noted that attention is focused on the activities of Boko Haram in the North Eastern part of Nigeria, while devastating terrorist activities with equally devastating impacts in other regions of the country are daily swept under the carpet.

Nigeria in the last few years has witnessed rising waves of terrorists attacks, which is gradually becoming a permanent feature in the country's political landscape. Yet, the Nigerian government is treating the effects of terrorism, at the detriment of the causes of it. Forgetting that terrorism is like a huge smoke hovering furiously on top of a chimney. Anybody who wants to dispel it must quench the fire from which it oozes out. In the same vein, it is easy to locate terrorists and gun them down. But as long as the situations that gave birth to terrorists in the first place are not addressed a hundred more take his place as soon as one goes down.

Terrorism is arguably the biggest threat to global peace and stability in contemporary times. Just few years back, terrorism seemed to be restricted to a few isolated places. Now the phenomenon has engulfed the world like a wild fire ready to consume an object close to it. Nigeria like any

other country in the world has had its fair share of groups who adopted terrorist tactics to fight the government and civilian alike. These groups include and not limited to the militancy in the Niger Delta, OPC in the South west, MASSOB in South East, IPOB in South Eastern Nigeria, Maitatsine, Fulani herdsmen in the north and presently, the Boko Haram which the government is still battling to overcome. Adeyemi (2010) noted that although activities of different groups that target civilians their objects are definitely terrorism, the attempts of the government in Nigeria to use this label may have created some confusion, especially when political opponents, civil society groups, and opponents of government have also been branded terrorists.

From the forgoing, the researcher sees the need to investigate the concept of terrorism and probes into counter-terrorism measures put in place by the government of Nigeria.

Challenges of Terrorism in Nigeria

Terrorism is arguably the biggest threat to global peace and stability in contemporary times. It is a popular but vague concept. And it is also one of the most complex and also the most complicated phenomena of the contemporary world. There is little agreement on what constitutes and who practices terrorism even among the academics. Scholars have conceived over 200 definitions for this concept (Global terrorism index n.d:2)⁷.

Because of this ambiguity in the definition of terrorism, counter-terrorism is likely to be almost as complicated as terrorism. Accordingly, the UNODC during the Doha Declaration with the theme "Promoting a Culture of Lawfulness" pointed out that the implication of the absence of a universal definition of terrorism for legal purpose are wide-ranging, it noted that the lack of a definition for terrorism may facilitate the politicization and misuse of the term terrorism to curb non-terrorist (or sometimes even non-criminal) activities. This according to the report can result in state violating the rights of their own or other states' citizen, such as those of international human right law, in the course of their counter-terrorism efforts. As a result of this,



the domestic laws can suffer from ambiguity as to their full reach and meanings in term of the activities criminalized and the implication thereof; such law can offend the principle of legality. In the same vein, CLEEN foundation in 2011 pointed out that the militarization of security in regions affected by insurgence by the government and the increase in the number of persons killed by the hard security approach of the security personnel to the problem is a source of concern. This unleashed more terror to the people, a feeling of dissatisfaction and insecurity. This situation according to the foundation has attracted the attention of various stakeholders' particularly civil society organizations which have condemned the strategies employed by security in their attempt to restore order in the regions.

The activities of terrorist groups in Nigeria have resulted in dire humanitarian situation as evident in human casualties, human right abuses, population displacement, refugee debacle, livelihood crises, public insecurity, and underdevelopment (Okoli and Iortyer 2014)⁸ Terrorism poses enormous threat to security, political stability, social, and economic development in Nigeria.

Putting both the contextual and environmental matters into perspective, the researcher sees the need to investigate terrorism and counter-terrorism in Nigeria.

In the light of the foregoing, this contribution focuses on the following.

- Conceptual Clarifications
- The phenomenon of Counterterrorism
- Environmental factors of Terrorism in Nigeria
- Effects of Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Nigeria

Conceptual Clarification

Terrorism: Terrorism is a popular but vague concept. It is one of the most complex and also the most complicated phenomena of the contemporary world. There is little agreement on what constitutes and who practices terrorism even among the academics. Scholars have conceived over 200 definitions for this concept (Global

terrorism index n.d:2). Terrorism mean different thing to different people. For instance, to analysts, terrorism is seen as a strategy adopted by weaker side to gain maximum advantage in an asymmetric conflict at a minimum cost Chaliand G. and Blin A. 2007⁹ (cited in Kamilu 2016)¹⁰. To its victims, terrorism is evil. It is a criminal act with no regards for human life. To the terrorists, terrorism is a legal justified, i.e., a legitimate fight for what they believe in and by whatever means possible to attain their goal (Kamilu 2016)¹¹

The Arab convention for suppression of terrorism adopted by the council of Arab ministers of interior and council of Arab ministers of justice in Cairo 1998¹² defined terrorism as any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda and seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty or security in danger, or seeking to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or property or to occupying or seizing them or seeking to jeopardize national resources.

Martha (2009)¹³ noted that despite the passage of twelve anti-terrorism conventions. The United Nations has yet to decide on an official definition. The one given in 2004, the UN security council resolution 1566 (2004) sees terrorism as criminal act, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

In the same vein the U.S. Code defined terrorism as premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. While the European Union defines terrorism for legal/official purposes in Art.1 of the framework decision on combating terrorism (2002). This provide that terrorist offences are certain criminal offences in a list comprised largely of serious



offences against person and property which, given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organization where committed with the aim of, seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structure of a country or international organizations.

In order to draw attention to terrorism in Nigeria, it is important to conceptualize it within an African context (Adeyemi 2010)¹⁴. Against this backdrop, the definition by AU in its convention on the prevention and combating terrorism will be relevant in this paper. The AU in the convention, article 1 (3) defines terrorism as any act which is a violation of criminal laws of a state party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to any member or group of persons or causes or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and is calculated or intended to

1. intimidate, put in fear, coerce or induce any government body, institution, the general public or any segment thereof, to do or abstain from doing any act, or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint or to act according to certain principles, or
2. disrupt any public service, the delivery of any essential service to public or create a public emergency, or
3. Create or generate insurrection in a state.

The AU in article 3(1), however notes that

1. The struggle waged by people in accordance with the principles of international law for their liberation or self-determination, including armed struggle against colonialism, occupation, aggression and domination by foreign forces
2. Political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other motives shall not be a justifiable Defence against a terrorist act.

The AU is clear on the activities that qualify one

group or the other as terrorist group, or activities that are qualified as terrorist activities.

In this paper, terrorism is taken to mean an unconventional battle tactic used to achieve purely political goals that are based on act of violence, sabotage or threat made against a state, organization or social group, against civilians having the specific purpose of producing psychological effect, generalized fear and intimidation.

The ultimate objective of terrorists is to apply pressure on the entity in question to act in accordance with their wishes. Essentially, the definition of terrorism contains three key elements; the essence of the action (deliberate use of violence); the underlying goal (achieving political ends); and the object of the attack (civilian targets). Supporting this claim, Kamilu (2016)¹⁵ pointed out that regardless of the difference in perspective, terrorism has one universal feature, i.e., seeking to wield power by inciting fear.

Counter-terrorism: Counter terrorism incorporates the practice, military tactics, techniques, and strategy that government, military, law enforcement, business, and intelligence agencies use to combat or prevent terrorism (USA National Counter-terrorism Center). Michael (2006)¹⁶ pointed out that countering terrorism involves the use of all the security forces of the state within the context of a political process. According to him, it is not simply about destroying the threat; consideration should also be given to the means with which to get rid of the threat, as well as how it and the counter terror involved are perceived.

United Nation Global Counter-Terrorism strategies include:

1. Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
2. Preventing and combating terrorism
3. Building state capacity and strengthening the role the United Nations
4. Ensuring human right and the rule of law

In this paper counter-terrorism is taken to mean



the political or military activities designed to prevent or thwart terrorism

Theoretical Framework: The study anchored its theoretical analysis on the displacement theory of crime. Many scholars such as Repetto 1976¹⁷, Clarke and Felson 1993, Gabor 1990, Barr and Pease 1990, Eck 1993, Bowers and Johnson 2003, Guerette and Bowers 2009²⁰, have contributed to the issue of displacement of crime. The basic premise behind this theory is that interventions which discourage offenders from committing crimes in particular area simply result in offenders recasting their target areas and focusing on nearby alternative locations not subject to intervention (David and Adam 2008). In the same vein, displacement theory of crime also argues that removing the opportunity for crime or seeking to prevent a crime by changing the situation in which it occurs does not actually prevent crime but merely move it around. Clarke and Felson (1993) pointed out that there are five main ways in which displacement theory suggests crime is move around, namely

1. crime can be moved from one location to another (geographical displacement)
2. crime can be move from one time to another (temporal displacement)
3. crime can be directed away from one target to another (target displacement)
4. One method of committing crime can be substituted for another (tactical displacement)
5. one kind of crime can be substituted for another (crime type displacement)

Geographical displacement of crime, in the wake of the onslaught by the Military Joint Task Force (JTF) on Boko Haram in states like Yobe, Borno and Adamawa, some of the Boko Haram relocates to states like Taraba, Gombe, Bauchi and Kano. In temporal displacement, the offenders change the time at which the commit crime. Target displacement entails crime being directed away from one target to another target entirely, for instance, when Boko Haram started in the North

Eastern part of Nigeria, they started with the attacked of places of worship, and later they shifted to attacking parks, markets, and even the police, army barracks and other public places. Finally, the displacement theory of crime seeks to analyze the impact of introduction of crime control measures in any crime prone areas or in anticipation of development of crime or anti-social behaviour in any area in order to reduce crime.

Methodology

The materials embedded in this paper were procured both from the primary and secondary sources. Social survey was employed to elicit information from the respondents. The non probability sampling technique was adopted, employing the purposive sampling method, as the samples were selected based on the researcher's judgment. The researcher utilizes both the questionnaires and in-depth interview, and both the closed and open-ended questions were utilized. The open-ended questions were used during the in-depth interview with all the selected key informants, while the closed-ended questions were used in the questionnaire distributed to the respondents 150 respondents at the Durumi IDPs camp FCT Abuja were selected using the purposive sampling technique. The researcher believed that this detached area of study being a part of the federation will reflect the characteristics and circumstances of all those that are affected by the activities of terrorists and insurgencies across the country. In addition to this, 5 key informants were carefully selected for this research work. These include one from the UNODC, two from the academics, two from the general public.

While secondary data was through the documentary analysis of current literatures which enhances critical and contextual analysis of issues bothering on terrorism and counter-terrorism in Nigeria.

Table 1:1 Socio-demographic variables of the



respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	31	20.7
Female	119	79.3
Total	150	100
Age		
10-20	50	33.3
21-30	40	26.7
31-40	42	28.0
41-50	15	10.0
51-60	2	01.3
61+	1	00.7
Total	150	100
Marital status		
Single	26	17.3
Married	35	23.3
Divorce	10	06.7
Widow	79	52.7
Total	150	100
Educational attainment		
Not educated	70	46.7
Primary	57	38.0
Secondary	18	12.0
NCE/ND	4	02.7
Degree	1	00.7
Total	150	100
Income per month		
Below 5000	89	59.3
5000-10000	57	38.0
11000-20000	4	02.7
21000-30000	0	00.0
Total	150	100

Source: field survey 2018

Table 1.1 shows that women are the dominant group in Durumi IDPs camp, this is possibly so, as reports have it that people being killed by Boko Haram are mostly men. And that is possibly why, from the table, the number of widows are also high, totally 79 which represent 52.7% of the respondents. Worthy of note, is the fact that the number of children found in this camp were also very high, representing up to 33.3% of the respondents. The standard of living in the camp is also very poor, as most of the respondents earn below five thousand per month.

Table 2.1 Showing respondents view on whether

corruption aid terrorism

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	130	86.7
No	18	12.0
	2	01.3
Total	150	100
If yes, how?		
Corruption leads to unemployment	55	42.3
Corruption leads to poverty	60	46.2
Lost of trust in the political system	15	11.5
Total	130	100

Source: field survey 2018

Majority of the respondents held the view that terrorism manifested in Nigeria as a result of the endemic corruption in our system. And on further probe, most of them believed that corruption engenders unemployment and associated deprivation that makes the citizens vulnerable, and therefore can easily be recruited by the terrorists. Others held the view that corruption engenders or aggravates economic and social adversities and deprivations like poverty and inequality, which will in turn make the citizens vulnerable tools for recruitment by the terrorists. While others believed that corruption fuels Lost of trust in the political system that creates some forms of agitation that can engender crime and terrorism. A key informant who is a professor of criminology from the University of Abuja attested to this argument, as she believed that:

...corruption fuels terrorism in two ways, that is, through the source of illicit fund and through the means of subverting efficient law enforcement. Economic deprivation as a result of corruption increases the demand for political change. Economic disparities and poverty exacerbated by infrastructure deficit arising from corruption usually lead to political upheaval and could invite interested groups to resort to terrorism as a method of achieving the desired goals (key informant).

Table 2.2 Showing respondent view on whether



injustice causes terrorism

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	125	83.4
No	20	13.3
Don't know	5	03.3
Total	150	100
If yes, how?		
Inequitable distribution of resources	89	71.2
Discriminatory employment/appointment	36	28.8
Total	125	100

Source: field survey 2018

Majority of the respondents held the view that injustice fuels terrorism, and on further probe, most of them believed that inequitable distribution of scarce resources can engender some form of dissatisfaction/agitations among the citizenry, while others believed that discriminatory employment/appointment is also a form of injustice that can lead to agitation from various groups, these agitations and dissatisfactions arising from the above could provoke reactions that could lead citizen to take up arms against the government deploying terrorists tactics. Their responses coincided with the assumption of Martha (2009) who observed that any condition that generates a sense of profound injustice could provide a pool for terrorist recruitment. Buttressing this submission, a key informant who is the UNODC Project Coordinator on Response to Drugs and Related Organized Crime in Nigeria pointed out that:

...inadequate social inclusion, inequality and poor governance can trigger terrorism. Injustice breeds frustration, pains and despondency within the heart of individual, and this can fuel terrorism. The deep feelings of injustice and hopelessness among Nigerians have essentially increased the threat and danger of crime and violence thereby making peace to be a mirage (key informant).

porous borders aid terrorism

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	87	58.0
No	53	35.3
Don't know	10	06.7
Total	150	100
If yes, how?		
Illicit movement of weapons	10	11.5
Entry of criminals with little resistance	34	39.1
Escape route for terrorists	43	49.4
Source: field survey 2018	87	100

Majority of the respondents held the view that porous borders aids terrorism. On further probe, some of them believed that porous borders trigger the entry of different types of weapons into the country which is fueling terrorism, 39.1% of the respondents held the view that porous borders engender the entry of criminals/terrorism into the country. While majority believed that porous borders served as escape routes for these terrorists. Supporting this submission, a key informant pointed out that:

...the movement of weapons from Libya into Nigeria following the continuous assault on ISIS forces in Sirte, and the mass smuggling of small and light weapons (SALW) from Northern Mali is as a result of our porous borders. These smuggled arms most times find their ways through the porous and extensive Sahel region into Nigeria. Furthermore, the challenge of securing the country's borders is enormous due to the large expanse of lands and water (key informant).

Land borders for example according to some of the key informants can be tremendously lengthy and porous and difficult to monitor for lack of equipment and specialist skill by our law enforcement, or the lack of intra-state and inter-state cooperation. The submission by the key informants also coincides with the report of the Inter-Governmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa GIABA (2013) which pointed out that the rising radicalization and southward migration of terrorists and

Table 2.3 Showing respondents view on whether



extremist, particularly members of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) through the Sahel towards Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria, can also be pinned down to porous border. The report pointed out further that there are indications that AQIM has operational base in some West African countries and has forged tactical alliance with terrorist groups such as Boko Haram in Nigeria. With our porous borders, the entry of criminals/terrorists that have tactical alliance with Boko Haram into and out of the country will be with ease.

Table 2.4 Showing respondents view on whether climate change causes terrorism

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	111	74.0
No	34	22.7
Don't know	5	03.3
Total	150	100
If yes, how?		
Desertification	21	18.9
Shortage of rainfall	43	38.7
Increase rate of dryness and heat	47	42.4
Source: field survey 2018	111	100

Majority of the respondents held the view that climate change can trigger terrorism in the country. On further probe, some of the respondents believed that desertification can engenders terrorism; others believed that shortage of rainfall is also part of the mix, while majority believed that the increase rate of dryness and heat arising from climate change can trigger terrorism. Buttressing this assumption, a key informant pointed out that

...desertification; shortage of rainfall, increased dryness and heat arising from climate change can trigger terrorism. The drought-ravaged regions around the Lake Chad Basin countries of Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon are examples of climate change that affects food and the availability of water and land. The affected people in these regions will become more vulnerable not only to negative climate change impacts but also recruitment by the terrorists' groups offering alternative livelihoods and economic

incentives (key informant).

The responses from the respondents and key informants further validate the initial assumption that some of the causes of terrorism in Nigeria include inadequate social inclusion, injustice, socio-economic and socio-political discontent, bad governance, climate change, poor intelligence gathering, porous borders, systemic corruption, and weak institutional structures among others.

Table 2.5 Showing respondents view on whether terrorism affects Nigerians negatively

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	150	100
No	0	0.00
Don't know	0	0.00
Total	150	100
If yes, how?		
Human casualties	68	45.3
Population displacement (refugees)	45	30.0
Public insecurity	25	16.7
Underdevelopment	12	08.0
Source: field survey 2018	150	100

Table 2.5 shows that all the respondents believed that terrorism has negative consequences in our society, when probe further on how they believed that terrorism affect society, majority of them believed that terrorism affect Nigeria negatively through high number of human casualties (either through death or bodily injuries). Others believe that terrorism affect the society through population displacement (Refugees in IDPs camps), while others believe that terrorism affects the society through public insecurity, destruction of both private and public properties and underdevelopment. Supporting this submission, a key informant pointed out that:

... Terrorism is one of the biggest threats to global peace and stability in contemporary times. The activities of terrorist groups in Nigeria have resulted in dire humanitarian situation as evident in human casualties, human right abuses, population displacement, refugee debacle, livelihood crises,



public insecurity, and underdevelopment. It poses enormous threat to security, political stability, social, and economic development in Nigeria (key informant).

Table 2.6 showing the distribution respondents on their view on whether the counter-terrorism measure put in place by the government is yielding result.

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	104	69.4
No	44	29.3
Don't know	2	01.3
Total	150	100
If yes, how?		
Reclaiming of all local governments under the control of Boko Haram in Nigeria	57	54.8
Reduced killing and kidnapping in places of worship and other public place.	47	45.2
Source: field survey 2018	104	100

Table 2.6 shows that majority of the respondents held the view that the counter-terrorism measures by the government is yielding the desired result, on further probe, most of them believed that the reclaiming of the regions where Boko Haram were in control of is an indication that the government is winning the war on terrorism. While others believed that the reduced attacks and killings by the Boko Haram is also an indication that the government is having an edge over the terrorists.

Some of the key informants affirmed to this submission, by pointed out that the government in Nigeria has at different times, adopted different approaches to combating terrorism in the country. According to them, one of the most comprehensive actions taken so far was the amnesty programme in the Niger Delta, when the use of military could not yield positive result. The aim of the programme then was ensuring unconditional pardon and cash rewards to militants who agreed to lay down their arms, and subsequent rehabilitation of the militants. In checking the activities of Boko Haram according to some of the key informants, the government has deployed the military to the affected areas, the

present administration of Muhammadu Buhari went a step further by relocating the military high command to the north eastern part of the country, and that is why the military can now lay claim to the fact that they have tactically defeated Boko Haram, even though, this claim remains highly contestable drawing from unfolding events after their claim. Some of the key informants share the same view with Michael (2006) as they pointed out that the failure on the part of the authorities to make the public more secure or at least to create a sense of security amounts to a victory for the terrorist. According to him, as difficult as it is for us to accept in the immediate aftermath of an attack with victims in plain view, terrorists are primarily interested in the audience, not the victims.

Table 2.7 Showing the distribution of respondents according to their view on the effects of counter-terrorism

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	113	75.3
No	37	24.7
Don't know	0	0.00
Total	150	100
If yes, how?		
Human right abuses	71	62.8
Hamper effective humanitarian action	32	28.3
Underdevelopment	10	08.9
Source: Field survey 2018	113	100

Table 2.7 shows that majority of the respondents believed that counter-terrorism affects our society while few of them believed that counter-terrorism measure cannot affect the society. On further probe on why they believe that counter-terrorism can affect the society, most of them held the view that counter-terrorism can leads to human right abuses. Others believe that counter-terrorism hampered effective humanitarian action, while others believe that counter-terrorism can lead to underdevelopment. Supporting this submission, a key informant pointed out that:

..... Terrorism is designed to have direct and indirect victims, and it is crucial to understand that how the audience reacts is as important as the act



itself and the instrumental victims who are its direct casualties. Therefore, counterterrorism policy must address not only the violence of the terrorist actor but also the multiple audiences of the violence, which may be local, national, regional, or global if not so, counter-terrorism can lead to human right abuses, hampered effective humanitarian action, underdevelopment, and can de-consolidate democratic gains (Key informant).

Key Informants Interview Analysis ***On the Concept of Terrorism.***

Responding to this question, all the informants held divergent view on what constitute terrorism. This further confirmed the controversy surrounding the concept of terrorism. The first informant interviewed define terrorism as the deliberate use of violence aimed against civilian targets in order to achieve political, religious, ideological, and socio-economic objectives. The second informant have this to say on what he believed constitute terrorism, according to him, terrorism is the unconventional use of violence to intimidate, put in fear, coerce or induce any government body, institution, the general public or any segment, to do or abstain from doing any act, or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint or to act according to certain principles for political or ideological ends.

The third informant is of the view that terrorism is the senseless killing of civilian and destruction of properties by non-state armed groups for political, socio-economic, and ideological purposes. The fourth informant pointed out that terrorism is politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups, usually intended to create fear and influence an audience and the government to do their bidding. The last informant interviewed argues that terrorism as threat of violence, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty or security in danger, or seeking

to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or properties for political or ideological objectives.

It becomes clear that regardless of the difference in the above definitions given by the informants and the previous one given by others; the ultimate objective of terrorists is to apply pressure on the entity in question to act in accordance with their wishes. Essentially, the definitions given contains three key elements; the essence of the action (deliberate use of violence); the underlying goal (achieving political, religious, ideological and socio-economic ends); and the object of the attack (civilian targets). Supporting this claim, Kamilu (2016) pointed out that regardless of the difference in perspective, terrorism has one universal feature, i.e., seeking to wield power by inciting fear.

On the question of what Counterterrorism entails.

Responding to this question, the informants held almost the same view that Counter terrorism incorporates the practice, military tactics, techniques, and strategy that government, military, law enforcement, business, and intelligence agencies use to combat or prevent terrorism. Some of the informants went further to state that the government response to the terrorists has largely focused on the need to stamp out the insurgency through strong military response and heightened activities in the intelligence and security agencies.

Some of the informants were quick to add that the government should seek for opportunity to dialogue with the group, knowing fully well that the vehement applications of military force or the over reliance on force, seeks victory in the traditional war fighting sense may be undoing some of the positive effects of the initial campaign. The Nigerian security operatives in this sense have been accused by the amnesty international for human right abuses.

They argue that identifying what leads to terrorism will serve as a lead to countering same. As was argued in the introductory part of this



paper that, it is easy to locate and gun down terrorists, but as long as the situations that gave birth to terrorism in the first place are not addressed, a hundred more take his place as soon as one goes down. Some of the informants were quick to add that the ability of government to deter, defeat and respond decisively to terrorist attacks is facing serious challenges. These challenges according to them include and not limited to human right abuses, porous border, unskilled security agents, corruption and proliferation of light weapons among others.

On the causes of Terrorism in Nigeria

In responding to this question, all the informants held the view that terrorism is caused and sustained in Nigeria as a result of socio-economic and socio-political discontent, bad governance, inadequate social inclusion, injustice, climate change, poor intelligence gathering, porous borders, systemic corruption, and weak institutional structures. Though looking at the root causes of terrorism is also as controversial as the concept of terrorism and that is why some people even believed that looking at the causes of terrorism is an effort to justify it.

On the effects of Terrorism and Counter Terrorism in Nigeria

In responding to this question, the informants shared almost the same view, their view further support the assumptions made in the introductory part of this paper and the views of the respondents, as most of them believed that terrorism and counter-terrorism can de-consolidate democratic gains. According to them, terrorism affect the society in the following ways human casualties, human right abuses, population displacement, refugee debacle, livelihood crises, public insecurity, and underdevelopment. It poses enormous threat to security, political stability, social, and economic development in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper attempted to investigate terrorism and counter-terrorism in Nigeria putting into perspective the contextual and environmental matters. The paper concluded that terrorist' activities in Nigeria or those perpetrated by

Nigerians elsewhere in the world have become a matter of major international concern, as the potential threat posed by terrorism has provoked considerable alarm. And as such, the subject of terrorism has inspired voluminous literature in recent times. It becomes clear that terrorism is a popular but vague concept, a very complex, complicated and multifaceted phenomenon. That is why many scholars who research the roots of terrorism are conscious that no single cause exists. As such, to solve the problem of terrorism a multi-dimensional approach will be required. Finally, the following were recommended

1. In order to adequately prosecute the war on terrorism in Nigeria, it is important to conceptualize terrorism within the universally agreed definition, to reduce the politicization and misuse of the term terrorism to curb non-terrorist (or sometimes even non-criminal) activities. By so doing, it will further reduce the violation of the rights of citizens in the course of counter-terrorism efforts, and reduced the ambiguity of our domestic laws as to their full reach and meanings in term of the activities criminalized as terrorist and the implication thereof.
2. Counter-terrorism action should fully apply democratic principles and absolute respect for the rule of law. This should be based not just on a normative preference for democracy but also on the conviction that the underlying principles of democracy and the rule of law provide the best foundation for policy choices. Ignoring democratic norms and process will particularly in the longer-term harm counter-terrorism efforts.
3. Counter-terrorism must always address not simply the treatment of and response to actions that have taken place and the prevention of future acts of terrorism but also the reaction of the audience to the acts or threats. In this regard, the authorities must thus not only make the public more secure; they must also make the public subjectively believe that they are more



secure and must create confidence that the authorities are acting toward that end.

4. Closely linked to number 3 recommendation is for Nigeria government to focus on treating the causes and the effects of terrorism simultaneously, rather than treating the effects at the detriment of the causes. As it is easy to locate terrorists and gun them down. But as long as the situations that gave birth to terrorists in the first place are not addressed a hundred more take his place as soon as one goes down. The government can achieve this by having adequate social inclusion, address the problems of injustice, fight corruption to a standstill, fortified our borders, create employment opportunities and poverty eradication.
5. We must move beyond the confines of individual states. States confronted by the threat of transnational insurgent terror should recognize the need to collaborate with other states to eliminate safe havens, to control financial resources, and to guard and to prevent the sales of weapons and explosives to terrorists. One approach with regards to such initiatives is intensification of bilateral and multi-lateral agreements on policing and security
6. The carrot and stick approach in the fight against terrorism will go a long way in curtailing the menace. On this basis, the Nigerian government must look deeply into the reasons why earlier efforts at curtailing the problem of terrorism have not yielded the desired result. One approach with regard to such initiatives would be to look beyond the use of coercion, and rather seek ways that can deal with the deeper underlying and fundamental issues that serve as catalyst for terrorism in the country.
7. Adoption of intelligence led policing by the security agencies in Nigeria in countering terrorism will also reduce the menace, and with this approach, the mid and high-level

members of terrorists and their sponsors will be targeted.

8. Strengthening of our institutions.

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