

CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM: EXAMINING THE SOCIO-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

Allens Umunna Iheonu, PhD
Department of Political Science
Abia State University, Uturu

Acho Elendu, PhD
Department of Political Science
Abia State University, Uturu

Valentine Nwaugo, PhD
Department of Sociology
Abia State University, Uturu

Abstract

The work is a study of the cross-border terrorism that has been bedeviling the developing countries, with emphasis on Africa and the Indian subcontinent. The work studied the concepts of international terrorism and cross-border terrorism and noted that international terrorism came to the attention of the international community with the brutal assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia and Mr. Louise Barthou, the French foreign minister in 1934. The study found that the causes of cross-border terrorism is a result of political and economic instability that have beset the developing countries as a result of weak and illegitimate governance, economic downturn, corruption, mismanagement of national resources, ethno-religious intolerance and extremism of ideas, lack of

effective border control etc. The solution proffered by the study include that states should have a more effective border control with the help of CCTV and security personnel that are up to their duty. Again, and more importantly states should down play difference in ethnicity and religion and embrace our shared humanity. Developing countries must endeavour to strengthen their economies by fighting corruption, mismanagement of resources, and prebendalism. The study adopted expofacto as its research design. It deployed relative deprivation and frustration – aggression theory as its theoretical framework. Its method of data collection was secondary data collection. The study employed relational content analysis as its method of data analysis.

Key words: Aggression, Cross-Border, Deprivation, Frustration, Terrorism

Introduction

International terrorism has been a trouble scourge that has been bedeviling the conduct of international relations since 1934 when King Alexander of Yugoslavia and Mr. Louise Barthou, the French foreign minister were assassinated on the street of Marseilles. The phenomenon of international terrorism deepened with the murder of eleven Israeli athletes during the 1972 Munich Olympics, a period that should ordinarily celebrate the brotherhood of man. The scourge of international terrorism even became more troubling in 1998 when Libya was accused of sponsoring the terrorism that led to the aerial explosion of Pan Am

flight 103 in Lockerbie, Scotland in which 270 people perished. The climax of international terrorism came in 2001 with the aerial terrorist attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Centre, New York, and the Pentagon (Iheonu and Enyiazu, 2024).

The incidence of international terrorism, on the surface, can be said to be directed more on the developed world, however, another type of international terrorism, cross-border terrorism, is now a big scourge bedeviling the underdeveloped world. Cross-border terrorism takes its toll in the Third World countries especially in the North and West African sub-regions, India sub-continent and South East Asia.

Trans-border terrorism, as it is sometimes called, has come with its mayhem, killing vulnerable men, women and children. Properties worth millions have been destroyed. Agricultural lands have been devastated. All these have combined to create squalor to the border communities as a result of displacement of population. Many of the indigenes of border communities are in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps occasioning many out of school children. What the future portends to these people is very bleak.

Theoretical Framework

This study will be anchored on two theories. These are Relative Deprivation, and Frustration-Aggression theories. Sciencedirect.com (2025) states that “Relative deprivation theory centres on the proposition that negative effects associated with judgments of one’s own status is not simply a function of

one's objective. Instead, resentment, anger and dissatisfaction and other deprivation-related emotions vary with the subjective assessment of one's status.

It was Samuel Stouffer, a Sociologist, who coined the term relative deprivation. Study.com (2023) states that he discovered relative deprivation theory when he was studying World War II soldiers and their feelings towards how likely they were to receive a promotion. Stouffer, according to study.com, discovered or realized that comparison and feelings of deprivation lead to relative deprivation. Relative deprivation is, therefore, the perceived feeling of deprivation when compared to a standard. He distinguishes this from absolute deprivation which is not comparable in nature.

Townsend (1979) in Arendt (2025) avers that relative deprivation arises when there is the lack of resources to sustain the diet, lifestyle, activities and amenities that an individual or group are used to or that are widely encouraged or approved in the society to which they belong. In line with this, Walker and Smith (2002), Bayvertz (1999) and Schaefer (2008) according to Arendt (2025) state that measuring relative deprivation, allows on objective comparison between the situation of the individual or group compared to the rest of society. Relative deprivation may also emphasis the individual experience of discontent when being deprived of something to which one believes oneself to be entitled. In the same line of thought, Longley (2021), contends that relative deprivation is formally defined as an actual or perceived lack of resources required to maintain the quality of life (e.g. diet, activities, material

possessions) to which various socio-economic groups or individuals within those groups have grown accustomed, or are considered to be the accepted norm within the group. Put in a simpler way, Longley states that relative deprivation is a feeling that you are worse off than the people you associate with and compare yourself to. For instance, when you can only afford a compact economy car but your co-worker, while getting the same salary as you, drives a fancy luxury sedan, you may feel relatively deprived.

Even though Stouffer coined the term relative deprivation, the scientific development of the concept is attributed American sociologist Robert K. Merton, whose study of American soldiers during World War II revealed that soldiers in the military police were far less satisfied with their opportunities for promotion than regular general infantries (UGIs).

Walker and Smith (2001) contend that relative deprivation is a theory developed by Robert K. Merton. They state that relative deprivation is a term used in Social Sciences to describe feelings or measures of economic, political or social deprivation that are relative rather than absolute. They aver that the term is also associated with similar terms such as poverty and social exclusion. So, in effect, the concept of relative deprivation has important consequences for both behavior and attitudes, and participation in collective action which sometimes may come out in a show of violence. This situation leads to what is known as the concept of frustration-aggression theory.

As Iheonu (2024) states, frustration-aggression theory is related to relative deprivation theory, because in most cases it is a sense of deprivation that leads to frustration. Frustration-aggression theory is a theory postulated by John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Ovrall Mowrer and Robert Sears in 1939. The theory was further developed by Neal Miller in 1941, and even further fifty years later in 1989 by Leonard Berkowitz. Friedman and Schustack (2014) contend that the theory of frustration-aggression affirms that aggression is the result of blocking or frustrating a person's efforts to attain a goal. This is in line with Dollard *et al* who state in their postulation that frustration always precedes aggression, and that aggression is the sure consequence of frustration. However, Zilmann (1999) avers that later scholars have modified the theory somewhat. He notes that Miller (1941) and Sears (1941) have reformulated the theory to opine and suggest that while frustration creates a need to respond, some form of aggression is only one possible outcome; their new thinking is that while frustration brings about a behavior that may or may not be aggressive, any aggressive behavior is the result of frustration. This, according to Millier and Sears, makes frustration not sufficient but, however, a necessary condition for aggression.

Another dimension of frustration-aggression theory that is even more disturbing is the issue of transferred aggression when innocent targets are made to suffer for other people's frustration. Dollard *et al* affirms that frustration breeds aggression but when the source of frustration cannot be reached, the aggression gets

displaced and transferred to an innocent person. They state, for example, that if a man is disrespected and humiliated at his office or work place but cannot respond to this because of the place but losing his job; he may go home and mete out his anger and frustration on his innocent family (Iheonu, 2024). Taking it a little further, Withley and Kite (2009), state that this theory is also used to explain the incidence of riots and revolutions, which are both seen to be caused by poorer and subsequently more deprived sections of society who may express that bottled up frustration and anger through violence. And of course, terrorism is part of this mix. So, in effect, as Iheonu (2024) contends, deprivation breeds frustration and frustration triggers aggression. The relative deprivation theory and the frustration-aggression theory are therefore suitable as the theoretical underpinning of the study.

The Concept of International Terrorism

Cross-border terrorism is an aspect of international terrorism. One will, therefore, understand the import of cross-terrorism, when one appreciates the gravity and troubling dimensions of international terrorism.

French Diplomacy (2025) states that international terrorism is one of the most serious threat to international peace and security. International terrorism became a global concern in 1934 as a result of the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia and Mr. Louise Barthou, the French foreign minister in Marseilles. Since then, international community has

grappled with the problems of international terrorism without really making headway.

The major obstacle to combating international terrorism is that the international community has not been able to agree on what constitutes the phenomenon. Iheonu and Enyiazu (2024) note that even though terrorism is the use of violence and intimidation to exert pressure on governments, certain elements must be there for terrorism to acquire international dimension. It is on the presence or non-presence of these elements that members of the international community disagree on.

According to Iheonu and Enyiazu (2024) the definition of international terrorism is as difficult as any other concept in social sciences, but one thing for certain is for terrorism to acquire international significance it must be calculated to bring about political change which disrupts international relations and which the international community views as contrary to desirable international norms of behavior.

Even though Franck and Lockwood (1974) contend that the term terrorism was first used during the 'Reign of Terror' in France during the French Revolution. This means that the phenomenon started as a state affair; the term has since this period dramatically changed its meaning mainly to the Western countries who now see terrorism as actions perpetrated by individuals and groups of individuals. This does not, however, sit well with the Arab world, the Non-Aligned countries, and in fact, the Third World in general. Franck and Lockwood (1974, p2) went further to state that these states are of the view that:

...that any disinterested consideration by the United Nations of the subject of terrorism, must began with state terrorism, that being the most dangerous brand of violence, the most often practiced at the most comprehensive scale.

The reason for this stance of the Third World countries is clear. It is this brand of terrorism, that is, state terrorism that they themselves suffer. State terrorism is the terrorism perpetrated by one state against another. These, according to some Third World scholars, include Israel's Zionism that sees Israel terrorising neighbouring Arab states, South Africa's apartheid that spills into terrorizing the frontline states who they accuse of harbouring and sponsoring South African black freedom fighters, and the United States quest to maintain its hegemony in its hemisphere in the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine that occasioned her invading other American states like Chile, Nicaragua and Panama etc. with the pretense of curbing communist threat (Franck and Lockwood, 1974) .

In the same line of thought Abu-Lughod (1973) according to Iheonu and Enyiazu (2024) states that there is no denying the capacity of the more powerful countries to bring destruction and ruin to man and his environment as a consequence of their continuous progress in science and technology, especially in weapons of destruction which they use to terrorise the weak. So, to weak countries which are largely Third World states, terrorism in international relations, no matter how it is defined, is largely an attribute of the strong.

Weighing in on the difficulty of agreeing the definition of terrorism or what constitutes it, AR-Terrorism Definition (2023, P.1) contends that:

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. The use of violence for the achievement of political ends is common to state and non-state actors or groups. Most of the definitions in use have been written by agencies directly or closely associated with governments, and are systematically biased to exclude governments from the definition.

So, to AR-Terrorism Definition (2023) the contemporary label of terrorism is highly pejorative as it denotes lack of legitimacy and morality.

The controversy over the definition and meaning of the term ‘terrorism’ does not look like something that will soon end. As late as 2022, the controversy still raged at the United Nations’ Sixth Committee. The United Nations (2022) reports that at the Sixth Committee (Legal) of the United Nations meeting which took place in October, 2022 to approve its work programme for to Seventy-Seventh Session and its consideration of the Secretary General’s report on measures to eliminate international terrorism, a state official representing Iran, and speaking for the Non-Aligned Movement, strongly emphasised that all states must combat terrorism including prosecuting or extraditing the perpetrators of

terrorist acts. However, he maintained that terrorism should not be equated with the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial rule or alien domination and foreign occupation. United Nations (2022) also reported that the representative of Saudi Arabia agreeing to this line of thought and speaking on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), call for the clearing of the outstanding issues on the draft convention on terrorism, essentially as it concerns the distinction between terrorism and the struggle for self-determination of those under colonial rule or occupation by foreign powers.

There is no gain saying the fact that the western states are more concerned with the acts of terrorism that are carried out by individuals or groups, as these are the one that affect them. There is no way that weaker developing countries who have grouse to settle with them can invade them, so they often use the services of their agents to hit western targets through clandestine terrorist operations. It is, however, important to state that western countries do not agree with Third World scholars' reasons for the western world being particular about individual or group terrorism rather than state terrorism. This stance is because in the preliminary talks on international relations at the United Nations in 1972, the western states rejected the invitation to include state acts within the category of international terrorism not because state acts are sacrosanct but for exactly the opposite reason, which is that adequate international laws already restrain state violence.

All those argument notwithstanding, there are some basic conditions that must be there before a terrorist act could be said to have acquired international character as different from ordinary every day violent criminal act that are normally taken care of by national laws. So for violent acts to be seen as international terrorism or for them to acquire international significance, certain elements must be there. It was on this premise that the signatories states to the 1937 convention in article I agreed to categorize as acts of terrorism all acts directly against a state which were intended or calculated to create state of terror in the minds of a section of the public (Dugard, 1973, p94).

These acts, according to Dugard (1973) would be treated as terrorist acts, the signatories agreed, if they were directed at another state and if they involved:

- a) Death or bodily injury to a head of state or a person holding public position,
- b) Damage to the public property of another state,
- c) Dealing with arms and ammunition with a view of committing an act of terrorism, and
- d) Any willful act calculated to endanger the lives of members of the public (Dugard 1973, p94).

There are some scholars who say that the importance of motive behind acts of terror is not captured by the 1937 convention. However, this was clearly captured in the United States Draft Convention and the importance of this US position on motive is to differentiate the acts of international terrorism from everyday crime covered by national criminal law. Whatever the case, the controversy over the definition

and meaning of international terrorism will continue to rage on since different states with their different inclinations look at it from their own personal lenses. But for the purpose of this study we define international terrorism as the use of destructive power and sheer violence by one state or its agent, (whether individual or group) against a state or a people in a bid to influence the attitude of the victim state for the advancement of the foreign policy of the perpetrator state.

Conceptualising Cross-Border Terrorism

Cross-border terrorism is a brand of terrorism that involves two neighbouring countries. Drishti IAS (2019) states that the term, “cross-border” implies a movement or an activity across a border between two countries. It went further to state that cross-border terrorism is a form of terrorism in which soil of one country is used to create terror in bordering countries. It avers that as a grey zone conflict, cross-border terrorism is an undeclared war and considered to be the highest form or strategy to bleed a country for prolonged period by small efforts.

Further to this, Drishti IAS (2019) states that cross-border terrorism is a systematic use of violence against civilians as a way of intimidating a population or government for political, religious, or ideological goals. Cross-border terrorism includes unconventional tactics like cyber-attacks, political warfare, perception war, sponsorship of armed proxy fighters etc.

Shukla (2024) defines cross-border terrorism as acts of terrorism that are organised, started, and led by

terrorist organisations or individuals from one state to cause unrest, fear, and violence in another state. He states that, it is a situation when non-state actors carry out terrorist actions across the common border between two countries, frequently with purported support from element within a neighbouring state. He went further to state that cross-border is a proxy warfare in that it often involves the use of non-state actors, acting as proxies to advance the strategic interests of the state providing support. He contends that cross-border terrorists use asymmetric tactics which include guerrilla warfare, suicide bombs and targeted killings when conducting cross-border terrorism. These measures aim to terrorise, kill, and destabilize the area they are intended for.

Cross-border implies a movement or an activity across a border between two bordering countries. Legally, Law Insider (2025) states that cross-border means ‘across any border’, while also specifically meaning ‘issues impacting specifically on regions on both side of a shared internal or external border’. Cross-border terrorism should not be confused with cross-border conflict. Cross-border conflicts refer to disputes that arise between neighbouring countries over territorial boundaries, resources, or different political ideologies. This dispute may result to arms conflicts between the two states that may be gruesome on the civil population but this does not make it cross-border terrorism. Cross-borders terrorism is carried out by private individuals even if they are sponsored agents of the state. Their operation is often clandestine, faceless, attritional and aiming to score a political or religious point.

Factors that Facilitate Cross-Border Terrorism

One of the factors that facilitate cross-border terrorism is porous borders. For instance the international borders in Nigeria are very porous. In the northern frontiers of Nigeria, people go through the borders at will without any disturbances from security forces. Things are not really better in the western frontiers nor in the eastern side of the country. Drishti IAS (2019) states that India borders with most neighbours are not protected and are therefore, extremely easy to cross. It went on to state that the problem is that these Indian borders with neighbours cannot be physically wired due to complex geographical features such as mountains, deserts and other landforms. It states that the complexity makes these borders difficult to protect by security forces. As it is in India so it is in Nigeria and other West African countries and in Southeast Asia. Border management in the developing part of the world has been characterised by security ambivalence and lack of strategic thinking (Drishti IAS 2019, p 1).

Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2025) notes that the geographic spread and opportunistic relocation of such conflicts is amplified by the lack of control on many African borders that facilitate the circulation of fighters, hostages and weapon without restraint. It states that the offensive conducted by AQIM and the rebels of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNL) against the Malian army in the year 2012, for instance, was fuelled with Tuareg fighters who fled Libya with

light arms, ammunitions and explosives from Maummar Gaddafi's extensive stockpile. There is no gainsaying that border regions of North African countries are deadlier than any other area of countries in North Africa.

The porousness of borders are sometimes brought about as a result of local population who support and facilitate cross-border movement of terrorists by providing them conveyance and safe places to hide. Drishti IAS (2019) contends that this could happen due to multitude of reasons such as identical ethnic affiliation, monetary requirements, fear of life, lack of education, dissatisfaction with present governance system etc. Sympathy for the terrorists cause can also be a factor.

Another reason adduced by Drishti IAS (2019) why many Third World countries' borders are porous is a consequence of corrupt officials. It states that sometimes officials in exchange for a thousand of whatever their currency is allow unabated entry of illegal migrants whose identifies and backgrounds are not known or little known. This enables criminal elements to cross over to the target country and soon unleash mayhem.

Instances of Cross-Border Terrorism

Cross-terrorism is one scourge that has been bedeviling the underdeveloped countries especially in the West Africa sub-region, North Africa, India sub-continent and Southeast Asia.

West African Situation: West Africa Task Force (FATF) (2013) states that West and Central Africa have continued to experience the troublesome impact of terrorism, albeit cross-border terrorism. It states that Boko Haram in particular has developed into the most deadly terrorist organisation in the world, responsible for 6000 casualties in 2015 alone. Terrorism, it notes, not only threatens civilians' lives in these areas, but also contributes to political instability and undermines economic gain and future development.

In line with the above, the Center for Preventive Action (2024) avers that the persistent and growing strength of violent extremist organisations in the Sahel region of West Africa threatens to exacerbate the humanitarian crisis and spread of instability across Africa in the region. It notes that it is the continuing collapse of international counter-terrorism support, as well as weakening leadership in regional efforts, that have created a vacuum which extremist organisations exploit to expand their operations.

The organisations in this fold include, according to Center for Preventive Action, Jama'at Nusrata al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM), Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), Islamic State in the West African Province (ISWAP). Center for Preventive Action avers that these extremist organisations have already taken advantage of the vacuum created by the continuing collapse of international counter-terrorism support to unleash indiscriminate attacks on government forces and civilians while using countries in the Sahel region as

platforms. The countries in the Sahel region are Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria.

Centre for Preventive Action (CPA) (2024) states that since gaining independence in the 1960s, many countries in the Sahel have experienced violent extremism due to the confluence of weak and illegitimate governance, economic decline, and the worsening effects of climate change. Violence, conflict, and crime have surged over the last decade, transcending national borders and posing significant challenges to countries both in and outside the region. It went further to contend that the Sahel remains a principal transit point for migrants traveling from Sub-Saharan Africa to Northern coastal states and on to Europe. It avers that further violence could seriously increase the rate of displacement and migration from the region, which will in turn compound pressures on northern and coastal African states and Europe.

Cross-Border Terrorism in North and East Africa:

United Nations (2025) states that the North Africa region faces threats from terrorist groups affiliated with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, (AQIM); the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) also known as Daesh, and Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) who travelled to Iraq or the Syria. It avers that the undetected return of FTFs to their countries of origin following ISIL's territorial defeat poses additional security challenges. It notes that these returnees acting as lone actors of small cells have carried out a number of cross-border deadly

attacks in recent years in several North African countries and have proven difficult to detect.

Gurria and Mayaki (2025) state that since the early 2000s, a combination of rebel groups, and transnational organisations affiliated with al-Qaeda or the Islamic State (IS), and independent self-defence militia have challenged the legitimacy and stability of states in North Africa. It avers that in this region, governments are increasingly confronted with new forms of political violence. It notes that the geography of these conflicts is often elusive, due to the large number of actors involved, their shifting alliances and their transnational movement across borders that visits the local population with violence.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2025) avers that terrorist groups continue to benefit from organised crime activities using illicit-trafficking as a source of financing and logistic supplies for the planning and implementation of their operations. Porous borders, the use of advanced technology for communication and financing, as well as the control of strategic routes, are enabling factors that aid these growing threat of cross-border terrorism in North Africa.

The East African Scenario: East Africa is not shielded from the menace of cross-border terrorism. Ifri (2024) states that East African states are among the 20 countries most impacted by cross-border terror threats consequent upon state fragility, the prevalence of armed conflicts, under development, and the growth of extremism. It notes that terrorist network have extensively exploited

the maritime domain of the India ocean to inflict cross-border naval crimes which includes maritime terrorism, piracy, human trafficking, and smuggling of illicit goods etc. Ifri states that coastlines in East Africa have traditionally been seen as potentially vulnerable sites in terms of illegal drugs, arms, and human trafficking. So, therefore, securing the maritime coastlines is pivotal for governments of East Africa countries of Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia and Tanzania.

Cross Border Terrorism in the India Sub-Continent.

Center for Preventive Action (CPA) (2024) states that the conflict between India and Pakistan came about as a result of the 1947 partition of British India as enshrined in the Indian Independence Act. The partition created a Muslim-majority Pakistan and a Hindu-majority India and gave the diverse Jammu and Kashmir the opportunity to choose which country out of the two, to join. CPA notes that the Maharaja (Kashmir's Monarch) initially sought independence for his people, as Kashmir was neglected and subjugated by successful conquerors. However, he later agreed to accede to India in exchange for help against invading Pakistan herders. This triggered Indo-Pakistani war of 1947-48.

Even though there was a ceasefire that temporarily stopped the war the relations between India and Pakistan has been that of a cat and dog which has ultimately led to cross-border terrorism. There have been cross-border terrorist attacks on both countries. The one on Pakistan come largely from Afghanistan. For example, in 2017 a cross-border attack killed two

Pakistan military personnel which led Pakistan to summon the Afghan CDA, that is, the diplomatic representative of Afghanistan, and a strong protest lodged with the Afghan government. Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017) notes that these cross-border terrorism attacks on Pakistani forces confirm the presence of a large number of terrorists in the increasingly ungoverned spaces in Afghanistan.

Be this as it may, the cross-border terrorism on India come largely from Pakistan as result of the dispute over the status of Kashmir. Vision of Humanity (2025) states that India a view Pakistani as perpetuating the on-going cross-border conflict and for sponsoring militant activity in India in a bid to destabilise the state of Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country.

Pakistani has, however, also accused India of sponsoring military terror groups after a train was hijacked in the south-west of Pakistan. Survivor recounted their ordeal from the unprecedented attack that killed 26 passengers. The chief minister of Baluchistan, where the incident occurred, told reporters that Pakistan has solid evidence of India's involvement in the attack and hijack but did not, however, share any specific information (The Guardian, 2025).

Be that as it may, Perktovich and Dalton (2016) state that the case of India-Pakistani faces off may not let off if India persists in its tough stand on Pakistan. They believe that if India persists in its position that it can manage Kashmir as an internal matter without Pakistan's negotiated cooperation India will be unable to build an

international coalition that would significantly raise the cost of Pakistan of future major attacks on India.

Effects of Cross-Border Terrorism

Some of the major socio-political implications of cross-border terrorism is the disruption and disarticulation of the very existence of the border communities in the following areas:

- i. Displacement of population. The border communities are forcefully dispersed because of the activities of the terrorists and the response from the government in fighting them. The people often scatter and migrate to save themselves and their loved ones.
- ii. Many of the dispersed people who were not adequately prepared for the terrorists onslaught (most are not always prepared because of the suddenness of events) find themselves in Internally Displaced People's (IDP) camps where their safety is not even guaranteed as the terrorists strike those camps to cart away young girls whom they use as sex objects.
- iii. Displacement of population and their eventual herding into IDP camps lead to out of school children. The future development of such communities are, therefore, in great jeopardy.
- iv. Farm work and agricultural production are disrupted leading to shortage of food and consequently skyrocketing of food prices

which leads to acute hunger in the land and in turn engenders criminal activities.

Recommendations

There are some steps that states can take to stop or ameliorate cross-border terrorism. Amongst them are the following:

- i. There is no gainsaying the fact that cross-border terrorism occurs mainly in the Third world countries. This is as a result of bad governance, mismanagement of national resources, corruption, and prebendalism which occasion civil strife, political instability, insurgency, and outright terrorism. In places or regions where there is relative economic stability, the incidence of cross-border terrorism is minimal or entirely absent. Third World political elite must endeavour to up the ante in quality leadership to stop or at least ameliorate the incidence of cross-border terrorism.
- ii. The importance of quality border management cannot be over-emphasised if the incidence of cross-border is to be checked. Most Third World countries' borders are porous leading to free movements across borders of people whose identities are little known. Well trained security personnel must man and patrol the borders with CCTVs monitoring every move near the borders. Culprits who try to smuggle arms and ammunitions or who try cross the borders

with or without arms should be seriously and thoroughly dealt with.

- iii. One thing every state, especially the Third World countries should do, is to prevent violent extremism. United Nations (2025) states that preventing violent extremism requires multidimensional cooperation between member states, civil society, and international and regional organisations. This is a crucial component to comprehensively addressing the threat of cross-border terrorism.
- iv. Added to the above, terrorist, as well as the people they inspire represent a major transnational threats. Dictating and disrupting the travel of these individuals and groups, and other high risk criminals, is a priority of the international community, especially those in the volatile areas or regions (United Nations, 2025).
- v. Lastly, United Nations (2025) notes that terrorist groups target young people. They exploit real or perceive grievance of the youth and use manipulative messages including the use of new technologies to increase their reach across borders and cultures. To prevent or de-escalate cross-border terrorism states need to engage with and invest in the youth.

Conclusion

The study deployed a combination of relative deprivation theory and frustration-aggression theory as its theoretical framework. It notes that it is the poor leadership structure of the Third World countries that is responsible for the cross-border terrorism that is bedeviling the underdeveloped countries.

This poor leadership structure breeds corruption, economic mismanagement, political instability, and civil strife etc. which lead to relative deprivation and which in turn leads to frustration and aggression in many cases which finds expression in terrorism albeit cross-border terrorism.

Third World states must start policies that will positively turn around the economy of the underdeveloped states. Tough measures must be taken to stop official rascality, corruption, prebendalism, economic mismanagement, and misappropriation of national resources etc.

Other steps such as effective border management, measures to prevent violent extremism, and positive engagement of the youth must be a priority if the incidence of cross-border terrorism must be checked. The political leaders of the underdeveloped world must up the ante.

References

Abu-Lughod, I. (1973). Unconventional violence and international politics. *American Journal of International Law* 67. (5). Nov.

- Arendt, G. (2025). Relative deprivation. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org> Accessed 20/4/2025, 3.17 pm.
- AR-Terrorism Definition (2023). Various Definitions of Terrorism. <https://dema.az.gov?file> Accessed 29/5/2023, 3.09am.
- Bavertzi, K. (1999). Solidarity. Springer, Google Print.
- Center for Preventive Action (2024). Conflict between India and Pakistan. www.cfr.org Accessed 7/4/2025, 1.36pm.
- Center for Preventive Action (2024). Violent extremism in the Sahel: Global conflict tracker. www.cfr.org Accessed 6/4/2025, 9.26am.
- Drishti IAS (2019). Cross border terrorism <https://www.drishitias.com> Accessed 2/4/2025, 9.02pm.
- Dugard, J. (1973). Towards the definition of international terrorism, American Journal of International Law, 67(5). Nov.
- Financial Action Taskforce (FATF) (2023). Terrorism financing in West and Central Africa. <https://www.fatf-gafl.org> Accessed 6/4/2025, 8.45am.
- France Diplomacy (2025). Terrorism: France's international action. www.diplomatie.gouv.fr Accessed 29/3/2025, 5.29am.
- Gurria, A. and Mayaki, I.A. (2025). Foreword: The geography of conflict in North and West Africa. OECD: Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat. <https://www.oecd.org> Accessed 6/4/2025, 10.49am.

- Ifri (2024). Cross-border dynamics in terrorist mobility and infiltration along the East African coastlines. <https://www.ifri.org> Accessed 6/4/2025, 2.10pm.
- Iheonu, A.U. (2024). Ubuntu in the face of xenophobia: Interrogating the socio-political contradictions. Igbo Scholars International Journal Vol. 17 No. 2, Sept. <http://acjol.org/index.php/igboscholars/article/view/5745>
- Iheonu, A.U. and Enyiazu, C. (2024). Understanding International Terrorism from the 20th to the 21st centuries. Abia State University International Journal of Political Science Vol. 1. No 2.
- Law.Insider (2025). Cross border: Definition. <https://www.lawinsider.com> Access 5/4/2025, 8.36am.
- Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (2025). The Geography of conflict in North and West African. OECD: Sahel and West African Club Secretariat. <https://www.oecd.org> Accessed 6/4/2025, 11.24am.
- Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017). Pakistan condemns cross border terrorist attack from Afghan soil resulting in Shahadat of two Pakistan military personnel. <https://mofa.gov.pk>. Accessed 7/4/2025, 2.18pm.
- Perkovick, G. and Dalton, T. (2016). Not war, not peace: Motivating Pakistan to prevent cross-border terrorism. <https://www.carnegieendowment.org> Accessed 7/4/2025, 1.14 pm.

- Schaefer; R.T. (2008). Racial and ethnic groups. New York: Pearson Education.
- Sciencedirect.com (2025). Relative deprivation. <https://www.sciencedirect.com> Accessed 24/3/2025, 5.48am.
- Shukla, S. (2024). Cross-border terrorism: Examining the India-Pakistan relationship. International Journal of Novel Research and Development (UNRD). <https://www.ijnrd.org> Accessed 5/4/2025, 10.20pm.
- Study Smarter (2024). Cross-border conflicts: cause and Impact. <http://www.studysmarter.co.uk> Accessed 5/4/2025, 8.28am.
- Study.com (2023). Relative deprivation theory: Overview, principle and examples. Accessed 24/3/2025, 6.05am.
- Townsend, P. (1979). Poverty in the United Kingdom: A survey of household resources and standard of living. London: Penguin Books.
- United Nations (2022). As Sixth Committee begins seventy-seventh session, speakers call for clear definition of terrorism, draft convention on global menace to be included. Coverage of United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee Meetings. 3 October. <https://www.un.org/press.un.org/ga3656.doc.htm> Accessed 10/8/2024, 10.05pm.
- United Nations (2025). Border security and management. <https://www.un.org> Accessed 5/4/2025, 9.22pm.

- United Nations (2025). North Africa <https://www.un.org>
Accessed 6/4/2025, 10.18am.
- United Nations (2025). Office of counter-terrorism.
<https://www.un.org> accessed 20/4/2025, 12.36
pm.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
(UNODC)(2025). Strengthening borders security
futures: A critical counter-terrorism summit in
Dushanbe. <https://www.unodc.org> Accessed
5/4/2025, 8.57pm.
- UNODC (2025) UNODC enhances cross-border
cooperation on countering terrorism and its links
with organised crime for Northern African
countries.<https://www.unodc.org> Accessed
6/4/2025 1.39pm.
- Vision of Humanity (2025). Terrorism in India and
successful counter terrorism strategies.
<https://www.visionofhumanity.org> Accessed
7/4/2025, 2.3pm.
- Walker, I. and Smith H.J. (2001). Relative deprivation:
Specification, development, and integration.
Cambridge University Press.
- Withley, B. F. and Kite, M.E. (2009). The psychology of
prejudice and discrimination (2nd edition).
Belmont, C.A. USA. Wadsworth.
- Zillmann, D. (1979). Hostility and aggression. Hillsdale,
New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.