

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR GROWTH AND CONSEQUENCES OF TERRORISM AND MILITIA ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN KADUNA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Southern Kaduna, a region in the Middle Belt of Nigeria, predominantly inhabited by Christian communities, has witnessed decades of recurrence of violent attacks as well as intercommunal conflicts linked to terrorism and militia activities; this is often attributed to tensions between local farmers and Fulani herders. Over time, the situation within the Southern Kaduna region has evolved from the usual tension between local farmers and Fulani herders to now encompassing organised criminal activities, ethnic militancy, and extremist insurgency. This periodic violence in the region is multifaceted, known to be driven by a complex interplay of historical, political, religious, ethnic, socio-economic, and security factors. This paper examined the factors responsible for the growth of terrorism and militia activities in Southern Kaduna, as well as their consequences. The paper adopted the Sociological Theory of Terrorism, which suggests that terrorism arises in response to social conditions that create grievances and frustration among certain groups of people. These grievances can be political, economic, or social, and can be exacerbated by factors such as poverty, discrimination, and inequality. The study also used the Discourse Analysis Method to examine the language and narratives used by terrorist groups to understand their ideologies and justifications; particularly, the researcher used both primary and secondary sources for data collection. Findings reveal that there are frequent intercommunal conflicts and attacks within southern Kaduna communities. These grave attacks have led to the massive loss of lives and the wanton destruction of properties in the region. Several counterterrorism measures by both international terrorist organizations and local bodies have been put in place to combat the rapid increase in terrorism and militia activities, and have yielded positive results. However, more effort is needed to put in place to eradicate the syndrome.

KEYWORDS: Terrorism, Militia, Southern Kaduna, Growth, and Consequences.

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is a complex problem, and its origins are diverse. As Jason Franks underscores, “The study of terrorism has become preoccupied with the constant debate that revolves around explaining what actually constitutes terrorism and how to counter it” (153). Interestingly, the term terrorism has become a topic of intense attention for scholars and government agencies during the past few years. Academic interest in terrorism was moderate during the last few decades, with journals, books, monographs, and national reports reasonably accessible and courses taught in most colleges on terrorism and political violence, but interest in this issue has exploded since the events of September 11, 2001 Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York City plane crashed attack by the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda, the Pentagon plane crash in Arlington, Virginia, and the fourth plane crash in a field in Pennsylvania after passengers and crew attempted to regain control of the aircraft. Although many democracies have, in recent years, developed departments or agencies to deal with terrorism, in the wake of 9/11 and the subsequent declaration of “war on terrorism” by the global community, nations throughout the world are now publishing annual reports on terrorism, creating joint task forces to gather information, and creating multinational centres to deal with this problem. Even so, there is still a lack of consensus for what terrorism is precisely, although there is general agreement on certain primary features, such as the targeting of civilian noncombatants, the intent to create a mood of fear and intimidation in a population, the use of violence, and the advocacy of a political or social cause. But these characteristics are very broad and may not encompass all acts of terrorism today (Combs & Slann xi-xii). However, modern terrorism, too, now encompasses tools not associated with terrorism of previous centuries and, in some cases, previous decades. It is obvious that the threat of cyber terror, for instance, was not a concern for governments until 20 years ago. Thus, cyber terror is considered today a serious threat to many systems, and much effort is now expended on protecting these systems from the dangers of cyber-attacks. “Weapons of mass destruction” were only a few years ago regarded as very unlikely terrorist tools; today, governments expend considerable effort to determine who has such weapons and whether they might be used effectively.

Terrorism and militia activities in Southern Kaduna are fuelled by a complex web of factors, which includes historical, political, religious, ethnic, socio-economic disparity, and other security factors. The consequences of these terroristic activities are severe, impacting the region’s economy, security, and overall development. Thus, the research focuses on investigating the factors responsible for the growth, as well as exploring the consequences of terrorism and militia activities in the Southern Kaduna region.

This paper adopted the Sociological Theory of Terrorism. The sociology of terrorism field views terrorism as a “social construction” (Ozeren, Gunes, and Badayneh 77). This suggests that terrorism is a product of social conditions and processes rather than individual pathology. According to this theory, terrorism arises in response to social conditions that create grievances and frustration among certain groups of people, as seen in Southern Kaduna. These grievances can be political, economic, or social, and can be exacerbated by factors such as poverty, discrimination, and inequality. It can be further stated that the sociological theory of terrorism focuses on how social conditions create and perpetuate terrorist ideologies and behaviours. In Southern Kaduna, it is evident that factors such as ethnic and religious tensions, competition for resources, political marginalization, and a history of violence all contribute to the grave challenge of terrorism and militia activities within the region. Furthermore, the major contributing factor resulting in these terrorism and militia activities in Southern Kaduna, especially the frequent clashes between farming communities and the Fulani militia counterpart, is over grazing routes, hunger, poverty, and the unequal treatment between the indigenous people of Southern Kaduna and the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups, which is most fuelled by biased politicians within the region. By understanding the social factors that contribute to terrorism, the theory advocates that we can develop more effective counter-terrorism strategies.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH OF TERRORISM AND MILITIA ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN KADUNA

After the US twin-tower terrorist attacks on 11th September 2001 and the intensified concerns about a global Jihad and other forms of terrorism, and renewed calls to better understand its divergent causes or roots, there have been differing views and/or arguments on what are to be considered as the reasons behind the frequency of terrorism and militia activities surrounding mankind today. African countries have experienced a relatively high level of terrorism and militia activities, and especially in Nigeria, several factors have been seen to serve as contributing factors leading to the occurrence and/or recurrence of these crimes.

It is pertinent to note that “there appear to be at least three schools of thought about the sources of terrorism. The first, and most primitive, posits that terrorism is simply a product of religion and culture. The second posits that terrorism is a consequence of authoritarianism, stagnation, and repression, and therefore democratic reform of these authoritarian societies is the key to ending systemic terror, i.e., power terrorism. The third school posits that terrorism is the result of economic inequality and poverty” (Hegay 12).

With respect to the various debates on the root causes of terrorism and militia activities, it is heartwarming to know that prominent researchers in the field of terrorism such as criminologists, psychologists, social scientists political scientists; and also, policymakers from the national government, international organizations, civil society groups, and also the private sectors, have been able to identify some commonly cited factors. A few among these factors contributing to the high rate of terrorism and militia activities are grouped into two, such as political marginalization as well as economic injustice, as seen in Southern Kaduna. Other related factors include rapid urbanization, decline in traditional authority, globalization, and so forth. Furthermore, these differences in the root causes of terrorism and militia activities, reflecting philosophical, religious, political, and other differences, are not merely academic; they can affect our understanding of both the threat and responses to terrorism and militia activities. Below is a discourse on the roots of terrorism and militia activities.

Political Marginalization

Political marginalization is a complex issue that can play a significant role in the development of terrorist ideologies. When people feel that their voices are not being heard or that they are excluded from the political process, as seen in Southern Kaduna, they may become disillusioned with conventional means of seeking change and turn to violence as a means of making their concerns known. This can manifest in several ways, including:

Ethnic Discrimination

“Empirical studies deem the political exclusion of ethnic minority groups to be a significant cause of civil war, rebellions, and mass violence” (Moore 851). Furthermore, in the opening paragraph of Alam Saleh’s introduction to his paper on Relative Deprivation Theory, Nationalism, Ethnicity and Identity Conflicts he acknowledges the fact that “In states wherein minorities experience economic discrimination, inequalities in standards of living as opposed to other ethnic groups, and asymmetrical access to such state resources as land and wealth, ethnic conflict is more likely” (157). Scholars believe that when minority groups are marginalized and denied equal political rights, they may feel that violence is the only way to achieve justice. Thus, in Southern Kaduna, ethnic discrimination has contributed greatly to the development of terrorist ideologies which occur in some phases such as through marginalization and/or inequality, deprivation of people’s identity and justice, especially where the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups are often favoured over other Southern Kaduna ethnic groups. These phases, therefore, reveal how terrorism and militia ideologies are formed:

- i. When ethnic minorities are denied equal rights, treated unfairly, or subjected to discrimination, they may feel marginalized and excluded from mainstream

society. This can fuel resentment and lead to support for extremist ideologies that promise to right perceived wrongs.

- ii. Ethnic discrimination can erode people's sense of identity and self-worth, and fuel feelings of injustice.

Religious Discrimination

Religious discrimination can lead to the development of terrorist ideologies. To Nilay Saiya:

When states practice minority religious discrimination by partnering with a dominant faith tradition, they often end up generating terrorism in two broad ways. First, and most obviously, religious minorities in these countries might rebel against their marginalized and suppressed status. In this sense, terrorism functions as a classic "weapon of the weak." These kinds of religion-state arrangements, however, can also transform terrorism into a "weapon of the strong" by empowering religious terrorists to attack religious minorities (61-104).

Deducing from the above purview, proponents who regard religious discrimination as one of the major sources of terrorism and militia activities submit that these discriminations form the terrorist ideologies in the following ways:

- i. When people of a particular faith are subjected to discrimination, they may feel marginalized and oppressed, fuelling resentment and support for extremist ideologies.
- ii. When there are conflicts between different religious groups, extremists may exploit the situation to gain support for their cause, perpetuating a cycle of violence.
- iii. Religious discrimination can erode people's sense of identity and self-worth, and fuel feelings of injustice that often result in terrorism.

Economic Injustice

Adam Smith argues that "economic deprivation is seen in relation to other members of society and creates frustration among the relatively deprived" (4). With respect to the inequality-terrorism nexus, Tim Krieger and Daniel Meierrieks propose a "relative deprivation theory," which suggests that "a country's level of income inequality is directly related to its level of terrorists' activity. Income inequality breeds frustration due to feelings of relative deprivation, frustration in turn results in terrorism" (5). Hypothetically, the relatively deprivation theory as suggested by Krieger and Meierrieks informs that "inequality may directly lead to more terrorist activity by fuelling frustration in accordance with relative deprivation theory, where terrorism serves as a means to voice discontent over and eventually change the economic-

distributional status quo. Furthermore, inequality may indirectly fuel terrorism by contributing to poorer socio-economic outcomes (e.g., health, education) and impairing institutions (e.g., corruption control, the rule of law), which in turn may incite terrorism. This leads to the following hypothesis: “A higher level of income inequality is associated with more terrorist activity” (5-6).

It is evident to note that “societies that see higher levels of economic inequality also see larger parts of society affected by relative deprivation. That is, more income inequality within a society coincides with a larger pool of frustrated “have-nots” and thus a higher risk of terrorism. Terrorism is used by the frustrated “have-nots” to violently voice discontent, punish the “have” and challenge (and possibly, change in their favour) the distribution of economic resources. For one, this notion indeed matches the self-perception of terrorist groups, which often portray themselves as fighting for “the poor” or “social justice.” For another person, it also corresponds with the political goals and incentives often associated with terrorism. The prospects of a redistribution of wealth (as a political objective of a terrorist group) as well as the forcible capture and exploitation of rents (e.g., from natural resources) that advance one’s economic position may offer strong incentives to engage in terrorist activity” (5).

To surmise the aforesaid, economic injustice can have a profound impact on the development of terrorism and militia activities in society. As seen in Southern Kaduna, where the people are unable to access necessities such as education, healthcare, or unemployment opportunities, they often feel that the system is stacked against them. The reasons mentioned are enormous factors that foster feelings of resentment and disillusionment that can fuel terrorist ideologies that promise a better future or vengeance against perceived oppressors. In simple terms, poverty, unemployment, and other forms of economic injustice can contribute to feelings of desperation and frustration, which can fuel terrorist ideologies. An overview of these factors will be presented below:

Poverty

Terrorism and poverty are serious socio-political problems that have been with us throughout the ages. But in the modern period, we see different trends and characters developing with both terrorism and poverty (Daskon 1). Poor living conditions and a lack of economic opportunities are regarded as significant factors in the development of terrorist ideologies. Poverty is seen to be a major source that often leads to frustration and despair, creating conditions that are ripe for extremist ideologies to take hold. It is obvious that in impoverished communities, people may struggle to meet their basic needs, such as food, shelter, and healthcare. Terrorist groups often exploit these feelings by promising better living conditions or a sense of purpose and belonging to those who join their cause. However, after September 11th, the debate about whether poverty

causes terrorism has gained considerable momentum. The most well-known contribution is a study by Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Maleckova refuting the existence of any provable link between poverty and terrorism, drawing inter alia upon case studies of the social background of Hizbullah members and Hamas suicide bombers, which show that these movements recruit from the middle classes, not from the poorest social strata of society (1). Similarly, a lack of sufficient food and other basic amenities has led to growing insecurity challenges within the Southern Kaduna region.

Krueger and Maleckova further amplified the fact that:

A careful review of the evidence provides little reason for optimism that a reduction in poverty or an increase in educational attainment would, by themselves, meaningfully reduce international terrorism. Any connection between poverty, education, and terrorism is indirect, complicated, and probably quite weak (1).

Krueger and Maleckova's study received a tremendous amount of attention and has been widely cited by scholars, practitioners, and politicians as evidence of the lack of linkages between poverty and terrorism. Nevertheless, other studies have found robust results linking poverty and terrorism. A quantitative study by Quan Li and Drew Schaub finds that economic developments in a country and among its major trading partners reduce the likelihood of transnational terrorism. They conclude that the effect of economic development in reducing transnational terrorism is significant and recommend that "promoting economic development and reducing poverty should be an important component in the global war against terrorism" (253).

Unemployment

High unemployment and a lack of opportunities for young people can be a massive drag on economies, but it's also one of the biggest recruitment drivers for extremist and terrorist groups, a new report has found (Bove 1). It is obvious that "the average national unemployment rate for each country would be expected to bear a significant positive relationship with terrorism, as unemployment precipitates the stress of idle workers who might suffer from unmet economic expectations and therefore turn to political violence" (Piazza 166).

Evidently, unemployment can be a significant factor in the development of terrorist ideologies for several reasons:

- i. In communities where unemployment is high, people may feel that they have no opportunity to improve their lives or provide for their families. This can lead to feelings of hopelessness and resentment, which can be exploited by terrorist groups.

- ii. Joining a terrorist group can offer a sense of identity and purpose to those who feel marginalized or unfulfilled in their lives. This, therefore, has led many into terrorism and militia activities.

Education

A series of disagreements emerges as scholars continually discuss whether there is a link or not between lack of education (or inadequate education) as one of the contributing factors to terrorism and militia activities. According to Sarah Brockhoff, Tim Krieger, and Daniel Meierrieks, “when country-specific conditions are favourable (e.g., sound institutions, strong economic development), education helps to reduce terrorism. However, when country-specific conditions are poor, a lack of education may fuel terrorism. In other words, those very ‘great hard times’ associated with the positive role of education in terrorism may turn into ‘hard times’ when country-specific conditions are unfavourable” (1). In the case of Southern Kaduna, where numerous uneducated youths have always been found guilty of the uprising security challenges made it is evident that there is a link between terrorism and lack of proper education.

As widely agreed, lack of education can play a significant role in the development of terrorist ideologies, as it can foster ignorance and misinformation, which can be exploited by terrorist groups. Two propositions can be made here: without proper education, people may be more susceptible to extremist ideologies and propaganda. Terrorist groups may use this to their advantage by indoctrinating individuals with distorted and hateful views of the world. Secondly, without a solid education, people may be less able to critically analyse information and identify misinformation or propaganda, which will lead to the formation of terrorist ideologies.

Healthcare

The possibility that inequalities in health contribute to the occurrence of terrorism needs to be investigated (Deboutte 6). Thus, it is widely believed that lack of good healthcare can contribute to the development of terrorist ideologies, and this usually occur when people lack access to quality healthcare, they may suffer from poor health, including illnesses and injuries that go untreated, which can lead to feelings of resentment and frustration, especially if they believe that their suffering is a result of social or political inequalities. Also, terrorist groups may exploit the suffering caused by the lack of healthcare to recruit members into many forms of terrorism and militia groups.

Urbanization

According to Jo Beall, “urbanization and the rapid and unplanned expansion of cities exacerbate the impact of terrorism” (6). Rapid urbanization is seen to be a cause of terrorism and militia activities in several ways. One, it can result in economic

inequality, with urban areas experiencing rapid growth and economic prosperity while rural areas fall behind. This inequality can fuel resentment and frustration, which can be exploited by terrorist groups. Secondly, rapid urbanization can also lead to social isolation and a loss of community, which can increase the risk of radicalization and recruitment into terrorist groups.

Globalization

Globalization arguably has a link with terrorism, but the extent to which these two are linked has been a subject of continued research and debate across time and space (Ogu, Iyanda, Ogu 71). As rightly noted above, globalization is seen to be another phenomenon that has come to be closely connected with terrorism and terrorist activities. Ogu, Iyanda, and Ogu further asserts that “the opportunities provided by globalization have served as a very effective vehicles for terrorist activities to drive; from transportation, to communication, and even weapons manufacture, terrorist activities have increasingly become much more effective and its consequences much more devastating, as a result of the opportunities and even artifacts provided for by globalization” (71).

Globalization is often cited as a cause of terrorism for several reasons, one of which is that it leads to increased connectivity between people and nations, which makes it easier for terrorist groups to recruit and spread their ideologies. Globalization has resulted in the uneven distribution of resources, which has created resentment and grievances among marginalized groups. It has also led to a culture clash, as traditional ways of life and values come into conflict with the values and practices of other cultures.

Traditional Authority

Traditional authority structures can contribute to terrorism in several ways. Some of these traditional authorities may use violence and intimidation to preserve their power and control over a population, which can fuel resentment and opposition. In areas where traditional authority structures dominate, democratic institutions may be weak or nonexistent, leaving few options for political participation and expression. Traditional authority structures may limit economic opportunities, especially for marginalized groups like Southern Kaduna, leading to frustration and support for extremist ideologies (Ogu, Iyanda, Ogu 71).

CONSEQUENCES OF TERRORISM AND MILITIA ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN KADUNA

The negative effects of terrorism and militia activities on humans are numerous. These negative implications of terrorism and militia activities, especially in Southern Kaduna, according to Adrienne Stith Butler, Alison M. Panzer, and Lewis R. Goldfrank,

are considered “a subset of human-caused disasters that can have a particularly devastating impact on psychological functioning. Terrorism carries with it a potentially greater impact than other disasters on distress responses, behavioural change, and psychiatric illness by virtue of the unique characteristics or terrorism events” (168). Butler, Panzer, and Goldfrank further reiterates that “terrorism attacks, and the threat of a terrorism event, may also result in more severe psychological consequences than other types of traumatic events due to a perceived lack of control” (168). Terrorist violence has a profound influence on social attitudes, including trust in governmental institutions and attitudes towards migration and civil freedoms. Acts of terrorism cause citizens to experience a complex range of negative emotions, including anxiety, anger, sorrow, and a sense of vulnerability and helplessness. Research on the magnitude and duration of these effects may play an important role in efforts to build peace and reduce violence in the world (“The Prolonged Effects of Terrorism: A Closer Look” 1).

Terrorism has the capacity to erode the sense of community or national security; damage morale and cohesion; and open the racial or ethnic, economic, and religious cracks that exist in our society. It is obvious that “...many of the victims of a terrorist attack may suffer the death of family members, close friends, or work colleagues, which can lead to a complicated bereavement with its own elevated risk for depression, self-medication, and substance abuse” (Rosen 1).

The effects of terrorism can be very devastating, as seen above. It has a huge impact on individuals, communities, and society as a whole. Terrorism often involves the use of violence, which can result in loss of life, injury, and trauma for victims and their families. These acts of terrorism and militia activities may include bombings, shootings, and kidnappings, among others. Another dimension where the effects of terrorism and militia activities become evident is when survivors of these attacks suffer from long-term psychological and emotional trauma, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety. Psychological and emotional trauma are common effects of terrorism, as survivors may struggle with a range of mental health issues as a result of their experience.

In Nigeria, terrorism has a direct effect on the enjoyment of a number of human rights, in particular the rights to life, liberty, freedom of movement, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and freedom against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (Houel 1). Concurring with the aforesaid, the Resolution 1840 (2011) Final Version of the report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Rapporteur also acknowledged that “Terrorism has a direct impact on human rights, with consequences for the enjoyment of the right to life, liberty and physical integrity or rights, especially victims of terrorism. It can destabilize and undermine entire societies, jeopardize peace and security, and threaten social and economic development. It seeks to impose upon the majority the views of a minority and stops at

nothing in the pursuit of its aims. Terrorism attacks the pillars of democracy and the rule of law upon which the respect of human rights is based” (“Human Rights and the Fight Against Terrorism” 1).

According to E. B. Niyitungan, “The fact that terror attacks target civilians and create in them a sense of fear and insecurity, as well as their effects on the economic sectors, have been given scant attention. The effects of terror attacks on the economic sector, if not dealt with at both national and continental level, might lead to economic instability and deepen poverty, thus violence and conflicts will become unavoidable” (22). Additionally, Niyitungan further argue that “the impact of terror attacks on the economic sector slow national development and worsen the economic security of ordinary persons and forces them to live in a state of fear and uncertainty” (22).

It is worth noting to point out the fact that “the fighting against Al-Shabab in the Horn of Africa and Boko Haram in West Africa has not only affected the region’s national security but also thwarted people’s freedom from want and fear. It is significant to know that these effects extend to affect African intra-state relations and international relations. This is because many tourists from across the globe are going to reduce their visits to Africa due to fear for their lives. Moreover, it is vital to note that many countries, particularly the Western ones, are going to tighten their immigration rules. Unfortunately, these economic effects of terror attacks and the repercussions they have on African people have not been fully examined” (Niyitungan 23).

Terror attacks have also had an enormous negative impact on agriculture and consumption. Many African countries rely on agriculture for their survival. Much literature on agriculture asserts that agriculture is to a large extent an economic engine for Africa (Hermann 296-376). Furthermore, in Africa, agriculture is a fundamental asset to the health of humans, animals, and the ecosystem.

Buttressing the aforesaid, it is important to note that since most African states depend on agriculture, terror attacks against agricultural production systems and water supplies can produce more harm and slow down the national economy of many states. Consequently, the other effects are experienced in the place where terror attacks have occurred, in the sense that it becomes difficult for people who rely on agriculture and farming to continue their farming projects (Coulterwood 1). It is argued that terror attacks on agriculture slow down production in a region that is already struggling, and therefore hinders economic development. For example, in Nigeria in the Northern region, Boko Haram attacks have negatively affected all the agricultural activities; therefore, people in the region have started to show signs of strain (Coulterwood 1). This fact is supported by Samer Haj-Yehia, who points out that the effect of terror attacks on personal security is especially important when terror hits civilians in the course of their everyday lives in a random pattern (Haj-Yehia 2006), therefore preventing them from carrying out their agricultural activities.

In addition, it is argued that Boko Haram has had a lot of effect on the agricultural products from the North and has severely reduced cross-border trade with Cameroon, Chad, and Niger (Coulderwood 1). In Somalia, where the land could have been used for agriculture, it has become the sanctuary of Al-Shabab and a battlefield for major terror attacks. And people, due to their personal safety and lack of security, cannot freely conduct their individual farming and business. “Therefore, if terror attacks persist in Africa, their effects will be seen on the tourism industry, trade and production, agriculture and consumption, GDP, trade in the realm of importation and exportation, and financial banking and public spending” (Niyitungan 35). The remains that “terror attacks cause inevitable economic and political consequences, infuse the public with fear, and inhibits the free flow of capital, labour, and free market principles. Terror attacks have strong ramifications on intra- and inter-industry trade; they also have an impact on destabilizing people’s security and safety, and economic insecurity is a major threat to peace and security. Similarly, these attacks weaken the economic systems and thus make African states more vulnerable” (Niyitungan 36).

In Southern Kaduna, there have been various causative factors leading to terrorism and militia activities, which to mention are: poverty, unequal treatment between diverse ethnic and religious bodies, socio-economic challenges, as well as the fight over land borders and grazing routes, which have often led to bloodshed, attacks, and lack of peaceful coexistence within the region.

From the foregoing, it is significant to say that the negative implications of terrorism and militia activities to human, economic, and national security cannot be overemphasized. The magnitude of these series of challenges posed by terrorism and militia activities ranges from social, psychological, and economic effects, which have greatly affected the development of individuals, communities, and nations at large. Significant efforts have been put in place on counterterrorism tactics to combat the recurrence of terrorism and militia activities, especially in Southern Kaduna, and some of these strategies that have been put in place are yielding results. Below is a discourse on the proposed ways towards curbing terrorism and militia activities.

WAYS TOWARDS REDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF TERRORISM AND MILITIA ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN KADUNA

In today’s globalized society, no country is immune to terrorism, and no country can effectively deal with terrorism alone (United Nations 1). It is worth noting to say acts of terrorism and militia activities in the world today, and especially in Nigeria, especially in Southern Kaduna, require concerted effort to fight against the negative implications they pose on people’s social, psychological, and economic life. Counterterrorism is not a job that can be undertaken by an individual or one single

agency fighting terrorism; it also involves the aid of some international regulatory bodies instituted to combat the challenge confronting the today's society.

Solutions to terrorism and militia activities are complex and multifaceted, but several steps can be taken to address this predicament. Some of the suggested potential solutions are addressing the root causes of terrorism and militia activities, educating people and creating more awareness on the hazards of engaging in terrorism and militia activities, and putting in counterterrorism strategies with stringent policies to help in combating the menace of terrorism and militia activities in the Southern Kaduna region. An expanse of these suggested solutions is given below.

Addressing Root Causes

According to Joshua Sinai, "to effectively resolve a terrorist insurgency against a state, it is crucial to map the root causes underlying the conflict because terrorism does not emerge in a political, socio-economic, religious, or even psychological vacuum. Root causes form the initial components driving the terrorist life cycle, e.g., why terrorist groups are formed, how they are led and organized, the nature of their grievances, motivations, strategies and demands and their relations with their constituency, while the terrorist attack cycle refers to how they conduct a spectrum of operations, ranging from non-violent to violent activities, and their choice of weaponry and targeting. Once these underlying causes are mapped, it will be possible to formulate appropriate response measures. Although some terrorist insurgencies can be resolved through conciliatory measures, some by means of a mix of coercion and conciliation, whereas others may only be resolved by defeating the terrorist militarily" (101).

Addressing the root causes of terrorism and militia activities, such as poverty, inequality, and discrimination in Southern Kaduna, can help prevent people from turning to violence, extremist ideologies, and engaging in terrorist activities. Some of the key reasons why addressing the root causes of terrorism and militia activities has become necessary to help combat these terrorist acts in the following ways: By addressing inequalities in political representation, economic opportunities, and social standing, governments can reduce the grievances that fuel extremist ideologies. Also, by providing people with opportunities for education, employment, and social mobility, governments can increase resilience to terrorist recruitment and radicalization. Bekir Cinar further made it crystal clear that "Suggestions to solve the problem of terrorism will not be successful unless they address the political system" (99).

Education and Awareness

Regardless of whether lack of education in and of itself is a driver of radicalization, there seems to be a consensus that education is one of the most important tools to reach young people and therefore can be used to address some of the "push and

pull factors” that may drive young people towards violent extremism (Samantha de Silva 9). The fact remains that educating people of Southern Kaduna about terrorism, its causes, and effects can help prevent radicalization, recruitment, and support for extremist groups and their ideologies. Tackling political, social, and economic inequalities will go a long way to help increase empathy and understanding for people who may be susceptible to extremist ideologies across the globe, especially in the Southern Kaduna part of Nigeria.

Counter-terrorism Efforts

Counterterrorism refers to efforts by governments, law enforcement, intelligence agencies, and community groups to identify, prevent, disrupt, and respond to terrorist activities. There are several key ways in which counterterrorism can help in combating terrorism and militia activities, especially in Southern Kaduna; one of these ways may involve surveillance, intelligence gathering, and law enforcement operations in the disruption of terrorist activities within the region. Secondly, counterterrorism measures can help to strengthen security at airports, borders, and other public spaces to prevent terrorist attacks.

According to the UK’s counterterrorism strategy, which is an effort to reduce the risk of terrorism across the globe, but with keen interest to UK’s terrorist activities; there are basically four key strategies that could be employed: First of all is to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; secondly, by pursuing to stop terrorist attacks happening; thirdly, by strengthening the protecting against terrorist attacks; and lastly is to prepare to minimize the impact of a terrorist attack (Counter-terrorism Strategy (CONTEST 2023 1). To be able to prevent people from committing terrorist acts, pursuing to stop these acts, also protecting against terrorist attacks, and preparing to diminish the negative implications of terrorism and militia activities will go a long way in aiding counterterrorism. Also, by empowering local vigilantes with modern techniques for surveillance and apprehending anyone guilty of any terrorist act, it will go a long way in tracking these bandits terrorizing the communities in southern, thereby controlling the vast spread of insecurity within the region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations have been proffered to help curb the growth of terrorism and its impact on the indigenous people of Southern Kaduna. These recommendations are:

1. The need to increase counterterrorism strategies, such as the formation of community policing in every community, the formation of local vigilante services, and even the use of registered local hunters who are well-informed in

knowing the terrain, as that will go a long way in curbing the recurrent attacks in the Southern Kaduna region.

2. There is a need to tighten the security of the Southern Kaduna region to boost the economy of the region, especially by engaging in agricultural activities, etc.
3. There is a need to enhance educational opportunities for youth to curtail the rate of engagement in criminal activities.
4. Promoting interfaith and interethnic dialogue has been a key source of enhancing peaceful coexistence among people, and thus, will help in redressing the frequent intercommunal conflicts within the Southern Kaduna region.
5. Traditional rulers are to work hand in hand with the government to provide the security of the people of Southern Kaduna. This can be achieved by encouraging peaceful coexistence and the efforts in resolving every misunderstanding between different ethnic groups in a way that all affected persons are adequately represented.
6. It is also necessary for the government to implement land reforms to control infringements among the Southern Kaduna people. This will help in curtailing the incessant clashes that are often recorded in the region.

CONCLUSION

Terrorism and militia activities are very complex. While its causes are deeply rooted in socio-economic, political, religious, ethnic, historical, and security factors, its effects are so grave, leading to loss of lives and the displacement of people, economic retrogression, and social fragmentation among the people. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach that includes promoting economic development, fostering inter-community dialogue, strengthening governance, and enhancing communication infrastructure. Thus, only through comprehensive and sustained efforts can lasting peace be achieved in the Southern Kaduna region.

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