



International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management
Volume 5, Issue 2, pp. 275-283. 2023

ISSN: 2735-9220

www.ijilpm.com.ng



TERRORISM AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The Nigerian State has come under severe attacks in the hands of kidnapers, bandits, Fulani herdsmen, armed robbery and many more that have brought the country to its knees. The objective of this paper is as follows (i) to examine the relationship between terrorism and political development in Nigeria (ii) identify the nature and activities of terrorism in Nigeria, (iii) identify the consequences of terrorism in Nigeria. The study adopted the elite theory as theoretical framework and the qualitative research analysis method. This enables the researchers to be involved in case studies, observations amongst others. The major findings include the following; terrorism has brought hardship on the Nigerian State. It has destroyed the Nigerian economy. It was recommended that government should do something meaningful to combat terrorism, provide an enabling environment for development.

Keywords: Terrorism, development, Political, Nigeria.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Mgbuyenbi, C. V., & Efeurhobo, D. O. (2023). Terrorism and political development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management*, 5(2), 275-283.

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INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian State has come under terrible and humongous threats arising from different social vices ranging from kidnapping, banditry, Fulani herdsmen, amongst others. These categories of people have done incalculable damages to the socio economic and political development of the country. Their modus operandi is to some issue threat and invades any institution or places of their choices. Different institutions places have become victims of their devices. The Chibok Girls' School in Borno was attacked in April 14, 2014, the Dapchi School was attacked, pastors,

professors, military men and many others have received their venom from this blood thirsty group in different situations.

So, terrorism as a violent means of making government ungovernable by a group of persons usually born out of political, personal factors have consistently and increasingly reduced the nation to a point where it was obvious to seek for foreign help, since at a point it was obvious that the situation was going beyond the powers of the law enforcement agents and the Nigerian government in general. According to Alapiki (2015, p. 12), "it is important to understand from the perspective of this lecture that in "Terrorism" The violence threatened or perpetrated has purpose broader than simple physical harm to a victim. The audience of the act or threat of violence is more important than the immediate victim". Corroborating the above, Cocodia (2020, p. 11) has this to say, "Thus in Nigeria, much of the banditry that occurs in the country, especially in the northern and middle belt areas are believed to be carried out by terror groups or herdsmen". So, the emergence of these group of persons, from one state to the other restricted and hindered many people from going about their legitimate businesses. Even foreign investors were not spared. There were cases of many foreign experts who were equally victims. Consequently, this action prevented the foreign investors from coming to Nigeria to invest. So many activities were halted. People became scared of stepping out, going to their farms. The situation was most horrifying and scaring. "It therefore should be the responsibility of government to always monitor the barometer of the peoples frustration and the safety nozzle or it would build up to something catastrophic" (Nwaorgu, 2014, p.15).

The paper is therefore set to interrogate seemingly intractable table challenges ranging from terrorism that has consistently hindered the socio-political development of the Nigerian states. It is hoped that the evaluation of this problems (economic and political) will help to ameliorate the dilapidating and appalling situation of the Nigerian states.

Statement of the Problem

Terrorism of different magnitude has terribly retrogress the economy of the Nigerian society. Scholars of different intellectual pundit have tried to consistently attribute the actions of the terrorists to desperation, to seek power. Some have attributed it to influence of western culture. Others have advanced to it to neglect on the part of government. The list is endless. According to Okereke (2011, p. 201), these recruits were indoctrinated by Yussuf to believe that their state of hopelessness was caused by the government which imposed western education in them and failed to manage the resources of the country to their benefits. So, it becomes pertinent to recognize that terrorism in Nigeria comes under different reasons for their actions.

It is in line with the above the interrogation of the study is anchored on the political factor of terrorism, perhaps to access the actions of these blood thirsty terrorists to give the paper a critical and surgical outlook. And more importantly to fill the gap in literature as far as the study is concern. The point is all the reasons or factors some of which that have been mentioned as advanced by some scholars have relevant underpinning in the analysis of terrorism in Nigeria. However, this paper will want to view the actions of the terrorists from the political perspective in order to proffer solutions borne of altruistic motives. Again, to fill the relevant gap in literature, for instance, question such as; why terrorism become a consistent challenge to the Nigerian government despite the humongous resources, both material and human that have been earmarked in other to put an end to this problem. It is question such as this, the paper is set out to interrogate. The idea is to see whether these social vices can be put to rest. So that people can be seen going about their legitimate businesses.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to stop terrorism in Nigeria political development, however, the following are the specific objectives:

- Assess the relationship between terrorism and political development.
- Identify the nature and activities of terrorism in Nigeria.

Research Questions

- What is the relationship between terrorism and political development?
- What are the nature and activities of terrorism in Nigeria?
- What are the consequences of terrorism in Nigeria political development?

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

In order to have a clear and detailed analysis of the study, some concepts related to the topic were examined. Below are some of them.

Terrorism: Terrorism is a term both at the national and international levels of governance that connotes violence and unguided behavior by a group of persons whose aim is to make government unpopular through actions that are considered abnormal and bizarre towards people or citizens who go about their legitimate businesses. The large dose of violence in African societies today puts a serious question mark to the reasons for the state and the meaning for the existence of state structures for the provision of security (Nwaorgu, 2014, p. 5). In line with the above, Jerrold (2017, p. 3) opined that “terrorism is a particular species of political violence. It is violence or the threat of violence against noncombatants or property in order to gain a political ideological or religious goal through fear and intimidation. So, terrorism has done incalculable and monumental damages to the life of many people in Nigeria. People are scared to access their farms. People are scared to travel for fear of being kidnapped, maimed or killed. Mosques, churches, government institutions amongst many have been destroyed. Terrorism is a scourge that takes innocent lives, threatens values of humanity, human rights and freedoms and impedes development and world progress (Abolurin, 2011, p. 8).

Development; Development means the transformation of people, economically, political, culturally and socially within a specified period of time. Thus, it is development when the life pattern of people assumed a comparative progressive stage and status. According to Todaro (1977,p.96) “development is multidimensional process involving changes in attitudes, structures, and institutions as well as the acceleration of economy growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty, In the words of Rogers (1969) cited in Obi (2006,p.3) “development has been defined as a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capital income and levels of living through more modern production methods and improved social organization. Corroborating the above, what sums up development in the words of Okeke, Bello, Ofubanjo and Pogsoson, 2015, Ibaba 2011, cited in Angalapu and Ibani (2021,p.34) is the qualitative improvement of the standard of living of man in society.

Political: political is an affirmation of a system recognized as managing the affairs of a people and their property. In other words, it is political to affirm that the Nigerian state is a political system. It is correct to say that the Yoruba, Hausa nation is a political system. It is a forum use in describing a phenomenon. The political scene in Nigeria has saddled the state with the peace of the graveyard which appears to lay audience to the reports of the America national intelligence council (NIC) in Omachi (2005, p 120) which predicts that Nigeria would break up in a near future (Omachi & Okwoche, 2007.p.120)

Terrorism and Political Development in Nigeria

Nigeria political development has been consistently interrupted and marred by series of violent antagonism ranging from kidnapping, banditry, herdsmen activities and other terrible social vices that have done incalculable and unforgettable damages to the human psyche. There is virtually no part of the country that has not suffered this mishap. In the South east for instance, it is kidnapping with scaring ransome to set someone free or face their wrath. In the south west it is ritual activities, in the north it is Boko Haram and banditry challenges. The list is endless to talk about. According to Emordi (2012, p. 258), “since the current security situation in the country is one result of the structural, systematic and value decay thrown up by long years of mass neglect and political impunity to the well-being of the masses of the diverse people of Nigeria, there is the need for a total political, social and economic transformation in the country as currently being advanced” The situation is so alarming that one is almost tempted to imagine if we are experiencing a civil war, “people can hardly go about their legitimate businesses without the intervention of these blood- thirsty group of people” (Efeuhobo & Christmas, 2021, p. 69).

The Nigeria political development needs total stability for it to be able to develop, A political development that is devoid of internal crisis, violence, terrorism. One that will enable everyone to go about their jobs programmes and other related activities that can enhance the beauty of life. One is tempted to say this because institutions of governance, party faithful, business mogul, leaders of government parastatals, patriots, students, reverend fathers and many others, have been victims of these terrorists. At the threshold of this terrorism, Chibok girls were among the first victims in April 14, 2014. Till date, some of these girls have becomes “wives” of Boko Haram members. Some of them have given birth to children. Students of Dapchi school were not spared. Professors, medical doctors have their bitter experiences to tell in the hands of these bandits. Borno state particularly , Maiduguri the state capital witnessed political and social violence between 2009 and 2011. This started when the members of the Boko Haram, a group which calls itself Ah-al-sunnat wal-da’awat jihad began to attack police offices, killing police officers and setting fire on police offices” (Garba, 2011,p.145). So, it is clear to every discerning mind that it will take the Nigeria political system to develop so long as these destructions, killing of human lives goes unchecked. No political system can effectively and genuinely make meaningful progress in a country besieged with reckless destruction of property and total disregard for life. The situation the Nigerian political system have been subjected to for years is not different from the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70. A cursory look and observations of some of the terrible acts of terrorism across the country political development may make the whole analysis become clearer. Below are some of the pictorial representations of terrorism in Nigeria.



Figure 1a: grotesque pictures of Boko haram members groping to discuss

Source: <https://guardian.ng/opinion/origin-and-development-of-terrorism-in-nigeria/>



Figure 1b: grotesque pictures of Boko haram members groping to discuss

Source: <https://www.channelstv.com/2014/11/19/nigeria-ranked-one-of-five-countries-worst-hit-by-terrorists/>

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The above picture of Figure 1a,b reveals the grotesque pictures of Boko haram members groping to discuss their next level of destruction and efforts towards the destabilization of the country. It is this unrelenting attitude and bizarre behaviour anchored on their goals towards maiming, raping, kidnapping and killing that has sent terrible fears and worries into the minds of the Nigerian citizens and governments. Consequently, their actions over the years have hindered the much anticipated progress of Nigeria political development. Perhaps, it is this unrelenting actions and resilient attitude of the terrorist towards the destruction of humanity that made the international community ranked Nigeria one of the five countries worst hit by terrorists.



Figure 2a: Shows the high profile level and organization of the Boko haram group
<https://www.dataphyte.com/latest-reports/why-nigeria-is-listed-among-10-countries-mostly-impacted-by-terrorism/>



Figure 2b: Shows the high profile level and organization of the Boko haram group
<https://issafrica.org/iss-today/another-chance-for-nigeria-to-get-counter-terrorism-right>

The Figure 2a,b shows the high profile level and organization of the Boko haram group in initiating and coming up with ideas that are bound to stop the federal government from challenging their powers over the subjugation of unsuspecting members of the public. The picture further reveals the use of sophisticated weapons that are sometime and often time comparatively stronger and more powerful to subdue the power of the Nigerian Police and Army. It further reveals that Nigerian government at a point desire to involve members of the international community to assist in fighting against this social stigma.



Figure 3a: shows the regrouping of unrepentant and forceful member of the Boko haram terrorist group

<https://guardian.ng/news/reintegration-of-repentant-terrorists-stirs-fresh-concerns/>



Figure 3b: shows the regrouping of unrepentant and forceful member of the Boko haram terrorist group

<https://theconversation.com/why-terrorism-continues-in-nigeria-and-how-to-turn-the-tide-143479>

Figure 3a,b shows the regrouping of unrepentant and forceful member of the Boko haram terrorist group to plan on the next line of action to inflict pains and anguish on the Nigerian citizens. More often than not the action of these blood thirsty individuals has hampered and hindered social economic activities across the Nigerian nation. So much that they claim to have their own flag of solidarity and emancipation from a system that forbid them from carrying out their own self-belief ideology. A believe that made them to see Western Education as a waste

and sin. The perception by these terrorists has made them to almost see Nigeria government as an oppressive and wicked system. Consequently, it is this thought and believe that have made Nigeria to be very ungovernable by their wicked and nefarious acts.

Identified Gaps in the Literature

It is important to always note the importance of literature review in an academic discourse of this nature. The idea is to find out whether the research questions asked in the earlier part of the study have been critically addressed. It is on the strength of this one would say that the questions have not been addressed. The empirical and theoretical studies examined in this study showed that the different works addressing the terrorism regarding its manifestations still exists.

Similarly, some of the scholarly postulations did not address the problem of terrorism as it affects political development in Nigeria. The study treated the problem of terrorism as if though it was purely caused by religious intolerance and social factors. In this same vein, these scholars failed to argue that years of unbridled political development resulting in terrorism in the midst of very heavy and enormous resources were issues to be considered when evaluating terrorism in Nigeria political development. Almost all sectors of the economy is severely challenged by the problem of terrorism.

Again, scholars failed to strongly examine how terrorism can be effectively tackled in Nigeria political development. At least to the point of giving every citizen the desire posture to go about their legitimate businesses and ventures. There are every reasons for all stake holders of Nigeria political development to be engaged in policies and programmes that are people and resulted oriented, and are fundamental and germane to human growth and political development of the country in general. When decisions that are instructive and vibrant play active roles in the political life of a citizen, such country is bound to be politically stable and egalitarian in outlook.

Recommendations

In the light of the above discussion, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Good governance should be seen as panacea to prevent terrorism;
- Similarly, government actions must be intensified to give room for people to go about their businesses;
- Severe and very strict punishment should be given to offenders of the law;
- Everybody should see security as a collective effort to stopping this menace.

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