Influence of Religious Affiliation, Judicial and Political Structure on Perceived Terrorists' Activities in North-East, Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study investigated the influence of religious affiliation, judicial and political structure on perceived terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria. The study employed ex-post facto cross-sectional survey method where three hundred and thirty seven (337) participants consisting of 187 (55.5%) males and 150(44.5%) females were used for the study. Their ages ranged from 18 – 69 years with the mean of 34.6 (SD = 10.4). A questionnaire consisting of five sections was used to collect data from the participants. Findings from the hypotheses indicated that, religious affiliation significantly influenced terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria R = .270 and R^2 =.073, F (1,335) =- 26.440, P<.05. Judicial structure significantly influenced terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria R = 202 and R^2 =.041, F (1,335) = 14.219, P< .05. Political structure significantly influenced terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria R = .226 and R^2 =.071 F (1,335)=25.574, P <.05. The study recommended that Nigerians should be tolerant of each others' religion and shun religious fanatism. Judges should remain impartial and incorruptible in their practice. Leaders at all levels should consider the plight of their people so as to avoid public outcry. Finally, more researches should be encouraged in the study area for further identification of long term solution to the problems of terrorism in North Eastern Nigeria in particular and Nigeria at large using larger sample sizes.*

Keywords: *Judicial structure, Impartial, Incorruptible, Political structure, Religious affiliation, Religious fanatism.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is one of the major security threats in which people worldwide are exposed to today. Terrorism, one of the most widely discussed issues of today is also one of the least understood. Their recent manifestations have been described in countless books, monographs, articles, plays, novels, amongst others. On all possible levels of sophistications, terror has fascinated the meta-physician as much as the popular novelists.

Terrorism is a condition whereby an organized group or party sought to achieve its avowed aims chiefly through the systematic use of violence. Akor (2009), defined terrorism as a coercive intimidation or premeditated acts or threats of violence, systematically aimed at instilling such fears in the target to the extent that it will force the target to alter its behaviour in a way desired by the terrorist. This act is a real response to grievances and as a result, the perpetrators see it as a justified action and continuously carry it out unabated. According to Juergensmeyer (2011), terrorism consists of acts that terrify, the definition of which is provided by the witnesses-the ones terrified and not by the party committing the act; accompanied by a religious motivation, justification, organization amongst others.

According to Webster (1806), it is both "a mode of governing" and "a means of opposing government". In ordinary parlance, terrorism is "wrong" when used to intimate a righteous regime and "right" when applied to correct injustice. Terrorism is usually carried out through the following ways to terrorize enemies, agitations, assassinations, attacks, bombings, break in, coup

detat, demands, guerrilla war, plane hijack, hostage taking, massacre, murder, raid, random killings, ransom, rape, strikes violence and war.

Available literature indicates that from 2009 till date, terrorist activities have become the order of the day in Nigeria. Since then, thousands of people have been killed when Boko Haram launched its campaign to install Islamic law (Johnson, 2013; Olukolade, 2013.,Will,2013). On 3rd December 2013 Boko Haram militants launched a daring raid on the military in the Northeastern Nigerian city of Maiduguri overnight, prompting a round-the- clock curfew that shut air space and cut off roads, the army, state government and eye witnesses said. The terrorists heavily armed besieged the whole of 79 Composite Group of the Nigeria Air Force and the 33 Artillery of the Nigerian Army destroying aircrafts, razing buildings and setting shops and petrol stations ablaze in a deadly rampage (Olukolade, 2013).

On January, 2014, 74 people were killed in separate attacks by Boko Haram members in Adamawa and Borno States, Northeastern Nigeria. Attackers armed with guns and explosives killed 22 people at a busy church service in Waga Chakwa village in Adamawa State on Sunday morning; before burning houses and taking residents hostage during a four-hour siege. In the other attack in neighboring Kwauri village in Borno State, security officials told Associated Press that suspected Islamic extremists used explosives to attack the village killing 52 people and razing more than 300 homes (Danbouye, 2014., Umar, 2014).

In a related attack, gunmen suspected to be members of Boko Haram struck on Friday 31th January, 2014 night killing a pastor and 10 other persons in Sabon Garin Yamdula village, Madagali area of Adamawa state. The attackers shot 10 persons and the resident pastor of EYN church who was rushed to and later died in a hospital at Madagali town (Oladipo, 2014).

In the same vein, Boko Haram terrorists killed 47 people when they attacked Bama and invaded Joint Task Force (JTF) Commanders residence (Ifoh & Ndahi, 2014). According to Matazu and Wakili (2014), Boko Haram terrorists had in june 2013 killed 8 students and 1 teacher at Government Secondary School Damaturu. In july 2013, the terrorists killed 29 students of GSS Mamudo. The same Boko Haram terrorists had in September 2013 killed 40 students of College of Agriculture Gujba. In febuary 2014, Boko Haram terrorists killed 59 students of FGC Bani. In that wise, it is actually confirmed that, at least 136 students have been killed in separate attacks on schools in Yobe State less than a year.

Another terrorist event that attracted global attention was the abduction of the Chibok secondary school girls. On the night of 14th April 2014, a group of militants attacked the government secondary school in the town of Chibok in Borno State, Nigeria. They broke into the school, shooting the guards and approximately 276 female students were kidnapped (UN News Center, 2014). A large number of students were taken away in trucks, possibly into the Sambisa forest. Houses in Chibok were also burnt down in the incident (Hassan, Sule & Mutum,2014).The kidnappings were claimed by Boko Haram, an Islamic Jihadist and Takfiri terrorist Organisation based in Northeastern, Nigeria. From 2011 till date, terrorist activities have taken the center stage in Northeastern Nigeria in particular, and Nigeria at large.

According to Anhange (2012), systematic terrorist operations involve careful planning, resembling the staff work of a minor military campaign. The intended victim has to be watched for a certain time, his habits and movements studied to establish the most promising place and time for the action. The terrorists need transport to and from the scene of the operation. They also need to have false identity papers, effective arms, and above all, money. To make the most of their operation, they need a central command, sometimes highly professional and efficient, at other times rudimentary and amateurish. Elaborate planning that sacrifices the element of improvisation could redound to the disadvantage of the terrorists. A small group, on the other hand, will usually lack the resources and the know-how for carrying out a major operation. The ideal pattern is strong leadership concerned with broad strategy, but with the details left to the local branches. The central command of the terrorist leaders can move about freely without fear of arrest. But the disadvantage of locating a terrorist headquarters far remote from the scene of action is that they will have less knowledge of current events because of the more tenuous of its contact with its own people. The larger a terrorist movement, the greater the danger of detection. Terrorist groups in contrast to guerrilla units do not grow beyond a certain limit. The basic unit

usually consists of three to ten people. If the terrorist groups are even more numerous but lack cohesion, they will split into several factions.

Terrorism has no doctrinal, ethnic, political or legal boundaries. It has been employed by ethnic and religious groups, Catholics and protestants, Jews and Muslims, blacks and whites, and by ideological and political factions in tribal societies; developing nations and in the industrial states. It is an essential tool for revolutionary governments both left and right. In 1901, Lenin declared that we have never rejected terror on principle nor can we do so" and Hitler's (1940) terror decree stated that "terror can be countered only by terror"

A large body of literature of the possible factors including religious affiliation, judicial and political structure have been implicated as influencing terrorist activities. A survey conducted by Gofwen (2004) identified religious intolerance as the major source of religious violence in all societies existing as long as the history of mankind, and permeating all forms of human civilizations, with attendant destructive tendencies. Religious fundamentalism and extremism are similar to, and indeed, manifestations of religious intolerance.

One other trigger of religious violence is obstructive, disruptive and annoying modes of worship by the two dominant religions. Ehigiator and Akinbaani (2002), maintained that, there is a notorious Christian tradition of organizing mass crusades and revivals on public high ways or properties adjoining high-ways. Most of these crusades and revivals have the tendency of obstructing vehicular and human movement for long periods of time in absolute disregard to tortuous and criminal liabilities. Many road users of other faiths and even those of the same faith see this practice as an affront to their legal rights to the use of public roads as well as demonstration of religious arrogance and insensivity. In the same vein, it has become an unwritten law for all public roads in Muslim-dominated areas to be blocked during Juma'at (Friday) prayers. Accordingly, all intending road users needing access through these roads on Fridays have often had the misfortune of abating their movements and waiting for the completion of Juma'at prayers. This tradition has triggered religious disturbances, particularly in places with evenly distributed numbers of Christians and Muslims.

In a survey conducted by Omotosho (2008), it was noted that disparaging literature or publications by both the Christian and Muslim elites was the major cause of terrorism. Achunike (2009) observed that the wrong perception of other people's religions or faith, wrong religious orientations, the low literacy level of religious adherents, selfishness on the part of religious personalities, pervasive poverty, government involvement in religious matters, amongst others are responsible for inter-religious conflicts and terrorism.

Maregere (2011), considered religion as a "double-edged sword" believed to serve as an instrument of social harmony and on the other hand as a motivation for violence. On his part, juergensmeyr and Abunimer (2000) revealed that, time immemorial; religious bigots have attempted to legitimize violence in the name of God. Acts of extreme violence such as terrorist attacks are often justified as "holy warfare" in most violent conflicts around the world.

Research has shown that as confidence in the criminal justice system grows, in turn, law abiding behaviour increases (Hun, 2002). Tyler (1990) found that litigants are more likely to be satisfied with their courts experience overall and to comply with court orders when perceiving that their voice was heard by decision-makers, they were treated with respect and decision-makers were neutral and trust worthy. Azubuike (2011) identified frustration as the bane of terrorist activities. According to him, this frustration and anger is founded on a sense of injustice and also premised on the claim that the judiciary has consistently ignored the right of "low class citizens" when violated by the "high class citizens".

Cathedral (2012) maintained that the over whelming and unwavering forces of corruption over judiciary is what determines the rate of terrorist activities in the country. In the same vein, Akor (2009) identified poverty, illiteracy, bad governance and inequality as militating factors to the act of terrorism in Nigeria. Schemed (1983) linked discriminative and selfish interests of political leaders to terrorism and terrorist activities.

While the event of 11th September 2001 in the United States of America during which the World Trade Center (Twin Tower) was bombarded under the leadership of late Osama Bin-Laden serves to draw the attention of many to global terrorism, Adeyemi (2010) noted that terrorism has had a long history in Africa and Nigeria in particular. From the Sherifan dynasty of the Alawites and Fillali in Morocco to the regencies of Algeria, Tunisia and Libya under the Effete Suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey, the Mataitasine in Nigeria, the Berber-Arab population of North Africa also experienced one form of terrorism after another, even before colonial rule. The French invasion of Tunisia in 1880 was characterized by one terrorist act after the other. The journeys for independence in most countries of Africa were also strewn with one act of terrorism after the other. The Jesse and Odi events in Nigeria are two examples of state terrorism which have placed Nigeria in the global terrorist map.

To date, there is little understanding of the specific influence of religious affiliation, judicial and political structure on perceived terrorist activities in Northeastern Nigeria. Of concern, while the literature does indicate the increasing prevalence of terrorism in Nigeria, little is known about the specific causes of this phenomenon. Moreover, there have been limited researches conducted into the development of an understanding of how to proactively work towards reducing the negative impact of terrorism in Northeastern Nigeria in order to reduce engagement into terrorist activities and improving their psychological well being. It is by understanding how the individual perceive terrorism, the specific factors which produce terrorism and the motivational behaviour associated with coping under terrorism that the researchers will have a stronger basis from which to develop appropriate prevention and intervention strategies. The purpose of this study is to address these issues. Specifically, the current study proposes that by developing a framework for understanding the specificity of terrorism as it relates to the Northeastern Nigerian population, and the relationship of this to psychological well being, the researcher will be more able to initiate proactive intervention which will reduce terrorism and terrorists activities among this population. It was therefore hypothesized that:

1. Religious affiliation will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in Northeastern Nigeria.

2. Judicial structure will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in Northeastern Nigeria.

3. Political structure will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in Northeastern Nigeria.

2. METHOD

2.1 Design

The study employed ex-post facto cross-sectional survey method to investigate the influence of religious affiliation, judicial and political structure on perceived terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria. The independent variables include religious affiliation, judicial and political structure. The dependent variable is the perceived terrorist activities.

2.2 Participants

The participants were three hundred and thirty seven (337) respondents drawn from five states in the North Eastern Nigeria consisting of 187 (55.5%) males and 150 (44.5%) females. Their ages ranged from 18 – 69 years with the mean age of 34.6 years (SD = 10.4). Among the participants, 135 (40.1%) were Christians, 128 (38%) were Muslims, 33(9.8%) were traditional worshippers, while 41(12.2%) belonged to other religions. In terms of occupation, 40(11.9%) were farmers, 121(35.9%) were civil servants, 64(19%) were traders, 58(17.2%) were students, while 54(16%) were applicants. As for their marital status, 142(42.1%) were single, 154(45.7%) were married, 40(11.9%) were divorced, while 1(3%) was separated. In terms of income, 55(16.3%) were high income earners, 170(50.4%) average income, while 112(33.2%) were low income earners. As for their educational attainment, 80(23.7%) had primary education, 186(49.3%) post primary education, while 91(27%) obtained tertiary education.

2.3 Measures/instruments

The instruments for the study included a socio-demographic questionnaire, Psychopathology and Religious Commitment Scale, Judicial Fairness Scale, Political Fairness Scale, and Terrorism Impact Scale.

i.   ***Socio-demographic variables***: The following variables were recorded: age, sex, educational background, religion, marital status, ethnicity, local government of origin and state of origin.

ii. ***Religious Affiliation Scale***: This is a 20 item questionnaire developed by Pfeifer and Waelty (1995). It measures the level of individual commitment to their respective faith. It has a "Yes" or "No" response format. A coefficient alpha of r=.72 was derived using Spearman-Brown formula. For the purpose of this study, a reliability coefficient alpha r=68 was derived which was considered adequate for use in this study.

iii. ***Judicial Fairness Scale:*** This is a 15-item questionnaire developed by Frazer (2006). It measures the perception of judicial fairness among the general population. The items are measured on a "Yes" or "No" response format. The instrument has a reliability coefficient of .81 Cronbach's alpha. The reliability obtained in the current study was .77 Cronbach's alpha which was considered adequate for in this study.

iv. ***Political Fairness Scale:*** This scale was developed by Isaac (2007) to measure perception of political fairness among the general population. It consists of 10 items. It has the Likert response format ranging from excellence = 1, very good = 2, good = 3, fair = 4, and poor = 5. A coefficient alpha of r = .80 was derived using Spearman Brown formula. The reliability obtained in the current study was .88 Cronbach's alpha which was considered adequate for use in this study.

v.   ***Terrorism Impact Scale:*** This scale was developed by Malik, Khawar, Iftihar, Saeed and Ilyas (2010) to measure how the general public perceive the impact of terrorist activities on the society. The scale is made up of 20 items. The responses are scored based on Likert response format of strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, disagree = 2, and strongly disagree = 1. The inventory has a reliability of .92 Cronbach's alpha. The reliability obtained in the current study was .81 Cronbach's alpha which was considered adequate for use in ths study.

2.4 Procedure

In order to obtain data for the study, five states from North Eastern Nigeria namely, Borno, Bauchi, Yobe, Adamawa and Taraba were sampled in the first instance. From these sampled states, thirty local government areas were finally used for the study to do this, ethical approval was sought and compliance with the code of ethics of research as well as confidentiality of participant's responses and strict adherence to individual privacy were fully assured. The respondents were made to understand the instructions given on the questionnaire. All the participants who were available within the duration of data collection and willing to participate were administered the questionnaire. All completed questionnaire were collected on the spot, while those not completed were collected on a later date. A total of 520 questionnaire were administered but only 337 were returned.

3. RESULTS

Hypothesis One stated that religious affiliation will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Table 1. *Summary of Simple Regression showing the influence of religious affiliation on terrorist activities.*

Variable	R	R^2	F	β	t	P	Remark
Constant	.270	.073	.26.440		27.455	.000	
Religious Affiliation				.270	5.142	.000	Sig.

Table one above shows that the hypothesis was accepted R = .270 and R^2 =.073, F (1,335) = 26.440, P<.05. This result implied that religious affiliation has much influence on terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria. It can therefore be concluded that, if religious activities are heightened to the extent that religious intolerance, fundamentalism and extremism become order of the day, terrorist activities will be on the increase. On the other hand, if religious activities are lowered down, then terrorist activities are bound to reduce.

Hypothesis two stated that judicial structure will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Table 2. *Summary of simple regression showing the influence of judicial structure on terrorist activities.*

Variable	R	R^2	F	β	t	P	Remark
Const	.202	.041	14.219		35.773	.000	
Religious Affiliation				.202	3.771	.000	Sig.

Table two above shows that the hypothesis was confirmed R=.202 and R^2 = .041, F (1,335) = 14.219, P<.05. This result implied that judicial structure has much influence on terrorist activities in Northeastern Nigeria. It can therefore be concluded that, if judicial fairness is enhanced, terrorist activities will decline. On the other hand, if judicial structure is corrupt and fairness is not enhanced, terrorist activities are bound to increase.

Hypothesis three stated that political structure will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in Northeastern Nigeria.

Table 3. *Summary of Simple regression showing the influence of political structure on terrorist activities.*

Variable	R	R^2	F	β	t	P	Remark
Const	.266	.071	.25.574		12.073	.000	
Religious Affiliation				.266	5.057	.000	Sig.

Table three above shows that the hypothesis was accepted R=.266 and R^2 =.071, F (1,335) = 25.574, P<.05. This result implied that political structure has much influence on terrorist activities in Northeastern Nigeria. It can therefore be concluded that, corrupt political structure brings about uproar and disenchantment by the masses leading to crises. On the other hand, political structure devoid of corruption will make the masses happy and terrorist activities will be reduced to the barest minimum.

4. DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis which stated that religious affiliation will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria was confirmed. This finding goes along with a survey conducted by Gofwen (2004) who identified religious intolerance as the major source of terrorism in all societies existing as long as the history of mankind, and permeating all forms of human civilizations, with attendant destructive tendencies. This finding again supports that of Omotosho (2008) who recognized disparaging literature or publications by both Christian and Muslim elites as the major cause of terrorism.

The second hypothesis tested was that judicial structure will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria. Again, this hypothesis proved to be significant. This finding supports Azubuike (2011) who identified frustration as the bane of terrorist activities. According to him, this frustration and anger is founded on a sense of injustice and also premised on the claim that the judiciary has consistently ignored the rights of "low class citizens" when violated by the "high class citizens". This finding also goes in line with Cathedra (2012) who observed that the overwhelming and unwavering forces of corruption over judiciary is what determines the rate of terrorist activities in the country.

The third hypothesis stated that political structure will have a significant influence on terrorist activities in North Eastern Nigeria. Again, this hypothesis was statistically significant. This finding supports Akor (2009) who identified poverty, illiteracy, bad governance and inequality as

militating factors to the act of terrorism in Nigeria. Again, this finding tallied with Schmid (1983) who linked discriminative and selfish interest of political leaders to terrorism and terrorist activities. In order to tackle terrorism, we should try and understand what terrorism is. It is only when we understand factors surrounding terrorism that intervention will work better.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The findings in this study are instrumental to the society in several respects. In the first instance, terrorism is one of the major security threats Nigerians are facing nowadays. For terrorism to come down to the barest minimum, and for Nigeria to enjoy international legitimacy, the value orientation of the political elite must change. The ideological parties rooted in ethnicity and religious sentiments must be altered positively and the psychologically non-transiting individuals must be adequately mobilized for the sustenance of the country's hard won democracy. Election must no longer be seen as the end of everything. While the majorities always have their ways, the rights of the minority must be protected.

Government should as a matter of fact be more sensitive in implementing some of her policies. Policies that are likely to create public outcry should be well-timed and the public should be educated on the necessity of such a policy. Nigerians should as well learn to tolerate each other's religion and shun religious fanatics.

Above all, there is a need for attitude change among Nigerians from the bad to the good. Nigerians should shy away from acts of terrorism since the use of violence in settling problems is out of fashion in a democratic setting. The use of Gandhian non-violent protest movement which if more widely known and understood might also become more widely adopted as an alternative to violent and terrorist protest.

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