Drivers of Political Radicalization and De-radicalization of Terrorism in Northern Nigeria

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Drivers of Political Radicalization and De-radicalization of Terrorism in Northern Nigeria

Neba Ridley NGWA[*]

Abstract

This article sheds more light on the role of states and the bearing which political and elite interests may have exerted on public support for Boko Haram. It examines the political, socio-economic, and ideological context of the crisis and moves on to map the two dominant de-radicalization approaches; top-down and bottom-up approaches. The article exposes the fault lines of realism's top-down approaches toward national security in Northern Nigeria and proposes a bottom-up approach as a complement to the earlier top-down model. An evaluation of both approaches reveals that top-down approaches are state-centric and are predisposed to realist techniques of wars centered on threat, use and control of military force. The work specifically argues for a hybrid security model that incorporates both elements on top down and bottom up security approaches. The key theoretical considerations employed in the article relates to micro and macro theories of collective political violence. The theories provide a better understanding of the underlying drivers of violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism and also justification for the approaches used in countering them. The article answered key research questions related to Top-down and Bottom-up security approaches.

Keywords: *Terrorism, Radicalization, De-radicalization, Bottom up and top down Approaches.*

Kuzey Nijerya'da Siyasal Radikalleşmenin Nedenleri ve Radical Terörizmin Önlenmesi

Özet[1]

Bu makale, Kuzey Nijerya'da Boko Haram örgütüne olan kamuoyu desteğinin artmasının arkasında itici bir güç olarak yer alan devletin rolüne ve seçkinlerin çıkarlarını temsil etmesine ışık tutmaktadır. Bu kapsamda krizin politik, sosyo-ekonomik ve ideolojik bağlamı incelenmekte ve aşağıdan-yukarıya; yukarıdan aşağıya yaklaşımlarla radikalleşmenin önlenmesi konusunda genel bir çerçeve çizilmektedir. Bu makale Nijerya'da ulusal güvenliğe yukarıdan aşağı bir yaklaşım sergileyen Realizmin fay hatlarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Her iki yaklaşımın değerlendirilmesi sonucu yukarıdan-aşağı

yaklaşımın devlet merkezli ve savaşa odaklanan Realist tekniklere müzahir olduğu ortaya konulmaktadır. Ayrıca bu çalışma yukarıdan-aşağı ve aşağıdan-yukarı her iki modeli de içeren Hibrit güvenlik modelini de tartışmaktadır.

Çalışmanın kolektif siyasal şiddetin mikro ve makro teorilerine dayandırılmıştır. Bu teoriler radikal terörizmin itici nedenlerini daha iyi anlamayı kolaylaştırarak bunlara karşı koymak için kullanılan yaklaşımların gerekçelerini daha iyi anlamayı sağlar. Bu bağlamda makale yukarıdan-aşağı, aşağıdan-yukarı yaklaşımlarla ilgili temel sorulara da cevap vermektedir.

Anahtar Kavramlar: *Terörizm, Radikalleşme, Ilımlılaşma, Aşağıdan-yukarı ve Yukarıdan Aşağı yaklaşımlar*

1. Introduction

Over the past decade, the northern region of Nigeria has experienced an upsurge in youth radicalization and terrorist violence instigated by a sectarian group known as Boko Haram. Nigeria's ranking on the Global Terrorism Index has risen from 16th out of 158 countries in 2008 to 3rd after Iraq and Afghanistan in 2016.[2] The group's use of suicide attacks, beheading and massive shooting presents an appalling threat typical of global terror. This paper notes that the multi-dimensional challenges of Boko Haram terrorist continue to confront the Nigerian government, leaving it struggling to clearly define the problem and to devise a comprehensive strategy to prevent and counter it. This paper holds that unless one clearly understands the process of radicalization, it will be difficult to device a comprehensive and concise strategy of de-radicalization from terrorist activities. Radicalization explains a process by which an individual or a group of individuals adopts a change in beliefs, feelings and behaviors in the direction that increasingly justify inter-group violence and demand sacrifice for the defense of the group. While de-radicalization is the most fashionable counter terrorism model today, it includes both the use of force to confront violent threats in tandem with peaceful measures that transform individuals away from violent radicalism and extremism that leads to terrorism. In recent years de-radicalization has grown both in proportion and scope as it supports programs

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[2] Global Terrorism Index, "Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism", Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016, http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.2.pdf (03.09.2017).

relating to individuals in the vulnerable age group that are most likely to be subject of intergroup violence.[3]

The major unresolved problem drawn in this article rest on the fact that a great deal of academic literature presented by previous analyst and security experts on the subject tend to focus more on top-down approaches towards de-radicalization of terrorist threats. The study attempts to argue that overdependence on top-down approach has led to a series of inadvertent consequences that pulled the entire de-radicalization process and desire to contain a crisis and achieve stability into a conservative end of the spectrum. Top-down approaches to counter violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism have been inclined to depend solely on conventional warfare mechanisms centered around the study of threat, use and control of military force.[4] Also, proponents of top-down model mostly rely on religious and ideological drivers of radicalization perpetrated by the terrorist group Boko Haram, they tend to ignore the socio-economic and political drivers and the unintended role of the state in radicalizing violent extremism.   This research will attempt to argue that since the drivers of terrorism has extensive socio-economic and political ramifications, top-down approaches that rely solely on ideological drivers are bound to be superficial and will likely fail to provide long term solutions to the complex threats posed by organized crime groups such as Boko Haram. It is on the basis of these limitations that this work aims to argue for a complementary approach within the literature of international security and strategic studies. The article moves away from the defensive claims mounted by traditional security and military experts that there are no alternatives to top-down approaches in the fight against terrorism.

The work contends that the weaknesses of realism's traditionalist approach built around conventional warfare techniques provide opportunities for implicit and explicit reforms in societies caught in the web of terrorist violence.[5] It is in this respect that this paper underpins the need for a bottom-up approach that advocates for de-radicalization programs with strong emphasis for a conceptual framework that guarantees long term solutions in societies facing

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[3] S. V. Marsden, "Introduction," *In Reintegrating Extremists* (Palgrave Macmillan, UK, 2017).
[4] M. Kaldor and I. Rangelov (Eds.), *The Handbook Of Global Security Policy*, (John Wiley & Sons, 2014).
[5] P. Hough, S. Malik, A. Moran and B. Pilbeam, *International Security Studies: Theory and Practice,* (Routledge, 2015).

violent insurgencies and radicalization that leads to terrorism. It is imperative to note that such bottom up model established within the framework of a de-radicalization program provides support for community-based approaches to counter terrorism, rebuild trust, establish legitimate domestic political order, ensures access to justice, rule of law and legal empowerment of local agencies and native councils, economic empowerment of individuals in vulnerable age groups that have been recruited or are most likely to be recruited into terrorist groups in local communities, intelligence cooperation by civil society actors in local communities. The conceptual approach proposed in this paper will set the basis for a new set of socio-economic, political and military reforms.

This paper answers two fundamental key questions and other subsidiary questions. The first set of questions at the heart of this article include; Do top-down approaches framed around realist conventional warfare techniques based on the use and control of military force provide long term solutions to threats posed by Boko Haram terrorist group? How do political and socio-economic structures of the state act as drivers of violent radicalization of terrorism in Nigeria? Is religious ideology an independent driver of radicalization or is Boko Haram ideology enshrined in local politics?

At the heart of the second set of questions include: How do bottom-up approaches framed around a conceptual framework of human security programs provide long term solutions to violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism? What constitutes the major conceptual framework for viable de-radicalization programs, under what local conditions will such programs operate, what objectives and methods will be employed by the said program? When will such programs succeed and when are they more likely to fail?

It is imperative to highlight that the purpose of this article is not to replace or completely repudiate the present conventional realist (top-down) approach used to counter terrorism; rather the objective is to modify and transform the existing approaches and to further circumvent the pitfalls that leads to a series of inadvertent consequences that pulled de-radicalization processes into the conservative end of the spectrum. Just as recent studies conducted by military innovation and strategist scholars have purported, this paper attempts to develop a more hybrid

and pragmatic security strategy that will provide viable answers to contemporary challenges on global terror. It highlights the importance of framing a model that combines the more conventional "top-down" approaches to security with "bottom-up" perspectives.

The paper therefor offers that unless one fully understands the process of radicalization it will be difficult to develop a comprehensive approach to counter terrorist threats. The purpose of this study is to shed more light on the role of states and the bearing which political and elite interests may have exerted on public support for Boko Haram. It examines the socio-economic context of the crisis and the extent to which it incites public support for Boko Haram.   It furthers focuses on the catalytic role of religion and how it has been exploited by these terrorist groups in generating huge solidarity in northern Nigeria. The core of the analysis section develops a human security paradigm as a form of bottom-up approach towards de-radicalization in Nigeria. Under the framework of the new hybrid approach focus is on individuals such as men, children, women, and girls within youthful age groups that are highly vulnerable to Boko Haram strategy of ideological socialization.

This article undertakes qualitative research methods built on interpretivist research techniques. Interpretivism is the key technique in qualitative research methods that attempts to understand the purpose of actions alongside the intension of human behavior.[6] Interpretivism clearly aligns with constructivist approach of inquiry since it offers valuable ways of studying how shared beliefs, rules, norms and cultural practices shape individual behaviours and those of states and other non-state actors. In using this techniques this work upholds the views of proponents of qualitative research who belief that access to reality cannot be simply observe from measurable data imbued in quantitative methods, rather the study contends that access to reality can be interpreted through social constructions such as language, communication, imagination, constraints.[7] In a similar vein this work will embrace interpretivist approach of analysis and will utilize individual orientation related to language, communication, shared beliefs, imaginations and constraints to explain and comprehend the process of radicalization

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[6] G. Walsham, "Interpretive Case Studies in Research: Nature and Method," *European Journal of Information Systems,* no. 4(2) (1995): 74-81.

[7] A. C. Lin, "Bridging Positivist And Interpretivist Approaches To Qualitative Methods," *Policy Studies Journal*, no. 26(1) (1998):162-180.

and de-radicalization of terrorism.

The article consists of two parts and four sections. First, theories of political violence, second, the historical background of Boko Haram, then drivers of political radicalization and finally top-down and bottom up approaches to de-radicalization. The first part of the analysis presents a brief historical background of the Boko Haram terrorist group; it traces the origin of the group and its evolution with particular emphasis on the political and socio-economic drivers that led to the rise of the group to international prominence. The second part uncovers the fault lines of conventional top-down approaches towards national security in Nigeria, while the third part assumes a unique bottom-up human security paradigm as a complement to top-down reductionist approach. The study specifically offers a hybrid model approach towards national security, the proposed model emphasizes not just on states and military security but on individuals, society and environment as major referent objects of security. This new approach considers both military and non-military threats as principal security concerns. In our contemporary global era, it is apparent that the rise of complex intra state violence cannot be fully explained and addressed in terms of traditionalist explanations; it is on the basis of this limitation that this study underpins the need of a more nuanced hybrid security approach.

2. Theories of Political Violence

At the theoretical level, this article adopts theories of collective political violence used within the discipline of security studies to provide explanations to the causes of violent conflicts and justification to the approaches used in countering them. In international security and strategic studies many scholars have put forward theories that help account for the new wave of violent extremism and radicalization relating to terrorism. This part of work borrows the idea of Conteh-Morgan who classified theories in the area of conflict analysis into two main categories; macro and micro theories, or what others termed reductionist and holistic approaches. Micro theories attempt to explain the underlying causes of conflicts in the nature of human beings, while macro theories focus on society's or state's structure and institutions.[8]

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[8] E. Conteh-Morgan, *Collective Political Violence: An Introduction to the Theories and Cases of Violent Conflicts*, (Psychology Press, 2004).

To this far, the major theoretical considerations deployed in this paper relates to both micro and macro theories of collective political violence. The principal micro theoretical approaches used in this article relates to Ted Robert Gurr's Relative Deprivation Theory. These micro theories suggest how relative socio-economic deprivation, class discrimination and societal injustices that prevent individuals from reaching their full potentials stir extremism and radicalization that leads to the rise terrorist groups.[9]   At macro level this study makes use of Jonan Galtun's Structural Violence Triangle.

On the one hand, studies carried out by the International Center for the Study of Radicalization (ICSR) offers more intelligent solutions in dealing with radicalization and political violence. ICSR establish trustworthy conditions for promoting human rights, safeguarding the rights of national minorities, resolving political, ethnic and religious fault lines and preventing violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism.[10] The ICSR is uniquely committed to execute local programs and lead capacity building efforts in conflict prone areas. The ICSR illustrates the importance and potential impacts of coercive and non-coercive approaches that have been adopted in this article in dealing with issues of violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism.

2.1. Micro Theories; Relative Deprivation as a Theory of Political Violence

The theory of relative deprivation is mostly associated with the American sociologist Robert K. Merton. He was amongst the first scholars to use the concept of relative deprivation to explain the presence of deviance conduct and a surge in violent criminal behavior within a given society. Relative deprivation occurs when an individual or a group of individuals perceived itself as unfairly treated in favor of another group having similar attributes as them. Walter Runciman used a hypothetical example in his formal definition of the concept.[11] He noted that there are 4 preconditions that clearly defines the concept of relative deprivation as seen as follows:

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[9] T. R. Gurr, "Relative Deprivation and the Impetus to Violence," *Why Men Rebel*, (1970):22-58.

[10] International Center for the Study of Radicalization-ICSR, "Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: Ideas, Recommendations, and Good Practices from the OSCE Region," 2019, https://icsr.info/2017/12/07/countering-violent-extremism-radicalisation-lead-terrorism-ideas-recommendations-good-practices-osce-region/ (13.02.2019).

[11] I. Walker and T. F. Pettigrew, "Relative Deprivation Theory: An Overview and Conceptual Critique," *British Journal of Social Psychology*, no. 23(4) (1984): 301-310.

Consider an object (X) and a person (A),

    a) 1st condition, person A does not have an object X

    b) 2nd condition, person A knows other person in his community that have the object X

    c) 3rd condition, Person A wants to have the object X

    d) 4th condition, person A believes that it is his right to obtain the object X

To put it together, relative deprivation is the feeling that one has been impaired or prevented to claim that which legitimately belongs to him. It is important to point that the term relative deprivation is different from absolute deprivation. Absolute deprivation is a situation wherein everyone in a given society is deprived or deficient of a particular necessity whereas relative deprivation relates to individuals who find their own welfare inferior to that of others with whom they share a common territorial space. Feelings of relative deprivation are derived from a comparison of social and political norms that are applicable to individuals differently at a given time.[12] Thus relative deprivation is different from absolute deprivation or absolute poverty which signifies a condition that applies to all underprivileged persons.

Equally as a point of focus, it is important to understand how relative deprivation theory account for the rise of social movement and different modes of political violence and deviant conduct related to terrorism. In brief retrospect, the concept of relative deprivation dates back to ancient Greece. Aristotle the ancient Greek scholar articulated the idea that revolution is driven by a relative sense of feeling and inequality rather than by an absolute measure.[13] In a similar vein Robert Gurr's writing titled "Why men rebel" (1970) provided a clear understanding of relative deprivation as a theory of political violence. He emphasized that political violence is the outcome of collective discontent caused by a feeling of relative deprivation. He noted that "Relative deprivation is the term used to describe the tension that arises from a discrepancy between ought and is".[14] The gap between individual's legitimate expectation and achieved welfare is what result to collective discontent. One very important question that needs to be answered here is how can feelings of relative deprivation translate into

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[12] Ibid, 308.

[13] E. N. Muller, "Income Inequality, Regime Repressiveness, and Political Violence," *American Sociological Review*, (1985):47-61.

[14] T. R. Gurr, "Relative Deprivation and the Impetus to Violence," *Why Men Rebel*, (1970): 22-58.

violence? In a bid to proffer an answer to the said question, Gurr (1970) adopted a psychological approach which describes how collective discontent manifest into different forms of political violence such as terrorism, and civil wars.

Gurr's approach was built on a causal relationship between frustration and aggression. He emphasized the fact that the primary source of violence in human beings is derived from frustration and aggression. The anger induced by frustration is the primary force that induces people to act aggressively.[15] However, Gurr was not the first political psychologist to propose a causal relation between frustration and aggression. Dollard Millard and others in 1939 had as well established a theory that postulated that frustration induces men to act aggressively. Relative deprivation further explains the rise of social movements; it accounts for the reasons why a group of diffusely organized people bound by a common goal relating to human society strive to pursue social change. Improved desire and determination to achieve their goals usually spark violent deviant behaviors manifested in the form of violence. To sum up, the term relative deprivation has been used to explain the expression of radical politics, violent religious manifestations, the rise of social movements, and a plethora of advanced criminal conduct. This attempt to explain the different strands of political violence from a perspective of relative deprivation is not new in international security studies.

2.2. Macro Theories; Johan Galtung's Violence Triangle

This paper submits that Robert Gurr's framework on relative deprivation theory and violence can be further strengthened and complemented with Johan Galtung's violence triangle. The essence here is to examine the political drivers of terrorism within the framework of Johan Galtung's approach to conflict. His theory specifically describes how socio-economic structures and political systems of a country cause different forms of political violence including terrorism.[16] He offered that violence constitute actions, words, structures and systems that causes direct physical, mental, emotional, social, and environmental damage to human beings, thus preventing them from reaching their optimum human potential. Violence such as terrorism is usually structured within the system of relationship that prevails within a given society, which

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[15] Ibid.
[16] J. Galtung, "Cultural Violence," *Journal of Peace Research*, no. 27(3) (1990):291-305.

is within the socio- economic and cultural arrangement of a society. Hence, systemic or structural violence can turn out to be the root cause of unending violent conflict as well as violent behavioral responses to specific conflict situation. In 1969 Johan Galtung in his illustration of "violence triangle" made a clear cut distinction between structural violence, cultural violence and direct violence.[17] According to him these variants of violence are causally inter-connected to each other and usually take a cyclical pattern from structural violence to cultural violence and then direct violence.

Figure 1.1. Violence Triangle[18]

Direct Violence

StructuralViolence
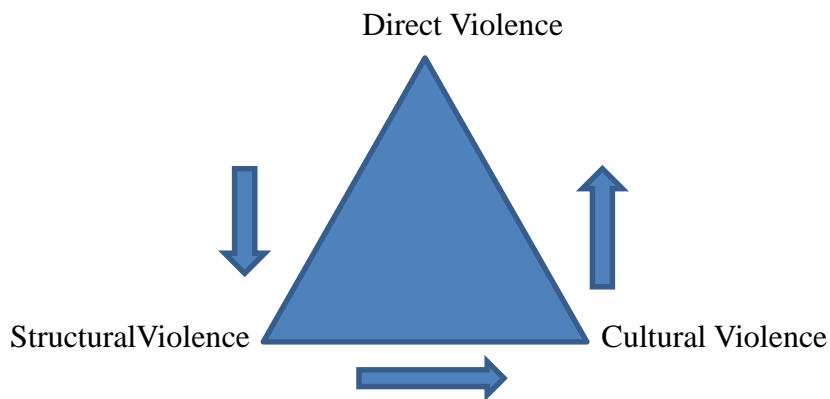
Cultural Violence

According to the triangle as shown in figure 1.1 structural violence is at the bottom left, cultural violence bottom right and direct violence at the top vertex. The assumption is that structural and cultural violence causes direct violence. As seen above the most dangerous and lethal form of violence is direct violence, it is the classic form that involves the use of physical force such as killings, torture, rape, beatings, beheading, wars, genocide and psychological abuse. This article holds that it is under the category of direct violence that terrorism is more visible. Direct violence is typified as personal violence because its perpetrators are human beings or persons.

Structural violence is much less visible; more often than not it is deadly than direct violence. Typically, no specific individual can be directly held responsible as a perpetrator of structural violence. Here violence is intricately linked to the structure of human organization

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid, 292.

within a given society; that is within the social, economic and political structure of governance of a society. Structural violence is usually invisible, not because it is rare or hidden but because it is so ordinary and discreet that it does not stand out unique. Its ordinary nature has made it to be viewed by most people as "normal" or "natural" part of how we see and interpret the world.[19] Structural violence is considered to exist when some groups, classes, gender, nationalities are perceived to have more resources or in fact do have more access to resources and opportunities than other groups, classes, genders, and nationalities within a given society. The inequality demonstrated here is a product of a political and socio-economic system used in governing societies and states across the world.[20] This article underpins the fact that in systemic or structural inequality, some groups, classes, and nationalities happen to be the root causes of most unending violent conflicts and resistances. It is necessary to quickly point out here that even though structural violence has real victims, it however does not have real perpetrators. The major actors responsible are states and their socio-economic and political systems of governance.

A more concise description of how systemic inequality is produced at both national and transnational levels can be found in Immanuel Wallenstein understating of world system approach. Wallenstein in his approach describe how unequal relation of production and the expansion of surplus capital (accumulation by disposition) inspires world economies and core states at both national and transnational levels to exploit mini system, semi peripheral and peripheral states and communities. Thus, world economies and core states have the political, economic, and military power to enforce unequal relations between the core and the periphery.[21] This article does not intend to amplify Immanuel Wallenstein approach in great depth, it however upholds the underlining fact that socio-economic systems that result in relative deprivation of basic human needs have an intricately causal relationship with varied forms of political violence particularly terrorism which is our major unit of analysis.

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[19] J. Galtung, "Violence, War, and Their Impact: On Visible and Invisible Effects of Violence," *In Polylog: Forum for Intercultural Philosophy*, Vol. 5(2004).

[20] K. M. Weigert, "Structural Violence," *Stress Of War, Conflict And Disaster,* (2010):126-133.

[21] T. K. Hopkins and I. M. Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: Theory and Methodology*, (Sage Publications, 1982).

Moving to cultural violence, this article notes that cultural violence is the prevailing attitude that surrounds our daily lives or that we have been taught from childhood and in effect such attitude instills an orientation or behavior in us that results in the infliction of physical injury, mental, social or environmental harm.[22] Cultural violence prevents persons from attaining their full human potentials. It occurs in the arena of culture, in the realm of beliefs, ideology and symbols. The challenge is that both direct and structural violence explained above poses a problem of meaning and interpretation that needs to be justified or legitimized in way one or the other. Cultural symbols, beliefs and attitudes helps justifies and legitimizes the manifestation of direct violence.[23] This paper holds the view that it is erroneous to assert that culture is the root cause of violent conduct such as terrorism; rather I posit that culture only serve as a causal link that justifies and legitimizes direct-violent behavioural responses whose root causes lie in structural violence.   Neither direct nor structural violence prevail for long without at least some support from cultural symbols, beliefs and attitudes. The practice is that in most cases of direct violence the justification and legitimization of violent actions can come from a variety of cultural values such as religion, national and cultural and symbol like language etc. In the case of global terrorism which constitute the deadliest form of direct violence and insecurity threat across the world today, cultural symbols such as language and religion has been continually used as a means of justify and legitimize violent behaviors.

3. Scrutinizing Drivers of Political Radicalization and Counter Terrorism Approaches

The first part of this analysis presents a brief historical background of the Boko Haram terrorist group; it traces the origin of the group and its evolution with particular emphasis on the political and socio-economic drivers that led to the rise of the group to international prominence. The second part uncover the fault lines of conventional top-down approaches towards national security in Nigeria while the third part assume a unique bottom-up human security paradigm as a complementary framework to the top-down reductionist approach. The

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[22] J. Galtung, "Cultural Violence," *Journal of Peace Research*, no. 27(3) (1990): 291-305.
[23] J. Lewis, *Language Wars: The Role of Media and Culture in Global Terror and Political Violence*, (Pluto Press, 2005).

study specifically offers a hybrid model approach towards national security, the proposed model emphasizes not just states and military security but on individuals, society and environment as the major referent object of security.[24] This new approach considers both military and non-military threats as principal security concerns. In our contemporary global era, it is apparent that the rise of complex intra states violence cannot be fully explained and addressed in terms of traditionalist explanations; it is on the basis of this limitation that this study underpins the need of a more nuance hybrid security approach.

3.1. Historical Background of Boko Haram

The introductory analysis begins with a brief historical background of the Boko Haram terrorist group, and proceeds to answer fundamental research questions: Is religion or are ideological factors the primary drivers of violent radicalization of terrorism in Northern Nigeria? How do socio-economic structures of the states in Nigeria serve as drivers of violent radicalization of violent extremism that leads to terrorism? What bearing does political and elite interest exert on public support for Boko Haram? Finally, the article concludes with what role can existing leadership in Nigeria play in the de-radicalization process at local or national level.

A lot of controversy surrounds the origin of Boko Haram; however, a great deal of academician holds that the rise of the terrorist organization can be traced as far back as in 1995 with the emergence of a Muslim-youth organization called Shabaab. The Group's headquarters is located in the Northeast of the country which is in Maiduguri-Bornu state. In the early years of its formation the group was headed by a man known as Lewan Abubakar who later departed for further studies to the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia. Before his departure he handed over the leadership of the organization to Mohammed Yusuf. Boko Haram is a Hausa word which literally means "western education is unlawful" but today it has been modified to mean "western culture is forbidden".

In 2002 Mohammed Yusuf altered religious sermon in line with the ideology fundamentalist beliefs of the group, as a result he was prevented from preaching in the Indimi

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[24]M. Kaldor, M. Martin and S. Selchow, "Human Security: A New Strategic Narrative for Europe," *International Affairs*, no. 83(2) (2007): 273-288.

Mosque in Maiduguri.[25] It is important to note that between the period of 2002 to 2009, (period prior to extremist violence) the group managed to gain wide base support and followers from mostly youthful ages between 17-30years old. During this period the organization gained many supporters, mostly unemployed youths and poor families. In the early formation years Boko Haram generated a huge appeal for thousands of youths who were already discontented with the poor system of federal governance in Nigeria.[26]   As part of its founding principle the group provided social programs and employment opportunities in a bit to help the impoverished indigenous people in the north eastern part of the country. As time went on, the activities of the group spread to other parts of the country with the most dreadful   areas being Kano, Yobe, Katsina and Bauchi regional states.

Equally the political history of northern Nigeria cannot be neglected in the discourse of the rise of the group. This is because the political history helps us understand the contemporary political impasse and the rise of violent insurgent groups. Prior to colonization of the region, the northeastern part of the country known as the Bornu Empire was under the control of the Kanuri Muslims. However British colonization and the imposition of British system of indirect rule led to increased allegiance of local people to the Bornu sultanate. It has been argued that profound dissatisfaction with the activities of British authorities fuelled the rise of Islamic fundamentalism among the Kanuri people.

This article argues that even though anti-colonial discontent is not unique to the Kanuri people, yet one cannot dislodge the fact that it helped a great deal to explain the genesis of the sympathy and popular support for Boko Haram in the early years of its formation. It is important to point out that Boko Haram's insurgency group and its activism become violent from July 2009 onwards after clashes between government security forces and members of the militant group in Bauchi state saw the death of 17 of its members including its key leader Mohammed Yusuf. The groups' denial to adhere to the enforcement of transport safety laws on compulsory use of helmets for motorcyclists led to the confrontations. In the aftermath of these

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[25] J. Campbell, *Boko Haram: Origins, Challenges and Responses*, (NOREF Policy Brief, 2014).
[26] D. E. Agbiboa, "Why Boko Haram Exists: The Relative Deprivation Perspective," *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, no. 3(1) (2013):144-157.

confrontations, the group's hideouts in Bauchi were invaded and materials for producing explosives discovered.[27] In retaliation, the group resurfaced with more advanced violent attacks characterized by bombings of the police headquarters in Abuja, June 2011, UN headquarters in August 2011 and numerous churches across the country in 2012. Even at the time of writing (September 2017) things are not getting any better with an increased rate of suicide and car bombers terrorizing Nigeria and its immediate neighbors especially Chad, Cameroon and Niger. In terms of support national intelligence report reveals that the group was\is heavily supported by university lecturers, political elites, bankers' unemployed graduates and local indigenes in from most the northern part of Kanuri, Bauchi, Bornu and other provinces located in the northeastern part of the country.[28]

Figure 1.2. Total Terrorism Deaths by Boko Haram[29]
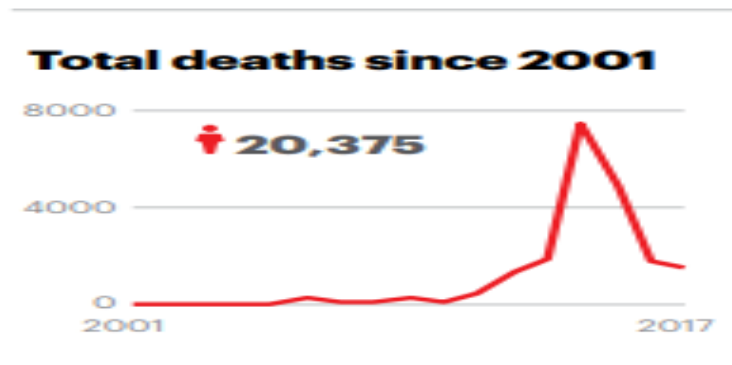
Source: Global Terrorism Database

Figure 1.2 highlights the fact that total deaths from terrorism in Nigeria gradually increased in the year 2000 and reached its peak in 2014. It then dropped to 1,532 in 2017, with a decrease of 16 per cent.[30]

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[27] P. Rogers, "Nigeria: The Generic Context Of The Boko Haram Violence," *Monthly Global Security Briefing*, (2012):1-55

[28] A. Olojo, *Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram*, (2013).

[29] Global Terrorism Index, 2017.

[30] Global Terrorism Index, "Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism," *Institute for Economics and Peace*, 2017,
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Global%20Terrorism%20Index%202017%20%284%29.pdf (07.12.2017).

Figure 1.3. Deaths from Terrorism

FIGURE 1.3 COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF DEATHS FROM TERRORISM, 2016
Five countries account for three quarters of all deaths from terrorism.
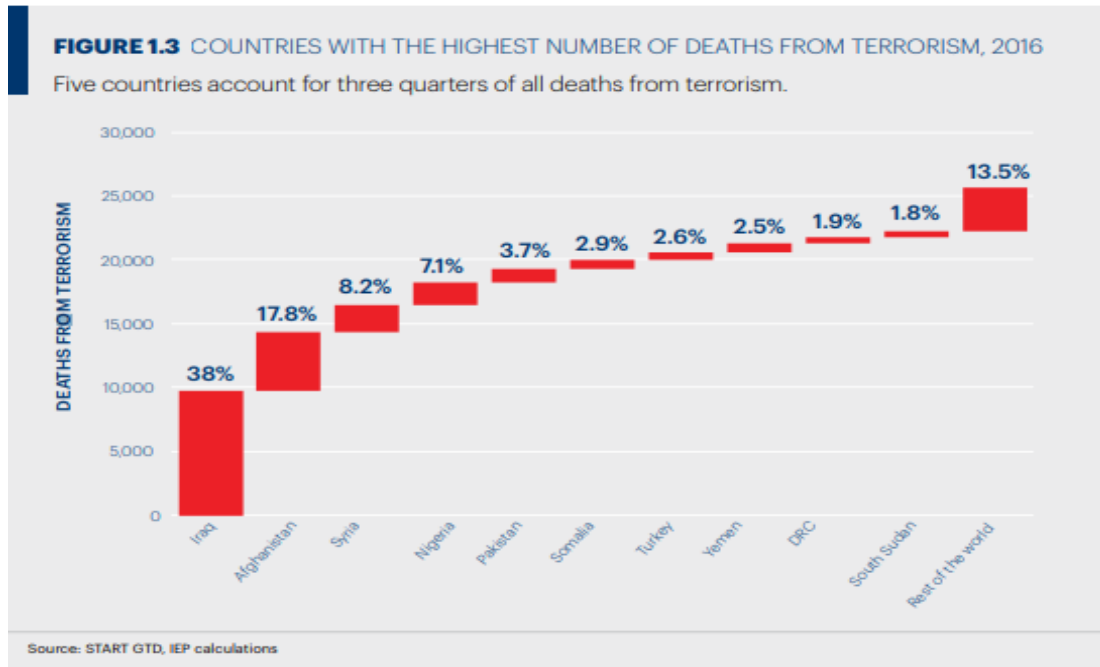
Source: START GTD, IEP calculations

Figure 1.3. shows countries with the highest number of deaths from terrorism in the 2016. The analysis reveals that five countries accounted for three quarters of all deaths from terrorism: Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Nigeria and Pakistan. These same countries have been the five most affected by terrorism since 2013.

Figure 1.4. Deaths from Terrorism by Country

Deaths from terrorism by country, 2017
Ten countries accounted for 84% of deaths from terrorism.

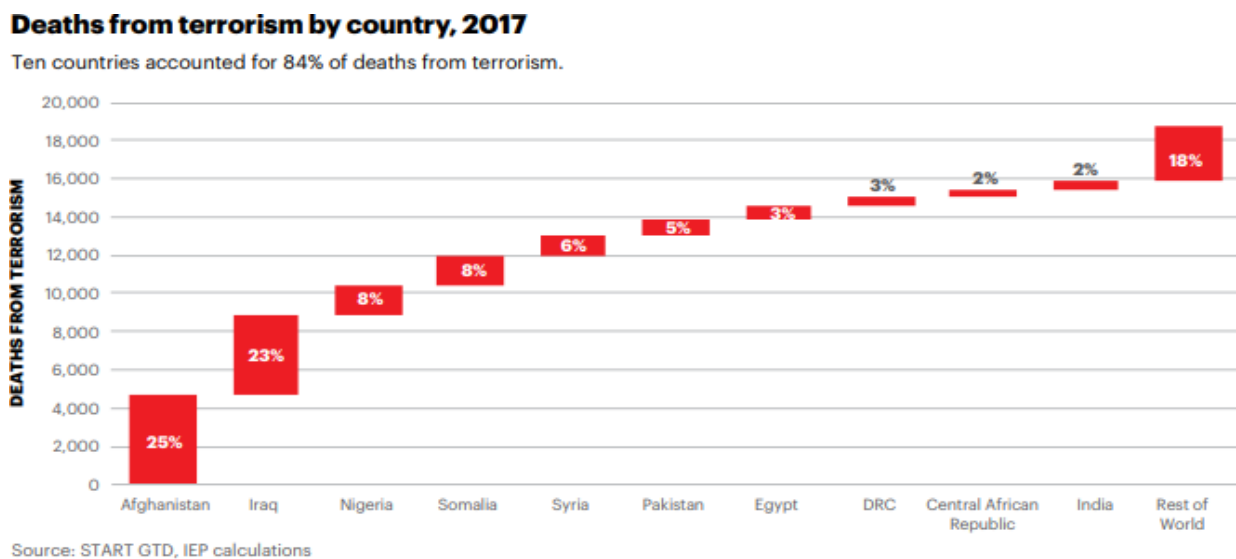Source: START GTD, IEP calculations

Figure 1.4 highlights the countries that experienced the highest rate of terrorist attacks and

deaths in terrorism from 2016 to 2017. Iraq, Syria, and Nigeria witnessed the highest amount.

3.2. Socio-economic Drivers

This section of the paper attempts to provide concise answers to certain key questions. Firstly, how do socio-economic systems in Nigeria serve as drivers of violent radicalization of terrorism perpetrated by Boko Haram? Drawing from Immanuel Wallenstein approach, this paper maintains that in Nigeria unequal relation of production between peripheral, semi peripheral and core states contribute to increased inequality, exploitation and marginalization of some people.[31] Peripheral states like Bornu, Kanu and Maiduguri in the northeastern part of Nigeria are least developed part of the country. They face heightened levels of deprivation with exploitation of cheap labor, raw materials and agricultural production by core states like Abuja. Accordingly, the semi peripheral and core regions of Nigeria have political, economic and military power and advantage that enable them to impose unequal relation of production characterized by institutionalization of unequal exchange and income rates on inhabitants in the Northeast of the country. This paper put forward that one significant driver that has influenced violent radicalization, recruitment and support for Boko Haram is relative economic deprivation.

This paper debunks the claim offered by some scholars that religion or ideological factors are the primary and sole drivers of violent radicalization of terrorism in northern Nigeria. Drawing from the structural violence paradigm this paper maintains that violence is intricately linked to the structure of human organization within a given society; that is within the socio-economic and political structure of the society. The root causes of Boko Haram terrorism need to be perceived as the outcome of the Nigeria's failed federal system of governance which favours some states at the detriment of others by providing more opportunities and access to resources to some groups and classes at the expense of others.[32]   Thus, as a result of relative deprivation and structural violence of the failing federal structures in Nigeria, the rise of social movements and the desire to pursue change for political liberation and socio economic

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[31] T. K. Hopkins and I. M. Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: Theory and Methodology*, (Sage Publications, Inc., 1982).
[32] B. E. Aigbokhan, "Growth, inequality and poverty in Nigeria," *Prepared for United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)*, (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2008).

emancipation has been the driving force behind Boko Haram rhetoric to establish a distinct political entity based on sharia law.

Information from Nigeria's national Bureau of statistics in 2008 revealed that relative poverty in Nigeria is highest in northeastern part of the country compared to southeast and southwest. The relative poverty figures in southeast and southwest stood at 67% and 59% while that of northeast and northwest stood at 76.3% and 77.7% respectively.[33] With regards to other indicators such as education of girls, a similar pattern of inequality is visible with much lower rates of enrolment for female students in the northern regions of the country compared the south. The difference between the north and the south is mainly as a result of poor federal system of governance and a feature of relative deprivation. This therefore has huge implication in exacerbating rate of frustration and aggression manifested by emerging social movements such as Boko Haram. As a practical case in point in 2015 the Nigerian government released dozens of women and teenagers who were members or presumed to be members of Boko Haram. Among the youths were members who testified to have previously accepted 5000 Naira (15$) from Boko haram members who in return provided them with gallons of fuel to set schools ablaze in Maiduguri and Borno State[34].

The phenomenon of increasing youthful population in Africa and Nigeria in particular has further exacerbated the number of economically deprived population that is susceptible to recruitment by the terrorist sect. Nigeria has a predominantly youthful population with three quarters of the population constituting youths below the ages of 30.[35] In the past decade political violence inspired by deprived and marginalized youths in the peripheral zones of the country specifically in northern part of Maiduguri and southern part of the Niger Delta is a clear reminder that there is a causal link between human development indicators (poverty, income, health, etc) and terrorism. Violent extremism perpetrated by a huge number of Nigerian youthful populations living in the margins or peripheral societies justifies the causal linkages.

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[33] Ibid, 18.
[34] Ibid, 14.
[35] F. I. Ogbeide, H. Kanwanye and S. Kadiri, "Revisiting the Determinants of Unemployment in Nigeria: Do Resource Dependence and Financial Development Matter?" *African Development Review*, no. 28(4) (2016): 430-443.

Ahmed Sakida a journalist who happened to have had a close contact to one of the founding members of the sect Mohammed Yusuf, in an interview before his death it was found that Boko Haram's followers increased in leaps and bounds because most of them were school drop outs, unemployed youths, low income civil servants and parliamentary staffs.[36] This article further underpin the fact that even though socio-economic deprivation constitute a powerful driver for violent radicalization of terrorism in Northern Nigeria, one must however remain cautious of the way and extent in which it influences Boko Haram's insurgency. This is because there are other intervening drivers or factors that need to be examined. As such this work hold the view that reducing Boko Haram's terrorism to socio economic deprivation obscure the analysis and the role which other drivers of radicalization can play.

3.3. Political and Elite Interest in Nigeria

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper one of the major objectives of this work is to shed more light on the role of poor governance and the bearing which political and elite interest may have on public support for Boko Haram. Needless to say, that national intelligence and surveillance report has revealed overwhelming evidence and suspicions that the political and elite class mostly from the northern part of the country provides material, financial and technical assistance to the group. As a case in point, in 2012 former President Goodluck Jonathan noted that some sympathizers of Boko Haram included both members from the legislative, executive and judicial arm of the government as well as the country's arm forces including some military officials who sympathize with the group.[37]

In recent years intelligence report has revealed the implicit role played by Nigerian Political elites from the Northern region of Nigeria, For instance before the clash with national security forces and violent radicalization in 2009 it was apparent that the group was under the influence of key politicians from the north. During the period between 2002 and 2009 some politicians supported the group's ideology in order to gain grass root support of the local population in their constituencies. In 2007 a key affiliate to the group Alahji Buji was

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[36] A. Olojo, *Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram*, (2013).

[37] A. R. Adenrele, "Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria as a Symptom of Poverty and Political Alienation," *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, no. 3(5) (2012): 21-26.

appointed as commissioner of Religious affairs in Bornu state. Before his death in 2009 he was known as one of the major financiers of the sect.[38] Northern Nigerian political elites who lend their support to the organization do so not just because they believe in the ideology of the group but partly because they intend to capitalize on the group's ability to mobilize a broad base support. They use the ideology of the group as a means to justify, legitimize and consolidate their position in power. For instance, in 2009 the leadership of the group was able to cooperate with the political class which provided financial support that enabled the group to acquire dozens of taxis, buses and motorcycles that were distributed to unemployed youths who joined the organization. Again in 2012 a spokesperson of Boko Haram revealed that Kano state governor Ibrahim Shekarau and Bauchi state governor Issa Yugunda had paid them monthly. Hence at domestic level, intelligence reports have persistently showed that the activities of the group are heavily financed and supported by politicians, businessmen and organized criminal networks.[39] However, this article strongly argue that the support accorded to the organization by the political elite is not mainly because of their belief in the groups radical ideology but mainly because of their un-quenching desire to pursue their political interest of having access to power and resources either under the federal structure or under a separate political entity govern by sharia law.

3.4. Religion as Opium of the Masses and a Force for Political Mobilization and Legitimization

Religious demography in Nigeria is almost evenly distributed between Muslims and Christians with the later representing about 50.05% of the population and the former representing 48.2% of the population. Other religious and non-religious groups cover the remaining 1.4%.[40] Islam and Christianity constitute the dominant religious denominations and a major factor of identity formation in Nigeria. The entire political, social and economic relations of Nigeria revolve around these identity factors. In 1914 the combination of Northern

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[38] Olojo, Nigeria's troubled North, 14.

[39] A. R. Adenrele, "Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria as a Symptom of Poverty and Political Alienation," *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, no. 3(5) (2012): 21-26.

[40] M. Stonawski, M. Potančoková, M. Cantele and V. Skirbekk, "The Changing Religious Composition of Nigeria: Causes and Implications of Demographic Divergence," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, no. 54(3) (2016):361-387.

and Southern regions together brought Muslims and Christians together to participate in the process of forming a nation state. Based on religious demography it is not surprising that religion dominates the daily life of the people and equally constitute an important feature of their national identity. In February 2004 a survey carried out by BBC ranked Nigeria among the top 10 religious nation with over 90% of the population believing in God/Allah.

Accordingly, this article strongly affirms that the role of religion as a force of political mobilization and an instrument for the justification and legitimization of power has serious implications in a pluralist society like Nigeria. As stipulated in section 10 of Nigeria's constitution, the country is a secular state, governed by secular laws. But the paradox is that Nigerian politicians and religious groups have been inclined to politicize religion as they see it as a means and source for political power. It is this perception of power that leads to the struggle for political leadership along religious lines instead of party lines. This partly explains why in Nigeria elections and political appointments are entangled between religion and politics. What prevails is that members of a particular religious denomination, sect, or group tend to strongly support or lobby for one of its members to be elected in political office. In many cases the struggle for political leadership along religious lines has resulted in civil confrontations and violent extremism in other parts of the country similar to that manifested by Boko Haram in the North. For example, in September 2001 the appointment of a Christian as local council chairman in Jos state ignited violence that led to the death of 160 persons. Again, in the aftermath of the 2011 presidential elections, reports from Human Right Watch stated that about 800 persons were killed and 6500 people displaced following three days of violent protest in the 12 Northern states.[41] The violence started because President Mohammadu Buhari a Northern Muslim lost to incumbent Goodluck Jonathan.

Again, this paper proffers the view that the root cause of political violence in Nigeria is not religion per say, rather it is the politicization of religion in a pluralist secular state that has contributed to the rise of social movements and different forms of political violence with

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[41] K. K. Aaron, "Relative Deprivation and Insurgency: What Lessons from Nigeria's Flawed Federalism?" *International Area Studies Review*, no. 18(2) (2015):164-181.

terrorism being the most prominent. In a more nuance and deeper look, religion itself is not the major problem and the root cause of the crisis in northern Nigeria. Instead it is the destructive and exploitative behavior of structural violence that have transform religion as a key driver of political violence in all its forms. Hence, it is the manipulation of religion that Boko Haram has capitalized on to the detriment of the Islamic faith and Nigerian state. What needs to be understood in this context is that the mere presence of religious factor does not cause violent sectarian conflicts. Rather, it is the presence of other factors such as political and socio-economic factors that aid manipulative attitudes of individuals and religious groups.

Emphasis on the role of religion as a force of political mobilization has been reinforced by Jeffrey Seul who explained that "religion is not the primary cause of conflict". Suel stressed that in situations of conflict pitting two or more religious groups, the fighter may take advantage of the religious identity factor to galvanize financial, moral and institutional support in order to sustain the group's objective, but this is not sufficient to say that religion is the primary cause.[42] It is exactly under these circumstances that Nigeria finds its self in a violent, unending war today. While religion is essentially a force for good, Boko Haram has used it to present high levels of negativity, they have persistently used it to advance their cause of establishing a distinct political entity govern by sharia law. Religious aspiration has been used to appeal to many young Muslims and followers who are drawn to the group with assurances of political and economic emancipation.

4. Counter Terrorism Approaches in Northern Nigeria

The second part uncovers the fault lines of conventional top-down approaches towards national security in Nigeria. By top-down approaches refers to traditional or conventional methods that dominates the discipline of international security and strategic studies during the early years of its formation. Traditional approach towards security usually draws its inspiration from realist theory in international relations. Since the inception of the discipline, the meaning of security is usually interpreted through three fundamental questions, what is referent object

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[42] D. Agbiboa, "The Ongoing Campaign of Terror in Nigeria: Boko Haram versus the State," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, no. 2(3) (2016).

of security? What is the nature of the threat? How should states or other actors respond to such threats? In answering these questions proponents of national security holds that the state remains the sole referent object of security because process of globalization has failed to change the most important characteristics of the international system established in the treaty of Westphalia in 1648. It has failed to change the world of sovereign states. On the contrary proponents of bottom security approaches towards security argue that the state is not the only referent object or principal actor in security, there are other important actors which includes individuals, communities, and environment. Secondly in responding to the nature of threat, while top-down or traditionalist security apologists hold that the nature of threat should always be determined in military terms and may be internal or external. On the other hand, supporters of bottom up security approach challenged the traditionalist school of thought, they disagreed over what threats are faced by states, and accordingly the nature of security threat should not be determined only in military terms but also in non-military terms, particularly with respect human security. In an effort to answer the third question "How should states or other actors respond to security threats"

This article holds that overdependence on traditionalist or top down notion of security pushes the meaning of concept security into the conservative end of the spectrum. The following section of this paper reveals the fault lines of conventional top-down approaches in Nigeria. National security agencies are inclined to focus only on states as the main referent object of analysis in security studies. The analysis in this part of the work considers human security paradigm or bottom up approaches as a complement to the top-down traditional reductionist approach. It specifically examines a hybrid security model that tends to focus on not just on states but on other actors such as individuals, communities and environment as the major referent object of security in Nigeria.[43] This hybrid approach further considers both military and non-military threats and the combination of hard and soft power, use of direct military actions, national intelligence gathering and most especially the consideration of a political solution that addresses the underlying root causes of terrorism. In our contemporary

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[43] M. Kaldor, M. Martin and S. Selchow, "Human Security: A New Strategic Narrative for Europe," *International Affairs*, no. 83(2) (2007): 273-288.

global era it is apparent that the rise of intra state violence related to terrorism cannot be fully explained and addressed only in terms of traditionalist explorations, it is on the basis of this limitation that this study attempt to argue for the need for a hybrid model, that is a combination of bottom and top down security response to Boko-Haram terrorism in northern Nigeria.

4.1. Top-down Approaches to Counter Terrorism:

Top down approaches in response to violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism are State centric in nature. The types of state centered techniques include use of national intelligence, surveillance and military force. Nigeria's responses to Boko Haram terrorist threats are based on a state-centric framework. The different state security agencies charged with different functions to counter terrorist threats include, the National Police Unit, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) changed with domestic and foreign intelligence services, and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) responsible for military intelligence. This work concurs with the dominant view that when faced with severe terrorist threats characterize by suicide attacks and guerilla warfare tactics, securitization measures dealing with the use of national intelligence, surveillance and military force becomes an inevitable counter strategy. Nigeria's security agencies charged with the responsibility to ensure national security has embarked on stringent measures involving the use of national intelligence and military force. In the wake of Boko-haram attacks national security agencies strengthen its coordination, improve intelligence gathering and ease the flow of vital information in a timely and preemptive manner. However, this paper holds that these measures must be done in line with respect for the rule of law. Reports from international and national human rights agencies like Amnesty International reveal that security agents in the country have not avoided the backlash of extra-judicial and indiscriminate killings and other forms of human rights abuses that lead to dissention and aggression in the minds of local populace. Since the onset the crisis, national security agencies have adopted an independent approach of fighting in isolation and of committing extrajudicial killings. This research submits that such top-down tactics employed by the Nigerian government pulls the fight against terrorism into the conservative end of the spectrum. Rather, issues of national security should be closely tied to the degree of cohesion,

cooperation between national defense agencies and the population in local communities in northern eastern part of the country.

Drones also known as Unmanned Arial Vehicles (UAV), a modern instrument in contemporary warfare have become a prominent feature in the fight against global terrorism. Since 2014 the Nigerian military has been running a counter insurgency program with the use of UAV from China and Israel. Drones have been largely deployed for surveillance and combat capacities in the Northeastern part of the country.   This article however submits that the use of drone may be an effective instrument for national intelligence and surveillance but when used in combat missions its effectiveness is questioned. Reports have further showed that the use of drones in combat missions has resulted in extrajudicial and indiscriminate killings; it remains illegal under international law. Regardless of how far the insurgents constitute legitimate targets; there is no legitimate justification for using drone to kill many innocent civilians in combat missions. In the light of these arguments, response to violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism in Nigeria is highly based on a state-centric framework; it is largely committed to the traditionalist preoccupation of the state as the sole referent object of security. Security is about something that needs to be secured; a nation, state, individual, ethnic group, community and environment. National security or what many observers termed as state security has been the principal occupation of the Nigerian government in the wake of Boko-haram activism. The use of top-down security approaches built within the framework of interstate or conventional warfare tactics to de-radicalize instar state violence that leads to terrorism remains controversial. The use of UAV in the northern parts of Nigeria has to a greater extent generated widespread hostilities and anger among the local population. This article submits the Nigeria government needs to reconsider its national security approach in its fights of Boko-haram terrorist group, at a very fundamental level, it is essential to adopt a complementary security approach that gives reference to the state nation, state, individuals, ethnic group and community as key elements that needs to be secured.

Since after taking office in 2015, president Buhari has fortified security cooperation with its immediate neighbors coupled with other foreign partners in the fight against terrorism.

Nigerian forces now work closely with its closest neighbors in the West African and Sahel region to block the flow of external support. In this respect multinational security alliance with Cameroon, Niger and Chad which borders the area where Boko-haram is based has been helpful albeit with some challenges. Grouping the four nations together to share information on intelligence and surveillance has proved harder due to mistrust among them. This article holds that such top-down hierarchical practice towards de-radicalization needs to be merged with a bottom up approach. Intelligence and security agencies in Nigeria need to highly consider the fact that the objective to de-radicalize demobilize and de-engage extremist greatly depends on ability to work in close collaboration with the local communities and win their support.

In the aftermath of Boko-Haram activism the Nigerian government has also received enormous support from its foreign counterparts in the fight against terrorism, U.S and Nigeria security relations have been cordial though restricted. Military cooperation between both countries has often been in the areas of joint military training, provisions of modern equipment, logistics support, and human rights monitoring operations. US department of defense has provided Joint-Combined Exchange Training (JCET) programs which trains and equip Nigerian troops in the wake of Boko-haram attacks. For example, in 2017 under the scheme of the said program General Bolduc a Green Beret with multiple task forces in Afghanistan visited Nigeria and ordered an assessment team to review the violent situation in the country. Upon assessment a small dozen of special U.S forces where stationed in Maiduguri in the northeastern part of the country to help Nigerian forces plan effective counter terrorism campaigns. It is worth noting that a major impediment in US-Nigeria security relations concerns issues related to respect for human rights. In the fight against Boko-haram the Nigeria government has taken steps through human rights training programs to ensure that troops do not resort to violate human rights. Nonetheless incidents of human rights violations whether justified or unjustified is still reported by Amnesty International, hence a challenge to US-Nigeria security relations. In a similar vein as of August 2017 Russia signed a military cooperation agreement with Nigeria which allowed Nigerian military officers to obtain training from Russia's military establishments, secure sale of military equipment and fortify cooperation in the fight against

terrorism. Symmetrical pattern of security cooperation has been witnessed with China that supplies modern military facilities like the CH-3s drone and Israel that equipped Nigeria with its Aerostar Unmanned Ariel Vehicles. This paper notes that in a bit to counter Boko-Haram terrorism president Muhammadu Buhari's government has adopted a top-down de-radicalization method shaped around a framework of interstate cooperation. Nigerian authorities have increased cooperation with its external partners in the fight against Boko-haram terrorism, however this article submits that such top-down measures characterize by interstate relations with over centrality on formal state institutions and state actors limit towards national intelligence and surveillance in local communities. The solutions the intra-sate crisis facing Nigeria should also be home-driven and should base on local knowledge and inspired by local actors who understand local dynamics of various communities. At a very fundamental level, it is essential to complement external cooperation with internal collaboration.

4.2. Bottom-Up Approaches to Counter Terrorism: Human Security and Community-Based Approaches

Bottom up approach built around the framework of human security paradigm is the most fashionable counter terrorism model today. It includes programs that aim to peacefully transform individuals and groups away from insurgencies, extremism, radicalism and violent activism. It has of recent grown both in proportion and scope and support programs related to individuals in the vulnerable age groups that are most likely to be subjects of intergroup violence. Bottom up approach focuses on disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremist offenders or potential offenders.

The analysis employed in this part principally focuses at local level; little reference is being made to the role of regional and transnational actors. This is so because it is more apparent that solutions to the challenges arising from a crisis deeply rooted to the structure of the state and nature of governance in Nigeria must ultimately come from Nigerians. They must necessarily be home-driven and based on local knowledge inspired by local actors who understand the local dynamics in the region. A society's path to peace and security is greatly determined by the ideals, vision and values that shape that society's future and these can only

come from within. Even though certainly there are solutions or benefits from external support and cooperation, again attention should be also given to local actors. This mainly because the case of Boko Haram terrorism manifest both typical and unique challenges. Its unique challenges do not fit well into the all-encompassing regional and international narratives of global terrorism. It is on this premise that this work underpins the need for local approaches to de-radicalization.

Borrowing from the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) this paper put forward that community-based approach offers the notion that the security of a community is closely related to the degree of cohesion, cooperation between national defense agencies and the local community.[44] Therefore, counterterrorism policies in Nigeria should aim at building resilient communities that reject political violence, violent extremism and terrorist propagandist ideologies. Public officials should focus on mobilizing citizens, individuals and groups in Bornu, Yobe, Bauchi, Katsina and Kano to support counterterrorism goals. These counterterrorism policies have to focus on developing technical resilience, for instance by protecting strategic infrastructures and strengthening emergency responses. Also, there is growing evidence that little efforts have been placed on fostering resilience at local levels.

Drawing from a bottom up perspective towards de-radicalization this article contends that threat posed by Boko-Haram terrorist group has been solely if not mainly defined in military terms. The Nigerian government has given little consideration to non-military threats related to human security. At a fundamental level, there is a high need to establish a framework of political solution that addresses the underlying root causes of the violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism in local communities. If fully created, community-oriented framework to countering terrorism will build strong public confidence, strengthen public support and police actions. It will fortify the legitimacy of state actions and state actors in areas caught in a vicious cycle of violent extremism and radicalization in Nigeria. Community security approaches to counterterrorism in northern Nigeria should involve both local men and women in communities or ethnic groups prone to conflict. Building and maintaining trust is

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[44] T. Husain, "Counter Terrorism Approaches: With Reference to Bangladesh," *ABC Journal of Advanced Research*, no. 6(1), 2017: 9-16.

essential for a successful de-radicalization from terrorist groups. Confronted by relative deprivation, structural and cultural violence in northern parts of the country, the Nigerian government must now realize that political solution to address these underlying causes in local communities is essential for long term solutions. Community support for, and involvement in, the formulation, implementation and evaluation of various strategies, policies and measures need to be taken into consideration.

Since the formation of the country in 1914 religion has remained as the major factor of its national identity. Religious antagonism between the two dominant denominations Christianity and Islam has been a stimulant to violent conflicts. This paper holds the view that there is an increasing need for inter-religious cooperation. Heightened measures should by employ to address issues of Christian-Muslim relations in Nigeria; it is true that in first decade of the 21st century some efforts were made by the former president Obasanjo to establish a Nigerian Inter-Religious Council-NIREC. [45] Building upon this initiative, interreligious dialogue and inter-faith working groups should be encouraged so that interaction can translate into greater understanding with trust and cooperation. As it stands, in Northeast Nigeria the government needs to engage credible Islamic scholars and experts, who can contribute to the process of de-mystifying doctrines which Boko-Haram distorts in order to spread its extremist ideologies.

Human security reforms in the peripheral communities in the Northern part of Nigeria needs to be geared towards expanding individual capabilities, providing more employment opportunities, alleviating poverty, improving economic infrastructure, and supporting political institutions that are corruption-free and accountable.[46] This paper maintains that the federal and regional governments in Nigeria needs to implement policies to target relative deprivation and structural violence highly manifested in the northern parts of Maiduguri, Yobe, kano Bauchi Katsina etc. The socioeconomic conditions of indigenous people in the north eastern communities in Nigeria undoubtedly need a boost. Particular focus should be on human

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[45] B. Gent, *Contemporary Muslim-Christian Encounters: Developments*, Diversity & Dialogues, (2017).
[46] J. S. Omotola, "Combating Poverty for Sustainable Human Development in Nigeria: The Continuing Struggle," *Journal of Poverty*, no. 12(4) (2008): 496-517.

development indicators established in the United Nations Human Development Index, the indicators include education, income and health. Most importantly the increasing unemployed youthful population and women must be at the epicenter of a human security program. This article notes that effort in these areas will greatly circumvent the ability of Boko Haram extremist to exploit the socio-economic conditions of the persons in vulnerable age groups. The failure of the government to constructively address the structural challenges at local levels and in grass root communities in the northeastern part of the country inadvertently led to the rise of social movements and a steady supply of young and violent extremists groups like Boko Haram and Niger Delta movement.[47] In effect a political solution created under the framework of de-radicalisation programs should target structural challenges and strengthening the rule of human rights law in the fight against Boko haram. It is noteworthy that the Nigerian government should acknowledge the fact that efforts to circumvent the complex challenges that come along with threats relating to terrorism require the necessary political will. In line with this the Northern States Governors Forum (NSGF) can be used as a platform by the major platform to ensure greater decentralization of power, resources, transparency and accountability.

Conclusion

To sum up, this article explored two key aspects within the contemporary literature of terrorism; that is on the first count drivers of political radicalization and on the second count approaches employed to de-radicalize and counter terrorist threats. This article so far underpins the fact that unless one clearly understands the process of radicalization, it will be difficult to device of comprehensive and succinct strategy to counter or de-radicalize terrorist activities. The major problem disclosed in this work so far revealed that a great deal of academic scholars and security expert have been inclined to focused more on catalytic role of religion as the only or principal drivers of violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism in northern Nigeria. They have often ignored the political drivers and the inadvertent role of the state in the radicalization process of violent extremism. However, the study has brought to bear the role of

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[47] K. K. Aaron, "Relative Deprivation and Insurgency: What Lessons from Nigeria's Flawed Federalism?" *International Area Studies Review*, no. 18(2) (2015): 164-181.

states and the bearing which political and elite interests may have exerted on public support for Boko Haram. It examined the socio-economic context of the crisis and also focused on the catalytic role of religion especially how it has been exploited by the terrorist group in generating huge solidarity in northern Nigeria. The second part of the discourse submitted in the analysis section also made known the fact that national security agencies in Nigeria tend to focused more on top-down approaches to counter violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism. Top-down approaches towards de-racialization are state centric and are disposed to depend mainly on conventional warfare strategy centered on the study of threat, use and control of military force**.** The article exposed the fault lines of top-down approaches towards national security in Nigeria. It contends that top down such approaches highly leads to a series of inadvertent consequences that pulls counter terrorism processes and desire to achieve stability into a conservative end of the spectrum. To this far, the paper far does aim to replace or completely repudiate the present realist conventional warfare approach used to counter terrorism. Rather, the discourse considered an additional bottom up approach as a complement to the earlier top-down model. Thus, this work specifically brings to bear the importance of a hybrid bottom and top down security model that tends to focus not just on states but also on individuals and communities as the major referent object of security in Nigeria.

At theoretical level the work adopted theories of collective political violence used within the discipline of security studies. The theories provide a better understanding of the underlying political drivers of violent extremism and radicalization relating to terrorism as well as justification to the approaches used in countering them. The major theoretical considerations deployed in this paper relate to both micro and macro theories of collective political violence. Micro theoretical approaches used in this article relates to Robert Gurr's relative deprivation theory that suggested how relative deprivation, class discrimination and societal injustices which prevent individuals from reaching their full potentials stir extremism that leads to the rise terrorist groups. At macro level this study makes use of Johan Galtung's theory of structural violence.

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