IMPACT OF TERRORISM ON WEST AFRICA: A FOCUS ON MALI

*SHERIFF GHALI IBRAHIM, **ORANYELI STEPHEN ONOCHIE AND ***BIBI FAROUK IBRAHIM BIBI

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA, ABUJA
*EMAIL: sherfboy@yahoo.com
PHONE: +234-7063372013

ABSTRACT

The paper captures the trend of terrorist activities and insecurity particularly in northern state of Mali and analyses the gross impact of such activities on the people and government of Mali. From library literature research, findings indicate that the terrorism in Mali is so complex in what constitute the growing nature of such extremist groups. There are internal causes such as inequality, corruption and lack of intelligence; there are external forces in support of the terrorist groups and ultimately the fall of Libya. The paper concludes that with the fall of Kabul and incremental level of terrorist activities within the Sahel, African leaders have a great task to extraordinarily cooperate and declare a state of emergency within the Sahel to curb the growing nature of terrorist build-up within the region. The paper recommends a drastic control over the porous borders of Mali and introducing an inclusive governance to avoid political resentment due to marginalization.
Keywords: Terrorism; West Africa; Mali; Impact; Tuaregs; Human Rights

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is now a household name which is being expressed by everyone including communities, countries and international organizations. Terrorism cannot be overemphasized. Terrorism denotes a clandestine group of individuals who performs deadly and wickedly acts of suicide bombing, abduction, arbitrary killing of civilian population, rape and destruction of well-cherished property of citizens whose target, aims and strategies is to create fear and tension in the minds of citizens thereby weakening the state government, for the group to take control of the state and establish Islamic state and laws. The actions of terrorism has caused and led states across globe to unnecessary spends on the equipping of their national armed forces , inestimable number of deaths, destruction of property and many countries uncontrolled and ungoverned. Terrorism in West Africa has compounded the deteriorated nature of their environment which includes destruction of lives and property, violation of human rights, sexual abuse particularly against girls and women are have become prevalent in Mali.

In Nigeria, for example, terrorist group (Boko-Haram) has killed more than 10,000 people in Nigeria and has driven nearly a half-million from their homes. Traumatized populations have fled to refugee camps in Cameroun, Chad and Niger, where malnutrition and diseases are becoming increasingly prevalent especially among children, (Global Terrorism Index, 2009). Terrorism has mounted pressure on the military budget, expenditure and equipment of the Nigeria where Nigerian officials estimated that billions dollars will be needed for the rebuilding ravaged infrastructure in the north. The implication of this is that the country would not have enough money to spend in other sectors of the economy including servicing of loan or debt servicing. Mali is not left out in this devastating situation.

Nowadays, Mali is believed to offer a safe-haven for terrorist groups operating in the region, especially after an alliance was established in Mali 2017 among the main Jihadist groups active in the country. And their activities especially AI-Qaida for the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJO) have caused more harm to the state of Mali particularly the northern part than good. The effects of their activities are enormous and large (Security Council, 2018).

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Concept of Terrorism: Terrorism has become an household name today. Terrorism has been complicated in an attempt to conceptualize its meaning. Many scholars of sound minds have defined the concept of terrorism according to illegal acts while some orders look at it as freedom fighters. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary (2000: 1236) terrorism is the use of violent action in order to achieve political goals or force a government to act in a particular direction or to influence the policy of a state towards selfish goals. In theocratic states for example, monarchies or capitalist terrorism known as globalization. According to Federal Republic of Nigerian National Assembly Act (2011 cited in Wilfred, Magdalene and Ayuba, 2016) terrorism is an act which is deliberately carried out with malice, aforethought and which:

> Many seriously harm or damage a country or an international Organization; as having been to: unduly compel a government Or international organization to perform or obtain from Performing any act, seriously intimidate a population, seriously Destabilize or destroy the Fundamental political , constitutional, Economic or social structures of a country or an international Organization or otherwise influence such government or International organization by intimidation or coercion, involving An attack upon a person's life which may cause seriously bodily harm Or death.

Terrorism is further viewed as the word which is politically and emotionally charged (Hoffman, 1998). Terrorism is a tool used to achieve a specific outcome by using force or violence on one segment of the society with the primary goal of causing fear n the larger society to make change in that society,(Garrison,2004). Bergesen and Lizardo (2004) defines terrorism as the premeditated use of violence by a non-state group to obtain a political, religious or social objective through fear or intimidation directed at a large audience typically involving two different countries. Turk (1982) sees terrorism as deliberate, shocking, unjustifiable violence against non-combatants as well as combatants .The above definition shows that the action of terrorism directed not only the civilian populations but soldiers too. Hoffman (1998) views terrorism as a means of communicating a message

and using violence as a way to further solidify the triumph of their cause. Ganor (2008) posits that: "Terrorism is the international use of, threat to use violence against Civilians or against civilians' targets, in order to attain political aims". In the view of Erickson (cited in Myra 2009) terrorism is the unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence against individuals to generate fear with the intent of coercing or intimidating political, social or ideological purposes. Idowu and Famuyiwa (2016) summarize the conceptual meaning of terrorism as follows:

> Terrorism is a scourge (criminal and unjustifiable acts) perpetrated by a clandestine with the use of violence, like: murder, kidnapping, explosion, Bombings, and soon to achieve a purpose and its deliberate and Indiscriminate attacks affects all and threatens the very way of innocent Lives, values of humanity, human rights and freedom, which impedes Development and progress by challenging the religious, economic and political institutions in the society. It undermines the process and Principle of interaction among states. It cuts across national borders, while governments are often the targets, more often millions of innocent Civilians have been victims and properties (both private and public) have also been destroyed. It is a threat to the peaceful and civilized co-existence of people, to the stability of institutions and a threat Global peace and security. Terrorism is immoral and criminal in nature as it violates basic human rights and human values. It is a justification of hatred, fear, insecurity and anarchy. Finally, every act in violation of international law is terrorism, if carried out by a person, organization or state. And worst of it all, is that terrorism fails to adhere to internationally accepted standards for conflict resolution.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The Study adopted the Relative Deprivation theory as its theoretical framework of analysis. Development of the theory of relative deprivation is often attributed to American sociologist, Robert K. Merton , whose study of American soldiers during world war II revealed that soldiers in the military, police were far less satisfied with their opportunities for promotion than regular .Theory of relative deprivation as defined by social theorist and political scientists , relative deprivation theory suggests that people who feel they are being deprived of something considered essential in the society (e.g money, rights, political voice and status) will organize or join social movements dedicated to obtaining the things of which they feel deprived. For example, relative deprivation has been cited as one of the causes of the U.S civil rights movement of the 1960s which was rooted in black Americans struggle to gain social and legal equality with white Americans.

 In some cases, relative deprivation theory has been cited as a factor driving incidents of social disorder like rioting, looting, terrorism and civil wars. In this nature, social movements and their associated disorderly acts can often be attributed to the grievances of people who feel they are being denied resources to which they are entitled, (Merton, 2003). Furthermore, relative deprivation theory described that the lack of resources, to sustain the diet, lifestyle, activities and amenities that an individual or group are accustomed to or that are widely encouraged or approved in the society to which they belong, (Peter, 1979).Measuring relative deprivation allows an objective on comparison between the situation of the individual or group compared to the rest of society (Smith, 2001). Again, social scientists, particularly political scientists and sociologists, have cited relative deprivation as a potential cause of social movements and deviance civil wars and other in extreme situations to political violence such as rioting, terrorism, and other instances of social deviance and such as crime (Merton and Gurr, 1970).

APPLICATION OF THE THEORY

An application of this theory is quite simple and related to the study. Its application and relationship to the study is that terrorist groups emanate, evolve and spread all over northern part of Mali. This affects basic needs of life, appointment into governmental positions, development and construction of transportation and communication networks, infrastructural development and the rights of the citizenry. It was particularly the above stated denials and deprivation of the Tuareg that created insurgency against the state of Mali which led to the formation of the coalition of terrorist groups in 2012 and beyond.

CAUSES OF TERRORISM IN MALI

The study looks at the holistic and fundamental causes of terrorism in Mali. These causes will be discussed below with an intent view of proffering an ever-lasting solution to terrorism in Mali:

Bad Administration: Bad administration contributed to the roots causes of terrorism in Mali. An inability of the past successive administrations of Mali to implement agreements reached severally with the Tuareg rebels proved corrupt tendencies of Malian government of the past that led to the formation and coalition of terrorist groups in Mali. The past leaders were insensitive to the plight of the northern part of Mali. It was shown in the most of policies formulated and implemented in the state where the north was excluded from the development. There are at least two reports that justify corruption claim in Mali. The first was by Adeyemi and Musa (2014:92) who documented that for the devastation of the drought of 1973, 1984 and 2010 in northern Mali, the government sought and obtained generous humanitarian support without ameliorating the effect of the drought on the affected region. It was also captured by the IMF reports that government under the president Amadou Toumani Toure, made outright embattlement of and diversion of public funds. It was estimated that tax and customs fraud amounted to nearly one billion US dollars a year in 2010 and 2011, (Sako, 2014:9). Thurston and Onuoha (2013:3) cited in Dauda, Adie and Nwokedi (2018) believe that the corruption of government in Mali weakened state institutions, undermined popular faith in the political system and enabled the predatory activity of criminal and jihadist groups in the north.

It is in line with the above that Sheriff, Abba and Bibi (2014) posit that "economic stagflation, social inequality and incongruity, non-payment of salary arrears for soldiers and public sector workers had resulted into a great conflict and political instability…Africa." Looking at the case of Mali, some of the above reasons identified by Sheriff, Abba and Bibi are significant.

The death of Gaddafi: The death of Gaddafi exacerbated the situation because it increased the rate of terrorism in Mali. In1980s the Libyan government supported the Malian state by building a government complex, national television network and mosques (New York Times, 2018). This support was equally extended to the Malian Tuareg refugees who were later recruited into Gaddaffi's Islamic legion and used to prosecute the wars in Chad and Lebanon in the 1980s" (Chanzal and Damme, 2015:44). As a result of those that fought for him while alive included Mohammed. Al Najim, a senior rebel commander of MNLA that served in Gaddaffi's army and other migrants totaling about 11, 230 migrated to Mali, (Branson and Henry, 2013:7). As they moved into Mali they came with looted light and heavy weapons from Libya thereby giving the MNLA more access to thousands of

arms including Anti-tanks and Anti-air craft, some of which were originally being given by NATO to anti-Gaddaffi rebels during the NATO backed Libyan uprising (Anig, 2012 cited in Dauda, Adie and Nwokedi, 2018). Adding more light to this, Sambre (2012:199) cited in Dauda, Adie and Nwokedi (2018) argued that the failure of the Malian government to disarm these returnees coming to Mali as Niger and Chad did to their returnees, significantly impacted on the crisis in 2012. It was agreed by a majority of scholars that the armed returnees entered Mali due to the fall of Gaddaffi and contributed to the militarization of the north, which increased the existence of terrorist groups in Mali and bolstered the position of the MNLA considerably (Haysom, 2012:2).

Foreign sponsorship of terrorism in Mali: Tuareg rebels and terrorist groups in Mali do enjoy external financing from the outside. Qatar and Saudi Arabia have been invariable accused of sponsoring radical groups in the Middle East and Africa. They were strength behind the rebels act in 2012 till date in Mali. Dauda, Adie and Nwokedi (2018) stressed further that many fingers have been pointed towards the direction of Qatar as being responsible for the funding of the Islamist rebels in Mali. Allenmandou (2013) gave support to the above source that the first accusation of Qatar's involvement with Tuareg separatist and Islamist groups came in June 2012 following an article entitled "our friend Qatar is funding Mali's Islamists" published in the Canard Enchaine. In the paperia source in the French Military intelligence was quoted to have said: "The MNLA (secular Tuareg separatist), the Al Qaeda linked Ansar Dine and MUJOA (Movement for Unity and Jihad In West Africa) have all received cash from Doha" (Allenmandou,2013).

The above author also reported that Qatar had been sending foods and other aids daily to the Airports in Gao working in Mali. It was also gathered that only Qatar's NGO was allowed to operate in large part of the northern Mali when the rebels took over the areas (Dauda, Adie and Nwokedi, 2018). In addition to the above, Global Financial Integrity reports that: "Qatar is one of the world's top 20 countries Providing the highest rate of funding to illegal activities with an average 5.6 billion dollars Financing crime every year" (Safira,2016). Saudi Arabia on the other hand, has been reported to have championed most Wahhabis movements in countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, North Africa and Syria where it spent huge amount of dollars in erecting the most reactionary extreme and violently dangerous terrorist organizations especially in poor nations (Dauda, Adie and Nwokedi,2018).

Historical marginalization of the Northern part of Mali and communities

The people of northern Mali have historically been marginalized particularly Goa, Timbuktu and Kidal. The southern central government has most of the plans and policies sidelined the people of the north. The people lack the basic needs or essentials of life vis a' vis infrastructural development which include good road network, communication and transportation links and electrification of the place. The northern environment is quite big, spacious and porous. Government of the state has not allowed its presence, attention and direction to be felt by this people. The major governmental developments are mainly done in the southern part especially Bamako. The above explanation of the conditions of the people of the north began when the colonial masters (France) were colonizing the state 18th and 19th countries   created that gap between the south and north. From studies scholars, researchers and theorists have conducted it was discovered scientifically, that the people of the north are marginalized politically, socially, economically and technologically. Politically, they are not well represented at the central level of government.

In Mali, for instance, the Tuareg population represents about 10 percent of the population and in the northern region mostly Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal where they carry out their pastoral activities raising cattles, goats, sheeps and camels (Adeyemi and Musa, 2014: 72 cited in Dauda, Adie and Nwokedi, 2018). The Tuaregs that made up of the northern Mali were sidelined and marginalized by the French colonialists and upon independence in 1960, the Malian central government failed to look into their plights even as the north experienced drought and famine to the extent that Nizemeimana and Nheme (2015:122) cited in Dauda, Adie and Nwokedii (2018) once remarked that food insecurity has become the song of the day in this region.'' It was stressed further by Francis (2013:4) that, "with all these the Tuaregs had taken up arms severally against the Malian government fighting for a separate state and the right of the Tuareg minority. The government would sign peace deals and ceasefire agreements after every Tuareg rebellion without addressing on a long-term basis, their exclusion (Francis, 2013). From the above explanation, we have seen how marginalization and exclusion worked in Mali in recent years.

Porous borders and drug trafficking in northern Mali: Another factor that contributed to the increased and continued terrorism in Mali was porous nature of their Malian borders and it led to the drug traffickers to do all kinds of illegal activities in northern Mali. The AQM for instance, was founded in 2006 and proposes against its enemies, calling as its final objective the restitution of the Islamic caliphate. Supplying other contesting movements in the Maghreb with weapons, training and personal, AQIM soon acquired status and consolidated itself in the region. Both movements receive funds through drug and weapons trafficking in the region (Pouport, 2013). Stressing this further, the trafficking in drugs and weapons by the terrorist groups in Mali was made possible because of the porosity of the Malian borders particularly the northern part.

IMPACTS OF TERRORISM ON MALI

Terrorism has left most part of West Africa economically battered, disrupted and politically unstable. Terrorism as the name implies is creating fear in the minds of citizens of any given country. Terrorist activities in recent years have led to the violation of citizens' constitutionally guaranteed rights, displacement of people from the various comfortable homes, proliferation of small and light weapons and wanton destruction of lives and property. Terrorist groups and the use of arms have created huge humanitarian problems beyond the countries' capability to handle. The activities of terrorism in West Africa have made it vulnerable to all kinds of attacks which in turn worsen the economic activities of most states. Some of these other impacts are as follows:

Arbitrary killing of people: citizens of Mali have been subjected to arbitrary killing as a result of activities of Ansar Dine, MUJAO and Tuareg rebels. Mali according to Statista (2021), has recorded about 4% of all global terrorism casualty in 2019, with Afghanistan having 40% of world total. The death toll in Nigeria was 2,320 in 2012, 3000 in 2010; 3560 in 2011. (Nigerian Security Trakers, 2014 cited in James and Wudil, 2016).

Sexual abuse and rape: Women and young female minors were raped, sometimes collectively while another time individually by armed men, including members of the MNLA, AQIM Jihadists, Ansar Dine and MUJAO, particularly Menka and Gao, (Amensty International, 2013). To buttress further it was reported by OCHA (2012), that a young girl aged 16 years was raped in Gao, shortly after the city was seized at the beginning of April, 2012, told the Amnesty International delegation that: "five rebels came and took me by force, they were speaking Tamasheq and some other Songhai. They took me into the bushes and raped me. I stayed there two days, during

that period, I was raped several times" (OCHA Complex Emergency Situation Report, 2012). According to Masters (2013 cited in Oranyeli 2018), the AQIM Jihadists have been particularly brutal to women many of whom have been raped or forced into marriage and prostitution (Masters, 2018). The raping of women and female minor has been perpetrated also by soldiers who came in the name of protection. Many girls got unwanted pregnancies and many died.

Proliferation of small arms and light weapons: terrorism in Mali has increased the circulation, transfer and influx of small and light weapons in many of West African states. In addition to the above, Mali as a country has had four civil wars since its independence in 1960. The first conflict lasted for only a year that is from 1963-1964 because there were no enough weapons for the Tuareg rebels to with stand the government forces (Dauda and Adie, 2019). But the subsequent wars saw the rebels well armed as a result they lasted longer as the second crisis between 1990 and 1996. The third crisis was between 2006 and 2009 (3years) and the fourth crisis was between 2002 and 2015 (Ademyemi and Musa, 2014; Farhaoui, 2013).

The use of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria and Mali by Terrorist and rebel groups has created huge humanitarian issues beyond the countries' capabilities to handle. For instance, Mali alone was reported to have produced over 169,000 refugees with another 311,000 internally displaced in the northern part of the country (Diop, 2013 cited in Dauda and Adie, 2012). It also affected sensitive sectors of the economy such as education, health sector, manufacturing sector and transportation sector.

Internally displaced persons: Terrorist activities as carried out by the Tuareg rebels, Ansar Dine, MUJAO and AQIM have made citizens of Mali particularly in 2012 -2018 to flee to the neighboring states, which made lives miserable. There emerged a complex Emergency situation as reported:

> Tens of thousands of people have fled towards the inside of Mali and towards neighboring countries. At the end of April 2012, 300,000 people had left northern Mali…62000 in Mauritania, 56000 in Burkina Faso, 4000 in Niger and 30000 in IDPS had fled to other regions of Mali, including over 25000 in Bamako (Oranyeli, 2018).

The displacement of persons in Mali has led to the separation of families, lost of homes, income-generating businesses and jobs, lost of human rights, sexual abuse of women and female minors, caregivers and parents (Isah, 2012).

Human rights violation: Malian state has experienced a series of human rights violation in 2012 and beyond. According to Coulibaly (2018), terrorist groups in Mali have violated citizens' rights, most of whom were beaten, harassed by terrorist groups without security forces intervening to protect them, nor punishing the perpetrators of these acts (Oranyeli,2018). This was also reported by Amnesty International (2012) when it gathered that "The military coup which overthrew the democratically elected President, Amodu Tourmmani on 21 March 2012, led to serious Human rights violations." At least four people were killed by Soldiers, in the centre of Bamako, and their bodies were taken to the Gabriel Toure Hospital where thirty or so people injured during the coup de'tat were treated.

CONCLUSION

Terrorist groups in Mali have been birthed as a result of a myriad of factors, some of which are: Corruption and bad governance, fall of Gaddafi, porous borders and foreign sponsorship. Impact of terrorism on Mali is huge and enormous. The fall of Kabul and perpetual attacks of government forces and structures within the Sahel is a trend that African countries should as a matter of urgency cooperate in an extraordinary way and as a matter of emergency to deal with the situation otherwise Africa will see no peace.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following:

i.   There should be effective control of Malian borders especially that of the northern part where terrorist activities are usually planned, strategized and carried out;

ii.   State of Mali should run an inclusive government where democratic principles will fully be applied and hold equitable distribution of resources among the people of Mali;

iii.   There should be recruitment of psychologists and sociologists into the state Customs and Immigration Services for an effective supervision and inspection of borders;

iv.   The law enforcement agents of Mali should be well-trained, adequately paid and motivated and properly equipped with modern weapons and;

v.   Intelligence gathering should also be built in order to explore terrorist hideouts as well as involving the community.

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