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MIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM IN AFRICA: THE STUDY OF NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The insecurity situation in the North-East, Nigeria has been of concern to the continent. As one of the biggest economies in Africa, whatever affects Nigeria, is of great concern to the continent and affirms the assertion that when Nigeria sneezes, Africa catches cold. Though measures have been taken to stem the tide of insecurity within Nigerian state, this heinous crime continues in shape and size. The study Migration and International Terrorism in Africa: A study of North-Eastern Nigeria attempts to review the nature, dynamics and impact of terrorism on African economy. The study employed historical research method, relying on secondary sources of data; with securitization theory as its analytical framework. The theory challenged the traditional definition of security which relate solely on objective threats posed by other states and involving the use or threat of military force and argued that security issues are varied in their nature economic, environmental, political or military as they are socially construed through an inter-subjective negotiations between securitizing agents and relevant audience. Findings revealed that challenges associated with international migration have elicited global concerns as there has been increase in cases of arson, murder and destruction of property among others. The study concluded that Terrorism poses a threat to humanity and recommend among others for an urgent and comprehensive regional strategy anchored on prevention, development, inclusion, and social justice.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

In contemporary times, nations undermining their geographical location, natural endowments, scientific and technological advancements, rather than live in isolation, form alliances and partnership. This underscores the need for inter-relations as ideas, resources, culture and technology are shared. In course of these interactions, nationals of different countries, ideas, goods and services move from one location to another. Thus, daily movement of people, goods and services remain a source of concern to states in the formulation of foreign policies. Migration therefore, became a dynamic feature of population distribution and determines the availability and size of a nation's workforce. Globally, migration as a phenomenon is not only triggered by economic factors, but also political, social, environmental, cultural, health, education as well as insecurity as the world is dynamic. Currently, about 244 million people live outside of their country of origin. While some have migrated in search of better opportunities, others flee from crises imposed by conflict or disasters

amidst others. For many, leaving one country for another is a complex process fraught with risks and uncertainties. However, while migration is not a new phenomenon, the sheer scale and intensity of people moving to neighbouring states and beyond in recent years has called attention for stronger international cooperation to better address the causes of displacement and to proffer solutions towards their safety, orderly and regular movements.

Toci (2021) assert that migration emerged as an inseparable part of a wider security concept which was re-defined after the Cold War with the political changes which were associated with globalization. It has become a topic of discourse on global stage. It is also part of security studies offering an alternative reading after the fall of the Iron Curtain and dissolution of Soviet Union. Currently, government, media and political analysts increasingly portray migration as a security threat with migrants being described as threats to civilization, cultural and religious identities. However, Swing (2016) argued that world leaders cannot and should not stop migration as it is a human nature but rather should strive to make better their economies as it will on one hand discourage residents from migrating while on the other hand encourage immigrants to stay put. Thus, migration is a process and not a problem as in recent years, millions of people have moved from one country to another. Generally, migration inflicts social and internal insecurity and could pose a threat to nascent economies. However, the state need protection from threatening forces, particularly that of war (Krause and Williams, 1996; Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 2010).

In West Africa, there are ten notable corridors of migration which are driven by economic opportunities, political instabilities, climatic change and regional integration policies. Regrettably, over 80% of African migration occurs within the continent through extra-continental routes to Europe, Middle-East with United States of America. These ten corridors include Mali, Cote d Ivoire, Senegal, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Chad. International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2020) assert that Africa is notably the highest contributor of illegal migrants entering Europe, North Africa and other parts of the world. With the volume of migrants leaving the continent daily, Africa is described as the continent with the world's most mobile population. Castles (2009) revealed that one of the greatest migratory episodes in the globe was made in Africa; with the movement of the Bantu people to Southern Africa; leaving their original home which is today occupied by Cameroun and Nigeria. It is worthy to note that migration is triggered by two key factors. Lee (1966) views these triggers as Push and Pull factors. Push factors include insecurity, hunger, epileptic power supply, absence of social amenities and dysfunctional educational system among others while Pull factors are better employment opportunities, security, quality education and an enabling environment that is flourishing for business. The prevalence of these factors determines the volume of person that migrates to a particular location or country. To this end, economically viable and buoyant states are targets as higher volumes of immigrants both documented and undocumented finds their way into these states. For instance, during the late 1970s which is referred to as period of oil boom, Nigeria became a choice destination for migrants from around West African sub-region. This development was compounded with Nigeria's porous borders as access became as duck to water. It should be noted that such movement was exclusively labour inspired. However, as stated as initio, migration like a coin is double sided (Sanikpege and Wonah, 2022).

In pre-colonial Africa, the concept differed from what it is today. This is because African enjoyed unrestricted travels as traders, nomads, farmers and tourists. However, the advent of colonialism altered this tradition by introducing and enforcing various categories of political and economic measures such as tax and establishment of territorial boundaries (Adeola, 2012). However, amidst this territorial restriction, African states still experience irregular migration resulting into the influx of arms and other illicit activities which has further compounded insecurity situations.

Statement of the Problem

Terrorism has emerged as one defining global challenge in 21st century. Over the last two decades, terrorist attacks have surged in frequency, scale, and geographic scope. From the attacks of September 11, 2001, to the rise of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the 2010s, and continuing into the 2020s across Africa and South Asia, the world has witnessed a transformation in the nature of violent conflict. As of 2023, terrorism remains a persistent threat across multiple continents. Global Terrorism Index (GTI, 2024) report that over 8,000 terrorist incidents were recorded in 2023, resulting in more than 23,000 deaths. The report notes a geographic shift in terrorist activities from

the Middle East where conflicts have decreased to sub-Saharan Africa, which now accounts for 43% of global terrorism deaths. Africa, in particular, has seen the emergence of new extremist groups and as well as evolution of existing ones.

Countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Somalia, and Nigeria are at the epicenter of these developments. In the Sahel region, for example, groups affiliated with Al-Qaeda and ISIS has exploited political instability, poverty, and weak governance to expand their influence. These groups are not only targeting military and government facilities but increasingly attacking civilian populations, schools, religious institutions and humanitarian workers (ACLED, 2024).

The plague of international migration has gravely infected Nigeria; Africa's most populous country and largest economy. Thus, since the emergence of Boko Haram in 2009, Nigeria has suffered thousands of attacks, displacing millions and creating severe humanitarian and developmental crises. Also, with the emergence of Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in 2016; a Boko Haram splinter group with closer ties to ISIS, the security architecture of the sub-region has been complicated. In addition, widespread banditry and ethno-religious violence in North-East and central Nigeria have contributed to the country's deepening insecurity (International Crisis Group, 2023).

Beyond Africa, the global implications of terrorism are evident. Attacks in Western countries including mass shootings, vehicle ramming and bombings often perpetrated by lone wolf actors inspired by online propaganda, highlight the transnational and dynamic nature of terrorism. Moreover, technological advancements particularly the use of encrypted communication, drones, and social media have created new operational tools for terrorists and new challenges for states trying to contain them (Europol, 2023).

Thus, global security architecture, therefore, faces significant strain as traditional military responses have proven insufficient when not paired with socio-economic and political reforms. Going forward, States and international organizations recognizes that preventing violent extremism (PVE) must involve addressing its root causes which include marginalization, unemployment, social injustice, identity-based discrimination, and ideological indoctrination. However, considering the strides of terrorism and its impact on global politics, this study attempts to unravel the impact of migration on terrorism, with a focus on North-East Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aimed at investigating how migration has fostered international terrorism in Africa. However, specifically, the following objectives shall guide this study. They are to:

Investigate the socio-political, economic and ideological drivers of terrorism in North-East Nigeria

Analyze the impact of terrorism on North-East Nigeria.

Identify the measures put in place to tame terrorism in North-East Nigeria.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Securitization theory which provides a framework for analyzing how security issues develop through a multifaceted, contested, and dynamic process was employed for this study. The theory challenge traditional definition of security which relate solely on objective threats posed by the use or threat of military force. Instead, it posits that security issues are varied in their nature in economic, environmental, political, or military and that they are socially construed through an inter-subjective negotiations between securitizing agents and relevant audiences (Walt, 1991). The theory is drawn from the fundamental works of Copenhagen School; with Ole Waever, Barry Buzan and Jaap de Wilde as its major proponents. Two leading camps are identified in the literature. They are Copenhagen School (CS) and Parish School (PS), each proffering divergent explanations as to mechanisms that underpin securitization (Stritzel, 2007; Balzacq et al., 2016). Yet, despite their differences, scholars from both Schools share a common and coherent research agenda which contributes complementary theoretical bricks that can collectively enhance understanding of securitization.

Bourbeau, (2014) noted that shifting focus away from their differences and towards shared aims and challenges, provides the most fruitful new avenues for research; and moves the conversation away from its current analytical stalemate. More so, while analyzing the literature, key theoretical fault lines that obscure our understanding of securitization success was identified. These three fault lines affect the process of securitization which includes the form and logic driving the social construction of an issue as a security threat; implementation and nature of policy measures and

the role of audience in evaluating securitizing frames and policies. Also, these three fault lines relate to the political and normative implications of (de)securitizing process for its central protagonists with referent objects that are to be protected as well as (de)securitizing agents that lead in making (or contesting) such claims. A final, seventh fault line concerns the role of time in securitization, which has consequences for both the process and the implications of securitization. The first fault line concerns the form and logic of the securitization process. For Copenhagen School (CS), the exact definition and criteria of securitization is constituted by inter-subjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects (Buzan et al., 1998). This understanding distinguishes the CS from approaches looking at social construction of second-order threats and non-existential risks (Corry, 2012). Copenhagen School applies the same logic of exception to the nature of the extra-ordinary response and emergency actions which in cases of successful securitization, is legitimized primarily through language and rhetorical constructions. It follows that the process of securitization is successful when an argument with this particular rhetorical and semiotic structure achieves sufficient effect to make an audience tolerate violations of rules that would otherwise have to be obeyed. Accordingly, the CS argues that defining criterion of security is textual: a specific rhetorical structure that has to be located in discourse (Buzan et al., 1998).

In a departure from realist pre-occupation with survival and urgency which CS approach embraces, PS views securitization process as consisting of a series of routinized and patterned practices carried out by bureaucrats and security professionals in an attempt to create a sense of insecurity and unease (Bourbeau, 2014; and Bigo 2002). Bigo and Tsoukala, (2008) argued that some (in)securitization moves performed by bureaucracies, media or private agents are so embedded in routines that are never discussed and presented as an exception but, on the contrary, as continuation of routines. In turn, researchers loosely associated with PS have identified a range of non-verbal little security nothings including security practices, policy tools, institutional configurations and forms of governmentality (Bigo, 2002). Such routines which also enforce silences and violent performative acts remind us of distinction between linguistic and behavioral aspects of social practice which is untenable during securitization processes.

The second fault line concerns the implementation and nature of policy measures in securitization processes. On implementation, the original theorization of CS created uncertainty over whether policy measures were required for securitization to be successful. Buzan et al., (1998) assert that a successful securitization has three components or steps which include existential threats, emergency action and effects on inter-unit relations by breaking the rules. This suggests that actions that produce effects are integral to securitization which is also a pathway to success. However, it is noted that there is the need for sufficient resonance for a platform to be made from emergency measures or other steps that would not have been possible if the discourse has not taken the form of existential threats (Buzab, et al., 1998). Thus, the implementation of emergency measures is not integral to securitization. Scholarly efforts to resolve these contradictions are further undermined by disagreements over the nature of these emergency measures. Thus, PS rejects the CS's requirement as measures as oftentimes, security is enacted through the aforementioned steps, which translates to standard political processes (Neal, 2019). From this, a second takeaway is distilled which is; irrespective of whether emergency measures are required or not, there is a meaningful difference between securitization processes where measures (emergency or ordinary) are permitted and taken in the name of security or rejected as not viable at all.

Also, in defining success, the construction of the message is a key component but the ultimate judge for evaluating this message is the audience: Does the audience accept that something is an existential threat to a shared value? Thus, security (as with all politics) ultimately rests neither with the objects nor with the subjects but among the subjects (Buzan, et al., 1998). Yet, the CS offers little guidance as to who the audience will be in any given situation. Unlike securitizing actors and functional actors, they give no specific examples of an audience; a development, leading many to conclude that the concept is so radically under-theorized as to be effectively outside of the theory (Balzacq, 2005; Stritzel, 2007). Whilst one may argue that sidestepping the audience would aid simplicity, Balzacq, (2019) posit that shying away from finding audience made a difference in securitizing an issue so as to express an insufficient commitment to the empirical requirements of the theory.

In applicability, securitization theory becomes relevant to our discourse in that both concepts are moved from normal politics to the realm of security threats through speeches and policy actions.

The theory therefore explains how migration (regional integration) policies have shaped both domestic and external relations within African sub-region. It underscores the fact that though most immigrants pose as travelers for economic purposes, they also constitute security threats to the choice economy. This therefore justifies the aptness of the theory and its applicability to the study.

III. METHODOLOGY

The secondary data collection was employed for this study. Secondary sources such as newspapers, news magazines, textbooks, internet sources and academic journals was relied on for this study. The qualitative method was employed for analysis as the study is historical in outlook.

Conceptual Review

Migration

Migration is as old as man and viewed as an innate nature of human existence. There are volumes of literatures that attempts to offer useful insights into the nature, causes and effects of migration. International Organization for Migration (2020) defined migration as the movement of people away from their usual place of residence, either across an international border or within a state. However, while there is no universal consensus on definition of migration, it includes more than the physical displacement of a population. Migration is also part of cultural phenomena and a dynamic element in the population. It does not simply include leaving a specific geographical area for another, but the physical transition of an individual or a group from one society to another. Therefore, it involves people who migrate and abandon a social setting. It thereby includes cultural, economic and inter-personal dynamics that influence human relationships within the area. Migration is a shift of both spatial and social locus and refers to movement of individuals, goods, service or ideas across an international border. Depending upon a decision-making approach, migration can either be voluntary or forced. Forced migration can be driven by a multitude of factors ranging from political, economic, physical to environmental factors.

Mabogunje (1972) views migration as part of a dynamic feature of the entire West African sub-region. It made it easier for ethnic groups in each of the newly border demarcated countries to settle in more than one state in the area. Also of note is the fact artificial borders created by the colonial masters contributed to cases of international terrorism within the study area. Shelly et al., (2003) opined that in international migration discourse, nations are most times incapable to fully protect their borders. The problems of insufficient financial resources, inadequate manpower and training suggest that effective border security is a reality only in very few regions of the world. Even developed states with great affluence and influence like Australia and Japan and whose island status isolates them from other states are not immune from the challenges of terrorism. This therefore means that international migration is a concern not only to West African states, but the globe.

Iheanacho and Ughaerumba (2015) assert that migration can be traced to existence of first set of humans on earth. Migration has taken various patterns such as slave trade, colonization, urbanization, industrialization and globalization. Movement of persons (migrants) from one place to another has been a trend adopted by various individuals. International Migration in Nigeria can be traced from pre-colonial (slave trade) to colonial and post-colonial eras. Although the state was not recognized as Nigeria as at then, but it had a kingdom and an empire structure. However, it is important to note that migration in Africa can be traced to this era as migration was both forced and voluntary. In early hours of independence, international migration became the new trend and was at its increase as Nigerians and other Africans left their respective states for Europe. Meanwhile, with the aid of South-South pathways, Africans migrated to other parts of West African neighbouring states mostly for trade with the aid of the policy of regional integration.

Mohammed (2021) noted that sociologists have long analyzed migration issues with the push-pull model. Push factor refers to circumstances at home that propel nationals to migrate. He listed push factors to include famine, drought, low agricultural productivity and unemployment while pull factor refers to those conditions found elsewhere (abroad) that attract migrants. It is worthy to note that the economic models focus at relative wealth and income between home and destination countries. This may not necessarily imply that international immigrants are always impoverished by standards of the home country. The poorest classes in developing countries may lack the resources needed to cross illegally, or the connections to the destination country.

Udenta and Nwosuji (2015) noted that Boko Haram terrorist group in Northern Nigeria consists mostly of young men recruited as a result of their lack of means of livelihood. They revealed

that it has been established that there is a link between Boko Haram sect and external radical forces in the region, especially Al-Qaeda in Maghreb, while Mali and other countries like Sudan are used as training grounds for the sect. Cross-border recruitment of young people as mercenaries in armed conflict is common in the territory extending from Guinea-Bissau to Côte d'Ivoire. Also, issues about cross-border migration West Africa is compounded by prevalence of small arms, mercenaries, illegal check-points and drug trafficking which impinges on security architecture of African states.

Akinterinwa (2018) averred that Nigeria's oil resource endowments and huge oil sector earnings have led to influx of persons from neighbouring countries in search for economic fortune. However, following the collapse of oil prices in international market in early 1980s and its devastating impact on the Nigerian economy, the situation took a different turn.

International Terrorism

The term terrorism originated during the French Revolution of late 18th century but gained notoriety during Ronald Reagan tenure as U. S President (1981 – 89); Beirut Barracks Bombings (1983) and attacks on New York City and Washington D.C. in September 2001 and October 2002 respectively. There is no commonly accepted definition of terrorism. However, being a charged term, it is often used, both by government and non-state groups to abuse or denounce opposing groups. Broad categories of political organizations all claimed to have been involved in terrorism to further their objectives, including right and left-wing political organizations, nationalist groups, religious groups, revolutionaries and ruling governments. Terrorism related legislation has been adopted in various states, regarding the concept as a crime. Thus, there is no universal agreement as to whether or not terrorism, in some definition should be regarded as a war crime (African Journal on Terrorism, 2020).

Terrorism is defined as a premeditated political violence against civilians. However, since terrorist activities are targeted at civilians or non-combatants, terrorist acts fundamentally differ from civil wars, guerrilla warfare and riots. More so, the aim is to raise the profile of the cause as one main objective of terrorism is to maximize media exposure so as to further the atmosphere of fear. Contemporary, terrorism has evolved from its historic origins during French Revolution into a form of specialized crime. It should be noted that what separates terrorism from ordinary crime is that crime stems mostly from need, greed or passion. In addition, conventional criminals do not seek to terrorize masses in order to blackmail governments. On the other hand, terrorism is neither compelled by passion or need, as most times, it is for political reasons which are arguably supported by governments.

Walzerin (2002) viewed terrorism as deliberate killing of innocent people to intimidate or spread fear to an entire population. It is also viewed as an act that naturally causes one to feel insecure and frightful. It is the use of intentional and organized means that naturally stir fear so to attain particular objectives. Terrorism is a barbaric or horrific act that contradicts societal modes, and violates human dignity. There are five crucial components of terrorism which includes an involvement of an act of violence, an audience, the creation of a mood of fear, innocent victims, and political goals or motives. The threat of violence in which the capacity and the willingness to commit violence is common to terrorism, where attacks on the undefended are not an unsought side effect, but a premeditated stratagem. Terrorists plan and execute murder or maiming of innocent persons in a calculated and needless fashion so as to frighten and through fear, dominate and control the locality. They avoid being labeled as terrorists by choosing names for themselves so as to hide the image of terrorism in any of its forms so as to be seen to be neutral. They strive for legitimacy for psychological rather than tactical reasons as well as endeavor to legitimize their activities in their own eyes to convince the public of their worthiness. Terrorists often credit themselves as freedom fighters that are driven by desperation due to a lack of any other viable alternative thus are forced to take up arms so as to protect themselves and their constituents. This characteristic of self-delusion is a trait that distinguishes terrorists from political extremists as well as criminals. Additionally, they often go to great lengths to evade or obscure any inference or connection to terrorism, let alone to acknowledge that they are a terror group. They will always argue that society, government, or the socio-economic system and its laws are the real terrorists and that if it were not for the oppression caused by the reasons above, they would not have to resort to terrorism (Combs, 2000). They intentionally cloak themselves in the terminology of military jargon, portraying themselves as freedom fighters. More so, terrorist organizations claim that they are entitled to Prisoner of War status and argue, due to their

numerical inferiority and limited firepower, that they must operate clandestinely or conduct bloody indiscriminate acts of violence for publicity for themselves and their cause.

Every society explains terrorism in a way that agrees with its policies and interests, regardless of whether the definition agrees with the correct meaning of terrorism or contradicts it. This underscores why actions of a giving group of people is described as a terrorist act in one instance and similar act, perhaps more barbaric conducted by others is not viewed as terrorism. UN Secretary-General Report (2004) described terrorism as any act intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act. Those labeled as terrorists by their opponents rarely identify themselves as such, and typically use other terms to their situation, such as separatist, freedom fighter, liberator, revolutionary, vigilante, militant, para-military, guerilla, rebel or patriot. More so, it is common for both parties in a conflict to describe each other as terrorists. The pejorative connotations of the word can be summed up in the aphorism, "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter". This is exemplified when a group using irregular military methods is an ally of a state against a mutual enemy, but later falls out with the state and starts to use those methods against its former ally.

Empirical Review

Sanikpege and Wonah (2022) remarked that the challenges associated with cross-border migration have elicited global concerns. Recently, there has been increase in cases of arms smuggling, human trafficking and financial crimes. To nib these in the bud, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Lake Chad Basin States had put up several measures to arrest this ugly situation. Formation of Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), was one of the measures to tame insecurity in West African sub-region. Yet, these ugly trends had continued unabatedly. This study therefore, was carried out to critically examine cross-border migration and armed conflicts in Lake Chad Basin: Nigeria-Chad experience. The study employed historical research method relying on secondary sources of data. Qualitative research method was used in data analyses. Lee's Push-Pull migration theory which anchored on the assumption certain socio-economic variables described as push-pull factors triggers migration was adopted as its analytical framework;. While insecurity, lack of employment opportunities and poor health care system are the push factors; economic security, quality education and health care as well as food security are seen as pull factors. These factors account for an increase or decrease in migration to a particular geographical location. Findings revealed that Africans in diaspora should come together and build synergies that will enhance replication of economic development models of first world economies. Also, African leaders should prioritize development of health and educational sectors so as to improve literacy and life expectancy rates on the continent.

Olapeju et al., (2022) assert that Africa is viewed as a theater of war due to incessant attacks that plagued its landscape. This situation among others explains why the continent's development has been slow or stagnated; with little recognition accorded her in international arena. Against this background, this paper examined the effects of terrorism on the security of the continent. The descriptive method was adopted and a secondary source of data collection was employed. The paper revealed that though terrorism and insurgency have been issues rooted in history, they have recently become serious challenges to African nations thus retarding the pace of development. The paper posited that religious prejudice, deprivations and feelings of neglect are the underlying factors breeding terrorism and insurgency in Africa. It further averred that though a lot of combative efforts have been made to checkmate the trend of these phenomena, such have, however, achieved limited success due to certain factors which ranges from weak leadership, corruption and porosity of national borders. These factors encouraged illegal migration of people which in most cases accentuated arms proliferation among others. The paper is a modest effort to arrest this unpleasant situation as the security architecture of African nations need to be re-engineered and directed towards generating employment opportunities. Also, collaboration and intelligence gathering as well as information sharing should be encouraged among African nations to ensure early response to such challenges.

Wilcox et al., (2025) examined the effect of migration on national security in Nigeria. The study adopted three objectives which investigated the causes and effect of migration, and proffer effective strategies for managing migration in national security. The theory of transnationalism was adopted as its theoretical construct. The study adopted the field survey research that is qualitative

and quantitative in nature. Findings revealed that porous borders, abuse of ECOWAS protocol, globalization/manpower problem, inadequate cooperation between security agencies, poor educational opportunities, bad governance, corruption, lack of social justice, equity, and fair play, youth unemployment were causes of migration while infiltration of terrorists, banditry, instability, diseases, and economic down turn are identified effect of migration in national security. The study recommended amongst others that government should adopt policies geared towards transforming border areas from deplorable conditions with effective and efficient machinery that would speed up developmental process.

Ayika (2025) critically examined global rise of violent extremism, its structural drivers, and implications for security and development, with a particular focus on African. The study analyzed the evolution of terrorism from ideologically driven and hierarchical networks to more decentralized, transnational and technologically sophisticated formations. It identifies core drivers such as ideological radicalization, political repression, socio-economic marginalization and use of digital platforms for recruitment and propaganda. The paper contextualizes these dynamics within Africa, highlighting regional vulnerabilities including weak governance, porous borders, environmental stressors, and fragile institutions. Particular attention was given to terrorist hotspots such as Sahel, Horn of Africa, and Lake Chad Basin. Nigeria was examined in depth as a case study, exploring the rise of Boko Haram and ISWAP, state's military and non-military responses, and broader socio-political and humanitarian consequences of protracted insurgency. Through an evidence-based policy framework, the paper presents actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing regional cooperation, socio-economic resilience, counter-radicalization, community engagement and justice sector reforms. The study concludes that a sustainable response to violent extremism must move beyond military containment toward a holistic strategy that addresses root causes; rebuilds trust in public institutions, and empowers affected communities.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following are findings from the study.

Firstly, challenges associated with international migration have elicited global concerns. Recently, there has been increase in cases of arson, murder, destruction of property, arms smuggling and human trafficking among others. However, to nib all these to the bud, African Union (AU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had put up several measures; one of which was formation of Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to arrest this situation. Sadly, these ugly trends have continued unabatedly.

Secondly, the study revealed that currently, there is a notion that Africa is viewed as a theater of war due to incessant attacks that plagued its landscape. This situation among others explains why the continent's development has been slow or stagnated in all spheres with little recognition accorded to her in the international arena.

Also, findings revealed that porous borders, abuse of ECOWAS protocol, globalization/manpower problem, inadequate cooperation between security agencies, lack of social safety misgovernance, corruption, lack of social justice and youth unemployment were causes of migration while terrorists, banditry, instability, diseases, and economic down turn are identified effect of migration on national security.

Finally, the study revealed that the transformation of terrorism from ideologically driven and hierarchical networks to decentralized, transnational and technologically sophisticated formations has increased in shape, size and dynamism as core drivers such as ideological radicalization, political repression, socio-economic marginalization, and use of digital platforms for recruitment and propaganda are among its core features.

It is worthy to mention that what is today referred to as Boko Haram which has been responsible for various acts of terrorism within Africa was formed by a fiery Islamic scholar and cleric called Mohammed Yusuf between 2002 and 2003. It is reported that Yusuf's father who migrated from Cameroon died as a member of Maitatsine sect (Kane, 2003). The Maitatsine sect was responsible for the series of deaths and genocide in northern Nigeria in about 1980. This implies that there is a generic coronation about the religious and troublesome disposition of Yusuf in his lifetime. At inception, Yusuf did not pose any security threat to Nigerian State (Northern Nigeria) until about two decades ago when the group embarked on a vanguard for religious transformation. This vanguard which was championed by Yusuf was later condemned for using hate speeches in his

vanguard against northern politicians and Borno state at large (Sanikpege and Wonah, 2023).

Two major factors informed the vanguard which was later referred to as hate speech. Firstly, in the prelude to the 1999 elections, politicians from the area (northern Nigeria) gathered a group of young minds, equipped them with arms and detailed them to fight their political opponents. This was a deliberate strategy geared towards enthroning themselves or winning the upcoming elections. These young minds called 'Ecomog Group' did as was instructed; results delivered and their principals (politicians) were sworn into office. However, having assumed office in an elected capacity and as it is akin to Nigerian politicians, this 'King Makers/ Ecomog Group' were neglected, with their entitlements denied (Albert and Danjibo, 2004). This action angered the Ecomog Group. However, with arms in their possession, these aggrieved and frustrated young minds became aggressive. While some resorted to crime for survival, others embraced Muhammed Yusuf which at that time was on a vanguard for the Salafist ideology. This ideology is identified with the preaching of Islam as taught and practiced by Prophet Mohammad, the founder of Islamic religion. Yusuf condemned northern Nigerian politicians for bad governance as well as for diluting the religion with infidel teachings and doctrines. His vanguard against northern politicians aligned with the experiences of the 'Ecomog Group' whom the politicians had used, neglected and deprived of their entitlements (Albert, 2017). Yusuf, thus became a source of attraction as he provided succor to the aggrieved young lads. Yusuf addressed some of the young lads concerns by availing them with financial assistance for those who wanted to marry, as well as provided start-up capital for others who has entrepreneur mindset.

More so, as words spread about Yusuf's vast knowledge of Quran, his public dislike for the northern political class and his philanthropic nature, he became a magnet to the youths who were already aggrieved over their antecedents with the northern political leaders. This therefore brought him at logger heads with the Nigerian State especially Borno state government. He was arrested and extra-judicially killed by the Nigerian Police in 2009. By his death, the Borno state government presupposed it as the death of the sect. However Abubakar Shekau, his deputy who succeeded him reformed the sect into a terrorist organization (Sanikpege and Wonah, 2023).

From activities of Boko Haram, Nigeria has been certified as a full-fledged terrorist state. Above all the study area has been a victim of incessant terrorist attacks thus undermining the economy of the region and forcing many to flee from the area. A situation that has caused grave insecurity, hunger and increased the unemployment condition in the study area. According to Bagnetto (2021), the dreaded Boko Haram sect are reported to be in control of locally made craft weapons as well as other armunitions smuggled into the country. With the possession of these weapons, more dastardly acts are committed. Specifically, in September, 2021, 40 suspected arms traffickers were arrested in Nigeria after being accused of supplying weapons to the insurgents in Cameroon (Kindzeka, 2021).

In Nigeria, instances of insecurity and armed conflicts which includes terrorism, organized crimes and banditry activities is on the increase. The formation of vigilante and militia groups is sequel to the upsurge of terrorist activities in the Nigerian state. This has led to incessant attacks and counter attacks making the North-Eastern Nigeria to be highly unsafe and volatile. The insurgent group has embarked on various forms of attacks with counter attacks either from the state (security personnel) or civilian joint task force. This has consequently, made the region very unsafe. On the other hand, gangs and other militia groups has seize the insecurity in the area to smuggle Small Arms and Light Weapons like General Multi-purpose Machine Guns into the area. The Boko Haram terrorist group thrived on this insecurity situation thus forging alliances with these gangs as well as extends her sphere of influence.

Furthermore, availability of Small Arms and Light Weapons within North Eastern Nigeria, which is the end product of insecurity in the area created room for violence to thrive. This terrorist sect is connected to the deaths of over 35000 persons and indirectly to more than 320,000 (mostly children), with another two million internally displaced or forced to flee as refugees (UNDP, 2021). The sect has raided the area with series of attacks on markets, churches, mosque, schools and other public facilities with properties worth unimaginable sums of cash destroyed.

From the study above and considering the wanton destruction of lives and property by Boko Haram, the following points can be deduced. Firstly, the horrendous activities of Boko Haram in the study area have terminated the life of prospective citizens who if left alive, would have changed the African narrative. This is because the value and prospect of life cannot be monetized. Also the trauma and psychological impact on the life of individuals over the sight or the gruesome murder of a loved

one last for a life time. On the other hand, innocent children are rendered homeless and made destitute as the activities of this terrorist sect ravage the life of their parents and guidance. These incessant attacks like tsunami scatters families and cut short prospective ambitions. Presently, about 39-46 children including toddlers and seven teachers were abducted on May 15th, 2026 by armed bandits from Community High School, Baptist Nursery and Primary School and Local Government Authority Primary School, Oriire Local Government Area, Oyo State. Media reports shows that at least two of the teachers including the mathematics teacher were beheaded while others are still wallowing in pain and agony in the kidnappers den.

Also, the insecurity situation drives away potential investors. This is as no business establishment thrives in a security threatened environment. Prospective investor is/are interested in investing in a conducive atmosphere where investment will flourish. Again, this has serious implications on the economy of the study area as it reduces the production of goods and services thereby leading to massive unemployment which is tantamount to hunger, starvation and disease. Furthermore, grave insecurity situations in the study area have battered the image of Nigeria, her neigbhouring states and West Africa in the Comity of Nations. This has also affected her tourism prospects. This entire misnomer negatively impacted on her Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It reduces the nation's financial capability making her resort to borrowing to embark on sustainable projects. Also, increased inflow of funds, goods and services without a commensurate outflow of goods and services result to economic disequilibrium. This leads to currency devaluation in the face of other currencies.

In addition, in global politics today, migration is a trending concern. Lee's migration theory recognizes socio-economic variables tagged Push-Pull factors as triggers of migration. This factor sub-consciously influences immigrant's decision about their chosen destination. Push factor like poverty, unemployment and insecurity pushes residents from their home to foreign states in search for safety and or greener pastures. On the other hand, the availability of the above factors in the form of employment opportunities/job security, quality health care, better transportation system and good standard of living pulls or attracts immigrants to an alien economy. Insecurity in the North-East Nigeria and Africa at large is therefore a reason for increased migration from Africa. Ironically, in an effort to beat stringent border policies, most African migrants undermine the safety implications of linking Europe through the Meditararian Sea. A voyage that most times lead to a high death rate and thus a source of concern to the globe.

Finally, insecurity in North-East Nigeria has displaced families. Many of the victims of these attacks are displaced and later housed in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps. Relocating victims of insecurity to IDP camps denies a larger population or residents of their private doctors and healthcare thus making them vulnerable to hunger, disease and deaths. Arguably, the increase in cases of HIV/AIDS in Africa today, is an end product of insecurity.

V. CONCLUSION

In 21st century, terrorism has emerged as a complex and enduring threats to global peace and security. Its manifestations which range from coordinated attacks by transnational terrorist networks to localized insurgencies reveal the adaptability and nefarious nature of these non-state actors. From a global standpoint, the evolution of terrorism reflects a transformation from structured ideologically motivated movements to hybrid networks that blend political, religious, economic and criminal motives. The decentralization of terrorist organizations, along with the use of emerging technologies and online platforms, continues to challenge conventional counter-terrorism strategies. These global transformations have taken a particularly intense and devastating form in Africa, especially in North-Eastern Nigeria. As noted from the study, terrorism has been fueled by state fragility, poor governance, endemic poverty, unemployment and ethnic marginalization. Thus, terrorist groups have evolved from fringe actors to formidable forces capable of occupying territories, administering alternative governance, and perpetrating large-scale violence against civilians and state institutions.

In Nigeria especially North-East region, experience stands out as both a cautionary tale and a case study of the multi-dimensional nature of terrorism. The country's encounter with Boko Haram, ISWAP and increasingly organized banditry reveals the entanglement of radical or ideological extremism with deep-rooted governance failures, socio-economic inequalities, and regional insecurity. While Boko Haram started as a religious movement in northeast Nigeria, its evolution into a full-blown

insurgency exposed how state neglect and brutal repression could radicalize marginalized populations. The rise of ISWAP further demonstrated the dangers of splintering and ideological franchising, particularly as the group adopted a more strategic governance approach to win local legitimacy. Nigeria's military and governmental response has been mixed. On the one hand, large-scale military operations have succeeded in reclaiming some territories and weakening insurgent structures. On the other hand, corruption, lack of coordination, poor intelligence, human rights abuses, and government's failure to address root causes have limited the effectiveness of these responses. Many military gains are not sustained due to the absence of credible civil governance and social services in recovered areas thus creating a vacuum which these non-state actors explore daily.

UNDP (2022) reported that in Nigeria, human cost of terrorism has been staggering with over 350,000 lives been lost since 2009; millions displaced, local economy devastated and human population have been traumatized. Schools have been closed or destroyed; creating a lost generation of children who are denied access to education. Agriculture has collapsed in many parts of the North-East, thereby deepening food insecurity. Meanwhile, the psychological scars left by abductions, mass killings and sexual violence are likely to haunt affected populations for decades. Ironically, Mtshali's satiric work titled: Night Fall in Soweto forms daily experiences of residents in North-Eastern part of Nigeria.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study made the following recommendations.

The need for an urgent and comprehensive regional strategy anchored on prevention, development, inclusion, and justice. Terrorism poses a threat to humanity. Thus, as a global phenomenon, all hands must be on deck. Military force alone cannot eliminate terrorism; it can only suppress its symptoms. Attaining sustainable peace and security in Nigeria and West African sub-region should be hinge on addressing root causes of radicalization. Thus, restoring state legitimacy, economic security by way of creation of employment opportunities, empowering youth, building community resilience, and fostering inclusive governance will help in nibbling the bud of insecurity in the region.

There is an urgent need to strengthen regional cooperation, reforming the justice sector, deliberate efforts towards socio-economic development, education and gender-sensitive peace-building mechanisms.

While military assistance and humanitarian aid are important, donor countries and trans-national organizations must prioritize capacity building, institutional reforms, and long-term economic investment over short-term military engagements. Thus, these initiatives should be ably led by African leaders with international actors playing a supportive not dominating role. Ultimately, Nigerian experience offers a powerful lesson as the battle against terrorism will not only be fought on battlefields but in classrooms, village councils, courts of law and in the hearts and minds of citizens. Defeating terrorism requires rebuilding public trust in the state, expanding access to justice, creating livelihoods, and addressing grievances that extremists exploit.

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