



**TERRORIST ATTACKS AND THE INFLUENCE OF ILLICIT OR HARD
DRUGS: IMPLICATIONS TO BORDER SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA**

Dr. Temitope Francis Abiodun
Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria
abiodun.temitope3@gmail.com
+2348033843918

Gbadamosi Musa
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Damilola Adeyinka
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Anthony Ifeanyichukwu Ndubuisi
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Joshua Akande
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Omoyele Ayomikun Adeniran
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Adesina Mukaila Funso
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Chiamaka Ughor Precious
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Abayomi Olawale Quadri
M.A. Student, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The West African sub-region has experienced a devastating surge in terrorist attacks against civilian and military targets for over one and half decades now. And this has remained one of the main obstacles to sustenance of peaceful co-existence in the region. This is evident in the myriads of terrorist attacks from the various terrorist and insurgent groups across West African borders: Boko Haram, ISWAP (Islamic State West African Province), Al-Barakat, Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa. In the same vein, property worth millions of dollars have been razed and several lives targeted and lost in West African states: Nigeria, Chad, Niger and others any time the terrorist fighters are under the influence on illicit or hard drugs. The brutal terrorist threats have affected every strata of life and led to untold displacements in the region. The study employed frustration-aggression and anomie theories. This study interrogates and establishes that there is significant synergy between the terrorists and influence of illicit drugs or hard drugs while executing their heinous acts or brutal killings in across West African states borders. The study, therefore, recommends there is need for collaborative efforts of all states in West Africa to tackle the menace, increase in intelligence gathering and sharing among the security agencies across states' borders, setting up of a Joint Military Force among members states, blockage of illicit or drug trafficking in the region, closure of borders among others, as measures towards checkmating the menace.

Keywords: Terrorist Group, Illicit Drug, Drug Trafficking, West Africa, Counter-terrorism and Intelligence Gathering.

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is as old as humanity with some insisting that individuals and groups have been employing terror tactics for years, while others arguing that real terrorism has only been around for decades (Law, 2009). Terrorism, as a phenomenon, is gradually becoming a pervasive, often dominant influence in our daily lives. It affects the manner in which governments conduct their foreign policies; the way corporations transact

business; it causes alterations in the structure of our security forces; and forces us to spend huge amounts of time and money to protect public figures, vital installations, citizens and even our systems of government (Combs, 2006).

The term *terrorism* is commonly used, but lacks a clear, consistent and widely agreed upon definition of either what constitutes terrorism or *who* the terrorist is. With global attention focused on the Middle East in the war on terrorism, it is easy to forget that al Qaeda's most audacious terrorist attacks prior to the September 11 2001 attacks in the United States of America were the August 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi, which cost the lives of almost 224 people and injuring 4,574 more (Mills, 2004). Africa's strategic position in the fight against terrorism was raised after 9/11 attack on the US, with then Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Susan Rice (2001), describing Africa as the world's "soft underbelly for global terrorism". Likewise, the September 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States of America also changed the calculus of Africa's strategic importance by officially stating for the first time that "weak states can actually pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states" (National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002).

In 2002, Mohammed Yusuf, a young charismatic cleric, searching for a purer form of Islam, established a movement known as Yusufiya (meaning followers of Yusuf) in Maiduguri, Borno State, and northeast Nigeria. Rejection of formal education gradually gained a central position of the group. The group which was christened the "Nigerian Taliban" by local people in the region later became popularly referred to as "Boko Haram" which in the Hausa language, means "Western education is forbidden" (Wikipedia, 2016). The sect with a reference to Yusuf's widely circulated sermons, condemned all aspects of Western education as being sinful as they contradicted Islamic principles and beliefs. These teachings lured many people in that part of the country, including students, school drop-outs, unemployed youth, who saw a radical form of Islam as the antidote to the alienating social inequalities and economic impoverishment that marked their lives. Yusuf's followers also included high-ranking elites such as politicians, government officials, and wealthy businessmen.

The group's member population rose with young men from across northern Nigeria, attracted by Yusuf's fiery gospel against unjust and corrupt secular governments. Mohammed Yusuf was later captured by the Nigeria Army on July 30, 2009 after years of violence in Maiduguri, and the Nigeria police executed him days later having been handcuffed at police headquarters in Maiduguri. This act thereafter, made the group increasingly radical (Abiodun, 2016). However in the year 2010, one of Yusuf's deputies, Abubakar Shekau, took over the mantle of leadership and renamed the group "Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad," an Arabic phrase with the meaning "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad." Under his leadership, Boko Haram became intensely violent with devastating consequences for school-age children. In March 2015, Shekau pledged Boko Haram's allegiance to the Middle-East-based terror group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS); ISWAP and despite the unholy alliance, while other terrorist groups were formed and they carry out their evil attacks under the influence of illicit or hard drugs (cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and all sorts of others) (Nwannenaya and Abiodun, 2017).

Surprisingly, West Africa, which never had a drug problem in the past has become a hub for cocaine trafficking. Ships and planes loaded with cocaine are coming from Latin America into poorly guarded ports and air fields in West Africa. From the foregoing this paper provides answers to the following questions: Why do illicit drugs exhibits such a known propensity for border crossing? Which factors contribute to sudden emergent of West Africa as the hub of most of these illicit drugs being used by the terrorists? What are the trends of terrorist groups in West Africa? Which process or processes are in place to combat the menace of these two criminal networks?

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Terrorism

Terrorism is the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change (Hoffman, 2008). Terrorism is the use of terrorizing methods of governing or resisting a government (Ahmed, 1998).

Terrorism is the illegitimate use of covert violence by a group for political ends (Laqueur, 2008: 4-5).

The Organization of African Unity's (now the African Union) *Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism* (1999) defines terrorism very broadly: Any act which is a violation of the criminal laws of a State Party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number of group of persons or causes or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and is calculated to: (i) intimidate, put in fear, force, coerce or induce any government, body, institution, the general public or any segment thereof, to do or to abstain from doing any act, or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint, or to act according to certain principles; or (ii) disrupt any public service, the delivery of any essential service to the public or to create a public emergency; or (iii) create a general insurrection in a State.

Illicit or Hard Drugs

Illicit drugs could be defined as outlawed drugs that are under legal prohibition and are not made available for general consumption. It takes series of process such as production, cultivation, manufacture, procurement, storage, importation, exportation, transportation, distribution, offering for sale, dealing in, paddling in and sale of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances under international law NDLEA (2010). Illicit or hard drugs refer to substances that affect the way the body functions. If a drug is classified as 'illegal', this means that it is forbidden by law. Different illegal drugs have different effects on people and these effects are influenced by many factors. This makes them unpredictable and dangerous, especially for young people. The effects of a drug are influenced by: the type of drug, how much is consumed, where the person is when the drug is being used, that the person is doing while using the drugs, individual characteristics such as body size and health vulnerabilities and how many different drugs are taken at one time (Matilda, 2019).

There are several types of illegal drugs among which are; cannabis (marijuana), cocaine, MDMA/ecstasy, GHB, hallucinogens, heroin, inhalants, ketamine, methamphetamine. Also,

illicit or hard drugs are classified thus: **Depressants**: are drugs that slow down the central nervous system and the messages that go between the brain and the body. These drugs decrease people's concentration and slow down their ability to respond. The name 'depressant' suggests that these drugs can make a person feel depressed, but this is not always the case. The term depressant purely refers to the effect of slowing down the central nervous system. Some examples of depressants include: alcohol, opioids (e.g., heroin), barbiturates, GHB (Matilda, 2019).

Stimulants (also referred to as psycho stimulants) are drugs that stimulate the central nervous system and speed up the messages going between the brain and the body. These drugs typically increase energy, heart rate and appetite. Some examples of psycho-stimulants include: methamphetamine (speed, ice, base), cocaine, dexamphetamine, caffeine, nicotine, MDMA/ecstasy. **Hallucinogens** are drugs which typically alter how a person perceives the world. These drugs can change the way a person sees, hears, tastes, smells or feels different things, including experiencing things that aren't there at all. Some examples of hallucinogens include: ketamine, magic mushrooms (Matilda, 2019).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Frustration-Aggression Theory

Scholars have tried to bring to limelight what prompts terrorists to carry out their attacks in West African sub-region. Many used religion to explain their act of violence, by arguing that there is something in their religion that makes them carry out heinous violence. This argument is deficient, because there is no significant relationship between being a Muslim and being a terrorist. The study adopts the Frustration-Aggression (F-A) Hypothesis, commonly called the Frustration-Aggression (F-A) Theory, is a seminal theory in Psychology which has been used several times in other fields of study to explain aggressive human behaviour. Central to the Frustration-Aggression theory is the tenet that there is a causal relationship between frustration and aggression. This conviction of a nexus between frustration and aggression was first held by a group of Yale University psychologists – John Dollard, Leonard W. Doob, Neal E. Miller, Orval

H. Mowrer and, Robert R Sears in their co-authored monograph: *Frustration and Aggression* (1939).

The theory was later revised by Neal E. Miller (1941) and Leonard Berkowitz (1969). Frustration to the Yale group is “an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at its proper time in the behavior sequence” (Dollard et al., 1939:7). In other words, it is a situation where the attainment of a desired goal of a person or group of people is hindered. Succinctly, aggression is a “sequence of behavior, the goal-response to which is the injury of the person toward whom it is directed” (Dollard et al., 1939:9). According to Dollard and his colleagues, “the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression” (Dollard et al., 1939:1). Neal E. Miller two years later reformulated the original assumption to “frustration produces instigations to a number of different types of response, one of which is instigation to some form of aggression” (Miller, 1941:338). Berkowitz (1965) on his part pointed out that frustration does not immediately trigger aggression in a person or group of people but, creates a “readiness for aggressive acts” (Shaffer, 2005:275).

On Boko Haram, ISWAP and other terrorist groups' attacks or insurgency, the Frustration-Aggression Theory makes us understand that the spike in the terrorist attacks in the West African region and across borders of Nigeria, Niger and Chad, and other states, is as a result of the frustration of inability to achieve their personal goals: putting an end to Western education, foisting their personal Islamic religion on the people, unemployment and impoverishment of the locals. Since the goal of being gainfully employed to meet basic human needs and lead a decent life, foist a personal type of religion on the people in the country and putting an end to Western education has been hampered over time, the locals have taken out their frustration aggressively on the citizenry and government institutions whom they claim are blocking their chances. While the Frustration-Aggression Theory lenses can only make the user see frustration as the root cause of the aggressive behaviour of the terrorists in West Africa.

Anomie Theory

The Anomie Strain Theory is a sociology and criminology theory developed in 1938 by Robert K. Merton in his social structure and anomie publication. It states that society puts pressure on individuals to achieve socially accepted goals, though they lack the means. This leads to strain which may lead individuals to commit crimes, like selling hard drugs, joining terrorist group or involving in prostitution etc. as a means to gain financial security. Robert Merton's theory stems from a fundamental question that he posed for the American society on why the rates of deviance were so different among different societies. He thought that there could be deviance where there is a difference between what defines success and the proper means to achieve said goals. Merton added that when individuals are faced with a gap between their goals and their current status, strains occurs. He also describe five different ways people respond to strain to include; conformity, innovation, that is using socially unapproved or unconventional means to obtain culturally approved goals. Therefore, the quality world pictures and ideas in one's head of what we want for ourselves and others influence how we interact in the world. This theory helps us to understand the world view of terrorist groups, their interactions with and administration of illicit or hard drugs and implications of their heinous activities to border security in West Africa.

METHODOLOGY

The study is anchored on the data gathered from the various primary and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with some arrested Boko Haram fighters, counselors for the terror victims, and experts in the field of psychology and security matters. The study area is West African sub-region, as one security issue in any part will definitely have consequences on other parts of the region and African continent as a whole. The study is entirely a quantitative and qualitative study while secondary materials such as journals, books, unpublished papers, official documents of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and newspapers on the menace were utilized. Periodicals on terrorist attacks and influence of hard drugs in West Africa were consulted respectively.

The Terrorist Groups in West Africa

In the last few years, reports of Africa becoming the new front line for terrorism in general and Islamic terror in particular, have become more recurrent. This account seeks to examine to what extent such concerns are reasonable. Terrorist attacks have become more common on the continent, particularly in the last two decades. It is also apparent that certain parts of the continent and particular West African countries are more frequent locations of terrorist attacks than others, signifying that this is more of a local rather than continental crisis (Sharma, 2014). Actors known to have an Islamist attachment committed a minority of the total number of terrorist attacks in Africa from 1997-2010. However the number of attacks perpetrated by this category of actors has been steadily increasing from the 2011-2015 period.

However, terrorist groups known to be affiliated with al-Qaeda and Daesh have been perpetrating increasingly more attacks since the year in 2003. Indeed, roughly 90 per cent of attacks attributed groups known to have an Islamic affiliation with Daesh and al-Qaeda. Yet, the majority of attacks perpetrated by al-Qaeda- and Daesh-associated organizations were committed by no more than a handful of individual organizations. These include Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, Tripoli Province of the Islamic State and the Sinai Province of the Islamic State. Some of the various terrorist groups in West Africa and other sub-regions are:

Al-Shabaab (Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahidin) :Al-Shabaab emerged in 2006 and is led by Ahmad Umar. In 2012, it officially joined Al-Qaeda. Several sources point to alliances with AQIM, Boko Haram, Hizbul Islam and ISIL (Wikipedia, 2018).[†]

Al-Qaeda: This group came up in 1970s as a result of the occupation of Afghanistan by the former Soviet Union (USSR), and it is fundamentally associated with its founder, Osama Bin Laden, who provided support to many Jihadi movements and built his organization as an organized military structure with networks of undercover contacts. Al-Qaeda has staged various terrorist operations around the world, such as the attacks against the US Embassy in Nairobi, the September 11 attacks in the United States (New York, the Pentagon and Stonycreek Township) and the bombings in Madrid in 2004, among others. The group has grown to have affiliates and allegiances across the globe. It is now known as Al-Qaeda Core or Al-Qaeda Central and seeks to lead the global

movement of the Jihadi groups. Although the emergence of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has expanded the terrorism space it appears that rivalry has now set in between the two groups as they compete for supremacy in the Jihadi movement. Al-Qaeda is led by Ayman Al-Zawahiri and it became listed on 6 October 2001 (www.africanarguments.org).

Boko Haram: (a.k.a Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad; Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad; Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad; Western Education is a Sin). Listed on: 22 May 2014 Additional information: Boko Haram was founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, Nigeria, by the Nigerian Mohammed Yusuf (deceased) with the goal of supporting Islamic education and establishing an Islamic state in Nigeria. Since Yusuf's death in 2009, Boko Haram has been led by Abubakar Shekau and has become one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world. There has been a recent leadership crisis in Boko Haram (Abiodun, 2016).

ISWAP: In 2016, the Boko Haram group split into two – Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Jamatu Ahlis Sunna Lidawatti wal Jihad (JAS) - although both groups are still referred to as Boko Haram. On 3 August 2016, ISIL announced through its al-Nabaa newspaper that Abu Musab al-Barnawi, the son of BH founder Muhammed Yusuf was the new leader (the 'Wali' or governor) of ISWAP. On 7 August 2016, Abubakar Shekau announced in a video that he had reverted to being the leader of JAS and was no longer with ISWAP (Abiodun, 2016). Boko Haram is responsible for a series of major terrorist attacks, including a wave of bombings in Kano, Nigeria in January 2012 that killed more than 180 people in a single day. They have attacked international targets (UN headquarters in Abuja), religious targets (Saint Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla) and have undertaken a campaign of violence against Nigerian schools and students including, shooting 50 students at an agricultural school in Yobe, Nigeria on 29 September 2013.

Others include *Abdullah Azzam Brigades, Al-Mulathameen, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Allied Democratic Forces, Ansar al-Sharia (Derna), Ansar Bait al-Maqdis, Ansar Dine, Ansar ul Islam, Al-Barakat, Al-Mourabitoun (militant group), Jama'at*

Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin, Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, Islamic Movement (Nigeria).

TERRORIST GROUPS AND INFLUENCE OF ILLICIT OR HARD DRUGS USE IN EXECUTING THEIR DEADLY OPERATIONS AND ATTACKS ACROSS WEST AFRICAN STATES' BORDERS

From time immemorial, there has been different cases of conflict, violence and terror; so also, the use of hard drug. The origin of hard drug is difficult to ascertain as these drugs have been used for religious ceremonies by priests, medical purposes for healing and as a staple commodity; the abnormal pattern of substance use leading to addiction made such drugs refer to as hard drug. There is no universal reason as to why people use drugs knowing full well that these drugs have adverse effects on man. This study doesn't focus on the consequences but the influence drug use has on terrorist groups. A psychoactive drug is a chemical substance that changes brain function and results in alterations in perception, mood, consciousness, cognition or behavior. It is as a result of how harmful the drugs are that they are referred to as "hard drugs" and it is divided into four major categories based on their effects on the user- stimulants such as cocaine, depressants such as alcohol, opium-related painkillers such as heroin and hallucinogens.

Generally speaking, when an individual use hard drug over a long period of time, the brain function is altered and this changes the way it operates. From medical research done, it confirms that the drugs have taken the place of naturally occurring chemicals in the body and this affects the brain functions (www.africanarguments.org). The drugs have grievous effect on emotions as it attaches itself to a certain receptor that works in the brain to regulate the mood. This is what is reflective in the actions of the terrorist, the drugs put them in a certain mood either sad that makes them reminisce on events that took place and a will for vengeance or the general feeling of euphoria shortly after taking drugs that also make them boost their performances and give them a reason to keep attacking. This is backed up by medical research that says that the receptors are

attached with certain neurotransmitters such as serotonin and dopamine, which work in the brain to raise mood and make a person feel good (www.africanarguments.org).

It is a fact that terrorists use drugs as a motivational tool to make militants more brave before going into suicidal actions and this influences their actions against enemy targets. Hard drugs make this kind of scrupulous actions easier to carry out. This method of motivation is not new as they encourage the illegal drug trade which is the most crucial financial source of terror and a tool to collapse the legal state in the targeted country. Terrorist groups also use hard drugs to numb their pre-existing emotional pain. These are people that for one reason or another had to leave their family and loved ones to fend for them or live out their beliefs (www.africanarguments.org). Hence the drug assists in making them neglect their past and move on with the task ahead of them. Hard drugs have never for once had a positive effect on any man. These drugs make the terrorists more in tune with their negative side and blindfold them to the crimes they commit. It may be safe to say that absence of these drugs can lead to a reduction of terrorist activities in West Africa.

Hard Drugs Used for motivation

It is a fact that terrorists do not want and support drug use among their cadres [except for a motivational tool for suicide actions] and in the society they have been fighting for. (Sahin, 2001). But sometimes terrorist organizations use drugs as a motivational tool for suicide action and to encourage terrorists for certain actions against enemy targets. Drugs make this kind of an action easier. I do not argue that drugs play a main role in this type of motivation but perhaps has a secondary role. This method for the motivation is not new and surprising, because when we look at the history of terrorism we can see the example of the first narco-terrorist organization which was called Assassins. Hassan ibn-al-Sabbah commonly known as Hassan-i-Sabbah was the first grand master of the order of Assassins. His feared organization's sinister name came from its member's ritual use of the drug hashish, which is called in Arabic Al-hash shin (Sahin, 2001).

Also for terrorist organizations drugs provide economic motivation, because people join terrorist organizations not only for their political, ideological or religious aim but also for economic reasons. For some terrorist coming from a poor family who is unemployed,

being in a terrorist organization is a way to earn money for their family. For them, being a member of terrorist organizations is a financial issue. They provide money coming from the drug trade to their poor family, wife or children to provide a better life, health and education for them. From this perspective, terrorist organizations need much more money to keep terrorist militants within terrorist organizations (Sahin, 2001). Besides thanks to the money coming from illicit drugs, the leaders and high level rulers of terrorist organization get rich, and gain affluence which provides them with prosperity and luxury. This is another important aspect of the role of drugs in terrorism.

Hard or Illicit Drugs as a Weapon against Enemy

It is an undeniable fact that, on the macro level, drug trafficking and the production of illegal narcotics such as heroin, cocaine, cannabis are a security problem as well as a hazard to the foundations of civil society and to sovereignty. It is also an indication of the failure of some economic development strategies and the lack of viable economic alternatives (Bardy, 2007). The terrorists become weak because of the mind-numbing effects of drugs. The entire soul of society is undermined and democracy is diminished by drug use (Hutchinson, 2002). For this reasons, some terrorist organizations use illicit drugs as a weapon to make living environment and society insecure, to undermine the foundations of civil society and sovereignty, to make people and the younger generation some sort of slave, to create an unhealthy individual, generation, society.

That is the reason Deborah Mccarthy (2003) argues that “unlike other crime, drug trafficking often has a twofold purpose for some terrorists. Some terrorists do not only obtain operational funds through drugs, but also believe they can weaken their enemies by flooding their societies with addictive drugs. So while certain terrorist groups are increasingly involved in organized rackets in kidnapping, piracy, weapons trafficking, extortion, people smuggling, smuggling of cigarettes and other contraband, financial fraud, or other crimes, drug trafficking occupies a special position both in terms of profitability and as a perceived direct weapon used against the United States and certain other countries. Some terrorist groups in particular use this argument to rationalize their involvement in illicit activity to their membership or support base” (Mccarthy, 2003).

One of the arrested Boko haram terrorists, Adamu Musa, when interrogated in March 2019, submitted that he clearly remembered that they were all made to take various hard drugs in his first offensive in which he took part. He agreed that it was about a week after he was abducted along with a dozen of other boys in Gwoza, Borno State, Nigeria when he was ordered to join a terrorist mission. Musa was part of a group of terrorists that would attack a nearby community to kidnap more fighters but before the assault, each member was forced to take several doses of Tramadol. Adamu Musa revealed that everyone took it before leaving the camp and if there was nothing else in the camp, there was always Tramadol (Philip, 2019). Tramadol, opioid, heroin and methamphetamine are undoubtedly the drug of choice for terrorists with several former militants reporting its widespread usage. That is why Musa Adamu, an arrested terrorist, expatiated that whenever they take those hard drugs, they become so “high” and very bold and nothing matters to them anymore except what they (terrorists) are sent to do because it is impossible to go on a deadly mission without taking the drugs (Philip, 2019).

According to the UN (2019), West and Central Africa terrorists now account for 87% of all pharmaceutical opioids seized globally. This trend is largely driven by the rising use of Tramadol, which is mostly imported from South Asia, particularly India. In sourcing huge quantities of the opioid, Boko Haram and ISWAP benefit from lax regulation and obtain the drug from several sources. Nigeria shares porous borders with Benin, Niger and Chad. Benin Republic is the second largest recipient of Indian Tramadol after the United States of America (Ibid).

Terrorists’ heavy reliance and use of illicit or hard drugs to drug fighters is deeply worrying, and many researchers believe it could account for the ruthlessness of certain attacks. However, the groups’ reliance on the opioid also represents a weakness that could be targeted. Therefore, stopping the flow of hard drugs would not end the war or solve its root causes, but experts submit it could cripple the terrorists’ abilities to launch attacks or carry out assaults (Obaji, 2019). The boldness of terrorists, most especially,

Boko haram fighters to attack mostly evolves from the effect of the illicit or hard drugs administered or taken in their body system (Bala, 2019).

IMPLICATIONS OF TERRORIST GROUPS' ACTIVITIES AND ATTACKS TO BORDER SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

Terrorist groups all over the world have one main aim, to create terror in the hearts of all concerned. As argued by Ezirin and Onuoha (2013), terrorism encompasses the premeditated use, or threat of use, of violence by an individual or group to cause fear, destruction, and/or death, against unarmed targets, property or infrastructure in a state, and is intended to compel those in authority to respond to the demands and expectations of the individuals or groups behind such violent acts. In another vein, terrorism spreads across West African states' borders light fire in various forms of transnational organized crimes, and for various aims, primary among which include terrorism financing. Although the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes does not provide a working definition for Transnational Organized Crimes (TOCs), describing it as a serious crime committed by an organized and structured criminal groups for profit making (UNTOC, 2000).

Accordingly, border regions are worst hit by activities of terrorist groups, many of whom stage attacks on one side of the border, while using the other side as operational and tactical bases. Perhaps the most impact of these activities is felt in relation to irregular migration amidst sporadic attacks on border communities, as well as attendant Transnational Organized Crimes. A regional assessment by the International Organisation on Migration (IOM) (2015), reveals the estimated number of forced migrants to be 1,135,356, though spread across the four countries currently being ravaged by the Boko Haram, ISWAP and other terrorist groups' attacks: Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. This in turn, like a vicious cycle, results in an amplified crime rate.

The incessant growth in influx of illegal migrants between the years 2009 and 2015 is in concord with the escalation of terrorist attacks within the same period, (Onyekachi: 2018). The submission is corroborated with statements by the Nigerian Army claiming

that documents and personal items discovered on the corpses of dead Boko Haram fighters in Borno State, Nigeria indicate that many of them are foreign fighters and appear to have come from the neighbouring countries of Chad and Niger Republic, (James, 1989).

Another worrisome impact of terrorist groups on border security is the attendant dip in economic fortunes of border communities occasioned by activities of these groups. Prior to the rise to prominence of the Boko Haram and ISWAP attacks, Konings (2005) notes that the Nigerian migrants community in Anglophone Cameroon always took advantage of the economic opportunities and cross-border trade of its host region. However, this region, which had hitherto prospered, albeit minimally, has had its economy distorted, with consequent impact on quality of life and standard of living. The resulting menace has heavily enmeshed the border region around Northern Cameroon and Adamawa State, Nigeria, in violent conflict characterized by a full-scale insurgency of massacres, assassinations, kidnappings, enslavement, terrorism, and other crimes against humanity, which has all paralyzed the daily activities of Northern Nigerians and their day-to-day economy (Sharma, 2014).

Accordingly, the devastating impacts of terrorism on border security are such that, if not stemmed, possess the capacity to eat into the very fabrics of the existence of a state, culminating in an unending vicious cycle of violence and distortion of socio-economic life.

Recommended Strategies for Combating the menace of Terrorism in West Africa

The various strategies suggested by the findings of this study are as follows:

Strengthening of the bomb disposal unit of the security forces in the region

There is dire of strengthening the Bomb-Disposal Unit of the various security forces in West African states with the requisite manpower and materials to stem the tide of sporadic bomb blasts across the borders. The governments must also ensure adequate provision of mobile cars on permanent basis for Rapid Action Squad, Anti-Bomb/Terrorism Squad at different locations across the country to counter terrorism.

West African states governments should classify every member of terror group as terrorists

The governments at all levels in the West African sub-region should commence treating all terror groups, most especially Boko Haram and others like other global terrorists rather than freedom fighters or insurgents.

Intensive policing of West African states' borders

It is high time the various West African states started policing their borders intensively; the Nigeria-Cameroon and Nigeria-Chad borders in the North-Easter part of the country. The step, if taken, will prevent the influx of insurgents from other nations into each country or building camps within her borders.

Curtailling terrorism financing

There are evidences that the terrorist activities are being financed in the various countries in West Africa; the Boko Haram insurgents received various financial settlements from both the local and foreign followers and sympathizers (Al-Jazeera cable News Network, 13 February 2015). Therefore, it is the sole responsibility of the Central banks of each West African state to freeze all the financial accounts through which the evil activities are perpetrated in the countries. The accounts after being frozen, be regularly monitored.

Identifying the saboteurs in the States' military and other security Agencies

The various saboteurs in the Military, Police and other security agencies fighting terrorists groups should be closely identified and prosecuted. However, governments should ensure that the terrorists do not launch any further attacks on their shores by taking the fight to the terrorists as American government did when Osama bin Laden, the Al-Qaeda leader, was killed. In other to also bring this into effectiveness, there is need for the government to enter into bilateral agreements with the governments of Cameroon and Chad.

States in West Africa need to enter into multilateral relations with each other in the region to fight crimes

In other to also bring this into effectiveness, there is need for the government of each state to enter into multilateral agreements or relations each other; Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, Chad and host of others.

Use of Multinational /Joint Task-Force

The multinational task force should be relatively expanded and strengthened to cover all the borders between Nigeria, Benin Republic, Niger, Cameroon and Chad. This

approach seems working out as it is currently employed in the fight against the terrorists.

Engaging the services/supports of local citizens

The governments of each state in the region should endeavour to enlist the services or support of her citizens in the fight against the insurgents by incentivising anyone that provides reasonable information to security agents about the members of the sect. The collaboration of the Civilian Joint Task Force (Civilian JTF) at the countries' borders could be taken to yielding good results.

Each West African state suffering from terrorists' attacks should relocate her military base to the war zones

The government of each state in the region should relocate her military base to the base of the terrorists in order to tackle the menace

Increased intelligence gathering and sharing among the states' security forces

Increase in intelligence gathering and sharing among the security agencies across borders, setting up of a Joint Military Forces among member states.

Blockage of illicit or drug trafficking across the West African states' borders

There is need for blockage of illicit or drug trafficking across the West African states' borders. Therefore, stopping the flow of hard drugs would not end the war or solve its root causes, but experts submit it could cripple the terrorists' abilities to launch attacks or carry out assaults

CONCLUSION

This study extensively discussed the various influences of illicit or hard drugs in executing the deadly operations of the terrorists across West African states and borders. Confirmed evidence clearly shows that the terrorists carry out more deadly operations whenever they are under influence of illicit or hard drugs. The study dealt with the various strategies the West African states' governments should undertake to kill the threat of terror in their domains such as use of multinational force, freezing the terrorists' accounts, policing the border areas among others. This study finally concludes that the more effective these strategies are made use of, the lesser the terrorist attacks in Africa as a whole.

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