Youth Radicalization and the Future of Terrorism in Nigeria

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Abstract

Radicalization of youth is becoming one of the most important threats to national and international security in the world today. Socially isolated, disenchanted young men turn to extremism in their search for identity, acceptance and purpose. Radicalization is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice. Radicalization is therefore seen as the process that leads to violence which, in the final analysis is what distinguishes a terrorist from other extremists. This process occurs over time and causes a fundamental change in how people view themselves and the world in which they live. In Nigeria, the problem of youth radicalization is rising and very few attempts have been made toward understanding this problem. Hence, the exact ature of this process is still misunderstood with researchers having developed a number of different theories and conceptual models that seek to explain the process. This paper addresses the phenomenon of youth radicalization and its implication for the future of terrorism in Nigeria.

Key words: Radicalization; Counter-terrorism; United States; Youth; Future implication; Community engagement

INTRODUCTION

Since the return of democracy into the country, Nigeria has experienced an upsurge in violent conflicts and criminality. The violence and criminality have come in the form of armed robbery, kidnapping, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, human trafficking and militancy among others. Particularly worrisome is the fact that this threat of terrorism no longer solely comes from foreign centrally organized groups like Al Qaida, Hezbollah or Jamaah Islamiyah but from home grown terrorists. Nigeria's internal security has been significantly undermined by violent activities of armed non-state actors, largely made up of radicalized youth groups as foot soldiers. These violent groups have leveraged on the vulnerability of the Nigerian youth to deepen their process and drive for recruitment and radicalisation.

Many believe that the sympathizers of the group are mostly disaffected and unemployed youths who live in hostile environment, with challenges spanning economic, social and political deprivations.

However, the recent profiles of terrorists suggest that they are not the stereotyped, impoverished and uneducated youths as was generally presumed. Instead they are the progeny of years of frustrated political aspirations and indignity, which inculcates an acute sense of insecurity and consequent hatred against those who are perceived to have brought about these conditions.

Radicalization of youth is becoming one of the most serious threats to international terrorism in the world today. Socially secluded, dissatisfied young men turn to extremism in their search for identity, acceptance and Purpose (Bizina, 2014).

While youth involvement in extremism and violence may be caused by social and economic circumstances in which the youths find themselves, the avenues through which they get recruited into such violence are necessary for understanding restiveness. Understanding how people get persuaded to become members of militants or terrorist

organizations is critical in the design and development of counter-terrorism measures, and without members, terrorist organizations cannot exist. Appreciating how and why an individual is radicalized and recruited into a terrorist organization therefore form the basis for addressing the problem. The individual level is where terrorism begins. It is the individual who keeps the organization operational and helps perpetuate the organization's ideology. It is therefore important to know what causes an individual to embrace terrorism. It is more helpful to supplement such profiles with examinations of recruitment patterns. In Nigeria, Radicalisation has been identified to be acquired through a variety of sources. The study aims at providing a better understanding of the issues involved and examine the problem of Youths radicalization in Nigeria and the future of terrorism in the country. The study therefore aimed at examining the following objectives:

a) Provide an empirical understanding of the mechanisms, catalysts and dynamics of the radicalisation process in Nigeria.

b) Examine the motivations that lead to youth recruitment into terrorist groups in Nigeria.

c) Examine the process of youths radicalisation and the future of terrorism in Nigeria.

1. RADICALISATION: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of radicalisation has gained significant currency in use by government officials, media practitioners, scholars and security officials in discourses on terrorism and violent extremism. It is appropriate to clarify the way it is understood and applied to this study, before delving into the diverse discursion. There is no single definition of the term that is generally agreed upon by its diverse users. As Schmid has rightly noted, "the terms 'radicalisation' and 'de-radicalisation' are used widely, but the search for what exactly 'radicalisation' is, what causes it and how to 'de-radicalise' those who are considered radicals, violent extremists or terrorists, is a frustrating experience" (Schmid, 2013, p.1). Ashour, for instance, posits that radicalisation is

> a process of relative change in which a group undergoes ideological and/or behavioural transformations that lead to the rejection of democratic principles (including the peaceful alternation of power and the legitimacy of ideological and political pluralism) and possibly to the utilisation of violence, or to an increase in the levels of violence, to achieve political goals. (Ashour, 2009, p.4)

For Sodipo, radicalisation is

> a process by which an individual or group adopts extreme political, social, or religious ideals that reject the status quo, undermine contemporary ideas regarding freedom of choice and expression, and condone violence to achieve ideological ends, including undertaking terrorist acts. (Sodipo, 2013, p.4)

It typically starts with changes in one's self-identification. Grievances, frequently driven by personal or group concerns regarding local issues as well as international events, fuel this change. In the view of Schmid, radicalisation entails: An individual or collective (group) process whereby, usually in a situation of political polarisation, normal practices of dialogue, compromise and tolerance between political actors and groups with diverging interests are abandoned by one or both sides in a conflict dyad in favour of a growing commitment to engage in confrontational tactics of conflict-waging. These can include either (i) the use of (non-violent) pressure and coercion, (ii) various forms of political violence other than terrorism or (iii) acts of violent extremism in the form of terrorism and war crimes. The process is, on the side of rebel factions, generally accompanied by an ideological socialization away from mainstream or status quo-oriented positions towards more radical or extremist positions involving a dichotomous world view and the acceptance of an alternative focal point of political mobilisation outside the dominant political order as the existing system is no longer recognized as appropriate or legitimate (Schmid, 2013, p.18).

Although there is no unanimity among scholars on the definition of the term, analysts are almost in agreement that radicalisation is a process. Factors that engender the radicalisation of individuals or groups have remained a subject of debate among experts. It has been argued that the causes of radicalisation are as diverse as they are abundant. In other words, experts believe that there is no single factor that leads an individual or even a group to become radicalized, but rather, it is the complex overlap of concurring and mutually reinforcing factors (see Evans & Neumann, 2009; Kirby, 2007; Ferrero, 2005; Stern, 2003). To this end, a study on causal factors of radicalisation concludes that a complex interaction between factors at three levels – individual, external and social—is likely to be crucial for the intensity of the readiness for radicalisation (Danish Institute for International Studies, 2008). External factors manifest themselves independent of the individual. They shape and constrain people's environment, but individuals have only minor influence on their environment. External factors can be subdivided into political, economic and cultural dimensions. Social factors refer to mechanisms that position the individual in relation to relevant others and hence can include people from in-groups as well as out-groups.

Wiktorowitcz has identified four interrelated stages of the radicalisation process as follows: i) cognitive opening whereby individuals conditioned by both internal and external factors like economic and social circumstances become receptive to new ideas; ii) religious seeking during which individuals seek religious understanding of the issues; iii) frame alignment where the new ideas which are often radical in nature become meaningful to them, and iv) Socialisation during which individuals

internalize radical ideas that enable them to join extremist groups (Beutel, 2007). This process may not entirely explain the circumstances for all radicalized people and Islamic groups but certainly illuminates how youths get radicalized in the West and other parts of the world.

These factors can manifest in different forms depending on the individual and context. However, agreement tends to revolve around a broad set of parameters that act as ingredients in the radicalisation process: grievance, ideology, mobilisation, and tipping points. While grievance is understood to be the sense of alienation or disenchantment that provides a cognitive opening, ideology entails the extreme set of ideas that provides the individual with a new outlook and explanation for the world an individual finds him or herself. Mobilisation captures the process by which the individual is slowly integrated into a community of individuals who are like-minded and create a self-reinforcing community, and finally, tipping points are the specific events that push an individual or group from rhetoric to action (Beutel, 2007). External forces can also facilitate and reinforce these factors. While these varying definitions and explanatory frameworks illuminate our understanding of radicalisation, it is important to bear in mind that what attracts young people to radical behaviour differs from person to person with the most important being the individual factor. As experts have argued, "the part to radicalisation is a highly individualised one, with very different characteristics from a person to person" (Vidino, Pantucci, & Kohlmann, pp.201-230). According to the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), radicalisation is a gradual process that, although it can occur very rapidly, has not specifically defined beginning or end-state (Danish Institute for International Studies, 2008, p.6). Rather, radicalisation is an individual development that is initiated by a unique combination of causal factors and that comprises a drastic change in attitudes and behaviour.

This study, therefore, defines radicalisation as defined by Cleen foundation 2014 as the process by which an individual or group transits from a state of passive reception of revolutionary, militant or extremist views, ideas and beliefs to active pursuit of the ideals of such views, ideas and beliefs, especially through supporting, promoting or adopting violence as a means to achieving such intentions. It is such transition that underlies violent extremism or terrorism. In the light of the foregoing, the critical challenge is to uncover the reason young people are inclined to be part of insurgent groups in Nigeria.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY

In understanding the causes that motivate individuals into terrorism, it is important first to understand relative deprivation as a theory of political violence. Gurr explains that instead of an absolute standard of deprivation, a gap between expected and achieved welfare creates collective discontent. This theory also applies to individuals who find their own welfare to be inferior to that of others with whom they compare themselves. Gurrargues that relative deprivation is a term used to denote the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the "ought" and the "is" of collective value satisfaction. The concept of relative deprivation dates back to ancient Greece. Aristotle articulated the idea that revolution is driven by a relative sense or feeling of inequality, rather than an absolute measure. For Aristotle, the principal cause of revolution is the aspiration for economic or political equality on the part of the common people who lack it, and the aspiration, Gurr states that perceived discrepancy between value expectations and value capabilities is what leads to discontent, not the millionaire's absolute economic standing.

Gurrfurther explains that the primary source of the human capacity for violence appears to be the frustration—aggression mechanism—the anger induced by frustration—is a motivating force that disposes men to aggression, irrespective of its instrumentalities." However, Gurr was not the first in his field to propose a link between frustration and aggression. Dollard (1939) and others were the first to propose the theory, postulating that frustration leads men to act aggressively. Accordingly, frustration is caused by relative deprivation, and the resulting aggression is manifested as terrorism.

The hypothesis is therefore that levels of terrorism may be explained in part as an expression of country conditions conducive to relative deprivation. To examine this theory empirically, one examines whether high unemployment rates, dependent on there also being higher rates of enrollment in tertiary education, are positively correlated with terrorism. When a large group of highly educated individuals enter the work force at low levels, they may feel over-qualified and disappointed relative to what they expected to gain from their education. Presumably individuals pursue higher education with the expectation that additional studies or training will help them find better jobs. As a result, well-educated individuals may feel greater discontent from unemployment than those who did not expect such employment opportunities. This socioeconomic discontent, in turn, may result in political violence. While individual economic indicators alone do not appear to be strongly correlated with terrorism, the interaction effect of an economic variable (unemployment) and a social variable (education) may provide better insight into understanding terrorism.

Quantitative studies of terrorism have increased dramatically in the past decade. Many articles in this body of literature sought to explain terrorism as the

result of poor economic development and lack of education in a country. However, it soon became clear that this is not the case. Krueger and Malecková argue that eradication of poverty and universal secondary education are unlikely to change these feelings. Indeed, those who are well-off and well-educated may even perceive such feelings more acutely. In fact, terrorists tend to be better-educated and wealthier individuals than average. Azam also notes that, the emerging picture is that terrorists are men and women in their twenties with some post-secondary training, mostly in technical or engineering education. For example, biographies of Al-Qaeda members recorded by Sageman reveal that they are generally highly educated, mostly in scientific or technical disciplines. More recent studies of terrorism have focused on individual determinants rather than any interaction effect of economic and social variables.

Relatively, Li and Schaub, examine whether economic globalization increases or decreases transnational terrorist incidents inside countries. Globalization may be tied closely to relative deprivation, in the sense that greater access to information about people in other countries increases awareness of one's relative world view. Li and Schuab hypothesize that increased globalization leads to greater levels of international terrorism because trade makes it easier for terrorists to mobilize and move materials that they eventually use to carry out attacks across borders.

Krueger and Malecková's finding on the connection between education, poverty, and terrorism confirm the core assumption that terrorists tend to be better educated and from wealthier backgrounds. They find that Palestinian suicide bombers are less likely to come from impoverished families and more likely to have completed high school and attended college than the rest of the Palestinian population. They also find that poverty is inversely related with whether someone becomes a Hezbollah member, and education is positively correlated with whether someone becomes a Hezbollah member, suggesting that wealthier, more highly educated people are more likely to join this particular terrorist organization. Another scholar, Johan Galtung says that "feelings of deprivation arise when one has inconsistent rankings; that is, high education but low salary.

Many results from studies provide some evidence that within countries where there are recorded attacks, the interaction between unemployment and higher education may be an important indicator. This could suggest that while the effect is not significant enough to drive individuals in a nation to the point of terrorism, in countries where there is already terrorist activity, an increase in these conditions could further increase the incidence of terrorism.

3. YOUTH AND RADICALIZATION INTO VIOLENT EXTREMISM: A PRELIMINARY PSYCHOSOCIAL ANALYSIS

Why are youth so heavily represented amongst militants radicalized? While some argue that the role of social media is crucial in understanding how youths attracts today's tech savvy youth, in reality the Internet, though not unimportant, is merely an accelerant of the radicalization process (Homeland Security Institute, 2009, p.6). What makes youth vulnerable actually reside off-line in a real world context; nevertheless, insights from several disciplines offer us some preliminary answers.

3.1 Neurological Factors

To start with, neurologically youth is pretty unique as their brain development proceeds in a rather uneven fashion. Specifically, during the teenage years the prefrontal cortex that guides reasoning and self-control develops more gradually than the amygdala—the center of human emotions. This helps explain why teenagers between 18 and 20 years of age often appear to many an exasperated parent as impulsive and rash (Leong, 2011). Second, the amygdala-driven and rather intense emotional turbulence that many teens more or less experience at regular intervals is not without implications. It suggests a certain psychological instability that expresses itself frequently in a quest for absolute cognitive certainty—which violent fundamentalist groups like ISIS conveniently appear to offer. In sum, youth is anything but regular folk: They are actually in a "tumultuous biological, cognitive, social and emotional transition to adulthood" (Ramakrishna, 2015, p.116). It is precisely this process of transition that renders youth to be akin to psychological putty in the hands of skilled extremist ideologues.

3.2 The Family Context

The essential psychological vulnerability of youth arising from neurological factors is further influenced by the immediate family context. British psychiatrist Russell Razzaque in this respect has argued that the "the initial parental bond" is utterly crucial for the healthy emotional development of youth (2008, pp.80-83). He asserts that "just as oxygen deprivation can impair growth or cause damage to the unborn child, so lack of attachment and emotional deprivation can harm the growing infant and stunt his psychological development". Razzaque warns that a youth growing up without a stable role model in the immediate family context "will see things in a very different light from the way adults do, even as he grows older". Psychologically speaking, it has long been understood that "our personality, character, thoughts, and feelings are shaped by our early childhood experiences", and central to the process of ego and identity formation until even well into adulthood is as noted the "early

and influential parent-child dyad" (Jones, 2008, p.119). Hence those youth who, because of a deeply dysfunctional relationship with early parental figures, possess "fragile senses of identity and unhealthily developed egos", they would lack the utterly important "inner strength and personal stability required to endure life's ordinary trials and tribulations" (Alper, 2006, pp.173-4). A weak and/or dysfunctional immediate family context, therefore, could well render a youth "desperately hungry" for "external objects that claim to be perfect and ideal", and that supposedly offer "that necessary sense of connection to something of value" that can "buttress his self-esteem" (Jones, 2008, pp.133-4). This is the point where for instance Boko Haram extremist ideologues can strike home with their social media appeals. The adverse impact of a poor family background is no exaggeration. In Saudi Arabia as one instance, it was found that many who had grown up in homes of relatives "without their parents present" were in need of attention, as their "personal and social problems" appeared to "contribute to radicalization" (International Peace Institute, 2010, p.9).

3.3 The Social Milieu

Another factor that plays an instrumental role in at times rendering youth susceptible to extremist appeals for example is the wider social milieu within which they and their immediate families are embedded. Of special concern are Muslim communities or sub-cultures that are relatively insulated from the wider polity and have been beset by a range of political, historical and socioeconomic setbacks that have generated a sense of alienation vis-a-vis dominant out-groups. In some cases, such "countercultures" —not just in the Middle East but including poorly integrated migrant communities—may share a generalized perception that their communities are facing political and socioeconomic marginalization—or worse (Juergensmeyer, 2000, p.12). In a broadly similar way, the aforementioned training camps for children Boko Haram has apparently set up can be considered as seminal "cultures of violence", that are "a crucial part of understanding religious terrorism" (Jones, 2008, p.120). Youth that is immersed in their formative years in such stressed communities rarely emerge unscathed. From a neurological perspective, growing up immersed in a counter cultural milieu characterized by interactions and experiences that heighten out-group prejudice has a significant impact on their highly plastic youthful brains. Specifically, within the hippocampus, a part of the ancient limbic system of the brain, strong emotional reactions to experiences of social and economic discrimination or worse at the hands of out-groups—as well as repeated exposure to negative out-group stereotyping—cannot but be stored as long-term memory (Johnson, 2004, p.8; Wilson, 1999, pp.116-17; Newberg & Waldman, 2006, p.32).

Freud elaborated on this process with his concept of so-called critical periods. During such periods, the unique architecture of a youth's hippocampus stabilizes in a relatively enduring way. Hence when such critical and brief windows close, the youth's learned habits, beliefs and attitudes become relatively resistant to change; put another way, once certain neural pathways are laid down, they become entrenched (Doidge, 2008, pp.52-3); (Ridley, 2004, pp.167-70). In essence, therefore, youth who come of age within cultures of hatred "tend to be self-righteous, prejudicial and condemnatory toward people outside their groups", whilst possessing an especially pronounced "us versus them' mentality that many will carry throughout their lives"— shaped in no small part as well by "the stories" they have "heard and read while growing up" (Newberg & Weldman, 2006, p.121).

The Middle East offers one illustration of how culturally sanctioned out-group prejudice can be socialized into youth: "Hatred for Jews and Zionists" is widespread in the mainstream and social media and even in textbooks for children as young as three years old, "complete with illustrations of Jews with monster-like qualities". In short, Jews are painted as "bloodsuckers who attack the Palestinians" (Ali, 2013, p.37). Not entirely surprising perhaps then that in one Palestinian refugee camp in the Gaza Strip a Hamas official informed the terrorism scholar Scott Atran in 2004 that "our youth are running into martyrdom" (Atran, 2010, p.353). So generalized and pervasive was the counter culture hatred of Israelis that one young man very matter-of-factly discussed with Atran the "costs and benefits of a roadside versus suicide bombing", a topic that appeared normal within the "group's moral frame" (2010, p.355). Even more remarkable was the little boy kicking a frayed soccer ball near the border crossing at Bayt Lahiyah who assured Atran that "he wanted to die a *shahed*, killing Israelis" (2010, p.356). It is thus not hard to see how immersion in a counter-culture milieu characterized by deep out-group hatred and prejudice can—in tandem with the neurological, psychological and family factors just discussed—erode the ability of youth to withstand the siren call of violent extremist ideologues, like those that currently promote the seductive ISIS narrative across various social media platforms.

3.4 Poor Education System

The situation could be marked by a poor education system stratified along socio-economic lines and disparate economic opportunities across segments of society. Frustrated expectations and relative deprivation of mainly educated youth represents a danger zone. Moreover, perceptions of social exclusion and marginality in an environment of a youth bulge are seemingly a recipe for radicalization. These are warning signals that could increase the likelihood for young members of society being lured towards extremist causes. Most importantly,

the presence of an extremist infrastructure, the impeccable organizational discipline and widespread social networks of Somalia are factors that influence the youth or make them vulnerable to manipulation. Islamic political and militant outfits, a failure of the moderate forces to deliver credible results, and myopic policies by regional and global powers further enhance radicalization and the influence of violent extremist forces. In some contexts, some issues are more important than others hence the need to locate the problem in a long and complex process of interaction between multiple drivers.

In many countries of the sub-region the crisis of the state, the failure of secular and moderate forces to deliver credible results could provide a fertile ground for youth radicalization. But other internal and external actors need to be met before this translates to violent extremism.

In fact, in most cases socio economic problems may not be used by leaders of terrorist groups as a major weapon for recruitment. Nevertheless, it may still remain the case that drives the youth to join radical and terrorist groups. So there seems to be a gap between the official statements and manifestos of terrorist organizations and the drivers of youth recruitment. This partly explains the weakness of terrorist organizations and the minority of their core membership. It may also explain why extremist groups are poor at governing. This is however changing with time. However, without such organizations and their leadership, radicalization cannot be turned into violent extremism or terrorism. In order for this to happen there should be organizations that can frame and channel the relevant grievances in violent directions.

4. PROCESS OF RADICALIZATION

According to Precht (2007), in Western Europe, for many, the process of radicalization begins when they are teenagers looking for a cause and a stronger identity and increasingly finding the answer in the ideology of radical groups. Often people are rather secular before they enter the radicalization process and, in general, radicalization is taking place within loose social networks of friends and peers (Precht, 2007). An important factor in radicalization is the presence of a charismatic person who can easily deliver persuasive speeches not only in Mosques but also in schools, universities, or even prisons.

> Official sources indicate that many American homegrown Islamists have also been radicalized while incarcerated, including the members of the prison-formed Jamiyat al-Islam al-Sahih cell in California that was convicted in 2007 for its plans to attack not only synagogues but also the Israeli consulate in Los Angeles. (Benraad, 2009)

Many of young potential radicals are not fully aware of their country's history, as well, they lack proper knowledge of Islam and have not read the Quran to see that Islam is actually one of the more peaceful religions.

The fact that preachers of Wahhabi Islam find to their advantage is that many young disenchanted individuals are not knowledgeable about the entire scope of religion they are trying to embrace.

Another important factor to consider is the role of social networks in the process of radicalization. "Social links are key to the dynamics of terror networks" (Sageman, 2004). Group phenomenon is a strong factor in creating such network, because the potential jihadists were close friends or relatives when joining terrorist network and have done so not individually but as a group. Many youth enter the circles of radicals after the society rejected them by finding virtual networks online, or in youth clubs and places of worship. The local community, by remaining disinterested in its youth, misses the cues that indicate the process of radicalization, as was the case with the Millennial Plot bombers in Montreal. Having been seen as "a bunch of guys" involved in petty crimes, living in an apartment on welfare, they were not taken seriously by the authorities, although their circle revolved around Kamel, who undergone military training and fought jihad in Bosnia (Sageman, 2004). Perhaps, this lapse in judgment was due to the same British multicultural approach that Canada has adopted to its immigration policies. However, the process of radicalization apart from social isolation also involves the desire to affect political change. Krueger (2007) posits that terrorism is akin to voting. High opportunity cost of time, such as high paying job, should discourage people from voting, but on the contrary, it is precisely them who vote, because they care about influencing the outcome and consider themselves sufficiently informed to express their opinions (Krueger, 2007). Terrorists also care about influencing political outcomes: they care about a cause so deeply that they are willing to die for it. Terrorists are responding to geopolitical issues, and understanding the causes of terrorism can help prevent countries from pursuing counterproductive courses of action (Krueger, 2007).

4.1 Discussion

The political marginalisation or perceived marginalisation of ethnic or religious groups is believed to increase the risk of youth radicalization and violent extremism. In Nigeria, the marginalization of the minorities ethnic groups especially the Niger Delta is frequently identified as a cause of youth militancy in the region.

There are certainly cases of extremist groups using political exclusion as justification for violence like the case of Ibos in Nigeria. But, equally, terrorist organisations can emerge and flourish in highly democratic countries (as with left-wing terrorism in Germany in the 1970s, the Provisional IRA in the UK, and ETA in Spain). Some research distinguishes transnational from domestic terrorism, and source countries from target countries.

> Poor governance has long been assumed to be a driver for violent extremism. The underlying logic is that democratic

institutions and procedures, by enabling the peaceful reconciliation of grievances and providing channels for participation in policymaking, can help to address those underlying conditions that have fuelled the recent rise of youth radicalization. (Windsor, 2003, p.43)

Schmid (2006) argues that state weakness provides opportunities for revolt, while excessive strength and abuse of state power can foster resistance, providing opportunities for terrorist groups. He proposes two reasons for this: When unpopular rulers cannot be voted away in democratic procedures, advocates of political violence find a wide audience; when long-standing injustices in society are not resolved, desperate people are willing to die and to kill for causes they—and often also others—perceive as just. Schmid's thesis is intuitive, and some econometric studies such as Krueger and Laitin (2008), and Li (2005) show an inverse relationship between civil liberties and terrorism. Dowd and Lind (2015), in relation to sub-Saharan Africa, suggest that contemporary violence stems from historical grievances about the state's failure over time to address deeply-rooted marginalisation and insecurity, while its use of repressive machinery to respond to insurgencies causes violence to recur. Others, however, disagree.

Freeman (2008) finds a more complex relationship between political participation and violence, Chenoweth (2010) finds that terrorist activity is actually more prevalent in democracies, and Dalacoura's (2006) analysis of Islamist terrorist groups across the Middle East shows that political exclusion and repression of Islamist movements contributed to the adoption of terrorist methods in some cases, but not in others. Several studies suggest that states which are partly free, or are in transition from authoritarianism to democracy are particularly vulnerable to violent extremism (e.g. Abadie, 2004). Newman (2007) argues that weak or failed states might provide an enabling environment for certain types of terrorist groups to operate. This is not a sufficient explanation as terrorist groups have also emerged from, and operated within countries which have strong, stable states and a variety of systems of government.

4.2 Implication of Youth Radicalisation to the Future of Terrorism in Nigeria

In Nigeria, there are numerous problems affecting the country. These issues range from weak legal regime, exclusion, political intolerance, marginalization, poverty, restiveness and youth bulge coupled with joblessness as well as crisis of national identity. When young people are not firmly rooted in a sense of nation, they are more likely to be persuaded by foreign extremists who invoke transnational and radical ideals. Similarly, homegrown radicalization is more likely to surface along ethnic, clan, or communal lines when a strong sense of nation is absent from the national consciousness. These factors provide ready and already hopeless pool from which terror

networks recruit followers. The threat from Boko haram and other Militants groups in the country to Nigeria's political and territorial integrity is therefore not a threat that Nigeria can choose to ignore.

In the wake of the present situation in the country, radicalization will increase in the country in the nearest future as many youths see this as their opportunity to shine and to belong and to make a difference.

In light of these developments, Government should foster healthy nationalism through civic education, cultural events, and other activities that strengthen national solidarity. People being radicalized are noted to have been motivated by a desire to combat injustice, impunity, and corruption. The intelligence community in the country should cooperate fully with other security agencies both public and private as well as with the local populations in order to slow down the process of radicalization. Unfortunately, bureaucratic processes and the goals of various intelligence agencies do not allow for swift reorganization of various agencies and their increased cooperation with local communities, thus leaving open the dilemma of youth radicalization. Since the radicalization of youth in the country will only tend to increase in the nearest future, based on the multitude of factors, closer cooperation between various law enforcement and counter-terrorism agencies is vital. The Arab spring, as well as the current economic crisis has made a lot of young people in the country anxious and looking for ways to engage meaningfully in the "struggle for justice" and thus has put more pressure on counter-terrorism policy in the country.

It is important in this struggle for de-radicalization of youth to engage the local community to its fullest potential, as teachers, coaches and parents are missing the early cues of radicalization process. As a society of isolated individuals concerned with accumulation of wealth in Nigeria is missing the link with their dissatisfied young population that is spending increasingly more time online and less in the community. The need to combat online radicalization, as well as local charismatic radical Islamists is placed on the shoulders of law enforcement, but the community has to share the burden if it is to be successful in this battle. Communication between all levels of governments and community is essential for the achievement of de-radicalization.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNTER-RADICALIZATION

Nigerian Governments and the society at large must recognize the threat posed by radicalization in its various forms. While currently a great deal of attention is focused on Islamic radicalization in the region, due to the global war on terrorism, there is also need to recognize other more local forms of radicalization that may either

increasingly pose challenges on their own or form alliances with Islamic radicalism or camouflage within such radicalizations.

In addition, it is essential to remember that poor people care about surviving and putting food on the table, they prioritize material gains, not politics. Hence, through dialogue with communities, the government should undertake genuine reforms aimed at creating socio-economic and political institutions with which citizens can empower themselves so as to identify and reject endeavors towards radicalizations and the issues emanating from it. In this regard, there is the need to address seriously the plight of the youth, especially as it relates to unemployment, since they form easy targets for recruitment, posing a dangerous challenge because of the youth population bulge that exists in all the African countries, included Nigeria.

Also, there should be a partnership between the police and the community. Community may act as an early warning system for the police and intelligence services; it can also work upstream to prevent young people from radicalization, by diverting them from extremist propaganda, helping to deal with personal crisis and social exclusion; it can tackle the grievances; and the communication with police should be consensual, to maintain the trust in the relationship (Briggs, 2010). The major problem in Nigeria is that many community members don't trust the police. They still feel alienated because they don't feel that their views are valued by local authorities or that their involvement will make any difference.

Both government and the wider society need to recognize the power of information technology and globalization. Since the region cannot wish away their influence, creative ways need to be explored in utilizing the same to respond to the current challenges of radicalization. Still on technology, and information, there is need to harmonize regional legal and enforcement systems as well as improve information exchange and other joint strategies to combat cross-border security challenges like terrorism and terrorist networks.

Additionally, of importance is the need to reform the judicial and the law enforcement systems in the country to ensure the adoption of necessary counter-terrorism legislation and practices. This includes both international laws and domestic laws.

In conclusion, although generally violent extremists adhere to diverse ideologies, the strategies that they employ to enlist youth into their ranks are often similar. Radical organizations understand and prey upon a combination of political realities, socioeconomic factors, and individual characteristics that render youth vulnerable to recruitment. A primary goal of preventing youth radicalization into terrorism is to promote understanding of the drivers of youth radicalization, identify Africa's resiliencies and coping mechanisms to these drivers, and

to generate policy recommendations aimed at mitigating the drivers. This is possible, though requires time, resources and application of relative cross-section expertise.

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