

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The spectre of terrorism has been casting a menacing shadow on the global system to the extent of threatening to eclipse it. Undoubtedly, violent extremism is on the rise, and every country is feeling its destructive effect (Rapoport, 1988). There is a resurgence and proliferation of terrorist groups that are motivated by religious and other imperatives. Terrorism has in recent times become a major source of concern to the global community.

Terrorism has become increasingly sophisticated in weaponry, use of intelligence, selection of targets, coordination of attacks, and manipulation of the media. Today, evolving before us is the fear of continued acts of “mega-terrorism”, such as the use of a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) (Schelling, 1983). Aum Shinrikyo, a movement in Japan that believes that “Armageddon” will come at the end of this century, decided to unleash fears of extreme terror with the release of sarin gas in a Japanese subway in 1995 (Kaplan, 2000). A dimension of the increased sophistication of terrorists is the exploitation of the global interchange of information, finance, and ideas to their benefit, often through the Internet (Metraux, 2000). Increasingly, there is a rapid rise of radical Islamist groups, or groups using religion as a pretext, in the global system. Radical Jihadism has become more widespread, diffuse, possibly more deadly, and increasingly homegrown, often with a lack of apparent formal operational connection with Al-Qaeda ideological leaders, although perhaps inspired by them or assisted through training.

Since its independence in 1960, Nigeria, a West African nation rich in cultural diversity and natural resources, has continually grappled with various forms of security challenges (Thompson, 2022). However, the severity and complexity of these challenges have escalated in the past

decade, with terrorism, armed banditry, and kidnapping becoming a significant concern. This escalation, particularly in the northwest of the country, poses a threat to Nigeria's peace, stability, and development. To understand the gravity and impact of the situation, it is crucial to delve into the history, examine the consequences, and evaluate the counterterrorism efforts of the Nigerian government. A map of the northwest and northeast where terrorism activities are concentrated in Nigeria is at Figure 1.1

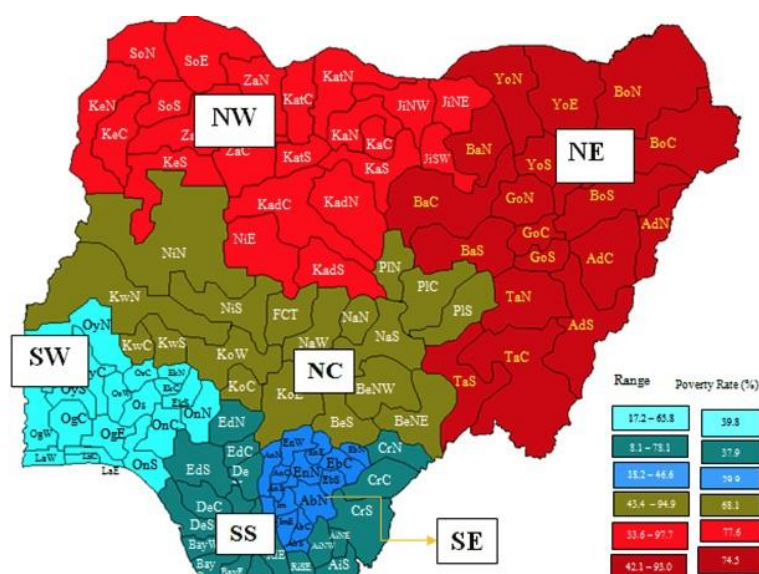


Figure 1.1 Map of Nigeria Showing the Northwest and North East
Source: Atlas Map (2023)

The Boko Haram crisis started with Mohammed Yusuf, who began a subtle and peaceful crusade of religious activism, which he used to covertly seek the political goal of creating an Islamic state (Samuel & Lasisi, 2019). He consolidated his narrative by condemning Western education and launching military operations against the FGN in 2009 (Samuel & Lasisi, 2019). Mohammed Yusuf optimised and manipulated the prevalence of penury and social lapses in the society to fuel his ideological goals. Intermittently, the group had clashes with the civil populace, but the rifts were overlooked by the authorities. This emboldened the group and resulted in the recruitment of more people, particularly the unemployed. The affront of Mohammed Yusuf and his military operations against the FGN

culminated in his demise in 2009 (Oluwabunmi, 2022). Consequently, his followers went into hibernation and nominated a new leader who charted their next course of action.

During the hibernation period, Abubakar Shekau emerged as the new leader of BHT (Samuel & Lasisi, 2019). The terrorist group also sent some of its members to the AQIM for training and to learn how to make Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). Thus, on re-emerging BHT became more ferocious, attacking police stations, the military, civilians, schools and the government. It also used IEDs in populated areas to undermine the people's confidence in the security forces. Examining the activities of BHT before and after the demise of Mohammed Yusuf, it became evident that the group had resorted to terrorist activities. A summary of the attacks carried out by BHT attacks between 2014 and 2017 is shown below.

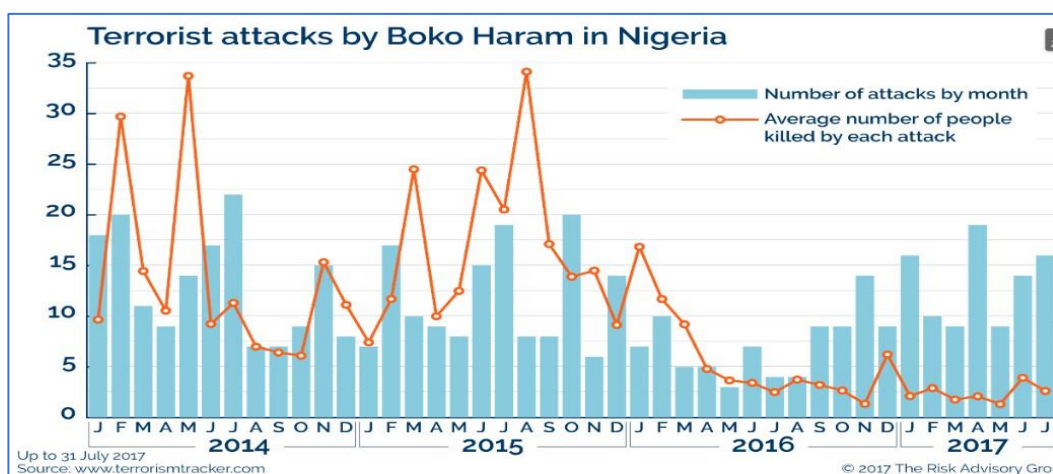


Figure 1.2 Terrorist Attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria (2014-2017)

Source: www.terroristtracker.com (2023)

In the period between 2010 and 2020, Nigeria became a hotspot for terrorism, predominantly due to the activities of the jihadist group BHT and its offshoot Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). According to the Global Terrorism Index, Nigeria ranked third after Iraq and Afghanistan in the most affected nations by terrorism in 2020 as shown in Figure 1.3.

Reports estimate that over 36,000 lives were lost to Boko Haram's insurgency alone between 2010 and 2020 (Abdulazeez-Malefakis, 2022).



Figure 1.3 Global Terrorism Index 2020

Source: IPRI (2022)

Simultaneously, armed banditry, cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom and robbery, particularly in the northwestern region of Nigeria, have burgeoned. The emergence of armed bandits in northwest Nigeria can be linked back to the pre-colonial era when the region played a crucial role in international trade and migration. Cities such as Kano and Katsina were strategically positioned along trans-Saharan routes, facilitating trade and tourism connections with Sokoto in the West, Borno and others in the East, and the Benin Empire in the South (Ojo et al., 2023). Within this context, armed bandits took residence along these routes, posing significant threats to caravan trading, tourism, political stability, and the territorial integrity of precolonial states and societies in the area. Notably, locations like Kwotarkwashi and Chafe in Zamfara served as frequent hubs for criminal activities, leading to substantial security challenges (Auwal, 2021). The root cause of this armed banditry during this period can be attributed to the limited capacity of the affected African states and societies to govern their territories effectively and secure their trade routes.

Despite the aforementioned factors, the colonial administration strengthened the capabilities of pre-colonial states in northern Nigeria and effectively suppressed the activities of armed bandits, achieving notable success (Ikime, 1980). The introduction of the colonial order brought about an Atlantic-oriented trade system, a socioeconomic framework, a Westphalia state structure, and associated policing and defence initiatives. These changes, among others, marginalised armed bandits, relegating them to the underworld and reducing their threats in late colonial and early post-colonial Nigeria. However, the post-colonial period witnessed an increase in armed resistance and criminal violence due to factors such as political violence, ethnic tensions, societal militarization, insufficient policy focus on human development and climate change, and the weakened institutional capacity of the state in governance and security. Amidst these challenges, armed bandit groups proliferated nationwide, leading to a surge in armed robbery and ethno-communal clashes from the 1980s. In Northern Nigeria, particularly in the northwest, this trend expanded to include cattle rustling, which became prominent in the 2000s. However, the year 2011 marked a significant turning point in the contemporary resurgence of armed banditry in northwest Nigeria, with the emergence of armed groups led by the Fulani ethnic Kundu and Buharin Daji. Despite the absence of young individuals in the group, they named themselves "Kungiyar gayu," meaning the young guys' association. The public knew them as "Kungiyar Barayin Shanu," signifying the cattle rustlers' association.

In 2012, instances of cattle rustling began to surface in the region, shedding light on the underlying motives behind these incidents. This phenomenon is perceived as a cultural group aiming to liberate their community from perceived oppression imposed by security forces, politicians, and traditional leaders. Grazing areas in Zamfara state were under threat of encroachment and confiscation, particularly as herders were migrating to neighbouring states. Before a recruitment process in 2011, membership was restricted to individuals of ethnic descent. The recruitment

tactics involved a combination of inducements such as cash, cattle, sexual favors, recreation, and intimidation to attract individuals. Many herders joined the group as a means to evade harassment by its members upon discovering the gang's involvement in livestock rustling. There have been accusations that certain influential families in Zamfara, Sokoto, and Katsina states have shown support through contributions and moral backing to these gangs, possibly out of fear of adverse consequences (Ojo, 2020).

Some other factors such as the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs), youth unemployment and illegal artisanal mining, amongst others, have led to wanton loss of lives, destruction of property and displacement of persons. These have undermined citizens' well-being and are impinging on national security in Nigeria (Nicholas, 2021). Disturbingly, these criminal activities are not only carried out by organized gangs but also by loosely formed groups of herdsmen, farmers, and unemployed youth. The Council on Foreign Relations' Nigeria Security Tracker suggests that more than 8,000 people were killed in the northwest region due to these activities (Gavin, 2023). Between 2018 and 2020, terrorism activities specifically armed banditry in the Northwest region, particularly in Zamfara, Katsina and Kaduna states led to about 286 attack incidents, over 300 lives lost, with hundreds displaced, including the devastation of farmlands and rustling of about 7,500 cattle with attendant negative impact on citizens safety, which undermined national security in the Northwest region of Nigeria (Nicholas, 2021).

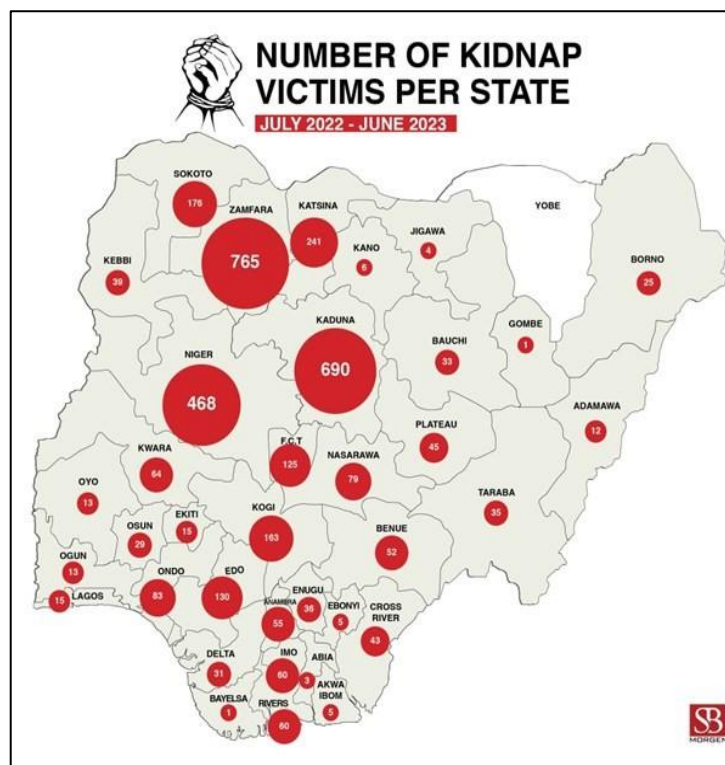


Figure 1.4 Number of Kidnap Victims per State
Source: SB Morgen Intel (2023)

The socio-economic impact of these security challenges is colossal and far-reaching. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC, 2021) reported that by the end of 2020, over 2.9 million people had been internally displaced in Nigeria due to violence and conflict. The majority of these displacements occurred in the Northwest where activities of terrorists has been most active. Furthermore, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2022) estimates that nearly three million hectares of farmland were destroyed between 2010 and 2020 due to terrorism and related activities. This destruction has affected the country's food security, increased dependency on food imports, and escalated poverty levels, particularly among rural farming communities.

In response to these security threats, the Nigerian government has made various counterterrorism efforts. Key among these is the enactment of the Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011, amended in 2013, that provides the legal framework for the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of acts

of terrorism. It also created a mechanism for the enforcement and implementation of international standards and obligations to combat terrorism. Furthermore, the government established the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) within the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the Joint Task Force (JTF) consisting of military and paramilitary personnel. These units were equipped and given the mandate to counter terrorism and other insurgency activities.

As part of efforts from 2017 to 2021 towards addressing the menace of armed banditry in the Northwest Nigeria, the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) embarked on several operations such as Operation DIRAN MIKIYA, Operation PUFF ADDER and Operation HARBIN KUNAMA among other operations (Nicholas, 2021). Zamfara and Katsina states governments in the same period initiated an Amnesty Programme for peaceful negotiation with armed bandits to lay down their arms towards peace in the region (Ibrahim, 2021). The Nigerian Army (NA), Nigerian Air Force (NAF) and the NPF counter armed banditry operations in the region led to the killing of over 500 armed bandits, arrest of about 1,200 and destruction of their camps at different locations in the region (Ibrahim, 2021). Furthermore, Zamfara and Katsina State Government's Amnesty programme led to surrendering of about 150 repentant armed bandits and recovery of over 2,500 arms among other items (Ibrahim, 2021). Notwithstanding these efforts, terrorist activities still persist in the region thereby undermining national security in Nigeria. Between 2019 and May 2021, about 50 incidents of armed bandit attacks were recorded in Kaduna, Zamfara and Katsina States, which led to 30 deaths, 60 kidnap incidents, 210 cattle being rustled and about 800 persons displaced (Ibrahim, 2021).

The Nigerian government also promulgated the National Security Strategy (NSS) in 2019. This strategy aims to foster a safe, secure, and prosperous environment for the country's development. It emphasizes a multi-dimensional approach that includes diplomacy, law enforcement, socio-economic development, and military engagement. The NSS also

recognizes the importance of addressing the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy. The implementation of the NSS over the years has seen Nigeria make significant strides in countering terrorism. One of the key achievements was the recapture of territories previously under Boko Haram's control. The government also initiated Deradicalization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (DRR) programs for repentant Boko Haram members, aiming to reintegrate them back into society. In addition, the government has made efforts to improve intelligence gathering, surveillance, and monitoring to prevent and respond to attacks. For instance, the Department of State Services (DSS) has made several successful interventions that have led to the arrest and prosecution of terrorism suspects.

However, the fight against terrorism in Nigeria is far from over. Despite the government's efforts, attacks from Boko Haram, ISWAP, armed banditry and other groups persist. The northwest region continues to reel under the effects of armed banditry and kidnapping. The reasons for this are multi-faceted, ranging from issues with the implementation of policies and strategies, inadequate funding of the military to vast ungoverned spaces that offer insurgents a safe haven. Additionally, there seems to be a lack of a comprehensive approach to addressing the underlying socioeconomic issues fuelling these security challenges. While the NSS acknowledges the importance of addressing these issues, there is still a significant gap between policy and practice. It is instructive to note that, terrorism activities in these states, have brought agricultural activities among others socio-economic factors to a halt, with attendant negative effects on citizens' well-being and national security in Nigeria.

1.2 Research Focus and Sub-Focus

1.2.1 Research Focus

Based on the background of the study, the focus of this research is to examine the defence management of the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN)

and security forces in addressing non-state activities such as terrorism, armed banditry and kidnapping, amongst others, in the Northwestern region in the country.

1.2.2 Research Sub-Focus

The sub-focus of this research is exploring strategies that would address terrorist activities in the Northwest region of Nigeria, particularly in Kaduna, Zamfara and Katsina States. These would involve examining:

- a. The several threats of terrorism or insurgent activities in the Northwest region of Nigeria.
- b. The AFN efforts at military operations in overcoming the threat of terrorism or insurgent activities in the Northwest region of Nigeria.

1.3 Problem Formulation

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) between 2017 and 2021, deployed the military and the NPF to the Northwest region under several operations with codenames such as Operation SHARAN DAJI, Operation DIRAN MIKIYA and Operation PUFF ADDER among others, mainly to curb terrorist activities in the region for enhanced national security (Ibrahim, 2021). These efforts in the same period were accompanied by the establishment of 8 Division of the NA in Zamfara and Katsina States, the suspension of all forms of mining activities by FGN in Zamfara state to control the proliferation of SALWs as well as Zamfara and Katsina states governments amnesty programmes for armed bandits to lay down their arms under an agreed deal that would bring lasting peace in the region for enhanced national security in Nigeria.

These efforts are, however, yet to yield the desired impact, probably due to the efforts of security agencies not being adequately supported by Federal and State Governments' policies, programmes and plans. Other factors could include unmanned border, poor synergy among security agencies and delays in the dispensation of justice, among others, which

have led to continuous attacks by armed bandits in the region with attendant negative effects on citizens' well-being and national security in Nigeria. For instance, on 11 November 2020, about 300 students were abducted at Government Boys Secondary School Kankara in Katsina State, and on 11 March 2021, 39 students were also kidnapped at the College of Forestry and Mechanization at Mando in Kaduna, on 17 April 2021, about 20 students at Green Field University were also abducted in Kaduna State (Ibrahim, 2021). Others include the displacement of over 5,000 people and the rustling of over 1,200 cattle in Zamfara, Katsina and Kaduna States. (Ibrahim, 2021). These incidents have undermined citizens' safety with dire consequences on national security in Nigeria.

It is against this backdrop that the problem formulation is drawn as follows:

- a. What poses the threat of terrorism affecting Nigeria's national security in the Northwest region?
- b. What are the impacts of terrorism in the Northwest region on the national security of Nigeria?
- c. What are the challenges faced by the AFN's military operations in overcoming the threats of terrorism in the northwest region of Nigeria?
- d. What are suggested strategies for military operations that will improve the defence management of the AFN in tackling the threat of terrorism in Northwest Nigeria?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to assess the effects of terrorist activities in the Northwest region of Nigeria, particularly in Kaduna, Zamfara, and Katsina states, on national security in Nigeria. However, the specific objectives of the study are to:

- a. Analyse the threats of terrorism in the northwest region of Nigeria.

- b. Examine the impacts of terrorism in the Northwest region on national security in Nigeria.
- c. Assess the challenges hindering the AFN's military operations in overcoming the threat of terrorism in the northwest region of Nigeria.
- d. Proffer strategies for the military operations of the AFN in tackling the threat of terrorism in Northwest Nigeria.

1.5 Research Benefits

The researcher desires the results of this study to provide benefits, both theoretically and practically, for all parties involved as follows:

1.5.1 Theoretical Benefits

The study would benefit scholars or researchers in the Indonesian Defence University and elsewhere who desire to promote an understanding of defence management in addressing threats of terrorism in the Northwest and national security in Nigeria through the conduct of further research work on the subject matter. It would serve as reference material for future studies in the field of defence science and defence management in addressing terrorism in the Northwest of Nigeria. The study would benefit the general public by adding to the existing body of knowledge on potential threats of terrorism in Northwest Nigeria.

1.5.2 Practical Benefits

This study is aimed at providing a practical guide to Indonesia on the mechanism of terrorism and armed banditry with an intent to give policymakers workable methods to prevent or deal with situations of terrorism and banditry like those being experienced in Northwest Nigeria. It is also believed that the outcome of the study would assist the FGN, State governments of the Northwest region and Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), in establishing programmes and plans to curb potential threats of terrorism in the Northwest region in Nigeria. Other beneficiaries

include the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the Police, the army, the navy, the air force and other security agencies. The study could also assist the relevant stakeholders involved in policy formulation and review towards improving the operations of security agencies in curbing armed banditry. The outcome of the study would assist in improving the performance of armed forces, police as well as other relevant security agencies in curbing potential threats to terrorism. It could also help to improve the synergetic efforts of security agencies with regard to intelligence gathering and sharing during joint operations to curb potential threats of terrorism in the Northwest region of Nigeria for enhanced national security in Nigeria.