

## TERRORISM, HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND GENDER IN AFRICA

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### ABSTRACT

The globe has become flat. Thus a common platform has been created for people of diverse regions, and nationality to interconnect without stress. This has facilitated the efflorescence of trade and commerce, exchange of political ideas and experience. Most important is the ease with which crime against humanity is committed across national and continental borders, and transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) from one place to the other. The effect of these is that soft targets such as children and women are made helpless victims. It was against this backdrop that the United Nations Organizations (UNO) through its Resolutions outlawed crimes against humanity. Regrettably, by the 21st century women are still the prime targets of these inhuman acts. This study, therefore, seeks to examine why terrorism and human trafficking have been on the increase and the remedies needed to abate them. This is a qualitative research, and we relied on the secondary sources for data collection. This includes review of existing literature, official gazettes, magazines, newspapers, visit to Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and the Center for Black Arts and African Culture (CBAAC). It was discovered that the incessant terrorist activities and constant human trafficking are mere reflections of the State's inability to fulfill its primary obligations to the people. We, therefore, recommend that States must purge themselves of their obvious anti-democratic features by ensuring the fulfillment of its primal obligations to the people.

**KEYWORDS:** Gender, The State, Terrorism, Humanity Human Trafficking..

### INTRODUCTION

Globally, terrorism and human trafficking have become visible virus, defying territories' sophisticated security measures. Terrorist impact became remarkable after Al-Qaeda attack on America World Trade Centre and the Pentagon building in September 11, 2001. Since then several countries have had threats and suffered attacks of varying dimensions. Today, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a terrorist organization, has devastated Syria for over four years now.

Human trafficking and smuggling of people across national territories or continents for economic benefits of the smuggler against the will of the smuggled is another phase of social problem. Human trafficking in this sense, is not only a moral problem, but a criminal problem, abuse of individual (human) rights, economic problem; health problem, labour problem and global problem (Nmom, 2003).

According to Fidelis (2010), it is the abhorrent phenomenon called slave trade which was abolished in 1865. That is, human trafficking is simply modern day slavery. The only difference if any, is the form and mode of operation. Indeed, economic benefit is the driving force for human trafficking. The success of human trafficking is dependent on the use of force or violence. This visible nexus between trafficking and terrorism means that both play complimentary role in the survival of each. In these scenario, Africa have had its own share. As a peripheral State, the impact of terrorism is enormous. It is believed that this peripheral attribute exacerbated the infiltration of insurgent sentiments. Being a peripheral State with weak institutions, a significant proportion of its population are neglected, thus are vulnerable groups. It is this gap, which the State is unable or refused to fill, that terrorists filled, which manifest as insurgence.

According to Jubril (2016), Boko Haram is a terrorist group operating in Northern Nigeria, a region populated by illiterates, recruited, trained many followers and substituted the original Islamic teaching to Jihadist ideology which is averse to Western education and modern government. Generally, State failure, is a feature of African states. In this instance, the continent over the years, has become a theatre of diverse violence from either ethnic agitation or political unrest or religious problems.

In recent time, Africa had its own share of terror attacks. We have the Harakat al-shabaab al-Mijahideen (HSM), also called Al-shabaab . Al-shabaab is a salatistJihadis organization, currently operating in East Africa, but have its dominance in Somalia and some parts of Kenya. Boko Haram also called Ahlas-Sunnah lid-Da'wahwa'l-Jihad. It is a rejection of western Education .They occupy the Northern part of Nigeria especially North Eastern , some parts of Niger and Northern Cameroon.In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood also exist, Al-Qaeda operates in Nigeria, Libya and Northern Mali. Similarly Ansar al-Sharia terrorist organization exist in Tunisia and Libya.

Noting the depth of terror attacks, Global terrorism index for 2015 compiled by the Institute for Economic and Peace (IEP) in Dudley (2016) revealed that 29,376 deaths occurred due to terror- related attacks and 274 terrorist groups carried out the act. Out of this ISIS, Boko Haram, Taliban and Al-Qaeda caused about 74% of the deaths. In Africa, the worst hit are Nigeria; Somalia, Egypt and Libya . Libya lone had 432 terrorist incidence (Dudley, 2016). What is remarkable in any terror incidence is that terror attack provide averitable impetus for human trafficking.

Several studies such as the 2011 Global Report on Trafficking; 2014 Global Slave Index, and Fidelis (2010) confirm that women and children are the worst hit. According to 2011 Global Report on Trafficking on persons, of 49% of trafficking victims in 2011, 20% are girls, 18% men and 12 boys. When one add the percentage of both boys and girls, one will get 33% out of 49%. Further probe into Global Slave Index reveal that 106,000 are enslaved in DR. Congo; 834,200 enslaved in Nigeria while 165.8million persons are in some form of slavery in 169 countries. For these victims just like the old slave era, force is a vital instrument of control. In the light of the above, this study therefore seek to examine the gender dimension of terrorism, human trafficking and the extent of human rights abuse .

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Terrorism**

Terrorism has a of plethora definitions. Thus defining it has become a hazardous attempt. However, idealistic and realistic meanings can be considered. According to Thom-Otuya and Ibiamu (2017)

terrorism represent the act that produces fear, terror or death, whether legitimately carried out or not by any individual group or State. The realist on the other hand sees terrorism as attack by any clandestine groups on non-combatants or civilians in order to draw attention by infusing fear in the public to coerce a State from carrying out an action for their objectives Njoku (2011) in Thom-Otuya and Ibiamu (2017).

According to the Nigeria 2011 Terrorism and Money Laundering Act, “a person is said to have committed terrorist act if the person knowingly does or attempts or threaten to do an act preparatory to or in furtherance of an act of terrorism; or assists or facilitates the activities of persons engaged in act of terrorism.” The United Nations General Assembly (resolution 49/60) in Alapiki (2015) define it as criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in a specific type of violence. From the above, terrorism is a specific type of violence. It can be international or domestic. It is perpetuated mainly against civilians. It is motivated by political, religious, ideological and socio-economic objectives. It is a planned and calculated action. The selection of a target is neither spontaneous no random. It is an action intended to produce an impact on a targeted audience (Alapiki, 2015).

### **Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking is simply modern day slavery. It involves transporting and harboring of people for the purpose of either slavery or force labor or servitude (Fidelis, 2010). According to the Economic Community of Central Africa States and Economic Community of West Africa, 2006 Charter on Human Trafficking, the concept means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, accommodation or threat or use of force or other forms of coercion or abduction of fraud or deception or abuse of power or a position of vulnerability of the giving or receiving of payment or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person. In this instance, victims of human trafficking are gotten through coercion, deception and/or abduction. From these, one can deduce that human trafficking is not just an immoral act, but a criminal, economic and by all means, a violation of human rights. It acts as inducement for prostitution. This characteristic underscore why human trafficking is considered not just an illicit and clandestine movement of persons across national borders, but more for economic purposes than any other reasons, for the benefit of those who recruit them. This transition over time, has become phenomenal in developing countries and it involves forceful, exploitative taking of women and children for commercial sex, economic, and crime syndicate as well as well as other illegal activities like force domestic labor.

### **Gender**

Gender, given its root on inequality has attracted the attention of different scholars interest, and this has resulted to many definitions. The World Bank (1995) in Asuru (2017) defined it as any form of relationship between men and women that involves roles assignment with direct or indirect, positive or negative impact on development goals. That is, gender is a concept used in classification of male and female. Simply put gender means social identity construction. From this classification, roles usually culturally based on sex, are given. A spillover of gender role according to Asuru (2017) usually impacts on the distribution of non-material elements like power, knowledge, participation in decision making and health status. In this respect, gender issues are historically and socially constructed and handed down to generations.

### **The Theses**

Over the years, terrorism has become phenomenal especially after September, 2001 incidence in United States. Critical in all terrorist attacks is that defenseless victims are targeted (Stephen, 2003). An X-ray of these victims reveal that women and children mostly minors, are always the primary victims. Thus terrorism is condemned. Coadly (2003) quoting Yasser Arafat, the late Palestinian President clearly stated that,

“No degree of oppression and no level of desperation can ever justify the killing of innocent civilians. I condemn terrorism. I condemn the killing of innocent civilians whether they are Israeli, American or Palestinian.”

The killing of vulnerable elements in the society raises the issue of whether terrorism can be called a just war. The International Crisis Group (2016) using Boko Haram as an example revealed that women and girls are prime victims as most of them are forced to join Boko Haram. Some joined to escape their already deteriorating circumstances; some enslaved while some raped and forced to marry Boko Haram members after undergoing series of sexual abuse. Crisis Group equally revealed that women with such indecent connection or relationship are always discriminated or stigmatized, thus reintegration into the community is difficult. The depth of the problem is that some of the children who are indoctrinated to join Boko Haram have become suicide bombers or child soldiers. In Nigeria, not less than 200 school girls in Chibok were kidnapped, some of these girls on regaining their freedom were either pregnant or are mothers. Because of the increase in Boko Haram attack refugee situation has worsened, getting to breaking point in countries like Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon.

Sex ratio according to United Nations Population Fund(UNPF), United Nations office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs(UNOCHA), World Food Programme(WFP)and Agriculture Organization of United Nation (2016) report have it that women and children make up about 79% of the population of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Nigeria. The same situation exist in Somalia and Kenya. Because of terrorism, most homes (about 70%) in Somalia are female-headed homes. This case has remained because men have been killed in terror wars Human Rights Watch(HRW) report (2010) stated that Al-shabaab imprisoned people and beat them for selling tea. Similarly, forced marriage is a common practice by Al-shabaab. Confirming this, the 2011 United States Trafficking in Persons report noted that Al-shabaab abducted young girls as wives for the leaders, and even keep some of the them as wives and sex slaves, or as a tool for logistics support like gathering of intelligence information.

In some instances Al-shabaab have forcefully married other people’s wives especially civil servants’ wives. For Al-shabaab, such act is a form of punishment for their husband who are working for their enemies; the government. The women who refused were beheaded

<http://www.fet.world.org/docid/4foeb8cd2.htmh>. Retrieved on September 4,2017.

This is in addition to the use of under age children as foot soldiers, human shield during any incursion by government forces and forceful recruitment of young girls for human trafficking. All these are against the International Humanitarian Laws, and the International Covenant on the Rights of the Child(CRC).

## **Terrorism, Human Trafficking and Gender in Africa.**

Terrorism depending on which side of the divide the scholar stands, has diverse meanings. Lodge (1988) observed that it is a strategy, a form of political violence—approximating insurrection, rebellion; anarchy or political protest or revolution. Wilkinson (1988) in Lodge (1988) also identified three types of revolutionary terrorism; sub-revolutionary terrorism and repressive terrorism. The argument is enormous and can continue without end. Irrespective of the typology, terrorism is a violent means of achieving (getting) publicity for causes, the victims of which are usually non-combatants (innocent persons in some sense).

Terrorism is a symptom of dysfunction in the society. It is an activity perpetuated by out-groups or those claiming spurious legitimacy with the intention to act on behalf of a supposedly oppressed group. The medium used to achieve their goal is usually violent means which often times, result to death of people and destruction of property. In some instances people are held hostage against their will to secure their freedoms. The adaptors demand money and other economic or non-economic material bargain. Where these conditions are not met, usually within a short time given by the terrorist, death is possible. Evidence from several terrorist incidence reveal that the weak and vulnerable, mainly women and children, are the worst hit. It was this motif that influenced Boko Haram in April 2014 to raid and kidnap 276 Chibok school girls. However on 13/10/2016, 21 of the girls regained their freedom, thereafter, 52 of them, on 7/5/2017 regained their freedom through swopping of some Boko Haram members in government custody. Some of the girls rescued were either pregnant or suffering varies degrees of illness. Reports from 2011 Global Report on Trafficking; 2014 Global Slave Index and Fidelis (2010) provides deep insight into gender issues and human right violations in terrorism. Fidelis (2010) established that there exist a very close nexus between terrorism, human trafficking and gender problem. He clearly observed that often, the vulnerable and powerless minorities are the primary victims. In his assessment, women and children mostly those from poor socio-economic background, where opportunities for development are limited suffer more.

Similarly, Shelly (2014) stated that there is a link between ISIS, Boko Haram and growing human trafficking in the 21st century. He also observed that there is a phenomenal growth in ISIS and Boko Haram terror activities. Those often trafficked are the weak, mostly women and children. The method used to acquire these articles of trade is kidnapping. In addition, female are used as sex slaves. Shelly (2014) noted that \$25 is the price value for each girl child sold as a slave. In this respect, human trafficking has three dimensions in terrorism: as a source of generating revenue; a vital means of fighting power and as a means of decimating the enemy. These reasons guide Boko Haram's technique as they raid communities in Nigeria, Cameroon and Niger. Beyond these, children especially, mostly under age boys are kidnapped recruited as child soldiers and suicide bombers.

Collean (2007) in a related study established an interface between terrorism, human trafficking, drug and arms. These, according to him have become a plaque threatening Georgia regional security. Of great importance is that women and children are the worst hit. In Africa, terrorists rely heavily on drug trafficking and other organized crimes to finance their terror wars. This nexus deepened violence against women and children. This perhaps, explains why each time violence occur, women and children are raped, some will be forced into marriage against their will, and refusal is simply opting for voluntary death. This circumstance is a leeway to acquiring HIV/AIDS, even those who survive these atrocities live with the stigma for life. These exclude the task of raising children without fathers.

An examination of the state of things in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Nigerian North East due to Boko Haram terrorist attack reveals that 50% of those in the IDPs are women and children. In 2015, the Internally Displaced Monitoring Centre (IDMC) , estimated that 2,152,000 IDPS exist in Nigeria. Out of this, 53% are women, 47% men and more than 56% children. Of this number, more than half are 5 years old children. For these persons, movement to the camp and in the camp is an ordeal; it involve a rigor of long journey to the camp, diseases of diverse forms with poor medical attention in the camp, hunger, no water, no education and no privacy . In support of this, the African Independent Television News (AIT) reported on 11/8/2017 that Boko Haram is the worst in the use of child bombers. The atrocities committed by terrorist organizations contradict the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 212 on Universal Human Rights in Respect to Marriage. Ezeilo (2008) noted that

“No marriage shall be legally entered into without the full consent of both parties consent to be expressed by them in person after due publicity and in the presence of the authority competent to solemnize the marriage and of witnesses as prescribe by law.”

## **CONCLUSION**

Terrorism and human trafficking are complementary evil, the latter, sustain terrorists' economy. The first and very visible victims are women and children, the minority vulnerable group whose rights according to international standard are violated. As a means of sustaining their war, terrorist use women and children as vital article of trade. Some who are kidnapped become their wives; some sexually abused; some become a tool for negotiation from state authorities for money or to regain the freedom of their colleagues who were arrested by government, some as suicide bombers. Indeed these acts contradicts all known human rights conventions.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Terrorism, human trafficking, and the attendant gender issues therein are surmountable. The first therapy is transparent and responsible government. This should start with respect for the sanctity of the ballot box; free and fair election which will produce popular leadership for development. Such leadership will produce inclusive growth, solve development challenges and unemployment. The beauty of such leadership is that apart from the fact that it will significantly distant itself from corruption and dictatorship, it will promote equality in education; respect for human beings and enlightened populace with strong commitment to collective will. It is the absence of quality leadership and lack of a transparent electoral system, and the attendant state of human insecurity that makes it possible for terrorism and human trafficking to rise..

Therefore, invaluable premium should be placed on investment in quality education. Terrorism and human trafficking are social problems not biological. Man at birth is a table rasa; an empty script that need to be filled with vital virtues that will translate him/her from an animal to a human being. Education helps to properly build human beings. Because the society has failed in this, terror groups have filled the vacuum with terror ideology. In fact the consequence of no proper investment in education is the current large scale violence, human trafficking and gross human rights violation of vulnerable groups. With proper investment in education, there will be popular empowerment, and society will produce the needed manpower that will provoke human development , terrorism and human trafficking will gradually wither away.

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