

TERRORISM IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: A BANE TO HUMAN DIGNITY AND VALUES (A PHILOSOPHICAL INTERROGATION)

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Abstract

This paper examines the challenge of terrorism in northern Nigeria from a philosophical viewpoint. It brings to the fore the dehumanizing and adverse effects of terrorism on the economy, security, development and internal peace in the North. It argues that much more than other regions Northern Nigeria is overwhelmed by this menace that has displaced citizens, rendering them international refugees and internally displaced persons even in their own country. The goal of the paper is to attain the rectification and restoration of a peaceful social order within that axis. Thriving on the conviction that terrorism with its potentiality of monumental and even irreversible harm to humanity is driven by strong ideologies, religious, political/social, the paper conceptually interrogates these ideologies as well as the terrorism question in general. In highlighting the evil, harmful, disruptive nature and outcomes of terrorism in northern Nigeria and its inherent threats to human dignity and values, it projects possible remedial measures. The work is mainly a conceptual and descriptive analysis of some relevant causal factors or ideologies occasioning terrorism, such as ideological alienation, commodification of values, egoism and narcissism in political governance and dehumanization among others. This is done with a view to showing the life-threatening nature of terrorism and suggest the need for an alternate set of human and humane values for a more stable, viable and progressive developmental socio-political order in Nigeria.

Key words: terrorism, northern Nigeria, values, human dignity, sociopolitical order

Introduction

Terrorism in Nigeria is an enigma of some sort. It is arguably one of, if not the major problem facing the country. Terrorism in Nigeria has led to the death of thousands of people and the destruction of properties worth billions of naira. Its effect on the economy, security, development and internal peace is alarming to say the least. Terrorism and particularly terrorist tendencies is expressed in such diverse forms as; criminality, organized crime, banditry, jungle justice, impunity, brigandage, land grabbing, civil disturbances, hooliganism and thuggish attitudes in political and tribal affairs. At a higher and more global scale, terrorism is further exhibited in such forms like hijacking of air planes, cars, trains, buses, ships, kidnap, mauling, intimidation, torture and assassination of people, bombing of private and public buildings such as markets, malls, airports, schools, hotels, offices, etc. The hostage taking of prominent or valuable persons for ransom or leverage is a key feature of terrorism at any level of operation local or global. What really seems to distinguish terrorism from other types of criminal behaviour is its politically charged tendency and substantially disruptive

nature. Nigeria, especially the northern region suffers this problem to a great degree.

Terrorism has brought so much destruction, disorder and vulnerability to the Northern region and even the country at large. Thousands of human lives and billions of dollars' worth of properties are continuously being lost to the inhuman activities of terrorism. Lots of persons and communities have been displaced and they have become international refugees and even domestic refugees in their own country. It is therefore necessary to conceptually interrogate the terrorism question in the north so as to be able to attain the rectification and restoration of a peaceful social order within that polity.

This article focuses on a philosophical analysis of the above topic by taking its lead from the traditional way that philosophers have tried to study terrorism using a conceptual clarification or exhibition analysis of some related concepts that illustrate the depravity and vileness of terrorism. To show this untenable nature of terrorism as evil, some ethical correlates such as suffering, cruelty, wickedness, and harm are illustrated by descriptive and empirical account. The idea is to use human values especially some ethical values (human dignity, justice,) and or social values (cooperation for the common good, dialogue, peace,) to show why the large scale disruption associated with terrorism is not acceptable in any stable, viable and progressive human society. So the paper is examining the nature of terrorism as a moral and social evil leading to insecurity. Specifically, it is interrogating the evil nature and outcomes of terrorism in northern Nigeria, as threats human dignity and values.

The philosophical method used in this work is conceptual analysis and a touch of descriptive analysis or empirical account, which helps to simplify, clarify and analyse some of the relevant concepts occasioning terrorism, such as ideological alienation, commodification of values, egoism and narcissism in political governance and dehumanization among others. This is done with a view to showing the life-threatening nature of terrorism and the need for an alternate set of human and humane values for a more stable, viable and progressive developmental socio-political order in Nigeria. This topic is worthy of study or justified because even though a good number of works exist on terrorism as well as terrorism in Nigeria, yet, this article is focused on a philosophical study of terrorism in northern Nigeria, with a bent towards human dignity and value. That precisely is what this paper intends to achieve. This paper thus will proceed in this conceptual clarification of the concept terrorism, the interrogation of the different terrorist groups in the North and their ideologies, the conceptual interrogation of the conditions/ideologies that drive terrorism generally in the north, finally the evaluation and conclusion which also project possible remedial measure.

1. Clarification of The Concept Terrorism

It is important to kick off with some much needed conceptual clarification of a few related concepts that are more often than not associated with terrorism; Banditry as one of such, encompasses rape, pillaging, killing, armed robbery, kidnapping, attacks against agents of the state and the entire gamut of violent crime and lawlessness. Banditry terrorizes a population but banditry is common criminality writ large, though on a large scale. It is crucial to note that banditry may not have a direct disruptive power at the State level or a political agenda. That is the key difference between banditry and terrorism.

Basically, terrorism is a violent strategy using a symbolic act to attain a political goal. Terrorism embraces all of the above associated with banditry but it is specially the promotion of an anti-state agenda such as insurrection, insurgency, secession, decimation of an existing state's government and infrastructure, declaration of a sovereign state within an existing state among others. Terrorism construed conceptually is a brutal, symbolic, politically motivated act that can cause massive destruction of life. Terrorism is a politically and /or an ideologically motivated violent act or set of acts that have social/political undertones. Most times, it has to do with atrocious mutilations and torture, intimidation and revolt involving the open use of arms, destroying buildings and displacing people, putting pressure on state resources and institutions such as the Police, Fire service and other health and emergency services as well as causing financial earthquake of core businesses. Let us now take a look at some terrorist groups dominant in northern Nigeria starting with *Boko Haram*.

2. Conceptualizing Different Terrorist Associations In The Northern Nigeria And Their Ideologies

(i) Boko Haram

Boko Haram is the most recent and most popular of the different terrorist groups in northern Nigeria. The exact date of the emergence of the Boko Haram sect is mired in controversy with conflicting dates given by different scholars. It's origin is nebulous, but can be faintly back dated to 1995 under one Lawan Abubakar but surfaced prominently in 2002 with the emergence of Mohammed Yusuf who was killed extra judicially by the police in 2009."¹ Historically, the Boko Haram group is known by the Nigerian state to have existed since 1995 under the name of *Ahlusunna wal'jama ah hijra*. And according to Oviasogie, "the sect has subsequently flourished under various names like the Nigerian Taliban, *Yusufiyyah* sect, and Boko Haram (literally meaning western education is a sin)."² As the name indicates, the group is opposed to what it perceives as western based penetration that acts as threat to orthodox values, beliefs and customs among Muslims in northern part of Nigeria. The ideology of the group is grounded in the practice of orthodox Islam. Orthodox Islam in their belief and interpretation abhors western education and western system of administration. And this explains the name Boko Haram, meaning western education is a sin.

The first time Boko Haram took up arms against state security apparatus was in 2003 when it strongly attacked police stations and government buildings in Yobe state killing several people and destroying properties. Such type of attacks was also carried out in Bama and Gworza police stations in Borno state. And since then, the sect's activities have spread to a total of five northern states, namely Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Taraba and Kano plus the federal capital territory Abuja.³

Politically, the goal of Boko Haram is to create an Islamic state in the 12 northern states of Nigeria, with the plan of subsequently spreading to the rest of the country. It is a form of extreme Islamic fundamentalism. "Boko Haram violence has been mainly motivated by the sect's dichotomization between secularism and Islamic values."⁴ Democracy is alien to the sect because their leader succinctly stated that he will not support a government whose constitution was not based on the Quran.⁵ In fact Boko Haram and some other terrorist groups beyond the religious-ideological outlook that they project are also largely products of wide spread social economic factors like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, corruption, etc. It is clear that "poverty and ignorance are fertilizers for

insurgency anywhere and in any age. When they combine and cloak themselves in religious, ethnic, or other partisan robes, they become ready incentive for the most brutal and reckless violence.”⁶

A very high percentage of those living in the northern part of Nigeria are poor. Persistent high levels of poverty in the country seem to have become a predominantly northern phenomenon. The poverty index has increased over the years and the northern part of Nigeria which is worst hit by the menace of terrorist has the poorest states in Nigeria. It was observed that “of the ten states with the highest incidence of poverty eight were in the far northern zone. These include Jigawa with 97 percent; Kebbi 89.7 percent, Kogi 86.6 percent, Bauchi 86.8 percent, Kwara 85.2 percent, Yobe 83.3 percent, Zamfara 80.7 percent, Gombe 77 percent, Sokoto 76.8 percent and Adamawa 71.7 percent.”⁷ Corruption is another factor that has made terrorism to thrive in Nigeria because there is an institutionally dysfunctional state in place so extremist teachings and uncouth behaviours are easily accepted and displayed because deprivation and injustices are rife⁸ in such a way that religious demagoguery, sectarianism, radicalization, messianic theocracy and other negative uses of religion are endemic.

Religious terrorism, as associated with Boko Haram seems to be a paradigm that tries to link up religion and violence. It has an idealized attachment to the past hence it is backward looking and so anti-democratic and anti-progressive. It is also unconstrained in its use of violence as its mandate is not earthly. The purist and intolerant nature of *boko haram* is illustrative of the *Salafi* orientation. The other worldly view of things makes their antagonisms and hatred transcendental, implacable and irreconcilable. It is absolutist and self-justifying and so does not lend itself to logic of doubt or self-criticism or the search for alternatives or compromise. Another character of the group and others like it, is that it is driven by endemic and fundamental educational backwardness, poverty, deteriorating social services, social injustices,⁹ economic deprivations, corruption and poor governance,¹⁰ unemployment, misery, untold hardship, disenchantment with the Nigerian state.¹¹ There are splinter or related groups that operate like Boko Haram and such include the Ansaru, Nigerian Taleban, Yobe Taliban,¹² among others, and these are equally driven by massive illiteracy, discrimination, individual and group grievances.¹³ Boko Haram is also called the Nigerian Taliban due to its preference for Taliban dress code, insignia and tactics.¹⁴ Next is the group known as Maitatsine.

Maitatsine Terrorist Tendencies In The North Central And North Eastern Nigeria
Another group is the Maitatsine sect. The Maitatsine movement was led by Muhammadu Marwa, a Cameroonian residing in Kano who opposed the Nigerian state. Maitatsine is Hausa word meaning “the one who damns” According to Falola “in 1980, the Maitatsine crisis claimed thousands of lives (the government conservatively estimated the death toll at just over four thousand) and caused millions of Naira in property damage.”¹⁵ The rise of the Maitatsine as an extremist religious cult or community is connected to a combination of factors that Falola has described as economic decline, the poor seeking means to survive, exploitation of vulnerable followers by their leaders, the collusion and loss of regulatory powers by traditional chiefs, degeneracy and limitations associated with the political exigencies of the times, power rivalries among security forces and politicians and bureaucratic inefficiency.¹⁶ More than anything else, rise of the extremism that the Maitatsine epitomized can be explained to be the end result of state’s nonchalance towards it and tolerance of the illegality of the segregation of the group from the rest of the

society. The sect ultimately became “popularly associated with violence, they were hostile to non-members whom they harassed or even kidnapped. The Maitatsine adherents were known to have raped and killed innocent people.”¹⁷ Another terrorist group is discussed below.

(iii) Nigerian Taliban And Yobe Taliban In Northern Nigeria

Nigerian Taliban or Yobe Taliban on its part is traceable to Afghanistan as its root. From there it attained an international dimension gradually filtering into other nations beyond Afghanistan. It seems that the government of Nigeria was aware of the time of its infiltration into the country. A renowned extremist fundamentalist religious scholar who was believed to have escaped from either Sudan or Afghanistan was then harbored by a Nigerian, Musa in Katsina.¹⁸ Not quite long afterwards the devastating activities of this group became manifest in the country. It was also observed that an Islamic group aided by some Nigerians. Damagun, Inuwa and Babayo at the time was recruiting Nigerians for training in Mauritania.¹⁹ The self-styled Yobe Taliban which also emerged in 2002 was made up of Nigerian citizens mainly university students, workers and former security personnel who initially lived peacefully with their neighbors but following a crisis with the Zagi-Biriri community in Yobe state they relocated to Kanama near the Nigeria -Niger border. They were led by Alli a contemporary of Yusuf and member of Boko haram. Alli’s faction broke away and migrated to become Yobe Taliban after a disagreement. It was here the Nigeria Police Mobile Force first engaged them and then the army was brought in to destroy them. The escapees returned to Yusuf’s faction of Boko Haram.²⁰ The above analysis allows a clear view that terrorism is endemic in northern Nigeria. In the next section we show that other terrorist tendencies abound and pose a threat to human dignity in northern Nigeria and the corporate existence of Nigeria as a political entity.

Sundry Terrorist Tendencies and Activities in Northern Nigeria

It is pertinent to note that before Boko Haram there had been cases of massive loss of lives, displacement of people and destruction of infrastructure as a result of religious violence. Between 1980 and 1998, there were 16 major incidents nation-wide and the putative causes of these crises are quite instructive to students of conflicts and social studies. The desire of the Maitatsine group to be a law unto themselves for instance led to 1,200 deaths, at least 5,913 displaced persons and properties worth millions of naira destroyed across Kano, Kaduna, Borno, Gombe, Adamawa formerly Gongola and Bauchi. A Federal College of Education in Kafanchan was destroyed because of a sermon by a Christian pastor who converted from Islam. There were religiously motivated killings arising from these other causes; the relocation of a market, disagreement over the use of a mosque, conducting of an evangelical crusade by a German preacher, desecrating the Quran- the Muslim holy book, arrest and killing of religious leaders in the north by the security forces, imposition of Christian religious studies in northern schools among others.²¹

A further brief statistical summary shows that; from 1999 to 2003 more than 10,000 persons were killed in religious violence in Nigeria. From September 2001 to May 2004, 53,787 persons were killed in Plateau state alone because of religious violence. There were at least 187 ethno-religious violence from May 1999 to April 2009.²² Again the causes of some of these incidents may be enlightening to students of politics and society.

There were religiously motivated killings arising from; Muslim fundamentalists attack on churches- 14 churches destroyed, reprisal killings by south westerners and easterners whose kin were killed in northern Nigeria 450 persons killed, the introduction and implementation of Sharia law- 3000 killed in Kaduna, the US invasion of Afghanistan – 150 persons killed, a publication in the This Day newspaper- 250 persons killed, dispute over the location of a central mosque – 17 persons killed, a cartoon published in Denmark- 50 killed, 30 churches, 200 shops, 50 houses and 100 vehicles destroyed, a pregnant female teacher killed by her secondary school students for preventing fraud by students using the Quran to cheat in examinations, controversial results of a local elections- 700 persons killed, thousands displaced, local disagreement within a housing estate in Bauchi-11 persons killed, 400 houses burnt, 1600 persons displaced.²³ This trend merely continued with Boko Haram and others. In 2003, the intolerant sect attacked and killed 30 persons for simply refusing to join the group. In 2004, the group ambushed and killed 60 policemen at Kala-Balge on Lake Chad.²⁴

A summary shows that between July 2009 to March 2010 there were six incidents across the north that killed 1318 persons and displaced 44,500 persons in Bauchi, Borno, Yobe, Kano and Plateau states, with very high frequencies of occurrence in Bauchi and Plateau states.²⁵ Over three years- 2010-2013 more than 3500 persons died as a result of the group's actions. The violence of July 2009 alone in which the Boko Haram leader Mohammed Yusuf was extra judicially killed by the police claimed the lives of at least 1000 persons. The violence spread to six northern states- Borno, Bauchi, Gombe, Yobe, Kano and Katsina. In Borno alone, 500 members of the group were killed by the security forces, in all 3500 persons were internally displaced, 1264 children orphaned, 392 women were widowed as well as 28 policemen killed, 5 prison warders, many soldiers, 48 buildings, 1 court, 3 schools, 12 churches were destroyed. In 2010 the group reemerged under Shekau to destroy Maiduguri prison releasing over 700 inmates, bombed Jos killing 80 people, attacking and destroying police stations, banks, military facilities, churches, mosques, schools, higher institutions.²⁶ From the above, we can see that there is a real and serious issue. The next section examines some causes of terrorist tendencies in northern Nigeria such as ideological alienation, commodification of values, egoism and narcissism in political governance and dehumanization. This discussion will thereafter highlight the imperative a new way of organizing the Nigerian sociopolitical order.

4. Conceptualizing Some Key Ideologies\ Causal Roots of Terrorism In Northern Nigeria

(i) Ideological Alienation

An ideology refers to a set of closely related beliefs or ideas or even attitudes characteristic of a group or community. Within socio-political discourse, it connotes values such as quality of life, and the distribution of goods and services, among others. Better still, ideologies in a more positive sense, refer to a constellation of ideas as to the constituents of the good society.²⁷ An ideology is important for every society and its aim is to provide a theoretical framework for socio-political action. There is a focus here on appraising ideology, specifically religious ideologies. A religious ideology in the same line of thought will connote or refer to beliefs, values and practices associated with a particular religion. Accordingly, religious ideologies shape world views, moral values and behaviour of adherents and influence their attitudes towards the socio political order.

Deviant religious ideologies are bedrocks to the rise of religious extremism and consequently terrorism. Religious extremism or fanaticism is an “intense sense of ideological fervour accompanied by highly focused and sustained sets of activities that express the devotion of one or more persons to their particular belief systems.”²⁸ Some key features of religious extremism /fanaticism include; “monastic seclusion of members, the extended proselytisation of non-members, the vilification of outsiders as sinners, the criminalisation of non-compliant persons, and the eradication of designated enemies.”²⁹ Many terrorist activities in Northern Nigeria thrive under this religious atmosphere. More often than not the roots of the many sects associated with terrorist tendencies are traceable to this extremist religious atmosphere. A sect operates as a non-state actor that is small gang of human beings that often pursues an agenda different from that of the majority of the members of society. It forms itself as a faction fractured out of the body of the large group and has its own beliefs and objectives- ideology.

Nigeria being the broader umbrella of the case study is a clear instance of a country that has been compromised by parochial objectives and ideologies. Religious and even ethnic ideologies take precedence over the national interest and ideology. For many a scholar and thinkers this is so because the national question of integration and nationhood remains unresolved. As such there is an ideological dimension to the terror issue in Nigeria. Any deviant ideology ordinarily is combated by stopping its emergence and interdicting its channels of dissemination and recruitment. But contrarily such a measure is not being effectively explored because the Nigerian state promotes marginality due to its institutionalised ways of alienation, exploitation, repression, dehumanization and inequality of workers and aborigines. And of course needless to say that inequality and inequity breed groups of aggrieved, frustrated and vulnerable people who may become a threat to themselves and others. The ripple effect is the extremism, hate speech, prejudice, racism and alienation, xenophobic and sundry discriminatory practices that abound.

The point being established is that when an ideology is not inclusive; it is exclusive, it creates a closed community such as a cabal, sect, cult or religiously motivated terrorist group then alienation sets in. Alienation is the feeling of estrangement, the idea that one has been excised or excommunicated or exiled and this can happen from both ways whereby a society can alienate a person or group or that person or group can alienate himself or herself from the society. The results are usually the same because people or institutions lose touch with one another. Different people start doing whatever they feel is right. This is more so with religiously driven terrorism that promotes fanaticism, extremism and fundamentalism in persons and groups. Terrorism and terrorist tendencies are perpetrated by such persons or groups who feel that their ideas, ways or views are superior to those of others. Such persons do not offer logically cogent reasons for their actions and thoughts, but use brute force, terrorization and intimidation to cow, kill and torture others to abide by their dictates. So the *modus operandi* of terrorism is siege mentality, cult of personality, sectarianism, cultic following, intolerance and theocratic inclinations among others.

Commodification of values

Values are things that are desirable, choices or things that are of interest to a person or people.³⁰ Human beings live by values or things that are important or desirable to them. Such things or values may not always be beneficial. But when something or a value is altogether of benefit, desirable and important to man then it becomes a human value. The constellation of human values that puts humanity first; “agrees” that self-perseveration and life-promoting behavior is primary to the survival of all societies. Society requires moral and democratic values that facilitate the realisation of a better quality or standard of life in the society. Certain values for instance, human dignity, right, liberty, etc., are necessary to achieve an organized system of human existence.

Human values and their merits are upheld and sustained by arguments that justify the need for their existence or usefulness. The question for instance may arise as to why human beings should encourage values like truth, peace, excellence, fairness, equity, civility, rule of law, respect for others’ dignity and accomplishments and so on. And rightly this is justifiably so because these are attributes /qualities that embody the search for peace and progress of all humanity and as such ought to be the focus of every human effort or endeavor at the international, continental and national levels as they are life promoting values. Human values therefore are intrinsic values that should be upheld as “sacred” in any given world. Contrarily, institutionalized inequality and inequity particularly in the northern axis as our case study, has created a huge class of poverty stricken populace such that with little inducement these values are compromised. What ordinarily would have been intrinsic values, with poverty and deprivation becomes susceptible to *commodification*. Commodification of values is the construct of this study to buttress how human values are compromised for pecuniary or social benefits particularly in the north for reasons of poverty. Poverty can be of income wealth, material, mental or spiritual type. For Thakur, “poverty can be an incubator of terrorism.”³¹ The terrorist leaders who are often influential and wealthy people find their members or followers among the poor, marginalized people in the society, who are then indoctrinated and end up as terrorist foot soldiers. As such, “...despair, discontent provides fertile grounds to would-be terrorists.”³² In Nigeria, especially northern Nigeria, there is a high unemployment rate, poor ratio of per capita income of less than a dollar per day, lack of adequate infrastructure, high rate of corruption at all levels of government easily explains the rising incidence of terrorism in that part of the country.³³ Many terrorist activities are executed by the Almajiri. These Almajiris are a large army of unemployed youths roaming the streets paying their dues of discipleship by begging and scavenging and who are prepared to engage in any violence for a fee. Wealthy terrorists have exploited their social state to commit acts of terrorism.³⁴ However, poverty thesis is not all about the causal factors of terrorism given that some terrorists are in fact from the wealthy or upper class in the society.³⁵ Terrorism and terrorist tendencies are anti-human values or antithetical to human survival and preservation at the collective level.

Egoism and narcissism in political governance

At the heart of morality as a set of personal or social rules for establishing right and wrong conduct for the harmonization of interests, is the injunction against harming others.³⁶ It is on this basis that the question of the need for morality exhumes the age-long problem of egoism. The question of the need for morality continues to dominate the controversy between the exponents of egoism and altruism.³⁷ Egoism holds that morality should serve the interest of the self and that the goal of a person's action should be his own self-interest. In effect, egoism holds that man should not only seek his own interest in everything he does, but that he should act morally only if he has something to benefit from such an arrangement. However, some important questions arise from the attempt to justify morality on the basis of egoism. Can self-interest, self-centeredness and selfishness be a genuine basis for enduring morality?

It seems that a strictly egoistic moral life will not be conducive to personal and social morality. It may in fact be antithetical to the demands of morality, because the promotion of self-interest as the directing moral rule will elicit that the goal of harmonising conflicting interests is largely defeated. Only confusion can be the lot of any society founded strictly on egoistic principles of morality. Egoism holds that man should not only seek his own interest in everything he does, but that he should act morally only if he has something to benefit. In a sense, egoism when practiced by a group will reflect in many adverse ways including isolation, intolerance, domination and discrimination which remain the hall marks of ethnicity or group based egoism. A social order is easily threatened by the antagonism and restiveness of dominant or provincial or splinter ethnic and religious groups that have put their directing principles and values on egoism. Egoism when taken to the extreme, leads to narcissism or excessive self-centeredness. A person or group feels that everything must be about him or it alone. "Others should go and die". Such inordinate greed and ambition is what leads to corruption and the ripple effect of corruption is deprivation, exploitation and social injustice which ultimately leads to agitations and sometimes of violent kind and even terrorism. Corrupt practices instigating deprivation and marginalization can trigger terrorism. Also terrorism is a form of corrupt behavior that refuses to take into consideration the rights, dignity and well-being of other human beings and interests.

Corruption here is understood as the violation of established rules for personal gain and profit; "an anti-social behaviour conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms, and which undermines the capacity of authorities to improve the living conditions of the people."³⁸ Corruption is the abuse of public office for private gains; Public office is abused for private gain when an official accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe. It is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantages or profit. Public office can also be abused for personal benefit even if no bribery occurs, through patronage and nepotism, the theft of state assets, or the diversion of state resources,³⁹ political oppression, the weakness of public institutions ineffective public governance and ethnic conflicts.⁴⁰

Within Nigeria's democracy, corruption ensures the prevalence of god-fatherism, ethnic domination, money politics, distraction and alienation of the legislature making them distant from the people they are representing due to pecuniary gains. Corruption among the tiers of the legislature-

the National Assembly NASS have obstructed this strategic body from intervening meaningfully in the daily concerns and social justice of the represented. There is also a lack of political, moral and financial independence of the Judiciary as an arm of government, which thus denies justice to the aggrieved and occludes established means for seeking redress. Needless to say that the prolonged delays in judicial activities, delay of justice or absence of efficient mechanism for moral redress are enabling grounds that aid terrorist to escape justice.

Other gaps in the character and effectiveness of Nigeria's democracy are due to the side effects of corruption. All of these oil the wheel of terrorism at different levels. These could include the general inefficiency in public service delivery, the under-funding of government agencies, a dominant role of the politicization of ethnicity as a directing principle of public affairs and also a general citizens' dissatisfaction with gross disparities in the standard or quality of life of the rich, middle class and the poor. These put differently is the reality of the bad government or governance of the day which is a major causal factor to the high terrorism index. The government of a society ought to ensure that everyone is responsible and committed within a social environment that is secure and safe under the rule of law. This obviously is not the case. Nigeria contends with the problem of bad governance which poses obstacle to tackling terrorism. Tackling terrorism requires handling the causal factors such as the social and economic factors especially as earlier noted; poverty, inequality, discrimination and marginalization among others. But with the governance order of the day thriving on narcissism and egoism where many are perceived or treated as second class citizens in their own country,⁴¹ the government itself has become the strong clogs on the wheels of counter terrorism mechanism. The submission is that a strictly egoistic, narcissistic moral life particularly as experienced in governance generally in the polity today is not conducive to "social morality" and in fact may be antithetical to the anti-terrorism crusade.

(iv) Dehumanization

In the ethical, political and social spheres Nigeria is beset by the problem of a negative dominant social paradigm (DSP) of hatred, intolerance, the abuse of human rights, dehumanization, exploitation, authoritarianism, poverty and oppression. This watering down of human dignity and the value of human life often leads to tension, violent conflicts, wars, disrespect for others, hate, irredentism, intolerance, disdain for others creeds and outlooks. This is the issue of dehumanization that exists and is easily seen in the selective humanism associated with class distinctions. The teleology of dehumanization is based on exploitation, disempowerment, lack of rule of law and structural discrimination are its core negative values.⁴² These features are easily seen for instance, in the hegemonic domination or might is right in politics, bad governance of African rulers arising from a political culture of neo-colonial statist militarism and other strategies of marginalization particularly political and economic discrimination. Under a dehumanizing system, all human beings are not considered equal ontologically and socially, hence there is deprivation and dissension that is always a ready-trigger for terrorism. Certain problematic ideologies promote marginality due to their established modes/features of alienation, exploitation, repression and inequality thus breeding a

group of aggrieved, frustrated and vulnerable people who may become a threat to themselves and others. Dehumanization therefore denies that all human beings are equal by virtue of a common human nature and should therefore be equal under the law as well as receive equal opportunities under the rule of law and social justice. Dehumanization allows for the values that makes a human being truly so to be eroded or vitiated. One way that human beings are easily dehumanized is through the abuse or denial of human rights.

Human rights are those inalienable rights of the human person which cannot be infringed upon by any individual or a state or which cannot be denied of a person. They are defined as 'rights' which all persons everywhere and at all times equally have by virtue of being moral and rational creatures. Human rights are basically rights which inhere in every human person by virtue of common humanity. The human person is said to be abused or dehumanized when this inalienable right is violated and or not protected by the law. In this connection, human rights are both natural and universal. Human rights may be confirmed or crystallized by positive law or legal instruments. The idea of human rights is a highly contested category subject to diverse interpretations. Yet, basic elements that comprise human rights are rights that enable man to realize himself. To talk about 'right' in human right is to say that such claims or guarantees can be 'exact' as something one is entitled to or invoked. *The Constitution Of The Federal Republic Of Nigeria. Chapter IV of 1979 and 1999*, lists the following as human rights: right to life; right to human dignity; right to personal liberty; right to private and family life; right to freedom from discrimination; right to fair hearing; right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; right to freedom of expression; right to peaceful assembly and association; right to freedom of movement and right to acquire and own moveable property. Beyond this *The United Nations Declaration of Universal Human Rights of 1948 contains 30 Articles* cataloguing what are the rights of a human person or society. The articles clearly focus on the concern for fellow human beings and clearly raised issues about positive and negative rights, mainly on the issue of freedoms, and the link between these rights and specific forms of social order. The question that arises is, is human rights in a democracy different from that in communism or tyranny? It is assumed that a human society that respects freedom and rights of humans is most likely to foster peace and development economically.⁴³ Nigeria faces serious human rights challenges due to its approach to the rule of law and social justice. Nigeria's human rights profile or portfolio looks bleak, given the country's colonial past, socio-political dynamics of multi-ethnicity, resource distribution issues and multi-religious experience. Examples of human rights violations in Nigeria include extra-judicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention by government agencies and non-state actors. These issues raise serious human rights concerns, and the possibilities of domestic and international protections.⁴⁴ Abuse of human rights within a polity or put differently dehumanization has multifaceted consequences. It's adjudged to be one of the fundamental causes of terrorism or terrorist tendencies. Victims of human rights abuses sometimes do not consider it reasonable to recourse back to the same state institutions for redress when their rights and dignity was primarily violated by same institutions; the police institution for instance. Such victims

may seek revenge through terrorist activities against the state and regrettably even against innocent citizens. Human right abuse is therefore an ill wind that does no good to anyone.

The wrongness of terrorism under this context is such that while avenging an abuse, it necessarily violates the most fundamental of others, the right to be treated as human beings. We are now in a better position to offer some arguments and solutions to the problem of, and causes of terrorism in northern Nigeria.

5. Conclusion

This paper has been a conscious effort to conceptually interrogate the causal root of terrorism in Northern Nigeria and the ideologies that drive it. This interrogation brought to the fore the fact that Northern Nigeria contends with such violence as terrorism today because some basic social and human values are being or have been relegated and replaced with some narcissistic, egoistic and inhuman ideologies and values. The paper strongly contends that unless there is a conscious effort towards reorientation and actions to the contrary the situation might remain the same. To this end, it becomes very expedient for the paper that the rightful humane and human values must be brought to bear within the polity so as to curb the tendencies towards terrorism in the Northern axis and accordingly achieve the needed peaceful social order. The submission of Ujomu and Bature is very instructive in this regard. They argued that the rightful social human and humane values are panaceas for resetting a troubled violent social order. They argued that such shared human values which include the desire for self-preservation, basic human freedom and wellbeing,⁴⁵ are values that drive the quest for peace, prosperity and progress among human beings. They argued that human beings live by values or things that are important or desirable to them, for instance, the pursuit of life-promoting thoughts and actions.⁴⁶ They argued that the purpose of human and humane values is to promote humane, compassionate and productive interaction and interrelations between human beings using rules of cooperation, communication and compassion as directing principles. As such for them, flowing from this line of thought it logically follows that when human values of human dignity, freedom and right are upheld for what they are in any polity, human life and dignity will be better respected, preserved and protected. This paper agrees no less given that the other side to such empathy and respect for human life and dignity is the violence and terrorism predicament of northern Nigeria today.

In this same line of thought, the optimism of this paper for the possibility of a remediation to this distorted violent social order is rooted in the fundamental presupposition that the human species and society can survive and thrive when life-promoting actions are separated from life-threatening actions. While the former, which are acts that promote life, are approved then the latter, which are acts that undermine life are prohibited and punished. This paper is of the opinion that there must be conscious effort to expunge from the sociopolitical and even from the religious arena within the northern axis, ideologies and values that undermine life and human dignity. This is realizable by using the means of education and democracy that is laced with increased critical reasoning and rationality. Critical reasoning as emphasized here will help decipher the right ways to use ethnicity and religion as key and positive features of human social and political existence. It (critical thinking) will help expose the illogicality of negative tendencies of extremism, tyranny, demagoguery, intolerance, hate, terrorism, disobedience to the rule of law, anachronism and other socially disruptive vices. It will accentuate the need to develop a more intelligent view of life or cosmological disposition understood as a view of human society or the universe. The people of northern Nigeria particularly sponsors and

perpetuators of these heinous crimes need to become more inquisitive, critical, and accommodative of other people's views and open to new ideas. Once the northern sociopolitical order is encouraged to rest on these social, human and humane values and rightful democratic and educational foundations, then, a new culture of humanism can emerge for combatting social vices such as terrorist tendencies.

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