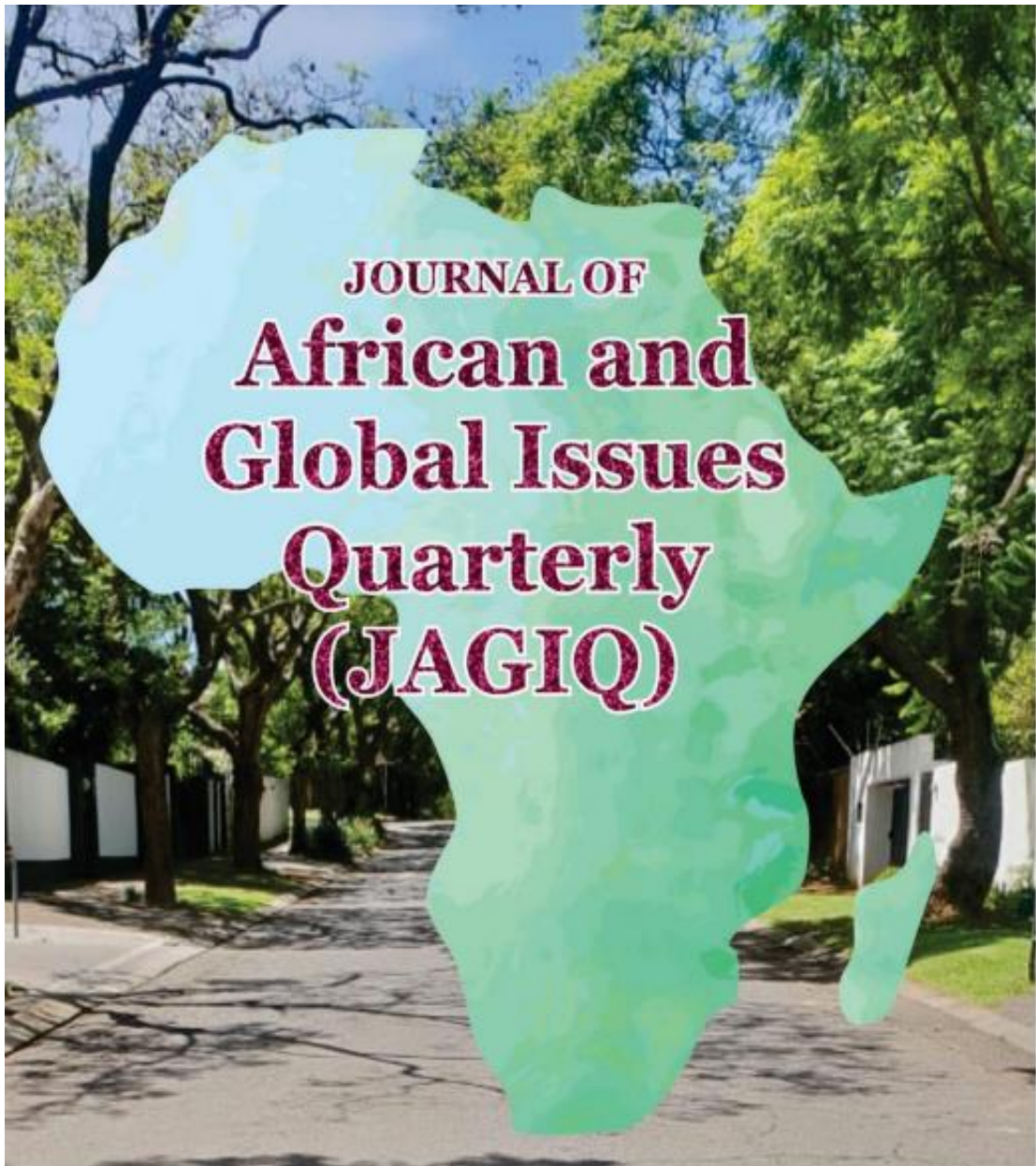




ISSN: 2709-8478 (PRINT)
2710-0073 (ONLINE)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69778/2710-0073/2026/7.2/EN>

Editorial Note:

Strengthening Accountability, Confronting Violence, and Reimagining Security in Africa

This Special Issue of African and Global Issues Quarterly arrives at a critical juncture. Across Africa, nations grapple with interconnected crises: the erosion of public trust in financial governance, the devastating rise of organised violence among youth, the persistent marginalisation of vulnerable populations, and the enduring legacy of colonial and neocolonial institutions that continue to shape contemporary realities. The thirteen papers presented here dissect these challenges with intellectual rigour and practical urgency.

We open with Nakabago and Hofisi's forensic examination of Uganda's Universal Primary Education capitation grant. For decades, UPE has been hailed as a pro-poor triumph. Yet, as the authors reveal, weak monitoring and evaluation of internal controls have turned a lifeline into a leaky vessel. Without real-time auditing and community-based oversight, financial accountability remains aspirational. This paper is a clarion call: education funding cannot be separated from forensic vigilance.

The crisis of youth violence, examined across two complementary studies by Somtochukwu, Muyideen, and colleagues, forces us to look where society often refuses to look: inside Ogun State's correctional facilities. Their first paper critically submits that socioeconomic indicators unemployment, broken kinship networks, and educational exclusion are causal pathways into cultism. The second adds a psychosocial layer, revealing how trauma, identity displacement, and the search for belonging drive young inmates deeper into violent collectives. Together, these studies argue that incarceration without therapeutic intervention is not rehabilitation but a factory for recidivism.

History matters. Daniel Oluwafemi John takes us into Igangan Town, Oyo State, between 1973 and 2021. The farmer-herder crisis is often framed as a contemporary emergency, but John demonstrates its long arc: decades of land tenure ambiguity, climate-induced migration, and state neglect. Understanding 1973 is essential for solving 2026. This is a sobering lesson in how unresolved grievances become inherited wars.

Joel Odaudu moves beyond Africa's borders with a multidimensional causal analysis of terrorism. Rejecting single-factor explanations, Odaudu insists on the confluence of political exclusion, economic inequality, and social fragmentation. His framework is a necessary tool for any government designing a counterterrorism policy that does not merely react but prevents.

The international justice system faces a necessary reckoning in Avitus A. Agbor's incisive critique of the International Criminal Court's racist image and agenda. Through comparative analysis of the situations in Ukraine and Palestine, Agbor exposes the selective application of international law a double standard that undermines the Court's legitimacy and perpetuates global hierarchies of victimhood.

Choma, Thobejane, and Rannditsheni's revisiting of human rights for people living with albinism foregrounds a community too often marginalised in both policy and scholarship. Their work reminds us that human rights discourse must move beyond abstract universality to address specific, lived vulnerabilities rooted in superstition, stigma, and systemic neglect.

Governance and accountability receive comprehensive treatment. Mohono, Gabanakgosi, and Shopola's Public Value Theory perspective on parliamentary oversight provides a fresh framework for understanding democratic governance in Southern Africa. Zweni and Mahlala extend this conversation to grassroots public participation in municipal budget development, demonstrating that budgets are political statements about whose needs are prioritised.

The spectre of fragmentation looms large in Kelechi Johnmary Ani's unravelling of secessionist movements in Ambazonia and Biafra. By examining governance failures, identity politics, and historical grievances, Ani illuminates the root causes of separatist aspirations rather than merely managing their symptoms.

The private sector's challenges in volatile environments are explored by Parsad and Chummun, whose study of operational excellence in VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) environments focuses on South Africa's insurance industry, offering practical insights for navigating uncertainty.

Academic rigour and methodological integrity come under the spotlight in Musaigwa, Nojiyeza, and Tabane's practical guide to writing strong conclusion chapters, addressing a perennial challenge in research dissemination and preempting reviewer criticism.

Nthambeleni Charles Netshisaulu's conceptual analysis of reversible metaphors in Tshivenda adds a rich linguistic dimension, demonstrating how language reflects and shapes cognition, culture, and social relations.

Taken together, these contributions remind us that accountability is not a bureaucratic checkbox. It is the thread linking school grants to classroom outcomes, correctional policies to safe communities, land history to peaceful coexistence, international law to genuine justice, and linguistic expression to cultural identity. The papers collectively argue that sustainable development in Africa demands simultaneous attention to financial probity, social inclusion, historical reckoning, and institutional reform.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all contributing authors for their intellectual rigour and commitment to advancing knowledge that serves African communities. In a world increasingly characterised by complexity and contestation, the role of critical scholarship has never been more vital. This Special Issue intervenes with rigour, compassion, and hope.

Editor

Dr. Nicholas Idris Erameh

Nigerian Institute of International Affairs

Lagos, Nigeria

Email. Eramehnickolas@gmail.com

Table of Content:

1. Monitoring And Evaluation Of Internal Controls In The Financial Accountability Of The Universal Primary Education Capitation Grant In Uganda <i>Johan Nakabago, Costa Hofisi</i>	5
2. Psychosocial Analysis Of Youths' Involvement In Cultism In Ogun State Correctional Facilities, Nigeria <i>Ogunmefun Folorunsho Muyideen, Njoku Daniel Somtochukwu</i>	26
3. A History Of Farmer-Herder Crisis In Igangan Town, Oyo State, Nigeria, 1973-2021 <i>Daniel Oluwafemi John</i>	43
4. The Political, Economic, And Social Determinants Of Terrorism: A Multidimensional Causal Analysis <i>Joel Odaudu</i>	56
5. Blunting The Racist Image And Agenda Of The International Criminal Court (Icc): The Situations In Ukraine And Palestine <i>Avitus A. Agbor</i>	80
6. Revisiting Human Rights And People Living With Albinism <i>Tsoaledi Daniel Thobejane, Vhuhwavho Rannditsheni, Hlako Choma</i>	95
7. The Role Of Parliamentary Oversight And Its Influence On Democratic Governance: A Public Value Theory Perspective <i>SD Mohono, BJ Gabanakgosi, MA Shopola, T Motswakae</i>	110
8. Unravelling The Dimensions Of Secessionist Movements In Africa: Focus On Ambazonia And Biafra <i>Kelechi Johnmary Ani</i>	130
9. Use Of Total Physical Response Method For Teaching Action Verbs To Primary School Learners <i>Farisani Thomas Nephawe</i>	141

10. Implementing Operational Excellence In Vuca Environments: A Study Of The Insurance Industry In South Africa
Sahil Dwarika Parsad, Bibi Z. Chummun
159

11. Reversible Metaphors In Tshivenda: A Conceptual Analysis Of Domain Swapping
Nthambeleni Charles Netshisaulu
177

12. The Catalyst Of Public Participation In The Development Of Municipal Budgets In Category B Municipalities In South Africa: A Community Engagement Perspective
Abongile Zweni, Sandiso Mahlala
201

13. Europe’s Manufactured “Migration Crisis”: Media, Militarisation, and Mobility in a Time of Global Crisis
Aghogho Akpome, Kofi Takyi Asante
218

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69778/2710-0073/2026/7.2/a4>

THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF TERRORISM: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL CAUSAL ANALYSIS

Joel Odaudu

International Relations and Security Studies

Management, Law, and Social Sciences

University of Bradford, United Kingdom.

Email: joelodaudu@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8119-3884>

Abstract

Terrorism continues to pose significant challenges to communities and governments worldwide, driven by a mix of political, economic, and social pressures that shape structural conditions across societies. This paper examines the political, economic, and social drivers of terrorism, focusing on factors such as political marginalization, human rights abuses, poverty, educational access, religious extremism, and social inequality, and argues that these factors rarely operate in isolation. Instead, they intersect in ways that deepen frustration, heighten perceptions of injustice, and create environments in which radicalization becomes more likely. Drawing on diverse academic studies and real-world cases, the paper illustrates how weak political institutions, economic hardship, and social exclusion create conditions conducive to terrorist recruitment, particularly among disillusioned youth, and shows how both state and non-state actors may exploit these vulnerabilities for strategic gain. The study extends existing scholarship by presenting a structured, multidimensional framework that not only categorizes terrorism's drivers but also demonstrates how they reinforce one another. Through this approach, it moves beyond descriptive analysis toward integrated, theory-informed insight. Ultimately, the study contends that terrorism cannot be attributed to a single cause and that mitigating its persistence requires inclusive, long-term policies that address both structural conditions and the appeal of extremist ideologies.

Keywords: *Terrorism, Structural Drivers, Relative Deprivation, Political Opportunity Theory, Political Marginalization, Economic Inequality, Radicalization,*

1. Introduction

Terrorism, as a modern political concept, is commonly traced to the French Revolution. The term terrorism

emerged during the Jacobin Reign of Terror (1793–1794), a period marked by systematic state violence and mass executions (Doyle, 2018; Steinberg, 2015). It was later formalized in the

1798 supplement to the Dictionnaire de l'Académie française, which defined terrorism as the “système, régime de la terreur” (Doyle, 2018). At the time, terrorism referred primarily to acts of violence carried out by a government against its own citizens to consolidate political control. This early usage provides important historical context, shedding light on the political origins of the term. However, it does not fully capture the complexity of contemporary terrorism. To understand how the concept has evolved, it is necessary to consider how modern scholarship characterizes terrorism in practice.

Terrorism denotes a subversive mode of political action that employs violence to induce panic for political ends (Laqueur, 1999). Terrorists use violence to deliberately intimidate their targets, attract attention to a cause, and advance their demands (Laqueur, 1999; Hoffman, 2006). Although some political objectives may be pursued through terrorism, perpetrators often target innocent civilians to amplify fear and visibility (Hoffman, 2006; Schmid, 2011). Contemporary terrorism is often understood in relation to war. Whereas terrorism may be carried out by individuals against a state, states too can formulate and execute policies of terrorism against their own citizens. Terrorism has multiple and context-dependent causes, and there is no single rationale for why people engage in such acts. Political, social, and economic factors have all been identified as key

determinants of terrorism across different contexts (Butler, 2015; Schmid, 2011; Newman, 2007). Although recent research has begun to examine how these drivers interact, many studies still analyze them in isolation rather than assessing their combined effects.

Despite these advances, existing scholarship has produced valuable insights into the political, economic, and social conditions associated with terrorism, but much of this work remains fragmented (Schmid, 2011; McCauley & Moskalenko, 2017). Many studies identify drivers such as political exclusion, poverty, social inequality, or ideological radicalization either independently or in combination, but often stop short of systematically theorizing how these factors interact within broader structural environments (Crenshaw, 1981; Bjørgo, 2005; Piazza, 2017). This reveals a key gap in the literature: the absence of a consistently integrated framework that explains how overlapping structural pressures converge to shape pathways to radicalization and violent extremism. This limitation is particularly significant in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, where weak institutions, socio-economic inequality, and political exclusion frequently coexist (Agbiboa, 2013b). Without a multidimensional framework that captures these interactions, scholarly analysis and policy responses risk remaining partial and fragmented.

This study addresses this gap by synthesizing Relative Deprivation Theory and Political Opportunity Theory into a unified analytical framework applied across multiple regional contexts. By emphasizing the interaction of structural conditions rather than treating them as separate causes, the study demonstrates how systemic inequality, institutional constraints, and socio-economic grievances collectively shape pathways to radicalization. In doing so, it moves beyond descriptive accounts toward a more coherent explanation that contributes to ongoing debates within terrorism studies and offers a stronger foundation for long-term prevention strategies and policy design. Against this backdrop, the paper argues that terrorism does not arise from a single causal factor but from the convergence of political exclusion, economic deprivation, and social inequality. Drawing on cross-regional illustrative cases, the analysis demonstrates how these structural forces operate in combination to shape patterns of radicalization.

The paper proceeds by providing a conceptual clarification of terrorism, followed by a review of relevant literature, outlining the methodology, and presenting the theoretical framework. It then critically explores the complex political, economic, and social conditions that contribute to terrorism as interacting structural drivers rather than isolated variables, before concluding with the study's

contributions and policy recommendations.

2. Conceptual Clarification

Many governments are reluctant to define terrorism, often out of concern that doing so might delegitimize liberation movements or restrict their own political narratives. In some cases, the term has been used to discredit opposition groups, as seen in China's labeling of Tibetan activists or in Zimbabwe, where the late President Mugabe used it against democratic opponents. As a result, terrorism has become a politically charged concept, frequently employed to cast adversaries in a deeply negative light. This politicization has contributed to a proliferation of definitions. Schmid (2011) identifies over 260 distinct definitions in the academic and policy literature, with roughly half originating from governments and official institutions.

Despite this definitional diversity, certain recurring elements appear across interpretations, including the use or threat of violence, political motivation, the deliberate creation of fear, coercion, and the targeting of civilians or non-combatants. The absence of universal agreement, however, reflects deeper normative and political disagreements about legitimacy, resistance, and state authority. There is therefore no universally accepted definition of terrorism. Nevertheless, several influential scholars and institutions

have proposed conceptualizations that help clarify the core components of the term.

Laqueur (1999) defines terrorism as the unlawful use or threat of violence for political purposes, particularly against innocent civilians, with the deliberate aim of generating fear and publicity. Similarly, Alexander (1977) emphasizes the targeting of civilian populations to produce widespread intimidation in pursuit of political objectives. Drake (1998) underscores the strategic and organized nature of terrorism, describing it as politically motivated violence intended to influence perceptions and behaviour through psychological impact.

These scholarly formulations are mirrored in institutional definitions. The United States Department of Defense (1994) defines terrorism as the deliberate use or threat of unlawful violence to instill fear in governments or populations for political, religious, or ideological ends. Earlier, the League of Nations Convention (1937) characterized terrorism as illegal acts intended to instill fear in specific individuals, a group of individuals, or the broader public. Although phrased differently, these definitions consistently highlight violence, political motivation, coercion, and the intentional production of fear as defining features of terrorism.

Though these definitions vary in emphasis, most share a common core: violence or the threat of violence,

ideological or political motivation, and the intentional spread of fear. This persistent disagreement over meaning underscores the normative tension embedded in the term itself. As Yasser Arafat famously stated at the United Nations in 1974, “One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter,” a remark that captures the enduring contestation surrounding legitimacy and resistance in the use of political violence.

For this paper, terrorism is understood as the deliberate use or threat of violence by state or non-state actors to intimidate or coerce civilian populations in pursuit of political, ideological, or religious goals. This working definition is analytically useful because it captures the strategic nature of terrorism while remaining broad enough to encompass the diverse cases examined in this study. It also aligns with the paper’s focus on political, economic, and social determinants by emphasizing terrorism as a purposeful response to structural conditions such as exclusion, deprivation, and inequality. By adopting this definition, the analysis is able to connect conceptual clarity with the causal pathways explored in subsequent sections.

3. Literature Review

Existing literature provides a range of explanations for terrorism, particularly emphasizing the role of political, economic, and social conditions. A substantial body of research suggests

that weak and ineffective political processes and institutions, along with political disengagement and exclusion, generate frustration among individuals and groups (Gaibullov et al., 2024). Political systems marked by endemic corruption, elite domination, and diminished optimism for meaningful change further intensify these conditions. Such environments are often exploited by terrorist groups, particularly where political marginalization or perceived exclusion heightens the likelihood of violence (Gurr, 2015; Piazza, 2017). Political marginalization refers to systemic exclusion from meaningful participation in democratic decision-making processes, which limits opportunities for groups to have their interests represented (Cederman et al., 2013; Wimmer, 2018). For instance, the exclusion of Sunni Arabs from the post-2003 political arrangement in Iraq is widely identified as a contributing factor to the 2006–2007 civil war and the subsequent emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Tripp, 2007; Weiss & Hassan, 2016). Similarly, during South Africa's apartheid era, the African National Congress (ANC) resorted to sabotage and later guerrilla warfare after peaceful political avenues were progressively closed (Ellis, 2013; Lodge, 1983).

Beyond these contexts, there are also cases where terrorist groups justify violence by citing political exclusion, although such groups can emerge in

well-established democracies. Examples include German left-wing terrorism in the 1970s, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) in the United Kingdom, and Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) in Spain (Hoffman, 2006). In addition, some studies distinguish between international and domestic terrorism, as well as between countries of origin and target states (Enders & Sandler, 2012). Terrorist activities have frequently been linked to poor governance and maladministration (Newman, 2007; Piazza, 2017), while other research suggests that democratic institutions can mitigate grievances by facilitating peaceful conflict resolution and expanding political participation (Windsor, 2003). However, this relationship is not straightforward. Weak or fragile state institutions can create conditions conducive to insurgency, while excessive use of force and abuse of authority can provoke resistance and create opportunities for terrorist mobilization (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Piazza, 2017). Two common explanations are advanced: first, civil violence becomes more appealing when political leaders cannot be removed through effective democratic mechanisms (Abadie, 2006); and second, prolonged injustice can foster conditions in which individuals become willing to engage in extreme forms of violence (Gurr, 2015).

While these perspectives highlight the role of political exclusion and governance, alternative views complicate this relationship. Freeman

(2008) identifies a complex connection between political participation and violence, while Chenoweth (2010) finds that terrorist incidents may be more frequent in democratic contexts. Dalacoura (2013) shows that political repression can lead to radicalization in some cases but not others. Similarly, countries in transition between authoritarianism and democracy appear particularly vulnerable to instability and extremist activity (Abadie, 2004). Newman (2007) further argues that although weak or institutionally constrained states may provide conducive environments for terrorism, such conditions alone do not fully explain its occurrence, as terrorist groups also operate in stable and well-functioning states.

Overall, existing scholarship shows that terrorism cannot be explained by a single causal factor. Rather, it is shaped by the interaction of political exclusion, governance failures, socio-economic inequality, and wider structural conditions. At the same time, the literature remains divided on how these factors operate across different contexts. While some studies link weak institutions, marginalization, and limited state capacity to heightened risks of radicalization and violence, others show that terrorism can also occur in democratic, transitional, and relatively stable states. These mixed findings reveal a central limitation in the literature, as existing studies identify important drivers of terrorism but do not fully explain how political,

economic, and social factors work together. This limitation points to the need for an integrated, multidimensional framework that can account for the convergence of structural pressures across different regional contexts. This gap provides the basis for the present study's theoretical and analytical contribution.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design based on a narrative (traditional) literature review and thematic analysis of political, economic, and social explanations of terrorism. A narrative review approach is appropriate for this study because it allows for the integration and interpretation of diverse bodies of literature in order to develop a theory-driven, multidimensional understanding of terrorism, rather than providing an exhaustive or systematic aggregation of all available studies. It relies exclusively on secondary data, examined through analysis of peer-reviewed scholarship, policy documents, government and institutional reports, and established international and regional media sources used for contextual support. These materials capture both scholarly interpretations and contemporaneous accounts of security events and political developments. Academic materials were identified through searches of major scholarly databases, including Scopus, JSTOR, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, using relevant keywords such as terrorism, political exclusion, economic deprivation,

relative deprivation, radicalization, structural violence, and social inequality. The initial search yielded approximately 120 sources, of which around 70 were retained after preliminary screening for relevance. Following full-text review, approximately 45 sources were selected for final analysis.

Inclusion criteria comprised peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and reputable institutional reports published in English, with clear analytical relevance to the structural drivers of terrorism. Exclusion criteria included opinion pieces, non-scholarly sources, and works lacking methodological rigor or substantive analytical engagement. Sources were screened for relevance to the study's focus on structural drivers of terrorism before full-text review. Works lacking substantive analytical engagement or methodological grounding were excluded. The selected literature was analyzed thematically. Coding combined theory-informed categories with themes that emerged during close reading of the reviewed works. Through systematic comparison across sources, recurring patterns were grouped into broader themes capturing

political, economic, and social conditions associated with terrorism. To strengthen the analysis, illustrative case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia were incorporated. These regions were selected purposively due to the documented prevalence of terrorism, the availability of substantial scholarly literature, and their relevance for comparative analysis across different political and institutional contexts. The cases were chosen because they reflect documented structural grievances and represent varied governance environments in which the drivers of terrorism have been widely studied, enabling examination of how structural factors operate across different regional settings.

The reliance on secondary sources limits the study's ability to incorporate first-hand perspectives from policymakers, security practitioners, or affected communities and may reflect interpretive biases present within published accounts, including media framing. These limitations constrain the scope of the study's claims. The findings offer analytical synthesis rather than statistical generalization and are explanatory rather than predictive.

Table 1: Summary of Literature Selection Process

Stage	Number of Sources	Description
Initial search	120	Identified through database search
After screening	70	Filtered for relevance
Final included	45	Used for thematic analysis

5. Theoretical Framework

This study adopts a structuralist explanation of terrorism, emphasizing macro-level political, economic, and social conditions that shape environments conducive to violent extremism (Gurr, 2015; Newman, 2006; Schmid, 2005). Rather than interpreting terrorism primarily as the product of individual psychological abnormalities or isolated ideological extremism, this approach locates its origins within systemic inequalities, institutional weaknesses, and patterns of exclusion that generate sustained grievances. From this perspective, terrorism is understood not as a spontaneous or irrational phenomenon, but as a form of political violence embedded within deeper structural pressures. Enduring inequalities, restricted political participation, and weak governance structures create conditions under which violent movements can mobilize and sustain support. By situating terrorism within

these broader systemic dynamics, the framework provides an analytical foundation for examining how political, economic, and social forces converge to produce radicalization and violent extremism.

A central component of this framework is Ted Robert Gurr’s theory of relative deprivation, which explains how perceptions of injustice and unmet expectations can generate frustration and, under certain conditions, escalate into political violence (Gurr, 2015; Agnew, 2010). Relative deprivation does not refer simply to material poverty but to the perceived gap between what individuals or groups believe they deserve and what they actually experience. When political participation is restricted, economic opportunities are limited, or social recognition is denied, these perceived disparities become particularly acute. Over time, sustained frustration may transform into collective grievance, which under specific political and

organizational conditions can create a motivational foundation for violent mobilization (Piazza, 2011). The theory therefore illuminates how structurally entrenched yet unevenly distributed inequalities foster a sense of systematic disadvantage among specific groups (Cederman et al., 2010). Empirical analyses of Nigeria's civil war and the Boko Haram insurgency further demonstrate how accumulated ethno-religious and political grievances, interpreted through the lens of relative deprivation, can generate conditions conducive to extremist violence (Ottuh, 2025; Agbiboa, 2013a).

Complementing this grievance-based perspective is political opportunity theory, which shifts attention from motivational drivers to the institutional environments within which grievances are expressed. Political opportunity theory focuses on how the structure of political institutions shapes the strategic choices available to aggrieved groups. Terrorism becomes more likely when legitimate avenues for political expression are blocked, inconsistent, or repressive. This dynamic is especially pronounced in hybrid or transitioning regimes, where political openings are uncertain and state responses are unpredictable. Under such conditions, groups may conclude that peaceful engagement is ineffective or structurally impossible, prompting a strategic shift toward violent tactics as an alternative means of influencing political outcomes. Dim's (2017) integrated analysis of Boko Haram

reinforces this institutional logic, demonstrating how weak governance, exclusionary political arrangements, and inconsistent state repression created a constrained political opportunity structure that incentivized violent mobilization over lawful participation.

While this framework is particularly useful for explaining non-state mobilization, structural pressures and institutional incentives may also shape the strategic use of coercive violence by states, especially in contexts of regime insecurity or contested authority. When considered together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the structural roots of terrorism. Relative deprivation explains the formation of grievances arising from perceived injustice, while political opportunity theory clarifies how institutional constraints shape the expression of those grievances. Integrating both perspectives allows the study to examine how political exclusion, economic hardship, and social inequality interact to foster radicalization. This framework underpins the thematic analysis and supports a multidimensional understanding of terrorism as the outcome of interrelated structural pressures rather than a single causal factor.

5.1 Conceptual Framework

Building on the integration of Relative Deprivation Theory and Political Opportunity Theory, this study develops a conceptual framework that explains how structural conditions interact to produce terrorism. The framework links three core structural drivers: political exclusion, economic deprivation, and social inequality, to processes of grievance formation and strategic decision-making. First, political exclusion, economic deprivation, and social inequality generate perceptions of injustice and unmet expectations among individuals and groups. In line with Relative Deprivation Theory, these conditions produce frustration and collective grievances, particularly when disparities are persistent and perceived as unfair. Second, the translation of these grievances into action is shaped by the structure of political opportunities. Where institutional channels for participation are blocked, inconsistent, or repressive, aggrieved groups are more likely to view violent alternatives as viable or necessary. Political Opportunity Theory thus explains how structural constraints influence the strategic choices available to such groups. The interaction between these two processes, grievance formation and constrained political opportunity, creates conditions under which terrorism can emerge as a form of political action. Rather than operating independently, structural drivers reinforce one another: economic hardship can intensify perceptions of exclusion, while political repression

can amplify the effects of social inequality.

This framework guides the analysis in subsequent sections by providing a structured lens through which the political, economic, and social drivers of terrorism are examined as interconnected and mutually reinforcing factors, rather than isolated causes.

6. The Multidimensional Drivers of Terrorism

The root causes of terrorism are complex and varied. These ‘drivers’ are understood here as the underlying conditions that give rise to terrorist acts. No country, whether wealthy or poor, is entirely immune. Terrorism manifests in different forms, and each may be driven by a distinct set of causes. For the purpose of this paper, the analysis focuses on three key categories of drivers: political, economic, and social factors.

6.1 Political Drivers of Terrorism

Terrorism is often viewed as a strategic and rational response to the failure of political processes. People across different communities and societies may experience hardship, resentment, or injustice caused by certain government policies and may seek redress through political means. In the event that the government fails to respond or act, they may become aggressive in an effort to achieve their ends. From this perspective, terrorism

can represent the aftermath of a rational evaluation of a group's goals and their prospects of success (Butler, 2015). When success through conventional methods appears unlikely, terrorism may be seen as a preferred alternative. This reflects the logic of political opportunity theory, which posits that the perceived closure or ineffectiveness of institutional channels can shift strategic calculations toward violence. For instance, during South Africa's apartheid era, the ANC ultimately resorted to the use of violence after political pathways were explored but ended in failure. As peaceful protests and civil disobedience were met with repression, bans on political organizations, and the imprisonment of key leaders, legitimate avenues for political change gradually narrowed. Faced with the closure of legitimate avenues for change, the ANC concluded that armed struggle was the only remaining option to confront an entrenched and violent regime (McKinley, 2018). The establishment of its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, in 1961 marked a strategic shift toward sabotage as a response to blocked political opportunity structures. While some scholars interpret these actions as terrorism because they involved violence for political ends, others argue that systemic oppression and the absence of alternatives render them a form of legitimate resistance under international norms (McKinley, 2018). This case illustrates how state repression and the erosion of political

space can push liberation movements toward violent tactics, blurring the line between terrorism and resistance depending on perspective and context. It also demonstrates how sustained political exclusion can generate grievances consistent with relative deprivation theory, thereby reinforcing the link between perceived injustice and collective action.

Moreover, disenchantment with the political process is not limited to non-state actors. Terrorism is also used by states to advance strategic interests. In other words, states may support terrorists to pursue aligned objectives. For instance, on 21st December 1988, while Pan Am Flight 103 was traveling from London to New York, Muammar Gaddafi's Libya was accused of deploying terrorists to detonate a bomb, killing 259 passengers and crew. This was reportedly in retaliation for U.S. and British attacks on Libya (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018). Another example of state-sponsored terrorism is Iraq under Saddam Hussein. Iraq harbored the Abu Nidal Organization, a transnational Palestinian militant group responsible for terrorist acts in about twenty countries, killing and maiming roughly 900 people. The group, also known as the Revolutionary Council (Fatah al-Majles al-Thawry), operated an office in Baghdad, receiving training, funding, and logistical support from the Iraqi government (Byman, 2005). These examples underscore that political opportunity structures do not only constrain non-state actors; states

themselves may manipulate political openings and constraints to pursue coercive aims, demonstrating that terrorism can be embedded within broader strategic calculations shaped by institutional power. This extends the application of political opportunity theory beyond non-state actors to include state behaviour within strategic environments.

Another theory suggests that government suppression can galvanize terrorism. In this view, “suppression” refers to systematic restrictions on civil liberties, political participation, and dissent. Political freedom and civil rights are used to assess government repression (Berrebi & Ostwald, 2011). Volatile and authoritarian societies often form weak governments that inflict suffering on the population. Human rights abuses and the debasement of citizens can lead individuals to develop intense resentment towards the government (Newman, 2006). In some cases, suppression takes more brutal forms. In 1985, the United Nations General Assembly, in Resolution 40/61, acknowledged that racism, colonial domination, foreign occupation, and human rights violations contribute to conditions conducive to terrorism (United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), 1985). If a country shows minimal regard for basic rights, citizens may develop grievances against policymakers and, in seeking redress, may turn to terrorism. Terrorist cells can equip members with the resources

needed to confront political repression. Such suppression contributes to, rather than automatically causes, the emergence of terrorism (Basuchoudhary & Shughart, 2019). This dynamic aligns closely with relative deprivation theory, as persistent political exclusion and the denial of rights deepen the perceived gap between what citizens believe they are entitled to and what they actually experience, thereby intensifying the emotional and motivational foundations of grievance.

Several other studies also point to a strong link between terrorism and the social injustices people suffer under state authorities. Recent research supports this view, showing how political neglect, weak service delivery, and exclusionary governance can fuel radicalization, particularly in contexts characterized by weak institutional capacity, such as Pakistan, where young people are disillusioned with the state’s failure to meet basic needs (Rehman et al., 2025). Where governments lack the capacity to provide basic amenities such as roads, schools, electricity, water, and healthcare, citizen frustration grows, and terrorist groups may exploit this to recruit new adherents (Butler, 2015; Piazza, 2017). This pattern is particularly evident in northeastern Nigeria, where systemic political neglect and weak governance have left large portions of Borno State underdeveloped and underserved. According to Samson et al. (2025), the state’s chronic infrastructural deficits,

perceived abandonment by federal authorities, and limited avenues for civic participation have cultivated deep public resentment. Boko Haram has capitalized on these conditions by framing the government as illegitimate and positioning itself as an alternative source of protection, identity, and justice. These cases demonstrate how structural political failures generate both the grievances (relative deprivation) and the strategic openings (political opportunity) that violent groups exploit, reinforcing the argument that terrorism emerges from the interaction of motivational and institutional forces rather than from isolated political events.

Governments are responsible for providing resources for the population's survival, including healthcare, employment opportunities, and education. Many people believe it is also their duty to guarantee political freedom. Studies indicate that political freedom is related to terrorism, but not always in intuitive ways. The countries most prone to terrorism are often those in transition, neither fully authoritarian nor fully democratic (Abadie, 2006). The highest levels of terrorism tend to occur in such middle-range states. More incidents arise when authoritarian regimes begin transitioning to democracy. Transitional states struggle to grant full freedoms, leading to ripple effects in other areas. Although it may seem that autocracies are more vulnerable, research shows that states in the middle range appear particularly

susceptible (Butler, 2015). This pattern is consistent with political opportunity theory, which predicts that periods of institutional flux, where political openings are partial, inconsistent, or contested, create uncertainty that both empowers and emboldens violent actors. Transitional regimes therefore represent environments where grievances are high, expectations rise, and institutional guarantees remain weak, increasing the risk of terrorist mobilization rather than determining it.

6.2 Economic Drivers of Terrorism

Here, the main issue lies with economic or relative deprivation, which is closely related to poverty and social exclusion (inequality). Relative deprivation is the discontentment and resentment that people feel when they compare their situation with that of others in society. The perceived pressure of societal expectations can galvanize them to participate. Participation here means the engagement of individuals in making decisions on issues that affect their lives in their communities. When this is not possible, individuals begin to compare their position with that of others. Relative deprivation is oftentimes adduced as the rationale behind social movements which ultimately culminate in politics, riots, violence, civil wars, and many other examples of social deviation (Butler, 2015). This dynamic reflects the core logic of the structuralist framework: economic inequalities do not operate in

isolation but shape how individuals interpret their social position, fueling perceptions of injustice that underpin radicalization. In this sense, economic deprivation functions as a key source of grievance within relative deprivation theory, linking perceived inequality to the motivation for collective action.

Gurr (2015), in the updated edition of *Why Men Rebel*, clarifies the link between civil violence and relative deprivation. The book examines the conditions under which individuals engage in political violence and how regimes typically respond. Although originally published decades ago, its insights remain analytically relevant in the 21st century. Gurr argues that when obstacles hinder people from achieving their goals, they experience relative deprivation, often responding by seeking to eliminate the source of the obstruction. When expectations of fair economic or distributive outcomes conflict with actual experiences, violence may result. While frustration alone does not always lead to violence, Gurr maintains that prolonged exposure can kindle anger and, ultimately, aggression. Structural economic hardship can heighten this risk. Countries affected by terrorism must therefore consider this dynamic, as economic deprivation often lowers the cost and increases the ease with which terrorist groups recruit followers or secure financial support (Piazza, 2011). In structuralist terms, economic deprivation intensifies both the motivational and material conditions

that make terrorism a viable option, reinforcing the argument that economic structures shape the pathways through which grievances escalate into violence.

One widely cited theory holds that economic marginalization and perceived inequality can create conditions that facilitate terrorist recruitment, particularly where poverty interacts with political exclusion and weak institutions (Newman, 2006; Piazza, 2011). However, the poverty argument is complex, as it comprises a vast set of smaller, interconnected factors that shape what it means to be poor. One study evaluated poverty using indicators such as low Gross Domestic Product (GDP), low literacy rates, and social inequality (Newman, 2006; Gunaratna, 2004). Other researchers included unemployment, population size, and inflation (Akhmat et al., 2014). A challenge with this explanation is that poverty is hard to measure. Various indicators, including homelessness and the poverty gap, reflect different aspects of deprivation. Many Middle Eastern countries are well-endowed with natural resources, yet significant portions of their populations remain unemployed, lowering living standards (Mohammad, 2005). As social inequity deepens, many grow resentful of their inability to achieve what others have. This discontent can contribute to domestic unrest in specific regions, thereby increasing the risk of extremist mobilization (Newman, 2006). These

patterns align with relative deprivation theory, which emphasizes that it is not absolute poverty but perceived inequality, especially when visible and persistent that fuels the emotional foundations of grievance.

Terrorism can flourish in the aftermath of natural disasters (Berrebi & Ostwald, 2011), representing a variant of the poverty-terrorism link. Disasters place immense strain on societies, deepening misery and weakening state capacity. For example, the 2010 floods in Pakistan overwhelmed the government's ability to respond, creating space for the Taliban and other extremist groups to operate more freely (Arai, 2012; Berrebi & Ostwald, 2011). In such contexts, terrorist groups may exploit the government's limited capacity to maintain order or provide aid, especially when state resources are diverted toward relief efforts. Berrebi and Ostwald (2011) found that countries with low to middle Gross National Product per capita were more severely affected by disaster-related terrorist activity, supporting the notion that terrorism thrives in conditions of need and institutional weakness. This illustrates how economic shocks interact with political opportunity structures, as weakened state capacity reduces barriers to mobilization and creates openings for extremist groups to operate.

In sum, when people are deeply dissatisfied with their living conditions, they may turn to extreme measures, or

be persuaded to do so. Substantial evidence suggests that economic hardship can function as a persistent driver of terrorism under certain structural conditions. Real-world cases underscore this link: Syria's political repression and civil conflict enabled jihadist insurgencies (Lister, 2016); Boko Haram capitalized on poverty and state neglect in Nigeria (Agbibo, 2013b); and in Afghanistan, prolonged instability and foreign intervention sustained extremist violence (Moghadam, 2008). These examples illustrate how structural failure creates fertile ground for radicalization. Taken together, they demonstrate that economic deprivation functions not only as a source of grievance (relative deprivation) but also as a condition that weakens state capacity and widens political opportunity structures, thereby enabling terrorist organizations to recruit, operate, and expand. This reinforces the central argument that economic drivers operate in conjunction with political constraints, rather than as isolated determinants of terrorism. Addressing both structural and immediate causes is therefore essential for mitigating the economic foundations of terrorism.

6.3 Social Drivers of Terrorism

Social factors are also important in shaping the environments in which terrorism emerges. Several studies identify education levels or school enrollment as factors that may

influence vulnerability to extremist activity. Education is widely regarded as a tool for human development, and it features prominently in broader discussions of the structural conditions surrounding terrorism (Schmid, 2005). Research suggests that the relationship between education and terrorism is complex rather than straightforward. This complexity aligns with relative deprivation theory, which emphasizes perceived inequality rather than absolute conditions. While lower levels of school enrollment may increase vulnerability to recruitment by extremist groups, higher levels of educational access do not always guarantee reduced participation in violent activities. One explanation is that individuals with access to education are more likely to pursue academic or employment opportunities, making them less inclined toward terrorist activity. However, this does not always hold true, as some terrorist leaders are highly educated. This observation is supported by studies showing that education does not uniformly predict non-involvement in terrorism (Krueger & Malečková, 2003). Another possibility is that attending school keeps young people engaged in structured activities, limiting opportunities for deviant behavior. This is similar to domestic criminal justice theories suggesting that young people engaged in academics and other productive activities are less likely to commit crimes. The same logic can apply to terrorism: sustained engagement in formal education may

reduce involvement in violent extremism by structuring young people's time, providing alternative aspirations, and limiting their exposure to recruitment and radical influence. Overall, higher levels of school enrolment are often associated with lower levels of youth involvement in terrorism as suggested by empirical analyses linking education access to reduced participation in violent extremism (Butler, 2015). This relationship can be understood through relative deprivation theory, as access to education reduces perceived inequality and expands legitimate pathways for advancement. This suggests that nations should prioritize education by ensuring access to essential materials, facilities, and quality teaching. Doing so equips young people with knowledge and opportunities, keeping them engaged in meaningful pursuits and reducing their vulnerability to recruitment by violent groups. Ultimately, education serves as a preventive mechanism that fosters stability and nonviolence in society. From a structuralist perspective, education reduces both the perception of relative deprivation and the structural openings that extremist groups exploit, thereby weakening the motivational and institutional foundations of radicalization.

Religion also warrants examination as a factor that may contribute to terrorism. In recent decades, religiously motivated terrorism has become a prominent pattern of political violence and a

significant concern in international security discourse. Political violence has increased in intensity and scope globally (Martin, 2010). The term 'religious terrorism' refers to political violence justified by the belief that such acts are sanctioned by a supernatural authority in service of a religious cause. Adherents often believe that actions undertaken in the name of the faith will be divinely sanctioned and rewarded in the afterlife. Essentially, religious belief can legitimize violence when it is interpreted as an expression of divine will (Martin, 2010). It is important to emphasize that religious radicalism is not confined to any one faith tradition; various forms of faith-based extremism have emerged across religious groups (Juergensmeyer, 2005). However, in recent decades, Islamist militancy has become particularly prominent in global security discourse due to the frequency and scale of related terrorist activities. Notable examples include Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in Nigeria, Ansar Dine in Mali, and Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) in Burkina Faso. These groups aim to impose strict interpretations of Islamic law and establish Islamic states within their respective regions (Zenn, 2020; Thurston, 2020). These movements often gain traction in environments characterized by governance deficits, social inequality, and restricted political participation, illustrating how religious narratives intersect with structural grievances and political opportunity structures.

Religious terrorism has increased in recent decades and constitutes a significant component of contemporary terrorist activity. At the same time, contemporary terrorism has taken on new forms, such as online radicalization, where extremist ideologies are disseminated through social media to recruit and indoctrinate followers. Lone-wolf terrorism, often inspired rather than directly orchestrated by organized groups, has also become more frequent and difficult to anticipate. Moreover, heightened political unrest and social polarization in recent years have created conditions in which extremist narratives can more easily circulate and resonate (Conway, 2017; Gill et al., 2014). These developments illustrate how social fragmentation, identity insecurity, and weakened social cohesion can intensify perceptions of relative deprivation and generate new opportunity structures for extremist mobilization, reinforcing the structuralist argument that social conditions shape both the motivations and mechanisms of radicalization.

While this paper focuses primarily on political, economic, and social drivers of terrorism, it is important to acknowledge that not all acts of terrorism can be explained by structural conditions alone. Psychological theories, for instance, highlight the role of personal trauma, identity crises, or the desire for significance as potential motivations for extremist behavior (Dugas & Kruglanski, 2014). Others

point to the power of ideology, where deeply held beliefs, often religious or political, can justify violence regardless of material conditions (Sageman, 2004). State-sponsored terrorism is another layer, where governments may directly or indirectly support violent groups to advance strategic interests (Byman, 2005). While these perspectives may not fully contradict structural explanations, they offer valuable insights into the diversity of pathways that lead individuals or groups to terrorism and should be considered alongside broader systemic factors. Nevertheless, the structuralist framework remains essential for understanding why certain societies become more vulnerable to terrorism than others, as it situates individual motivations within the broader political, economic, and social environments that shape the opportunities and constraints under which terrorism emerges.

7. Conclusion

Terrorism can arise from a complex interplay of political, economic, and social conditions, with no single explanation sufficient to account for its persistence. Individuals and groups often turn to terrorism not out of an inherent attraction to violence, but as a means of pursuing ideological, religious, or political aims when legitimate avenues for expression appear blocked or ineffective. This

study examined key drivers of terrorism across political, economic, and social dimensions, including social inequality, human rights violations, limited school enrollment, religious extremism, political suppression, and poverty, and argues that these factors rarely operate in isolation. Instead, they intersect in ways that deepen frustration, heighten perceptions of injustice, and create environments in which radicalization becomes more likely. Understanding these dynamics is central to any meaningful attempt to address the structural roots of terrorism. Building on the study's integrated theoretical framework, the analysis shows that terrorism can be productively understood through the combined lenses of Relative Deprivation Theory and Political Opportunity Theory. Together, these perspectives illuminate how unmet socio-economic expectations generate grievances, while restricted access to political participation shapes the strategic choices available to aggrieved groups. The case illustrations from Iraq, Nigeria, and South Africa further demonstrate how these structural pressures manifest in diverse contexts, reinforcing the argument that terrorism emerges from the convergence of motivational and institutional forces. Effective counterterrorism strategies must therefore move beyond short-term security responses and engage with the underlying structural conditions that sustain radicalization. A more coherent understanding of terrorism emerges when fragmented

explanations are replaced by multidimensional perspectives that reflect the interconnected nature of its root causes, offering a stronger foundation for both scholarly inquiry and long-term policy design. Addressing these interconnected drivers requires policy approaches that reduce structural inequalities and expand inclusive political participation, thereby tackling both the grievances emphasized by Relative Deprivation Theory and the institutional constraints highlighted by Political Opportunity Theory.

7.1 Contribution to Knowledge

While previous studies have offered helpful overviews of terrorism's causes by identifying factors such as poverty, repression, and political grievances (Butler, 2015; Schmid, 2011; Newman, 2006), this paper contributes to these discussions by presenting a structured and multidimensional approach. It not only organizes the drivers of terrorism into political, economic, and social categories but also examines how these factors intersect and reinforce one another in shaping the conditions that enable terrorism. Rather than viewing the causes as separate or static, the study underscores their overlapping nature and how they collectively influence recruitment and radicalization. This emphasis on interaction reflects a structuralist understanding of terrorism, where political exclusion, economic deprivation, and social inequality

operate as mutually reinforcing forces rather than isolated variables. The paper also contributes theoretically by combining Relative Deprivation Theory and Political Opportunity Theory into a single analytical framework. This synthesis offers a structured integration of existing structural explanations. It demonstrates how grievances, as explained by relative deprivation, and institutional constraints, as highlighted by political opportunity theory, jointly shape pathways toward violent extremism. By bringing these perspectives together, the study shows how individuals and groups may turn to violence, particularly in contexts where access to legitimate political participation is limited, offering a more integrated explanation than either theory provides on its own. Through case illustrations drawn from Iraq, Nigeria, and South Africa, the paper connects theory with context, offering grounded insights into how structural challenges operate in practice. These cases show how structural conditions manifest differently across regions while still following the same underlying causal logic, thereby supporting the broader applicability of the integrated framework. By moving beyond description to analytical integration, the paper addresses a gap between thematic literature reviews and policy-oriented studies. It provides a coherent foundation for both academic reflection and the development of more inclusive and preventive strategies to address terrorism at its roots. In doing so, the

study contributes to ongoing scholarly efforts to develop theory-driven, context-sensitive approaches capable of informing long-term counterterrorism and peacebuilding initiatives.

8. Recommendations

Given the wide-ranging and structurally embedded causes of terrorism, no single solution can be universally applied. Responses must be tailored to the specific political, economic, and social conditions shaping each context. Accordingly, the following recommendations outline context-sensitive approaches for different types of states:

(i) Addressing the structural drivers of terrorism requires coordinated political, economic, and social responses. Strengthening political institutions and improving governance structures may reduce the structural conditions that enable terrorist movements to gain traction. Political systems that expand meaningful participation and reduce exclusion can help mitigate grievances that extremist groups often exploit.

(ii) Policies aimed at reducing poverty, unemployment, and economic marginalization may also contribute to addressing conditions that facilitate recruitment by extremist organizations. While economic deprivation alone does not automatically produce terrorism, persistent economic inequality and limited opportunities can create environments in which

extremist narratives resonate more strongly with vulnerable populations.

(iii) Promoting inclusive governance and expanding opportunities for political participation may further reduce feelings of marginalization among groups that perceive themselves as excluded from decision-making processes. When individuals and communities believe that legitimate political channels are accessible and responsive, the appeal of violent alternatives may diminish.

(iv) Expanding access to education may also help reduce vulnerability to extremist recruitment, particularly in contexts where young people face limited economic prospects and social mobility. Education can contribute to critical thinking, civic awareness, and social integration, which may strengthen resilience against radicalization narratives.

(v) Finally, a comprehensive approach that combines political reform, economic development, and social inclusion may be more effective than isolated policy measures. Because the drivers of terrorism often interact with one another, strategies that address multiple structural pressures simultaneously may provide more sustainable long-term outcomes.

These recommendations align with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which emphasizes not only security measures but also addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism through inclusive development, human rights protection,

and engagement with vulnerable populations (United Nations, 2006). By grounding counterterrorism efforts in inclusive development, equitable governance, and sustained engagement with vulnerable groups, states may

begin to address the structural grievances and constrained political opportunities associated with terrorism, thereby strengthening long-term conditions for peace and resilience.

References

- Abadie, A. (2006). Poverty, political freedom, and the roots of terrorism. *American Economic Review*, 96(2), 50-56.
- Agbiboa, D. E. (2013a). The Nigerian burden: Religious identity, conflict and the current terrorism of Boko Haram. *Conflict, Security & Development*, 13(1), 1-29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2013.770257>
- Agbiboa, D. E. (2013b). Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective. *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review*, 3(1), 144-157.
- Agnew, R. (2010). A general strain theory of terrorism. *Theoretical criminology*, 14(2), 131-153. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480609350163>
- Akhmat, G., Zaman, K., Shukui, T., & Sajjad, F. (2014). Exploring the root causes of terrorism in South Asia: everybody should be concerned. *Quality & Quantity*, 48(6), 3065-3079.
- Alexander, Y. (ed.) (1977) *Terrorism: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. NY: John Jay Press.
- Anderson, S. K., & Sloan, S. (2009). *Historical dictionary of terrorism*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Arafat, Y. (1974) Yasser Arafat's 1974 UN General Assembly speech. https://en.m.wikisource.org/wiki/Yasser_Arafat%27s_1974_UN_General_Assembly_speech
- Arai, T. (2012). Rebuilding Pakistan in the aftermath of the floods: Disaster relief as conflict prevention. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 7(1), 51-65.
- Basuchoudhary, A., & Shughart, W. F. (2019). On ethnic conflict and the origins of transnational terrorism. In *Transnational Terrorism* (pp. 165-188). Routledge.
- Berrebi, C., & Ostwald, J. (2011). Earthquakes, hurricanes, and terrorism: do natural disasters incite terror?. *Public Choice*, 149(3), 383.
- Bjørge, T. (Ed.). (2005). *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203337653>
- Butler, T. (2015). What causes terrorism. Retrieved May, 18, 2017. <https://www.mckendree.edu/academics/scholars/butler-issue-25.pdf>
- Byman, D. (2005). *Deadly connections: States that sponsor terrorism*. Cambridge University Press.

- Cederman, L. E., Gleditsch, K. S., & Buhaug, H. (2013). *Inequality, grievances, and civil war*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cederman, L. E., Wimmer, A., & Min, B. (2010). Why do ethnic groups rebel? New data and analysis. *World politics*, 62(1), 87-119.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887109990219>
- Chenoweth, E. (2010). Democratic competition and terrorist activity. *The Journal of Politics*, 72(1), 16-30.
- Conway, M. (2017). Determining the Role of the Internet in Violent Extremism and Terrorism: Six Suggestions for Progressing Research. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 40(1), 77-98.
- Crenshaw, M. (1981). The causes of terrorism. *Comparative politics*, 13(4), 379-399.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/421717>
- Dalacoura, K. (2013). Islamist terrorism and the Middle East democratic deficit: Political exclusion, repression and the causes of extremism. In *Democratization in the Muslim World* (pp. 146-163). Routledge.
- Dim, E. E. (2017). An integrated theoretical approach to the persistence of Boko Haram violent extremism in Nigeria. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 12(2), 36-50.
- Doyle, W. (2018). *The Oxford history of the French revolution*. Oxford University Press.
- Drake, C. (1998). The Role of Ideology in Terrorists' Target Selection. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 10(2).
- Dugas, M., & Kruglanski, A. W. (2014). The quest for significance model of radicalization: Implications for the management of terrorist detainees. *Behavioral sciences & the law*, 32(3), 423-439.
- Ellis, S. (2013). *External mission: The ANC in exile, 1960-1990*. Oxford University Press.
- Enders, W., & Sandler, T. (2012). *The Political Economy of Terrorism*. Cambridge University Press.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2018). The Bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.
<https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/remembering-pan-am-flight-103-30-years-later-121418>
- Fearon, J. D., & Laitin, D. D. (2003). Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war. *American political science review*, 97(1), 75-90.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055403000534>
- Freeman, M. (2008). Democracy, Al Qaeda, and the causes of terrorism: A strategic analysis of US policy. *Studies in conflict & terrorism*, 31(1), 40-59.
- Gaibullov, K., Piazza, J. A., & Sandler, T. (2024). Do Failed or Weak States Favor Resident Terrorist Groups' Survival?. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 68(5), 823-848.

- Gill, P., Horgan, J., & Deckert, P. (2014). Bombing alone: Tracing the motivations and antecedent behaviors of lone-actor terrorists. *Journal of forensic sciences*, 59(2), 425-435.
- Gunaratna, R. (2004). The post-madrid face of Al Qaeda. *The Washington Quarterly*, 27(3), 91-100.
- Gurr, T. R. (2015). *Why men rebel*. Routledge.
- Hoffman, B. (2006). *Inside Terrorism*. Columbia University Press.
- Juergensmeyer, M. (2005). Terror in the mind of God: The global rise of religious violence. *Police Practice and Research*, 6(2), 201-208.
- Krueger, A. B., & Malečková, J. (2003). Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 17(4), 119-144.
- Laqueur, W. (1999). *The new terrorism: Fanaticism and the arms of mass destruction*. Oxford University Press.
- Lister, C. R. (2016). *The Syrian Jihad: Al-Qaeda, the Islamic state and the evolution of an insurgency*. Oxford University Press.
- Lodge, T. (1983). *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*. Longman
- McCauley, C., & Moskaleiko, S. (2017). Understanding political radicalization: The two-pyramids model. *American Psychologist*, 72(3), 205–216. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000062>
- Martin, G. (2010) Religious Terrorism. In *Essentials of Terrorism: Concepts and Controversies*.130-156. SAGE Publications. 836/01AUL_INST:AUL
- McKinley, D. T. (2018). Umkhonto We Sizwe: A critical analysis of the armed struggle of the African National Congress. *South African Historical Journal*, 70(1), 27-41.
- Moghadam, A. (2008). *The globalization of martyrdom: Al Qaeda, Salafi Jihad, and the diffusion of suicide attacks*. JHU Press.
- Mohammad, A. Y. S. (2005). Roots of terrorism in the Middle East: Internal pressures and international constraints. In *Root causes of terrorism* (pp. 121-136). Routledge.
- Newman, E. (2007). Weak states, state failure, and terrorism. *Terrorism and political violence*, 19(4), 463-488.
- Newman, E. (2006). Exploring the “root causes” of terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 29(8), 749-772.
- Ottuh, J. A. (2025). Ethno-Religious Diversity Induced Violence in Nigeria and Remote Causes:(Re) Examining the Civil War and Boko Haram Insurgency in Light of Ted Gurr’s Relative Deprivation Theory. In *Diversity Management: Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Sustainable Peace in Nigeria* (pp. 159-204). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Piazza, J. A. (2017). Repression and terrorism: A cross-national empirical analysis of types of repression and domestic terrorism. *Terrorism and political violence*, 29(1), 102-118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2014.994061>

Piazza, J. A. (2011). Poverty, minority economic discrimination, and domestic terrorism. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(3), 339-353.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343310397404>

Rehman, S. U., Bano, S., & Fatima, N. (2025). Beyond Ideology: The Complex Determinants of Terrorism in Contemporary Pakistan. *Journal of Peace and Diplomacy*, 6(02), 49-71.

Sageman, M. (2004). *Understanding terror networks*. University of Pennsylvania press.

Samson, S. S., Ogah, A. T., & Sangari, D. U. (2025). Public Perceptions of People on Boko Haram Terrorism in Borno State, Northeastern, Nigeria. *Journal of Arts and Sociological Research*. <https://doi.org/10.70382/ajsr.v10i6.080>

Scaife, L. (2017). *Social Networks as the New Frontier of Terrorism: # Terror* (p. 216). Taylor & Francis.

Schmid, A. P. (2011). The definition of terrorism. In *The Routledge handbook of terrorism research* (pp. 39-157). Routledge.

Schmid, A. P. (2005). Root causes of terrorism: some conceptual notes, a set of indicators, and a model. *Democracy and security*, 1(2), 127-136.

Steinberg, R. (2015). Trauma and the effects of mass violence in revolutionary France: a critical inquiry. *Historical Reflections/Réflexions historiques*, 41(3), 28-46. <https://doi.org/10.3167/hrrh.2015.410303>

Thurston, A. (2020). *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local politics and rebel groups*. Cambridge University Press.

United Nations. (2006). *United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288)*. <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy>

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). (1985). Measures to prevent international terrorism (Resolution 40/61). <https://undocs.org/A/RES/40/61>

United States. Joint Chiefs of Staff. (1994). *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Vol. 1, No. 2). Joint Chiefs of Staff

Weiss, M., & Hassan, H. (2016). *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror* (updated edition). Simon and Schuster.

Wimmer, A. (2018). Nation Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Fall Apart. *Survival*, 60(4), 151-164.

Windsor, J. L. (2003). Promoting democratization can combat terrorism. *The Washington Quarterly*, 26(3), 43-58.

Zenn, J. (2020). *Unmasking Boko Haram: exploring global jihad in Nigeria*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers