

# TERRORISM AND COUNTER-TERRORISM MEASURES IN NIGERIA: READINGS OF OSOFISAN'S *ONCE UPON FOUR ROBBERS* AND ESIABA IROBI'S *HANGMEN ALSO DIE*

BY

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## Abstract

*The Nigerian society today is seen to be overwhelmed with a plethora of socio-political, economic, cultural, tribal and religious crises. Highly pronounced are the different shades of terrorism being perpetuated across the country that have resulted in massive killings and destruction of lives and properties. Terrorism has therefore become Nigeria's greatest security challenge wearing numerous faces and masks which is why the President Buhari's administration ranked security as a major priority. The country has also witnessed several counter-terrorist strategies by past and present leaders but with the high spike in terrorist activities till date, it would be safe to say that the government's strategy to counter terrorism has appear ineffective. It is on this premise that this paper seeks to investigate the different types of terrorism in relation to dramatic literature as reflected in the plays of two major Nigerian play writings and more so, advocate a more stringent approach of counter terrorism. Anchoring on psychological theory of terrorism and using Femi Osofisan's *Once Upon Four Robbers* and Esiaba Irobi's *Hangmen Also Die* as paradigm, the study reflects the ills of terrorism in the Nigerian society while proffering a solution to curb this ugly menace.*

**Keywords:** terrorism, counter-terrorism, Nigerian space, dialectical materialism, false consciousness, psycho-social.

## Introduction

Terrorism, it may appear is gradually becoming a household word as there are not too many nations that is completely absolved from its ripple effects. In Nigeria like several other countries of the world, terrorism is an age-long phenomenon and in the words of Ebele Geraldine Ojukwu, "Terrorism in Nigeria has had a long history beginning from the military era with its attendants coups and counter-coups to the advent of democratic rule since the year 1999." (180) Terrorism, has continued to gain currency and more relevance in our contemporary existence and even though terrorism in Nigeria predates the current 4<sup>th</sup> Republic, never has the magnitude and intensity been as frightful and devastating as currently experienced with the activities of terror group like the Niger Delta Militants, the IPOB group, the Boko Haram group, the Armed Fulani Herdsmen and the Armed Bandits. In the words of John Iwuh; "Terrorism in Nigeria has taken a worse dimension since 2009 especially by gunmen who invade villages, churches and mosques, bombing, maiming and killing defenseless citizens" (774). This maybe true as the Boko Haram insurgency is said to have begun in 2009

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when the Jihadist rebel group started an armed rebellion against the government of Nigeria. Furthermore, the 21<sup>st</sup> century will perhaps be remembered as one of the most disturbing in the history of mankind based on the lives being lost to terrorism as well as people who have been displaced across the nation. And as observed by Ofonime Inyang:

Nigeria is crippled with military insurgency, sectarian agitations, mass uprising, youth restiveness, violent demonstration and brazen killing which has continued to threaten democracy and national development (93).

One would have thought that a return to democracy would have restored peace to the nation but since her return to democracy, the nation has continued to witness high increase of security as vividly captured by Hameed Olutoba Lawal, "restoration of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 coincided with the act of terrorism in Nigeria in different dimensions and colorations" (80). Presently, the Nigerian space is bedeviled with various acts of terrorism which has continued to threaten the unity and peaceful existence of the Nigerian people as several parts of the country is agog with cases of insecurity. Nigerians have become victims of bomb blasts, suicide bombers, religious wars and conflicts and insurgency which has spread across the nation. According to Ofonime Inyang, "forms of terrorism witnessed in Nigeria include, mass protest, riot, civil disobedience, secessionist agitations, communal clashes and insurgency and militancy" (98-100).

The adverse effect of terrorism cannot be overemphasized as it has continued to impoverish the people in addition to the effects on the people's psychological health, security, social, political, and economic life of the people as well as food security. Adesoke Adefolaju Eben affirms that, "terrorist attacks have done immeasurable and unquantifiable damage to the lives and properties of Nigerians" (779). Furthermore, the ripple effects of post traumatic effects of terrorism in Nigeria are alarming as many lives are lost and several properties destroyed with many people displaced. The concern hitherto has become real and urgent threat to Nigerians as fear of terrorists acquiring nuclear or biological weapons is threatening. This has made the fight against terrorism a major concern of successive Nigerian governments as terrorism and counter terrorism have become concern for countries of the world. Nevertheless, despite the numerous counter terrorism measures adopted by successive Nigerian governments, domestic terrorism is rising incessantly in Nigerian society today giving credence to the fact that the government have been unable to curb this ugly menace. And it is on this backdrop that this study seek to investigate and interrogate the masks and faces of terrorism in Nigeria, with particular reference to two Nigerian plays to extract the root causes of terrorism in Nigeria while vividly capturing the socio-political happenings in the Nigerian space with a view to propose and proffer suitable counter-terrorism measures to curb this menace and restore the peace that Nigerian people so much desire.

### **Theoretical Framework, Definition of Key Words and Analysis of Plays under Study**

According to Arie W. Kruglanski and Shira Fishman, "terrorism is essentially rooted in human psychology and fundamental questions about terrorism are psychological and socio-psychological in nature." (3). Therefore, to understand the nature of terrorism, it becomes pertinent to recourse to psychology. Consequently, this study is anchored on psychological

theory of terrorism that focuses on personality. According to psychologist John Horgan, he lumped people who are more often to terrorist recruitment and radicalization as,

Those who feel angry, alienated or disenfranchised; believe that their current political involvement does not give them power to effect change; identified with perceived victim of the social injustice they are fighting; feel the need to take action rather than just talking about the problem; believe that engaging in violence against the state is not immoral; have friends or family sympathetic to the cause; and believe that joining a movement offers social and psychological rewards (Web).

In addition, recouring to the psychoanalytical theory of violence of Sigmund Freud, aggression is an innate and instinctual human trait. According to Freud, humans had the energy of life force (eros) and death force (thanatos) that sought internal balance. Violence, therefore, as Freud concludes is the displacement of thanatos from self and onto others. Similarly, this study is also anchored on Marxist theory which strongly assert that the overall economic organization for producing and distributing material goods largely determine the human way of thinking. In one of his essay, 'Materialism and Spirituality', he opines that man is not product of divine design but creation of our own cultural and social circumstances. According to Max, conflict in the society arise out of economical power, materialism and class conflict and human consciousness should be understood in relation to political economy, class struggle and identity.

The term terrorism has proven refractory to an agreed upon definition, Kruglanski and Fishman observe. According to them, "even as far back as 1988, Schmid and Jongman in their comprehensive volume on political terrorism list no less than 109 definitions of terrorism" (2). Martha Crenshaw as cited by Ebele Ojukwu defines terrorism as "the deliberate and systematic use of threat or violence to cause changes in political behaviour" (181). The definition of terrorism which seem akin to the Nigerian Space is that proposed by Farley John who defined terrorism as,

a means of intimidation through fear and those involved in it, are made up of relatively well educated rebels, not very poor; usually acting on behalf of an ideology and they tend to be both "true believers" and "ideological pursuit" who see their own view as "correct" and those who disagree with them as being "in need of education" (580).

This definition seems obsolete as terrorists have moved from more intimidation to outright violence which has led to the formulation of new definitions. Citing the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), W.E Blernatzi asserts that; "terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against person or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objective" (27). Similarly, the United States Department of Defence as cited by Ende and Dzukogi declare that "terrorism is the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear intended to coerce or intimidate government or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological" (63). As its working definition, this study would adopt the definition proposed by Walter Laqueur, a renowned scholar of terrorism as captured by Korede and Ayodeji,

As the use or threat of violence by an individual or a group whether acting in opposition to established authority when such action is designed to create extreme anxiety or fear including effects in a target group larger than immediate victims with the purpose of coercing that group into acceding to the political or religious demands of the perpetrators (557).

Summarily, Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in 2005 highlights four key elements of terrorism as quoted by IbitonyeOluwatoyin which includes; "it is premeditated; it is political; it is aimed at civilians; it is carried out by sub-national groups" (611). Counter-terrorism on the other hand, as conceded by Benedict Binebai, "is an anti-terrorist strategy developed by government and terrorized legitimate spaces to combat and dispel terrorism" (407). The intention of counter-terrorism is simply to put an end to terrorism in the society and they include policies and methods used to deter and defeat terrorism. Ujara, Ifaloye and Ekong acknowledges that "terrorism involves actions strategies targeted at the prevention of terrorism escalation, control, of damage from terrorist attacks that occur with the ultimate goal of eradicating terrorism" (162). More so, in the words of Machunga and Dandaura, "counter-terrorism should incorporate the practice of military tactics, techniques and strategies that government, military, law enforcement, business and intelligence agencies use to combat or prevent terrorism" (120).

To interrogate the root causes of terrorism in Nigeria and vividly capture the happenings of the Nigerian society, two Nigerian plays are selected for study. Femi Osofisan's *Once Upon Four Robbers* (1980) and Esiabalrobi's *Hangmen Also Die* (1989) have been selected. Both plays captures the root causes of terrorism as Osofisan illustrates that terrorism is a product of unjust socio-political structures and Esiaba contends that terrorism arise out of ideology and class struggle. Elaborately, the play affirms that terrorism arises out of economic exploration, social deprivation, social injustice, gross poverty and ignorance. While capturing the dramaturgy of the playwrights; MuiyiwaAwodiya speaks of Osofisan,

His dictum is summarized as every predicament known in man's life is due to the machinations of some members of the society and not as the whims of a deity. Therefore, human beings can resolve the problems of their daily living by imposing their personal will and by taking their destiny in their own hands (22).

Similarly, commenting on Esiabalrobi, Diala Isidore affirms,

He is preoccupied with the frustration and depression of the Nigerian youth by the country's leadership, military and civilian alike and by the passionate espousal of a violent ethic as a resolution to the corruption of Nigerian politics (28-29).

### **Interrogating the Numerous Mask and Terrorism in Nigeria**

As already stated, Nigeria is bedeviled with numerous terror groups and insecurity that has led to the loss of lives, destruction of property and displacement of some people which has contributed to the chaotic state of the nation. This is all evident of in the scores of people killed by bandits across the North West zone of the country leaving the region under serious security threats by bandits despite numerous operations by the military. More so, the nation has continued to witness instances of arm robbery across as banks are attacked. Also, kidnapping

has continued to thrive in the country as numerous people are being kidnapped as the rate of kidnapping continue to rise across the nation. Buttressing further, another wave of terror currently witnessed in the nation is the high rate of internet fraudsters which has left several vulnerable citizen bankrupt and consequently plunging them to depression while some have taken their lives. Brazen killings across the nation has continued to breed fear and terror in the citizens as reports continues to troop in of citizens being killed by unknown gunmen. Also, clashes between groups and the police is also prominent and on the increase as reports detailing such clashes abound leaving people dead and some injured on both sides.

Furthermore, police brutality and intimidation has become rampant as reports shows different degrees of assault on citizens by men on uniform as clearly evident in the ENDSARS protest in October 2020 across all states of the federation with regards to police brutality, intimidation, molestation and extrajudicial killings which has led people to question the issue of funding, passion and the recruitment system of the men in uniform. All these might be accountable for the reason why global terrorism index ranked Nigeria as the third most terrorized country in the world. According to Forbes,

Nigeria is ranked the third most terrorized country in the world and accounted for 13% of all terrorist-related deaths globally in 2018 with a 33% rise in number of fatalities compared to the year before - that translates into 2,040 deaths and 772 injuries from 562 terrorist incidents.

It is pertinent at this juncture to note that this figure is only attributed to deaths from recognized terror groups as terrorism in Nigeria is believed to have religious, cultural and socio-political undertones. Terror in Nigeria has been concretized by the approaches and means in religion, culture and socio-political. The state has continued to function as terrorist as government also commit terrorism by political executions, death squad, torture and conviction without adequate investigations and trial and military attacks against civilian target as witnessed during the ENDSARS protest. Also, the state functions as terrorist by providing the social construct that have necessitated terrorism in the country as violence stems from bad leadership, unemployment, corruption and hunger. Capturing the place of terrorism in African clime and mostly Nigeria, Martin Tugbokorowei comments:

Within the African continent and particularly in Nigeria, we have had our own share of dictatorial and terrorist regimes that promoted free reign of terror on the citizens. Nigeria has been held hostage by a succession of dictatorial military regimes (532).

Also, terrorism in Nigeria has found root in religion as religion is used as a weapon to project fear in order to subdue the society into prioritizing religious ideologies above other societal goals and objectives. Consequently, the doctrines of "tithing", "seed sowing" have tend to gain more grounds. According to Williams and Tolulope, "many religious followers believe that their economic empowerment depends solely on their level of generosity towards their denomination" (698). This invariably has amounted to the infliction of fear and terror.

Furthermore, Nigeria is under the terror cloaked in cultural practices. As observed by Epochi-Olise Ruth,

Cultural practices consciously and unconsciously have promoted negative thinking, propagated hatred and violence in the society which ranges from child/forced marriage, female genital mutilation, son preference, female infanticide, honour killing, early

pregnancy, wife battering, sexual abuse, widowhood rites and prostitution among others (129).

These practices have been accounted to deaths by victims mostly of the female gender. Furthermore, with the advent and popularization of the social media, Nigerians have continued to witness her own share of gruesome graphic images and videos which has instilled fear and terror in people, with the increase of the new media as a force of information dissemination, terror groups have used it to promote terror and fear. According to HaastrupAdedayo,

The world suffers from information overload and with the gargantuan increase in terrorism and violent conflicts and the use of social media platforms in sharing of viral videos, short messages and gory pictorial violence scenes (692).

In conclusion, terror, it may seem has become a principal means of governing in Nigeria and has eaten deep into the psyche of Nigerians and resulting to loss of lives either to killings or suicide, displacement, destruction of properties, depression and mental health thereby mitigating against the growth and development of the nation and her citizens.

#### **Unmasking the Root Causes of Terrorism in Nigeria with Selected Nigerian Plays**

Numerous factors have continued to lead to increase of violence and insecurity in the nation. One of the reasons could be attributed to the effects of marginalization, oppression and exploitation that have found expression through violent means as terrorism stems from the conscious attempt by the marginalized to regain their rightful position.

**ANGOLA:** No, Aafa, too many objections. First, one sergeant owes us a debt. Then there are many citizens who must be made to account for their wealth and the poverty of their worker (Once Upon Four Robbers<sup>35</sup>).

**R.I.P:** So, if today, we have turned to violence as the only weapon to redeem our destiny, redeem our fate, our future and our manhood (Hangmen Also Die<sup>46</sup>).

Similarly, the failure of the elected to deliver the dividends of democracy is responsible for the increase in violence across the country. As observed in *Hangmen Also Die*:

**DAYAN:** We have no place in the politics of the nation.

**ACID:** The constituent assembly is filled with the same ancient chimpanzees.

**DAYAN:** We have no chance to help in shaping the destiny of this nation.

**ACID:** We are like tigers in a game reserve.

**DAYAN:** We are not even given a chance to contribute our own quota (46-47).

From the forgoing, one can argue that the non-inclusion of the youth in politics accounts for the rise in violence as youths feel disenfranchised and resort to violence as they regard the nation as an imprisoned state held hostage by an evil and unconcerned leadership class through the years only interested in their selfish interests resulting to them resorting to violence as a means of liberating themselves from the shackles of bad leadership. Furthermore, the high increase of terrorism could be attributed to the sponsors of terrorism as there have been reports of terrorists being sponsored by politicians and highly placed individuals who purchase weapons for terrorists, using them as tools for political thuggery.

This is vividly captured in *Hangmen Also Die* as Dr. Ahitophel Ogbansiegbe was bent on hitting back on his political adversaries and to use the suicide squad as his henchmen, assassin and murder squad. Similarly, ignorance is a factor responsible for increase in terrorist activities in Nigeria as youths are brainwashed by those who sponsor these acts of terror. This is equally evident in the plays as the Suicide Squad could not differentiate between 'revolutionary tactics and meaningless anarchy' (42). This ignorance is made evident as youths have become spanners and hammers in the hands of political mechanics. Also, social deprivation is one of the factors that fuels terrorism in the country. As highlighted in the play:

**MAYOR:** Forgive us. It is hunger that drives us (*Once Upon Four Robbers*, 31).

In another instance:

**ANGOLA:** No! Aafa, too many people ride their cars along the sorer ridden backs of the poor (*Once Upon Four Robbers*, 36).

**IBIWARI:** There is a thief in all of us. In all of us, there is a thief. When God created us, God put a thief in all of us. And this thief creeps out when the plague of poverty and hunger falls upon the land like a blanket of darkness (*Hangmen Also Die*, 64).

Youth restiveness, demonstrations, riots, protests could be seen as a consequent effect of social deprivation which leaves the youth in a state of despair and hopelessness.

**R.I.P:** We have no jobs.

**ACID:** Therefore, we have no money.

**DANYAN:** Which means we cannot marry.

**R.I.P:** And consequently cannot have children.

**CHORUS:** We are the rejects of the world (*Hangmen Also Die*, 45).

The above illustrates how the employment factor contributes to the increase of terrorism in Nigeria as youths resort to violence as they feel the need to take action.

**MORTUARY:** Every dream we have you have stolen from us.

**DISCHARGE:** Every hope we had, you have also stolen from us.

**DANYAN:** Everything we have, you have taken from us.

**KHOMEINI:** And even that which we do not have.

**CHORUS:** You have also taken from us (*Hangmen Also Die*, 52).

Consequently, the desire to join a movement that effect change leads to insecurity and violence:

**DIMEARI:** I am a reject of the society. A piece of furniture standing unobserved in the living room of a blind world, I feel empty. I feel impotent. I feel useless. I want to do something that will shock the world, something that will make the world realize that I exist... (*Hangmen Also Die*, 71-72).

This illustrates that the desire for change, for revenge, for a dangerous employment accounts for the high rate of terrorist activities in Nigeria.

**DIMEARI:** You see, I want to be where the action is. Where the happening is. I want to have my own revenge on society for what it has done to me (*Hangmen Also Die*, 72).

More so, the desire for retribution against harsh government decisions and laws leads to violence.

**ALHAJA:**(Sobbing). My husband!

**ANGOLA:** Like a ram. They slaughtered our leader like a ramadan lamb.

**HASAN:** Or worse. With that cloth tied over his face, they denied him even the privilege of bleating.

**ANGOLA:** They must pay for this.

**HASAN:** They will pay. They or their children (*Once Upon Four Robbers*, 22).

In another light, this desire for retribution against embezzlement of public funds leads to violence.

**TAMARA:** He has already squandered the money...God will judge him.

**R.I.P:** Tamara, when man write and wait for God to act and God does not act, man takes up the role of God and acts. That is why he made us in his image (*Hangmen Also Die*, 118).

As highlighted in the play, the socio-political situation of the country and the desire for change ignite violence and terrorism in the country.

**R.I.P.:** We were fishermen, fresh in the world, fresh from home and families stricken by poverty. Sometimes we did not know where our next meal is coming from. So, we become pregnant with ideas with dreams, with ambitions to change this nation, change its leaders and create a new lease of life for us citizens (*Hangmen Also Die*, 38).

This buttressed how the problem of bad leadership accounts for the increase of terrorist attacks across the nation. Furthermore, the belief in ideology account for the causes of terrorism in Nigeria as those who sponsor these acts of terror and these perpetrators are often sold into one ideology or the other. As highlighted and illustrated in the play; *Hangmen Also Die*, Dr. Ogbansiegbe sold his ideology of terrorism, on the the uses and abuse of terrorism to the suicide squad members which is responsible for the mayhem unleashed in the play.

Lastly, the plays illustrate the state of the nation and the attitude of the citizens. Both plays begin in a chaotic state which reflects the situation of the country as described in *Once Upon Four Robbers*; "the soldiers lead a prisoner and tie him to the stake, then, at the orders of their officers, they take position. They fire, the prisoner slumps and the doctor steps forward to examine the body" (21). This captures the mood of the nation as the government continues to kill its citizens with harsh economic conditions which in turn incites violence in the country. In *Hangmen Also Die*, the play begins in the hanging room of a Nigerian prison. "Hanging" here connotes beyond physical as the suicide squad chorused at the end of the play.

**EROKOSIMA:** You will die. You will all hang. If you hang me, you will die hanging

**CHORUS:** Hang him, he has been hanging us all these years (*Hangmen Also Die*, 121).

The prison-like state the government has placed its citizens leads to the violence experienced across the nation.



**MAJOR:** Listen Angola, Hasan, Alhaja! This is the end, the guns will get us too in our turn unless we gulf.

**HASAN:** But for what? Where do we go?

**ALHAJA:** Nowhere. They have trapped us with their guns and decrees.

**HASAN:** All we have left is the Bar Beach and then 6 feet in the ground (*Once Upon Four Robbers*, 27).

It is pertinent to state that in the play, the Bar Beach connotes the place for the public and execution of robbers. Similarly this prison-like state of the nation that ignites violence is illustrated as thus,

**CHORUS:** And we do what we do because we know we have no future, because we know that no matter what we do, no matter how hard we try, no matter how hard we aspire, there is something waiting in the atmosphere to destroy us (*Hangmen Also Die*, 91).

In conclusion, the two plays portray characters that represent both the 'terrorists' and the 'terrorized' as the suicide squad members in *Hangmen Also Die*, (R.I.P., Mortuary, Acid, Danyan, Khomeini, Discharge, Tetanus) and the robbers in *Once Upon Four Robbers* (Angola, Major, Hasan, Alhaja) represent the citizens who feel marginalized, oppressed, exploited and have recourse to violence and terrorism as a means to reclaim their rightful position and take revenge on the society. The market women (Mama Alice, mama Toun, mama Uyi, Bintu, Yedunni) in *Once Upon Four Robbers* and (Tamara, Ibiwari, Ibiaye) in *Hangmen Also Die* represent the terrorized; the victims of terrorism. Orusoso, Ibiaye on one hand represents those who benefit from the activities of terrorism and in one way support and encourage it. Yekini, on the other hand represents the terrorists who have become so distraught from being used to perpetuate terror and have come to challenge those sponsoring acts of terror. He represents those who have decided to forgo their benefit in partaking in acts of terror. This is evident in the threat by the superintendent,

**SUPERINTENDENT:** Yekini, I want you to bear in mind that if another hangman hangs those boys, you will be retrenched without gratuities and pensions, without retirement benefits (*Hangmen Also Die*, 129).

On the other hand, the superintendent represents those who benefit from the unjust social system. As Yekini points out.

**YEKINI:** Tell me, Superintendent. These boys you want me to hang, what did they do? Is it true that you want them to be hanged not because they killed Chief Erokosima who stole their money but because you are afraid they will implicate you (*Hangmen Also Die*, 34).

Furthermore, Yekini represents the bulk of people who allowed themselves to be used as perpetrators of violence because they are scared of the punishment that await them. Also, Tamara represents those who are distraught with the situation of things and have recourse to terrorism and violence as a means to make their voices heard.

**TAMARA:** Prove to me that you are men. Disrupt the ceremony. Harass the chief. Recover what is left of our 3 millionnaira compensation money (*Hangmen Also Die*, 83).

The 'Doctor' and 'Warden' represents those despite their education have been brought into the conspiracy of silence and allows violence and terrorism to thrive because they are afraid of being stripped off their positions.

**DOCTOR:** Yekini, there is nothing we can do now. Our hands are tied.... Besides, I don't want to lose my job (*Hangmen Also Die*, 24).

Dr. Ogbasiegbe represents those who sponsor terrorism, the Erekosima represents those at the apex who benefits from the unjust social system. Also, like the prisoner doctor, prison warden and the superintendent, the sergeant, corporal and soldiers also represents the agents of terror used by the government to promote state terrorism.

**SERGEANT:** Alright, no need to take offence. You see our guns were sococked and alert that had we heard so, much as a humming, the market would have been littered with corpses (*Hangmen Also Die*, 47).

Finally, both plays highlight the incompetence of religious leaders in fighting terrorism thereby making it thrive.

**SERGEANT:** Prisoner, this is your last chance. Do you still refuse the priest?

**MAYOR:** I've said it, Sarge, I want no bad odour around me (*Once Upon Four Robbers*, 69).

In the words of Sola Adeyemi, "the harsh depiction of Aafa in *Once Upon Four Robbers* is to emphasize the inadequacy of religion in confronting the contemporary anomie" (14).

Summarily, while highlighting the root causes of terrorism according to the plays, Sola Adeyemi opines, "the causes of anguish in *Once Upon Four Robbers* are multifarious ranging from economic exploitation to social deprivation, social injustice, gross poverty and ignorance" (12). These conditions precipitate insecurity and violence as the marginalized and oppressed resort to violence as a means to regain their rightful position. Capturing the tendency, Femi Fatoba observes that the state neglects the duty by allowing conditions favourable to class divisions and because these class divisions results in the poverty of the working class which leads to the attempt by the working class to cure its poverty through violent means and then because the state then decides to confront the rebellious elements within the working class with a bigger force, the state put itself in a terrorist position (80).

### **Renegotiating the Counter-Terrorism Measures in Nigeria**

As already stated, the 21<sup>st</sup> century has continued to witness high increase in terrorist activities despite the numerous counter-terrorist different approaches adopted by successive Nigerian governments. The reason for this might not be far-fetched as captured by ChijiokeChinwokwu, cited by AondowaseBoh and TerkimbiAdoka,

In spite of the actions put in place to suppressing terrorism, the menace seems to be over-stressing the government, the fact is most of the government mechanism at

taming the menace have been mere peripheral window dressing as they have not actually tackled the issues that give rise to terrorism (115).

Similarly, Maurice Ogonnaya, a senior Research consultant Institute of Security Studies Pretoria affirms,

Despite massive expenditure by the Nigerian government over the past decade, counter-terrorism operations by security forces have achieved limited sources and the country is still ranked on the Global Terrorism Index as one of the states most affected by terrorism (web).

The question of bad policy, strategy and tactics or corruption in the leadership ranks of the security forces have been posed.? Numerous factors account for the increase of terrorism in Nigeria and as such, a multifarious approach to counter- terrorism is needed to curb this menace. This study therefore proffers the following counter terrorism measures. There is need for constitution review as there have been numerous calls for constitution reviews as many Nigerians hold the view that the constitution is old, colonialistic in nature and dictatorial as it does not reflect the Nigerian space. The popular opinion is that the deficiency of the constitution is responsible for the unrest as there are no consequences for terrorism enshrined in the constitution. It is therefore proposed that a new and democratic constitution be constituted. Also reports from past constitutional conferences needs to be considered, implemented and adopted. More so, since insecurity begins from the state, the state governors who are the chief security officers of the state should be allowed and encouraged to fight insecurity in their states.

Furthermore, this study proposes the following as support counter-terrorism measure; attitudinal change and social consciousness which could be done by civic societies and the government at all levels, traditional leaders, prominent personalities, the media and the church. This intention is to sensitize the people on the ills and evils of resorting to terrorism. Also public discourse and dialogues which will help breach the gap between the government and the people should be conducted. The use of military force which entails a more stringent and honest approach to fighting and combating terrorism should be adopted. More importantly, the study proffers the counter-terrorism measure of nipping this menace in the bud which basically entails providing essential services and removing the social construct of marginalization, social deprivation, social injustice, poverty, unemployment, that necessitates terrorism in Nigeria.

In conclusion, this study align with the injunction of Kofi Anan as he elaborated the key five elements of counter-terrorism that he feels any meaningful government in Africa who truly wants to fight terrorism should adopt, which include, to dissuade disaffected groups from choosing terrorism as a tactic to achieve their goal, to deny terrorists the ability to carry out their attacks, to deter them from supporting terrorists, to develop capacity to prevent terrorism and to defend human rights in the struggle against terrorism

### **Summary and Conclusion**

Terrorism has become a rampant phenomenon in Nigeria and no state in Nigeria has not had its own share of insecurity ranging from armed robbery and kidnapping, communal clashes and

tribal wars, rival cult wars in tertiary institutions and proscribed terror groups. These insidious actions are responsible for the physical and structural violence experienced in Nigeria as domestic terrorism has been recorded across the nation with many lives lost and properties destroyed leaving so many people displaced. Terror, therefore has become a principal means of governing in Nigeria and has eaten deep into the psyche of the Nigerian society as every Nigerian at one point or another contemplate "if-I-don't-bribe, will-I-get-the-job", if-I-don't-bribe-will-I-get-the-contract", if-I-don't-pay-my-tithe, will-God-attend-to-my-prayers", if-I-don't-sort that-lecturer-would-I-pass-his-course?" This and several other contemplative terror thoughts have continued to harass the minds of Nigerians thereby breeding and concretizing terror in political, social, religious and educational undertones .

Since no nation thrives in an atmosphere of terror, different successive governments of Nigeria have adopted counter-terrorism measures to curb this ugly menace but their efforts is yet to yield any positive effects in Nigeria as domestic terrorism across the nation is seen to be on the increase. The rate of terror attacks in Nigeria is very alarming as it has continues to threaten the security of the nation and inflict unquantifiable adverse effects on the people. This is despite the huge fund being injected to fight terrorism and setting up bodies to help terrorists who have renounced their memberships and also setting up establishments to help those who are marginalized so they wont resort to terrorism, nevertheless. the nation is still besieged with high increase of domestic terrorism. The reason for the failure of this counter-terrorism measures might not be far fetched as corruption has eaten deep into the fabrics of our nation as funds that are mapped out to fight terrorism has been embezzled by those in charge. In addition, the root causes of terrorism which are include social injustice, poverty, ignorance, unemployment, corruption, embezzlement, social deprivation and exploitation among others have not been addressed thereby making any counter-terrorism measures unproductive.

Until this corruption in the military is addressed and funds earmarked for counter-terrorism is adequately utilized for this purpose; until the constitution is reviewed to give stringent punishments to terrorists and grant states power to fight insecurity and until the social construct of ignorance, unemployment, marginalization, social injustice, exploitation among others is addressed, any counter terrorism measures adopted will be likened to a medical doctor who treats the symptoms of an illness instead of treating the illness. Therefore. the government at all levels; traditional rulers, religious leaders, the media, and indeed every Nigerian has a role to play towards an effective counter-terrorism measures.

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