Combating Terrorism: A Literature Review

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Abstract

Terrorism and the security threats it poses to individual states and the global community currently dominate the public discourse. Scholars, policymakers, and ordinary citizens are engaged in an endless inquiry into the nature, root causes, impacts, trends, patterns, and remedies of terrorism. Although serious academic research on terrorism goes back to early 1970s and 1980s (Crenshaw, 2014), the 9/11 terrorist attack in the United States served as a catalyst that intensified research efforts within the academic circles (Sageman, 2014). This literature review seeks to explore in detail five fundamental questions that are at the center of academic research on terrorism. These questions are: Is there a globally accepted definition of terrorism? Are policymakers really addressing the root causes of terrorism or are they fighting its symptoms? To what extent has terrorism and its threats to peace and security left an indelible scar on humanity? If we were to consider terrorism to be a public illness, what types of medication could be prescribed to permanently cure it? What methods, techniques and processes would be appropriate to help affected groups engage in a meaningful discussion on the topic of terrorism in order to generate mutually acceptable and implementable solutions that are based on reliable information and respect for the dignity and rights of individuals and groups? To answer these questions, a thorough examination of available research literature on the definition, causes, and solutions of terrorism is presented. The literature utilized in the review and analysis are peer-reviewed journal papers accessed and retrieved through the ProQuest Central databases, as well as research findings published in edited volumes and scholarly books. This research is a scholarly contribution to the ongoing discussion on counter-terrorism theories and practices, and an important tool for public education on the subject matter.

Keywords: terrorism, counterterrorism, combating terrorism, terrorism literature, definition of terrorism, causes of terrorism, solutions of terrorism, terrorism research

Background and Impact Assessment

Terrorism and the security threats it poses to individual states and the global community currently dominate the public discourse. Scholars, policymakers, and ordinary citizens have become active participants in an endless inquiry into the nature, root causes, impacts, trends, patterns, and remedies of terrorism. Although serious academic research on terrorism goes back to early 1970s and 1980s (Crenshaw, 2014), the 9/11 terrorist attack in the United States served as a catalyst that intensified research efforts within the academic circles (Sageman, 2014).

Since 9/11, many researchers in the fields of social sciences and humanities from universities around the world have been engaged in the monitoring, data collection, and analysis of terrorism related violence (Freilich, et al, 2009). In the United States, the University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) has been playing an important role since 2000 in collecting and collating data on terrorism related incidents around the world through its Global Terrorism Database. With available data on terrorism, researchers at the Institute for Economics and Peace found that 2015 was the second deadliest year on record with a total number of 29,376 deaths, and an economic loss of US$89.6 billion (Global Terrorism Index, 2016).

Several factors could explain the global spread of terrorism. First, it is believed that the emergence of ISIL from the Middle East as an international terrorist network accounts for the rapid spread of terrorism related violence in the Western countries through its affiliates in many countries and its recruitment of lone wolves on social media (Mccauley and Moskalenko, 2014). Second, the militarized engagement of Boko Haram in the northeastern part of Nigeria by the Nigerian military forced Boko Haram members to flee to neighboring countries of Niger, Cameroon, and Chad, from where the group recruited more members and intensified its violent acts against the local populations, government facilities, and the law enforcement (START, 2015). The third factor is the regrouping and rebranding of Al-Qaeda after the killing of Osama bin Laden on May 1, 2011 in Pakistan, and the death of Muammar Gaddafi on October 20, 2011 which created a vacuum for the activities of terrorists in Libya. Al-Qaeda's activities are currently present in Africa - especially in the Maghreb region - and the Arab world through its affiliates in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Syria, Lebanon, Kurdistan, Mali, Algeria, and other countries (Crenshaw, 2014). Fourth, Al-Shabaab's continuous activities in East Africa, particularly in Somalia and Kenya, and its collaboration with other terrorist networks make the global counterterrorism efforts more difficult in that region. The fifth factor is that against the counterterrorism measures and the war on terror by the United States and its allies, the Taliban intensified its terror attacks and war in Pakistan and Afghanistan, with a 29 percent increase in terrorism related deaths and 34 percent increase in battlefield deaths, making it a total of 19,502 deaths in 2015 (Global Terrorism Index, 2016). Without neglecting the other factors that are not mentioned here, the sixth point is the unpredictable nature of the transnationally connected but domestically executed terrorism related attacks by home-grown-lone-wolves in the Western countries (Mccauley and Moskalenko, 2014; King and Taylor, 2011; Moghadam, 2006). The transnational nature of the terrorist attacks that occurred in Western countries, for example, the terrorist attacks in Boston, San Bernardino, Orlando, Paris, Brussels, Ankara, London, Berlin, and

so on, show that terrorism is no longer a Middle Eastern, Asian or African problem. Terrorism poses a serious threat to the national security of Western countries, and the world at large.

Researchers have identified some common drivers of terrorism. In developing countries, there is a correlation between state sponsored political violence combined with existing unresolved intractable conflicts, and terrorism (Testas, 2004; Piazza, 2006; Çınar, 2009). For example, it is believed that the extrajudicial killing in 2009 of Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram, by the Nigerian law enforcement motivated the members of Boko Haram to revenge through violence. The U.S. invasion of Iraq and the dethronement of Sadam Hussein in 2003 are said to have planted the seed for anti-American and anti-Western sentiments in the Arab world (Moghadam, 2006). The killing of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, the war in Syria, and the interethnic war in Iraq created the conditions for the rapid spread of the Islamic State's ideology. It is estimated that between 1989 and 2014, about 93 percent of all the global terrorist attacks occurred in those countries where state sponsored violence and intractable interethnic or interreligious conflicts exist (Global Terrorism Index, 2016). In some developed countries, however, it is believed that youth unemployment, exclusion, underlying grievances, access to weapons, and so on, drive lone wolves to commit terrorist attacks (McCauley and Moskalenko, 2008; King and Taylor, 2011).

Although the security threat posed by terrorism is highly felt in countries around the world, it is reported that Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria and Nigeria have suffered the most, accounting for 72 percent of all deaths related to terrorism in 2015. Also, it is believed that ISIL, Boko Haram, the Taliban and al-Qa'ida committed the highest number of terrorist attacks in 2015 while being responsible for about 74 percent of all terrorism related deaths globally (Global Terrorism Index, 2016).

Combatting the threats that terrorism poses to human and ecological security and peace will require concerted, coordinated, and proactive efforts from each of the affected countries as well as the international community. Each country, for example the United States, has initiated counterterrorism programs that involve all the relevant government agencies, civil society, and faith based organizations (Sageman, 2014). Nevertheless, the United Nations, through the General Assembly and the Security Council, has adopted many catalyzing and coordinating resolutions aimed at helping and empowering member states to successfully deal with the challenges they face in their counterterrorism activities. Prominent among the United Nations terrorism related resolutions is the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (United Nations General Assembly, 8 September 2006). It is recommended in this resolution that the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) should help member states develop a global action plan containing four key counterterrorism measures. The four key measures are: measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; measures to prevent and combat terrorism; measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard; and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism (United Nations General Assembly, 8 September 2006). Each of these measures contain specific actionable items which will be discussed later under the solution subheading using relevant literature on this topic.

However, it is important to note here that the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF), an international forum of 29 countries and the European Union that works "to reduce the vulnerability of people worldwide to terrorism by preventing, combating, and prosecuting terrorist acts and countering incitement and recruitment to terrorism," believes that applying the United Nations resolution to meet three specific needs is vital. Through its "Life Cycle Toolkit," the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum recommends that to successfully combat terrorism globally, member states should channel their efforts to three main areas: prevention, detection and intervention, and rehabilitation and reintegration (Global Counter-Terrorism Forum Life Cycle Toolkit, n.d.).

With the above background knowledge on terrorism, the remaining sections of this literature review seeks to explore in detail five fundamental questions that are at the center of academic research on terrorism. These questions are: Is there a globally accepted definition of terrorism? Are policymakers really addressing the root causes of terrorism or are they fighting its symptoms? To what extent has terrorism and its threats to peace and security left an indelible scar on humanity? If we were to consider terrorism to be a public illness, what types of medication could be prescribed to permanently cure it? What methods, techniques and processes would be appropriate to help affected groups engage in a meaningful discussion on the topic of terrorism in order to generate mutually acceptable and implementable solutions that are based on reliable information and respect for the dignity and rights of individuals and groups?

To answer these questions, a thorough examination of available research literature on the definition, causes, and solutions of terrorism is presented below. The literature utilized in the review and analysis are peer-reviewed journal papers accessed and retrieved through the ProQuest Central databases, as well as research findings published in edited volumes and scholarly books.

On the Definition of Terrorism

The definition of terrorism has generated numerous debates within the academic arena, just as the efforts to explain what terrorism is have been a contested endeavor among policymakers (Weiss, 2002; Schmid, 2005). Although the debate on the definition of terrorism could be traced to the 1960s and 1970s (Roberts, 2015), the current arguments on the definition of terrorism revolve around what exactly constitutes terrorism and a terrorist attack (Lentini, 2008).

Scholars and policymakers are stuck in their efforts to outline the criteria for distinguishing terrorism from other state and non-state violence. While some researchers argue that setting globally acceptable criteria for knowing and identifying terrorist acts is important, others believe that such criteria should be relative depending on the situation, location, motivations, and national policies (Weiss, 2002). In-between these opposing positions, the third argument takes a middle ground approach and argues that when we see a terrorist act we will know exactly what it is (Greenstock, 2001, as cited in Weiss, 2002). This means that our knowledge or definition of terrorism should be derived from our perception of what we think and recognize as a terrorist attack. The idea of *when we see it, we will know what it is*, reminds us of St. Augustine's answer to the question about time. What is time? St Augustine replies: "If you don't ask me, I know it; but if you ask me, I don't know" (Augustine, ., & Chadwick, 1992).

Although these arguments on the definition of terrorism persist in the available research

literature, there is a consensus among scholars and researchers that terrorism poses a serious threat to peace and security all over the world (Freilich, et al., 2009). Scholars also agree that the impacts of terrorism on societies in countries around the world are devastating, and that terrorism should be considered as an international crime under the statutes of the International Criminal Court (Lawless, 2007). For this reason, many scholars have argued that to define terrorism, it is imperative to go from the known to the unknown; that is, from the visible effects of terrorism on societies to the unexpressed motivations for committing acts of terror (Newman, 2006). This means that a definition of terrorism should include the impacts of terrorism on the victims, the consequences of terrorist attacks on societies, and the motivations that drive terrorists to inflict harm on others and cause substantial damage and loss to the society and families.

One question comes to mind regarding this visible impacts and motivation assessment argument of terrorism. Could those violent acts that are sponsored by the state actors qualify as terrorism? For the past two thousand years, state actors have directly or indirectly inflicted devastating acts of violence on some populations as a means to achieving their goals, and realizing their interests (Laqueur 2001; Rapoport 2003, as cited in Lentini, 2008). Recently, it is reported by Democracy Now that about 1,500 civilians are directly killed by U.S. airstrikes in Iraq and Syria only in March 2017 (Democracy Now, March 30, 2017). Also, it is reported by Amnesty International that hundreds of civilians were recently killed inside their homes or refuge places in Mosul, Iraq, by the U.S. led coalition airstrikes after receiving orders not to leave their homes from the Iraqi government (Amnesty International, 28 March 2017). In addition, the recent report that the Assad government is using chemical weapon against the Syrian civilians outweigh the normal impact of terror on innocent populations.

The arguments on defining terrorism from the level of impact it has on humans and their societies to the motivations for committing such atrocities, or from motivation to impact, show how complicated, complex and nuanced the use of the term terrorism is within the academic arena. Lentini (2003, as cited in Lentini, 2008) confirms that terrorism is a multifaceted phenomenon. Multifaceted in the sense that terrorism could be understood from many perspectives. It is like a coin with two sides, or a double-edged sword. World icons and Nobel peace prize winners like Nelson Mandela, Menachem Begin, and Yasser Arafat were once labeled as terrorists (Weiss, 2002).

Depending on how it is understood and defined, and considering the motivations of those who resort to violence to achieve their goals, terrorism could have both favorable and unfavorable consequences. From this perspective, some scholars have argued that strategic bombing, for example, could qualify as a terrorist attack (Grosscup, 2006). Military strategic bombing on the civilians located on the side of the enemy, just like the targeted terrorist attack by bomb explosion or suicide bombing which are committed by the known terrorist networks, are all carried out to intentionally inflict psychological and physical damage, as well as a loss on the enemy. So, some authors like Grosscup (2006) question the difference between those military strategic bombing that are intentionally dropped on civilians to weaken the enemy and the suicide bombing or killings committed by those who are labeled terrorists.

In the last analysis, the question that stands out is: who has the authority, ethical standard, moral obligation, and legal parameters to determine and declare a particular group a terrorist

organization? In 1995, Jordan and Weedon published an important research article where they argued that the powerful has always been the one to determine, name, and define contentious global issues (Jordan and Weedon, 1995). For Weiss (2002), the use of violence to achieve a political goal is usually condemned by those who are unsympathetic to the struggle and applauded by those in solidarity with the cause. Boko Haram, an Islamic religious organization that started off peacefully in 2002 in the northeastern part of Nigeria, for example, was declared a terrorist organization on September 14, 2013 when the United States government through the office of the U.S. Secretary of State designated Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) after a series of violent confrontation with the Nigerian law enforcement, beginning from 2009 when the Boko Haram's founder was killed (Ugorji, 2016).

Moreover, scholars like Grosscup (2006) have consistently maintained that defining terrorism and establishing the criteria for determining what is or what is not terrorism have been the preoccupation of those who are in the position of power. Often the underlying conflicts or grievances that motivate groups to violence are not considered before these groups are branded terrorist organizations. A hasty labeling of a group as a terrorist organization without a careful examination of the underlying issues could have many consequences.

Roberts (2015) identifies three types of consequences associated with placing a terrorism label on a group. First, it could lead to misunderstanding and costly mistakes. For example, it was later recognized and acknowledged internationally that the labeling of the African National Congress led by Nelson Mandela of South Africa in 1988 by the United States and the United Kingdom as a terrorist organization was a regrettable mistake. Second, such labels could impede negotiation or mediation efforts with the group, to the extent that it will be impossible to utilize the "*dangerous* mediation" model proposed by Cloke (2001) in mediating fascism and oppression oriented conflict. Third, labeling a group as a terrorist organization may hinder future efforts to fight an enemy of a higher order in partnership with the labeled group, just as the Turkish Kurdish organization (PKK), although labeled as a terrorist organization by Turkey and some Western countries, has been instrumental in fighting ISIS.

However, many scholars believe that to be able to set the parameters for determining what qualifies as terrorism, there is need to distinguish between state actions and non-state actions as they occurred in the past and as they are occurring in the present (Schinkel, 2009). According to this idea, terrorism is nothing but a spillover from what the perpetrators consider to be past injustices and oppression. Some scholars argue that "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" and that "Whom the Israelis call a terrorist, the Palestinians call a martyr" (Weiss, 2002, p. 11).

However, could the state sponsored violence be considered as terrorism? To this question, some scholars argue that the state sponsored military strategic bombing is governed by international laws, and when such laws or treaties are violated, the violators will be charged for committing crimes against humanity and gross violations of human and group rights to existence (Lentini, 2008). Rapoport and Wilkinson (1971, as cited in Roberts, 2015) were the first to emphasize the need to separate terrorism from other forms of political violence. Non-state actors, on the other hand, are viewed differently. Through terrorist attacks, non-state actors are described to be involved in "a symbolic act designed to influence political behavior by extranormal means,

entailing the use or threat of violence" (Thornton, 1964, p. 73, as cited in Roberts, 2015).

Based on this distinction, Hoffman (1998) proposes a definition of terrorism that excludes state sponsored violence on the civilians. Terrorism, according to Hoffman (1998) is defined as the use of violence or a declared threat to use violence against a population or non-combatants including their possessions in order to cause a political change by creating fear in the society. While maintaining that scholars should be cautious in their attempt to define terrorism, Roberts (2015) argues that inasmuch as the core meaning of terrorism is largely accepted while the peripheral meaning is debatable, and given that the meaning of terrorism is not static, the notion of state sponsored terror should be included in the definition of terrorism. Whether the perpetrators are state actors or non-state actors, it is believed that terrorism is "a form of political communication, violence intended to send a message to a watching audience" (Crenshaw, 2014).

Therefore, there is need to situate the definition and analysis of terrorism in a wider theoretical framework (Crenshaw, 2014). But most importantly, scholars and researchers should try to understand how policymakers and the law enforcement conceptualize and define terrorism in their counterterrorism activities. The pioneering research survey conducted by Freilich, et al. (2009) with the American State Police agencies about "terrorism threats, terrorism sources, and terrorism definitions" is very instructive. The researchers provided the respondents with a set of definitions of terrorism that includes those of the state agencies and academic scholars without telling them the sources of the definitions. It is reported that the law enforcement's understanding of terrorism has about 83.8 percent match with that of the FBI and 40.5 percent match with the state department's; and lower matches with those definitions from the academic fields, for example, the definitions by Brian Jenkins (27. 7 percent) and James Poland (27.7 percent) (Freilich, et al, 2009).

To realize the goal of this paper, the four definitions that emerged from Freilich, et al.'s (2009) survey are stated below.

- FBI: "Terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."
- U.S. State Department: "Terrorism is the purposeful threat or use of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups, whether acting for, or in opposition to established governmental authority, when such actions are intended to influence the victim and or a target group wider than the immediate victim or victims."
- Brian Jenkins: Terrorism is "the use or threatened use of force designed to bring about a political change."
- James Poland: "Terrorism is the premeditated, deliberate, systematic murder, mayhem, and threatening of the innocent to create fear and intimidation in order to gain a political or tactical advantage, usually to influence an audience" (as cited in Freilich, et al., 2009).

Having reviewed the various arguments on the definition of terrorism, and with the understanding of terrorism through the four definitions stated above, one question that needs to be examined in the terrorism literature is: what do researchers think are the root causes of terrorism? This is the focus of the next section.

On the Root Causes of Terrorism

The root causes of terrorism, just like its definition, are contested in the available research literature. Since there is no consensus on the definition of terrorism, it is difficult to agree on what constitutes the underlying causes of terrorism at the local and international levels (Schmid, 2005; Newman, 2006). However, a quick scan of the major research literature on terrorism from 2002 to 2017 reveals common themes identified by scholars as the primary root causes of terrorism. Central to these themes – which will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs – is the notion of existing or perceived injustices (Weiss, 2002).

Actual or perceived injustice, however, is a complex and vague term. Are these injustices found within the economic, political, social, demographic, psychological, religious, or family domains? In his analysis of previously identified root causes of terrorism, Newman (2006) distinguishes between "permissive structural factors and direct underlying grievances" (p. 751). The structural factors represent the structures that enable, ferment, and perpetuate all forms of injustices. They are the enablers of terrorism at the premanifest conflict processes level (Cheldelin et al., 2008, as cited in Ugorji, 2016). These structures could be local, national or international institutions that ferment poverty, unfavorable social change, unemployment, or forced migration, and so on. The underlying grievances are tangible political issues that have not yet been resolved, including "inequality, exclusion, repression, dispossession, sense of humiliation / alienation, sense of foreign occupation / hegemony, clash of identities / dispute with identity aspect, violent conflict, negative effects of globalization, sudden economic downturns" (Newman, 2006, p. 764). These manifest conflict processes, according to Sandole (Cheldelin et al., 2008, as cited in Ugorji, 2016) could escalate to aggressive manifest conflict processes of which terrorism is a good example.

Nevertheless, both the structural factors and the underlying grievances alone cannot escalate to terrorism. There is need for a catalyzing agency. The catalytic conditions according to Newman (2006) are "leadership, funding, and state sponsorship" (p. 764).

A deep reflection on Newman's (2006) analysis of the root causes of terrorism reveals some similarities with the works of his predecessors. In 1981, Martha Crenshaw published an important research article entitled, "The Causes of Terrorism" (Crenshaw, 1981) in which she identified two distinguishing categories of causes: preconditions and precipitants. The preconditions are those underlying factors that create the conditions for the emergence of terrorism, and they are a combination of root causes and situational or proximate causes. Examples of the root causes that Sirseloudi (2004) outlined in his research article entitled, "Early Detection of Terrorist Campaigns" (as cited in Schmid, 2005) are "lack of democracy, lack of rule of law, lack of good governance, lack of social justice, the backing of illegitimate regimes, high / rising distributive inequality, historical experience of violent conflict waging, support for groups using terrorist means, vulnerability of modern democracies, and failed states / safe havens outside state control" (p. 133). The precipitants are those catalyzing actions or factors that immediately precede the occurrence of a terrorist attack, and they include a "counterterrorism campaign causing many victims to call "for revenge and retaliation, humiliation of the group or its supporters, threat, failed peace talks, elections, and symbolic dates" (Schmid, 2005, p. 133).

Both the preconditions and precipitants theory of Crenshaw (1981) and the permissive

structural factors and direct underlying grievances theory of Newman (2006) show that that which has the potency of causing terrorism could also be found within the causes of war in the same way that the causes of war could be explained from the causes of conflict, conflict dynamics, situations, environment, and motives. The difficult question is: why do some groups or individuals in a conflict or crisis mode choose terrorism instead of other conflict styles or tactics? Schmid (2005) contends that the choice of terrorism as a conflict style is based on seven factors: the size of the group – small groups are more likely to resort to terrorism than large ones -; resources available to the group including having access to arms and bombs; media coverage of past terrorist attacks, creating the conditions for a sense of fame and heroism; internal group dynamics; "relative group strength compared to the political opponent; the group's ideology; and the conflict behavior of the opponent" (p. 135).

Although the above root causes of terrorism may seem very intriguing and accurate, some qualitative and quantitative research conducted in the last decade found that, contrary to the popular belief, factors such as poverty and economic downturn or income are not significantly related to terrorism (Testas, 2004; Pedahzur, 2005, Piazza, 2006; Çınar, 2009). Instead, these researchers found that higher education levels could even be an asset for transnational terrorism in some countries (Testas, 2004), and that increased state repression, structure of party politics, political injustices and ethno-religious grievances are significant predictors of terrorism (Testas, 2004; Piazza, 2006; Çınar, 2009). It is very difficult though to explain how higher education could qualify as a root cause of terrorism. It is true that people who have higher education degrees would want to assume the leadership of an emerging political entity or a new state should the use of terrorism result in independence or self-determination. Also, people who have advanced knowledge in internet technology including social media and telecommunication could be a great asset to terrorist networks. However, could education alone motivate people to pursue their goals using terrorism? This question is yet to be answered by researchers.

Nevertheless, existing interethnic or interreligious grievances and conflicts are most likely to escalate, serving as a radicalization pathway toward terrorism. Some scholars have argued that to understand the root causes of terrorism, it is important to explain how radicalization happens (McCauley and Moskalenko, 2008; King and Taylor, 2011); and what constitutes the profile of lone wolves, particularly "what moves an individual from radical opinion to radical action" (Mccauley and Moskalenko, 2014). McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) argue that radicalization and its extreme outcome – terrorism - could be explained from the perspective of the social cleavage theory through the dynamics of existing intergroup conflict. People tend to identify with their own group and do everything possible to defend their group. For them, what is branded "terrorism" is nothing but a defense mechanism in solidarity with the group people identify with.

It is true that group members could have strong sentiments for and attachment to their group. But what exactly accounts for the shift from radical attachment to the group one identifies with to a radical action or a terrorist attack against another group? How could the radicalization of homegrown jihadists in Western countries, for example, be explained? These questions are the preoccupation of King and Taylor (2011). In their research on "the Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists," King and Taylor (2011) found that the root causes of radicalization and terrorism could be explained not only from the social cleavage perspective, but primarily through a combination

of three psychological factors identified as "group relative deprivation, identity conflicts, and personality characteristics" (p. 602).

Depriving a group of what belongs to that group, coupled with other identity based conflicts, are necessary but not sufficient in explaining the gap between "radical opinion and radical action" or in understanding what motivates a terrorist organization or group. For this reason, some scholars argue that in the last analysis it is better to explore the root causes of terrorism through the constituting elements of the profile of lone wolf terrorists, especially through their "personality characteristics" (McCauley and Moskalenko, 2008). In their research, McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) discovered two important profiles of lone wolf terrorists which could explain the root causes of terrorism. These are "disconnected-disordered and caring-compelled" (p. 69). The disconnected-disordered are lone wolf terrorists with signs of psychological disorders who are motivated by existing grievances, and because of their access to or mastery of weapons and ammunitions, they are inclined to committing terrorist attacks on civilians or government property. The caring-compelled are those lone wolf terrorists who are motivated by the suffering of other individuals or groups to whom they are strongly connected and are compelled to act in order to "reduce or avenge this suffering" (McCauley and Moskalenko, 2008). This explains to a high degree why individuals without previous criminal records could instantly commit suicide terrorist attacks in order to be recognized as a martyr by their group members (Moghadam, 2006; Pedahzur, 2005).

The preceding root causes of terrorism, especially suicide terrorism, tend to show that suicide bombers act from a rationally, well reflected, and willful decision making, which makes suicide terrorism "a rational tactical strategy (Pedahzur, 2005, p. 33). However, this position fails to recognize or account for hundreds of minors who are being kidnapped by terrorist organizations, hypnotized, and forced to commit suicide bombing on their behalf. It is my contention and submission that these innocent children do not willingly choose to become terrorists. They are victims of terrorism in the same manner that victims of suicide bomb explosions are. It is important therefore that researchers and policymakers devote more time and resources to understanding the plights and vulnerability of the kidnapped minors and how they could be rescued, as well as how the kidnapping by terrorists could be prevented.

Preventing terrorists from kidnapping minors and recruiting the vulnerable fall within the ongoing search for sustainable solutions to terrorism. In the next section of this literature review, efforts will be made to examine the various theories, methods, techniques and processes proposed by researchers to prevent and resolve terrorism related issues.

On the Solutions of Terrorism

For a long time, policymakers and academics have sought to understand what motivates people to turn to political violence and terrorism in order to know which solutions could be most suitable for terrorism (Sageman, 2014; Taylor, 2014). However, the fact that there are multiple causes of terrorism, and because of the disagreement over what constitutes terrorism, it is difficult to know for sure what the overall solutions to terrorism should be (Sageman, 2014; Crenshaw, 2014). Nevertheless, it is possible to identify specific solutions to terrorist actions based on the

identifiable patterns, locations, known causes, and dynamics.

Also, efforts to prevent, counter or combat terrorism must begin by identifying immediate or short-term and long-term strategies (Pedahzur, 2005). As part of the short-term strategy, it is recommended by Pedahzur (2005) and reemphasized by Lentini (2008) that interveners should first establish trust between the vulnerable population and the government, as well as among the antagonists involved in existing conflicts. Once an atmosphere of trust is established, the long-term approach will entail the use of both the offensive and defensive measures (Pedahzur, 2005). The use of offensive strategies includes the active involvement of the intelligence community from where intelligence is sent to the different stakeholders in the respective security agencies as well as the presidency. Signals from the intelligence will help in determining whether a military intervention or action is needed. The defensive measures include "prevention, crisis management and reconstruction" (Lentini, 2008). Included in the long-term strategy are the imprisonment of leaders of terrorist networks, negotiation, and provision of humanitarian aids to the affected populations (Pedahzur, 2005, p. 189).

Some scholars have cautioned that even though the removal of the leaders of terrorist networks may weaken the capabilities of the network in the short run (Price, 2012, as cited in Crenshaw, 2014), such removals either by military strike, killing or imprisonment may fester strong sentiments among members of the organization and possibly lead to more recruitment of new members (Crenshaw, 2014). In 2009, it was believed that the extra-judicial killing of Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram, by the Nigerian law enforcement while in police custody, would deter members of Boko Haram from committing further violence (Ugorji, 2016). The opposite was the case. Yusuf's death in police custody triggered intense fighting and terrorist attacks against the Nigerian state and the citizens, leading to the escalation and spread of the conflict.

The Boko Haram example indicates that the use of military force alone cannot solve the terrorism problem (Art and Richardson, 2007, as cited in Crenshaw, 2014). It is therefore imperative that any solutions to terrorism should display "greater clarity in the objectives and terms of reference utilized" (Irwin, 2015). Also, interveners should first seek to understand the limitations of these solutions and their long-term effects on the society before they are deployed.

This means that selecting the solutions alone is not enough. Other strategic factors should be considered. Hoffman (2009) suggests four interconnected elements needed to successfully combat terrorism and defeat it. First, there must be a clear strategy. Second, policymakers should have a defined structure for implementing the solutions. Third, there is need for intergovernmental agency cooperation. And fourth, there should be a unified effort to implement the solutions (Hoffman, 2009). Based on this set of guidelines, a five-point solution is proposed by Hoffman (2009):

- Denial of terrorist sanctuary, elimination of terrorist freedom of movement, and denial of terrorist resources and support;
- Identification and neutralization of the terrorist;
- Creation of a secure environment—progressing from local to regional to global;
- Ongoing and effective neutralization of terrorist propaganda and information operations through the planning and execution of a comprehensive and integrated information operations and holistic civil affairs campaign in harmony with the first four tasks;

- Interagency efforts to build effective and responsible civil governance mechanisms that eliminate the fundamental causes of terrorism and insurgency. (pp. 372-373)

A solitary reflection on these solutions reveals a reactionary pattern. These solutions fail to consider and address the conditions that give rise to terrorism. Also, even though it proposes a counter-narrative measure, it does not recognize the need for rehabilitation and reintegration. These important factors are included in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; measures to prevent and combat terrorism; measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard; and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism (United Nations General Assembly, 8 September 2006). Similarly, the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum recommends that to successfully combat terrorism globally, member states should channel their efforts to three main areas: prevention, detection and intervention, and rehabilitation and reintegration (Global Counter-Terrorism Forum Life Cycle Toolkit).

Sometimes, it is easy to develop a global strategy on a paper, but very difficult to implement it. The United Nations is a typical example. Before any resolution is passed, the core members of the Security Council will need to reach a consensus. Often, politics and rivalry get in the way, making it difficult for a resolution to pass. The same thing occurs in different countries, especially among the elected officials. Elected officials who are supposed to champion the cause of the citizens and work together for the protection and safety of the citizens end up antagonizing one another. Also, the lack of cooperation between the intelligence community and the academic experts in the field of terrorism research has led to a stagnation in terrorism research (Sageman, 2014). Therefore, there is need to explore the solutions of terrorism through other research methods.

Hence, I propose a future terrorism research aimed at knowing whether group facilitation as a methodological tool could help in finding solutions to terrorism and increasing the effectiveness (Schwarz, 2002; Schuman, 2005) of stakeholders to successfully prevent, counter and combat terrorism. In this future research, the skilled facilitator approach (Schwarz, 2002) will be used to explore answers to three fundamental questions that scholars have not yet answered in the existing literature:

1. How do young people, especially students, define terrorism?
2. What are the views of the young people on what motivates people to commit terrorist attacks?
3. What are the views of the young people on the strategies that could be utilized to prevent, counter and combat terrorism?

Finding answers to these questions is quintessential for youth empowerment, leadership capacity building, and successful resolution of terrorism related conflicts.

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