

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**



**SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN  
INSECURE REGION**

**BY**

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**(10348926)**

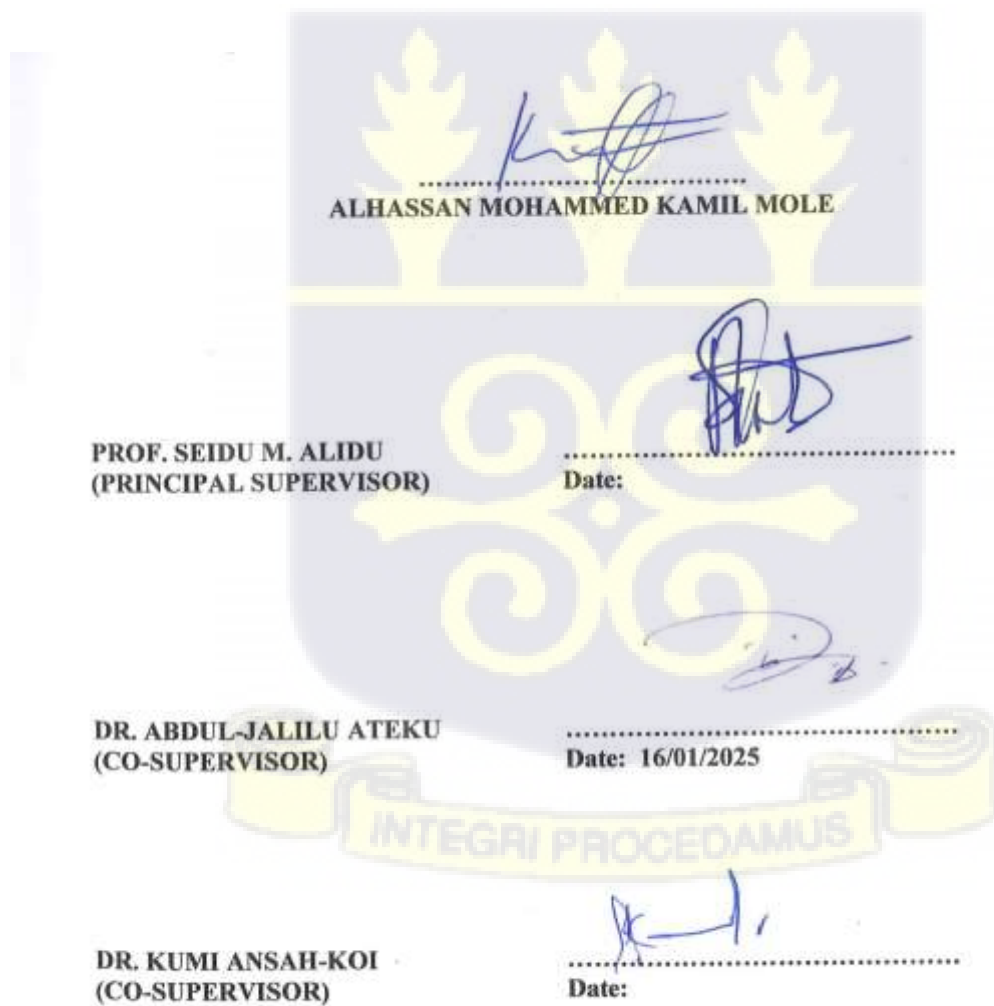
**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN  
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF PHD  
POLITICAL SCIENCE DEGREE**

**OCTOBER 2022**

**DECLARATION**

I, Alhassan Mohammed Kamil Mole, do hereby declare that besides the quotations and other references which have been duly acknowledged, this research is carried out under the able leadership of Dr. Seidu Alidu as the Principal Supervisor and supported by Dr. Abdul-Jelilu Ateku and Dr. Kumi Ansah Koi. This work has not been submitted in whole or in part for a degree anywhere. I am, however, responsible for any weakness, marginal or substantial, which may be identified in this thesis.

I also declare that this work has never been submitted by me or any other person to the University of Ghana, Legon or any other University for the award of any degree.



## ABSTRACT

Although the surge in terrorism has resulted in a corresponding rise in scholarly interests and academic research, the focus has been on terrorism-embattled territories with parameters under investigation straddling the reasons why those countries experience terrorism and violent extremism to the political and socio-economic effects of terrorism. Very scant attention has been paid to countries that have not experienced terrorism and more especially the sources of their immunity to terrorism. As a result, there is a wealth of ignorance and poverty of knowledge on the sources of stability unlike instability from terrorism, which benefits from expost explanations. The purpose of this study therefore, is to seek to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's resilience to terrorism and violent extremism, relative to her peers in the West African Sub-region. In effect, the question underpinning this study is, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even though they share similar political, socio-economic and demographic characteristics? To yield better insights into the phenomenon under discussion, the study addressed four research questions; (a) is Ghana exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism? (b) why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African sub-region? (c) how is Ghana responding to the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism (P/CVET)? (d) how do the chosen responses and mechanism impact Ghana's P/CVET effort?

Methodologically, the study employed a mixed method of data collection and analysis. Data for the study was obtained from multiple sources which included surveys, focus group discussions, expert interviews, and documentary reviews. The study analysis was guided by the research objective/questions and anchored on the Relative Deprivation (RD) theory as the theoretical framework.

Based on the analysis of the data gathered and the ensuing discussions, the study concludes that, Ghana's history and culture of peace; Absence of an overarching religious authority; A thriving democracy and the rule of law; The role and authority of traditional leadership in Ghana; State presence and participatory local governance system and presence of a vibrant media among others are the factors on which Ghana's resilience to the risk and threats of terrorism is anchored. It also emerged that, Ghana over the years has developed and adopted several domestic and externally sponsored measures respectively, in response to the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. These measures are manifested in legal and policy frameworks, multilateral co-operations, and domestically inspired counter-terrorism strategies. The study makes an inconclusive verdict on the impact of the responses on Ghana's apparent immunity to terrorism. It nevertheless identifies a number of ways the responses can prop up Ghana's ability to address the underlying drivers of terrorism while remaining relevant in the international war against terrorism.

Based on the findings, the study recommended among other things, that in order to prevent the risk factors from exploding into full-blown terrorism, the Government should prioritize addressing the underlying political and socio-economic drivers such as corruption, erosion of trust in institutions, poverty, unemployment and the perception of political marginalisation and exclusion. The study also recommends that the Government work closely with multilateral partners to strengthen the Accra initiative by addressing issues such as financial constraints, language barrier and political will in order to minimise geo-political threats of terrorism.

**DEDICATION**

This **PhD** thesis is dedicated to my adorable daughter

**FAHILA KAMIL (TIPA'YA)**



### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am forever grateful to the Almighty Allah for His love, favour and grace and making the dream of finishing a Ph.D. in Political Science a reality. My special gratitude goes to my lead supervisor, Dr. Seidu Alidu who is my mentor. His time, patience, tolerance and effective supervision has brought me this far. I am also thankful to Dr. Abdul-Jelilu Ateku, and Dr. Kumi Ansah-Koi for being the second and third supervisors respectively contributing immensely to the work. God bless you Sirs.

Gratitude is extended to the following persons for their enormous financial and kind contribution to the entire P.hD. process; Maame Ama (God-mother), Dr. Owusu Mensah (Director of Research at the Presidency), Alhaj Fuzak Hussein, my senior brother Alhaj Adam Bashiru, Hon. Atta Issah, Ibrahim Murtala Mohammed (Hon. MP for Tamale Central), Hajia Saajida Shiraz and Edward Abambire Bawah (Hon. MP for Bongo). Maame Ama in particular paid the first full fees to enable me enrolled for the Ph.D. programme.

To my Dad, my Mom and my Wife, yours is a special place in my heart for your encouragement and spiritual support.



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**LIST OF ABBREVIATION**

AQIM	al-Qaeda In the Islamic Maghreb
ATTA	Anti-Terrorism Act
CTED	Counter-Terrorism Executive Department
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GPS	Ghana Police Service
HSRC	Human Security Research Centre
IEP	Institute for Economics and Peace
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
IS	Islamic State
ISWAP	Islamic State West African Province
KA IPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
P/CVET	Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism
RD	Relative Deprivation
SIAA	Securities and Intelligence Services Act
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VET	Violent Extremism & Terrorism
VEO	Violent Extremists Organization
WACCE	West African Centre for Counter Extremism
WANEP	West African Network for Peacebuilding



## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 Introduction

Terrorism, without doubt has become one of the daunting security challenges to humanity and arguably, the most spiteful phenomenon in human history that the contemporary nation-state and the international setting continue to grapple with (Abbott, Rogers, & Sloboda, 2006; Abdikadir, 2016; Byman, 2019; Ellis, 2004b; Zondi, 2016). Even though the history of terrorism is as old as the history of political violence, the phenomenon took the character of a pressing and far-reaching threat to global peace and security on Tuesday, September 11, 2001 when Al-Qaeda, a Wahhabi terrorist group, mounted four coordinated attacks resulting in 2,996 deaths and over 25,000 injuries on the United States of America (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011; Lancet, 2001; Zondi, 2016). No country or individual has proven invulnerable to its threats, irrespective of geographical location or economic status (Ellis, 2004b; IEP, 2018; UN, 2004). According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), globally, 13,826 deaths resulting from terrorism were recorded in 2019 alone. Even though this figure reflects a consecutive decline for the past five years from its peak of 33,438 deaths in 2014 and 15.5% from the death toll of 2018, terrorism remains a major security challenge globally (IEP, 2020: p.4 & p.12). Aside from the loss of lives, the economic impact of terrorism is equally worthy of note. The actual threat of attacks has debilitating effects on the economies of countries through trade, investment, tourism and the free movement of people, goods and services (ECOWAS, 2013; IEP, 2020). Conservative estimates from the IEP show that the global economic impact of terrorism in 2019 alone amounted to US\$26.4 billion. This figure compared to that of 2018 is 25 percent less and five consecutive declines from the highest of \$116 billion in 2014. The recorded decline in both the economic cost and loss of lives at the

global level is attributable to a slowdown of terrorism in places such as the Middle East and North Africa and by no means a conclusive indication of the success of the global war on terror (IEP, 2020).

Despite the recorded fall in terrorism in some regions of the world, it has become even more widespread in other regions, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (SS). The emergence and expansion of ISIL and Al-Qaeda affiliates in the region, facilitated largely by a confluence of socio-economic and geo-political factors, has led to a surge in terrorism in many countries in the region. For example, seven out of the ten countries that recorded the largest increases in death from terrorism in 2019 were in sub-Saharan Africa, namely Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, Niger, Cameroon, and Ethiopia. In fact, Burkina Faso recorded the largest increase in deaths globally from terrorism within the period of 2018 to 2019 with the number of deaths rising from 89 in 2018 to 593 in 2019. In Africa, the growth of terrorism and violent extremism is having a devastating impact on lives, properties, and the economy. In a 2015 UNDP Sub-regional Strategic Scoping Report, it was noted that the activities of Boko Haram terrorists' group in Nigeria have displaced 1.2 million people internally and forced more than 200,000 Nigerians to flee to neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and Niger (UNDP, 2017, p.5).

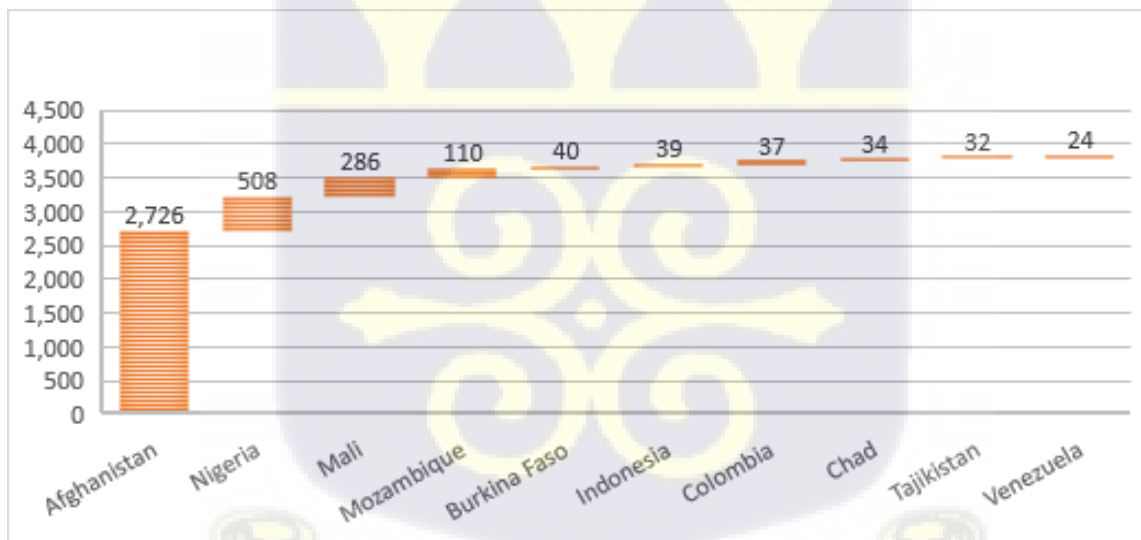
Not only is terrorism in Africa and in particular SSA pushing the boundaries of global terrorism in terms of lives lost but in the economic impact of terrorism. For instance, the available data from the IEP shows that, in 2019, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and South Asia (SA) were the two regions most impacted economically at US\$12.5 and US\$5.6 billion respectively (IEP, 2020: p.4). For SSA in particular, the figure of US\$12.5 billion actually represented an increase from the previous year. In 2018, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and SSA suffered the

highest economic impact of terrorism, representing US\$11.9 and US\$12.2 billion respectively. Meanwhile, as MENA recorded a substantial reduction in the economic impact from US\$11.9 billion to US\$4.7 billion, and was overtaken by South Asia in 2019, SSA maintained its top position as the most economically impacted and even recorded an increase from US\$12.2 billion to US\$12.5 billion. This means sub-Saharan Africa is not only experiencing a rising spate of terrorism but also responsible for half of the global economic impact arising from terrorism (IEP, 2020).

In what may be a departure from the IEPs estimates in terms of the economic impact of terrorism, evidence from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) suggests that the figure posted by the IEP as the economic impact of terrorism in Africa may be far lower than the actual economic cost of terrorism to the continent. In a report titled “Measuring the Economic Impact of Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism in Africa”, the UNDP estimates that, 16 of the 18 focus countries - Nigeria, Tanzania, Central African Republic, Niger, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cameroon, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania and Libya - have lost an average \$97 billion per year in informal economic activity since 2007 (UNDP, 2019: p.22). The discrepancy in the figures may result from the difference in the methodology. Unlike the IEP’s estimates which are based on conservative calculations and do not account for the impact of terrorism on the informal economy, the UNDP used a more progressive approach that accounted for the economic impact of terrorism on the informal sector of the economy.

From the above discussion, it’s obvious, based on evidence, that Sub-Saharan Africa is a significant contributor to terrorism globally. It is important to note however, that SSA's contribution to global terrorism both in terms of the economic impact and the number of deaths

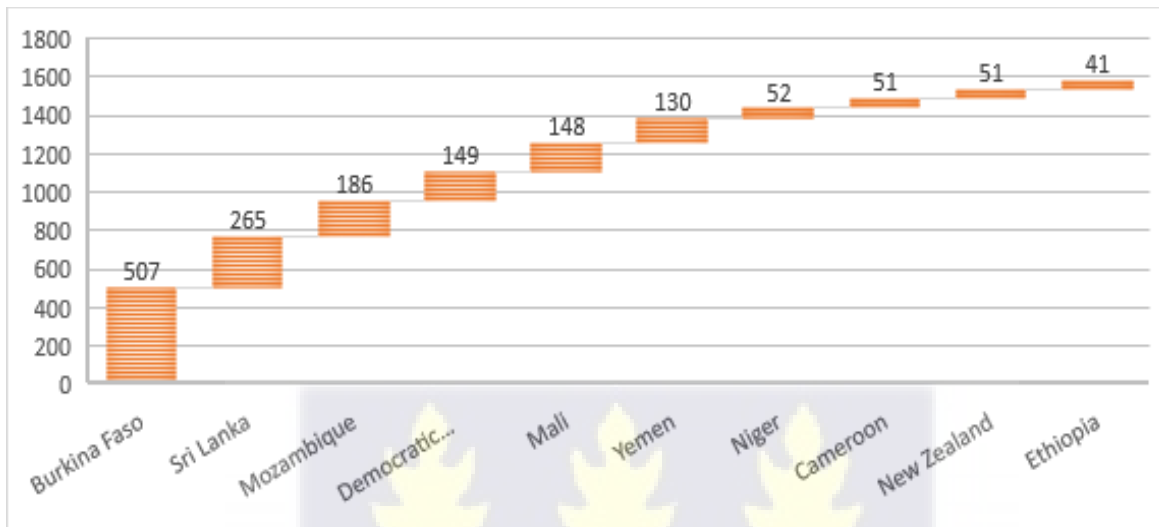
as shown by the data above is driven largely by the surge in terrorism and terror groups in West Africa. The west African sub-region, increasingly, is becoming the epicentre of terrorism in SSA due to the expansion in the number of terrorist groups and the complexity of the tactics employed by these terrorists and other violent extremists' groups operating in the region (Camara, 2021). Terrorism and research into same suggest that the phenomenon is prevalent in West Africa and that some of the world's most dangerous and resilient terror and violent extremists 'groups are harboured and operates in the region (Agbiboa, 2014; ECOWAS, 2013; Salihu, 2015; UN, 2012; UNOWAS, 2020; WANEP, 2019). As shown in **Figure 1**, out of the top 10 countries that produced the largest increases in deaths from terrorism for the period 2017–2018, the four countries from Africa that made it onto the list were all from West Africa; i.e., Nigeria= 508, Mali = 286, Burkina Faso= 40 and Chad=34 (IEP, 2019: p.14).



**Figure 1.1: Largest increases in deaths from terrorism, 2017-2018**

*Source: Author's own design using data from the IEP*

Similarly, in 2019, even though seven countries from Africa featured in the top ten countries that produced the largest increases in deaths from terrorism, three of these countries (Burkina Faso = 507, Mali = 148 and Niger = 52) were from West Africa and more significantly, Burkina Faso, as presented in **Figure 2**, produced the largest increase globally (IEP, 2020: p14.).



**Figure 1.2: Largest increases in deaths from terrorism, 2018-2019**

*Source: Author's own design using data from the IEP*

To buttress this fact, it is worth quoting in full the statement by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) in his report to the UN Security Council in New York on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2020.

In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, casualties from terrorist attacks have increased fivefold since 2016 with over 4,000 deaths reported in 2019 alone as compared to an estimated 770 deaths in 2016. Most significantly, the geographic focus of terrorist attacks has shifted eastwards from Mali to Burkina Faso and Niger and is increasingly threatening West African Coastal States. The number of people killed in Burkina Faso has increased from about 80 in 2016 to over 1,800 in

2019. The number of displaced persons has increased tenfold to about half a million, in addition to 25,000 who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries (UNOWAS, 2020: p.1).

In response to the increasing threat of terrorism and to ensure that its noble objectives of securing the peace and security of the peoples of the region is not jeopardized, the regional body, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) instituted several measures in the form of regional frameworks to help countries and sub-regional units prevent and counter terrorism. It also facilitated the adoption of continental and international frameworks and national level mechanisms to combat terrorism in the region (Agbiboa, 2014; ECOWAS, 2013; WANEP, 2019). At the international level, almost all the States in the region have ratified at least seven of the eighteen universal counter-terrorism instruments (ECOWAS, 2013). In addition, each State in the region has submitted at least one report to the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1373 adopted in 2001.

There has also been some structured ad hoc responses dominated by ECOWAS Member States though mandated by the African Union (AU). Key among these ad hoc arrangements is the Joint Force of the Group of Five of the Sahel (G5 Sahel) and The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The G5 Sahel is made up of Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad. The objective of the G5 Sahel is to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism prevalent in the Sahel. The MNJTF, focused primarily on dismantling Boko Haram within the Lake Chad Basin is made up of troops from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria and Niger. There is also national level mechanisms anchored on domestic counterterrorism laws and legal frameworks. Nigeria's "Policy Framework and National Action Plan" for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism adopted in August, 2017 (Musa, 2018) and Ghana's

Antiterrorism Act (Anti-Terrorism Act, 2008 (Act 762)) passed in 2008 and amended in 2012, are some examples of national level mechanism for preventing and countering terrorism in west Africa. Theoretically, adherence to the ECOWAS measures much like any other counterterrorism strategy, is expected to result in the prevention of terrorism or effective response to terrorism in member states of ECOWAS even though this is not the case in practice (Department of Homeland Security, 2019; ECOWAS, 2013).

Available evidence identifies a number of vulnerability factors that can be reduced into social, political and economic as well as a more nebulous driver of terrorism, priced on psychological factors such as individual psychology, judgement and reaction to stimuli (Agbiboa, 2014; ECOWAS, 2013; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Onuoha, 2014; UNDP, 2016; WANEP, 2019). For instance, Onuoha (2014), found that Boko Haram recruiters take advantage of the frustration and vulnerability of the Nigerian youth by conveying to them the narrative of weak, unwilling and corrupt government. The study points to poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and weak family structures as the susceptibility factors that make the youth vulnerable to these terrorist groups. Given the well documented drivers of terrorism such as widespread poverty, political instability, bad governance, blocked political participation, ethnic and religious sentiments among others, virtually no country in the West African sub-region has proven invulnerable to the threat of terrorism.

However, Ghana is one of the very few countries on the African continent and within the West African sub-region that has enjoyed relative peace and prolonged stability in an insecure region. Despite the geographical proximity to and similarity in demographic, political, economic and social vulnerabilities with terrorism hot beds such as Mali, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, there have been no known active terrorist group operating in the country neither has the

country ever recorded any terrorist attack in spite of pockets of avoidable violence attributable to political vigilantism (CODEO, 2017; Gyampo & Graham, 2017; Tankebe, 2018). This quiet however, does not in any way suggest that Ghana is at zero-risk of terrorism or free from the threat of terrorism. For example, Ghana's terrorism risk is consistently rising for the past three years on the Global Terrorism Index (GTI). Currently, the country's risk is measured to be 1.743, an increase from 1.559 and 1.397 in 2018 and 2017 respectively on a scale of 0 to 10 (IEP, 2019: p.39, 2020: p.8). The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) measures the direct and indirect impact of terrorism on a country in terms of damage to lives and property. A non-zero index score is an indication that Ghana may as well be somehow vulnerable and exposed to terrorism despite the overtly peaceful nature of the country.

Again, Ghana's immediate neighbours to the north and west have not only suffered terrorist attacks lately but are also havens for terrorist groups such as the *Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM)* which is a conglomeration of AQIM fighters, the Fulani Macina Liberation Front, Ansar al-Dine and Al-Mubrabitoun. This geographical proximity exposes Ghana to the risk of a potential spillover from her neighbours, which can feed into pre-existing risks as noted above. An immediate and even urgent threat to the peace and stability of the country is the western Togoland secessionists movement that is rearing its ugly head once again. Even though the movement has not escalated or assumed dimensions that qualifies it to be an insurgent group, it nevertheless bears semblance with the genesis or mutation of all other insurgent groups most especially the Boko Haram of Nigeria, the second deadliest terrorist group in the world according to IEP (IEP, 2020). The curious fact however is that, despite all these risk factors, Ghana remains a relatively stable country, less prone to terrorism and insulated from terrorists' attacks in a region that clearly is an epicentre of terrorism on the African continent.

## 1.2 Problem statement

Discussions in the literature as far as terrorism is concerned is centred around the number of attacks that have occurred in a specific country (i.e., Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria or AlShabab attacks in Kenya) and/or the number of terrorists groups that exist or are being harboured in different countries (Aronson, 2013; Byman, 2019; Chauzal, 2015; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; IEP, 2019, 2020; Onuoha, 2014; Schroden, Rosenau, & Warner, 2016; Zenn, 2018).

Recent discussions in the literature have shifted to the sources and drivers of terrorism as well as the recruitment and radicalization of the youth in places such as Nigeria, Kenya, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Somalia among others, where terrorism is very rife (Chauzal, 2015; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Onuoha, 2014). For instance, Ewi and Salifu (2017) study on Nigeria focused on the drivers of youth involvement in terrorism while Gregory and Chauzal (2015) looked into the root causes of Malian conflict following the rise of terrorism in Mali (Gregory and Chauzal, 2015).

Though the surge in terrorism has resulted in a corresponding rise in scholarly interests and academic research (Byman, 2019; Hassan, 2012; Jazeera & Wing, 2013; Schroden et al., 2016; Starr, 2012; Zenn, 2018), Ghana on the contrary has attracted far less attention than its neighbours in regional and international security debates due in part to the relative stability and insulation from activities of terrorists. Consequently, the sources of the relative stability and terrorism-free environment enjoyed by Ghana remain nebulous and inadequately unearthed in the existing literature.

The purpose of this study therefore is to seek to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's stability relative to her neighbours as far as terrorism and violent extremism is concerned. In effect, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even as they share similar political and socio-economic characteristics? In line with

observations made by Davies (1969) several decades earlier, there is a wealth of ignorance and poverty of knowledge on the sources of stability unlike instability, which benefits from ex-post explanations. In essence, the author concluded that social scientists have paid scant attention to why the stable societies they live in are stable. From the background discussion, two key issues require critical examination in the case of Ghana; first, adherence to the ECOWAS counterterrorism initiatives/measures and second, the documented drivers of terrorism. The questions that may follow from these issues are; is Ghana less prone to terrorism because it adheres to the regional (ECOWAS) measures on preventing and countering terrorism than her peers? Does Ghana evolve a robust domestic mechanism that effectively addresses the drivers of terrorism relative to her neighbours? Knowing the sources of Ghana's relative peace and resistance to the threats of terrorism will undoubtedly yield valuable insights for preventing and countering terrorism in the region and beyond.

### **1.3 Research objectives**

The main objective of this study is to empirically examine the sources of the factors that make Ghana less prone to terrorism in an insecure region. Specifically, the study is anchored on the following objectives;

- i. To explore Ghana's exposure to the threats of terrorism. ii.
- ii. To identify and examine the reason (s) why Ghana is less prone to terrorism.
- iii. To explore Ghana's response to terrorism and the strategies for preventing and countering violent extremism.
- iv. To examine how the chosen response and strategies impact Ghana's Counter-terrorism effort.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

Against the backdrop, this study seeks to address the following four key questions.

- i. Is Ghana exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism?
- ii. Why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African subregion?
- iii. How is Ghana responding to the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism?
- iv. How does the chosen response mechanism impact Ghana's P/CVET effort?

#### **1.5 Significance of study**

This study will provide value to various groups of users. First, the study contributes in a unique way to the ongoing discussion on preventing and countering terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel. It will therefore serve as a valuable literature to potential and current scholars who are interested in the subject of terrorism and counterterrorism. Secondly, this study is important to both source and recipient countries of terrorist or radicalized persons, as it provides not only insight but also policy recommendations on how to prevent terrorism effectively and efficiently. Finally, the study outputs will be significant, especially to the ECOWAS, Member States, and partner organizations in formulating appropriate policies and strategies in their effort to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism in West Africa and the African continent. The study will also contribute to the effort of sustaining the peace and stability of jurisdictions considered peaceful such as Ghana among others.

### **1.6 Limitation of study**

This study is focused on Ghana as a case. The purpose therefore is to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's stability relative to her neighbours as far as terrorism and violent extremism is concerned. Even though it is intended to generate very valuable insights into the sources of stability and insulation from terrorism, drivers of terrorism and counterterrorism, its application to other jurisdictions in terms of generalization may be limited. This limitation is common with case studies where context specific effects have so much bearing on the outcome of the study.

### **1.7 Organization of study**

The study is structured into six chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction of the study, which includes background, statement problems and research questions as well as the significance and limitation of the study. Chapter two reviews both the theoretical and empirical literature. Chapter three discusses the theoretical framework that underpins the study as well as the hypothesis that broadly guided the study. Chapter four presents the methodology as well as the methods of the study. It details systematically how the study is carried out and the tools used in carrying it out. Chapter five presents and discusses the study results and its broader implication on terrorism in SSA and its exceptional manifestation or the lack thereof, in Ghana. Chapter six is made up of the summary of the study, conclusion, recommendations as well as the directions for future research.

### 1.8 Operational definitions

On the importance of defining key concepts to any study, Creswell & Creswell (2018: p.93) notes that defining terms adds precision to scientific study. It will also ensure that the ideas and findings of the study are communicated clearly and accurately to the intended audience. As Wilkinson (1991: p.22) has argued, “scientists have sharply defined terms with which to think clearly about their research and to communicate their findings and ideas accurately”. On his part, Firestone (1987: p.17), posits that, “The words of everyday language are rich in multiple meanings. Like other symbols, their power comes from the combination of meaning in a specific setting. . . . Scientific language ostensibly strips this multiplicity of meaning from words in the interest of precision. This is the reason common terms are given “technical meanings” for scientific purposes”. Some of the concepts to be defined will include violence, violent extremism, terrorism, counterterrorism, and any other concept as may become necessary as the study progresses. In defining terrorism in particular, the controversies around the concept of terrorism will be addressed considering the political and ontological obstacles it faces.

**Violence:** For the purpose of the discussion in this study, violence is defined as *“The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either result in or have a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation”* (World Health Organization, 2002; p.5).

**Violent Extremism:** Violent extremism is defined by the FBI as “encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic goals.” (FBI, n.d.). Similarly, a USAID commissioned report written by Glazzard & Zeuthen (2016; p.1) defined violent extremism as “advocating, engaging

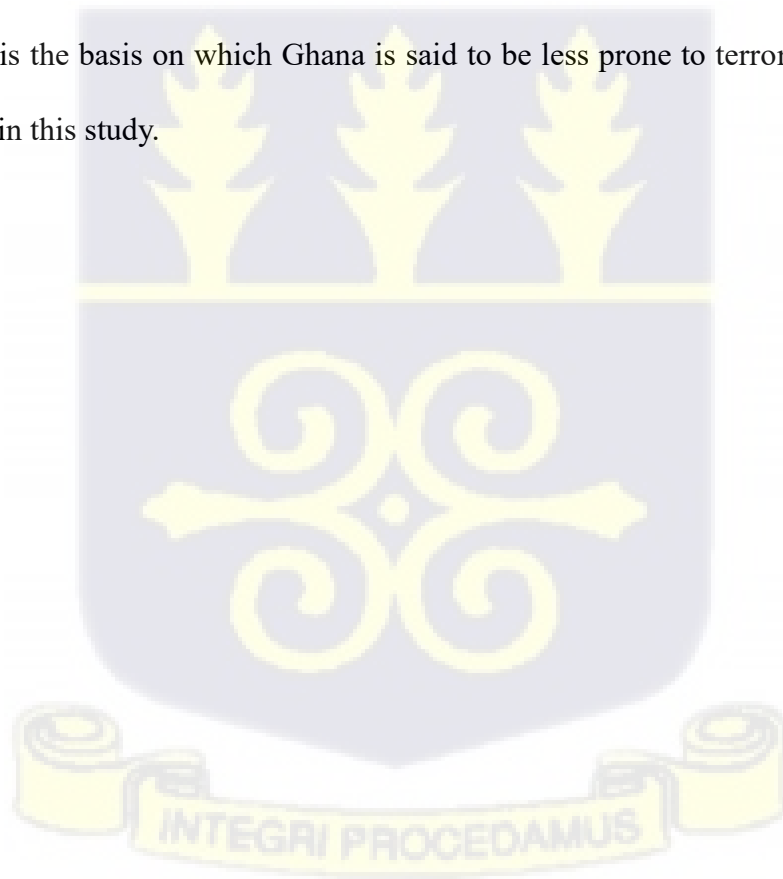
in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic or political objectives”. Whereas extremism is not necessarily harmful to society, violence is and extremism becomes problematic where it excites or induces some amount of violence (Abdikadir, 2016).

**Terrorism:** Considering a survey of definitions, terrorism, for the purpose of this study can be defined as the unauthorized or illegitimate use of violence to kill, maim, disrupt the peace, instil fear and destroy properties in order to achieve a political, social, economic and or ideological objective by both state and non-state actors (Jackson et al., 2019; Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011; Lyman & Morrison, 2019; The Lancet, 2001). Terrorism is one of the strategies used by violent extremists’ groups. For that reason, terrorism and violent extremism will be used interchangeably in this study and where the context so requires.

**Exposure to terrorism:** Exposure to terrorism can be defined as the direct and indirect impact of terrorism on a country in terms of damage to lives and property (IEP, 2020). Individuals can also be exposed to terrorism by coming into direct, indirect or semi-direct contact with terrorism as either victims or accomplices. Therefore, exposure can be used to measure a country or an individual’s risk or susceptibility to terrorism and the activities of terrorists. For the purpose of this study, emphasis will be laid on the exposure of a country and in this case Ghana as a case study.

**Insulation from terrorism:** Insulation from terrorism can be described as a situation where a country that is exposed to terrorism is shielded from terrorism or has not had any direct terrorist attack. This does not mean the country or terrorism may never experience direct terrorism or attacks from terrorists, it just implies that during the period under consideration, there is no evidence of such an attack. Broadly, political, economic, social, cultural, historical and or geographic variations may be relied upon to explain a country’s insulation from terrorism.

**Prone to terrorism:** According to the Collins Dictionary online, to be prone to something, usually something bad, means to have a tendency to be affected by it or to do it (Collins Dictionary, n.d.). Countries or societies that are prone are inclined to be affected by terrorism. Such a country may have been affected by terrorism, experienced terrorists' attacks or portends the trappings of countries or societies that have experienced or are experiencing terrorism. The fact that a country has not experienced terrorism does not mean such a country is not prone. It may just be that other less visible factors are at play. To be less prone therefore is not synonymous with not prone but that one country or group of countries are contrasted with their counterparts in terms of intensity or susceptibility. In effect, two countries may both be prone to terrorism but the one that has never experienced terrorists' attacks is said to be less prone to terrorism. This is the basis on which Ghana is said to be less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in this study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 4.1 Introduction: Thematic review

The discussion under this section presents the state of the art at different levels and in a thematic form. Specifically, the review opens with a general discussion on the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism. Reviews and discussions on terrorism and violent extremism in African, West Africa and the Sahel are present in the subsequent sections (Agbiboa, 2014; Byman, 2019; ECOWAS, 2013; Schroden et al., 2016; UNDP, 2019; WANEP, 2019; Zenn, 2018). Studies on violent extremism and terrorism in Ghana will also be reviewed to provide further background to this study and elaborate on the gap for this study (Adarkwah, 2020; CODEO, 2017; Gyampo & Graham, 2017; Tankebe, 2019). Thematically, the drivers of terrorism, responses to terrorism and challenges are discussed under each level.

#### 4.2 General discussions on drivers of terrorism and violent extremism

A large host of academic research in the field of conflict, violent extremism and terrorism is dedicated to understanding and examining the sources or causes of the phenomenon of terrorism. Much of these discussions, though not often is explicitly stated, also investigate why some countries or societies are more prone to terrorism than others. This is because, to explain why some countries are less prone to terrorism, there should be a contrast in the form of countries that are more prone to terrorism. This will enable the researcher to build a more reliable analytical framework capable of explaining why country X and country Y, in spite of the positive correlation between their political and socio-economic conditions, one is more prone to terrorism than the other.

In this regard and for terrorism and violent extremism in particular, the causes are often categorised into political and socio-economic drivers (Goldman & Noy, 2020; Piazza, 2006; UNDP, 2016). Unemployment, poverty, lack of economic opportunity, ethnic cleavages borne out of natural resources distribution, social and economic inequality, tribal and ethnic resentment among others are mostly considered to be the socio-economic factors that drive terrorism (Abadie, 2006; Elu & Price, 2015; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Jager, 2018; Omwega, Elizabeth, & Ndiku, 2016; Onuoha, 2014; Piazza, 2006; Sageman, 2004; UNDP, 2016; Zenn, 2018). Weak states or failed states, corruption, bad governance and political exclusion as well as the prevalence of marginalized groups are also labelled as the political drivers. Scholars have however found mixed results on the exact relationship between these drivers and terrorism; ranging from strong to no relationship with some only finding a weak relationship.

#### **4.2.1 Socio-economic drivers of terrorism**

On the socio-economic drivers of terrorism, Lichbach (1989) summarised volumes of studies on what he referred to as the “Economic Inequality-Political Conflict puzzle” and concluded that, the majority of social scientists have assumed a priori economic factors such as economic inequality to be important drivers of violent political conflicts. As a result, Lichbach argues that socio-economic disparities have taken a central role in most academic studies as an explanatory variable for the incident of violent conflict. Despite the explanatory power of the socio-economic drivers, Lichbach has also noted that, the academy after several decades has not enjoyed the kind of consensus that seem to have been common among policymakers on the relationship between socio-economic factors and terrorism (Lichbach, 1989; Piazza, 2006). A legion of scholarly studies devoted to examining the relationship between poverty, material deprivation, and unequal distribution of resources and mass political violence suggests evidence both against and for the relationship (Piazza, 2006).

In a similar study, Muller and Mitchell sampled eighty-five developing states, studied them between 1973 and 1977 and found support for the relationship between socio-economic drivers and violent conflicts (Muller & Seligson, 1987). The authors posited that, for the subject states, income inequality rather than regime repression is a significant predictor of political violence. The study by Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson could be taken as confirmatory research of an earlier inquiry by Bruce London and Thomas D. Robinson. London and Robinson also analysed fifty-one developing countries between 1968 and 1972 focusing on the relationship between socio-economic factors and violent conflict (London & Robinson, 1989). The authors found that income inequality is a significant determinant of violent conflict and that the relationship is mediated by the distribution of wealth in the domestic economy and how this is altered by the presence of multi-national corporations (Piazza, 2006). In addition to this scholarship, Fearon and Laitin in a much later study titled ‘civil war and insurgency’ analysed 127 civil wars between the period 1945 – 1999 and socio-economic factors to be significant drivers of violent conflicts (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). In particular, the authors showed through their analysis that poverty, along with large population size, general political instability and rugged terrain is a significant driver of violent domestic conflict. To Fearon and Laitin, results in economically and administratively weak states and also facilitates recruitment by violent extremists and insurgents (Piazza, 2006).

In a recent study by Krieger and Meierrieks, *‘Income Inequality, Redistribution and Domestic Terrorism’*, the authors empirically analysed the relationship between income inequality and terrorism for the period 1984 to 2012. Using a sample of 113 states, they evinced evidence to suggest a link between higher levels of income inequality and domestic terrorism (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2019). This result, according to the authors, remained robust even when subjected to methodological adjustments (such as instrumental-variable approaches). The relationship is

mediated by institutional failures (e.g., corruption, poor service delivery, weak bureaucracy etc.) occasioned by income inequality. These institutional outcomes then motivate domestic terrorism. The study also found that domestic terrorism is minimal and even absent in states where there is equitable redistribution since this improves institutional conditions.

The notion of terrorism as an expression of socioeconomic discontent and desperation has also gained impetus from national and international policy makers since the tragic events of September 11, 2001 in the US. The immediate and widely accepted policy response was a call on the wealthy nations to increase development aid to the world's poorest countries and to fight poverty as a way of combating terrorism (Krueger & Malečková, 2003; Piazza, 2006). This position was reflected in the policy statements and opinions of prominent political and policy actors as well as positions taken on such platforms as the UN. For example, two months after the September 11 attacks, forty-one heads of state in their address to the UN General assembly in November 2001 impressed upon the UN and member states to first tackle the issues of poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment as the solution to international terrorism (Piazza, 2006; UN, 2001). Speaking at the same occasion, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan stressed the link between poverty and terrorism by declaring that "No one in this world can be comfortable or safe when so many people are suffering and deprived" (UN, 2001). Still linking economic deprivation to terrorism, Nemat Shafik, the World Bank's Vice President for Private Sector Growth, Infrastructure, and Guarantees, in 2001 labelled developing and underdeveloped countries suffering from the legacies of economic stagnation, high unemployment, and inequality as "fertile ground for terrorist seeds to flourish" (Kreisler, 2001). In spite of the support enjoyed by the "Economic Inequality-Political Conflict puzzle" within the terrorism and conflict scholarship and among policy actors, the relationship fell short of commanding any consensus among researchers in the field (Goldman & Noy, 2020; Piazza,

2006). A swath of later studies dedicated to examining the popular hypothesis premised on the relationship between terrorism and poverty, inequality, and poor economic development have rather produced contradictory results, disputing the existence of any such relationship (Goldman & Noy, 2020; Piazza, 2006; UNDP, 2017a). To note a few; in a 2006 study by James A. Piazza that employed a series of multiple regression analyses on incidents of terrorism and casualties in 96 states between 1985 and 2003, the author used low economic growth, poverty, malnutrition, inequality, unemployment, inflation and a host of other political and demographic variables as predictors and found no significant relationship between any of the economic variables and terrorism (Piazza, 2006). Contrary to the popular opinion favouring the “Economic Inequality-Political Conflict puzzle”, the author found such variables as population, state suppression, ethnic and religious differences as significant predictors of terrorism and political violence. The author therefore concluded that ‘social cleavage theory’ more closely explains terrorism than the theories linking economic factors to terrorism. Similarly, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) drawing on a large array of studies (e.g., 2002 Pew Survey) has found that terrorism survives under different socio-economic conditions, ranging from impoverished societies to advanced industrialised nations (USAID, 2009). The Agency further notes that; wealth does not insulate a country against violent extremism or terrorism and that improved economic conditions do not necessarily discourage public approval of violent extremism of terrorism. Quoting directly from the Agency’s 2009 guide to violent extremism;

*“A direct, explicit concern with issues of poverty, unemployment, service delivery, and economic opportunities does not appear to be the central preoccupation of many violent extremist organizations. If it were, these organizations and their leaders typically would have a lot more to say about those issues than they actually do. In looking at the rhetoric*

*of many of these movements, in fact, one is struck by the paucity of references to the “underling socioeconomic conditions” which so many analysts describe as the main drivers behind them. Many of the spokespersons for these movements instead appear to be concerned with issues of identity, existential threats, and cultural domination or oppression...” (USAID, 2009, p.11).*

Consistent with this angle of the scholarship, research into the phenomenon of ‘lone wolf’ or lone actor terrorism has also ruled out poverty as a driver of terrorism (Jager, 2018; Sageman, 2004; Spaaij, 2012). Spaaij identified and studied 88 cases of lone wolf terror acts in Australia, Europe and North America from 1940 to 2010 and concluded that poverty was not one of the reasons people join, promote or undertake terror acts (Spaaij, 2012). Instead, the author, though admitting the absence of a standard profile of lone wolves, found individual processes, interpersonal relations and socio-political and cultural circumstances as significant predictors of terrorism (Spaaij, 2012). Similarly, Sageman interviewed more than four hundred individual members of the Al-Qaeda terrorist group who joined the group from Europe, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Relying on national and international standards, Sageman concluded that the majority of the individual terrorists came from solid financial backgrounds and that about 66% of those interviewed had attended college, held professional or semi-professional occupations (Sageman, 2004). In their analysis of Hezbollah, Krueger & Malečková (2003) reports that the members of the terror group were wealthier than the average Lebanese. The authors then caution against the optimism in poverty reduction as a strategy to preventing or countering terrorism.

Finally, Goldman & Noy (2020) anchored their research on the rational - economic model and found that no significant relationship exists between poverty and economic inequality and the number of people who joined terrorist groups. Based on the rational - economic model, the authors hypothesised that, in a poorer base country of operation and in a base country of operation in which the economic inequality is wider the likelihood of terror organizations to become larger (higher number of core activists) is higher. To test this hypothesis, they used GDP per-capita and GINI index as proxies and a host of other statistical methods to analyse hundreds of organizations categorised as terrorist organizations.

#### **4.2.2 Political drivers**

There's also a corner of scholarship within the terrorism literature that prices failed and failing states as harbingers of terrorists and a fertile ground for their growth (Hagel, 2004; Tikuisis, 2009; Hewitt, Wilkenfeld, & Gurr, 2008; Piazza, 2007). Hagel's assertion that Terrorism finds sanctuary in failed or failing states (Hagel, 2004, p.65). this assertion is shared by many other scholars (Hewitt, Wilkenfeld, & Gurr, 2008; Piazza, 2007) and anchors the view that failed or failing states including those states considered to be weak are more likely to harbour terrorist groups and hence exposed to terrorism than states considered to be strong. The world bank describes a fragile state as a state characterised by weak governance and ineffective policies, malfunctioning institutions incapable or unwilling to provide essential social services for their populations. There's also a high risk of conflict that could constrain poverty reduction with the potential for a spill over into neighbouring countries (World Bank, 2005). The Fund for Peace's Fragile State Index (FSI) identifies failed or failing states by ranking states in order of their vulnerability to violent conflict and societal dysfunction (Fund For Peace, 2017).

The FSI is also found to have high (negative) correlation ( $r$ ) with other indicators such as Rule of Law (RL), Government Effectiveness (GE), Political Stability (PS) and Human Development Index

(HDI). Given the positive correlation between high FSI and state's vulnerability to violence, Tikuisis (2009) argues that a probable relationship between terrorism and weak states could be inferred from that whereas weak states are lumped with failed and failing states in terms of definition. Tikuisis inference is consistent with the conclusion of several other studies on the relation between failed states and terrorism (Hewitt, Wilkenfeld, & Gurr, 2008; Piazza, 2007). Piazza in particular elucidates by arguing that failed states provide the fertile environment that creates or enables the activities of terrorists, a view held by a host of other studies (Haims, Gompert, Treverton, & Stearns, 2008).

The established relationship between terrorism and failed, failing or weak state has also suffered some setbacks from a number of studies (Hehir, 2007; Newman, 2007; Rotberg, 2002). For example, based on a study of 66 states using the presence and non-presence of terrorist groups in weak or failed states, Newman (2007) argued that, there is not a conclusive relationship between failed or weak states and terrorism. He further notes that Much as failed states have provided the fertile grounds for such groups to flourish, terrorist groups have also emerged in very strong states with stable governments and democratic ethos as the basis of political action. Hehir (2007) employing a similar approach as Newman also concludes that there is no causal link or pronounced relationship between failed states and the proliferation of terrorism. On his part, Rotberg (2002) Described failed states as having environments that are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and bitterly contested by warring factions (Rotberg, 2002, p.85) but refused to endorse any relationship between terrorism and a failed state. He questioned the likelihood of the failed state – terrorism puzzle by observing that violence alone

does not amount to states failure neither are states insulated from failure because of the absence of violence.

The contending and contradictory results reflects the lack of consensus among scholars of terrorism and conflict studies on sources or causes of conflict (Piazza, 2006). It also highlights a fundamental ontological problem in the study of terrorism and violent extremism which is the definition of terrorism and what exactly constitutes a terrorist act (Jackson & Jackson, 2008). The problem is further stretched in an attempt to define who a terrorist and even more compounded when looked at from the angle of who defines what. Whereas a whole generation of research are dedicated to the questions of why and how terrorism and terrorists' groups come about, the question on why some societies do not experience terrorism or produce terrorists remains unearthed. One would assume that; it is taken for granted that the opposite of what causes terrorism is true for societies that do not experience terrorism. Even though this assumption is highly unlikely, it will also be problematic since the variables that determine the occurrence of a phenomenon are not necessarily the same variables that determine the non-occurrence of the same phenomenon. The difficulty of such reverse logic will even be compounded by the lack of consensus among scholars on the causes, roots or drivers of terrorism from which one would infer. This therefore provide the imperative for separate and original study into the sources of the stability and insulation enjoyed by some societies from terrorism.

#### **4.2.3 Global responses to terrorism**

Given the scale of terrorist's activities and the devastation that it visited on human lives, properties and the environment and its imminent threat to global peace and security, several

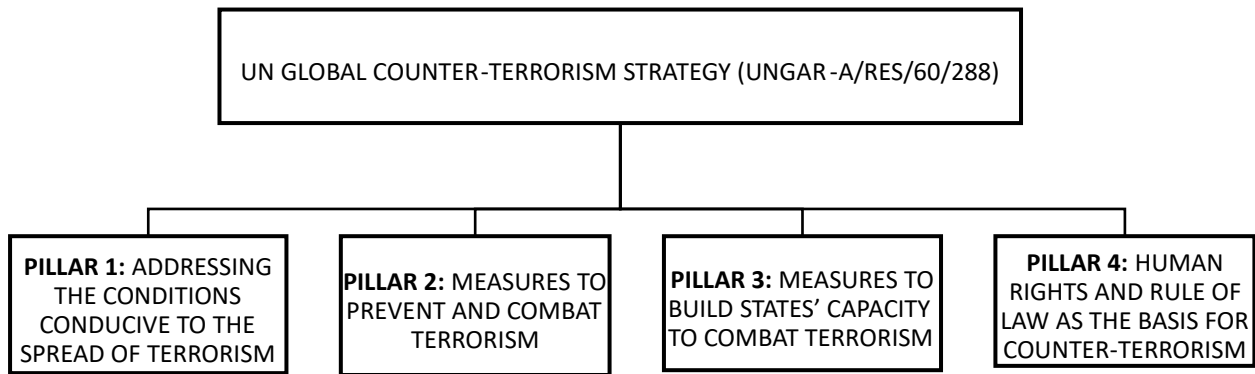
responses have been reached at various levels to address the scourge of terrorism. There are numerous responses that can be layered from the global level responses to regional level and to the state level responses, collectively known as Global War on Terror (WOT). At the global level, the main actor is the United Nations (UN) at which several anti-terrorism or counterterrorism resolutions have been reached by member states in their collective efforts to address the destabilizing force of terrorism. An example of such global responses is United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1566 (2004) adopted on October 8, 2004 by the Security Council at its 5053rd meeting to, among other things; “reaffirm its resolutions 1267 (1999) of 15 October 1999 and 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001” as well as its other resolutions concerning threats to international peace and security caused by terrorism, “reaffirm also, the imperative to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law” (UNSC, 2004).

Another important initiative with global appeal and significance is the United States War on Terror which gained impetus after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in the US. The 9/11 attack on the most powerful country, both economically and militarily at the time only reinforced the concern hitherto raised by many observers that, the international system and its collective security institutions were no longer at pace with the changes in global security threats (Harlem, Ogata, & Salim, 2004). The attack however, brought with it the opportunity for renewed commitment and reengineering of the idea of collective security (Harlem et al., 2004; Zondi, 2016). Consequently, and without delay, France, On September 12, 2001, introduced and the Security Council unanimously passed resolution 1368 (2001), which condemned the attacks and opened the way for United States led military action against the Taliban regime in self-defence. This was followed by the adoption of the Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) on September 28, 2001, which obligates all Member States,

under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, to take specific actions to prevent and combat terrorism. Subsequent to this mandate, the US has heralded several counter-terrorism initiatives across the world, especially in Africa and the Middle East, believed to be the most favourable sanctuaries for breeding terrorists. First of such US-led initiatives were; the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in Djibouti in October 2002, the East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI) established in 2003 and the Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI) formed in 2003 by the Sahelian countries- Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger with explicit support of the US. The establishment of the PSI in particular was driven by the fear that the countries of the Sahel could be used by Islamic radicals to create a safe haven where they could train new recruits, as was done in Afghanistan under the Taliban rule (Chauzal, 2015; Ellis, 2004b).

Arguably, the most comprehensive effort and international policy frame at addressing the menace of terrorism is the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy which was unanimously adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2006 by the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The strategy is a unique global instrument designed to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism in all its forms (UN, 2018). The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the form of a resolution and an annexed Plan of Action ([A/RES/60/288](#)) composed of 4 pillars; also presented graphically in figure 2.1 below;

1. Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
2. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism
3. Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard;
4. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism



**Figure 2.3: UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**

*Source: Designed by the author with information from the literature*

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is reviewed every two years from its inception in 2006 to ensure that it remains relevant to the counter-terrorism priorities of member-states. In all its reviews, priority is given to member states' domestic conditions and how that affects the success of the strategy. The strategy thus lives in time and reflects current trends in the fight against terrorism. In the sixth review of the strategy, member states in re-echoing the tenets of the first pillar, emphasized the need to refocus on the conditions conducive to terrorism. Among other consideration for a renewed strategy, member states call for tolerance for diversity, inclusion of youth and women and regular engagement with local communities and nongovernmental organizations in the processing, developing and executing strategies for preventing and countering violent extremism. Consequently, the UN General Secretary called on the UN system to place national and regional priority and ownership at the centre of the prevention and countering of terrorism and the effort at addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism (UN Counter-Terrorism Centre, 2020, p.26).

Following the instruction of the Secretary General, the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre in 2020 instituted locally-tailored capacity building support schemes and innovative programmes that

focused on preventing violent extremism while addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism in three strategic areas. These were youth empowerment, strategic communications and policy assistance. Implemented within the framework of UN Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism and other relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, the capacity building scheme and innovative support by the UNCCT took into account the recommendations of the UN counter-terrorism Committee and Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) (UN Counter-Terrorism Centre, 2020, p.28).

#### **4.2.4 Limitations of the global response to terrorism**

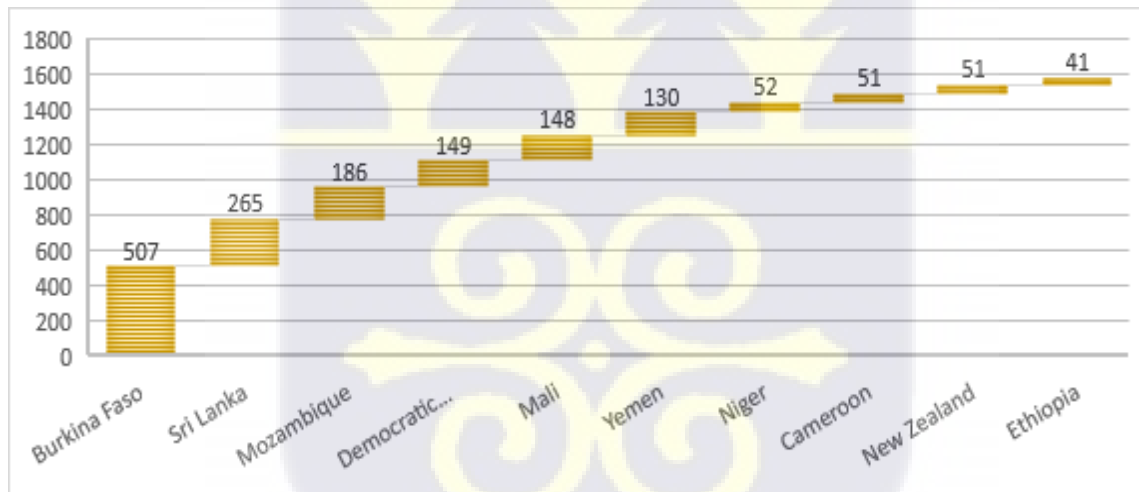
There is a raft of evidence to show that despite all these efforts or initiatives, terrorism doesn't seem to be diminishing. The assessments of the counter-terrorism efforts are mixed with a majority favouring the narrative of unimpressive progress or even outright failure (Byman, 2019; Zondi, 2016). For instance, the US war on Terror has succeeded in decimating the leadership of al-Qaida, the Islamic State, and other jihadi groups, and limiting attacks on the U.S. Yet, for more than two decades after the 9/11 attacks, the United States and allied counterterrorism efforts have still not put the nail in the coffin of jihadis. Rather, the jihadi cause has far more local and regional influence than it did in the years before 9/11. It is better able to inspire individuals in the West to act on its behalf, and groups have proven resilient despite the fierce U.S.-led war on terror. Americans are concerned with ravaging conflicts in Afghanistan, Syria, and other countries and favor, at most, limited efforts in far-flung theatres like Somalia or West Africa where jihadis are active. Efforts to pass the burden onto allies have met little success in most parts of the world, with a few important exceptions like the French counterterrorism campaign in Mali (Byman, 2019). Similarly, other efforts such as the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI) have proven futile to its objective of countering terrorism and

transnational crimes in the Malian or Sahelian region. The central Sahara is a major route for smugglers, the main trade reportedly being the transport of cigarette contraband of all types, including people, weapons, or anything else into Europe (Ellis, 2004b). PSI ignored the basic principle of counter-insurgency which stresses that military action should be only a minor component of a larger political strategy (Ellis, 2004b; Zondi, 2016). And rather than analysing the threat and then finding an instrument to combat it, Washington seems to have resorted to using what it has most obviously available: its formidable armed forces, deployed with little regard to a coherent political strategy (Harlem et al., 2004; Zondi, 2016).

It is, however, worthy of note that, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UNGC-TS) which was unanimously adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2006 by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) appears to be inching close to a more appropriate response to terrorists' recruitment and radicalization. The preponderance of the evidence-based researches identifies economic, political and social drivers of terrorism, which must be addressed by any successful counterterrorism (Abdikadir, 2016; Aronson, 2013; Ellis, 2004b; Harlem et al., 2004; Hellsten, 2016). The four pillars of the (UNGC-TS) as depicted in figure 2.1, when effectively and efficiently executed may succeed in ironing out some of the drivers of terrorism such as extreme poverty, human rights violations, weak state capacity, inequality, injustice, corruption, disenchantment with socio-economic and political systems, a changing global culture and banalization of violence in media and entertainment and excessive militarism among others (Harlem et al., 2004; Omwega et al., 2016; Zondi, 2016).

### 2.3 Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa

Terrorism on the African continent has been on the rise for the past decade. Terror organizations, militias, rebel groups, and other non-state actors have frequently targeted civilians in their violent campaigns. From Somalia to Mali, Nigeria to Mozambique, the continent has seen a slew of gruesome acts of violence directed at civilians. According to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), 381 attacks targeting civilians occurred in Africa in 2015, resulting in 1,394 deaths. This number steadily increased over time, and by 2020, there had been 7,108 attacks on civilians, resulting in 12,519 deaths (Abrahms, 2021). According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), the threat of terrorism has risen so much on the continent that by 2020, seven of the top ten countries in the world in terms increases in the number of deaths from terrorism were from Africa (See figure 2.2). (IEP, 2020: p14.).



**Figure 4.2: Largest increases in deaths from terrorism, 2018-2019**

*Source: Author's own design using data from the IEP*

A 2020 study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) titled ‘Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach’, noted that, the “The growth of violent extremism - and the devastating impact of groups espousing violent

ideologies – is not only setting in motion a dramatic reversal of development gains already made, but threatening to stunt prospects of development for decades to come” (UNDP, 2020, p.4). The study found that, tourism and foreign direct investments which are major sources of employment and income to the continent have been hard-hit by the rising spate of terrorism and violent extremism in the region. In Kenya for example, it is estimated that tourism plummeted by 25 percent as a direct repercussion of the surge in terrorism while foreign direct investment (FDI) saw a 21 percent in Nigeria between 2011 and 2012 due to the terror acts of Boko Haram (UNDP, 2017b). In Africa as in any other place, terrorism and violent extremism are impacting lives and livelihood in many ways; disruptions of economic activities and essential services, loss of family members, loss of jobs, closure of schools among others (IEP, 2020; UNDP, 2020). The youth however are disproportionately affected both as victims and perpetrators of terrorism in Africa (Sommers, 2019).

Research into terrorism on the African continent has often focused on the history and trends of terrorism in the region (Lyman, 2009; Lyman & Morrison, 2019; Walt, 2014; WANEP, 2019; Whitaker, 2010), the root causes or sources of terrorism (Abdikadir, 2016; Musa, 2018; UNDP, 2017a, 2019; Zenn, 2018), terrorist targets (Abrahms, 2021; Hassan, 2012; WANEP, 2019; Zenn, 2018). Another area that has received attention recently is the prevention and countering of terrorism (Organizations, 2017; UNDP, 2016; Zenn, 2018). The units of analysis have mostly been limited to only the countries that have experienced the incidents of violent extremism and terrorism. Two key questions have rarely been touched; why no incident of terrorism in country A or B? and What the sources of the stability in those countries are?

Historically, there is no consistent and widely accepted position on the origins of terrorism in Africa (Walt, 2014). While some commentators posit that terrorism have been around for a long time and that various groups and individuals have employed terror tactics spanning a

millennium in Africa, others such as Law maintained that terrorism is a recent phenomenon and has only been decades old (Law, 2009, p.1). The latter generation of scholars attribute the origins of terrorism in Africa to the audacious terrorists' attacks on the US embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in 1998 by the al Qaeda terror group which claimed 224 lives (including 12 US citizens) and injured 4,574 people (Mills, 2004). Exacerbated by the September 11 terrorist attack on the US by the same terrorist group, Africa became a strategic theatre for the war on terrorism with Susan Rice, the then Assistant Secretary of State for Africa in the Clinton Administration describing Africa as the world's "soft underbelly for global terrorism" (Walt, 2014, p.72). Susan reflected the thinking that, weak states, a predominant feature of African states then, provided as safe haven for the survival of terror groups such as the al Qaeda (Abrahms, 2021).

Historically, discussion on terrorism in Africa focused on some events, characteristic of terrorism and acts of terrorism that predated the audacious events of 1998 (Mills, 2004). Notable among them was the plan by some members of the Islamic brotherhood in 1995 to assassinate Hosni Mubarak, then president of Egypt in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (Ayinde, 2010, p.55). Other antecedents in the history of terrorism in Africa reflected in events in places such as Morocco, Cairo, and many parts in North Africa, where militant groups operating under the banner of al Qaeda targets Western interests in places like hotels, resorts, embassies and military bases among others (Walt, 2014). There are also some scholars who categorise tyrannical leaders and their reigns as essential contributors to the history of terrorism in Africa. Leaders such as Iddi Amin and Charles Taylor have frequently been cited for the use of acts of terror to perpetuate their political agendas. Though predating and largely unconnected to the broader contemporary global terrorist threat (Mills, 2004) the use of terrorism as a tactic by some African regimes, guerrilla armies and warlords for decades during wars, sheds light on

the development and history of terrorism in Africa. This lack of consensus on the history of terrorism in Africa reflects a fundamental ontological problem that terrorism faces in terms of definition of terrorism and in particular, who or what constitutes terrorism (Mills, 2004).

Ayinde (2010) proposed a more comprehensive and coherent chronology of the history of terrorism in Africa. According to the author, the history and development of terrorism on the continent is characterized by three phases albeit overlapping. These phases include the Afro-Oriental phase, the Afro-Occidental phase and the Afro-global phase. Ayinde described the Afro-Oriental phase of terrorism in Africa as the period where external terror on the continent was fuelled by Arab slave raiders who invaded sub-Saharan Africa in search of slaves using terror as the modus operandi. This phase of terrorism in Africa coincided and conjugated with 'internal' terror that stemmed from the threat of cannibalism. The Afro-Oriental phase was succeeded by the Afro-Occidental phase which marked the contact with Europe and the active enslavement of Africans by the Europeans using the tactic of terror. In fact, slavery itself is considered the most obnoxious act of terrorism against any individual or group of people. And though the physical torture of slavery as suffered by African ended centuries ago, the psychological torture remains to this day. Africans are pained by the ubiquitous reminders and scars of terrorism that they bear through underdevelopment, exploitation of labour and resources, indignity and unabated dependency on their erstwhile colonial masters.

The end of slavery in its outer trappings ushered in the Afro-global phase of terrorism in Africa. As noted by Stohl (2010, p.21), that "since power gained by force of arms is often sustained through the same means, the British in Nigeria, Sudan, Somalia, Egypt and other parts of Africa had no option but to resort to violence and terror in order to maintain the empire ". In particular, 130-year colonial rule in Algeria was abhorred for its use of coercion and to a varied degree terrorism to subjugate Algerians. Its recent manifestation is France's role in the escalation of

terrorism on the African continent, specifically al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM). Similarly, the Cold War and the attendant race between the East and the West left legacies of human rights abuses, artificial social and political divisions, unresolved grievances and massive influx of weapons and small arms. These legacies of the cold war, along with the collapse of institutions of state in many African countries such as Liberia, the DRC, Somalia and Sierra Leone fuelled conflicts and insurgencies in which the acts of terrorism flourished (Sheehan, 2008). The contemporary narration of the evolution of terrorism from state failure frequently cites Somalia as the paradigm of weak state, where years of wars have provided the fertile grounds and sanctuary for terrorism to flourish (Walt, 2014).

These episodes and phases of terrorism development on the continent as discussed above cannot be treated as distinct historical events. They are overlapping and at minimum complementary. As noted by Ayinde (2010), the spaces of terror across the continent of Africa are far more elastic and interconnected than generally imagined. Presently, terrorism have become a widespread phenomenon on the continent with nearly every country exposed even though a handful is yet to record any incident of terrorism properly so defined.

#### **2.4 Drivers of terrorism in Africa**

In terms of the sources and drivers of terrorism in Africa, the discussion in the literature have generally categorised the factors into political, social, economic and to a large extent ideology or religion (Buchanan-Clarke & Lecalake, 2016; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hassan, 2012; Onuoha, 2014; Walt, 2014).

#### 2.4.1 Political drivers of terrorism in Africa

Politically, raft of studies has often cited blocked political participation and decision making, corruption, bad governance and failed or weak state as some of the factors militating against the stability of the continent and thus providing the fertile grounds for terrorism and violent extremism to fester. In Nigeria for example, Onuoha (2014) found that perception of corrupt and weak government has driven a lot of young people into the fold of terrorists and violent extremists. This narrative of weak and corrupt government as well as the prevalence of violations of human rights have become recruiting tools for the country's home-grown terrorists' group, Boko Haraam (Akpomera, Eddy & Omoyibo, 2013). Similarly, Barros, Faria, and Gil-Alana (2008) found a positive relationship between poverty and terrorism in Africa but argues that the association is mediated through conditions of deteriorated political and economic freedom (Elu & Price, 2015).

Also, fragile democracy, weak state and dysfunctional state institutions of some states on the continent have also led to instability and the rise and sustenance of violent extremist groups and terrorism. Somalia is frequently used as an example of a weak state (Walls, 2009: 371). Even among Somalis, Somalia, the number-seven-shaped country in the north-east of the continent that forms the Horn of Africa, has long been a contentious concept, encapsulating one of postcolonial Africa's worst mismatches between conventional state structures and indigenous customs and institutions (Kaplan, 2010: 82). The United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Ethiopia claimed the Somali populated lands in the Horn of Africa during the nineteenth century, dividing the "Greater Somalia" into five distinct governmental jurisdictions (Ibrahim, 2010: 283). Decades of civil war have resulted in governmental collapse and weak institutions in Somalia, creating the ideal climate for terrorism and, in particular, the emergence of radical Islam.

Walt (2014, p.82), notes that, by the 1990s, it was estimated that one-third of Sub-Saharan African states had low state capacities, which had been exacerbated, at least temporarily, by the process of globalisation, which challenged the client-oriented and autocratic nature of many African economies with its open and transparent approach to governance issues. Walt further posits, that on the African continent, a large number of weak states or quasi-states, porous borders, widespread poverty, political frustration, religious radicalism, and repression combine to create an environment conducive to alienation and radicalism, which can foster both domestic and international terrorism. However, Terrorists, according to Mills (2004), requires critical governance and infrastructural features (such as regular flights and reliable communications and banking systems) to operate efficiently, hence there is no clear association between complete state failure and terrorist activity.

Consequently, to successfully eliminate or mitigate the political conditions that engender radicalism and social alienation capable of brooding terrorism and violent extremism in the long run, Whitaker (2010) proposed that, the chief policy response and counterterrorism strategy in Africa must be anchored on the promotion of democracy and civil society on the continent. On his part, (Mills, 2004) argues that, to effectively stamp out the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism in the continent, African states must build sufficient capacities to be able to exact authoritative force through the resourcing and training of the police forces and their militaries. Additionally, Mills (2004) much like Whitaker (2010) underscores the promotion of democracy and good governance as the corner stones in countering terrorism and violent extremism on the continent. According to Mills, this will increase the legitimacy of governments to exercise control over its territory and population by means of regular, multiparty elections, providing the conducive setting for socioeconomic reforms (i.e., the

alleviation of extreme poverty), which in turn will result in the building of state capacity and institutions (aimed at combating terrorism).

Another important political dimension of the sources of terrorism and violent extremism on the continent is the exclusion of the youth who form the majority on in the continent in decision making. To this end, (Hellsten, 2016), argues that the youth in Africa generally lack the opportunity to influence and to contribute to decision that affect their lives. Fanthorpe (2001) bemoaned this situation as militating against the political rights of the youth to participate and to challenge the unequal state-youth relations. Citing the recruitment and radicalization of the Kenyan youth, (Abdikadir, 2016; Hassan, 2012) posit that the invisibility of the youth as important political stakeholders facilitates the process of exclusion that drives the youth to accept violence as a possible and sometimes a legitimate means of political expression. To quote Sirkku Hellsten, in the case of Kenya, “as long as Kenyan domestic politics remain divisive; corruption prevails; and inequality and the lack of political voice continue, the youth of all ethnic groups will be vulnerable and susceptible to believing the promises made by recruiters” (Hellsten, 2016).

#### **2.4.2 Socio-economic drivers of terrorism in Africa**

Economically, the drivers most frequently cited include poverty, income inequality, unemployment and lack of economic opportunities for the youth. A 2017 study by The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), titled “Journey to extremism in Africa”, underscores the significance of economic factors as key enablers to the emergence and surge in terrorism and violent extremism on the African continent. The study notes that; “The grievances associated with growing up in contexts where multidimensional poverty is high and

far deeper than national averages, with the lived reality of unemployment and underemployment, render ‘economic factors’ a major source of frustration identified by those who joined violent extremist groups. This is a key dimension of individuals’ vulnerability to narratives that invite them to channel such grievances and associated desperation into the cause of extremism” (UNDP, 2017a, p.5).

The study further found that, a person gainfully employed or studying was found to be likely to be susceptible to terrorist recruitment and radicalization compared to an unemployed youth.

The study revealed employment is the single most mentioned immediate need at the time of joining violent extremism groups. And unlike the unemployed and impoverished, it took a long time for the recruits identified as not being vulnerable (Educated, studying or employed) to take a decision to join violent extremists’ groups (UNDP, 2017a). Whereas the September 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States of America deemphasized a direct relationship between poverty and the proclivity to become a terrorist or join a terrorist group, it nevertheless, cited poverty, weak institutions and corruption as important factors that make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and the surge in violent extremism in Africa (Walt, 2014). Hanlon also supports the significance of poverty and material deprivation by arguing that, conflicts and by extension violent extremism and terrorism are caused by material deprivation, particularly poverty, political and economic marginalization among the youth. On their part, Habibe, Forquilha and Salvador made reference to the Al Shabab terrorism, arguing that the group often present a puritanical version of Islam as the solution to widespread problems of poverty, unemployment, corruption and political exclusion suffered by the youth in Somalia and Kenya. This reinforces the position espoused by Hanlon that, on inclination to join terrorists or violent extremists’ group, religion unlike poverty and material deprivation, only functions as a rallying point or cloak.

The poverty –terrorism nexus narration in Africa has also found support in the rising jihadist violent extremism in the Southern African sub-region. Commenting on the jihadist insurgency in Cabo Delgado, the northernmost province of Mozambique, Conceicao (2021), argues that, the deep sense of government neglect, evidenced by the grinding poverty faced mainly by the youth who have lost all hopes of escaping their present misery has contributed tremendously to the vulnerability of the province and of the susceptibility of the youth to recruitment and radicalization of jihadist fighters. Additionally, the author, in his work titled “The rise and root causes of Islamic insurgency in Mozambique and its security implication to the region”, has maintained that, governments inability to transform the regions abundant natural resources and economic opportunities into improved livelihoods, exposed largely by weak state structures of governance, ineffective public institutions, corruption and poverty has exacerbated existing grievances, opening the space for radical preaching and recruitment of the youth by violent extremist groups (Conceicao, 2021).

In contributing to the discussion on the role of poverty, economic inequality and political marginalization as drivers or enablers of terrorism and violent extremism, Combs (2016) postulates that, although some recruits and adherents "come from families who have had wealth, most are from absolute destitution, individuals for whom terrorism represents the only way to lash out at society's injustices." (Shinn, 2016, p.20) Combs observation lends support to the research on terrorism that suggests terrorist organization foot soldiers are drawn from the pool of the economic downtrodden rather than from the well to do or middle class (Shinn, 2016). Whereas proponents of the poverty/economic inequality – terrorism nexus have yet to find a safe landing, there is little dispute that poverty and economic inequality are significant contributory factors in creating the fertile environment that encourage and push disenchanting youth to join terrorists' organizations (Abrahms, 2021; Shinn, 2016; Zenn, 2018). Available

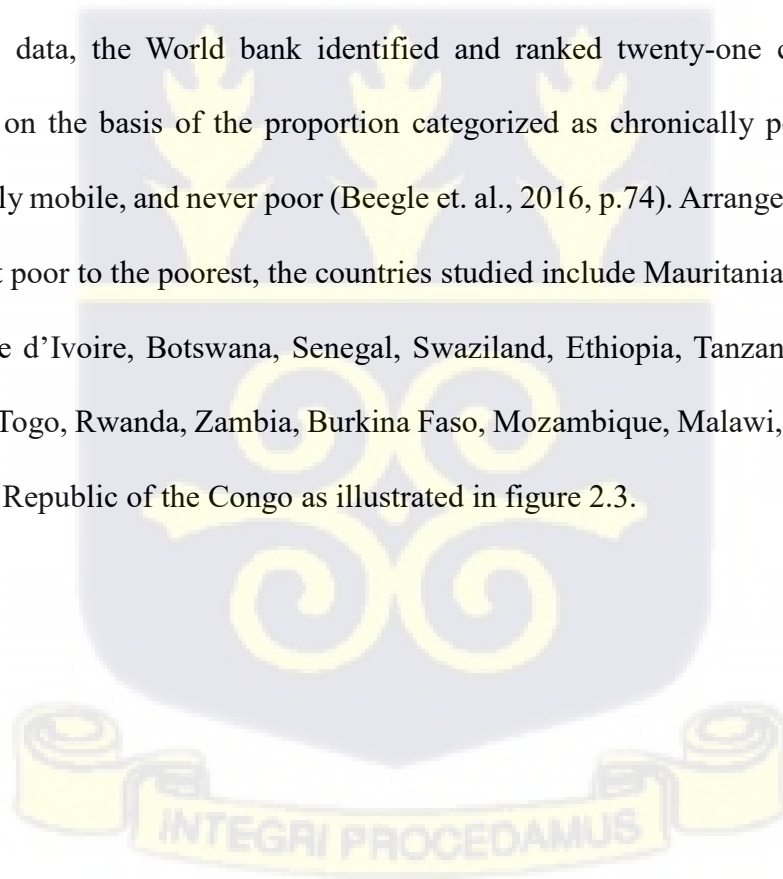
evidence tends to support this conclusion in the case of some of deadly terrorists' organizations such as Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, the Lord's Resistance Army etc. operating mostly in Western and Eastern Africa and lately in the Southern African region in places like Cabo Delgado in Mozambique.

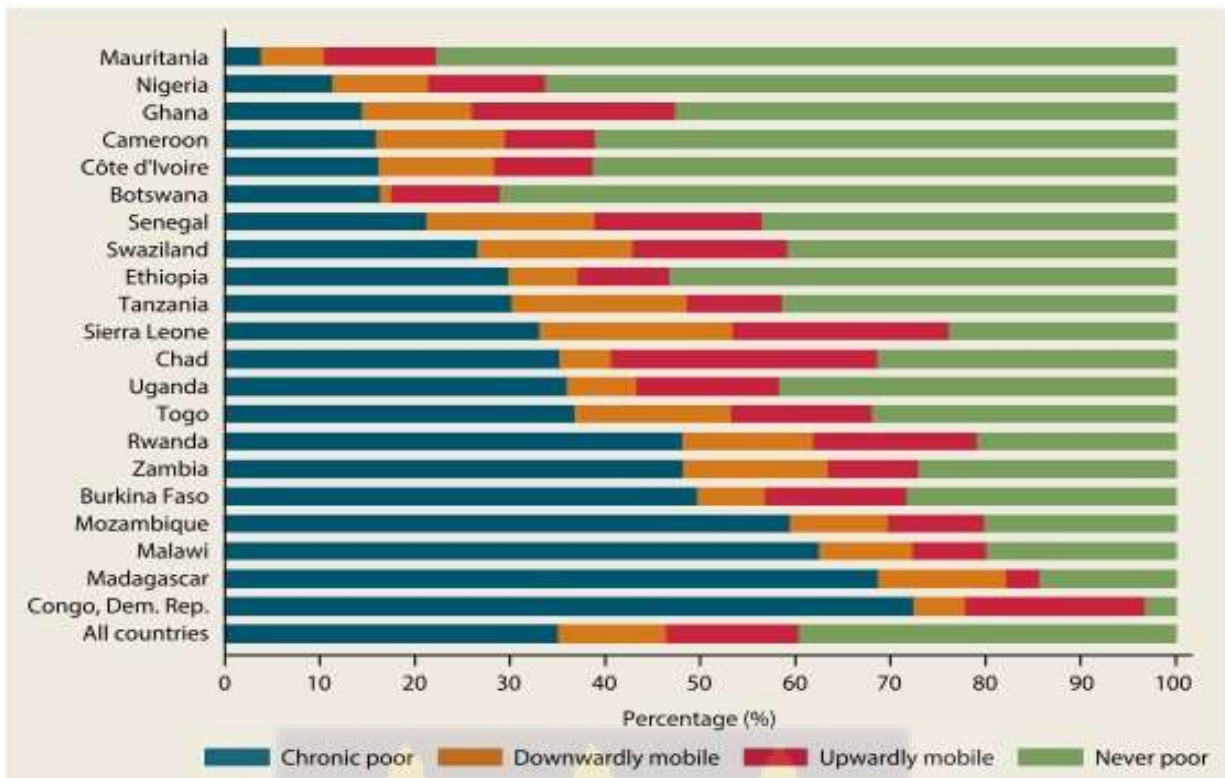
In 2016, noted a new a shift in Al-Shabaab's recruitment strategy, which highlights the role of poverty and economic inequality in terrorist's recruitment and radicalization. The group according to Shinn initially targeted groups at the bottom of the economic ladder especially in Nairobi and Mombasa, the capital cities of Kenya and Somalia respectively. The group gradually turned its attention to Muslim students and fresh university graduates offering a salary of up to \$700 per month, attractive support to recruits facilities and promises of other economic and spiritual benefits (Jager, 2018). Even though the significance and magnitude of that new development remains undetermined, it nevertheless illustrates the terrorists' groups confidence in exploiting poverty and the attendant economic challenges to mount their cause.

In spite of the pieces of evidence suggesting a relationship albeit largely indirect between poverty, economic inequality and terrorism, the relationship is a lot more complex and far from being conclusive. According to Jager (2018), in his study titled "*Does Poverty Cause Terrorism?*", raft of the empirical research set out to investigate the relationship between poverty and terrorism proved that poverty does not cause terrorism. One such study worth mentioning is that of Alberto Abadie who is himself revered in the field of terrorism research. In his widely circulated research titled "Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism", Abadie was emphatic that no relationship exists between poverty and terrorism (Abadie, 2006). According to the author, the only condition under a semblance of relationship is noticed is when other highly influential variables such as ethnic and religious differences and

political freedom are not accounted for (Abadie, 2006; Jager, 2018). Abadie's research in this regard is important for two reasons: firstly, Abadie took into account both domestic and international terrorism in his analysis; secondly, in conceptualizing poverty for his analysis, Abadie used both international criteria (such as the International Gini Coefficient and the UN Human Development Index) and domestic or national level measures (such as local GDP and local Gini Coefficient) (Abadie, 2006; Jager, 2018, p.6).

The socio-economic – terrorism nexus in Africa gets even more complex and nebulous when subjected to the findings of a landmark research conducted by the World Bank in 2016 (Beegle et. al., 2016, p.74 also cited in Jager, 2018, p.20). Employing the most current and available socio-economic data, the World bank identified and ranked twenty-one countries in sub-Saharan Africa on the basis of the proportion categorized as chronically poor, downwardly mobile, upwardly mobile, and never poor (Beegle et. al., 2016, p.74). Arranged in a descending order from least poor to the poorest, the countries studied include Mauritania, Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Botswana, Senegal, Swaziland, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Chad, Uganda, Togo, Rwanda, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Malawi, Madagascar, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo as illustrated in figure 2.3.





**Figure 2.5: The share of poor people in Africa who fall into poverty is about the same as the share of poor people who move out of poverty**

Source: (Beegle et. al., 2016, p.74)

For each of these countries the bank identified the number of violent attacks against civilians of these countries. Categorized into low, medium and high-level attacks that spanned three-time frames; 1997— 1999, 2009-2011, and 2014, the study found that only eight countries out of the twenty-one fell in the same range i.e., low, medium, or high, of violent events for all three-time frames. And even though violent attacks or events against civilians is not necessarily the same thing as terrorism, they are in this case, suggestive as opined by Jager (2018, p.20).

Furthermore, only in a few, three countries to be specific - Mauritania, Botswana, and Swaziland was lower levels of poverty found to be correlated with least number of violent events against civilians. Similarly, higher rates of poverty in The Democratic Republic of the

Congo and Mozambique were found to coincide with high levels of violent attacks against civilians in the time frames under consideration. While these initial observations are suggestive of a positive relationship between poverty and terrorism, it was difficult establishing any such correlation for the remaining countries especially in the mid-range, further complicating and attenuating any attempt to draw a conclusive relationship between poverty and terrorism or violent extremism. For instance, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria are found to have relatively low rates of poverty but recorded high numbers of violent events against civilians for the times frame. Nigeria presently is battling with the boko haram terrorist group in the Nier Delta, that has grown beyond its boundaries into Neighbouring counties including Cameroon and Chad. On the other hand, Togo and Burkina Faso consistently recorded least number of violent attacks against civilians while poverty levels remain high. This latter observation undermines the suggestion of any form of relationship between poverty and terrorism (Jager, 2018).

It is important to note that, whereas the debate continues on the relationship between terrorism and poverty, nowhere it is concluded or made emphatic that poverty causes terrorism or that poverty make people into violent extremist or murderers. Rather, the issue has always been the role of poverty along other multitudes of factors in creating the fertile environment. Whereas (Jager, 2018) admits that poverty is not the cause of terrorism, the author concedes that in the case of Africa, poverty worsens the political and economic condition thereby creating the favourable environment for marginalized groups and individuals to support or join terrorists' groups. The author further notes in agreement with (Yoroms, 2007) that, poverty in continues to compete with other historical political and socio-economic challenges such disease, corruption, poor governance, insecurity, conflict, socioeconomic inequality, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and political marginalization that create the environment likely to lead to terrorism.

### 2.4.3 Responses to terrorism and Violent extremism in Africa

At the Continental/regional level, several collective efforts have been made by regional groups such as the African Union (AU) to prevent and combat terrorism. For example, in September 2002, the member states of the adopted the African Union (AU) Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Transnational Terrorism (AUPAPCTT) (Zondi, 2016). The AUPAPCTT facilitated the establishment of the legal framework and roadmap for African countries to implement international counterterrorism measures in line with the OAU Convention, as well as the UN Security Council's Resolution 1373 of 2001. The UNSC Resolution 1373(2001) required that each individual UN member state create a prescribed legal framework in its domestic laws and established the necessary institutions for preventing and combating terrorism and to cooperate fully with other member states on a global scale in preventing and countering terrorism. Consequently, in 2004, AU member states adopted the AU Protocol to the Organization of African Unity Convention, which convened on the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (Zondi, 2016). Other regional mechanism includes the US-backed regional counter-terrorism initiatives such as the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in Djibouti in October 2002 under the US Central Command (CENTCOM), the East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI) established in 2003 and the 2009 Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism program (PREACT) (Zondi, 2016).

At the individual level, African countries have also enacted counter-terrorism laws and regulations in line with the respective resolutions and protocols by the UN and their regional organizations. For example, following the US embassy bombings in Mombasa in 1998, Kenya established the National Security Intelligence Service, which later became part of the US Anti-

Terrorism Assistance Program (ATA) (Mogire and Agade, 2011). In addition, the Kenyan government created an anti-terror Police Unit (ATPU), a Joint Terrorism Task Force, a National Counter-Terrorism Centre and a National Security Advisory Committee. Currently, Kenya is working closely with local, regional and international parties in the fight against threats of transnational terrorism through initiatives like the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (Mogire and Agade, 2011; Abdikadir, 2016; Aronson, 2013; Hellsten, 2016; Zondi, 2016). In 2008, Ghana also enacted its anti-terrorism law, the Anti-Terrorism Act, Act 765 (762) whose object was to combat terrorism, suppress and detect acts of terrorism, to prevent the territory, resources and financial services of this country from being used to commit terrorist acts, to protect the right of people in the country to live in peace, freedom and security and to provide for connected purposes (Ghana Act, 2008).

#### **2.4.4 Limitations to response**

Whereas sufficient studies have identified the leading drivers to be politically and socioeconomically situated, much of the African response is largely militaristic. The overly militaristic approach only responds to the manifestations of terrorism and not the root causes. In other jurisdictions, the military approach has resulted in wrong targeting and human rights abuses which as further angered victims and provided the rationalistic grounds for people to engage in terrorism. Chauzal (2015, p.9) for instance notes that, as public support both abroad and in Mali wanes for the French-led military operations in the Sahel, the French military are under mounting accusations of human rights violations. The author further reported that, a UN fact finding mission discovered that French strike killed 19 civilians and injured many more during a wedding ceremony in 2021. Rather than showing accountability for the heinous act, the French Defence Chief was reported by France24 to have been defending the act (Chauzal,

2015, p.9). So, the key limitations of the African response to terrorism are the over-bearing militarization at the expense of the underlying drivers such as unemployment, human rights violations, corruption, resourced -induced conflicts among others.

## **2.5 Terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel**

Since the end of European colonialism in the region in the early 1960s, West Africa, like the rest of the African continent, has faced a slew of security challenges (Souaré, 2010). As most West African countries marked 50 years of independence in 2010, it was declared as the "Year of Peace," by African Union (AU). However, many of these issues remain even more pressing and as real even today. Indeed, Fawole and Ukeje argued in the preface of their 2005 book, *Crisis of the State in West Africa*, that West Africa, more than any other subregion in Africa, has earned the dreadful repute as a veritable theatre of violent wars, political instability, and state implosions (Ukeje, 2005).

The rapidly deteriorating security situation in West Africa and in particular the Sahel region defies easy categorization. Numerous extremist groups, which aim to achieve their selfish and incomprehensible goals through violent means, add to the complexity. Recent acts of violence by members of these groups serve as a wake-up call to national governments and the international community to take additional steps to combat the groups and protect vulnerable communities from the worst effects of the increased regional instability brought on by violent extremist's groups operating in and around the Sahel (Wentling, 2020).

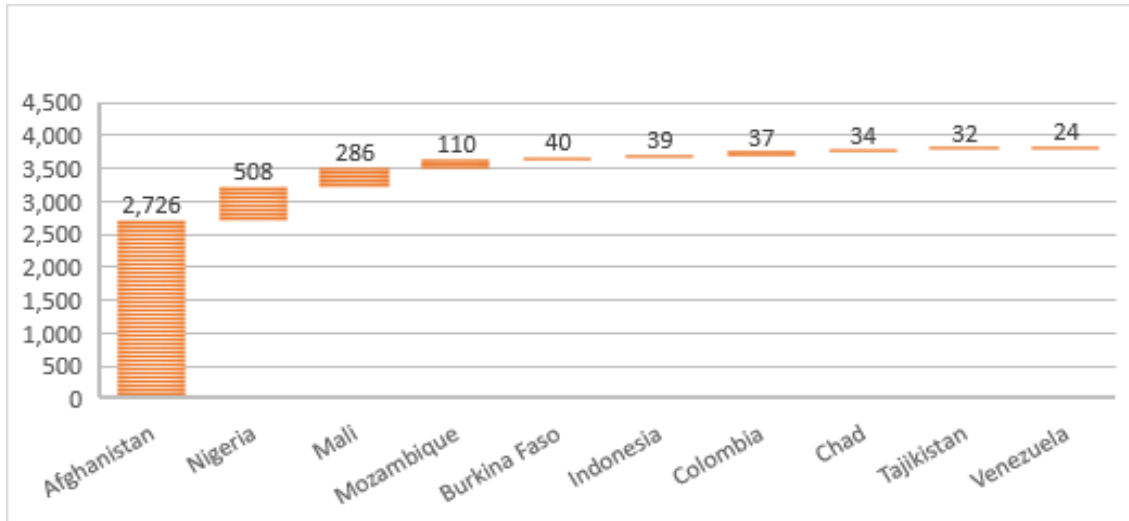
Of particular interest are the three Sahelian States plus one: Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, the home and origin of the Boko Haram terrorist group before it spread to other parts of the region. The level of instability and violence in the Sahel—and the number of incidents

in these countries, in particular—has skyrocketed since the military overthrew an elected government in Mali in 2012 and the substantial outflow of arms and extremist fighters following Muammar Gaddafi's downfall in Libya in 2011. (Wentling, 2020). This has also given fuel and impetus to violent extremists and terrorists groups operating in the region.

### **2.5.1 Contemporary manifestation of terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel**

The west African sub-region, increasingly, is becoming the epicentre of terrorism in SSA due to the expansion in number of terrorist groups and the complexity of the tactics employed by these terrorists and other violent extremists' groups operating in the region. Defined as “politically motivated violence directed against non-combatants or symbolic targets which is designed to communicate a message to a broader audience” (Jackson, 2010: p.26), terrorism and research into same suggests that the phenomenon is prevalent in West Africa and that some of the world's most dangerous and resilient terror and violent extremists 'groups are harboured and operates in the region (Agbibo, 2014; ECOWAS, 2013; Salihu, 2015; UN, 2012; UNOWAS, 2020; WANEP, 2019). As shown in Figure 2.4, out of the top 10 countries that produced the largest increases in deaths from terrorism for the period 2017–2018, the four countries from Africa that made it onto the list were all from West Africa (Nigeria= 508, Mali = 286, Burkina Faso= 40 and Chad=34) (IEP, 2019: p.14).

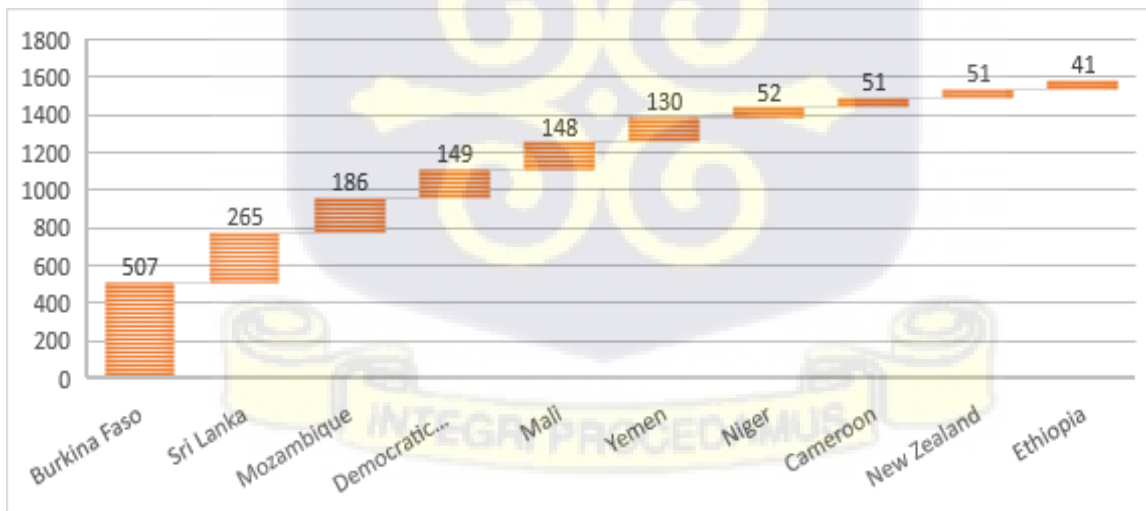




**Figure 2.6: Largest increases in deaths from terrorism, 2017-2018**

*Source: Author's own design using data from the IEP*

Similarly, in 2019 even though seven countries from Africa featured in the top ten countries that produced the largest increases in deaths from terrorism, three of these countries (Burkina Faso = 507, Mali = 148 and Niger = 52) were from West Africa and more significantly, Burkina Faso, as presented in **Figure 2.5**, produced the largest increase globally (IEP, 2020: p14.).



**Figure 2.7: Largest increases in deaths from terrorism, 2018-2019**

*Source: Author's own design using data from the IEP*

To buttress this fact, it is worth quoting in full the statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) in his report to the UN Security Council in New York on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2020.

*In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, casualties from terrorist attacks have increased fivefold since 2016 with over 4,000 deaths reported in 2019 alone as compared to an estimated 770 deaths in 2016. Most significantly, the geographic focus of terrorist attacks has shifted eastwards from Mali to Burkina Faso and Niger and is increasingly threatening West African Coastal States. The number of people killed in Burkina Faso has increased from about 80 in 2016 to over 1,800 in 2019. The number of displaced persons has increased ten-fold to about half a million, in addition to 25,000 who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries (UNOWAS, 2020: p.1).*

### **2.5.2 Drivers of terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel**

Available evidence identifies a number of vulnerability factors that can be reduced into social, political and economic as well as a more nebulous driver of terrorism, priced on psychological factors such as individual psychology, judgment and reaction to stimuli (Agbiboa, 2014; ECOWAS, 2013; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Onuoha, 2014; UNDP, 2016; WANEP, 2019). For instance, Onuoha (2014), found that Boko Haram recruiters take advantage of the frustration and vulnerability of the Nigerian youth by conveying to them the narrative of weak, unwilling and corrupt government. The study points to poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and weak family structures as the susceptibility factors that make the youth vulnerable to these terrorist groups. Given the well documented drivers of terrorism such as widespread poverty, political instability, bad governance, blocked political participation, ethnic and religious sentiments

among others, virtually no country in the West African sub-region has proven invulnerable to the threat of terrorism.

### **2.5.3 Regional responses to Terrorism**

In response to the increasing threat of terrorism and to ensure that its noble objectives of securing the peace and security of the peoples of the region is not jeopardized, the regional body, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) instituted several measures in the form of regional frameworks to help countries and sub-regional units prevent and counter terrorism. It also facilitated the adoption of continental and international frameworks, sub-regional units' mechanism and national level mechanisms to combat terrorism in the region (Agbibo, 2014; ECOWAS, 2013; WANEP, 2019). At the international level, almost all the States in the region have ratified at least seven of the eighteen universal counter-terrorism instruments (ECOWAS, 2013). In addition, each State in the region has submitted at least one report to the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1373 adopted in 2001. There have also been some structured ad hoc responses dominated by ECOWAS Member States though mandated by the African Union (AU). Key among these ad hoc arrangements is the Joint Force of the Group of Five of the Sahel (G5 Sahel) and The Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The G5 Sahel is made up of Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad. The objective of the G5 Sahel is to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism prevalent in the Sahel. The MNJTF, focused primarily on dismantling Boko Haram within the Lake Chad Basin is made up of troops from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria and Niger. There is also national level mechanisms anchored on domestic counterterrorism laws and legal frameworks.

Nigeria's "Policy Framework and National Action Plan" for Preventing and Countering Violent

Extremism adopted in August, 2017 (Musa, 2018) and Ghana's Anti-terrorism Act (Anti-Terrorism Act, 2008 (Act 762)) passed in 2008 and amended in 2012, are some examples of national level mechanism for preventing and countering terrorism in west Africa. Theoretically, adherence to the ECOWAS measures much like any other counterterrorism strategy, is expected to result in the prevention of terrorism or effective response to terrorism in member states of ECOWAS (Department of Homeland Security, 2019; ECOWAS, 2013).

Additionally, ECOWAS approved a budget of US\$2.3 billion for the 2020-2024 Action Plan in 2019. Its eight main areas vary from coordinating counter-terrorism activities and pooling resources to promoting inter-communal communication and combating violent extremism. It is a positive step forward. The strategy allows ECOWAS to take the lead on an issue on which it has been competing for years with the UN, African Union, and Group of Five Sahel countries (G5 Sahel) (ISS Africa, 2021).

In spite of all these efforts, the counter-terrorism initiatives championed by ECOWAS and other sub-regional ad hoc arrangements are criticized for being ineffective. Whereas ECOWAS itself appears reluctant in sharing sensitive information and divided in the fight against terrorism, ad hoc arrangements such as the Group of Five Sahel countries (G5 Sahel) is poorly resourced while fighting fires (Blake, 2020). This weakness has thus removed any barrier of resistance that could prevent the festering of terrorism and violent extremism in the region as well as its spread to relative safe spaces such as Ghana and Togo. Meanwhile, the same elements that have facilitated the expansion of terrorism in Mali and Burkina Faso— widespread poverty, a lack

of health and education opportunities, and ethnic tensions—are being duplicated in neighbouring nations that are already politically and security weak. A strong shock, such as a jihadi intervention, might have disastrous implications, especially for Togo's stability (Blake, 2020).

## **2.6 Terrorism in Ghana: Mapping the vulnerabilities**

Ghana is one of the very few countries on the African continent and within the West African sub-region that has enjoyed relative peace and prolonged stability in an insecure region. Despite the geographical proximity to and similarity in demographic, political, economic and social vulnerabilities with terrorism prone countries such as Mali, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, there have been no known active terrorist group operating in the country neither has the country ever recorded any terrorist attack in spite of pockets of avoidable violence attributable to political vigilantism (CODEO, 2017; Gyampo & Graham, 2017; Tankebe, 2018). This quiet however, does not in any way suggest that Ghana is at zero-risk of terrorism or free from the threat of terrorism. For example, Ghana's terrorism risk is consistently rising for the past three years on the Global Terrorism Index (GTI). Currently, the country's risk is measured to be 1.743, an increase from 1.559 and 1.397 in 2018 and 2017 respectively on a scale of 0 to 10 (Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP), 2019: p.39, 2020: p.8). The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) measures the direct and indirect impact of terrorism on a country in terms of damage to lives and property. A non-zero index score is an indication that Ghana may as well be somehow vulnerable and exposed to terrorism despite the overtly peaceful nature of the country.

Broadly, Ghana's security vulnerability can be looked at from two angles; domestic and external threats. The domestic security threats include youth bulge, porous borders, rising unemployment, political cleavages, ethnic-conflicts, religious and social divert. Other factors

including the rising culture of nepotism, favouritism, corruption, governance deficit, violent and economic crimes, illegal trafficking of goods and persons, money laundering and the proliferation of small and lightweight weapons all expose the country to the risk of terrorism as experienced elsewhere in the region. For example, on the issue of the youth bulge which is equally not less pressing, 70% of Ghana's population is under 40 years and 57% is below 25 years (Ministry of National Security, 2020). While this is the case, the country over the years has not been able to create economic opportunities that will convert the youth bulge into demographic dividend. As currently pertains in the Sahel and places such as Nigeria, failure to manage the youth bulge open up the youth to the alternatives of narcotic use, armed robbery, cybercrime and recruitment into violent extremists and terrorists' groups.

Externally, Ghana's immediate neighbours to the north and west have not only suffered terrorist attacks lately but are also considered havens for terrorist groups such as the *Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM)* which is a conglomeration of AQIM fighters, the Fulani Macina Liberation Front, Ansar al-Dine and Al-Mubrabitoun. This geographical proximity exposes Ghana to the risk of a potential spill over from her neighbours, which can feed into pre-existing risks as noted above. An immediate and even urgent threat to the peace and stability of the country is the western Togoland secessionists movement that is rearing its ugly head once again. Even though the movement has not escalated or assumed dimensions that qualifies it to be an insurgent group, it nevertheless bears semblance with the genesis or mutation of all other insurgent groups most especially the Boko Haram of Nigeria, the second deadliest terrorist group in the world (Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP), 2020). The curious fact however is that, despite all these risk factors, Ghana remains a relatively stable and peaceful country in a region that clearly is an epicentre of terrorism on the African continent.

From the foregoing discussions, it's obvious that Ghana is not immune from terrorism and violent extremism. In fact, Ghana is as much exposed as some of the countries that have and continue to experience terrorists' attacks. An interesting aspect that remains unearthed is the reason why Ghana has still not experienced any terrorism incident in spite of the vulnerabilities. Therefore, an analysis of the factors making Ghana free of terrorism incidents is imperative for purposes of prevention in the particular case of Ghana.

## **2.7 Preventing and Countering terrorism in Ghana**

In preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism as well as its manifestation in all forms, a number of measures have been adopted by Ghana for the purpose. Ghana's antiterrorism regime is anchored on domestic legal frameworks, international legal frameworks, institutional frameworks, a national strategy and sub-regional ad hoc arrangements (Bamba, 2014).

### **2.7.1 Domestic legal frameworks**

The principal enactment in this regard is the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), 2008 (Act 762). The ATA is made to criminalize terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. Specifically, the ATA is designed to prevent, combat and contain acts of terrorism and violent extremism and to ensure that Ghana's resources are not exploited to facilitate the propagation and or commission of the acts of terrorism. For example, a person who provides or agrees to provide training or instruction in the making or use of an explosive or other lethal device, in carrying out terrorist acts, or in the practice of military exercises or movements commits an offence if the person knows the training is being provided to a terrorist organization or a person engaged in terrorism, according to section fifteen. Similarly, section sixteen of the act also provides that, a person who a) incites or promotes the conduct of a terrorist act, b) incites or promotes participation in

a terrorist group, or c) solicits property for the benefit of a terrorist group or the commission of a terrorist act commits an offense related to terrorism. This section in particular is very important in preventing individuals and organizations in engaging in political, tribal, or race-based incitements as well as religious provocation, which are well-known methods of instigating terrorism.

Another notable domestic legal framework for preventing and countering terrorism in Ghana is the Anti-Money Laundry Act 2008 (Act 749). Without resources, an act of terrorism will remain just an idea or a fantasy. Therefore, closing the resources or financial flows to violent extremists is an important step in preventing terrorism and violent extremism. The Anti-money laundry Act criminalizes money laundering in all its forms to ensure that money does not flow into the hands of terrorism or aid the commission of the acts of terrorism. Section of the Act stipulates that, if a person knows or should have known that property is or is part of the proceeds of unlawful activity, and the person: (a) converts, conceals, disguises, or transfers the property, (b) conceals or disguises the unlawful origin of the property, or (c) acquires, uses, or takes possession of the property, the person has committed money laundering.

To give further effect to the Act, sections Four and Five established the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) whose mandate include: (a) assist in the identification of proceeds of unlawful activity and the combat of money laundering activities; (b) make information available to investigating authorities, intelligence agencies, and revenue agencies to aid in the administration and enforcement of the Republic's laws; and (c) exchange information with similar bodies in other countries regarding money laundering.

There's also a national security strategy of 2020 adopted by the government to address known and potential security risks. The ultimate goal of the strategy is to outline the context within which Ghana should mobilise and coordinate the efforts of sectors of the Ghanaian society to respond to the security threats, risks and challenges facing the country in order to ensure national stability and peace socio-economic development (Ministry of National Security, 2020).

### **2.7.2 International legal frameworks**

Acknowledging that external terrorists' events have domestic effects on peace, security and stability of the country, Ghana has adopted a number of international legal frameworks on countering and preventing violent extremism at various levels of international organizations. Primarily, the international legal frameworks which comes in the form of conventions, protocols and agreements reached at the ECOWAS, AU and UN levels. At ECOWAS level Ghana is signatory to a number of conventions and protocols including the protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security of 1999 as well as the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, including the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF). Ghana is also a signatory to the 2006 ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other Related Materials. The convention proscribes the illegal import or export of arms and ammunition with the West African sub-region without authorization from member states. This is to ensure that arms and ammunition don't end up in the hands of terrorist. At the level of the AU, Ghana is a signatory to the OAU (now AU) Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, Algiers, 1999.

Outside of the continent, the country has ratified a number of international treaties that have implications for the prevention and countering of violent extremism. To note a few of them;

the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (1971), the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages (1979). There's also the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1997) and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999). At the level of the United Nations Ghana has also adopted a number of resolutions aimed at combating terrorism and violent extremism. Examples include UN Security Council Resolutions 1267 of 1999, 1373 of 2001 and 1718 of 2006.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

This discussion looked at the phenomenon of terrorism at four levels – global, African, regional and national – with focus on the history, drivers and prevention and countering of terrorism. whereas the literature is possessed with extensive discussion of the phenomenon on the themes noted above and in particular with countries that have experienced terrorism incidents, scant attention has been paid to the reasons why some countries have not experienced incidents of terrorism or put another way are more prone to terrorism than others. In particular, the literature remains largely silent on why Ghana is less prone to terrorism compared to her neighbours both immediate and distant, even though the Ghana shares undisguisable political and socioeconomic characteristic with them. For purposes of prevention of terrorism and violent extremism, this apparent invisibility of Ghana presents a very crucial gap to be explored. The findings should provide valuable lessons for countries within the West African region and the Sahel, which are considered as the hotbeds of terrorism build a more effective P/CVET strategy.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the theoretical framework of the study is presented to enable the researcher to answer the why and how questions regarding the phenomenon of terrorism in relation to the objective set out in this study as well as provide the grounds to support the research method selection. The chapter is structured as follows; discussion of theory and theoretical framework in research; the definition and conceptualization of terrorism and violent extremism as a conduit to understanding the occurrence of terrorism. The chapter will also present the theoretical choice as well? The model to guide the analysis.

#### 3.2 Theory and Theoretical Framework in Research

This section provides the definitions and explanations of theory and theoretical framework as well as their significance to the study.

##### 3.2.1 Theory

A theory like virtually every term in social science has no specific definition. The interesting thing about theory however. is that, whether in objectivist deductive or subjectivist inductive research, virtually the same meaning is given to the term *theory* (Varpio, Paradis, Uijtdehaage, & Young, 2020). For Varpio et al. (2020), a theory is a set of propositions showing the relationship between and among several propositions and constructs logically. And according to Abend (2008), theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and,

in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions.

The value of theory in research can be descriptive (i.e., naming and characterizing a phenomenon), explanatory (i.e., clarifying the relationships between phenomena), emancipatory (i.e., articulating the oppression of a people), disruptive (i.e., extending existing knowledge or refuting it), or predictive (i.e., predicting an outcome based on specific inputs) (Varpio et al., 2020, p.990). As will be revealed later in this study, the use of the chosen theory or theories will attempt to explain the relationship between the incidence of terrorism and certain variables widely accepted as the key drivers of violent extremism. In effect, the theory or theories for this study will be used for their explanatory value and to seek to understand why some countries or societies are more prone to terrorism than others.

The explanatory power or utility of theories in research or academic inquiry can be categorized into three different levels – grand theories, middle-range theories, and micro-theories. The grand theories are considered as the broad and abstract theorization of natural or social phenomena (e.g., Marxist theories of society). Middle-range theories on their part are used to explain specific aspects of human interactions (social distance and mass casualty theory of terrorism (Brynja, 2005)) and micro-level theorization is concerned with phenomena exclusive to the individual and is predominantly identified with the rational or psychological traditions. It is, however, possible to employ more than one theory or level of theorization in an attempt to understand or explain a single phenomenon. For instance, in terrorism studies and as will be seen in this study, several levels of theorization and different theories will be used to explain the phenomenon of terrorism, its causes, why groups and individuals choose to join terrorist groups or become terrorists as well as why some countries are more prone to terrorism than others.

### 3.2.2 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a rationally created and interrelated set of concepts and premises that a researcher develops to scaffold a study, based on one or more theories (Varpio et al., 2020). To construct a theoretical framework, the study's key concepts and preferred theory(ies) must be clearly defined and connected logically to serve as the foundation for the study being carried out (Varpio et al., 2020). For Abend (2008), the theoretical framework is the structure that anchors a research study's theory. By anchoring the study's theory, the theoretical framework explains why the problem under investigation exists. The utility of a theoretical framework to a research study is numerous. To note a few; whereas a theory enables the researcher to identify the limits of a study, the theoretical framework specifies the underlying factors influencing the phenomena under investigation and under what circumstances those factors affect the phenomena. For instance, in this study, the function of the theoretical framework will be to enable the researcher to identify the various factors or variables that influence or causes terrorism and under what circumstances or within what context those variables can lead to terrorism. the theoretical framework also connects the research to the existing and relevant knowledge about a phenomenon while providing the grounds for stating a study hypothesis and research method selection. Finally, articulating the theoretical framework makes it easier for the research to address the why and how questions about a phenomenon. For example, why do some groups resorts to terrorism and other groups facing the same circumstances decide to use peaceful advocacy to effect change? How do these processes occur and in the case of terrorism or violent extremism, how do individuals or groups become radicalized and eventually engage in terrorism?

### **3.3 Defining and conceptualizing terrorism and violent extremism**

This section surveys a collection of definitions and explanation of what terrorism is while highlighting the controversies surrounding the concept. Without attempting to resolve the controversies, a working definition has been deduced from the bouquet of definitions in the literature to guide the subsequent discussions in this study. The definition of violent extremism and the conceptual framework linking radicalization and unresolved grievance to terrorism are also presented in this section.

#### **3.3.1 Terrorism**

According to Jackson, (2010: p.1), there are over 200 different definitions of terrorism within the terrorism and counter-terrorism literature. This apparent lack of consensus among scholars and practitioners on what exactly constitutes terrorism, presents both political and ontological obstacles to the battle against terrorism and violent extremism (Corlett, 1996). Some scholars as a result have yielded to the unhelpful ways of giving up on the definitional debates while proceeding on the faulty assumption that the term is widely understood. However, a clear understanding of what constitutes terrorism is not only relevant to the academic discourse of the field but has significant consequences on how the strategies for preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism are constituted and prosecuted domestically and internationally. It also has a legal and criminal implication on how terrorism is understood and dealt with under domestic and international law (Jackson, 2010: p.1). Seeping through the bouquet of definitions available in the literature, a few definitions are provided below;

According to Hoffman, terrorism is an act of violence committed by mostly non-state actors in pursuance of political interests with sweeping psychological implications (Hoffman, 2006). For Bockstette, terrorism is purely a product of asymmetrical conflict where the weaker party uses

terror and violence as a weapon (Bockstette, 2008). Bockstette also emphasizes the use of social media to influence the behaviour of the targeted audience. Fortna (2015), on her part, defines terrorism generally, as the intentional use of violence against civilians for political gain. The American political philosopher Michael Walzer in 2002 also wrote that "Terrorism is the deliberate killing of innocent people, at random, to spread fear through a whole population and force the hand of its political leaders" (Mackey, 2009, p.1). Perhaps the most compelling definition of terrorism is given by Louise Richardson as "politically motivated violence directed against non-combatants or symbolic targets which is designed to communicate a message to a broader audience" (Jackson & Jackson, 2008, p.26). Uniquely, this definition, unlike the ones provided by Hoffman and others accepts that states can also employ the strategies of terrorism to achieve their goals. This diffuses the fallacy of the state-biased or actor-based definitions that sought to attribute terrorism entirely to non-state actors.

To prevent and counter terrorism, ECOWAS has adopted the definition of terrorism provided by the African Union. The AU defines terrorism as follows: Terrorist acts "shall include an act, actual or threatened, that is intended, or can reasonably be regarded as being intended, to intimidate the public or any section of the public or compel a government or international organization to do or refrain from doing any act and to advance a political, religious or ideological cause, if the act:

- I. Involves serious violence against persons;
- II. Involves serious damage to property, endangers a person's life, creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or any section of the public;
- III. Involves the use of firearms or explosives;

- IV. Involves exposing the public to any dangerous, hazardous, radioactive, or harmful substance, any toxic chemical or any microbial or other biological agent or toxin;
- V. is designed to disrupt, damage, destroy any computer system or the provision of services directly related to communication infrastructure, banking, and financial services, utilities, transportation, or key infrastructure;
- VI. is designed to disrupt the provision of essential emergency services such as the police, civil defences and medical services; or involves prejudice to public security or national security” (OAU, 1994, p.3).

Even though a precise definition cannot be drawn from the attempted definitions above, one can, however, deduce from those definitions some characteristics attributable to terrorism. These include primarily; the use of violence and terror in pursuit of a political objective, deliberate destruction of public properties and systems, exertion of influence, etc. A common theme that appears to feature all the definitions given above, is the use of violence which is consistent with even the history and evolution of the idea and practice of terrorism (Jackson et al., 2019; Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011; Lyman & Morrison, 2019; The Lancet, 2001). Putting it all together, terrorism, for the purpose of this study can be conceived as the unauthorized or illegitimate use of violence to kill, maim, disrupt the peace, instil fear and destroy properties to achieve a political, social, economic, and or ideological objective by both state and non-state actors.

Conceptually, terrorism in this study is discussed within the context of Violent Extremism but distinct from other forms of conflict or violence. The attempt here is not to explain the sources of conflicts or why some societies are more prone to conflicts than others. Rather, the boundary of this instant study is to focus on terrorism studies as distinct from the broader conflict studies.

### 3.3.2 Violent Extremism

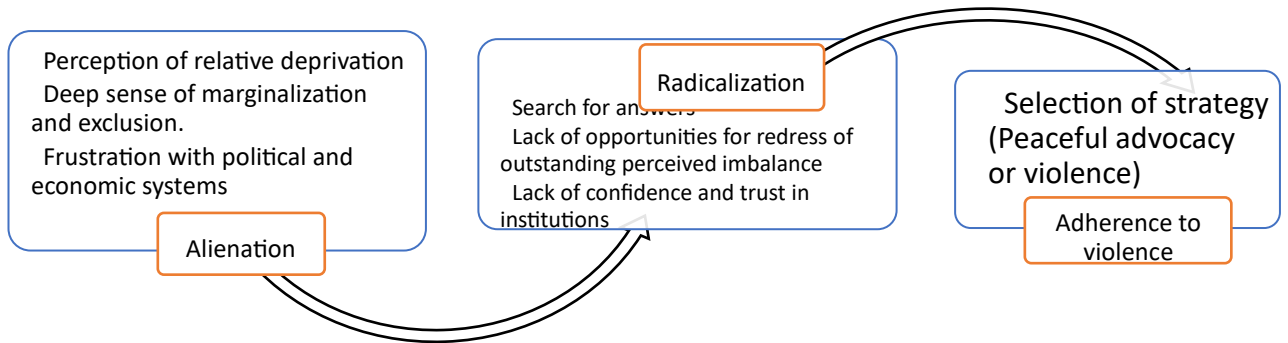
Used interchangeably with terrorism, the rise of violent extremism has become an important issue the world over with political, socio-economic, and psychological consequences and root causes (Glazzard & Zeuthen, 2016). There is no universal definition or understanding of what constitutes violent extremism. Often, researchers take it as a given and thereby proceed to discuss violent extremism without having to labour with the definitional issues. However, according to the USAID, violent extremism can be defined as “advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic or political objectives” (Glazzard & Zeuthen, 2016; p.1). Violent extremism in this sense can be said to be the universal set with which terrorism as a form of violent behaviour falls. This makes it conceptual possible to use the two terms interchangeably when discussing terrorism in particular. The conceptual path as illustrated in figure 3.1 and figure 3.2 equally apply to terrorism.

Whereas extremism is not necessarily harmful to society, violence is and extremism becomes problematic where it excites or induces violence or leads to terrorism (UNDP, 2016). For this discussion, violence is defined as; “The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either result in or have a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” (World Health Organization, 2002; p.5).

Two issues stand out in this definition; intentionality and power. Intentionality is to distinguish violence committed deliberately from accidental events such as traffic accidents and other unforeseen circumstances. The use of ‘power’ is to highlight the significance of power relations between and among actors that result in the act of violence.

Violent extremism and by extension terrorism is preceded by the process of radicalization (UNDP, 2016). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) explains radicalization as a behavioural trait that connotes a change in behaviour that is becoming increasingly associated with an anti-liberal and anti-democratic ethos and ultimately evokes a sense of the use of violence (UNDP, 2016). In principle, radicalization is not necessarily a negative appeal, it only becomes a problem where a radicalized group or individual chooses to use violence rather than peaceful advocacy and protestation as a means to an end. When this happens, the radicalized individual becomes a violent extremist or is described subjectively as a terrorist and the use of violence may gradually move from being instrumental to symbolic. Scholars and practitioners have so far not evolved a clear-cut path to radicalization or violent extremism. However, for purposes of preventing violent extremism and terrorism, the UNDP has developed a very useful three-stage conceptual framework for understanding the path from radicalization to violent extremism and terrorism. These stages include; *alienation*; *radicalization*; and then *adherence to violence* (UNDP, 2016); see Figure 3.1.





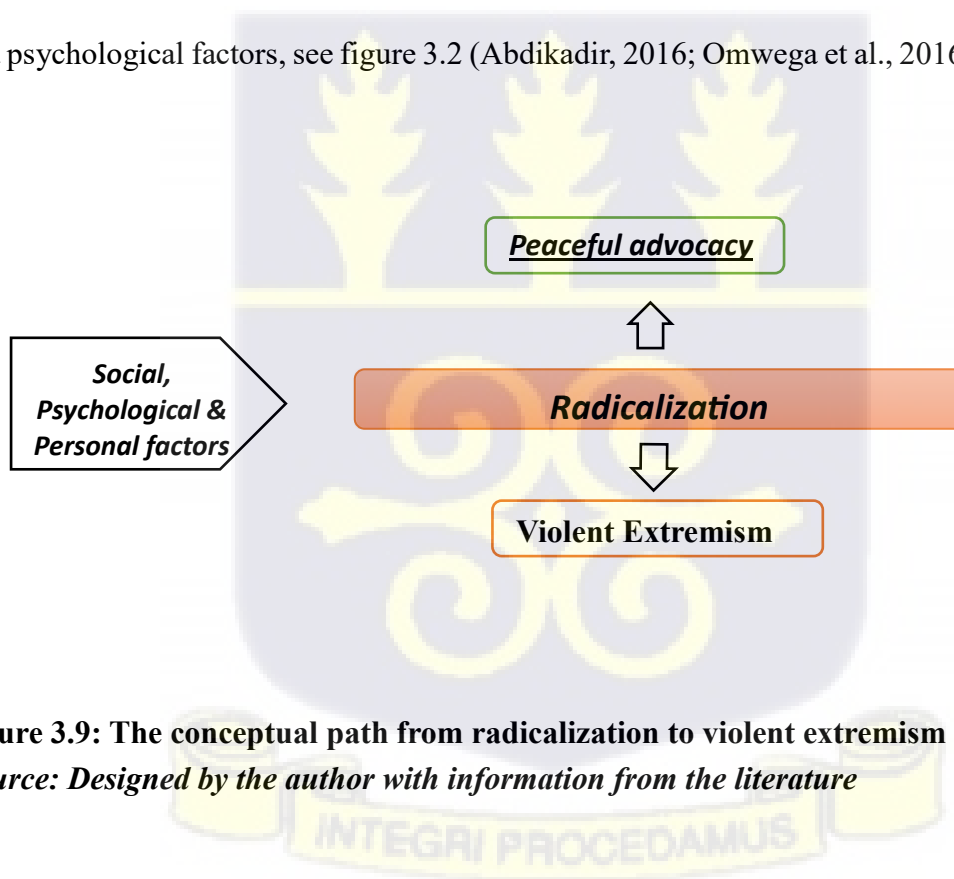
**Figure 3.8: The Conceptual path from radicalization to violent extremism and terrorism**

*Source: Designed by the author with information from the literature.*

*Alienation* emanates from the perception of relative deprivation at the individual or group level. The individual or group at this stage feels excluded or marginalized by the existing or a sudden change in the political, social, and economic arrangements of the community, society, or state. An escalated sense of withdrawal, grievances, anomie, and decreased economic, political, and social participation characterizes the relationship between the specific individual or group and structures of family, society, and the state at this stage (Abdikadir, 2016; UNDP, 2016). As frustration and grievances trump up against the existing economic, social, and political structures, individuals and groups begin to search for a possible outlet for their frustration as well as platforms (ideologies, organizations, groups, and other identities) through which they can change or in the extreme case dismantle the status quo. *Radicalization* then sets in where there's an inadequate and broader system for engagements such as dialogue, communication, mediation, and participation (UNDP, 2016). Also conducive to the process of radicalization is the weakening of the institutions of family, community, and the state as instruments of control and provision. This kind of environment is very accommodative of extremist ideologies and world views, making it easier for terrorists and other radical recruiters to take advantage to

manipulate the feelings, anger, and frustration of these alienated, vulnerable, and frustrated individuals and groups; mainly the youth.

*Adherence to violence* is the point on the path that distinguishes radical individuals and groups from those who become violent extremists and may decide to join terrorist groups in extreme cases. As indicated earlier, radicals at this stage may only choose to use peaceful advocacy and protestation to register their displeasure about a system or seek to achieve a reform of the same. Violent extremists on the other hand are those who would have chosen violence as a justified means to achieve their goals. The tipping point where individuals and groups choose to experiment or employ violence is a process that is largely facilitated by personal, emotional, and psychological factors, see figure 3.2 (Abdikadir, 2016; Omwega et al., 2016; UNDP, 2016).



**Figure 3.9: The conceptual path from radicalization to violent extremism and terrorism**  
*Source: Designed by the author with information from the literature*

It is important however to point out that not all violent actions such as taken by religious, right and left-wing extremism are explained by alienation. There's raft of evidence that terrorist and violent extremist groups such as ISIS, al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab have been joined by

individuals from middle or even high-income families and well-adjusted societies. Some analysts have attributed these kinds of special cases of violent extremism to very nebulous and less well explained psycho-social factors such as resentment against particular groups, the quest of young men for a sense of heroic purpose or the use of weapons to speed up transition to manhood (UNDP, 2016).

### **3.4 Theory, Theoretical framework and Theory of terrorism**

Scholarly debates on terrorism and, to a considerable extent, violent extremism have identified a basic problem: the apparent lack of a consensual theoretical or conceptual foundation. The “failure to base metrics in a theoretical knowledge of the situation,” as Michael Stohl puts it, is the crux of the problem of scholarly discussion on terrorism (Stohl, 2010). This basic problem, according to Stohl, stems from the over-politicization of terrorism and counterterrorism in practically all jurisdictions and at all levels, which has resulted in considerably more political than scholarly approaches to understanding terrorism and counter-terrorism (Schroden, Rosenau, & Warner, 2016).

Controversial discussions about the causes of terrorism therefore are unavoidable. There are those who attribute even the most objective discussion on underlying reasons, motivating factors, and grievances for the occurrence and manifestation of terrorism to an attempt to justify violence (Brynja, 2005). While such concerns may be valid in some situations, any study of terrorism and its future potential must rely on causality and examine all key aspects that influence its occurrence and manifestation objectively (Brynja, 2005; Schroden et al., 2016). Furthermore, in the post-9/11 period, it is more crucial than ever to understand the causes that drive terrorism; otherwise, devising balanced and effective long-term counter-measures will be near impossible (UNDP, 2016).

Terrorism can be sparked by a variety of circumstances (Brynja, 2005; Elu & Price, 2015; Newman, 2006). Terrorists can be impoverished and illiterate, or wealthy and well-educated. And despite the fact that young males are over-represented in most terrorist organizations, terrorists can be found in both sexes and at all ages (Cunningham, 2003). Terrorism also occurs in both affluent and poor countries; in the contemporary industrialised world and less developed places; during and after a process of transition and development; in former colonial governments and independent ones; and in established democracies as well as less democratic regimes (Abadie, 2006; Brynja, 2005; D. Meierrieks, Gries, Meierrieks, & Gries, 2020; Omwega et al., 2016). This list may easily be expanded, but it serves as an example of the wide range of circumstances that must be considered when attempting to comprehend terrorism. Because there are so many different types of terrorism as discussed in the literature, it's impossible to generalize about them. Attempt is made in scholarly discussions to distinguish international and internal or domestic terrorism, socio-revolutionary terrorism, and separatist terrorism, albeit nebulous. Leftist, rightist, and even religious ideas are all involved in socio-revolutionary terrorism. It's also vital to keep in mind that what causes terrorism may not be the same as what sustains it over time (Brynja, 2005).

When looking into the causes of terrorism and more especially why some countries or societies are more prone to terrorism than others, there are three levels of explanations and theorizations to consider (Brynja, 2005). There are psychological or more typically psycho-sociological explanations at the individual and group levels, such as those that explain why people join terrorist groups. There is also the societal or state level explanations purposed to find nonspurious links between specific historical, cultural, and socio-political elements of the wider society and the prevalence of terrorism. The impact of modernisation, democratisation, economic disparity, and other factors on terrorism, for example, fits into this area. And at the

world system or international level, explanations are aimed at identifying causal linkages between, on the one hand, characteristics of the international state system and inter-state relations, and, on the other hand, the incidence of international terrorism.

Of the three levels of analysis, this study will focus on the psycho-sociological theories that explain group behaviour and why groups defer to terrorism as a justified course of action. The group level analysis provides deep insights into why some states or societies are more prone to terrorism than others, since terrorists are generally constituted into groups within states or across states – in the case of trans-national terrorism- either directly or through their affiliates or satellites in the recipient state. Additionally, and equally important is the fact that, a lot of time and effort has already gone into explaining terrorism on an individual level (Brynja, 2005; Darden, 2019; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hassan, 2012; Hudson, Majeska, & Metz, 1999; Onuoha, 2014; UNDP, 2016) and thus provides the imperative to look into the causes of terrorism beyond the individual level. Meanwhile, no thorough evaluation of academic works exists that explains why some countries are more prone to terrorism than others. Clearly, this is a knowledge gap that needs to be filled. And to address this gap, the group or psycho-sociological level analysis and its related theories will serve a useful purpose, though not exclusively.

The specific theory that will underpin this study is the relative deprivation (RD) theory, which is a variant of the psycho-sociological tradition and has also gained much currency lately as a theory of choice in the study of terrorism, conflict studies, political science and international relations studies. Even though the RD theory is prized for its explanatory power of the nonspurious link between political and socio-economic variables on the one hand and terrorism on the other, its key limitation stems from its failure to account for why individuals eventually decide to become terrorists or join terrorists' groups. For this limitation, the RD theory will be

complemented by the psycho-pathological theory and another variant of the psychosociological theory, the social distance and mass casualty theory. The Psycho-pathological and the social distance and mass casualty theories instrumental for explaining the transition from frustration or extremism to terrorism at least at the individual and group levels owing to the fact that, all terrorism starts at the personal level (Brynja, 2005; Darden, 2019; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hassan, 2012; Hudson et al., 1999; Onuoha, 2014; UNDP, 2016).

### **3.5 Relative deprivation theory**

Swath of studies has examined the sources of terrorism in its current shape and form and has found support both for and against the relationship between terrorism and poverty, unemployment, blocked political participation, material deprivation and unequal distribution of resources among others (Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Omwega et al., 2016; Onuoha, 2014; Piazza, 2006; UNDP, 2016, 2017b). Ted Robert Gur's theory of relative deprivation (RD), although not specifically a terrorism theory, has become the mainstay of terrorism research into why individuals and groups may resort to terrorism or political violence (Gurr, 1970; Piazza, 2006). In his paradigmatic study titled "Why Men Rebel", Gur propounded the theory of relative deprivation (RD) to link economic and political disparity with the propensity of individuals and groups to resort to violent political action, where RD denotes the discrepancy between the 'ought' and the 'is' of collective value satisfaction, that disposes men to 'violence.' (Gurr, 1970; Piazza, 2006). As a variant of the psycho-sociological theory, RD is priced on the key assumption that, a gap between expected (with a sense of entitlement) and realized welfare is a recipe for collective discontent, capable of persuading 'men' to resort to political mobilization and violence (Abdikadir, 2016; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). Central to the RD theory is the 'perception' of relative deprivation which according to Gur is the determinant of nearly all

political violence. Essentially, the theory of RD applies to individuals and groups who find their political, social and economic position inferior to that of their comparators within the same community, society or state.

### 3.5.1 History and scholarly contributions to the RD theory

The theory of relative deprivation is the modern and well constituted form of an old idea which dates to ancient Greece and attributed to Aristotle. According to Aristotle the “principal cause of revolution is the aspiration for economic or political equality on the part of the common people who lack it, and the aspiration to have it” (Abdikadir, 2016: p.14). In relation to terrorism and violent extremism, impatience and frustration from perceive marginalization and eventual exclusion may offer the motivation and rationalistic grounds for people to want to experiment with terror tactics or in the extreme become vulnerable to recruitment and radicalization by terrorist groups (Abdikadir, 2016; Arnim, 2005).

In modern history, the emergence of the RD theory is attributable to the works of Stouffer who conducted a study titled *the American soldier* after the World War II. From the study emerged unexpected relationships where the US Army Air corpsmen showed excessive frustration over promotions of their comparators in the military police (Stouffer, Suchman, Devinney, Star and Williams, 1949). Stouffer noted that, ironically, the Air Corps groups enjoyed faster promotions compared to the military police and thus concluded that the military police were not the relevant objects of comparison for the Airmen. Instead, the airmen knew of their colleagues within the same air corps who had been promoted. These in-group promotions according to Stouffer produced the feelings of RD among the air corps men. Unfortunately, however, the *American Soldier* researchers didn't explicitly assess RD; instead, they inferred it as a post-hoc

explanation. As a result of the absence of a prototype measure, RD research has been plagued by myriads of different and occasionally contradictory measurements ever since.

Merton took the idea of RD further, broadening the idea within a reference group framework (Merton & Kitt, 1950). This work informed much of Pettigrew's work on RD. On his part, Pettigrew pointed out that the theory of RD was an offshoot of the family of concepts and theories priced on relative comparison in sociological and psychological social psychology (Pettigrew, 1967). After Merton and Pettigrew, Runciman was the next to make significant contribution to the RD theory. Runciman introduced two categories of the RD constructs, which he calls the egoistic (individual) and fraternal (group) RD (Runciman, 1966). According to Runciman, an individual could believe that she or he is personally relatively deprived (Individual RD or IRD) or that a social group they belong to is deprived relative to a referent group or other objective environmental factors. Runciman provided further clarification, positing that, for the GRD to take effect, the feelings should be linked to ingroup-serving attitudes and behaviours like collective action and outgroup prejudice, while IRD feelings should be linked to individual-serving attitudes and behaviours like academic achievement and property crime.

Over the next decades, the RD theory began to find expression in the wider theories of social comparison, casual attribution, equity, and social identity theory (F. J. Crosby, 1982; Gurr, 1970; Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, & Mielke, 1999; H. J. Smith, Pettigrew, Pippin, & Bialosiewicz, 2012; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). For example, according to social identity research championed by Mummendey et al. (1999), people will feel GRD, if the intergroup situation is perceived as illegitimate and unlikely to improve without collective challenge, and group boundaries are seen as impermeable. Although intergroup and interpersonal (upward and

contrasting) social comparisons have been the focus of social psychological RD research, political science RD research has focused on people's comparisons of their current situation with their past, future, desired, or deserved selves (Brynja, 2005; Gurr, 1970; Hewitt & Wilkenfeld, 2008; Mummendey et al., 1999; Smith et al., 2012). Gurr in particular is credited for presenting the RD theory in a well-organized fashion than any other scholar has before him done. His compelling presentation and forceful defence of the RD theory has given it a much broader appeal and application across several disciplines including political science and conflict studies (Gurr, 1970; Lichbach, 1989; H. J. Smith et al., 2012). In linking RD to aggression and the potential for collective violence, Gurr argues that;

In summary, the primary source of the human capacity for violence appears to be the frustration-aggression mechanism. Frustration does not necessarily lead to violence, and violence for some men is motivated by expectations of gain. The anger induced by frustration, however, is a motivating force that disposes men to aggression, irrespective of its instrumentalities. If frustrations are sufficiently prolonged or sharply felt, aggression is quite likely, if not certain, to occur. To conclude that the relationship is not relevant to individual or collective violence is akin to the assertion that the law of gravitation is irrelevant to the theory of flight because not everything that goes up falls back to earth in accord with the basic gravitational principle. The frustration-aggression mechanism is in this sense analogous to the law of gravity: men who are frustrated have an innate disposition to do violence to its source in proportion to the intensity of their frustrations .... (Gurr, 1970, p.36-37)

### 3.5.2 Key Assumption and Principles of the RD theory

The RD theory draws both from the psycho-pathological traditions of frustration-aggression theories and the psycho-sociological theories of social movements and political mobilizations. Generally, the RD theory proceeds from the assumption that aggression is a product of frustration (Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). To be more specific, the frustration-aggression assumption is underpinned by the proposition that the prevalence of violent behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and that the existence of frustration necessarily leads to violence. By this assumption, all forms of political violence including terrorism are linked to frustration from objective political and socio-economic conditions. Its validity is anchored on two fundamental principles as discussed below.

The first principle is that, deprivation is subjective. Deprivation in this sense is a function of an individual's perception, needs, experience and knowledge. Gur does not equate deprivation to an objective or absolute lack on the part of the individual or group. This allows for the RD theory to accommodate and permeate different historical, cultural and social contexts as well as personal preferences and perceptions. In spite of the attempt to clarify relative deprivation by conceptualizing it as a subjective phenomenon, the absence of any benchmark or standard against which relative deprivation is assessed can undermine its utility (Gurr, 1970).

The second principle thus addresses this gap by emphasizing individual comparisons, appraisals and affect as the bases for the feeling or claim of relative deprivation. This principle asserts that, individuals consider their presently perceived or expected position, achievements, gratifications, or capabilities as the bases of comparison with their wants, needs, what they think ought to have been the case or what they think their entitled. Therefore, the gap between

the objective self or position and the subjective entitlement produces the sense of relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970).

### 3.5.3 Strengths of the RD

Whereas Gurr's theory does not explain the motivation for all forms of violence, it certainly makes a very useful addition to the explanations and conceptualization of violent extremism and terrorism as consequences of political, social and economic disparities. It is found to be consistent with both empirical findings and expert analysis on the drivers of violent extremism as well as terrorist recruitment and radicalization across several contexts and geography (Abdikadir, 2016; Darden, 2019; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hellsten, 2016; Omwega et al., 2016; Onuoha, 2014; Piazza, 2006; Sommers, 2019; UNDP, 2016). According to Pettigrew, the RD theory is not only an excellent social psychological concept but that it amalgamates seamlessly with other forms of social psychological processes to build more integrative theory, which in his opinion is a disciplinary need. Its advantage over other forms of social psychological theories is that it links the individual with the interpersonal and intergroup levels of analysis.

Gur's theory of RD has challenged the conventional knowledge of absolute deprivation and has inspired a generation of scholars to search for and to interrogate the empirical roots of political violence and terrorism in light of relative deprivation. To note just a few; in a study by Chauzal (2015) that aimed at tracing the roots of the Malian conflict, the author argued that, the Tuareg uprising and terrorist spree in Mali in 2012 was deeply rooted in the country's history of state-led marginalization and exclusion of the northern populations from the political and economic development of the country since independence. The Uprising and its subsequent terrorist lacing could best be described as a reaction from a deep sense of deprivation and the need to secure equal political and economic opportunities as enjoyed by the southern populations.

Similarly, authors such as (Abdikadir, 2016; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hellsten, 2016; Omwega et al., 2016; Onuoha, 2014) have all argued, that, frustration and impatience with the system, characterized by loss of faith in the dysfunctional state have push a lot of young people in Kenya and Nigeria to join groups like Al-Shabab, Boko Haram and ISWAP, carrying out activities such as suicide bombings targeted at government installations as well as innocent civilians. As already noted, Ewi and Salifu's (2017) study of the causes of terrorism in Nigerian and why the youth of the country resorts to Boko Haram found socio-economic and political drivers such as unemployment, poverty, poor governance, corruption and weak family structures as being conducive to youth radicalization and recruitment into terrorists' groups.

#### **3.5.4 Conceptual and theoretical critique of the RD theory**

The RD theory as it currently stands is bedevilled with a number of conceptual and methodological deficiencies. This section raises one of such deficiencies that is related to this study and suggests a direction for resolution.

Though Gurr's conceptualization of RD is focused on individualistic processes, he fails to demonstrate how RD disposes the individual to engage in violent behaviour or experiment with violence as a justified cause. In view of the fact that not all frustrated persons resort to violence or aggressive behaviour, Gurr conceptualisation is challenged in identifying the mediating variables that links an individual relatively deprived to the enactment of violence. This failure is witnessed in Gurr's radical shift from focusing on individual expectations to discussing group phenomena even as the entire theory is priced on individual expectations:

Deprivation is relevant to the disposition to collective violence to the extent that many people feel discontented about the same things. Unexpected personal deprivations such as failure to obtain an expected promotion or the infidelity of a spouse ordinarily affect few people at any given time and are therefore narrow in scope. Events and patterns of conditions like the suppression of a political party, a drastic inflation, or the decline of a group's status relative to its reference group are likely to precipitate feelings of RD among whole groups or categories of people (Gurr, 1970. p. 29).

To address this key limitation of Gurr's conceptualization of the RD theory, Crosby's model makes a very useful attempt at a theoretical revelation of the relationship between RD, conditions precedent and the behavioural outcomes.

Crosby's model (1976, 1982; Cook et al., 1977) is a significant attempt at a theoretical integration of the relationships between RD, the precipitant preconditions and behavioural outcomes. She outlines five necessary and sufficient preconditions that characterizes an individual in a state of RD. The five preconditions are; the person sees others possess a desirable X; wants X; feels entitled to X; thinks it feasible to attain X; and does not blame him/herself for not having X. If all five preconditions are not met, one of several emotional responses, according to Crosby will result: disappointment, indignation, or jealousy. For purposes of responses to RD, Crosby postulates that the effects of RD are mediated by three variables - a person's direction of blame for not having X (to self or society), level of personal control, and actual opportunities for effecting change:

First, the intropunitive person turns his anger inward, while the extrapunitive person turns it against society. Next, the individual with low personal control feels that he cannot change his

lot nor affect society, but the individual with high personal control is more optimistic. Finally, when a person has low personal control, the question of whether his opportunities are blocked or open is irrelevant; such a person will not try to bring about change even if his chances are not blocked. However, for the person with high personal control, open opportunities lead to constructive actions, but closed opportunities lead to emotional outbursts. Emotional outbursts take the form of stress symptoms when the individual is intro-punitive and of violence against society when the individual is extra-punitive. Constructive action takes the form of self-improvement when the individual is intro-punitive and of constructive change of society when the individual is extra-punitive (F. Crosby, 1979, p.100).

Crosby's model, though not explicitly stated draws more on the theories of the psychopathological tradition since that is almost the only analytical tool with the explanatory power to link RD to Violence at the individual level. Equally important to the RD theory as a complementary analytical and interpretive tool is the social distance and ass casualty theory which is drawn from the psycho-sociological traditions. We turn next to a more elaborate explanation of the psycho-pathological and psycho-sociological traditions and how individuals and groups are disposed to violent behaviour resulting from relative deprivation respectively (Brynja, 2005; Jongman, 2005).

### **3.6 The psycho-pathological tradition**

The psycho-pathological tradition examines each terrorist individually, looking for deviant personality traits. The primary premise of a pure psychological theory of terrorism is that nonviolent behaviour is the accepted norm, and that people who engage in terrorist actions must therefore be abnormal (Brynja, 2005). Several psychologists claim to have established a distinct terrorist personality based on behavioural studies and profiles. Character qualities widely

believed to be typical of terrorists include spoiled, troubled, cold and calculating, perverted, excited by violence, psychotic, crazy, irrational, and zealot (Jongman, 2005). On his part, Jerrold Post contends that there is a distinct logic of terrorist thought, although dismissing the hypothesis of a terrorist personality. He coined the phrase "terrorist psycho-logic" to describe his study hypothesis that "terrorists are pushed to conduct acts of violence as a result of psychological pressures, and that their specific psycho-logic is built to rationalize crimes they are psychologically compelled to commit." (Post, 1990).

The psycho-pathological tradition depoliticize terrorism by identifying terrorists as mentally ill people and depicting terrorism as violence for the sake of violence. Psychopathological hypotheses have been heavily criticized, not just for divorcing terrorism from its socioeconomic and political context, but also on the basis of contrary evidence. Corrado, for instance, came to the conclusion that "political terrorists are not widely recognized as suffering from mental problems." Political terrorists are considered as being motivated by ideas or principles that legitimize the use of terrorism as an acceptable political tool, with a few notable exceptions.' (Corrado, 1981). Many other academics agree, stating that "the best-known generalization is negative; terrorists do not demonstrate any apparent psychopathology" and that "terrorists' most remarkable attribute appears to be their normalcy." (Corrado, 1981).

Even if terrorists are usually normal, given the stress and strains of underground clandestine work, one cannot rule out the possibility that there is "a link between an individual engaging in terrorist activities and having a mental disease." (Weatherston & Moran, 2003). Furthermore, as Sprinzak has pointed out, psychopathological elements cannot be completely ruled out: 'the formation and activity of certain violent groups, especially tiny and poorly structured groups, cannot be reduced to socio-political causes.' (Sprinzak, 1995). The Aum Shin-rikyo in Japan

and the Rajneshees in the United States as well as the Lord Resistance Army in Uganda are some examples of allegedly non-political religious cults engaged in terroristic violence against society, implying that psycho-pathological characteristics among the leadership must have played a substantial part (Brynja, 2005).

### **3.7 Social distance and mass casualty terrorism**

A related theory to the RD theory is the social distance and mass casualty terrorism theory.

Recent research has employed sociological theories of violence and social geometry to explain how 'pure' or mass casualty terrorism occurs. The starting premise is that long-standing grievances alone are insufficient to justify severe violence (Brynja, 2005). As a result, the sociological interrelationships between terrorists, their grievances, and their antagonists, or the players' "social geometry," must be identified (Black, 2004). Terrorism, according to Senechal de la Roche, is most likely to occur when there is a lot of 'social gap' or 'social polarization' between the offenders and the victims, which includes a lot of cultural and relational distance, inequality, and functional independence (de la Roche, 1996).

Other social distances are also identified by Donald Black, who points out that terrorism has a 'inter-collective' component: terrorists attack civilians affiliated with another collectivity, whether it is another ethno-religious community or foreign nationals. Terrorism can also be directed upward; terrorist attacks are intended against targets that represent the central authority, a powerful adversary regime, or a socioeconomically or politically superior community. Terrorism from the social distance paradigm thus constitutes a form of 'social control from below.' Terrorism, according to Black, 'arises inter-collectively and upwards across large distances in multidimensional social space' in its purest form (Black, 2004). To put

it another way, the most destructive forms of terrorism are most likely to occur when offenders are as socially separated from the victims as feasible.

In schematic terms, figure X presents a model that guides our analysis. In a linear illustration, figure X links RD to violent extremism/terrorism. However, in a structured scheme, figure X shows the sources or drivers of RD, the triggers or manifestations of the RD, the behavioural outcomes of the RD and the intervening factors that disposes individuals or groups to aggressive behaviour resulting from the feeling of RD.

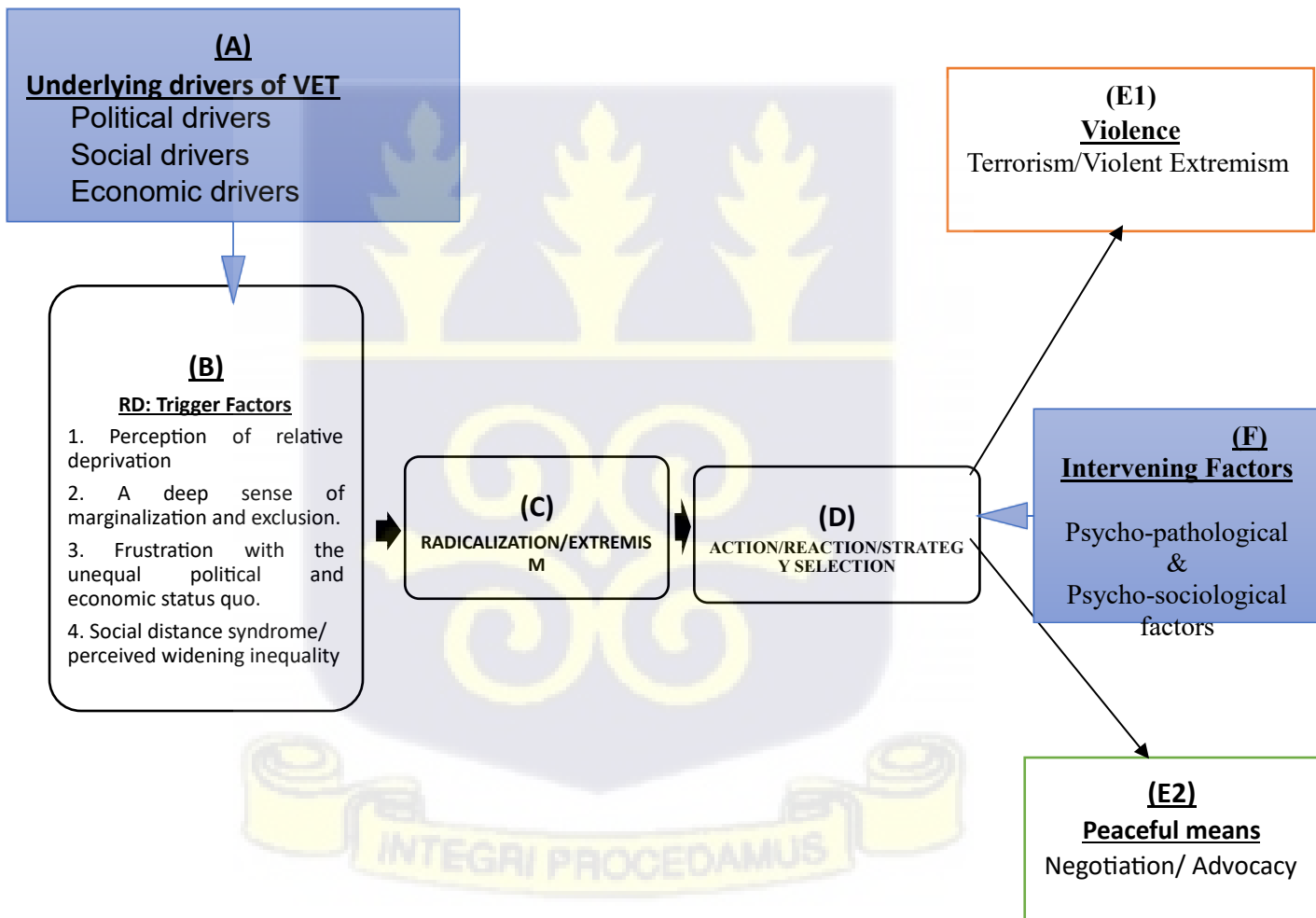


Figure 3.10: Theoretical path from relative deprivation to violent extremism/terrorism

From figure X, we identify in group **(A)** the underlying drivers of terrorism and violent extremism and reduced that into political, social and economic factors. When individuals compare their conditions under each of these factors to the expected position or to a referent group or person and find their situation worse off, it triggers the sense of deprivation relative to the expected position or the referent group or person. This process is aptly captured by Gurr as, “events and patterns of conditions like the suppression of a political party, a drastic inflation, or the decline of a group’s status relative to its reference group are likely to precipitate feelings of RD among whole groups or categories of people” (Gurr, 1970. P. 29). The sense of relative deprivation will produce the results in box **(B)** which include a deep sense of marginalization and exclusion, frustration and perceived widening inequality. Radicalization and extremist’s position sets in as in box **(C)** where the individual or group finds that there are limited or no opportunities to change their conditions to a more desired outcome. Box **(D)** shows a situation where the individual or group perceiving or experiencing limited or no opportunities, decide to effect a change through actions/reactions or strategies they find optimal and justified.

At this stage and for the purpose of responding to the stimuli of RD, Crosby identified two personality types; the person with low personal control and the person with high personal control (Crosby, 1982). First, the person with low personal control naturally withdraws and meets the stimuli with indifference. The question of open or blocked avenues for change is irrelevant to the person with low personal control. This person doesn’t even get to the point of **(D)**. On the contrary, the person with high personal control is optimistic and as shown in Boxes **(E1)** and **(E2)** takes steps to bring about change. Where the opportunities are opened, the person with high personal control will engage in constructive actions such as dialogue and or peaceful advocacy. However, where opportunities for change are blocked, it will result in emotional outburst and may take the form of aggressive behaviour including terrorism. Finally, as shown

in (F) the point of departure from (D) to either (E1) or (E2) is mediated by psychological and environmental factors, highlighting the complementary role of the psycho pathological and psycho – sociological theories or explanations to the RD theory in linking frustration to aggression in general and RD to terrorism in particular.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

If the RD theory is applied in the reverse, it is suggestive that insulation of country X from terrorism, relative to its peers can be explained by the absence of the perception of relative deprivation in that country (Country X). Or to the extreme, that the perception of relative deprivation has not been sufficiently exploited to spur or mobilize individuals and groups to engage in political violence leading to terrorism. Hypothetically, speaking therefore, the sources of Ghana's stability and supposed insulation from terrorism as defined in the literature is due to the absence of the perception of relative deprivation or that such perception even if it exists has not transmogrified into pushing individuals to resort to political violence leading to terrorism. If the hypothetical assumption is to find support, it will mean that individuals are either satisfied with the prevailing social, political and economic circumstances in the country or that, they are not adversely affected by changes within the social, political and economic relations to the extent that they have to resort to violence leading to terrorism. In a study that attempts to explain the relative political stability of the US, Davies (1969), did a comparative analysis of the US and Brazil on a number of factors. The author found socio-economic realities and political heritage as the two distinguishing characteristics of the two countries and hence the sources of the US's relative political stability. Unlike the US, the study found a vast hiatus between the poor and the rich in Brazil while the space for political participation remained skewed and uneven. While acknowledging the need for the study to be extended and refined, the author concluded, "poor respondents in the US lack the intense hostility toward the rich that

is shown by poor Brazilians; and Brazilians generally lack the degree of involvement and trust in political processes that showed up in the American interviews.” (Davies, 1969: p.1). Situating this finding within the context of the theory of RD, it can be extrapolated that, the prevalent socio-economic and political conditions were not as deplorable enough to engender the perception of relative deprivation in the US at the time of the study hence the relative political stability. Due to the vast time differential and context variations, the conclusions from Davies’s study does not necessarily hold true for Ghana or any other place unless further study is conducted taking into account contemporary realities and context specific effects.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to empirically examine the sources of Ghana's resilience to terrorism and violent extremism, relative to her peers in the West African Sub-region. In effect, the question underpinning this study is, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even though they share similar political, socio-economic and demographic characteristics? The researcher hoped that understanding the source(s) of Ghana's relative resilience to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism will undoubtedly yield valuable insights for preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in the region and beyond. To obtain better insights into the phenomenon under discussion, the study addressed four research questions; (a) is Ghana exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism? (b) why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African sub-region? (c) how is Ghana responding to the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism (P/CVET)? (d) how does the chosen response mechanism impact Ghana's P/CVET effort?

This chapter discusses the methodology of this study around the following items; (a) philosophy of the research (b) research design (c) research strategy (d) data collection (e) Data analysis and (f) ethical consideration. The chapter concludes with a brief summary and reflections.

#### 4.2 Philosophy of the research

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2015: p. 122), research philosophy refers to a system of beliefs and assumptions about how we produce knowledge. This system of beliefs and assumptions constitutes the worldview of the researcher which in turn influences the researcher and the choice made in the research process starting with how the research problem is understood (Saunders & Tosey, 2013: p.1). Historically, two classical philosophical assumptions have been distinguished – positivism and interpretivism - and later, pragmatism and critical realism (Melnikovas, 2018; Saunders & Tosey, 2013; Saunders et al., 2009).

Positivism is based on a natural scientist's assumption that only observable facts and empirical evidence are reliable sources of knowledge. Historical and Social constructions, as well as values systems, are irrelevant to the positivist (Saunders & Tosey, 2013). Unlike positivism, interpretivism considers knowledge to be socially situated, bound, and influenced by circumstances, contexts, and specific times. For the interpretive researcher, reality is socially constructed and constantly evolving (Saunders & Tosey, 2013). Given that this current study is largely exploratory, taking a strict positivist or interpretivist philosophical stance may deny the researcher the needed flexibility and rigour to address the research questions stated above. The researcher thus yields to the philosophy of pragmatism which is explained next.

Pragmatism advocates the plurality of truth and therefore focuses on outcome rather than process of knowledge production. For the pragmatist, there is no one best way of conducting research (Saunders & Tosey, 2013). The most appropriate procedure and technique for data collection and analysis is the one that best achieves the objective of a piece of research (Melnikovas, 2018). Pragmatism thus produces a synergy of positivism and interpretivism while offsetting the limitations associated with both philosophies. The researcher who reflects

the philosophy of pragmatism is allowed the flexibility required of this kind of exploratory study. This study therefore is guided by the philosophy of pragmatism.

### **4.3 Research Design**

To answer the research questions set forth in this study, a mixed method approach to data collection and analysis was employed. The mixed method approach will comprise quantitative and qualitative methods. The core assumption underpinning the use of this form of inquiry is that, the synergy that results from the integration of qualitative and quantitative data produces insights and nuances that otherwise would not be obtained by using either the qualitative or quantitative method alone (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The quantitative method took the form of a survey data on the demographic characteristics of respondents and their perceptions about the phenomenon under study. An analysis of this data was used to address the first objective of this study, which is to examine the extent to which Ghana is exposed to terrorism and partly the second objective on the source (s) of Ghana's resilience to terrorism. Since exposure to terrorism also depends so much on the perception and susceptibility of individuals (Gurr, 1970; Piazza, 2006 and UNDP, 2016), the survey was also used to gauge the behaviour of respondents on some specific political and socio-economic drivers of terrorism while obtaining a broader picture regarding the exposure of Ghana to terrorism from the viewpoint of the study respondents.

The qualitative approach on the other hand took the form of interviews and documentary reviews. Information rich informants were purposively selected and interviewed to collect data on their knowledge and experience with the phenomenon under study. The target respondents for the in-depth interviews were officers and stakeholders with responsibility for or relationship

with the phenomenon of terrorism and its prevention. Specifically, the key informants for this study were drawn from selected state institutions, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations with extensive relationships with the phenomenon under investigation. The Data gathered from these interviews were analysed thematically and categorically to address objectives two, three and four of this study. It was also used to triangulate for objective one and two.

#### **4.4 Research Strategy: Case study**

Research strategy is defined by Saunders et al. (2009: p.600) as “the general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions”. Similarly, Remenyi et al. (2003) posits that research strategy gives the overall direction of a research process including how the research is conducted. To answer a research question or questions, the researcher is confronted with the choice of an appropriate research strategy or strategies. Saunders and Tosey (2013: p.2) have identified some common and frequently used research strategies. These are experiment, case study, ethnography, survey, action research, grounded theory, archival research among others. The choice of each of these research strategies according to Saunders et al. (2009) is informed by the research questions and objectives, philosophical underpinnings of the researcher, availability of knowledge on the subject area and the amount of time and resources. Yin (2003), using a rather different approach, recommended that the decision on a research strategy should be based on three (3) conditions. These are; the research question, the extent of researcher’s control over actual behavioural events and the degree of focus on contemporary and historical events. However, both Yin (2003) and Saunders et al. (2009) agree that none of the strategies is exclusive and that the most important consideration for selecting a particular strategy or set of strategies should be on how advantageous it is for the study.

Given that the purpose of this study is to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's resilience to terrorism and violent extremism, the case study research strategy was adopted as the appropriate strategy for this study for several reasons. Case study strategy is defined by Dul and Hak

as "a study in which (a) one case (single case study) or a small number of cases (comparative case study) in their real-life context are selected and (b) scores obtained from these cases are analysed in a qualitative manner (2008, pp4). Collis and Hussey (2009) also defined case study research strategy as "a methodology that is used to explore a single phenomenon in a natural setting using a variety of methods to obtain in-depth knowledge". According to Yin (2003: p.22-23) the case in the case study research strategy can be an individual person, an event, an organization or any entity which in this case includes a country.

Whereas Dul and Hak emphasise the study of a single case, Collis emphasizes the use of a variety of methods. Unlike Dul and Hak's, who seem to favour a qualitative approach to case study, Collis et al. emphasis appears to find much support in the scholarly literature. For instance, Wedawatta, Ingirige, & Amaratunga (2011: p.3), describe a case study research strategy as a strategy that deals with technically distinctive situations, relies on multiple sources of evidence, and benefits from prior development of theoretical prepositions to guide data collection and analysis. The 'multiple sources' in this description is taken to mean case study research can employ multiple methods to address a research problem. This view is supported by Saunders & Tosey (2013). According to the authors, "whilst a case study, perhaps of an individual organisation, is often associated with interpretivism, case studies are also used in positivistic research", Saunders & Tosey (2013: p.2). Similarly, both Yin (2003) and Gerring (2007) support the idea that a case study strategy can accommodate both qualitative and quantitative data, which allows the researcher to benefit from the rich mix of data for the study.

The present study is aimed at exploring a single phenomenon (Terrorism) in a single case (Ghana) using a variety of methods (mixed methods) to obtain in-depth knowledge. This makes the case study research strategy ideal for the present study as Schell (1992: p.2) has observed; “the case study is the most flexible of all research designs, allowing the researcher to retain the holistic characteristics of real-life events while investigating empirical events.”

Even though case study is a distinctive research strategy with many methodological advantages including allowing for an in-depth investigation of a research problem, it does not mean case study research strategy is without limitations or criticisms (Wedawatta et al., 2011; Yin, 2003). Yin (2003) in particular has identified some common criticisms associated with the use of a case study research strategy especially when applied without caution. These include lack of rigor, likelihood of being biased, case study cannot be generalized and requires a lot of time to accomplish. To off-set these and other limitations and to enhance the quality of the case study research, this study applied the four tests that are common to empirical research; construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability (Yin, 2003: p.19).

#### **4.5 Data collection**

Two types of data have been collected for this study; primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through in-depth interviews and surveys. The secondary was gathered through documentary reviews from relevant institutions and publications. This was used primarily to address objectives three and four.

#### **4.6 Survey**

For the survey data, a cross-sectional survey was conducted to measure the perceptions and views of members of the public using simple random sampling. Simple random sampling was used as the method of sampling due to its advantage of ensuring equal participation and internal validity (Fox et al., 2007).

#### 4.6.1 Sample size determination

Following Slovin (1960 cited in Glen, 2021) and Yamane (1967), with a population of 30,800,000, a minimum of about 400 respondents was determined to be the adequate sample size for the survey. The Slovin formula is most appropriate where the population is heterogeneous. To calculate the sample size, the Slovin formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where:

n = Number of samples,

N = Total population and e

= Error tolerance (level)

Considering the whole of Ghana as the sampling unit with a population of 30.8 million and using a 5% margin of error;

$$n = \frac{30800000}{1 + 30800000(0.05 \times 0.05)}$$

$$n = \frac{30800000}{77001}$$

$$n = 400$$

The adequacy of the sample size for this study is supported by myriad studies in the literature and also finds expression in identical formulae such as that of Yamane (1967). For instance, in a similar book by Onuoha (2014, p.2) titled “Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?”, the author surveyed 600 respondents to make inferences about a population of more than 200,000,000

Nigerians. This makes a sample size of 400 sufficient enough to make inferences about a population of 30,800,000 while being cautious about generalizing beyond the study's domain.

#### **4.6.2 Instrumentation and Quality test**

The instrument for the survey was a closed-ended questionnaire attached as **Appendix 1**. It is made up of 21 items of multiple choice and Likert scale questions. The instrument was designed using a google enabled software, called "google forms". Using the google software for the instrument creation and data collection allowed for the data to be collected into organized spreadsheets for easy analysis, eliminating data entry errors while reducing the amount of time used in the data collection process. It also has an automated feature that generated for the researcher, real time preliminary summary statistics, which made it possible for the researcher to detect any issues of validity and reliability in the data collection process.

Before the actual data collection, the instrument was pre-tested for validity and reliability to ascertain the quality of the data collection instrument (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2003). For the validity test, Yin, (2003, p.34) identified three types of validity tests; Construct validity, internal validity and external validity.

Construct validity test was undertaken to ascertain whether items or the instrument measures the hypothetical constructs or concepts that underpin the study. Internal validity is more accommodative to explanatory studies, establishing a non-spurious relationship whereby certain conditions lead to other conditions. External validity measures the capacity for generalizability of the research findings. In other words, how applicable the findings of the research were beyond its domain. Creswell & Creswell, (2018, p.250), however, notes that construct validity has become the mainstay of the validity test for most recent studies. This is partly due to its utility in addressing subjective judgements in the data collection (Yin, 2003, p.35). For reliability, the goal was to minimize errors and biases in research, such that if another

researcher applies the same methods over the same case, the findings and conclusions will not differ (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2003). All these tests were met before the questionnaire was deployed for actual data collection. To carry out these tests, the data collection instrument (questionnaire) was deployed for limited period and the data gathered was analysed in line with the set objectives. The test results showed that the instrument was both valid and reliable as it elicited responses that adequately addressed the objectives of the research. In all 50 responses were collected which is about 20% of the responses finally gathered for the analysis of this study.

#### **4.6.3 Survey data collection strategy**

Using Ghana as the sampling unit, the questionnaire was deployed online via social messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and emails. This media allowed for even distribution of the questionnaire while giving the majority of Ghanaians equal opportunity to participate in the process. Data on the number of internet users, mobile connections, and social media users in Ghana supports the choice of an online survey. According to [datareportal.com](http://datareportal.com), as of February 2020, there were 14.76 million internet users, 39.97 million mobile connections, and 6 million active social media users in Ghana. In percentage terms, Ghana has 48% internet penetration, 130% mobile connections, and 20% social media penetration. The percentage of internet users using WhatsApp is 82% (World Wide Web Foundation, 2020). This statistic provides the basis for the online survey to have a wider reach and representative of the country's demographic characteristics. Each questionnaire took between 5 – 10 minutes to complete.

At the end of the data collection, a total of two hundred and eighty-five (285) respondents participated in the survey. This resulted in a 71% response rate for the survey, which is considered good enough for the research to make inferences about the population. Writing for the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, Fincham (2008) argues that a response rate

approximating 60% should be the goal of every researcher in making them respectable. On their part, Wu, Zhao, & Fils-Aime (2022), conducted a comprehensive study of 8672 studies and examined 1071 online surveys in published education - related research and found that the average response rate to be 44.1%. Evidence from the literature makes the 71% response rate of this study adequate for the researcher to proceed with the analysis of the data and to make inferences about the population. In the face of the pandemic, the online data collection strategy provides the opportunity for the researcher to sample opinions of respondents while adhering to the Covid-19 protocols of social distance and staying safe from possible contraction or the spread of the virus.

#### **4.7 In-depth Interview and focus group discussion**

For the in-depth interviews, interview guides, attached as **Appendix 2** were developed and used to aid the researcher to stay on course and to elicit the appropriate responses from the key informants. The key informants were selected using purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is a variant of the non-probability sampling techniques where sample members are selected on the basis of their understanding, relationship and expertise in relation to a subject area (Langkos, 2014). Each session of the in-depth interviews lasted an average of one hour thirty minutes (1 hour 30 minutes).

Prior to the interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher placed a phone call to all the eleven (11) participants individually to schedule a convenient time to hold the sessions. The researcher gave the respondents the freedom to choose the venues and time for the interview. This was done to make the interviewee comfortable and to assure them of their security and privacy. Before the beginning of each session, the interview respondents and focus group

discussants were assured that all of their comments would be held in strict confidence and that each would be identified by a pseudonym. The researcher also sought the informed consent of the participants to audio-record and later transcribe their responses for purposes of analysis.

In the case of the Focus Group Discussions, the group consisted of 3 respondents selected from the 11 interview respondents – 2 respondents from WANEP and the other respondent from HSRC. The researcher maintained the role of a facilitator, while allowing participants to be in control of the discussions. The researcher stepped in or interjected only when it was necessary for clarification of a concept or for emphasis on the topic of the discussion. Participants were also informed that the discussion will be in three parts. In the first part, the focus was on the susceptibility factors for terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. The second part concentrated on the sources of Ghana's relative stability and why the country remained less prone to actual incidents of terrorism compared to her peers in the same region. The final part addressed Ghana's P/CVET strategies including domestic and international efforts. The researcher/facilitator hinted to the participants that he would let them know when they should turn their attention to the next part of the discussion. Participants were encouraged to reflect more on their experiences working with the phenomenon of terrorism and violent extremism. The reason was to give the researcher access to a certain amount of knowledge that cannot be gained through the literature reviews and which has not been reported in many cases.

Being conscious of the concept of saturation in the data collection process, the researcher determined that saturation was reached after the Focus Group Discussion and the sixth respondent. At this stage, no new information was emerging from the discussion starting with the fifth respondent. The concepts and topics under discussion were extremely exhausted by the researcher's understanding. Therefore, any more interviews or discussions was determined

to be superfluous, increasing the workload of the researcher with no additional insight or benefit.

#### 4.7.1 Sampling

For the present study, the target sample were purposively selected due in part to their extensive knowledge and relevant work experience in the field of security studies in general and more specifically, in the field of prevention and countering violent extremism and terrorism.

Similarly, their host organizations have a special relationship with the phenomenon under investigation, have built robust reputation and proven track records in their contribution to the practice and study of terrorism and related security concerns. Table 4.1 presents the list of key informants and some relevant descriptors.

**Table 4.1: List of key informants**

<i><b>RESPONDENT IDENTITY</b></i>	<i><b>INSTITUTION</b></i>	<i><b>PSEUDONYM/ ABBREVIATION</b></i>	<i><b>GENDER</b></i>	<i><b>STATUS</b></i>
Executive Director	West African Centre for Counter Extremism	WACCE	Male	CSO
Researcher	West African Network for Peacebuilding	WANEP	Female	CSO
Researcher	West African Network for Peacebuilding	WANEP	Male	CSO
Executive Director	Human Security Research Centre	HSRC-Ghana	Male	CSO
Senior Officer	Defence Intelligence	DI	Male	Ghana Armed Forces

Research Associate	Human Security Research Centre	HSRC- Ghana	Female	CSO
Translator	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping and Training Centre	KAIPTC	Female	Training Institution (Private)
Expert staff	Small Arms Commission	SAC	Male	Public Sector
Senior Officer	Ministry of National Security	MNS	Male	Public Sector
Senior Officer	Ghana Police Service	GPS	Female	Public Sector
Senior Officer	Ghana Immigration Service	GIS	Male	Public Sector

#### 4.7.2 Sample size determination

The sample size for the in-depth interview is eleven (11) which is within the acceptable range in the extant literature. Whereas some scholars avoid the question of numbers in terms of the sample size for qualitative studies, Dworkin (2012, p.2) notes that, in a review of a large section of the literature straddling research papers, books, conferences and discussions, the recommended guidance is between 5 to 50 respondents. Generally, fewer sample sizes are recommended for qualitative studies. This allows the researcher to have sufficient time and attention for each respondent rather than spreading out his or her attention over a large sample and may end up with a less rigorous data (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & Ann McKibbon, 2015).

Some scholars have all together dismissed the essence of numbers in estimating the sample size in qualitative interviews and instead emphasised the importance of the concept of saturation, where saturation is the point in the data collection process at which additional data adds no new

information (Dworkin, 2012). And for Charmaz, (2006, p.113) saturation is “when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of your core theoretical categories”. Even though the study targeted a sample size of eleven (11) experts, the researcher determined that saturation was reached after the Focus Group Discussion and the sixth respondent. At that stage, no new information was emerging from the discussion starting with the fifth respondent. The concepts and topics under discussion were extensively exhausted by the researcher’s understanding. Therefore, any more interviews or discussions was determined to be superfluous, increasing the workload of the researcher with no additional insight.

#### **4.8 Secondary data: Documentary review**

A document is defined as “any written material other than a record that was not prepared specifically in response to some requests from the investigator” (Guba and Lincoln, 1981: 228). A documentary study is simply the critical study, review or evaluation of documents—both printed and electronic material – for facts about a particular phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007: 47). According to Atkinson and Coffey (1997), documents are “social facts”, and that they are produced, distributed and utilized in socially organized ways.

The study utilized documents such as published legal instruments aimed at preventing and countering terrorism, assessments of Ghana’s counter-terrorism frameworks and strategies, policy documents, memos and peer-reviewed articles on the phenomenon of terrorism. Some of the legal and policy instruments reviewed for the analysis in this study include the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, the Security and Intelligence Agencies Act 2020 (1030), the Anti-Terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762), the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2012, the National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Ghana

(NAFPCVET) and the National Security Strategy among others. Systematic scoping reviews were also used to identify the relevant secondary data for the study. Systematic scoping reviews have great utility for synthesizing research evidence and are often used to categorize or group existing literature in a given field in terms of its nature, features, and volume.

The use of documents as a research instrument to gather data for this study is justified on two grounds. First, as some researchers have opined, institutional memoranda and reports, government pronouncements, census publications, diaries and many other written materials are veritable sources of data for social science research (Bailey, 1982; 1994; Polit and Hungler 1991, Treece and Treece, 1982; Webb, Campbell, Schwarz and Sechrest, 1984). As Denscombe (1998: 163) put it, “government publications and official statistics would seem to be an attractive proposition for the social researcher.” Second, the legal and policy frameworks and published assessments remain the most reliable documents that provide useful insights into the status of Ghana’s exposure and country’s response to terrorism.

#### **4.9 Data analysis**

The data gathered have been analysed in line with the objectives of the study. The survey data have been analysed using graphs and summary statistics in the form of percentages to reflect participants perceptions on the phenomenon of terrorism. Principally, the analysis of the survey data seeks to provide a broader view of participants perceptions, experience and behaviour towards some specific political and socio-economic drivers of terrorism. The result was very useful in addressing the first and second research objectives.

Data gathered from the interviews, FGDs and documentary reviews were organised into categories and sub-categories and analysed thematically to address the objectives of the studies.

Each interview including the FDG was transcribed by a professional transcriptionist under a non-disclosure agreement prior to transcribing the interviews. The transcribed interviews were shared with the interviewees and discussants for review. While each interviewee had the right to strike any interview content, this practice was not encouraged. Each interviewee was also asked to indicate if there was anything she/he would like to add upon reflection.

Following the endorsement of the interviews of the transcripts, edits were made as necessary to the transcription, including capturing any reflective thoughts following the interview. Interviews were not part of the writing or editing of the actual analysis and results, as no one interviewee had access to any other interview. The research cautious to ensure that no single interviewee was equipped to have any insight into how the group of individuals collectively may have similar or different perspectives.

The transcribed data from the interviews and FDGs was then coded in order to break it down into meaningful and manageable chunks and then synthesised for purposes of analysis. The coding process fragments the interview into separate categories, which enables the researcher to look at each category detail, whereas the synthesis involves piecing these fragments together to reconstruct a holistic and integrated explanation.

Overall, the approach used was to produce a number of clusters, patterns or themes that were linked together, either similarly or divergently and that collectively described or analysed the phenomenon under investigation. To achieve this, a three-layered process in examining the data was followed. For the first layer, the data was examined and threads and patterns were compared within categories. In the second layer, connecting threads and patterns were compared across categories. The third layer, situated the current work within the context prior research and was compared and contrasted with issues that had been raised by the extant literature on terrorism. None of these layers was exclusive, they were mutually reinforcing and iterative throughout

the synthesising process. Based on analysis and synthesis, the study findings were presented thematically in categories and the broader implications discussed in chapter five.

#### **4.10 Ethical consideration**

First and foremost, the confidentiality of the respondents to this study as much as possible will be guaranteed without compromise. Prior to the interview, the researcher will explain to the interviewee the purpose of the study and respond to all necessary questions from the interviewees before proceeding with the interview. Questions with emotional implications would not be stressed too much in order to avoid interviewees getting too emotional in the process. However, in the event of explanation, where a participant gets too emotional, the researcher will postpone the interview and continue it later. The essence of this is to allow the researcher to get quality data for the analysis. In addition, and more importantly, the interview guide will be developed in line with the ethical rules and standards of the University of Ghana research ethics.

#### **4.11 Chapter Summary**

In summary, this chapter provided a detailed description of this study's research methodology. A mixed method case study methodology was used to illustrate why Ghana is less prone to terrorism in an insecure region. The participant sample was made up of 285 survey respondents randomly selected and 11 in-depth interview informants purposively selected. Four data collection methods were used. These included surveys, in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and documentary reviews. The instruments were pre tested for validity and

reliability of the data to be collected for the analysis. In all, data was collected from 296 participants. These included 285 survey respondents, 11 expert interviews, and one focus group discussion comprising three participants selected from the 11 experts previously interviewed.

A review of the literature was conducted to devise a conceptual framework for the design and analysis of the study. A process analysis enabled the key themes from the findings to be identified. Through a comparison with the literature, interpretations and conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were offered for both educational practice and further research. The intent was that this study would make a contribution to the understanding of why Ghana is less prone to terrorism in an insecure region.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORT OF FINDINGS

#### 5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to seek to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's stability relative to her peers in the West African Sub-region as far as terrorism and violent extremism is concerned. In effect, the question underpinning this study is, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even though they share similar political and socio-economic characteristics? The researcher hoped that understanding the source(s) of Ghana's relative peace and resistance to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism will undoubtedly yield valuable insights into preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in the region and beyond. This chapter presents the key findings and analysis of data obtained from surveys, focus group discussions, expert interviews and documentary reviews. In all, data was collected from 296 participants. These included 285 survey respondents, 11 expert interviews, and one focus group discussion comprising three participants selected from the 11 experts previously interviewed. The primary data is supplemented by the secondary data collected through documentary reviews.

The analysis in this chapter is guided by the objective of the study and anchored on the relative deprivation theory. The relative deprivation theory is complemented by the psychopathological theory and another variant of the psycho-sociological theory, the social distance and mass casualty theory. The Psycho-pathological and the social distance and mass casualty theories are instrumental for explaining the transition from frustration or extremism to terrorism at least at the individual and group levels owing to the fact that, all terrorism starts at the personal level (Brynja, 2005; Darden, 2019; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hassan, 2012; Hudson et al., 1999; Onuoha,

2014; UNDP, 2016). The subsequent discussion in this chapter presents highlights of the key findings, demographic description of the study respondents, presentation of detailed findings and conclusion.

## 5.2. Highlights of key findings

From the analysis of the data, four key findings emerged from the study:

- i. Ghana is susceptible and exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. Ghana's exposure is on account of certain identifiable political, socio-economic, demographic, and geopolitical factors. The risk may not be as high as what pertains in the Sahelian and Chadian states but if not mitigated can be exploited by extremist groups to disastrous effects.
- ii. In spite of the visible risk faced by Ghana, the study also found evidence to suggest that, the country is less prone to actual incidents of terrorism and violent extremism relative to her peers in the same region. The reasons for the apparent immunity remain contestable. However, factors such as Ghana's history and culture of peace, A thriving democracy and the rule of law environment, the role and authority of traditional leadership in promoting peaceful co-existence, State presence and participatory local governance system in Ghana and Vibrant media among others are found to be some of the factors that have made Ghana less prone to terrorism.
- iii. Ghana has over the years developed specific responses to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism domestically. The domestic efforts are manifested in myriad albeit mutually reinforcing legal frameworks, security institutions and national action plans for preventing and countering terrorism in Ghana and beyond.

- iv. Ghana has proven to be committed and consistent in its adherence to regional and international response to terrorism and violent extremism. Ghana has acceded to countless regional, continental and global counter-terrorism instruments and conventions. Some of the domestic measures such as the enactment of Ghana's Anti-Terrorism Act and the development of a comprehensive National Framework for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Terrorism are products of Ghana's adherence to international anti-terrorism efforts.
- v. The measures adopted by Ghana have proven very useful per the evidence evinced. However, the study could not conclude whether these measures are the reasons Ghana is less prone to terrorism and violent extremism. Some of the terrorism-prone countries in the region have instituted similar measures but continue to face terrorism and violent extremism on their soils. Further research is needed to understand why those measures have proven less useful for those countries.

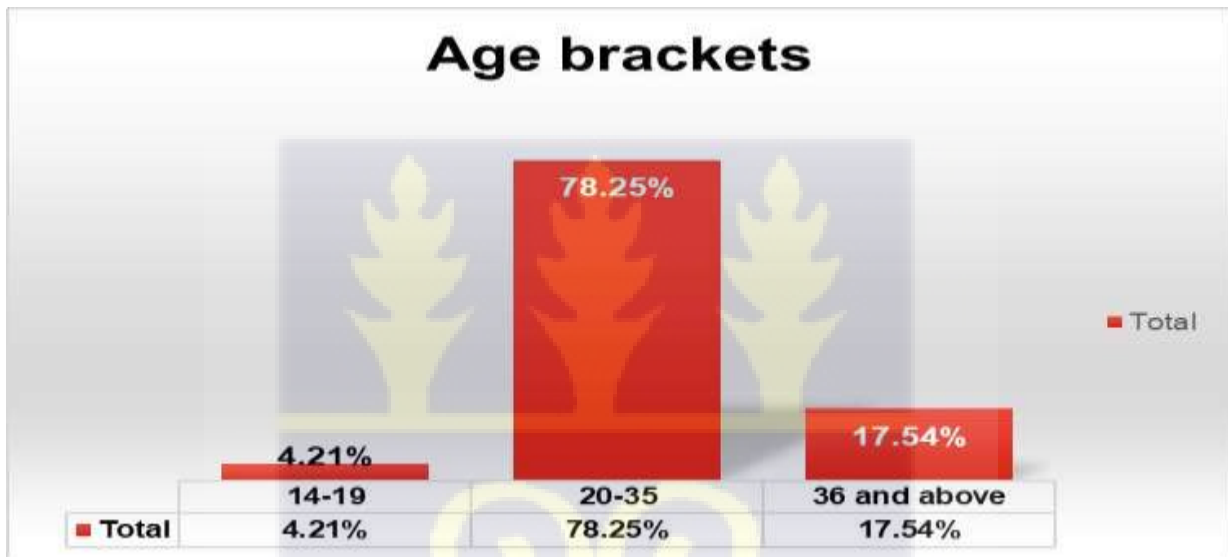
### **5.2.1. Demographic description of the survey respondents**

The demographic description of the respondents takes into account those characteristics of the respondents that can help the researcher to contextualise the perceptions and preferences of the study respondents. The demographic distributions considered for the purpose of analysis include the age, gender, religion, employment status, educational level, religion and regional distribution of respondents.

#### **5.3.2.1 Age distribution of respondents**

The age distribution of the respondents is indicative of age dynamics in terms of participation in terrorism and violent extremism. The majority of the respondents are within the youth

bracket. From Figure 5.11, eight out of every ten (78.2%) respondents are between the ages of 20 to 35 years. This is followed by those between the ages of 36 years and above which constitute 17.54% and those between the ages of 14 to 19 years representing 4.21% of the total number of respondents. In effect the overwhelming majority (92.41%) of the respondents were those within the youth bracket. The distribution is most desirable since the youth is the target for recruitment and radicalization by extremist groups. Their perceptions are therefore important in understanding what derives terrorism.



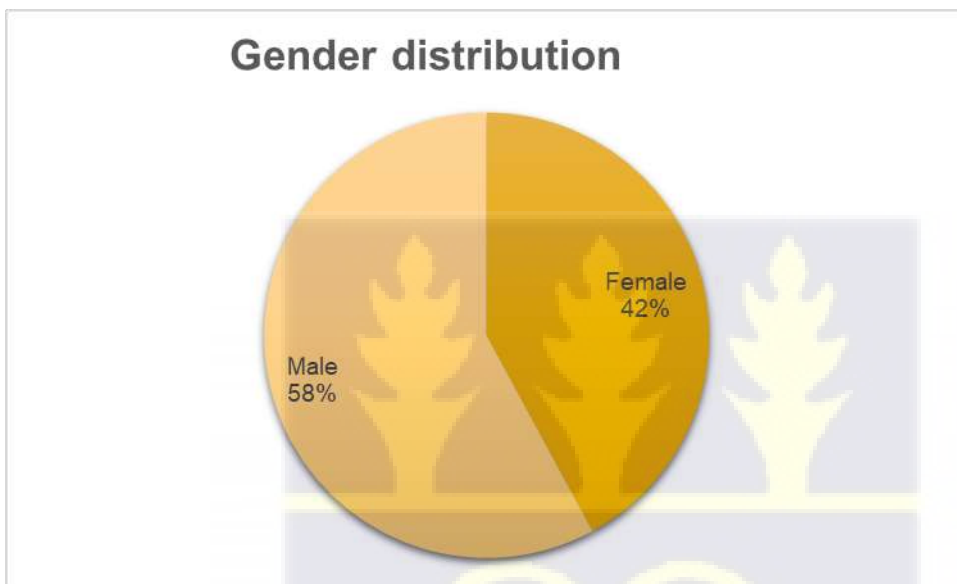
**Figure 5.11: Age distribution of respondents**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.3.2.2 Gender distribution of respondents

An analysis of the primary data shows that 60% of the respondents were males and 40% were female. Even though the female-male population within the spaces of data collection could not be determined before data collection, the disparity could be a reflection of the gender divide that exists around digital access and skills in Ghana. A World Wide Web Foundation for Women's Rights Online Report (2020) reveals that the gender gap in access to the internet is

5.8%. The gap in meaningful connectivity is 14%. Of the Ghanaian women surveyed only 31% had access to a smartphone and just 5% accessed a 4G connection (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020). The gap in access to smartphones is corroborated by a Household Survey on ICT in Ghana (2019) which shows that ownership of smartphones was higher among the males, representing 51.1% as compared to females which are 41.1% (World Bank, 2021). Aside from access, a lack of digital skills is identified as the biggest barrier to women being online.



**Figure 5.12: Gender distribution of respondents**

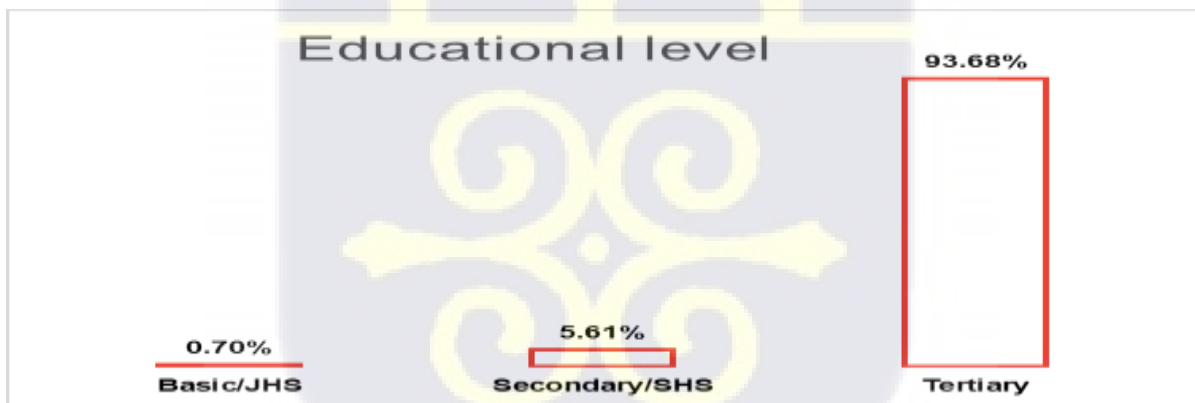
Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.3.2.3 Education of respondents

The sampled population appeared to be quite educated as shown by the analysis of the data. From the data, Nine out of every ten (93.68%) respondents have had a tertiary level education either completed or ongoing. Those who indicated they have secondary level education constitute only 5.6% and the least was 0.7% which is the percentage of those with basic education. This outcome, though random, is good for the analysis in this study since the level of education also affects a respondent's ability to understand the questions as well as the

concepts to be addressed. The researcher is confident that, per the level of education of the majority of the respondents, the responses to the questions raised adequately represent their perceptions about the phenomenon under study and will lead to a more objective outcome for the study.

However, on the flip side, the outcome can be explained by the medium of data collection. The spaces within which the samples were polled are largely literate. Similarly, tertiary education enrolment is on the rise in Ghana and may reflect in data collection especially in spaces where the majority of respondents are literate. For instance, the 2019, the World Bank estimated gross enrolment in tertiary education to be 17.2% (CTVET, 2021). Education attainment is improving in Ghana, the gross enrolment in tertiary education is currently at 18.8%, even as the government pursues a policy to achieve a 40% enrolment ratio by 2030 (Centre on Global Brand Leadership, 2021).



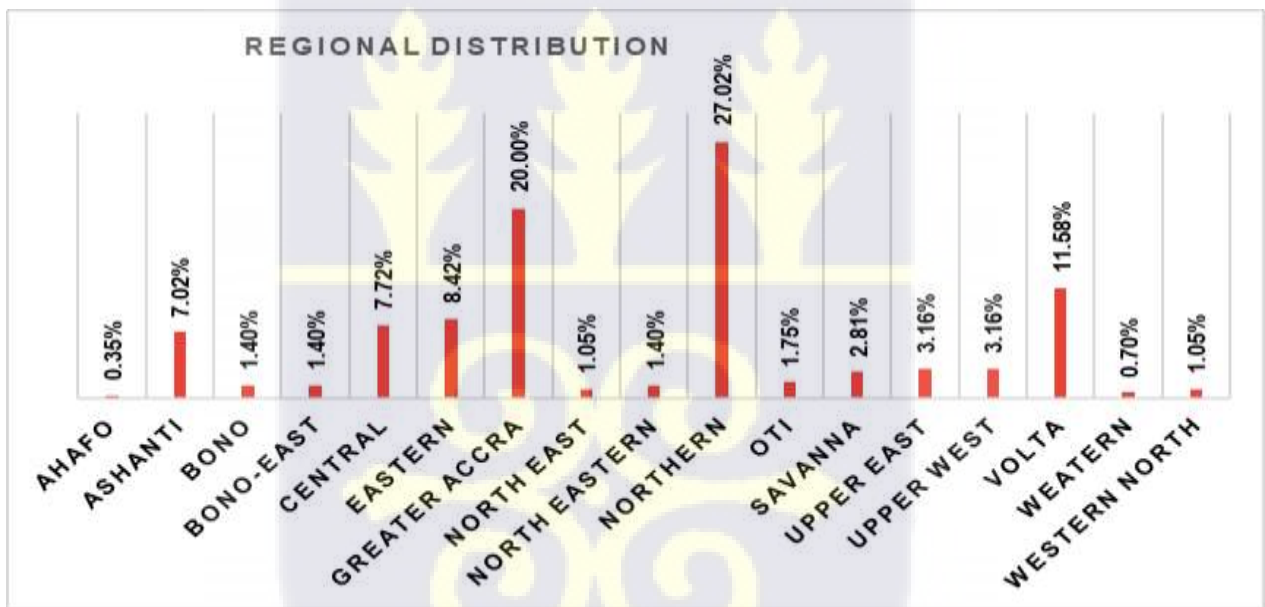
**Figure 5.13: Educational background of respondents**

Source: field survey, 2023

#### 5.3.2.4 Regional distribution

In terms of the regional distribution, all the 16 political and administrative regions were represented, although not in equal proportions. In descending order, the majority of the respondents, one-fourths (27%) were participants from the Northern region. This was followed

by the Greater Accra region (20%), the Volta region (12%) while the Eastern region and Central region came fourth (8.4%) and fifth (7.02%) respectively. The Ashanti region came sixth (7.7%) with the Ahafo region recording the least number of participants (0.35%), coming next to the Western North and North East regions each of which accounts for 1.05% of the respondents. The distribution of the sample on a regional basis tends to reflect the national population distribution except in the case of the Greater Accra region and the Northern region. The similarity however is that, both regions are polyglots hosting people from diverse backgrounds and from several regions. Therefore, a survey in each of these regions – Greater Accra and Northern – yields a result that is fairly representative of a broader national outlook.



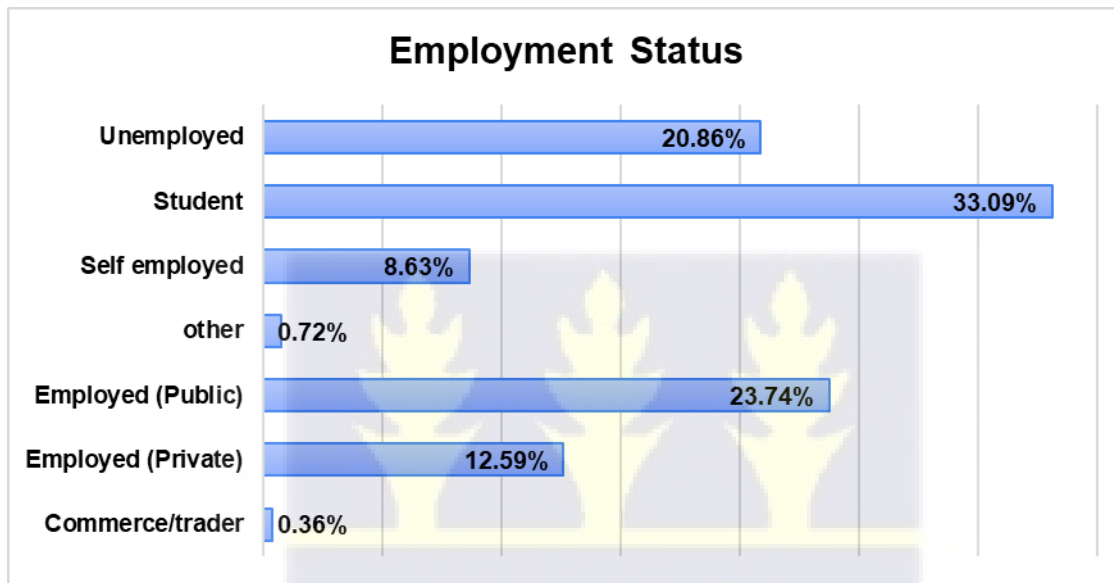
**Figure 5.14: Regional distribution of respondents**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.3.2.5 Employment status of respondents

Figure 5.15 presents the employment status of the respondents. An individual employment status is found to impact his/her perception about the phenomenon of terrorism or the proclivity

to accede to terrorism and violent extremism. The analysis of the data showed that the majority (45%) of the respondents are within the employment category. These proportions are distributed among three sectors (Employed in the private sector- 12.59%, employed in the public sector – 23.74%, and self-employed- 8.63%). Three out of every ten (33%) reported that they are students and 22.22% are unemployed. Another 0.7% each reported as being in other forms of employment or commerce/trading respectively.



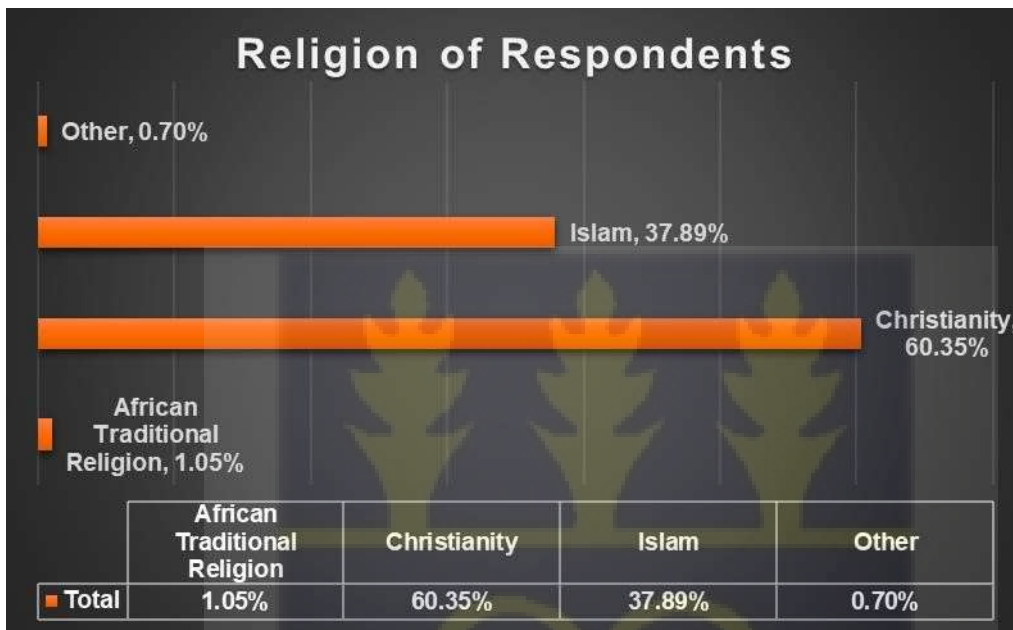
**Figure 5.15: Employment status of respondents**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.3.2.6 Religious affiliation of respondents

In assessing the causes of terrorism, one of the factors that has had little contestation as regards its role as a driver for terrorism and violent extremism is religion. This makes it an important variable to plug in an attempt to assess individual perceptions about the phenomenon of terrorism and violent extremism. The respondents of this are predominantly Christians and Muslims with those reporting as Christians being in the majority. A hand full however reported belonging to the African Traditional Religion (ATR) or other. From Figure 5.6, six out of every

ten (60.35%) respondent is a Christian and nearly two out of every five (38%) also reported being Muslim. The data also showed that, for every one hundred respondents only one responded as being part of the ATR (1%) or other (0.75%). The religious outcome is intuitive as it mimics the religious dynamics in the country where Christians form the majority and followed by Muslims. For example, the 2021 census placed the percentage of Christians at 71.2%, Muslims at 17.6% and Traditionalists at 5% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).



**Figure 5.16: Religious distribution of respondents**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.3. Detailed presentation of Key Findings

The detailed findings present the findings of the study from the points of the surveys, interviews, focus group discussions and documentary reviews. In the first findings, we present evidence relating to Ghana’s exposure to the risk of terrorism and violent. Under the second findings, evidence explaining why Ghana is less prone to terrorism and violent extremism is evinced. The third and fourth findings presents evidence of Ghana’s, commitment, consistence and contribution to counter-terrorism efforts at the national, regional, continental and global levels.

#### 5.4. Ghana's exposure to the risk of terrorism

The first finding addresses the first research objective which seeks to examine Ghana's exposure to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. The conclusions reached from the analysis of the data gathered through in-depth interviews, documentary reviews and the survey are that, Ghana is exposed to risk of terrorism and violent extremism. Very little or no discord emerged regarding Ghana's exposure to terrorism and violent extremism. If any at all, it is about the extent of exposure and the time horizon within which that could materialize provided no steps are taken to address the underlying drivers: This is how a key informant at WANEP captured it;

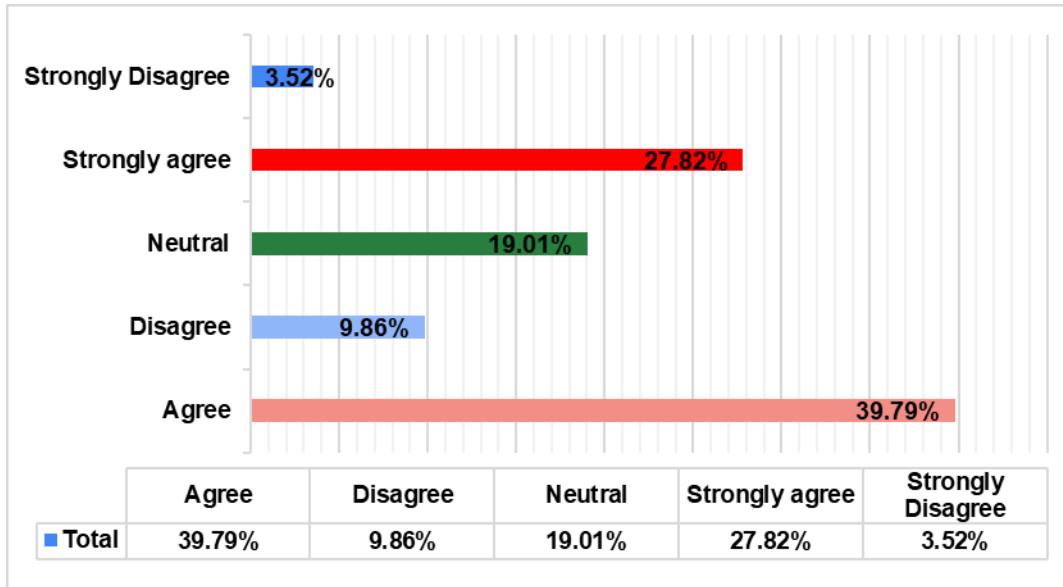
*Well, I think in terms of the vulnerabilities, if we were starting from that point I think clearly and as you have rightly said, there are quite similar vulnerabilities that we share with a number of countries that are also going through or dealing with the challenges of violent extremism. Starting from the point of governance and again I look at governance from all levels. So political governance, economic governance and social governance. Across these levels we have a number of fault lines and fragilities that we face (WANEP, Female, ...2023).*

Another key informant from HSRC, looking at Ghana's vulnerability from the youth bulge perspective and governance failure averred;

*From my experience working in the field of human security and prevention of violent extremism in Africa, I find sufficient evidence that shows that Ghana has some vulnerabilities that can easily be exploited by these groups who are presently marauding along the gulf lines bordering the country. Take the youth bulge for example and view that in light of the ever-rising unemployment in the country and you'll see the*

*point. The youth are upset. Many of them have graduated from school and for years there are no jobs. This makes them very vulnerable and susceptible to recruitment and radicalization by extremists' groups once there is a glimpse of hope. Already we have had evidence of some Ghanaian youth joining ISIS and they were lured with promises of jobs. The youth are impatient to escape the hardships they are facing. So aside from the recruitment by extremists' groups, they can by themselves decide to rise against the system if ever they find that justifiable and I think we are not far from that stage if nothing is done to address the issues of the youth and unemployment. But you what? This is governance failure not just in Ghana but Africa as a whole (HSRC, Female, ..., 2023).*

The views expressed by the respondents above are supported by the survey results, where majority of the respondents hold the view that Ghana is vulnerable and there can be terrorist attacks in the country. In responding to a statement that, in spite of the claim of Ghana being a very peaceful country, it is likely that there can be terrorist attacks in the country, majority of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. From figure 5.17, 40% of the respondents indicated they agreed with the statement and 28% indicated they strongly agreed with the same statement. This translate into nearly seven out of every ten respondents, representing the majority of the respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that, Ghana can potentially can be attacked by terrorists. This reflects the public notion about Ghana's level of vulnerability, which is in tandem with the expert position on Ghana's risk exposure. Only 9.86% representing one out ten respondents and 3.52 % representing three out of hundred respondents respectively disagree and strongly disagree with the view that Ghana can experience terrorist's attack.



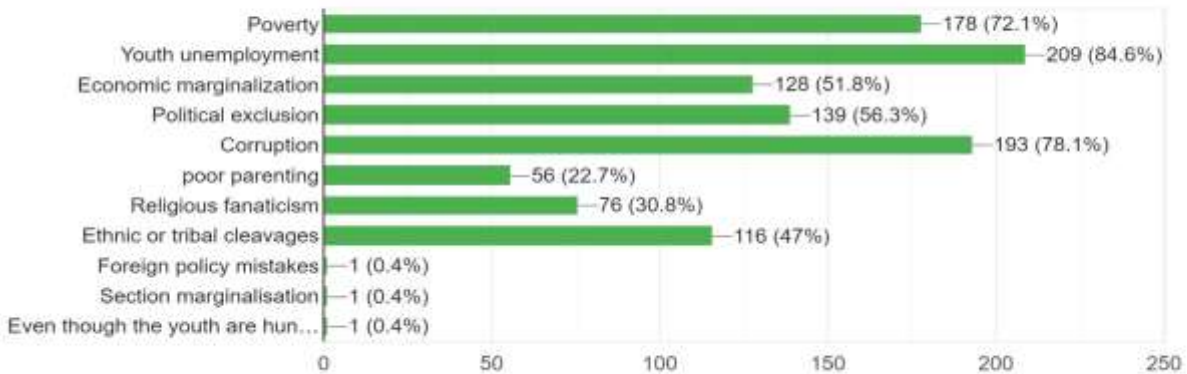
**Figure 5.17: Perception of susceptibility to terrorism**

Source: field survey, 2023

Following from the above question, respondents were asked during the survey to identify the factors that informed their opinion on Ghana’s exposure to terrorism and violent extremism. As shown in Figure 5.18, unemployment, corruption, and poverty were the three biggest factors that exposes Ghana to the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. These were followed by political exclusion (56.3%), economic marginalization (51.8%), and ethnic or tribal cleavages (47%). Religious fanaticism (30.8%) and poor parenting (22.7%) were also cited by some of the respondents as risk factors for terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. The overwhelming majority (84.6%), representing eight out of every ten respondents, cited unemployment. This is followed by corruption, which was selected by nearly eight out of every ten (78.1%) respondents. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the respondents, representing 7 out of every ten respondents consider poverty as a risk factor for terrorism and violent extremism.

If you agree or strongly agree that it is likely Ghana can suffer incidence of terrorism, what factors can account for that? Pick as many as applicable.

247 responses



**Figure 5.18: Risk factors for terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana**

Source: field survey, 2023

#### 5.4.1. The Risks factors

In terms of the drivers of Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism, four key factors have been identified in the analysis of the data gathered. These susceptibility factors can be categorized into political factors, economic factors, social factors and geopolitical factors,

#### 5.6 Political drivers of Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Ghana

Politically, the participants emphasized the pervasive perception of corruption, The erosion of trust in democracy and institutions of state, the perceived exclusion or marginalization, predisposition to violence (Costly signalling) and the poor management of the episodic clashes between the Fulani's and the local communities in some parts of the country and political exclusion both at the level of governance and intra-party politics.

### 5.6.1 Corruption

On the issue of corruption as a contributory factor to the susceptibility of Ghana to terrorism and violent extremism, a key informant at WACCE shared his views and experience as follows; *I want to talk about the issue of corruption. It is ridiculous that people don't see the potential danger in having a pervasive perception whether real or not in society. There is a guy I feel very hurt but I have not been able to get a grip of him. This is a guy who called me in 2016 and told me how he identifies with what I do and all that but he is calling to let me know that this country is just at the edge of a security problem and that it's just by God that it did not happen, and that he personally had planned to come to parliament house intending to bomb it. This is a guy from the Upper West region. And then I asked him why he would do that and then he said 'my brother, the issues of corruption are things that I cannot withstand'. So, he narrated this and said, since 2015, I have stopped watching television since the bus branding scandal came up by the Ministry of Transport. That it was a clear case of corruption and it was referred to parliament to investigate by a committee and nothing came out of it. And that he believes that the problem of this country is parliament and that he intended to bomb parliament.*

The key informant continued;

*So, I asked how he was going to do it? And he said 'I'm not going to tell you. I think he is a tailor. So, these things are the reality and I can tell you there are people who can feel very enraged and can think of nothing to do but because of the atmosphere and the idea that this is a peaceful place. We haven't seen examples. If we see examples, it's easier for people to do more. There are situations where you just need a spark. So, we are lucky that we have not had any attacks yet. Once we have an attack, we cannot contain it (WACCE, Male 2023).*

The comments made by the informant in this case reveal the potential of corruption as a key driver of violent extremism in Ghana. His views are supported by the outcome of the survey, where a substantial number of the respondents have cited corruption as a reason why they think Ghana can experience terrorism. As presented in figure 5.8, when asked to identify which factors account for their view that Ghana can be attacked by terrorists, 78% which represented eight out of every ten respondents cited corruption as a factor. The comments also highlight a very important issue, which is the erosion of trust in institutions of state and in this particular case the legislature. This discontent in the legislature is captured in the following line “... *And that he believes that the problem of this country is parliament and that he intended to bomb parliament*”. The author of this discontent is not alone. This is highlighted in the survey results when respondents were asked to indicate their levels of trust for a set of socio-political institutions with implications for governance. As presented in Figure 5.19, nearly eighty percent (79%), accounting for four out of every five respondents expressed weak and very weak trust in the institution of parliament (43.51% and 35.44% respectively).



**Figure 5.19: Level of trust in the institutions of state [Parliament]**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.6.2 Erosion of trust in democracy and institutions

Further on the political drivers is the erosion of trust in the democratic system of governance, to which the study participants bemoaned the spiralling of the responsiveness of the current governance and political system to deliver the desired political and economic outcomes for the citizens. Worthy of note was the emphasis on the exclusionary governance and political system that is taking shape and its security implications. Emphasis was also placed on the winner-takes-it-all system both in intra and inter-party politics, which runs through the political strata and introduces a patronage system where power is to the highest bidder. This situation as observed by the majority of the key informants creates the feelings and sense of exclusion, which can further produce the environment fertile enough for either internal elements or external extremists' groups to take advantage. A key informant at WANEP expressed this in the following way;

*Since we are looking at the context of security, I want to start with the political governance given that it is at that level that lies the primary duty and responsibility. If you look at political governance, I think we have been struggling for a couple of years now. If you want to do an assessment and do a rating, you'll find that, with some of the indicators that are used to do the ratings, we've been on the decline in terms of political governance starting from the nature of politics itself which is becoming more and more exclusionary rather than inclusive (WANEP, Female, ...,2023).*

She proceeded to add;

*I think it (governance) is one of the fault lines that we are looking at to inform the levels of insecurity we are facing. So, the exclusionary politics that we have been practicing, which is seen in the case of Ghana and not just between our political parties but even*

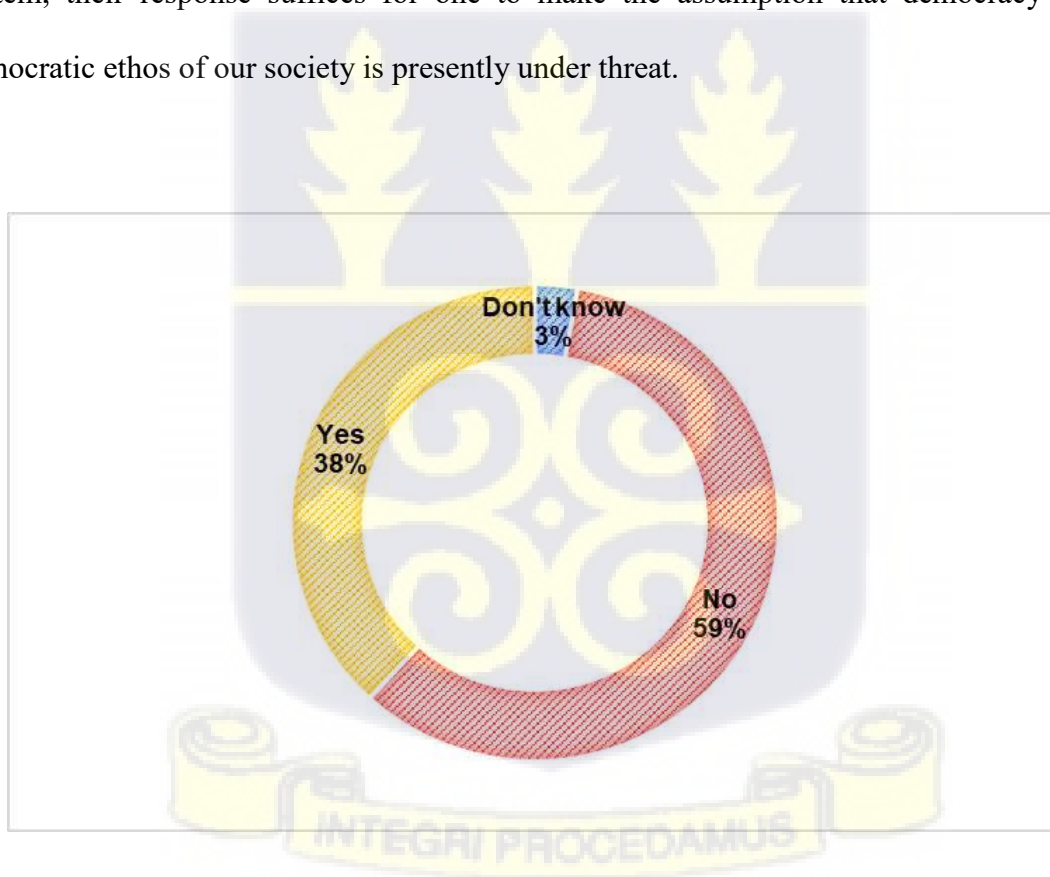
*at the level of intraparty activities, is a recipe for grievance and violent contestation. Again, we see a lot of exclusivities being practiced, where we seem to have moved away from grassroots membership-driven party politics to more of who has money and who, irrespective of where the money is coming from, being the one driving the political party dynamics even at the intra level. So, we seem to have lost the quality of inclusive political party dynamics and it obviously continues and plays out at the state level that is, at government level where once the political party is in power then, of course, the exclusive practices continue and only a few are benefiting (WANEP, Female, ...,2023).*

In drawing comparisons in a practical sense, the situation in the Sahel and Nigeria where governance failures have produced the enabling conditions for recruitment and radicalization by terrorists' groups in such spaces was highlighted. Essentially, the exclusionary system of governance coupled with the erosion of trust in political institutions in those places have exacerbated the feeling of exclusion and marginalization among a section of the population. For some of the respondents, the story is not too different in Ghana, which to them should be a cause for worry. An informant from HSRC averred;

*Now, this idea people give as if it is an army that is marching across the border to come and attack, for me, it's neither here nor there. What we have to be concerned about is that extremism can start here for many other reasons and those are the things that we have to look at. It's all about good governance. Because if people are dissatisfied with issues of good governance, the thing (terrorism) will start from here. And it can be anything. As we said, the situation about Nigeria in the gulf is not about Islam. It's about the economy. It's about livelihood, good governance, and politics. And the same*

*way, the thing that started in Northern Mali, it's all about good governance. Some of the people feel neglected, and marginalized (HSRC, Male, ... 2023).*

The discontent with the governance system and democracy as revealed by the interview informants is supported by the survey results. This is shown in Figure 5.2 below, where respondents were asked directly if they think democracy has served Ghana and Africa well. The majority of the respondents answered in the negative. From the pie chart below, six out of every ten respondents, read in percentage terms as 59% hold the view that democracy has not served Ghana and Africa well. Only thirty-eight (38%) percent of the respondents hold a contrary view. Even though respondents were not asked to provide or name an alternative system, their response suffices for one to make the assumption that democracy and the democratic ethos of our society is presently under threat.

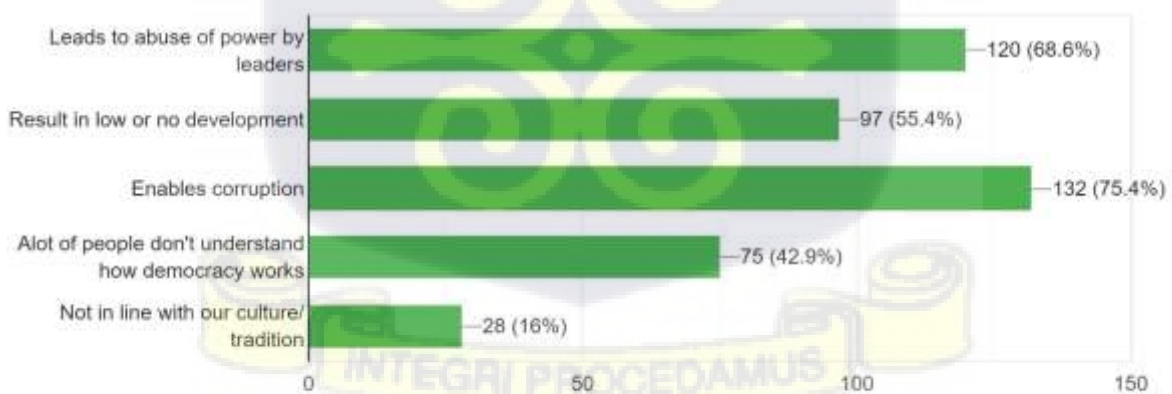


**Figure 5.20: Do you think democracy has served Ghana and Africa better?**  
Source: field survey, 2023

Respondents did not go without stating the reason why they think democracy has not served Ghana and Africa well. The dwindling confidence in the democratic system of governance is occasioned by a bouquet of reasons straddling from abuse of power by leaders to cultural conflict between democracy and tradition. From the analysis of the survey data as shown in Figure 5.21, the majority of the respondents to this question cited corruption as a reason. Nearly four out of every five respondents (75.4%) believe that democracy “enables corruption”. This result is particularly significant when read side by side with the results in figure 5.8, where corruption is ticked to be a high-risk factor for terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. Aside from corruption, 68% said democracy has led to abuse of power by leaders and 55.4% don’t agree that democracy speeds up development. However, 42.9% of the respondents cited a lack of understanding of democracy as a reason why it has not served Ghana and Africa better. The last or least cited reason was that democracy is not consistent with Ghanaian culture (16%).

If you answered 'No' to the above question, why do you think so? Pick as many reasons as applicable

175 responses



**Figure 5.21: Reasons why democracy has not served Ghana and Africa better**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.6.3 Perceived exclusion and marginalization

The exclusion or marginalization of the youth in decision-making also came up strongly as a risk factor. Some of the key informants emphasized the dangers of the alienation of the youth in political and socio-economic decision-making. This phenomenon, according to the respondents, creates a heightened sense of deprivation which is pervasive in Africa and has occasioned many vices that involve the youth. Respondents also note that, once the youth feel locked out of the opportunities to have their concerns addressed through the legally or socially acceptable channels, they may be tempted to resort to the use of violence and other unorthodox means of drawing attention of the government to their needs. This, according to the respondents could lead to internal mobilization for some kind of violent protests which can be taken advantage of by violent extremists' groups or creates the enabling condition for infiltration by external terrorist groups. Worthy of note is the comment of one of the key informants from HSRC;

*So internal factors such as the political marginalization of Ghanaian youth leads to serious frustration with the system. And this is a serious security risk and vulnerability factor to watch out for. If you take the recent "Fix The Country " protest that spread like wildfire, you'll realize that all the issues raised are about the Ghanaian youth fighting for inclusion in decision making. To put it bluntly, the youth is saying to leadership and the society as a whole, we are tired of the systematic marginalization and exclusion from decision making in the county, we want to be heard and seen. They have finished school and there is nothing to do. They have serious political and economic concerns and no one seems to take them seriously. They cry out, sometimes through social media and we say the youth is unreasonable. Nowhere to turn to. This situation naturally leads to frustration, which can cause the youth to agitate and possible introduce violence. And it reaches a point where they feel that if they don't take*

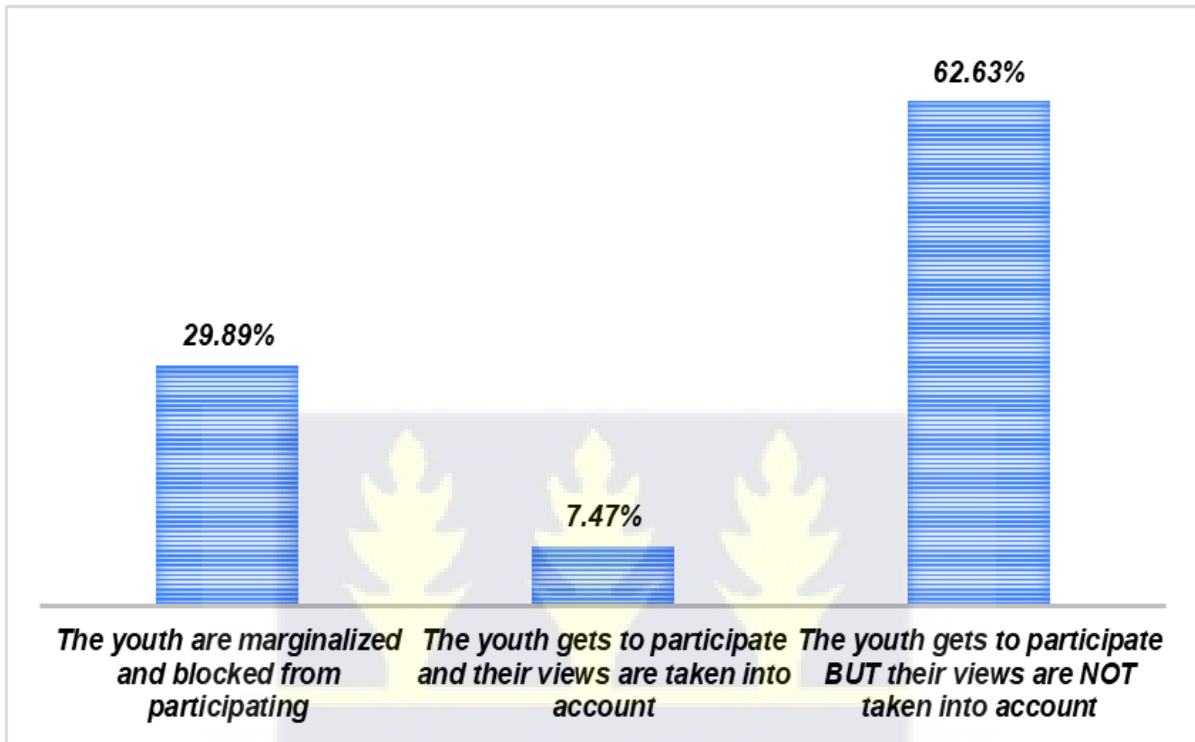
*certain actions or signal the authorities in a costly way, the authorities will feel lax to change their situation. So, they may resort to doing some terrorist stuff and which will require assistance.*

The key informant from HSRC added;

*And at this stage two things will happen, they'll either mobilize domestically to carry out such acts or draw on connecting with existing terrorists' groups for assistance. That is how I see the situation in Ghana and most of the coastal regions. I think that our vulnerabilities are inside here. It's just governance issues. If we could correct this, create the space for youth effective participation in political and economic decision making in the country, people would have some peace of mind and nobody would really be looking for any violent means of letting anybody know that they are upset. For me, that is what Ghana's vulnerability is (HSRC, Female..., 2023).*

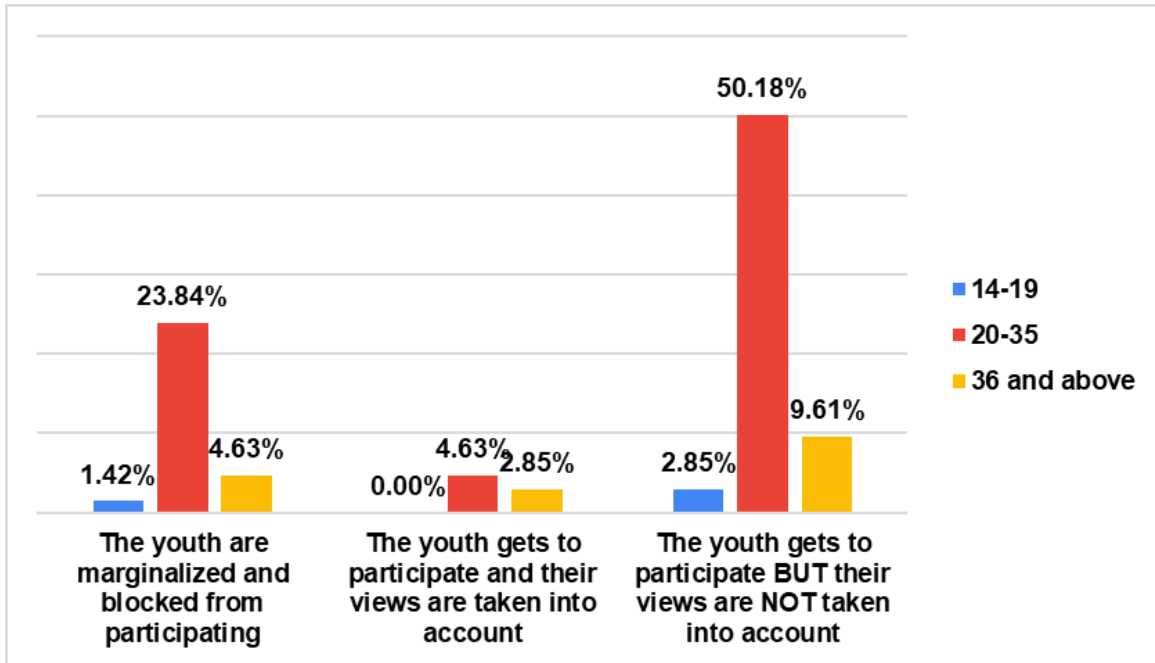
The analysis of the survey data reveals similar results to that of the key informant's perspective on the situation and perception of the youth in terms of decision-making at all levels of government. As shown in figure 5.12, a sixth (62.63%) of the survey respondents hold the view that there's no effective participation in decision-making for the youth. And about a third (29.89%) declare that the youth are marginalized and blocked from participating in decision making. Only about seven out of a hundred respondents (7.47%) hold the contrary view that the youth get to participate in decision-making and their views are taken into account. Recalling that, the overwhelming majority of the survey respondents are within the youth bracket, the results show how the youth feel about their status in the country's politics. Figure 5.13 is illustrative of this fact. Figure 5.12 shows that 93% of the respondents believe that the youth are marginalized and blocked from decision making or even if they get to participate, their

views are not taken into account. If you read this figure side by side with figure 5.13, it reveals that 78.3% of the 93% who think the youth doesn't matter in decision-making at all levels of government are within the youth bracket. This means that for every ten respondents who feel the youth are invisible in decision making, eight are themselves youthful.



**Figure 5.22: Position of the youth in decision-making**

Source: field survey, 2023



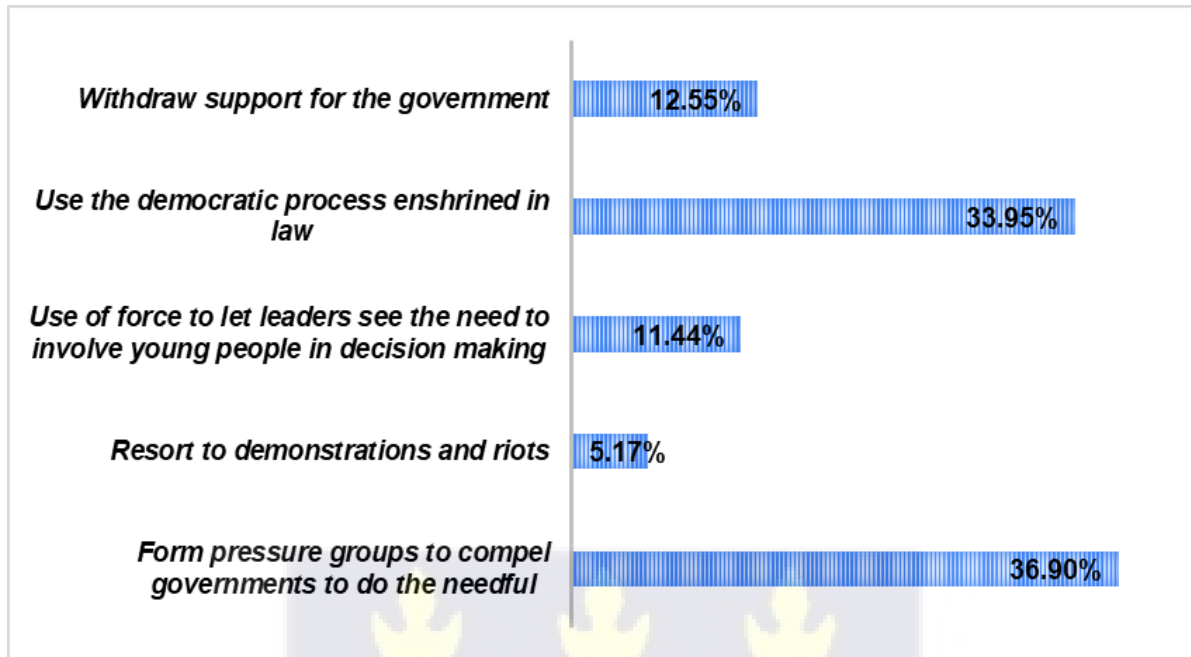
**Figure 5.23: Position of the youth in decision-making**

Source: field survey, 2023

#### 5.6.4 Predisposition to violence

To buttress the notion that the marginalization and exclusion of the youth from decisions making could lead to violent extremism, respondents were asked to proffer a solution to the perceived marginalization or exclusion. Only a third of the respondents recommended the use of the democratic process enshrined in law for the youth or any marginalized groups to advocate for participation. The rest of the respondents recommended various shades of unorthodox tactics with elements of violence or with the potential to lead to violent extremism. From Figure 5.24 below, thirty-three (33.3%) representing three out of every ten respondents favoured the use of the democratic process to address any issue of exclusion or marginalization. Another third (36.90%) of the respondents recommended the formation of pressure groups by the youth or any marginalized groups to press home their demands. Twelve percent (12.55%) suggested the withdrawal of support for the government which could mean anything and another 11.44%

proposed the outright use of force as a response to exclusion and marginalization from decision making.



**Figure 5.24: Suggestion to the youth or any marginalized group**

Source: field survey, 2023

Linked to the predisposition to violence is the phenomenon of political vigilantism that is taking centre stage in Ghanaian politics. Unlike the conventional character of vigilantism, where a community authorizes a voluntary group to help fight a vice, the prevailing political vigilantism in Ghana takes the form of inter- and intra- party violence. Young men and women are recruited by political parties as force wings with terrifying names. The modus operandi of these groups is brutal violence against anyone who stands in the way of their political parties. They are mostly deployed in internal party elections and national elections. Respondents identify this phenomenon as a risk factor for the emergence of terrorism-like violent extremism. Some of the respondents have also expressed concern that external terrorist groups can take advantage and recruit members of these groups as international fighters or for activities within the home country. One of the respondents expressed this opinion in the following words; *There are*

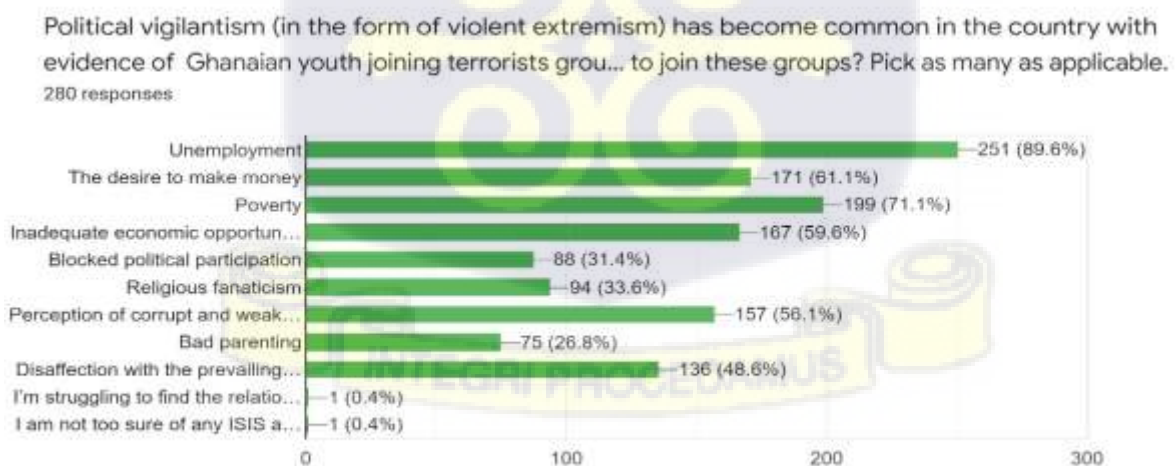
*serious vulnerability issues of concern that have not been dealt with in this country. A collection of these vulnerability factors which are very real and present include the violent political contestation in our space here. The violence in this sense manifests in the form of political vigilantism, which has become a spectre in our body politics. These happenings we witness in our space set an environment for the possible terrorists' recruitment or extremists attacks on this country. So, when we are talking about terrorism in West Africa, we need to have in mind that these vulnerabilities are here and are pervasive in this space. How we manage the vulnerabilities will determine the next phase of this country's exposure to terrorism within the short to medium term*

*WACCE, Male...,2023).*

As a phenomenon that is pervasive with violent manifestation and which has taken centre stage in the country's political discourse lately, respondents were asked to identify the possible reasons for the emergence of vigilantism in the manner it is manifested in the country. The respondents were assumed to have some appreciable level of knowledge about political vigilantism in Ghana. Some of the reasons for this assumption include; 1. Political vigilante groups have sprung out of the main political parties in the country (e.g., the NPP and NDC) and have formed their satellite groups in the various regions and units of the parties respectively. The names and titles given to these groups have become household names in virtually every corner of the country (e.g., invincible forces, the hawks, delta force, azorka boys etc.). 2. Their activities, by their violent and unpopular nature, have made them very visible and feared. 3. The phenomenon of political vigilantism and the activities of vigilante groups have attracted much attention from the government, the media, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the general public. Two landmark steps have been undertaken by the government through the executive and parliament at addressing the menace of political vigilantism in

Ghana; the vigilantism and related offenses bill and the commissioning of a Commission of Enquiry into the violent activities of these groups in the famous Ayawaso West Wuogon violence.

In responding to the question above, respondents identified unemployment, poverty, money, perception of weak and corrupt government, blocked political participation, inadequate economic opportunities, disaffection with the prevailing economic and political system, and religious fanaticism among others. As can be seen in Figure 5.25 below, unemployment, poverty and money were cited as the three top reasons for the occurrence of political vigilantism in Ghana and which has pushed some Ghanaian youth to join foreign terrorist groups. For instance, 89.6%, representing nine out of every ten respondents cited unemployment, 71.1% constituting 7 out of ten respondents named poverty and 61% selected the desire to make money. Additionally, 56% cited the perception of a weak and corrupt government, 33% cited religious fanaticism and 31% indicated blocked political participation as some of the factors driving political vigilantism violence in Ghana.



**Figure 5.25: Push factors for the youth joining vigilante and terrorist groups**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.6.5 Socio-Economic drivers

On the economic drivers of terrorism, both the interview respondents and focus group discussants have emphasized poverty, unemployment, economic marginalization, inadequate economic opportunities, and the desire for money as critical risk factors for terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. Much of the discussion and expert opinions in this respect were comparative as respondents and discussants repeatedly compared the prevailing situation in Ghana to that of Nigeria and some of the Sahelian states. Below are some of the views expressed by the respondents and discussants;

*The other point is that there should have been some premise before when I talked about the factors or reasons why Ghana has not been attacked. We have to look at the profile of this country when we are talking about violent extremism. What constitutes violent extremism in this space? We may not have the same profile as Nigeria or Mali but we have our own vulnerability and situations that make young people or society vulnerable to extremist attacks. We are looking at the drivers of radicalization or the factors that lead individuals to engage in extremism. In this space, we are talking about pervasive youth unemployment. This is one of the biggest drivers or enablers in terms of violent extremism. Virtually in all the work we do in the Sahel and the Gulf regions, youth unemployment is one issue that keeps coming up strongly in many of our research works.*

The same key informant continued;

*You know, as they say, the idle hands are used by the devil. Even though we cannot conclude that joblessness leads to terrorism, we have found evidence linking the lack of job to acceptance and eventual participation in the activities of terrorists and violent extremist groups for survival. This puts Ghana in the spotlight when you consider the*

*huge youth bulge and the high levels of unemployment. Two things could happen, drawing from the lessons we have learned; violent extremists' groups may take advantage of the unemployed youth and recruit them as foreign fighters in another country or the youth themselves may resort to criminal activities leading to acts of violent extremism, which will be their direct response to the hardships they face... (WACCE, Male...,2023).*

Another key informant speaking from the Human Security Research Centre averred;

*The evidence linking poverty to crime, especially terrorism is patchy and not conclusive. However, the desire to escape economic hardship has led people, especially the youth to engage in all kinds of vices to survive. In Ghana today, there's a lot of hardship and what I will call excruciating youth poverty borne out of cyclical and unresolved unemployment crisis. And there is no evidence of seriousness by the political class or successive governments to address this looming danger. In some of the terrorism embattled countries we have visited, the government's neglect of the economic concerns of the youth and rising unemployment have created the spaces for recruiters to infiltrate the population with promises of jobs and relief. This is the risk I see for Ghana. I hope you see the link now?... The young man who was recently reported by the BBC to have joined ISIS, what was the reason? It was related to unemployment. So, unemployment vis a vis the youth bulge is a serious terrorism risk to Ghana (HSRC, Female..., 2023).*

Similarly, the key informant from the Ghana Police Service postulates that;

*Rising levels of poverty and youth unemployment are the two most important factors that the government should address without delay. These are the two most important factors that violent extremist groups have employed as tools of luring people, especially the unemployed youth. And when it comes to this, the level of education doesn't matter. Those who even finish school without jobs for years are the most vulnerable and as it's often said, the most dangerous criminal is the educated criminal (... laughs). You see places such as Timbuktu in the Sahel, endemic poverty is what has delivered the vast space and the inhabitants to the terrorist groups from the Sahara but you hear analysts call the place ungoverned spaces. This is simply because people have been denied basic facilities and amenities which is both the cause and consequence of endemic poverty. These groups don't have to force the people to join them. They simply point to the failures of the government and make promises to them and actually deliver some of them. As simple as that! and their loyalty is bought! And for some of the youth, they are promised salaries if they join their ranks ... so poverty and joblessness especially among the youth should be watched... (GPS, Female..., 2023).*

The analysis of the survey results on the link between economic factors and violent extremism lends support to the expert opinions expressed by the interview respondents. In Figure 5.15, where respondents were asked to identify factors that push the youth to join political vigilante groups or even terrorist groups, unemployment, poverty, desire for money and inadequate opportunity were the most rated reasons.

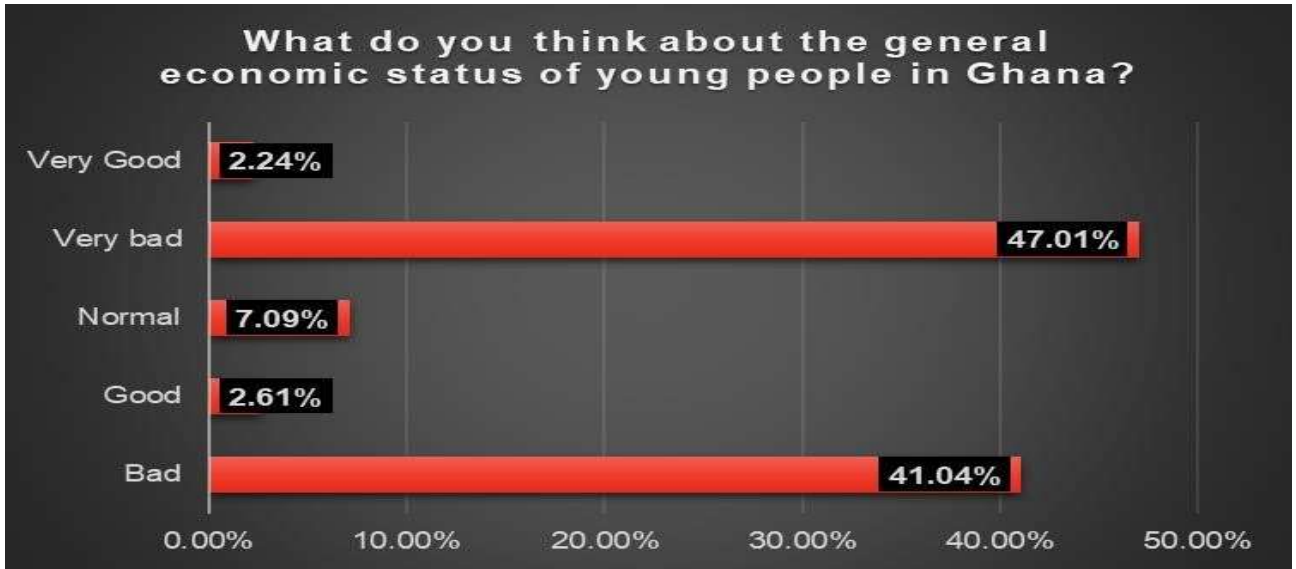
Another point that came up strongly was respondents' perception of the economic condition of the youth. This was particularly important for the research since the perception of the feeling

of relative deprivation is driven largely by the perception of the actor relative to their reality.

To this, one of the interviews respondents remarked that;

*The youth may decide to employ violence to send what we call costly signalling to the authority if they think their economic concerns are being ignored deliberately or much worse if they begin to believe that the unemployment or general youth poverty is born out of the deliberate decision of some or a group of people. So, it's all about the perception, and when you talk to young people many of them hold unfavourable perceptions about the unemployment situation in the country. This is especially serious among the educated and the group mostly referred to as the elite. So, to me, managing the perception of the youth is very important and, I will say, is the first step to addressing the economic or socio-economic drivers of terrorism and violent extremism (HSRC, Female...,2023).*

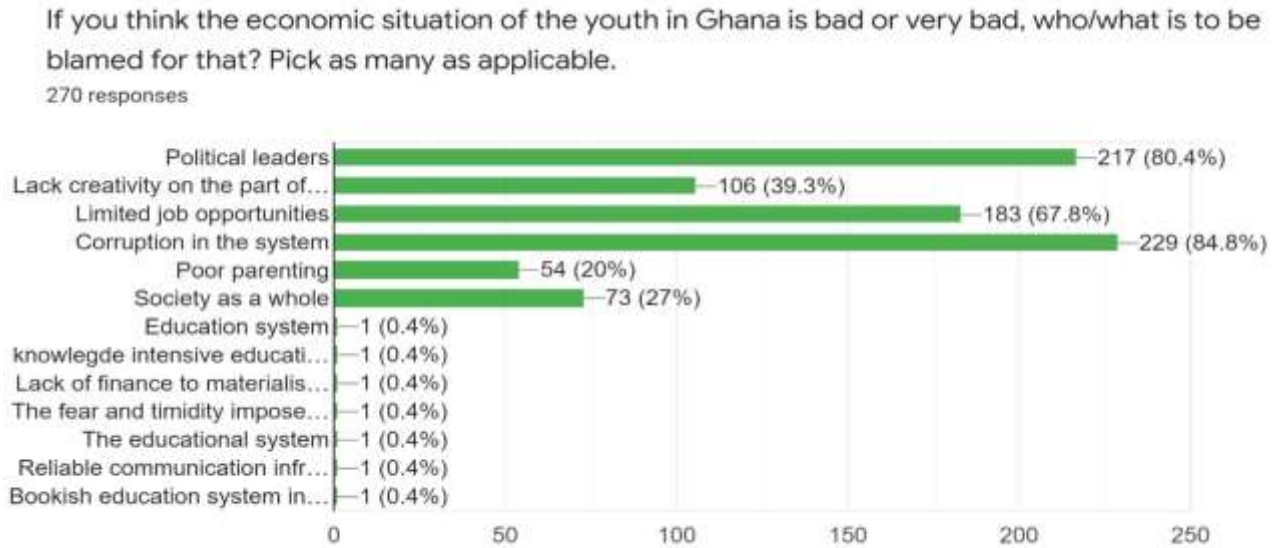
The analysis of the survey data as shown in Figure 5.16 confirms the view held by the interview respondent regarding the perception of the youth in relation to the latter's economic condition in the country. When asked about what they think about the general economic conditions of the youth in Ghana, an overwhelming majority of the respondents think the economic conditions of the youth in Ghana are either bad or very bad (very bad – 47.01% and bad – 41.04%). Only about four out of every hundred respondents think the economic conditions of young people in Ghana is either good or very good. Generally, the analysis of the data shows that of every ten respondents contacted, nine hold a bleak picture of the economic conditions of the youth in the country.



**Figure 5.26: Perceptions about the economic conditions of the youth**

Source: field survey, 2023

The perceived worse economic condition of the youth in Ghana was blamed on several factors. Respondents have identified a number of reasons why the economic situation of the youth is what it is. The top three factors were identified as corruption, the failure of political leaders, and limited economic opportunities in the country. Reading from Figure 5.27 below, almost nine out of every ten respondents (85%) mentioned corruption in the system as the cause of the bad or very bad economic situation of the youth. Next to corruption is the failure of political leaders. Eighty percent (80%) respondents blame the economic situation of the youth on political leaders in the country. Limited economic opportunities took the third ranked position (68%) as a cause of the bad or very bad economic condition of the youth. However, forty percent (39.3%) of the same respondents think that lack of creativity on the part of young people have also contributed to the economic condition of the youth.



**Figure 5.27: Factors responsible for the economic condition of young people in Ghana**

Source: field survey, 2023

### 5.6.6 Geo-political factors

Ghana's geographical proximity has also been found to be a key susceptibility or vulnerability factor to terrorism and violent extremism. Drawing from the contagion theory of terrorism, the interview respondents argued that there could be an overflow from Ghana's neighbours as a result of shared political and socio-economic characteristics. The fact that these groups are able to penetrate the borders of Ghana to recruit young Ghanaians as foreign fighters is evidence that they can move into the country where the need arises. Without establishing a clear cause for their presence in those regions north and west of Ghana, the fear of a contagion is heightened with the intensification of terrorism in southern parts of the Sahelian countries. Speaking elaborately on the risk of contagion to Ghana, the key informant from WANEP explained;

*I think we can also look at Ghana's proximity to these countries where we have this act of violent extremism and terrorism happening, especially when these neighbouring countries are presently facing a lot of political uncertainties because of the recent military coups and all that. And you can see that the political uncertainties impact on how these countries to the north of Ghana can even control the terrorism menace within their own territory and the spillover effects to other areas. And you know, if you go to the northern part of Ghana for example there are a lot of cultural links with communities in Burkina, there are a lot of trade links with communities in Burkina you know? And this makes us a bit vulnerable also because of the weak border control. And I want to draw inferences from Nigeria and Niger for example, if you look at Maiduguri, where Boko Haram started, most of the Boko Haram militants were part of the Kanuri group and when you cross to the other side of Niger, they were also Kanuries. That made it easy for them to be able to influence the communities within those areas because they share similar cultural identities and also face similar historical issues of injustice within those regions (WANEP, Male..., 2023).*

The narration of the key informant from WANEP, is corroborated by the views expressed by key informant from WACCE, as postulated below;

*Now if you look at our part of the north, especially now, we have a lot of issues going on in the region and sometimes whatever happens here in Ghana also has implications across the border. So, this is also one of the issues you can look at in terms of the spillover effect. And coupled with the fact that we've also seen a lot of people moving from the countries where we have these acts of violent extremism happening presently.*

*Some are economic migrants who have come to look for new jobs and all that and if you trace how issues of armed robbery, kidnapping and whatever is even happening in their country you see a new trend of how these things are taking roots in Ghana. Most of these people come to this country with the purpose of maybe getting jobs but they end up finding no jobs and they have to survive you know. And these people have a lot of money to influence people to commit some of these acts. So, the influence of a lot of uncontrolled migrants from parts of the region also poses a threat especially when it comes to issues relating to fuelling community grievances against governments or even forming homegrown terrorists' cells in this country (WACCE, Male..., 2023).*

However, in the case of Ghana, the key informant from HSRC has downplayed the role of geographic proximity as a significant risk factor. According to him, the geographic proximity becomes an issue where there are shared cultural and political identities across borders. He cites the presence of the Tuaregs in both Mali and southern Algeria which made it easier for them to mobilize and also to move across borders to execute a common agenda. This shared cultural identities such as language and ethnicity and sometimes as close as a clan allows exiled terrorists fighters to be accepted and harboured in the neighbouring country. He explained further;

*When the French backed Algerian government granted amnesty to the rebels in Algeria, Muqtar Bel Muqtar and his people rejected it and moved to the Sahel, where they formed AQIM. From the money they got through KFR in the Sahara, they acquired arms and started launching attacks on Algeria. The fight then became who controls the trade routes and the money that comes from the trades across the route. Now Iya Ghali, a Tuareg, who hitherto worked for the Malian government also took advantage of the*

*situation and began to mobilize his people along the same concerns that drove Muqtar and his people to the Sahel. They then linked up with AQIM, swore allegiance and began to control some areas in the north including Timbuktu, Kidal etc. But you know, the spill over or if you like the contagion effect was easy or even possible because the Tuaregs are in both Northern Mali and southern Algeria, they are the same people with shared challenges. It is the same Tuareg guys who were supplying and taking things across both sides of the Sahara-Sahelian trade route. So, the linkage between Algeria and Mali is very strong. As a result, the Tuaregs are likely to have the support of Algerians in a lot of the things they are doing (HSRC, Male...2023).*

From the explanations offered by the two respondents from WANEP and HSRC respectively, there is a common point of convergence even though the latter sought to disagree with the former on the significance of proximity as a risk factor to Ghana. The common point here is the cultural and political similarity across borders. In the case of Nigeria and Niger, the Kanuri tribe or ethnicity is distributed across both sides making identification with a common cause and mobilization much easier. Similar narrative favours the Tuareg story in Mali. What the informant from HSRC tried to convey was that Ghana does not have any such similarity with any other country or her neighbours. In instances where you find cultural similarities between any group in Ghana and elsewhere such as the Mosis in Ghana and Burkina Faso or the Akans in Ghana and Ivory Coast, such groups are not engaged in any struggle on either side to warrant any spill over or call for support.

## **5.7 Factors that account for Ghana's apparent immunity from Terrorism**

The second objective of the study seeks to address the question on why Ghana is less prone to terrorism in a region that is repeatedly referred to as the hotbed of terrorism. The second findings address this objective. From the presentation of findings number one above, it has become less contestable that Ghana is susceptible to terrorism occasioned by multiple risk factors. The findings as presented above accentuates the importance of addressing objective two. To this end, the analysis of the data shows that a bouquet of factors converged to make Ghana less prone to terrorism and violent extremism in an insecure region.

- i. Ghana's history and culture of peace*
- ii. Absence of an overarching religious authority*
- iii. A thriving democracy and the rule of law*
- iv. The role and authority of traditional leadership in Ghana*
- v. State presence and participatory local governance system*
- vi. Vibrant media*

These factors are supported with the empirical findings in the subsequent sections below;

### **5.7.1 Ghana's history and culture of peace**

The key informants have emphasised the political and social historical evolution of Ghana as a key factor that has made Ghana less prone to terrorism and violent extremism compared to some of her peers in the same region. According to the evidence gathered, at the inception of Ghana's independence, the then prime minister who became the first president of the republic of Ghana, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, declared that any person who was resident in Ghana at the time was entitled to a Ghanaian citizenship. In effect, anybody who was resident in Ghana at the time of the declaration of independence and hailed from any other African country was

automatically a citizen of Ghana. The respondents also noted that the policy at the time was such an integrating gesture that dispelled any sense of exclusion or effective marginalization of anybody based on their place of origin or tribe. This unique historical edifice is said to be missing in some of the terrorism embattled countries. Rather, their independence struggles ushered in episodes of conflicts over citizenship and ownership along the lines of tribe and religion. In Nigeria for instance, the struggle remained between the predominantly Muslim North and Christian populated south. In terms of tribal distribution, the North is populated by Fulanis and Hausas and the south, Igbos and other tribes. The key informant from HSRC explained;

*Ghana has some peculiar kind of shield and I learnt this as an expert researcher in the security field and I tend to agree with those holding that same view. The fact that Ghana is a safe haven for a myriad of people from all these West African areas is an important source of stability and resilience. So, what we have learned is that, at the declaration of independence, Kwame Nkrumah said that anybody here who found himself in this geographical space delineated as the country Ghana is Ghanaian from this day on. And that was a wide net that captured so many West African people and you have to remember that they are still connected to their families in Mali, Senegal, Niger and wherever you can think about. And it appears that afterward, years down the line, Ghana has become like the US.*

He continued to expand on the relationship between culture and resilience to terrorism;

*So, every West African nation or whoever is in here and their wider family are out there, when issues occur in those places like Mali, Niger, Chad, or Burkina, the families come here for shelter because their relatives are here. And so, this country called Ghana is not a place where they want what is happening in the bigger picture to even occur. They*

*advise themselves accordingly. So, they have become a form of shield for us and that is one thing I have learned and I believe to be true (HSRC, Female...2023).*

Beyond the independence declaration, the key informant from WACCE, also highlights other political and social measures that past and present governments have instituted to promote integration and inclusive social and political development;

*So, you want to trace why Ghana has not been attacked. It's a very complicated question. Some would want to travel as far back into history in terms of the formation of this country; why Ghana has been able to build such kind of culture that embraces diversity, pluralism in a manner that has allowed us to avoid any large-scale conflict or civil war or vulnerabilities that have manifested in ways that we have seen in other West African countries. A number of measures have been put in place from the inception of this country to unite the people on several fronts. Looking at the boarding school system implemented by the first administration after independence allows ethnic groups or people of different ethnic backgrounds to live together, study together, to make friends and partnerships that helped defuse possible or potential ethnic tensions that existed in those days. These historical arrangements continue to impact the social life of the people and security of the nation (WACCE, Male...,2023).*

Still looking at the historical antecedents, not only did the Ghanaian political history promote inclusivity and integration, there's also no trace of Islamic dominance at any point in the history of Ghana. The informants compared the situations in Nigeria and Mali to that of Ghana, arguing that, in Nigeria, Boko Haram is a renaissance of the Dan Fodio legacy of Islamic dominance in

especially the northern part of Nigeria. As narrated by one of the informants, Osumanu Dan Fodio conquered most of the Hausa states and converted them to Islam in the early centuries before the western colonial masters arrived with Christianity and the secular system of governance and social life. These new developments were antithetical to the status quo as was the case in the northern states. Boko haram is a manifestation of the contestation between the well-established Islamic culture and the antithetical western system – where the former is fighting both for survival and attempt at overthrowing the secular state that has now taken shape. So, the terrorism in Nigeria and by extension the activities of Boko haram is rooted in the political and social history of Nigeria as noted by the experts. From the explanation by the informant from HSRC, the arguments made is that the conditions are not the same and for which we cannot be expecting the same results in Ghana.

*Look at Dan Fodio in Nigeria, he conquered all the Hausa states and converted everybody living in those territories into Islam. So, to date, Nigeria still has a problem with the Dan Fodio elements. You can see that in Borno, they have the Borno-Kanu empire which also accepted Islam very early. So, in that place, Nigeria also had its own problem, even before independence, the idea is that the Boko people don't believe in what we believe. So, there's a very strong anti-secular feeling around North-eastern Nigeria. Even the Muslim elites had to dodge and send their children to school but they couldn't convince the traditional people that this Yen Boko thing, let's see how we get a compromise. So, Muhammad Yussif and co are still standing on that. Because Muhammad Yussif's father was an Imam, he took him and ran away to Maiduguri when they wanted to send his son to school. You do not have the same conditions in Ghana, nor does Ghana have such historical antecedents (HSRC, Male...,2023).*

Moving onto the Sahel, respondents recounted the historical struggle by the Tuaregs for recognition and independence from the Malian central government. Respondents have pointed to historical developments where the Tuaregs and Arab populations continued to challenge the authority of the central government post-independence. Already, the southern elites held deep resentment against the northern populations, making it difficult for any form of integration. As a result, the Malian government focused its attention on developing the south which it found to be 'useful'. This resulted in the gradual marginalization of the northern populations and the imposition of military rules on those regions. The deep-seated distrust between the north and south have led to at least four known uprisings, which together have exacerbated the historical fault lines. The situation created a fertile environment which has been taken advantage of by terrorists' groups from the Sahara. Respondents presented these perspectives and historical facts to contrast the terrorism prone countries with Ghana. A relation by one of the informants is presented below;

*Now let's leave all those things and come to the Sahel which is close to us (Ghana). These people have been living there all this while and they have been having their difficulties- the Arabs, the Bambara, and all that. The Tuaregs will always come and raid villages, rustle some cattle and go. But these things never escalated into full-blown terrorism and they were all living in the Sahara using the trans-Saharan trade routes with everybody benefitting even though occasionally they'll have a small fracas and try to solve... The Fulani's were known to always have problems with Bambara over land issues- Farmer- Herder.*

The informant continues to build the point;

*At the time of independence, the Tuaregs said they'll not be under Modibo Kaita because the black man was their slave. So that sets its own problem in Mali after independence. So, you can see that history already sets about some fault lines in what can happen. So, you can see from that time the Malian government never had complete control over the North because of the Tuaregs. Efforts were being made to get Tuaregs into the government over the years but all that failed. The French also did divide and rule promising the Tuaregs that they were going to help them get their own independent country. So again, you can see the historical situation there. Now Iyad Ghali who is one of the Tuaregs who had been working for the Malian government, also took advantage of the situation and began to organize his people and began controlling the areas of Timbuktu, Kidal, and Co, linking up with AQIM, and swearing allegiance to them. This is how full-blown terrorism began in Mali and by extension the Sahelian region. This is the kind of history you cannot find in Ghana (HSRC, Male ..., 2023).*

Linked to the historical argument is the buffer argument where Ghana is said to be strategically positioned and composed to serve as a buffer to many African countries and especially those within the west African sub-region. This geopolitical importance of Ghana to some of these countries and their citizens, many of whom have various forms of ties with Ghana serves as a shield to Ghana's exposure to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism.

*In any case, Ghana is unique. Because before independence and around the time of independence, we had everybody here – Malians, Burkinabe, Nigeriens- everybody was here. After independence, all those people became Ghanaians. When I was the National*

*Security Coordinator, anytime there were problems in Nima, the Imam who was my friend would bring the matter to me so we solved it. But some of them were concerned with issues of inheritance and what not. So, they'll have to wait for the Family head to come from Mali, Nigeria or Niger to solve the issue. Because they still had their ties with them and they visited from time to time but they are Ghanaians now.*

The key informant also recounted a personal encounter as a practical example that finely suits his explanation Ghana's history of tolerance and culture of peace;

*I remember some time back in Niger, I met one guy when I was working for the AU and he had been the foreign minister of Niger before. And he was telling me that they all grew up in Ghana and that his brother was working for customs and all that.... And that after school he went back to Niger and that's how he became foreign minister. So, you can see, if the FM of Niger is actually identifying with Ghana...So they all respect Ghana. When I go to Mali and tell you, see that they respect Ghana and if there's trouble there, Ghana is the place they can run to. So even those causing trouble in those places want Ghana to remain peaceful. So that if there's trouble over there, they can come here and stay quietly with their families. Once they manage to come to Ghana, they are safe (HSRC, Female..., 2023).*

### **5.7.2 A thriving democracy and the rule of law**

Ghana's deepening democratic credentials and the supremacy of the rule of law are found to be key resilience factors. Respondents argue that the constitution of the republic of Ghana, which is the fundamental law of the land, has a number of guarantees and provisions that makes

it difficult to exclude anyone from political and economic life by virtue of any form of identities such as religion, region, tribe, social and economic status. On the supremacy of the constitution and the guarantees it provides, one of the interview informants posits;

*You are looking at a kind of setting where the constitution is the biggest source of a lot of things in this country. Within the constitution, there is a portion that talks about the directive principles of state policy where there is regional balance in terms of leadership, allocation of resources and development in general, and the recognition of all minority groups in terms of national representation and character. So, these things help in preventing the sense of exclusion or marginalization among minorities within the country (MNS, Male..., 2023).*

Then comes another informant;

*Ghana's democracy, though nascent, provides a strong buffer against these things. After over 20 years of returning the country to democratic rule, citizens are becoming accustomed to the democratic ethos as the basis for political mobilization and action. So, you'll see that many people now resort to the court systems to address their grievances as compared to taking the law into their own hands. The airwaves have become safer for people to express their opinions freely even if that's the only action they intend to take. Also, the freedom of association has allowed people to come together to protest the actions of government and leaders without any hindrance. All these put together create a culture of peaceful and democratic approach to addressing*

*grievances in the country. For many of the countries where we witness terrorism and violent extremism, these buffers are lacking (GPS, Female..., 2023).*

The analysis of the survey data also lends support to the view expressed by the survey respondents on the democratic ethos and how that diminishes the potential of violent eruption and creates spaces for peaceful political contestations. During the survey, even though the majority (61%) of the respondents as seen in Figure 5.10 do not think that democracy has helped Ghana and Africa, only a handful of them are willing to employ the use of force to compel the government to be responsive to their needs. Similarly, reading from figure 5.14 as presented above, the majority of the respondents preferred to use one of the popular democratic methods of registering discontent with the government. Out of the 285 respondents, more than 70% chose to use a democratic means as compared to those who will employ force or resort to riots. In specific terms, when respondents were asked; ‘If you perceive that there is limited space for the youth to participate in decision-making or that their views are not taken into account, what will be your suggestion to the youth or any marginalized group?’, 34.38% of the respondents suggested the use of the democratic processes stated under the law. Another 37% suggested the formation of pressure groups to compel governments to do the needful. In all, seven out of every ten respondents prefer the use of peaceful and democratic means to address grievances. Those who suggested the use of any form of force akin to violence were in the minority; 11.7% suggested the use of force and 4% suggested resorting to riots and demonstrations. However, 12% chose to withdraw support for the government.

### 5.7.3 The role and authority of traditional leadership in Ghana

The authority and role that chiefs play in our societies have also been highlighted as an important mitigating factor for the emergence and thriving of violent extremist groups. According to the respondents, the authority of chiefs to adjudicate on issues of concern in their localities has allowed them to act on early warning signals and blocked any wrong move by any individual or groups of individuals. Also, where signals are picked about any looming danger, chiefs tend to be proactive in saving the situation from escalating. Informants also note that chiefs play crucial roles in conflict resolution by ending existing conflicts and also preventing new ones. An important instance is how chiefs have managed farmer-herder differences in some communities. Chief has also been credited with intervening to douse the rise of religious extremism and religious conflicts.

The cases of Wa in the Upper West region and Tamale in the northern region have been cited by some respondents as instances where chiefs have prevented the emergence of religious extremism. Following the arrival of an exodus of young Saudi-trained scholars in Wa sometime in the year 2021, many of them had no formal jobs nor recognized mosques to teach and preach the religion. So, they resorted to street preaching. Many of them were members of the global Dawah community sponsored by Saudi Arabia. Recognizing that such spaces could be safe havens for floating extremists' narratives by the largely Saudi-led Salafi trainees, the Wa Naa (Chief of Wa) issued a fiat that no one could preach again on the streets except in recognized mosques in the town. According to some of the informants, the fiat issued by the Chief was not made out of a vacuum. It was based on intelligence gathered on possible infiltration of extremist elements from the neighbouring Ivory Coast, where al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its affiliate groups are actively operating. The Chief also issued the Fiat as a precautionary

measure in responding to the warning signs occasioned by the activities of violent extremists in the Ivory Coast since the Upper West region shares a border with the former. Below are some of the direct statements from an informant in this regard;

*If you look at our situation in Ghana, take the Northern part, there is an ethnic membrane that is not easy to penetrate. That coupled with the respect for the chieftaincy authority in the communities, it becomes extremely difficult for infiltration. In the northern part of the country where the risk is perceived to be high, you (drawing a map) have the Walas here, you have the Dagaate here, you have the Kasena Nankani and Frafra in the middle here and the Kusaase, the Mamprusi and the Moshie on that flat. The Lobi are also here. Now these guys, the Dagaate are very Christian, mostly catholic. The Walas are predominantly Muslim but very well organized under their chieftaincy. So, there's quite some discipline. When the Wa Naa says something, people will have to comply. So, it is not very easy for people to go and create any terrorist cells there in any of these places.*

The narration continues...

*The other time some young preachers in Wa as part of their Dawah started preaching along the street and the messaging started to create some tensions in the town. The Wa Naa just issued orders warning that there will be no preaching on the streets of the town and that all forms of preaching should be done in the Mosque. This order came to stay and saved a situation that could degenerate into something else. So, you can see that it's not that easy for violent extremists' groups to infiltrate the society as a result of the authority and proactive intervention of the chief. There's quite some control in Ghana*

*here. And if you start coming down south, you'll see how these extrapolates. Because if it comes to Dagbon and the Yaa Naa calls and says something... it creates....*

*Even in Afa Ajura's time, you could see how it involves the Ya Naa. And if they are bringing that Islamic thing, it is going to go into the Maikano Afa AJura, Andani-Abudu thing again. So, people are very cautious.... It's not the same environment at all. You have to understand how it happens (HSRC, Male..., 2023).*

#### **5.7.4 Absence of an overarching religious authority**

From the analysis of the interview data, another factor that accounts for the safety and makes Ghana less prone to terrorist attacks is found to be the absence of a powerful religious mobilizing authority. In this respect, Ghana has been compared to countries in the Lake Chad Basin and some of the Sahelian states. According to the informants, the mobilization of groups in these regions are effected through the instrumentality of powerful clerics such as Amadou Koufa in Burkina Faso and Ibrahim Dicko in Mali. Even when these powerful clerics are dead and gone, their teachings and legacies continue to inspire their followers and adherents to engage in terrorists' activities. An informant put this discussion in the following context.

*In Ghana here we don't have such serious clerics as we have in Mali. In Mali, they have 3 or 4 clerics. They can call a meeting now and the whole stadium is full. So even if they are politicians... Also, you need the cells as they do within Burkina who we can recruit from. The clerics also lean on ethnic or tribal sentiments to mobilize their followers. In the Sahel, you are likely to find a place where the population is not only Muslim dominated but also predominantly the same tribe or ethnic group. So, mobilization becomes much easier. Dicko and Koufa and Mali and Burkina Faso*

*respectively exploit both Salafi ideology and the Fulani sentiments to mobilize, recruit and train or even motivate individuals to engage in violence and terrorism (HSRC, Male..., 2023).*

### **5.7.5 State presence and participatory local governance system**

The study found that there is a visible presence of the state and a participatory local governance system in Ghana which together has built Ghana's resilience against the threat of terrorism in the region. From the evidence gathered, the popular and often cited 'ungoverned spaces' phenomenon in the terrorism literature does not apply to Ghana. Places such as Timbuktu, which has become a sanctuary for breeding terrorists is said to be the perfect example of an 'ungoverned' space. In Ghana, the local governance system along with the fiscal decentralization and devolution have ensured that there is the presence of the state in virtually every nook and cranny of the country. This, according to some of the key informants, gives the central government the advantage of picking early warning signals and putting the necessary preventive measures to curb the possibility of any extremists' events. The presence of the state, as argued by some respondents, makes every part of the country feel recognized as a stakeholder in the affairs of the country. Worthy of note is the comment by key informant from the Ministry of National Security (MNS) which summed up the preponderant view;

*In Ghana, we are administratively well organized. We have the regional administration, the district administration. So, no district can say they are very worried or neglected. The MCE is a good post. He or she attends regional administrative meetings and chairs the district security council. So, they know what's going on. It's not other places where the place has completely been neglected like the case in Mali or*

*like in Niger were because of their linkage with Nigeria through the Darfur region. Then there's a lot of influence because it's a complete Hausa community from Nigeria across the border to Niger. So, there's a lot of influence from ISWAP, which is Hausa and Kanuri based. And that makes it a little easier for them because they have the same mentality and they are the same people (MNS, Male..., 2023).*

Another informant from the Ghana Police Service averred;

*When you look closely at the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism, political exclusion and marginalization is a key driver. Most of the groups that mobilize and launch attacks do that because they feel they have been denied the right of participation and the political benefits thereof. If you look at the Sahel for instance, there is a vast uncontrolled space that is out of the reach of the central government. These spaces have become safe havens for the convergence and recruitment by terrorists and violent extremists' groups in the region. And these groups enter these spaces, they take advantage of the populations who already feel marginalized or alienated by the central government. The local governance structure in Ghana has got an inbuilt mechanism that addresses this problem. So, the local governance system in Ghana is one of the robust shields against the growth of internal violent extremists' groups. It also makes it hard for an external group to make a foothold since the right environment, which is perception of political exclusion, is largely absent (GPS, Female..., 2023).*

## 5.8 Ghana's response to Violent Extremism and Terrorism

From the analysis of the data gathered through the in-depth interviews and documentary reviews, Ghana's response to violent extremism and terrorism is prosecuted through rafts of legal frameworks – domestic and international, multilateral security initiatives and domestic policy frameworks and counter-terrorism strategies. These instruments are presented in the subsequent sections below.

### 5.8.1 Legal frameworks

Ghana's internal and external effort at counter-terrorism predates the advent of 9/11. However, the events of 9/11 and the ensuing international efforts has prompted Ghana to step up its own efforts at fighting terrorism and all its forms both domestically and internationally. The counter-terrorism efforts are anchored on domestic, regional and international legal frameworks. Through documentary reviews and discussions with key informants from GPS, GIS, and MNS, a number of domestic counter-terrorism legal frameworks and instruments have been identified. These include;

- i. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana
- ii. The Security and Intelligence Agencies Act  
2020(1030)
- iii. Anti-Terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762)
- iv. Economics and Organized Crime Act 2010 Act 804,
- v. Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2012
- vi. The Directive Principles of State Policy
- vii. The Anti-money Laundering Act 2008, Act 749

- viii. The National Disaster Management Organization Act, 1996, (Act 517)
- ix. The Emergency Powers Act, 1994, (742)
- x. Immigration (Amendment) Act 2012 (Act 848)
- xi. The Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29)
- xii. The Criminal Offences (Amendment) Act 2012 (Act 849)
- xiii. Economic and Organised Crime Office (Operations) Regulations 2012 (LI 2183)
- xiv. the Electronic Communications Act 2008 (Act 775), as amended by the Electronic Communications (Amendment) Act 2009 (Act 786)
- xv. The Mutual Legal Assistance Act 2010 (Act 807); and
- xvi. The Electronic Transactions Act 2008 (Act 772).

It is important to note, however, that some of these legal frameworks and instruments were not originally designed to counter terrorism but crime in general. However, the fight against terrorism and terrorist financing, some of these instruments have become handy in enabling state security agencies and other partners to operate within the confines of the law. For instance, the National Disaster Management Organization Act, 1996, (Act 517), The Emergency Powers Act, 1994, (742), and The Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29) were enacted long before 9/11 but have become very focused on the fight against terrorism. In his explanation of Ghana's response to terrorism on the legal front, key informant MNS averred;

*You know the first and most important step in addressing any problem in a democratic environment is to define the problem within the context of the law and situate your effort within the ambit of the law. That way you know clearly what you're fighting and how to fight it. Ghana needs to be commended for that. Starting from the 1992 constitution and specifically the directive principles of state policy through to the many legal instruments*

*that have been enacted subsequently, Ghana's counter-terrorism measures are based on law. In the institution where I work, these legal instruments guide how we fight to prevent and combat terrorism both in-country and in support of our neighbours. For example, through the Mutual legal assistance law which was enacted in 2010, we are able to share and receive intelligence from neighbouring countries on activities of these groups. Both sides benefit in these information exchanges. For us, it helps us to prevent these groups from entering or even starting their cells here in Ghana. You can also talk about the anti-money laundering act, the electronic transaction act...all these laws enable us to fight against the financing of terrorists and their affiliates... So, you see the importance of these legal instruments? (MNS, Male..., 2023)*

On his part, the key informant from the GPS also added that;

*Previously we only had the criminal offences act. After 9/11 and when terrorism became popular with the threats eminent to Ghana, we realize the need to come up with a separate law that addresses terrorism specifically. There were instances where certain crimes were clearly acts of terrorism or acts aiding terrorism but because we didn't have any law dealing with such acts, some criminals ended up walking away. So, the enactment of the anti-terrorism act and related laws have helped greatly in the fight against terrorism from entering Ghana. I believe that if not because of some of these laws, like by now, Ghana will be like Mali or even Nigeria. But because the country was proactive in passing some of these laws, we are able to prevent terrorism and also protect our people from these groups. Apart from the anti-terrorism law, there are several other laws that are designed to help the country fight off the threat of terrorism.*

*I will try and name a few for you... the... Security and Intelligence agencies act, the Economics and Organized Crime Act, the anti-money laundering act and others. In fact, the 1992 constitution of Ghana itself is a counter-terrorism law the since all these laws drive their powers from the constitution. But there are also some limitations on these laws and that is issues of human rights (GPS, Female, ..., 2023).*

Whereas all these legal instruments as stated above are important in the fight against terrorism, two Acts, the Anti-terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762) – and the Amendment Act, 2012- (hereinafter referred to as ATA) and The Security and Intelligence Agencies Act 2020 (Act 1030) (hereinafter referred to as SIAA) stand out in their relevance and direct relationship with the fight against terrorism. These two legal instruments will be discussed in detail in chapter six of this study.

### **5.8.2 Legal frameworks: International**

Ghana's role in advancing regional and continental security is influenced by a number of factors. Firstly, Ghana's foreign policy goals remain largely unchanged from independence and are anchored on the promotion of friendly relations and economic cooperation with other countries, good neighbourliness, and a commitment to maintaining international peace and security. Secondly, the constitution of the Republic of Ghana, under the Directive Principles of State Policy, chapter 6 Article 40 states;

*“in its dealings with other nations, the Government shall (a) promote and protect the interests of Ghana; (b) seek the establishment of a just and equitable international economic order; (c) promote respect for international law, treaty obligations, and*

*settlement of international disputes by peaceful means; (d) adhere to the principles enshrined in or as the case may be, the aims and ideals of the UN Charter, the OAU Charter, the Commonwealth, the ECOWAS Treaty and any other organization of which Ghana is a member.”*

And thirdly, Ghana’s commitment to regional, continental, and international obligations to the ECOWAS, AU, and the UN under which Ghana is obliged to uphold the various decisions, resolutions, conventions and protocols and the regional and international mechanisms relating to peace, security and stability.

Beyond these three factors, one basic rule which has guided Ghana’s foreign policy in relation to other nations is the notion that foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. This means Ghana’s participation in the international peace effort is informed by the thinking that Ghana’s destiny is inextricably tied to that of its neighbours. Hence Ghana’s involvement in promoting sub-regional peace is not only aimed at re-establishing peace and security in those conflict prone countries but to prevent the potential spillover of these insecurities into Ghana’s territory.

Motivated by history and the factors noted above, Ghana has acceded to the number of regional and international peace and security as well as counter-terrorism instruments. At the regional level, Ghana has acceded to and ratified a number of security and counter-terrorism instruments. Notable amongst them include;

1. The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials (2006);
2. The Protocol A/P1/01/06 Relating to the Establishment of an ECOWAS Bureau of Intelligence and Investigation on Criminal Matters (2006);

3. The ECOWAS Protocol A/P3/12/01 on the Fight against Corruption (2001);
4. Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security (2001);
5. Protocol A/AP1/12/99 Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security; 6. 1994 ECOWAS Convention A/P1/8/94 on Extradition (1999);
7. ECOWAS Convention A/P1/7/92 on Mutual Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters (1992);

At the continental level, Ghana has acceded to the Organization of African Unity (now African Union) Convention on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism adopted in 1999. The 1999 Convention obligated member states to proscribe and criminalize terrorism in all its forms. Member states were also required under the Convention to establish state jurisdiction over terrorist acts, provide a legal framework for extradition as well as extra-territorial investigations and the provision of mutual legal assistance. Speaking to an informant high up in the security and intelligence agencies, he averred;

*Ghana was among the first countries to adopt this convention and this has influenced much of the work Ghana has done in building the necessary barriers against terrorism. If you look at some of the regional instruments on counter-terrorism, they took their inspiration from this landmark convention. It also shows that Ghana and Africa had already perceived and understood the threat of terrorism before 9/11 happened... (GIS, Male..., 2023).*

At the level of the United Nations, Ghana has shown commitment to the war against terrorism and violent extremism. Ghana has taken part in global efforts and has ratified a number of conventions and instruments aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism. Notable among these instruments are;

- i. The Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism and Terrorist Financing in 2002;
- ii. International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings
- iii. the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism iv.  
the Convention of the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of  
Maritime Navigation and
- v. the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages

At the UN Security Council level, several resolutions have been passed with the objective of suppressing terrorism by freezing the assets of terrorists and their sponsors and taking care of related offenses. Some of the UN Security Resolutions (UNSCR) that Ghana acceded to include UNSCR 1267 (1999) which targeted the activities of the Taliban in and out of Afghanistan, UNSCR 1718 (2006) on North Korea's nuclear program, and UNSCR 1373 Adopted by the Security Council at its 4385th meeting, on 28 September 2001 which seeks to among other things obliges States to work together urgently to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, including through increased cooperation and full implementation of the relevant international conventions relating to terrorism.

In her comments on Ghana's commitment to regional and international counter terrorism efforts, the key informant KAIPTC averred;

*Prior to the terrorist attacks on the world trade centre in New York, Ghana was already playing a very pivotal role in safeguarding regional and global peace and security. The attacks on the world trade centre only made Ghana realize we had to do more to secure our borders and also contribute to the general war on terror. Ghana is so much respected regionally and globally for its adherence to regional and global efforts at combating terrorism. So, if you take a careful look at many of the laws and counterterrorism strategies, you'll see that they are products of international legal instruments and frameworks. Ghana's anti-terrorism law for instance was inspired by the United Nations resolution on fighting terrorism... And I think the resolution is 1373 or so... Not that sure.*

Speaking further on the relation between Ghana's counter-terrorism legal framework and the relevant UN General Assembly Resolutions, the Key Informant added;

*If you also look at the country's framework for preventing and countering terrorism, you'll realize that it is modelled along with the UN Secretary General's framework for preventing terrorism which was adopted in 2015. So, Ghana's commitment to regional and international counter-terrorism effort is not in doubt and if you ask me, I'll say that has contributed in making Ghana immune from the attack from terrorists (KAIPTC, Female..., 2023).*

In spite of the existence of these laws, some of the key informants bemoaned the challenges in implementing some of these laws. The informants cited the lack of political will, inadequate financial support, poor understanding of these laws by some of the people who are supposed to implement them, and low awareness by the general public of the existence of these laws.

According to the respondents, these challenges and many others pose threat to Ghana's efforts at preventing and countering terrorism. In his view, the key informant from GIS posits that;

*... yes, we have all the laws necessary to help us prevent and counter-terrorism on our soil. And I think that there are a lot of success stories from the enforcement of some of these laws just that we cannot put some of them out there for security reasons. But there's also a problem with implementation and enforcement. You know every law is good on paper, right? But the implementation is what makes the difference. You need resources including human resources to enforce some of these good laws. This, in my opinion, is a serious setback to Ghana's effort at fighting against terrorism... Aside from the issue of money, I think the political will is also lacking most of the time except when there is a high-profile case and the politicians are interested, then you see the law working... (GIS, Male..., 2023).*

### **5.8.3 National Policy Frameworks**

Apart from the legal frameworks, there are also policy frameworks designed to contain the counter-terrorism strategy of Ghana. Two of these frameworks stand out. The National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Ghana (NAFPCVET) and the National Security Strategy. For purposes of this study, we focused on the NAFPCVET to understand Ghana's counter-terrorism strategy. In line with the 2006 United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the 2015 United Nations Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, the Government of Ghana adopted the NAFPCVET. The unique feature of the NAFPCVET from other measures is its inclusive nature. It encourages a whole of the community and all- hands-on desk approach to fighting terrorism in Ghana. The Framework is developed around four mutually reinforcing pillars. For

each pillar, there is a short-medium to a long-term goal. The pillars are Prevent, Pre-empt, Protect, and Recover abbreviated as PPPR. These Pillars are discussed in detail in chapter six.

#### **5.8.4 Regional security mechanisms: The Accra Initiative**

Ghana's regional efforts toward the suppression of terrorism are not only manifested in the adoption of regional instruments but also in practical engagements with regional and international partners and stakeholders at that. Ghana has hosted and continues to host regional counter-terrorism initiatives such as meetings of Chiefs of intelligence and security of member states of ECOWAS, Ministerial meetings, and Heads of States meetings. One such outstanding initiative that is currently being hosted by Ghana is the Accra Initiative (AI).

The AI was launched in 2017 as a collaborative and cooperative security mechanism with a permanent secretariat headquartered in Accra, the capital city of the Republic of Ghana. It comprises seven member states, five substantive members, and two members with observer status. The five members are Benin, Ghana, Togo, d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso. The remaining two members are Mali and Niger. Speaking on the AI, the key informant from MNS explained;

*I hope you are aware, at least from your studies, how Ghana and many of the coastal countries are not too different from the countries within the gulf region and the Sahel. We share a lot in common including language and culture. Regional and cross-border economic activities also erode the actual and imaginary borders. So, it's easy for the spillover of terrorism from these countries into the supposedly safe spaces such as the countries along the coast. This theory was only speculative but with terrorist activities now in Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, it became imperative that regional mechanisms such as the Accra Initiative be put in place to ward off any possible spillover of*

*terrorism. This was the objective of this initiative and Ghana has agreed to host the secretariat.*

The informant went on to add that;

*Since the establishment of the Accra Initiative, several joint border operations have been carried out following tip-offs and early warning signals. We have also conducted joint military and civilian pieces of training under the initiative. We have shared and continue to share security intelligence that has helped a lot in combating terrorism in the region... The initiative is still young, but if you ask me, I will say that we have been very successful with it. A lot of overt and covert have been carried out in the name of the initiative. A lot of threats to Ghana's peace have been detected and pushed back. So, the initiative is a great one. The challenges as you know, financial and logistical (MNS, Male, 2023).*

The AI has two primary objectives; to prevent the spill over of terrorism from the Sahel to coastal regions and to prevent transnational organized crimes and violent extremism along the borders of member states. The modus operandi of the AI, its successes and challenges have been discussed in chapter six.

## **5.9 Chapter Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter presented the analysis and findings uncovered by this research. The findings were organized to address the objectives set out in the studies. The data for the study was sourced from both primary and secondary sources including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, surveys and documentary reviews. The primary data in particular, which was

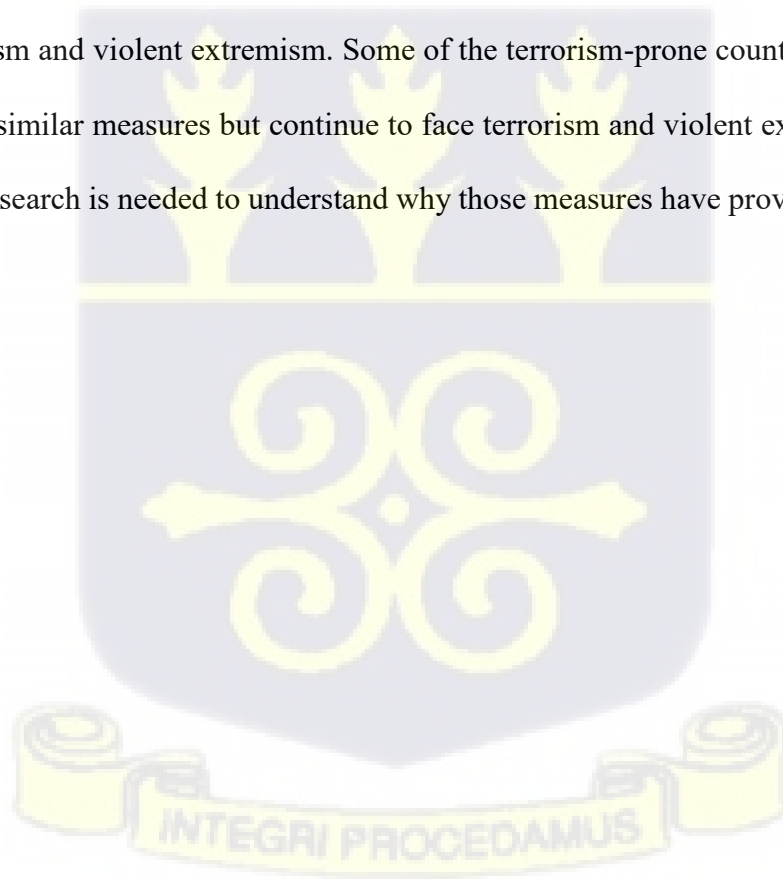
gathered from the interviews, focus group discussions and surveys revealed the perceptions of the participants vis-à-vis their experiences about the dissertation. To accurately represent the reality of the phenomenon under study and to build the confidence of the readers in the credibility of the dissertation, the researcher has decided to include extensive samples of quotation from the research participants' own words.

The first findings of the study establish Ghana's exposure to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. This finding addresses the first research question that sought to investigate whether Ghana is exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. To establish Ghana's exposure to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism, the research study identifies certain political, social and economic factors as accounting for Ghana's risk. Politically, some of the drivers include corruption, bad governance, dwindling confidence in the democratic system of governance, and perceived exclusion among others. Economically, poverty, unemployment, lack of economic opportunities among others are found to be the drivers of Ghana's risks to terrorism and violent extremism. Existing conflicts, poor parenting was also discovered as some of the social factors that can dispose Ghana to the threat of terrorism.

The second finding of this study was that Ghana is less prone to terrorism and violent extremism compared to her peers in the same region. Even though this study did not focus on Ghana's future susceptibility, it discovered a number of factors that have accounted for Ghana's past resilience and present immunity to the waves of terrorism hovering around the region. The factors that account for Ghana's apparent immunity to terrorism and violent extremism include the country's political and social history of integration and inclusivity, the role and authority of traditional chiefs in identifying early warning signals and mitigating the risk of terrorism, tight political and administrative control, functional security architecture, thriving democracy and the absence of an overarching religious authority that can galvanize support around religious

sentiments etc. In comparison with other countries in the same region, some of these factors are present in some of the regions that are currently terrorism-embattled, leaving room for further research on the ever-evolving drivers of terrorism and violent extremism. Connected with the second finding, the third and fourth findings reveal that Ghana has over the years evolved functional and responsive domestic mechanisms in responding to the risk and threat of terrorism and has been consistent in its contribution to regional, continental and international counter-terrorism efforts. The third and fourth findings address the third and fourth objectives of this study that focus on Ghana's domestic and external counter-terrorism efforts.

Finally, the measures adopted by Ghana have proven very useful per the evidence evinced. However, the study could not conclude that these measures are the reasons why Ghana is less prone to terrorism and violent extremism. Some of the terrorism-prone countries in the region have instituted similar measures but continue to face terrorism and violent extremism on their soils. Further research is needed to understand why those measures have proven less useful for those countries.



## CHAPTER SIX

### ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

#### 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to seek to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's relative resilience to terrorism and violent extremism compared to her peers in the West African Sub-region. In effect, the question underpinning this study is, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even though they share similar political and socioeconomic characteristics? The researcher hoped that understanding the source(s) of Ghana's relative peace and resistance to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism will undoubtedly yield valuable insights into preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in the region and beyond.

This chapter presents the key findings and analysis of data obtained from surveys, focus group discussions, expert interviews and documentary reviews. In all, data was collected from 296 participants. These included 285 survey respondents, 11 expert interviews, and one focus group discussion comprising three members out of the 11 experts previously interviewed. The primary data is supplemented by the secondary data collected through documentary reviews.

Apart from the overarching big question, the study was based on the following four questions;

- v. Is Ghana exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism?
- vi. Why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African subregion?
- vii. How is Ghana responding to the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism (P/CVET)?
- viii. How does the chosen response mechanism impact Ghana's P/CVET effort?

The study's research questions are addressed in line with analytic categories framed by the researcher. The same categories informed the analysis and presentation of the data in the previous chapter. In the previous chapter, data from various sources were organized into categories to produce a readable narrative. As a step further, this chapter will provide interpretive insights into the findings presented in the previous chapter. Whereas the previous chapter broke down the concentrated data into readable chunks, this chapter is an attempt to build a holistic understanding of the pieces of data while creating an integrated picture of the various parts of the analysis.

The discussion takes into account the extant literature and pertinent literature on the drivers of terrorism and the prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism. The outcome of this synthetic analysis will complement the perceptions of why countries are plagued by terrorism and violent extremism, how to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism, and why some countries are relatively less prone to the actual incidents of terrorism and violent extremism. The chapter concludes with a re-examination of the theoretical assumptions inferred from chapter three.

## **6.2 Analytic categories**

The first findings of the study reveal that Ghana is exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. We name analytic category 1 as "*Recognizing Ghana's risk exposure to terrorism and violent extremism*". This analytic category speaks to findings 1 and addresses the first research question. The second finding identifies the factors that make Ghana less prone to terrorism and violent extremism relative to her peers in the same region. Hence, we name analytic category 2 as "*Understanding Ghana's resilience against VET*". Analytic category 2

answers the research question two. The study also found that Ghana has, over time, evolved several measures domestically– legal and policy options – and acceded to international efforts – frameworks, conventions, and multilateral initiatives- aimed at preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism. To this revelation, we named analytic category 3 as “*Ghana’s response to Violent Extremism and Terrorism*”. This analytic category speaks to findings 3 and 4 and addresses the research questions 3 and 4.

### **6.3 Analytic category one: Recognizing Ghana’s risk exposure to terrorism and violent extremism**

The study proceeded from the intuition that no country is free from the risk of or threat of terrorism. This is particularly true in the case of Ghana, given that the country finds itself in the middle of terrorism-embattled neighbours. Beyond this geographic proximity, Ghana’s terrorism risk consistently rose for three years on the Global Terrorism Index (GTI). As at 2020, the country’s risk was measured to be 1.743, an increase from 1.559 and 1.397 in 2018 and 2017 respectively on a scale of 0 to 10 (IEP, 2019: p.39, 2020: p.8). The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) measures the direct and indirect impact of terrorism on a country in terms of damage to lives and property. A non-zero index score is an indication that Ghana is as vulnerable and exposed to terrorism despite the overtly peaceful nature of the country. The analysis of the data gathered in this study has further exposed Ghana’s risk to terrorism and violent extremism in several ways. Very little or no discord emerged regarding Ghana’s exposure to terrorism and violent extremism. If any at all, it is about the extent of exposure and the time horizon within which that could materialize provided no steps are taken to address the underlying drivers: This is how a key informant at WANEP captured this:

*Well, I think in terms of the vulnerabilities, if we were starting from that point I think clearly and as you have rightly said, there are quite similar vulnerabilities that we share with a number of countries that are also going through or dealing with the challenges of violent extremism. Starting from the point of governance and again I look at governance from all levels. So political governance, economic governance and social governance. Across these levels, we have a number of fault lines and fragilities that exposes us to the risk of attracting violent extremist groups (WANEP, Female, ... 2023).*

Another key informant from HSRC highlighted Ghana's risk in light of the youth bulge the continent in general and the country in particular is currently faced with. She bemoans the lack of jobs to meet the rising educated and skilful youth population as a key risk factor. According to her, this failure, which she placed at the doorstep of governance, disposes the youth to extreme ideas and makes them vulnerable to recruitment and radicalization by violent extremist groups. She averred;

*From my experience working in the field of human security and prevention of violent extremism in Africa, I find sufficient evidence that shows that Ghana has some vulnerabilities that can easily be exploited by these groups who are presently marauding along the gulf lines bordering the country. Take the youth bulge for example, and view that in light of the ever-rising unemployment in the country and you'll see the point. The youth are upset. Many of them have graduated from school and for years there are no jobs. This makes them very vulnerable and susceptible to recruitment and radicalization by extremists' groups once there is a glimpse of hope from that side. Already we have had evidence of some Ghanaian youth joining ISIS, who were lured with promises of jobs and better life. The youth are impatient to escape the hardships*

*they are facing. So aside from the recruitment by extremists' groups, they can by themselves decide to rise against the system if ever they find that justifiable and I think we are not far from that stage if nothing is done to address the issues of the youth and unemployment. But you know what? This is governance failure not just in Ghana but Africa as a whole (HSRC, Female, 2023).*

The views expressed by the key informants above are supported by the survey results, where the majority of the respondents hold a view that suggests Ghana is vulnerable and that there can be terrorist attacks in the country. In responding to the statement that, in spite of the claim of Ghana being a very peaceful country, it is likely that there can be terrorist attacks in the country, majority of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. From Figure 5.7 in the previous chapter, 40% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 28% indicated they strongly agreed with the same statement. This translate into nearly seven out of every ten respondents, representing the majority of the respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that, Ghana can potentially be attacked by terrorists. This reflects the public sentiments about Ghana's level of vulnerability, which is in tandem with the expert exposition on Ghana's risk exposure. Only 9.86% representing one out of ten respondents and 3.52 % representing three out of a hundred respondents respectively disagree and strongly disagree with the view that Ghana vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

The discussion in the terrorism literature on Ghana also reflects the survey results and expert accounts of Ghana's risk exposure to terrorism. Prah & Chanimbe (2021) in their work titled, supports the findings in this study. The authors identified Ghana's proximity to terrorism-prone countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria as very alarming threats. They also pointed to some of Ghana's controversial foreign policy positions as exposing Ghana to the risk of terrorist attacks.

What is alarming is, although Ghana shares borders with these countries, it remains among the few countries in the sub-region that have not experienced terrorist attacks. However, its geographical location, i.e., nearness to terrorism-prone countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, and Nigeria predisposes it to terrorist attacks. Again, Ghana's cordial relations with the US leading to the governments' acceptance of two former Guantanamo Bay detainees and the 2018 signing of a military agreement with the U.S for the establishment of a quasi-military base in Ghana's capital Accra for counterterrorism deployment in the sub-region has brought Ghana ever closer to the attention of terrorist groups both in the sub-region and beyond (Prah & Chanimbe, 2021, p.368).

Prah & Chanimbe (2021) exposition has accentuated two critical susceptibility factors which will be discussed later in the study – geopolitical and political drivers of terrorism. What this section of the study has done is to uncover and examine the factors exposing Ghana to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. Consistent with findings from the literature and the relevant theories of terrorism reviewed, these factors have been categorised into political, socioeconomic and geopolitical drivers of terrorism. These drivers are discussed systematically in the subsequent sections.

#### **6.4 Political factors**

Politically, the participants emphasized the pervasive perception of corruption, perceived political exclusion and marginalization, the dwindling trust in the democratic system of governance, the low levels of trust for political institutions in the country, the desire of the section of the population to experiment with violence as a way to achieving political goals

(Costly signalling) and the poor management of the episodic clashes between the Fulani's and some local communities in parts of the country.

#### 6.4.1 Corruption

The relationship between corruption and terrorism have received very little attention in the literature. However, increasing anecdotal evidence of the nexus of corruption and terrorism has resulted in increasing calls for more research into enhancing the knowledge on the relationship between two phenomena (Olaniyi, 2019; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). On the issue of corruption as a contributory factor to the susceptibility of Ghana to terrorism and violent extremism, a key informant at WACCE shared his views and experience with the researcher as follows;

*I want to talk about the issue of corruption. It is ridiculous that people don't see the potential danger in having a pervasive perception whether real or not in society. There is a guy I feel very painful but I have not been able to get a grip of him. This is a guy who called me in 2016 and told me how he identifies with what I do and all that but he is calling to let me know that this country is just at the edge of a security problem and that it's just by God that it did not happen, and that he personally had planned to come to parliament house intending to bomb it.... So, he narrated this and said, since 2015, I have stopped watching television when the bus branding scandal by the Ministry of Transport came up. That, it was a clear case of corruption and it was referred to parliament to be investigated by a committee and nothing came out of it. And that he believes that the problem of this country is parliament and that he intended to bomb parliament... So, these things are the reality and I can tell you there are people who can*

*feel very enraged and can think of nothing to do but because of the atmosphere and the idea that this is a peaceful place. We haven't seen examples. If we see examples, it's easier for people to do more. There are situations where you just need a spark. So, we are lucky that we have not had any attacks yet. Once we have an attack, we cannot contain it (WACCE, Male, ... 2023).*

The comments by the participant reveal the potential of corruption as a key driver of terrorism and violent extremism. The views expressed by the participant are supported by the outcome of the survey where a substantial number of the respondents have cited corruption as a reason why they think Ghana can be attacked by terrorists. As presented in figure 5.8 in the chapter five, when the study respondents were asked to identify which factors account for the notion that Ghana is vulnerable to terrorism, **78%** which represented eight out of every ten respondents cited corruption as a factor.

The comments also highlighted a very important issue, which is the diminishing mistrust for institutions of state and in this particular case the legislature. This discontent in the legislature is captured in the following line “... *And that he believes that the problem of this country is parliament and that he intended to bomb parliament*”. The author of this discontent is not alone. This point is discussed extensively in the subsequent sections under the appropriate heading.

The views expressed by the respondents in this study regarding the extent of corruption and its relationship with terrorism is supported by raft of findings in the literature and that of reputable rating agencies. In 2015, Ghana was listed along Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Liberia in the Global Corruption Barometer as the top 4 most corrupt countries in Africa (Transparency

International, 2015). Between 2014 and 2021 Ghana also lost five points on the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), plummeting from a score of 48 to 43 (Transparency International, 2022). Together, these shows that Ghana is among the countries whose citizens are most negative about the scale of corruption in their countries and the ability of the state to address same. Consistent with the available evidence drawn elsewhere, these are factors that can make the youth of Ghana susceptible to terrorist recruitment and radicalization. It is important to stress the point that, aggrieved youth/citizens may not be originally violent but are certainly vulnerable to any recruiter who plays on their emotions. For example, Boko Haram recruiters in Nigeria, present to the youth, the narrative of corruption, greed and dishonest government as the imperative for a radical and violent change in the system (Onuoha, 2014).

There is also a corner of the scholarship on terrorism which has evinced evidence to suggest that, not only the perception of corruption, that actual corruption is also important precipitant of terrorism. In his study titled *'Relationship between Corruption and Terrorism in African Countries'*, Olaniyi (2019), found evidence of positive causal relationship between corruption and terrorism Niger and Cameroon. Similarly, (Adeniran, 2018), in assessing federal government of Nigeria's efforts to recover looted assets as a means of fighting corruption and terrorism, has found that the country's score on the peace index is positively correlated with the score on the corruption perception index. These findings lend support to the findings of this study while expanding the angles through which the relationship between corruption and terrorism should be interrogated. Unlike this study, which focuses on the perception of corruption and terrorism, (Olaniyi, 2019) and (Adeniran, 2018) stretches the frontiers to highlight the impact of actual acts of corruption on terrorism. This, when read along the

corruption ratings of Ghana, sets an alarming tone that requires immediate intervention. On their part, Teets & Chenoweth, (2009, p.1) in emphasizing the relationship between corruption and terrorism explains;

Colombia consistently ranks as one of the more corrupt countries in the world; it ranked 3.8 out of 10 on the 2008 Corruption Perceptions Index. Incidentally, Colombia has suffered decades of terrorist attacks conducted by one of the most enduring terrorist groups in the world—the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). Conventional wisdom suggests, and U.S. policy subscribes to the belief, that corruption and terrorism coexist in a mutually reinforcing relationship. Such a conclusion seems intuitive given conditions in Colombia and elsewhere, where corruption and terrorism seem to coincide. This relationship, however, has always been a matter of speculation; it has not yet been systematically assessed (Teets & Chenoweth, 2009, p.1).

However, whereas corruption is noted as a driver of terrorism and which is supported by evidence in the literature, a section of the literature contradicts the argument in favour of a positive relationship between corruption and terrorism. Even in the elaborate expiation of (Teets & Chenoweth, 2009), admission has been made to the effect that the relationship between corruption and terrorism is speculative and has not been systematically assessed. Similarly, Olaniyi (2019) own study, which finds a positive relationship between corruption and terrorism in Niger and Cameroon, presented a conflicting finding where in Chad and Nigeria the relationship was weakly negative. In a rather radical departure from the studies purporting positive relationship between corruption and terrorism, Simpson (2014), suggest that lower levels of corruption rather promote increased incidents of terrorism. Using a fixed effects longitudinal negative binomial regression based on Muller's model of domestic political

violence, the author investigated the relationship between the perception of corruption and changes in the rate of incidents of terrorist violence for hundred and six (106) countries and found that in countries where avenues for corruption are blocked or limited, those countries experience higher rates of terrorism and terrorism related violence.

This conflicting evidence shows that the effect of corruption on terrorism is not decisive and requires further research. However, the evidence from this study appears to agree partly with Olaniyi (2019) and completely with Adeniran (2018) and Onuoha (2014) on corruption as a susceptibility driver for terrorism and violent extremism. In all these studies, the bottom line is the perception of corruption and how that could spur individuals or groups to advocate, support or even engage in terrorism. This heightens the risk of Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism on account of the perception of corruption in the country. The evidence in this study is further stretched and supported by a UNDP's study titled "Preventing Violent Extremism Through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity: A development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism". Reading from the UNDP's conceptualization of the path from radicalization to violent extremism, the perception of corruption along with the perception of injustice is pinned as a key driver of violent extremism (UNDP, 2016). In its expatiation, the UNDP argues that, there is a strong correlation between perceptions of injustice, corruption and systematic discrimination and the propensity to engage in violent extremism. Even among the three factors identified, the perceptions of injustice and discrimination, according to the study are fuelled by the high levels of corruption, which makes corruption the anchor on which other drivers of violent extremism are hinged;

The correlation between poverty and unemployment and young people's willingness to engage in political violence is not explicit. There appears to be a stronger correlation

between political violence and experiences or perceptions of injustice, corruption and systematic discrimination. People do not take up guns because they are poor, but because they are angry and frustrated. Perceptions of injustice may also be fuelled by high levels of corruption - domestic as well as international (e.g., illicit financial flows). These and protracted impunity for corrupt behaviour in particular are important drivers of violence, as they fuel sentiment that violent action is justified when it aims to rectify the inequality and injustice that result from it (UNDP, 2016, p.21).

The sentiments reported by the key informants and supported by the survey results as well as a section of the literature (Adeniran, 2018; Olaniyi, 2019; Onuoha, 2014; UNDP, 2016) reflects the potential of the perception of corruption as a key risk factor in Ghana. Even though the author of the discontent as narrated by the key informant from WACCE was silent on the plans as well as the capacity to engage in any bombing, his comments nevertheless show the extent to which corruption can provide the rationalistic grounds for people to engage in terrorism or even harbour the idea to. It is also important to note that every form of terrorism or violent extremism starts with an idea or the desire to change the way things are. It is from that stage that an individual or group of individuals begin to search for the means or the support systems to address the issues they find necessary to change. This search, according to the UNDP (2016) is the tipping point, which leads the individual or group to one of two paths – peaceful advocacy or violent extremism.

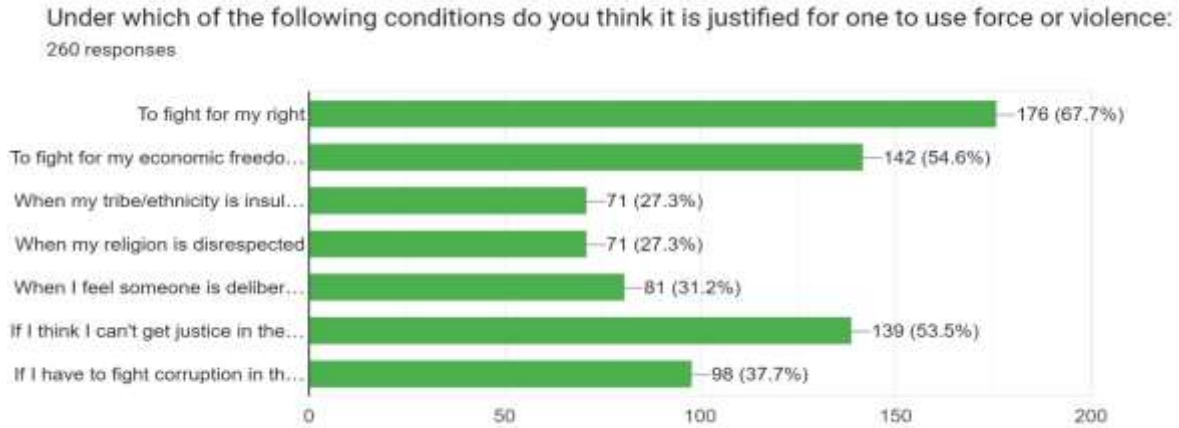
On their part, Gilchrist & Eisen (2019) are very categorical about the effect of corruption on terrorism. For the authors, corruption provides the fertile grounds for the festering of terrorism by undermining the fight against terrorism, giving access and funding to terrorists and providing motivation to terrorists and would-be recruits to engage in terrorism. The authors

illustrated their claim using the case of Kenya, where border security forces have regularly taken bribes to aid smuggling and illegal border crossing, giving unhindered entry and exit to al-Shabaab operatives in and out of Kenya respectively. Narrating how the experience and perception of corruption have enabled and festered terrorism in Kenya, the authors noted; Furthermore, officers in the Kenyan Defence Forces entrusted with fighting al-Shabab in Somalia have in the past instead collaborated with them to smuggle sugar over the border, allegedly resulting in at least \$200 million in funding for al-Shabab. On other occasions, Kenyan police officers have been known to detain and extort money from innocent Somali Kenyans under the pretence of finding al-Shabab sympathizers. These abuses contribute to the perception that Somali Kenyans are being discriminated against and generate motivation (at least in part) for jihadis to join the cause in Kenya (Gilchrist & Eisen, 2019, p.1).

The findings of corruption as a key driver of terrorism and violent extremism and which exposes Ghana to the risk of terrorism is also supported by a nationwide risk/threat analysis by the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) of Ghana in 2021. The NCCE in the study titled “Risk/Threat Analysis of Violent Extremism in the ten Border Regions of Ghana”, identified corruption as a vulnerability factor that exacerbates the propensity for violent extremism activities in Ghana (NCCE, 2021). This position is supported by the results of their nationwide survey, in which a quarter (24.8%) of all the respondents are willing to support or engage in violent extremism in order to fight corruption in the country (NCCE, 2021, p.28). According to the survey by the NCCE, corruption was the most frequently chosen vulnerability factor.

This study posed a similar question to the survey respondents and the response rate was slightly higher than that of the NCCE even though the findings reflect the same vulnerability. In figure

6.1 below, 37.7% of respondents indicated the fight against corruption as one of the reasons for which they could use force or engage in violent extremism.



**Figure 6.28: Justification for the use of force or violence**

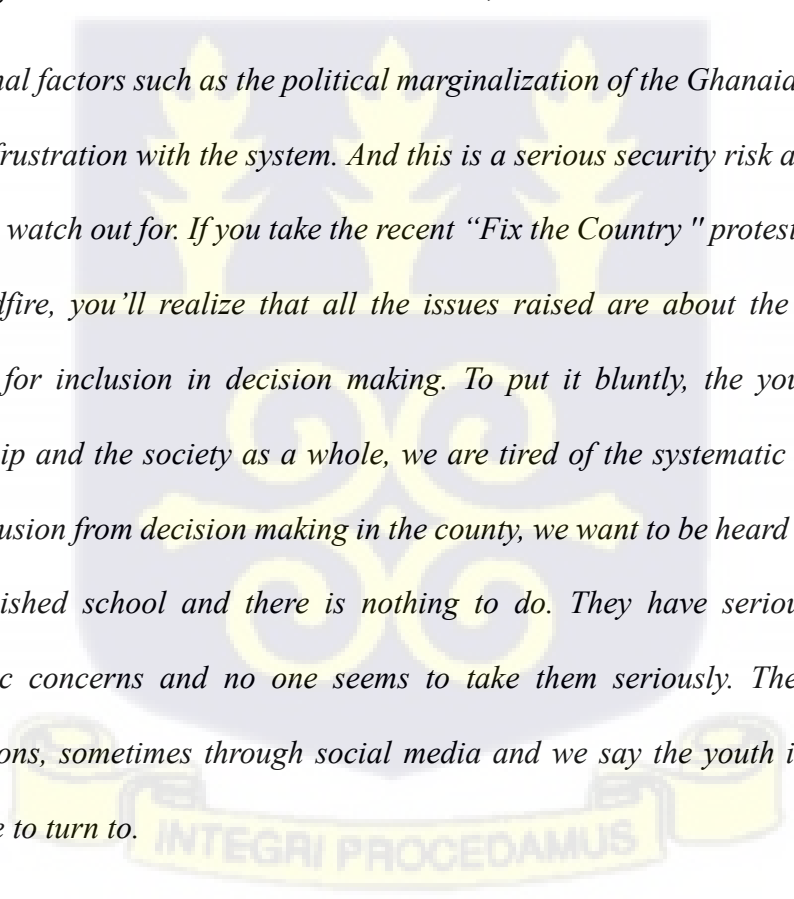
Source: field survey, 2023

Even though the percentages from these studies are below 50%, the response rates are alarming. The reason being that, when it comes to terrorism, a negligible figure relative to the entire population are expected to be involved (Sommers, 2017). So, to have a quarter and more than three out of every ten responses in the NCCE's risk/ threat analysis and in this study respectively portend a serious case for concern for Ghana. And even though the relationship between corruption and terrorism is inconclusive as revealed in the literature, on a whole the weight of evidence supports the findings in this study which portrays corruption as a major susceptibility factor for Ghana.

#### 6.4.2 Political exclusion and marginalization

The exclusion or marginalization of the youth in decision-making also came up strongly as a terrorism risk factor. Majority of the key informants emphasized the dangers of the perceived alienation of the youth in political and socio-economic decision-making as a vulnerability that

exposes Ghana to the propensity of terrorism activities happening in the country. This phenomenon according to the key informants creates a heightened sense of deprivation which is pervasive in Africa and has occasioned many vices that involve the youth. Informants also noted that, once the youth feel locked out of the opportunities to have their concerns addressed through the legally or socially acceptable channels, they may be tempted to resort to the use of violence and other unorthodox means of drawing attention of the government to their needs. This, from the perspective of the informants, could lead to internal mobilization for some kind of violent protests which can be taken advantage of by violent extremists' groups or creates the enabling condition for infiltration by external terrorist groups. Worthy of note is the comment of one of the key informants from HSRC on this issue;



*So internal factors such as the political marginalization of the Ghanaian youth leads to serious frustration with the system. And this is a serious security risk and vulnerability factor to watch out for. If you take the recent "Fix the Country " protest that has spread like wildfire, you'll realize that all the issues raised are about the Ghanaian youth fighting for inclusion in decision making. To put it bluntly, the youth is saying to leadership and the society as a whole, we are tired of the systematic marginalization and exclusion from decision making in the county, we want to be heard and seen. They have finished school and there is nothing to do. They have serious political and economic concerns and no one seems to take them seriously. They express their frustrations, sometimes through social media and we say the youth is unreasonable. Nowhere to turn to.*

She bemoans further that;

*This situation naturally leads to frustration, which can cause the youth to agitate and possibly introduce violence. And it reaches a point where they feel that if they don't take*

*certain actions or signal the authorities in a costly way, the authorities will feel lax to change their situation... If we could correct this, create the space for youth effective participation in political and economic decision-making in the country, people would have some peace of mind and nobody would really be looking for any violent means of letting anybody know that they are upset. For me, that is what Ghana's vulnerability is (HSRC, Female..., 2023).*

The comments from the key informant are supported by a raft of studies and discussions in literature on susceptibility to terrorism. For instance, Hellsten (2016), confirms that the youth in Africa generally lack the opportunity to influence and to contribute to decisions that affect their lives. Fanthorpe (2001) and Tlou (2014) on their part bemoaned this situation as militating against the political rights of the youth to participate and to challenge the unequal state-youth relations. Citing the recruitment and radicalization of the Kenyan youth, (Abdikadir, 2016; Hassan, 2012) posit that, the invisibility of the youth as important political stakeholders facilitates the process of exclusion that drives the youth to accept violence as a possible and sometimes a legitimate means of political expression. To quote Hellsten, in the case of Kenya, “as long as Kenyan domestic politics remain divisive; corruption prevails; and inequality and the lack of political voice continue, the youth of all ethnic groups will be vulnerable and susceptible to believing the promises made by recruiters” (Hellsten, 2016, p.23).

The analysis of the survey data reveals similar results to that of the expert interviews on the position of the youth in terms of decision-making at all levels of government. As shown in figure 5.12 in the previous chapter, a sixth (62.63%) of the survey respondents hold the view that there's no effective participation in decision-making for the youth in Ghana. And about a

third (29.89%) believe that the youth are marginalized and blocked from participating in decision-making. Only about seven out of a hundred respondents (7.47%) hold the contrary view that the youth get to participate in decision-making and their views are taken into account. Recalling that, the overwhelming majority of the survey respondents are within the youth bracket, the results show how the youth feel about their status in the country's politics. Figure 5.13 in the previous chapter reveals that 78.3% of the study respondents are within the youth bracket. This suggests that 78.3% of the 93% who think the youth doesn't matter in decision-making at all levels of government is within the youth bracket. This result heightens the susceptibility imminent for Ghana.

Given the fact that the youth is the most vulnerable to terrorist recruiters and constitute the majority of terrorist fighters for terrorism and violent extremists' groups (Abdikadir, 2016; Allan, Glazzard, Jesperson, Reddy-tumu, & Winterbotham, 2015; NCCE, 2021; Onuoha, 2014; Sommers, 2019; UNDP, 2016), the findings of this study is foretelling of a gloomy future if nothing is done to build inclusive politics and society in which the youth feel part. The risk/threat analysis by the NCCE as noted above found that the youth in Ghana constitutes more than 80% of the population that is likely to be recruited into violent extremist groups (NCCE, 2021, p.29). Sommers (2019) in particular have articulated this in his work titled "Youth and the Field of Countering Violent Extremism";

The overwhelming majority of those who become violent extremists are youth, most of whom are male youth. Whether highlighted or suggested indirectly, CVE focuses on young people deemed vulnerable to becoming violent extremists. As a CVE expert remarked in an interview for this study, "Youth is implicit in CVE work because they are the ones who are vulnerable to recruitment" by VEOs (Sommers, 2019, p.7).

To buttress the notion that the marginalization and exclusion of the youth from decision making could lead to violent extremism, respondents were asked to proffer a solution to the perceived marginalization or exclusion. Only a third of the respondents recommended the use of the democratic process enshrined in law for the youth or any marginalized group to advocate for participation. The rest of the respondents recommended various shades of unorthodox tactics with elements of violence or with the potential to lead to violent extremism. From figure 5.14 below as presented in the previous chapter, thirty-three (33.3%) representing three out of every ten respondents favoured the use of the democratic process to address any issue of exclusion or marginalization. Another third (36.90%) of the respondents recommended the formation of pressure groups by the youth or any marginalized groups to press home their demands. Twelve percent (12.55%) suggested the withdrawal of support for the government which could mean anything and another 11.44% proposed the outright use of force as a response to exclusion and marginalization from decision making.

Even though the proportion of those willing to use outright force to fight back against exclusion is just 11%, literally translated into ten out of hundred people, that does not make it less threatening. The reason is that, even though the majority of those involved in terrorism and violence is the youth, their proportion is numerically negligible compared to the youth population. So, the numbers do not matter as much as the intent and red-alert. This notion, supported by the finding in this study, is equally espoused in Sommers work on the youth in the field of countering violent extremism (CVE). Sommer borrowed the metaphor from the work of Khalil & Zeuthen (2014, p.21) "...needles in a haystack" to emphasize the point that only a tiny proportion of the bulging youthful population ends up joining VEOs. He however,

concedes to what he describes as an irony, that these “needles in a haystack” are having disproportionate effect.

The drive to thwart violent extremists from attracting or coercing relative handfuls of young people has inspired one expert to compare CVE work to “searching for needles in a haystack.” ... and it boils down to the following irony: Although the overwhelming majority of recruits into VEOs are youth, tiny proportions of vast youth populations become recruits. Even if CVE did not exist, most female and male youth would not become violent extremists. At the same time, the tiny proportions of youth who enter VEOs are having a disproportionate effect (Sommers, 2019, p.8).

Another important aspect of the political exclusion and marginalization in the case of Ghana is how the Fulani minority ethnic group is treated, sometimes by agents acting in the name of the state. Several of the key informants have bemoaned what they described as systematic victimization and marginalization of the Fulani minority on ethnic grounds. The key informants cautioned that, the way the Fulani minority is being treated in Ghana – negative media representation, generalization with individual acts, reported cases of abuses and attacks of Fulani’s in some communities in Ghana -- is a significant risk factor worth considering by policy makers. A key informant speaking from HSRC made reference to the situation in Mali and Burkina Faso where the majority of the terrorists’ fighters are Fulani minorities ostensibly struggling for recognition and fair treatment from the state. Highlighting these events and the risk associated with exclusion and marginalization of the Fulani minority, the key informant from HSRC averred;

*... but we have to be careful about how we treat the Fulani minority people in Ghana. Because there is a growing international Fulani community advocating for justice for Fulani people as minorities in particular countries. So, if we continue to have difficulties with Fulani people, that could also raise issues. During the registration of the National Identification, some Fulanis were denied access just because they were Fulanis. Meanwhile some of them are Ghanaians. We don't care to challenge them legally as we normally do with an Akan, Ewe, Ga and others. This is marginalization and a form of abuse against the Fulani. This coupled with the inciteful reportage in the media against Fulanis, treating them as single with a single story is a serious risk factor. Amadu Kuofa and Dicko took advantage of similar systematic political exclusion and marginalization to mobilize the Fulani minorities in both Mali and Burkina Faso respectively for terrorists' activities. An example is the Fulani Macina Liberation Front... (HSRC, Male...,2023).*

Ryan Cummins, the Director of Signal Risk at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change Gives credence to the above statements made by the key informant. Cummins asserted that Ansarul Islam, a jihadist group, was allegedly created by Malam Ibrahim Dicko purportedly to defend the rights of the Fulani ethnic group in Burkina Faso. The prominent Islamic preacher, who became a leader of the militant group and noted for preaching radical Islam constantly memorialized and vowed to resurrect the ancient Kingdom of Djeelgodji – a powerful Fulani empire (Cummings, 2017). Whether Dicko's claim is justifiably or not is immaterial. The lesson is that, part of Dicko's impetus came from evidence of systematic marginalization and sometimes state sponsored abuses against the Fulani minority group in Burkina Faso. Having entrenched his group in Burkina Faso, Dicko made attempts to export his ideals and to forge alliances across borders and territories in advancement of the interest of the Fulani ethnic group.

Following his proselytization in Burkina Faso's Soum province, it is rumoured that Dicko travelled to northern Mali, where he met and trained alongside Amadou Koufa, the purported leader of the al-Qaeda-aligned and Fulani-dominant Macina Liberation Front (MLF) militant group. Akin to its Burkinabé counterpart, Koufa's MLF also seeks the resurrection of an antiquated Fulani empire that once presided over central and southern Mali. A social media post from the same account that claimed the Nassoumbou attack seemed to further reinforce the strategic relationship between Dicko and Koufa – and, by extension, between Ansarul Islam and the MLF – when it released a statement on behalf of both militant leaders (Cummings, 2017, p.1).

The revelations by Cummins raises serious concerns for Ghana. Firstly, because there is a sizable group of Fulanis in Ghana who sometimes suffer open discrimination. This alone is enough to spur them into mobilizing like their counter-parts in the Sahel and Burkina Faso. Secondly and equally alarming is the proximity of Ghana to Burkina. The two countries share a common border and from Cummins assertions, Dicko's expeditions in Mali illustrates the potential of spill over of similar struggles into Ghana if there are no satisfactory treatments to the Fulani minority in Ghana.

#### **6.4.3 Erosion of trust in democracy and political institutions**

The resentment with the economic and political system of governance and the loss of faith in political institutions have in many cases produced the rationalistic grounds for people to advocate, sponsor or even join terrorist groups as a form of political agitation (Hamelin, Anzay, Connell, & Kalpakian, n.d.; Onuoha, 2014; Piazza, 2006; UNDP, 2016). Respondents in this study bemoaned the spiralling of the responsiveness of the current governance and political dispensation to deliver the desired political and economic outcomes for the citizens. Worthy of

note was the emphasis on the exclusionary governance and political system that is taking shape and its implication on the security situation in the country. Emphasis was also placed on the winner-takes-it-all system both in intra and inter-party politics, which runs through the political strata and introduces a patronage system where power is to the highest bidder. There is a rising notion that the current democratic system and the structure of the public institutions conspire to rig the system in favour of the few. This situation as observed by the key informants creates the feelings and sense of exclusion, which can further produce the environment fertile enough for either internal elements or external extremists' groups to take advantage. A key informant at WANEP expressed this in the following way;

*Since we are looking at the context of security, I want to start with political governance given that it is at that level that lies the primary duty and responsibility. If you look at political governance, I think we have been struggling for a couple of years now. If you want to do an assessment and do a rating, you'll find that, with some of the indicators that are used to do the ratings, we've been on the decline in terms of political governance starting from the nature of politics itself which is becoming more and more exclusionary rather than inclusive. When people cannot readily point to the cause of their misery, the prevailing economic and political system become the immediate culprit. Those who perceive themselves as victims of the current system, will then start to plot its collapse or overthrow (WANEP, Female, ...,2023).*

She proceeded to add;

*I think it (governance) is one of the fault lines that we are looking at to inform the levels of insecurity we are facing. So, the exclusionary politics that we have been practicing, which is seen in the case of Ghana and not just between our political parties but even at the level of intraparty activities, is a recipe for grievance and violent contestations ...*

*So, we seem to have lost the quality of inclusive political party dynamics and it obviously continues and plays out at the state level that is, at government level where once the political party is in power then, of course, the exclusive practices continue and only a few are benefiting (WANEP, Female, ...,2023).*

In drawing comparisons in a practical sense, the situation in the Sahel and Nigeria where governance failures have produced the enabling conditions for recruitment and radicalization by terrorists' groups in such spaces was highlighted. Essentially, the exclusionary system of governance in those places have exacerbated the feeling of resentment against the democratic system of governance and the political institutions on which it thrives. This study found that the story is not too different in Ghana, which should be a cause for worry. A key informant from HSRC averred;

*Now, this idea people give as if it is an army that is marching across the border to come and attack, for me, it's neither here nor there. What we have to be concerned about is that extremism can start here for many other reasons and those are the things that we have to look at. It's all about good governance. Because if people are dissatisfied with issues of good governance, the thing (terrorism) will start from here. As we said, the situation about Nigeria in the gulf is not about Islam. It's about the diminished faith in the prevailing economic and political system. It's about livelihood, good governance, and politics. And the same way, the thing that started in Northern Mali, it's all about good governance too. In Ghana today, people are beginning to feel that this whole democracy thin is a scam, designed to tie down the vulnerable and give the elites all the opportunity to steal or loot. So, there's huge disenchantment with democracy and the democratic institutions. And this is not just in Ghana alone (HSRC, Male, ... 2023).*

The UNDP also projects this perspective using events in Germany and Italy, certain VE groups such as the Baader-Meinhof Group in Germany or the Red Brigades in Italy who rejected established political and economic systems in these countries. According to the UNDP, these groups denounced the status quos as machines designed to rig the system in favour of some while promoting a violent overthrow of what they perceive as a decadent and corrupt system.

Most violent extremist groups offer an ideological alternative to the combined narrative of free markets, democracy and multicultural diversity. This was also the ideology used in the past by groups such as the Baader-Meinhof Group in Germany or the Red Brigades in Italy, rejecting the established global order and many of the parameters of the modern nation-state. The world's growing economic inequality—whereby nearly half of the wealth is owned by 1% of its population – and the sense of injustice that stems from this, are projected by violent extremists as a result of a socio-economic and political system that is rigged to serve a wealthy and powerful few. In contrast, the narrative professed by extremists offers empowerment, order and security, with violence as one of the tools for imposing this view on the wider society. Hence, they often allude to the necessity for a violent overthrow of a decadent and corrupt system. This perverse ideological narrative seems to appeal to groups and individuals of all ages, across all lines of identity and income (UNDP, 2017, p.21).

The discontent with the governance system and democracy as espoused by the key informants is also supported by the survey results. This is shown in figure 5.10 in the previous chapter, where respondents were asked directly if they think democracy has served Ghana and Africa well. The majority of the respondents answered in the negative. Six out of every ten respondents, read in percentage terms as 59% hold the view that democracy has not served Ghana and Africa well. Only thirty-eight (38%) percent of the respondents hold a contrary view.

The evidence thus points to the fact that, the majority of Ghanaian citizens have lost confidence in democracy as the most efficient and effective system of governance. Even though respondents were not asked to provide or name an alternative system, their response suffices for one to make the assumption that democracy and the democratic ethos of our society is presently under threat. And though democratic countries are not immune from terrorists' attacks, the culture that democracy promotes has embedded in it the cures for some of the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism – pluralism and popular participation halts the festering of the perception of exclusion and marginalization which are critical drivers' terrorism and violent extremism.

Lending credence to the findings in this study is a similar finding made by Afrobarometer. In its round 8 survey in Ghana, the Afrobarometer reported that 59% of the respondents held the view that the country is going in the wrong direction while 35.4% said the country was going in the right direction (Afrobarometer, 2020, p.12). On the direct question of whether respondents were satisfied with the way democracy works in Ghana, 65% reported being satisfied or very satisfied compared to 32% who are dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Ghana (Afrobarometer, 2020, p.30). Overall, the majority according to the Afrobarometer survey are satisfied with the democratic system in Ghana. Whereas this varies with the findings reported in this study, there is no objective basis for comparing the two or rejecting one in favour of the other. The fundamental linkage is that, in both studies, a section of the citizenry demonstrated dissatisfaction with the system and this poses a threat to the stability and peace of the country. As noted above, situations like this have motivated people to advocate or even experiment with violent extremism as tools for imposing such negative views on the public (UNDP, 2016).

On account of trust for public institutions especially those with significant responsibility for CVE such as the police, the legislature and the courts the study finds that trust for these institutions is hitting its nadir. As presented in figure 6.2 below, the public trust for these institutions is disturbingly low. On average less than 3% of all the respondents said they had very strong trust for the institutions of parliament, the police and the law courts combined. These institutions are important because their functions have direct and significant implications for the prevention and countering of violent extremism. Parliament for instance is made up of the representatives of the people and whom the people should trust to articulate their concerns and grievances in a peaceful manner. Where the people tend to have low trust for these institutions as shown in figure 6.2 (43.5% and 35.4% reported weak and very weak trust respectively), other means of interest articulation including violent contestations could be employed by the people to articulate their concerns. Considering the fact that 59% of these same respondents already reported that democracy has failed in Ghana, the propensity of resorting to violence is high.

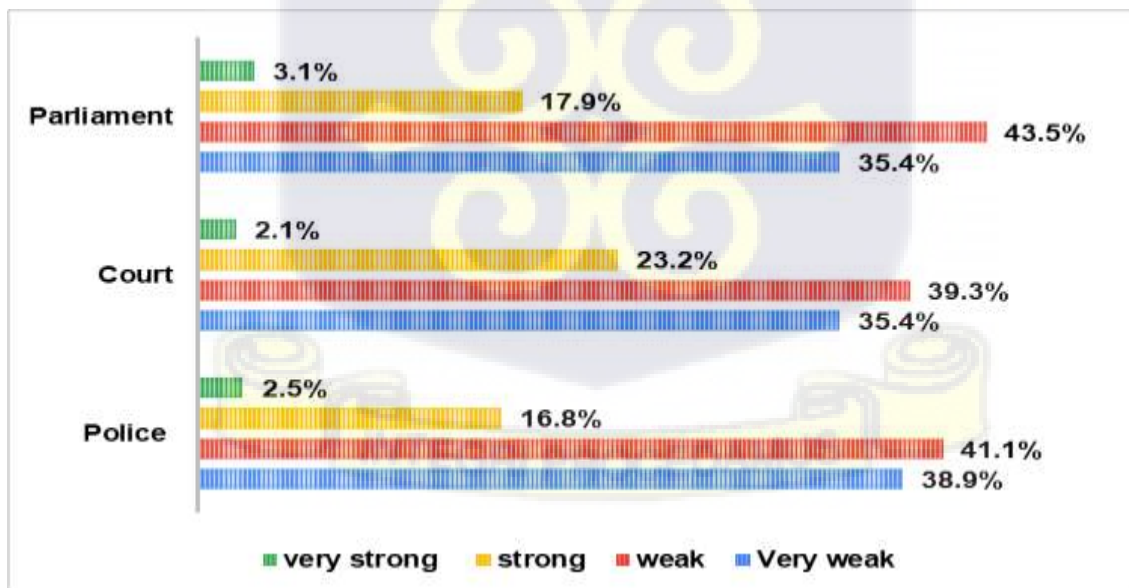


Figure 6.29: Levels of trust for public institutions

Source: field survey, 2023

The levels of trust in the courts as depicted in the graph presents an alarming situation for Ghana as far as susceptibility to violent extremism is concerned. The courts are seen as the bastions of democracy that give voice to the citizenry as well as a mechanism for peaceful resolutions of grievances in situations where trust is lost for other institutions such as the police and the legislature among others. Weak or very weak trust in the courts in Ghana means the country running out of avenues for peaceful redress of issues or grievances including political grievances. This trajectory could create the fertile grounds for violence to be used or advocated as a means for addressing grievances which can then be exploited by external groups or domestically radicalized individuals.

Raft of other studies reflects the findings in this study while pointing to the risk of dwindling trust in the system and its institutions. For Hamelin, Anzay, Connell, & Kalpakian, (n.d., p.231); “The degree to which individuals admit to low faith in government concern seems to be an important driver for the intention towards violent action”. Thornton, (1964) was more direct by arguing that, when people no longer have faith in their governments and the democratic process of addressing their concerns, terror becomes the tool for political agitation. Similarly, Abadie, (2006) also argues that, when governments and the political institutions through which they work are no longer credible, the conditions for terrorism and violent extremism tend to fester. And as much as the conditions in Ghana has not exacerbated to the point of inciting or inciting violent extremist activities, the findings made in this study, augmented by the evidence adduced from the literature reveals the growing threat of terrorism and violent extremism that Ghana faces.

#### 6.4.4 Predisposition to violent extremism

Another significant or alarming susceptibility factor discovered by this study was the predisposition to the use of violence. To buttress the notion that the marginalization and exclusion of the youth from decision making could lead to violent extremism, respondents were asked to proffer solutions to the perceived marginalization or exclusion. Only a third of the respondents recommended the use of the democratic process enshrined in law for the youth or marginalized groups to advocate for participation and inclusivity. The rest of the respondents recommended various shades of unorthodox tactics with elements of violence or with the potential to lead to violent extremism. From figure 5.14 in the previous chapter, thirty-three (33.3%) representing three out of every ten respondents favoured the use of the democratic process to address any issue of exclusion or marginalization. Another third (36.90%) of the respondents recommended the formation of pressure groups by the youth or any marginalized groups to press home their demands. Twelve percent (12.55%) suggested the withdrawal of support for the government which could mean anything and another 11.44% proposed the outright use of force as a response to exclusion and marginalization from decision making.

Another phenomenon that heightens the predisposition to violence especially among the youth is that of political vigilantism, which has now taken centre stage in Ghanaian politics as one of the ways of interest articulation. Unlike the conventional character of vigilantism, where a community authorizes a voluntary group to help fight a vice, the prevailing political vigilantism in Ghana takes the form of inter- and intra- party violence. Young men and women are recruited by political parties as force wings with terrifying names. The modus operandi of these groups is brutal violence against anyone who stands in the way of their political parties. They are mostly deployed in internal party elections and during national elections ostensibly to protect

the interest of their respective political parties. Respondents identify this phenomenon as a risk factor for the emergence of terrorism. Some of the respondents have also expressed concern that external terrorist groups can take advantage and recruit members of these groups as international fighters or for activities within the home country. A key informant expressed this opinion in the following words;

*There are serious vulnerability issues of concern that have not been dealt with in this country. A collection of these vulnerability factors which are very real and present include the violent political contestation that is dominating the country's political space. The violence in this sense manifests in the form of political vigilantism, which has become a spectre in our body politics. These happenings we witness in our space set an environment for the possible terrorists' recruitment or extremists attacks on this country. So, when we are talking about terrorism in West Africa, we need to have in mind that these vulnerabilities are here and are pervasive in this space. How we manage these vulnerabilities will determine the resilience of this country's exposure to terrorism within the short to medium term (WACCE, Male..., 2023).*

The statements by the key informant above are supported by prior discussions in the literature. Commenting on the rise of jihadist groups in the Syrian civil war, Mubin Shaikh, an ex-counterterrorism operative for the Canadian security services and former extremist and now a radicalization expert, argues that, the experience and exposure to violence makes individuals more susceptible to terrorism. The author identified three overarching conditions that define and facilitate the relationship between history and exposure to violence and susceptibility to terrorism. Firstly, the exposure to violence makes it easier for a person to resort to using it. Because the person sees it all the time and gets accustomed to it; secondly, history and exposure

of violence allows the individual to build operational capability. Here the individual or group now has the skill set to apply to terrorist and which makes that person or group a suitable target for recruitment by Violent Extremists Organizations. And the third condition is that exposure to and history of terrorism gives the individual access to a wider network of people who exhibit the first two attributes (Robinson-Early, 2016).

This is where the activities of violent political vigilante groups present a threat to Ghana in terms of the propensity of terrorist activities taking place here. This is because their presence and activities in Ghana reveals all the three precedent conditions espoused by Shaik – getting accustomed to violence, opportunities to build operational capability and exposure to the relevant networks. This is especially clearer if one considers the findings in this study, where respondents not only agree with the potential of terrorism happening in Ghana but also admitted to the willingness of using violence for various reasons. In Figure 6.1 presented above the respondents in this study have indicated the various reasons for which they will use force or violence. Given that the reasons cited – such as corruption, poverty which is blamed on leaders, perceived injustice etc - are found to be present in Ghana shows the extent of vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism especially the youth. For instance, as high as 67.7% are ready to employ violence in defence of their rights. Similar findings have been made by the NCCE in its risk/threat analysis of the ten border regions of Ghana. The NCCE asked respondents to indicate the reasons for which they will engage in or support violent extremist activities and found that respondents were willing to support or engage in violent extremist activities for reasons such as fighting corruption, poverty, human rights abuse among others (NCCE, 2021, p.28).

Further on the link between predisposition to violence and susceptibility to terrorism, Robinson-Early (2016) revealed that at least two of the men involved in the attacks on Brussels in 2016, Ibrahim el-Bakraoui and his brother Khalid were found to have a history of multiple convictions and involvement in crimes and violence including shooting at police officers, armed robbery etc. Joan Smith, author of "Homegrown: How Domestic Violence Turns Men into Terrorists" also examined the relationship between prior exposure to violence and susceptibility to terrorism and argued that men with a history of a receptive attitude to violence are susceptible to terrorists' propaganda. According to the author, such men exude character traits that terrorists' organizations understand and exploit.

Obviously, we are talking about a small minority, given that most abusive men don't become terrorists. But men who habitually abuse women have a lower threshold for violence. They live with it every day, enjoying the feeling of power and control that comes with it. They are desensitised, accustomed to being around distressed people, and other people's pain and fear makes them feel important. These men have different attitudes to violence - a predisposition that makes them more susceptible to extremist propaganda. They're also imbued with misogyny, which terrorist organisations understand and exploit. Some foreign fighters have admitted that they joined ISIS to have sex slaves, the most extreme form of domestic abuse it's possible to imagine (Smith, 2019, p.34).

The above discussions and as supported by the survey results, point to the view that the prevalence of political vigilantism and the willingness of the section of the population to engage in or support violent extremism exposes Ghana to high propensity of terroristic activities.

## 6.5 Socio-economic factors

Unemployment, poverty, lack of economic opportunity, ethnic cleavages borne out of natural resources distribution, social and economic inequality, tribal and ethnic resentment among others are mostly considered to be the key socio-economic factors that drive terrorism (Abadie, 2006; Elu & Price, 2015; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Jager, 2018; Omwega et al., 2016; Onuoha, 2014; Piazza, 2006; Sageman, 2004; UNDP, 2016; Zenn, 2018). On the economic drivers of terrorism, both the key informants and focus group discussants have emphasized these factors - poverty, unemployment, economic marginalization, inadequate economic opportunities, and the desire for money - as critical risk factors for terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. Much of the discussion and expert opinions in this respect were comparative as respondents and discussants repeatedly compared the prevailing situation in Ghana to that of Nigeria and some of the Sahelian states. One of the key informants in expressing this link averred;

*We have to look at the profile of this country when we are talking about violent extremism. What constitutes violent extremism in this space? ... We are looking at the drivers of radicalization or the factors that lead individuals to engage in extremism. In this space, we are talking about pervasive youth unemployment. This is one of the biggest drivers or enablers in terms of violent extremism. Virtually in all the work we do in the Sahel and the Gulf regions, youth unemployment is one issue that keeps coming up strongly in many of our research works. You know, as they say, the idle hands are used by the devil. Even though we cannot conclude that joblessness leads to terrorism, we have found evidence linking the lack of job to acceptance and eventual participation in the activities of terrorists and violent extremist groups for survival. This puts Ghana in the spotlight when you consider the huge youth bulge and the high levels of unemployment. Two things could happen, drawing from the lessons we have learned;*

*violent extremists' groups may take advantage of the unemployed youth and recruit them as foreign fighters in another country or the youth themselves may resort to criminal activities leading to acts of violent extremism, which will be their direct response to the economic hardships they face... (WACCE, Male...2023).*

Another key informant speaking from the Ghana Police Service, highlighted unemployment and poverty as socio-economic vulnerability factors to be looked out for. According to the informant, levels of poverty and unemployment are rising and that these could make especially the youth vulnerable to terrorist recruitment and radicalization. The informant compared the current situation in Ghana to what he claims pertains in the Sahel;

*Rising levels of poverty and youth unemployment are the two most important factors that the government should address without delay. These are the two most important factors that violent extremist groups have employed as tools of luring people, especially the unemployed youth. And when it comes to this, the level of education doesn't matter. Those who even finish school without jobs for years are the most vulnerable and as it's often said, the most dangerous criminal is the educated criminal (... laughs). You see places such as Timbuktu in the Sahel, endemic poverty is what has delivered the vast space and the inhabitants to the terrorist groups from the Sahara but you hear analysts call the place ungoverned spaces. This is simply because people have been denied basic facilities and amenities which is both the cause and consequence of endemic poverty. These groups don't have to force the people to join them. They simply point to the failures of the government and make promises to them and actually deliver some of them. As simple as that! and their allegiance shifts! And for some of the youth, they are*

*promised salaries if they join their ranks... so poverty and joblessness especially among the youth should be watched... (GPS, Female...2023).*

The analysis of the survey results on the link between economic factors and violent extremism lends support to the expert opinions expressed by the interview respondents. In Figure 5.15 in the previous chapter, where respondents were asked to identify factors that push the youth to join political vigilante groups or even terrorist groups, unemployment, poverty, desire for money and inadequate opportunity were the most rated reasons. As has been cited in figure 5.15, unemployment, poverty and money were the three top reasons for the occurrence of political vigilantism in Ghana and which can push young people in Ghana to join foreign terrorist groups. For instance, 89.6%, representing nine out of every ten respondents cited unemployment, 71.1% constituting 7 out of ten respondents named poverty and 61% selected the desire to make money. Additionally, 56% cited the perception of a weak and corrupt government, 33% cited religious fanaticism and 31% indicated blocked political participation as some of the factors driving political vigilantism violence in Ghana.

In places such as Nigeria, Kenya, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Somalia, where terrorism is very rife, unemployment, poverty and perceived economic inequality are said to be some of the key reasons why the youth join terrorists' groups. For instance, in 2013, a study conducted by Onuoha in Nigeria, using a combination of Surveys, Interviews, and Focus group discussions, revealed that "poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and weak family structures make or contribute to making young men vulnerable to radicalization" (Onuoha, 2014, p.1). Onuoha also found that itinerant preachers exploit and influence the youth by preaching an extreme version of religious teaching to them while conveying a narrative that portrays the government

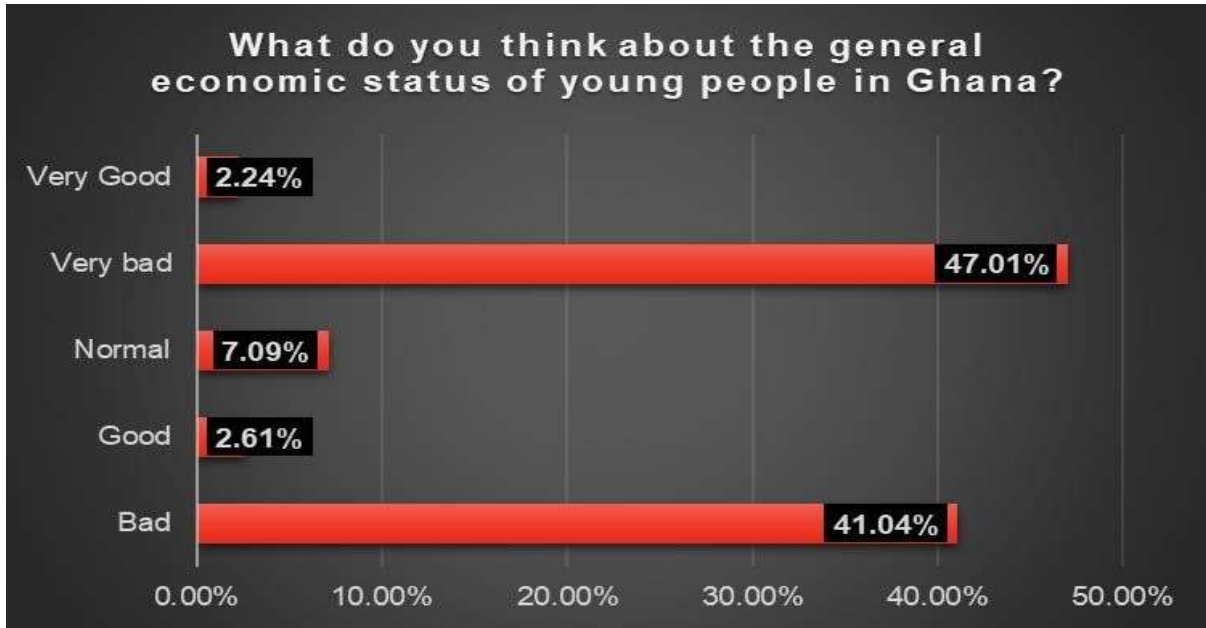
as corrupt and greedy. Three years later, Ewi and Uyo, in a similar study intuitively titled “*Money talks: A key reason why the youth join Boko Haram*” also found that, poverty and the desire to make money on the part of the youth delivered them into the sanctuary of Boko Haram Terrorists Group, where they undertake roles ranging from couriers to suicide bombings (Ewi & Salifu, 2017). In Somalia, the Al-Shabaab terrorist group draws its fighters largely from the pool of impoverished and frustrated youth within Somalia and neighbouring Kenya, using token money as bait (Abdikadiri, 2016; Hassan, 2012; Hellsten, 2016). In a focus group discussion with some ex-Al-Shabaab militants in the Horn of Africa, Hassan revealed that Al Shabab recruits earned between \$50 and \$150 dollars a month while working with the group (Hassan, 2012).

On the socio-economic drivers of terrorism, Lichbach (1989) summarised volumes of studies on what he referred to as the “Economic Inequality-Political Conflict puzzle” and concluded that, the majority of social scientists have assumed a priori economic factors such as economic inequality to be important drivers of violent political conflicts. As a result, Lichbach argues that socio-economic disparities have taken a central role in most academic studies as an explanatory variable for the incident of violent conflict. Despite the explanatory power of the socio-economic drivers, Lichbach has also noted that, the academy after several decades has not enjoyed the kind of consensus that seem to have been common among policymakers on the relationship between socio-economic factors and terrorism (Lichbach, 1989; Piazza, 2006). A legion of scholarly studies devoted to examining the relationship between poverty, material deprivation, and unequal distribution of resources and mass political violence suggests evidence both against and for the relationship (Piazza, 2006).

The other socio-economic driver that came up strongly was respondents' perception of the economic condition of the youth. This was particularly important for the research since the perception of the feeling of relative deprivation is driven largely by the perception of the actor relative to their reality. To this, one of the key informants remarked;

*The youth may decide to employ violence to send what we call costly signalling to the authority if they think their economic concerns are being ignored deliberately or much worse if they begin to believe that the unemployment or general youth poverty is born out of the deliberate decision of some or a group of people. So, it's all about the perception, and when you talk to young people many of them hold unfavourable perceptions about the unemployment situation in the country. This is especially serious among the educated and the group mostly referred to as the elite. So, to me, managing the perception of the youth is very important and, I will say, is the first step to addressing the economic or socio-economic drivers of terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana (HSRC, Female..., 2023).*

The analysis of the survey data as shown in Figure 6.16 and reproduced below confirms the view held by the interview respondent regarding the perception of the youth in relation to the latter's economic condition in the country. When asked about what they think about the general economic conditions of the youth in Ghana, an overwhelming majority of the respondents think the economic conditions of the youth in Ghana are either bad or very bad (very bad – 47.01% and bad – 41.04%). Only about four out of every hundred respondents think the economic conditions of young people in Ghana is either good or very good. Generally, the analysis of the data shows that of every ten respondents contacted, nine hold a bleak picture of the economic conditions of the youth in the country.



**Figure 6.30: Perceptions about the economic conditions of the youth**

Source: field survey, 2023

In a similar study, Muller and Seligson sampled eighty-five developing states, studied them between 1973 and 1977 and found support for the relationship between socio-economic drivers and violent conflicts (Muller & Seligson, 1987). The authors posited that, for the subject states, income inequality rather than regime repression is a significant predictor of political violence. The study by Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson could be taken as confirmatory research of an earlier inquiry by Bruce London and Thomas D. Robinson. London and Robinson also analysed fifty-one developing countries between 1968 and 1972 focusing on the relationship between socio-economic factors and violent conflict (London & Robinson, 1989). The authors found that income inequality is a significant determinant of violent conflict and that the relationship is mediated by the distribution of wealth in the domestic economy and how this is altered by the presence of multi-national corporations (Piazza, 2006). In addition to this scholarship, James and Laitin in a much later study titled ‘civil war and insurgency’ analysed 127 civil wars between the period 1945 – 1999 and socio-economic factors to be significant drivers of violent conflicts (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). In particular, the authors showed through

their analysis that, poverty, along with large population size, general political instability is a significant driver of violent domestic conflict. To Fearon and Laitin, results in economically and administratively weak states and also facilitates recruitment by violent extremists and insurgents (Piazza, 2006).

In a 2019 study by Krieger and Meierrieks, *'Income Inequality, Redistribution and Domestic Terrorism'*, the authors empirically analysed the relationship between income inequality and terrorism for the period 1984 to 2012. Using a sample of 113 states, they evinced evidence to suggest a link between higher levels of income inequality and domestic terrorism (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2019). This result, according to the authors, remained robust even when subjected to methodological adjustments (such as instrumental-variable approaches). The relationship is mediated by institutional failures (e.g., corruption, poor service delivery, weak bureaucracy etc.) occasioned by income inequality. These institutional outcomes then motivate domestic terrorism. The study also found that domestic terrorism is minimal and even absent in states where there is equitable redistribution since this improves institutional conditions.

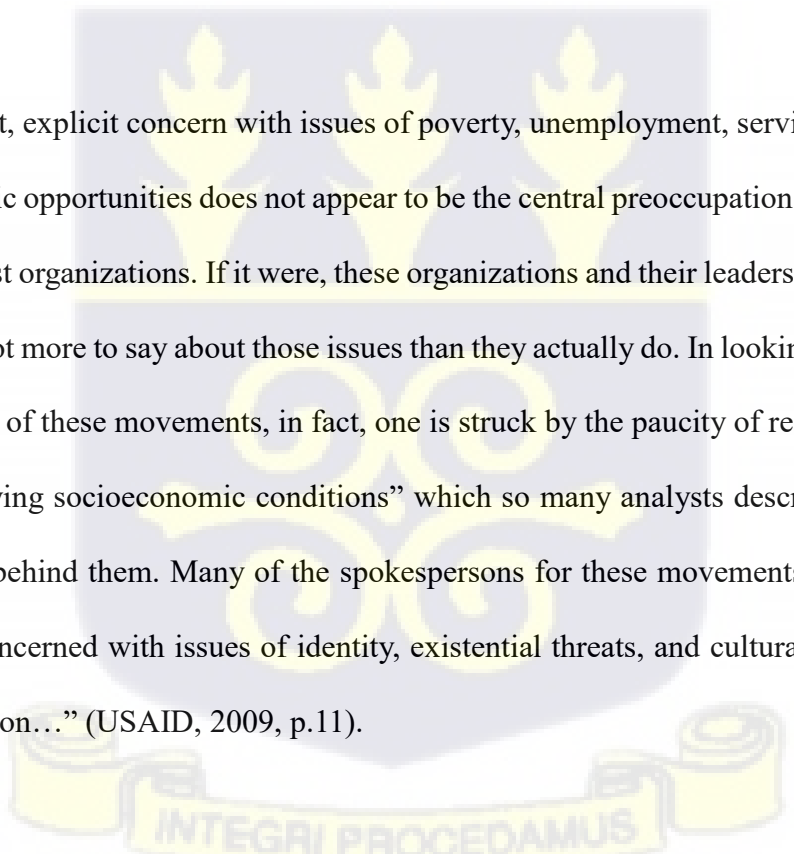
The notion of terrorism as an expression of socio-economic discontent and desperation has also gained impetus from national and international policy makers since the tragic events of September 11, 2001 in the US. The immediate and widely accepted policy response was a call on the wealthy nations to increase development aid to the world's poorest countries and to fight poverty as a way of combating terrorism (Krueger & Malečková, 2003; Piazza, 2006). This position was reflected in the policy statements and opinions of prominent political and policy actors as well as positions taken on such platforms as the United Nations (UN). For example, two months after the September 11 attacks, forty-one heads of state in their address to the UN

General assembly in November 2001 impressed upon the UN and member states to first tackle the issues of poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment as the solution to international terrorism (Piazza, 2006; UN, 2001). Speaking at the same occasion, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan stressed the link between poverty and terrorism by declaring that “No one in this world can be comfortable or safe when so many people are suffering and deprived.” (UN, 2001). Still linking economic deprivation to terrorism, Nemat Shafik, the World Bank's Vice President for Private Sector Growth, Infrastructure, and Guarantees, in 2001 labelled developing and under-developed countries suffering from the legacies of economic stagnation, high unemployment, and inequality as "fertile ground for terrorist seeds to flourish." (Kreisler, 2001).

In spite of the support enjoyed by the “Economic Inequality-Political Conflict puzzle” within the terrorism and conflict scholarship and among policy actors, the relationship fell short of commanding any consensus among researchers in the field (Goldman & Noy, 2020; Piazza, 2006). A swath of later studies dedicated to examining the popular hypothesis premised on the relationship between terrorism and poverty, inequality, and poor economic development have rather produced contradictory results, disputing the existence of any such relationship (Goldman & Noy, 2020; Piazza, 2006; UNDP, 2017a). To note a few;

In a 2006 study by James A. Piazza that employed a series of multiple regression analyses on incidents of terrorism and casualties in 96 states between 1985 and 2003, the author used low economic growth, poverty, malnutrition, inequality, unemployment, inflation and a host of other political and demographic variables as predictors and found no significant relationship between any of the economic variables and terrorism (Piazza, 2006). Contrary to the popular opinion favouring the “Economic Inequality-Political Conflict puzzle”, the author found such

variables as population, state suppression, ethnic and religious differences as significant predictors of terrorism and political violence. The author therefore concluded that ‘social cleavage theory’ more closely explains terrorism than the theories linking economic factors to terrorism. Similarly, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) drawing on a large array of studies (e.g., 2002 Pew Survey) has found that terrorism survives under different socio-economic conditions, ranging from impoverished societies to advanced industrialized nations (USAID, 2009). The Agency further notes that; wealth does not insulate a country against violent extremism or terrorism and that improved economic conditions do not necessarily discourage public approval of violent extremism of terrorism. Quoting directly from the Agency’s 2009 guide to violent extremism;



“A direct, explicit concern with issues of poverty, unemployment, service delivery, and economic opportunities does not appear to be the central preoccupation of many violent extremist organizations. If it were, these organizations and their leaders typically would have a lot more to say about those issues than they actually do. In looking at the rhetoric of many of these movements, in fact, one is struck by the paucity of references to the “underlying socioeconomic conditions” which so many analysts describe as the main drivers behind them. Many of the spokespersons for these movements instead appear to be concerned with issues of identity, existential threats, and cultural domination or oppression...” (USAID, 2009, p.11).

Consistent with this angle of the scholarship, research into the phenomenon of ‘lone wolf’ or lone actor terrorism has also ruled out poverty as a driver of terrorism (Jager, 2018; Sageman, 2004; Spaaij, 2012). Spaaij identified and studied 88 cases of lone wolf terror acts in Australia, Europe and North America from 1940 to 2010 and concluded that poverty was not one of the

reasons people join, promote or undertake terror acts (Spaaij, 2012). Instead, the author, though admitting the absence of a standard profile of lone wolves, found individual processes, interpersonal relations and socio-political and cultural circumstances as significant predictors of terrorism (Spaaij, 2012). Similarly, Sageman interviewed more than four hundred individual members of the Al-Qaida terrorist group who joined the group from Europe, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Relying on national and international standards, Sageman concluded that the majority of the individual terrorists came from solid financial backgrounds and that about 66% of those interviewed had attended college, held professional or semi-professional occupations (Sageman, 2004). In their analysis of Hezbollah, Krueger & Malečková (2003) reports that the members of the terror group were wealthier than the average Lebanese. The authors then caution against the optimism in poverty reduction as a strategy to preventing or countering terrorism.

Whereas the findings of this study favour the economic inequality – political violence model and also finds support with a host of prior findings in the literature, the relationship between socio-economic variables and terrorism remains inconclusive. Evidence varies according to context and period of study. And whereas the studies that found a positive relationship between a deterioration in the socio-economic variables and terrorism are emphatic, those that dispute the relationship are more cautious. The side that one takes on the economic inequality – political conflict puzzle depends on the weight of the evidence available, the context of study and the period of study. Unlike the prior studies that found no relationship between economic factors and terrorism, Ghana is studied as a case and not a member of a sample of countries. The evidence available supports the economic inequality – political conflict puzzle within the general purview of the literature. The reason partly is that, in all the country specific cases, evidence is found to support the economic inequality – political conflict puzzle. And though

Ghana has never experienced any incidence of terrorism, the perception of poverty, unemployment, perceived inequality and the feeling of relative deprivation are serious susceptibility factors worth the attention of both academics and scholars if the findings in this study is subjected to the general findings in the literature. And then again, the fact of Ghana's insulation from incidents of terrorism is not to suggest that socio-economic factors such as unemployment, poverty, inequality among others do not lead to terrorism.

### 6.6 Geopolitical factors

In terms of geo-political factors, key informants emphasized geographical proximity and the contagion effect. Ghana's geographical proximity has been found to be a key susceptibility or vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. Drawing from the contagion theory of terrorism, the interview respondents argued that there could be a spill over from Ghana's neighbours as a result of shared political and socio-economic characteristics. The fact that these groups are able to penetrate the borders of Ghana to recruit young Ghanaians as foreign fighters is evidence that they can move into the country when the need arises. Without establishing a clear cause for their presence in the regions north and west of Ghana, the fear of a contagion is heightened with the intensification of terrorism in the southern parts of the Sahelian countries, the northern and western neighbours of Ghana. Commenting elaborately on the risk of contagion to Ghana, the key informant from WANEP explained;

*I think we can also look at Ghana's proximity to these countries where we have this act of violent extremism and terrorism happening, especially when these neighbouring countries are presently facing a lot of political uncertainties because of the recent military coups and all that. And you can see that the political uncertainties impact on*

*how these countries to the north of Ghana can even control the terrorism menace within their own territory and the spillover effects to other areas. And you know, if you go to the northern part of Ghana for example there are a lot of cultural links with communities in Burkina, there are a lot of trade links with communities in Burkina you know? And this makes us a bit vulnerable also because of the weak border control. And I want to draw inferences from Nigeria and Niger for example, if you look at Maiduguri, where Boko Haram started, most of the Boko Haram militants were part of the Kanuri group and when you cross to the other side of Niger, they were also Kanuries. That made it easy for them to be able to influence the communities within those areas because they share similar cultural identities and also face similar historical issues of injustice within those regions (WANEP, Male..., 2023).*

Another key informant on the same theme of geographic proximity opined;

*Now if you look at our part of the north, especially now, we have a lot of issues going on in the region and sometimes whatever happens here in Ghana also has implications across the border. So, this is also one of the issues you can look at in terms of the spillover effect. And coupled with the fact that we've also seen a lot of people moving from the countries where we have these acts of violent extremism happening presently. Some are economic migrants who have come to look for new jobs and all that and if you trace how issues of armed robbery, kidnapping and whatever is even happening in their country you see a new trend of how these things are taking roots in Ghana. Most of these people come to this country with the purpose of maybe getting jobs but they end up finding no jobs and they have to survive you know. And these people have a lot of money to influence people to commit some of these acts. So, the influence of a lot of*

*uncontrolled migrants from parts of the region also poses a threat especially when it comes to issues relating to fuelling community grievances against governments or even forming homegrown terrorists' cells in this country (WACCE, Male...,2023).*

The comments above by the key informants express the possibility of a spillover of terrorism from the neighbouring countries into Ghana. From the comments, this could happen in one of two ways. First is that, Ghanaians, desirous of changing the deplorable political and economic conditions in the country may imitate the methods employed in the neighbouring countries and thus resort to violence and possibly terrorism as a justified course of political agitation. The second perspective describes a situation where terror groups crossover into Ghana in pursuit of a strategic interest. This sheds light on the terror contagion discussed in the literature. The contagion theory as a psycho-sociological theory was propounded by the French scholar Gustave Le Bon in his 1895 influential book titled *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (Bon, 1960). The principal assumption of the contagion theory is that; collective behaviour is irrational and results from the contagious influence of the crowds in which individuals find themselves. In short, the theory argues that, individuals can be influenced to act likewise by observing or relating with others within the same environment (where environment here could mean a physical space or context such as a political or socio-economic condition).

Relating the contagion effect to terrorism, Clancy, Addison, Pavlov, & Saeed (2021, p.6) explains that, the terror contagion is a type of social canker that is propagated by acts of mass violence through cultural scripts. Based on specific grievances and moral indignation within a given at-risk population, these cultural scripts convey a template ideology and a template approach that is ideal for transmission. In respect to the population at risk, these templates must

be appropriate in terms of self-similarity and notoriety. Self-similarity in that they see themselves in the perpetrator's identity, and notoriety in that they see mass violence as a source of celebrity rather than repulsiveness. The template ideology presents a conspiracy theory that justifies the perceived grievance, blames it on an out-group, and calls for violence to resolve it.

The explanations by Clancy et al. (2021) exposes Ghana's susceptibility to the contagion effect even more. The authors identify four preconditions that favour the terror contagion. The first is the existence of objective suitable conditions – unemployment, marginalization, poverty, corruption etc., the second of the existence of grievance based on these conditions, the third is the perception of similarity with perpetrators of terrorism elsewhere and the fourth is the acceptance of a template of approach that prizes violence as a justified cause. The data gathered in this study shows the presence of the first two factors and the fourth factor in Ghana.

However, in the case of Ghana, the key informant from HSRC has downplayed the role of geographic proximity as a significant risk factor. According to him, the geographic proximity becomes an issue where there are shared cultural and political identities across borders. He cites the presence of the Tuaregs in both Mali and southern Algeria which made it easier for them to mobilize and also to move across borders to execute a common agenda. This shared cultural identities such as language and ethnicity and sometimes as close as a clan allows exiled terrorists fighters to be accepted and harboured in the neighbouring country. He explained further;

*When the French backed Algerian government granted amnesty to the rebels in Algeria, Muqtar Bel Muqtar and his people rejected it and moved to the Sahel, where they formed AQIM. From the money they got through KFR in the Sahara, they acquired arms*

*and started launching attacks on the Algeria government. The fight then became who controls the trade routes and the money that comes from the trades across the route. Now, Iya Ghali, a Tuareg, who hitherto worked for the Malian government also took advantage of the situation and began to mobilize his people along the same concerns that drove Muqtar and his people to the Sahel. They then linked up with AQIM, swore allegiance and began to control some areas in the north including Timbuktu, Kidal etc. But you know, the spill over or if you like the contagion effect was easy or even possible because the Tuaregs are in both Northern Mali and southern Algeria, they are the same people with shared challenges. It is the same Tuareg guys who were supplying and taking things across both sides of the Sahara-Sahelian trade route. So, the linkage between Algeria and Mali is very strong. As a result, the Tuaregs are likely to have the support of Algerians in a lot of the things they are doing (HSRC, Male..., 2023).*

From the explanations offered by the two respondents from WANEP and HSRC respectively, there is a common point of convergence even though the latter sought to disagree with the former on the significance of proximity as a risk factor to Ghana. The common point here is the cultural and political similarity across borders. In the case of Nigeria and Niger, the Kanuri tribe or ethnicity is distributed across both sides making identification with a common cause and mobilization much easier. Similar narrative favours the Tuareg story in Mali. What the informant from HSRC tried to convey was that Ghana does not have any such similarity with any other country or her neighbours. In instances where you find cultural similarities between any group in Ghana and elsewhere such as the Mosis in Ghana and Burkina Faso or the Akans in Ghana and Ivory Coast, such groups are not engaged in any struggle on either side to warrant any spill over or call for support.

In spite of the elaborate explanation by the key informant from HSRC disputing the contagion effect in the case of Ghana, the preponderance of the evidence gathered points to the contrary. He emphasizes the existence of a shared cultural and political identities across borders as a precondition for the contagion effect to work. However, reading from Clancy et al.'s (2021) conceptualization of the contagion of terrorism, Ghana is at risk from the terror contagion. This is because events in neighbouring countries can market the template method, which is the use of violence to address the shared political and economic grievances expressed by the respondents in this study.

Therefore, the citizens of Ghana do not have to have any shared cultural and political identities across borders with any of the neighbouring countries as in the case of the Tuaregs in Mali and Algeria. Once the conditions for the emergence of terrorism – such as poverty, corruption, unemployment, political exclusion, marginalization and inequality among others– exist, the population can be described as an at- risk population to contagion. All that is needed at this stage is the acceptance of the template method by the at-risk population and the contagion effect sets in. The overall evidence as evidenced by the analysis of primary data from this study and supported by the secondary data shows that Ghana is exposed to the risk of terrorism. So, what may be needed in the case of Ghana for terrorism incidents to happen is the acceptance of the template methods – the use of violence and terrorism as celebrated strategies for political agitation. This challenge of contagion is amplified by the advancement of technology especially the social media and other advanced channels of propaganda.

## **6.7 Analytic category two: Understanding Ghana's resilience against VET**

The findings number two of the study presents a bouquet of factors that have converged to make Ghana less prone to terrorism and violent extremism in a region described as the epicentre of terrorism. Not only does the findings answer the research question two, it also helps the researcher and the reader to unravel what may be described ordinarily as a mystery; that in spite of the myriad risk factors identified in the first findings, Ghana remains resilient to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism. the following are some of the factors that the study has found to be responsible for Ghana's apparent immunity from the threats of terrorism and violent extremism;

- i. Ghana's history and culture of peace*
- ii. Absence of an overarching religious authority*
- iii. A thriving democracy and the rule of law*
- iv. The role and authority of traditional leadership in Ghana*
- v. State presence and participatory local governance system*
- vi. Vibrant media*

### **6.7.1 Ghana's history and culture of peace**

Ghana's political history and culture of peace has come up in the course of the study as a key resilience factor to terrorism and violent extremism. Socially, Ghana is heterogeneous with diverse but inter-related ethnic groups including the Akan, Ewe, Ga- Adangbe, MoleDagbani, Guan, and Gurma among others. Historically, the countries culture of peace and spirit of togetherness goes back in time but was epitomized at the inception of Ghana's government independence. As narrated by one of the key informants from HSRC and shared by several others, the first president of the Republic of Ghana, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah at the

declaration of Ghana's independence from colonial rule pronounced that any person of African decent living in Ghana at that time was automatically a citizen of Ghana. To note in full, one of the key informants averred;

*Ghana has some peculiar kind of resilience and I learnt this as an expert researcher in the security field and I tend to agree with those holding that same view. The fact that Ghana is a safe haven for a myriad of people from all these West African areas is an important source of stability and resilience. So, what we have learned is that, at the declaration of independence, Kwame Nkrumah said that anybody here who found himself in this geographical space delineated as the country Ghana is Ghanaian from this day on. And that was a wide net that captured so many West African people and you have to remember that they are still connected to their families in Mali, Senegal, Niger and wherever you can think about. And it appears that afterward, years down the line, Ghana has become like the US. So, every West African nation or whoever is in here and their wider family are out there, when issues occur in those places like Mali, Niger, Chad, or Burkina, the families come here for shelter because their relatives are here. And so, this country called Ghana is not a place where they want what is happening in the bigger picture to even occur. They advise themselves accordingly. So, they have become a form of shield for us and that is one thing I have learned and I believe to be true (HSRC, Female..., 2023).*

In effect, anybody who was resident in Ghana at the time of the declaration of independence and hailed from any other African country was automatically a citizen of Ghana. The policy at the time was such an integrating gesture that dispelled any sense of exclusion and marginalization of anybody based on their place of origin or tribe. This unique historical edifice

is said to be missing in some of the terrorism embattled countries. Rather, their independence struggles ushered in episodes of conflicts over citizenship and ownership along the lines of tribe and religion. In Nigeria for instance, the struggle remained between the predominantly Muslim North and Christian populated south (Chukwuma, 2020).

Again, not only did the Ghanaian political history promotes inclusivity and integration, there's also no trace of Islamic dominance at any point in the history of Ghana. The informants compared the situations in Nigeria and Mali to that of Ghana and argued that, in Nigeria, Boko Haram is a renaissance of the Dan Fodio legacy of Islamic dominance in especially the northern part of Nigeria. As narrated by one of the informants from HSRC, Osumanu Dan Fodio conquered most of the Hausa states and converted them to Islam in the early centuries before the western colonial masters arrived with Christianity and the secular system of governance and social life. These new developments were antithetical to the status quo as was the case in the northern states. Boko haram is thus a manifestation of the contestation between the well-established Islamic culture and the antithetical western system – where the former is fighting both for survival and attempt at overthrowing the secular state that has now taken shape;

*Look at Dan Fodio in Nigeria, he conquered all the Hausa states and converted everybody living in those territories into Islam. So, to date, Nigeria still has a problem with the Dan Fodio elements. You can see that in Borno, they have the Borno-Kanu empire which also accepted Islam very early. So, in that place, Nigeria also had its own problem, even before independence, the idea is yen Boko people, they don't believe in what we believe. So, there's a very strong anti-secular feeling around North-eastern*

*Nigeria. Even the Muslim elites had to dodge and send their children to school but they couldn't convince the traditional people that this Yen Boko thing, let's see how we get a compromise. So, Muhammad Yussif and co are still standing on that. Because Muhammad Yussif's father was an Imam, he took him and ran away to Maiduguri when they wanted to send his son to school. You not have the same conditions in Ghana, neither does Ghana has such historical antecedents (HSRC, Male..., 2023).*

The comments made by the key informant above is reflected by Chukwuma (2020) in his article titled *Understanding the ISIS threat in the Lake Chad Basin*. The author explained why Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin is so strategic to radical Islamic terror groups such as ISIS, Al-Qaida and their affiliates ISWAP and Boko Haram respectively. According to him, the centrality of Nigeria and the Lake Chad basin to the terror groups is situated in its historical antecedents, emotional attachments and geopolitical significance to ISIS and Al-Qaida. Narrating the centrality of the historical antecedents, Chukwuma notes;

In part, this potential relates to both the population of the sub-region and zeal of the new converts. However, historical evidence reveals that, across West Africa, for instance, the former Sokoto Caliphate, communities of converts often blend their traditional practices with Islamic tenets, thus practice 'hybrid Islam.' ... Hybridity in Islam, ... may have contributed to the emergence of Islamic fundamentalist movements who seek to replace it with 'authentic' Islamic way of life (Chukwuma, 2020, p.57).

So, the terrorism in Nigeria and by extension the activities of Boko haram is rooted in the political and social history of Nigeria as noted by the key informant and supported by the literature. Compared to Ghana, the conditions, historical and social are not the same and for which we cannot be expecting the same results in Ghana. Similarly, using the social and

historical situation in the Sahel to contrast Ghana's and why Ghana seems less prone to terrorism, the same key informants recounted the historical struggle by the Tuaregs for recognition and independence from the Malian central government;

*Now let's leave all those things and come to the Sahel which is close to us (Ghana). These people have been living there all this while and they have been having their difficulties- the Arabs, the Bambara, and all that. The Tuaregs will always come and raid villages, rustle some cattle and go. But these things never escalated into full-blown terrorism and they were all living in the Sahara using the trans-Saharan trade routes with everybody benefitting even though occasionally they'll have a small fracas and try to solve... The Fulani's were known to always have problems with Bambara over land issues- Farmer- Herder. At the time of independence, the Tuaregs said they'll not be under Modibo Kaita because the black man was their slave. So that sets its own problem in Mali after independence. So, you can see that history already sets about some fault lines in what can happen. So, you can see from that time the Malian government never had complete control over the North because of the Tuaregs. Efforts were being made to get Tuaregs into the government over the years but all that failed. The French also did divide and rule promising the Tuaregs that they were going to help them get their own independent country. So again, you can see the historical situation there. Now Iyad Ghali who is one of the Tuaregs who had been working for the Malian government, also took advantage of the situation and began to organize his people and began controlling the areas of Timbuktu, Kidal, and Co, linking up with AQIM, and swearing allegiance to them. This is how full-blown terrorism began in Mali and by extension the Sahelian region. This is the kind of history you cannot find in Ghana (HSRC, Male..., 2023).*

In support of the comments expressed by the Key Informant, Chauzal contend that, the Tuaregs and Arab populations in Mali continued to challenge the authority of the central government post-independence, linking the violent extremism in Mali to historical antecedents. Already, the southern elites held deep resentment against the northern populations, making it difficult for any form of integration. As a result, the Malian government focused its attention on developing the south which it found to be ‘useful’ (Chauzal, 2015). This resulted in the gradual marginalization of the northern populations and the imposition of military rules on those regions (Francis, 2013). The deep-seated distrust between the north and south have led to at least four known uprisings, which put together have exacerbated the historical fault lines (Chauzal, 2015). The situation created the fertile environment which has been taken advantage by terrorists’ groups from the Sahara. Respondents presented these perspectives and historical facts to contrast the terrorism prone countries with Ghana.

### **6.7.2 Absence of an overarching religious authority**

Linked to the historical argument is the notion that Ghana is safe from especially Salafi jihadism as a result of the absence of powerful clerics with political motives. From the analysis of the interview data, another factor that accounts for the safety and makes Ghana less prone to terrorist attacks is found to be the absence of a powerful religious mobilizing authority. In this respect, Ghana has been compared to countries in the Lake Chad Basin and some of the Sahelian states. According to the informants, the mobilization of groups in these regions are effected through the instrumentality of powerful clerics such as Amadou Kuofa in Burkina Faso and Ibrahim Dicko in Mali. Even when these powerful clerics are dead and gone, their teachings and legacies continue to inspire their followers and adherents to engage in terrorists’ activities. To put this discussion in context the comments of a key informant is quoted in full below.

*In Ghana here we don't have such serious clerics as we have in Mali. In Mali, they have 3 or 4 clerics. They can call a meeting now and the whole stadium is full. So even if they are politicians... Also, you need the cells as they do within Burkina who we can recruit from. The clerics also lean on ethnic or tribal sentiments to mobilize their followers. In the Sahel, you are likely to find a place where the population is not only Muslim dominated but also predominantly the same tribe or ethnic group. So, mobilization becomes much easier. Dicko and Koufa in Mali and Burkina Faso respectively exploit both Salafi ideology and the Fulani sentiments to mobilize, recruit and train or even motivate individuals to engage in violence and terrorism (HSRC, Male...,2023).*

The implication of the discussions above is that, the Ghanaian social construct through its historical evolution has built certain resilience against the emergence and festering of terrorism. Besides the historical attempt at fostering unity and integration among Ghanaians and between Ghana and her neighbours, the multi-ethnic composition of the Ghanaian society has maintained the culture of peace and birthed the consciousness of one nation, one people, and one common destiny' among many Ghanaians (Aubyn, 2021). This consciousness as a product of Ghana's social and political history has fostered the environment of harmony and national cohesion while promoting tolerance for people of different ethnicities and religion. In keeping with the history of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence, the National Chief Imam, who is the leader of all Muslims in Ghana, in 2019 attended Easter service at Christ the King Church in Accra on the occasion of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday (Nunoo, 2019). That gesture was intended to encourage Ghanaians to continue to treasure the culture of peaceful coexistence and religious harmony, despite the sentiments of some minority religious groups (Aubyn, 2021).

### 6.7.3 A thriving democracy and the rule of law

A beacon of democracy as has severally been referred to; Ghana's nascent but promising democratic credentials have been celebrated the world over as the antidote to many political ills which include political violence. In spite of the pockets of political violence which have been rarely and episodic and manifested in what has become known as political vigilantism, Ghana on a larger scale is considered a stable and perhaps the most peaceful country in the West African sub-region. Additionally, the rapidity with which this episodic violence has usually been addressed using the established democratically acceptable mechanisms goes a long way to reinforce the notion that, Ghana's democracy is resilient against violent extremism.

Respondents in this study have re-echoed Ghana's deepening democratic credentials and the supremacy of the rule of law as key resilience factors when it comes to susceptibility to terrorism and violent extremism. Majority of the respondents hold the view that, the constitution of the republic of Ghana, which is the fundamental law of the land has a number of guarantees and provisions that makes it difficult to exclude anyone from political and economic life by virtue of any form of identities such as religion, region, tribe, social and economic status. The majority of the Key Informants hold the belief that such provisions and guarantees have eliminated or reduced the potential for the exclusion or marginalization of any group to the extent that they will want to mobilize to launch an attack or even join any group with such intentions to fight back. With democracy taking shape as the basis of all public life, issues that would have degenerated into frustration aggression are expressed unhindered. On the supremacy of the constitution and the guarantees it provides, one of the key informants posits;

*You are looking at a kind of setting where the constitution is the biggest source of a lot of things in this country. Within the constitution, there is a portion that talks about the directive principles of state policy where there is regional balance in terms of leadership, allocation of resources and development in general, and the recognition of all minority groups in terms of national representation and character. So, these things help in preventing the sense of exclusion or marginalization among minorities or collectivities within the country (MNS, Male..., 2023).*

Then comes another informant from the Ghana police service averred;

*Ghana's democracy, though nascent provides a strong buffer against these things (Terrorism). After over 20 years of returning the country to democratic rule, citizens are becoming accustomed to the democratic ethos as the basis for political mobilization and action. So, you'll see that many people now resort to the court systems to address their grievances as compared to taking the law into their own hands. The airwaves have become more safer for people to express their opinions freely even that's the only action they intend to take. Also, the freedom of association has allowed people to come together to protest the actions of government and leaders without any hindrance. All these puts together create a culture of peaceful and democratic approach to addressing grievances in the country. For many of the countries where we witness terrorism and violent extremism, these buffers are lacking (GPS, Female..., 2023).*

The analysis of the survey data also lends support to the view expressed by the survey respondents on the democratic ethos and how that diminishes the potential of violent eruption and creates spaces for peaceful political contestations. During the survey, even though the

majority (61%) of the respondents as seen in Figure 5.10 in the previous chapter do not think that democracy has helped Ghana and Africa, only a handful of them are willing to employ the use of force to compel the government to be responsive to their needs. Similarly, reading from figure 5.14 as presented in the previous chapter, the majority of the respondents preferred to use one of the popular democratic methods of registering discontent with the government. Out of the 285 respondents, more than 70% chose to use a democratic means as compared to those who will employ force or resort to riots. In specific terms, when respondents were asked; ‘If you perceive that there is limited space for the youth to participate in decision-making or that their views are not taken into account, what will be your suggestion to the youth or any marginalized group?’, 34.38% of the respondents suggested the use of the democratic processes stated under the law. Another 37% suggested the formation of pressure groups to compel governments to do the needful. In all, seven out of every ten respondents prefer the use of peaceful and democratic means to address grievances. Those who suggested the use of any form of force akin to violence were in the minority; 11.7% suggested the use force and 4% suggested resorting to riots and demonstrations. However, there was 12% chose to withdraw support from the government.

In tandem with the views expressed by the respondents, the constitution of the republic of Ghana has embedded in it provisions which to a large extent uphold the supremacy of the rule of law and promote freedom of expression, democratic ethos and inclusive society. To note a few provisions in this regard, article 36 of the 1992 constitution provides in sections 1 & 2; (1) All persons shall be equal before the law (Republic of Ghana, 1996). (2) A person shall not be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, creed or social or economic status. Whereas section 1 reinforces the rule of law, section 2 promotes non-

discrimination and integration of all peoples. For purposes of clarity and emphasis, section 3 of the same article provides; “For the purposes of this article, "discriminate" means to give different treatment to different persons attributable only or mainly to their respective descriptions by race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, gender, occupation, religion or creed, whereby persons of one description are subjected to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another description which are not granted of persons of another description are not made subject or are granted privileges or advantages which are not granted to persons of another description.”

Further on the establishment of democracy as the basis of all political, social and economic engagements and the promotion of integration and inclusive society, article 35 of the constitution provides in sections 5 & 6; (5) The State shall actively promote the integration of the peoples of Ghana and prohibit discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of place of origin, circumstances of birth, ethnic origin, gender or religion, creed or other beliefs; (6) Towards the achievement of the objectives stated in clause (5) of this article, the State shall take appropriate measures to ...(d) make democracy a reality by decentralizing the administrative and financial machinery of government to the regions and districts and by affording all possible opportunities to the people to participate in decision-making at every level in national life and in government (Republic of Ghana, 1996).

These constitutional provisions as noted above does not only lend credence to the views held by the respondents but also provides the legal basis for what has become of Ghana as a beacon of democracy in Africa. Discrimination and the absence of the rule of law, which are features of a failed state are key drivers of terrorism and violent extremism (Hehir, 2007). It appears the

Ghanaian constitution has foreseen and provided remedy to these important drivers of terrorism and violent extremism. However, it is important to note that, these provisions will remain a 'fairy-tale' without proper enforcement and implementation. Terrorism embattled countries such as Nigeria, Mali and Niger equally have constitutions with similar provisions. The difference stems from the implementation and level of acceptance of the democratic ethos established by the constitutions. The survey results and the views expressed by the key informants show that there is high level of acceptance of the democratic ethos in Ghana.

The views expressed by the key informants regarding the prophylactic potential of democracy is supported by raft of studies in the literature that sought to suggest that democracies are resilient to incidence of violence. Generally, there exists sufficient evidence to show that democracies experience less incidence of violence. Within the context of the democratic peace theory, several writers have expanded on this thesis, noting that, not only do established democracies live at peace with each other, they also experience relative stability domestically. Abadie in his study titled, "Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism" finds that most of the countries that experience less incidence of terrorism are democracies (Abadie, 2006). Similarly, Rummel, expressing the devastating nature of democide, concludes in his study, 'Power Kills: Democracy as a Method of Nonviolence'; that the more democratic a regime the less its democide (Rummel, 1997). Other forms of political violence such as genocide and politicide are found to be rare in democracies. Examining the Holocaust and the risk of genocide and political mass murder in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Harff (2003) finds that democratic countries enjoy minimal risk of experiencing genocides and politicides compared to undemocratic countries.

Whereas the data from the studies as well as a portion of the literature sought to link reduced incidents of violent extremism to democracy, this view is far from being conclusive. There are democratic countries in Europe, America and Africa that have experience and continue to experience incidents of terrorism and violent extremism. The events of September 11, 2001 when Al-Qaeda, a Wahhabi terrorist group, mounted four coordinated attacks resulting in 2,996 deaths and over 25,000 injuries on the United States of America (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011; Lancet, 2001; Zondi, 2016), taint the reputation of democracy as a bastion of a society free of terrorism. Countries such as Mali, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Chad suffered from the scourge of terrorism in spite of the fact that those countries are considered to be democracies. Again, Kenya which is a celebrated democracy in Africa is presently terrorism embattled, fighting both home-grown and externally infiltrated violent extremism groups. The democracy-terrorism thesis has also suffered significant setback from aspects of the literature on terrorism. The works of authors such as (Hehir, 2007; Newman, 2007; Rotberg, 2002) have raised questions on the link between terrorism and the status of a state. Newman in particular employed a sample of 66 states using the presence and non-presence of terrorism in those states and found that, there is no conclusive link between failed or weak state. The author further declared that, much as failed states have provided the fertile grounds for such groups to flourish, terrorist groups have also emerged in very strong states with stable governments and democratic ethos as the basis of political action. This conclusion is in stark contrast to the position earlier posed of Abadie, (2005), Harff, (2003) and Rummel, (1997), where the authors prized democracy as antidote to the emergence of violent extremism.

On the whole however, the contending and contradictory discussions on the democracy – violence nexus makes the study on Ghana very relevant to the literature on terrorism as it adds to the weight of the studies that favour the relationship between democracy and the low

incidents of all forms of violence. And until contrary evidence is adduced especially in the case of Ghana, it can conveniently be held to be true that Ghana's democracy has contributed in making it less prone to terrorism compared to her peers. Generally, and on the weight of the evidence available, both in the literature and the findings of this study, Ghana's present condition – democratic and less prone to terrorism – lends credence to the corner of literature that situates democracy as a shield against political violence.

#### **6.7.4 The role and authority of traditional leadership in Ghana**

The authority and role that traditional and religious leaders play in our societies have also been found to be an important resilience factor against terrorism in Ghana. More than half of the key informants hold the believe that, the authority of chiefs and religious leaders to adjudicate on issues of concern in their localities has allowed them to act on early warning signals and blocked any wrong move by any individual or groups of individuals. Also, where signals are picked about any looming danger, chiefs tend to be proactive in saving the situation from escalating using their traditional adjudicative and executive authority. Informants also note that chiefs and religious leaders play crucial roles in conflict resolution by ending existing conflicts and also preventing new ones. An important instance is how chiefs have managed the farmer herder conflict in some communities in the country. Chiefs have also been credited with intervening to douse the rise of religious extremism and religious conflicts in the country. Below are some of the direct statements from a key informant regarding the proactive role of chiefs in preventing violent extremism;

*The Walas are predominantly Muslim but very well organized under their chieftaincy. So, there's quite some discipline. When the Wa Naa says something, people will have to comply. So is not very easy for people to go and create any terrorist cells in any of these places. The other time some young preachers in Wa as*

*part their Dawah, started preaching along the street and the messaging started to create some tensions in the town, probably because they were preaching extreme versions of Islam. The Wa Naa just issued orders warning that there will be no preaching on the streets of the town and that all forms of preaching should be done in the Mosque. That order came to stay and saved a situation that could degenerate into something else. So, you can see that it's not that easy for violent extremists' groups to infiltrate the society as a result of the authority and proactive intervention of the chief. There's quite some control in Ghana here.*

He continued;

*And if you start coming down south, you'll see how these extrapolates. Because if it comes to Dagbon and the Yaa Naa calls and says something... it creates.... Even in Afa Ajura's time, you could see how it involves the Ya Naa. And if they are bringing that Islamic thing, it is going to go into the Maikano Afa Ajura, Andani-Abudu thing again. So, people are very cautious.... It's not the same environment at all. You have to understand how it happens (HSRC, Male..., 2023).*

The views expressed by the respondents reflects the recognition of the important roles of traditional leaders in the political and socio-economic development of Ghana. Not only is the chieftaincy institution recognized and given a special place in the 1992 constitution, a separate ministry of chieftaincy and religious affairs has been created to harness and harmonize the distinct contributions of chiefs and other traditional institutions for peaceful co-existence and national development. For purposes of clarity, traditional authorities in this study include traditional rulers such as chiefs, queen mothers, stool fathers, elders, 'linguists' development chiefs and religious leaders (Knierzinger, 2011, p.5). The role played by the traditional

authority has significantly impacted the socio-economic wellbeing of Ghana especially in promoting peaceful co-existence among diverse groups in the country.

Specifically, on the prevention of violent extremism, the traditional authority is seen to be important actors even though a negligible number of them have acted in ways in the past that disturbed the peace of some communities. As already noted in the comments above, the cases of Wa in the Upper West region and Tamale in the northern region exemplifies some of the ways in which chiefs have contributed in preventing the emergence of religious extremism in some communities in Ghana. In the instance of Wa in the upper west region, following the arrival of exodus of young Saudi-trained scholars in Wa sometime in the year 2021, many of them had no formal jobs nor recognized mosques to teach and preach. So, they resorted to street preaching. Many of them were members of the global Dawah community sponsored by Saudi Arabia. Recognizing that such spaces could be safe havens for floating extremists' narratives by the largely Saudi-led Salafi trainees, the Wa Naa (Chief of Wa) issued a fiat that no one could preach again on the streets except in recognized mosques in the town. According to some of the informants, the fiat issued by the Chief was not made out of a vacuum. It was based on intelligence gathered on possible infiltration of extremist elements from the neighbouring Ivory Coast, where the al-Qaida in the Islamic Magreb (AQIM) and its affiliate groups are actively operating. The Chief also issued the Fiat as a precautionary measure in responding to the warning signs occasioned by the activities of violent extremists in the Ivory Coast since the Upper West region shares a border with the former.

As a way of promoting peaceful co-existence, religious leaders in particular have worked to build a robust interfaith tolerance and cooperation among the major religious groups and sects in the country. Notable of this interfaith tolerance is how Muslims and Christians host each other during their religious festivities such as Eid celebrations, Christmas and Easter. In 2019,

the national chief Imam, who leads and represents all Muslims in Ghana attended an Easter service at Christ the King Church. Gestures such as that distinguishes Ghana from her peers in the region where terrorism is rife. There's also the National Peace Council, established by law to ensure sustainable peace by facilitating the development of mechanisms for prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Ghana. The membership of the council also incorporates the religious diversity as well as recognize the significance of traditional authority in ensuring peaceful co-existence. For example, the membership includes participants across the various religions and religious sects within the country such as the Tijahaniya Muslims, Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Al-hasuna Muslims, Ghana Christian Council, Catholic Bishops Conference, Ghana Pentecostal Council, Ghana Charismatic Council, and the African traditional religion.

The findings in this study only goes to reinforce a long-held notion and practice that puts the traditional authority in Ghana at the centre of development, conflict resolution and prevention. This has earned it the trust and confidence of the people. Even though the secular and modern political structures have reshaped the role traditional authority significantly, the role played by that sector remains irreplaceable. In a survey conducted by Knierzinger (2011, p.21) which compares chiefs to members of parliament, the author found that majority of the respondents still perceive the chiefs to be more powerful than the MPs. This level of trust in the power of the chiefs' places them in a position to be effective in preventing all forms of violence which could to terrorism. This is the role that this study has highlighted and which needs to be harnessed more for preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana.

### 6.7.5 State presence and participatory local governance system

There's a corner of scholarship within the terrorism literature that identifies failed and failing states as harbingers of terrorists and a fertile ground for their growth (Hagel, 2004; Tikuisis, 2009; Hewitt, Wilkenfeld, & Gurr, 2008; Piazza, 2007). The Fund for Peace identified failed and failing states and ranked them in order of their vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. The Fund found that, countries with high Fragile State Index (FSI) are more vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism. The World Bank defines failed or failing state as a state characterised by weak governance and ineffective policies, malfunctioning institutions incapable or unwilling to provide essential social services for their populations. In effect the state is absent in the lives of the people, leaving a vacuum for grabs by extremists' groups.

In relation to this study, the majority of the key informants hold the view that, Ghana has a very tight and well-functioning local administrative system relative to most of her peers in the west African sub-region, especially the terrorism embattled territories. According to the key informants, the popular and often cited 'ungoverned spaces' argument does not apply to Ghana. Places such as Timbuktu, which has become a sanctuary for breeding terrorists is said to be the perfect example of an ungoverned space in West Africa. In Ghana, the local governance system along the fiscal decentralization and devolution has ensured that, there is the presence of the state in virtually every nook and cranny of the country. This according to some of the key informants gives the central government the advantage of picking early warning signs and putting the necessary preventive measures to curb the possibility of any extremists' events. The presence of the state, as argued by some key informants makes every part of the country feel

recognized as stakeholders in the affairs of the country. To this end, one of the key informants who hold this view commented;

*In Ghana, we are administratively well organized. We have the regional administration, the district administration. So, no district can say they are very worried or neglected. The MCE is a good post. He or she attends regional administrative meetings and chairs the district security council. So, they know what's going on. It's not other places where the place has completely been neglected like the case in Mali or like in Niger were because of their linkage with Nigeria through the Darfur region. Then there's a lot of influence because it's a complete Hausa community throughout from Nigeria across the border to Niger. So, there's a lot of influence from ISWAP, which is Hausa and Kanuri based. And that makes it a little easier for them because they have the same mentality and they are the same people (MNS, Male...,2023).*

Another informant from the Ghana Police Service averred;

*When you look closely at the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism, political exclusion and marginalization is a key driver. Most of the groups that mobilize and launch attack do that because they feel they have been denied the right of participation and the political benefits thereof. If you look at the Sahel for instance, there is a vast uncontrolled space that is out of the reach of the central government. These spaces have become safe havens for the convergence and recruitment by terrorists and violent extremists' groups in the region. And these groups enter these spaces, they take advantage of the populations who already feel marginalized or alienated by the central government. The local governance structure in Ghana has got inbuilt mechanism that addresses this problem. So, the local governance system in Ghana is one of the robust*

*shields against the growth of internal violent extremists' groups. It also makes it hard for an external group to make a foothold since the right environment, which is perception of political exclusion is largely absent (GPS, Female...,2023).*

The views expressed by the key informants reflects an important discussion in the terrorism literature regarding a country's governance structure and its vulnerability to terrorism. Though a probably relationship, the overwhelming view supports the idea that weak governance structures provide both the fertile grounds and enabling environment for the emergence of terrorism (Hehir, 2007). Many of the terrorism embattled countries in the region are found to have vast territories of ungoverned spaces. This provides sanctuaries for terrorists as well as cheap sources of recruits for their activities within and across borders. Englebert & Lyammouri (2022) in particular have bemoaned the over concentration of the state on the capital city to the neglect of large segments of the population;

“While large segments of their territories and populations face tragic circumstances and fall under the control of alternative sources of authority, Sahel's political elites remain concerned about control of the apparatus of the state in the capital city and, mostly, access to its resources. Their “relative complacency” contrasts with the seriousness of the crisis” (Englebert & Lyammouri, 2022, p.12).

Similarly, in the case of the Chadian region the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) identifies limited state presence and a governance system characterised by isolation of huge populations of the citizenry. This, coupled with the inability of the state to control the vast watery expanses has provided the conducive environment for extremist groups to challenge the authority of the state even before the emergence of Boko Haram (Mahmood & Ani, 2018). A local researcher

contributing to the study by the ISS study explained in brief the depth of the isolation and limited state presence;

Interviewees in Chad noted that communities such as the Boudouma, who inhabit many of the islands in the Lake Chad, are isolated and receive limited government services. The population knows very little about the local administrative authorities and the nature of the country they belong to. They are mostly aware of traditional governance. Some of those interviewed in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps did not even know the colours of the Chadian flag, which they only saw for the first time when they had to leave their place of residence to flee the fighting between the Boko Haram insurgents and the Chadian military (Mahmood & Ani, 2018, p.7).

In the case of Ghana, there is a functioning and well-organized local governance system that promotes inclusive governance and creates room for broad participation from all segments of the Ghanaian society. The local governance system of Ghana is powered by the 1992 constitution of the republic of Ghana and operationalized by an Act of Parliament, Act 936, 2016 (Republic of Ghana, 2016). Unlike the Sahelian countries where the presence of vast ungoverned spaces creates the safe-haven for terrorist, the local governance system in Ghana reinforces state presence in all corners the country. For political and administrative purposes, the country is divided into 16 administrative regions, each headed by a regional minister. The regions are further sub-divided into District, Municipal and Metropolitan Assemblies. The granting of the status of a district, municipal or metropolitan assembly is based on the population, the geographical contiguity and economic viability of the area. This assignment criteria are provided for in section 1(4) of the Local Government Act, 2016.

The Act also allows for the creation of sub-district structures in order to open up participation at the local level. The sub-district structures as contained in the Act are Sub-Metropolitan District Councils, Urban Councils, Town Councils, Area Councils and Unit Committees. The unit committee is the most basic of the structure and a settlement of five houses is qualified to be categorized as a unit committee. This explains the extent of state presence in the Ghanaian society. This arrangement does not only guarantee the presence of the central government in all spheres of the country, it also promotes a sense of belonging and ownership. Symbolically, every citizen feels part of the governance system and thus ready to threaten the security of the country.

It is important to point out that, the local governance system in Ghana is not without limitations. Prominent amongst them include financial constraints, inadequate human resources and other logistical challenges. On the whole however, the inclusive nature of the local governance system in Ghana creates a sense of belonging and ownership. It suppresses any sense of exclusion and keeps the central government connected with the concerns of the population. And when it comes to recruitment and radicalization by violent extremists' groups, the presence of the state closes all avenues of exploitation by these groups. In as much as a lot still needs to be done to make the Ghanaian local administration much effective and responsive, the present arrangement is a useful tool for addressing the factors that fuel local sentiments and vulnerability to terrorism.

#### **6.7.6 Vibrant media and resilience to terrorism**

The Ghanaian media, politically referred to as the fourth estate of the realm is an important pillar in Ghana's democratization process. The public and private media and lately the social media (The new and unconventional media) have contributed significantly in sustaining the

democratic ethos that Ghana is praised for (Aubyn, 2021). The media has particularly contributed immensely in deepening participation and freedom of expression by informing and giving voice to the voiceless. The media has also provided the medium through which government and the citizenry exchange information in a democratic environment. Open discussions on media platforms offer government the opportunity to regularly engage citizens on critical issues and also helps in addressing major concerns. In discussing the drivers of terrorism, aggression as a product of frustration is a principal assumption of the relative deprivation theory (Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). As a custodian of the free speech, the media has become a regular space for people to burn their anger and frustration at government and government policies in a non-violent manner. Whereas not much is desired about this method, especially by the government, it nevertheless serves as the only alternative avenue to violent political agitation by the citizens. In effect, the media is an important mechanism for escalation of grievance in aggression or even violent extremism. One of the key informants reflected the importance of the media in the following comment;

*For me... Still talking about the reasons why Ghana is less prone to the problems of terrorism as witnessed in the neighbouring countries, the role of media freedom and free expression cannot be discounted. In most of the countries that conflicts and other forms of violence have erupted, free speech is either non-existent or very limited to a few regime praise-singers. Even when individuals identify threats, they will have to avenue to express that. Again, when the frustration boils to the brim, the next default level is out-burst. This is where you find individuals engaged in violent protests and if the system prohibits open association, they then start to plan secret. Whatever, happens the population become vulnerable to anyone who promises them enhanced freedom. In Ghana, the situation is generally much better. In spite of the few issues, the media is free and individuals are free to express themselves and to draw government's attention*

*to issues such as unemployment, abuse of office, poverty and many others that can threaten the peace and stability of the country (KAIPTC, Female..., 2023).*

In consonance with the comments by the respondents above, several incidents in past have accentuated the significant role of the media in preventing violent extremism. For instance, during the clashes between Fulani herdsmen and some residence of the Agogo area in the Ashanti region from 2016, the media highlighted the incidents extensively in their reportage and that caused the state to act swiftly to curtail its escalation. The state deployed a combination of community engagement, dialogue and limited military action to address the causes of the clashes. In other countries such as Nigeria, the late detection or poor management of such farmer-herder clashes have escalated and provided avenues for infiltration by terrorist groups. The media have also become reliable partners with government and other stakeholders in countering extremists' narratives and threats to country. In the recent 'see something-say something' campaign, by the government, the media played a central role in publicizing and broadening the reach of the campaign. The campaign was occasioned by intelligence pointing to the approaching threats and possible penetration of violent extremists' elements into the boundaries of the country. The ministry of national security, as part of promoting a whole-of society approach to dealing with the threats, launched the 'see something-say something' campaign to raise awareness to threats of terrorism and terrorism related crimes and to encourage the public to report any suspicious activities or individuals in their localities to the appropriate bodies.

The media as a key partner has proven to be the closest to the citizens and is among the first line of receptors of these alerts as far as the see-something-say-something campaign is concerned. The ministry of national security in recognizing the significance of the media in the

fight against terrorism and the campaign in particular, appointed some media celebrities and personalities as ambassadors of the campaign. Those appointed included Kofi Kinata, a musician; Kwame Sefa Kayi, Journalist with Peace Fm, Nana Aba Anamoah, a social media influencer and a journalist with GhOne Television and Gifty Bampoe, a journalist with the Tv3 among others (Abbey, 2022).

With the rise of violent extremism across the African continent and the Sahel in particular and the proximity of its threats to the Coastal states, the role of the Ghanaian media in this regard has also come to light. While admitting that, not all the actors within the media landscape are non-partisan and responsible in their conduct, the preponderant majority have been used as forces for the general good. In many instances, the media picks up the early warning signals and brings that to the attention of the government and relevant stakeholders for the appropriate action.

### **6.8 Analytic category three: Ghana's response to Violent Extremism and Terrorism**

As a result of the rising hostilities by well-known terrorist groups (such as Boko Haram, al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar al-Dine, al-Murabitoun, Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP), Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) among others) in the Lake Chad region and the Sahel and their steady advance southwards, Ghana has intensified its efforts at preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism both at home and abroad (Kwesi, Prah, & Chanimbe, 2021). In their work titled, *Ghana's Readiness to Combat Terrorism: Strategies of Security Institutions*, Kwesi et al. (2021) highlighted Ghana's resilience to terrorism but were quick to point to the imminent threat that the country's

geographical proximity to terrorism-embattled countries have exposed it to the threats of terrorism;

What is alarming is, although Ghana shares borders with these countries, it remains among the few countries in the sub-region that have not experienced terrorist attacks. However, its geographical location, i.e., nearness to terrorism prone countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, and Nigeria predisposes it to terrorist attacks (Kwesi et al., 2021, p.368).

The observations made by Kwesi et al. reflects the findings made in this study and thus accentuates the imperative of identifying and examining Ghana's response to the threat of terrorism hovering around the region. Ghana's internal and external effort at counter-terrorism predates the advent of 9/11 (Birikorang, 2007; Kwesi et al., 2021). However, the events of 9/11 and the ensuing international efforts has prompted Ghana to step up its own efforts at fighting terrorism and all its forms both domestically and internationally (Kwesi et al., 2021). From the analysis of the data gathered from the discussions with Key Informants and the reviews of relevant and available documents, this study found that, Ghana's response to violent extremism and terrorism is anchored on a bouquet of domestic and international legal and policy frameworks, multi-lateral co-operative and collaborative agreements and security institutions (Birikorang, 2007; Kwesi et al., 2021; Ministry of National Security, 2020; NCCE, 2021; Republic of Ghana, 1996).

## **6.9 Legal frameworks**

The legal frameworks enacted and adopted by Ghana in preventing and countering terrorism come in two flavours – domestic and international. Whereas the international legal frameworks

are products of regional, continental and global agreements such as international laws, conventions and protocols, the domestic legal frameworks are motivated by domestic experiences and compliance with international agreements and laws. A sample of these legal frameworks are discussed in the subsequent sections in this chapter.

### 6.9.1 Domestic legal frameworks

The primary source of the domestic legal frameworks is the 1992 constitution of Ghana. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land and all other laws operational in Ghana must conform with the tenets and dictates of the constitution. Some of the relevant domestic legal frameworks that are related to the prevention and countering of terrorism in Ghana include but not limited to the following;

- i. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana
- ii. The Security and Intelligence Agencies Act 2020 (1030)
- iii. Anti-Terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762), xx. Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2012
- iv. The Anti-money Laundering Act 2008, Act 749
- v. The National Disaster Management Organization Act, 1996, (Act 517)
- vi. The Emergency Powers Act, 1994, (742)
- vii. Immigration (Amendment) Act 2012 (Act 848)
- viii. The Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29)
- ix. The Criminal Offences (Amendment) Act 2012 (Act 849)
- x. Economic and Organised Crime Office (Operations) Regulations 2012 (LI 2183); EI 2, (2013)
- xi. the Electronic Communications Act 2008 (Act 775), as amended by the Electronic Communications (Amendment) Act 2009 (Act 786)

- xii. The Mutual Legal Assistance Act 2010 (Act 807); and
- xiii. The Electronic Transactions Act 2008 (Act 772).

It is important to note that some of these legal frameworks and instruments were not originally designed to counter terrorism but crime in general. However, in the fight against terrorism and terrorist financing, some of these instruments have become relevant in enabling state security agencies and other partners to operate within the confines of the law. For instance, the National Disaster Management Organization Act, 1996, (Act 517), The Emergency Powers Act, 1994, (742), and The Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29) among others were enacted long before 9/11 but have now become very relevant to the fight against terrorism. In reflecting the significance of the legal frameworks in preventing and countering terrorism in Ghana, the key informants from MNS and GPS capture the views held by a couple of other informants in the following words;

*You know the first and most important step in addressing any problem in a democratic environment is to define the problem within the context of the law and situate your effort within the ambit of the law. That way you know clearly what you're fighting and how to fight it. Ghana needs to be commended for that. Starting from the 1992 constitution and specifically the directive principles of state policy through to the many legal instruments that have been enacted subsequently, Ghana's counter-terrorism measures are based on law. In the institution where I work, these legal instruments guide how we fight to prevent and combat terrorism both in-country and in support of our neighbours. For example, through the Mutual legal assistance law which was enacted in 2010, we are able to share and receive intelligence from neighbouring countries on activities of these groups. Both sides benefit in these information exchange. For us, it helps us to prevent*

*these groups from entering or even starting their cells here in Ghana. You can also talk about the anti-money laundering act, the electronic transaction act...all these laws enable us to fight against the financing of terrorists and their affiliates... So, you see the importance of these legal instruments? (MNS, Male..., 2023).*

Similarly, the key informant from the Ghana Police Service averred;

*Previously, we only had the criminal offences act. After the 9/11 and when terrorism became popular with the threats eminent to Ghana, we realize the need to come up with a separate law that addresses terrorism specifically. There were instances where certain crimes were clearly acts of terrorism or acts aiding terrorism but because we didn't have any law dealing with such acts, some criminals ended up walking away. So, the enactment of the anti-terrorism act and related laws have helped greatly in the fight against terrorism from entering Ghana. I believe that if not because of some these laws, like by now, Ghana will be like Mali or even Nigeria. But because the country was proactive in passing some of these laws, we are able to prevent terrorism and also protect our people from these groups. Apart from the anti-terrorism law, there are several other laws that are designed to help the country fight off the threat of terrorism. I will try and name a few for you... the... Security and Intelligence agencies act, the Economics and Organized Crime Act, the anti-money laundering act and others. In fact, the 1992 constitution of Ghana itself is a counter-terrorism law since all these laws drive their powers from the constitution. But there are also some limitations on these laws and that is issues of human rights (GPS, Female..., 2023).*

From the comments of the key informants, it's clear that Ghana's war against terrorism is guided largely by the laws of the land and principally by the constitution of the country. Significantly, working with the relevant laws as noted from the comments of key informant from MNS, aids the responsible actors to understand what exactly to combat and how to combat that. That way, individual discretion is eliminated or significantly reduced in the fight against terrorism. In places such as Mali, individual discretion by operatives of law enforcement agencies in targeting certain groups have provided the rationalistic grounds for mobilization by marginalized groups who eventually launch attacks on their own as revenge or are recruited by already established groups to launch attacks on government installations and the unsuspecting public. This is not to suggest that there are no laws in Mali and other terrorism embattled places to tackle terrorism. Rather the problem stems from the enforcement or ill-enforcement of the law.

Whereas all these legal instruments listed above are important in the fight against terrorism, two pieces of legislations, the Anti-terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762) – and the Amendment Act, 2012- (hereinafter referred to as ATA) and The Security and Intelligence Agencies Act 2020 (Act 1030) (hereinafter referred to as SIAA) stand out in their relevance and direct relationship with the fight against terrorism domestically. These Acts are discussed in the next sections below.

#### **6.9.1.1 The Anti-Terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762 and Amendment Act 2012)**

The ATA Act is defined broadly as;

*“AN ACT to combat terrorism, suppress and detect acts of terrorism, to prevent the territory, resources and financial services of this country from being used to commit*

*terrorist acts, to protect the right of people in this country to live in peace, freedom and security and to provide for connected purposes.”.*

The ATA in particular is so important to such an extent that it supersedes the Criminal Act of Ghana in its application. Section 42 states; the Criminal and Other Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29) shall be read as one with this Act and where there is a conflict, this Act shall prevail.

Speaking to a key informant from high up the security services on the nature and implementation of the ATA, he provided a background explanation to the enactment of the Act, its significance in addressing terrorism and some issues of concern to its implementation for which operational difficulties could arise.

*The ATA is a piece of legislation passed to suppress, prevent and combat terrorism in the country. Before the ATA was enacted, the country had a number of legislations that were purposed to suppress terrorism and violent extremism. However, 9/11 and subsequent events created the imperative for a separate and specific law to deal with terrorism and to close the gaps that the previous laws did not contemplate. So, the ATA was enacted in 2008 and later amended in 2012 to accommodate international best practices in addressing the scourge of terrorism. for example, the amended Act designated some groups as al-Qaida affiliates and froze their assets. Taking inspiration from UNSC Resolution 1373 and subsequent resolutions, the ATA does not only criminalize terrorism but also prohibits terrorists financing and all forms of support for terror groups including harbouring such groups in the country. So, people are careful who they accommodate. Another important aspect of the ATA that has helped us to detect and suppress a lot of acts that could denigrate into terrorism is the power given to security operatives to intercept communication and also conduct searches (DI, Male..., 2023).*

For purposes of detecting, preventing, combating and prosecuting culprits of acts of terrorism or terrorist, the ATA defines what constitutes terrorism and acts not considered as terrorism- Sections 2 & 3. An Act of terrorism is defined in section 2 subsections 1 of the ATA as;

*An act is a terrorist act if it is performed in furtherance of a political, ideological, religious, racial or ethnic cause and (a) causes serious bodily harm to a person; (b) causes serious damage to property; (c) endangers a person's life; (d) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public; (e) involves the use of firearms or explosives; (f) releases into the environment or exposes the public to; (i) dangerous, hazardous, radioactive or harmful substances; (ii) toxic chemicals; or (iii) microbial or other biological agents or toxins; (g) is prejudicial to national security or public safety; (h) is designed or intended to disrupt (i) a computer system or the provision of services directly related to communications; (ii) banking or financial services; (iii) utilities, transportation; or (iv) other essential services; or (i) is designed or intended to cause damage to essential infrastructure.*

On the contrary, section 3 defines acts that cannot be considered as terrorism as;

*“A protest, demonstration or stoppage of work which disrupts an essential service shall not be considered to be a terrorist act within the meaning of this Act if the act does not result in the harm referred to in paragraphs, (a), (b), (c) or (d) of subsection (1) of section 2.”*

Recognizing the importance of terrorists financing to terrorism and the use of technology and other forms of modern communication tools in aiding the commission of a terrorist acts, the ATA makes provisions to tackle the financing of terrorism and to detect, intercept and expose terrorists and terrorism related communication. Section 7 on foisting attempt to finance or offer financial services to terrorist's states;

*A person who directly or indirectly provides or makes available financial or other related service (a) with the intention that the financial or other related service be used, (i) in whole or in part to commit or facilitate the commission of a terrorist act, or (ii) to benefit a person who is committing or facilitating the commission of a terrorist act, or (b) knowing or having reasonable cause to believe that the financial or other related service in whole or in part will be used by or will benefit a terrorist group, commits an offence and is liable on conviction on indictment to a term of imprisonment of not less than seven years and not more than twenty-five years.*

The ATA also empowers security and law enforcement agencies to intercept and decode any suspicious communication for the purposes of preventing the commission or the aiding of the commission of terrorism. However, reasonable grounds are required before a judge of competent jurisdiction will issue a warrant to a designated officer to intercept the communication of a target. The reasonable grounds standard is applicable to both Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian targets. This makes it difficult for terrorist or their affiliates elsewhere to use the Ghanaian space as a secured medium of communication. To this end, section 34 subsections 1-4 of the Act states;

*(1) A Police officer not below the rank of an Assistant Commissioner of Police may apply ex parte to a Circuit Court for an order to intercept communications for the purpose of obtaining evidence of commission of an offence under this Act.*

*(2) A Police officer not below the rank of an Assistant Commissioner of Police may make the application only with the prior written consent of the Minister.*

*(3) A Judge of the Circuit Court to whom an application is made under subsection (1) may make an order for the prevention of crime upon reasonable grounds to (a) require a communications service provider to intercept and retain a specified communication or communications of a specified description received or transmitted or about to be received or transmitted by that communications service provider; (b) authorise a senior police officer to intercept or listen to a conversation provided by a communications service provider; (c) authorise the senior police officer to enter premises and install on the premises a device for the interception and retention of specified communications or communications of a specified description and to remove and retain the device, where there is reasonable suspicion of commission of an offence under this Act, or the whereabouts of a person suspected by the police officer to have committed an offence is contained in that communication or communication of that description.*

*(4) Despite the Evidence Act, 1975 (N.R.C.D. 323) information contained in a communication which is intercepted and retained in a foreign state in accordance with the law of the foreign state and certified by a judge of that foreign state to have been intercepted, is admissible in proceedings for an offence under this Act as evidence of the truth of its contents even if it contains hearsay but shall be corroborated.*

#### **6.9.1.2 The Security and Intelligence Agencies Act 2020 (1030)**

The SIAA is defined broadly as;

*AN ACT relating to the National Security Council, to provide for the establishment of regional and district security councils, to specify and coordinate the activities of the agencies responsible for the security of the State and to protect and preserve the unity and stability of the State and to provide for related matters.*

Even though the National Security Council is a creation of the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana, Article 83, the SIAA defines in detail its distinguished role in safeguarding the internal and external security of the state and established the regional and district security councils. The function of the security council includes ensuring the collection of information relating to the security of Ghana and the integration of the domestic and foreign policies relating to the security of Ghana so as to enable the security services and any other departments and agencies of the Government to co-operate more effectively in matters relating to national security. This function and others are replicated at the regional and national levels.

The SIAA in section 12 also establishes the two principal National security intelligence agencies (IAs) under the direct supervision of the national security council (section 13); the National Investigation Bureau (NIB) (the erstwhile BNI) and the Research Department (RD). The primary and overarching duty of the IAs is to protect the internal and external security of the country by working to suppress terrorism, espionage, piracy and any other threats to wellbeing of Ghanaians. Specifically, section 14 (1 c) provides that the IAs are responsible for (i) counter intelligence, and activities for the internal security and stability of the country; and (ii) intelligence gathered internally in order to prevent and counter violent extremism, including terrorism, in the country. In the discharge of this duty IAs are empowered to collect as provided under section 14 of the Act to monitor, collect, analyse, evaluate, retain and disseminate in an appropriate manner information and intelligence gathered internally and perform intelligence operations.

The key function of the IAs is intelligence gathering and in conformity with the constitution on the privacy rights of targets, the SIAA carefully erects the standard required to intercept communication of targets as circumscribed in section 34 (1 & 2) of the SIAA;

*(1) Where a Director-General of an intelligence agency or an employee designated by the Director-General has reasonable grounds to believe that a warrant is required to enable the agency to perform a function under this Act, the Director-General or the designated employee may apply for the issue of a warrant. (2) The application for the warrant shall be made in writing to a Justice, the chairperson of a tribunal or a senior police officer not below the rank of a superintendent or above.*

The ATTA and SIAA are very similar in character and the prescriptions both laws make in preventing and countering terrorism. One very striking feature common to both laws is comprehensive nature of their provision straddling the legal and operational ladder of the counter-terrorism enterprise. At the very basic, the laws make provisions for detecting the early warning signals of terrorism. They also empower the law enforcement officers to investigate, confirm and to prevent the threat from escalating. Where applicable, the laws also provide for combating and prosecuting terrorism and terrorism-related offences. Additionally, the ATTA in particular takes cognizance of the global nature of the terrorism and its impact and thus makes provision to take of that. As already noted above, sub-section 4 of section 34 of the ATTA allows for the information intercepted and retain in a foreign state in accordance with the laws of the foreign state to be admissible in proceedings of an offence under the ATTA. It also empowers the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice to implement or issue instructions for the effective implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) relating to terrorism. The specific resolutions named in the law include UNSCR 1267 (1999),

UNSCR 1373 (2001), UNSCR 1718 (2006) and any other successor resolutions related to the freezing or seizure of terrorist assets and related matters.

In spite of the comprehensive legal basis and justification outline by the ATTA and the SIAA, these laws are not without some downsides. For instance, the warrant to intercept communication of target, the law does not define which type of communication to intercept. This could lead to breach of privacy of other people who are related to the target but are not targets themselves. Again, if you read the ATA together with SIAA, which had been passed earlier, the ATA prescribes the Circuit Court (a lower court) as the appropriate forum for making the application for a warrant. Under the SIAA officers of the Bureau of National Intelligence (BNI) and other department heads can only secure a warrant from only the High Court. No reason is assigned for this change but it is important that one forum or court is singled out to deal with warrant applications. This prevents a situation where the Circuit Court judge may grant an application made by the police but the same application on similar facts made by the BNI may be refused by a High Court Judge and vice versa.

### **6.9.2 International legal frameworks and Ghana's response to terrorism**

Motivated by history and the imminent threat of terrorism and violent extremism to which no country has proven invulnerable, Ghana has acceded to a number of regional and international peace and security as well as counter-terrorism instruments. At the regional level, Ghana has acceded to and ratified a number of security and counter-terrorism instruments. Notable amongst them include;

1. The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials (2006);

2. The Protocol A/P1/01/06 Relating to the Establishment of an ECOWAS Bureau of Intelligence and Investigation on Criminal Matters (2006);
3. The ECOWAS Protocol A/P3/12/01 on the Fight against Corruption (2001);
4. Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security (2001);
5. Protocol A/AP1/12/99 Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security;
6. 1994 ECOWAS Convention A/P1/8/94 on Extradition (1999);
7. ECOWAS Convention A/P1/7/92 on Mutual Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters (1992);

At the continental level, Ghana has acceded to the Organization of African Unity (now African Union) Convention on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism adopted in 1999. The 1999 Convention obligated member states to proscribe and criminalize terrorism in all its forms. Member states were also required under the Convention to establish state jurisdiction over terrorist acts, provide a legal framework for extradition as well as extra-territorial investigations and the provision of mutual legal assistance. Speaking to an informant high up in the security and intelligence agencies, he averred,

*Ghana was among the first countries to adopt this convention and this has influenced much of the work Ghana has done in building the necessary barriers against terrorism. If you look at some of the regional instruments on counter-terrorism, they took their inspiration from this landmark convention. It also shows that Ghana and Africa had*

*already perceived and understood the threat of terrorism before 9/11 happened... (DI..., 2023).*

*Prior to and after 9/11* Ghana has shown commitment and consistency in the global fight against terrorism and transnational organized crimes (Birikorang, 2007; Kwesi et al., 2021). At the level of the United Nations, Ghana has shown commitment to the war against terrorism and violent extremism. Ghana has taken part in global efforts and has ratified a number of conventions and instruments aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism across the world. Notable among these instruments are; vi. The Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism and Terrorist Financing in 2002; vii. International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings viii. the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism ix. the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime

Navigation and

- x. the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages

At the UN Security Council level, several resolutions have also been passed with the objective of suppressing terrorism by freezing the assets of terrorists and their sponsors and taking care of related offenses. Some of the UN Security Resolutions (UNSCR) that Ghana has acceded to include UNSCR 1267 (1999) which targeted the activities of the Taliban in and out of Afghanistan, UNSCR 1718 (2006) on North Korea's nuclear program, and UNSCR 1373 adopted by the Security Council at its 4385th meeting, on 28 September 2001 which seeks to among other things obliges States to work together urgently to prevent and suppress terrorist

acts, including through increased cooperation and full implementation of the relevant international conventions relating to terrorism.

The UNSCR 1373 in particular was passed under Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, thus giving member states the right and discretion to use force to enforce the dictates of the Resolution. As part of measures imposed on member states by the resolution, Member States were required to enact domestic legislation that criminalizes terrorism and acts of terrorism. It also required member states to fight all enablers of terrorism and even if they are other member states. While acting in their individual context in effecting the dictates of the Resolution 1373, Member States are entreated to do that consistently with other international legal regimes on terrorism and the international human rights law. In his comments on Ghana's commitment to global counter terrorism measures, key informant from the GPS averred;

*Ghana is so much respected regionally and globally for its adherence to regional and global efforts at combating terrorism. So, if you take a careful look at many of the laws and counter-terrorism strategies, you'll see that they are products of international legal instruments and frameworks. Ghana's anti-terrorism law for instance was inspired by the United Nations resolution on fighting terrorism... And I think is the resolution 1373 or so... If you also look at the country's framework for preventing and countering terrorism, you'll realize that it is modelled along with the UN Secretary General's framework for preventing terrorism which was adopted in 2015. So, Ghana's commitment to regional and international counter-terrorism effort is not in doubt and if you ask me, I'll say that has contributed in making Ghana one of the safest countries from terrorism in the region (GPS, Female..., 2023).*

Broadly speaking, Ghana's role in regional and international peace and security architecture dates back to the time of the struggle for independence. At the time, the infant Pan-Africanist government of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, inspired by the independence of Ghana encouraged and supported other African states in their struggle for independence (Birikorang, 2007; Kwesi et al., 2021). The subsequent governments though in varying degrees continued to pursue policies that fostered cooperation through regional and continental integration and supported countries whose peace and security were threatened internal and external happenings. Ghana has over the years played remarkable roles and leadership in several peacekeeping and peace-making missions across the region and beyond. Notable among these were peacekeeping and peace-making missions in countries like Lebanon, Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Côte d'Ivoire (Birikorang, 2007, p.2).

Ghana's role in promoting regional and continental peace and stability is influenced by a number of factors. Firstly, Ghana's foreign policy goals remain largely unchanged from independence and are anchored on the promotion of friendly relations and economic cooperation with other countries, good neighbourliness, and a commitment to maintaining international peace and security. Secondly, the constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Under the Directive Principles of State Policy, chapter 6 Article 40 states;

*“in its dealings with other nations, the Government shall (a) promote and protect the interests of Ghana; (b) seek the establishment of a just and equitable international economic order; (c) promote respect for international law, treaty obligations, and settlement of international disputes by peaceful means; (d) adhere to the principles enshrined in or as the case may be, the aims and ideals of the UN Charter, the OAU*

*Charter, the Commonwealth, the ECOWAS Treaty and any other organization of which Ghana is a member.”*

And thirdly, Ghana's commitment to regional, continental, and international obligations to the ECOWAS, AU, and the UN under which Ghana is obliged to uphold the various decisions, resolutions, conventions and protocols and the regional and international mechanisms relating to peace, security and stability. Beyond these three factors, one basic rule which has guided Ghana's foreign policy in relation to other nations is the notion that foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. This means Ghana's participation in the international peace effort is informed by the thinking that Ghana's destiny is inextricably tied to that of its neighbours. Hence Ghana's involvement in promoting sub-regional peace is not only aimed at re-establishing peace and security in those conflict-prone countries but to prevent the potential spillover of these insecurities into Ghana's territory. This is especially true for the most insidious security challenge that every country and region now face - Terrorism.

The pursuit of international counter-terrorism co-operation through legal frameworks also comes with some limitations especially as a result differences in domestic laws. Adarkwah (2020), expresses this issue more eloquently;

The framework for international cooperation also presents substantial rule of law issues. States' actions against terrorism require international cooperation between national authorities across geographical borders. This involves information-sharing among national authorities. Information-sharing can be problematic when the information to be shared had been procured under a standard lower than pertains in the target's country (Adarkwah, 2020, p.64).

## **6.10 National Policy Frameworks**

This section identifies and discusses a key national framework for preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism. Principally, this section identifies the National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Ghana (NAFPCVET) and the National Security Strategy while focusing on the NAFPCVET.

### **6.10.1 -The National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism (NAFPCVET)**

Apart from the legal frameworks, there are also policy frameworks designed to guide the counter-terrorism strategy of Ghana. Two of these frameworks stand out. The National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Ghana (NAFPCVET) and the National Security Strategy. For purposes of this study, we focused on the NAFPCVET to understand Ghana's counter-terrorism strategy. In line with the 2006 United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the 2015 United Nations Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, the Government of Ghana adopted the NAFPCVET. The unique feature of the NAFPCVET from other measures is its inclusive nature. It encourages a whole of the community and all-hands-on desk approach to fighting terrorism in Ghana. The Framework is developed around four mutually reinforcing pillars. For each pillar, there is a short-medium to a long-term goal. The pillars are Prevent, Pre-empt, Protect, and Recover abbreviated as PPPR.

#### **First Pillar: Prevent**

The aim of the first pillar is to address the political, economic, and social root causes of violent extremism and terrorism. Under the first pillar, the government plans to address factors such as

poverty, unemployment, and governance gaps and to counter the narratives of terrorists. Generally, the first pillar addresses all the factors that create an environment of disappointment, frustration anger, hopelessness, and the rejection of acceptable societal norms, and ways of behaviour.

### **Second Pillar: Pre-empt**

This pillar is concerned with unearthing the actions of violent extremist or terrorist groups or individuals, identifying the culprits, and stopping the activity before it is carried out. The deployment of a mechanism of a pervasive capability for vigilance and monitoring for the provision of accurate and timely intelligence to first responders is critical to the success of this pillar. It relies on public awareness and the deployment of a mechanism of a pervasive capability for vigilance and monitoring for the provision of accurate and timely intelligence to first responders. Terrorist plans must be disrupted before they can be carried out, which requires a rigorous and ongoing threat assessment and analysis of available information.

### **Three Pillar: Protect**

This Framework pillar comprises the methodical identification of society's vulnerabilities to the dangers of violent extremism and terrorism, as well as the development of the necessary resilience to withstand them. It includes safeguarding vulnerable communities, important national infrastructure, transportation corridors, public spaces, and cyberspace. The successful execution of this pillar requires collaboration between the government and the private sector, as well as regional and international partners.

#### **Fourth Pillar: Recovery/Respond**

The goal of this pillar is to generate and deliver an adequate national response in the event of a terrorist attack, while ensuring that it is supplemented by the other pillars and the resilience synergy that has already been established to ensure minimal damage, injury, or loss of life, and a quick return to normal life. Appropriate threat-specific collaborative training of responder agencies, as well as inventories of necessary goods and equipment, are critical to a successful response. Interoperability of responder agencies will be increased by cooperative planning and preparation of the delivery of a response to a terrorist incident, in addition to joint training. The effective delivery of response without fuss depends on the proper coordination of the complete national effort of Security, Intelligence, Law Enforcement, and Emergency Services, with distinct complementary duties assigned to each. The development and effective manning of functional Joint Situation Rooms at all levels could considerably improve this.

The NAFPCVET is very good on paper but with Ghana's ugly history of succeeding governments abandoning initiatives and projects commenced by previous governments, the NAFPCVET is at risk of suffering the same fate as similar beautiful policies have in the past. For it to be sustainable, the NAFPCVET needs to be supported by an Act of parliament with a secured source of funding for its implementation, even if such a law is to have a sunset clause.

#### **6.11 Multilateral mechanism: The Accra Initiative**

Ghana's regional efforts toward the suppression of terrorism are not only manifested in the adoption of regional instruments but also in multilateral initiatives with regional and international partners and stakeholders. Ghana has hosted and continues to host regional counter-terrorism initiatives such as meetings of Chiefs of intelligence and security of members states of ECOWAS, Ministerial meetings, and Heads of States meetings.

One such outstanding initiative that is currently being hosted by Ghana is the Accra Initiative (AI). The AI was launched in 2017 as a collaborative and cooperative security mechanism with a permanent secretariat headquartered in Accra, the capital city of the Republic of Ghana. It is comprised of seven member states, five substantive members, and two members with observer status. The five members are Benin, Ghana, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso. The remaining two members are Mali and Niger. The AI has two primary objectives; to prevent the spillover of terrorism from the Sahel to coastal regions and to prevent transnational organized crimes and violent extremism along the borders of member states.

In pursuit of its aims, member states have launched several cross-border security operations, joint military training, and meetings of heads of security and intelligence under the AI. The first cross-border security operation took place in May 2018 and was dubbed Operation Koudanlougou I. It was jointly conducted by Ghana, Togo, and Burkina Faso with Benin participating as an observer. The second operation, Operation Koudanlougou II was launched in November 2018 jointly by Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire with Mali as an observer state. Operation Koudanlougou III was launched exactly a year after the second operation as the third cross-border operation jointly by Ghana and Togo. Also, as part of its security and intelligence sharing, the AI sponsored a joint personal training in Côte d'Ivoire in 2020.

To a large extent the Accra initiative has been successful in increasing information flow between the partner countries. This has led to some successful arrests of suspected militants' while foisting suspected terror groups movements and activities within the region (Aubyn, 2021). The information flow between and among the partner countries as well as the episodic operations has contributed in keeping the borders of Ghana clean and safe of potential terror

activities. In spite of the moderate successes of the AI, the initiative still suffers some setbacks in a number of ways (Aubyn, 2021; Kwarkye, Abatan, & Matongbada, 2019). Aubyn (2021), in examining the AI has pointed out that the operations under the initiative have been ad hoc with very limited duration and geographic reach. This limits its impact and culminates into sustainability challenges. The author also noted that, the language barrier between English-speaking Ghana and her Francophone counterparts is militating against effective communication and execution. Finally, Kwarkye, Abatan, & Matongbada, (2019) bemoaned the excessive military dominance of the initiative at the expense of political, socio-economic and governance challenges.

#### **6.12 How has the response impacted Ghana's P/CVET Strategies?**

It is not clear whether Ghana's response to violent extremism and terrorism as discussed above has contribute to making the country less prone to terrorism. However, on the impact of the response mechanism on Ghana's P/CVET strategies, a number of contributions have been identified.

Firstly, the response mechanism, especially the domestic legal frames aid in early detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorism and terrorism-related offences. In all these, the laws provide the legal guarantees and rationalistic grounds for effective prevention and counterterrorism execution. For instance, the SIAA and ATA as discussed above, allows officers to intercept the communications of suspicious targets. This, however is done after a designated officer of the law applies a warrant before a court competent jurisdiction, providing reasonable grounds to that effect.

Secondly, the response mechanism guarantees Ghana the requisite international support through co-operation and collaboration in preventing and countering terrorism. The Accra Initiative is a multilateral mechanism through which Ghana shares and receive information on the activities of terrorists or suspected terrorists within the sub-region and across the country's borders.

Thirdly, Ghana's response encourages a whole of society approach to preventing and countering terrorism. A whole of society approach, an approach which acknowledges and incorporates the role community members and other stakeholders in combating terrorism is considered to be the most effective strategy. Take the National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Ghana (NAFPCVET), it is developed around four mutually reinforcing pillars. For each pillar, there is a short-medium to a long-term goal. The pillars are Prevent, Pre-empt, Protect, and Recover. The third pillar relies on public awareness and collaboration to detect the early signs of terrorism and to combat it.

Fourthly, the response mechanisms also promise to be effective as it identifies and prioritizes the socio-economic and political drivers of terrorism. Whereas the legal frameworks and multilateral initiatives focus on the legal and military angles of the fight against terrorism respectively, the policy frameworks address all the factors that create an environment of disappointment, frustration anger, hopelessness, and the rejection of acceptable societal norms, and ways of behaviour. For instance, the first pillar of the NAFPCVET is purposed to address the political, economic, and social root causes of violent extremism and terrorism. Under this pillar, government aims at addressing factors such as poverty, unemployment, and governance gaps while countering the narratives favourable to terrorists.

The aim of the first pillar is to address the political, economic, and social root causes of violent extremism and terrorism. Under the first pillar, the government plans to address factors such as poverty, unemployment, and governance gaps and to counter the narratives of terrorists. Generally, the first pillar addresses all the factors that create an environment of disappointment, frustration anger, hopelessness, and the rejection of acceptable societal norms, and ways of behaviour.

### **6.13 Conclusion: Revisiting Theoretical framework**

The purpose of this study was to examine why Ghana is less prone to terrorism and violent extremism in a region that is considered the epicentre of terrorism. The following key questions were set forth to guide the data collection, data analysis and overall discussion of the study. ix.

Is Ghana exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism?

- x. Why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African subregion?
- xi. How is Ghana responding to the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism (P/CVET)?
- xii. How does the chosen response mechanism impact Ghana's P/CVET effort?

As an important requirement of academic and objectivity test, the study is grounded in theory. Among other competitive theories, the Relative Deprivation (RD) theory propounded by Robert Gurr was settled on to underpin the study. Whereas Gurr's theory does not explain the motivation for all forms of violence, it certainly makes a very useful addition to the explanations and conceptualization of violent extremism and terrorism as consequences of political, social and economic disparities. It is found to be consistent with both empirical

findings and expert analysis on the drivers of violent extremism as well as terrorist recruitment and radicalization across several contexts and geography (Abdikadir, 2016; Darden, 2019; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hellsten, 2016; Omwega et al., 2016; Onuoha, 2014; Piazza, 2006; Sommers, 2019; UNDP, 2016). According to Pettigrew, the RD theory is not only an excellent social psychological concept but that it amalgamates seamlessly with other forms of social psychological processes to build more integrative theory, which in his opinion is a disciplinary need. Its advantage over other forms of social psychological theories is that it links the individual with the interpersonal and intergroup levels of analysis.

Generally, the RD theory proceeds from the assumption that aggression is a product of frustration (Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). To be more specific, the frustration-aggression assumption is underpinned by the proposition that the prevalence of violent behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and that the existence of frustration necessarily leads to violence. By this assumption, all forms of political violence including terrorism are linked to frustration from objective political and socio-economic conditions where individuals feel relatively deprived, either as against a referent group or as against their expectation (Hewitt & Gurr, 2008).

#### **6.14 Linking the theoretical assumptions to the findings of the study**

The first and second research questions were design to test the key assumption and proposition of the RD theory. The relationship between the findings of this study and the RD theory is mixed and inconclusive. Whereas the findings one of the studies lends credence to the latter proposition of the theory which links frustration and susceptibility to terrorism to objective

political and socio-economic drivers, the findings two failed to support the assumption of the theory which suggests that the existence of frustration necessarily lead to violence.

The first finding of this study shows that Ghana is exposed to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism. This exposure, from the analysis of the data gathered through the in-depth interviews, surveys and documentary reviews is caused by a combination of political, socioeconomic and geo-political factors such as corruption, perception of political exclusion and marginalization, fatigue with the failure of democracy, poverty, unemployment, the contagion effect as a result of proximity to terrorism-prone countries among others. According to Gurr, frustration from these political and socio-economic factors provides the rationalistic grounds for individuals and groups to mobilize and resort to violence as a natural response. Whereas the evidence in this study suggest that these factors have sponsored an environment of susceptibility to violent extremism, the study, as shown in the second finding could not support the conclusion that frustration from these political and socio-economic factors leads to violence and in this case terrorism.

The second findings show that, in spite of the presence of susceptibility to terrorism caused by the factors noted in the first findings, Ghana is still less prone to terrorism and violent extremism and remains one of the few countries in the West African sub-region that has not yet experience incidents of terrorism. The resilience factors that have made Ghana less prone to terrorism relative to her peers have been explained extensively in the previous sections in this chapter and not worth repeating here. The second findings of this study and conclusion therefrom does not only not support the extrapolation of the RD theory on the frustration-terrorism link, it also contrasts with the conclusions from other studies in the literature

(Abdikadir, 2016; Chauzal, 2015; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hellsten, 2016; Omwega et al., 2016; Onuoha, 2014; Piazza, 2006; UNDP, 2017b).

As already noted in chapter three, in a study by Chauzal (2015) that aimed at tracing the roots of the Malian conflict, the author concluded that, the Tuareg uprising and terrorist spree in Mali in 2012 was deeply rooted in the country's history of state-led marginalization and exclusion of the northern populations from the political and economic development of the country since independence. The Uprising and its subsequent terrorist lacing could best be described as a reaction from a deep sense of deprivation and the need to secure equal political and economic opportunities as enjoyed by the southern populations. Similarly, authors such as (Abdikadir, 2016; Ewi & Salifu, 2017; Hellsten, 2016; Omwega et al., 2016; Onuoha, 2014) have all argued, that, frustration and impatience with the system, characterized by loss of faith in the dysfunctional state have push a lot of young people in Kenya and Nigeria to join groups like Al-Shabab, Boko Haram and ISWAP, carrying out activities such as suicide bombings targeted at government installations as well as innocent civilians. As already noted, Ewi and Salifu's (2017) study of the causes of terrorism in Nigerian and why the youth of the country resorts to Boko Haram found socio-economic and political drivers such as unemployment, poverty, poor governance, corruption and weak family structures as being conducive to youth radicalization and recruitment into terrorists' groups.

The studies contrasted with the findings in this study were done in contextually different environment from what pertains in Ghana. These were conducted in countries that are terrorism-embattled with active terrorist and violent extremists' groups operating within their borders. This could influence the conclusions they reached by supplying the evidence of how

such frustration has moved people into advocating, supporting or actively involving in violence.

However, the contrast pointed out above reveals the conceptual limitation of the RD theory in explaining why some countries become terrorism-embattled and others with the same political and socio-economic drivers do not. To link this frustration of violence, this study complements the RD theory with two other variants of the of the psycho-sociological theories. These are the psycho-pathological theory and another variant of the psycho-sociological theory, the social distance and mass casualty theory. The Psycho-pathological and the social distance and mass casualty theories are instrumental in explaining the transition from frustration or extremism to terrorism at least at the individual and group levels owing to the fact that, all terrorism starts at the personal level (Brynja, 2005; Jongman, 2005). According to these theories, a radicalized or frustrated individual stands at a junction with two options – the path of peaceful advocacy or the path of violent extremism and terrorism. As to which option is chosen is a function of psychological and environmental factors. This is the point at which the psycho pathological and psycho – sociological theories complement the RD theory in linking frustration to aggression in general and RD to terrorism in particular or otherwise.

This then throws much light on the exception observed in the case of Ghana. From the extrapolation of the RD theory, Ghana is exposed to the risk or threat of terrorism as a result of frustration of the citizens borne out of objective political and socio-economic drivers. However, at the point of transition, certain identifiable political and socio-economic factors mediated to produce a different result from what is known in the literature and other studies.

The presence or absence of these psycho pathological and psycho – sociological factors in countries currently battling with terrorism is beyond the boundaries and the scope of this study and thus presents a gap for further research. The focus of this study is to examine why Ghana is less prone to terrorism and not why other countries are more prone. For comparative purposes, conditions and studies on other countries have been leveraged to juxtapose with that of Ghana for better understanding. But that is far from attempting to explain why those countries experience incidents of terrorism. That will require a separate and full-blown study to uncover as has already been done by many researchers.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to seek to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's relative resilience to terrorism and violent extremism compared to her peers in the West African Sub-region. In effect, the question underpinning this study is, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even though they share similar political and socioeconomic characteristics? The researcher hoped that understanding the source(s) of Ghana's relative peace and resistance to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism will undoubtedly yield valuable insights into preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in the region and beyond. To yield better insights into the phenomenon under discussion, the study addressed four research questions;

- i. Is Ghana exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism?
- ii. Why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African sub-region?
- iii. How is Ghana responding to the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism (P/CVET)?
- iv. How does the chosen response mechanism impact Ghana's P/CVET effort?

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the key findings of the study in line with the objectives, highlight the conclusion and make recommendations for the attention of governments, academics, practitioners in the field of P/CVET and students of terrorism studies.

## 7.2 Summary of key findings

First, the study found that Ghana is susceptible and exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. Ghana's exposure is found to be driven by certain identifiable political, socioeconomic, demographic, and geopolitical factors. Politically, pervasive perception of corruption, erosion of trust in democracy and some institutions of state, perceived exclusion or marginalization of the youth and other minorities, predisposition to violence (Costly signalling) and political exclusion both at the level of governance and intra-party politics. Socioeconomically, unemployment, poverty, inadequate economic opportunity, ethnic cleavages borne out of natural resources distribution, social and economic inequality, tribal and ethnic resentment among others are mostly considered to be the key socio-economic factors that expose Ghana to the risk of terrorism. And in terms of geo-political factors, key informants emphasized geographical proximity and the contagion effect. Ghana's geographical proximity has been found to be a key susceptibility or vulnerability factor to terrorism and violent extremism. Drawing from the contagion theory of terrorism, the interview respondents argued that there could be a spill over from Ghana's neighbours as a result of shared political and socio-economic characteristics. The fact that these groups are able to penetrate the borders of Ghana to recruit young Ghanaians as foreign fighters is evidence that they can move into the country when the need arises.

Second, in spite of the visible risk faced by Ghana, the study also found evidence to suggest that, the country is less prone to actual incidents of terrorism and violent extremism relative to her peers in the same region. Even though the reasons for the apparent immunity remain contestable, factors such as Ghana's history and culture of peace, thriving democracy and the rule of law environment, the role and authority of traditional leadership in promoting peaceful

co-existence, State presence and participatory local governance system in Ghana and Vibrant media among others are found to be some of the factors that are making Ghana less prone to terrorism on its soil.

Third, it is found in this study that, Ghana has over the years developed specific responses to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism. The responses are manifested in myriad albeit mutually reinforcing legal frameworks, security institutions and national action plans for preventing and countering terrorism in Ghana and beyond. The legal frameworks enacted and adopted by Ghana in preventing and countering terrorism come in two flavours – domestic and international. Whereas the international legal frameworks are products of regional, continental and global agreements such as international laws, conventions and protocols, the domestic legal frameworks are motivated by domestic experiences and compliance with international agreements and laws. Some examples of the domestic legal frameworks include the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, the Security and Intelligence Agencies Act 2020 (1030); Anti-Terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762); Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2012, and The Anti-money Laundering Act 2008, Act 749.

Fourth, Ghana has proven to be committed and consistent in its adherence to regional and international response to terrorism and violent extremism. Ghana has acceded to countless regional, continental and global counter-terrorism instruments and conventions. The international instruments are adopted at the levels of ECOWAS, AU and UN. To note a few of the international legal and policy frameworks; the ECOWAS Protocol A/P3/12/01 on the Fight against Corruption (2001); the Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention,

Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security (2001); Protocol A/AP1/12/99 Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security; African Union) Convention on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism adopted in 1999; the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism and Terrorist Financing in 2002; International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Together, these instruments are supposed to exact specific domestic measures and foreign policies on preventing countering terrorism and violent extremism. Some of the domestic measures such as the enactment of Ghana's Anti-Terrorism Act and the development of a comprehensive National Framework for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Terrorism are products of Ghana's obligation to global effort at preventing and countering terrorism.

Fifth, the measures adopted by Ghana have proven very useful per the evidence evinced. Some of the ways in which the chosen responses impact Ghana's counter-terrorism strategies include; Firstly, the response mechanism, especially the domestic legal frames aid in early detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorism and terrorism-related offences. Secondly, the response mechanism guarantees Ghana the requisite international support through co-operation and collaboration in preventing and countering terrorism. Thirdly, Ghana's response encourages a whole of society approach to preventing and countering terrorism. Fourthly, the response mechanisms also promise to be effective as it identifies and prioritizes the socioeconomic and political drivers of terrorism. Whereas the legal frameworks and multilateral initiatives focus on the legal and military angles of the fight against terrorism respectively, the policy frameworks address all the factors that create an environment of disappointment, frustration anger, hopelessness, and the rejection of acceptable societal norms,

and ways of behaviour. However, the study could not conclude whether these measures are the reasons why

Ghana is less prone to terrorism and violent extremism. Some of the terrorism-prone countries in the region have instituted similar measures but continue to face terrorism and violent extremism on their soils. Further research is needed to understand why those measures have proven less useful for those countries.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to seek to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's resilience relative to her peers in the West African Sub-region as far as terrorism and violent extremism is concerned. In effect, the question underpinning this study is, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even though they share similar political and socio-economic characteristics? The researcher hoped that, understanding the source(s) of Ghana's relative peace and resilience to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism will undoubtedly yield valuable insights into preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in the region and beyond. To yield better insights into the phenomenon under discussion, the study addressed four research questions; (a) is Ghana exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism? (b) why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African sub-region? (c) how is Ghana responding to the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism (P/CVET)? (d) how does the chosen response mechanism impact Ghana's P/CVET effort?

Methodologically, the study employed a mixed method of data collection and analysis. Data for the study was obtained from multiples sources which included surveys, focus group

discussions, expert interviews and documentary reviews. In total, primary data was obtained from 296 participants. These included 285 survey respondents, 11 expert interviews, and one focus group discussion comprising three members out of the 11 experts previously interviewed. The primary data was supplemented with secondary data collected through documentary reviews.

The study analysis was guided by the research objective/questions and anchored on the relative deprivation theory. The relative deprivation theory was also complemented by the psychopathological theory and another variant of the psycho-sociological theory, the social distance and mass casualty theory. The Psycho-pathological and the social distance and mass casualty theories are instrumental for explaining the transition from frustration or extremism to terrorism at least at the individual and group levels owing to the fact that, all terrorism starts at the personal level.

Based on the analysis of the data gathered and the ensuing discussions, the study concludes from the findings, that Ghana is exposed to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. And that, despite the exposure, Ghana has proven to be less prone to terrorism in an insecure region. It also emerged that, several domestic and externally sponsored measure have been designed and adopted respectively as responses to the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. These measures are manifested in legal and policy frameworks, multilateral co-operations and domestically inspired counter-terrorism strategies. The study makes an inconclusive verdict on the impact of the responses on Ghana's apparent immunity to terrorism. It nevertheless identifies a number of ways the responses can prop Ghana's ability to address the underlying drivers of terrorism while remaining relevant in the international war against terrorism.

## 7.4 Recommendation

Consequent to the findings outline above, the study makes several recommendations targeted at the government and other relevant stakeholders such as the media, traditional authorities and the youth among others. Systematically, the recommendations are tailored to address the various drivers of terrorism as identified by the study and also to strengthen Ghana's response to the threats of terrorism.

### 7.4.1 Addressing the political drivers

Politically, the state must reaffirm its commitment to address the known drivers of terrorism such as corruption, inclusion of youth and women in decision-making as well as the erosion of trust in democracy and the institutions supposed to uphold the tenets of democracy. Specifically, the states in particular must find ways to give greater voice to the youth at all levels – local, national and international – before they begin to find voice through violence and by radical means. States must also uphold good governance practices such as transparent, inclusive and accountable governance, respect for human rights and tolerance of dissenting views especially from minority groups. Corruption must also be fought urgently and seriously. And the fight must be all inclusive and transparent to starve extremists' groups the fodder for their narratives.

To address the perceived exclusion and marginalization in decision-making, government must, as a matter of prudence and as acknowledged in the National Youth Policy and African Youth Charter, create room for the youth to play leading roles in the formulation and implementation of all youth-targeted empowerment and employment strategies. This is particularly important because of the advantage of the 'insider' experience. Such inclusive approaches will also

engender the spirit of ownership and sustainability of the strategies. And more importantly leave no room for extremist narratives to fester.

Similarly, the inclusion and mainstreaming of women in preventing and countering terrorism is an important political dimension that addresses the perception of exclusion and marginalization. The role of women in particular which has been suppressed for all this while must be projected in any effective counter-terrorism effort (UN Women, 2017; GTI, 2018). Women and girls are impacted differently by terrorism and violent extremism from boys and men. And any counter-terrorism effort that is male-centric will deny governments an essential and even more nuanced dimension to fighting terrorism. Experts have shared how community-based approaches and good practices have empowered women to counter terrorist narratives in both on-line and of-line spaces. In effect, women, in which ever capacity shape the values of the community they find themselves and must be empowered and given the opportunity to help address problems that we face.

#### **7.4.2 Addressing the economic drivers**

To address the socio-economic drivers of Ghana's exposure to the risk of terrorism, the issue of unemployment, job creation and poverty reduction must be taken seriously by the government and all stakeholders. In this regard, the Government needs to liberate the youth from poverty and misery by creating and expanding economic opportunities for young people. Specifically, there should be short to long-term multi-level, multi-agency, and sustainable employment creation strategies formulated and implemented inclusively. Within the short to medium term, the government must urgently work to reduce the number of youths currently unemployed. And in the long run, the government must look at addressing the

underemployment and vulnerable employment challenges that leave even the employed feeling poor and vulnerable. The government should streamline the existing youth entrepreneurial and financing schemes to assume the character of non-partisanship and meritocracy. That way, young people with great initiatives can leverage such schemes to build businesses which would at least reduce the level of unemployment if not create more jobs.

Additionally, and as a matter of policy adjustment, the government should consider harmonizing the standalone arrangements such as the Youth Employment Authority (YEA) and the Nation Builders Corps (NABCO) programs to generate more acceptable and sustainable jobs for the youth who are enrolled in these programmes. As the biggest spender in the economy, a certain proportion of government procurement should be reserved for young entrepreneurs and start-ups in the country. This practice, if implemented, will help start-ups in the country to acquire the needed economies of scale and economies of experience as well as the needed market capital to boost growth and employment generation.

#### **7.4.3 Addressing the social drivers**

Socially, the role of the family unit, civil society, opinion and cultural leaders, educational leaders and women in addressing the menace of violent extremism should be amplified. The processes of extremists' recruitment and radicalization often start at the basic levels such as the family unit and the counter-effort must equally start at that level. Education and training on counterterrorism should be made a part of the curriculum at all levels of education in the country. Sometimes terrorist recruiters prey not only on the frustration but also on the ignorance of their victims or potential recruits. Awareness raising on the part of government and Civil

Society Organizations will be a catalyst to countering terrorist narratives to the youth in both online and offline spaces.

#### **7.4.4 Address geopolitical drivers**

To address the geo-political drivers, the government must strengthen its border control mechanism to hold back the advancement of extremist's groups to Ghana. This can be made more effective through building the capacity of the agencies in charge of the borders of the country such as the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) in detecting and preventing the movements of extremist's elements. Also addressing issues of corruption which compromises the country's border security. Additionally, not only do extremist groups cross borders to foment troubles, ideas and sentiments can also be shared across imaginary borders from one country to another. Some of these sentiments concern issues of governance and economic deprivation – cultural scripts of a template ideology and a template approach that is conducive for terrorism- as espoused by the contagion theory. As already noted above, the government would have to prioritize issues of good governance and economic empowerment to ensure that the environment is not conducive to receive such errant sentiments from the neighbouring countries. Government should also work closely with multilateral partners to strengthen the Accra initiative by addressing issues such as financial constraints, language barrier and political will.

#### **7.5 Some pertinent lessons from the study and their implications**

Based on the foregoing discussions, the study highlights the following lessons which have implications for our theoretical, empirical and comparative understanding of terrorism and counter-terrorism in Ghana and within the region.

Comparatively, the study has shown that the history of a country has significant implications on its susceptibility to terrorism and violent extremism. Evidence from the study suggests that the history of Ghana, which has been one of promoting peaceful coexistence among people of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, has shaped how Ghanaians express dissent and disappointment. This is especially pronounced where the evolution of Ghana's social and political history has been compared with that of countries in the Sahel and the Chadian region.

One striking criterion characterizing the relationship between religion has been the immediate aftermath of attainment of independence and the political and cultural struggles that ensued. Unlike in the case of Ghana, where the attainment of independence integrated all persons irrespective of their identities such as country of origin, tribe or even religion, Nigeria on the other hand was immediately plunged into north-south conflict over political leadership and economic resources control in the country. This exacerbated the religious divide that was already characteristic of Nigerian society even before independence. In effect, Boko Haram, one of the world's most dangerous terrorist groups, which originated from Nigeria is said to be partly a product of this history of religious and political struggles pre-independence and the immediate aftermath of independence. Admittedly, however, this comparative aspect of the emergence of terrorism has not received attention in the literature and thus requires further and more focused studies on the relationship between a country's history and its susceptibility to terrorism.

Empirically, the study has also produced very emphatic evidence to suggest that a country may be highly exposed to terrorism but may not experience terrorism due to the presence of some factors. The interesting thing, however, and for which this angle of the study finding requires further interrogation is the fact that some of the terrorism-embattled countries have presented in them some of these factors. Whereas democracy and vibrant media are found to account for

Ghana's relative immunity from terrorism, Nigeria is also a democracy with equally vibrant media. And in terms of the responses, Nigeria, very similar to Ghana's SIAA and ATTA, has several legal frameworks for preventing and countering terrorism. Principally among them are the Terrorism Prevention Act (TPA) 2011 and Terrorism (Prevention) (Amendment) Act 2013 (Omolaye-Ajileye, 2015).

What this study has done is focus on the factors that are making Ghana less prone to terrorism. What has not been done is to look at the within-factor difference to explain what accounts for the different outcomes even when similar measures are found to be implemented across comparative countries. This is another gap that can be interrogated further.

Theoretically, the study has made significant contributions to the Relative Deprivation (RD) theory in study of terrorism and counter-terrorism. The study has produced evidence to support the principal assumption of the RD theory which states among other things, that, all forms of political violence including terrorism are linked to frustration from objective political and socio-economic conditions where individuals feel relatively deprived, either as against a referent group or as against their own expectations (Hewitt & Gurr, 2008).

Generally, the RD theory proceeds from the assumption that aggression is a product of frustration (Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). To be more specific, the frustration-aggression assumption is underpinned by the proposition that the prevalence of violent behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and that the existence of frustration necessarily leads to violence. By this assumption, all forms of political violence including terrorism are linked to frustration from objective political and socio-economic conditions where individuals feel relatively deprived, either as against a referent group or as against their expectation (Hewitt & Gurr, 2008).

On the contrary however, the study has also highlighted a conceptual limitation of the theory in linking frustration to violence. The case of Ghana has proven, contrary to the assumption of the RD theory, that not all frustrations lead to aggressive behaviour. This finding thus calls for caution on the part of students, academics and practitioners alike in applying the RD theory to the study and practice of terrorism and counter-terrorism. More importantly however, it opens the gap for further examination of the theoretical assumptions of the RD, possible in other contexts.



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APPENDICES

6/27/22  
Ethics Committee for Humanities  
10 JAN 2024  
Valid Until  
(UNIVERSITY OF GHANA)

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

Thank you for accepting to participate in this exercise. Responses are received as anonymous answers, which guarantees confidentiality. The purpose of this exercise is to solicit your perception of Ghana's exposure to terrorism and violent extreme. Your honest responses will help the researcher to conduct objective analysis of the situation and to provide policy recommendation for preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism in Ghana and beyond.

\* Required

Section A: DEMOGRAPHY OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your region of origin? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Ashanti
- Ahafo
- Bono
- Oti
- Volta
- Eastern
- Weatern
- Western North
- Central
- North East
- Upper East
- Upper West
- Savanna
- Bono-East
- Northern
- Greater Accra

INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/15Bn#NNmVzvil\\_nglyrMBIZ87pyALTyhgyn9Lz158M/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/15Bn#NNmVzvil_nglyrMBIZ87pyALTyhgyn9Lz158M/edit)

1/9

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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA

2. Please select the appropriate age bracket \*

Mark only one oval.

- 14-19
- 20-35
- 36 and above

3. Gender \*

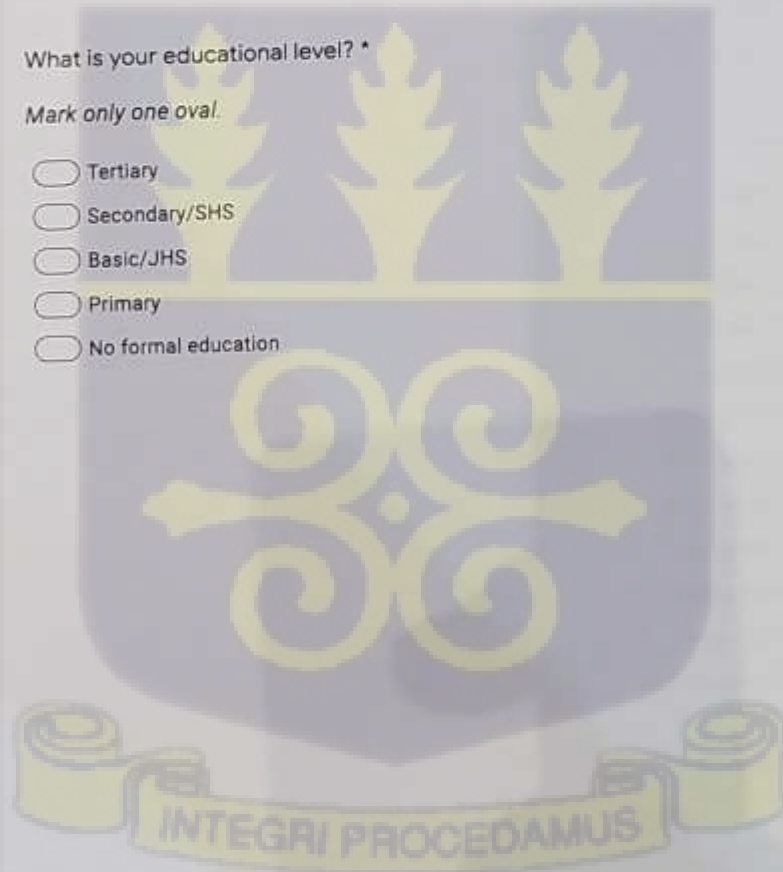
Mark only one oval.

- Female
- Male

4. What is your educational level? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Tertiary
- Secondary/SHS
- Basic/JHS
- Primary
- No formal education



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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

5. What is your employment status?

Mark only one oval.

- Employed (Private)
- Employed (Public)
- Unemployed
- Self-employed
- Commerce/trader
- Student
- other

6. Which of the following describes your religious belief ?

Mark only one oval.

- Christianity
- Islam
- African Traditional Religion
- Other

Section B: POLITICAL DRIVERS

7. Do you think democracy has served Ghana and Africa better?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

8. If you answered 'No' to the above question, why do you think so? Pick as many reasons as applicable

Check all that apply.

- Leads to abuse of power by leaders
- Result in low or no development
- Enables corruption
- A lot of people don't understand how democracy works
- Not in line with our culture/tradition

9. If you answered 'Yes' to the above question, why do you think so? Pick as many reasons as applicable

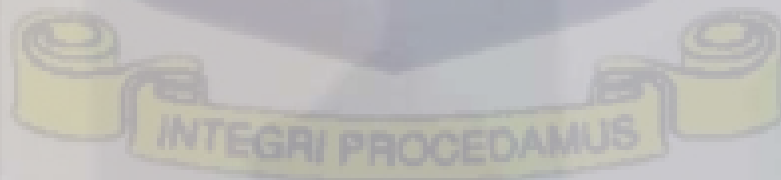
Check all that apply.

- Democracy has brought about development
- Democracy has promoted political participation
- Given voice to the youth
- Promotes peace and security
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. What do you think about the youth and decision-making at all levels of governance in Ghana?

Mark only one oval.

- The youth gets to participate BUT their views are NOT taken into account
- The youth gets to participate and their views are taken into account
- The youth are marginalized and blocked from participating
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

11. If you perceive that there is limited space for the youth to participate in decision-making or that their views are not taken into account, what will be your suggestion to the youth or any marginalized group?

Mark only one oval.

- Use the democratic process enshrined in law
- Resort to demonstrations and riots
- Use of force to let leaders see the need to involve young people in decision making
- Withdraw support for the government
- Form pressure groups to compel governments to do the needful
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Section C: SOCIO-ECONOMIC DRIVERS

12. What do you think about the general economic status of young people in Ghana?

Mark only one oval.

- Very Good
- Good
- Normal
- Bad
- Very bad

13. What do you think about the unemployment situation in Ghana?

Mark only one oval.

- Good
- Normal
- unacceptable

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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

14. If you think the economic situation of the youth in Ghana is bad or very bad, who/what is to be blamed for that? Pick as many as applicable.

Check all that apply.

- Political leaders
- Lack creativity on the part of the youth
- Limited job opportunities
- Corruption in the system
- Poor parenting
- Society as a whole
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Similarly, if you consider the unemployment situation in Ghana as unacceptable, which of the following factors in your opinion account for that? Pick as many as applicable.

Check all that apply.

- Lack of adequate economic opportunities
- Lack of political will on the part of past and present governments
- Prevalence of Corruption
- Favoritism and nepotism in job recruitment
- Limited job opportunities
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Section D: SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

16. Do you agree with the assertion that Ghana is a very peaceful country?

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

17. In spite of the claim of Ghana being a very peaceful country, it is likely that there can be terrorist attacks in the country

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

18. If you agree or strongly agree that it is likely Ghana can suffer incidence of terrorism, what factors can account for that? Pick as many as applicable.

Check all that apply

- Poverty  
 Youth unemployment  
 Economic marginalization  
 Political exclusion  
 Corruption  
 poor parenting  
 Religious fanaticism  
 Ethnic or tribal cleavages

19. If you disagree or strongly disagree that it is likely Ghana can suffer incidence of terrorism, what is your reason for that?

\_\_\_\_\_



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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

20. Political vigilantism (in the form of violent extremism) has become common in the country with evidence of Ghanaian youth joining terrorists groups such as ISIS. What in your opinion pushes the youth to join these groups? Pick as many as applicable.

Check all that apply.

- Unemployment
- The desire to make money
- Poverty
- Inadequate economic opportunities
- Blocked political participation
- Religious fanaticism
- Perception of corrupt and weak governments
- Bad parenting
- Disaffection with the prevailing economic and political systems

21. Under which of the following conditions do you think it is justified for one to use force or violence:

Check all that apply.

- To fight for my right
- To fight for my economic freedom and empowerment
- When my tribe/ethnicity is insulted or marginalized
- When my religion is disrespected
- When I feel someone is deliberately making me poor
- If I think I can't get justice in the judicial system
- If I have to fight corruption in the land

Section E: TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS



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SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION

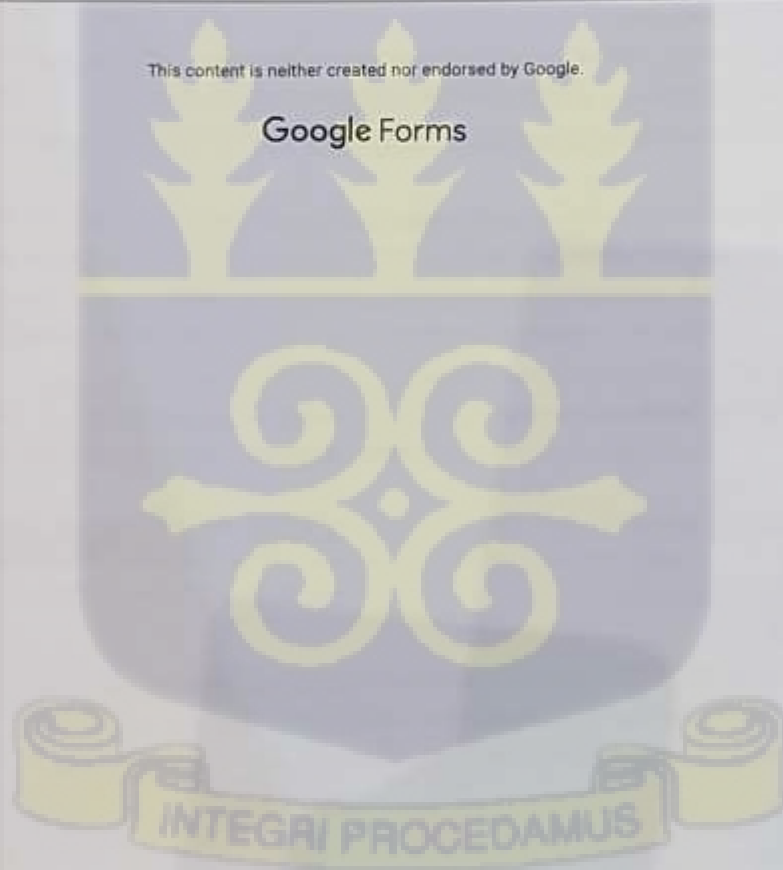
22. Please rate your level of trust in the following institutions from very weak to very strong.

Mark only one oval per row.

	Very weak	Weak	Strong	Very strong
<b>The police</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>The court</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>The parliament</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Chieftaincy institution</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Religious leaders</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## APPENDIX 2

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

Topic:

**SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION**

Researcher:

**Alhassan Mohammed Kamil**

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- i. **Report** ☺: My name is Alhassan Kamil. I am a final-year Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana. This interview is purely for academic purposes and is designed to find answers to my research questions.
- ii. **The topic of inquiry and purpose of the study:** The topic of inquiry for this study is "*Susceptibility to terrorism: exploring the case of Ghana in an insecure region.*" The purpose is to empirically examine the reason(s) why Ghana is less prone to terrorism compared to her peers in a region considered the hotbed of terrorism.
- iii. **Confidentiality note:** Every answer you provide in this interview is considered confidential and your identity remains anonymous to the audience of this work.
- iv. **Interviewee consent:** Given this background and disclosure, do I have your consent to proceed with the interview and to record our interaction for purposes of analysis?

2. **BODY**

2.1 **Question one:** To what extent is Ghana exposed to terrorism and why is that so?

- i. In your opinion, is Ghana vulnerable /exposed to terrorism or terrorist attacks like other countries in the sub-region? For example, Nigeria or Mali?
- ii. Are there any specific events or factors that explain Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism or incidents of terrorism? eg political, economic, social – religion, ethnicity, inequality, etc.
- iii. In your opinion what do you think can be done to alienate vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana?

2.2 **Question two:** Why is Ghana less prone to terrorism compared to other countries in the West African sub-region?

- i. In your opinion, what accounts for Ghana's apparent insulation from terrorism incidents despite evidence of vulnerability or exposure to terrorism? eg History, security systems, governance/politics, socio-economic, geographic, religion, etc?
- ii. Do you think Ghana is doing something different from the other countries within the West African sub-region that is currently battling terrorism? (Please you are free to compare with and to give examples from other countries).
- iii. What do you think other countries such as those in the Sahel and Lake Chad basin can learn from Ghana in preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism (P/CVET) in their domestic settings?

2.3 **Question three:** How well is Ghana adhering to ECOWAS counter-terrorism measures and how has this impacted its P/CVET effort?

- i. How well has Ghana participated and adhered to the regional P/CVET measures?
- ii. Are you aware of some of the P/CVET instruments or other measures Ghana has ratified, adopted, or signed onto? These could be Treaties, Conventions,

Agreements, and or Protocols. (**Hint:** There are about 11 ECOWAS Instruments for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism; LIST A).


- iii. Are there some specific policies and programs, or legal regimes or strategies that are products of Ghana's adherence to or implementation of regional P/CVET measures?
- iv. Would you say Ghana has done better in utilizing the regional P/CVET measures than her peers, especially the countries that are experiencing terrorism in the sub-region presently?
- v. Can you please expatiate more on this point?
- vi. How has this contributed to Ghana's P/CVET effort and apparent insulation from terrorist incidents?

### 3. CLOSING

Thank you so much for accepting to do this interview with me. I appreciate the time you took for this interview. I should have all the information I need. However, should I need some more clarification in the course of the analysis, do I have your consent to call again?




APPENDIX 3



10 JAN 2024  
Valid Until.....  
(University of Ghana)

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH)

Official Use only  
Protocol number

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PROTOCOL CONSENT FORM

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	<b>SUSCEPTIBILITY TO TERRORISM: EXPLORING THE CASE OF GHANA IN AN INSECURE REGION</b>
Principal Investigator:	<b>ALHASSAN MOHAMMED KAMIL MOLE</b>
Certified Protocol Number	<b>ECH 053/ 22-23</b>


Section B- CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

**General Information about Research**

Ghana is bordered to the East, West and North by countries that have become terrorism embattled as a result of the increasing activities of groups such as the Boko Haram, al-Qida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Fulani Macina Liberation Front, Ansar al-Dine and Al-Mubrabitoun etc. Beside the geographical proximity, Ghana also shares with these countries, similar political and socio-economic challenges such as unemployment. In spite of this similarity, Ghana has never experienced terrorism. The purpose of this study therefore, is to seek to identify and empirically examine the sources of Ghana's stability relative to her peers as far as terrorism and violent extremism is concerned. In effect, the study asks the question, why is Ghana less prone to terrorism than her peers in the same region even as they share similar political and socio-economic characteristics?

The study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. For the in-depth interviews, the researcher projects a maximum of one hour for each participant. For the surveys, it is expected that a maximum of 5 minutes is taken to complete each questionnaire. At the commencement of each session, the researcher will explain the purpose of the study to the participant, assures the participant of anonymity of their identity and confidentiality of the

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information to be provided. Additionally, a copy of an introductory letter will also be provided from the department to those participants who may want to verify.

#### **Benefits/Risks of the study**

By participating in this study, participants get the opportunity to express their views about a phenomenon that has become very pervasive with little known about it. Participants also get to contribute to knowledge generation that will be helpful to academia and society in general. At the policy, the outcome of the study is intended to inform Ghana's Counter-terrorism strategy as well as its contribution to regional and international counterterrorism efforts.

The only risk associated with this projection is the leakage of participants confidential information. This risk is mitigated by keeping the identity of participants identity anonymous. Participants will be identified with pseudonyms and whatever information they provided will be considered as a confidential information.

#### **Confidentiality**

The records and information that will be taken from participants in this study will remain strictly confidential. When reporting the findings of the study, the identity of participants will be made anonymous and where the context so require the true identity of the author of any piece of information, express permission will be sought from the participant in question.

Apart from the principal investigator, the supervisors to this study may have access to the research records for purposes of verification only. Participants are given the opportunity to consent to or refuse to consent to this future possibility.

#### **Compensation**

Participants in both the elite interviews and the administering of questionnaires would not be entitled to any compensation, and this would be made known before the interactions.

#### **Withdrawal from Study**

Participation in this study is voluntary, and any participant can withdraw at any time she/he is not comfortable without any penalty. Participants or their legal representatives will be informed in a timely manner if information becomes available that may be relevant to the participants' willingness to continue participation or withdrawal. At any moment, the researcher becomes suspicious of false information from participants, the participants participation will be terminated.

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**Section C- PARTICIPANT  
AGREEMENT**

"I have read or have had someone read all of the above, asked questions, received answers regarding participation in this study, and am willing to give consent for me, my child/ward to participate in this study. I will not have waived any of my rights by signing this consent form. Upon signing this consent form, I will receive a copy for my personal records."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature or mark of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**If participant cannot read and or understand the form themselves, a witness must sign here:**

I was present while the benefits, risks and procedures were read to the volunteer. All questions were answered and the volunteer has agreed to take part in the research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of witness / Mark

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person who Obtained Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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