

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



**TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION:
ASSESSING THE VULNERABILITY AND PREPAREDNESS OF GHANA.**

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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DECLARATION

I affirm that this dissertation was conducted under the guidance and supervision of Professor Seidu Mahama Alidu and Dr Abdul-Jalilu Ateku. I declare that this work was done independently and has not been previously submitted by me or anyone else, either within this institution or elsewhere, for any academic recognition or award. Proper and comprehensive acknowledgements have been provided for all references used in this work.


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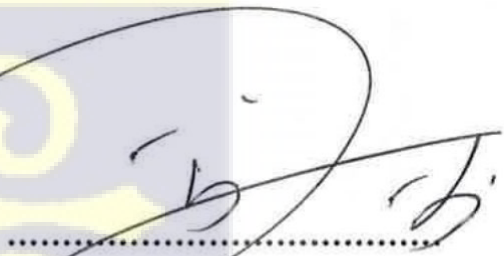
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INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the Almighty God, parents, friends, and the Amuvari family.



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First, I sincerely express my heartfelt and profound gratitude to the Almighty God, who has been my support in every aspect of my life. I offer all the glory and honour to Your Holy Name for guiding me and bringing me this far. I also extend my profound gratitude to my mentors and supervisors, Professor Seidu M. Alidu and Dr Abdul-Jalilu Ateku, for their unwavering patience, invaluable insights, and exceptional guidance throughout this academic journey.

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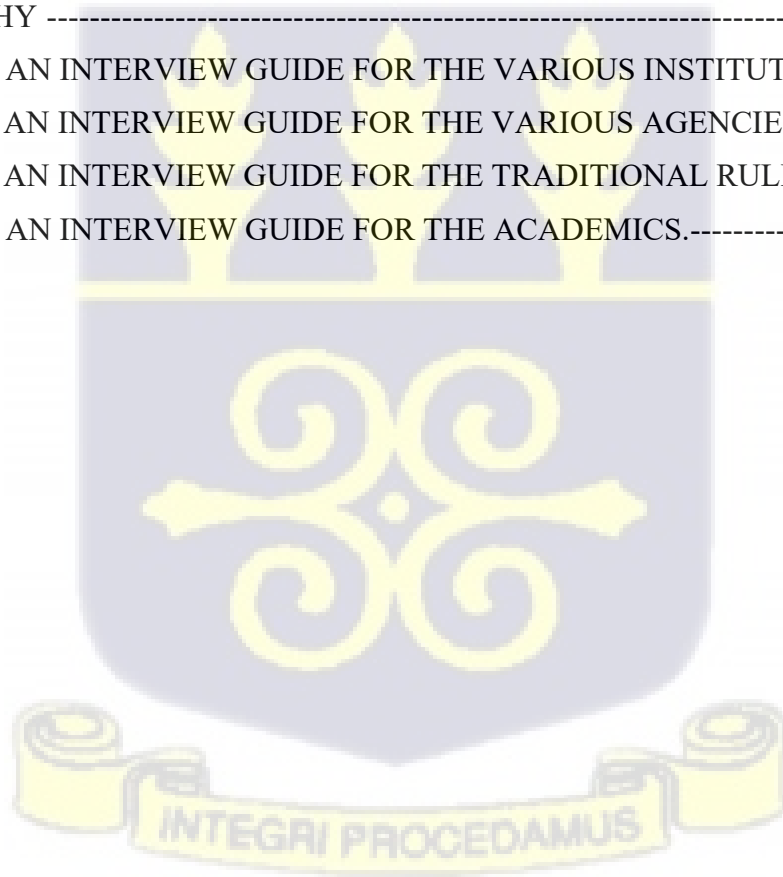
God bless you all.

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List of Abbreviations

ABC- Automatic Border Control

AQIM- Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

AU- African Union

BCM- Border Control Management

BCPs- Border Control Points

CCTV- Closed-Circuit Television

CEPS- Customs Excise and Preventive Service

CTF- Countering Terrorist Funding

CTU- Counter-Terrorism Unit

ECOLIST- ECOWAS Black List of Terrorist and Criminal Networks

ECOWARRANT- ECOWAS Arrest Warrant

ECOWAS- Economic Community of West African States

EU- European Union

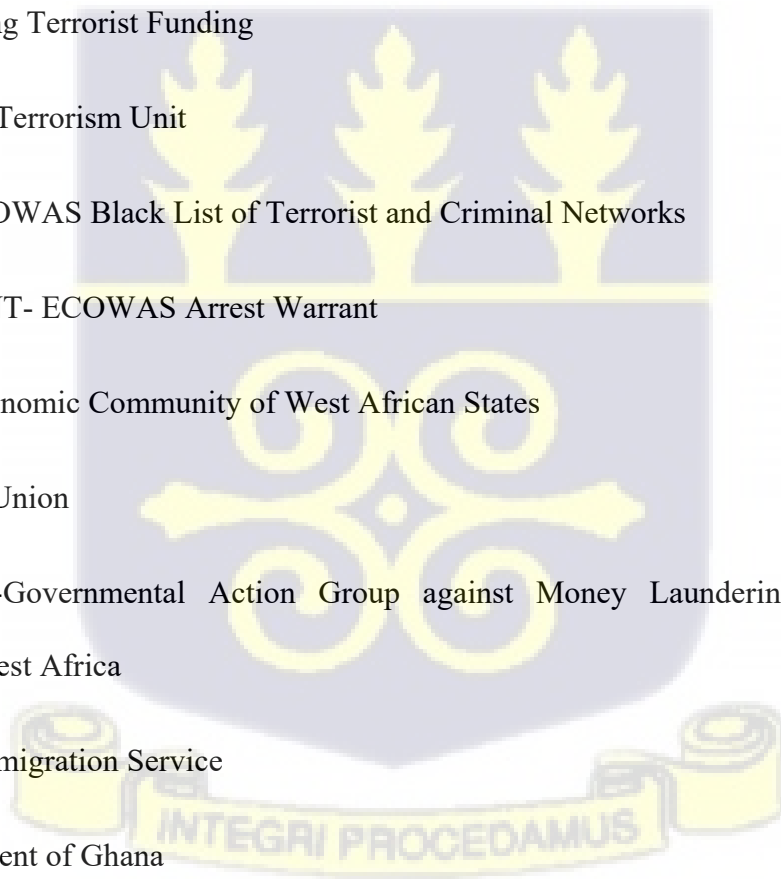
GIABA- Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in West Africa

GIS- Ghana Immigration Service

GoG- Government of Ghana

IGAD- Intergovernmental Authority on Development

ILO- International Labour Organisation



ISGS- Islamic State in the Greater Sahara

ISIS- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

ISWAP- Islamic State of West Africa Province

JNIM- Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslim

MNJTF- Multinational Joint Task Force

MNS- Ministry of National Security

MOD- Ministry of Defence

MoFA- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration

MOI- Ministry of Interior

MUJAO- Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa

NAFPCVET- National Framework for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Terrorism

NAM- Non-Aligned Movement

NCCE- National Commission for Civic Education

NGOs- Non-Governmental Organisations

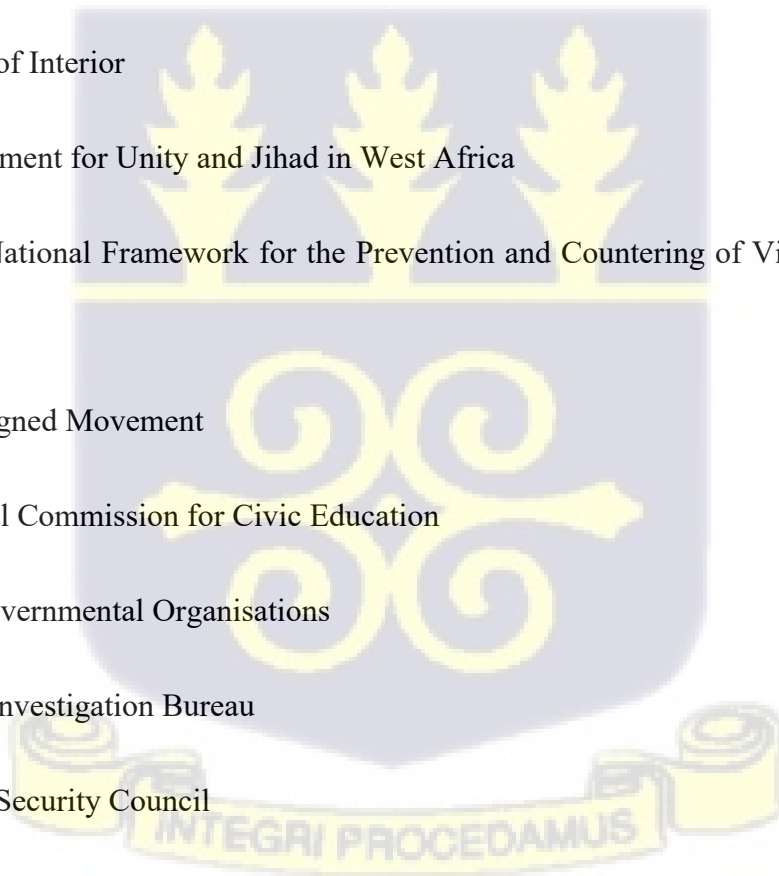
NIB- National Investigation Bureau

NSC- National Security Council

NST- National Security Theory

PID- Police Intelligence Directorate

RDT- Relative Deprivation Theory



SADC- Southern African Development Community

SALW- Small Arms and Light Weapons

SIG- Surveillance and Intelligence Gathering

UN DPKO- United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations

UN- United Nations

UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

UNESCAP- United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

UNSC- United Nations Security Council

US- United States



ABSTRACT

Terrorism and violent extremism have emerged as formidable security challenges in West Africa, with countries in the region grappling with the ever-present threat of extremist activities. This study delves into the specific case of Ghana, a country located in West Africa, to assess its vulnerability and preparedness in the face of terrorism and violent extremism.

The study adopted a qualitative approach to gather primary data and draw upon some existing secondary sources such as government reports, academic studies, and interviews with experts to assess Ghana's vulnerability and preparedness against terrorism and violent extremism. Even though Ghana is generally peaceful and democratically stable, the study examines the socio-economic, political, and cultural factors that contribute to Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. Additionally, it assesses the effectiveness of Ghana's counter-terrorism strategies, law enforcement capabilities, and international collaborations in preventing and responding to terrorist threats. The findings of this research reveal that while Ghana has thus far avoided significant acts of terrorism, it is not immune to the challenges posed by terrorism and violent extremism. Factors such as sporadic conflicts around chieftaincy, interethnic conflicts, poverty, high unemployment, porous borders, marginalized communities, and the potential influence of radical ideologies remain concerns that have an impact on the dynamics of its internal security and Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. To this, Ghana has demonstrated a commitment to addressing these issues through a combination of legislative measures, intelligence sharing, and community engagement programs. The study recommends the need for Ghana to adopt proactive measures and continuous risk assessment to safeguard Ghana against the spread of terrorism and violent extremism. The study further suggests enhanced regional security cooperation and strengthened resilience against the threat of terrorism.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Background to the Study

Until the 1990s, terrorism was generally considered a secondary security concern, often overlooked by standard textbooks on international politics (Heywood, 2011). However, the catastrophic events of September 11, 2001, proved to be a significant turning point that led to a comprehensive reappraisal of the nature and repercussions of terrorism. To some extent what was variously dubbed "new" terrorism (Laqueur, 1999; Ignatieff, 2004; Field, 2009) "global" terrorism (Roy, 1994; Azzam 2008,), "hyper-terrorism" (Sprinzak, 2001) or "catastrophic" terrorism (Carter et al. 1998) reflected the fact that non-state actors (terrorist groups) had gained significant importance over states under conditions of globalization, and had become the principal security threat in the twenty-first century. Only the Pearl Harbour attack in 1941 had a psycho-emotional impact on the US, as did September 11; both events dispelled the myth of US invulnerability. The attacks on the World Trade Centre, the Pentagon, and United Airlines Flight 93 heading for the White House resulted in the loss of approximately 3000 lives. These attacks are considered the deadliest terrorist strikes in history because they target symbols of financial, military, and global political power, respectively (Heywood, 2011). Nonetheless, September 11 alone fails to demonstrate the global significance of terrorism. Geographically, international terrorism has been pervasive, with frequent terrorist strikes occurring in every region other than North America. Events from the past and the present show that no country is immune to the threat of terrorism. In their ambition to conquer the world, terrorists have no regard for national boundaries, forcing nearly every continent to partake in the carnage of their hijacked gun battles and martyrdom attacks, which mostly target helpless civilians (Anim, 2015).

There are many terrorist groups both outside and inside of Africa as the continent is not exempt from this vice. According to an essay in Sada al-Jihad, an online publication that promotes the global jihad, Al Qaeda is interested in expanding into Sub-Saharan Africa because the region's weak governments and high levels of corruption make it easier to operate there than in nations with strong security, intelligence, and military capabilities (Worcester,2015). The wide cultural and ethnic diversity that cuts across geographic boundaries makes it challenging to obtain and evaluate intelligence, further complicating the strategic position in Africa. In Northern, Central, Western, and Eastern Africa, there are well-known terrorist organizations that have established strongholds. Due to the instability in Eastern Africa, terrorist groups like Al-Shabaab in Somalia have found safe havens from which to invade other parts of the world (Ateku and Owusi-Mensah, 2023). The menace of violent extremism posed by Al-Shabaab has created a significant security vulnerability in Somalia, which is widely recognized as East Africa's terrorism epicentre. This threat extends beyond Somalia's borders, affecting neighbouring countries, with Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti, and Ethiopia being the "spillover" states, and Tanzania, Sudan, and South Sudan considered the "at-risk states" (IGAD, 2018, as cited by Ateku & Owusi-Mensah, 2023). In 2013, a significant and tragic attack took place at the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya. This devastating incident resulted in the loss of numerous civilian lives, including that of Kofi Awoonor, a distinguished Ghanaian diplomat and poet.

The rise of terrorism in West Africa is a growing concern, as evidenced by the alarming frequency of terrorist attacks that have claimed countless lives and resulted in significant property damage in several West African nations. This vast region has a historical presence of illegal trafficking networks and is characterized by a lack of effective governance (Raineri & Strazzari, 2015). Jihadist organizations such as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslim (JNIM) have inflicted significant terror upon the West

African region. It is crucial to note that the terrorist group known as Boko Haram, which translates to "Western education is a sin," is primarily active in Northern Nigeria, a region with a predominantly Muslim population. Extremist and armed groups have been entrenching themselves in Mali for the past decade and extending their operational reach into Burkina Faso and Niger. Sadly, the current crises in the area can be linked back to the 2011 downfall of the Libyan government and the 2012 Tuareg uprising in northern Mali. Following the Libyan civil conflict, a significant quantity of arms found their way into northern Mali and were utilized to equip Tuareg rebels. These rebels then allied themselves with extremist groups such as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and engaged in war against the Malian government to establish an autonomous state (Muqthar, 2022). Even though the number of fatalities in the region is currently decreasing from a peak of nearly 7,200 in 2014 to 6701 in 2022 (GTI, 2023), the threat has grown in complexity and geographic reach.

To address this challenge in West Africa, ECOWAS member states have passed anti-terrorism and Countering Terrorist Funding (CTF) laws, put institutional frameworks in place, improved internal inter-agency cooperation, and boosted investigative and prosecution capabilities. With the help of numerous stakeholders, a regional Counter-Terrorism Action Plan was created in 2012 to bolster regional counterterrorism activities. The ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its accompanying Implementation Plan, along with the Political Declaration on a Common Position against Terrorism, were also endorsed at the ECOWAS Heads of State and Governments summit which took place in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire from February 27 to 28 2013 (GIABA, 2013). The Strategy and Implementation Plan, in particular, offers a structure based on three primary pillars: Prevent, Pursue, and Reconstruct. The G5 Sahel was founded in 2014 by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger to promote security and development cooperation (International Crisis Group, 2017). However, these are firmly based on the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was overwhelmingly approved by the UN General

Assembly in September 2006 by a resolution with an annexing Plan of Action (Van Ginkel, 2012).

Ghana is generally known for its peace and democratic stability, but its proximity to countries with a history of terrorism, such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria, coupled with sporadic conflicts related to chieftaincy disputes, interethnic tensions, poverty, governance issues, a lack of effective rule of law, weak border controls, and high unemployment in various communities, contribute to the complexity of its internal security landscape. Within Ghana, these risks are further amplified by the ongoing challenges posed by Western Togoland separatists in the Eastern border regions, as well as the persisting Bawku chieftaincy conflict and ethnic tensions in the Northern region (Boakye, 2016). Admittedly, there are concerns regarding the Zongo communities, which are predominantly settlements of Hausa-speaking traders, potentially becoming fertile ground for terrorism and violent extremism. This concern arises from their deep-rooted connections to Islam in the Sahel, their perceived marginalisation, economic deprivation, and elevated levels of unemployment (Aubyn, 2021). These vulnerabilities put Ghana in danger of terrorist exploitation due to the inherently high exploitative capacity of extremists and terrorist groups. Despite the recognition of terrorism as a shared global security challenge, the threats faced by states vary significantly based on their location, continent, or region (Davis, 2012). These variations in threats largely shape perceptions of terrorism and influence the strategies that states and stakeholders employ to address them. It is against this backdrop that this study assesses the vulnerability and preparedness of Ghana against the threats of terrorism and violent extremism.

1.1 Problem Statement

The impact of terrorism has spread across the world, making it a global problem rather than just a concern for the US (Heywood, 2011). Over the years, terrorism and violent extremism have received scholarly attention in academia on both the drivers and the strategies adopted by states to combat them, which has broadened the scope of the literature on terrorism and violent extremism. Scholars like Gow et al. (2013), Aning and Abdallah (2013), Shafiu et al. (2014), Francis (2014), Andrew et al. (2015), Mair, (2003), Alexander (2012), Brien and Rashid (2013), Anim (2015), Ogbonna et al (2017), Barros et al (2008) and Steyn (2018) have examined the vulnerability of states to terrorism and violent extremism. They found a strong relationship between perceived grievances, underdevelopment, unemployment, poverty, corruption, ethnic conflicts, and the incidence of terrorism. For example, Mair found that factors such as a dysfunctional state, social impoverishment, cultural identity loss, political persecution, and a lack of economic opportunities contribute to terrorism. Thus, the economic aspects of terrorism relate to the conditions and circumstances that may push individuals or groups toward involvement in terrorism. Similarly, Ogbonna et al (2017) found that the activities of Boko Haram are largely influenced by factors like poverty, inequality, illiteracy, economic deprivation and want, and corruption. For Gow et al. (2013), the existence of a large population of young and unemployed individuals in West Africa creates a vulnerable demographic that is susceptible to recruitment by extremist groups.

On the other hand, scholars such as Worcester (2015), Akanji (2019), Ajala (2021), Bala and Tar (2021), and Ateku and Owusu-Mensah (2023) have discussed cooperation and collaboration among states as well as the role of regional organisations like ECOWAS, IGAD, etc, in countering the threats of terrorism and violent extremism. For instance, Ateku and Owusu-Mensah (2023) found that the current regional security cooperation is through alliances, collective security, security regimes, and communities, which are weak in handling

internal issues and, as a result, it might not be the best strategy for handling brand-new security issues like "transnational" threats, which are mostly non-state issues. Bala and Tar (2021) also highlighted measures such as enhanced information sharing, coordinating strategies and operations, strengthening institutional frameworks, and greater collaboration among regional states as shared responsibilities to effectively combat the menace of terrorism. However, these works have largely focused on states that have experienced terrorism and violent extremism, with little attention on states with no incidence of terrorism and violent extremism.

In terms of the preparedness of states against terrorism and violent extremism, scholars such as Paa-Prah and Chanimbe (2021), Christensen and Edu-Afful (2019), Aubyn (2021), Khera (2017), Bamba (2014), Aning and Abdallah (2013), Eren (2013), Sosuh (2013) and Tholen (2010) have examined the strategies adopted by states to counter the threats of terrorism and violent extremism. For example, Khera (2017) contended that combating terrorism calls for a multipronged strategy that includes both supranational cooperation with international and regional organisations and traditional interagency security at the local level. Bamba (2014) advocated for stringent security operations and checks in Ghana's efforts to combat terrorism. Again, Paa-Prah and Chanimbe (2021) highlighted the importance of periodic cross-institutional training programs, at national and international levels, to counter new forms of terrorism and that security agencies should collaborate with media outlets to educate the public about terrorism and provide guidance on responsible reporting. These studies, however, focused on only the military (kinetic) strategies adopted by Ghana to counteract the threats of terrorism, leaving out the non-military (non-kinetic) strategies that are necessary for countering terrorism and violent extremism in the country. Thus, the strategies adopted to combat terrorism so far include collaborative security training, bolstered border control management, intelligence gathering, and information sharing. The effectiveness of these counterterrorism strategies has not been clearly articulated and dealt with, revealing a gap in existing studies, as

these strategies are not issue or country-specific but too broad and may not be applicable in some situations or countries to counteract the threats.

It is against this backdrop that this study sought to examine both the military (kinetic) and non-military (non-kinetic) strategies adopted by Ghana to counter the threats of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as the effectiveness of these strategies. This study presents a comprehensive analysis that examines how Ghana's political strategies (cooperation with its neighbour), combined with properly conducted military intelligence, efforts and non-military strategies, can help counteract the threats of terrorism and violent extremism.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The study is underscored by 3 objectives:

1. To examine why Ghana is vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism.
2. To discuss Ghana's preparedness against terrorism and the effectiveness of Ghana's counter-terrorism measures.
3. To examine Ghana's cooperation with other states to counteract terrorism in West Africa.

1.3 Research Questions

To investigate the research problem, the following questions have been addressed by the study:

1. Why is Ghana vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism?
2. How prepared and effective is Ghana against the threats of terrorism and violent extremism?
3. How is Ghana cooperating with other states to counteract terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa?

1.4 Justification of the Study

Due to the growing prevalence and heightened complexity of terrorist activities in West Africa, more efforts must be dedicated to addressing this pressing issue. Ghana as a case study is justified by the fact that there are limited studies on Ghana regarding terrorism and violent extremism even though the country is vulnerable to attacks by terrorists. Many prior studies on terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa have primarily focused on countries that have already witnessed such incidents. This bias arises from the fact that Ghana has not experienced significant terrorist attacks, leading researchers to direct their attention towards other West African nations grappling with terrorism and violent extremism. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that Ghana's vulnerability to these threats necessitated a proactive approach to understanding and countering potential risks, even in the absence of past attacks. This approach can contribute to bolstering security measures and preparedness in Ghana and throughout the West African sub-region.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is relevant because of its contribution to scholarship on terrorism and violent extremism through an assessment of the factors that have contributed to the vulnerability of Ghana. The study is crucial for several reasons, including the need to address the global threat of terrorism, the potential spillover effect of terrorism and violent extremism in neighboring countries, and the limited research on Ghana's vulnerability and preparedness to these threats. The findings of this study are valuable for policymakers, security agencies, and other stakeholders in Ghana and the West African sub-region. Therefore, this study has enriched the existing literature by examining the factors influencing terrorism or undermining Ghana's security and stability. It also explored strategies for reinforcing Ghana's defence against terrorism and violent extremism

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study was limited to Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism, Ghana's preparedness, and cooperative efforts with her neighbors to combat terrorism and violent extremism. The focus was on both the military and non-military measures adopted by Ghana to fight the threats of terrorism and violent extremism.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered certain limitations during the process of collecting primary data from the Ministries, primarily stemming from government bureaucracy. Additionally, there were constraints related to the researcher's available time and resources, which restricted their ability to gather data as extensively as desired. Despite these challenges, the researcher managed to obtain the essential information required from the Ministries. This data was subsequently analysed rigorously, leading to the attainment of substantial findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

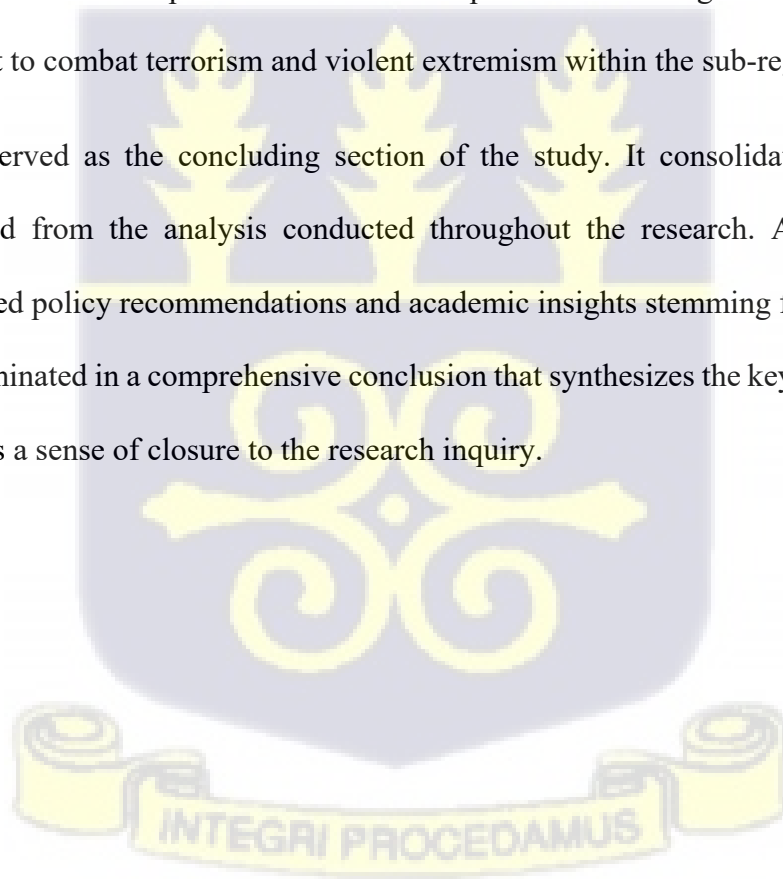
The organisational framework of the study was structured into five chapters. Chapter One served as the introduction and offered a thorough background to the study. It encompasses essential components, including the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, rationale for the study, study significance, scope, and the organisation of chapters.

Chapter Two was dedicated to the theoretical framework and literature review. In this chapter, the focus is on reviewing pertinent literature in the broader field of terrorism and violent extremism. It delved into Ghana's specific vulnerability and preparedness in dealing with

terrorism and violent extremism. Additionally, it explored Ghana's collaborative efforts with neighbouring countries to combat terrorism and violent extremism.

Chapter Three outlined the methodology and research instruments used in the study. The chapter began with an introduction to various research sampling techniques and strategies. This was followed by a discussion of the data collection methods, data sources, data analysis framework, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. In Chapter Four, the research shifted its focus to the assessment of Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism as well as its preparedness in addressing the challenges posed by terrorism and violent extremism. This chapter also evaluated the effectiveness of the counterterrorism strategies employed by Ghana and explores the nation's cooperation with neighbouring states in the collective effort to combat terrorism and violent extremism within the sub-region.

Chapter Five served as the concluding section of the study. It consolidated the principal findings derived from the analysis conducted throughout the research. Additionally, this chapter presented policy recommendations and academic insights stemming from the research findings. It culminated in a comprehensive conclusion that synthesizes the key outcomes of the study and offers a sense of closure to the research inquiry.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter comprised of two sections: the theoretical framework or review and the empirical review of relevant literature related to the study. As noted by Biggam (2008), a literature review in any research endeavour serves several key purposes, including the sharing of results from other studies relevant to the field of inquiry, situating the study within the broader ongoing discourse in the literature, addressing academic or literature gaps, and building upon prior research.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was framed by two theories: the Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) and the National Security Theory (NST). The use of theories in this study served a valuable purpose, as Hollis and Smith (1990) contend, theories attempt to either provide explanations and predictions of behaviour or to facilitate an understanding of why events unfold as they do. The rationale behind adopting two theories in this study was to harness their complementary nature, enhancing the overall comprehension of the subject matter. Thus, the relative deprivation theory was augmented by the national security theory to assess the preparedness of Ghana against terrorism and violent extremism while the Relative Deprivation Theory provided an in-depth account or explanation for states' vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. Thus, the factors that make states vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism have been examined using the Relative Deprivation Theory.

2.1.1 The Relative Deprivation Theory

The fundamental premise of the relative deprivation theory lies in the notion that individuals often perceive themselves as falling short of a certain standard. According to this theory, those who experience relative deprivation in comparison to others concerning aspects such as wealth, resources, political influence, social status, or other factors are more inclined to join social movements as a means to express their grievances (Brush, 1996). Relative deprivation exerts significant influences on various aspects of behaviour and attitudes, including heightened stress levels, shifts in political beliefs, and increased participation in collective actions. This concept is inherently interconnected with notions like poverty and social exclusion.

2.1.1.1 Origin

The concept of Relative Deprivation was initially introduced by Stouffer (1949) to describe intriguing findings arising from surveys conducted among American soldiers serving in World War II (Smith et al., 2015). Over time, researchers have employed Relative Deprivation to elucidate a wide range of phenomena, including its association with poor physical health (Adler et al., 2000), involvement in mass protests (Newton, Mann & Geary, 1980), and even its potential role in the recruitment of individuals into terrorist groups (Moghaddam, 2005 cited in Smith et al., 2015). Indeed, this idea has found applications across various social sciences disciplines, spanning from political science (Lichbach, 1990) and history (Snyder & Tilly, 1972) to criminology (Lea & Young, 1993) and economics (Yitzhak, 1979) (cited in Smith et al., 2015). Relative deprivation, with a particular focus on temporal relative deprivation, has garnered significant attention from social scientists, especially political scientists and sociologists. It has been proposed as a potential catalyst for social movements and deviant behaviours, which in severe instances can lead to acts of political violence such as riots,

terrorism, civil wars, and other criminal activities (Brush, 1996). However, it is worth noting that British statesman and sociologist Walter Runciman is credited with providing the initial precise definitions of relative deprivation. Runciman (1966) established four key prerequisites for the concept of relative deprivation:

An individual is lacking something.

That individual is aware that others have that something.

That individual has a desire for that thing.

The individual thinks there is a probability of obtaining it.

However, Ted Gurr is the most well-known advocate of the relative deprivation theory in modern times, even though Aristotle first identified the connection between deprivation and conflict. According to Gurr (1970), there are several causes for "political violence" and "political movement," but the main contributing component appears to be the general public's subjective perception of "Relative Deprivation." The idea that an unequal distribution of income and resources will lead to violent insurrection is practically ubiquitous (Tripathi, 2008). In his research on 114 nations, Gurr discovered that relative poverty and inequality were the main drivers of both domestic and international political violence, and states that a society where there is a significant gap between actual and potential is prone to experience violence (Gurr, 1970).

2.1.1.2 Justification of the Theory for the Study

Violence occurs more frequently in developing nations than in developed countries (Tripathi, 2008). Additionally, disparities in support for political violence are mostly explained by inequalities in income and economic development. According to the relative deprivation

theory, people or groups may be driven to take violent or non-violent action if they believe that they are more deprived than others in society. This theory can shed light on why some people or groups may turn to acts of extreme violence in the context of terrorism to air their grievances or demand justice for perceived injustices. This idea further contends that when people or groups feel unfairly excluded, they may experience relative deprivation. Feelings of relative deprivation can develop when people or groups think they have been unfairly denied access to resources, opportunities, or other kinds of social and economic benefits (Smith et al., 2015). These deprivation-related feelings can breed frustration, rage, and resentment, which in turn can stoke the urge for vengeance or retaliation. To express their anger and demand change, groups or people who believe that their social, economic, or political status is unfairly marginalized or repressed may turn to violence. These people or organizations hope to disrupt the status quo and bring attention to their cause by employing violence. According to relative deprivation theory, violence is an integral component of the human experience rather than merely a transient social phenomenon. To improve their circumstances, people or groups who feel deprived or lacking some good, service, or comfort are more prone to start violence.

2.1.1.3 Weaknesses of the Theory

The Relative Deprivation theory has faced criticism for its inability to fully account for why certain individuals who experience deprivation of rights or resources do not engage in social movements aimed at acquiring these rights or resources. According to Rao (2002), the relative deprivation theory provides a more adequate account of the origins of social movements since it is centered on conflict and cognitive transformation, inspiring and organizing people around particular issues. The limitations of this theory, however, show that it is insufficient to explain violence around the world.

1. It is significant to stress that the relationship between relative poverty and terrorism is intricate and multifaceted. That is, not all people or groups who live in relative squalor will turn to violence. Conflict or violence in a state is not always caused by a situation of relative deprivation. According to Rao (2002), the structural factors of relative deprivation simply provide the necessary conditions and not the underlying causes of terrorism and violent extremism.
2. Again, the relative deprivation theory offers a helpful framework for comprehending the role of social and economic inequalities in fuelling the incidence of terrorism, but it is important to take other factors into account when attempting to explain this complex phenomenon, such as ideology, group dynamics, and individual psychological factors. The idea does not pay attention to the underlying causes of violence, such as lack of resources, mobilization, and displacement of persons. It entirely ignores the political climate as well as the element of greed that drives acts of violence or terrorism.

2.1.2 National Security Theory

Along with developments in global security concerns, the discourse on security in international relations and security studies has changed. The 1940s marked the beginning of the study of national security (Taylor, 2012). The Second World War may have had a profound impact on the concept of security, as the state has been associated with security since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. As a result, the state had complete control over determining what security meant to it. To justify, and sometimes legalize the acts of states under the security prism, numerous theories and perspectives on security have developed (Ibid). Interpretations of security vary among theories and perspectives, such as idealism, realism, neoliberalism, and constructivism. Thus, state protection against attacks has been justified using the National

Security Theory. National security is the capacity to protect a country's borders, nature, institutions, and governance against external interference, as well as its territorial integrity and economic connections with the rest of the world on reasonable terms (Taylor, 2012).

National security in democratic countries has received a lot of recent scholarly attention such as Dannreuther and Peterson 2006; Webber, Sperling and Smith 2013. Although some aspects of the current concept can be attributed to James Madison's ideas and more recently to Charles Beard and Hans Morgenthau, Walter Lippmann is credited with providing the first formal definition of national security (Sussex et al. 2017). Since states continue to be the primary providers of security in the world, it is crucial to expand our understanding of national security in the modern world. This is particularly true given that globalization, technological improvements, and the rise of a variety of risks, from transnational actors to natural disasters, have all put strain on state capacities for identifying, categorizing, and responding to harm. Traditional military-centric notions of security began to include other previously ignored factors after the end of the Cold War. According to Booth (1991) cited in Sussex et al. (2017), people began to recognize that economic collapse, political oppression, shortages, overcrowding, ethnic conflict, the devastation of nature, terrorism, crime, and diseases pose a greater threat to human well-being than an invading foreign army.

2.1.2.1 Assumptions of the Theory

The theory of national security is pertinent to this study because it is predicated on several premises. These are a few of them.

1. According to the national security theory, the nation-state, which aims to protect its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and citizens' welfare, serves as the main analytical unit.

The state is considered to be the primary player in charge of maintaining and advancing national security.

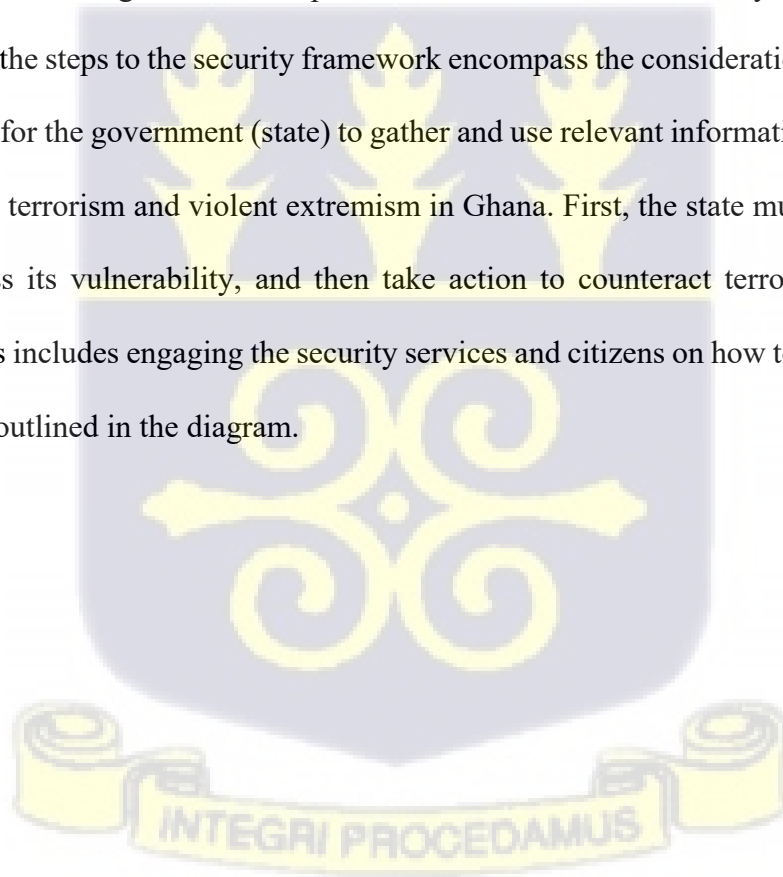
2. The theory assumes that national security is primarily concerned with external threats to a nation-state's interests. Threats to national security might come from rival nation-states, non-state entities (such as terrorist groups), or transnational problems like climate change or pandemics.
3. The theory frequently highlights how military strength and deterrence contribute to maintaining national security. It makes the supposition that maintaining strategic stability and repelling aggression require a robust military power to defend against possible enemies.
4. According to the theory, making decisions about national security entails evaluating risks and threats, ranking them according to their seriousness, and distributing resources appropriately. To find and address potential vulnerabilities, this process may comprise intelligence collecting, analysis, and strategic planning.

2.1.2.2 Justification of the Theory

The national security theory is a doctrine that outlines the framework a government should take to safeguard its population. National security, originally conceived as a defence against military attacks, has evolved significantly to encompass a much broader spectrum of concerns. Today, it is widely acknowledged that national security extends beyond military considerations and includes various non-military dimensions such as security from terrorism, crime reduction, economic stability, energy security, environmental protection, food security, and cybersecurity. The foundation of national security lies in the identification of potential threats, the assessment of associated risks, and the development of strategies to address and mitigate these threats.

Governments employ a wide range of methods to safeguard the security of their nation and these methods encompass the use of political influence, economic policies, military capabilities, and diplomatic efforts. By addressing issues like climate change, economic injustice, politics, and nuclear proliferation, they can also take steps to foster cooperation for security on a regional and global scale. In reality, managing physical threats and the military tools employed to do so are the main concerns of national security. In simpler terms, national security is a nation's ability to organize its military to protect its borders and to prevent or respond effectively to physical threats including defending against military aggression and countering non-state actors such as terrorist groups.

The figure below is a diagrammatical representation of the national security theory and how it operates. Thus, the steps to the security framework encompass the considerations and decision-making it takes for the government (state) to gather and use relevant information to enhance its security against terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. First, the state must understand its exposure, assess its vulnerability, and then take action to counteract terrorism and violent extremism. This includes engaging the security services and citizens on how to fight the threats of terrorism as outlined in the diagram.



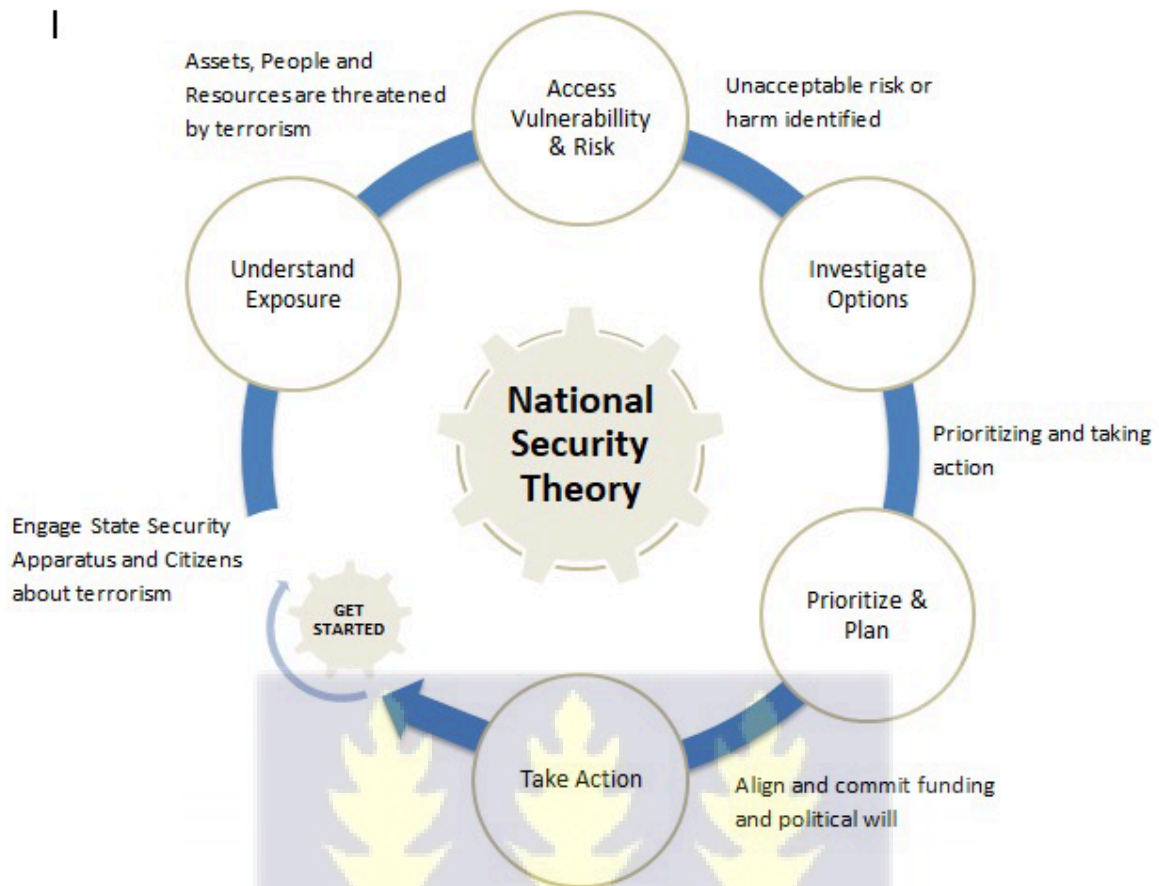


Figure 2.1 The Structure of the National Security Theory (Source, Author's own, 2023)

2.1.2.3 Weaknesses of the Theory

The national security idea is not without its criticisms, despite its advantages. Typical objections to the national security theory include the following:

1. One criticism of the national security theory is that it tends to ignore the importance of non-state actors, such as transnational businesses, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations, and instead uses the nation-state as the fundamental analytical unit. These players can undermine state-centric strategies and frequently play important roles in determining security dynamics.

2. The national security theory traditionally emphasizes military power and external threats, often overlooking non-military dimensions of security. Critics contend that security covers a wider variety of issues, such as social justice, economic security, environmental security, and human security (which addresses personal safety and well-being). By ignoring these factors, security concerns may not be fully understood. Critics argue that the national security theory tends to prioritize military responses to security threats, sometimes leading to an over-reliance on force and militarization. This approach may neglect alternative strategies such as diplomacy, conflict resolution, development aid, and other non-coercive measures that can contribute to long-term stability and peace. Thus, the overemphasis on national security can lead to the securitization of various issues, potentially infringing upon civil liberties, human rights, and democratic principles. Policies pursued under the guise of national security may undermine individual freedoms, stifle dissent, and disproportionately target marginalized communities.
3. The national security theory has been criticized as it often fails to adequately address the underlying social, political, and economic factors that contribute to insecurity. By focusing primarily on symptoms and immediate threats, the theory may miss opportunities for addressing root causes, such as poverty, inequality, political exclusion, and grievances, which can fuel instability and violence.

These shortcomings of the National Security theory have been catered for by employing the Relative Deprivation Theory which explains the issues that underpin the vulnerability of states to terrorism and violent extremism. National security is considered a multidimensional concept that embraces not only military defense but also economic security, political stability, social cohesion, and the protection of critical infrastructure. It acknowledges that there are many potential sources of security threats, including military, economic, cyber, and environmental.

Accordingly, coordination between various government agencies, including defense, intelligence, law enforcement, and foreign affairs, is necessary for effective national security. The necessity of interagency cooperation and information sharing is emphasized to fully address security challenges.

2.2.0 Empirical Review

The review of literature in this section was structured thematically, which provided a systematic framework for organizing and presenting the relevant literature in a manner that aligns with the research objectives and facilitated a coherent understanding of the research context. The literature was reviewed based on the following themes which will help appreciate and understand the purpose of the study.

2.2.1 Definition of Key Concepts

This section provided definitions of some key concepts that are relevant to the study. Understanding these terms or concepts will help in the appreciation of the study.

2.2.1.1 Terrorism

Defining terrorism is a complex task due to its multifaceted nature and evolving characteristics. Various scholars and experts have proposed different definitions for the term, and it is important to consider the practical challenges in crafting a precise definition. The issue of defining terrorism holds significant implications for how authorities handle it, both domestically and internationally. It influences the legal and moral dimensions of addressing terrorism as a criminal act within the framework of both international and domestic law. One widely accepted definition of terrorism characterizes it as a form of political violence that seeks

to achieve its objectives by instilling fear and apprehension among the population (Goodin, 2006 cited in Heywood, 2011).

2.2.1.2 Violent Extremism

Violent extremism is a specific form of extremism that encompasses and justifies the use of violence as a means to advance ideological or deliberate objectives, often rooted in religious or political beliefs (Gigauri, 2023). It frequently involves the conflation of extremist views with acts of religious or political violence and can manifest in various contexts, such as politics, religion, and gender relations.

Radicalization: While the term "radicalization" may have some controversies surrounding it, it is generally used to describe the process by which an individual or group comes to view violence as an acceptable and legitimate course of action.

2.2.1.3 Types of Terrorism and Violent Extremism

There are two primary categories of terrorism, namely state terrorism and transnational terrorism, each with its distinct characteristics:

State Terrorism: State terrorism pertains to acts of terrorism carried out by government agents or armed forces. This form of terrorism involves a state harnessing its resources to achieve foreign policy goals, even employing military force for terrorist activities. State terrorism is distinguished by government agents using threats or violent actions against civilians, frequently displaying a callous disregard for human life.

Transnational Terrorism: Transnational terrorism represents an enduring and evolving phenomenon characterised by terrorist groups whose objectives, activities, and organisational structures extend beyond their country of origin. Notable examples of transnational terrorist organisations include al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. These groups operate on a global scale, often conducting acts of terrorism in multiple countries or regions.

Vulnerability to Terrorism: **Vulnerability to terrorism** refers to the degree to which individuals, communities, institutions, or systems are susceptible to being affected by, targeted by, or involved in terrorist activities. It reflects how likely a person or group is to become either a victim of terrorism or be radicalized and recruited into terrorist networks.

Counter-Terrorism: **Counter-terrorism** refers to the practices, strategies, tactics, and measures that governments, militaries, law enforcement agencies, and other organizations use to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism. It involves the following indicators

- **Prevention:** Identifying and disrupting terrorist plots before they happen (e.g., surveillance, intelligence gathering).
- **Protection:** Securing potential targets (e.g., airports, public events).
- **Response:** Reacting to terrorist attacks to minimize harm and restore order (e.g., emergency services, military action).
- **Recovery:** Rebuilding and restoring affected areas and communities after an attack.
- **De-radicalization:** Programs aimed at rehabilitating individuals involved in or vulnerable to terrorism.

Cooperation: Cooperation refers to the process of working together toward a common goal or mutual benefit. It involves individuals, groups, or organizations coordinating their actions, sharing resources, and communicating effectively to achieve objectives that would be difficult or impossible to accomplish alone.

2.3.1. Studies on the Nature of Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa

The activities of terrorists and violent extremists all over the world are a threat to humanity and very dynamic. According to Laqueur (1999), terrorists will build "earthquake machines" and launch "artificial meteors" to bombard the Earth. Benjamin and Simon (2000) assert that the use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists will make it catastrophic. The activities of terrorists in Africa are indeed a matter of great concern, with Alexander (2012) shedding light on the extent of insecurity prevalent in the region. According to his findings, over the past decade, the Sahel and the Maghreb regions have experienced a notable upsurge in terrorist attacks.

Smith's account of terrorism in Africa, as presented in her book "Securing Africa: Post 9/11 Discourses on Terrorism" (2010), provides a comprehensive exploration of the historical development of terrorism on the continent. Smith's (2010) analysis of terrorism in Africa is characterized by a classification into three distinctive phases: Afro-oriental, Afro-occidental, and Afro-global. The author views terrorism as an ideology of fear and a socio-political tool and provides a comprehensive genealogy of its evolution on the continent.

According to Smith, the phase of Afro-Orientalism serves as the earliest indication of terrorism's roots in Africa, with its origins dating back to the twelfth century. During this phase, Africans experienced enslavement under dehumanising conditions at the hands of Arab slave traders. Smith argues that the black African is one who was fated for permanent doom. Africans

were not only the victims of terror but also, at the same time, perpetrators and witnesses. The Africans were victims and survivors of terrorism as they fled those who would enslave them (Smith, 2010). Likewise, the Afro-occidental phase was characterised by the era of slavery, which persisted into the 20th century. During this era, slavery remained the greatest act of terror that would continue to be experienced by Africans. ‘Whereas the physical torture and death suffered by the black Africans during this period cannot be replicated anymore, black Africans of today bear the scars and are permanently pained each time they imagine how it could have felt for their forebears when they were headed into the slaves’ ships on the way to an unknown destination, Europe and the Americas’ (Smith, 2010, pp 60). Jalata (2013) underscores that slavery inflicted various forms of violence, including the abduction of able-bodied people and the exploitation of indigenous resources. For Jalata, the enslavement of Africans disintegrated African families, all in the pursuit of amassing wealth and capital. Furthermore, the act of enslaving Africans encompassed practices such as warfare, banditry, kidnappings, torture, and the destruction of communities, all of which qualify as acts of terrorism (Jalata, 2013). Following the colonisation of various regions in Africa by European powers, the Afro-global phase emerged within these colonial territories. This phase, as highlighted by Smith (2010), was characterised by the reported inhumane treatment meted out by the Europeans, which engendered terror within these colonial states. During this period, Africa experienced further fragmentation as a result of European colonialism. Smith argues that while the era of slavery involved the forceful removal of Africans from their homelands, where they were often treated as commodities and transported to foreign lands in shackles, colonialism took a different approach. Instead of physically uprooting Africans, colonialism sought to keep them in their native lands but relegated them to the status of second-class citizens (Smith, 2010).

Regarding the actors engaged in terrorism in Africa, numerous groups employ violence and acts of terrorism to pursue a variety of objectives, often linked to religious, socio-economic, or

political motives. The most terrorism-prone region in the world is Sub-Saharan Africa, with East and West Africa being particularly vulnerable to such acts, according to Attalla Bashir, former Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (Apronti, 2017). Acts of terrorism in West Africa are still committed by activist groups that have disrupted the peace and security of the region like Ansar al-Dine, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), and Boko Haram, which was named the deadliest terrorist organization in the world in 2015 by the Global Terrorism Index (Jalata, 2013).

For instance, Cohen (2013) points to external influences as a significant factor contributing to the escalation of terrorist activities in Africa over the years. Specifically, he highlights the growing presence and influence of Al-Qaeda in Africa, noting that this influence expanded from virtually zero presence in 2005 to the establishment of three distinct franchises by 2013. This development is considered a crucial turning point in the trajectory of terrorism on the continent. The author further underscores that authoritarian regimes, particularly within predominantly Muslim populations, and poor economic development have created fertile ground for Al-Qaeda to infiltrate (Cohen, 2013).

Furthermore, Kohnert (2022) recognizes that religious fanaticism and ideological zeal are not the sole motivations behind terrorism, but factors like revenge, survival, and local conflicts playing significant roles. According to Kohnert, ill- and ungoverned spaces provide favorable conditions for the rise of terrorist movements, both religious and non-religious, driven by localism and informal networks (Kohnert, 2022). The author further notes the potential increase in crime and terrorism in West Africa due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors. It concludes by emphasizing the need for long-term solutions that consider the

interconnectedness of counterterrorism, the rule of law, human rights, and socio-economic development.

In a holistic assessment of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa, IMANI Africa report (2022), *The Growing Threat of Terrorism in Africa: The Product of Misdiagnosis and Faulty Policy Response*, highlights the growing threat of terrorism on the African continent, with an increase in the number of attacks and fatalities in recent years. It mentions that the terrorist threat now affects all five regions of Africa, although the impact is uneven across the continent. According to the report, there are concerns about the expansion of terrorist groups in the Sahel and the potential spread to littoral states in West Africa. The policy brief argues for a new approach to dealing with the terrorism threat in Africa, one that prioritizes human security and political strategies. While acknowledging the importance of hard security instruments, the proposed approach emphasizes their utilization within a broader political and developmental strategy. It calls for a shift from a security-first approach to a human-security-centered approach. Despite the proliferation of security response measures and the allocation of diplomatic, financial, and military resources, the report suggests that counter-terrorism interventions by the African Union (AU), regional entities, and international actors have been unsuccessful. This failure is attributed to two interconnected factors. First, there is a misdiagnosis of the nature of the threat, reducing it to solely being about terrorist groups. Second, the policy response is primarily focused on defeating identified terrorists, leading to a reliance on hard security instruments.

However, these arguments put forward so far strongly imply that the continent of Africa has become the global epicentre of jihadism as a result of the exponential rise of Islamic State allies, the survival of Al-Qaeda affiliates, and the ongoing deterioration of social and economic conditions throughout the African continent. One of the most critical concerns is Smith's broad definition of terrorism. Traditional definitions focus on the use of violence to achieve political

aims, typically by non-state actors. Smith expands this to include historical slavery and colonialism, which risks diluting the term's analytical precision. The passage seems more rhetorical than empirically grounded. For instance, there is no discussion of variations across regions, the complexity of African societies, or resistance movements against slavery. Such generalisations can obscure the nuances of African history. Therefore, these works are limited by the fact that they are general in scope and fail to consider the country-specific issues that give rise to terrorism. This study fills this gap by examining country-specific issues using Ghana as a case study.

2.3.2. Studies on the Vulnerability of States to Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Attempts have been made by researchers to draw a nexus between underdevelopment and terrorism, both at the domestic and external levels (Alexander, 2012). This quest has not been an easy task as the activities of terrorists continue to rise and pose serious challenges to countries, especially developing countries, as they strive to lift themselves out of the quagmire of underdevelopment. The drivers of these threats or vulnerabilities are both internal and external. Understanding the causes of terrorism and its recent record are important parts of combating it (Lacquer, 2004). The causes or factors that make states vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism are both internal (domestic) and external (international) in character. Some scholars have written profusely on the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. The list includes Mair (2003), Alexander (2012), Gow et al (2013), Brien and Rashid (2013), Ogbonna et al (2017), and Barros et al. (2008). They conclude that factors such as poverty, corruption, political marginalisation, social exclusion, internal conflicts, unemployment, and poor development are the main causes of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa.

According to Newman (2006), the underlying conditions, when combined with specific triggering factors that foster the creation of terrorist groups and acts of terrorism, are the core causes of terrorism. Some of the primary factors identified by Newman (2006) as contributing to terrorism include socioeconomic inequality, poverty, demographic shifts, dispossession, exclusion, and political grievances. These underlying factors might be thought of in this context as the independent variables that provide the background conditions required for terrorism to develop if we consider terrorism to be the dependent variable. Newman (2006) categorises the underlying causes of terrorism into two groups: Permissive structural elements and direct root causes. The three most prominent permissive structural elements are urbanisation, demography, and poverty. At the individual level, poverty is seen as a potential breeding ground for resentment and desperation, which can lead to support for political extremism (Newman, 2006). On the state level, according to Newman, impoverished societies often lack the resources to prevent terrorist activity or recruitment. Furthermore, these states may struggle to implement educational programs that could potentially reduce support for terrorism. Additionally, urbanisation, when coupled with poverty and exacerbated by unemployment, can have adverse effects on dissatisfied societies. This discontent may be exploited by terrorist groups, enabling them to recruit and mobilise people within deprived communities (Newman, 2006).

In Africa, religious ideologies are one of the main causes of terrorism. Religious extremists are frequently driven by a profound belief that the violence they do is a direct command from their god and that doing so fulfils their faith. However, terrorism in Africa is primarily driven by two factors, according to Alexander (2012). First, he makes the case that the unresolved conflict in Western Sahara has given groups like Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) a chance to gain more power and recruit new members, especially from Algerian refugee camps. Second, Alexander mentions the Arab Spring, describing it as an extraordinary and spectacular chain

of events. These events, according to Alexander (2012), provide opportunities for terrorist groups in North, West, and Central Africa to exploit instability and further destabilise the region. While Alexander raises an important issue about comprehending the circumstances that have contributed to terrorism in Africa, it seems that his submission downplays the preexisting elements. Considering that there were underlying causes for terrorism and that the consequences of these two events only served to intensify the situation, it would be more accurate to see these events as additional reasons that contributed to the terrorist problem in Africa.

Mair (2003) offers a correlative perspective on the motivations behind terrorism, suggesting that terrorism arises from the interplay of several factors. A dysfunctional state, social impoverishment, cultural identity loss, political persecution, and a lack of economic possibilities are some of the factors (Mair, 2003). Regarding the economic roots of terrorism, Mair argues that they are more about the incentives and constraints that individuals and organisations face, rather than being driven by specific, easily quantifiable factors. In other words, the economic aspects of terrorism relate to the conditions and circumstances that may push individuals or groups toward involvement in terrorist organisations. Additionally, Mair (2003) notes a transformation within terrorist organisations, shifting from hierarchical structures to fluid networks of cells with a relatively loose chain of command and control. This transformation can be attributed to two main reasons. First, hierarchical organisations became vulnerable to more effective state repression and the infiltration of intelligence agencies. Second, the advent of advanced communication technologies. Satellite phones, mobile phones, and the Internet have revolutionised the way terrorists communicate and coordinate their activities.

In their study "Militancy and Violence in West Africa: Religion, Politics, and Radicalism," Gow, Olonisakin, and Dijkhoorn (2013) explore the connection between terrorism in West Africa and other regions of the world. Their research concludes that local factors, rather than external influences, predominantly contribute to radicalisation in West Africa. The authors emphasise several key causal factors for terrorism in the region, including unemployment, poverty, and various economic and social challenges. They argue that these local issues are critical drivers of terrorism in West Africa. Specifically, the presence of a significant population of young and unemployed individuals in West Africa creates a vulnerable demographic that is susceptible to recruitment by extremist groups (Gow et al. 2013). However, the claims made by Gow et al. (2013) regarding the weight of external influence on local terrorism in West Africa do raise valid points. It is essential to consider the evolving tactics and affiliations of groups like Boko Haram as evidence of a connection between terrorism in Africa and global Islamist terror networks. For example, the shift in Boko Haram's tactics, such as the use of suicide bombings and coordinated attacks against both military and civilian targets, can indeed suggest a deeper connection with broader global terrorist networks, including Al Qaeda and its affiliates. Additionally, the emergence of factions within Boko Haram, like the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP), that declare allegiance to organisations like ISIS further underscores the global linkages of terrorism in the region.

Furthermore, Brien and Rashid (2013) investigate the post-conflict Islamic trends in Sierra Leone up until 2009, emphasising the concerns about the possible rise in violence motivated by religion in the country. The authors contextualise the analysis within the context of international concerns about Sierra Leone potentially becoming a haven for religiously inspired violence. The combination of prolonged economic hardship and the influence of foreign religious ideologies, especially those from Saudi Arabia and Iran, is the cause of these concerns about terrorism (Brien & Rashid, 2013). They contend that there is proof of a resurgence of

Islam in Sierra Leone following the war. This reinvigoration is attributed to the prolonged economic hardships faced by the population and the impact of external religious influences. They claim that despite the revival of Islam and the prominence of purist factions, there is little evidence of Sierra Leonean Muslim groups actively engaging in global jihadist networks or widespread acts of extremism and violence motivated by religion. It implies that attempts to use religious support for political objectives have been mostly fruitless and fleeting in Sierra Leone.

In addition, Ogbonna, Jiménez, and Ángel (2017) contend in *The Inordinate Activities of Boko Haram: A Critical Review of Facts and Challenges* that every terrorist group's actions are driven and supported by specific factors and in Boko Haram's case factors like poverty, inequality, illiteracy, economic deprivation and want, and corruption have a significant impact on the group's actions and activities. However, in the realm of terrorism and its relationship with economics, it's noteworthy that some Western researchers, like Krueger and Maleckova (2002), have found no clear correlation between terrorism and traditional economic indicators such as economic status, education, or poverty. Their analysis suggests that individuals associated with terrorist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas are not necessarily characterised by poverty or lack of education. Instead, these individuals often possess the means and skills to plan and execute attacks that can have significant economic repercussions. They believe that the motivations of certain high-profile individual terrorists are likely to be more rooted in ideological or religious beliefs rather than driven by economic factors

Similarly, the widely held notion that Islamic radicalisation in Nigeria is exclusively caused by socioeconomic hardship or intergroup conflicts is refuted by Alao (2013) in *the investigation of Islamic radicalisation and violence in Nigeria, with a focus on the actions of Boko Haram*. Rather, Alao contends that a variety of outside variables that are entwined with religion and identity in Nigeria are responsible for the phenomena. He argues that knowledge of Islamic

radicalisation and violence is influenced by elements of Nigeria's historical past, particularly its colonial heritage. These viewpoints are, however, contradicted by the findings of Barros, Faria, and Gil-Alana (2008). Their study, centred on Africa, suggests that there is an association between illiteracy in Africa and terrorism, and this relationship is influenced by the presence of low levels of political and economic freedom. They highlight that the issue of poverty is often cited as a potential contributing factor to terrorism, as impoverished communities may be more vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups due to a lack of economic opportunities and social services. Their research further suggests that poverty alone does not directly cause terrorism, but it can create an environment conducive to the growth of extremist ideologies and violence. Economic deprivation, coupled with political marginalisation, social exclusion, and limited access to education, can foster a sense of frustration, hopelessness, and resentment within certain communities, making them susceptible to radicalisation (Barros et al, 2008).

Concerning Ghana, the work of Aning and Abdallah (2013) focuses on Islamic radicalisation and violence in Ghana. Their study posits that while Ghana does experience some level of violence stemming from religious radicalisation, this violence tends to be intra-religious rather than directed against the state. It often manifests as conflicts within and among various religious factions, both within and between similar and dissimilar religious groups. They examine how political and socioeconomic factors fuel Islamic radicalisation and violence in Ghana and propose that these dynamics also influence the radicalisation of the three main religious movements in the nation: the Ahmadiyya Movement, Ahlussunna Waljama'a, and the Al-tijania Movement. Additionally, they point to disparities in doctrine and interpretation as the origins of Islamic extremism and violence among Ghana's religious communities. These distinctions could fuel conflicts and rivalries over doctrinal supremacy, which could lead to radicalisation and violent outbursts (Aning & Abdallah, 2013).

Similarly, Anim (2015), *Ghana's Vulnerability to Domestic and Transnational Terrorism: A Critical Analysis*, also provides an understanding of the vulnerability of states to terrorism and violent extremism. The author examines Ghana's susceptibility to both local and international terrorism, emphasizing Ghana's standing as a peaceful nation in a region riven by protracted conflicts. The region faces several challenges, including weak borders, insufficient interagency cooperation, and ECOWAS' policy of free movement of people and goods. These issues are further compounded by the growing number of Islamist insurgents and terrorist activities. According to Anim, these factors underscore the need for enhanced security measures and a comprehensive approach to addressing the threat. By using Nigeria's Boko Haram insurgency as a reference point, the study highlights the transnational aspect of the threat, pointing out that Ghanaians can be influenced by the ideological motives and activities of extremist groups. The study recommends that Ghanaian authorities should closely monitor social, political, economic, and religious conditions that could potentially fuel terrorism, such as unemployment, poverty, bad governance, corruption, and the promotion of extreme beliefs and practices. (Anim, 2015).

To some extent, the literature above reveals that the rise in terrorism and violent extremism is partly due to flaws in the process of development, particularly the persistence of poverty in many developing nations. The disparity between the wealth of the few and the poverty of the many, as well as the lack of adequate education, are frequently cited as sources of economic advancement, and general "civilising" factors were also mentioned as contributing factors to terrorism. The degree of poverty, inequality, and other aspects of underdevelopment are factors that determine terrorism and violent extremism in Africa, even though not all terrorists are poor or even come from poor societies, and not all poor people or people from poor societies become terrorists. The grievances stemming from high levels of unemployment have indeed created fertile ground for terrorist groups to garner support and recruit young people, often for

insurgency and terrorist attacks. Consequently, it is crucial to emphasise that in Africa, domestic terrorism often finds its roots in oppressive or authoritarian leadership. For example, in countries where leadership is characterised by authoritarianism and suppression, it often leads to gross human rights violations and political intimidation. Such oppressive regimes can give rise to a population of disgruntled citizens who feel marginalised, oppressed, and silenced and may resort to using terrorist tactics as a means to settle political scores or to draw international attention to their grievances.

However, the literature above shows that terrorism, regardless of its roots, is more likely to perpetuate when it coexists with low economic growth, a natural resource that is vulnerable to exploitation, a weak government and unfavourable geography. Thus, the chances for economic gain and governmental failure become crucial factors in the survival of terrorism. Poor development is a major factor in this research because it leaves large numbers of individuals with few options and almost no opportunity costs, making them easy targets for terrorist organisations. This reveals a gap as these issues provide a limited understanding of the incidence of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. This oversimplifies a very diverse continent. While authoritarianism is a factor in some contexts, in others, terrorism may be driven more by ethnic marginalisation, foreign intervention, or religious ideology. Again, Gow et al. (2013) did a commendable job of challenging a purely localist interpretation of terrorism in West Africa; however, they over-concentrated on the evolution of Boko Haram and simplified terrorism in the region as a single unit that cannot be fully understood in isolation. This study sets out to contribute to the debate by examining the ethnic conflicts, border issues and ideological influences of terrorism and violent extremism. Thus, the incentive-based policies also have limitations, as they cannot compel everyone to abandon the ideological or psychological factors that drive them towards violence.

2.3.3 Studies on Preparedness of States against Terrorism and Violent Extremism

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy defines counterterrorism as actions carried out by national or international authorities to oppose and avert terrorism. (Crenshaw & LaFree, 2017). As one of the most important counterterrorism tactics of the twenty-first century, effective Border Control Management (BCM) is emphasised by Tholen (2010) and Eren (2013). They contend that the main protection against the transnational movement of terrorists and the illegal trafficking of goods and freight is BCM. Kershner (2005) also argues that implementing efficient border controls, such as using border fences with various security features like barbed wire, high-tech sensors, ditches, and multi-component barrier systems, can be useful in thwarting the threat posed by terrorism. She draws attention to the State of Israel's effective implementation of this strategy along the Green Line, which separates it from the Gaza Strip, especially since 1994. On the contrary, Khera contends that combating terrorism calls for a multipronged strategy that includes both supranational cooperation with international and regional organisations and traditional interagency security cooperation at the local level (Khera, 2017). According to this perspective, numerous local security agencies as well as international and regional organisations should be included in counterterrorism activities. According to him, coordination, cooperation, and organisation are essential for success.

Similarly, *An Analysis of Ghana's Response to the Emerging Threats of Terrorism in West Africa* by Bamba (2014) examines and rates just the military actions that Ghana has taken to fight terrorism and the efficacy of those actions. He admits the limitations of these efforts and advocates for stringent security operations and checks if Ghana is to be effective in stopping terrorism when it does happen. However, the fact that Bamba's research was conducted in 2014 suggests that certain changes may have occurred regarding terrorist threats, particularly Ghana's vulnerability to and preparedness against terrorism and violent extremism, which calls for policy modifications and adjustments.

Again, the counterterrorism tactics or measures used by Ghana have been highlighted by Paa Prah and Chanimbe (2021), *Ghana's Readiness to Combat Terrorism: Strategies of Security Institutions*. They argue that there is limited scholarly discussion on the subject, even though Ghana has never experienced terrorism and faces both internal and external dangers. They reveal that whereas different organisations were using similar tactics to achieve a common objective, differences arose in the way these tactics were applied and the underlying motivations behind their use. They also reveal that certain organisations worked with communities to deradicalise, while others used the same strategy for disarmament. The study stresses the importance of periodic cross-institutional training programs, at national and international levels, to counter new forms of terrorism and discover emerging trends. Security organisations should collaborate with media outlets to educate the public about terrorism and provide guidance on responsible reporting (Paa Prah & Chanimbe, 2021).

On Ghana's readiness to fight terrorism, Christensen and Edu-Afful (2019) provide recommendations for Ghana's law enforcement agencies to improve their counterterrorism efforts. The authors recommend putting the national counterterrorism policy framework into actual reality, improving inter-agency cooperation through coordinated training and exercises, and giving resources a higher priority for preventive actions like neighbourhood outreach. They also call for coordination of security forces, support and coherence within Ghana's legal framework in addressing counterterrorism. Skilled intelligence analysts and organisational frameworks that encourage intelligence sharing and interoperability are necessary for Ghana to be able to respond to the growing threat of terrorism (Christensen and Edu-Afful, 2019).

Sosuh (2011) *Border Security in Ghana: Challenges and Prospects*, provides a more thorough analysis of the numerous international and transnational organised crimes that involve terrorism. According to her, the main causes of terrorism in Ghana include the flood of

refugees, drugs, armed and human trafficking, merchandise smuggling, money laundering, animal movement, and the ECOWAS free movement protocol. Without a doubt, Sosuh's research shows that Ghana faces several border security challenges, including the risk of transnational terrorism, which puts the country's security and stability at risk. Effective border management is critical to utilising all available resources to control and monitor the movement of people and goods across borders. Its efficacy hinges significantly on the formulation of rules and procedures designed to enforce the terms under which entry is granted. This includes a steadfast commitment to identifying and addressing instances of individuals breaching the conditions of their stay (Sosuh, 2011). However, she contends that the origin, character, and method of border administration during the imperial era are the main causes of the threats to border security throughout Africa, including Ghana. These boundaries, which were created as a legacy of colonialism, did not factor in the ethnic situation of Africa and, in some cases, divided families or ethnic groups between two states, like the Ewes in Ghana and Togo. This makes border control management in these areas difficult if not impossible (Sosuh, 2011).

Comprehensively, on the preparedness of states, particularly Ghana, against terrorism, extant literature concentrates much on the military strategies of the country. The range of activities employed so far in response to terrorism varies from training and humanitarian efforts to major combat operations. However, it is essential to emphasise that the overall effectiveness of Ghana's response to terrorism hinges on the state's willingness to acknowledge that the battle against terrorism and its underlying drivers cannot be solely won on the battlefield. Success depends on recognising that combating terrorism requires addressing the drivers of radicalisation, effectively addressing grievances, and mobilising local community support and goodwill. It also entails building the necessary social and economic infrastructure to foster resilience against extremism, strategic communications, law enforcement operations, and deradicalisation efforts, particularly within Muslim communities. Again, the issues that

provide a haven for terrorists to operate, like high unemployment, poverty, and the unresolved chieftaincy disputes in Bawku and other parts of the country, need to be tackled and resolved without delay to discourage the young but aggrieved Ghanaians from joining terrorist groups, which can jeopardise the security of Ghana. However, it is notable that these non-military efforts have often taken a secondary role compared to the application of military power in addressing the problem. In fact, how Ghana's military can best kill terrorists has been a major topic of discussion when it comes to managing radical Islamist terrorism. Indeed, history provides examples where the use of sheer brute force has successfully suppressed insurgencies. However, it is essential to acknowledge that in contemporary times, modern democracies often struggle to accept and implement a purely repressive response to an insurgency. Although the authors rightly focus on institutional capacity, inter-agency cooperation, community-based prevention, and legal coherence, which are all crucial pillars of effective counterterrorism, political dimensions such as the politicisation of security forces and the role of elite manipulation of terrorism fears for political gain are largely ignored. While the authors may not have explicitly covered non-military strategies, their work represents a significant foundation on the measures employed by states to counter terrorism and violent extremism. They provide a robust foundation for further investigation because of their holistic and comprehensive identification and examination of influential factors of terrorism and violent extremism. As a result, a balanced approach that combines both military and non-military strategies is essential to address the multifaceted and evolving threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism effectively. This study contributes to the literature by examining how a combination of political strategies, well-executed military intelligence efforts, and non-military approaches can effectively counter both insurgencies and terrorist movements.

2.3.4 Studies on Collaboration and Cooperation among States to Combat Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

Cooperation and coordination between states is one strategy for combating terrorism and violent extremism. This includes new alliances as well as those between states with long-standing partnerships. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously passed Resolution 1373 after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, urging increased state-to-state coordination and intelligence sharing in the fight against terrorism. Resolution 1373 imposes responsibilities on countries to deny haven to terrorists and install effective border controls. Additionally, the resolution emphasises the importance of information sharing related to terrorist activities and fostering international cooperation to prevent terrorist acts. Millard (2004) noted that the resolution called for nations to prohibit the movement of terrorists and terrorist groups by implementing strict controls on the issuance of identity papers and travel documents. It also urged adopting measures to prevent the counterfeiting, forgery, or fraudulent use of such documents. According to Khera (2017), the rising insecurity in Africa has led to the implementation of stricter security measures. This is due to the severe impact of violent extremist and terrorist attacks, as well as other forms of violence. These measures aim to address the various forms of insecurity in countries that are dealing with insurgent and organised banditry groups.

Ateku and Owusu-Mensah (2023), who advocate state cooperation, offer a theoretical and empirical analysis of the role and difficulties faced by ECOWAS, IGAD, and SADC in combating terrorism in Africa in the Anthropocene. In their work, they contend that regional cooperation has been identified as being crucial to guaranteeing the collective security of the state. According to the authors, the present regional security cooperation is still defined by cooperation through alliances, collective security, security regimes, and communities. They do agree, though, that although the security community settles conflicts peacefully and without

resorting to violence, it is weak in handling internal issues; as a result, it might not be the best strategy for handling brand-new security issues like "transnational" threats, which are mostly non-state issues like drug trafficking, organized crime, and terrorism (Ateku and Owusu-Mensah, 2023). They suggest that the lack of robust inter-subregional security cooperation exacerbates Africa's inability to contain the spillover of terrorists. However, they could have incorporated specific examples, case studies, or empirical data to support their arguments. Providing concrete instances of regional cooperation and illustrating the challenges faced by ECOWAS, IGAD, and SADC would enhance the depth and credibility of the analysis. The reference to the Anthropocene, although not fully explained, indicates an intention to contextualise the discussion within a specific framework, but further clarification on the relevance of the Anthropocene to the topic would help readers understand its connection and significance.

Furthermore, the work of Bala and Tar (2021), *Regional Cooperation in West Africa: Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency*, discusses the challenges and importance of regional cooperation in addressing terrorism and insurgency in West Africa. They highlight that regional responses to terrorism and insurgency have gained significance in recent times. Bala and Tar (2021) delve into the dynamics of terrorism and insurgency in West Africa, recognising the diverse factors that contribute to their proliferation and impact in the region and suggesting measures to enhance regional cooperation in West Africa. These measures include enhancing information sharing, coordinating strategies and operations, strengthening institutional frameworks, and promoting greater collaboration among regional states have recognised the need for shared responsibilities and cooperation to effectively combat the menace of terrorist actors (Bala and Tar, 2021).

Similarly, the work of Worcester (2015) is very germane as it provides a comprehensive analysis of terrorism in Africa. Worcester discusses the challenges of fighting terrorism in Africa, particularly in failed and fragile states that offer safe havens for illicit trade, drug production, and weapons smuggling. In the fight against terrorism, the author highlights the significance of good governance, efficient intelligence gathering, and collaboration across various agencies and ministries at the national and international levels. He recommends that it is necessary to comprehend the dynamics of the situation at a national, regional, and worldwide level, as well as to build a strong civil society and transfer specific expertise from European professionals to African governments. The author concludes that combating terrorism is not a task that can be taken on by a single agency, but rather calls for collaboration and contributions from a wide array of national and international organisations, encompassing law enforcement agencies, the military, intelligence services, the financial industry, diplomatic services, and health organisations. According to the author, IGAD can and ought to play a significant role in improving governance throughout Africa. For him, poor governance is the fundamental cause of poverty, inequality, poor healthcare, and terrorism, as well as a barrier to Africa's current efforts to combat terrorism. Therefore, Africa must assume responsibility for this development and establish its own standards, which may be different from those established by European countries (Worcester, 2015).

Additionally, Ajala (2021), *Interorganizational Cooperation in Combating Transnational Security Threats: A Case Study of the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Sahel and West Africa*, provides a valuable analysis of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and its role in addressing terrorism in the Sahel and West Africa. Ajala (2021) effectively highlights the importance of inter-organisational cooperation in tackling transnational security threats in the 21st century. The article utilised a theoretical framework and combined data from various sources to argue that the MNJTF has not been successful in fulfilling its mandate. By

employing this framework, the author sheds light on the factors such as regional dynamics, political challenges, and resource constraints that may have contributed to the organisation's shortcomings and provided a more comprehensive understanding of the MNJTF's struggles. The author gives potential reasons for its failure, provides specific areas for improvement, and offers insights into the challenges faced by inter-organisational security cooperation efforts. The author's conclusion emphasises the importance of inter-organisational cooperation in combating transnational security threats and the need for allied nations to recognise and collectively address shared existential threats to enhance the effectiveness of such organisations.

In support of cooperation to fight terrorism, the work of Akanji (2019), *Sub-regional Security Challenge: ECOWAS and the War on Terrorism in West Africa*, effectively highlights the varied responses of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to terrorism in the region. Akanji acknowledged that while some positive results have been achieved, there are significant challenges that hinder the organisation's efforts. The absence of political will and commitment from member states in implementing and enforcing counterterrorism decisions, as well as the impact of the international political environment on ECOWAS's initiatives, was specifically emphasised. The author, therefore, suggested that ECOWAS needs to demonstrate increased commitment and dedication to the fight against terrorism. By doing so, the organisation can effectively address the existing challenges and enhance its overall effectiveness in countering terrorism in West Africa. The inclusion of concrete examples, such as the ongoing attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria and various terrorist incidents in Mali and Burkina Faso, strengthens the argument that terrorism remains a persistent threat in the sub-region. These examples effectively illustrate the urgency for ECOWAS to redouble its efforts in countering terrorism. The work calls for priority attention from the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) to sub-regional counterterrorism initiatives is well-founded. Thus,

given the transnational nature of terrorism, political will, commitment, support, and collaboration from international bodies in addressing the ongoing threat are crucial for the success of regional efforts (Akanji, 2019).

This article has illustrated that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has taken various measures to respond to terrorism in West Africa. Although certain efforts have yielded favourable outcomes, they have also underscored the hurdles posed by a lack of political will and commitment among member states when it comes to executing and enforcing counterterrorism measures. Furthermore, the role of the global political landscape has exerted an influence on ECOWAS' initiatives aimed at countering terrorism. However, the fact that terrorism in the subregion has not stopped as demonstrated by Boko Haram's continued attacks, though mostly on soft targets, in northeastern Nigeria and the series of terrorist attacks in Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, and other countries means that ECOWAS needs to step up its efforts and demonstrate a greater commitment to combating terrorism, and the UN and AU need to prioritize sub-regional counterterrorism initiatives.

In terms of the cooperation of states against terrorism, the above literature concentrates mainly on the efforts of ECOWAS, IGAD, AU, and the UN in addressing the menace in Africa. Even though the activities of G5 Sahel, the Accra Initiative are individual states' efforts to counteract the threats of terrorism and violent extremism in the West African sub-region, these efforts are largely rhetoric and lack concrete actions by states. Thus, states merely subscribe to these agreements, but the implementation of these initiatives remains largely a problem due to financial challenges and internal political demands of the citizens of member states. There is also the lack of political commitment and desire on the part of member nations to put counterterrorism decisions into action and uphold them, as well as the influence of the global political context on ECOWAS's actions. Thus, a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the

various factors contributing to terrorism in West Africa and the challenges faced is very important in countering the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. This study contributes to the literature in this domain by examining and analysing the effectiveness of the implementation of the various cooperative initiatives by Ghana and its neighbours to fight terrorism and violent extremism. The task of countering the various potential sources of violence is indeed challenging, and it's unrealistic to expect any single policy to address them all comprehensively. This study contributes to the literature by examining how collaboration and cooperation between and among states can be an effective strategy for combating terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section examines the methodology that underlies the study. The section captures the research approach, design, sampling techniques, data sources, tools for data collecting, data analysis tools, and ethical considerations that make up the study.

3.1 Research Approach of the Study

This study, to examine the phenomenon of terrorism and violent extremism, adopted the qualitative approach to gather information. This was influenced by the fact that qualitative research is a technique for investigating and comprehending the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human issue. According to Creswell (2009), it entails creating questions and methods, obtaining information about the participant's environment, doing an inductive analysis of the data from specifics to broad themes, and evaluating the significance of the findings. The decision to employ the qualitative approach in this study was driven by the recognition that qualitative research emphasises the acquisition of extensive data from a relatively limited sample size. It represents a more adaptable methodology compared to quantitative research, as it grants participants the freedom to articulate their perspectives while providing valuable data. The qualitative research approach is particularly useful for uncovering intricate details of phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are often difficult, if not impossible, to capture using quantitative methods (Osuala, 2007). This approach addresses the limitations of quantitative research, particularly in cases where data may be insufficient, hidden, or not readily quantifiable. By adopting a qualitative approach, researchers gain the opportunity to engage directly with participants and experience the events under investigation firsthand. The descriptive and narrative nature of qualitative research also

benefits researchers who may lack strong statistical or mathematical skills. Moreover, qualitative methods are effective in identifying intangible factors such as motivations, perceptions, and social contexts that cannot be measured through statistical calculations (Mack et al., 2005). Specifically, the study used the qualitative approach due to its ability to thoroughly assess the vulnerability and preparedness of Ghana against the threats of terrorism and violent extremism. However, qualitative research has been criticized for being time-consuming, especially in terms of data collection and analysis (Osuala, 2007).

3.2. Research Design (Case Study Approach)

According to Welman and Kruger (2001), research design refers to the technique used to determine the nature of data to be collected and the specific participants required to draw valid conclusions in line with the research objectives. Creswell and Poth (2018) further assert that research design can adopt one of three approaches: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. This study employed a qualitative research approach to gather expert insights on Ghana's vulnerability and preparedness against terrorism and violent extremism. The qualitative method is fundamentally inductive, allowing researchers to generate meaning directly from data collected in the field (Creswell, 2003). Creswell also noted that qualitative inquiry can take various forms, including narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies, and case studies. According to Creswell (2009), case study methodologies are especially valuable for exploring the complexities of a program, event, activity, or process in depth. In this study, the case study approach was selected to address the essential "how" and "why" questions that frame the research inquiry. This methodology provides a comprehensive framework for examining and understanding the specific context and intricacies of the subject matter, allowing for a nuanced exploration of the research questions. Accordingly, academics like Yin (2014) and Baxter and Jack (2008) confirmed that the purpose of using case studies in

research is to address the "why" and "how" concerns. The study employed a descriptive case study methodology, which involves the review of documents, participant observation, and in-depth interviews to gain insights into the experiences, viewpoints, and worldviews of individuals within a specific context. The selection of the case study research method is associated with several advantages, including:

Ability to recognise connections between phenomena, contexts, and individuals.

Flexibility in gathering data through diverse methods.

Ability to comprehensively capture the context and life experiences of participants.

Even though the case study method faces criticism for its limited generalisability to other contexts and the potential for researcher bias due to personal opinions and preferences, it remains a valuable approach for comprehending intricate issues in real-life settings. It is frequently employed to gain insights into the perspectives of participants within those specific settings.

3.3 Target Population

Based on the nature of the study, the target population was grouped into two main categories. The first category was representatives of the ministries, institutions, policymakers, and personnel of Ghana's security agencies (the military, police, national security, and immigration service) who have the responsibility of protecting the country against any attacks, including terrorist attacks. The second category included people such as academics who specialise in security issues, traditional rulers, opinion leaders, youth leaders, and women leaders in the country who are sensitised on terrorism and violent extremism, especially in the northern parts of Ghana. This helped in gathering the necessary data from people with in-depth understanding

and firsthand knowledge of the incidence of terrorism and violent extremism in the region, Ghana's susceptibility, and how to deal with the threats.

3.4 Research Instrument

To undertake this study, data were gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Interviews, which entail verbal communication between the researcher and the subject, are regarded as essential data collection techniques (Canals, 2017). A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research technique in which the interviewer has the freedom to explore deeper into particular topics or responses as needed, along with a planned set of open questions meant to spark conversation. The semi-structured interviews were appropriate for data collection in this study because the researcher wanted to explore participants' thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about the threats of terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. Researchers frequently prefer this approach because it allows for prepared questions, which makes the interviewer look knowledgeable and well-prepared. Semi-structured interviews give participants the chance and flexibility to voice their opinions in their own words. This makes the participants more relaxed and at ease, making the interview more of a conversation than a deliberate interrogation of questions and answers.

3.5 Sampling and Sample Size

Sampling is a crucial stage in research, as it informs the research design and the methods employed by the researcher. A sampling technique that is free from researcher bias is considered both reliable and representative of the broader population's views (Fritz & Morgan, 2010). This study employed a non-probability sampling technique, which involves the subjective selection of participants based on their prior knowledge or experience related to the

research topic. Specifically, this study utilized purposive to select participants with in-depth knowledge of Ghana's vulnerability and preparedness against terrorism and violent extremism. Adopting purposive sampling is justified by the need to find participants with relevant knowledge of Ghana's security measures for countering terrorism. Thus, the researcher purposely searched for people who had the requisite knowledge of terrorism and violent extremism. This technique allowed the researcher the opportunity to contact people who possess relevant information to the study, that is, terrorism and violent extremism. Although purposive sampling has been criticized for its potential susceptibility to researcher bias, it remains a convenient and suitable approach, particularly for exploratory research designs (Fritz & Morgan, 2010).

In terms of sample size, the study made use of 35 participants as the sample size, which comprised 15 participants from the various institutions and security agencies that have the responsibility of protecting the country against terrorism and violent extremism. In actuality, a representative/technocrat from each of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of Interior (Minter), Ministry of National Security (MNS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), and NCCE. Also, senior officers of Ghana's security agencies [the Army, the Police service, Immigration Service, and National Security operatives] who are tasked with protecting Ghana against terrorism provided the data. This is important because they provided information on both the kinetic and non-kinetic measures adopted by Ghana. Some civilians, such as academics, traditional rulers, opinion leaders, youth, and women, also contributed firsthand information on Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. This category was made up of 20 participants, consisting of academics, traditional rulers, opinion leaders, youth leaders, and women leaders who expressed their views on terrorism and nonmilitary measures to combat terrorism and violent extremism. The table below shows the total sample size used for the study.

Name of institution or group	Number of participants
Ministry of Defence	1
Ministry of Interior	1
Ministry of National Security	1
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1
National Commission for Civic Education	3
Ghana Armed Forces	2
Ghana Police Service	2
Ghana Immigration Service	2
National Security Operatives	2
Academics	2
Traditional Rulers	3
Opinion Leaders	5
Women	5
Youth	5
Total	35

Table 3.1. A table showing the total number of participants.

Secondary data is the second source of information. Secondary data, according to McGinn (2008), is typically pre-existing and gathered by researchers for other objectives. Public and private archives, institutional databases, government repositories, and existing researchers' databases made up the majority of this source. Journals, papers, books, and other existing references that were relevant to the study were used to gather the secondary data for the study.

3.6 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance, reliability, and richness of data collected, this study employed purposive sampling to identify and select participants who possess significant knowledge, experience, or roles in matters related to terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were guided by the objectives of the study, which aimed to explore both state-level (kinetic) and non-state (non-kinetic) perspectives on Ghana's vulnerability and response to the threat of terrorism and violent extremism.

Inclusion Criteria

The study included participants based on the following criteria:

Institutional Affiliation and Role in National Security

Participants were included if they were affiliated with key government ministries and agencies responsible for national security and counter-terrorism efforts such as the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of the Interior (MinTER), Ministry of National Security (MNS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE). These institutions play a central role in the development and implementation of security policies and responses to terrorism and violent extremism. Technocrats and representatives from these

bodies were selected based on their involvement in policy formulation or operational execution related to national security.

Service in Ghana's Security Agencies

Senior officers from the Ghana Armed Forces, Ghana Police Service, Ghana Immigration Service, and National Security Secretariat were included. These officers were selected based on their practical experience in operational security and intelligence gathering, particularly regarding the threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism. Participants had to be involved in counter-terrorism or border security operations or hold strategic planning roles within their respective agencies.

Civil Society Representation and Community Insight

A separate category of participants was drawn from civil society to gain perspectives on the societal dimensions of terrorism and violent extremism. This group included:

1. Academics with research expertise in security, international relations, or conflict studies.
2. Traditional rulers and opinion leaders with influence and local knowledge of community-level vulnerabilities.
3. Youth and women leaders actively involved in peacebuilding or community resilience programs. These individuals were selected based on their experience, influence, and active involvement in grassroots awareness, civic education, or conflict prevention.

Knowledge and Experience

All participants were included based on their demonstrable knowledge or practical experience with issues related to national security, terrorism, and violent extremism. For civil society participants, inclusion was contingent upon their capacity to speak to the non-military dimensions of preventing and responding to radicalization and insecurity within their communities. Participants needed to be proficient in English, the medium of the interviews, and express a willingness to voluntarily participate in the study. Consent either verbal or written was required before inclusion.

Exclusion Criteria

The study deliberately excluded certain individuals and groups to maintain focus and ensure data validity:

Lack of Relevant Expertise or Role

Individuals without any professional or experiential knowledge of terrorism, violent extremism, or national security were excluded. This included public servants or community members without exposure to or involvement in relevant sectors. Individuals within security agencies who were under active operational restrictions, or whose participation could compromise national security, were excluded. Similarly, those who might have had a conflict of interest, such as contractors with government security contracts, were not considered to avoid biased responses.

Non-availability or Unwillingness to Participate

Prospective participants who were unwilling to engage in an in-depth interview or declined to provide informed consent were excluded. Also, individuals who could not commit sufficient time for the interview process, or who withdrew mid-way, were excluded from the final sample. Since the interviews were conducted in English, individuals who could not communicate effectively in the language were excluded to avoid miscommunication and ensure the clarity of responses. Individuals considered vulnerable, such as minors or those with mental incapacity to understand the study's nature and provide informed consent, were excluded to maintain ethical research standards.

In short, the inclusion and exclusion criteria ensured that the selected sample comprising 35 participants from both government institutions and civil society was not only representative of the relevant stakeholders but also equipped to provide rich, nuanced, and informed perspectives on Ghana's vulnerability and counter-terrorism strategies. By focusing on individuals with demonstrable expertise or experiential knowledge, the study upheld methodological rigor while capturing diverse viewpoints essential for comprehensive analysis.

3.7 Analysis of Data

Critical contextual analysis of the data from both primary and secondary sources was performed. According to Kawulich (2012), every study's data analysis stage entails breaking down enormous amounts of field data into more manageable units to make sense of it. As mentioned in the section on data collection, themes were used to organize interviews to help keep the emphasis on the overarching goal and objectives of this study. To perform a successful qualitative research study, the study employed the thematic data analysis technique where

interviews from the field were recorded and transcribed for the analysis. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative data analysis is a technique for categorizing written or spoken information into groups that share certain patterns. In-depth interviews were audio-recorded, and the researcher also took handwritten notes during each session. The interviews were conducted in English, as it was a common language shared by both the researcher and the participants. Following data collection, the interview recordings were transcribed, coded, and organized into themes aligned with the study's objectives. As a result, the study used a qualitative content analysis approach, in which different the field data and pre-existing literature were examined and interpreted thematically to align with the study's overall objectives.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Given that society demands more accountability, ethical behavior (personal, professional, and research-related) has become increasingly important and broad (Zegwaard, Campbell, & Pretti, 2017). Fleming and Zegwaard (2018) highlighted the five (5) main ethical principles that must be considered when conducting any political study. They include risk of injury, conflict of interest, privacy protection, preserving anonymity and confidentiality, and informed permission. Before recording any interviews, consent from the respondents was gathered in strict compliance with these ethics. Principles of secrecy and anonymity were respected due to the sensitive nature of the study. Furthermore, the names and contact details of the respondents were eliminated from the study out of consideration for their privacy.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section discusses and analyses data on Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. This discussion is grounded in empirical data gathered from the field, obtained through in-depth interviews utilizing a semi-structured interview guide, supplemented by existing literature on terrorism and violent extremism. This was guided by the relative deprivation theory and sought to examine why Ghana is vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism. The second section analyses and discusses field data with the guidance of the national security theory, aiming to assess Ghana's preparedness and its cooperation with other states in countering terrorism and violent extremism.

4.1 Ghana's Vulnerability to Terrorism and Violent Extremism:

The study investigates factors that make Ghana vulnerable to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism and how these threats are being addressed, as these threats are expanding to littoral states, including Ghana. According to a UNDP (2023) report, Ghana faces eminent threats of terrorism and violent extremism in the sub region due to a plethora of factors. The report assesses community-specific vulnerabilities of individuals, groups, and communities to radicalization and the potential for violent extremism in Ghana. The report highlights that the vulnerabilities to violent extremism and radicalization in Ghana must be understood within the broader context of socio-economic, governance, and security dynamics in West Africa and the Sahel. Despite Ghana's democratic achievements, its electoral and post-electoral periods remain marked by relatively high levels of violence. Furthermore, the stability of democratic governance has not fully translated into addressing persistent socio-economic and governance

challenges (UNDP, 2023). These challenges include limited civic engagement, endemic corruption, rent-seeking behavior, clientelism, stalled local governance, and weak macroeconomic fundamentals (UNDP, 2023). In Ghana, the link between democratic processes and the equitable distribution of socio-economic benefits remains tenuous at best and this put the country at risk of terrorists' exploitation. This study also identified several factors during the fieldwork that makes Ghana vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism. They include the following:

1. Poverty
2. Youth unemployment
3. Corruption and Injustice
4. Chieftaincy and Ethnic Conflicts
5. Porous borders
6. Bad governance

4.1.1 Poverty

The study highlights that poverty is a significant contributing factor to the growth of terrorism and renders Ghana susceptible to terrorism and violent extremism. Despite a notable reduction in the percentage of impoverished Ghanaians, declining from 40% in 1990 to 23.4% in 2017, absolute poverty remains pervasive. Moreover, the country has witnessed a concerning upward trend in inequality (Fieldwork, 2023). In the year 2023, Ghana had an estimated 2.99 million individuals who were grappling with extreme poverty, with the majority of this population concentrated in rural areas (Sasu, 2023). Among them, approximately 2.8 million people were surviving on less than \$1.90 United States dollars per day in the rural areas, while the urban areas were home to around 214,000 individuals living in extreme poverty. Between 2016 and

2022, the incidence of poverty consistently exceeded two million in rural communities and ranged between 200 thousand and 350 thousand in urban areas ((Sasu, 2023). Specifically, in the 2016/17 period, poverty rates were significantly higher in rural areas, standing at 39.5%, in contrast to the 7.8% observed in urban areas. Notably, three regions, namely Upper West (70.9%), Northern (61.1%), and Upper East (54.8%), exhibited particularly elevated poverty rates (Tsiboe et al., 2022). This disparity was especially pronounced among children, as impoverished households tended to have larger family sizes compared to the rest of the country ((Tsiboe et al., 2022). The pronounced poverty levels in these regions, coupled with their proximity to countries like Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, which are grappling with ongoing terrorist attacks, heighten Ghana's vulnerability to the threats of terrorism and violent extremism.

Consequently, the study show that the prevailing poverty situation can amplify frustration among the populace, potentially fostering resentment towards the government. This could provide terrorist groups with an opportunity to exploit this discontent for recruitment purposes (Fieldwork, 2023). This reinforces Anim's (2015) assertion that the dissatisfaction among the Ghanaian populace due to the significant wealth inequality gap between the rich and the poor is an important source of Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. This is further confirmed by a UNDP report (2023) which argues that the developmental paths in the Northern regions, encompassing social, political, and economic aspects, have contributed to the perception that the state appears to be in a state of 'withdrawal' from these regions. This perception is marked by a sense of distinctiveness or what has been depicted as 'Northern peculiarity' and is underscored by the development disparities between the northern areas and the rest of the country which makes the regions vulnerable to terrorism. It further highlights that throughout all five regions, poverty and unemployment are crucial factors that could potentially lead to violent extremism. Thus, the high levels of unemployment and widespread

poverty, even among individuals with education, can foster a sense of hopelessness and desperation, making people more susceptible to accepting radical offers or alternative ideologies out of frustration and disillusionment (UNDP, 2023). Groves (2008) also argues that poverty plays a significant role in fostering terrorism through several interconnected mechanisms. It can provide a perceived moral 'justification' for radical actions, cultivate support for terrorist tactics within the broader population, and contribute to systemic inequalities that breed frustration and ultimately fuel political violence (Groves, 2008).

Within the urban areas, poverty is notably prevalent in slum communities, commonly referred to as Zongo communities, which are primarily inhabited by Muslims. These communities are poor and characterized by substandard housing, inadequate sanitation facilities, a lack of access to potable water, and generally low living standards (Fieldwork, 2023). This augments Anim's (2015) claims that there is a concern about the rise of religious extremism and an increasing incidence of religious radicalization and violence within certain segments of the Muslim community in Ghana. This issue is attributed to the high poverty of the Zongos and the widespread dissemination of extremist doctrinal sermons, primarily originating from specific Sunni sects (Anim, 2015). Evans and Kelikume (2019) also claim that poverty significantly contributes to the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria, implying that an increase in terrorism is, to some extent, driven by poverty. While the relationship between poverty and terrorism is a subject of complex debate among researchers and experts, it is acknowledged that there might not be a direct causation, but there can be a correlation or indirect connection between poverty and the likelihood of individuals engaging in terrorism. In regions grappling with poverty, individuals often encounter limited economic prospects and restricted access to essential services. The experience of poverty can engender feelings of frustration, hopelessness, and resentment, potentially rendering some individuals more susceptible to extremist ideologies or recruitment by terrorist organizations (Fieldwork, 2023). A police

officer provided the following perspective on Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. He stated:

I believe that Ghana is socially predisposed to these threats. Our proximity to neighbouring countries that have experienced terrorism-related activities automatically makes us vulnerable. In my opinion, we face several issues that contribute to this vulnerability. We've seen instances of vandalism in our senior high schools, incidents of hooliganism, and the presence of endemic poverty, which can make recruitment into terrorist groups more likely (Interview, August 11, 2023).

This statement highlights the officer's view that Ghana's geographical location and certain social factors expose the country to the risk of terrorism and violent extremism. The officer also points out specific social issues within Ghana, such as school vandalism, hooliganism, and poverty, which could potentially exacerbate this vulnerability. This reinforces the findings of Ehrlich and Liu (2002), who observed that while some terrorists may be financially well-off themselves, the socioeconomic conditions in their countries often provide a fertile ground for moral indignation. Similarly, Francis (2014) argued that many of the foot soldiers of groups like Boko Haram are not necessarily driven by extreme religious ideologies; instead, they are often impoverished youth who have been swayed against their corrupt governments by charismatic leaders. While there may not be a direct causal link, extremists often exploit poverty for their own ends (O'Neil, 2003). Brynjar and Skjølberg also supported this view, asserting that terrorist organizations leverage issues like poverty to incite individuals to act on behalf of the larger population (Brynjar and Skjølberg, 2004, as cited by Kavanagh, 2011).

Moreover, even if an individual terrorist is not personally impoverished, poverty remains a significant underlying factor in the context of terrorism. Terrorist organizations may offer financial incentives, support, or a sense of belonging to recruit individuals who feel marginalized or disenfranchised due to economic hardships (Fieldwork, 2023). Therefore, the relative compensation for skilled and unskilled individuals participating in terrorist activities,

as compared to their counterparts in legal sectors, often reflects the influence of poverty. This perspective aligns with Kavanagh's (2011) findings that poverty, whether indirectly or directly, plays a role in sustaining terrorism. The simplest economic argument attributes terrorism to poverty and unemployment, contending that these conditions create desperation and hopelessness among marginalized individuals, driving them to join terrorist groups because of the social services such groups provide or due to a lack of alternative opportunities (Kavanagh, 2011). This view is exemplified by Keller's (2002) claim that the decision to increase payments to families of suicide bombers in Iraq led to a subsequent increase in suicide bombings. Even before the payment increase, Hassan (2001) reported an excess supply of willing suicide bombers. In essence, poverty has contributed to an environment that enables terrorist organizations to garner support. Adesoji (2011) argues that poverty in Ghana is primarily caused by marginalization and unequal distribution of state resources and this makes recruitment for extremist sects easier. Therefore, the discussions above underscore that state failure and the potential for economic gains become pivotal elements in the persistence of rebellions. While poverty alone may not directly cause terrorism, the pervasive nature of poverty in Ghana can foster frustration among individuals, rendering them susceptible to terrorist recruitment. More importantly, Kunz and Frank (2004) stressed that poverty is more than just the lack of financial resources; rather, it is a manifestation of social, economic, and political marginalization. This perspective casts doubt on the notion that those living in poverty would be more likely to commit acts of terrorism because they have nothing to lose. Consequently, poverty contributes to the spread of terrorist tactics by giving people a moral "justification" and creating a climate of discontent that fuels political violence.

4.1.2 Youth Unemployment

The study shows that the pervasive issues of unemployment and the low quality of employment among young people have emerged as significant socio-economic and political dilemmas on a global scale. The study reveals that across Ghana, there are significant segments of largely unemployed and unemployable youth, mostly male, who survive through informal or underground economic activities. Unemployment among these groups ranges from 36% in the Savannah, Upper East, and Upper West regions, to as high as 40% in the Northern Region and 49% in the North East Region. The fieldwork interviews identify the North East Region as the most vulnerable, followed by the Northern Region. In contrast, the Savannah and Upper East regions are found to have the lowest levels of household vulnerability. Among female youth, unemployment remains high across all northern regions, ranging from 37% to 47%. These young women often have limited or substandard education, falling within the categories of 'no education' or 'incomplete primary education.' The data reveals that among males, educational deprivation ranges from a low of 12% in Savannah to a high of 31% in Upper West. For females, the figures are more severe, with a low of 10% in Savannah and a staggering 67% in the North East Region.

In the wake of the "Great Recession," unemployment rates have experienced prolonged challenges on a global scale. Even in countries that have seen some improvement in their labour markets, employment levels often continue to lag behind pre-recession standards (Elsby et al., 2010). It occurs when individuals who seek employment struggle to secure job opportunities. Ghana stands out not only as a nation with a vibrant and youthful population but also as one that is making significant strides towards becoming a more educated and enlightened society. However, the unfortunate reality is that the educated segment of the population is currently grappling with the severe repercussions of a high rate of unemployment. According to Baah-

Boateng (2021), in 2017, an estimated 810,000 Ghanaians aged 15 years and above were grappling with unemployment. Alarming, a substantial portion of this group, about 625,000 individuals (77.2%), belonged to the youthful age bracket of 15 to 35 years. Indeed, the youth are disproportionately impacted by unemployment, with statistics underscoring the severity of the issue (Baah-Boateng, 2021). In 2017, a staggering 12.4% of the youth labour force found themselves unemployed, a rate significantly higher than the overall unemployment rate of 8.3%. Furthermore, among the younger youth aged between 15 and 24 years, a staggering 19.3% were unemployed. This subgroup primarily consists of new labour market entrants with limited or no prior labour market experience, in stark contrast to the older youth group, where the unemployment rate stood at 9.1% (Baah-Boateng, 2021). Undoubtedly, this unemployment condition exacerbates Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism (Fieldwork, 2023). The finding reinforces the UNDP report's argument that young people, due to their underdeveloped political consciousness or limited political awareness, have become susceptible to being used as pawns by politicians and political parties to disrupt political processes in exchange for meager payments (UNDP, 2023).

The study also finds that youth mobilization, often associated with gatherings like camps, which serve as venues for entertainment or political mobilization, can inadvertently act as spaces where radicalization may occur (Fieldwork, 2023). Given the elevated vulnerability of youth in Ghana, there is a persistent likelihood that they may be inclined to participate in any endeavour they perceive as conducive to enhancing their living standards. This finding corroborates Anim's (2015) claim that unemployment is a pressing issue in Ghana, and its adverse consequences on the country cannot be underestimated. Thus, there is a strong need to promote the identification of additional opportunities for youth engagement. Sadly, unemployment has contributed to the emergence of factions, with grievances stemming from unemployment catalysing terrorist groups to mobilize support and recruit young people,

primarily for insurgency and terrorist activities (Anim, 2015). This observation further supports the view of Furnham (1985) who contextualized the potential link between unemployment and violence. He argued that higher levels of education and unemployment are likely to be associated with an increased likelihood of violence and terrorism, particularly when social mobility is constrained by autocratic regimes. Evans and Kelikume (2019) also make the case that there is a positive relationship between unemployment and terrorism, that the greater the unemployment rate in a nation, the higher the incidence of terrorism.

The study reveals that youth unemployment not only poses economic challenges but also gives rise to significant social problems. Young people often experience frustration when unable to secure employment, especially when they observe others succeeding without apparent effort, which can create immense pressure to succeed. One youth leader interviewed during the study noted the following:

Unemployment is a major contributor to substance abuse as the drugs numb their worries (Interview, July 21, 2023).

This confirms the UNDP claim that the violence associated with these predominantly unemployed youth, occasionally influenced by drugs, has materialized in various forms, including attacks against political adversaries, the occupation and destruction of state assets, and the forcible removal of government officials (UNDP, 2023).

These statements underscore the multifaceted impact of youth unemployment, including its potential role in fuelling substance abuse as a coping mechanism for the challenges and frustrations faced by unemployed young individuals. This perspective was further supported by an officer from the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), who emphasized that the elevated levels of unemployment in Ghana have driven many young people toward drug abuse, including substances like tramadol and marijuana. Additionally, they have been

drawn into engaging in other social vices such as prostitution and armed robbery, especially in major cities like Accra, Tamale, and Kumasi. This precarious situation can significantly influence young individuals to consider joining terrorist groups, which may offer them income as a form of employment or a means of survival (Fieldwork, 2023).

The officer provided a compelling argument, he stated:

It is not without reason that young people are becoming recruits for terrorist organizations or violent extremist groups. In Ghana, it is widely acknowledged that the unemployment crisis is severe and has worsened in recent years, while the government's efforts to address it have been insufficient. Imagine spending several years in university and, after graduation, being unable to secure a job to sustain yourself and meet family obligations. This situation can lead to ridicule and mockery from society, including community members who may question the value of the resources invested in your education by your parents (Interview, August 07, 2023).

This statement also emphasizes the profound impact of unemployment on the lives of young individuals, highlighting the feelings of hopelessness and despair that can result from being unable to find gainful employment, which, in turn, can increase susceptibility to extremist influences.

These assertions aligned with the findings of Flowers (2014), who suggested a potential and contemporary relationship between the rate of youth labour force engagement and the prevalence of terrorism. Unemployment is known to be linked with reduced self-esteem, heightened stress, and a range of social issues, including drug abuse, criminal activity, mental health problems, and feelings of disempowerment (Furnham, 1985 cited in ILO, 2010). Additionally, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung report expressed concerns about the significant migration of unemployed youth who venture in search of work or "adventures" in neighbouring countries, particularly in the Sahel region and even as far as Libya. This migration raises

concerns about the potential for recruitment during their journeys (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2022).

The concurrent rise in unemployment and educational attainment provides another tenable rationale for why certain young people without jobs might turn to terrorism (Fieldwork, 2023). Gurr (1968) first proposed this idea in the 1960s and contended that higher education can make young people realize that their chances of finding jobs are unlikely to improve, which can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction with their current situation. According to Collier (2000), a higher degree of education is connected to a lower chance of conflict since it increases the opportunity costs for an individual to join a rebellion or partake in violent or illegal activities, such as terrorism.

In summary, the inability of leaders to implement effective economic policies that augment the well-being and living standards of their citizens, especially by creating employment opportunities, has resulted in a significant challenge of youth unemployment. The high rates of unemployment can create conditions conducive to political radicalization, with individuals seeking radical solutions to address their economic grievances. This may lead to support for extremist ideologies or political movements associated with terrorism. Unemployed individuals may become more susceptible to radicalization if they experience social isolation or spend significant time online. Online extremist communities can provide a sense of belonging and validation for those who feel marginalized in society. Consistent with this perspective, Flowers (2014) argued that unemployed youth, with more free time and lower opportunity costs, are more susceptible to engaging in antisocial behaviours, particularly acts of violence, and young men, in particular, are vulnerable to both perpetrating and falling victim to violence when gainful employment is lacking in their lives. While Ghana is widely seen as a stable nation, security circumstances since the mid-2000s indicate the presence of ongoing

internal vulnerabilities such as a high youth unemployment rate and a political landscape marked by exclusion and marginalization that consistently make the youth more susceptible to radicalization and violent extremism (UNDP, 2023).

4.1.3 Corruption and Injustice

Another significant aspect highlighted in the study is the pervasive issue of corruption and injustice within the country. Corruption is a deeply rooted human condition with a long historical legacy. Since ancient times, individuals in positions of power, both from privileged backgrounds and the common citizenry, have exploited their positions for personal gain. This has often entailed using corruption as a means to obtain advantages, with those in power either abusing their authority or manipulating access to resources for their personal benefit (Rotberg, 2009). The exercise of discretion, especially when it facilitates or hinders access to opportunities, often attracts potential abusers. As noted by Anyalemechi (2018), terrorism, regardless of its geographical location, frequently finds its origins in specific real or perceived conditions of injustice, inequity, or unjust socioeconomic and political relations. The study uncovered that corruption and injustice are rampant issues in Ghana. Many politicians and certain public officials engage in corrupt practices, leveraging state resources to accumulate wealth at the expense of ordinary citizens (Fieldwork, 2023). One young individual expressed their frustration with the situation:

We live in a country where the moment you become a politician, you become wealthy. Even if you couldn't afford a motorcycle before, the moment you are elected into office, you suddenly own numerous cars, including V8s. These individuals live extravagant lives while the citizens suffer (Interview, July 21, 2023).

The sentiment expressed is consistent with Kim's argument, which posits that feelings of disparities and dissatisfaction frequently emerge when individuals assess their situations in comparison to others and recognize that they possess less than what they perceive they are entitled to (Kim, 2014). A woman also voiced her dissatisfaction. She said:

No one likes the current government. Ministers have lavished mansions in Accra, while ordinary people have nothing. It should be publicly acknowledged that the current government is riddled with corruption. They should be held accountable and required to answer for their actions (Interview, July 21, 2023).

Closely linked to corruption is the issue of injustice, exacerbated by the "winner-takes-all" politics experienced by many Ghanaians in terms of the allocation of national resources. Injustice, in this context, encompasses any act that involves unfairness or the violation of an individual's rights. Allan et al. (2017) discovered a significant link between the perception of injustice and the rise of violent extremism. They suggested that both discrimination and marginalization can provoke feelings of discontent among citizens towards the government, as well as create ethno-religious tensions which can inadvertently assist extremist groups in their recruitment efforts by legitimizing their propaganda narratives. This perspective also supports the position of Cilliers (2003), who argued that all forms of terrorism, including international terrorism, initially originate from and are driven by domestic injustices within a particular country or region. The study revealed that the emergence of terrorism often hinges on the existing socio-political and economic injustices within society (Fieldwork, 2023). This concept aligns with the relative deprivation theory, which suggests that individuals or groups may resort to violent or non-violent actions when they perceive themselves as more deprived than others in society. Smith (2015) further developed this idea, asserting that feelings of relative deprivation can arise when people or groups believe they have been unfairly denied access to resources, opportunities, or other social and economic benefits. The study found that income

distribution in Ghana is highly skewed, with the majority of citizens living in poverty and a small elite group controlling the lion's share of resources (Fieldwork, 2023). A traditional leader interviewed during the study provided this insight:

Terrorism is often influenced by the perception of injustice in Ghana. Terrorism tends to emerge when people believe that state resources are unfairly distributed, and they resort to extreme means to voice their demands (Interview, July 21, 2023).

Similarly, Hendrix (2016) described a comparable situation in Northern Nigeria, where historical neglect, corruption, and lack of access to essential services have fueled feelings of marginalization and discontent. He observed:

For years, the central government ignored the humble northeast. For much of the past six years, there have been large parts of Nigeria's northeast where there has been no functional government. For decades, corruption and neglect meant that the region received little in terms of education, healthcare, infrastructure, electricity, or other public services. Given its size, it might be logical to assume that Nigeria had a state capacity similar to Indonesia, Russia, or Brazil. But across Nigeria, public institutions have been hollowed out, with corrupt politicians taking away the spoils and neglecting the rot until the country got to this crisis.

In a nutshell, Ghana grapples with issues of nepotism, corruption, injustice, and a "winner takes all" political landscape. This situation leads to the concentration of power and resources in the hands of the ruling party, while a significant portion of the population is left without access to these resources. These factors collectively contribute to a growing sense of frustration and a perceived need for retribution, ultimately contributing to the rise of security challenges such as terrorism (Fieldwork, 2023).

4.1.4 Chieftaincy and Ethnic Conflicts

Another critical factor relevant to terrorism and violent extremism involves ethnic and chieftaincy conflicts. Conflict is an inherent and widespread element in human societies. Ghana stands apart from several West African countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, and Guinea, as it has not witnessed full-scale civil conflicts. Nevertheless, it grapples with numerous localized conflicts that pose an ongoing threat to its peace and stability. While none of the country's administrative regions (now 16 administrative regions) is entirely immune from various forms of conflict, the five northern regions have experienced numerous conflicts, including those rooted in inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic disputes arising from issues related to chieftaincy, land, and boundary disputes, identity conflicts, and disputes over resources (UNDP, 2023). The study revealed that even though not all forms of violence or ethnic conflicts directly lead to terrorism or violent extremism, they create a niche or avenue that terrorists and violent extremists can exploit to their advantage (Fieldwork, 2023).

This finding aligns with Sen's (2006) perspective, which suggests that while group identification can facilitate cooperation within a particular group, excessive identification can lead to inter-group conflicts. In other words, although groups can encourage the development of "social capital" that permits harmonious coexistence, the establishment of trade routes, and the supply of public goods, unequal relationships between insiders and outsiders can lead to polarization and violent conflicts, which may eventually result in terrorism (Sen, 2006). Recent literature exploring the causes and consequences of terrorism indicates a positive relationship between a country's vulnerability to terrorist groups and measures of ethnic, linguistic, and religious fractionalization within the target country. Therefore, ethnically divided countries are more likely to experience civil wars, domestic violence, and terrorism.

The study has unveiled that the ongoing chieftaincy and ethnic conflicts, especially in the northern regions of Ghana, could be exploited by terrorists (Fieldwork, 2023). For instance, the ethnic conflict between the Mamprusi and Kusasi communities over a chieftaincy position in Bawku, located near the Ghana-Burkina Faso border, has the potential to escalate into a full-blown war, as indicated by police records. This kind of situation may attract external funding and support, particularly from terrorist and violent extremist organizations, to back one faction involved in the conflict (Fieldwork, 2023). A police officer explained:

Not all conflicts lead to terrorism and violent extremism. We must understand the context of the conflict in the Northern Region, which is often related to chieftaincy matters. The interface between chieftaincy issues and terrorism is quite broad. However, when there is political conflict, tension, or prolonged conflicts of any nature, it becomes more susceptible to exploitation by terrorists when they support specific factions (Interview, August 11, 2023).

This observation is consistent with George-Genyi's claim that terrorism and diverse manifestations of violent conflicts, be they social, political, or environmental, have substantially contributed to crises leading to the loss of both human and material resources in Nigeria throughout the last decade (George-Genyi, 2013: 59). Jawondo (2011) also noted that political violence in Nigeria has had devastating effects on national security, encompassing political, economic, social, and religious dimensions. Furthermore, Basuchoudhary and Shughart (2010) established a connection between ethnic conflicts and terrorism, tracing the origins of the three major waves of terrorism in the past century to ethnic tensions resulting from colonial-era activities and the redrawing of national boundaries at international conferences. These arbitrary boundaries subsequently became the basis for modern terrorist activities (Basuchoudhary & Shughart, 2010).

Kurrild-Klitgaard et al. (2006) supported these assertions by contending that a positive correlation exists between terrorist activities and the ethnic, linguistic, and religious

fractionalization of nations. Highlighting disparities and cultivating ethnic tensions can unquestionably worsen the grievances of groups that view themselves as disadvantaged within the prevailing social structure. Regions characterized by high levels of poverty also tend to experience armed conflicts. In such areas, terrorist groups may emerge or thrive due to the instability and power vacuums created by these conflicts, which can be effectively exploited by terrorists to advance their objectives.

4.1.5 Porous Borders

Effective border control is a significant challenge in Africa, and this is particularly pronounced in West Africa. This issue facilitates the emergence and spread of terrorists and criminal activities, posing serious security challenges for countries in the region (Bakrania, 2014). Ghana shares borders with countries that have experienced terrorism and jihadist attacks, such as Togo, Ivory Coast, and Burkina Faso. Porous borders have been identified as a factor that can facilitate terrorism and violent extremism for several reasons.

First, the study reveals that terrorist organizations often depend on illicit trade and smuggling networks to acquire weapons, funds, and other essential resources (Fieldwork, 2023). Porous borders provide opportunities for terrorists to smuggle weapons, explosives, and funds across international boundaries, enabling them to strengthen their capabilities. This aligns with Cole's perspective of how porous borders allowed jihadists and terrorists to smuggle illicit weapons and goods, leading to conflicts among competing groups (Cole, 2012). These claims find further support in Lacher's work (2012b), which describes organized crime and conflict in the Sahel-Sahara region, emphasizing that contraband goods, illicit trade, and illegal immigration often take place openly with the collusion of authorities in neighbouring countries like Niger (Lacher, 2021b). Ammour (2012) also posited that the absence of proper security measures during the conflict allowed unguarded arsenals to become easily accessible to a wide range of

actors, including looters, rebels, and those involved in illicit arms trafficking. This included various groups such as tribes, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), as well as Sudanese, Chadian, and Tuareg mercenaries who took part in the Libyan conflict (Ammour, 2012). Similarly, Opanike et al. (2015) posited that the permeability of West African borders can be identified as a facilitating factor in the activities of insurgent groups and criminal networks operating across the region, including the illicit movement of weapons. The weapons that fell into the hands of these diverse groups included highly sophisticated weaponry, like missiles.

These assertions resonated with a point made by an academic. He said:

The porosity of the borders in the region facilitates the movement of crucial logistical supplies that are vital for sustaining terrorist operations. These supplies include essentials like food, medical resources, and communication equipment. This porous border situation creates vulnerabilities that terrorists can exploit to maintain their activities (Interview, August 25, 2023).

These observations align with the concerns raised by some academics, emphasizing the far-reaching consequences of the unchecked proliferation of weapons in the aftermath of the Libyan conflict. The situation has not only posed a threat to the stability of Libya but has also had a destabilizing impact on the broader Sahel region, contributing to the rise of extremist groups and escalating security challenges.

Second, the study uncovers that porous borders can be exploited for human trafficking and recruitment by terrorist groups (Fieldwork, 2023). Terrorist organizations may recruit individuals, including vulnerable populations, from neighbouring countries and transport them across these porous borders for various roles within the organization, such as fighters, suicide bombers, or support personnel. This is consistent with the findings of Awudu (2016), who identified large-scale drug trafficking dating back to the 1960s, driven by illegal activities involving cannabis, cocaine, and heroin, often conducted by Nigerians and Ghanaians. These

regions may lack a significant government presence and control, making them attractive locations for training, recruitment, and planning terrorist operations. Many countries in the region struggle to effectively monitor their borders, providing opportunities for terrorist groups to establish training bases and transport weapons across the sub-region. An academic had this to say. He said:

The concerning issue here is the lax security situation at unmanned entry points, which poses a significant worry. The challenge at hand is the existence of numerous vulnerabilities where permanent security posts could be established. Regrettably, the Ghanaian government, for reasons yet to be fully understood, has not allocated sufficient resources to deploy permanent security personnel to monitor and safeguard these areas, thereby leaving them susceptible to potential threats from Jihadists (Interview, August 25, 2023).

Finally, the study highlights that terrorist groups operating in multiple countries can exploit porous borders to coordinate their activities. They often establish cross-border networks and alliances, thereby complicating the task of security forces in tracking and effectively combating these groups. Disturbingly, these arms have been in use not only within Libya but also in neighbouring regions, notably in southern Algeria and throughout the Sahel. Mali, in particular, has become a focal point where AQIM has found a safe haven to operate (Zoubir, 2012). This is further emphasized by Opanike et al (2015) that vast ungoverned spaces around porous borders create fertile ground for international terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb to thrive and establish a coordinated jihadist movement across West Africa. This indicates that these terrorist organizations have established connections with one another, with the ultimate goal of creating a coordinated jihadist movement across West Africa. McGregor supported this view by stating that Libya has indeed been used as a base for armed extremist groups to carry out attacks on neighbouring nations (McGregor, 2013a). These findings align with the work of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2022), which highlighted the

growing insecurity in northern regions of Ghana due to its porous borders with Burkina Faso. In addition to issues like banditry and fraud associated with trafficking, the region is now confronted with an increasing threat from jihadist groups originating in the Sahel, who aim to establish a presence among the local population (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2022). The attacks in certain towns in Burkina Faso that are closer to Ghana have forced many people from Burkina Faso to flee to Bawku in the Upper East region of Ghana (Fieldwork, 2023).

The influx of refugees from neighbouring countries affected by terrorism, as well as the free movement protocol under ECOWAS, also contributes to border-related security concerns (Fieldwork, 2023). While ECOWAS promotes the free movement of persons, goods, and services across member states without restrictions, its implementation has been poor, leading to more security challenges than economic development (Opanike et al., 2015). Furthermore, it has been observed that the security forces have taken advantage of this situation and turned it into a profitable venture of their own. They often encourage the smuggling of various commodities across borders by accepting small bribes or tokens.

In a nutshell, porous borders pose significant security challenges for countries in West Africa, including Ghana. They allow for the smuggling of weapons and funds, human trafficking, and recruitment, and provide safe havens for terrorist groups. Additionally, terrorists can use porous borders to coordinate their activities, and the free movement of people within the ECOWAS region adds complexity to border-related security concerns. Addressing these border security challenges is crucial for mitigating the risk of terrorism and violent extremism in the region.

4.1.6 Bad Governance

There is no doubt that internal politics, regional power conflicts, and poor governance have played a significant role in the grave security challenges faced by West Africa. Governance, as defined by the World Bank Institute (2012), encompasses how power is exercised in overseeing a nation's economic and social assets for the improvement of society (United Nations Report, 1977; as cited in Coker & George-Genyi, 2014). Adesola (2012) identifies key attributes of good governance, including popular participation, adherence to the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, and a consensus-oriented approach. This study explores the role of bad governance in fueling terrorism and violent extremism. It thus finds that bad governance results in the emergence of large populations with limited opportunities and few alternatives, rendering them susceptible recruits for rebel groups (Fieldwork, 2023). A youth leader emphasized:

Governance is a process where people elect leaders to represent and serve them. However, in some African countries, this process has become skewed, with leaders becoming masters instead of servants. Underdevelopment, youth unemployment, lack of social amenities such as access to clean water and healthcare, bad governance, poor leadership, and the absence of policies that prioritize the needs of the people are all factors that can easily drive the youth toward radicalization by extremist groups. When you vote for a politician and they come into power without showing any care for your well-being, when you lack access to education and healthcare, it becomes clear that these leaders are not working in your interests. In such circumstances, it's natural for young people to feel disillusioned and seek alternatives. Bad governance, corruption, inadequate leadership, flawed policy implementation, and the absence of essential social amenities can collectively create an environment conducive to terrorism and violent extremism (Interview, July 21, 2023).

Despite being richly endowed with human and material resources, the West African region remains one of the most impoverished in the world. This dire situation is primarily attributed to a lack of effective leadership and poor governance of resources. In such circumstances, extremist groups may present an alternative vision for addressing economic challenges, even if their proposed solutions involve violence and terrorism (Ibid). Nonetheless, it is crucial to recognize that poor governance is a manifestation of the incompetence of public institutions in efficiently managing public affairs and resources (Coker and George-Genyi, 2014). Poor governance becomes visible when a state or government, despite having ample resources at its disposal, significantly falls short in addressing societal needs. In a broader context, Owoye and Bissessar (2009) perceive poor governance as a symptom of institutional and leadership failures, which can manifest through authoritarian leaders, constraints on media freedom, and undemocratic electoral procedures. The argument here is that bad governance, stemming from poor leadership, a lack of adherence to the rule of law, and a deficit in transparency and responsiveness, can create social discontent and frustration. These grievances can then be exploited by extremist groups to garner support (Fieldwork, 2023). This aligns with the perspective shared by an academic, who underscored that:

In many African countries, civilian governments often mismanage their economies. This economic mismanagement tends to result in widespread unemployment, soaring prices of goods and services, a lack of access to essential social services, and extreme poverty among the general population. What makes this situation even more unacceptable is that despite the severe hardships endured by the masses, the leaders typically enjoy substantial salaries, acquire expensive vehicles, and reside in opulent mansions. Additionally, they often violate the fundamental human rights of their citizens (Interview, August 25, 2023).

This finding augments Owoye and Bissessar (2009) who averred that in response to the oppression, suppression, intimidation, hunger, poverty, and unemployment brought about by bad governance, citizens, especially the youth under the patronage of various actors, have

formed militant groups. These groups often resort to illicit activities such as oil bunkering, hostage-taking, assassinations, bombings, and various other unlawful acts to sustain themselves. Calderisi (2006) provides extensive documentation of this problem in his book *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working*. He identifies institutional failure, pervasive corruption, and incompetent leadership as the main causes of terrible governance in Africa. It has been established by the United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) that governments displaying a range of unfavourable traits are included in the category of bad governance. These include being ineffective and inefficient, lacking transparency, unresponsive to the needs of the people, unaccountable for their actions, favouring elites over the broader population, lacking participatory mechanisms, disregarding the rule of law, and failing to adopt consensus-driven policies.

In a comparative context, Ghana has indeed made notable progress in terms of political governance and economic growth in recent years. However, weak state and civil institutions, coupled with poor leadership and ineffective social policies, have hindered development and entrenched poverty. The ruling elites' determination to retain power, the widespread poverty, and the competition for limited resources, including land, create conditions that render the population vulnerable to manipulation by terrorist and violent extremist organizations.

4.2. Ghana's Preparedness against Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Accordingly, this section presents the findings from the fieldwork and discusses how they relate to the existing literature. The study employed a purposive sampling approach to gather insights from various sources, including technocrats from the Ministry of defence (MOD), Ministry of Interior (MOI), Ministry of National Security (MNS), and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MoFA). Additionally, the perspectives of personnel from the

Ghana Armed Forces, Ghana Police Service, Ghana Immigration Service, and ordinary citizens were also collected for analysis. This section is focused on the analysis and discussion of data on the following themes:

1. Ghana's preparedness against terrorism and violent extremism and the effectiveness of these measures.
2. Ghana's cooperation with other states to counteract terrorism and violent extremism in the subregion.

4.2.1.1 Ghana's Legal Framework against Terrorism and Violent Extremism

In the fight against terrorism, legislative frameworks and administrative measures are vital tools. Ghana has implemented a comprehensive legal framework to address this challenge, including key acts and international treaties. The Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2008 (Act 749), Organized Crime Act of 2010 and the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2008 (Act 762) enacted in 2008 and subsequently amended in 2014 serves as a cornerstone of Ghana's efforts to combat terrorism. It provides the legal basis for identifying, prosecuting, and preventing individuals and groups involved in terrorist activities. Periodic reviews and amendments of existing intelligence services, anti-terrorism acts, and related frameworks are undertaken to effectively respond to new terrorist threats. These revisions are aligned with sub-regional developments and emerging terrorism challenges. Ghana has established specialized institutions that play crucial roles in protecting the country from terrorism, including the Counter-Terrorism Unit (CTU), National Security, Police, Military, Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), National Investigation Bureau (NIB), among others. These agencies work tirelessly to safeguard the nation against acts of terrorism.

Ghana is also committed to international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The country has ratified various international treaties, protocols, and legislations. Ghana has ratified several UN Security Council Resolutions, such as 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 1718 (2006), and 1737 (2006). The International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1997), UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, AU and ECOWAS Conventions. These resolutions set global standards for countering terrorism and ensuring international security and contain provisions aimed at thwarting various aspects of terrorism and violent extremism. The UN unilaterally declared in 1994, as cited in Anim's work in 2015, that criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons, or particular persons for political purposes are unjustifiable under all circumstances. This holds regardless of the considerations of political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious, or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them. This unequivocal statement underscores the absolute rejection of acts of terrorism and reinforces the principle that terrorism cannot be justified on any grounds, including political, philosophical, or religious ideologies.

In conclusion, Ghana has developed a comprehensive legal framework and engaged in international collaborations to effectively combat terrorism and violent extremism. This approach encompasses legislative acts, enforcement agencies, and international agreements, ensuring a multifaceted response to the multifaceted challenge of terrorism in the modern world.

4.2.1.2 Ghana's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Measures

One of the primary objectives of this study was to evaluate Ghana's level of preparedness in countering terrorism and violent extremism. Participants held varying opinions on the effectiveness of Ghana's current counter-terrorism measures, as effective anti-terrorism

strategies are crucial for assessing vulnerability and threat levels. In terms of preparedness against the threats of terrorism and violent extremism, the study revealed that Ghana has implemented a wide range of measures to combat these challenges. Given the persistent terrorist attacks and threats posed by violent extremists, it is imperative to adopt counter-terrorism measures that align with regional and international conventions and protocols called the National Framework for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Terrorism (NAFPCVET) in 2019. It encompasses four main pillars: *Prevent, Pre-Empt, Protect and Respond* which relies on the methods, plans, and tactics used by corporations, law enforcement organizations, governments, and intelligence services to fight or eradicate terrorism. The purpose of this Framework is to identify the threats of Violent Extremism and Terrorism faced by Ghana and provide a comprehensive strategy to prevent and counter these threats. It promotes inter-agency collaboration in counterterrorism efforts and adopts a Human Security approach to addressing violent extremism, as well as an all-of-society approach to acts of terrorism. Ghana's counterterrorism strategy encompasses various elements, including intelligence gathering, analysis, and sharing; law enforcement activities; border security and immigration control; military operations; diplomatic initiatives; and the implementation of legal frameworks and policies. To better understand the context of this study, it is important to identify and discuss Ghana's counter-terrorism measures implemented.

4.2.1.3 Surveillance and Intelligence Gathering

Surveillance and Intelligence Gathering (SIG) is a critical tool in the fight against terrorism (Jones, 2018). It involves the systematic observation and monitoring of individuals or groups to collect information about their activities, whether they are criminal or not. Thus, intelligence gathering is an essential aspect of professional investigations, as it involves the collection and

analysis of information from various sources to create a comprehensive understanding of the subject or situation under investigation.

Surveillance operations are among the most resource-intensive intelligence activities. Typically, surveillance involves a well-coordinated team that tracks subjects of national security investigations both on foot and by vehicle, utilizing various technical devices. In the context of countering terrorism and violent extremism, the study found that Ghana's security agencies employ surveillance and intelligence gathering as a strategy to gather relevant information on potential terrorist activities (Fieldwork, 2023).

Ghana has effectively harnessed the power of intelligence by bringing together multiple security agencies, including the police, the military, the National Intelligence Bureau, and national security operatives, into a collaborative "Joint Intelligence Community" across the country (Salihu, 2015). According to Cavoukian (2013) the primary SIG methodologies currently relied upon include Information Mapping, Facial Recognition Systems, Biometric Surveillance, CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television), Phone Surveillance, Electronic Surveillance, and Computer Video Surveillance. To enhance surveillance capabilities, security agencies in Ghana install CCTV cameras at key locations in cities and towns, including border stations, airports, and checkpoints (Fieldwork, 2023). They also conduct enforcement activities where they visit various establishments such as hotels, restaurants, guest houses, and factories to collect information on visitors, especially foreigners. Additionally, some informants mentioned that security agencies employ covert methods, such as officers renting temporary residences in suspected communities or operating in civilian clothing to conceal their identities during surveillance operations.

A senior officer emphasized:

We are not sleeping, and we cannot pretend that everything is okay. So, some of our intelligence officers mingle with civilians by dressing in plain clothes or civilian attire to avoid drawing attention from criminals. Furthermore, some of our personnel have rented accommodations in communities, especially in the remote parts of Ghana, for intelligence-gathering purposes. You see when terrorists intend to enter the country, they often do so through the bordering communities, where they may stay for some time, typically with the support of locals (Interview, August 11, 2023).

This aligns with the observations made by Prah and Chanimbe (2021), who emphasized that personnel disguised in civilian attire often take up temporary residences in communities, move discreetly in plain clothes, and rely on information from civilians to gather covert intelligence. At border control points, advanced security software is employed to efficiently identify suspected terrorists and detect concealed contraband.

This approach underscores the proactive and vigilant stance of Ghana's security agencies in their efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism by blending in with the local communities and using advanced technology to identify potential threats at border points.

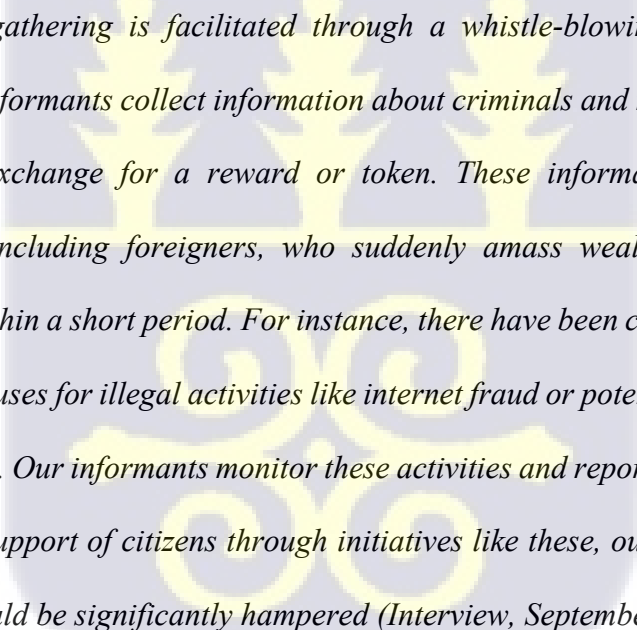
Another officer supported this perspective, highlighting the role of the Police Intelligence Directorate (PID):

In the police service, we have a specialized unit called the Police Intelligence Directorate (PID). Members of this unit often do not wear police uniforms but dress like ordinary civilians. They mingle with the local population to identify criminals or terrorists who may pose a danger or threat to our country (Interview, September 07, 2023).

These statements collectively underscore the critical importance of intelligence gathering in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in any nation. Intelligence plays a pivotal role in crime prevention, as timely and accurate information can deter criminal activities from occurring in the first place. As noted by Diaz and Merlos (2008), intelligence serves a vital function in collecting information related to terrorist acts, the individuals behind these acts, and

the cells and groups involved, with the ultimate goal of dismantling terrorist organizations. Since terrorists have identities, engage with others, travel, communicate, and leave traces of their activities, intelligence efforts, though sometimes fragmentary and incomplete, can provide valuable leads on their whereabouts and operations.

The study also revealed that Ghana's security agencies actively collaborate with informants to gather intelligence on terrorism and violent extremism. This strategy often involves engaging individuals such as opinion leaders to provide information on suspicious individuals or behaviours within their communities. Additionally, the security agencies may appoint informants from among the civilian population to report any unusual activities or behaviours related to terrorism. An officer emphasized:



Intelligence gathering is facilitated through a whistle-blowing mechanism, where anonymous informants collect information about criminals and report it to the security services in exchange for a reward or token. These informants frequently report individuals, including foreigners, who suddenly amass wealth and acquire large properties within a short period. For instance, there have been cases where individuals rent entire houses for illegal activities like internet fraud or potentially joining terrorist organizations. Our informants monitor these activities and report them to us for action. Without the support of citizens through initiatives like these, our efforts in countering terrorism would be significantly hampered (Interview, September 07, 2023).

Likewise, an officer from the Formed Police Unit of the Ghana Police Service endorsed this approach and explained:

In recent years, there has been a concerted effort by the Ghana security agencies to raise awareness through sensitization programs. You may have heard the slogan 'See Something, Say Something.' These initiatives reflect collaborative efforts involving the state and relevant stakeholders to address terrorism-related activities. Additionally, I have observed a significant increase in collaborative efforts between the police and the military. The police service has established a counterterrorism unit, and the military has a similar unit. Recently, the immigration service has also joined these efforts. These initiatives have contributed to Ghana's preparedness to respond to security challenges, including terrorism (Interview, August 11, 2023).

These findings demonstrate the importance of community engagement, public awareness, and collaborative efforts between various security agencies and the civilian population in Ghana's efforts to counter terrorism and enhance security. The introduction of a strategy by the Ministry of National Security known as "See Something, Say Something" as a means of gathering intelligence related to terrorism and violent extremism is well noted. This campaign aims to raise citizen awareness and encourage them to be vigilant, reporting any suspicious individuals or activities. It is part of a broader operational strategy that fosters collaboration between security agencies and the civilian population to protect the country's borders and its people. While this strategy is commendable in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, its effectiveness faces challenges. One significant challenge is the majority of citizens' lack of education and security awareness, making it difficult for them to identify early signs of terrorist threats and report them accurately.

In conclusion, intelligence gathering is a pivotal element in comprehending, monitoring, and countering terrorism. It supplies the essential information needed to prevent attacks, dismantle terrorist networks, and formulate effective counterterrorism measures. In essence, the intelligence-gathering practices described highlight the proactive and preventive nature of

counterterrorism efforts in Ghana. These efforts are crucial for identifying and neutralizing potential threats before they can materialize into acts of terrorism or violent extremism. However, the reluctance of some citizens to provide credible information for arrests, investigations, and subsequent convictions by law enforcement and security personnel can impede the smooth execution of counter-terrorism operations. Such reluctance on the part of the population can potentially jeopardize the nation's security. Efforts should be made to address this challenge by raising awareness and providing education to empower citizens to play an active role in safeguarding their communities and country.

4.2.1.4 Border Control Management (BCM)

The concept of a "border management system" is a relatively new framework encompassing all activities related to border enforcement, border control, and border security (Duggan, 2008). According to Duggan, the degree to which a nation provides information about its border management with its bilateral, regional, or global partners is referred to as border management transparency. Effective border security and management are crucial for Ghana's ability to prevent and counter the movement of suspected terrorists and foreign terrorist fighters across its land, air, and maritime borders (Fieldwork, 2023). For example, Eren (2013) emphasized that enhanced border control management remains one of the most vital counterterrorism techniques in the twenty-first century. The study identified various strategies and methods employed by the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) to control and manage the country's borders. These methods include the use of security software, closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, and the profiling of immigrants to prevent impersonation, along with engagements with border communities.

First, GIS participants discussed how they use technology and security applications at border posts to identify and prevent terrorism. This is in line with the Thales Border Management strategy, which provides a wide range of applications to integrate cutting-edge technologies and best practices in immigration procedures at Border Management and Border Control Points (BCPs). With the help of this, border control organizations may handle visitors arriving and leaving through a variety of transportation channels, such as air, land, and sea ports of entry. It includes Automated Border Control (ABC) gates and manned immigration desks outfitted with cutting-edge ID readers. A senior officer from the Ghana Immigration Service, while citing security concerns, declined to disclose the specific name of the software used but mentioned:

We have sophisticated technology deployed at the borders to screen individuals and goods passing through, although it is currently limited to a select few border crossings. For instance, if we have intelligence about a particular individual, and they approach the border, entering their name into our system would trigger an alert indicating potential danger. We also conduct inland checks where we verify visas, ID cards, and passports of travellers. This verification process provides essential information for further action (Interview, September 07, 2023).

This approach aligns with the assertion made by Duggan (2008), who emphasized the significance of information systems, including local communications, intelligence, and data analysis, in the interface between human operators and physical equipment for interpreting the information provided by technology. Telephones and radios are used for a variety of tasks, such as data transmission between sensors and control stations, local communications with security personnel, and data interchange between border elements and regional or national headquarters. One important factor affecting border personnel's performance is timely access to intelligence. Therefore, having access to data about people entering the nation such as visitation requests, booking and itinerary details, manifest data, and shipping details provides border officials with crucial information they need to assess risks and decide on the best course of action. Data is

created to direct further actions and responses when an alarm is raised, either by sensor systems or through visual observations by border protection personnel.

In addition to profiling, security agencies in Ghana actively engage with communities in border regions and share information with external security agencies (Fieldwork, 2023). This approach fosters transparency in border management and builds trust in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. This perspective aligns with Duggan's (2008) argument that when countries have differing intentions, transparency can create opportunities for mutual understanding and finding common ground or compromise. Ateku (2019) also emphasized that improving border control systems based on trust and developing good relationships between border security personnel and local border communities are the first steps in bolstering Ghana's resilience against the threat posed by transnational criminal networks and regional terrorist organizations. Information collecting for intelligence purposes requires these kinds of partnerships. Countries can efficiently manage security measures while streamlining the movement of people and goods by exchanging information such as intelligence, immigration statistics, import/export policies, manifest data, and inspection procedures (Ateku, 2019). The African Union also highlights the necessity of a practical approach to border management to advance integration, peace, security, and sustainable development in Africa.

Therefore, promoting transparency in border management and fostering positive relations between border security officials and local communities are essential components of effective counterterrorism efforts. These measures not only enhance security but also contribute to the overall development and stability of the region, aligning with broader regional and continental goals.

4.2.1.5 Joint Domestic Security Training Programs and Operations

The study revealed that various security agencies in Ghana actively participate in reciprocal training programs, both domestically and internationally. They engage in joint training programs with each other and receive training from institutions such as the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and the National Peace Council, as well as other stakeholders. Additionally, international development partners like the European Union, the United Nations (UN), the United States (US), the African Union (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) provide training opportunities. These training programs serve several purposes, including the development of skills within security agencies and the utilization of expertise from other agencies. They enhance the capacity and performance of Ghana's security agencies, especially in collaboration with regional countries that have experienced terrorist attacks. For example, security agencies participate in joint operations such as Operations Desert Shield, Calm Life, Cow Leg, Conquered Fist, Koudanlgou, and Home Shield (Fieldwork, 2023). These operations are conducted to deter terrorists and protect the country's borders. This approach is consistent with Khera's (2017) claims on the significance of traditional interagency security cooperation in countering terrorism. It highlights the need for collaboration and coordinated efforts among all local security agencies while also underlining the establishment of security partnerships with international and regional organizations at the supranational level. One officer from the Ghana Immigration Service averred:

We do joint operations with various security agencies, including the police, military, and customs service, in addressing violent extremism and terrorism. Operation Conquered Fist, for instance, is a joint operation aimed at equipping troops with the necessary capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to terrorist threats in the designated area of operation and across the country. These joint operations provide opportunities to learn new tactics, technologies, and knowledge to combat terrorism

effectively. Additionally, officers stationed at the borders under these operations are rotated periodically to prevent potential compromises of security. Furthermore, the National Security Task Force plays an essential oversight role in matters related to security, ensuring coordination and collaboration among security agencies (Interview, September 07, 2023).

Therefore, Ghana's commitment to strengthening its defence and security apparatus through administrative and defence reforms is evident. The country has benefited from intra-agency and inter-agency training, including support from the United States and the European Union, to bolster its counter-terrorism efforts. Additionally, the deployment of new counter-terrorism and Special Forces units to the northern border areas, such as the establishment of a military camp in Sandema, demonstrates Ghana's proactive approach to securing its borders. These units, equipped with mechanized vehicles, enhance border coverage and collaborate with other security services in operations like "Conquest Fist" and "Calm Life." Building public trust in security forces is crucial for effective interventions against violent extremism, and improving relationships with communities can enhance the effectiveness of security operations.

The study, however, identifies several challenges in Ghana's counter-terrorism efforts, including funding limitations, logistical constraints, insufficient security personnel, and political interference by influential politicians. Addressing these challenges will be essential for the continued success of Ghana's efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism.

The comments from participants, including those from National Security and the Immigration Service, highlight the critical importance of adequate funding for effective security and counter-terrorism efforts.

A national security officer averred:

Security requires capital, and without sufficient funding, achieving security objectives becomes challenging. Look at the US budget for defense alone, it is not small. So, the government must do well to provide funds if not forget it. Go to the borders and see. They don't have well-equipped technological machines and the officers are complaining (Interview, August 18, 2023).

The officer of the Immigration Service echoed these concerns and stated:

The lack of modern technology to track criminals, especially as terrorists employ increasingly sophisticated methods is worrying. The inadequacy of funds and logistics, coupled with political interference, was identified as a significant obstacle in the fight against terrorism. Political interference, where influential individuals pressure security agencies to release suspects, was particularly troubling, as it hampers law enforcement efforts (Interview, September 07, 2023).

These findings align with Sosuh's (2011) observations about the general lack of infrastructure and facilities required for effective security operations along Ghana's borders. Even when equipment is available, it may be obsolete or have limited use. Additionally, Anim (2015) highlighted a gap between policies and their implementation, as well as a lack of institutional structures that weaken compliance with global border crime legislation.

Addressing these challenges, such as funding limitations, logistical deficiencies, and political interference, will be crucial for Ghana to strengthen its security apparatus and effectively combat terrorism and violent extremism. Adequate resources, modern technology, and a commitment to implementing policies and legislation are essential for improving the country's security efforts.

4.2.1.6 Local Community Engagements

The study highlights the significance of local community engagement as a crucial counter-terrorism strategy implemented by the government. These community engagements serve two primary purposes: divergence and counter-radicalization or deradicalization. They play a pivotal role in fostering inclusivity and citizen involvement in identifying proactive and preventive measures to address the root causes of terrorism while mitigating its impact (Fieldwork, 2023). This perspective is in line with the views expressed by Ngari and Reva (2017), who argued that the failure of counter-terrorism responses often results from strategies employed by states that damage and alienate the very communities they intend to assist, often due to religious or ethnic discrimination.

Regarding divergence, the government initiates engagement with citizens through various channels, including the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), Peace Council, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and collaborates with personnel from security agencies such as the military, police, and the Ghana Immigration Service to implement counter-terrorism measures. In the context of community engagements aimed at divergence, an officer from the police service and the director of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) provided their insights. The police officer emphasized the importance of starting with foundational education. He stated:

I think that we have to start from the basics, we have to start from junior high schools, teach people on proper channels to express their grievances, and so education is the first step. Okay. We have to go down to our senior high schools; we have to inculcate nationalism, the spirit of nationalism, and patriotism into people by moving down. If you want your voices heard or your needs met, it means you have to put Ghana first. He highlighted that efforts have been made to orient civilians or non-military

individuals and sensitize them, preparing them to contribute positively (Interview, August 11, 2023).

The other participant asserted:

The government must address the underlying conditions that enable terrorism to thrive in society. Issues like poverty and unemployment, as well as the government's role in providing basic social amenities such as water, good roads, and electricity should be addressed as well as the illegal use of small arms among the population (Interview, August 07, 2023).

This viewpoint corresponds with the conclusions of Human Rights Watch (2018), which emphasized that the ready availability of firearms has played a role in the expansion and militarization of self-defence groups and documented numerous allegations of severe human rights abuses and criminal activities by self-defence groups in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. In several cases, this has exacerbated pre-existing inter-communal tensions, leading to deadly conflicts.

Again, community engagements, as a counter-terrorism measure, play a crucial role in dispelling the myth of superiority held by security personnel over civilians in Ghana and in strengthening the relationship between them.

A senior Immigration officer emphasized this point and stated:

In the past, there was a disconnect between security personnel and civilians. This disconnect stemmed from the perception that security personnel maintained a superior mentality, as their commands had to be obeyed. While I cannot speak to personal experiences, I can say that from a broader perspective, a lot of effort is being made to bridge the gap between the public and the police. Recently, you've heard about police TV, where the police engage with the public. So, these community engagements aim to educate people and bring the police closer to the public to instil confidence in the police. When public confidence in the police is built, people will willingly want to support the police in various aspects" (Interview, September 07, 2023).

The study reveals that widespread availability of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), closely tied to porous borders and inadequate border security measures, serves as a significant facilitator for radicalization and extremism in Ghana (Fieldwork, 2023). This supports a UNDP statement that the issue of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) extends beyond porous borders and encompasses organized smuggling networks, the local production of SALW, illegal small-scale mining activities, and the smuggling of commercial goods. However, the strategy of divergence for disarmament and arms control as a counter-terrorism measure highlights the challenges of mitigating illegal arms proliferation. Examining the nation's susceptibility to terrorism and the ease with which Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) can proliferate both inside and outside of its boundaries will help one comprehend the scope of this issue. Ghana has been one of the main hubs for the spread of SALW in West Africa since 2013 (GIABA, 2013). Due to their accessibility, affordability, and efficacy, firearms made in Ghana have become well-known throughout the region and are a major supply of weapons for certain armed organizations operating in the subregion. The results of the second national small arms baseline survey conducted in 2014 since 2004 showed an alarming circulation of over 2.3 million small guns in the nation. An estimated 1.1 million of these were reportedly illegally owned by citizens (Osei-Appiah, 2016, referenced in Prah and Chanimbe, 2021).

The second purpose of community engagements in the context of counter-terrorism is deradicalisation or counter-radicalization. Radicalization is a process whereby individuals or groups embrace progressively extreme political, social, or religious ideas that challenge or subvert the established norms or current manifestations of their society (Sieckelinck et al., 2018). McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) define radicalization as a change in attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that justifies intergroup violence and demands sacrifices for the benefit of one's own group. Radicalization can take many different forms and originate from

individual or identity-group grievances that are disseminated via the media, hearsay, or other people's testimonies.

To prevent terrorism and violent extremism, the study finds that the government, through organizations like the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and other stakeholders, engages with communities, especially youth, to raise awareness about the dangers of terrorism and extremism (Fieldwork, 2023). Regarding the radicalization of individuals in Ghana, the findings suggest that there is no specific group that is inherently prone to radicalization. While some individuals believed that radicalization might occur more frequently in Zongo communities, which are predominantly inhabited by Muslims, others disagreed and emphasized that radicalization is not specific to any religion. A Director of NCCE articulated this viewpoint:

No group is immune from radicalization to terrorism. We cannot assume that a certain religious group is more likely to radicalize because Ghana is a secular state. We approach it from the perspective of our entire community. We do not have programs targeted at one religion, but the concept is to ensure that all the youth in our country are sensitized and educated about the signs of radicalization and violent extremism (Interview, August 07, 2023).

This was corroborated by Salihu (2015) who reiterated that although religion, particularly Islam is commonly cited as a contributing factor to terrorism, it is not the direct cause because religious groups in West Africa have historically coexisted peacefully. This viewpoint, however, contradicts that of Aning and Abdallah (2013), who contended that inter-religious elements may be present in Ghanaian religious radicalization, but intra-religious radicalization accounts for the majority of it. They observed that, in comparison to other religions, Islamic radicalization is comparatively more widespread. But in recent times, terrorist groups have used religious extremism, especially its violent radicalization, to gain support, recruit followers, and further their operations. One participant brought this to attention. He asserted:

There are signs of radicalization in some communities, as radicalization to extreme views typically begins at the community level through everyday conversations about political, social, or religious ideas. Over time, individuals may become radicalized, advocating for violence and extreme means. Therefore, the approach taken is to sensitize everyone, regardless of their religious background, to prevent radicalization (Interview, August 25, 2023).

This response aligns with Store's (2012) perspective on de-radicalization efforts, emphasizing that political extremism doesn't arise in isolation. Extremist ideologies thrive because they provide narratives that claim to address deep injustices and identify enemies. Deprived of this ideological fuel, extremism diminishes. In terms of deradicalisation, community engagements have proven effective in dissuading individuals from radicalization. The study finds that community engagement efforts involve collaborations with community leaders, religious institutions, and NGOs to counter radicalization narratives and present alternative viewpoints (Fieldwork, 2023). Engaging with communities can indeed play a pivotal role in the early detection and prevention of radicalization and extremist behaviour. Residents often possess valuable information about their communities and can identify individuals who may be at risk of radicalization or involvement in terrorist activities. A National Commission for Civic Education officer emphasized this point:

We conduct community engagements in all the districts of the five northern regions to educate the people on what the government is doing. For individuals who have already become radicalized and engaged in extremist activities, community-based programs can be instrumental in their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. These programs can provide counselling, vocational training, and support networks to help individuals disengage from extremism. Sometimes people don't know what is happening around them, and they become aggrieved about it. For example, you have a borehole in a community, but the people prefer to go too far places or even streams to fetch water and leave the borehole water unused because they were not aware or consulted before installing the borehole. All these grievances, if left unaddressed, can lead to

radicalization and violence, especially against the government (Interview, July 24, 2023).

One police officer also posited:

As mentioned earlier, there is a collaborative effort between the State Security and the National Commission for Civic Education. I have been receiving SMS alerts from national security, and I regularly tune in to Peace FM to catch the morning news. It's worth noting that some media houses have actively engaged with security personnel and individuals with relevant information about terrorism. I have had the opportunity to participate in interviews about terrorism on a couple of occasions. Efforts have been made to orient civilians or non-military individuals and raise awareness about terrorism. These initiatives aim to sensitize the general population and prepare them to respond appropriately to potential threats and security situations (Interview, August 15, 2023)

Community engagement as a counterterrorism tactic is consistent with the findings of Stephen Krasner, who noted that terrorists frequently move through multiple communities, recruiting and radicalizing susceptible people who have the psychological motivation and financial incentives to join the terrorist groups (Krasner, 1999). Anim (2015) also asserted that radicalization can lead to pockets of violence and conflicts in society if not managed, hence communities must be engaged about the dangers of terrorism and violent extremism.

In conclusion, communities possess a deep understanding of their local context, including the dynamics of extremist groups operating in the area. This local knowledge can be invaluable for law enforcement agencies in their efforts to disrupt terrorist networks and prevent attacks. Effective community engagement can help prevent the stigmatization and alienation of specific religious or ethnic groups, which is crucial in reducing social marginalization and ethnic targeting. Engaging with communities respectfully and inclusively can counteract the risk of exacerbating grievances and pushing individuals toward extremism. However, it's important to note that community engagement should not be limited to a single country or region.

International collaboration on community-based counterterrorism approaches can facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned from different parts of the world.

4.2.2.0 Ghana's Cooperation with Other States to Combat Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Effective international and regional cooperation is crucial in handling criminal cases related to terrorism and designating the right authorities for such cooperation, given the transnational nature of terrorism. Within this framework, cooperation pertains to the degree to which a nation participates in cooperative border management initiatives with its neighbors (Salihu, 2015). The evolving global security environment has prompted nations to deal with their security concerns, insecurities, and relations with neighbouring countries through voluntary engagement, cooperation, and various forms of bilateral, multilateral, and minilateral interactions (Bala, 2021). The operational success of regional cooperation largely depends on the voluntary actions, interactions, and cooperation of member states in West Africa.

4.2.2.1 Ghana's Cooperation with Other States

The study identifies two key reasons for Ghana's cooperation with other states or organizations in combatting terrorism and violent extremism: First, Ghana's approach to cooperation with other states and organizations is characterized by a dedication to principles and ideas that promote and enhance the collective security of member states (Fieldwork, 2023). Throughout its history, Ghana has actively participated in international bodies such as the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to promote the collective security of members. This

commitment aligns with the concept of collective security that emerged in the 20th century, aimed at preventing or containing war by mitigating acts of aggression or threats to the peace and security of alliance members (Ateku & Owusu, 2023). This approach involves all states within a region focusing on the security of members within its jurisdiction. A representative of the Ministry of Defence emphasized the proactive stance of Ghana in addressing the threat of terrorism by highlighting the need to take precautionary measures when neighbouring countries are experiencing such challenges. She said:

Yes, I think that as a country, we're not just sitting down and saying that we will never have any terrorist attacks. Because there's a proverb that when your neighbour's beard is on fire, you need to take precautionary measures against it. So, once we're experiencing some of these things in our neighbouring country, there's a need for us to put in measures, and part of that is to cooperate with other countries to promote our collective security (Interview, August 28, 2023).

A report by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2022) further underscores the significance of coordinated policies in contributing to collective security and limiting conflicts conducive to the establishment of armed groups. Strengthening cooperation is essential in countering terrorism, not just in addressing threats but also in tackling issues related to terrorists' movement across borders, weapon smuggling, and money laundering. It further argued, that enhanced counter-terrorism political dialogues through high-level meetings with strategic countries can bolster cooperation and capacity-building efforts to address terrorist threats, including foreign fighters, ensuring collective security. One such system that works as a multilateral cooperative and collaborative security mechanism to improve the collective security of its member nations is the Accra Initiative, which was introduced in 2017. The three main pillars of the program are the execution of joint cross-border military operations, the training of security and intelligence personnel, and the sharing of information and intelligence (Aubyn, 2021). Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, and Cote d'Ivoire are among the member

nations with Mali and Niger as observers. Among the goals of the Accra Initiative are combating violent extremism and transnational organized crime in border regions, as well as halting the spread of terrorism from the Sahel region.

For instance, cross-border security operations have been carried out by member states. Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Togo jointly carried out Operation Koudanlgou I in May 2018 throughout their border regions. Following that, in November 2018, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire carried out Operation Koudanlgou II, which led to the detention of several people across different nations (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2022). A year later, Ghana and Togo executed Operation Koudanlgou III. These operations have resulted in the disruptions of the movement and activity of terrorist groups as well as the arrest of suspected militants. It is worth noting that these joint operations have demonstrated the importance of collaborative efforts among neighbouring countries to address regional security threats (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2022). This was substantiated by statements from security personnel during interviews. A senior police officer explained:

We conduct an operation known as Koudanlgou, a covert operation executed simultaneously in different regions based on intelligence received from headquarters. The objective is to apprehend individuals involved in illegal activities, including the possession of arms, contraband goods such as drugs, and other illicit substances. Those who are apprehended and found guilty are subsequently prosecuted. The most recent Koudanlgou operation took place in 2021. These coordinated operations enable us to acquire new tactics and reduce costs by pooling our resources and expertise (Interview, August 11, 2023).

These collaborative efforts in counterterrorism are in harmony with the concept that effective and enduring national responses to terrorism necessitate a holistic multidimensional approach. This approach includes fostering multi-agency cooperation among security entities at different levels, both domestically and in partnership with regional, continental, and global counterparts

(Gunaratna, 2018). Joint security training and educational programs with both local and international partners play a vital role in keeping security personnel up-to-date with contemporary terrorism and counter-terrorism strategies, thereby enhancing their effectiveness, particularly in countries with evolving security environments (Sosuh, 2011).

While cooperation is valuable, it is not without challenges. Disagreements over which strategy to adopt can hinder effective cooperation. Ajala (2021) noted that conflicts of national interests and divisions in individual military strategies are significant challenges faced by multinational joint task forces. Other factors, such as the inability to redefine colonial borders, sole reliance on military approaches to counter-terrorism, inadequate efforts to address structural challenges that fuel terrorism, and suspicions related to border issues and sovereignty, also present challenges.

Finally, Ghana actively cooperates through peacekeeping missions as part of its strategy to enhance security and counter-terrorism in the sub-region. Ghana's history of involvement in foreign military interventions dates back to the colonial era (Fieldwork, 2023). Since the early 1990s, Ghana's contributions to maintaining peace and security in the sub-region through peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts have increased significantly. The country's involvement in resolving African and international conflicts can be traced back to its intervention in the Congo crisis in the 1960s (Birikorang, 2007). Ghana's foreign policy objectives, which encompass fostering friendly relations, promoting economic cooperation, advocating good neighbourliness, and contributing to international peace and security, have played a pivotal role in shaping its involvement in West African politics. Ghana has deployed its troops to various conflict zones, including Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, South Sudan, and Liberia (ModernGhana, 2010, cited in Anim, 2015). The country also commits its troops to organizations engaged in peacekeeping and peace enforcement missions, such as those in Mali and Somalia. According to UN DPKO (2010), Ghana was ranked sixth among the top twenty troop-contributing nations

to UN Peacekeeping Operations as of February 28, 2010. The military officer highlighted Ghana's prominent role in peacekeeping efforts in Africa and the world:

When we talk of peacekeeping, Ghana is the first in Africa. Ghana has provided troops to the UN, AU, and ECOWAS for peacekeeping duties. Currently, Ghana has peacekeepers in DR. Congo, Sudan South, Sudan, Mali, Lebanon, and the Central African Republic. This is part of Ghana's role in maintaining peace and security (Interview, August 28, 2023).

However, concerns have been raised about the potential drawbacks of over-prioritizing peacekeeping efforts at the expense of addressing internal socio-political conditions, which could compromise the country's progress and security. Ghana's extensive involvement in peacekeeping missions could attract the activities of rebel groups, especially those engaged in conflicts. Ghana has hosted several peacemaking initiatives led by successive governments, including hosting rebel groups and their representatives. Hosting peace talks involves providing accommodation and maintenance for all the involved groups for the duration of the negotiations (Birikorang, 2007). The academic's perspective underscores the complexity and concerns associated with Ghana's extensive involvement in peacekeeping missions. This was particularly notable during the Liberian conflict, where at least five such talks were held in Ghana. An academic corroborated this and said:

Peacekeeping in itself is not bad but where you have problems and challenges that you cannot solve but decide that you want to send soldiers for peacekeeping is worrying. I am sure you heard the decision to send our soldiers to Niger to go and fight for a president who has been removed from power. This decision is an afterthought and does not make sense to me at all. There is conflict in Bawku here that you cannot resolve and the security personnel you send there are being killed by the local people yet you are interested in another country's business. What is the point? Again, the armed robbery cases, galamsey issues (illegal mining), and other serious problems need more

attention than going on peacekeeping when you don't have peace in your own home
(Interview, August 25, 2023).

While Ghana's commitment to peacekeeping missions is commendable and contributes to regional and global stability, there are valid concerns about the economic and security implications of overemphasizing peacekeeping activities. Striking a balance between international peacekeeping obligations and addressing internal socio-political challenges remains a complex task for the country. It requires thoughtful consideration of the costs, benefits, and potential risks associated with extensive involvement in peacekeeping efforts.

In essence, Ghana must prioritize its domestic challenges and security concerns before committing its resources and personnel to international peacekeeping missions. This perspective reflects the ongoing debate within Ghana about the balance between international obligations and addressing pressing domestic issues.

4.2.2.2 ECOWAS in Countering Terrorism

At the subregional level, the study highlights ECOWAS as a major actor in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. ECOWAS has demonstrated a strong commitment to countering violent extremism and terrorism. Article 3 of the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security (1999) underscores the organization's dedication to combat these threats (ECOWAS 1999 cited in Ateku & Owusu, 2023). This finding is reinforced by Bala (2021) who stated that ECOWAS has a robust regional military capability to respond to various security threats, including terrorism. The organization's military vision outlines the importance of defining, building, organizing, and maintaining a standby regional military force. This force is intended to be self-

sustaining and capable of deploying troops and logistical support for peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in response to regional crises, including those related to terrorism and environmental challenges. The Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in West Africa (GIABA) is a significant counterterrorism organization established by ECOWAS (Akanji, 2019). Initially established by ECOWAS to combat money laundering on December 10th, 1999, the organization expanded its mandate in 2006 in response to the increasing threat of terrorism in the region and the role that illicit funds (money laundering) played in supporting it. Additionally, ECOWAS has created other initiatives and mechanisms, such as the ECOWAS Arrest Warrant (ECOWARRANT), the ECOWAS Black List of Terrorist and Criminal Networks (ECOLIST), the ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Training Center, and the Counter-Terrorism Technical Assistance Directory (ECOWAS 2013a), to address terrorism-related challenges.

Also, ECOWAS actively encourages its member states to adopt and ratify protocols and conventions related to counterterrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. To achieve this, ECOWAS has formulated a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy encompassing three key components: prevention, pursuit, and reconstruction. The strategy emphasizes the importance of rebuilding communities and addressing the impact of terrorism on individuals and societies (ECOWAS 2012, as cited in Ateku & Owusu, 2023). Through ECOWAS member states have established institutional structures to enhance inter-agency cooperation, improve investigative capabilities, and strengthen prosecution efforts. Member states are urged to prioritize preventive measures to counter violent extremism and terrorism. In cases where prevention efforts prove insufficient, states are expected to take vigorous action to pursue and bring perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice.

Again, ECOWAS plays a pivotal role as a platform for the exchange of knowledge and expertise among government and non-governmental experts (Fieldwork, 2023). This perspective aligns with the findings of Rosan et al. (2008), who emphasized that ECOWAS fosters the sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and national implementation experiences among its member states. This exchange of information ensures that regional and subregional contexts are effectively communicated to global entities such as the United Nations and other international organizations. The positions regarding ECOWAS's role in countering terrorism and violent extremism were further supported by an academic who emphasized the importance of intelligence sharing and addressing governance issues within the subregion. He averred:

ECOWAS can help to fight terrorism and violent extremism in the subregion by improving intelligent sharing on best counter-terrorism measures. The issue of bad governance within the region must be tackled by instituting mechanisms for best practices in member states. It can also deal with most of the problems that give rise to terrorism like the poverty situation, unemployment, and corruption in member states by encouraging good governance among member states (Interview, August 25, 2023).

However, the effectiveness of ECOWAS as a subregional body committed to ensuring the peace and security of its members as well as combatting terrorism and violent extremism is questioned. These inefficiencies are due to a paucity of financial and technical resources, structural problems, poor coordination, lack of political will and selfish interests of member states, and excessive dependence on external partners for funding. One respondent supports this claim and said:

In my personal opinion, it appears that ECOWAS may have lost some of its effectiveness over time. The initial purpose of ECOWAS was primarily economic and aimed at boosting the economic well-being of its member states. However, it seems that political considerations have increasingly taken precedence, possibly due to the organization's structural setup. For instance, the decision to deploy troops to Niger raises questions about the organization's focus and priorities. Instead of deploying military resources,

ECOWAS could be more effective by addressing the root causes of crises, such as poverty, unemployment, and governance issues, in member states. This approach could help prevent conflicts and instability in the first place (Interview, August 25, 2023)

As highlighted by Ateku and Owusu (2023), the current security challenges faced by countries like Burkina Faso and Mali, as well as the vulnerability of littoral states, partly stem from the perceived ineffectiveness of ECOWAS in countering terrorism. These challenges underscore the need for ECOWAS to address internal shortcomings and strengthen its capabilities to fulfill its peace and security mandate effectively.

To conclude, the fight against terrorism and violent extremism necessitates collaborative efforts among multiple states, as intelligence sharing and information exchange are crucial. Regional and subregional organizations like the AU and ECOWAS play pivotal roles in facilitating such cooperation and collaboration. Through policy commitment, military preparedness, legal frameworks, a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy, and knowledge exchange, ECOWAS contributes significantly to enhancing regional security and stability. However, it is essential to underscore the significance of bilateral and multilateral state-level engagements and cooperation, as they contribute to a multifaceted approach to countering terrorism. These collaborative efforts promote unity among member states and allow for the development of context-specific strategies to combat terrorism, considering the diverse sociocultural, political, and economic characteristics of the affected populations.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This thesis assesses Ghana's susceptibility and the measures Ghana has put in place to counter violent extremism and terrorism, which have destabilized the subregion. The study draws on the theory of relative deprivation and the national security theory and employs a qualitative approach to gather insights from various stakeholders. These include technocrats from key ministries such as the Ministry of Défense, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, as well as academics and personnel from security agencies such as the police service, the military, national security, the immigration service, and ordinary citizens. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, the data collected was analysed alongside existing literature to either validate or refute the findings.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the research findings, present conclusions, and offer recommendations to assist Ghana in countering the threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The findings of the study were summarized according to the following themes: Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism; Ghana's preparedness against Terrorism and Violent Extremism; and Ghana's cooperation with other states to counteract terrorism and violent extremism.

5.1.1 Ghana's Vulnerability to Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

The rationale behind this study was to uncover the various factors that render Ghana susceptible to the risks of terrorism and violent extremism. In alignment with this objective, the research has identified six key findings.

Firstly, the study revealed that the prevalence of widespread poverty, particularly in the northern regions of Ghana, significantly contributes to the nation's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. By drawing parallels between the extent of poverty and Ghana's susceptibility, as well as examining events in regions like Nigeria and the Middle East, it becomes evident that poverty in Ghana, especially in the northern areas, can foster desperation and hopelessness among its citizens. This, in turn, can facilitate recruitment into terrorist groups, either because of the social services these groups provide or due to the general lack of opportunities within the country.

Secondly, the study found that grievances stemming from high unemployment rates catalyse terrorist groups to garner support and maintain a steady recruitment of young individuals, often for insurgency and terrorist activities. The unemployed population in Ghana becomes particularly susceptible to radicalization, as they may experience social isolation or spend increased time online due to the scarcity of employment opportunities. Consequently, the failure of leaders to implement effective economic policies aimed at improving the well-being and living standards of Ghanaians by generating employment opportunities results in a vacuum of unemployment among the youth. This vacuum, in turn, contributes to the rise of terrorism and violent extremism in the country.

Thirdly, the research found that corruption is particularly prevalent in Ghana, making individuals more susceptible to radicalization towards terrorism and violent extremism. Additionally, the perceived injustice in the distribution of national resources leaves many

feeling deprived of their rightful share, which can fuel citizen grievances against the state. This sense of injustice can also exacerbate ethno-religious tensions and aid extremist groups in their recruitment efforts. Therefore, the unequal access to state resources and opportunities, compounded by corruption and winner-takes-all politics, poses a significant risk of exposing Ghana to terrorist activities.

Fourthly, the study indicated that the longstanding ethnic and chieftaincy conflicts experienced in Ghana, especially in the northern regions, create openings for terrorists to exploit to their advantage. It is posited that areas or regions marked by armed conflicts provide fertile ground for terrorist groups to emerge or thrive, given the instability and power vacuums created by these conflicts that can be exploited by terrorists.

Fifthly, the research found that Ghana's porous borders, surrounded by countries grappling with terrorism and violent extremism, further expose the nation to these threats. These porous borders create opportunities for terrorists to engage in activities such as smuggling weapons and explosives, human trafficking, recruitment, and the transfer of funds across international boundaries and serve as safe havens for terrorist groups. Consequently, Ghana's porous borders present significant challenges for security agencies in terms of access and disruption, enabling terrorists to enter Ghana through illegal entry points and carry out their activities.

Finally, the study found that poor governance and ineffective leadership in Ghana have been identified as contributing factors to the nation's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. These extremist groups may offer alternative solutions to economic challenges, even if their proposed methods involve violence and terrorism. The prevalence of bad governance, characterized by inadequate rule of law, lack of transparency, and unresponsiveness in Ghana, fosters social discontent and frustration. These factors can be exploited by extremist groups to garner support.

5.1.2 Ghana's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Measures.

The study found that Ghana has implemented a range of measures to counteract terrorism and violent extremism. These measures encompass both domestic and international legal frameworks designed to prohibit and respond decisively to these threats. For example, Ghana has enacted legislation such as the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2008 (Act 762), which was subsequently amended in 2014, the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2008 (Act 749), and the 2010 Organized Crime Act. These legal instruments provide a foundation for an effective response to terrorist threats. Furthermore, Ghana has adopted and ratified key United Nations Security Council Resolutions, including 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 1718 (2006), and 1737 (2006), along with the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings.

Secondly, the study found that Ghana has employed surveillance and intelligence gathering as a core strategy to gather relevant information on potential terrorist activities. Security agencies have utilized covert operations methods, such as officers renting temporary residences in suspected communities or operating in civilian clothing to conceal their identities. Additionally, security services collaborate with informants to gather intelligence on terrorism and violent extremism, often relying on individuals such as opinion leaders to provide information about suspicious individuals or behaviours in the community. However, the study notes that these efforts are hindered by the reluctance of citizens to provide comprehensive information and tips regarding terrorism.

Thirdly, the study found that Ghana has implemented various strategies and methods to enhance border control and management. These include engaging with border communities, utilizing security software, installing CCTV cameras, and profiling immigrants to prevent

impersonation. These measures aim to promote transparency and trust in border management, thereby contributing to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

Fourthly, the study uncovered that Ghana's security agencies have engaged in joint domestic and international training programs to build capacity and enhance performance, particularly in collaboration with regional countries that have experienced terrorist attacks. However, the research highlights challenges such as inadequate funding, logistical constraints, insufficient security personnel, and political interference by influential politicians as key obstacles in border control and counter-terrorism operations.

Finally, the study found that Ghana has embraced citizen engagement as a tool for diversion and deradicalization of individuals susceptible to terrorism and violent extremism. Interestingly, the research reveals signs of radicalization in Ghana, although this radicalization is not limited to a particular religion but occurs within different strands or sects of the same religion. Citizen engagement initiatives as a counter-terrorism measure are aimed at dispelling the myth of the superiority of security personnel over civilians in Ghana and improving the relationship between them. This approach is seen as essential for reducing social marginalization, stigmatization, ethnic targeting, and the radicalization of citizens.

5.1.3 Ghana's cooperation with other states to counteract terrorism and violent extremism

The transnational nature of terrorism necessitates effective and efficient international and regional cooperation in addressing criminal matters related to terrorism and violent extremism.

The study found that Ghana's cooperation in this regard has been marked by a commitment to principles and ideas that bolster its security. Consequently, reinforcing regional cooperation is an essential indirect measure to counter terrorism, not only by addressing the threats themselves

but also by tackling the mobility of terrorists across borders, the illicit smuggling of weapons, and money laundering activities that often go undetected and unchecked. For instance, Aubyn (2021) reinforces this finding and argues that the Accra Initiative serves as a cooperative and collaborative security mechanism. It facilitates information and intelligence sharing, the training of security and intelligence personnel, and the coordination of joint cross-border military operations aimed at countering terrorism.

Furthermore, at the subregional level, the study identified ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) as an organization playing a pivotal role in combatting terrorism and violent extremism. ECOWAS mandates its member states to prioritize the prevention of violent extremism and terrorism. In cases where the preventive approach fails, member states are encouraged to aggressively pursue and bring to justice those responsible for terrorist acts, as well as to engage in efforts to rebuild the damage caused to individuals and communities. However, the study also found that the current structure of ECOWAS as an organization has limitations, which hinder its effectiveness in addressing insecurity and terrorism in the sub-region.

5.2 Conclusions

The increasing activities of terrorists and the transnational nature of terrorism continue to pose a significant threat to the peace and security of West Africa. In the examination of Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism, this study identified a multitude of contributing factors that expose Ghana to these threats. Overall, the study concludes that factors such as poverty, high unemployment, corruption, injustice, chieftaincy and ethnic conflicts, porous borders, and bad governance collectively contribute to Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. These factors are further exacerbated by ineffective leadership, characterized by the mismanagement of state resources, failure to benefit all

citizens, and an inability to improve living conditions for the masses. These factors are interconnected and cyclical, as bad governance leads to high corruption and injustice, resulting in unemployment, which, in turn, leads to poverty and societal conflict.

Furthermore, the study concludes that Ghana has adopted various measures to counteract the threats of terrorism and violent extremism. These measures encompass surveillance and intelligence gathering, effective border control management, joint security training and operations, community engagements, and cooperation with other states. While these measures are aimed at safeguarding the country against terrorism and violent extremism, their effectiveness is hindered by challenges such as funding and logistical constraints, political interference in the work of security agencies, and a shortage of security personnel at the periphery due to inadequate staffing. The study further concludes that local communities possess valuable knowledge of their specific contexts, including the dynamics of extremist groups operating in their areas. This local knowledge can prove invaluable to law enforcement agencies in disrupting terrorist networks and preventing attacks.

Finally, the study underscores the critical importance of international and regional cooperation in effectively addressing the complex and transnational nature of terrorism and violent extremism. Ghana's active engagement in initiatives such as the Accra Initiative reflects a strategic commitment to enhancing regional security through collaboration, intelligence sharing, and coordinated military operations. Similarly, the role of ECOWAS in promoting preventive and punitive measures against terrorism highlights the sub region's collective efforts to address these threats. However, the study concludes that despite these efforts, structural limitations within ECOWAS hinder its overall effectiveness. Addressing these institutional challenges is essential for strengthening regional responses and ensuring that cooperative frameworks are capable of adapting to the evolving security landscape in West Africa.

In summary, when assessing the risk (vulnerability) against the preparedness of Ghana to counter terrorism and violent extremism, this study concludes that the risk outweighs the preparedness. This is because many of the counter-terrorism strategies face significant obstacles. These challenges are compounded by the socio-political climate and the general mistrust and disillusionment of citizens towards the government, which makes them reluctant to support government efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism. Similarly, the economic grievances of many Ghanaians, such as high inflation, low salaries of public sector workers compared to substantial salaries and allowances of politicians, and financial misconduct, further contribute to Ghana's vulnerability to these threats.

5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations of this study principally address various issues and challenges of Ghana in countering the threats of terrorism and violent extremism. Given this, the study articulated the recommendations in the paragraphs below.

In the first place, the study found that issues such as poverty, unemployment, corruption and injustice, and general bad governance were major sources of Ghana's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. Though not all situations, these factors increase the frustrations of many people in Ghana making them susceptible to terrorists' recruitment. The study recommends that more poverty alleviation policies be rolled out by the government, especially in the northern parts of the country where poverty is perceived to be endemic. Again, the government should create more jobs for teeming unemployed youth, provide basic social amenities like potable water, schools, hospitals, roads electricity, etc. in various communities as well as intensify the fight against corruption in the country by resourcing and allowing the Special Prosecutor to work without any interference. Leadership should not only be very responsive to

the yearnings and aspirations of the people but should be accountable and transparent in all their activities.

Secondly, the study found several prolonged chieftaincy and ethnic conflicts like the Bawku conflict, the Cheriponi conflict, the Daboya conflict, and the Kandega conflict in Ghana. The study recommends the need to strengthen conflict resolution mechanisms to deal with the many conflicts in the country. The government should encourage diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts and establish ceasefires to create a safer environment for all to live in such communities. Similarly, an Interreligious platform for synergizing the efforts of the major religious groups should be established and encouraged to redress the misunderstandings among them to clarify and defuse areas of needless differences among them.

Thirdly, the study revealed porous borders and ineffective border management as potential sources of terrorism in Ghana. To address this situation, the study recommends that the government commit enough funds to procure sophisticated technological equipment and logistics for border management. The government should also increase the personnel of the immigration service in particular and other security agencies to beef up security in the various borders and other ungoverned spaces of the country.

Fourthly, the study uncovered that Ghana cooperates with other states to counteract terrorism and violent extremism. However, this cooperation lacks the political will and is often hampered by the selfish interests of member states. To manage this, the study recommends that member states should eschew selfishness and commit adequate political will to counter terrorism by providing funds and personnel for operations. It must be added that bilateral state-level collaborations be intensified as this will foster unity among members and devise situation-dependent strategies to combat terrorism taking into consideration the sociocultural, political, and economic characteristics of the people. This supports Akanji, (2019) position that political

will, dedication, support, and cooperation of international authorities in confronting the continued threat are therefore essential for the success of regional operations given the transnational dimension of terrorism.

Finally, the study unearthed that ECOWAS is a major actor in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism as well as ensuring the general peace and security of West Africa. However, the current structure of ECOWAS poses a lot of problems with its effectiveness in countering terrorism. The study, therefore, suggests a change of structure to allow for independent persons to manage the organization. ECOWAS should require member states to eliminate or nip corruption in the bud. The mandate of ECOWAS to improve the socio-political and economic conditions like poverty, unemployment, and bad leadership should be intensified by ECOWAS in member states.



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**APPENDIX A: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS
(MINISTRIES) THAT HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THE PEACE
AND SECURITY OF GHANA.**

Introduction

I am an M.Phil candidate of the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana researching the topic, “**Terrorism and Violent Extremism in West Africa: Assessing the Vulnerability and Preparedness of Ghana**” under the supervision of **Prof. Seidu M Alidu and Dr. Abdul-Jalilu Ateku**. As part of my write-up, I would be grateful if you could assist in providing answers to the questions below. In line with the ethics of research, the information provided will be solely for academic purposes and respondents are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The interview section will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes and will be recorded for further analysis upon approval.

Institution: MoFA. . MOD. . MOI. . MNS. NCCE

1. What factors in your view make Ghana vulnerable to the incidence of terrorism and violent extremism?
2. What should be done to solve these problems?
3. What are the various anti-terrorism policies and legal frameworks that Ghana adopted and enacted to counter terrorism?
4. What ways has the government used to create citizens’ awareness of the threats of terrorism and violent extremism?
5. What divergence strategies are being implemented by the government to fight terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana?
6. What deradicalisation efforts are being undertaken in the communities, especially the Zongos?

7. What can be done to mitigate radicalization of people?
8. Why does Ghana cooperate with other states to combat terrorism and violent extremism?
9. What challenges does Ghana face in cooperating with other states and how can they be solved?
10. What is the effectiveness of ECOWAS in counteracting terrorism and violent extremism?
11. How can it be improved?



**APPENDIX B: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE VARIOUS AGENCIES THAT
HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF
GHANA.**

Introduction

I am an M.Phil candidate of the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana researching the topic, “Terrorism and Violent Extremism in West Africa: Assessing the Vulnerability and Preparedness of Ghana” under the supervision of Prof. Seidu M Alidu and Dr. Abdul-Jalilu Ateku. As part of my write-up, I would be grateful if you could assist in providing answers to the questions below. In line with the ethics of research, the information provided will be solely for academic purposes and respondents are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The interview section will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes and will be recorded for further analysis upon approval.

AGENCY: ARMED FORCES POLICE SERVICE IMMIGRATION
SERVICE COUNTER-TERRORISM FUSION CENTER

1. What factors in your view make Ghana vulnerable to the incidence of terrorism and violent extremism?
2. How do you gather intelligence on terrorism and violent extremism?
3. How do you manage the borders to prevent terrorists from entering Ghana?
4. What joint domestic and international security training programs has Ghana adopted?
5. How effective are these counter-terrorism and violent extremism measures?
6. What challenges do you face in countering terrorism and violent extremism?
7. Why are community engagements necessary in fighting the threats of terrorism and violent extremism?
8. What deradicalisation efforts are being undertaken in the communities, especially the Zongos to mitigate radicalization of people?

**APPENDIX C: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE TRADITIONAL RULERS,
OPINION LEADERS, YOUTH AND WOMEN LEADERS.**

Introduction

I am an M.Phil candidate of the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana researching the topic, **“Terrorism and Violent Extremism in West Africa: Assessing the Vulnerability and Preparedness of Ghana”** under the supervision of **Prof. Seidu M Alidu and Dr. Abdul-Jalilu Ateku**. As part of my write-up, I would be grateful if you could assist in providing answers to the questions below. In line with the ethics of research, the information provided will be solely for academic purposes and respondents are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The interview section will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes and will be recorded for further analysis upon approval.

TRADITIONAL RULER OPINION LEADER YOUTH WOMEN

1. What events, behaviors, and attitudes constitute terrorism and violent extremism?
2. What are the signs that show that your colleague is radicalized?
3. How do you identify strange people in your community?
4. What factors make Ghana vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism?
5. What do you do when you perceive any threat of terrorism and violent extremism?
6. How can civilians help to fight the threats of violent extremism and terrorism?
7. What efforts should the government adopt to mitigate the radicalization of people?



APPENDIX D: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE ACADEMICS.

Introduction

I am an M.Phil candidate of the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana researching the topic, **“Terrorism and Violent Extremism in West Africa: Assessing the Vulnerability and Preparedness of Ghana”** under the supervision of **Prof. Seidu M Alidu and Dr. Abdul-Jalilu Ateku**. As part of my write-up, I would be grateful if you could assist in providing answers to the questions below. In line with the ethics of research, the information provided will be solely for academic purposes and respondents are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The interview section will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes and will be recorded for further analysis upon approval.

1. What factors in your view make Ghana vulnerable to the incidence of terrorism and violent extremism?
2. How can the government fight the threats of violent extremism and terrorism in Ghana?
3. What efforts should be put in place by the government to mitigate the radicalization of people?
4. What ways has the government used to create citizens’ awareness of the threats of terrorism and violent extremism?
5. Why does Ghana cooperate with other states to combat terrorism and violent extremism?
6. What challenges does Ghana face in cooperating with other states and how can they be solved?
7. What is the effectiveness of ECOWAS in counteracting terrorism and violent extremism?
8. How can it be improved?