

Nigeria's Terrorists Rehabilitation And Reintegration Policy: A Victimological Perspective

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Abstract : Acts of terror perpetrated either by state or non-state actors are considered a social ill and impugns on the collective well-being of the society. As such, there is the need for social reparations, which is meant to ensure the healing of the social wounds resulting from the atrocities committed by errant individuals under different guises. In order to ensure social closure and effectively repair the damages done by anomic behaviors, society must ensure that justice is served and those whose rights and privileges have been denied and battered are given the necessary succour they deserve. With regards to the ongoing terrorism in the Northeast, the moves to rehabilitate and reintegrate Boko Haram members have commenced with the establishment of Operation Safe Corridor,¹ and a proposed bill for the establishment of "National Agency for the Education, Rehabilitation, De-radicalisation and Integration of Repentant Insurgents in Nigeria"². All of which Nigerians have expressed mixed feelings about. Some argue that the endeavor is lacking in ethical decency and justice and totally insults human reasoning. Terrorism and counterterrorism in Nigeria have been enmeshed in gross human rights violations both by the military and the terrorists, and this raises the concern of Nigeria's ability to fairly and justiciably implement the deradicalization and reintegration efforts. On the other hand, there is the challenge of the community dwellers that are victims of terrorism and counterterrorism and their ability to forgive and welcome back their immediate-past tormentors even with the slightest sense of injustice in the process of terrorists reintegration and rehabilitation. With such efforts implemented in other climes, the Nigeria's case poses a unique challenge and commands keen interests by stakeholders and the international community due to the aforementioned reasons. It is therefore pertinent to assess the communities' level of involvement in the cycle of reintegration- hence, the objective of this paper. Methodologically as a part of my larger PhD thesis, this study intends to explore the three different local governments (Michika in Adamawa, Chibok in Borno, and Yunusari in Yobe), all based on the intensity of terrorists attacks. Twenty five in-depth interview will be conducted in the study locations above featuring religious leaders, Community (traditional) leaders, Internally displaced persons, CSOs management officials, and ex-Boko Haram insurgents who have been reintegrated. The data that will be generated from field work will be analyzed using the Nvivo-12 software package, which will help to code and create themes based on the study objectives. Furthermore, the data will be content-analyzed, employing verbatim quotations where necessary. Ethically, the study will take into consideration the basic ethical principles for research of this nature. It will strictly adhere to the principle of voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality.

Keywords : boko haram, reintegration, rehabilitation, terrorism, victimology

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