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QUALITY OF LIFE OF ADOLESCENTS WITH TERRORISM EXPERIENCE IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Background: Nigeria has a young population, almost half less than 14 years old. Violent crimes such as kidnapping, banditry, and terrorism continue to plague threats to the young population with consequent effects on their Quality of Life.

Objective: This study aimed to determine the relationship between experience of terrorism and Quality of life among adolescents in Mangu Village, Plateau State.

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Methodology: This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted between Dec. 2023 and January 2024, among adolescents aged 10-19 years, living in Mangu Village, Plateau State with a sample size of 200 determined using Taro Yamane formula. Data were collected through standardized, semi-structured, pre-tested questionnaires covering socio-demographic information, experiences of terrorism, and the quality of life of respondents. The SPSS version 20.0 was used for statistical analysis, including a linear regression to assess the relationship between terrorism experience and the quality of life of respondents.

Results: A total number of one hundred and thirty-two (66.0%) were above 16 years old, while one hundred and seven (53.5%) were females. About 92.5% have experienced terrorist attacks before, during which 24.3% felt stressed, 34.6% were sad, and 23.2% were pained. Most of the respondents (53%) were less than 1 month after the duration of the terrorist attack, and 75.7% of the respondents experienced the attacks frequently. 49% of the respondents were self-wishing for death and away from it all. A total number of 114 (57%) of respondents were of good quality of life, while 86 (43%) respondents had poor quality of life in the attack.

Conclusion: This study found that the experience of terrorism among adolescents affects their quality of life. Hence, we recommend the development of policies and programmes that will improve the quality of life of adolescents exposed to terrorism.

Keywords: Adolescents, Terrorism, Insurgency, Disaster, Quality of life.

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is usually defined as the use of violence or threats intended to generate a general climate of fear among the population, which aims to carry out a specific political objective [1]. The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities and directed towards achieving a political, economic, religious, or social goal [2]. According to the Global Terrorism Database, over the past ten years, explosives have been the most commonly used method of terrorist attack, followed by firearms, incendiary weapons and melee weapons [3]. Distinguishing terrorism from other forms of political violence, particularly from insurgency, has raised questions [4]. Insurgency is defined in the Nigeria Government counterinsurgency guide,

as 'the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region [5].

In Nigeria, Boko Haram insurgency has lately introduced a terrorist dimension into the crime space in Nigeria [3], [4]. The most fundamental source of insecurity in Nigeria today is terrorism. *Terrorism* is commonly understood to refer to acts of violence that target civilians in the pursuit of political or ideological aims [6]. Poverty and unemployment have been identified by some studies as common causes of terrorism [1], [7].

Terrorism has a widespread impact on the entire society that disrupts the usual routine of a functional society by spreading fear and terror among its inhabitants, particularly in regions that have a history of being vulnerable to terrorist attacks [2], [8]. The fear of terrorism has been found to induce many undesired psychological states in individuals, such as increasing their level of anxiety, depression, insomnia, and other mental health problems [9], [10]. These consequences may be worse felt by adolescents where the social, physical, and psychological changes are more rapid [9], [11].

War, conflict, and acts of terrorism are a few of the most painful and shocking events that may not only influence the daily well-being of these adolescents but also undermine their quality of life while they are already going through various social, physical, and psychological changes [11], [12]. These negative consequences may have a widespread impact on multiple aspects of life, including the deteriorating academic performance of those adolescents whose schools had been targeted in the past or who face potential threats from multiple terrorist groups. Proclaimed threats of possible terror attacks on educational institutions have become a common phenomenon in Pakistan since these terrorist organisations assume the existence of educated youth to be a threat to their existence [2]. Terrorism and conflict produce a sense of insecurity among societies that eventually become the cause of anxiety, depression, fear, and mental problems [13]. Traumatic events like terrorism are not limited to specific regions but are becoming the cause of growing public health problems all over the world. Adolescents' terrorism-related fear may affect their psychological well-being while going to school or by observing such incidents [14]. Social well-being is "the set of abilities (verbal and nonverbal) that enable a person to generate, recognize, express, understand, and evaluate their own, and others, emotions to guide thinking and action that successfully cope with environmental demands and pressures 9.

Many adolescents (individuals aged 12-19 years) die prematurely every year; an estimated 1.7 million young men and women between the ages of 10-24 lose their lives to violence [1]. Adolescents suffer from post-traumatic stress disorders, anxiety and major depression. Continuous exposure to stress, particularly in adolescents, can induce structural changes in neural connectivity and have long-term consequences on brain functioning, leading to mental and social well-being [15].

The objectives of this study are to explore the experience of terrorism among adolescents in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State, to assess their quality of life, and to relate the experience of terrorism to their quality of life. The study hypothesized no significant relationship between the experience of terrorism and quality of life among adolescents in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State.

METHODS

The study was carried out in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State. Its headquarters are in the town of Mangu at 9° 31′ 00′′N, 9° 06′ 00′′E. It has an area of 1653 km2 and a population of 294,931 at the 2006 census. The major ethnic group found in Mangu is the Mwaghavul people. They occupy the districts of the Local Government where this study was carried out which include: Panyam, Pushit, Kerang, Mangun, Kombun, Ampang West, and Mangu districts.

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. The study population comprises all adolescents in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State. All adolescents aged 10-18 years living in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State, who accepted to be interviewed after consenting were recruited in the study until a projected sample size was achieved. Consent was obtained from their parents or caregivers, while assent was gotten from the participants.

A sample size of 200 respondents was used.

The sample size will be calculated using the Leshlie's formula: $n=Z^2pq/d^2$ where: n= sample size,

Z = the standard deviation at a 95% confidence interval, which is 1.96

P = proportion of the population with the desired factor of 15 = 0.15.

$$q = 1-p = 1-0.15 = 0.85$$

d = maximum allowable error of 5% = 0.05

$$n = \frac{z^{2} p (1 - p)]}{d^{2}}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^{2} [0.15 (1 - 0.15)]}{0.05^{2}}$$

$$n = \frac{3.842 \times 0.15 (0.85)}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{0.4899}{0.0025}$$

$$= 195.96$$

$$= approx, 200$$

Thus, two hundred questionnaires were administered in data collection. Data were collected using a pretested questionnaire administered to the respondents and by interviewing. At least 20 respondents per district were interviewed daily for 10 days until 200 respondents are reached.

Data analysis was done after data collection, and the data was coded. The authors analysed data using statistical product and service solutions (SPSS version 27.0) [16]. After data were analysed, data were presented in frequency tables and pie charts. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, and percentage were used.

A letter of introduction was collected from the College of Health Sciences, LAUTECH, Ogbomos, while approval was obtained from the Plateau State Ministry of Health. They were informed of their right to pull out of the study at any point in time, and this would not attract any punishment or ill feeling towards them. The confidentiality of respondents was guaranteed.

RESULTS

This study is part of a larger research that has been published.

Sociodemographic Characteristics:

As shown in Table 1, most of the respondents (66%) are above 16 years, with more females (53.5%). Most (64.5%) have no formal education. However, a third (32.5%) of their fathers have tertiary education. The respondents were primarily traders (39%). A total number of 115 (57.5%) are single, 55 (27.5%) are married and 30 (15%) are divorced/separated. A total number of 115 (57.5%) respondents are Christians, 62 (31%) are Muslims, while 23 (11.5%) are traditionalists.

Table 1: Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents.

VARIABLES	Variables	Frequency	Percentage	
AGE (years)	10-12	8	4.0	
	13-15	60	30.0	

	>16	132	66.0
GENDER	Male	93	46.5
	Female	107	53.5
MARITAL	Single	115	57.5
STATUS	Married	55	27.5
	Divorced/Separated	30	15.0
INCOME (N)	<20,000	32	16.0
	20,000-29,000	40	20.0
	30,000-39,000	89	44.5
	40,000-49,000	32	16.0
	≥50,000	7	3.5
EDUCATIONAL	No formal	129	64.5
STATUS	Primary	29	14.5
	Secondary	42	21.0
RELIGION	Christianity	115	57.5
	Islam	62	31.0
	Traditionalist	23	11.5
OCCUPATION	Trading	78	39.0
	Apprenticeship	54	27.0
	Farming	39	19.5
	Unemployed	29	14.5
CUSTODIAN	Parents	112	56.0
	Friends	56	28.0
	Live alone	32	16.0
FATHER's	No formal	33	16.5
educational	Primary	79	39.5
status	Secondary	23	11.5
	Tertiary	65	32.5
MOTHER's	Trade	70	35.0
occupation	Civil servant	43	21.5
	Farmer	73	36.5
	Unemployed	14	7.0

Experience of Terrorism:

Table 2 summarises their experiences of terrorism. Terrorists have attacked a total number of 185 (92.5%) before, with 45(24.3%) feeling stressed, 64 (34.6%) feeling up, 64 (34.6%) sad, and 43(23.2%) being pained.

Table 2: The Experience of Terrorism.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
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Previous experience of terrorist attacks (n=200)		
Yes	185	92.5
No	15	7.50
Means of escape (n=185)		
Called Security	90	48.6
Ran inside bush	37	20.0
Hid	13	7.10
Remained calm inside	45	24.3
Knowledge of someone attacked before (n=200)		
Yes	190	95.0
No	10	5.00
Consequences of the attack on the person (n=190)		
Injure	80	42.1
Deaths	110	57.9
Possible cause of the attack by the terrorist (n=185)		
Religion	164	88.6
Unemployed	21	11.4
Frequency of attack (n=185)		
Frequent (up to thrice per year)	140	75.7
Occasional	45	24.3
Emotional Response during the attack. (n=185)		
Нарру	2	1.10
Stressed	45	24.3
feel up	31	16.8
sad	64	34.6
pained	43	23.2
Duration of the Terrorist attack. (n=185)		
<1month	98	53.0
1-2months	56	30.2
3months and above	31	16.8

Quality of life after experiencing Terrorism:

Figure 1 summarises the Quality of life after experiencing terrorism. Those with 50% and above were scored as good QoL while those with less are poor Qol. A total of 57% of respondents were of good quality of life while 43% were poor during the attack.

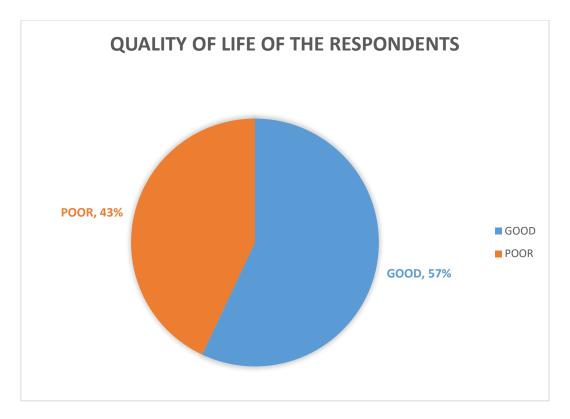


Figure 1: Summary of the Quality of Life.

Table 3 depicts the Quality of life of adolescents exposed to terrorism. A total of 78 (39.0%) respondents rated their quality of life as very good, while 23 (11.5%) rated it as very poor. A total number of 89 (44.5%) adjudged their current health as good, while 19 (9.5%) adjudged it as poor. A total of 106 (53.0%) respondents enjoy their life very good, while 0(0.0%) enjoy their life neither poor nor good. A total of 56 (28.0%) respondents feel good in their daily life, while 12 (6.0%) have a pool feeling.

Table 3: Assessment of the Quality of Life of Adolescents (n=200)

S N		Better than usual	Same as usual	Worse than usual	Much worse than usual
1	Feeling perfectly well and in good health	85 (42.5%)	60 (30.0%)	35 (17.0%)	20 (10.0%)
2	Feeling in need of a good tonic	77 (38.5%)	61 (30.5%)	32 (16.0%)	30 (15%)

3	Feeling ill	101 (50.5%)	60 (30%)	30 (15.0%)	9 (10.0%)
4	Having hot or cold spells	79 (39.5%)	48 (24.0%)	29 (14.5%)	44 (22%)
5	Getting scared or panicky for no good reason	68 (34.0%)	90 (45.0%)	28 (14.0%)	14 (7.0%)
6	Feeling nervous and strung up all the time	75 (37.5%)	50 (25%)	62 (31.0%)	13 (6.5%)
7	Thinking of self as a worthless person	85 (42.5%)	40 (20%)	65 (32.5%)	10 (5%)
8	Can't do anything because nerves were too bad	92 (46.0%)	37 (18.5%)	40 (20%)	31 (15.5%)
9	Wishing to be dead and away from it all.	48 (24.0%)	98 (49.0%)	36 (18.0%)	18 (9.0%)

Association Between Sociodemographic Characteristics and Experience of Terrorism

Table 4 shows the association between sociodemographic characteristics and the experience of terrorism among adolescents. There is no significant association between the experience of terrorism and age, sex, marital status, custodian, father's education, and mother's education.

Table 4: Association Between Sociodemographic Characteristics and Terrorism Experienced.

Variables	Experience		Total	Statistics
	Poor	Good	(n=185)	
Sex				X2 = 0.000
Male	38 (20.5)	40 (21.6)	78 (42.2)	Df = 1
Female	19(10.3)	88 (47.6)	107 (57.8)	P-value =0.990
Age (years)				
<11	5 (2.7)	8 (4.3)	13 (7.0)	X2 = 5.794
12-15	11 (5.9)	29 (15.7)	40 (21.6)	Df = 4
>16	70 (37.8)	62 (33.5)	132 (71.4)	P-value = 0.215
Marital Status				
Single	42 (22.7)	73 (39.5)	115 (62.2)	X2= 2.487

Married	14 (7.6)	41 (22.2)	55 (29.7)	Df=2
Divorced/separated	5 (2.7)	10 (5.4)	15 (8.1)	P-value = 0.288
Custodian				
Parents	22(11.9)	90 (48.6)	112 (60.5)	X2 = 2.323
Friends	18(9.7)	38(20.5)	56 (30.3)	Df=4
Live alone	8 (4.3)	9 (4.9)	17 (9.2)	p-value=0.677
Father's educational status				
No formal	13 (7.0)	20 (10.8)	33 (17.8)	X2 = 4.501
Primary	34 (18.4)	45 (24.3)	79 (42.7)	Df=3
Secondary	8 (4.3)	15 (8.1)	23 (12.4)	p-value=0.212
Tertiary	14(7.6)	51 (27.6)	50 (27.0)	
Mother's educational status				
No formal	26 (14.1)	19 (10.3)	45 (24.3)	X2=10.758
Primary	20 (10.8)	66 (35.7)	86 (46.5)	Df=3
Secondary	10 (5.4)	32 (17.3)	42 (22.7)	*p-value=0.013
Tertiary	12(6.5)	15 (8.1)	12 (6.5)	

Association between Socio-demographic characteristics and Quality of Life

Table 5 shows the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and QoL. Only the father's education (P value = 0.001) has an association with QoL.

Table 5: Association Between Sociodemographic Characteristics and Quality of Life

Variables	Quali	Quality of life		Statistics	
	Poor	Good		(x ²)	P-value
Sex				I	
Male	53 (26.5)	40(2)	93 (46.5)	0.181	0.670
Female	23(11.5)	84 (42)	107 (53.5)		
Age					
<11	6 (3)	2(1)	8 (4)	2.681	0.444
12-15	35 (17.5)	25 (12.5)	60 (30)		
>16	85 (42.5)	47 (23.5)	132 (66)		
Marital Status					

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Single	56 (28)	59 (29.5)	115 (57.5)	4.356	0.226
Married	30 (15)	25 (12.5)	55 (27.5)		
Divorced/separated	17 (8.5)	13 (6.5)	30 (15)		
Custodian					
Parents	86(43)	26 (13)	112 (56)	4.356	0.226
Friends	43(21.5)	13(6.5)	56 (28)		
Live alone	9 (4.5)	23 (11.5)	32 (30.2)		
Father's education					
No formal	23 (11.5)	10 (5)	33 (16.5)	16.342	0.001*
Primary	40 (20)	39 (19.5)	79 (39.5)		
Secondary	15 (7.5)	8 (4)	23 (11.5)		
Tertiary	42(21)	23 (11.5)	65 (32.5)		
Mother's education					
No formal	32 (16)	13 (6.5)	45 (22.5)	0.450	0.520
Primary	59 (29.5)	27 (13.5)	86 (43)		
Secondary	39 (19.5)	3 (1.5)	42 (21)		
Tertiary	19(9.5)	8 (4)	27 (13.5)		

Association between the Experience of Terrorism and Quality of Life:

Tables 6a and 6b are the illustrations of the test of hypothesis indicating the relationship between terrorism and QoL. Terrorism has a significant effect on the quality of life among adolescents in Mangu Local Government of Plateau State. The linear regression results (R2) value of -0.187 revealed that terrorism independently accounted for -18.7% of the variation in quality of life among adolescents in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State. The F. statistics of 11.201 revealed that the model is statistically significant at 0.05 significant levels. This implies that as terrorism increases by 1%, quality of life decreases by 18.7%. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, terrorism significantly influences the quality of life among adolescents in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State.

Table 5: Association between the experience terrorism and quality of life of the adolescents.

Variables		Terrorism	Quality of life
Terrorism	Pearson Correlation sig. (2. tailed) N	232	- 0.369** 0.000 232

Quality of life	Pearson	- 0.369**	1
	Correlation	0.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	232	232
	N		

^{**} Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2-tailed)

Table 5 shows negative correlation between terrorism and Quality of life. There exists significant correlation between the independent (terrorism) and dependent (peace) variables (r = -0.369, n = 232, p < 0.01).

DISCUSSION

This discusses the study's findings in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State. Terrorism, Quality of life of the adolescents in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State. The objectives are discussed below, as well as the findings and subsequent comparisons with similar studies conducted on the same. The quality-of-life levels following a terrorist attack vary widely. Described in the limitations, and, if possible, the positive predictive value should be given.

The analysis above answered the questions posed in the study and tested the hypotheses of the research. The study discovered that there is a significant relationship between terrorism and QoL among adolescents among adolescents in Plateau State. This finding agrees with a previous studies [6], [13]. Thus, the study revealed that terrorism exerts a negative significant effect on quality of life. Thus, the study revealed that terrorism exerts a negative significant effect on quality of life. Consequently, when terrorism increases, QoL decreases. This is explainable even with global experiences. For example, terrorism has resulted in nightmares in the United States of America with the bombings of the World Trade Centre (WTC) and the Pentagon in New York City (NYC) on September 11, 2001 (9/11) [9]. Mumbai attack in November 2008, Istanbul bombings of 2016, the London bombings of 7th July 2005 (7/7), and the Abuja 31st December 2010 bombing. Terrorists' activities weaken each adolescent ability to provide peace for its citizens. The Nigerian situation is akin to what describes concerning Mumbai, Chechnya, Bali, Istanbul, Madrid, Kosovo, Israel, East Timor, and Kashmir, among others, where terrorism disrupts likelihoods, increases violence and fear and has resulted in bloodshed; where terrorism was initially rooted in religion but later took a political dimension [11], [17].

Similarly, Graham in 2018 found several socio-economic, demographic and cultural factors to encourage risk-taking behaviours among young people [18]. Improving access to youth-friendly services, implementing peer education programmes for school-going adolescents, and developing effective Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials and curricula have been highly suggested to improve the existing young people's sexual and reproductive health status. Thus, when terrorism increases, social well-being decreases. All the cities that have experienced terrorist attacks have a decline in social well-being. Kaduna attack in November 2008, the Maiduguri bombings of 2016, the Jos bombings of 7th July 2005 (7/7), and the Abuja 31st December 2010 bombing. Terrorists' activities weaken each country's ability to provide peace for its citizens [19], [20]. The Nigerian situation is akin to what describes concerning Mumbai, Chechnya, Bali, Istanbul, Madrid, Kosovo, Israel, East Timor, and Kashmir, among others, where terrorism disrupts livelihoods, increases violence and fear and has resulted in bloodshed; where terrorism was initially rooted in religion but

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later took a political dimension [2]. Thus, wherever and whenever terrorism is increasing, social well-being is decreasing among adolescent in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State.

In a state where terrorism exists, the tendency for development will be hampered due to the activities of terrorists [21]. Terrorists are bound to destroy already existing growth and development. In the case of Nigeria, terrorism has, over time, destroyed previous achievements made by successive governments, and finances meant for development are now being channeled to fighting terrorism in Nigeria [5], [6], [20].

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Issues bordering on terrorism and social well-being are very critical for the material progress of any polity. As a result of this, our study examined the terrorism and Quality of life of the adolescent in Mangu Local Government, Plateau State. This study found that most of the adolescents have experienced terrorist attack at one point in time or the other. with a little less than half of them having poor QoL. The study further notes that the heinous activities of terrorists' groups have a significant effect on QoL of the adolescent on Mangu Local Government, Plateau State in the region and have accounted for poor living standard of people living in the region.

The recommendations embody a tripartite dimension or implication: practical, empirical, and theoretical implications. These implications include the need for the Governments to support Policies to reduce the effect of terrorism so as to reduce the consequences on the quality of life of the adolescent. Also, the Government should come up with programmes that will provide infrastructural facilities to restore lives back to the survivors of the insurgency. Finally, there is a need to equip the military to provide peace and security to Nigerians.

Limitations

This study is limited by the fact that a bias could result from the failure of the adolescents to accurately recall long-term events asked for. Also, the cross-sectional study design it could not permit the determination of the direction of causality between the outcome and explanatory variables. Hence, further longitudinal studies are needed to examine the causal links between terrorism and quality of life.

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