STRATEGIES TO PREVENT HOME-GROWN TERRORISM IN GHANA

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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2018

STRATEGIES TO PREVENT HOME-GROWN

TERRORISM IN GHANA

by

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**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Social Science**

May 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFC   Anti-Terrorism Financial Commission

ASWAJ   Ahlul-Sunnah Wal Jamaa'

AIC   American Islamic Council

ASEAN   Association of South East-Nations

AMISON   African Mission in Somalia

AQIM   Al-Qaeda in Maghreb

AU   African Union

BK   Boko Haram

BBC   British Broadcasting Corporation

BNI   Bureau of National Investigation

BIFPS   Brookings Institution for Foreign Policy Studies

CSIS   Canadian Security and Intelligence Services

CHS   Commission on Human Security

CTC   Counter-Terrorism Committee

CSI   Council of Senior Imams

EC   Electoral Commission

EU   European Union

ECOWAS   Economic Community of West African States

FGD   Focus Group Discussion

FBI   Federal Bureau of Investigation

GAF   Ghana Armed Forces

GAFSCS   Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College

GSS   Ghana Statistical Service

GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
HGT	Home-grown Terrorism
IIAG	Ibrahim Index of African Governance
ILO	International Labour Organization
IS	Islamic State
ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and Levant
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Sham
IUMS	International Union for Muslim Scholars
IRRC	Islamic Research and Reform Centre
KDF	Kenya Defence Forces
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
LECIAD	Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NSC	National Security Council
NSA	National Security Agency
OSCE	Organization for *Security* and Co-operation in Europe
SMS	Short Message Service
UN	United Nations
UNGS	United Nation General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USA	United States of America
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

UDHR	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WACCE	West Africa Centre for Counter-Terrorism

STRATEGI UNTUK MENGHALANG KEMUNCULAN PENGGANAS DALAM NEGERI DI GHANA

ABSTRAK

Selepas serangan 11 September 2001, ancaman 'home-grown' (home-grown terrorism) (HGT) wujud sebagai satu bentuk keganasan yang menimbulkan satu ancaman baru kepada semua negara di Eropah, Amerika, Asia dan Afrika. Sejak kebelakangan ini, HGT telah mengorbankan ramai nyawa individu dan ini menjadi satu ancaman berat yang perlu dihadapi oleh individu di seluruh dunia kerana menjejaskan keselamatan dan kesejahteraan kehidupan individu yang menjalani kehidupan yang aman dan mampan di negara maju dan negara sedang membangun. Oleh itu, kajian ini ingin meneliti sifat HGT di Ghana dengan menilai strategi-strategi yang digunakan oleh aktor kerajaan dan aktor bukan kerajaan untuk mengatasinya dengan menggunakan kerangka Keamanan Manusia (Human Security) untuk memahami strategi-strategi yang diguna pakai di Ghana bagi mengelakkan kemasukan HGT dalam kawasan Afrika Barat yang tidak stabil seperti negara Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali dan Nigeria yang tengah menghadapi HGT. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah temu bual mendalam untuk mendapatkan maklmuat daripda tiga agensi keselamatan negeri dan 10 orang imam daripada 10 wilayah di seluruh Ghana. Penemuan daripada aktor kerajaan mendapati bahawa tentera ISIS Ghana yang telah kembali pengancam utama yang menyebabkan HGT berlaku di Ghana. Aktor bukan kerajaan mempercayai bahawa kuasa ISIS untuk merekrut belia Ghana, radikalisasi agama, pengangguran belia yang tinggi dan ketidakstabilan serantau adalah ancaman HGT di Ghana. Aktor kerajaan mampu menggagalkan HGT di Ghana dengan: tadbir urus yang baik, memantau dakwah Islam, pendidikan awam,

meningkatkan kerjasama antarabangsa, menubuhkan pusat pemulihan, mewujudkan operasi ketenangan dan memantau aktiviti kewangan oleh individu dan korporat. Pendekatan aktor bukan kerajaan Ghana dalam mengatasi HGT pula berbeza. Mereka menggunakan kaedah baru untuk mengajar, melibatkan belia dalam pelbagai aktiviti dan memberi pendedahan berkenaan HGT. Kajian ini merumuskan bahawa, langkah untuk mencegah HGT di Ghana oleh pihak aktor kerajaan dan aktor bukan kerajaan ialah berdasarkan masa strategi melawan ancaman yang tepat. Akhirnya, kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa kerajaan perlu mengadakan program nasional secara rasmi untuk memerangi HGT. Polisi dokumen program tersebut perlu terdiri daripada pengawasan radikalisasi agama oleh agensi kerajaan atau pemerintah.

STRATEGIES TO PREVENT HOME-GROWN TERRORISM IN GHANA

ABSTRACT

In the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks, home-grown terrorism (HGT) emerged with significant threat to all nations across Europe, America, Asia and Africa. In recent years, HGT has caused the death of many people and is gravely threatening humanity across the world, affecting human security, well-being and peaceful state of many individuals living in both developed and developing nations. Therefore, this study explored the nature of HGT in Ghana by assessing the strategies used by state and non-state actors to counter it by adopting the Human Security frameworks to understand the strategies adopted by Ghana to prevent HGT in an unstable West African region, where countries like: Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali and Nigeria, have all suffered from HGT. The study used in-depth interview to elicit qualitative data from three state security agencies and ten Islamic religious leaders (Imams) from Ghana's ten regions. The findings from state actors revealed that: Ghanaian ISIS returnees are the sole threat that can cause HGT in Ghana. Non-state actors believed that, ISIS power of recruiting Ghanaian youth, religious radicalization, high youth unemployment and the regional instability are the threats of HGT in Ghana. State actors were able to thwart HGT in Ghana with: good governance, monitoring Islamic preaching, public education, increased international cooperation, establishing rehabilitation centers, creating stillness operation and monitoring financial activities by individuals and corporations. Ghanaian non-state actors' approach in countering HGT was different: They adopted new methods of preaching, engaged the youth in their various activities and preached against HGT. The study concluded that, the move to prevent HGT in Ghana by state and non-state

actors is a timely and significant counter-terrorism strategy. Finally, the study recommends that, the state should put in place a nationwide program to fight HGT. The policy document of such program should comprise supervision of religious process of radicalization by a government agency or commission.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0   Overview

Home-grown terrorism (HGT) is the most extraordinary disparaging conflict and a form of modern terrorism in the twenty-first century. After the September 11, 2001 attacks, some radical and extreme local residents in America, Australia, Europe, Asia and Africa conceptualized and planned deadly attacks against their country of birth while building up the so-called Islamic State (IS) or other terrorist groups as their ideological orientations (Silber & Bhatt, 2007).

It has assumed by many security analysts that; the terrorist threats have gradually become more of home grown nature. The analysts argue that, as the attack on the Al Qaeda organization has divided the group, small sector of the terrorists and unreachable persons getting little more than momentum from abroad have become the primary concern (Cato Institute, 2012).

However, cases of home-grown extremism have increased over the past years, posing a growing threat to many nations across the globe. According to a new United States (US) Homeland Security Committee Report (2017); America has witnessed thirty-nine HGT attacks across 20 federal states over one-year period, scoring an eight percent raise from March 2017. The inclination also grew drastically in the year 2016.

According to Johnson (2017), more than 20 percent of the 209 home-grown extremist cases in the United States after the September 11 terrorist attacks have taken place over the past 12 months. He explained that, 60 percent of those cases involved connected to the extremist Islamic State terrorist group. In Europe's case, a number of European countries continue to face an unrelenting threat from home-

grown terrorists. The threat has amplified with the increased activities of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), the Al-Qaeda derivative even though they have now lost control over many cities they used to operate in Libya, Iraq and Syria.

These security anxieties are being aggravated by extraordinary ranks of resettlement into Europe from poor and/or war-torn quarters of the Middle East, Africa, and the Balkans, with ISIS predicting such directions for penetration (Simcox, 2016).

Thus, Europeans encounter a greater risk from HGT than people in the United States because they are essentially nearer to Libya and Iraq and the Muslim population in Europe frequently suffers and feels further isolated from society than their Muslim brothers in the United States (Strickler, 2015).

Similarly, Southeast Asia has long been a fruitful place for the increase of Islamic terror networks. Various international extremist groups have had a continued presence in Association of South East Asian Nation (ASEAN) countries, including the Jemaah Islamiyah (الجماعة الإسلامية), Al Qaeda and now ISIS (Lowe, 2017).

In Africa, the continent has become ever more exposed to the activities of terrorist groups and this has become a growing concern to the global community. Right from Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria to Somali Al-Shabaab, from well-known Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), to the Islamic Fighting Group in Libya, the growing intimidation from the arc of home-grown terror have turned out to be a pestilence for the African continent (Sun, 2014).

According to U.S (United States) Department of State country report on HGT, Africa experienced momentous level of HGT movement in 2015. In East Africa, where terrorist groups have been very active, Al-Shabaab a Somalia-based terrorist group demonstrated its power of endurance and re-emerged from a sequence

of most important slow down experienced in the early part of 2015, which included the death of main functions and the defeat of monopolies and secure shelter in parts of south-central Somalia. In spite of these setbacks, the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM) fight back to counter Al-Shabaab, as the terrorist group implemented more and more violent strategies (U.S. Department of State, 2015).

So far, in the West African Region, Ghana enjoys a pleasant status for being moderately non-violent, safe and sound in the sub-region, although HGT has drastically affected other West African states, particularly in radiance of the divergence in Niger, Mali and the advance of terrorist aggression in northern Nigeria. According to Burchard (2016), Boko Haram's insurgency in Nigeria and its growth to other countries in the Lake Chad Basin since January 2016, has witnessed two foremost terrorist attacks that have essentially traumatized the security landscape in West Africa, emphasizing HGT as a mounting threat to the region.

However, in January 2016, unknown gunmen stormed the Splendid Hotel in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, a country that shares border with Ghana, taking hostages and holding the hotel for several hours. Security forces in Burkina Faso were ultimately talented to successfully free hundreds of hostages, but after 29 lost their lives and approximately 50 injured in the attack.

In addition, in early March 2016, a similar attack took place in the resort town of Grand-Bassam in Ivory Coast, also a neighboring country to Ghana, where unidentified attackers stormed three separate hotels, killing approximately 20 and injuring scores of others. Even though Ghana has not witnessed any terrorist attack, its comparative stability should not be taken for granted as the country faces numerous threats of HGT.

In the view that HGT seems to pose serious threat to Ghana and its citizens, even though the country has found itself in an unstable region, this research seeks to examine the significant roles of the state and non-state actors in countering the peril of HGT in Ghana, and the challenges involved. There were reports that some Ghanaians returned home after gaining experience from fighting abroad with terrorist organizations and this may pose risks to the emergence and spread of HGT in Ghana. There is also the threat of Islamic radicalism in Ghana and the threat posed by ISIS regarding their recruitment of some Ghanaian Muslim youth.

This Chapter seeks to elaborate on the above issues and their relations to HGT. Studying HGT in Ghana is even more urgent and imperative given the events in other West African countries, and considering its unique democratic achievements and the fact that it has not yet experienced any domestic or international terrorism attack.

1.1   Ghana and HGT Threat

Ghana in earlier times, known as Gold Coast is a country on the west coast of Africa. It is bordered by Ivory Coast in the west, Togo in the East, Burkina Faso in the north, and the Atlantic Ocean in the south. In 1992, Ghana moved into a transition of multi-party democracy and became the most secured nation in the sub-region and Africa as a whole (BBC country profile, 2017).

After its move to multi-party democratic system in 1992; Ghana has completed a key tread towards amalgamating its self-governing accomplishments. Not like many African nations, Ghana has witnessed seven gratis and flaxen voting in 25 years and three nonviolent transition of power, which makes the nation more stable and solid in achieving developments.

Globally, Ghana has gained positive recognition, as it ranks 26th in the 2016 World Press Freedom Index and 2nd in Africa. The Index measures the pluralism, liberty and independence of the media, excellence of lawmaking structure and protection of members of the press in each of the 180 nations in the grading. Ghana's governance has also seen vital development through the strengthening of its self-governing testimonial. There are now 24 recognized political parties in Ghana (Electoral Commission, 2016).

According to Hirsch (2013), Ghana has surfaced, by assessment to its neighboring countries, as one of the very few nations where voting are supervised smoothly, and where ballot vote disagreement are determined by judges, not armed groups, while the political situation is dominated by two biggest parties, New Patriotic Party and National Democratic Congress. The greatest conventional

democratic system in Africa has been experienced in Ghana. The nation also has a strong wisdom of national character and harmony that replace other connection such as customs and clan, arising out of a learning system in which people from diverse environments apt to merge (Ghana Investment Promotion Centre, 2017).

Over the past years, Ghana has been touted as an oasis of peace and stability in a rather volatile and conflict-prone West African sub-region. Whereas many of its neighboring countries have descended into deadly civil wars and conflicts, Ghana has been able to maintain relative cohesion and stability, even though there have been many pockets of communal conflicts and disturbances in one part of the country or another. As a country and regardless of its various differences, including tribal, religious and political, Ghana has always co-existed peacefully.

Ghana seems to have avoided all the pitfalls and traps which tend to trigger such deadly conflicts in neighboring countries. It is against this background that the growing and almost entrenched impression which is created particularly during electoral cycles that the country is some sort of a war zone and in urgent need of peace-promotion measures should be worrying.

However, Ghana cannot be complacent with a false sense of peace and stability. Yet by the same token it needs to guard against the potential of a few self-seeking individuals or group of individuals taking advantage of developments elsewhere to create this climate of fear, particularly during the count-down to elections (Nyamenna, 2012).

In terms of its natural and human resources, Ghana is favorably endowed country. Since the colonial period Ghana has depended largely on Coaco production,

the extraction of minerals like gold, diamond manganese, forest production like timber and bauxite and discovered oil in 2007. Over the years, Ghana's economy grew because the country had accumulated enough resources from earnings on its export trade and investment including roads, railways, the ports and communication (Asante, 2011).

The system of governance in Ghana operates with the office of the President, who is both head of state and head of administration, and of a multi-party system, also those elected or appointed to serve in high offices as its nerve-centre. The leadership participates in the determination of the most important policies but the power of the president is extensive. Flag Staff house/Jubilee house is the seat of government and the administrative power is worked out by the government, while the lawmaking command is vested in both the administration and parliament, with the courts being independent of the decision-making and the legislature.

Ghana is like any other African country is full of diverse ethnic groups, tribes and religious beliefs. In spite the diverse nature of Ghanaians, they share common values that weld their various faith, ideologies, culture and tribes together as one people. Even though, time has proven that the values of Ghana as a nation and as individuals are not static but keep evolving.

The Constitution of Ghana includes a structure of verification and balances, with supremacy shared between a president, a unicameral parliament, a council of state, and an independent judiciary (Asante, 2011). Enshrined in the constitution, is article 12 (2) that reads, *Every person in Ghana, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion, creed or gender shall be entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual contained in this Chapter but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest*

(Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1993). This article provides citizens of Ghana the right to practice any religion of their choice, though in a way that does not infringe on the rights of non-practitioners of any religion.

The religion of Islam is practiced extensively and widely in Ghana. Its existence in contemporary Ghana dates back to the 10th Century which corresponds with the end of the old Ghana Empire. Historically, Islam preceded Christianity in Ghana. According to Azumah (2000), Muslims came to modern Ghana in the 14th Century, mostly from the north. Muslim religious scholars generally identified to as "Malams", influenced a few northern local rulers, principally through the performance of sooth-saying and the delivering of trinkets and talisman for medicinal and war intentions (Bari, 2014).

A few aggressive campaigns were carried out by slave-raiding Muslim factions in the late 19th Century in Salaga of the northern region. These operations only thrived in building the affected ethnic groups' reluctance to Islam. Traders from Nigeria and other neighboring countries brought Islam into touch with the Ashanti Kingdom in the late 18th Century. But in Gt. Accra and Central Regions, Islam was first felt in the 1830s through migration of the freed slaves from the East Indies (Bari, 2013).

Yet, in the last four decades, there has been a significant increase in Muslim activity in Ghana, resulting in a proliferation of Islamic organizations. In 1971, a Muslim missionary organization known as the Islamic Reformation and Research Centre was started in Accra. Activists of the Center refer to it as *Ahlul Sunnah Wal Jamaa'* disciple regulations, the association is fund by the *Dar al-Ifta* دار الإنتاء of

Saudi Arabia, other Gulf countries and has since created thousands of followers who have been to universities in Arab countries for additional studies (Bari, 2014).

The population of Muslims in Ghana is about 18% to 30% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). Despite religious tensions in some West African countries since the mid-1970s, Muslims and Christians in Ghana have had brilliant relationships. Their pleasant affairs are steered by the influence of the Muslim and Christian commissioners and leaders' councils. Most of these religious tensions experienced by some other countries in West Africa especially the northern part of Nigeria have escalated into terrorist's attacks that are mainly home-grown.

HGT is considered as a major threat to the safety and security of countries around the world and in Africa; Ghana is no exception. Generally, Africa is alleged to be a focal point of HGT based on known situations and circumstances such as war, poverty ailment, bad governance and corruption (Sosuh, 2011). Based on those conditions, it is very intricate to discover what comprises HGT as a lot of the efforts by the individuals in quest of their recognized nationwide root and freedom were ended through violent means.

According to Muhlhausen and McNeill (2011), between 1969 and 2009, there were 38,345 terrorist events around the world. Out of the aforementioned attacks, 7.8 percent were against the United States, while 92.2 percent were against the rest of the world. United States' country reports indicated that, Africa has witnessed considerable stages of HGT action in 2015 and 2016 (U.S Department of States, 2015). While home-grown terror attacks in the developed world surge 650% in one year, the total people deceased by the terror attacks in 2015 in Africa is as much, if not bigger than the deaths meted out by ISIS in the Middle East (Gaouette, 2016).

This calls for concern and the implementation of certain initiatives geared towards preventing HGT. Islam as a religion forbids acts of violence, but some of its followers are deemed to be perpetuators of HGT.

In the European concern; France, Belgium, Turkey, Britain have been striving to curb this menace. The case in Africa is not different as countries like Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Mali and some other countries all find themselves in this same struggle. This calls for a serious attention from the state and non-state actors to work hard and ensure the safety of their citizens.

Even though Ghana has not experienced any form of terrorism like its counterpart in the African sub-region, lessons learnt from the devastating relics of HGT in these countries, raises eye-brows on the need for state and non-state actors to take concrete steps in avoiding HGT from rearing its ugly head in the nation.

However, one may assume that, the state and non-state actors in Ghana have not done enough to prevent HGT. But in Mathew (2013) thesis, he hypothesized that, Ghana is not adequately prepared in terms of policies and counter-terrorism strategy to prevent terrorism from occurring or to battle it if it crops up. Therefore, he suggested many policies and mechanisms that can be put in place to prevent terrorism.

Accepting this fact, Anim (2015) quoted a high ranking administrator of the Ghana Customs Service, who pointed out that, actions and tricks of Boko Haram intimidate the safety of the region and the world at large. The customs officer explained that among other things that, once HGT has occurred in Nigeria; it is only a matter of time before it happens in Ghana. He argued that Ghana and Nigeria are

Anglophone nations occupied by the British; with similar social structures. This is a clear affirmation of how vulnerable Ghana is with regards to the threat of HGT.

In Obour's (2016) report, he wrote that, in the first quarter of 2016 the *Ghanaian Chronicle Newspaper* reported the vigilance of the law enforcement agencies, in reaction to the implicit imminent terrorist attack on Ghana. The report further indicated the measures taken by the state as, police officers disguised as supporting staff, made their attendance amiably felt at various locations of public crowd, mainly hotels and malls. This development was followed by Prophet TB Joshua's prophesy that, Ghana was about to witness its first terrorist attack. The attack, he said, could occur either on Thursday, Friday or Saturday of April 2016.

Also, according to a *Voice of America's* news reporter Forson (2016), a leaked memorandum hinted the threat of a terror attack in Ghana is real, quoting intelligence from the Ghana National Security Council Secretariat. The memo was addressed to Ghana's immigration service to put stronger border surveillance, including thorough profiling of people coming to Ghana from Mali, Niger and Libya. This development called the then president of Ghana his Excellency John Dramani Mahama (2012-2017) to address the nation and explain the measures taken by the government to curtail that threat.

In the president's address, he assured Ghanaians of their safety while saying that: "we have trained our own special forces. Currently, a significant number of them are on standby. We are preparing for any such [eventuality] but we need the alertness of the public" (The Chronicle Newspaper, 2016). By this assertion, it appears that the national security was prepared for any ultimate terrorist attack by positioning its men at very vantage points around the country.

But there are more issues of concern regarding HGT threat in Ghana. As there are factors that could cause HGT in Ghana if not properly addressed. These include; several Ghanaians in Libya who went in search of jobs and Tornyi (2015) reported that ISIS militant group kidnapped a Ghanaian Christian and two other Africans in eastern Libya in 2015. In September 2017, the current United Nations recognized Libyan administration declared that it has recognized at least 50 forefront fighters of ISIS to be Ghanaians.

This was enclosed in a statement from an enquiry into crimes committed in cities across Libya by the so-called Islamic State released by the Head of Investigations at the Office of the Attorney General, Al-Seddiq al-Sour (*Citi Fm Online*, Tuesday, October 10, 2017). Such situations can make Ghanaians who return home, after ISIS captured some of the cities in Libya, culpable and capable of igniting the flame of HGT as witnessed in many countries.

According to Jaiprgas (2016), there is increasing alarming issues among regional counterterrorism executives that the United States-backed fight mechanism surrounding ISIS is fortuitously producing an extremist alumni system in Southeast Asia and some other places; made up of escaped rebellious looking for a safe refuge in their home nations. This is because the threats posed by the foreign terrorist fighter returnees are real and looming.

However, the United Nations Security Council Counter Terrorism Committee (UNCTC) during Head of States meeting in 2014 defined foreign terrorist fighters as persons who go to a nation other than their country of habitation or nationality for the reason of committing, setting up or training, or involving in terrorist actions or providing or taking part of terrorist training, as well as in linking with fortified conflict.

According to the Security Council, terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Islamic States and related factions have recruited more than 30,000 strange radical fighters from over 100 associate nations. The related challenges are international in nature (UN Security Council, 2014).

Yet, the alarming case of these foreign fighters for Ghana seems to be very perilous, as the state has no data and vivid information on the actual number of youth who had traveled to those areas. These returnees may clearly have momentous influence and may proven to be able to organize or simply inspire attacks back at their home countries. A situation that may compel Islamic State IS to demand far more attacks from its members and loyalists as it suffers on the battlefield in so many places they used to control in Iraq, Syria and Libya.

Nevertheless, in Ghana, there seem to be too little focus on ISIS threats emanating from Western countries; especially by the state actors. Discussing ISIS threat through media houses would never help curb their advancement towards the country; rather, it will furnish them with more information to re-strategize their approach towards Ghanaian Muslims.

Therefore, there is the need for the state and non-state actors to be certain that, Ghanaians would work together to avert terrorism of all types, but should not act blindly, rather must work harder towards a better understanding of the problem and build good protective counter strategies. Equipped with such awareness, the state and non-state actors will be better positioned to develop strategies to prevent religious radicalization that may lead to HGT tragic killings (Willis, 2017).

According to Control Risks Report (2016), religious radicalization has made roads into Ghana, Senegal and Ivory Coast, but remains more limited in Mali, Nigeria and Niger. Ghana and Ivory Coast in particular have seen their Muslim

population grow significantly over the past 30 to 40 years, following influence of immigration from Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Niger, Nigeria and Guinea. The associated importation from threads of Islam has fine-tuned tensions between moderate and more hardliner sections of the population and had contributed to the emergence of radical sects, particular in parts of the north, Ashanti Region and the capital Greater Accra.

Youth unemployment and the weakening of traditional social structures have also allowed radical Muslims to take root in Ghana and Senegal. According to Aning and Abdallah (2013), Ghana's religious radicalization can be best described as adopting or spreading fussy thread or strands of a particular religious' values, beliefs or thought by some Muslim religious groups which are divergent to views and ideas held by other Muslim and non-Muslim groups.

King and Taylor (2011) consider that, radicalization as a practice is not by nuance specific to any rigorous state, religious or political group. But, the term radicalization in its existing figure is often used to illustrate an incident that leads to HGT. The current situation of Muslims around the world today faces a huge number of challenges regarding the fight against extremism and terrorism; Muslims in Ghana are no exception considering the number of Ghanaian Muslim youth who recently flocked to join ISIS and other terrorist groups (Mohammed-Awall, 2015).

Nothing disturbs the mind more than the expression of apparently seeing a Ghanaian Muslim addressing the world as he viciously beheads a fellow human being. But while the number of violent and extremists Ghanaians are relatively small, the issues underlying their reasons for joining terrorist groups are wide spread. One main issue that can be the cause of extremism and terrorism among Ghanaian Muslims is religious radicalization (Hirsch, 2014).

Yet, the role of religion in causing radicalization among Ghanaian Muslims is debatable. Aly (2015) believes that religion plays less role in causing radicalization, because there is no empirical evidence to support such claim. Patterson (2015) has attributed the cause of religious radicalization among Muslims to four main concerns. These causes have served to deepen Ghana's vulnerability to radicalization: organizational and traditional issues, grumbles, foreign policy of super powers, and radical ideology.

Aning and Abdallah (2013) also affirmed that, through financial support from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Morocco, Algeria, and some other Islamic countries, Ghanaian Muslims have developed a radical nature of defending their ideology. In Ghana, there are four main Muslim sects classified as follows:

i. Tariqatul Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya of the Sufis groups in Ghana; these particular groups are presently known in Ghana as the Tijaniyya Movement under the leadership of Zaeemul Haraka Shaikh Abdul Wadud Sisse who has been praised by his followers for transforming this faction through developmental programs.

ii. Qadiyaniya or Ahamadiya faction is a movement led by Alhaji Maulvi Mohammed Bin Salih.

iii. Ahlussunna Waljama'a led by Sheikh Umar Ibrahim Imam. According to Aning & Abdallah (2013), this is a group that has been specifically regarded by their rival groups in Ghana as Wahabis. It is from this sect that Salafis and Jamat Tabligh emerged in Ghana.

iv. The Shiites or Shias are also represented in Ghana, but with very few followers.

In the present Ghanaian situation, there is a group that emerged from Ahlul Sunnah. This group is identified as Salafis; some Ghanaian Muslim scholars classified this group as a radical religious group for the reason of their search for modification and return to the times of yore, the Qur'an and Hadith. The quest for this modification replicates in their ideas, doctrines and advocating approach.

Salafis apparent essential thoughts at times lead to violent behavior. Nevertheless, exercising violence is not constrained to this group alone in Ghana. Their equal factions, Tijaniyya and Shia have also been well-known to commit violence as a reaction or response to supposed and definite assaults by the Ahlussunna faction. Yet, the Ahmadis association also engaged in aggression and violent behavior with the conventional Tijaniyya Muslim in the 1930s and 1940s when the belief was being launched in Ghana.

At the moment, Ahmadis are perceived by many non-Muslim Ghanaians to be modest Muslims because of their focus on attracting persons and increasing their fizz of persuasion in the course of developing projects rather than fierce extremism. As for *Jama'at Tabligh*, جماعة الدعوة و التبليغ they fundamentally connect to preaching and spreading the message of Islam in mosques throughout the country. Consequently, this group of Ahlul Sunnah is not linked to violent radicalization in Ghana (Aning & Abdallah, 2013).

This confirms that the violent nature of Ghanaian Muslims is not targeted at the state, but if not checked well, it could undermine the peace and stability that the country enjoys and lead to HGT once ISIS transmit their ideology to the Muslim youth in Ghana.

Even so, the Islamic State (IS) is a threat in Ghana as indicated by the Ghana National Security. In the middle of 2015, Ghana grappled with a report suggesting

that a fresh Ghanaian Muslim under-graduate (Nazir Alema) and his colleague joined the Islamic State, the most dangerous terrorist group in the world. It was a report that caused fear and panic among Ghanaian citizens, both Muslims and Christians (Shaban 2016).

According to Mullen's (2015) analysis, ISIS appeals to young Muslims by religious idealism to escape the frustration some of them may be going through due to the difficult life in Africa for recruitment. However, it is established that ISIS has recruitment agencies in so many countries around the world.

These recruiters preach to the youth the luxury life they will be enjoying after being killed in a battle field while fighting against unbelievers. As an extremist, the person will feel that is the best opportunity for him to take advantage and be part of the group. The recruiters also may quote some Quranic verses and interpret them wrongly to convince the youth to join the organization.

In the first quarter of 2016, the government of Ghana estimated that an unspecific number of Ghanaian Muslims joined ISIS to fight in Syria, Libya and Iraq (Citi FM Online, 2015). In 2017, according to *Daily Graphic Online Report* (04-05-2017), a 21-year-old from northern Ghana was in 2016 prevented from being recruited by the Islamic State's agencies in Ghana, through the effort of the Senior Manager of the West Africa Centre for Counter-Extremism (WACCE), Mr Mutaru Mumuni Muqthar.

The senior manager explained that, his association (WACCE), ever since its founding in 2013, has being able to prevent about twenty Ghanaians from being recruited by extremist groups. What is more alarming now is not about the number of those who joined ISIS, but the type of personalities involved. These are not just ordinary citizens but students at their tertiary levels of education. Who knows, may

be some Muslim lecturers, civil servants and even security personnel may also be involved.

Ghana's National Security Council (NSC) in 2016 disclosed that, the country faces a credible terrorist threat following Ivory Coast's attack (Shaban 2016). This reportage made the president John Dramani Mahama (2012-2017) who was also the head of National Security Council, called an emergency meeting at which the security situation in the country was reviewed. Prior to this news, what many Ghanaians thought was far has started knocking on their doors.

The above discussion indicates that, there seem to be real threats of HGT in Ghana that must be taken very seriously. The state and non state actors cannot wait for terrorist-righteous anger to occur before they put in place necessary measures to counter the possibility of its occurrence. Therefore, in line with this study, it is necessary to subsequently discuss the roles of the state and non-state actors in preventing HGT and strategies of countering HGT in Ghana.

1.2 Problem Statement

HGT is a relatively new security challenge in West Africa. Al Qaeda, Boko Haram and Islamic State militants have challenged the sovereignties of nations and contributed to instability of West Africa. These groups have assumed a militant form in the region, thus recruiting youth and engaging them in HGT acts. The phenomenon has made many policy makers and security experts in West Africa to describe the region as a hot spot of rising home-grown terrorist actions.

The bloody siege in Mali, Niger, Cameroun, Chad, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast underline the evolution of brutal activities of Boko Haram, Islamic State and

Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) beyond their traditional theatre of conflict in Nigeria, Iraq, Yemen, France, Belgium, Turkey, Egypt and Syria.

The most dreadful issue actually, is the rising persuasion of the radical groups in the midst of educated Ghanaian Muslim youth. There was a report that links some well educated Ghanaian Muslims with Islamic State in the year 2015 (Citi FM Online, August 28 2015). Hence, the ideological influence of ISIS on the Ghanaian Muslim youth is quite alarming and noticeable.

The fortitude of HGT and the increase of sadistic radical groups in the West African region underscore the confines of straight approaches to battle them. Several years of skills have established that unskilled approaches and a solitary intelligence focused on security actions are not enough in the global battle against HGT.

The recent recruitment of Ghanaian Muslims to ISIS is thus far one more indication of the serious danger Islamic State, AQIM and Boko Haram pose to the West African region and the world at large, particularly to Ghana and countries with minority Muslims.

This recruitment diary suggest that if care is not taken, Ghana as a country can be targeted by the Islamic State, Boko Haram or AQIM inspired terrorist attacks from its citizens or individuals outside the country.

The above factors indicate that, in Ghana's case, HGT threat exists. But why has Ghana not yet experienced any incidence of HGT and what have the state and non state actors did to prevent it, what are the counter-terrorism strategies adopted by both actors?

1.3   Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are to:

i.   Identify the nature of HGT threat in Ghana

ii.   Assess the impact of the roles played by the state and non-state actors in countering HGT in Ghana

iii. Analyze the challenges of preventing HGT in Ghana by the state and non-state actors

1.4   Research Questions

The research questions of this research are:

i.   What is the nature of HGT in Ghana?

ii.   How did the state and non-state actors prevent HGT in Ghana?

iii. Why is it important for the state and non-state actors to overcome the challenges of preventing HGT? And what are the challenges?

1.5   Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to address issues of preventing HGT and the challenges involved. The study will serve as a platform for other studies on preventing Ghanaian Muslims from religious extremism that may lead to HGT. It is hoped that the information that would be generated from this research will serve as a tool for the government of Ghana, academia, researchers in general and Muslim religious groups. Researchers can use this study to look at preventing Muslim youth from HGT, and critically analyze its effect on Muslim youth around the West

African region. This study will also afford the international community an opportunity to critically evaluate their international relations strategy.

1.6   Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on how the state and non-state actors countered HGT in Ghana and the challenges they faced from the period of 2015 to 2017. This is because the regional block of West Africa is endangered by HGT from the activities of radical Muslims and terrorist groups.

Ghana is taken as a case study in West Africa due to the enormous size of the West African region. Moreover, Ghana occupies a strategic location in West Africa and shares boarders with three (3) different countries with similar socioeconomic and political characteristics. The importance of choosing Ghana also results from the attention it has attracted from both regional and international communities.

The scope of this study is limited to opinion leaders and institutions that have the responsibilities of countering HGT in Ghana in relation to the roles of state and non-state actors. Non-state actors are restricted to Imams in Ghana, while state actors are limited to members of the Ghanaian Armed Forces, Ghana Police Service and National Security Council (NSC).

The study also focused on the origin and nature of HGT in Ghana; the threats of Islamic radicalism that terrorist groups like ISIS pose to the security of Ghana and the challenges of preventing their acts of terrorism.

1.7 Definition of Concepts

State: This is a protective entity guarded by a government and occupied by inhabitants. States play major roles in ensuring security, stability or causing conflict.

Non-state Actors*: are structured factions that have an ordered structure, functioning outside state by means of forces to attain political ambitions or making an alleged political approach. Non-state actors may work with the state to achieve development or work against it to cause conflict.

Radicalization: is a practice by which a person or faction adopts excessive political, social, or religious principles and desires that refuse or demoralize the character or challenge modern ideas and expressions of liberty of choice.

Extremism: This is confidence and hold up of ideas that are extremely far from what most individuals regard as acceptable or sensible.

Imam in Ghana: Imams in Ghana are those who lead Islamic prayers and provide moral services to Muslim communities and also contribute to enhance living conditions through providing neighbourhood supports and aid. One of the main tasks of Imams is providing religious counsel to young Muslims who plan to wed. Notwithstanding that Imams are carefully selected at the community, district municipal and regional levels. Muslims in a community decide and accept a responsible individual who is measured, educated, knowledgeable and astute.

1.8 Research Methodology

This section explains the chosen methods of information gathering and investigation procedures. Specifically, it touches on the research design, population,

sample, data collection instrument and procedure, data analysis and the whole research procedure.

1.8.1 Research plan

It is noticeable that the research topic from the literature review is very complex particularly because it deals with HGT as a threat to human security in Ghana and strategy of countering terrorism.

This demonstrated that a qualitative research method would be more suitable than a quantitative research method. Qualitative data presents an affluent detailed depiction to be constructed regarding why and how individuals act in certain habits, and their move towards those actions. Qualitative facts do not only count things, but it is a way of recording individual's feelings, thoughts and activities in better deepness (Liamputtong, 2013).

The recompense of qualitative research is that, it enables the researcher to find out the "why" behind some conducts; this is because instead of investigating figures, the researcher uses language and behavior. An additional benefit of qualitative research is that, there is an immense compact of elasticity involved.

Some examples of qualitative research approaches include focus group discussions (FGDs), interpersonal interviews, or ethnography, which is a means to represent graphically and in writing, the nature of a certain culture of people. Recently, other examples of qualitative research have emerged like: online focus groups, bulletin boards, and short message services (SMS) to explore a population that is advanced in technology.

Based on the above factors, a qualitative research method employed for this study to find out the nature of HGT threat in Ghana, how successful were the state

and non-state actors in Ghana to counter HGT and the potential challenges they faced in executing those tasks in all the ten regions across Ghana (Gt. Accra, Ashanti, Northern, Central, Western, Eastern, Brong Ahafo, Upper West, Upper East, and Volta region).

The questions to this pragmatic research were responded to using qualitative data that become visible from auto taped individual in-depth interview, explanations and transcriptions.

1.8.2 Population

A research population is more often than not an outsized group of persons or materials that is the core focal point of a systematic examination. It is for the benefit of the population that researches are completed. Yet, for the reason that the large sizes of populations, scholars frequently cannot assess every person in the population since it is too luxurious and time-consuming.

This is the reason why scholars rely on sampling methods. A research population is also known as a precise gathering of individuals or objects identified to have related uniqueness. All persons or materials within a certain population usually have an ordinary, requisite feature or characteristic. Frequently, the depiction of the population and the ordinary required feature of its components are equal (Shenk and Westerhaus, 1991).

However, taking into consideration the focus of this study and the broad-based nature of Muslims in Ghana, the target population for this study regarding non-state actors is all Imams in all the ten regions in Ghana. The actual estimated population would be very difficult to assert, but can be projected to be between three hundred thousand (300,000) to six hundred thousand (600,000) (Office of the