

COUNTERTERRORISM EFFECTIVENESS EFFECT OF NIGERIAN POLICE FORCE (NPF) TASK STRUCTURE

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined counterterrorism effectiveness effect of Nigerian Police Force (NPF) task structure. Cross-sectional and correlational designs were adopted. A total of 396 participants were drawn from Delta State, Kano State, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, using a multistage sampling technique that incorporated cluster and incidental sampling methods. Data were collected using three structured instruments: Nigerian Police Task Structure Questionnaire, Nigerian Police Organizational Commitment Inventory, and Counterterrorism Effectiveness Inventory. Pearson Correlational analysis was employed to test the stated hypotheses. Findings revealed that Nigerian Police Task Structure significantly correlated with counterterrorism effectiveness ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.450$, $N = 396$). Nigerian Police Task Structure also significantly correlated with all the dimensions of Police Counterterrorism Effectiveness namely “Prevent” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.200$, $N = 396$), “Pursue” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.400$, $N = 396$), “Protect” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.500$, $N = 396$), “Prepare” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.262$, $N = 396$), and “International Action” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.278$, $N = 396$). The implications of the study are that enhancing task structure of the Nigerian Police Force are essential for improving counterterrorism effectiveness, fostering police image, and strengthening public confidence in security framework of the nation. The study recommends improving structural clarity within police operations, conducting periodic public perception assessments of the Nigerian Police, so that the public will assist identify Nigerian Police’s structural and performance limitations, which are necessary during Police training. Citizen’s Self-defense against terrorists is also recommended, so as to reduce counterterrorism burden on the Nigerian Police. The study has contributed knowledge to counterterrorism effectiveness by bringing into focus the necessity that the public should be incorporated in identifying the structural and performance limitations of the Nigerian Police Force in counterterrorism, which should be part of Police counterterrorism training.*

KEYWORDS: Counterterrorism, Effectiveness, Nigerian Police Force, NPF, Task Structure

INTRODUCTION

The threat of terrorism in Nigeria has witnessed a disturbing and escalating trajectory in recent times. Transnational terrorist groups in Northern Nigeria, characterized by diverse membership compositions, have continued to perpetrate acts of violence within the context of armed conflicts, while simultaneously devising increasingly sophisticated means of acquiring weapons and financing their operations, including through transnational organized crime, complex money-laundering schemes, and elaborate financial networks (Ardovini, 2026).

Terrorists groups in Northern Nigeria are equally implicated in severe human rights

abuses, with many of their activities rising to the threshold of war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is further noteworthy that human rights violations committed in the course of counterterrorism operations have, historically, tended to erode the legitimacy and undermine the overall effectiveness of such measures (UNODC, 2021). Against this complex and volatile security backdrop, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) faces considerable institutional challenges with respect to task structure in the pursuit of counterterrorism effectiveness.

The prevailing task structure within the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) is seen by citizens as indefinably unsupportive of proactive

counter-terrorism strategies, contributing to public disengagement and criticism. Citizens frequently perceive poor interdepartmental coordination and insufficient support systems as indicators of a dysfunctional police force, exacerbating feelings of insecurity and mistrust. This perception of an undefined task structure, as noted by Osayi et al. (2023), undermines the Nigerian Police Force's (NPF) ability to effectively adapt to evolving counter-terrorism challenges, further compromising their operational effectiveness and diminishing public confidence in their capacity to maintain safety.

Countless studies have examined various aspects of terrorism, including its psychological impacts, sociopolitical drivers, and counter-terrorism strategies (Jongman & Schmid, 2023). However, not much study, known to the researcher have simultaneously integrated and investigated how task structure of the Nigerian Police relate to their effectiveness in executing counterterrorism operations. This gap in research highlighted the need for a comprehensive analysis that considers these critical systemic variables in understanding the performance of the Nigerian Police in counterterrorism.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to ascertain the perception of task structure and organizational commitment of the Nigerian Police Force in counter-terrorism effectiveness. The specific purpose of this study is to:

1. Ascertain whether task structure of Nigerian Police Force in counterterrorism effectiveness.
2. Find out the extent of relationship between task structure of Nigerian Police Force and dimensions of counterterrorism effectiveness.

Research Questions

The present study sought to answer the following research questions.

1. How effective is task structure of Nigerian Police Force in counterterrorism?
2. What is the extent of relationship between task structure of Nigerian Police Force and dimensions of counterterrorism effectiveness?

Significance of the Study

This study brings into focus the effectiveness of task structured of Nigerian Police Force in combating terrorism. By exploring the task structure of the Nigerian Police Force, the study assesses whether the police as operating with clarity, coherence, and strategic organization in their approach in tackling terrorism. A clearly defined and efficiently communicated task structure within the police is likely to inspire public confidence in the security framework of the Police and policing institution of the country.

When the public perceives that Police operations are systematically executed and well-coordinated, it reinforces the idea that terrorists threats are actively being deterred through situational control and operational preparedness. The outcome from this study can be instrumental in informing the training and development programmes of the Nigerian Police Force. By identifying specific areas where citizens perceive deficiencies in task structure, tailored training programmes can be developed to address these gaps.

Operational Definition of Measured Variables

Task Structure: This refers to the perceived organization's clarity, procedures, protocols, frameworks and systematic arrangement of duties and responsibilities assigned to police officers as measured with the Police Task Structure Questionnaire by Van Der Post (1997).

Counter Terrorism Effectiveness: This refers to extent to which the Nigerian Police Force achieves its objectives in preventing, pursuing, protecting, preparing and responding to terrorist activities as measured with the Counterterrorism Effectiveness Inventory by Nwankwo and Owoh (2026).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Anchor/Base

The Situational Crime Prevention Theory (SCPT), developed by Clarke (1980), serves as the theoretical anchor for this study. The theory posits that criminal behaviour can be prevented by manipulating situational conditions in ways that increase the effort required to commit crime, increase the risks of detection and apprehension, reduce the potential rewards

of offending, and remove opportunities that facilitate criminal acts. Although originally developed to explain conventional crime prevention strategies, the theory has increasingly been applied to terrorism and security studies because terrorist activities often depend on opportunities, vulnerabilities, and weaknesses within security environments.

The central proposition of Situational Crime Prevention Theory is that crime prevention is not achieved solely through punishment or offender rehabilitation but also through the creation of conditions that make criminal activities more difficult, risky, and less rewarding. In counter-terrorism contexts, the effectiveness of security institutions depends largely on their ability to establish and maintain organizational arrangements that limit opportunities for terrorist activities and enhance operational responsiveness. Consequently, the theory provides a useful framework for understanding how organizational factors within the Nigerian Police Force may influence perceived counter-terrorism effectiveness.

In this study, task structure represents an important situational control mechanism. Task structure refers to the extent to which responsibilities, operational procedures, communication channels, and command hierarchies are clearly defined and systematically organized. From the perspective of SCPT, clearly structured tasks enhance coordination, accountability, and operational efficiency, thereby reducing institutional vulnerabilities that could be exploited by terrorist actors. When citizens perceive the Nigerian Police Force as possessing clear operational structures and effective coordination mechanisms, they are more likely to regard the institution as capable of preventing, detecting, and responding effectively to terrorist threats.

Empirical Review

Ike et al. (2025) conducted a comprehensive systematic review examining Community Perspectives of Terrorism and the Nigerian Government's Counterterrorism Strategies, synthesizing findings from 21 empirical studies published between 2015 and 2024. The inclusion criteria focused on peer-reviewed articles and field-based reports

addressing public perception, terrorism drivers, and policy-level responses across northern, central, and Eastern Nigeria. The researchers adopted PRISMA guidelines for study selection and applied a thematic synthesis framework for analysis. The review identified three dominant themes shaping public perception: (1) Socioeconomic Deprivation, (2) Religious and Ethnic Polarization, and (3) Institutional Distrust linked to Security Force Abuses. These themes were present in over 85% of the studies reviewed.

A meta-thematic pattern revealed that communities experiencing poverty, unemployment, and displacement were more likely to distrust state counterterrorism policies, viewing them as repressive or politically biased rather than protective. Furthermore, over 70% of the reviewed studies reported that perceived military brutality and lack of accountability, especially in the Northeast and Middle Belt, exacerbated radicalization and community resistance to cooperation with security agencies. In contrast, studies that documented community-inclusive strategies such as local peace committees, religious leader involvement, and youth empowerment programs showed higher levels of public cooperation and trust in state interventions.

The authors concluded that Nigeria's counterterrorism efforts remain largely top-down and reactive, often alienating the very communities they aim to protect. They recommended a community-centered, dialogic approach, emphasizing co-production of security, transparent policing, and reconciliation mechanisms as critical to improving legitimacy and long-term success in counter-terrorism strategy. Building on this concern over "top-down" approaches, Usamotu and Agara (2024) shift the focus from community perception to an institutional lens, critically appraising the capacity of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) in preventing and combating terrorism in Nigeria.

Lawanson (2024) employed a convergent mixed-methods design, integrating data from 350 structured questionnaires and 20 semi-structured interviews conducted across Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States. Participants included both male and female adults from

diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, selected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Quantitative data were analyzed using independent samples t-tests and ANOVA, while qualitative responses underwent thematic coding and narrative analysis. Findings revealed that gender did not significantly influence perception of terrorism or confidence in counter-terrorism strategies ($t(348) = 1.21, p = .227$), suggesting a shared sense of insecurity and equal exposure to terrorism-related trauma across sexes.

However, religious affiliation significantly affected respondents' trust in government efforts ($F(2, 347) = 6.84, p \leq .001$). Specifically, Muslim respondents ($M = 2.83, SD = 0.76$) were more likely to perceive counter-terrorism interventions as unjustly targeting their communities, while Christian respondents ($M = 3.45, SD = 0.69$) expressed greater support for government operations, citing a perceived protection advantage. The interviews revealed deep-seated religious mistrust, politicization of terrorism narratives, and concerns over military neutrality, especially in mixed-religion towns.

Communities also reported limited access to trauma support services and a lack of religiously inclusive communication strategies during anti-terrorism campaigns. Lawanson concluded that counter-terrorism policy in Nigeria remains vulnerable to misinterpretation along religious lines, and recommended the integration of faith-based peace mediators, the training of security forces in religious sensitivity, and community-level interfaith forums to foster inclusive, trust-based cooperation with affected populations. Terzungwe et al. (2024) expand the scope to evaluate how the broader performance of Nigeria's security institutions affects national development and the structural stability of the state.

Nte et al. (2023) evaluated the challenges and prospects of ICT utilization in counter-terrorism efforts within Nigeria's transitional democracy, using a convergent mixed-method design that included 220 survey participants drawn from security agencies (military, police, DSS), and 15 key informant interviews with ICT experts and policymakers. Quantitative data were analyzed using regression

and ANOVA, while thematic content analysis was applied to qualitative data. Findings showed that ICT deployment in intelligence gathering and surveillance significantly predicted counter-terrorism success ($R^2 = .62, F(1, 218) = 35.71, p \leq .001$). However, barriers such as poor digital infrastructure, limited inter-agency data sharing, and political interference significantly hindered full ICT integration. Qualitative findings emphasized the disconnect between policy and implementation, and revealed that most security operatives lacked proper ICT training.

The researchers advocated for institutional capacity building through consistent training, investment in ICT infrastructure, and a national digital security framework to support counter-terrorism operations. They concluded that sustainable ICT utilization is critical to combating evolving terrorist threats in Nigeria's democratic context.

Ibrahim et al. (2022) study, adopted a cross-sectional design, employing MANOVA and regression analysis. Findings showed that operational clarity, a core aspect of task structure, significantly influenced counter-terrorism success ($P \leq .05 \geq .039 \text{ \& } .027; P \leq .001 \geq .000$). Military operatives recorded higher operational clarity and success rates compared to DSS agents. The researchers recommended integrating situational task briefs and mission updates to reduce uncertainty and improve coordination. Building on the operational-level insights into counter-terrorism effectiveness, Bashir et al. (2022) broadened the analytical scope to examine the macroeconomic consequences of terrorism across 22 South Asian countries between 1990 and 2020.

Khan et al. (2023) explored the effectiveness of military counter-terrorism operations in Afghanistan from 2005 to 2020. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, analyzing both qualitative interviews with military personnel and quantitative data on military operations and terrorist activity. The study found that while large-scale military operations resulted in short-term reductions in terrorist activities ($P \leq .05, \beta = -0.36$), they also led to increased civilian casualties and resentment among local populations, which ultimately fueled long-term support for terrorist groups.

The study emphasized the importance of a holistic approach to counter-terrorism that includes not just military force, but also political dialogue, economic development, and support for local governance. The researchers recommended integrating civilian and military efforts, ensuring that counter-terrorism operations are sensitive to local dynamics and the needs of affected communities. Building on the need for multidimensional strategies in counter-terrorism, Bolarinwa and Yakubu (2022) examined how systemic corruption contributes to the persistence of terrorism in West Africa.

Eze et al. (2022) assessed the relationship between Task Structure Awareness and Tactical Readiness in the context of counter-terrorism operations among Police Tactical Units stationed in Abuja and Kaduna, Nigeria, two key hotspots with recurrent terror threats. The researchers employed a cross-sectional survey design, involving 300 purposively selected police officers, with 150 drawn from tactical response units in Abuja and 150 from Kaduna State Command. The study aimed to determine whether officers' understanding of their task structures—the clarity of roles, operational expectations, and chain of command—influenced their readiness and effectiveness during counter-terrorism missions.

A structured questionnaire, validated through a pilot study (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$), was administered to measure two key constructs: Task Structure Awareness (TSA) and Tactical Readiness (TR). Data were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and simple linear regression techniques. Findings revealed that officers with higher levels of Task Structure Awareness exhibited significantly greater Tactical Readiness and Operational Performance, as indicated by linear regression results ($R^2 = .36$, $F(1, 298) = 8.21$, $p \leq .05 \geq .045$ & $.034$). The study also found that officers in Abuja reported statistically higher levels of TSA than their Kaduna counterparts ($F(1, 298) = 6.89$, $p \leq .05$), which the authors linked to more structured operational briefings and a stronger inter-agency collaboration culture in Abuja due to its strategic position as the Federal Capital.

Furthermore, qualitative feedback gathered in the study revealed that many Kaduna-based officers expressed uncertainty about the scope of their operational mandates, especially during joint force deployments or rapid-response scenarios. Officers cited issues such as last-minute operational changes, insufficient mission-specific briefings, and lack of access to tactical intelligence as barriers to performance. The authors emphasized that Task Structure Awareness serves as a foundational element in preparing tactical teams for high-risk missions, particularly in volatile environments where lapses in coordination can be fatal.

The study concluded that enhancing task structure awareness among tactical personnel not only boosts confidence and decision-making under pressure but also significantly improves the overall efficacy of counter-terrorism operations in Nigeria's security-challenged regions. Still on the theme of operational readiness and institutional effectiveness, Zhao et al. (2022) turned attention to the societal dimension, examining how counter-terrorism policies affect public trust in government institutions across.

Gaps in Literature

A review of the extant literature reveals a substantial body of scholarship on organizational commitment, task structure, and counter-terrorism effectiveness. These concepts have received considerable attention within organizational psychology, criminology, police studies, and security research. Theories such as Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment, Hackman and Oldham's Task Characteristics Model, Cognitive Load Theory, and Clarke's Situational Crime Prevention Theory have significantly contributed to understanding employee behaviour, organizational functioning, and crime prevention mechanisms.

Collectively, these frameworks provide valuable insights into how organizational processes influence individual and institutional outcomes. Despite these contributions, a critical examination of the literature reveals several unresolved empirical, theoretical, methodological, and contextual issues that warrant further investigation.

Empirically, one of the most significant empirical limitations in the existing literature concerns the absence of an integrated examination of task structure, organizational commitment, and perceived counter-terrorism effectiveness. Previous studies have generally examined these variables independently or have focused on isolated relationships between two variables at a time.

Theoretically, the literature also reveals important theoretical deficiencies. Situational Crime Prevention Theory has traditionally been applied to understanding how modifications in environmental conditions reduce opportunities for criminal behaviour. Existing applications have largely focused on offender decision-making processes and the manipulation of situational factors to increase the risks and reduce the rewards associated with criminal activities. While this approach has generated substantial evidence supporting the effectiveness of situational interventions, its application to organizational and psychological processes within policing institutions remains underdeveloped.

Methodological gaps are equally evident in the reviewed literature. Research on organizational commitment and task characteristics has traditionally relied on organizational members as respondents, whereas studies examining police legitimacy, public trust, and counter-terrorism effectiveness have generally relied on community samples. These two research traditions have developed largely independently, resulting in a fragmented understanding of the relationship between organizational processes and public evaluations.

A major contextual gap emerges from the geographical concentration of existing studies. Much of the literature on organizational commitment, task design, police effectiveness, and counter-terrorism has been generated in North America, Europe, and other developed regions. Although these studies provide valuable insights, their findings may not be directly applicable to developing countries characterized by different institutional arrangements, security challenges, and sociocultural realities. The Nigerian context presents a particularly important case for investigation. The Nigerian Police Force operates within an environment

marked by resource constraints, complex security threats, diverse ethnic and religious identities, and evolving public expectations.

Hypotheses

1. Nigerian Police Force task structure will not significantly correlate with counterterrorism effectiveness.
2. Nigerian Police Force task structure will not significantly correlate with dimensions of counterterrorism effectiveness.

METHOD

Participants: A total of three hundred and ninety-six (396) participants were sampled for this study. These participants were drawn from the three States namely Delta State, Kano State, and Federal Capital Territory Abuja (FCT). The sample size was determined using Slovin's (1960) sample size calculation formula, which is commonly applied in survey research to obtain a representative sample from a large population. According to population projections by National Bureau of Statistics (2020), Delta State has an estimated population of approximately 5,307,543, Kano State has an estimated population of approximately 14,253,549 and Abuja has an estimated population of approximately 2,702,443. The formula is given as: $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$. Where: n = the required sample size N = the population size thus: $5,307,543 + 14,253,549 + 2,702,443 = 22,263,535$, e = the margin of error (typically set at 0.05 for a 95% confidence level). Applying the formula: $n = 22,263,535 / (1 + 22,263,535 \times 0.05^2)$
 $n = 22,263,535 / (1 + 22,263,535 \times 0.0025)$
 $n = 22,263,535 / (1 + 55,658.8375)$
 $n = 22,263,535 / 55,659.8375 = 399.99$. n = approximately 400

Therefore, 400 participants were initially targeted for the study. However, after data screening and retrieval, 396 properly completed questionnaires were found suitable for analysis and were subsequently used for the study.

A multistage sampling procedure incorporating cluster and incidental sampling techniques was employed to select participants for the study. This approach was considered

appropriate because the study covered three geographically distinct locations in Nigeria, namely Delta State, Kano State, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, thereby facilitating broad demographic representation and enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

At the first stage, cluster sampling was used to group participants according to the three study locations: Delta State, Kano State, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. These locations constituted the primary clusters from which participants were drawn. At the second stage, participants within the selected clusters were approached using incidental sampling. This technique involved selecting individuals who were readily accessible and willing to participate in the study at the time of data collection. The use of incidental sampling was necessitated by the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame covering all eligible participants across the three study locations.

The combination of cluster and incidental sampling techniques enabled the researcher to access participants from diverse socio-demographic backgrounds while ensuring adequate representation across the study locations. Furthermore, demographic information including gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, years of work experience, local government area of residence, and religion was collected to describe the sample and to examine their potential influence on the study variables.

Instruments: To collect relevant data from participants, three structured and standardized questionnaires were utilized in this study: Nigerian Police Task Structure Questionnaire (NPTSQ), Nigerian Police Organizational Commitment Inventory (NPOCI), and Counterterrorism Effectiveness Questionnaire (CEQ). All instruments were validated for use within the Nigerian policing context and in line with theoretical frameworks related to job characteristics and performance.

Nigerian Police Task Structure Questionnaire was adapted from the Organizational Culture Instrument developed by Van Der Post (1997). The instrument consisted of nine items designed to assess the public's

perception of the structural organization of the Nigerian Police Force. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1=Very Untrue, 2=Untrue, 3=Uncertain, 4=True and 5=Very True.

The construct validity of the instrument was assessed using proximity matrix analysis with the Job Characteristics Index (JCI) serving as a benchmark. Significant convergence was observed, particularly with dimensions such as Task Identity ($r = .741$), Task Significance ($r = .674$), and Feedback ($r = .456$), demonstrating the questionnaire's theoretical alignment. The overall validity coefficient was .842, indicating a high level of convergent validity.

In terms of internal consistency, the scale demonstrated a Cronbach's Alpha reliability of .766, signifying good internal reliability for the sample. The observed minimum score was 11, the maximum score was 40, and the mean score was 20. Normative data from the pilot study indicate a sample mean of 27.111 ($SD = 8.222$), with a mean item score of 3.01, suggesting a generally neutral perception of the structural organization of the Nigerian Police Force among respondents.

Using the standard deviation banding procedure, scores at or above 43.56 ($M + 2SD$) are classified as indicating a very high positive perception of task structure, scores between 35.33 and 43.55 ($M + 1SD$) reflect a high positive perception, scores between 18.89 and 35.32 ($M \pm 1SD$) fall within the average range, scores between 10.67 and 18.88 ($M - 2SD$ to $M - 1SD$) indicate a low or negative perception, and scores at or below 10.66 (below $M - 2SD$) reflect a very low or strongly negative perception of the task structure of the Nigerian Police Force.

Counterterrorism Effectiveness Inventory (CEI) is a 78-item measure developed and validated by Nwankwo and Owoh (2026) to assess citizens' perceptions of the Nigerian Police Force's effectiveness in counterterrorism operations. The scale comprises five dimensions: Prevent (Items 1–13), Pursue (Items 14–36), Protect (Items 37–57), Prepare (Items 58–66), and International Action (Items 67–78). Responses are rated on a 5-point scale from 1 = Totally ineffective, 2 =

Very ineffective, 3 = Unsatisfactory, 4 = Effective, 5 = Very effective.

Convergent validity was assessed using also a proximity matrix against the Job Characteristics Index (JCI). The instrument showed strong alignment with Task Identity ($r = .776$), Task Significance ($r = .796$), and Feedback ($r = .630$). At the dimensional level, the CTES demonstrated strong internal convergence, with similarity coefficients: Prevent (.849), Pursue (.848), Protect (.713), Prepare (.789), and International Action (.784), yielding an overall validity coefficient of .921.

The overall Cronbach's Alpha reliability was .823, indicating strong internal consistency. The subscales also demonstrated acceptable reliability: Prevent: $\alpha = .763$, Pursue: $\alpha = .737$, Protect: $\alpha = .718$, Prepare: $\alpha = .767$, International Action: $\alpha = .746$. The observed minimum score was 99, the maximum score was 328, and the mean score was 164.

Normative data from the pilot study indicate that scores ranged from an obtained minimum of 99 to an obtained maximum of 331, yielding an obtained score range of 232. The sample mean was 215.149 ($SD = 64.183$), with a mean item score of 2.76, suggesting that respondents perceived the Nigerian Police Force's counterterrorism effectiveness as generally moderate. Employing the standard deviation banding procedure for norm construction, scores between 279.33 and 328.00 (at or above $M + 1SD$) are classified as reflecting a very high perception of counterterrorism effectiveness, scores between 215.15 and 279.32 (M to $M + 1SD$) reflect a high perception, scores between 150.97 and 215.14 ($M - 1SD$ to M) fall within the average range, scores between 99.00 and 150.96 ($M - 1SD$ to the obtained minimum) indicate a low perception, and scores below 99.00 reflect a very low perception of the counterterrorism effectiveness of the Nigerian Police Force.

Procedure: Prior to the commencement of data collection, an introductory letter was obtained from the Department of Psychology, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University to serve as official authorization for the study. The letter was used to introduce the researcher and the purpose of the study to prospective

participants. In addition, five research assistants were recruited and trained on the objectives of the study as regards to ethical requirements, participant recruitment procedures, questionnaire administration, and retrieval processes to ensure uniformity in data collection.

Data collection was conducted through direct face-to-face interactions with participants across the three study locations, namely Delta State, Kano State, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. These locations were selected to provide broader geographical and socio-cultural representation within Nigeria. A total of 520 questionnaires were distributed across the three study locations to accommodate possible non-response and incomplete returns. Following the screening of the data, 396 properly completed questionnaires were found suitable for analysis.

Of these, 198 respondents were drawn from Delta State, 120 respondents were drawn from Kano State, while 78 respondents were drawn from the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. This distribution ensured adequate representation of participants from the three study locations and facilitated meaningful comparisons across diverse socio-cultural contexts within Nigeria. Delta State was the primary study location and the researcher's base of operation, therefore a larger proportion of respondents was drawn from the state. The larger number of questionnaires was distributed to compensate for possible non-response, incomplete responses, and questionnaire attrition.

Using the established sampling procedure, the researcher and the trained research assistants approached prospective participants to participate in the study. At the point of contact, each participant was provided with an informed consent form attached to the front page of the questionnaire package. The consent form contained detailed information regarding the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, the expected duration of participation, the potential risks and benefits, confidentiality assurances, and participants' rights. Participants were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they were free to decline participation or

withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty.

Following the provision of informed consent, participants were requested to complete the study instruments, namely the Nigerian Police Task Structure Questionnaire, the Nigerian Police Organizational Commitment Inventory, and the Counterterrorism Effectiveness Questionnaire. The average completion time for the instruments ranged between 20 and 45 minutes. To minimize response contamination and social desirability effects, participants were encouraged to complete the questionnaires independently and to provide honest responses that reflected their personal experiences and perceptions.

Completed questionnaires were retrieved immediately where possible, while arrangements were made for subsequent retrieval in situations where participants required additional time to complete the instruments. Upon retrieval, all questionnaires were screened for completeness and suitability for analysis. Questionnaires with substantial missing data or response inconsistencies were excluded from the final analysis. At the conclusion of participation, respondents were debriefed regarding the objectives of the study and provided with additional clarification where necessary. Participants were also thanked for their time,

cooperation, and valuable contribution to the research.

Throughout the data collection process, strict adherence was maintained to established ethical principles. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by avoiding the collection of personally identifying information and by restricting access to the data to the researcher alone. Information obtained from participants was used solely for academic purposes and stored securely. Furthermore, openness and transparency were maintained throughout the study by providing participants with accurate information regarding the objectives, procedures, and intended use of the research findings. These measures were implemented to safeguard participant welfare, promote trust, and enhance the validity and reliability of the data obtained.

Design and Statistics

This study adopted a cross-sectional and correlational research design. Data was analyzed using the Pearson correlation utilizing SPSS version 26.0. The cross-sectional correlational design enabled the researcher to collect data at a single point in time and determine the strength and direction of the relationships among the study variables namely police task structure and counter-terrorism effectiveness among Nigerian citizens.

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Police Task Structure, Police Organizational Commitment, and Nigerian Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
AGE	396	18	60	25.17	8.71	1.99	.123	3.08	.245
WORKING EXPERIENCE YEAR	396	1	21	3.57	3.07	1.88	.123	4.50	.245
POLICE TASK STRUCTURE	396	10	47	27.11	8.22	.154	.123	-.400	.245
POLICE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT	396	43	96	63.48	16.06	.566	.123	-.830	.245
Identification	396	8	25	15.76	4.45	.118	.123	-1.09	.245
Job Involvement	396	10	27	18.16	4.87	.285	.123	-.983	.245
Loyalty	396	14	47	29.55	8.45	.435	.123	-.536	.245
POLICE COUNTER-TERRORISM EFFECTIVENESS	396	99	331	215.14	64.18	-.010	.123	-1.06	.245
Prevent	396	17	61	41.00	12.84	-.159	.123	-1.20	.245
Pursue	396	20	85	60.45	19.22	-.602	.123	-.520	.245
Protect	396	11	84	49.82	22.61	-.294	.123	-1.15	.245
Prepare	396	14	66	29.81	10.52	.984	.123	1.20	.245
International Actions	396	12	126	33.77	13.03	.868	.123	5.03	.245
Valid N (listwise)	396								

SOURCE: Questionnaire primary data

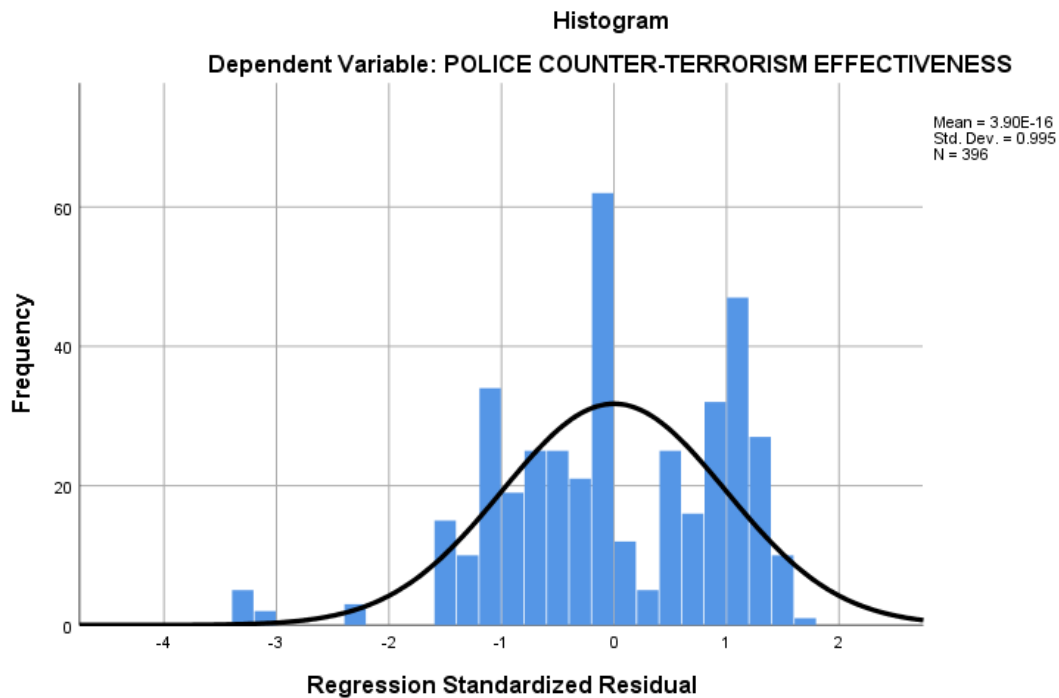
Table 1 shows “Nigerian Police Task Structure” was high above average (27.11 of 47). The SD

(standard deviation) was 8.22, indicating the extent of variations in Police Task Structure.

Skewness of Police task structure was 0.154 indicating more data of relatively lower values were collected. Kurtosis was -0.400 indicating uniformity of majority of the performance. “Police Organizational Commitment” was above average (63.48 of 96), with SD of 16.06, indicating very high variations of Police Organizational Commitment. Skewness was 0.566 indicating more data of lower values were

collected, while Kurtosis was -0.830 indicating majority of the performance was similar. “Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness” was above average (215.14 of 331), with SD of 64.18 indicating very high-performance variations. Skewness of -0.010 indicating more data of higher values than lower values were collected. Kurtosis was -1.06 indicating uniformity of majority of the performance.

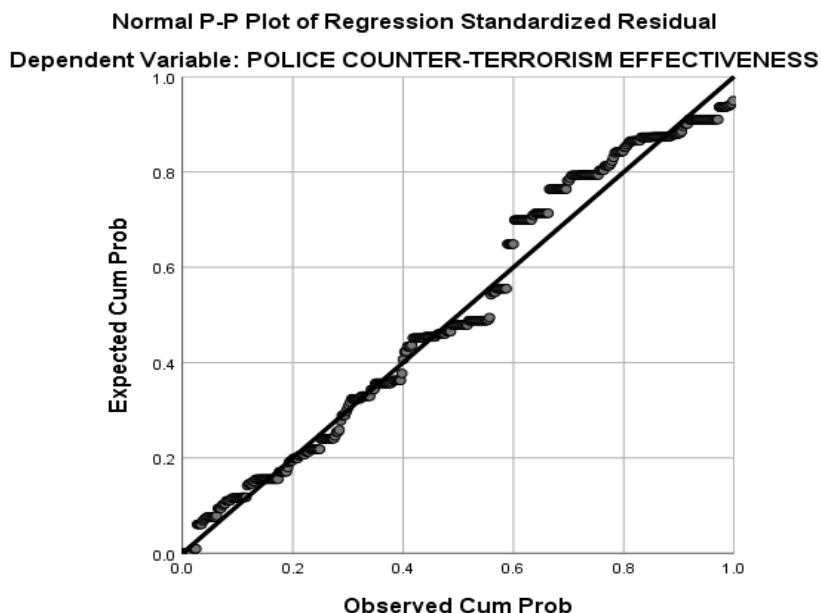
Figure 2: Histogram of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness



SOURCE: Questionnaire primary data

From the figure 2, the counterterrorism effectiveness was substantially congested within the normal curve, save for few outliers. This indicates that basically similar counterterrorism outcomes are achieved by the Nigerian Police.

Figure 3: Plot of Standardized Residual for Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness



SOURCE: Questionnaire primary data

Figure 3 shows Nigerian Police counterterrorism effectiveness is uniform, indicating non-dynamic operation, with irregular unsustainable success, often countered with poor performance.

Table 4: Correlations for Police Task Structure, Police Organizational Commitment, and Nigerian Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. NIGERIAN POLICE TASK STRUCTURE	1										
2. POLICE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT	.487**	1									
3. Identification	.411**	.865**	1								
4. Job Involvement	.375**	.879**	.721**	1							
5. Loyalty	.493**	.937**	.700**	.713**	1						
6. POLICE COUNTER-TERRORISM EFFECTIVENESS	.450**	.520**	.428**	.377**	.544**	1					
7. Prevent	.200**	.157**	.112*	-.069	.279**	.648**	1				
8. Pursue	.400**	.393**	.317**	.280**	.418**	.887**	.408**	1			
9. Protect	.500**	.549**	.500**	.393**	.552**	.950**	.547**	.868**	1		
10. Prepare	.262**	.317**	.123*	.413**	.300**	.587**	.340**	.370**	.426**	1	
11. International Actions	.278**	.533**	.501**	.411**	.512**	.825**	.439**	.727**	.781**	.470**	1

** Significant @ 0.01 level (2-tailed); * Significant @ 0.05 level (2-tailed), N = 396. SOURCE: Questionnaire primary data

Table 4 shows that “Nigerian Police Task Structure” significantly correlated with “Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.450$, $N = 396$). “Nigerian Police Task Structure” also significantly correlated with all the dimensions of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness namely “Prevent” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.200$, $N = 396$), “Pursue” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.400$, $N = 396$), “Protect” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.500$, $N = 396$), “Prepare” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.262$, $N = 396$), and “International Action” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.278$, $N = 396$). “Police Organizational Commitment” significantly correlated with “Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.520$, $N = 396$).

“Police Organizational Commitment” also significantly correlated with all the dimensions of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness namely “Prevent” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.157$, $N = 396$), “Pursue” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.393$, $N = 396$), “Protect” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.549$, $N = 396$), “Prepare” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.317$, $N = 396$), and “International Action” ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.533$, $N = 396$).

Summary of Result Findings

1. “Nigerian Police Task Structure” significantly correlated with “Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness”.

2. "Nigerian Police Task Structure" significantly correlated with "Prevent" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
3. "Nigerian Police Task Structure" significantly correlated with "Pursue" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
4. "Nigerian Police Task Structure" significantly correlated with "Protect" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
5. "Nigerian Police Task Structure" significantly correlated with "Prepare" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
6. "Nigerian Police Task Structure" significantly correlated with "International Action" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
7. "Police Organizational Commitment" significantly correlated with "Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness".
8. "Police Organizational Commitment" significantly correlated with "Prevent" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
9. "Police Organizational Commitment" significantly correlated with "Pursue" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
10. "Police Organizational Commitment" significantly correlated with "Protect" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
11. "Police Organizational Commitment" significantly correlated with "Prepare" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.
12. "Police Organizational Commitment" significantly correlated with "International Action" dimension of Police Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness.

DISCUSSION

The central objective of this study was to ascertain the role of task structure of Nigerian Police Force in counter-terrorism effectiveness. The findings revealed that "Nigerian Police Task Structure" significantly correlated with "Police Counterterrorism Effectiveness". "Nigerian

Police Task Structure" also significantly correlated with all the dimensions of Police Counterterrorism Effectiveness namely "Prevent", "Pursue", "Protect", "Prepare", and "International Action". The result indicates that the manner in which policing duties are organized, coordinated, and executed relate with the Nigerian Police Force response to terrorism. This suggests that counterterrorism policing as more effective when police operational roles appear systematic, coordinated, and professionally structured.

Task structure reflects visible indicators such as response coordination, operational discipline, clarity of police roles during security interventions, and effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration. Police effectiveness is seen through observable patterns of operational organization, including how security personnel manage checkpoints, conduct surveillance operations, and respond to security emergencies. When police operations appear structured and well-coordinated, public confidence in security performance tends to increase.

This finding supports the notion that security effectiveness is influenced by institutional orderliness and procedural clarity. Research has shown that public confidence in policing institutions is strongly shaped by perceived professionalism and operational efficiency (Tyler, 2004). When police operations demonstrate clear command structures and coordinated operational deployment, citizens are more likely to interpret such actions as indicators of institutional competence and preparedness.

The finding also is in support of Situational Crime Prevention Theory, which posits that crime control effectiveness is influenced by situational and environmental arrangements designed to increase risks and reduce opportunities for criminal activities (Clarke, 1980). In this study, task structure represents an organizational situational factor that influences public perception of the police's capacity to manage terrorism threats. Structured operational policing enhances visible surveillance and strategic deployment, which may strengthen citizens' belief that security agencies possess the capacity to deter terrorist activities.

Furthermore, the finding suggested that citizens interpret coordinated security operations as evidence of institutional readiness and tactical preparedness. Public perception plays a crucial role in counter-terrorism effectiveness because community members serve as vital sources of intelligence information and security cooperation. When citizens perceive police operations as organized and effective, they are more likely to cooperate with law enforcement agencies by sharing security information and supporting preventive policing initiatives (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003).

The result also reflects the broader concept of police legitimacy, which emphasizes that public trust and confidence in law enforcement agencies influence citizens' willingness to support policing efforts. Perceived operational structure enhances institutional legitimacy by demonstrating accountability, coordination, and professional discipline within the police force. This legitimacy is particularly important in counterterrorism policing, which requires community participation, intelligence gathering, and public cooperation.

Within the Nigerian security environment, where counterterrorism operations often involve multi-agency coordination and complex security challenges, citizens may interpret operational disorganization as institutional weakness. Therefore, the significant influence of task structure suggests that enhancing visible operational coordination may improve public confidence in counterterrorism policing outcomes. This finding demonstrates that police counterterrorism effectiveness is not solely influenced by crime reduction outcomes but also by observable indicators of institutional organization, operational clarity, and coordinated policing strategies.

Implications of the Study

The results had important implications for national security policy formulation in Nigeria. Counterterrorism effectiveness is influenced not only by tactical outcomes but also by the structural organization and institutional dedication of the Nigeria Police Force. Policymakers should therefore recognize that

public confidence in counterterrorism efforts depends heavily on visible institutional coordination and professionalism. Policies aimed at improving intelligence coordination, inter-agency collaboration, and operational consistencies are likely to positively influence public perception of counterterrorism effectiveness.

The findings underscored the centrality of police legitimacy in counter-terrorism policing. Citizens' perception of task structure, identification, and loyalty significantly shaped their evaluation of police effectiveness, suggesting that institutional credibility plays a critical role in security governance. When citizens perceive police officers as loyal and aligned with institutional and societal goals, they are more likely to cooperate by sharing intelligence, complying with security regulations, and supporting counterterrorism initiatives.

Therefore, improving structural organization and strengthening institutional commitment are not merely internal management concerns but strategic tools for enhancing community cooperation and intelligence-led policing. The findings implied that counterterrorism effectiveness should be understood as a relational construct involving both institutional performance and public perception. Strengthening police legitimacy may therefore serve as a preventive strategy in reducing terrorism risks by fostering community engagement and information sharing.

Limitations of the Study

1. The cross-sectional correlational design of the study limits causal inference. Although task structure and organizational commitment were found to significantly predict perceived counter-terrorism effectiveness, the temporal ordering of these variables cannot be definitively established. Correlational data capture perceptions at a single point in time and do not allow for examination of how changes in organizational structure or commitment may influence perceptions longitudinally. Future research employing longitudinal or panel designs

would strengthen causal interpretation and allow for dynamic analysis of perception formation over time.

Recommendations

The Nigerian Police Force should prioritize ascertaining from the public its (the Police's) operational and performance shortcomings in counterterrorism, and incorporate the findings in Police training. This will enhance robust counterterrorism knowledge.

Self-defense is also recommended as a strategy of enhancing counterterrorism effectiveness. Through self-defense against terrorists, the Nigerian Police's counterterrorism burden will be drastically reduced.

Contributions to Knowledge

1. The study contributes to knowledge by limelight that citizen-based evaluative approach to assessing counterterrorism effectiveness is very important. Rather than relying solely on internal police assessments or official crime statistics, the research incorporates public perception as a valid indicator of counterterrorism effectiveness. This methodological orientation reinforces the importance of the citizens in security governance research.
2. Importantly, this study contributes to knowledge by integrating community policing into the discourse on counterterrorism effectiveness. Community policing emphasizes partnership, trust-building, shared responsibility, and collaborative problem-solving between law enforcement agencies and the public. The findings of this research demonstrate that citizens' perceptions of police structural performance significantly influence their evaluation of counterterrorism effectiveness.

Suggestions for further Studies

1. Comparative cross-national studies are recommended. Nigeria's security architecture and terrorism landscape possess distinct sociopolitical characteristics. Replicating this study in other African countries confronting terrorism would allow for contextual

and practical comparisons which will enhance functional generalizability.

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APPENDIX
Nigerian Police Task Structure Questionnaire

S/N	WHEN IT COMES TO <u>TASK STRUCTURE</u> , HOW TRUE DO YOU BELIEVE THE NIGERIAN POLICE ARE IN:-	Very Untrue (1)	Untrue (2)	Uncertain (3)	True (4)	Very True (5)
1.	Getting approval from above before they can be initiative in fighting terrorism?					
2.	Following standard procedure in counter-terrorism operations?					
3.	Following the chain of command during counter-terrorism operations?					
4.	Observing many rules and regulations in fighting terrorism?					
5.	Supervising Police personnel very closely in counter-terrorism operations?					
6.	Following standard procedure all the times in fighting terrorism activities?					
7.	Following rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the police force in counter-terrorism operations?					
8.	Following too many rules, regulations and standard procedure in fighting terrorism?					
9.	Getting the job done in an informal atmosphere when tackling terrorist activities?					

Source: Van Der Post (1997).

Counterterrorism Effectiveness Inventory

S/N	WHEN IT COMES TO <u>COUNTERTERRORISM</u> , HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU BELIEVE THE NIGERIAN POLICE ARE IN:-	Totally Ineffective (1)	Very Ineffective (2)	Unsatisfactory (3)	Effective (4)	Very Effective (5)
PREVENT						
1.	Tackling the causes of radicalization?					
2.	Responding to the ideological challenges of terrorism?					
3.	Safeguarding those most at risk of radicalization?					
4.	Identifying and supporting vulnerable population from being radicalized?					
5.	Enabling earlier intervention for those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage?					
6.	Intervening and rehabilitating those already engaged in terrorism?					
7.	Focusing resources in locations where threats from terrorism and radicalization are highest?					
8.	Expanding disengagement programmes to individuals receiving rehabilitative interventions?					
9.	Developing multi-agency methods to assist those at risk of involvement in terrorism?					
10.	Focusing online activity on preventing the dissemination of terrorist material?					
11.	Building strong counter-terrorist narratives to ensure there are no safe places for terrorists online?					
12.	Building stronger partnerships with publics to improve terrorism prevention?					
13.	Sustaining actions to ensure communities and families are not attracted into violent extremism?					
PURSUE						
14.	Detecting terrorists' activities?					
15.	Understanding terrorists' intentions/motives?					
16.	Investigating terrorists' activities?					
17.	Disrupting terrorists' activities?					
18.	Prosecuting terrorists in the law Court?					
19.	Implementing national counter-terrorism policies?					
20.	Networking with other counter-terrorism agencies (eg military, Interpol, DSS)?					

21.	Introducing new counter-terrorism legislation to disrupt terrorist threats?					
22.	Taking into account of the scale of terrorism threat in the country?					
23.	Responding to the speed at which terrorists' plots are now developing?					
24.	Disregarding ethnic consideration in fighting terrorism?					
25.	Recruiting staff across the security and intelligence agencies?					
26.	Conforming to the national security strategy plans against terrorism?					
27.	Developing multi-agency approaches to improve information sharing against terrorism?					
28.	Improving understanding of threat at the local, national, and international levels about terrorism?					
29.	Avoiding recruiting former terrorists into the security agencies of the nation?					
30.	Not being influenced by religion in the fight against terrorism?					
31.	Bringing foreign terrorist-fighters to justice in accordance with due legal process?					
32.	Not being influence by national or international interests in the fight against terrorism?					
33.	Maintain the use of enhanced legislative tools to target and disrupt terrorist finance?					
34.	Using global reach to disrupt terrorism threats to the nation?					
35.	Ensuring strong independent investigations into the country's counter-terrorism work?					
36.	Regularly training personnel on Strategic Defense and Security?					
PROTECT						
37.	Detecting terrorism harmful materials at the border?					
38.	Dealing with suspected terrorists?					
39.	Reducing the risk to global aviation and other transport systems?					
40.	Improving the communities' resilience to fight terrorism?					
41.	Protecting critical national infrastructure most at risk to terror attack?					
42.	Reducing the vulnerability of terrorists' targets?					
43.	Preventing terrorists' access to equipment that could be used to conduct attacks?					
44.	Detecting terrorists' methods of operation?					
45.	Collecting information to enhance security agencies' ability to counter terrorists' goals?					
46.	Developing the country's counterterrorism screening and detection technologies?					
47.	Strengthening information-sharing among those involved in fighting terrorism and radicalization?					
48.	Ensuring terrorists and radicalized persons do not access restricted environments and information?					
49.	Strengthening security both at the rural and urban areas?					
50.	Partnering with international bodies to deliver robust and sustainable security against terrorism?					
51.	Improving security at potentially targeted places?					
52.	Working with local authorities and groups to provide effective counter measures against terrorism?					
53.	Detecting early Biological, Radiological, Explosives, Nuclear and Chemical (BRENC) terrorism?					
54.	Controlling and safeguarding materials that can be used in BRENC terrorism attacks?					
55.	Identifying and stopping the precursors BRENC terrorism?					
56.	Being able to analyze high volume of data on terrorism matters?					
57.	Detecting potential channels of terrorism information?					
PREPARE						
58.	Delivering a coordinated multi-agency response to all types of terrorist attacks?					
59.	Ensuring that the nation has a full range of capabilities to respond to current and future threats?					
60.	Minimizing the impacts of terrorist attacks on people, services and communities?					
61.	Maintaining investment in the capabilities of the emergency services to response to terrorist attacks?					
62.	Ensuring the nation is ready to respond effectively to a wide range of BRENC threats?					
63.	Ensuring all security agencies involved in counterterrorism operations work together effectively?					
64.	Testing multi-agency capabilities for comprehensive and coordinated response against terrorism?					
65.	Continuous exercising the multi-agency capabilities to recover from a wide range of terrorist attacks?					
66.	Improving support arrangements for victims of terrorism?					
INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS						
67.	Disrupting planned attacks directed at the nation and citizens or national interests overseas?					
68.	Reducing terrorist capability anywhere in the world?					
69.	Weakening the drivers or sponsors of terrorism abroad?					
70.	Protecting against and mitigating the impact of terrorism attacks?					
71.	Exposing terrorists' groups and methodologies around the world?					

72.	Leading international efforts to reduce global terrorism risks?					
73.	Preventing terrorist's use of the internet for their purpose?					
74.	Creating flexible national experts to be deployed where needed for rapid overseas expertise?					
75.	Countering terrorists' narratives using national and foreign communication partnership?					
76.	Building collaborative partnership on counterterrorism to promote security on the continent Africa?					
77.	Continuing to improve the Government's systems for responding to terrorists' incidents overseas?					
78.	Stepping up the ability to destroy terrorists' groups and networks overseas?					

Source: ¹Nwankwo, O. D., & ²Owoh, I.G. (2026). *Counterterrorism Effectiveness Inventory*.
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