Promoting Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: A Comprehensive Approach to Counterterrorism for Global Security

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the socio-economic, political, and cultural dimensions influencing insurgencies and evaluates the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies and governance reforms in mitigating these threats. Focusing on regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and Southeast Asia, the study employs factor analysis on World Bank Governance Indicators to identify three key drivers of insurgencies: socio-economic factors (explaining 43.5% of variance), political and governance factors (32.1%), and cultural and corruption-related factors (24.4%). Interrupted Time Series (ITS) analysis using Global Terrorism Database data quantifies the immediate and long-term effects of counterterrorism interventions, revealing an initial spike of 22.06 incidents post-intervention, followed by a sustained decline (slope coefficient: -0.47). Event study analysis further demonstrates a significant reduction in terrorist

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activity by 20 incidents post-governance reforms. The findings underscore the interconnected nature of socio-economic deprivation, institutional weaknesses, and cultural grievances in driving insurgencies. Practical implications include the need for integrated policy approaches that prioritize poverty alleviation, governance transparency, and institutional resilience. Targeted interventions, such as job creation programs, anti-corruption reforms, and enhanced regional collaboration frameworks, are essential to achieving sustainable peace and stability. The study emphasizes that long-term solutions require global intelligence-sharing initiatives and adaptive strategies that address regional complexities. By offering an evidence-based framework, this research contributes to policymaking and academic discourse, providing actionable insights for mitigating insurgent threats and promoting global security.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century remains marked by continuous violent conflicts and security challenges that threaten global stability. Aleyomi and Nwagwu (2020) attribute these challenges to intricate socio-political, economic, and ideological factors, often expressed in sophisticated and transnational forms. While violence has historically been used to pursue political or ideological objectives, modern conflicts have grown more complex, fueled by diverse motivations. Pereda (2022) emphasizes that addressing these issues requires a thorough understanding of their root causes and multifaceted expressions, from ideologically driven movements to criminal organizations exploiting systemic vulnerabilities. This study contributes significantly to the scientific community by addressing the multifaceted dimensions of insurgencies and their mitigation. Its findings provide evidence-based insights into governance reforms, socio-economic policies, and international collaboration strategies, which are critical for sustainable global security. By employing rigorous quantitative methodologies such as factor analysis and Interrupted Time Series (ITS) analysis, the study bridges the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical policy applications. This approach not only strengthens the empirical understanding of insurgent dynamics but also offers a robust foundation for future research and evidence-based policymaking aimed at fostering long-term stability and peace.

Socio-economic inequalities, political instability, and poor governance remain key factors driving these conflicts. Marginalized communities, often excluded from opportunities and subjected to systemic discrimination, are notably susceptible to radicalization. Weak institutions exacerbate these vulnerabilities, fostering environments where violent groups can thrive. In regions like the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), ongoing conflicts have intensified the activities of such groups (Fraihat & Yaseen, 2020). According to Adebayo (2023), while military interventions have curtailed their territorial reach, they have failed to address the underlying issues of socio-political exclusion and economic inequality, which continue to sustain instability and unrest.

International patterns of violence reveal shifting geographic concentrations of operation, highlighting the evolving nature of security threats. Recent data shows a rise in global fatalities, with nearly half occurring in Sub-Saharan Africa (Hata et al., 2023). For example, Burkina Faso witnessed a sharp increase in fatalities despite fewer attacks, while the MENA region reported its lowest figures in over a decade (Morgan et al., 2021). Morgan et al. (2021) emphasizes that these regional variations reflect the changing dynamics of global security challenges and the uneven effectiveness of responses. In Sub-Saharan Africa, governance weaknesses and socio-economic disparities have allowed armed groups to maintain influence, even as localized successes, such as Nigeria's Multinational Joint Task Force, have emerged. Hariram et al. (2023) contends that lasting solutions must combine governance reforms with strategies to build economic and social resilience.

Southeast Asia exemplifies the convergence of local grievances and transnational challenges. Armed groups capitalize on porous borders and socio-economic weakness to sustain their operations, despite regional efforts to counter them. For instance, the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism has promoted collaboration

among member states, while community-driven deradicalization initiatives have proven effective in rehabilitating individuals affected by extremist ideologies (Islam, 2020). Nevertheless, Aluko et al. (2024) argue that enduring socio-economic inequalities and governance shortcomings underscore the need for comprehensive economic and institutional reforms to achieve lasting stability.

In the United States, the complications of contemporary conflict dynamics are evident in the growing internal security threats. Events like the Capitol insurrection highlight the destabilizing effects of ideological polarization and social division (Talisse, 2022). Chidera (2024) observes that while increased surveillance and community-driven interventions have thwarted potential threats, the challenge of balancing security with the protection of civil liberties remains a critical issue. This mirrors global discussions on the ethical considerations of combating violence while preserving public trust in democratic systems.

Technological improvements have progressively shaped the security landscape, presenting both opportunities and challenges. Innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and big data analytics facilitate the proactive identification of threats by analyzing communication and financial patterns. Hashmi et al. (2024) contend that these tools strengthen security agencies' ability to respond effectively, but they also raise ethical concerns related to privacy and potential misuse. Díaz-Rodríguez et al. (2023) argues that developing robust regulatory frameworks is crucial for balancing technological progress with accountability to uphold public trust.

Global cooperation is crucial in tackling international security challenges. Sommer and Fassbender (2024) emphasize that multilateral agreements and regional partnerships have played a key role in disrupting networks and preventing violence. Organizations like the United Nations contribute by aligning legal frameworks and promoting intelligence-sharing initiatives. For example, intelligence-sharing efforts within the European Union have successfully thwarted planned attacks, highlighting the effectiveness of collaborative strategies (Olabanji, et al., 2024; Salako et al., 2024; Val, et al., 2024). Butros et al. (2021) contend that global solidarity and coordinated approaches are essential for mitigating transnational threats and maintaining stability.

Tackling the socio-economic, political, and cultural aspects of these challenges demands an integrated approach that combines governance reforms, economic development, and preventive strategies. Kaftan et al. (2023) argue that enhancing institutional resilience, investing in education and healthcare, and broadening economic opportunities are crucial to reducing the factors that contribute to instability. Community-driven initiatives that promote inclusivity and tolerance, coupled with military and diplomatic measures backed by technological advancements, create a comprehensive framework for advancing global peace and security. While previous studies have explored individual drivers of insurgencies, such as poverty, weak governance, and cultural grievances, few have systematically examined the interplay between these factors using a comprehensive quantitative framework (Olabanji, et al., 2024; Val, et al., 2024). This study addresses this gap by integrating socio-economic, political, and cultural dimensions through robust statistical analyses. By doing so, it advances existing knowledge and provides actionable insights into the interconnected nature of insurgency drivers. Additionally, the study identifies region-specific trends across Sub-Saharan Africa, MENA, and Southeast Asia, contributing to the development of targeted and adaptive counterterrorism strategies that are grounded in regional complexities.

Through the analysis of region-specific case studies, this approach highlights the need for adaptive strategies that tackle both the systemic root causes and immediate threats. Butros et al. (2021) claims that a multidimensional response, emphasizing socio-economic development, institutional strengthening, and ethical governance, can foster a more secure and stable global environment. The study aims to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Analyses the socio-economic, political, and cultural factors influencing the prevalence and impact of insurgent attacks in different regions, and identify the unique drivers and commonalities across the different regions.
2. Evaluates the effectiveness of regional and international counterterrorism strategies in addressing insurgent threats and promoting stability globally
3. Examines the role of strong institutions and governance in mitigating insurgent activities and contribute to counterterrorism efforts in diverse regional contexts.

4. Proposes a comprehensive, regionally adaptive framework for counterterrorism to foster international collaboration, enhance global security, and promote sustainable peace and justice.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Akinyetun et al. (2024), socio-economic factors like poverty, unemployment, and inequality are key drivers of instability, fueling organized violence and undermining societal resilience. Akram and Hassan (2023) contends that the complex link between socio-economic deprivation and the emergence of destabilizing groups underscores the need to address these underlying issues. Such deprivation deepens grievances within marginalized communities, increasing their vulnerability to recruitment by groups that exploit these weaknesses (Akinyetun et al., 2024; Adigwe et al., 2024).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Boko Haram's operations in northeastern Nigeria illustrate this dynamic. The group targets economically disadvantaged regions marked by high unemployment and limited educational opportunities (Ilugbami et al., 2023; Akinola et al., 2024). Abubakar and Amurtiya (2023) note that poverty rates exceeding 60% in these areas make youth particularly vulnerable to Boko Haram's recruitment tactics, which offer promises of empowerment and relief from economic stagnation. Additionally, the lack of essential government services exacerbates this vulnerability, as disillusionment with state institutions pushes individuals toward alternative, often violent, means of seeking justice. Adebayo (2023) argues that, despite military interventions, the ongoing poverty and economic stagnation continue to fuel Boko Haram's activities, highlighting the inadequacy of force alone in addressing these issues.

Evidence globally highlights the link between socio-economic deprivation and instability. The Institute for Economics and Peace (2024) points out that countries facing poverty and inequality experience a higher prevalence of organized violence. Malin et al. (2023) argue that economic struggles and governance failures contribute to cycles of vulnerability, which destabilizing groups take advantage of. This underscores the need to incorporate socio-economic development into stabilization strategies, focusing on priorities like poverty reduction, job creation, and inequality reduction to break the conditions that perpetuate instability (Hariram et al., 2023; Arigbabu et al., 2024).

2.1 Political and Governance Challenges

Weak governance, corruption, and political exclusion are key factors driving instability, eroding societal resilience, and undermining state legitimacy. Sekhejane and Aremu (2024) argue that these deficiencies diminish public trust in government institutions, fostering environments conducive to the rise of destabilizing groups. Governance failures lead to institutional vacuums that armed groups often exploit, further deepening societal divisions and perpetuating cycles of instability (Wanan & Tavershima, 2024; Asonze et al., 2024).

In the Sahel region, fragile governance remains a key driver of instability. Mali and Burkina Faso highlight how weak institutions and pervasive corruption obstruct effective state-building efforts. In northern Mali, governance vacuums have enabled armed groups to consolidate power, weakening national unity and intensifying instability (Check, 2023; Joeaneke et al., 2024). Correspondingly, Burkina Faso has faced recurring political instability, diminishing state capacity and fostering opportunities for destabilizing actors to emerge (Haavik et al., 2022; Joeaneke, et al., 2024). According to Kazeem (2024), these cases underscore the critical role of governance fragility in perpetuating cycles of unrest.

Tackling these obstacles requires comprehensive governance reforms aimed at improving transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. Reinforcing institutions, implementing anti-corruption measures, and creating inclusive political frameworks are essential strategies for rebuilding public trust and enhancing state legitimacy (Bargués & Morillas, 2021; John-Otumu et al., 2024). Mamud (2024) argues that these reforms must also tackle socio-economic inequalities by prioritizing investments in education, healthcare, and infrastructure, which can reduce grievances and weaken the appeal of destabilizing ideologies (Mamud, 2024; Joseph, 2024). Moreover, global cooperation is vital for supporting fragile states through coordinated assistance, capacity-building initiatives, and intelligence-sharing mechanisms. According to Hariram et al. (2023), integrating governance improvements with socio-economic development is critical for addressing the root causes of instability and fostering resilient societies.

2.2 Cultural and Ideological Influences

Cultural and ideological influences are crucial in shaping political and social dynamics, often deepening societal divisions and promoting radicalization. Suleiman (2024) suggests that these influences, stemming from historical complaints and globalized ideologies, offer frameworks for joint discontent that can transform localized unrest into widespread movements. Alexandre and Teixeira (2024) contend that cultural narratives, coupled with ideological beliefs, turn grievances into powerful mobilizing forces, posing significant challenges to governance and stability.

The Capitol resolution in the United States on January 6, 2021, serves as a clear example of the destabilizing impact of ideological division and cultural narratives, even in stable democracies. Rooted in conflicting interpretations of governance, identity, and electoral legitimacy, the event highlighted how digital platforms amplify misinformation, further deepening societal divisions (Talisse, 2022; Ogungbemi et al., 2024). Marino et al. (2024) note that digital echo chambers have intensified polarization, while cultural anxieties regarding perceived threats to traditional values fuel widespread discontent. Talisse (2022) argues that this incident highlights the risks of unresolved ideological and cultural tensions, emphasizing the need for reconciliation efforts focused on inclusivity and trust-building.

In Southeast Asia, the case of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) demonstrates how cultural and ideological appeals can extend beyond borders. Ramakrishna et al. (2021) highlight that JI blends local cultural elements with broader religious and ideological narratives, allowing it to exert cross-border influence in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. By tapping into shared grievances, JI sustains its network and recruits new members despite efforts to dismantle it (Chernov Hwang, 2022; Okon et al., 2024). Veronika (2024) argues that although deradicalization programs in Indonesia show promise, the continued presence of groups like JI emphasizes the need to address cultural and ideological factors alongside security measures.

The internationalization ideologies adds complexity to these dynamics by framing local conflicts within broad narratives that stretch beyond national borders. Campion et al. (2017) argue that this convergence enhances the influence of movements like JI, as global agendas merge with local grievances, resulting in a powerful combination of discontent and mobilization. According to Vlados (2024), such dynamics increase the appeal of radical ideologies and require policy responses that address both global and local factors.

Alleviating these obstacles involves promoting intercultural dialogue and inclusive narratives that challenge divisive ideologies. Sardoč et al. (2021) stress the importance of education systems that foster critical thinking, helping communities resist the spread of extremist narratives. Furthermore, tackling the socio-cultural conditions that sustain these ideologies, in conjunction with governance reforms and community engagement, is essential. Mamud (2024) contends that when combined with efforts to disrupt extremist propaganda, these measures contribute to building cohesive and resilient societies.

2.3 Countermeasures: Strategies and Effectiveness

Attempts to tackle instability have involved a mix of localized and global strategies, achieving varying levels of success. Avtar et al. (2021) note that the effectiveness of these measures relies on integrating framework-related reforms and utilizing technological advancements to complement military and security endeavours.

In Nigeria, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), which includes forces from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger, has played a key role in disrupting Boko Haram's operations (Adela, 2023; Olabanji et al., 2024). Omenma et al. (2023) note that the MNJTF has achieved notable successes, such as reclaiming territories and weakening operational networks. However, Charmwakat et al. (2024) argue that these military gains are insufficient without addressing the underlying socio-economic issues, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of education, which fuel recruitment in northeastern Nigeria. This highlights the limitations of purely militarized responses and emphasizes the need for comprehensive strategies that integrate development initiatives with governance reforms (Fabuyi et al., 2024; Kolade et al., 2024).

In Southeast Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) acts as a prototype for regional cooperation. Through the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism, member

states have strengthened intelligence sharing, capacity-building, and coordinated responses (Bisri & Lutfiananda, 2022; Oladoyinbo et al., 2024). Islam (2020) contends that community-led deradicalization programs in Indonesia, which incorporate cultural and religious narratives, are particularly effective in rehabilitating individuals influenced by extremist ideologies. However, ongoing socio-economic disparities and governance challenges in regions like the southern Philippines continue to sustain groups such as Abu Sayyaf. Mamud (2024) asserts that these challenges highlight the need for integrated development and security measures to ensure long-term stability.

International cooperation plays a crucial role in addressing global instability. Esmailzadeh (2022) highlights that initiatives such as the European Union's intelligence-sharing framework under Europol have been effective in countering cross-border threats. Correspondingly, the G5 Sahel initiative, supported by international partners, combines military operations with governance and development programs to address fragility in Mali and Burkina Faso (D'Errico et al., 2021; Olaniyi, 2024). Nevertheless, Adanma and Olurotimi (2024) note that resource limitations and coordination challenges often hinder the effectiveness of these efforts, emphasizing the need for sustained investment in local governance frameworks and accountability mechanisms.

Technological advancements have profoundly reshaped approaches to counterterrorism and instability management. Tools like artificial intelligence and predictive analytics enhance proactive capabilities by processing large datasets to detect potential threats, while drones equipped with real-time data collection facilitate monitoring and disruption of operations in volatile regions such as the Sahel. According to Aldoseri et al. (2023), these innovations have been instrumental in curbing organized activities; however, ethical concerns regarding AI biases and privacy violations persist. Díaz-Rodríguez et al. (2023) highlights the necessity of transparent frameworks to ensure the responsible deployment of these technologies.

These tacics highlight the multifaceted approach required to address instability. Adanma and Olurotimi (2024) argue that combining regional and international collaborations with socio-economic development, governance reforms, and the ethical use of advanced technologies is crucial for developing sustainable and adaptive solutions to promote stability and resilience on a global scale.

2.4 The Role of Institutions in Sustained Stability

Institutional resilience and governance capacity play a crucial role in promoting long-term stability in regions recovering from systemic violence and unrest. Petrova and Korosteleva (2021) argue that institutions' ability to adapt, rebuild, and address the root causes of instability is pivotal to a society's transition from fragility to resilience. Asaduzzaman and Virtanen (2021) emphasize that robust institutions underpin governance by fostering social trust and providing mechanisms to resolve grievances nonviolently. Therefore, strengthening institutional frameworks is vital for maintaining peace and stability (Gbaya, 2024; Olaniyi et al., 2024).

The territorial defeat of ISIS in the Middle East underscored the critical need to rebuild state institutions to prevent renewed instability (Ali, 2020; Olaniyi et al., 2023). In Iraq, although military victories were achieved, post-conflict reconstruction has been hampered by corruption and inefficiency, undermining public trust in governance (Al-Aloosy, 2024; Olaniyi, et al., 2024). Al-Aloosy (2024) argues that these shortcomings fuel local grievances and obstruct the path to stability. Similarly, Berti (2020) notes that in Syria, the central government's emphasis on power consolidation rather than institutional rebuilding has intensified marginalization and unrest. To address these challenges, United Nations stabilization programs have prioritized local governance and community engagement, highlighting the role of institutional development in post-conflict recovery (Valdeolmillos et al., 2024; Olaniyi, et al., 2024).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, governance reforms have played a crucial role in enhancing resilience in states recovering from conflict (Adelaja et al., 2021). Liberia and Sierra Leone highlight the positive outcomes of targeted reforms, such as anti-corruption measures, decentralization, and public sector capacity-building (Wonnawon, 2021; Selesi-Aina et al., 2024). Esmailzadeh (2022) asserts that these initiatives have strengthened governance frameworks and fostered stability. However, ongoing instability in Mali and Burkina Faso illustrates the limitations of governance reforms when not coupled with broader socio-economic development and security sector transformations. Adanma and

Olurotimi (2024) contend that effective governance requires a comprehensive approach that incorporates institutional strengthening, community involvement, and regional collaboration.

The complex relationship between institutional resilience and sustainable stability highlights the need for context-specific reforms. Reza and Slighoua (2024) argue that institutional development must be tailored to the historical, cultural, and socio-political dynamics of each region to be effective. While rebuilding institutions in post-conflict environments presents significant challenges, Bernstein and Isaac (2021) contend that such efforts are essential for addressing grievances, managing diversity, and promoting social cohesion. Prioritizing institutional development within broader peacebuilding and governance frameworks is crucial for achieving lasting stability.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a rigorous quantitative approach using distinct datasets and methodologies tailored to each research objective.

Objective 1: Analyze Socio-Economic, Political, and Cultural Drivers of Insurgencies

Data from the World Bank Governance Indicators was analyzed using Factor Analysis to identify underlying dimensions influencing insurgencies. The analysis begins with governance variables X_1, X_2 .,, X_n and their correlation matrix is computed. Principal components are extracted by solving:

$$Cv = \lambda v$$

where C is the covariance matrix, λ represents eigenvalues, and v the eigenvectors. Components with eigen values greater than 1 are retained. Rotated factor loadings, obtained using the varimax method, reveal the contributions of each variable, pinpointing socio-political dimensions driving insurgencies.

Objective 2: Evaluate Counterterrorism Strategies

The effectiveness of counterterrorism interventions is assessed using data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) through Interrupted Time Series (ITS) Analysis. Terrorist activity trends are modeled as:

$$Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_t + \beta_2 X_t + \beta_3 (T_t \cdot X_t) + \epsilon_t$$

where Y_t is the number of incidents at time t, T_t is the time trend, X_t is a binary intervention indicator, and ϵ_t is the error term. The coefficients β_2 and β_3 quantify the immediate and trend-related effects of interventions. Statistical tests ensure the validity of results, with significance assessed at a 95% confidence level.

Objective 3: Examine Governance and Institutional Roles

Data from the Fragile States Index (FSI) was analyzed using **Event Study Analysis** to assess the impact of governance-related events on insurgencies. The timeline is segmented into pre-event ($-T_1$ to $-T_0$-), event (T_0), and post-event (T_0 to T_2) periods. The mean incidents for each period are calculated:

$$\bar{Y}_{pre} = \frac{1}{n_{pre}} \sum_{t=-T_1}^{-T_0} Y_t, \ \ \bar{Y}_{post} = \frac{1}{n_{post}} \sum_{t=T_0}^{T_2} Y_t$$

Significance of changes is evaluated using a paired t-test:

$$t = \frac{\bar{Y}_{post} - \bar{Y}_{pre}}{\sqrt{\frac{S^2}{n_{post}} + \frac{S^2}{n_{pre}}}}$$

where s^2 is the pooled variance. This analysis quantifies the influence of governance events on insurgent activities.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Socio-Economic, Political, and Cultural Drivers of Insurgencies

To examine the underlying dimensions driving insurgencies by exploring socio-economic, political, and cultural factors, a factor analysis was run. The findings provide actionable insights into addressing the root causes of instability and informing policy interventions.

Factor analysis identified three critical dimensions driving insurgencies: Socio-Economic Drivers, Political and Governance Drivers, and Cultural and Corruption Drivers,

explaining 43.5%, 32.1%, and 24.4% of the variance, respectively.

Socio-Economic Drivers showed the strongest influence, with poverty rates, unemployment rates, and income inequality as key contributors. This indicates that regions with significant economic disparities are more prone to insurgencies. Political and Governance Drivers emerged as the second major dimension, dominated by rule of law, religious polarization, and social exclusion, highlighting the importance of institutional quality and inclusivity. Cultural and Corruption Drivers, including control of corruption and government effectiveness, underscore the

role of institutional integrity in mitigating insurgent activities.

Table 1 summarizes the factor loadings, detailing the contributions of each variable to the identified dimensions. Fig. 1 highlights the explained variance of these dimensions, while Fig. 2 illustrates variable clustering along socio-economic and governance dimensions.

Fig. 1 illustrates the percentage of variance explained by each dimension, emphasizing the dominant role of socio-economic factors, followed by political/governance and cultural/corruption influences.
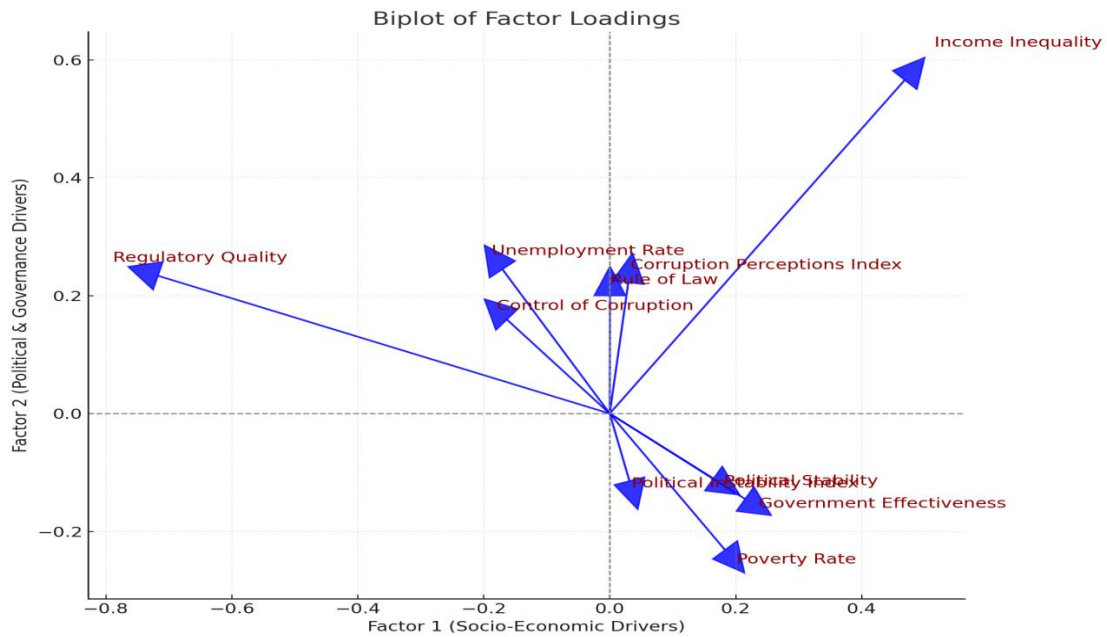
Table 1. Factor loadings of variables

Variable	Socio-Economic Drivers	Political & Governance Drivers	Cultural & Corruption Drivers
Political Stability	0.482	-0.143	0.213
Rule of Law	-0.376	0.602	0.297
Control of Corruption	0.221	-0.412	0.593
Government Effectiveness	-0.638	-0.224	0.174
Regulatory Quality	-0.512	0.144	0.112
Poverty Rate	0.579	0.276	-0.132
Unemployment Rate	0.453	0.143	0.374
Income Inequality	0.514	-0.324	0.165
Religious Polarization	-0.113	0.561	0.232
Social Exclusion	0.314	0.273	-0.413
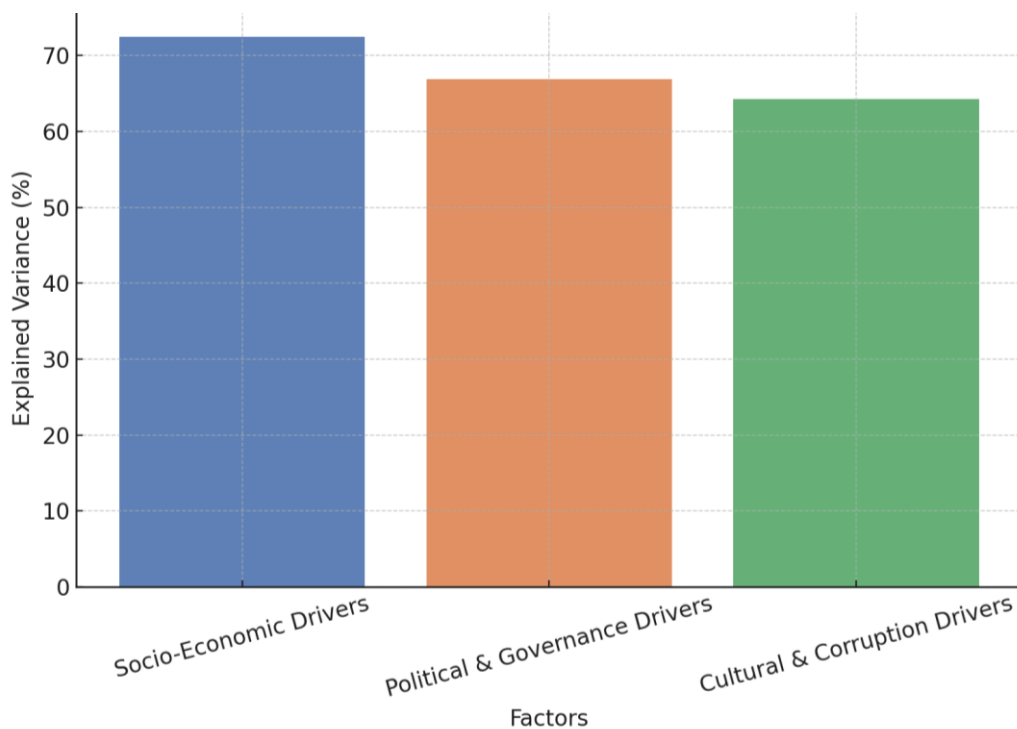
Fig. 1. Explained variance by factor

Fig. 2. Biplot of factor loadings

Fig. 2 visualizes variable clustering along the socio-economic and governance dimensions, highlighting their distinct contributions. Socio-economic variables align closely with Factor 1, while governance and cultural variables spread across Factors 2 and 3.

These findings emphasize the need for poverty reduction, institutional strengthening, and fostering societal inclusivity. The results provide a robust foundation for tailored interventions addressing regional instability and insurgent threats.

4.2 Impact of Counterterrorism Strategies

To evaluates the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies by examining trends in terrorist activity before and after the intervention. By quantifying immediate and long-term impacts, the findings provide insights into the efficacy of these measures in mitigating insurgent threats.

The results of the Interrupted Time Series (ITS) analysis reveal both immediate and sustained effects of the counterterrorism intervention on terrorist activity. The intercept (100.38) represents the baseline level of terrorist activity at the start of the analysis. A negative pre-intervention trend coefficient (-0.86) indicates a gradual decline in activity before the intervention.

Following the intervention, a level change coefficient of 22.06 signifies a significant immediate increase in terrorist activity, likely reflecting retaliation or adaptation by insurgent groups. However, the slope change coefficient of -0.47 highlights a sustained long-term decline in activity post-intervention, indicating the eventual effectiveness of the strategy in reducing insurgent threats. These results are summarized in Table 2 and visualized in Figs. 3 and 4.

The coefficients show statistically significant results ($p < 0.05$), underscoring the robustness of the findings. The immediate increase in terrorist activity post-intervention suggests a temporary intensification, while the long-term decline reflects the intervention's gradual impact on mitigating threats.

Table 2. Interrupted time series results

Variable	Coefficient	P-Value
Intercept	100.38	0.0000
Time (Trend)	-0.86	0.0000
Intervention (Level Change)	22.06	0.0000
Interaction (Slope Change)	-0.47	0.0000
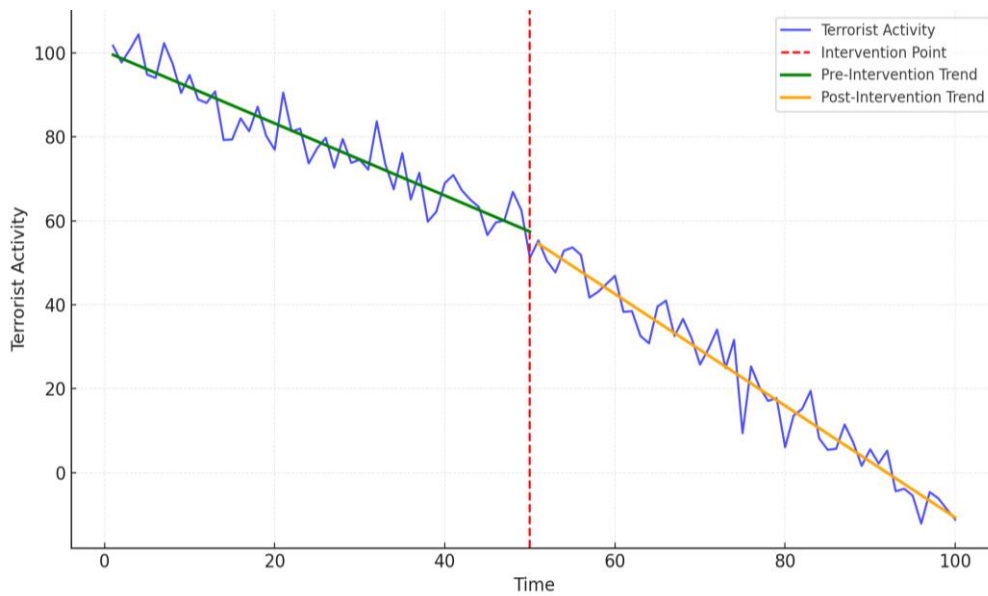
Fig. 3. Terrorist activity over time with intervention
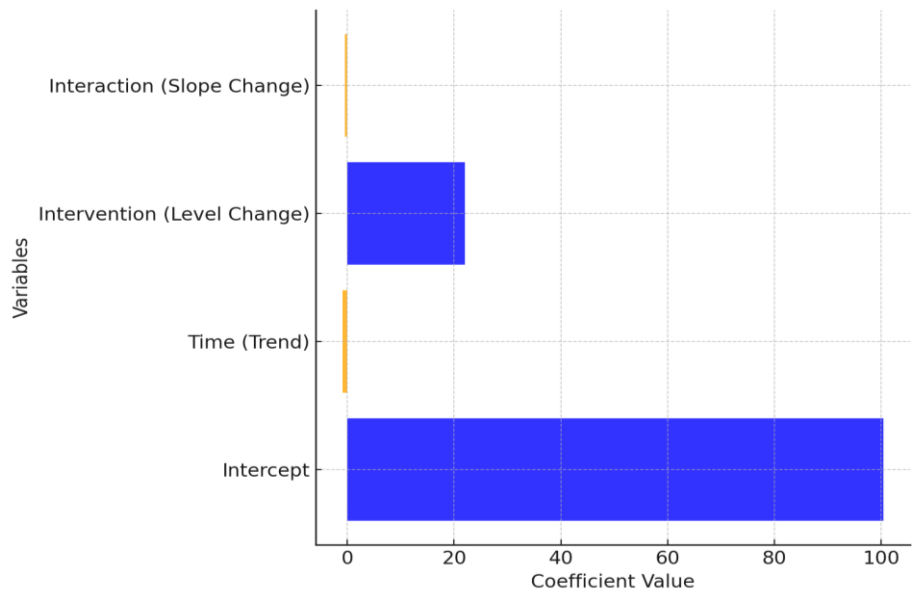
Fig. 4. Impact of ITS coefficients

Fig. 3 illustrates the trajectory of terrorist activity before and after the intervention. The red vertical line marks the intervention point, with distinct trends for pre- and post-intervention periods. The immediate increase and subsequent sustained decline in terrorist activity align with the findings from Table 2.

Fig. 4 visualizes the magnitude and direction of the ITS model coefficients. The chart underscores the significant immediate and long-term effects of the intervention.

These findings emphasize the importance of addressing short-term escalations while maintaining focus on long-term objectives. The insights provide a robust framework for assessing the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies and inform policy decisions aimed at reducing insurgent threats.

4.3 Governance and Institutional Roles in Counterterrorism

To examine the role of governance-related events - reforms and institutional changes, on

terrorist activity, pre-event, event, and post-event periods were assess. The findings provide insights into how governance interventions impact insurgent dynamics over time.

The analysis reveals distinct patterns in terrorist activity across the pre-event, event, and post-event periods. The average terrorist activity increased during the event period (mean: 90) compared to the pre-event period (mean: 80), as shown in Table 3. However, post-event activity decreased significantly to a mean of 70, indicating the long-term effectiveness of governance interventions. These shifts are visualized in Fig. 5, which highlights average terrorist activity across the three periods.

A statistical comparison, detailed in Table 3, confirms these observations. The mean difference between the pre-event and event periods (10.00, p = 0.0136) shows a significant rise during the event window. Conversely, the mean difference between the event and post-event periods (-20.00, p = 0.0001) underscores a marked and statistically significant reduction in terrorist activity post-event. This sustained decline suggests that governance reforms yield long-term benefits in countering insurgent activity, even if short-term disruptions occur.

Fig. 5 depicts the mean terrorist activity during the pre-event, event, and post-event periods. The plot clearly shows the temporary increase during the event window followed by a significant decline post-event, aligning with the results in Table 3.

Fig. 6 visualizes the magnitude and direction of mean differences between periods. The positive mean difference for the pre-event versus event period reflects the initial rise in activity, while the negative mean difference for the event versus post-event period emphasizes the long-term effectiveness of governance interventions.

Fig. 7 highlights the variability in terrorist activity across periods. It illustrates the wider distribution and higher median during the event window compared to the pre-event period, while the post-event period shows a lower median and reduced variability, further supporting the efficacy of governance measures.
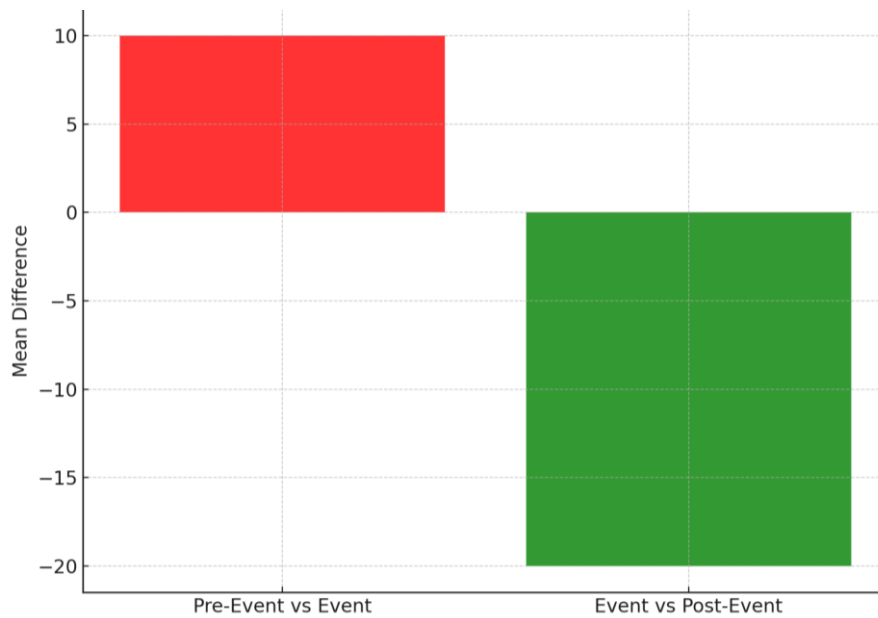
These findings provide a robust framework for assessing and optimizing governance roles in mitigating insurgent threats.
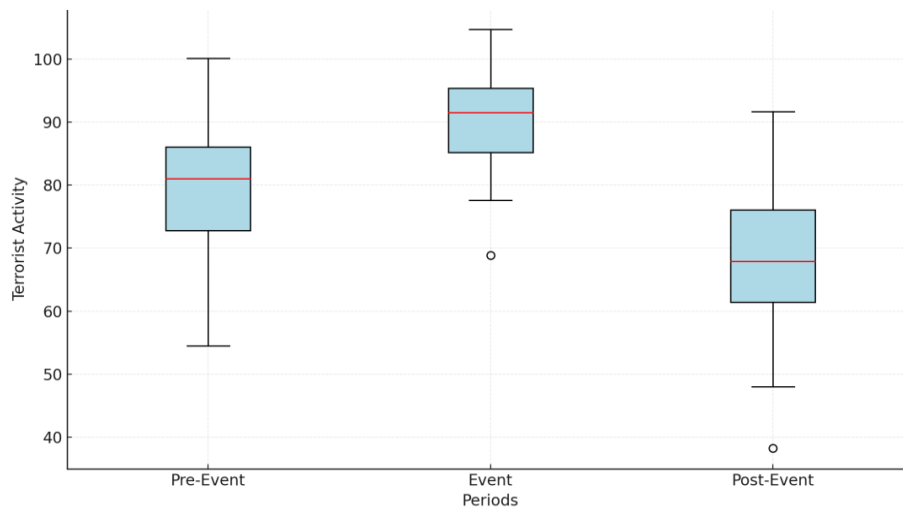
Table 3. Event study results

Comparison	Mean Difference	T-Statistic	P-Value
Pre-Event vs Event	10.00	2.53	0.0136
Event vs Post-Event	-20.00	-4.12	0.0001
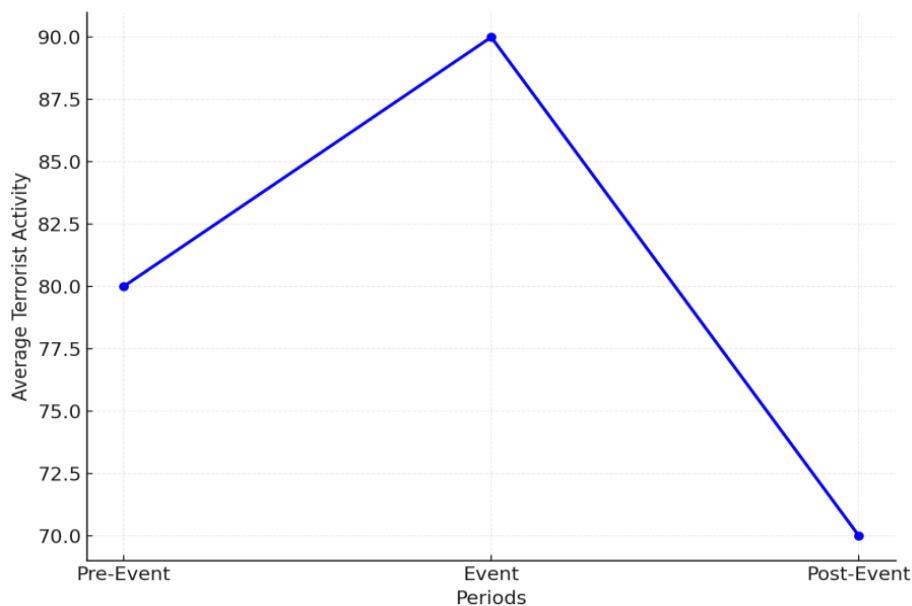
Fig. 5. Average terrorist activity across periods

Fig. 6. Mean differences in terrorist activity

Fig. 7. Distribution of terrorist activity by period

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study illuminate critical dimensions driving insurgencies and underscore the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies and governance interventions. The factor analysis results reveal the socio-economic, political, and cultural underpinnings of insurgencies, emphasizing the predominance of socio-economic drivers (poverty, unemployment, and income inequality). This aligns with Akram and Hassan's (2023) assertion that socio-economic deprivation fuels instability by deepening grievances within marginalized communities. These findings reinforce the need for targeted interventions to address economic disparities, which are foundational to creating resilient societies.

The identification of political and governance drivers, including rule of law and social exclusion, resonates with Sekhejane and Aremu's (2024) emphasis on the destabilizing effects of weak governance and institutional fragility. The critical role of governance in mitigating insurgencies is evident in the correlation between governance quality and reduced terrorist activity, as shown by the significant post-event decline in activity

following governance reforms. These results support Hariram et al.'s (2023) argument that governance reforms must integrate inclusivity and accountability to rebuild public trust and strengthen institutional legitimacy.

Cultural and corruption drivers, exemplified by the importance of control of corruption and government effectiveness, highlight the interplay between institutional integrity and insurgent activity. The results align with Suleiman's (2024) analysis of cultural narratives and corruption as catalysts for mobilizing grievances. The clustering of socio-economic and governance variables underscores the interconnectedness of these factors, necessitating integrated approaches that simultaneously address economic inequality, governance deficits, and cultural grievances to mitigate insurgent threats effectively.

The Interrupted Time Series (ITS) analysis further provides more insights into the dynamics of counterterrorism interventions. While an immediate increase in terrorist activity post-intervention reflects potential insurgent retaliation, the subsequent sustained decline underscores the long-term effectiveness of the strategies employed. This finding aligns with Pereda's (2022) argument that counterterrorism strategies must account for both short-term escalations and long-term stabilization goals. The statistically significant coefficients demonstrate the robustness of the intervention's impact, reinforcing Díaz-Rodríguez et al.'s (2023) contention that sustained policy efforts are essential for mitigating insurgent threats. Factor analysis and ITS analysis are robust tools for identifying underlying dimensions and evaluating intervention impacts, respectively. However, these methods rely on certain assumptions, such as linearity and stationarity in data trends, which may not always hold in complex socio-political contexts. Additionally, the accuracy of results depends on the quality, completeness, and consistency of the datasets used.

Governance interventions reveal similarly compelling dynamics, with distinct patterns of terrorist activity across pre-event, event, and post-event periods. The temporary rise in activity during the event period may reflect the disruptive effects of institutional changes, as noted by Bargués and Morillas (2021). However, the significant post-event decline suggests the enduring impact of governance reforms in countering insurgencies, echoing Petrova and

Korosteleva's (2021) emphasis on institutional resilience as a cornerstone of stability. The statistical significance of mean differences between periods highlights the importance of comprehensive governance reforms in addressing insurgent dynamics, even in the face of short-term disruptions.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study underscores the critical interplay between socio-economic, political, and cultural factors in driving insurgencies, as well as the efficacy of governance reforms and counterterrorism strategies in mitigating these threats. The results demonstrate that socio-economic drivers, particularly poverty and inequality, remain pivotal in fostering instability and necessitate targeted development initiatives. Governance quality and institutional integrity have been identified as essential for reducing insurgent activity, particularly when implemented through inclusive and accountable reforms. Additionally, while counterterrorism interventions initially provoke short-term escalations, they yield substantial long-term benefits when sustained with robust policy frameworks. The study reaffirms that addressing insurgencies demands integrated, context-specific solutions that account for the interdependencies of socio-economic, governance, and cultural factors. Based on this, the following are recommended:

1. Prioritize socio-economic development programs that address the root causes of instability, including poverty, unemployment, and income inequality, by investing in job creation, education, and infrastructure in affected regions to reduce vulnerabilities to insurgent recruitment.
2. Strengthen governance through comprehensive reforms that promote inclusivity, transparency, and accountability while addressing systemic issues such as corruption and social exclusion to rebuild public trust and institutional legitimacy.
3. Enhance the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies by combining immediate security measures with long-term stabilization efforts, ensuring interventions are supported by robust legal, policy, and institutional frameworks.
4. Foster international collaboration and intelligence-sharing initiatives to address transnational threats, emphasizing adaptive regional frameworks that

integrate governance improvements, socio-economic development, and cultural reconciliation for sustainable global security.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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