Chapter 94

Determinants of Terrorism in South Asia:
Insights From a Dynamic Panel Data Analysis

Ramesh Chandra Das
Katwa College, Burdwan, India

Sovik Mukherjee
St. Xavier's University, Kolkata, India

ABSTRACT

Terrorist activities in the post-Paris Peace Treaties have emerged as one of the most perilous agendas that are troubling the world economies and political figures in securing their nations and regions. Several socio-economic factors were evidenced to be the crucial factors in determining terrorist activities all around the world. The present article strives to identify the significance of several socio economic factors, namely, refugee population, access to good sanitation facilities, youth unemployment rate, percentage of education expenditure to GDP, percentage of military expenditure to GDP, per capita GDP and political stability in the panel of seven South Asian countries and China for the period 2002-2016. By applying both static and dynamic panel models, the article observes that all of the selected variables explain the terrorism index with expected signs. The article thus prescribes that the governments of the selected countries should concentrate on allocating their budgets on the improvements of sectors underlying the associated indicators.

INTRODUCTION

The terrorist activities in the post-World War II phase have changed the dimensions of international as well as internal conflicts from country to country basis, to groups to country basis depending on the religious sentiments, local political demands, ethnic groups, etc. The countries of Middle East and South

Asian regions were pronounced as the most affected by terrorist activities and the so-called developed countries of the west were among the least affected by these types of anti-national activities. But the western countries' dreams of keeping their citizens under safety and peace broke when the Al Qaeda led terrorists' attack demolished the pride of United States of America, *The World Trade Centre*, and reduced it to *The Ground Zero*. It is famous as September 11, 9/11 attack in the year 2001. According to Witschel (2003), the incidents of September 11 marked a visible transformation in the nature of international terrorism. Religion replaced ideology and ethno-nationalism as the most dominant motivating factor behind terrorism, which had acquired a global characteristic through a systematic networking between different cooperating groups. The September 11 attacks were a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by the Islamic terrorist group Al Qaeda on the United States on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. The attacks killed 2,996 people, injured over 6,000 others, and caused at least $10 billion loss in infrastructure and property damage. The initial response to these terrorist acts was a knee-jerk military attack led by the US on the bases of Al Qaeda and its host Taliban in Afghanistan. As the dust settled in the mountains of 'Tora Bora', the international society shifted its attention to a much more serious business of understanding the composition of terrorism and the various other issues related to it. Influenced by these developments, South Asia also witnessed renewed interest in terrorism, which even before September 11 has seen a substantial security threat for the countries in the region. USA, backed by most of the countries in the west and some of from the third world belt, showed their vengeance by attacking the residence of the Al Qaeda leader, Osama Bin Laden, at Abbottabad in Pakistan, on May 2, 2011. The palace of Al Qaeda leader was demolished and he was dead on the spot. In the aftermath, the strength of the Al Qaeda group militants became dampened. But the internal war furies in Syria in 2011 and the unstable government in Iraq together provided a perfect opportunity for the Al Qaeda militants to revive. Syria was in chaos, and the Iraqi jihadists established secure bases of operations there, raising money and winning new recruits to their cause by capsizing the oil wells in the country. Their ambitions grew along with their organization, expanding to include countries like Syria as well as Iraq. Iraqi jihadists, by 2013 calling themselves the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to reflect on their new, broader orientation, also faced less pressure in Iraq with the departure of U.S. forces at the end of 2011. The world then faced challenges from a conglomerated form of militancy under the common umbrella of ISIS.

A series of ISIS aggression targeted towards the so-called developed nations of the west after its formation has proved their existence and the so-called powerful world leaders are incapable to track their activities in advance. The deadliest actions started from the 'The November 2015 Paris attacks' which were a series of coordinated terrorist attacks that occurred in Paris, France and the city's northern suburb, Saint-Denis. Three suicide bombers struck outside the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, during a football match and it was followed by several mass shootings, and a suicide bombing, at cafés and restaurants. On the morning of 22 March 2016, three coordinated suicide bombings occurred in Belgium: two at Brussels Airport, and one at Maalbeek metro station in central Brussels. Thirty-two civilians and three perpetrators were killed, and more than three hundred people were injured. In December 2016, a truck was deliberately driven into the Christmas market at Breitscheidplatz in Berlin that left twelve people dead and fifty-six injured. The perpetrator was a Tunisian failed asylum seeker, recommended by Islamic State of Iraq. Very recently in March 2017, a terrorist attack took place in the surrounding area of the Palace of Westminster in London where the attacker drove a car into pedestrians on the Westminster Bridge and Bridge Street, injuring more than fifty people. London police marked the attack as "Islamist-

Related Content

Quantifying Decision Making in the Critical Infrastructure via the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)
John S. Hurley (2017). *International Journal of Cyber Warfare and Terrorism (pp. 23-34).*
www.irma-international.org/article/quantifying-decision-making-in-the-critical-infrastructure-via-the-analytic-hierarchy-process-ahp/190589

Cyber-Physical Systems in Vehicular Communications
Amjad Mehmood, Syed Hassan Ahmedand Mahasweta Sarkar (2020). *Cyber Warfare and Terrorism: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 411-431).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/cyber-physical-systems-in-vehicular-communications/251441

Information Security in Government
Christopher G. Reddick (2010). *Homeland Security Preparedness and Information Systems: Strategies for Managing Public Policy (pp. 166-186).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/information-security-government/38379

Differences and Commonalities Between Terrorism and COVID-19: Globalization in Ruins
Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje (2022). *International Journal of Cyber Warfare and Terrorism (pp. 1-14).*
www.irma-international.org/article/differences-and-commonalities-between-terrorism-and-covid-19/297859

What Lawyers Want: Legally Significant Questions that Only IT Specialists can Answer
Yaroslav Radziwill (2013). *International Journal of Cyber Warfare and Terrorism (pp. 52-57).*
www.irma-international.org/article/what-lawyers-want/105192