TERRORISM AND SECURITIZATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: WEST AFRICAN REFLECTION [1]

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ABSTRACT

The paper outlines terrorism and securitization in the 21st century, reflecting on West Africa. After the U.S attack in September 11, terrorism is given a new concept. However, terrorism in the 21st century has become one of the leading domestic and international challenges globally, especially in West Africa. The nature of terrorism is manifest in our daily lives based on the number of victims it claims. The paper uses theoretical and practical interference to provide the historical background of terrorism in West Africa, including ideologies and group formations, causes, consequences, and responses. This paper is crucial as it can help researchers and academics, policymakers, international organizations, and most government members understand the need for socioeconomic development and other mechanisms to combat terrorism in West Africa

Keywords: West Africa, Terrorism, Securitization, Causes, Responses

YÜZYILDA TERÖRİZM VE GÜVENLİKLEŞTİRME: BATI AFRİKA YANSIMASI

ÖZET

Makale, 21.yy'da Batı Afrika'daki terörizm ve güvenlikleştirme özetlemektedir. 11 Eylül ABD saldırısından sonra terörizme yeni bir kavram verildi. Bununla birlikte, 21.yy'da terörizm özellikle Batı Afrika'da önde gelen yerel ve uluslararası sorunlardan biri haline gelmiştir. Terörün doğası, iddia ettiği kurbanların sayısına göre günlük hayatımızda kendini gösterir. Makale, ideolojileri ve grup oluşumları, nedenleri, sonuçları ve tepkileri dahil olmak üzere Batı Afrika'daki terörizmin tarihsel arka planını sağlamak için teorik ve pratik müdahaleyi kullanıyor. Bu makale araştırmacılara ve akademisyenlere, politika yapıcılara, uluslararası organizasyonlara ve en çok hükümet üyelerine Batı Afrika'daki terörizmle mücadele için sosyo-ekonomik kalkınma ve diğer mekanizmalara olan ihtiyacı anlamalarına yardımcı olabileceğinden çok önemlidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Batı Afrika, Terörizm, Güvenlikleştirme, Nedenler, Tepkiler

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1. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism has become a significant security challenge that has attracted various stakeholders of the 21st century with a rising number of attacks, the level of active terror networks, and the growing links between and among terrorist groups. However, the word terrorism has become an essential concept after the September 11, 2001, U.S attack. Scholars with divergent backgrounds advance different perspectives on what make up terrorism as it varies in terms of definition. The French Revolution of 1789-1799 is believed to be the origin of terrorism and was the period when the French government used its regime to terror people against his ruling who were supporters of the old anarchy. This method of terrorism has been used by the weak and poor to overcome the oppressive and power for over 100 years as it has become an industrial phenomenon. A new meaning is attached to the concept of terrorism after the Second World War regarding Stalinist Russia, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany (Ansart, 2011). Jihadists have become the dominant terrorist since 1979, and in the 1980s, groups such as Al Queda were formed. The Middle East became the epicenter of terrorism, driven primarily by Palestinian groups, especially the PLO, which suddenly saw terrorism as their ticket to statehood and the way to get the world to pay attention to their grievances (Davis, 2006).

In the 21st century, the principal terrorist threats confronting the U.S in the world today are all extremism. They are groups based in this arc of instability stretching from West Africa to Central Asia, the larger part of North Africa and the greater Middle East, from al-Queda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen to Boko Haram in Nigeria to al-Nusrat and ISIS Front in Syria to Pakistan and Afghanistan, groups like the Taliban and the Haqqani network. The internet allows terrorist not only to publicize their atrocities and recruit, organize, and train people. It is a much more capable medium for terrorist organizations than television, making it almost impossible to imagine without the mass media. ISIS, for example, can use the internet to put videos of hideous atrocities (Jeakins, 2001).

In the early 2000s, the African continent became very important in the international system after decades of marginalization during the 1980s and 1990s. Okeke (2016) states two significant problems hindering the advancement of African security. First is the "rising prominence and recognition" affecting the political instability and the security landscape of Africa and the possible responses of states to threats and emergences in the continent. From this, the African Union introduce non-discriminatory policy in combating crises to promote peace and security. The African Union (AU) initiative has been complimented by Regional organizations and national governments. After the laughing of the Common African Defense and Security policy (CADSP) by African Union (AU), it created a platform for African forces to stay alert and how to resist Early Warning System. Therefore, the sub-regional bodies are assigned the responsibility of providing the politics of peace and security in Africa. Moreover, despite the creation of these platforms the prevailing Security challenges in West Africa are caused by Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria, and trans-nationalization of security treats to Cameroon and Niger, the National Movement for Liberalization (MNLA), and the Tuaregs insurgent in northern Mali (Okeke, 2016). As a results of these insurgent activities, that led to rebellions in many countries, including like Nigeria, Mali, Niger, and Senegal. Terrorism and security became a significant concerned to the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) as the regional organization, governments and ordinary citizens (Dokken, 2010).

This article explores the impacts of terrorism and securitization in the 21st century, the trends, the causes, and responses with a case study of West Africa. While many studies have explored the formation and activities of terrorist organizations, with no recent studies critically examining the success the failures of terrorist organizations. A new study such as the global terrorist index 2022 reveals that the new dynamic of terrorism has shifted to political conflict zones rather than the old concept that believes terrorism is anti-western and based on religion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. History and Concept of Terrorism

There is an issue with the generally accepted definition of terrorism globally. Terrorism is defined differently according to history from the pre-modern to the modern period. Terrorism is not something new; groups of individuals used political violence against authorities and elites during the pre-modern days. However, in the Middle East, a group now called the' Assassins' killed the governors and military leaders to create alliances or retribution during the end of the 11th century. So there is nothing new about the concept of terrorism because similar actions are done by individuals or a group of people nowadays that people called terrorist. Therefore, the first definition or understanding of terrorism will be the political assassination against the elites (Katona, 2007).

Pre-Modern Terrorism

These were terrorist activities before the modern age, and that has issues of the capacity for mass communication until the 1800s to a large extent when there was mass production of newspapers, an increase in literacy rate, and the availability of information to be distributed to a wide range of people. Some of the recorded terrorist incidents that scholars focused on during the pre-modern period were done by this group called Sicarii Zealots, who were radical Jewish assassins of the 1st century BCE who sought the end of Roman rule that controlled what is now Israel-Palestine. These radical Jewish individuals go into large crowds, especially Roman citizens. They use knives to stab as many people as possible and then slip them back into the crowd and disappear (Fettweis, 2009).

Modern Terrorism

The modern definition of terrorism starts in the 1870s and 1880s with anarchism, when people in Europe protest to abolish all forms of injustice and brutality of their regimes. Another slogan linked to early modern terrorism of 'Liberty or Death' can be traced in the 19th and 20th century of the protest and proclamation of International Macedonian Revolution resisting Ottoman rule and even after that period, people used different measures, ideologies, and extremism to attack people from all sectors of the society both at domestic and international level. Some even killed their leaders (Jensen, 2013).

Jihadists have become the dominant terrorist since 1979, and in the 1980s, groups such as Al Queda were formed. The Middle East became the epicenter of terrorism, driven primarily by Palestinian groups, especially the PLO, which suddenly saw terrorism as their ticket to statehood and the way to get the world to pay attention to their grievances. Terrorists always have some religious agenda, obviously an extreme plan if they are willing to kill to propagate it (Davis, 2006).

Four Waves of Terrorism by David Rapoport

The definition of terrorism keeps changing over time. According to David Rapoport, each of these waves of terrorism is based on a particular ideology and objectives that many different groups worldwide subscribe to justify their terrorist actions and what drove them to use terrorism to achieve their objectives (Rapoport, 2013). This waves of terrorism according to Rapopport (2013) includes:

First Wave of Terrorism: Anarchist Terrorism: (the 1880s-1920s). Anarchists are individuals who advocate for the disintegration of governments in many ways, and some anarchists often have leanings toward particular types of governments. They may want to dissolve a government they see as more democratic and capitalist and move towards a more authoritarian or socialist one, so there can sometimes be a blending of anarchism with other ideologies. However, for the most part, anarchist wants to end a particular type of government. They want a society that does not have a strong centralized government. An example of the Anarchist movement happened in Russia in the 1800s with the authoritarian government that existed and was ruled by Czars, who ruled Russia for hundreds and hundreds of years as an authoritarian government that enslaved most of its population until the 1850s. Hence, many early Russian terrorists wanted to overthrow this traditional society. They wanted

to end the rule of the Czars, and usage of assassinations was seen as a primary tactic to achieve their objectives of ending the oppressive Russian government.

The same tactic started to spread in other parts of the world after its emergence. The anarchist is one way responsible for the outbreak of the First World War when a Serb national named Garrison Princip assassinated Archduke Ferdinand and helped ultimately bring about the initiation of World War One. He was a Serbian anarchist who wanted to bring about the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Second Wave of Terrorism: Anti-Colonialism (the 1920s-1960s) these were movements worldwide trying to overthrow the colonial empires of France, Britain, Italian, and America. These countries that had colonial holdings during these 40 years had to deal with many groups that wanted to end colonial rule and gain independence. Most of these people are willing to use a lot of respect and some terrorist tactics to achieve their objectives. An example of this is the emergence of the Irish Republican Army to combat the British. Even after Ireland gained independence from the U.K in the early 1920s, the United Kingdom still controls Northern Ireland, a chunk of the island controlled by the British. The Ireland government is still trying to push out the British government and re-unite the Island of Ireland. There was a significant spread of anti-colonialist terrorist groups across the world to try to end these previously repressive forms of government that often allowed very little input from the populations that they ruled to have any say in their economic and governmental system and work toward trying to gain independence and many times the various groups were willing to use these terrorist tactics to achieve those objectives. However, by the 1960s, this wave of terrorism started to peter out because, by the 1960s, vast chunks of the world, especially Africa and Asia, had gained their independence from their previous colonial rulers. This wave of terrorism, in some ways, dies out to some extent based on the fact that most of these colonial holdings have become independent.

Third Wave of Terrorism: Rapoport calls the New Left (the 1960s-1990s). This is where we see a natural movement from the 1960s to the 1990s of leftist communist revolutionaries who were willing to engage in terrorist acts to try to bring about a global ideological shift at the end of World War Two, where the world was divided between the Capitalist West and Communist East were there is a considerable ideological struggle throughout the world whether different country groups are going to support the Soviet Union or whether they will support the United States. There was a significant spike in groups subscribing to more communist ideologies and carrying out terrorist attacks worldwide. These incidents happened in Latin and South America with groups like the Shining Path in Peru. This communist group carried out many terrorist attacks across Peru in the 19th, especially in the 1970s and 1980s. There were groups like the Palestinian Liberation Organization, a nationalist organization that wanted Palestinian independence and homeland with a more leftist communist leading ideology. This group carried out attacks against Israel to gain their independence and promote left-wing economic ideology. This group carries out extensive activities during this period. However, it started to peter out by the 1990s, mainly because the Soviet Union collapsed and the Communist Chinese government became more capitalistic. To a certain extent, these terrorist groups started to have more funding and support from the Soviet Union in their attempts to try to overthrow governments that they thought were perhaps more right-wing or more aligned with the United States, and once the Soviet Union collapsed, the funding of this group starts to dry up as well, and also the idea of a worldwide communist revolution fades away leading to the failure of communist ideology throughout the world.

Fourth Wave of Terrorism: Is religiously motivated that started (1980s-Present) with the rise of religious terrorism worldwide. This comprised of Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus, and many groups that started to emerge in the 1980s and many argue started after the Iranian revolution in 1979 helped spark a revival of more Islamic motivated terrorism around the world, especially with the capacity of the Afghanistan Mujahedeen who sought to push back against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan whose pride was an Atheist subscribe ideology. Many individuals who fought in Afghanistan sought to push back against these Atheist invaders. Osama Bin Laden was a significant leader in pushing back the Soviet Union, and with the success of the Iranian Revolution, small groups of forces like the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan. This inspired many small religious groups who wished to have powerful impacts on prominent players. The United States has seen groups like Christian terrorists like the Army of God emerging in the 1980s who bombed abortion clinics and tried to kill

abortion doctors. These different groups have been going till the present 2000s with the idea of religious cults subscribing to the ideas of religion.

Finally, the difference between pre-modern terrorism and modern terrorism has been the different ideologies and objectives of different groups and individuals involved. Before the modern period, individuals and groups aimed to fight against oppressive regimes, which were very brutal and abusive to their subjects. In the modern period, individuals and groups subscribe to a particular ideology highly motivated by religion.

2.2.   Securitization in the 21st century

Securitization has also become a global issue after September 11, 2001, US attack, which led the United States after declaring war on terror invasion of Afghanistan in (2001) and Iraq in (2003). Since after then, the security perspective of the world have changed and its shows that the technological advancement and infrastructural development of a country cannot determine its absolute security (Weaver & Lipschutz, 1995). The concept of security became a debating topic in the international system. The Copenhagen School gained its reference point, whose exponents are Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, and Jaap de Wilde. Who in 1996 argues that during the cold war, the form of security that prevailed was only concerned with the survival of states, an ideal broadly defended by realist theories of international relations. In his view, the term 'Security' cannot be treated as an undistorted area of analysis but rather a social results. In other words, it is a question of understanding the social construction of security issues.

In the early 2000s, the African continent became very important in the international system after decades of marginalization during the 1980s and 1990s. Okeke (2016) states two significant problems hindering the advancement of African security. First is the "rising prominence and recognition" affecting the peace and security landscape of Africa and the possible responses of states to threats and emergences in the continent. From this, the African Union introduce non-discriminatory policy in combating crises to promote peace and security. The African Union (AU) initiative has been complimented by Regional organizations and national governments. After the laughing of the Common African Defense and Security policy (CADSP) by African Union (AU), it created a platform for African forces to stay alert and how to resist Early Warning System. Therefore, the sub-regional bodies are assigned the responsibility of providing the politics of peace and security in Africa. Moreover, despite the creation of these platforms the prevailing Security challenges in West Africa are caused by Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria, and trans-nationalization of security treats to Cameroon and Niger, the National Movement for Liberalization (MNLA), and the Tuaregs insurgent in northern Mali. As a results of these insurgent activities, that led to rebellions in many countries, including like Nigeria, Mali, Niger, and Senegal. Terrorism and security became a significant concerned to the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) as the regional organization, governments and ordinary citizens.

2.3. Terrorism in West Africa

Over the decades, West Africa has experienced multiple conflicts, and insurgencies. The region is prone to post-electoral violence, socio-political instability, lack of democracy, corruptions and attempted and successful coups d'état, recently in Mali August 2020 and Guinea Conakry 2021 (Powell & Thyne, 2011). Since the Malian crisis, the region has attracted global attention because of the atrocities of terrorist groups that are affiliated with al-Qaeda and Islamic State territories organizations (Boss & Mellissen, 2019).

Suh (2019) states that in the early 2000, after the first emergence of terrorism. West Africa has been prone to worst terrorist attacks that is strengthening and increasing around many parts of the region.

The Sahel region has been identified globally, between 2017 and 2020 as the most increase area of worst terrorist violence (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, July 21, 2020). In 2015, the region has experience the emergence of extremist groups called the Islamic state that aimed to overthrow all governments and constitute an Islamic State in the great Saharan. As a results, the Malian conflict has a caused a lot of fear and threat in neighboring countries like Burkina Faso and Niger leading to so

many causalities and rise in terrorism globally between 2018 and 2019. While all prominent al-Qaida-affiliated organizations that includes, al-Qaida (AQIM) in the Maghreb, Ansaru, and al-Mourabitoun united in March 2017 under a union control by Iyad Ag Ghali the former Tuareg rebel leader (Harmon, 2010, p.4.).

Terrorism has become a new security threat in West Africa with the high rate of terrorist attacks and their connections with other terrorist groups outside the African continent. Groups AQIM, Islamic State, al Shabaab and Boko Haram, are most dangerous militant organizations active in African countries. Africa has become a conducive ground for establishing terrorist groups due to the high poverty rate, unemployment, under-development, poor governance, and conflicts that prompt its growth. However, the war on terror after September 11 and the demolishment of Al-Qaeda's base in Afghanistan and West Asia have tried to find the ground in Africa. They have propelled the increased activities of AQIM in West Africa and its support to other terrorist organizations such as Ansar Dine, Boko Haram, Ansaru, and others through weapons, financial, and ideological collaboration. Similar is the case with the Islamic State, which is keen to establish itself in West Africa (Onuha & Ezirim, 2013).

Nkwi (2015) argues that many terrorist groups in West Africa have common aims and objectives. However, the activities of these groups includes AQIM, operating in Mauritania, and northern Mali, Boko Haram, mainly operating in Northern part of Nigeria, Niger, Northern Cameroon and around Central Africa, the MUJAO also operates. The ultimate aim of these groups is bring the old Islam and do away with Western civilization. He further states that these terrorist groups launched attacks, kidnapped Western people, and bombed western properties which have fundamentally changed the regional security dynamics in West Africa.

2.4. Main terrorist groups in West Africa

There are many terrorist groups are operating in this region, and all these terrorist groups have similar aims and objectives.

Boko Haram: Is a 'group of people who love the teachings and practices of the Prophet' that is commonly known as Boko Haram is a violent extremist Islamic group, which has rendered massive havoc across Nigeria, Chad and, Cameroon. Mostly believed to have been founded in 2002 by Mouhammed Youssouf, the group has carried out violent attacks on government buildings, United Nations buildings, Churches, and other public places. Its existence and activities have posed severe security challenges to the Nigerian state and regional and global peace and security (Walker, 2012).

The terrorist attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria per year is shown in figure 1.
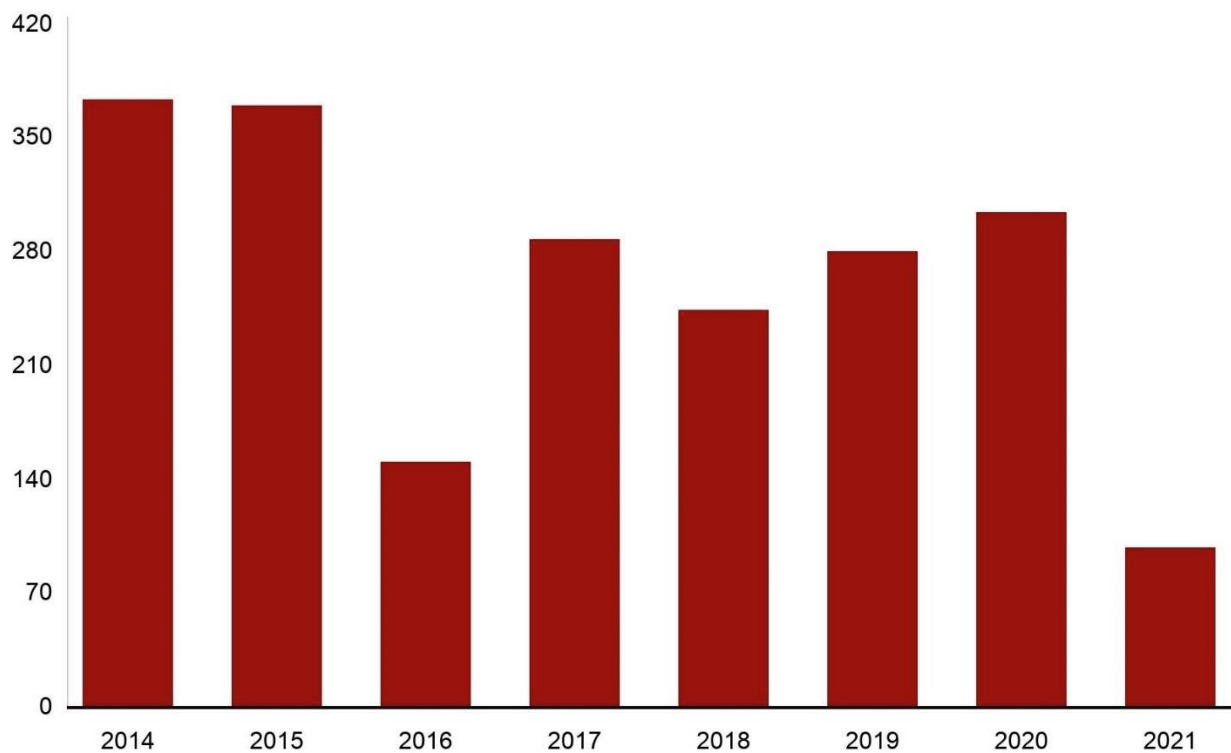
2014-2021

Figure 1. Terrorism incidents by Boko Haram Per Year
Source: Beacon Consulting, 2021.

AQIM: is an Islamist militant group (of al-Queda) whose intentions is constitute an Islamic State by overthrowing the Algerian government. The origin of the group is to promote and preach Islam. After declaring their intentions to attack Europeans, the United Nations and many countries have identified the group as a terrorist group. The group was involved in the coup of March 12 that dragged Mali into instability and chaos that generated a power vacuum. It, in turn, helps primarily MNLA, supported by Islamic groups such as MUJAO, AQIM, and Ansar Dine, to take control of almost two-thirds of the territory of Mali (Grobbeblaar & Solomon, 2015).

Figure 2. The countries AQIM operates on

Source: United States Counter Terrorism Guide, 2021

According to the United States counter terrorism guide 2021, AQIM operates in the northern part of Mali and Algeria (Figure 2). Their tactics include assassinations, suicides, and the bombing of different places, which comprise the military, government grounds, and employees of various cooperation. After NATO's 2011 Libya invasion they experience an influx of components (D'Amato, 2018).

MUJAO: The origin of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa formation can be traced back to the lands of Maghreb in 2011, when the former leader Hamad al-Khairy and Ahmed el-Tilemsi founded it as a separate entity of al Qa'ida. These two men aided in kidnapping two French nationals in January 2011 in Niger (Allison, 2014). However, the group is an Islamic Military Organization that split from the Al-Qaeda around the Maghreb region, intending to enhance and promote the teachings and deeds of Islam across more extensive sections of West Africa as well as condemning the interest of the French operations

In West Africa, which they regard as "colonialist occupiers." As the group intensified its activities across northern Mali and the southern part of Algeria, the United Nations Security Council sanctioned them in 2012 (Anuoha & Ezirim 2013).

***Ansaru*:** The Network for protecting Black Muslims in Africa is a group that is commonly called Ansaru and called Al-Qaeda in some regions around the Sahel (Anuoha & Ezirim, 2013). The group is an extremist jihadist movement that is a division of Boko Haram based in Nigeria, officially declared independent in 2012. However, the group have good relationship with Al-Qaeda which makes them more oriented internationally. The emergence of Ansaru creates a new version of West Africa's unfolding landscape of terrorism. Ansaru and Boko Haram closely work together until their activities increasingly declined and stopped in 2015. Since then, the group has become dominant through its continues activities and propagandas for. Furthermore, the group has promised to bring back the Sokoto Caliphate by protecting the "dignity of Muslims in Black Africa". The group has taken credit for so many terrorist activities in Nigeria, such as the November 2012 armed attack on the Ajuda detention center 2012, the attack on the military post at Kogi in January 2013, and the disappearance of foreign experts of Bauchi state in February of the same year"(Nkwi, 2015).

***Hezbollah and AQAP*:** Meaning "Party of God" or "Party of Allah" has its roots from the Lebanese Muslim Shia party led by its Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah since 1992 (Roberts, 2013). It is a group that beliefs in the Shia ideologies introduce by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini the Iranian leader whose followers aided the formation of the ideology in the early 1980s to spread the Islamic revolution (Robin, 2013). There is a significant security threat in West Africa to the expansion and increasing dynamics of Hezbollah and AQAP in the region. In 2002, after the end of the Sierra Leonean civil war, Lebanese Sunni and Shia emigrants started to visit West Africa and were involved in diamond dealings in the late ninetieth and early twentieth centuries. The group's activities in West Africa became severe with the arrest of two Nigerians who accepted thousands of dollars from AQAP to recruit potential members from Nigeria. Besides, terror reconnaissance is helping the Lebanese military outfit Hezbollah raise funds and recruitment in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Gambia, and Senegal. Most of these terror outfits raise funds for their operations by facilitating trans-National organized crimes and trafficking of contrabands (Akelere, 2021).

Islamic State: Pham (2016) argues that the IS terrorist has recently been the most dangerous in the West. In early October, the group had a clash with soldiers from the US and Niger on the border with Mali, and the battle resulted in the death of four US and five Nigerian troops. "There is an overall risk in West Africa as the ungoverned space is likely targeted by IS. Moreover, West Africa has weak governments, the poorest Muslim-majority globally, and a problem identity in its respective nations" (p.1-3). However, the ultimate aim of this terrorist group has been "to fight the western civilization and bring back the classical Islam that existed in the 10th century. They can only achieve their aims by launching attacks on Western installations, bombing embassies, kidnapping Western tourists, and anyone who stands in their way to achieving their aims and objectives" (p.4). They argued that westernization had undermined classical Islam.

2.5. Causes of Terrorism in West Africa

2.5.1. Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fanaticism constitutes one of the most dominant causes of this phenomenon. Scholars have dubbed it a double-edged weapon that can help achieve social union but can also be exploited by individuals and groups for political and personal reasons (Otenyo, 2004). Although regional, ethnic, and tribal lines have been sources of conflict in West African states, wars fueled by religion and ideologies are also significant. The three dominant religions in West Africa are Islam, Christianity, and Traditional beliefs (Ter Haar, 2005). Political outcomes, especially elections, are greatly influenced by religion. For instance, countries like Nigeria have geopolitics designed along with religion. A Muslim Hausa Fulani dominated the North, and a Christian Igbo dominated the east.

2.5.2. Bad Governance

West African states are generally associated with bad governance and corruption. Good governance entails the delivery of certain socio-economic services to citizens and guarantying fundamental human rights. Which should involves transparency, accountability and the supremacy of the law that should direct the day to day activities governments (Onuoha, 2014). There should be adequate provision of social welfare such as the creation of employment, provision of education, and health care helps lower

poverty, insecurity, political and religious extremism faced by the government in West Africa since independence has been associated with corruption which has led to attempts and successful coups in the region (Atuobi, 2007). Corruption impoverished citizens, leaving them desperate and vulnerable to join group terrorist groups for survival. For example, Nigeria ranked seventh globally as Africa's biggest oil supplier. However, this is not reflected in the lives of the masses, especially the northerners who suffer most from poverty (ibid). Presidential candidates in most West African states always promise to fight corruption and bad governance but mostly become more corrupt than their predecessors. Political elites live lavish and expensive lifestyles while the masses continue to wallow in poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Such deficiencies in Nigeria have provided Boko Haram a fertile breeding ground for recruitment, as they vow to fight corruption and inequality in Nigeria (Adesoji, 2010).

2.5.3. Corrupt Leaders

Many organizations have ranked countries in West Africa as corrupt. This is a major issue that hindered the socio-economic advance of West African states. Corruption destroys the legitimacy of a government, resulting in so many coups and instability in countries like Ghana and other West African states. For instance, In 2012 Gallup report showed that 94% of Nigerians believe corruption is widespread in Nigeria. Transparency International ranked Nigeria 149th out of 180 countries, making them one of the most corrupt nations (Transparency International, 2020). Going by the data mentioned above, it can be understood why for instance, Boko haram have risen to fight Nigerian government. Most Nigerians have resentment towards the state due to its incapability of providing essential services and necessities, especially considering the high revenue generated from oil. Boko Haram's initial attacks were against people or groups perceived as highly corrupt, including police officers and government officials. In its immediate emergence, the group provided health care, education, and employment which many locals argued was not being provided by the government (Pate, 2015).

2.5.4. Socio-Economic Causes

Socio-economic problems related to basic needs of human such as food, water, electricity, and clothes as a results of, unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, and economic marginalization have been exploited by terrorist groups in West Africa for support and recruitment. Poverty is usually the leading cause of terrorism in global security studies. Former Nigerian secretary of state Kerry admitted that poverty is the leading cause in West Africa, especially in the Boko Haram conflict. The World Bank defines poverty as individuals who live or earned less than $2 a day (Bello, 2013). Furthermore, the incapability of many youths and families to meet their basic needs has compelled many to join Boko Haram, AQIM, MAUJAO, and Ansaru as a means of survival. For instance, ex-Boko haram militants interviewed argued that Boko haram offered them a means of life as they were receiving about $25 as remuneration from BH (Onuoha, 2014). A US peace Institute sponsored research in 2013 in Kaduna and Kano revealed that 83% and 92% of youth strongly agreed that unemployment and poverty was the only push factor for joining terrorist groups in West Africa, especially Boko Haram (Onuoha, 2014). Former and present world leaders, including Tayyip Erdogan, Bill Clinton, George Bush, and Tony Blair, have all cited poverty as a cause of terrorism. Unemployment is also often cited as a reason for terrorism in West Africa. According to Stober (2015), in West Africa, millions of youths annually join the labor market, of whom the majority do not get employed. When people are unemployed, their ability to meet basic livelihood needs decreases tremendously, leading to poverty. Many qualified youths in West Africa lack employment opportunities leading to frustration as many struggles to survive. This makes them vulnerable to incentives and opportunities provided by insurgent groups such as AQIM, and IS, who provide employment and livelihood (Bolagi, 2010).

A high level of education can help a society achieve socio-economic development as it equips the citizens with critical reasoning abilities, which helps them make informed decisions and choices. A massive gap in literacy and school completion level exists between and among many regions in West Africa. For instance, in Nigeria, during the colonial period, the northern elites resisted both colonialism and formal education (Bello, 2013). The missionaries mainly operated in the East, Christian-dominated, where Western education and Christianity were openly welcomed. The disparity

in levels of literacy and completion has not significantly changed since then. Indeed North's educational history has disadvantaged it, but the Nigerian government has not developed affirmative policies that can breach the gap. Boko haram has effectively exploited the low literacy level in northern Nigeria to derive a level of northern legitimacy and support, as illiterates are the easiest to convince to join terrorist groups (Onuoha, 2014).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
These are theories and assumptions used and debated by scholars in relation to terrorism.

3.1. Kantian Theory of Perpetual Peace

Immanuel Kant was a German philosopher (1724-1804) regarded as one of the greatest political thinkers. Who wrote the book "Perpetual peace" published in 1975, is arguably seen as the starting point of contemporary liberal thought, which strongly argued for a world government. This theory of Kant can help analyze the causes of terrorism (conflict) and the counter-terrorism mechanisms, even though the theory promotes peace among nations. One of the earliest works of Immanuel Kant was done on the issue of peace without mixing it religion called "Foedus pacificum" for there to be a peaceful coexistence. According to Kant, peace is different from the anarchical nature of the state which is evil. However, for Kant, it is the human nature that appraise states to become evil because of their attitudes towards it. He further argues that "there should not be war in the state of nature but a concerned to prevent problems" because in a warfare there is abuse of human rights and its consequences are normally open hostilities that put everyone prepared and feel suspicious of their neighbors because no one is trusted. As a results of such, Kant has another meaning of war that includes "open hostility" and consequences of war. Moreover, the state is formed base on the will of the people that makes themselves peace institutions in the "natural state of nature" in other to avert them (Kant, 2008).

3.2. Dependency Theory

Dependency has been a significant problem of the international system as the underdeveloped states depend on developed countries for their survival, and this is still affecting the growth and sovereignty of some states, predominantly African, in their struggle to fight terrorism without external help as we still depend on the West for economic, political, and military support. Many scholars argue that Africa's underdevelopment results from the external influence of the Europeans and colonialism, which led to the exploitation of African resources, which created an unfair market that only works for the capitalist states. Today, Africa is the world's poorest, with numerous crises, including security and terrorism (Matunhu, 2011). Dependency theory came to counter an earlier theory of development called modernization theory which argues that all societies advanced through similar levels of development that today's undeveloped areas have similarities with today's developed areas before. The underdeveloped states need to be helped out of poverty through investment, technology transfer, and close relations in the world market. The dependency theories rejected the idea and argued that underdeveloped countries have their way of life and are not local entities of developed nations as the weaker members of the world economy (Onwudiwe, 2018). The introduction of dependency theory clarifies an apparent misconception about some nations' underdevelopment and other states' development. However, after the establishment of the theory in the 1960s and 1970s out of Central and South America but was part of a more significant movement asking a lot of question about the injustice nature of the international system and why other countries are not developed. International system was exploitative and characterized by the dominance of some countries over others (Agbebi & Virtanen, 2017).

3.3. Conflict Theory Perspective on Terrorism

Conflict theory studies the inequality of different groups in society (Hirshleifer, 2001). Conflict theory has its roots in sociology. Karl Marx (188-1883) was a very famous sociologist, economist, political scientist, and philosopher whose work in the early term mid-1800s formed the initial statements of

this perspective. Marx (1973) believed that society evolved through several stages. Most importantly, the 19th century capitalist Europe was dominated by the concepts of Socialism and Capitalism where the minority of the population are the upper class called the bourgeoisie. Moreover, the majority of the population are in the lower class called the proletariat. Marx argued on the huge economic difference between the workers and the owners of the factories.

He further states that there will be a conflict in a society were one group economically exploits the others (Marx, 1973). From a conflict perspective, other sociologists like Fahrendorf have debunk the way Marx divided the society into two economic classes. He argues that the struggle for dominance is the main problem that exist between the two groups and finally, the wealth of indivuals cannot be used to measure its social class in the society (Hillman & Chen, 2008).

3.4. The Assumptions of Terrorism

3.4.1. Assumption 1: Terrorism caused by poverty

An assumption is an unexamined belief that might be true or not. Most scholars prefer assumptions in analyzing terrorism rather than theories. After the September 11 incident, scholars and policy makers both national and international level see poverty as an important assumption of terrorism. This idea has been described by politicians and public figures around the world. For instance in 2002, during the United Nations General Assembly about Forty leaders argued that the primary cause of international terrorism revolves around inequality, poverty, and underdevelopment. However, the United Nations Secretary General at the time, Kofi Annan states that "no one in this world can be comfortable or safe when so many people are suffering and deprived." The second example was a speech made in January 2002 by Bill Clinton former U.S President who describes that terrorism is the "dark side of globalization" and nothing that survives on less than $2 per day in almost one-half of the world's population. He further advice policy makers in America to initiate policies that will help to close the inequalities in wealth and also promote national security. The third example was the one George W. Bush in 2002 and he said, "We fight against poverty because hope is the answer to terror" (Piazza, 2007).

Another example was the given in 2007 by Desmond Tutu of South Africa and he states, "You can never win a war against terror as long as conditions in the world make people desperate: Poverty, diseases, and ignorance." Are these statements correct or wrong about terrorism? Is poverty the root cause of terrorism? (Tutu, D. 2007).

The problem is that poverty has been the reason that affects the wellbeing and the quality of life of many people making them frustrated and angry on the situation they are living, which is key to violence (terror acts), might be the last restore to put their grievances on the political agenda. Some argue that the act is rational, and the committers are rational actors. It is arguable that some extremist groups claimed to fight for the rights of the poor who are found in the lower class of the society. This makes many to assume on the relationship that terrorism shares with poverty (Easterly, 2016).

3.4.2. Assumption 2: Terrorism is Anti-Western

This can be dived into aspects, First, are the Westerners the targets of terrorism or not? Second, are the slogan used by terrorist organizations anti-Westerners? Where is the assumption and origin of this claim? Days after the 2001 September 11 attack in U.S, George W. Bush highlighted in his speech and said, "Why do they hate us? They do because of our democratic values, their leaders are self-appointed and we elect our government" We respect the right to religion, liberties of individuals, freedom of assembly, and views of people" this is what they hate" (Bush, 2011).

In 2002, an interview was held by Al-Jazeera with Osama Bin Laden the former leader of al-Qaeda who states that, "This war is against the know believers in the United States and Jews who are still showing injustice to the Muslims."

Much discussion has been made by scholars and experts on anti-western terrorist attacks. Phares (2017) analyzes how extremist jihadists fight against Western ideology and civilization. According to many, this is seen as a new form of terrorism called Islamist terrorism. In order to test this assumption

that terrorists mainly target Westerners and the West. Martha Crenshaw (2000) states that: "A new terrorism is emerged and inspired by religious beliefs, more instrumental, deadly, and worse than the one the world is used to." She further states that this "new" terrorism "started in the Middle East and it is Anti-Western" that is connected to "Islamic Fundamentalism." before September 11 attack in the same book, he also describe on the "Alarm over the emergence of radical Islam (…) was heightened by a combination of factors: the resort to suicide bombings in Lebanon and Israel, a general willingness to inflict mass civilian casualties, and anti-American and anti-Western targeting patterns." If we continue anticipating terrorism is Anti-Western, is it important to test this assumption? Of course, the propaganda is spread, how about if it is not true? What if terrorism is not only targeting the West? Therefore spreading that misconception is not good because it will make things worse. Moreover, this might bring about civilization clashes as put forwarded by Huntington, that there is struggle or competition between Islam Christianity.

First, let us look at a geographical approach by looking at the following map of terrorist incidents in 2022 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2022). The terrorism in West have dropped. There is no western state in the index in the first 20 countries highly impacted by terrorism. The 6 (six) most countries with higher ranks are Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Burkina Faso, Syria, and Nigeria. Looking at Western Europe, South America, North America, and Australia compared with the figures in the South Asia or Middle East, in countries like India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Most of the Muslim countries in Africa are mainly facing terrorism, for example, West Africa, Nigeria, Mali, North Africa, Egypt, Libya, and the Sahel regions. This research shows that the Muslim world is experiencing high terrorist attack and most of the victims are Muslims.

The deaths from terrorism in 2021 fall by 1.2 percent to 7,142 deaths which is different from 2015, when it was at its peak. Most of the attacks occurred in six countries (Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Niger, Myanmar, Iraq, and Mali).

The dynamics of terrorism linked to regions or areas of political tensions such as Afghanistan, West Africa, and Myanmar have changed. In 2021 over 97 percent of terrorist attacks have been influenced by violent conflicts, which remain a vital driver of terrorism today.

The number of attacks over the last three years has fallen in the West. Out of Fifty-nine attacks, ten deaths were recorded in 2021, which shows a decrease of 68 and 70 percent since its peak in 2018—three attacks done by Islamist radicals in Europe in 202. Attacks in the U.S have also dropped drastically since 2015, with seven attacks recorded in 2021, and none of the attacks was linked to any terrorist groups. However, the number of deaths in the U.S increased slowly from two to three between 2021 and 2022 (Alfaro, 2022).

3.4.3. The Assumption 3; Terrorism is Successful

In this section, the criteria to measure the success of terrorists can be based on two points if you accept that terrorism is an objective to be achieved by a particular group looking at whether or not they achieved these particular goals; Does terrorism create attention and cause fear? Do terrorists archive their political goals? However, many different ways can be used to measure the success of terrorists. Some might argue that the number of casualties can be used to determined how powerful they are and how governments and other actors should interact with them especially when the organization can survive and the continuity the organization. However, Media plays a crucial role in measuring the success of terrorists through headlines level of fear caused, media is an essential tool that helps them to achieve their interests. Because without those headlines, level of fear, attntion, it will be a challenge for their political goal be achieved (Archetti, 2013).

Moreover, political goal has been used by many scholars to measure the success of terrorism or not. Max Abrahm (2006), in his work "Why terrorism does not work," used the United States terrorist Department data base to analyze 28 terrorist groups. His two findings were only 7% objectives is achieved by terrorist groups at a time. Most of the groups do not attack military zones but rather civilians which makes them failed in their objectives. The research highlighted that terrorist groups normally failed on their aims related to the technique of terrorism itself. The goal fails if the actors attack civilians. That is the bottom line. He further states that the dominant scholarly view will be

challenged by the results of this research that terrorism is a rational actor. Other scholars have argued why terrorists keep struggling if it does not lead to political achievements. For instance, Paul Wilkinson (2016) states, "Many terrorists have the perception that terrorism will work for them in the end, by forcing their opponents to submit to their demands" (P.2).

4. METHODOLOGY

The methods are defined as "the strategies and processes involved in conducting research studies." As a result, this article is specifically a qualitative research and "the aim is to analyze and understand the in depth view point of the research. However, the qualitative method is normally not interested with generalizations during the investigations but rather, the study represent the people" and the results that obtained will then use to generalize the whole population (Vanderstoep & Deirdre, 2008). For this reason, this research will follow such important structure to remain within the scope of qualitative research. This study was exploratory and descriptive to gain an insight into the phenomenon terrorism. The descriptive component of the study helps in examining and describing the causes, consequences, and the different responses in combatting terrorism and which alternatives should be applied plus the first one. The study is qualitatively based on secondary data analysis relevant to the study problem, these include documents, Websites, journals, books, newspapers as well as internal and regional groupings 'documents related to strategy plans to counter terrorism for instance the previous researches, writings, publications and reports from the UN, the AU, the ECOWAS and the G5 Sahel websites.

5. RESPONSES TO THE CHALLENGES OF TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA

5.1. Response by Governments

It is sensed that tackling terrorism at the domestic level is more productive and proactive because most terrorist activities are planned within the state, and the poor local people are once recruited to embark on these activities. Young (2006) argues that conditions in West Africa like Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Mali have designed legislation for anti-terrorism measures that can help respond to any form of violence or threat by terrorist organizations. Since most of these terrorist threats are domestic, the legislation will help governments quickly react to terrorist attacks, which might be difficult with strategic plans enacted by states.

It is essential to have a proper judiciary system that have good authority to make laws and implement regulations both in human and financial availability in other to have authority to make reviews of terrorist individuals living with the state as this will help to respond to this crisis and make a way out Since the causes of terrorism has been so diverse in motives, weaponry, targets, leadership, organizations, agenda, mission, location, and aims of achieving economic power. Governments have a significant role in understanding the consequences of terrorist activities and potential threats of terrorism in their states. If the danger is within the geopolitical space of another state, governments can form bilateral relations through funding, increasing arming, and increasing strategic plans with the other state to fight terrorism in their region (Waxman, 2009).

5.2. Regional Response by (ECOWAS)

ECOWAS is an intergovernmental organization that is established to promote peace and security in West Africa. However, the organization over the past years have so many crises relating to security and counterterrorism measures. As a results, the region needs effective regulations to promote socio-economic development and peaceful co-existence among member states. Since then, the organization has initiates different strategies including protocols and laws to manage the different problems the region is facing which includes, corruption, terrorism, drug trafficking, and money frauds (Akanji, 2019).

In combating terrorism, ECOWAS has partnered with states regionally and non-state actors internationally. At the regional level, ECOWAS created an environment where counterterrorism initiatives can be implemented by states. Governments and heads of states of the member states in 2006, for instance, has highlighted the rise of money frauds and terrorism. They agreed that all member states should introduce policies and strategies that will help fight against money laundering, and financing of terrorism in the region (AFRICA, 2013).

At international level, ECOWAS has established a good partnership with countries within and outside Africa together with international organizations which includes, African Union (AU), European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), and also with international financial institutions like World Bank, and International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the bases of promoting democracy, peace, security, and counterterrorism measures in the region (ECOWAS, 2015). Furthermore, ECOWAS is part of the committee established by the United Nations Security Council (UNSR) for counterterrorism (CTC), based on the resolution 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) for member states to prevent the activist of terrorism in and outside of their territories (UN, 2015).

Finally, the organization was not only involved in the making of laws for counterterrorism but where directly involved into so many crises in the region. For instance, the Malian crises after the coup d'état in 2012, the organization played a crucial role to prevent terrorism. They first condemned military intervention led by Captain Amadou Sonogo by mediating a transitional government in the country (Akanji, 2019).

5.3. Continental and International Response

It is uncertain to what extent terrorism started in Africa including the financial supporting of terrorist groups in almost all regions of Africa remained a serious concerned. However, concerning African Union, in 1991, the Organization initiates laws for counterterrorism measures in Africa. All member states that ratified the conventions should adhere to the resolution. No member state including individuals should:

 • Violate human rights, seize the liberty of people, threaten government institutions, from adopting or abandon a particular standpoint;

• Control and the absolute delivery of any public service,

• Go against the ratified convention made by 55 AU member states for preventing terrorism. Moreover, the agreement forbidden states to be involved in any actives that includes providing safe havens for terrorist groups, supporting them in terms of finance or providing of weapons, and issuing traveling documents (Møller, 2009). Another convention was made in 1999, for counterterrorism measures that all states should respect and work with the African Union promote continental peace and order for the betterment of all (Møller, 2009).

6. CONCLUSION

According to research, terrorism is a terrible atrocity that scathes a nation's security and development. However, it has drastically affected the ways of life of different people and limited their movements within and outside their countries. The term terrorism is practically contradictory because different people use terrorist activities to achieve their goals, including criminal's nationalist fighters who fight for self-determination. Moreover, it is also used as a tool by states to suppress their opponents. Moreover, scholars define terror acts as organized, calculated, and systematically conducted acts to spread fear and violence in society. There are also controversies between 'terrorism and counter-terrorism' as actions that creates violence and devastation, but counter-terrorism is considered to be the counteraction conducted to quiet a terror act. It can be claimed that the terror acts are sudden occurrences, but counter-terrorism is a consciously taken action by the state.

The literature on terrorism offers many definitions, and its conceptual description plays a vital role throughout these in trying to figure out what causes terrorism in the world, specifically in West

Africa. These causes are better explained through different approaches like; Religious fundamentalism, bad governance, corrupt leaders, and socio-economic causes This research attempted to contribute to West Africa-counter terrorism efforts by understanding the evolution and strategies of terrorist groups and analyzing the parallel linking the locally based terror groups to mainstream organizations such as Al-Qaeda, Taliban and ISIS. With the similarities in strategies, techniques, and operations to mainstream terror groups, it is evident that all these terrorist groups mentioned are linked to one another based on a deeply rooted ideological base of protecting the will of Islam.

In West Africa, religious fundamentalism has been stated by many scholars to be the major cause of terrorism. Religious, ethnic, and regional-driven conflicts are not new to West Africa. It has repeatedly occurred ever since the struggle for and after independence. However, these are usually triggered by severe deprivations and abnormalities in the states' political, social, and economic spheres in West Africa. The nature of the post-independent states of West Africa is often associated with bad governance, and corruption needs to be restructured. Political elites most aspire to rid states of all forms of corruption and establish a pragmatic and responsive government to the needs of its citizens. The research has highlighted some conditions that allow for the emergence of insurgent groups, including poor governance and corruption, poverty, economic inequality, illiteracy, etc. The heavy-handed and mainly militaristic response of the government has been repeatedly cited as a reason for the escalation and radicalization of the group.

This research has looked at terrorism and securitization in the 21st century using West Africa as a Case study, which focuses on the causes, consequences, and its responses. Meanwhile, the study was concerned with recent terrorism activities in West Africa. For instance, a fast-growing threat of Islamic military violence in West Africa increased 70 percent in 2021 in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Western Niger. This continued to be disrupted violence that has increased in the region since 2015. At the onset, Mali shifted quickly to Burkina Faso, which accounts for 58 percent of all violent violence events in the Sahel.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

After numerous attempts by governments, regional bodies, and international organizations to fight terrorism in West African, the phenomenon is getting fresh still, and therefore, I recommend the following measures:

• All governments should be non-partisan on religious issues. They should create a peaceful, inclusive environment for people of different political, social, economic, and religious backgrounds that can correlate without any problem.

• The two most dominant religions of Christianity and Islam, should be an introductory course that policymakers should look into because it will help the young ones to have the tolerance belief that the two are advocating for peace instead of becoming extremist and causing destructions and damages in the society.

• Governments should try to decentralized state resoures and distributions, including infrastructure projects, electricity supply, food, and good water supply, access to all societies because most of these societies where tertiary activities take place feeler marginalized.

• Governments should also promote peace clubs and peace advocates in their countries educational system, which will ensure and implore the spirit of loving one another among the young boys and girls.

• Finally, West African states should be very critical in their relationship with the West because most of these terrorist groups are Anti-Western. Governments should also promote a sense of nationalism and love in their respective states.

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