

A Comparative Analysis of the Effects of Terrorism from Ancient Times to Modern Day

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Abstract

Terrorism is replete with violence against innocent citizens. It is intended to cause fear and pandemonium among people. However, terrorism is not novel, it dates back to centuries prior to the modern day. Terrorist activity can now be found in virtually all countries of the world and the US 9/11 attack is perhaps the most popular terrorist act of the modern day. This study examined Terrorism from ancient times to the modern day. The study revealed that there have been different terror groups in existence at different times and ages. The study further did a comparative examination of the effect of acts of terrorism in pre-modernity and modernity. The study concluded that acts of terrorism have continued to have devastating consequences on humanity at different times and ages and it is even more brazen in the modern era.

Keywords

Ancient, Modern, Terrorism, Terror Groups, Effect

1. Introduction

The Latin word *terrere* which means *having fear*, is where the word terrorism first appeared. It, however, took on the contemporary name of terrorism during the French revolution from 1793 to 1794. Maximilien Robespierre characterized terror as strict and severe in contrast to justice. He described terror as opposed to justice as rigid and severe (*Project on Government Oversight*, 2015). In order to punish people and nations generally, the Roman Empire deployed the use of violence: death by hanging on the cross and mass killing. Likewise, during the French revolution, scores of people died. Nazi Germany, the Stalinist Soviet Un-

ion other regimes have been cited as examples of extreme State terrorism. The World Trade Center and the Pentagon suicide attacks on 9/11 and the attempted attack that led to the plane accident in Pennsylvania are the most well-known terrorist acts (Thimm, 2018)¹.

Terrorism is not a 21st-century phenomenon; it existed in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries as well. However, gleaned from the most recent global terrorism index, Afghanistan has been ranked as the Country that is mostly impacted by terrorism. The Sahel region of West Africa is now the theatre of terrorism with Countries such as Burkina Faso and Mali having the highest percentage of deaths as a result of terrorism. The Islamic State (IS) and its affiliate groups such as Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) remain the deadliest terror groups for the eight consecutive time followed by al-Shabaab (Global Terrorism Index, 2023). Nigeria, which was hitherto one of the top five most terrorism ravaged Countries from 2015 to 2019 has fared better in the last few years (Global Terrorism Index, 2019).

The causes of terrorism are replete. Scholars have identified some quickening or immediate causes and remote causes. These include revenge and retaliation, humiliation of a terror group or its followers, threat, breakdown of peace and a feeling of dissatisfaction with elections (Crenshaw, 1981). Other causes include unresolved socio-political crises, inequality, non-inclusion, oppression, humiliation, foreign domination, violent conflict, negative effects of globalization and economic downturn (Newman, 2006). Some other factors have also been identified as causes of terrorism, especially in developing countries: illiteracy, poverty, unemployment and politicization of religion (Ehiane, 2016).

2. Terrorism in the Pre-Modern Era

2.1. The Zealots

The earliest account of terror occurred in the first century, Palestine. One of the first organisations to engage in systematic terror, is evidenced by the acts of the Zealot sect (Flavius Joseph 93-94). The word *sicarii*, which means dagger-man, was used to describe them. The Roman Government's extensive empire-wide census occasioned the Zealots' terrorism against Roman Empire, despite the possibility of more distant causes. It represented the Jews' surrender to the Roman Government, which the Jews detested. The Jews rebelled against the action in the year 6 BCE, upon the demise of Herod, the King. This singular incident marked a new beginning for the Jews, who had been under the authority of the

¹Terrorism is often characterized by the use of violence against civilians, with the express desire of causing terror or panic in the population. On September 11, 2001, The twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York and part of the Pentagon in Washington DC, U.S.A. were attacked by terrorists and a lot of people were killed; on September 21, 2013, tourists sight-seeing and shopping at Kenyan shopping mall were also attacked by terrorists and several people were left dead. The June 2022 Owo, Ondo State Catholic Church attack, which led to death of scores of parishioners was one of the most devastating attacks in recent times in Nigeria. The most shocking of the Owo attack was that South West Nigeria, where the incident took place had never experienced terrorism prior to that attack.

Romans. In modern times, the Zealots' organized battle against the rulers could have been referred to as a war of freedom.

Varus, the governor of Syria, responded to the uprising with a retaliatory assault involving two Roman legions, and he eventually defeated the rebels by crucifying 2000 of them. Varus believed that the retaliation strike would put an end to the Jews' insurrection, but how wrong he was—the uprising lasted for many years.

The Zealots were also the most well-liked among the youths and their intellectual teachings were comparable to that of the Pharisees (Chailand & Blin, 2007). The Pharisees were criticized for their dogmatism and hypocrisy while they lived in the closest obedience of the Torah. The Zealots were reformers in comparison to other Jewish religious movements of the period; they had an unquenchable yearning for independence and believed that they could only account to God. They had staunch belief in their faith, which drew the admiration of other people, and even their opponents. The Zealots were extremely popular among the poor and the youths. It seemed that the leaders of the sect, were well read and from affluent backgrounds. The sect also targeted the working class as their members.

The Zealot sect was founded by Judah of Galilee, whose initial activities were curtailed and was not given a free hand to operate. The Zealots however, re-surfaced in the 1960s, after the initial difficulty it encountered. Not much was heard about the sect in the interregnum of about fifty years. The descendants of the founder, Judah, continued in the leadership of the sect, which connotes a certain level of organization. The Zealots right from inception had two major goals: religious and political. Their religious goal was to compel people to be more rigid in practicing their religion and went to the extent of terrorising the Jews, whom they regarded as non-devout. Their political goal was to wrestle political power from the Romans and the two goals were propagated side by side.

2.2. The Assassins

The Ismaili movement of Islam founded the Assassins, who were based in two countries: Iran and Syria. They unleashed brutal terror without minding if they lose their lives believing that they had a secured place with God. One of their major targets was the Crusader, a Christian sect. The Ismailis lived in permanent camps for the first 50 years or so following the sect's foundation. In the ninth century, the Abassid Caliphate's waning influence and ossification resulted in the sprouting of other movements. The Ismailis established themselves in other areas, like Yemen, southern Iraq, and Syria. Their religious and philosophical standing, which had developed over decades, served as extraordinarily effective tools for persuasion and propaganda that won over entire communities. The Ismailis were established in the region, and other places like Cairo, with the support of the Egyptian Fatimid monarchy. Their influence grew tremendously. They grew to constitute a constant threat to Baghdad's authority. Among the as-

sassins, Hassan was outstanding².

Hassan was born in Persia by a Shia Yemeni. He had embarked on a lengthy mission that allowed him to travel extensively, particularly in Persia. The mountainous Daylam region of Northern Persia piqued his interest in particular. He chose Northern Teran as his abode. From his base, he was able to control the entire region. His early successes encouraged him to expand his operations into new areas. In 1002, he was able to establish himself in the hilly area called Quhistan, which borders Iran and Afghanistan. He continued to wield influence in that territory and orchestrated one of the greatest terrorist attacks ever, which is being compared with the assassination at Sarajevo, which occasioned the first world war (Digital History, 2021) and 9/11 attack. The term *Assassin* first appeared in Syria to refer to the sect's founding members, who were not from Syria or Iraq but majorly Persians. The activities of the Assassins date back to the 10th century, several years after Nizam al-Mulk's³. The method of operation just like the Zealots, remained the use of daggers in slaughtering people.

The use of daggers was predominant in carrying out their activities in clustered places like mosques or markets. In modern day, the use of projectiles would have had a far-reaching devastating effect in such crowded places. The Assassins disguised as *Sufis* and attacked the leader during prayers at the mosque. The activities of the Assassins usually led to the death of scores of people until 1271, when they ceased to exist.

3. Terrorism from 17th to the Early 19th Century

The French Revolution of 1793-1794 marked the beginning of an era of systematic terror or what is now known as State Terrorism. The revolution was characterized by extreme brutality and the use of State as a vehicle to foment terror in the guise of defending humanity.

However, State terrorism took a long vacation after that period, disappearing for most of the nineteenth century before making a big comeback in 1917. Instead, during the pause, a fresh form of political terrorism emerged and has persisted ever since. As evidenced by the Zealots and the Assassins, terrorism com-

²Following the death of Prophet Muhammad in year 632, there arose a succession crisis. Some Muslims protested against the choice of leadership of Abu Bakr to succeed Prophet Muhammad ("caliph") but rather preferred Ali, the latter's cousin and Son-in-law. The rebellious Muslims founded "Shi'at Ali" (the party of Ali), which metamorphosed into the Shiite movement, which exists till the present day even in Northern Nigeria. By the 7th Century, the Shiite had attempted to control Islam and viewed their own movement as the true Islam. They also attempted to seize power from the Caliph and vest it in the Imam as the leader of the Muslims. However, the legitimacy of the leadership of the Imams was questioned because the leader of Islam was required to be directly connected to Prophet Muhammad by being the direct Son of Ali and Fatima. The lack of direct link between the Imam and the Holy Prophet marred the succession and recognition of the Shiite's Imam and this cast aspersions on the Shiite movement, particularly in the 8th Century. Conflicts arose within the movements and various factions were founded in Iraq and Persia. Upon the death of the leader, Imam "Ja'far" in 765, another succession crisis erupted between his two Sons-Isma'il and Musa. However, Musa gained supremacy and his movement developed into the Twelve Shiism "twelve Imams in the line of Musa", which is the recognized Islamic religion in Iran till date.

³The disastrous assassination of Quhistan in which the leader Nizam al-Mulk was killed.

mitted against the state is not a recent occurrence. Religion disappeared as a motivation for terrorism until the twentieth century. Actually, there was almost no religious component to terrorism throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There were other forms of motivations and tendencies such as anarchism, populism, marxism, fascism and racism. Terrorism of this period was frequently carried out by fringe groups who did not always have well defined political goals. An example is the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne in Sarajevo, which led to the First World War.

All nineteenth-century terrorist acts were motivated by ideas expressed in 1789, and the 1917 Russian Revolution signaled the start of the anomalous rise of modern terrorism as a political force. The year, 1793, saw a dreadful military situation in France, both abroad and in the Vendee. Fear-based tactics were not introduced during the French Revolution for military or political ends. Terrorists existed even before they were called so for the first time during the era of unleashing of terror in France. Nonetheless, the phrases terrorist and terrorism swiftly gained popularity⁴. The word was first used by Edmund Burke to describe the French agitators.

The nineteenth century terrorism was also characterised by terrorism, which had been in existence gradually prior to the exit of Great Britain from India in 1947.

Another one is the 1950s Mau Mau revolt in Kenya, which presented the British with a challenge, which they were able to conquer. The British, on the other hand, were unable to defeat the Arabian Peninsula terrorists because they had discovered that the political arena was where the decolonization struggle should be fought, not on the battlefield. Similar events occurred in Algeria, where the Fronte De Liberation Nationale was another colonial power (FLN)⁵, who deployed the use of terrorism to achieve political aims. However, General de Gaulle understood that the movement would be unsuccessful just as that of their British counterparts a few years before. The transition from national liberation wars to modern terrorism occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This was fueled by prior national battles and the Leninist-Marxist philosophy espoused by post-independence groups.

3.1. Terrorism from the Late 19th to the 20th Century

The development of various global terrorist movements occurred in the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. The French and Italian anarchists and Russian populists' models inspired copycat movements in some other countries.

Prior to the First World War, some States witnessed monumental political

⁴This is evident in the Académie française dictionary of 1798.

⁵The FLN, a socialist political party was formed to liberate the citizens especially the Algerian Muslims from France, their colonial master. In November, 1954, there was an armed rebellion by the FLN against French troop, which was unsuccessful. However, subsequent attacks were successful and France eventually pulled out of Algeria. The FLN used terrorist methods to achieve their objectives like bombing, which led to the death of scores of people. C.M. Brush, "FLN-Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?" sites.psu.edu accessed 20 January 2020.

and economic transformation. Capitalism and industrial revolution flourished. It was the era of the industrial revolution and the rapid expansion of capitalism. Some colonial empires rose to the zenith—France, England, and Russia, while some fell to the abyss—Austria and Türkiye. The First World War marked a turning point and the European countries began to lose their positions as world powers.

The assassination of the heir with its grave consequences signaled the end of the terrorism wave of 1870-1914 and heralded one of the worst conflicts in history. The Great War, one of the worst battles in history, began with the murder of the Austrian heir and his wife. The assassination was carried out by Serbian nationalist revolutionaries rather than anarchists, with whom the general public immediately identified terrorism, much like it does now with Islamists. The time of anarchist terrorism was finished; the nationalist period was only getting started. Although the assassination did not start the conflict, it did act as the spark. The nationalist Black Hand Society in Serbia (Crna Ruka) planned the most famous assassination of the 20th century, because they were concerned about the decision of the Archduke which could affect Bosnia militancy, hence, the assassination.

Serbian nationalists in Bosnia organized a rebellion against Austria's provisional rule in order to promote stronger Serbian unity. Emperor Franz Josef I chose to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina⁶ in response to this attack on Austrian authority.

Between 1910 and 1914, the Black Hand's agents organized a series of terrorist attacks against Austria, specifically targeting the Bosnian government. The emergence of Serbian nationalism was also influenced by the lingering feud between Serbia and Bulgaria over the fall of the Ottoman empire (Fanani, 2011).

A period that was characterized by terrorism, especially against political leaders and royals ended with the murder of Arch Duke Ferdinand. Terrorists thrived during that period exhibiting the brutality of the past. It started full-scale in 1881, when Alexander II of Russia was murdered (Genov, 2019). Although, unrelated to terrorism, James Garfield, former American president was also murdered. Italian anarchists conducted a number of assaults in a number of European nations. For example, Italian anarchist, Sante Jeronimo Caserio fatally stabbed French President Marie-François-Sadi Carnot in 1894. Another Italian, assassinated the Spanish Prime Minister, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo in 1897. Elisabeth (Sisi), the queen consort of Hungary and the empress consort of Austria, was murdered the following year by anarchist Luigi Lucheni. Also, another King from Italy, Gaetano Bresci was killed in 1900. In 1901, a follower of anarchism killed US President William McKinley, King Carlos of Portugal was also murdered in 1908 (Unofficial Royalty, 2020) and Pyotr Stolypin, the Russian prime minister, was assassinated by the revolutionary Dmitry Bogrov at the Kiev Opera House three years later.

⁶This happened on October 5.

3.2. Terrorism in the 21st Century

Terrorism is now a global threat in the twenty-first century. Terrorism in all its forms, including motivations, objectives, tactics, and techniques, abductions, suicide bombings, abductions and the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), have become prominent, with an incursion into cyberspace (Falode, 2018; Manik, 2009).

According to Ishengoma, terrorist groups in Africa use cyberspace to further their cause. An example is Al Shaabab's use of the social media such as Twitter in its September 2013 attack on the Kenyan Westgate shopping mall⁷.

The world community has been significantly influenced by this most current form of terrorism. No continent of the planet is shielded from the repercussions either directly or remotely. Today, terrorism has a significant impact on almost every continent in the world. The Sahel region of Sub-Saharan Africa, which was hitherto free of terrorism is now an epicenter. What is now commonly referred to as the 9/11 attack against the US by Osama Bin Laden led Al Qaeda, which attacked the U.S. on its own territory even though its home government in the Middle East supported American policies, is a notable example of a terrorist attack of the 21st century that was of international concern. The attack was well-planned and executed, using hijacked aircraft to destroy the World Trade Center's twin towers in New York and a portion of the Pentagon in Washington, DC⁸.

4. Modern Day Terrorist Organisations

Undoubtedly, certain groups have engaged in a fresh, violent wave of terror in the twenty-first century. The terrorist organisations are Islami State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Al Qaeda, Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP), Boko Haram, and Al Shabaab. They have all continued to carry out horrific assaults across the globe.

4.1. Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)⁹ was founded by *Abu-Musab Al-Zarqawi*, who was convicted and imprisoned in Jordan for five years, on the charge of illegally possessing weapons and his affiliation with the *Bayat al-Jihadi*. Upon his

⁷On September 21, 2013, tourists sight-seeing and shopping at Kenyan shopping mall were attacked by terrorists and scores of people were killed. In North-Eastern Nigerian, congested places are targets of terrorists like the market place, churches and mosques. Innocent children in school are also the target of terrorists, a new twist was added with the abduction of over 200 girls from their school on April 2014 in Bornu State; the abduction of girls from their school at Dapchi North-Eastern, Nigeria. On November 13, 2015, innocent civilians at a stadium, restaurants, café and a concert hall were attacked in France.

⁸On September 11, 2001, World Trade Centre's Twin Towers in New York and part of the Pentagon in Washington DC, U.S.A. were attacked, which left scores of people dead. The towers, which were usually a beehive of activities with people going about their jobs were left in ruins. The attack is now popularly called 9/11.

⁹Other acronyms have been used to designate ISIS, such as ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant—ISIL) or even its Arabic acronym Daesh.

release, he left for Afghanistan and was closely associated with Al-Qaeda. He was tutored by Al-Qaeda and he founded the Jund al-Sham group (*Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad*). The atrocities committed by the group include the destruction of Jordan tourist sites by lethal weapons in 1999¹⁰. Zarqawi later moved his activities to Northern Iraq, where his group continued to terrorise the Iraqi community, particularly the Kurdish area of Sulaymaniya¹¹ and the international community (de Toledo Gomes & Mikhael, 2018). The group later existed as an affiliation of Al-Qaeda (Shamie & Zultan, 2015).

Due to the different strategic approaches taken by the two organizations, their relationship was strained and upon Zarqawi's demise in 2006, Abu Ayyub al-Masri became the new leader in Iraq. A well-structured The Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) Dawla al-Islamiya fi Iraq was founded. The ISI grew as a result of the domestic war in Syria. Early in 2012, the Syrian revolution turned violent, which aided jihadist organizations' operations. ISIS's actions have wide-ranging effects both locally and globally. ISIS was connected to the country's division into several ethnic and religious groups in Iraq. It deployed three tactics: brutal attacks on civilians, Shias, Christians and other regarded enemies; the attack on military; and the targeting of foreigners to deliver their desired message. ISIS employed the same three military tactics in Syria as it did in Iraq and enjoys the backing of other groups with similar ideology in the Middle East.

4.2. Al-Qaeda

During the August 1998 U.S. embassy bombings, the moniker Al Qaeda quickly gained global attention despite having long held mythological status. Due to his refusal to use the term before the events of September 11th, Osama bin Laden himself had added to the mystique around it.

America became the enemy of the Al-Qaeda because of her presence in Saudi Arabia and alliance with monarchy. Bin Laden issued warnings to the US government to leave Saudi Arabia, but they were ignored (Iladi, 2009). In early 1998, Al Qaeda repositioned itself to orchestrate attack on the US. Most jihadist movements adopted that simplified structure as a model (de Toledo Gomes & Mikhael, 2018). The US had a long battle with Al Qaeda following a series of events. Al Qaeda which was identified as complicit in the 1993 murder of the US special troops on a mission to arrest the allies of Muhammad Farrah Aidid, the Somali warlord. On April 15, 1993, President George Bush was attacked by terrorists while visiting Kuwait; On March 8, 1995, two US ambassadors were assassinated while passing through Islamabad in Pakistan (New York Times, 1995). A car bomb was detonated in Pakistan on November 19, 1995 (CNN, 1995). On November 13, 1995, some US military officers died in a terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia. The Islamic Movement for Change took responsibility for the attack and four Saudi citizens who had served in Afghanistan were taken into

¹⁰Sajida Al-Rishand upon-awi attempted a failed suicide attack on the Radisson Blu and was captured and imprisoned in Jordan.

¹¹Derogatory term for Shiites

custody by local security agents and executed without cause. On June 25, 1996, a suicide vehicle bombing in Dahran cost the lives of 19 members of the American military stationed at Khobar and subsequent Saudi investigations into possible Shiite involvement came to a halt (Pearson, 2023). In 1999, German authorities intercepted a ship filled with bombs and coming from Bosnia. Salim, a Saudi alleged to be in charge of Al Qaeda's European financial networks was accused of the act. Later that year, Ahmed Ressay, an Algerian was captured while attempting to cross the US-Canada border with several kilos of local explosives in order to attack the Los Angeles International Airport.

Finally, on September 11, 2001, the well-planned attack on the US was carried out. Its intended target was the White House but was diverted. Scores of people from different nationalities were killed and properties worth billions of dollars, damaged. Upon investigation, it was discovered that Al Qaeda was responsible for the organized attack. The scope of the damage caused by the four strikes against the US was evidence of Al Qaeda's tactical prowess. It had directly struck very symbolic targets in the deadliest terrorist strike in history. However, on May 1, 2011, the Obama administration finally assassinated Osama Bin Laden, the Al-Qaeda leader behind the 9/11 attacks, in Pakistan (CNN Editorial Review, 2022).

4.3. Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahidiin is an offshoot of Somalia's Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which grew out of a grassroots, neighborhood-driven Islamic Jihad movement inspired by Somali Islamic scholars who were trained in Saudi Arabia as Wahhabi sect adherents (Ali, 2008). It is an active, politicised fanatic group, whose main goal is to militarily intervene in Somali-populated areas of the Horn of Africa and to build a Somali Caliphate of the Wahhabi Islamic sect. The group is committed to establishing a Wahhabi stronghold in Somalia as the foundation of an Islamic State of the Somali people in Somalia, Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia. It aims to take over Somalia and spread its ideology over the Horn of Africa and eventually throughout the rest of Central, South, and Eastern Africa. The group seeks to eliminate Western influence in the Horn of Africa and ultimately throughout Africa by promoting Wahhabi Islamic doctrine and, in the process, eradicating all other varieties of traditional Islam that have previously predominated in most of East Africa.

Al-Shabaab broke away from the International Criminal Unit (ICU), where it was the military force, and became an autonomous organization in December 2006. Al Shabaab's beginnings are unclear before it became the ICU's armed force. Aden Hashi Ayro served as its first leader. Al Shabaab allegedly disinterred an Italian cemetery in 2005 and was alleged to be involved in numerous killings of foreign laborers in Northern Somali land between 2003 and 2005. Similarly, after many ICU members were purportedly murdered by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia in 2005, Al Shabaab endorsed the use of violent revenge against TFG personnel.

The ICU briefly took control of Central and Southern Somalia in mid-2006. On December 27, 2006, the ICU was decisively destroyed and legally abolished but Ayro's Al Shabaab continued to operate. Al Shabaab assumed leadership in Somalia following its intrusion of Ethiopia. The group controlled Somali's defence while the ICU officials went into hiding. Al Shabaab attacked Ethiopian forces on Somali's land by bombing, suicide attacks and assassinations. The group wielded so much power in Somalia that when AMISOM¹², commenced its activities to stabilize Somalia in 2007, Al Shabab resisted the move and also launched attacks on AMISOM.

Al Qaeda and Al Shabaab merged in 2008 after the demise of Ayro, who was hit by an American missile. The new leader, Ahmed Abdi Godane (Mukhtar Abu Zubeyr) announced ideological affiliation with Al Qaeda. Godane sent his members to Al Qaeda for trainings and also recruited the latter's members into his group. The frequency of suicide attacks increased under Godane's leadership and Al Shabab received financial support from Al Qaeda. Al shabaab has been accused of abuse of women and children and particularly, the use of woman and girls as sex slaves. Women are kidnapped and taken to Al Shabbab's camp in the Boni forest, which lies on the border between Somalia and Kenya.

4.4. Boko Haram

The Islamist terrorist organization called Boko Haram is centered in Northern Nigeria and it is responsible for the majority of terrorism-related activities in the area. In the last twelve years, the group has orchestrated a period of unrest and tension in Nigeria, a country with a relatively equal population of Christians and Muslims (Akinfala et al., 2014). Since the Civil war, which was catastrophic, the nation has had numerous incidents of violence, frequently between Muslims and Christians and sometimes motivated by politics. The terrorist group has killed several Nigerians, primarily in the North, through bombing attacks and it is believed to have recorded more deaths in Nigeria than during the civil war. Boko Haram is principally based in Northern Nigeria, where it originated. It could also be found in Northern Cameroon and Niger. It has aversion for westernization and its ideology is to islamise Nigeria (Omale, 2013). The group's official name in Arabic is *Jamā' atahl as-sunnah lid-da' wawa-l-jihā* which is translated to English to mean—the Congregation of the People of Tradition for Proselytism and Jihad (Egbegi, 2018).

It is commonly called Boko Haram because of the group's resentment for western education. Boko Haram literally means *Book is a taboo*. Thus, the name could be loosely translated from Hausa to English to mean *western education is forbidden and sinful*. Due to their conservative nature, members of the group were not allowed to mingle with other muslims and had previously assassinated anyone who criticizes them, including Islamic clerics. Boko Haram's ideology and practices closely resemble that of the Taliban (Akinfala et al., 2014). The

¹²A contingent of African Union troops from Uganda and Burundi,

youths that joined the group or got convinced by their ideology dropped out of school, many of the youths also abandoned their families and people abandoned their jobs to follow them. Some others even sold their belongings and contributed the money to the upliftment of the organisation in furtherance of the Islamic ideology.

At inception, the group was described by the leader as non-rebellious but just a group who wanted to uphold Allah's tenets. Thus, they started their activities in Borno, Yobe, Katsina, Kaduna, Bauchi, Gombe, and Kano States but their activities can now be found virtually in all the Northern States (Njadvara, 2011). Boko Haram is of the opinion that western education has failed the nation and it the reason for the pervading poverty and corruption and should not be embraced by anybody. Yusuf, the leader began the movement quietly, preaching and trying to convince people. He gained followership mostly among the youths who bought into his ideology. However, the report that the group was becoming dangerous and intended to launch attack on the Nigerian State drew the attention of the police to the group. Yusuf was arrested and detained a number of times by the police but he was also released in due course.

In 2009, the feud between the group and the Police heightened because of the law compelling motor cyclists to wear helmets. The members of the group defied this law and the police clamped down on them. Violence erupted in the northern part of Nigeria and many public buildings were destroyed; criminals were also freed from prison in Maiduguri by the sect. The police arrested Mallam Yusuf and was killed extra-judicially while in police custody. It was reported by the BBC that Yusuf had visible signs of injuries, when he was paraded by the police after his arrest and his body was left outside the police headquarters for days after his death (BBC News, 2009).

Following the death of Mohammed Yusuf, the organization launched its first attack in Borno in January 2011, killing four persons. Since then, the frequency, intensity, and sophistication of the violence, as well as the number of casualties, have increased under the leadership Abubakar Shekau, a former subordinate of Yusuf, who took over in January 2012.

The group swore allegiance to the head of ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, in March 2015, and remained loyal to him until their differences in 2016, which led to the formation of the Boko Haram offshoot group, ISWAP. Nonetheless, ISIS and Boko Haram were allies until 2021, when they rebelled against each other and ISIS fighters attempted to kill Abubakar Shekau, the head of Boko Haram. Shekau has been reported to have been killed on few occasions, only for videos of him to later surface online. The most recent of these rumors is that he passed away on May 20, 2021, after a duel with ISWAP, a rival terrorist organization. It was alleged that Shekau used explosives inside his home to prevent being captured by ISWAP, and as a result, he was murdered or seriously hurt. The Nigerian Army has reacted to the news by announcing investigation on the issue (Al Jazeera, 2021a).

The group's core arguments and convictions include the notion that the na-

tion's banking, taxation and legal systems are wholly unreligious. They contend that these negate the entirety of the real Islamic religion and that western education is un-Islamic.

They forbid the sitting together of male and female, eating either commercial food or dishes made by non-members (Haram). They do not actually eat much; some of them are rumored to survive solely on fruits and dairy products. The acceptable pieces of clothing to be worn according to them are long sleeve robes, short pants, a turban, a long beard, a little coat over the long robe sleeves and a chewing stick. It is widely reported that members of the group disowned their families; discarded their certificates including higher degrees like masters and Ph.D. degrees certificates. Their major enemy was the government and the educated elites ([Human Rights Watch, 2014](#)). Following the launch of attack on the Nigerian State in 2011, the government responded by dealing with the sect as a terrorist organization. This resulted in the escalation of insurgency between 2012 and 2013. Boko Haram's actions have resulted in unprecedented humanitarian crises for the nation, which have had a catastrophic impact on human security and public safety.

The organization has planned attacks on the police department, banks, churches, and recreation centers, among others. It has also attacked public and international buildings like the United Nations Building in Abuja on August 26, 2011, Nigeria Police Force Headquarters bombing in Abuja on June 16, 2011; Police Headquarters and other government buildings in Damaturu, Yobe State on September 25, 2012; Christmas day bombing at St Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla near Abuja on 25th December 2011; The motor park bomb blast at Nyanya on April 14, 2014. The terrorist gang assaulted the town of Rann in Bornu State on January 28, 2019, in what was called their worst strike in more than a decade of terrorism ([Al Jazeera, 2019](#)).

Abduction has become a regular occurrence with the sect, the abduction of about 294 secondary school girls in Chibok, Bornu State on April 14, 2014 has gained international recognition with the bringbackourgirls group at the front burner of the campaign for the release of the girls. Over the years, 107 girls have been released by Boko Haram in a deal broker between the sect and the Federal Government while over a hundred girls are still missing ([Foyou et al., 2018](#)). On February 19, 2018, Boko haram kidnapped 110 girls in their school at Dapchi, Yobe State. Following negotiations between the sect and the federal government, the majority of the girls were given back. One girl, Leah Sharibu, was kept back, though. Leah has remained in captivity for the past two years since the abduction. Unexpectedly, IDP camps are not exempt from this problem, as demonstrated by the suicide bombing that took place at an IDP camp in Dalori, Bornu State, on July 26, 2019.

The Military Forces of the Buhari-led Federal Government launched an offensive against Boko Haram. The Nigerian Army reclaimed previously Boko Haram-controlled towns like Barga and Gworza after releasing some hostages, particularly women. Nonetheless, suicide bombings still occurs in Northern Nigeria

and citizens still live in fear. Other notable activities include the kidnap and eventually beheading of Lawan Andimi, the President of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Adamawa State on January 21 2020 ([Pulse News, 2020](#)); the abduction and killing of a doctor's wife and a seminarian in Kaduna on February 1, 2020 ([PM News, 2020](#)); and the Kankara school boys kidnap of December 11, 2020 ([The Economist, 2020](#)); Kagara school kidnap of 17th February 2021 ([Al Jazeera, 2021b](#)); and the Zamfara school girls kidnap of 27th February 2021 ([BBC, 2021](#))¹³; Kaduna train attack of 28 March 2022 and the Kuje prison break of 5th July 2022 ([CBS News, 2022](#)). The list keeps growing by the day. Nobody knows the next target of the sect; citizens only hope that someday, there would be an end to terrorism in Nigeria.

4.5. Islamic State in West Africa Province

Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) is a break-away faction of Boko Haram. In March 2015, Boko Haram was renamed ISWAP, having pledged its allegiance to ISIS ([IN FOCUS, 2021](#)). However, in 2016, following an internal rancour about the treatment of other Muslims, some ISWAP leaders split from the group to form a new faction with Mamman Nur and Abu Musab al-Barnawi as the new leaders. This new faction was ably recognized by ISIS, which was not pleased with Shekau's style of leadership. After the split, ISWAP target shifted from civilians to military personnel ([Al Jazeera, 2016](#)). Boko Haram therefore, reverted to its initial name and formation.

Abu Abdallah al-Barnawi, (Ba Idrissa) has assumed leadership of ISWAP since 2019 and the group is waxing stronger. It has a large army and is situated in some parts of Northern Nigeria ([BBC, 2021](#)). It had owned up to being responsible for some terrorist attacks in Sokoto state.

ISWAP mandates people to accept the Islamic fate while prohibiting them from practicing other religions or beliefs. The group penalises offenders by meting out harsh treatments including amputations and murder. ISWAP also abduct citizens and refuses their release because of their religion or belief. In some instances, people have been reportedly executed. Leah Sharibu, an abducted 17-year-old is still held hostage because of her Christian faith ([USCIRF, 2022](#)). The group is alleged to be the mastermind of the brutal terrorist attack on a Catholic Church, in Owo, Ondo State, South West, Nigeria in June 2022.

5. Comparative Analysis of Ancient and Modern-Day Terrorism

Prior to modernity, terrorism was basically a rebellion against constituted authority and rejection of other beliefs and religions such as Christianity by the Assassin Islamic sect. The motivations were political and religious as evidenced in the activities of the Zealots and the Assassins. The weapon utilized for carry-

¹³On 27th February 2021, more than 300 girls were kidnapped from a boarding school in Jangebe Zamfara State. The girls like the earlier cases too were released upon negotiations by the Federal Government and the Boko Haram organization;

ing out these heinous activities particularly in crowded places such as the mosque and markets was the dagger. The use of the dagger in slaughtering people was replaced with bladed weapons in the early 17th to 19th century during the era of State terrorism, which particularly witnessed the French revolution. Scores of people were left dead within few months of the revolution and also during the World War 1, which was triggered by the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince, Arch Duke Ferdinand. The late 18th Century to early 20th Century heralded bomb blasts as the dominant force, which replaced bladed weaponry. In the past, chemical weapons have only been briefly deployed during World War I and later, in the March 20, 1995 attack on the Tokyo subway ([History.com, 2009](#)). In the late 1960s, the airplane became a technology for terrorists' attacks. Earlier, Veno Azev of Russia had already envisaged that the airplane could be a potential vector for terrorists' attacks and purchased one from an anarchist Engineer. However, his objective of using it for terrorism was never actualized.

The effect of globalization on the spread and intensity of terrorism is technological advancement. In the second half of the 19th century, the development of dynamite and other explosives that were easier to handle and more effective were created. The creativity of scientists and engineers is (non) commendable. In this regard. However, the production of such explosives was done for the benefit of the general population, especially while mining and installing railroad tracks. This was advancement over the creation of black powder, which had a number of shortcomings. For instance, the 1846 invention of Nitroglycerin was too hazardous to handle. This motivated Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel to start the process that, two years later, resulted in the discovery of dynamite ([Wisniak, 2008](#)).

Terrorist attacks significantly increased when dynamite technology was developed, especially in France, Russia, and the US. It was lighter and easier to handle and was more effective. It kills quickly and explodes with a loud bang. Nonetheless, even if it is safer to use than earlier devices, many terrorists still commit suicide while carrying out attacks. The expansion of armed conflicts in the 20th century increased armed organizations' access to weapons of all kinds and not limited to explosives. Another significant example of the nineteenth-century, which account for proliferation of arms was the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, which led to the accessibility of arms to people.

The 21st Century attacks are more ferocious and carried out with such bravado, with the goals of instilling fear, raising awareness for a specific cause, and forcing governments to change specific policies, as well as taking political control of territories. These new faces of terrorism have had a significant impact on States in the international political system. The ease with which terrorists in the twenty-first century combine terrorism with other forms of asymmetric attacks has made it difficult for States to effectively address this hydra-headed problem.

According to David Rapport, there are four main waves of contemporary international terrorism: The anarchist wave, which originated in Russia between the 1880s and 1920s; the anticolonial wave; the new left wave, which started in

the 1960s and persisted until the 1980s; and the religious wave, which continues to this day (Rapoport, 2004).

According to Rapport, the religious wave of terrorism, which pervaded the Middle East in 1970s to 80s is deeply rooted in Islam. Iran was not friendly with the US and was readily available to train people to propagate religious terrorism, having been gingered by the Taliban who seized power in Afghanistan. Rapport's religious wave of terrorism continues to exist in Afghanistan today and in some other countries. Religious and ideological beliefs remain as underlying causes of terrorism and 9/11 appears to be a justification for the United States theory that religion promotes violence in general and terrorism in particular. On the basis of this belief, the former President George W Bush in his 2002 speech reiterated that innocent people are being killed by the extremist (Bush, 2002). Al-Qaeda, ISIS and Boko Haram are all on the mission of Islamising the globe and also denouncing imperialism and Western culture which have brought societal evils like corruption and injustices (Bunzel, 2015). Boko Haram's principal aim is to create the Islamist State of Nigeria. The group is totally against Western education and advocates adherence to Islam and also seeks the full implementation of Sharia in all the States in Nigeria (Ehiane, 2016). Boko Haram believes that the Western culture has nothing good to offer Nigeria but only societal evils like corruption, poverty, unemployment economic depression and the destruction of the political institution and infrastructures (Bugaji et al., 2012).

The Aum Shinrikyo group utilized chemical weapons in Tokyo in 1995 as part of a surge in suicide terrorism brought on by the so-called religious wave of terrorism. Earlier in 1983, Hezbollah, a Shia group funded by Iran, launched many suicide bombings against US Marines and French paratroopers in Lebanon. Due to the catastrophic damage and fatalities caused by these attacks, the governments of the two states withdrew their armed forces from Lebanon. The Tamil Tigers were also inspired by these suicide bombings. They carried out the majority of suicide terrorist acts from 1980 to 2000¹⁴. In the present day, dynamites and other explosives are the major weapons used by terrorists. They are far-reaching and can cause the death of multitudes within a second. These are the weapons employed by the modern-day terror groups in various States and particularly, the Sahel region of Sub-Saharan Africa, which has been identified as the epicenter of terrorism (Issaev et al., 2022).

6. Conclusion

Terrorism is carried out brazenly and ferociously over the different ages and times. Despite the fact that stakeholders continue to make endeavours to counter terrorism, there are certain challenges which hinder its success. These challenges include poverty, unemployment, corruption, inefficient security apparatus, economic stagnation, religious fanaticism, etc. Terror groups of the different eras have always deployed the use of weapons to unleash terror on innocent citizens.

¹⁴They carried out 75 out of the 186 (more than 40%) of suicide terrorists' attacks in the world.

These weapons are becoming more sophisticated in the age of technology with the invention of explosives and dynamites, which accounts for the ferociousness and far-reaching effects of terrorism in the present day. It was not the intention of scientists to deploy technology as a tool for terrorism. What was originally meant to serve as benefit for the whole world is now being used as an instrument of terror. Going by antecedent, the effect of terrorism in the modern day will get worse by the day as technology advances. Technology is greatly advantageous to the World and cannot be halted because of its side effect. However, the inventions could be controlled in order not to get into wrong hands that will utilize them for terrorism purposes.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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