DETERMINANTS OF TERRORIST ORGANISATION COALITION: FOCUS ON CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

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Abstract

Recently, there has been a growing synergy between Boko Haram and ISIS, leading the former to pledge allegiance to the latter in 2015. In view of this, the study examines the determinants of terrorist organization coalition, with focus on cultural imperialism. The study sought to unravel the various factors that account for cultural imperialism of the West, which have led to the rise and sustenance of terrorist organization on one hand, and its subsequent coalition with others, on the other. By employing Karmon's Terrorist Coalition Theory, documentary method of data collection, and case study research design, the study qualitatively unraveled and analysed several invasive western cultural exports that have disrupted the internal cultural dynamics of certain States in international system, giving rise to fundamentalist and extremist movements. The study therefore concludes and recommends that the government and religious leaders have a big role to play in terms education and sensitization of its people regarding moderation in beliefs and cultural practices, if they must live peacefully and develop in the 21ˢᵗ century that is largely enveloped in the web of globalization.

Keywords: Terrorism, Coalition, Cultural Imperialism, Terrorist Organisations.

Introduction/Problematique

Terrorism has become a burning and global issue of the day. Terrorism elicits a lot of concern from governments and troubled members of the public who are alarmed at the wanton destruction of lives and property at odd hours and in unexpected places. More worrisome are the several organizations under which these terrorists carry out their heinous acts and the subsequent bold pronouncements of claiming responsibility after each attack. Not to mention the resources at their disposal of these terrorist organizations. At the height of its territorial control in 2015, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) generated over $6 billion - the equivalent of the gross domestic product of Liechtenstein (The Economist, 2018). Some of these terrorist organizations operate as a coalition, especially ideologically, and with religious undertones.

Cultural imperialism is one of the main reasons for radicalization and subsequent terrorist acts by either lone terrorist or terrorist organizations. Cultural imperialism is arguably the most potent driver of terrorism in recent times, especially as it is seen in the Middle East, whose culture and worldview has been shaped historically by Islam and a growing Arab nationalism (Rubin, 2003). It is very important to note that one cannot polemicise cultural imperialism without referencing its purveyors- modernization and globalization. Cultural imperialism as a phenomenon would not have been possible or even exported to other lands without the driving forces of globalization and modernization (Oosterveld&Williem, 2017).

Following the event of 9/11, the world has been shocked at the proportion of disaster that was caused by that terrorist attack, which left about 2,977 people dead and more than 6,000 others were injured (CNN, 2013). In view of this, the United States and other members of the international community assumed the responsibility of shouldering the burden of nipping terrorist activities in the bud. One of the major ways proposed to do this was to go after their finances. One of the reasons advanced for such brutal acts by al-Qaida on US soil is cultural imperialism (Yayla, 2018).

The general impacts of cultural imperialism lie in the complex of influences imposed by more powerful societies to both dislocate and to provide alternatives to the traditional ways of life in the affected societies. Traditional and authoritarian political values and institutions are shaken by exposure to ideas of freedom, rights, and democracy. Competing religious forces, especially nonreligious secularism, are introduced. Cultural penetration of foreign lands has exposed the world, and notably the non-Western world, to a range of materialistic values and aspirations that are evidently unattainable in those societies (National Research Council, NRC, 2002a; 2002b).

However, it has been observed that most terrorist organizations do not operate in isolation. They have been discovered to have clandestine relations with either other terrorist organizations, states or with individuals who are sympathetic to their cause, especially those who share similar belief that the West have undermined greatly their cultural practices. The rise of terrorist groups across the globe is imbued with similarities and differences. Boko Haram (BH) and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) historical trajectories have differed.But recent events signaled a growing synergy between the two groups based on shared commitments to Salafist Jihadist Ideology, the attempt by Boko Haram to seek relevance within the global Jihad movement, and for possible assistance (Mamoun, 2014; Matusitz, 2013; Mahcupyan, 2014).

The growing synergy between the two terrorist groups has been linked to their shared belief of replacing western cultural belief system with of the Islamic cultural values. The partnership between Boko Haram and ISIS has grown from a low point and culminated recently in the formation of new faction of Boko Haram, named Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP). Prior to this period, Boko Haram has been following the footsteps of ISIS and draws inspiration and motivation from its activities. There appear to be a lag time between when ISIS does a tactic and when Boko Haram picks up. A clear example is when ISIS established a caliphate in June 2014 in Iraq and Syria; also, in August 2014 Boko Haram declared its own caliphate in Nigeria in apparent confirmation of following the foot step of ISIS (Cook, 2014).

With reference to conditions of domination by and acculturation to a more powerful society, the receiving society experiences an increase in the growth, complexity, and magnitude of political divisions. Other divisions are cultural in nature, as groups crystallize along the dimension of how much and in what ways they want to be modernizers (democratic, capitalistic, secular) and how much and in what ways they want to preserve a traditional way of life (Rubin, 2003). All these impacts are observable in dramatic form in the world's Islamic societies. An inevitable accompaniment of the process is the widespread perception that the domestic culture is under threat of extinction; hence, leading to some of armed resistance in the short run and full-blown terrorism in the long run for the purpose of forcing local

authorities to restore prevalent traditional values, cultures and lifestyles (NRC, 2002b). This either done individually (solo effort) or in concert with other individuals or groups within or outside the jurisdiction.

In March of 2015, the late leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau, pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, the leader of the ISIS who is now late. Later that month ISIS's English-language magazine approved of the alliance with Boko Haram. When ISIS accepted Boko Haram's pledge of allegiance, an ISIS spokesman informed fellow Muslims looking to join its ranks that "a new door for you to migrate to the land of Islam and fight" had opened within Africa (Pharm, 2016).In April, 2016, the commanding general of the U.S. Special Operations Command Africa (SOCAF), Brigadier General Donald Bolduc, said that ISIS and Boko Haram are increasingly sharing tactics, techniques, and procedures.General Bolduc highlighted that an ISIS weapons convoy was detected departing Libya and believed to be heading towards the Lake Chad region to provide support to Boko Haram (Cooper, 2016). However, other than verbal and material support, there is no indication that ISIS is providing Boko Haram with financial support. But there are strong indications that they have united on cultural grounds.

Terrorist attacks are regarded as a threat to the world and its democratic principles hinged on Christian cultural values. These attacks are carried out using products and means that require funding. This funding is what is known as the process of terrorist financing. Money could be seen as the 'lifeblood' of terrorist organizations since, without it, no significant attacks can be perpetrated. Preventing or detecting the flow of funds to terrorist organizations can disrupt their short-term operations and cripple their long-term aspirations (Rock, 2016).

In today's world, where billions of daily financial transactions can easily mask those with terrorist intentions, detecting these transactions is not an easy task to say the least. Nevertheless, combating the financing of terrorism is considered to be an essential part of combating terrorism (Rock, 2016).

In view of the foregoing, this study will focus on the determinants of terrorist coalition organizations from a cultural standpoint and perspective.The study however, adopt the descriptive (case study) research design. The choice of case study research design stems from the fact that it is a systematic empirical study in which the independent variables cannot in any way be controlled or manipulated given that the situation of study already exists and is also contemporaneous (Yin, 1984). Documentary method of data collection from secondary sources was adopted. The gathered data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively.

Theoretical Framework
The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on the **Terrorist Coalition Theory.** This theory was propounded in 2005 by Ely Karmon highlighting how terrorist organizations form coalitions in the international system. Karmon (2005) in his doctoral thesis entitled: *coalition between terrorist organizations*, he established the causes and conditions for the formation of coalitions between terrorist organizations of a transnational character, and also examined the practical conditions of cooperation arising from the coalition of two or more terrorist organizations. Building on the Balance of Power Theories by scholars in 1950s through the 1980s (Morgenthau, 1959; Liska, 1962; Rothstein, 1968; Holsti, Hopmann& Sullivan, 1985; Walt, 1987), Karmon argues that the conditions precedent for the formation of alliances by

sovereign states are different from those present in the formation of terrorist organization coalitions. He observed that while states, by virtue of their sovereignty, freely enter into alliances with other states through open, formal, and signed agreements. However, he comments, this is not the case for terrorist organizations seeking coalitions with other armed groups.According to him,

> research on alliances between states is irrelevant in the case of terrorist organizations, which consistently avoid formal agreements, and are careful to hide basic understandings with other organizations from their enemies, from the public at large, and even from their own members (Karmon, 2005, p. 25).

The element of secrecy as a key phenomenon of terrorist organizations sharply distinguishes it from state alliances. The reason for such secrecy as pointed by Karmon is due to the clandestine nature of terrorist organizations activities. Maintenance of secrecy of terrorist organizations becomes very important if they seek to neutralize the superior offensive and defensive capacities of their perceived enemy (Karmon, 2005). Karmon, on the question of secrecy further notes that "the reason for secrecy may stem from political interests, the need to keep options open in a changing reality, or the wish to avoid being perceived as allies of other radical and violent organizations" (Karmon, 2005, p. 25). In view of the foregoing, Karmon outlines certain basic assumptions for the formation of terrorist organization coalitions. The study shall consider some of these assumptions in line with the objectives of the study.

The first assumption the study adopts, and as given by Karmon, is that "*international and regional cooperation between security forces against terrorist organizations encourages the latter to form coalitions*". Over the years, it has been observed how regional and international organizations have launched war on terrorism. One of the ways this war is waged on terrorist organizations is to seek out their source of funding to cut it off. The reason for this orientation is because it has been established that money is the lifeblood of terrorist organizations (Bush, 2001; Hamm, 2005; Aykin&Sozmen, 2009; Stanojoska, 2011). In one of his reactions and charge to members of the international community with regard to the 9/11 attack, President George Bush proclaims thus:

> We will direct every resource at our command to win the war against terrorists, every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence. We will starve the terrorists of funding (President George W. Bush, 24 September 2001).

The above charge saw several regional and international cooperation of both military and non-military perspective to ensure the total degradation and subsequent neutralization of terrorist organizations around the world. With the hawkish approach of members of the international community on terrorist organizations finances, the latter, in order to keep afloat, device means and strategies (often clandestine and criminal activities such as money laundering, looting, robbery, extortion, identity theft, kidnapping for ransom, etc; some of which leaves little or no paper trail) to evade the watchful eyes of members of the international community on their funding sources and patterns. This is done through the clandestine formation of informal coalitions and alliances wherever it can be possibly

established. Clandestine alliances have been established by Boko Haram with the world's richest terrorist organization, ISIS (Clarke, 2015), before it became public knowledge occasioned by its change of name to Islamic State West Africa Province, ISWAP, (GIABA, 2013).

The second assumption is that *a coalition between two terrorist organizations exists only when there is some shared ideological base between the two.* The ideological leanings of both Boko Haram and ISIS are well established under the Salafist Jihadist Islamic Ideology (Hashim, 2014; Kfir, 2015; Abubakar, 2016). This ideology is believed to have been infiltrated and corrupted by western influences and imperialistic ideologies. Hence, the need for revivalist and fundamentalist approach to return the ideology to its status quo ante in the various states of the Middle East, North Africa and some parts of West and East Africa. Yayla (2018), in describing Salafist Ideology, avers that

> it is an ultraconservative, puritanical, grim and fundamentalist branch within Sunni Islam established on the teachings of the 13th-century scholar Ibn Taymiyyah, whose ideas were introduced by puritanical scholar Muhammed ibn Abd al-Wahhab in the Arabian Peninsula during the mid-18th Century. Wahhab advocated a return to the traditions of the first generations of Muslims (the salaf) (Yayla, 2018, p. 2).

Most radical terrorist groups like Boko Haram and ISIS strongly believe that Islamic principles and practices have been watered down by external influences, which have also been accepted by the political leaders in their regions, who they believe have been compromised. And as such, have deviated from the true Islamic religion. One of the radical Islamic revivalists who echoed this view was al-Zawahiri who once argued in his leaflet, Bitter Harvest, asserts that

> the Islamic movements must answer the questions: are the governments in the Muslim countries true Muslims or are they kuffar [infidels]? These rulers are obviously kuffar and murtaddeen [apostates] because they rule with a law other than that of Allah. Therefore it is a fardayn [individual duty] to wage jihad against them and remove them from their positions (al-Zawahiri, 1991, cited in Cragin, 2007, p. 3)

In line with above view of al-Zawahiri, Boko Haram and ISIS have persecuted and killed those Muslims who they believe have deviated from the practice of "true Islam", including political office holders. Moderate Sunnis in Iraq and Syria were the worst hit (Yayla, 2018). The shared ideology of both organizations thus also reflects their modus operandi in their various regions. The use of kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery and looting, human trafficking, etc to raise funds to finance their activities demonstrate their shared beliefs, with Boko Haram being the apprentice, and ISIS, the master (Cragin, 2007).

It is also pertinent to note that terrorist organizations themselves see ideology as critical for the success of their activities. Even small anarchist organizations have tried to build some ideological base, however rudimentary. Ideology determined the organization's ultimate objective, its enemy, and its strategic goals. Within every revolutionary organization, there is

an ongoing struggle over the nature of its ideology. When ideological differences occur, such a struggle may lead to splits within the organization. Finally, ideology determines not only the organization's foes, but also its actual and potential friends, and the broader ideological camp to which it belongs (Karmon, 2005)

Karmon also assumes that *in a coalition between a strong organization (ISIS) and a weak one (Boko Haram), the smaller organization is not significantly dependent on the larger one, and retains freedom to make its own decisions*. It is very evident that though Boko Haram pledged its allegiance to ISIS in 2015, it doesn't receive directives from time to time as to how it operates within its region (Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon). It only draws from ISIS, a psychological strength, which could be likened to a desperate move to seek attention and relevance among the now growing salafist-jihadist movement globally.

Boko Haram and Cultural Imperialism
There are two broad factors responsible for the radicalization of Boko Haram. There are:
(a). Religious revivalism, fundamentalism and extremism:- Earlier on in the literature review on cultural imperialism, we established that Islam is both a religion and an ideological worldview. Adherents, especially Salafist-Jihadists, believe that the Islamic ideological worldview is undoubtedly the purest worldview that has been revealed to mankind. At the heart of this worldview lies religious piety and sobriety, a just political and economic system, a sound alternative to nationalism and capitalism, etc (Library of Congress, 1999; MaddyWeitzman, 1996; Hamzeh, 1997; Sivan, 1997; Abootalebi, 1999; Alam, 2000). This worldview has been practiced for centuries before the infiltration and invasion of western imperialist. This invasion of western imperialism has according to them, eroded their traditional religious practices and culture, which must be restored at all cost. This revivalist instincts and movements according to Beck (2018), is a totalistic worldview aimed at Islamizing a community by imposing Islamic norms throughout all spheres of life.

This revivalist movements of restoring Islamic worldview globally, explains in part, BH actions in the northern Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, of capturing territories and declaring them as caliphates. After the capture of Gwoza, Borno State in 2014, Shekau's statement reinforces a revivalist Salafist-Jihadist movement in the world. He proclaimed thus:

> Thanks be to Allah, who gave victory to our brethren in Gwoza and made it part of the Islamic caliphate… We did not do it on our own. Allah used us to captured Gwoza; Allah is going to use Islam to rule Gwoza, Nigeria, and the whole world. Allah commands us to rule Gwoza by Islamic law. In fact, he commands us to rule the rest of the world, not only Nigeria, and now we have started (Shekau, 2014 cited in Ladbury, et al, 2015, p. 4)

(b). Globalization: - Boko Haram presents itself as the champion of a community deprived of its culture by locals imitating Western values. Globalization has somewhat helped terrorism, moreover it has brought the involvement of the latest technologies, economic boom and cultural boundaries between countries around the world which has fostered a culture of corrupt market in traditional communities. Many Jihadist consider this as a threat to their country. BH is known for its hatred of anything western, this includes western education, lifestyles, entertainment and governance (Akpos, 2018). They view westernization as being

inauthentic in northern Nigeria and that its infiltration is eradicating their traditional way of life. According to their belief, western education which was brought by Christian missionaries is a vehicle which will be used to convert northern Muslims to Christianity. Therefore, the group not only rejects western education because of its curriculum, it also rejects it because they view it as a deceptive camouflage. Paradoxically, the sect rejects western education in its entirety as it embraces the technical and engineering solutions. Certain teachings and scientific theories that the sect rejects include philosophical written that questions the existence of God, the Big Bang theory, Darwinism, the law of conservation of matter and energy, and the rain cycle (Akpos, 2018).

Globalization brought with it the most recent and better way to communicate and connect with people in what used to be far away distances, and at the same time made far away troubles to become domestic problems. According to Onuoha (2011), "Globalization, which has enhanced the movement of goods and people across borders, has equally facilitated the activities of criminal groups across borders." Globalization also increased the desire of both the mass media and the terrorists to reach to a wider audience thereby facilitating the creation of fear to a greater magnitude. Globalization not only facilitated the activities of criminal groups but also reinforced linkages of terrorist groups like Boko Haram, Al – Shabbab, etc (Onuoha, 2011).

ISIS and the burning issues of cultural imperialism

To some observers, ISIS seemed to appear suddenly and out of nothing (Kirk, 2016). According to Oosterveld and William (2017), while the organization did not emerge in a linear fashion, it is clear that ISIS is a distinct product of its time, geography, and circumstances: it grew out of the Globalization, convulsions of the war in Iraq (2003), the Arab revolutions (2010-2019) and the civil war in Syria (2011-present). More broadly speaking, ISIS is the outgrowth of broader global trends of Islamization that stress the tensions between religiosity and modernity, compounded by an increase in Islamic militancy.

Globalization: - Today the very process of globalization has led to the emergence of resistant and fundamentalist identities such as ISIS which stand against the waves of globalization and radical individualism. Before entering globalization, the identity and meaning in countries like Syria and Iraq were mostly determined and formed by common political ideologies; yet with the aggravation of globalization, this mechanism declined and abandoned the followers in the face of heavy waves of the crises of identity and meaning. In this respect, the fundamentalist groups like ISIS become the resistant identities that help their members against these crises by making collective identities and unique meanings. They create their society based on traditional values, religion, Jihad, Takfir of those they assume to be *mushriks* (infidel), nation and family (Loveday 2015); movements that stubbornly ask for autonomy within the range of their resistance in order to gain enough power to prepare attacks on the institutions which they assume as tyrannical.

Thus, today with the start of the third millennium, the fundamentalism of ISIS has become somehow amazing, powerful, and effective and manifests itself as one of the most important identity-making sources, in such a way that Telegraph Newspaper of London claims that over 27,000 foreign fighters have travelled to Iraq and Syria since fighting broke out in 2011. The foreign fighters joining these groups are from at least 86 countries. The aforementioned paper

has announced the number of foreigners of some countries as follows: there are 2,100 nationals from Turkey, 2,400 from Russia, 6,500 from Tunisia, 2,500 from Saudi Arabia, 2,250 from Jordan, 1,700 from France, 1,350 from Morocco, 900 from Lebanon, 800 from Egypt and 760 from Germany in the ISIS terrorist group (Kirk, 2016).

As stated below, the researcher shows extensively how globalization (as a factor) played different roles in giving rise to, and sustaining ISIS.

(a) Globalization brought about Western Secular spread.Some analysts argue that globalization also implies the spreading of the Western secular pattern and consider the emergence and expansion of the ISIS as a reaction to this phenomenon (Terner 2004). In this regard, the fundamentalism of ISIS is as clear as the reaction of the group to globalization. The sect thinks that secularization, urbanization and anti-traditionalism, which has been referred to by some scholars as 'globalization' is not a good and favorable phenomenon (Derrida, 1998). In this regard, religious fundamentalist discourseswith functions such as accessibility are the most important identity-building source in the networking society. By referring to the past and emphasizing an exclusive meaning of religion, they try to restore its domination in judicial, economic, and governmental affairs. Afghanistan and fundamentalist groups such as Taliban and ISIS in Syria and Iraq are evident examples of this impact. In these countries the extremist fundamentalists with a religious claim (such as ISIS) have demanded the formation of the Islamic government based on their own specific religious interpretations. They get their strength for fighting from the assumptions of a threat or destruction of religion and tradition of the Prophet of Islam in the new era (Arango, 2014). From this perspective, the main characteristic of the insight of ISIS group is the spirit of devotion to and canonization of theological and Islamic-judicial achievements of their predecessors. ISIS regards the early and medieval Islamic eras as the golden age and immune from any error and has a dogmatic belief with regard to the religious interpretations of this era. Modern jihad (religious jurisprudence) and deduction has no place in this school of thought and people are generallyobliged to follow the words and sayings of predecessor scholars. These merely imitative understanding of religion leads to their supporters' cynicism and hostility to the Western life and secularization of religion. In this regard also, opposition with the corruptions of the Western culture and civilization in general is one of the basic slogans of all fundamentalist groups; but what distinguishes extremist fundamentalism like ISIS and Taliban from other Islamic groups is their rejection of the Western civilization.

Doubtlessly, the opposition of ISIS with TV, imaging equipment, western dressing, cinema and the like is a clear sign of their spirit of militancy against the manifestations of the western civilization for establishment of new laws (Arango, 2014). For instance, after domination in Raqqa, ISIS imposed the rules whose violation deserves severe punishments. The list of these rules includes the following:

1. Wearing jeans is forbidden for women.

2. Smoking cigarettes and hookah is forbidden and if not observed, the two indexes and middle fingers of the offender will be cut off and if repeated, the sentence of the offender will increase to execution.

3. All barbershops are closed and if someone cuts their hair short they will be executed.

4. Display of women's clothing in the shop windows is forbidden and men cannot work in the shops selling women's clothing.

5. Men are not allowed to enter the sewing shop for women's clothing.

6. Advertisement and signage for women's beauty salons are forbidden.

7. Using the word ISIS is considered an offense and the offender will be sentenced to 70 lashes.

8. Women's visits to obstetrics and gynecology doctors for treatment are forbidden and the offender will be punished.

9. Combing the hair and placing any additional thing on the head is forbidden to men and the offender will be sentenced to 70 lashes.

10. The men with slim waists are not allowed to wear jeans; also, women sitting on the chair is *haram* (unlawful) (Khabar, 2013). Furthermore, members of 'Islamic State of Iraq and Syria' have started distributing notices in the schools of Saraqeb city in Idlib Province in which this terrorist group has required female students to observe Islamic clothing or covering such as gloves, *niqab* (veil or mask) and black veil. The people of *Raqqa* also, in order not to face these punishments, do not leave their houses expect in cases of emergency (Fars News Agency, 2016).

(b) Globalization, by transforming the relations of production, power and experience, has challenged the traditional relations between religion, identity and gender and has brought about insecurity, abandonment, loneliness of the individual and consequently demands such as the need for meaning and identity. In analyzing this situation, it should be added that the society has provided a modern formal network of relations whose basis is the increasing use of information and communications means; that is to say, in the same way that this process has caused the emergence of terrorist groups (fundamentalism), it has also caused this current of thought to make use of its facilities and show its power and identity. For instance, today the computer is the symbol of network society in comparison with the previous industrial processes. The economy of the ISIS group is based on networking. The points that are considered unimportant for the network society are ignored as it happened in many African countries (Mahcupyan, 2014). The power of this society is based on an efficient use of information and communication facilities and capabilities. The speed and intensity of changes have produced a gap in the society and the emergence and spread of fundamentalists - ISIS, appears in fact a logical response to it. In this regard, the activists that avoid individualization of identity and multiplicity of meanings resulting from globalization consider the fundamentalist identities of ISIS as a safe haven for attacking the hostile world outside. They are passive in nature and are a response to the adverse conditionsof the time. On the other hand, the ISIS group members use up-to-date technology to advertise and propagate their thoughts or reveal their identity. For instance, they use highly advanced weapons to fight against the Iraqi and Syrian governments. They also share different films, notices, and tapes of their thoughts and also commit crimes in cyberspace (Lister, 2014). Twitter, due to an easy and quick access it has, is widely used by ISIS. The secthas numerous Twitter pages with specified and defined functions; one of their pages was the page of ISIS leader who had more than 50 thousand followers, which was later closed by Twitter. They also have pages for each

of the languages that are used in European countries and they have created separate pages for all regions or, in their own words, the provinces they have conquered, such as Al-Anbar, Mosul and Syrian provinces, which advertise ISIS products with ISIS logo in Indonesia. Furthermore, ISIS has a software by the name of 'Sahar' which makes working in the Twitter environment easier for them and by means of this software they have an easy access to the accounts of their users and their audience and such measures make more difficult the tracking of their cyber activities for anti-terrorist forces (Spencer, 2014)**.**

(c) Globalization, in addition to challenging ideological identities dominant in Arabic Middle Eastern countries and exclusive meanings, has led to the emergence of fundamentalist identities such as ISIS that have based their resistance on the reconstruction of meaning and overcoming of identity crises. Wahhabism was one of such movements which later mothered many other deviations including ISIS. It seems that the root of these unrealistic interpretations of religion can be traced to inconsideration of the specialized aspect of religion and cynicism towards the modern world.

(d) Today, with the enhancement of communication and information technologies, the emergence of a new form known as globalization of information is witnessed. This dimension of globalization, by providing proper information facilities and infrastructures, has brought about significant changes whereby collective identities, by drawing on it, seek identification of their chosen identity and meanings by others (Machaidze, 2015). The powerful impact of fundamentalist groups especially ISIS is largely due to the presence of the media and effective use of information technologies. In fact, their organizational infrastructure is developed by means of the same technology. Without the Internet and a substitute medium, the ISIS movement could hardly develop the influential networks and would be only a group of dispersed and powerless reactions. On the whole, one can say that the way the Islamic communities treat globalization and Western modernity has led to political radicalism, since modernity and the process of globalization in these communities unfold in a chaotic and uncoordinated way and not only disrupt the balance within the society but also threaten the collective identity and bring new inequalities (Machaidze, 2015). Globalization, by the crisis of meaning it brings about, makes the individual in the Islamic communities' appeal to ideology and forms his/her resistant identity; a deviating thought which severely brainwashes the individual and turns him/her into an alienated element who is ruled neither by reason nor by himself/herself and is ruled rather by ideology. For example, a person who is under the influence of Wahhabism and the ideology of the ISIS group has no free will anymore. Humans are basically 'imaginaire' creatures and their mental images determine their behavior and narrow ideologies and teachings are the main image-making factors which draw the attention of uneducated and ignorant people (Spencer, 2014).

As the countries of Iraq and Syria have a long way ahead until democracy and the governments that are ruling in these countries are too weak to be able to eradicate fundamentalism and the ISIS group easily, it is predicted that the fire of rage of Islamic extremists will remain aflame (Shadid, 2010). However, these movements will bring about no changes and will only cause great damage to the image and reputation of Islam and the Muslims. It seems that these groups transform each time and new extremist groups form instead of them.

Boko Haram and ISIS Coalition

Pham (2016) has observed an increasing scenario of Boko Haram and ISIS collaboration, not only symbolism and ideology, but in insurgency doctrine as well. This conclusion is informed by a number of collaborative declarations and actions. First, is the 2015 pledge of alliance of BH to IS and subsequent rebranding as the 'Islamic State of West Province' (ISWAP). This has been followed up by an increased pace in virtual exchanges from BH's leader Abubakar Shekau as well as the group incorporating IS's black jihadist banner and *de facto* anthem, "My Umma, Dawn has Arrived" in its video releases. (Forest, 2012) In a mutual nod to each other, the two groups have credited each other for certain actions they have undertaken. For example, IS's publication, Dabiq, cited Boko Haram's kidnap of the Chibok school girls as a precedent for its enslavement and sexual abuse of Yazidi women. In addition, BH has also taken a cue from IS sectarian strife playbook by also attacking Nigeria's small Shia minority group. Furthermore, both groups have now abandoned their hit and run guerrilla tactics by now seizing and holding onto land (Pham, 2016).

Similarities between ISIS and Boko Haram

1. Grievances

It is not a coincidence that political violence has emerged among highly indignant northerners in Nigeria who are the most impoverished in the country and Sunni's in Iraq who feel marginalized by the Shiite led government (Forest, 2012). In the two communities, the most organized groups tend to be the radical Islamic ideologues who tap into the groundswell of disenfranchisement by offering them a radical solution. As Forest (2012) has observed,

> the likelihood of ideological resonance is greater when members of a community are desperate for justice, social agency, human dignity, a sense of belonging, or positive identity when surrounded by a variety of depressingly negative environmental conditions (p. 10).

   a. **Political Grievances:** Nigeria and Iraq, the birth place of Boko Haram and IS, are archetypal cases of political grievances being exploited by violent groups. In the case of the predominantly Muslim northern Nigeria, they have experienced the erosion of their political clout with the fall of the Sokoto Caliphate which used to be dominant in West Africa and their subsequent domination by colonialism, military regimes and the current secular democratic dispensation (Forest, 2012). It is, therefore, not surprising that the BH insurgency peeked during the presidency of a Christian president, Goodluck Jonathan, who was roundly rejected by the entire northern Nigeria during his 2011 re-election (Forest, 2012). This situation is compounded by a high rate of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment which has diminished the capabilities of the people of the north relative to their southern counterparts, a sentiment that BH has tapped into. Gurr (1970) describes such a situation whereby value expectations remain the same in the midst of declining capabilities as *decremental deprivation.* The same situation has happened in Iraq whereby the Sunni Iraqis, who once dominated political and economic power in Iraq during the reign of Saddam Hussein, suddenly find themselves on the margins of power with the Shiites using their numerical advantage to win elections in a zero-sum game of politics. However, the Iraqi case falls under Gurr's classification of *progressive deprivation* because Iraqi Sunni did not anticipate such a precipitous fall from political power as

their capabilities to hold on was greatly diminished in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 (Gur, 1970).

b. **Economic Grievances:** In both Nigeria and Iraq, while oil remains the largest foreign exchange earner and contributor to the GDP, decades of wanton corruption, economic mismanagement and misplaced priorities has denied millions the economic benefits of the oil revenues leading to a sea of discontent and hopelessness. Cordesman (2014) laments the economic discrimination against Sunnis by the ruling Shite elites which fuels the instability in Iraq. Having elites from the same community in power does not translate into fair distribution of wealth.

c. **Social Grievances:** In Nigeria for example, there is an overwhelming perception among northerners that

> the wealthy elite throughout the country tend to be Christian,
> while the most impoverished communities in the country are
> found among the Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, and other northern
> groups (all of them primarily Muslim)" (Forest, 2012, p. 56).

Such disparities fuels into Boko Haram narrative for the need to seek justice via violent jihad. One of the worse policies that had dire consequences on the security of Iraq was the U.S. backed De-Baathification policy which sought to purge mostly Sunnis deemed to be loyal to Saddam Hussein from the army and public sector/civil service. Many of these people felt targeted and could not accept the preferential treatment that their Shiite counterparts were receiving and thus ended up as IS recruits out of grief (Associated Press, 2012).

Tactical Similarities

The Islamic State and Boko Haram are both engaged in an asymmetric warfare defined as "the use of random/unpredictable violence by a weak group (i.e., one with a smaller force) against a stronger power (i.e., military, government, or even society in general) to gain advantage. Asymmetrical warfare is fought between grossly unequal sides. The less powerful force does not attack the more powerful force under the conventional rules of war because it cannot win by following these tactics" (Matusitz, 2013, p. 5). Under this type of warfare, the weaker sides such as IS and BH, employ "hybrid" tactics that includes both conventional and unconventional tactics against a much formidable enemy such as the U.S led international coalition and the Nigeria government respectively. These tactics are erringly similar and are discussed below.

(a). Attack on Security Installations: -A major part of the *modus operandi* of IS and BH is attacking military installations such as military barracks, police stations, recruitment centers and check points, prisons, etc. Such attacks are usually carried out stealthily and in spectacular fashion to inflict the most damage and casualty in order to garner as much as public attention as possible. Security installations are high value targets for terrorist organizations because of their centrality in legitimizing state authority (Mamoun, 2014). Thus, a blow against them not only demoralizes security agents of the state, it sends a message to the general public that if government cannot protect its forces, it surely cannot protect defenseless citizens.

According to Look and Haruna (2015), Boko Haram not only successfully attacked the border town of Baga in north eastern Nigeria, which happened to be the headquarters of the four-country anti-terrorism joint task force, they hoisted their black flag over the town in a symbolic blow to the government. Similarly, after a 2014 seizure of the third largest military base in Western Iraq, the IS seized the contents of the base and the training camp, including tanks, heavy weapons, munitions and stores, as well as spare parts and different military supplies (Mamoun, 2014).

(b). Territorial Conquest and Control: -Both ISIS and Boko Haram share the tactics of capturing and holding on to territories with the latter evolving towards this strategy after drawing inspiration from the former's territorial conquest strategy. Buttressing this point, Pham (2016) has observed that both groups shed their previous hit-and-run guerilla tactics in favor of seizing and holding increasingly large chunks of territory. According to Byman (2014), at the height of ISIS's prowess in 2014, it controlled territory larger than Israel which included oil fields, electricity generating infrastructure, small manufacturing zones and weapons depots, some of which contained arms supplied by the U.S. Such territorial control provided a base for IS to train, recruit and served as an operational launching pad (Byman, 2014). Similarly, Pham (2016) has observed that by also capturing and holding onto territory, BH was able to set up a number of bases in the territory where hundreds of its recruits received ideological instruction, weapons and other training.

(c). Suicide Terrorism: - Suicide terrorism is deemed the most horrifying and violent terrorist tactic used in today's world (Atran, 2006). Both ISIS and Boko Haram employ the tactic of suicide bombing as part of their terror repertoire because of what Pape (cited in Friedman, 2016) has dubbed the "strategic logic of suicide terrorism".

(d). Kidnappings, Beheadings and Ransom Demand: -Pham (2016) has observed that BH does not limit its kidnapping for ransom to only higher profile foreign nationals, but hundreds, if not thousands, of Nigerians whose families have had to offer modest payments, with most on the order of $10,000- $20,000. Similarly, IS has been able to command millions of dollars in ransom by relying on its fearsome reputation of barbarity. For example, in February 2016, IS released 230 Assyrian Christians kidnapped in Syria it had held for over a year after Assyrian business men and the Assyrian Church paid $25-30 million in ransom money (Associated Press, 2016).

(e). Sexual Violence Against Women: Both IS and BH use sexual violence against women and anti-women's rules as part of their *modus operandi*. The World Health Organization defines sexual violence as

> any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work (Jewkes, Sen, & Garcia-Moreno, 2002).

These terrorist organizations have gone to the extent of using Islamic theology to justify their violence against women. IS has particularly gained notoriety for its institutionalization of

sexual violence against Yazidi women whom they claim as non-believers, fall under the spoils of war under Sharia law classifications (Newsweek, 2014). Boko Haram has adopted an ultra-Salafi ideology that view women as subordinate to men and perceive Christian women, in particular as infidels.

(f). Attack on Western/Secular Symbols: IS and Boko Haram share an ideological antipathy towards westernization and western culture, which they view as having a corrupting impact on Muslim societies because of its attendant moral decadence. For example, in 2015, IS ordered school closures in three provinces pending a review of the school curriculum to conform with Islamic teachings, a move which affected about 670,000 Syrian school children (Huffington Post, 2015). Boko Haram fares worst in this regard by deliberately targeting schools and burning them down.

According to a Human Rights Watch Report (2016) titled *They Set the Classrooms on Fire*, between 2009 and 2015, attacks in northeastern Nigeria destroyed more than 910schools and forced at least 1,500 to close. By early 2016, an estimated 952,029 school agechildren had fled the violence. In addition, motivated by a fundamentalist Islamicinterpretation of combating "Shirk", which loosely translates as idolatry, both IS andBoko Haram have attacked symbols such as tombs, shrines, churches, monuments, etc.The most egregious example of such attacks is IS's destruction of the UNESCO Heritagesite of Palmyra Temple in Syria.

(g). Extra Judicial Enforcements and Killings: IS and BH administers territories under their control via extreme brutality. They enforce their extreme interpretation of Sharia via extra judicial killings for the most mundane "offenses". Pham (2016) points out that just as it's IS counterpart, wherever it seizes control, Boko Haram raises its black jihadist flag on public buildings and brutalizes anyone who fails to conform to their strict interpretation of Sharia Law.

(h). Multi-Media Strategy: The Islam State has become a global phenomenon in the realm of terrorist media production and propaganda. IS have utilized several social media sites, such as YouTube, Instagram and Facebook. However, Twitter is considered to be the largest source of propaganda input by the organization. The main appeal of Twitter is the difficulty for governmental authorities to permanently eliminate their messages and accounts. Hence, Twitter is widely used by many terrorist groups as the official media outlet of their organization (Green, 2015).Another media tool is the Dabiq, which is a standardized magazine, published by the organization, which contains current events, informative articles and photo reports about matters related to IS (Greene, 2015).

Although Boko Haram does not have the media sophistication of IS, recently, there is evidence that the group is following in the footstep of IS and even receiving technical assistance to reboot its media operations. A BBC (2015) report cited the launching of Boko Haram's twitter feed and the level of its sophistication as evidence of IS collaboration. The report also indicated that

> the increased sophistication and organization of the propaganda that followed
> the launch of the Twitter account bore signs of the influence of IS, which has
> honed its social media exploitation over the past year …and the use of multiple

languages and well-presented subtitles – using English, Arabic, French and Hausa – suggested the group may have had outside help from IS media operatives (BBC, 2015).

Conclusion

The paper investigated the determinants of terrorist organization coalition, with focus on cultural imperialism. It further examined the various factors that have given rise to cultural imperialism, leading to growth and sustenance of terrorist organization coalitions, with particular reference to the cooperative tendencies of Boko Haram and ISIS. These factors consist of invasive western cultures and practices, foreign military occupation, erosion of traditional values and belief systems, religious revivalism and fundamentalism.

Recommendations

The Government has a big role to play in terms of education and sensitization of its people regarding moderation in beliefs and cultural practices. These will go a long way in curbing these factors so as not to breed separatist and insurgent movements that could metamorphose into terrorism. Consequently, religious Leaders (clerics) and faith-based organizations across the two dominant religious divides have roles to play in countering the negative ideological and doctrinal teachings used in promoting hate, violent extremism, and tensions in their localities. This can be achieved through emphasis on inter-group relations, cross-cultural engagements, and inter-faith dialogue to foster trust, mutual coexistence, tolerance and confidence building.

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