Terrorism and its Negative Effects on Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case of Al-Shabaab

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Abstract

In contemporary times, the most pressing issues threatening the tranquility and global stability, particularly in Africa, are the heinous activities of terrorist groups. The word "terrorism" caught the world's attention through the 9/11 incident, although it has been in existence for centuries. There have been numerous definitions for the act of terrorism, yet there is no universally approved definition which is accepted by all countries. This article, therefore, seeks to elucidate terrorism from different perspectives and also elaborate on its causes as well. Most importantly, this article focuses on Al-Shabaab as a violent extremist group with an emphasis on their background, their violent activities, the recruitment process as well as their source of funding. Additionally, their interconnection with the Al-Qaeda group will be dealt with as well as how terrorism has negatively affected a lot of people through the spread of violence, fear, and instability throughout the regions of Africa. The Al-Shabaab terrorist group in Somalia is considered amongst the deadliest militant groups across the continent of Africa, after the Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria. Some of the heinous activities carried out by this Al-Shabab terrorist group comprises of intimidation, bombing, suicide attacks, kidnapping, and gunfire of unarmed innocent citizens both within and outside Somalia. The inception of Al-Shabaab was as a result of the power vacuum that was created in 1991 after the warlords were unsuccessful in bringing into being any governance system during the fall of the last Somalia central government. Owing to this power vacuum fabricated, it has therefore empowered the Islamic court's leaders to assume informal authorities in some parts of south-central Somalia. Despite the fact that the Islamic court defeated these warlords, they were eventually defeated on the grounds of a national security threat by Ethiopian forces invading Somalia.

Keywords: Terrorism, Religious fundamentalism, Proliferation of arms and light weapons, Africa, Global instability, Power, Governance

1. Introduction

Incontrovertibly, terrorism is one of the biggest threats to the future of Africa and the world at large (McQuaid & Asfura-Heim, 2015). In contemporary times, it has become crystal clear that it is the major challenge threatening peace and security across the globe, and all the continents and the races of the world have felt its disparaging consequences with the outcome seeming not to be very close (Neria, Y., Gross, R., & Marshall, R. 2006). Presently, the definition of terrorism is one of the most controversial issues in academia. This is because there is still no universally accepted definition and some authors such as Walter Laqueur even believe that "a comprehensive definition of terrorism does not exist and will not be discovered in the foreseeable future." Jeffrey Simon points out that there are at least 212 different definitions of terrorism worldwide, of which 90 are used by governments and other institutions (Simon, 1994). Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman also investigated 109 different definitions of terrorism in one of the strictest attempts to define terrorism. Thus, they identified 22 elements in these definitions, calculated the frequency of their occurrence, and issued a long consensus definition that incorporated most of these elements (Spencer, 2006).

Terrorism is a fear-driven method of repeated acts of violence used by (semi) secret individuals, groups or governmental actors for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereas, unlike murder, direct goals of violence are not the primary goals.

The immediate human victims of violence are usually chosen randomly (target of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic goals) from a target group and serve as message generators.

Communication processes based on threat and violence between terrorist victims (organization), (endangered)victims, and key target are used to manipulate the key target (audience (s)), thereby becoming the target of terror, the goal of the request, or the focus of attention, depending on whether it is primarily a sought intimidation, coercion, or propaganda(Schmid & Jongman,1988).

However, in a recent study, Leonard Weinberg, Ami Pedahzur, and Sivan Hirsch-Hoefler (2004) examined 73 definitions of terrorism from 55 articles in three leading academic journals on the topic. Hence, they concluded that "Terrorism is a politically motivated tactic involving the threat or the use of force or violence in the pursuit of publicity" which plays a significant role.

Nonetheless, Africa seems to be more vulnerable to the fight against terrorism owing to weak governance, weak borders, and frail security institutions. However, two of the deadliest violent extremist organizations operating in the sub-Saharan Africa zone are the Al-Shabaab and the Boko Haram. For years now, two countries in Sub-Saharan Africa affected mostly

or who have become victims to these terrorist activities of these two violent extremist groups include Somalia and Nigeria. Boko Haram operates mostly in the Northern part of Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, Chad, and the tip of the Central African Republic, whereas the Al-Shabaab operates mainly around neighboring countries which include Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and the others. Even though these two terrorist groups are well thought-out to be the biggest, there are others such as the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) whose activities are restricted largely to northern Mali and southern Algeria (Thomas-Greenfield, 2016). Additionally, there are two other extremist organizations, namely; the Janjaweed of South Sudan whose operation is centered in Western Sudan and Eastern Chad (Gold, 2007) and Al-Murabitoun operating in Libya, Algeria, Niger, and Mali. However, the violent activities of these various terrorist groups have really caused grave humanitarian crunches in the affected States.

Conversely, one of the conceivable incidences that brought the term "terrorism" into the limelight was that of September 11, 2001, also known as 9/11. This incident marked the history of the bloodiest terror attacks on the American soil from the time when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor during World War II (Pamela, 2018), which resulted in the killings of nearly 3000 people.

Nevertheless, Somalia has been the most vulnerable to the Al-Shabaab terrorist activities, and one of the fatal attacks to hit the capital (Mogadishu) was the commencement of the Islamic insurgency, the truck explosions, which killed more than 270 citizens leaving hundreds injured (Mohamed, Schmitt & Ibrahim, 2017). The devastating aspect is that Al-Shabaab not only operated within its territory but it extended its violent extremist activities to other countries and one of such countries is Uganda which was horrifically attacked in their capital, Kampala, resulting in seventy-four people dead in 2010. The primary reason behind the attack was intended to send a clear message to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISON) and the countries involved in the fight against Al-Shabaab operations. Moreover, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISON) was operated by Members of the African Union with the authorization from the United Nations primarily. The objective of AMISON was to protect the transitional government and also help the government forces to fight the Al-Shabaab militant group (Felter, Masters, & Sergei, 2018). In addition, another country that has also suffered from the violent activities of this Al-Shabaab extremist is Kenya which happens to be a close neighbor to Somalia and which also had one of its major shopping centers in Nairobi, specifically the Westgate Shopping Center bombed leaving 67 people dead, including both foreigners and locals. Finally, they also attacked the US Embassy in Kenya's capital (Nairobi) in 1998, killing more than two hundred people.

1.0 Early History of Terrorism

The evolution of radical terrorism across the world has been in existence for a long time; perhaps its innovative nature is the momentum that it has adopted in modern times. The first terrorist activity was witnessed when a Jewish sect known as zealots is said to have committed the earliest recorded form of terrorism in the 1st century. This sect is said to have withstood the Roman rule through the campaign comprising of assassinations of Roman officials in public view when there were people to witness such incidence. These actions were used by them as a message to the rest of the public. Additionally, an Islamic group by the name 'Assassins' also used similar methods between the year 1090 and 1272 in their struggle against Christian campaigners. They used similar methods of suicide and sacrifice that are being used by present-day terrorists; which views acts of violence as sacred, and the architects are assured of ascending to glory in heaven if they died in the act publicly (Mohammed, 2017).

1.1 Causes of Terrorism in Africa (Sub-Saharan)

There are major causes which make Africa, especially the Sub-Saharan Countries, more vulnerable to terrorist attacks and these include firstly; conflict, coups, and ethnic tensions. Secondly, it is about the proliferation of arms and light weapons, poverty, and mass youth unemployment and thirdly, it is about the issue of Muslim-Christian conflict (religious fundamentalism), Farmers-Grazers land conflicts, and porous borders which are left to contend with. Lastly, there is the challenge of chronic corruption, which undermines law enforcement and has engulfed the continent (Ewi, 2012).

1.1.2 The Methodology of the Study

To completely fathom terrorism and its demerits on sub-Saharan Africa in regards to the Al-Shabaab case, the applied research methodology adopted was based primarily on a literature review of existing research in the area of terrorism. Thus, the study also used historical research and analytical methods. This is because the nature of the study attempts to clarify forces that have influenced the youth rebellion in Somalia in the past and especially in the present day. The nature or style of the study is also descriptive because it builds on the findings of previous works done in the field of Al-Shabaab insurgency in Somalia. On the other hand, newspapers were also relied upon for contemporary development in the field of insurrection. The survey did not use primary sources of information and the data obtained were objectively analyzed qualitatively to determine its negative effects. As mentioned (Burnham et al., 2004; cited Morris 2009), the full range of data from different sources provides qualitative analysis, which gives an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon. It also provides a detailed and thorough explanation of the

subject that has been explored in a more comprehensive way and the likely implications for the future as regards the search for a long-lasting resolution of the crisis.

2. Defining Terrorism

The issue of the definition of terrorism is of great importance in counter-terrorism policy because it is closely related to the identification and punishment of terrorist activities, and causes disputes between states when they have to take common legal action to combat terrorism (Loas, 2012). For example, according to the United Kingdom Terrorism Act 2001, article 1, terrorism is explained as the use of force or violence to admit fear in society or part of society. Also, it can be defined in Article 421 of the French Penal Code which says that it is usually intentional and is either linked to either a person or collective organization and intended solely to harm by way of intimidation and ultimately with serious consequences affecting public order and peace (Wikipedia).

Furthermore, in Section 2331 of Chapter 113 (B), terrorism is defined as acts that have violence as part of their nature and are in violation to the Penal Code in the United States or in another state. Terrorism is intended to (i) instill fear into the innocent civilian population and also (ii) to affect government policy by means of threats or coercion; or to influence the government's behavior through mass destruction, killing or abduction, which mostly occurs within the territorial region of the United States (Wikipedia). However, the problem of defining terrorism is linked to the following facts; Firstly, the concept of terrorism is complex and terrorist acts may be part of rebellion and subversion. Secondly, the mass media has contributed to the confusion about the importance of terrorism by frequently using the term "terrorism" in a rather superficial way. This can be achieved by moving the political discourse from "problems" to "episodes", transforming politics into entertainment, and moving from opinion form-making to stimulation through images.

Thirdly, terrorism is a rare occurrence that works in contrast to facades. In conclusion, countries may utilize the word "terrorism" randomly to be in accord with their national propaganda and foreign policy objectives.

Various researchers have suggested many definitions of terrorism, and numerous definitions of terrorism have been used to respond to the needs of states, national bureaucrats, and international organizations (Laos, 2012). Yet, there is no definition of terrorism mainly accepted by an international organization such as the United Nations or the European Union. The only attempt that has been made to reach an international agreement on the definition of terrorism is the 1937 Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism. The draft convention defined terrorism as "All

criminal acts directed against a State and intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons or a group of persons or the general public" (Ruperez, 2017). From these divergent views, opinions, and definitions of Terrorism, I personally will elucidate Terrorism as a targeted and a carefully orchestrated atrocity or an enactment with its main mission or focus to willfully keep innocent citizens and individuals into their territorial domain or jurisdiction in order to keep them captives and slave-bound. This thereafter coerces or force them to obey their own principles and beliefs which definitely opposes the rightfully accepted law being it in a nation or in a state with the long term goal of ensuring that these principles and belief ideologies of theirs with which they operate with goes viral and spreads like a canker.

3. Background of Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabab, also often called Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahedeen, controls the majority of rural Somalia and this terrorist group was officially acknowledged by Al-Qaeda as an ally in the year 2012 with an estimate of 7,000 to 9,000 fighters commanded by Ahmed Umar, also known as Abu Ubaidah. When Ahmed Abdi Godane was assassinated during the US-led airstrike in Somalia, Umar was appointed to succeed him after the demise of Godane (Walli, 2015). Al-Shabaab or "the youth" is a radical organization linked to Al-Qaeda - a designated foreign terrorist organization that struggles to establish a fundamentalist Islamic state in Somalia. Al-Shabaab in Arabic means "youth" (Masters & Sergie, 2013) and is said to be one of the intense groups that came into being during the confusion of the civil war in Somalia that occurred after the military regime of Siad Barre collapsed in 1991.

In 2006, the central group of warriors and leaders of what Al-Shabaab was to become, part of the Islamic Court (ICU), successfully took control of the capital, Mogadishu, from the weak transitional government in 2006. In the same year, the intercession of Ethiopian and subsequent United Nations (UN) mandated African Union (AU), Mission in Somali (AMISOM) saw the expulsion of the Islamic Court Union (ICU) from Mogadishu, and Al-Shabaab appeared when the ICU broke down. This left the group in control of small parts of central Somalia and then started the war against the Somali government. In 2012, Al-Shabaab collaborated with Al-Qaeda and became an international radical organization positioned in the horn of Africa with the rise of terrorist organizations taking place against the backdrop of decades of instability in Somalia (Gaffey, 2017). Although the majority of Somalis are Sufis, this terrorist group advocated the Saudi-inspired Wahhabi version of Islam and the territories controlled by these radical groups also imposed a strict version of the Sharia Law, which consisted of stoning women accused of infidelity to death and amputating the hands of people accused of stealing.

3.1 Al-Shabaab's Violent Activities

In 2017, Al-Shabaab carried out a series of major terrorist attacks and one of such attacks occurred on October 4, 2017, which marked the date Somalia suffered the most deadly attack since Al-Shabaab was established. More than 300 people were killed and hundreds injured when a truck bomb exploded in the middle of Mogadishu near the Safari Hotel   (CNN Library, 2017). In addition, on September 28, 2017, a car-improvised explosive device killed 15 people in the Hamarweyne area. Furthermore, five folks were also killed in a mortar assault in Wardhigley on April 18, 2017, and also, 15 people were killed during a car bombing near the headquarters of the Ministry of Defense in Somalia   (CNN Library, 2017). On 19 February 2017, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) attack occurred in a busy market in the Madina area of Mogadishu, killing 40 people. The Kenyan security Forces camp in Kulbiyow, close to Kenyan border, was also attacked by Al-Shabaab fighters, of which 50 were killed on 27 January 2017.

Furthermore, another 20 persons were also attacked on the 2nd of February 2017 at the Peace Hotel near the capital, Mogadishu, specifically the international Airport by a car bomb. Also, in 2011, a truck full of explosives entered the government building in Mogadishu, killing more than 70 people and injuring 150 where the most victims were pupils registering with their guardians for the Turkish educational program ((CNN Library, 2017). Despite all these felonious attacks carried out on the Somalia soil, they further extended their deadly terrorist acts to surrounding countries including Kenya and Uganda. In 2017, Al-Shabaab's armed forces attacked the campus of Garissa University College (GUC) Kenya, where they killed almost 147 Christian students having their morning prayers and injured lots of people (BBC, 2015).

Al-Shabab, the militant terrorist group, pleaded guilty for all these felony attacks and they also pleaded guilty for the Kenyan massacre which took place at the Garissa University near the border with Somalia. This happened when armed militants stormed the Garissa University Campus and specifically targeted Christian students killing the majority of them. Lastly, there was a terrible attack during a football match between Spain and the Netherlands at the 2010 FIFA World Cup which also occurred when a large crowd gathered in rugby and a restaurant in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, was bombarded by this deadliest terrorist group resulting in the dead of 74 people who were then watching the football match (Yan, 2015). Also on January 31, 2016, Al-Shabaab attacked and killed three men in a village in the coastal district of Lamu, Kenya, and also killed 6 Ethiopian soldiers through the attacked of AMISON convoy in Somalia Bay region on April 21, 2016. In addition, Al-Shabaab gunmen bombed a town in Kiunga, Kenya, killing four

policemen and four children and again decapitating nine men from Jima village on July 8, 2017 (Jonathan & Mohammed, 2014).

4. Al-Shabaab Recruitment Process

Al-Shabaab as its name portrays "the youth" has empowered itself to recruit forcibly, boys as young as 9 years old to become members of the group. UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, stressed that the majority of Al-Shabaab fighters in January 2017 could be children. In addition, between 2010 and 2016, a total of 4,213 children, mainly boys, were admitted to the terrorist group, as noted by the Somalia Task Force. This was done because of aging fighters who need to be replaced by young energetic fighters, and the main recruitment process of Al-Shabaab was through an online medium in Somalia and Kenya. In Somalia, Al-Shabaab recruited children, adolescents, and young people. These children were abducted and forced to join the organization which mainly occurred within the jurisdiction of Al-Shabaab and as a result led most young people to flee to avoid conscription. In 2017, more than 100 children fled to government-controlled territories and according to official sources, more than 500 children fled their homes in order to avoid being recruited into this Al-Shabaab militant group (Counter Extreme Project, 2018). Al-Shabaab has won the heart of most Somalis as a result of their social services to the community by helping to build substructure and also raising money that is given to the poor in society. Thus, the youth are influenced and they finally decide to join this terrorist group as they are being paid a good amount of salary which is up to $700 for a month for joining the group, and aside from this, they are also guaranteed additional payments when they involve their wives and children. Children aged between 12 and 16 in the penurious area of Somali have been conscripted since its inception in the year 2009. This is as a result of the lack of basic amenities needed by the people, such as clothing, shelter, and food. Al-Shabaab, however, offers such necessities of life in exchange for conscription. As confirmed by former Al-Shabaab fighters, they stated that they joined this terrorist group for religious identity and due to the influence of families or friends. Furthermore, due to the lack of education and the need for a sense of collective identity, young people tend to gravitate towards joining this militant group. Al-Shabaab also recruits young radicals from Kenya who often converts to Islam with extremist preaching, and these young individuals are psychologically manipulated by their recruiters to increase enrollment into these terrorist groups. They infiltrate their minds by telling them: "Instead of doing nothing in the slum, it is better to go to Somalia and fight for your religion and you will go directly to heaven". This sermon was mainly propagated by the late Al-Shabaab member and the radical Kenyan cleric Aboud Rogo Mohammed (Jonathan & Mohammed, 2014).

5. Sources of Finance for Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab terrorist groups attract funds from various sources in order to support their evil atrocities across the continent of Africa and beyond. Their funding usually comes from the illegal activities and support of Somali Diasporas, mainly sponsored by locals, individuals, and organizations. Al-Shabaab raises funds internally from the proceeds of exporting charcoal to neighboring countries which were later seen as an illicit trade after the seizure of the port city of Kismayo, in the south of the country, in 2008 (Counter Extreme Project, 2018).

Despite losing control of the port of Kismayo, the militant group has earned income by selling charcoal and imported sugar at an affordable price, which has contributed to the sustainability of the group's activities. Additionally, they are able to raise their income without having any strict scrutiny as well as investing in gold to earn a return. Also, after pledging allegiance to Al-Qaeda, according to the 2011 United Nations report, this terrorist group has become an economic powerhouse that has raised tens of millions of dollars in cash through extortions, illegal taxes, and other "royalty" projects. Revenues are also collected in the form of customs duties and levies at ports and airports. Furthermore, these revenues are also collected by increasing the levies on goods and services as well as levies on domestic products. Also, revenues are collected by jihad donations as well as revenues from checkpoints and various forms of extortions in numerous forms. This militant group also works with various companies, humanitarian organizations, and other non-governmental organizations that also provide financial support to them. They also receive financial support from countries such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, Eritrea, Iran, Qatar, and Yemen, as reported by the United Nations, although they denied it (Counter Extreme Project 2018).

6. Al-Shabaab International Links

Al-Shabaab's international goals include the dissemination of global jihad and the support of Al-Qaeda and its affiliates. Al-Shabaab pledged allegiance to Osama Bin Laden in 2008 and became a formal AL-Qaeda affiliate in 2012. For instance, in a letter to Bin Laden in August 2010, it stated explicitly "the pledge of allegiance from our brothers in Somalia," stressing that membership requires "jihad" for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate (Azmarai, 2010).

Before Al-Shabaab's formal Al-Qaeda connection, the core provided the Militant Somali group with strategic leadership and direction, and Al-Shabaab also has links with other affiliates, including the Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). In 2008, the US-born cleric Anwar Al-Awlaki and key Al-Qaeda leader congratulated the youth for their fight against the US-backed Ethiopian invasion. In 2010, deputy leader of Al-Qaeda in the

Arabian Peninsula said Al-Shihri encouraged further involvement between Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Shabaab and AQAP exchanged combatants and weapons between Yemen and Somalia, and Al-Shabaab has received weapons and learning strategies from AQAP, including the use of laptop explosives and automobile bombs. Al-Shabaab's connection to Al-Qaeda had common benefits: AQ's presence in East Africa dates to Osama Bin Laden's time in Sudan (1992-1996) and the creation of cells that commenced on August 7, 1998, as well as the bombing of the US embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. For Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab has become its long-awaited associate in East Africa. Al-Shabaab has received training, funding, and recruitment as a result of their affiliation with Al-Qaeda and both groups cooperate in the areas of indoctrination, explosive training, and assassinations. AQ plays a role in the leadership of Al-Shabaab, with several foreigners serving on the Executive Committee of Al-Shabaab (Faber, 2017).

7. Negative Effects of Al-Shabaab Terrorism Act
7.1 Geopolitical Uncertainty
The continual threat from terrorist organizations, especially Al-Shabaab in Africa, has intensified, especially in Sub-Saharan countries. Thus, it has therefore triggered geopolitical conflicts between most parts of Sub-Saharan countries and one country in Africa that has experienced continual political instability till date is Somalia. This country has fought for more than twenty years without a stable and legitimate government and the consequence of these conflicts has resulted in the formation of several extremist groups which has taken over large parts of Somalia and even threatens sovereignty to Kenya as its neighbor. Even for a legitimate government that has been enthroned, it had made it impossible to provide basic amenities which include hospitals, food, medical care, work, housing, schools, and others for the living standards of Somalis. Nevertheless, this has made it easier for Al-Shabaab terrorist to recruit more of these innocent citizens as a result of this uncertainty. This militant group exerted fears on its neighbors and Kenya's government was forced to repatriate Somali refugees living in the Dadaab camp. On the other hand, countries such as Ethiopia and Uganda have also tightened border security which has ultimately influenced free movement between countries and reduced trade interplay (Ngugi, 2016).

7.1.2 Environmental Effects
The environment cannot be attributed to the background because the developmental focus has always formed the key part. Al-Shabaab's activities have evolved into conflicts that have led to severe degradation on the environment, which has hampered rapid economic growth and development.

Furthermore, radioactive contamination, war equipment (bombs), chemicals, and toxins are particularly dangerous to the environment. In addition, it has caused catastrophic problems for neighboring countries and cities as a result of refugees. Therefore, it has had a significant negative impact on the environment, such as the destruction of forests and over-population. Also, another effect is the over-cultivation and grazing of their land which in the end caused economic costs, social and cultural collapse in towns and countries.

7.1.3 Economic Factors

Any kind of terrorist act always has a negative impact on all the affected countries. For years, Somalia has been suffering from these terrorist acts of Al-Shabab, and this has led the economic situation of Somalia into greater turbulence since the Federal Government was founded in 2012. As reported by the United Nations specialized agency, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) states that the population of Somalia is 10.4 million with 40% of the population living in abject poverty. In addition, the government of Somali has been unable to take care of its citizens, especially in the face of an imminent threat from Al-Shabaab. These evil activities of Al-Shabaab have also spread to neighboring Kenya which had led to a degeneration of external relations with the country. Furthermore, the result has caused serious economic difficulties for innocent citizens and one of such serious attacks which greatly affected the economy of Kenya was the bombing which occurred at Westgate Mall in Nairobi, by the Al-Shabaab militant group mainly targeting and damaging Kenya's tourism and transportation system. This attack also resulted in a decline in FDI which serves as an important source of savings funds for any developing country territory (Walli, 2015).

7.1.4 Social Impact

However, not only does terrorism has innumerable negative effects on the politics and economics of a country and its neighbors, but also has many negative repercussions on the lives of the innocent citizens as well. In Somalia for example, the problem of lawlessness has been caused by these heinous activities of Al-Shabaab which ultimately has led to the collapse of the society. Furthermore, their dangerous activities, such as murder, torture, mutilation, kidnapping, arson, and blackmail have also created an environment of doubt and concern in society (Richardson & Gordon, 2008). Besides that, the inevitability of life is reduced, especially when terrorists kill civilians, children, and women which then give rise to societal discord. Al-Shabaab has specific control over certain parts of Somalia, and this has led this terrorist group to deal in money laundering, smuggling of goods, and collecting part of the fees from workers and traders operating in the group`s territory. This negative activity has therefore affected the economic development of the

affected states in Somalia. Every time they attack a place, the immediate effects are always a loss of life and property. They also disrupt the social fabric of society by depriving children of their loved ones, mutilating others, and driving away some of the survivors of their source of livelihoods. Hence, the outcome has depicted great social implications for the backsliders who may have needed the support of the mutilated and the dead (Jackson, 2011).

8. Conclusion

According to this study, Al-Shabaab is well thought of as one of the most dangerous militant groups linked to Al-Qaeda and this group poses a hazardous threat not only to peace and security in Somalia but also to the global and African continents, especially to neighboring countries. The outcome of their heinous activities has also had a negative impact on the Al-Shabaab's targeted countries such as Somalia, Kenya, Kampala, and the African Union Mission Group in Somalia (AMISOM), which are involved in maintaining peace in Somalia. In addition, these negative actions from this militant group have also resulted in a lot of Somalis being affected deeply by the economic, social, political, and environmental impacts. The emergence of this dangerous militant group has also been influenced directly by unilateral politics and military interventions from Ethiopia and Kenya. The unilateral intervention by Ethiopia in late 2006, among others, is the main trigger that led to the formation of the Al-Shabaab in Somalia. In conclusion and in my esteemed opinion, the only way I see the cessation of this offensive activity by Al-Shabaab is through negotiations and education. In addition, the elected governments should vigorously educate the youth in order to persuade them to know the atrocities carried out on the entire African continent by Al-Shabaab militant group, and the scar and damage they have done to their beloved country. I am personally of the view that the idea that education helps is only partly true: educating the young people without offering them opportunities on the job market is an invitation to disaster. Terrorist, at least their leaders are generally well educated and the frustration of being educated and finding no decent place for oneself in the world often radicalizes them and many others. Therefore, this problem is acute in Sub-Saharan countries.

9. Way Forward

There are many other suggestions being made by other commentators suggesting that education and negotiations are the best panaceas to nip this menace in its bud. According to Alan Steinberg (2015), negotiation is neither agreement nor acceptance; negotiation provides a panacea to a problem where both sides can potentially emerge prior to their inception. Negotiation can also be used to avert terrorism and also as an option, it can be considered as a prudent military strategy as opposed to the terrorist group. He proposed that

by giving the enemy an escape route, it prevents them from making a commitment to fight to the death. Consequently, governments should be open to negotiation in order to avert terrorism, as well as to halt the cycle of violence and retaliation between groups, should terrorism occur and when the proverbial line is crossed. Furthermore, Fatuma Ahmed Ali (2017) held the argument against negotiating with terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab as they give them publicity rewards on their terrorist behavior and hand them legitimacy but this had become fruitful in many instances to achieve a result. In 1988, the Spanish government and the separatist organization Basque Home and Freedom (known for its Basque acronym ETA) sat down after only six months of the killings of the 21 shoppers in the supermarket bombings. The Israeli government, which is not known to mitigate terrorism, had to deviate from the alleged ban in 1993 and secretly negotiate the Oslo Accords even though the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) continued its terrorist campaign and refused to recognize Israel's law to exist. In addition, the Colombian government led by President Juan Manuel Santos recently negotiated a peace process with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of the Colombian People's Army (FARC-EP) which resulted to the end of 52 years of war.

However, with such successes realized through this medium of negotiation, there is a possibility that negotiation can as well operate in Somalia. Thus, inferring from the above case, commentators - including scholars, analysts, policymakers, journalists, politicians, and ordinary citizens – concluded that negotiations may be a viable strategy to end the Somali Al-Shabaab threat. This is because Al-Shabaab and the Somali people have a common religious ideology (Islam) and also share the same nationality, but the problem with Al-Shabaab is that they are only implementing less of their belief system and rather using more of terror in order to attain their goals. Therefore, in my opinion, the government needs to explore new ways of compromising with these terrorist organizations by focusing on common doctrinal and belief system and I believe, negotiating with Al-Shabaab can promote a political settlement that is vital to Somalia's security, political and economic prosperity.

Furthermore, as stated by Mona Bint Nasser (2018), Education plays a crucial role in winning the hearts and minds of people. Education is crucial to unlocking human potential and for children living in the utmost deprived and disregarded societies; it offers them hope for a prosperous future. Devoid of education, they will see a future with frustrated desires and shattered dreams. They will also lack the required skills to gain significant employment and, out of anger and frustration, some of them will turn to extremism and violence. The sad truth is that terrorism seems to give people a twisted sense of aim that is distorted and desperate and in downgraded and underprivileged

communities, terrorism can spread like a virus. Education is now considered the world's vaccine against terrorism. However, I personally believe that the Somali government can defeat Al-Shabaab extremists by increasing access to good quality education and making education a major goal. Also, private organizations and external donors can help the government to achieve this goal. In addition, the Somali government should also develop a curriculum that teaches values, comprising the rule of law, individual freedom, and mutual respect and tolerance for diverse beliefs. In addition to the teaching of these values, it may also be a key component in helping young people to fathom their democratic rights and responsibilities which will at the end help them participate fully in modern society with the hope of avoiding violence for radical purposes. Finally, when more youth, especially young people, are well educated and exposed to good education, they are less likely to join these violent groups and ultimately, in the end, this will give them hope and protect them through meaningful work.

Again, the sources of funding and all sources of resources of this terrorist group should be intensively monitored by the government and, if possible, cut off in order to lose their strongholds. Also, the intercommunication existing between these terrorist groups as in the case with Al-Shabab which receives much of its information from the Al-Qaeda group should also be monitored and tracked, if possible, by the government. Furthermore, social media also aid these terrorist groups to influence young people through brainwashing. Therefore, they should be checked and blocked as well in order to minimize their influential activities on the youth.

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