

**Paper: “Revisiting the Formation and Radicalisation of Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) through Social Movement Theory”**

**Submitted: 13 October 2023**

**Accepted: 17 January 2024**

**Published: 31 January 2024**

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Doi: /10.19044/esj.2024.v20n2p84

Peer review:

Reviewer 1: Huseyin Cinoglu  
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Reviewer 2: Salwa Alenat  
Open University, Israel

Reviewer 3: Sharad K. Soni  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

# ESJ Manuscript Evaluation Form 2023

This form is designed to summarize the manuscript peer review that you have completed and to ensure that you have considered all appropriate criteria in your review. Your review should provide a clear statement, to the authors and editors, of the modifications necessary before the paper can be published or the specific reasons for rejection.

Please respond within the appointed time so that we can give the authors timely responses and feedback.

NOTE: ESJ promotes peer review procedure based on scientific validity and technical quality of the paper (not perceived the impact). You are also not required to do proofreading of the paper. It could be recommended as part of the revision.

*ESJ editorial office would like to express its special gratitude for your time and efforts. Our editorial team is a substantial reason that stands ESJ out from the crowd!*

Reviewer Name: Salwa Alinat	
University/Country: Open University in Israel	
Date Manuscript Received: 8-11-23	Date Review Report Submitted: 12-12-2023
Manuscript Title: ISLAMIST GROUPS AS SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: REVISITING THE FORMATION OF BOKO HARAM AND AL-QAEDA IN THE LANDS OF THE ISLAMIC MAGHREB (AQIM)	
ESJ Manuscript Number:	
You agree your name is revealed to the author of the paper: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes/No	
You approve, your name as a reviewer of this paper, is available in the “review history” of the paper: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes/No	
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## Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating Result</i> [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
<b>1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	

I recommended to make the title of the article shorter.	
<b>2. The abstract clearly presents objects, methods and results.</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	
<b>3. There are few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.</b>	<b>4</b>
I do not specialize in the English language, so it is difficult for me to assess the quality of the writing. For me As a reader, the English was fine.	
<b>4. The study methods are explained clearly.</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>(The sources should be more detailed, such as the time frame of the research, the types of sources, primary and secondary, and the research limitations; if there were interviews with the activists, there would be room to refer to this. What is the motivation for comparing the two movements, and what are the criteria according to which the author made the comparison? The introduction to the article needs to contribute more to the presentation of the research topic. Studies presented under the heading political movements should be moved to this section.</i> The presentation of the Boko Haram movement should be more detailed.	
<b>5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>(The discussion and summary should be improved according to clear criteria for comparing the two movements)</i>	
<b>6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>(The discussion and summary should be improved according to clear criteria for comparing the two movements)</i>	
<b>7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>(Current sources and the use of primary sources are necessary.)</i>	

**Overall Recommendation** (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accepted, minor revision needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Return for major revision and resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reject	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):**

The research topic is important, but the article is short and should be condensed with up-to-date material. It is also important to note why this issue is important and why the two movements were chosen for the study. What does the comparison between them contribute to the research corpus?

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Reviewer C:

Recommendation: Accept Submission  
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**The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.**

Yes, the title is descriptive and informative of the material to be covered.

**The ABSTRACT clearly presents objects, methods, and results.**

The abstract adequately lays out the significance of the subject matter by identifying the groups (Boko Haram and AQIM) that will be studied and neatly situating them within the overarching social movement theory.

Regarding the methodological approach used, the abstract states that the authors will use secondary data analysis as their primary analysis technique.

It also talks about significant findings about how Boko Haram and AQIM evolved, including the role of political opportunity structures, mobilizing structures, and framing processes. It also shows how the techniques and tactics of these groups have changed because of government repression.

**There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.**

Other than a minor grammatical error check, i do not think the manuscript needs a major grammatical overhaul.

**The study METHODS are explained clearly.**

The authors offer a basic outline of the qualitative approach in the methodology part, which also mentions the source of the data. However, to make this part stronger, authors might consider elaborating more on the following ideas:

1) Elaborate on the choice of method: Discuss concerning why qualitative study is the best way to look into the political, social, and ideological issues surrounding Boko Haram and AQIM. They should talk about how qualitative analysis can give you deeper insights than quantitative options.

2) About the source of secondary data: Authors might consider explaining why Danguguwa's (2014) Master's Thesis is a good and trustworthy source for your study. They might talk about the unique methods that were used in this thesis to make sure that it is valuable and relevant to your current research.

3) Analytical Framework: Authors might consider talking about the framework or the specific qualitative methods that were used to look at the data. Which method will they use? Thematic analysis, content analysis, discourse analysis, or something else? Explain this choice.

5) Limitations: They might talk about the problems that might come up when you use secondary data and qualitative research. They might also discuss how they will make sure that their interpretation of the data is reliable and valid. And what sorts of other limitations they encountered during the study and how they were able to tackle them.

6) Ethical Considerations: If there are any, Authors might consider explaining any ethical concerns that come up when using secondary data, especially when talking about sensitive subjects like radicalization.

**The body of the paper is clear and does not contain errors.**

The authors demonstrate a nuanced knowledge of the subject matter, suggesting the existence of earlier research and publication(s).

The literature review section sufficiently encompasses primary sources on Boko Haram and AQIM in terms of a more Social Movement theoretical framework.

And the body of the paper is clear enough and does not contain errors.

However, there needs to be more references to the data set and how that data helped you shape your findings.

**The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.**

Conclusions need to reflect a synthesis of the topics covered. This manuscript does an acceptable job of that.

However, this does not necessarily mean that there is no room for advancement.

The authors might consider including more discussions about the findings of their studies and the implications of their study, and they might also include research suggestions and, if they see fit, some policy recommendations as well.

**The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.**

Adequate

*Please rate the TITLE of this paper.*

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.*

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the METHODS of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

*Please rate the BODY of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

**Overall Recommendation!!!**

Accepted, minor revision needed

**Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):**

Congratulations.

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Reviewer N:  
Recommendation: Accept Submission  
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**The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.**

The Title appears to be clear and adequate to the content of the article.

**The ABSTRACT clearly presents objects, methods, and results.**

Although the abstract clearly presents objects and results, it lacks clear methods.

**There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.**

Yes, there are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes.

**The study METHODS are explained clearly.**

The study methods have been explained briefly, and hence it needs to be elaborated.

**The body of the paper is clear and does not contain errors.**

The body of the paper appears to be clear free from any major errors.

**The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.**

Yes, the conclusion is accurate and supported by the content

**The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.**

The list of references is appropriate and can be considered as comprehensive. But it lacks uniform style of referencing.

*Please rate the TITLE of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

*Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the METHODS of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

2

*Please rate the BODY of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

*Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.*

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

**Overall Recommendation!!!**

Accepted, minor revision needed



### **Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):**

By using social movement theory, the paper under review examines the rise and development of Boko Haram and AQIM, which were initially established as moderate and conservative Islamist groups in Nigeria and Algeria respectively. The paper argues that emergence and transformation of Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) have been influenced by social movement factors of political opportunity structures, mobilizing structures, and framing processes. The paper appears to be a product of good research, though it needs minor revision as follows: (1) A clear methodology should be explained in the Abstract; (2) Study methods in the body of the text should be elaborated; and (3) Uniform style of referencing must be followed.

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