An Evolving Security Dilemma: Adopting a Comprehensive Approach to the Changing Dynamics of Terrorism in Africa

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This article examines the threat of terrorism, its changing dynamics and manifestations, constituting a major security dilemma for Africa. It begins with a conceptual discussion of the term “Jihad” and how it is contributing to recent upsurge in terrorism among the Muslim youth in Africa. The article argues that the concept has largely been misunderstood, misinterpreted by some Muslims and non-Muslims alike and as a consequence “hijacked” and misapplied by extremists to achieve ideological and political goals. While the perpetration of terrorist act is undermining political stability of African states, the involvement of the youth does not only make the enterprise a dangerous one, but also questions the effectiveness of education and training being pursued, especially in Muslim communities across many states in Africa. The article thus suggests that, curbing the threat of terrorism arising out of wrong interpretation of the concept of Jihad will require adopting a comprehensive educational approach aimed at reforming and transforming the character of the Muslim youth. This should include religious, moral, secular and peace education. It concludes that failure to adopt such holistic approach will mean African states will continue to battle with terrorism as an evolving security dilemma for years to come and the name Islam will continue to be denigrated as a religion that is more susceptible to violence.

Keywords: terrorism, security, Islam, Jihad, education

Introduction

Africa’s security environment has radically transformed over the past two decades. From inter-state conflicts during the adversarial decades of the Cold War, to intra-state conflicts beginning from the 1990s to the dawn of New Millennium in 2000 and beyond, the continent is currently facing multiple and complex hybrid threats. These include: drug trafficking, human trafficking, piracy, money laundering, radicalization, violent extremism and increasing threat of terrorism. Among these, however, the continued mutation of terrorism and terrorist networks (Aning, 2010) and the complexities of their manifestations, especially among the youth undoubtedly makes it one of the evolving African security dilemmas. This will arguably remain so for some years to come if comprehensive educational approaches are not adopted to curb the emerging trend. Indeed, since 1998 when the coordinated bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salam in Tanzania occurred simultaneously, killing 224 people and injuring over 5,000, terrorism has continued to

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manifest in different and multiple forms (Princeton & Morrison, 2004). Besides the disturbing human cost of terrorism, in terms of lives lost or permanently altered, terrorist acts aim at undermining the security of African states, with enormous implications on political stability. More disturbingly is the involvement of the youth in this dangerous enterprise.

The 2015 report on “Global Programme on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism” attributes the difficulty in confronting the menace to the fact that, its “motivations, financing, methods of recruitment, methods of attack and choice of targets are constantly changing” (Global Programme on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism, 2015). It further argues that, terrorism defies national borders: One act of terrorism can involve a series of actors from numerous countries, those who finance, those who recruit, those who support logistically (Global Programme on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism, 2015). As a result, terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab in East Africa (Gunaratna, Jerard, Nasir, Sariipi, & Azman, 2012), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in North Africa and Boko Haram in Nigeria and some part of Africa continue to operate both independently and as a network, posing enormous challenge to the resilience of regional and continental security architectures such the African Union (AU), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Aning & Ewi, 2006).¹

As multiple causes of terrorism have been discussed in the existing literature, the aim of this paper is not to further interrogate causes such as unemployment, poverty, poor economic conditions, hopelessness, regime repression and corruption, injustice, inequality, and massive violations of human rights including against women and minorities. Rather, this paper seeks to explore the conceptual underpinnings of the recent upsurge in terrorism in Africa. To this end, the first section examines the concept of “jihad” from the perspective of the Qur’an. The concept of “Jihad” has largely been misconstrued, misinterpreted by a section of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, and as a consequence misapplied by “radical Islamists” to achieve political as well as religious goals. The second section discusses the threat of terrorism, current dynamics and manifestations in Africa. It further examines how these dynamics impacts on political stability of African states, with particular reference to Nigeria and Mali. To contribute to addressing the menace, the third section discusses a comprehensive educational approaches that seek to instill religious and moral discipline in the youth so as to reduce the increasing occurrence of terrorism on the continent. It then provides some concluding thoughts.

Conceptualizing “Jihad”

“Jihad” is an Arabic word that has recently gained currency in the international security discourse regarding the evolving threat of terrorism. To better understand and appreciate the nuances of the term “jihad” and its linkage with the increasing threat of terrorism, it should be critically examined from the perspectives of the Qur’an.

Besides the literal definition which is striving to achieve a goal (eg. educational goal), the Quranic definition of the word is “striving with one’s self and one’s money in the cause of God”.² The concept has been articulated in 23 different verses in the Qur’an, three of which are stated below. For instance, Chapter 49:15 states:

¹ The African Union Peace and Security Architecture and the ECOWAS Peace and Security Framework.

² Striving to uphold the “cause of God” simply means striving to uphold all God’s commandments and a strive to condemn all God’s prohibitions.

The true believers are those who believe in God and His messenger, then attain the status of having no doubt whatsoever, and strive (jahadu)³ with their money and their lives in the cause of God. These are the truthful ones (49:15).

Those who believe, and emigrate, and strive (jahadu) in the cause of God with their money and their lives, are far greater in rank in the sight of God. These are the winners. (9:20)

As for the messenger and those who believed with him, they eagerly strive (jahadu) with their money and their lives. These have deserved all the good things; they are the winners. (9:88)

Flowing from the above extracts, scholars such as Ibn Qayyim⁴ and Ibn Rushd⁵ have categorized “Jihad” into 14 and four different types respectively. For the purpose of this paper, we focus on the four broad classifications by Ibn Rushd including: Jihad of the heart (struggle against the self)⁶; Jihad of the tongue (education and counsel)⁷; Jihad of the hand (development of the civil society and material progress)⁸; and Jihad of the sword (combative Jihad)⁹. Among these, however, “jihad” of education, encompassing imparting knowledge, preaching and exhortations, calling people to Islam through dialogue and kind persuasions takes a pre-eminent position. This contrasts with the imagined belief among many Muslims that “Jihad” is only of the combative form—a type that is only encouraged in self-defence. In other words, it is encouraged when Muslims are actively prevented from practising their religion. Even in such instance, there should be a *fatwa* (a legal opinion issued by legitimate religious authority) sanctioning such a defence (Teti & Mura, 2009).

Exploring this discourse further, “Jihad” can be summarized to mean making an effort to contribute to the growth of Islam either financially or materially. This conforms to the analysis by Aning and Abdallah that, “Jihad” in its fundamental sense does not mean killing people. Rather, it is defined as striving to achieve perfection, supporting the growth of Islam in cash or kind, fighting against the ills in one’s own self and reforming one’s character so a non-Muslim will be attracted to the religion (Aning & Abdallah, 2013). However, because of perceived or real marginalization of Islam and Muslims, coupled with grievance factors such as poverty, unemployment and alienation, a section of Muslims, especially the youth restrict the understanding of “Jihad” to mean combative type, in which case they are prepared “To die in defence of Islam” and, “To kill a non-Muslim for making derogatory remarks against the Prophet Mohammed” through what has been misunderstood to mean Holy War. It is apparent from this that, the interpretation of “Jihad” by modern radicals is one that is exclusive, aggressive and aimed at Islamizing states and societies (Teti & Mura, 2012). This contrived interpretation of modern “Jihad” has created conditions in which two sets of Muslims: moderates (defensive) and extremists (offensive) have emerged.

³ The term “jahadu” is verb form of the word “jihad” (noun).

⁴ Ibn Qayyim was an Arab Islamic Jurist, Commentator of the Qur’an and a Theologian. He lived in Damascus in 13th and 14th centuries.

⁵ Ibn Rushd was a scholar in Qur’anic studies, jurisprudence and theology. He lived in the 12th Century.

⁶ The Jihād of the heart is the struggle of the individual with his or her own desires, whims, erroneous ideas and false understandings. This includes the struggle to purify the heart, to rectify one’s actions and to observe the rights and responsibilities of all other human beings.

⁷ Jihād of the tongue is to commend good conduct and forbid the wrong doing.

⁸ Jihād of the hand includes the struggle to build the nation through material development and progress, including building up civil society, acquiring and improving every aspect of technology and societal progress in general. This form of Jihād includes scientific discovery, development of medicine, clinics and hospitals, communication, transportation, and all necessary underlying infrastructure for societal progress and advancement, including educational institutions. Building also means to open opportunities to the poor through economic programs and self empowerment. Another aspect of Jihād by Hand is through writing. This includes the use of computers and all other forms of publication to disseminate information and advance the cause of humanity

⁹ Jihād by the sword falls under the category of jihad of the hand but only executed in self-defence when one fights the aggressor who attack in combative war.

While the moderates will resort to dialogue and sometimes verbal condemnation of a perceived or real denigration of Islam, the extremists believing in pre-emptive or combative “Jihad” sometimes engage in radical preaching, with violent manifestations such as suicide bombing, car bombing, kidnapping of school children, attack on hotels among others. Northern Mali and North-eastern part of Nigeria exemplify these manifestations of terrorist attacks in West Africa and contradicts the true and broader Quranic meaning, which has been manipulated to advocate violence and the killing of innocent people. Indeed, “The cause of God” as embedded in the definition of “jihad” does not allow unlawful killing or violence. The Qur’an makes a distinction between organized violence and “Jihad”. While organized violence is referred to as *ghazwa* (raid), *harb* and *qital* (war), jihad as indicated earlier is about striving against once negative inclinations (Teti & Mura, 2009).

The Qur’an thus condemns the killing or even the persecution of people merely because they embrace a different religion. The Qur’an mandates absolute freedom of religion among all people. Respect and mutual co-existence must be exercised with those of other religions. The Qur’an urges Muslims to treat such people kindly and equitably: “God does not enjoin you from befriending those who do not fight you because of religion, and do not evict you from your homes. You may befriend them and be equitable towards them. God loves the equitable” (Qur’an, 60:8).

The above verse indicates that, the Qur’an is clear in prohibiting all violence, unlawful killing and also forcing others into Islam. Deliberate attacks on civilians and on innocent people, especially, women, children and the elderly constitutes a violation of selected verses in the Qur’an.

It is clear from the foregoing that the concept of “jihad”, as one of the drivers of terrorism in Africa has been misconstrued and as a consequence misinterpreted by majority of Muslims and non-Muslims alike. While the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the concept among Muslims leads to radicalization and sometimes violence, it creates room for non-Muslims to castigate and pigeon-hole Islamic religion as one that is more radical and susceptible to violence. While radicalization and violence indeed happen among a section of Muslims, manifesting in acts of terrorism, it is borne out of limited understanding of the concept of Jihad and motives other than Islam-that represent peace and promotes peaceful co-existence.

The Changing Dynamics and Manifestations of Terrorists Threat in Africa

During the 1990s, terrorists and terrorist networks operated more independently and were perceived to be driven by different motivations: political, ideological and religious goals. Terrorism was thus seen as perpetuating political violence rather than engaging with other criminal networks (Liang, 2011). However, one emerging dimension of terrorism in Africa today is the increasing interconnection with other hybrid threats such as drug traffickers. Terrorist networks continue to forge mutual partnerships with other criminal networks, ostensibly to consolidate gains from an emerging criminal economy through kidnapping, hostage-taking and smuggling (Aning & Amedzator, 2014). These criminalities partly led to the destabilization of Mali, leading to the ouster of Amadou Toumani Toure, the President of Mali in 2012. Following this, weak state structures further created conditions in which criminal networks continue to collaborate with militant groups and terrorists to perpetrate crime and undermine state security (Aning, Aubyn, & Edu-Afful, 2014). This is so because terrorists are able to exploit fragile states with weak institutions and counterterrorism capabilities. This may include non-existence of anti-terrorism legislation and poor criminal justice systems.

As various methods are adopted by regional organizations such the AU and ECOWAS to confront the menace of terrorism, their modus operandi keep changing. Thus, terrorism and terrorist networks have

transmuted from what was known to be “old” threat to “new” with diverse manifestations, including: suicide bombing, car bombing, kidnapping of humanitarian aid and foreign workers, school children, attacks on mosques, churches, transport terminals, shopping malls and hotels. For instance, the recent attacks on hotels in Mali (Radisson Blu Hotel), August, 2015 and Burkina Faso (Splendid Hotel), January 2016 was claimed by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Almourabitoun terrorist groups. The attacks killed innocent civilians of different nationalities exemplify the current dynamics and manifestations of terrorism in West Africa.

While in the past, terrorist will engage in bombing and kidnapping for ransom, increasingly today, captives are being maltreated, severely beaten, forcibly made to have sex. Sometimes they capture school boys and girls, who are made to run errands while others are trained to shoot guns (Nigeria’s Boko Haram in disarray as government forces advance, May 5, 2015). Tactics are being varied from hit-and-run to capturing cities, and renaming them with the view to establishing an Islamic state. In October, 2014, Mubi city, for instance, was captured and renamed Madinatul Islam (City of Islam) by the Boko Haram (Boko Haram Renames Captured Adamawa Town, Mubi, 2014). Moreover, the insurgency in Nigeria is not limited to northern cities such as Kano, Maiduguri, Yobe and Adamawa, but has assumed regional dimension, establishing foothold in Cameroun, Chad and Niger. Thus, considered as unsophisticated in the past, Boko Haram has now mutated and metamorphosed into a “territorial insurgency”. Although the Nigerian military has made purposeful strides in crashing the Boko Haram, they have not been totally successful. Even with the election of new constitutional government led by Muhammadu Buhari, there are still logistical challenges that requires collaborative regional efforts to dislodge the terrorists from North-Eastern Nigeria (Payne, 2015).

In East Africa, for example, Al-Shabab has advanced its tactics and persistently carried out asymmetric attacks, including outside of its base in Somalia (Country Report on Terrorism, 2014). In 2013, for instance, the terrorist group launched an attack on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya that left at least 65 people dead and in April 2015, 147 students in Garissa University were also killed (BBC Report, April 3, 2015). And although October 2015 report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicated that, nearly 700 young recruits believed to have joined Al-Shabab have returned to Kenya, the country still grapples with how to de-radicalize such returnee terrorists (Al-Shabab recruits return to Kenya after quitting group, October 21, 2015). It has thus been argued that while the return of the radical persons presents an opportunity for Kenyan authorities to elicit important information as a way of designing counter-terrorism and de-radicalization strategies, there is also apprehension that, if proper reintegration measures are not adopted, the returnees might constitute a security threat rather than social and economic assets to the country (Country Report on Terrorism, 2014).

Similarly, the North African states have not been immune to the dynamics of terrorism. Almost all states in the region encounter the threat in varying dimensions. However, apart from the notable terrorist group, AQIM the aftermath of the Arab Spring has particularly propped up militant activities in Libya. For instance, jihadists groups such as Ansar al-Sharia, with splinters in Benghazi and Derna have emerged threatening the security of the state and safety of civilians. More worrying in recent time is the emergence of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Libya. It has extended its organized attacks in cities such Derna. For example, the group has claimed responsibility for masterminding the terrorist attack on the Corinthia hotel in Tripoli on 28 January, 2015 that left at least eight people dead, including five foreign citizens (UN Security Council, February 26, 2015). With the increased activities, the tendency is that Libya might become a base of terrorists because of non-functioning state institutions and governance structures.

There is no doubt that these dynamics and manifestations are having enormous and varied impacts on political stability of the countries involved and by extension the African continent.

For instance, Somalia, Kenya, Libya, Mali and Nigeria and recently Burkina Faso have been threatened by the activities of terrorist and jihadists groups. They often instigate fear to pressurise governments to take political decisions; seek to make political statements; control territory; push certain political ideology; and leads to the collapse of state machinery with the view to replacing it with the Islamic Shari'a. This attempt was seen in Mali in 2012 when the Tuareg separatist group, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) backed by the Sahel Al-Qaeda affiliate, Ansar Dine, wrestled northern Mali from sovereign control of the government. Mali's continuous unification is largely attributed to the 2013 French intervention, the absence of which would have resulted in complete disintegration of the West African Sahelian nation.

Nigeria's situation arising from the activities of the Islamist terrorist group, Boko Haram, which has declared an Islamic caliphate in the North Eastern territories, also represents a political challenge to the sovereignty of the country. In the regions it controls, Boko Haram has sought to institute Sharia law where the fundamental human rights of populations are curtailed: movement, especially of women are restricted as people are kept under armed guards to prevent them from escaping. In some cases, special permits need to be obtained to allow travel to neighbouring towns; and offences attracted draconian punishments ranging from flogging to public executions (Amnesty International, 2015).

The political ramification of the Boko Haram threat became more evident for Nigeria when its 2015 national elections was threatened. Initially scheduled for 14 and 28 February, 2015, the Nigerian national elections were pushed back six weeks by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) based on the security situation, resulting from increasing attacks by Boko Haram (Ekeowo, 2015). When the elections was eventually held, there were reports of isolated cases of voter intimidation by Boko Haram group who fired gunshots at polling centres in order to drive out voters in the north-eastern regions of the country.¹⁰

Confronting Terrorist Threat in Africa: Adopting a Comprehensive Educational Approach

The changing dynamics, manifestations and impacts of terrorism on Africa has raised concerns about the effectiveness of education and training in shaping the character of the youth to contribute to developmental, peace and security efforts on the continent. This assertion was highlighted by Hiroute Guebre Sellassie, the UN envoy to the African region in 2015 (UN envoy warns, November 26, 2015). In her address to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Sellassie noted that 44% of children in the Sahel, who are predominantly Muslims lack access to primary education and only 36% of the population can read or write. As a consequence, there is potential for such children and youths under the age 25 to be recruited into terrorist groups unless there is substantial increase in education and employment opportunities. She further noted that governments in the Sahel region such as Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger are being forced to spend a significant percentage of their budgets on growing security threats, leaving little money for issues affecting young people. While agreeing with Sellassie's view point on education as panacea to the growing incidence of radicalization and terrorism in Africa and the Sahel, it is imperative to examine this in a much more comprehensive context. Such a broad contextualization should aim at shaping the character of the youth, placing emphasis on religious, moral, secular and peace education.

¹⁰ Boko Haram kills 41, prevents Hundreds from voting in Nigeria. Retrieved April 1, 2015, from http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/28/world/africa/ap-af-nigeria-election.html?_r=0

Religious and Moral Education

The importance of education and the search for knowledge in addressing socio-economic and political security challenges has been emphasized and made obligatory on all believers in the very first verse of the Qur'an revealed to the Prophet Mohammed. It instructs,

Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists). Has created man from clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. Has taught man that which he knew not. [Qur'an 96:1-5]

Flowing from this divine commandment, the Prophet further emphasized on learning and searching after knowledge as a sacred duty of every Muslim, both male and female. It is significant to note from the above that the Qur'an and Hadith are the two most important documents that form the foundations of Islamic religious education. However, in most traditional Islamic societies in Africa, committing portions of the Qur'an to memory for the purposes of daily prayers and other religious rituals without necessarily understanding the true meaning has historically been commonplace. As such, understanding certain concepts of Islam such as "Jihad" suffered from multiple and sometimes wrong interpretations. And since misconception on "Jihad" has become a major driver of terrorism among the youth in Africa, educating them on the concepts and principles of "Jihad" as clearly articulated in these two documents is critical to understanding and appreciating the interpretational and practical challenges associated with its application. For instance, distinction between various forms of "Jihad" such as "Jihad" of the heart (struggle against the self); "Jihad" of the tongue (education and counsel); "Jihad" of the hand (development of the civil society and material progress); and "Jihad" of the sword (combative "Jihad") can be made clear through education. Such distinction, as indicated in earlier section, emphasizes the pre-eminence of education as the best form of "Jihad". It should be noted, however, that education is comprehensive and thus effectiveness of religious education in fighting terrorism will be dependent on understanding the moral dimensions.

Moral education as argued by Hornby (Hornby, 2010) is concerned with the principles of right and wrong behavior. It extends to showing respect for authority and acceptable social norms. As children are growing into adulthood, parents and educational institutions have the primary responsibility to build in them holistic education or training aimed not only at the development of cognitive, psychomotor skills of the individual learner but the affective domain, which according to J. Omede and A. Omede (2015) has been neglected in practice in many African countries. In actual fact, the affective domain is responsible for character development and transformation. Thus, J. Omede and A. Omede argue that, a deficiency in this domain contributes to creating "educated sinners" that are suitably recruited as political thugs, miscreants, ... hijackers and bombers to mention just a few (J. Omede & A. Omede, 2015). They conclude that, as the youth are increasingly being lured into engaging in terrorism, there is the need to pay particular attention to moral, values and religious education. Such an education can raise generation of youth and youth leaders that are disciplined and organized, have respect for human lives, and the responsibility to protect and defend one another. They will respect elders as well as constituted authorities and practice their own religions without hurting others. The existence of these virtues can do away with vices such as corruption, oppression, armed and pen robberies, drug and human trafficking, killing, maiming and destructions of properties that mutually reinforces terrorism (J. Omede & A. Omede, 2015).

Secular Education

Secular education, which is described as either a private or a public educational institution and identifies itself as non-religious in its orientation should be encouraged among Muslims, especially the youth. This allows individuals to freely practice any religion of choice provided the rights of others are not infringed upon.

In the post independence era in Africa, many Muslims did not embrace the secular education introduced by the European missionaries, which formed the foundation of educational curricula. Thus, while Christians or non-Muslim youth were equipped with the necessary skills and training to be employed in the formal sectors of their countries' economies, significant number of Muslim youth did not get the opportunity to attain appreciable level of secular education. Aning and Abdallah argue, for instance, that in Ghana and other African countries, Muslim parents prevented their children from embracing secular/western education for fear of being indoctrinated by Christian missionaries (Aning & Abdallah, 2013). As a consequence, socio-economic conditions of Muslims and Muslim youth in particular have been comparatively low.

In the midst of increasing threat of terrorism and given the fact that African states remain secular, Muslims, while giving pre-eminence to religious education, focusing on the two essential components of Islamic ideology; the creed or doctrine (Aqeedah) and a system of rules and regulation founded on this doctrine (Shari'ah) they should also give attention to secular education. This is important because the pursuit of secular education brings people of different religious backgrounds together to achieve a common goal. In such educational environments, there is an appreciation and an understanding of basic principles of different religions and this affords the youth the opportunity to do comparative study and a critique of ideologies for an enhanced understanding. This partly stems from the fact that, the teaching of subjects that have a basis in scientific fact, such as economics, sociology, religion, political science, mathematics and sciences offers the youth the opportunity to engage in critical thinking. They thus have a wider world view and appreciate the different religious ideologies and the need to tolerate such diversities and live in harmony. Tolerance of divergent views and ideologies can lead to the promotion of religious freedom and respect for human rights, not only for fellow Muslims, but also non-Muslims. Moreover, in the ever-growing globalizing and technological world, secular education is important for the youth to gain the requisite knowledge and skills for employment opportunities, but also to adapt and remain relevant to the ever changing complex world.

Peace Education

The culture of peace and peace education should be considered as another critical measure in addressing the menace of terrorism among the Muslim youth. Although this paper has indicated that Islam represents peace, the growing threat of terrorism among the Muslim youth in many African countries suggest that the concept of peace education is at best relegated to the background and at worse misconstrued. Therefore, an understanding of peace education should be part of educational curricular in African countries. According to Alimba,

Peace education is a comprehensive educational programme that involves different approaches capable of transforming the behavioural patterns of people through the inculcation of desired knowledge, attitudes and skills for effective contribution to the cultural, social, economic and political development of their countries. (Alimba, 2007, p. 340)

It undertakes enquiry into the obstacles to peace (both to resolve conflicts in a just and non-violent way, thereby studying ways of constructing just and sustainable alternative future (Hicks, 1985; Fountain, 1999). An

understanding and incorporation of the concept has become critical component of all development agenda in Africa. This is so because the last two decades has witnessed a number of conflicts and complex humanitarian emergencies that have scuttled the development initiatives in many states. Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire have grappled with conflicts, while Mali and Nigeria continue to face the threat of terrorism in West Africa. Similar conflicts and terrorist threats continue to undermine the peace and stability of the Republic of Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Central African Republic (CAR), Congo DRC and Libya. As most of these countries are embracing democracy, the inclusion of peace education, especially at the secondary and tertiary level of education has become imperative.

It is in this regard that ECOWAS, for instance, considers the inclusion of peace education (culture of peace) as one of the 14 components of ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) document. The aim is to among others transform the psyche, orientation and behavioral pattern of the population, particularly those of the youth in favor of exclusively peaceful means of thought, action and interaction. The role of ECOWAS in the realization of this objective include: the elaboration and adoption of module on Peace Education to be incorporated into the curriculum of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions; expose the youth to the rich cultural diversity of different ethnic and religious groups of Member States; carry out awareness raising and peace education activities through workshops on national reconciliation.

Conclusion

This paper has illustrated that, while Africa is currently grappling with multiple trans-national security threats, the growing threat of terrorism, its dynamics and continued mutations into different and multiple forms makes it one of the most disturbing security predicaments in the 21st century (Aning & Salihu, 2013). The involvement of the youth makes it even more disturbing and questions the efficacy of African education and training in shaping the character of the youth. At the same time, it thus exposes the weaknesses in state institutions and undermine the effectiveness of regional security frameworks. Although different causes of terrorism were highlighted, the aim of this paper has been to explore the concept of "jihad" from the perspective of the Qur'an and how the misunderstanding, misinterpretation and misapplication of the concept, particularly by militants or "jihadists" has contributed to driving terrorism in Africa. We argue that, majority of Muslims and non-Muslims alike have a limited understanding of the concept of "jihad" and as a consequence, while the former exploit it to engage in terrorist acts, the latter castigate Islamic religion as a variant that is more susceptible to violence. In actual fact, the acts of terror may not necessarily be motivated by only religious imperatives, but also underpinned by political considerations. This makes it complex and difficult to address. It is in this regard, that an all-inclusive educational approach, including religious, moral, secular and peace education, are needed to comprehensively confront the threat.

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