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Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and ISIS: A Study on the Life Cycle of Terrorist Organizations

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Al QAEDA, BOKO HARAM, AND ISIS: A STUDY OF THE LIFE CYCLE OF TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

by Taylor Dedic

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ABSTRACT

TAYLOR DEDIC: Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and ISIS: A Study of the Life Cycle of Terrorist
Organizations
(Under the direction of Ashleen Williams)

This paper discusses the internal activities of terrorist organizations during their

different periods of high and low activity. The research in this paper focuses on the case studies

of three organizations, al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and ISIS, and analyzes the shifts in their

activities throughout their life cycles. By focusing on terrorist organizations rooted in *Salafi-

Jihadism*, this paper aims to point out the importance of analyzing these organizations through

the context of their own ideology. Due to their ideology, these groups view their fight to be

centuries-long, thus they do not view a period of reduced activity as their defeat. By

understanding the life cycle of terrorist organizations and the trends that correspond with the

different stages of the cycle, researchers will be better able to assess how to combat these

groups.

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1- Introduction

Introduction

In April of 2018, Nigeria's Chief of Army Staff, Tukur Buratai declared to the press that there was "no doubt Boko Haram terrorists have been defeated."[1] And yet, on July 29, 2019, Boko Haram attacked a burial ceremony in the Nganzi district leaving 65 people dead.[2] How is it that a supposedly defeated organization can launch a high death toll attack a year later? Why is it that when states and other external actors claim that a terrorist organization is defeated, the organization continues to exist and commit attacks? Terrorists remaining active long after officials have declared their defeat is not isolated to just Boko Haram. For instance, U.S. military officials have claimed that "we have decimated al Qaeda," since the U.S. began its military campaign in Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks.[3] Even though al Qaeda may have seemed decimated in Afghanistan after the U.S. military efforts, the group became stronger and more active than ever between 2007 and 2015, and remain active today. On March 22, 2019, the White House declared that ISIS "has been 100% defeated"; however, in August 2019, the Pentagon released a report that ISIS was resurging in Syria.[4]

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[1] "US Urges Nigeria to Change Tactics Against Boko Haram." News24, April 18, 2018. https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/us-urges-nigeria-to-change-tactics-against-boko-haram-20180418.
[2] Busari, Stephanie, Isaac Abrak, Sophie Sherry, and Braden Goyette. "Suspected Boko Haram Attack on a Funeral Leaves 65 Dead in Nigeria, Official Says." CNN. Cable News Network, July 29, 2019. https://www.cnn.com/2019/07/28/africa/boko-haram-attack-nigeria/index.html.
[3] Morgan, Wesley. "Whatever Happened to Al Qaeda in Afghanistan?" Politico, August 15, 2018. https://www.politico.com/story/2018/08/15/al-qaeda-afghanistan-terrorism-777511.
[4] Browne, Ryan. "Pentagon Report Says ISIS Is 'Re-Surging in Syria' Following Trump's Troop Withdrawal." CNN. Cable News Network, August 8, 2019. https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/06/politics/pentagon-report-isis-syria/index.html.

The difficulty in determining the defeat of a terrorist organization comes from the life cycle of these organizations. Terrorist organizations often cycle between periods of high activity and growth and periods of defeat and shrinkage. The complexity of terrorist organizations' life cycles and activities makes them incredibly difficult to predict and defeat. As such, terrorism continues to top the threat list in the Worldwide Threat Assessment published by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence each year.[5] The activities of groups rooted in Sunni Extremism are of particular note with Sunni Extremist Groups, ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVEs) making up four of the seven groups listed under terrorism in the 2019 Worldwide Threat Assessment.[6] The 2019 Threat Assessment states that despite setbacks in recent years, "prominent jihadist ideologues and media platforms continue to call for and justify efforts to attack the US homeland," and that these groups are expanding their networks and abilities.[7]

One of the reasons these groups continue to pose a threat is the different beliefs and mindsets of these extremist Islamic organizations. Many of these extremist Sunni terrorist organizations are rooted in *Salafi-Jihadism*. According to Shiraz Maher, the author of *Salafi-Jihadism: The History of an Idea*, practitioners of *Salafism* seek "to revive the practices of the first three generations of Islam," who are considered to represent the golden age of orthodox Islam.[8] Maher states that there are different *Salafi* movements and their distinctions are based upon how they approach political power. For *Salafi-Jihadists*, the state is seen as "a heretical

[5] "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community," Office of the Director of National Intelligence https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf.
[6] "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community," Office of the Director of National Intelligence https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf.
[7] "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community," Office of the Director of National Intelligence https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf.
[8] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an idea*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

and artificial unit," that needs to be overhauled and reordered.[9] As such, terrorist organizations that are rooted in *Salafi-Jihadism* are more anti-Western, violent, and extremist that other sects and organizations. This greater violence is shown when *Salafi-Jihadist* groups, like al Qaeda use references to scripture to justify and explain their acts of violence.[10] Additionally, these organizations view conflict and success in a different sense than Western societies and groups, so their life cycle is different compared to other terrorist organizations. For this reason, this thesis aims to move away from traditional views on terrorist's behavior to examine the life cycle of terrorist organizations with *Salafi-Jihadist* ideologies.

Methodology

This thesis seeks to answer the research question of how do the internal actions of a terrorist organization change throughout their life cycle and how this impacts their survivability. The term life cycle of a terrorist organization refers to the group's shift between periods of low and high activity throughout its existence. The methodology for this research is qualitative. I will look at three terrorist organizations as case studies and examine three categories of internal actions.

The case studies are al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and the Islamic State (ISIS). These case studies were chosen for several reasons. First, all of these organizations are designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO) by the United States Department of State. The U.S. State Department designated al Qaeda as an FTO in 1999, Boko Haram in November 2013, and ISIS was designated an FTO while it was still AQI in 2004.[11] Second, these organizations all have ideologies based on *Salafi-Jihadism*. According to Maher, al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and ISIS

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[9] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an id*ea. Oxford University Press, 2016.
[10] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an id*ea. Oxford University Press, 2016.
[11] Bureau of Counterterrorism. (n.d.). Foreign Terrorist Organizations - United States Department of State. Retrieved from https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/.

are *Salafi-Jihadis*.[12] By focusing on terrorist organizations with the same Islamic ideology, we minimize the chance of ideology having an impact on each group's survivability. Finally, each of these groups represents a different length of existence, with al Qaeda representing a long presence, Boko Haram representing a medium presence, and ISIS representing a short presence. The variance in each of the group's lifespans will help give a more well-rounded view of the organizations' life cycle and survivability.

Organization	Al Qaeda	Boko Haram	ISIS
FTO Designation	10/8/1999	11/14/2013	12/172004
Ideology	*Salafi-Jihadism*	*Salafi-Jihadism*	*Salafi-Jihadism*
Presence	Long (1988-present)	Medium (2001-present)	Short (2013-present)

Figure 1: Case Study Criteria

For each of the case studies, I will look at three categories, recruitment methods, tactics, and community outreach, to understand the internal actions of the organizations. I selected these categories due to their impact on a terrorist group's existence. First, carrying out terrorist attacks is an integral part of an organization being classified as a terrorist organization, so tactics are one of the most important internal activities of a terrorist group. Next, recruitment shows whether the group is expanding or decreasing. Recruiting new members is how an organization grows and expands; therefore, recruitment methods are an important internal action. Finally, community outreach indicates whether the group has plentiful resources as well as impacts the popular support of the group, so it is the third category of internal actions. Data on these categories will come from a multitude of sources including news and journal articles, documents from the organizations themselves, and accounts from current and former members.

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[12] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an idea*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Additionally, I will use the Global Terrorism Database's statistics on attacks to aid in the tactics category. Secondary sources will be used in two ways. First, they will be used to provide background information and establish a basis for what has been studied on these organizations before. Secondly, I will be using the in-person interviews collected by other researchers to enhance my primary sources as I could not interview members of terrorist organizations myself. By using a mixture of sources from the organizations themselves and accounts of current and former members, I will better be able to understand the group's goals and motivations behind their actions. Mixing the information from the group with data from other sources, like the GTD and news articles, I can assess if what the groups are saying is accurate as well as the effects of their actions.

To answer the research question of how do the internal actions of terrorist organizations impact their ability to survive through periods of low and high activity we must first establish what constitutes low and high activity. In general, a period of high activity will reference the period(s) when the organization is in an offensive mode and experiences growth, while low activity will reference the period(s) the organization is on the defensive and shrinking. Using historical background information from secondary sources, I will establish the time periods for each group. These secondary sources include books and journal articles focused on the history of the groups as well as CNN's "Fast Facts" articles. These sources give a good overview of the group's existence and show the different periods throughout the group's history. I will then analyze the data collected on the three internal action categories to see the intensity of each of the categories. The intensity level is dependent on which category. For instance, with tactics, the greater the number and scale of attacks, the greater the intensity. For recruitment, the intensity is based on how focused the group is on recruiting and how many people it is

recruiting. Finally, for community outreach, the intensity is determined by if the organization is doing community outreach and how much resources the organization is putting into it. I will use the intensity of each of the three categories to determine whether each historical period was a period of high or low activity for the group.

To answer the question of how their internal activities impact a terrorist organization's survivability, I will analyze the changes in internal actions during the different periods for each group. I will then analyze the shifts in all of the case studies together to see if there are any commonalities between the groups.

Review of the Literature

This review of the literature will present a broad overview of the common themes throughout the sources on terrorist organizations. This review will point out the gaps in the literature that shows the need to examine terrorist organizations as their own influence rather than as reactionary groups to the Western world. Literature that is specific to each individual group's history and activities will be further presented in the following chapters. While existing literature covers themes such as why terrorist organizations rise, how they recruit, and how Western powers can defeat them, the majority of this literature is presented in a euro-centric manner. By a euro-centric manner, I mean two things. First, a lot of the literature studies these groups as reactionary to the Western world which takes away the agency of the organizations. Second, much of the literature uses Western definitions for measurements like the success and defeat of these groups. The ideologies of these organizations measure success in a significantly different manner, which will be discussed in this section, compared to traditional Western thinking. As a lot of the existing literature uses a euro-centric mindset to analyze these terrorist organizations, they present solutions to defeating these organizations that will only defeat them

in the western sense of the word. This thesis seeks to supplement the existing research by examining the shifts in a terrorist organization's internal actions through the lens of their own ideology rather than that of the Western world. By examining these organizations as groups with their own agency, we will be able to better understand why their life cycle is the way it is and how the shifts in internal actions they make impact their ability to survive.

I will present the differences in ideology and how they relate to the existence of terrorist organizations. I will then present the common themes in which these terrorist organizations are examined, such as why they form, their recruitment cycle, and how to defeat them. In each of these sections, I will point out the gaps that exist from the current literature. Finally, I will discuss how I aim to supplement the current literature on this topic.

The different ideology of these organizations leads them to have different values and mindsets compared to Western cultures. Maher writes that *Salafi-Jihadists* view the concept of "the modern nation-state is a heterodox affront to Islam whereby temporal legislation usurps God's sovereignty".[13] The values of a group rooted in *Salafi-Jihadism* are completely different than traditional, Western mindsets as they disagree with the concept of the state, the basis of Western civilization. *Salafi-Jihads* believe in the "absolute reconstruction of either international order or the nation-state".[14] Maher states that ISIS not only rejects the international system, but the group also enacts "policies that defy even civilizational standards".[15] The values of a civilization rooted in *Salafi-Jihadism* is extremely different compared to traditional Western civilizations, such as the United States; therefore, applying a eurocentric mindset when researching these organizations will not accurately assess the

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[13] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an idea*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
[14] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an idea*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
[15] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an idea*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

terrorist groups and their actions. This difference in ideology not only applies to their views on civilization. Brian Michael Jenkins states in his report "Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade: Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?" that *Salafi-Jihadi*-based terrorist organizations see conflict in "completely different terms from its Western foes".[16] He explains that these groups view fighting to be a mandatory, religious obligation that began centuries ago and will last beyond their lives, thus showing that these organizations have a very different idea of success and failure.[17] As the group believes this fight will last long beyond their years, they do not view "defeat" in the same way as Western powers do, rather their fight will continue for years despite momentary setbacks. As these organizations have very different ideas on what success and failure are, the common Eurocentric viewpoint is inadequate for studying the conflicts that these organizations are involved in.

One common theme of research on terrorist organizations is why and how these organizations develop. Most of this research seeks to examine the conditions that led to the rise of these groups to prevent the creation of future terrorist organizations. However, the rise of terrorist organizations in the existing literature is often described in terms of a country's conditions and actions rather than the motivations and actions of the organization. For instance, Daniel Egiegba Agbiboa writes in his paper "Why Boko Haram Exists: The Relative Deprivation Perspective" that the socioeconomic status in Northern Nigeria caused the rise of Boko Haram. Agbiboa cited the "unemployment and chronic poverty [that] are rife," in Nigeria as the root causes of Boko Haram's existence.[18] While the socio-economic conditions

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[16] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.
[17] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.
[18] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.

in Nigeria played a role in the group's rise to popularity, this takes away the group's agency. The religious ideology of the organization would be against the country's secular government in any socio-economic conditions, so claiming those conditions as the cause of the group fails to capture the whole picture. The focus on the country's conditions rather than the actions and beliefs of the terrorist organization's leaders is present in a lot of the existing literature. For example, the "Motivations and Empty Promises" report by Mercy Corps cites the lack of resources provided by the Nigerian government as the driver for Boko Haram.[19] This once again only focuses on the external conditions that lead to the emergence of terrorist organizations rather than the internal conditions of the organizations themselves. Additionally, Rohan Gunaratna cites the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to be the root causes of al Qaeda's existence.[20] While these external factors may provide a catalyst for the growth of the terrorist organizations, they are not the sole reason these groups emerge. The existing literature cites external factors, like a country's socioeconomic status or conflict, as the reason for the emergence of terrorist organizations. By doing this, it implies that terrorist organizations emerge as a reaction to Western actions, rather than for their own ideological motivations and aims.

Another theme that is common when researching terrorist organizations is how they recruit. While all terrorist organizations use their own recruitment tactics, they tend to follow a recruitment cycle as described by Mia Bloom in "Constructing Expertise: Terrorist Recruitment and "Talent Spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism". Bloom suggests that depending on what part of the terrorist life cycle that the

[19] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).
[20] Gunaratna, Rohan. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*. Columbia University Press, 2002.

organization is in, their recruitment tactics alter. She states that over time terrorist organizations "engage in "talent spotting" and eventually recruit more educated and professional individuals with specific expertise".[21] The targeting of experts plays an important role in the terrorist organization's success as the organization will "begin to function as service providers to their constituencies," and thus will have a need for specialized members like nurses and engineers.[22] This "talent spotting" is a stark contrast to when terrorist organizations are just starting, or are dying off, when they accept recruits from anywhere due to the need of casting "as wide a net as possible" to fill the ranks.[23] As terrorist organizations progress or regress, their recruitment focus shifts. For instance, Bloom states that after a defeat, the organization will open up recruitment to all levels of expertise to "replace lost operatives but also to regain lost momentum and…lost territory".[24] This concept of a recruitment cycle in which organizations target experts when gaining momentum and accept anyone during times of hardship applies to all of the terrorist organizations examined in this thesis. This idea that terrorist organizations shift their recruitment tactics based on where they are in the life cycle emphasizes the argument that terrorist organizations alter their internal actions to impact their survival. Bloom's research shows the agency of these organizations in making decisions regarding recruitment; however, she solely examined the recruitment cycle rather than the overall life cycle of these groups. In this thesis, recruitment trends will be combined with other internal actions to examine the life cycle as a whole.

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[21] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[22] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[23] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[24] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

The final common theme I will examine that is present in a large portion of research on terrorism, especially in counterterrorism research, is the measure of success and failure of terrorist organizations. This research seeks to understand how to defeat these organizations, but much of the existing literature uses a euro-centric understanding of structures to determine how to defeat a terrorist organization. For instance, in the book *Boko Haram: The History of an African Jihadist Movement*, Thurston claims that to defeat the group, there needs to be a focus on the political bargaining process with the group.[25] He believes that creating fair trials and developing rules for how former members will be reintegrated into society are important steps to defeating the group.[26] While these ideas work in the parameters of Western civilization, it ignores the founding ideology of the organization. The name Boko Haram means "western civilization is forbidden," as the group opposes all structures of Western culture including "multi-party democracy in an overwhelmingly Islamic country like Nigeria".[27] The fact that this organization is rooted in the ideology that is against Western political systems and believes those systems are corrupt suggests that the group is likely not to accept the political bargaining process suggested by Thurston. In the book *Salafi-Jihadism: The History of an Idea*, Maher states that Al Qaeda believes that "armed and violent rebellion against them is an individual duty on every Muslim," in reference to secular governments and their supporters.[28] As these terrorist organizations view it as their duty to fight against their respective enemies, they are unlikely to cooperate with the political processes of those states as they are supposedly defeated. In fact, as these groups view their struggle to be a centuries-

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[25] Thurston, Alexander. *Boko Haram: the History of an African Jihadist Movement*. Vol. 65. Princeton University Press, 2017.
[26] Thurston, Alexander. *Boko Haram: the History of an African Jihadist Movement*. Vol. 65. Princeton University Press, 2017.
[27] Thurston, Alexander. *Boko Haram: the History of an African Jihadist Movement*. Vol. 65. Princeton University Press, 2017.
[28] Maher, Shiraz. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an idea*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

long fight, they do not have the same understanding of the concept of defeat as Western states do. As such, applying a euro-centric mindset when proposing solutions to counter these terrorist organizations is inadequate for finding plausible solutions for defeating them.

While existing literature examines many facets of terrorist organizations, including why they exist, how they operate, and how to defeat them, the common euro-centric viewpoint is insufficient for understanding these organizations. Terrorist organizations that are rooted in *Salafi-Jihadism*, an ideology focused on reordering the current international system, do not view their fight in the same way as Western thought processes do. Thus, it is imperative to add to the existing literature by examining the behavior and actions of these organizations as groups with their own agency rather than as a reaction to the Western world.

The following three chapters will examine the aforementioned themes in more detail as they apply to the three specific terrorist organizations. Chapter two will cover the al Qaeda case study, chapter three will examine the Boko Haram case study, and chapter four will focus on ISIS case study. Each of these three chapters will begin with a brief overview and history of the organization, and then it will establish the periods of high and low activity. Then there will be a detailed look at the organization's recruitment methods, tactics, and community outreach. Additional review of existing literature will be throughout these chapters where it fits. Finally, each chapter will look at how these factors have shifted throughout the various patterns and what this means. The fifth and final chapter will bring the analysis of the three case studies together and will provide an outlook on what this research means for the approach to combatting terrorism.

Chapter 2- Al Qaeda Case Study

Historical Overview

On September 11, 2001, 19 men hijacked four airplanes to carry out the largest terrorist attack on the United States.[29] These attacks, which led to the deaths of nearly 3,000 people, were orchestrated and financed by the leader of al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden.[30] These attacks are perhaps the most known attacks by al Qaeda, and while the group carried out a few similar attacks during that time period, its attacks today are very different from the ones on 9/11. For instance, on January 20, 2019, Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen, an al Qaeda affiliate in the Sahara region, attacked UN Peacekeepers in a village in Northern Mali.[31] This attack led to the death of 10 peacekeepers as they thwarted and repelled the attack.[32] The spontaneity and small-scale of this attack are much more indicative of modern-day al Qaeda attacks compared to the organized, large-scale 9/11 attacks.

Despite rising to publicity in the early 2000s, al Qaeda is a terrorist organization that was formally established in 1988 in Peshawar, Pakistan. [33] The organization's name is Qaedat

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[29] History.com Editors. "September 11 Attacks." HISTORY. A&E Television Networks, February 10, 2010. https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/9-11-attacks.
[30] History.com Editors. "September 11 Attacks." HISTORY. A&E Television Networks, February 10, 2010. https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/9-11-attacks.
[31] "Al Qaeda: Chad Peacekeepers' Murder Backlash for Renewed Ties with Israel." The Jerusalem Post, January 20, 2019. https://www.jpost.com/International/Ten-UN-peacekeepers-killed-in-attack-in-northern-Mali-578079.
[32] "Al Qaeda: Chad Peacekeepers' Murder Backlash for Renewed Ties with Israel." The Jerusalem Post, January 20, 2019. https://www.jpost.com/International/Ten-UN-peacekeepers-killed-in-attack-in-northern-Mali-578079.
[33] Jenkins, Brian Michael. Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?, RAND Corporation, The, 2012. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/olemiss/detail.action?docID=876741.

al-Jihad, meaning "the Base of Jihad", commonly referred to as al Qaeda.[34] Al Qaeda was created in response to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.[35] The organization formed as a response to the post-colonial turmoil occurring in the Arab region; however, its cause evolved overtime to focus on the far enemy, the Western supporters of the local regimes. [36] Though the group formed in response to the Soviet Union's invasion, its disdain for Western-style governments extended just this one invasion. The organization's goal is not specific to a particular country, rather they aim to counter the "Western hegemony in Muslim lands," which is why the group operates throughout numerous countries rather than one.[37] Al Qaeda's former leader, Osama Bin Laden issued a fatwa against the United States in 1996, and another in 1998 that included Israel and other US allies as well.[38] These fatwas were a "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," and emphasize al Qaeda's focus on removing Western powers from Muslim lands.[39]

While the organization was founded in Pakistan, it operates in many different countries such as Yemen, Algeria, and Somalia. The group operated out of Pakistan until 1996 when it shifted its base to Afghanistan.[40] After the U.S. entered Afghanistan, the group shifted back to Pakistan and grew cells in other countries.[41] As of 2012, al Qaeda had autonomous cells in

[34] Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud. *Understanding Al Qaeda: Changing War and Global Politics*. Pluto, 2011.
[35] Bajoria, Jayshree, and Greg Bruno. "Al-Qaeda (A.k.a. Al-Qaida, Al-Qa'ida)." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, June 6, 2012. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-qaeda-aka-al-qaida-al-qaida.
[36] Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud. *Understanding Al Qaeda: Changing War and Global Politics*. Pluto, 2011.
[37] Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud. *Understanding Al Qaeda: Changing War and Global Politics*. Pluto, 2011.
[38] History.com Editors. "Al Qaeda." History. A&E Television Networks, December 4, 2018. https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/al-qaeda.
[39] History.com Editors. "Al Qaeda." History. A&E Television Networks, December 4, 2018. https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/al-qaeda.
[40] Bajoria, Jayshree, and Greg Bruno. "Al-Qaeda (A.k.a. Al-Qaida, Al-Qa'ida)." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, June 6, 2012. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-qaeda-aka-al-qaida-al-qaida.
[41] Bajoria, Jayshree, and Greg Bruno. "Al-Qaeda (A.k.a. Al-Qaida, Al-Qa'ida)." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, June 6, 2012. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-qaeda-aka-al-qaida-al-qaida.

over 100 countries including the U.S., United Kingdom, France, and other countries.[42] In addition to these cells, al Qaeda has partner organizations, also referred to as franchise organizations, that operate in other regions but are a part of the overarching organization. Examples of these organizations include al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, based in Algeria, and al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, based in Yemen.[43] Overall, al Qaeda has increasingly expanded its reach from starting in Pakistan to having cells and partner organizations all over the globe.

Periods of High and Low Activity

Since its founding in 1988, al Qaeda has experienced several periods of both low and high activity. Generally speaking, al Qaeda's activities fall into five periods of low and high activity. From its founding in 1988 to 1995, al Qaeda experienced a period of low activity as they were organizing and planning. This first period of low activity can be characterized by strategizing by the core group and very few attacks. From 1996 to 2003, al Qaeda was in a period of high activity as they began their transnational campaign. During this period, the group's actions were large-scale attacks that were organized by the core leaders. From 2003 to 2006, the group went into another period of low activity. While the group remained active, the organization was on the defensive as the U.S. led an offensive against the organization. During this period, the group began to recruit franchises, carried out the last of the attacks by the core group, and had an overall low number of attacks. Next, from 2007 to 2015, the organization entered a high activity period as its regional affiliates experienced growth and high activity. This period is characterized by franchise-focused community outreach and a very high number

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[42] Bajoria, Jayshree, and Greg Bruno. "Al-Qaeda (A.k.a. Al-Qaida, Al-Qa'ida)." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, June 6, 2012. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-qaeda-aka-al-qaida-al-qaida.
[43] Bajoria, Jayshree, and Greg Bruno. "Al-Qaeda (A.k.a. Al-Qaida, Al-Qa'ida)." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, June 6, 2012. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-qaeda-aka-al-qaida-al-qaida.

of attacks carried out. Finally, from 2016 to present the group has been in a period of low activity. During this time, the group remains franchise-driven, but the number of attacks has significantly dropped as some franchises have died out. Overall, al Qaeda has shifted its recruitment methods, attack tactics, and community outreach throughout its five periods of low and high activity.

Recruitment Methods

Al Qaeda's recruitment tactics fall under two major categories, recruiting individuals for membership and recruiting franchise organizations. Recruiting for membership is when the organization recruits a person to join the organization. This occurs at both the core al Qaeda organization and the franchise organization level. The core al Qaeda organization refers to the leaders and members of the original al Qaeda organization rather than one of the affiliate or franchise organizations. In contrast, recruiting franchise organizations is when the core organization recruits another terrorist group, that can be based anywhere in the world, to pledge its support for al Qaeda's cause and to join the ranks of the al Qaeda organization. While the members of that local group become part of al Qaeda worldwide, they are primarily a part of their local organization rather than the core al Qaeda organization. The organization of the franchise system will primarily be discussed under community outreach; however, it is important to note the strategy of recruiting these organizations changed over time. Al Qaeda's recruitment methods have shifted from centralized recruitment of individuals at the core level to decentralized, franchise-directed recruitment.
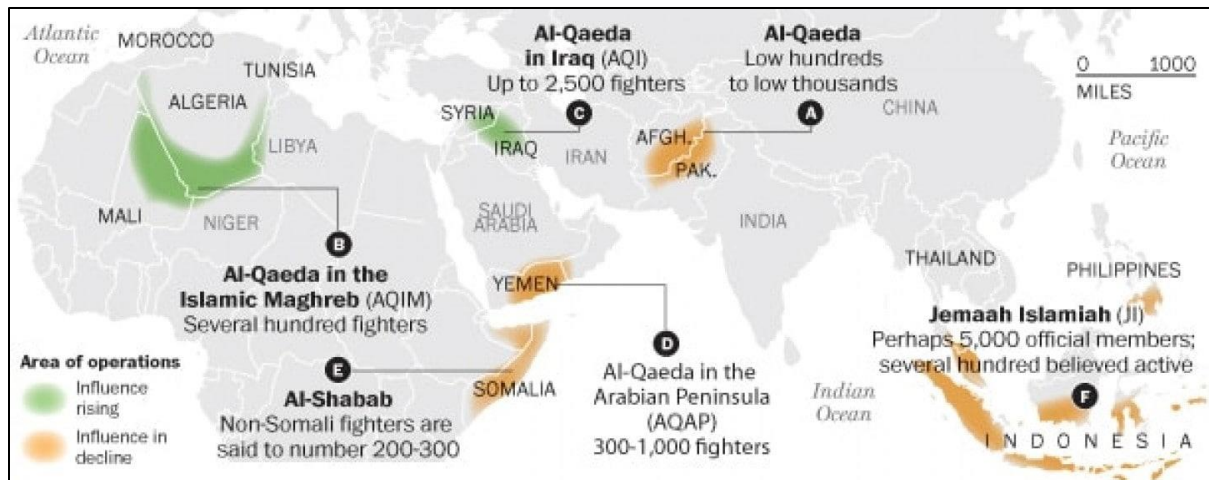
Atlantic Ocean · MOROCCO · TUNISIA · ALGERIA · LIBYA · MALI · NIGER

Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)
Up to 2,500 fighters

SYRIA · IRAQ · IRAN

Al-Qaeda
Low hundreds to low thousands

AFGH. · PAK. · CHINA · INDIA

0   1000 MILES

Pacific Ocean

C · **A**

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)
Several hundred fighters

B

YEMEN

THAILAND · PHILIPPINES

Jemaah Islamiah (JI)
Perhaps 5,000 official members; several hundred believed active

Area of operations
Influence rising
Influence in decline

E

SOMALIA

Al-Shabab
Non-Somali fighters are said to number 200-300

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)
300-1,000 fighters

D

Indian Ocean

F

INDONESIA

Figure 2: Map of Al Qaeda Affiliates from Washington Post[44]

Overall, al Qaeda uses a mix of indoctrination, talent spotting, recruitment, and selection in their recruitment cycle.[45] During the first step of recruitment, the group disseminates a "wide range of messages," to gain the attention of potential recruits; these messages often concentrate on local and international issues (social, political, or economic) and offer a simple, violent solution.[46] The organization uses a variety of media types as recruitment tools including hip hop videos and video games.[47] Plus, the group publishes a magazine called *Inspire* four times a year, and this magazine often includes articles on things including destroying buildings, best stances when using an AK-47, making bombs in your mom's kitchen, and what to expect in jihad.[48] Once these videos, games, and publications have begun the radicalization process, recruitment shifts to other internet mediums like forums and blogs to intensify the person's

[44] Fisher, Max. "Al-Qaeda's World: A Fascinating Map of the Group's Shifting Global Network." The Washington Post. WP Company, February 4, 2013. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/02/04/al-qaedas-world-a-fascinating-map-of-the-groups-shifting-global-network/.

[45] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[46] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[47] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[48] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

extremist thoughts.[49] Some of the most known extremist forums are the al-Mojahden Electronic Network, which was the first to launch a Facebook page, and the Shumukh al-Islam forum, which has Arabic, English, and German sections.[50] Eventually, after being immersed with the videos and forums, some people will accept the duty to act and join the organization's efforts.[51]

As stated above, al Qaeda uses a variety of recruitment methods that they tailor based on what group they are targeting. For instance, to recruit youths that feel like outcasts of society, the organization would use methods such as inciting speeches, having jihadi warriors have conversations with individuals, and jihadi publications with images of smiling martyrs.[52] In contrast, al Qaeda would use talent spotters to pick out recruits from mosques based on "their perceived level of commitment to the Islamist cause, and their skill sets and psychological make-up".[53] Children are also common targets of indoctrination. For instance, a cartoon movie called "al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula" aims to boost recruitment while providing an alternative to 'the poison that is broadcast by other TV channels to our children".[54] Additionally, the group uses schools to transmit the group's ideologies and provide training for future recruits.[55] The organization also targets those with criminal records and outcasts as

[49] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[50] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[51] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[52] "Al-Qaeda Recruitment Methods Revealed." Clarion Project, February 28, 2018. https://clarionproject.org/al-qaeda-recruitment-methods-revealed/.

[53] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[54] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[55] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

they viewed them as easy targets and "especially trainable as suicide bombers".[56] Some of al Qaeda's franchises even attempt to recruit Americans; for instance, in December 2009, five middle-class American men were arrested in Sargodha, Pakistan for attempting to join and fund the organization.[57] Overall, al Qaeda's recruitment methods are based upon what type of person they are recruiting.

Al Qaeda's recruitment methods and targets have changed over time. For instance, during the first two periods of the organization's existence, recruitment efforts were determined by the core al Qaeda leadership. During these periods, al Qaeda used training camps, located throughout Afghanistan and Sudan, to train their members.[58] These training camps also allowed members to have shared experiences which resulted in a cohesive bond between the core of Al Qaeda and its global affiliates.[59] During these periods, the group was able to provide long-term training and expertise to its members.[60] These training camps created skilled members of the organization and forged bonds between the members. The results of the training camps emphasize how when individual recruitment was coordinated by the core group, the focus was on gaining quality, well trained, and loyal members to the organization and its cause. After the 9/11 attacks, the United States invaded Afghanistan to fight against the group, which led to the organization disposing of its training camps within Afghanistan.[61] Though it

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[56] "Al-Qaeda Recruitment Methods Revealed." Clarion Project, February 28, 2018. https://clarionproject.org/al-qaeda-recruitment-methods-revealed/.

[57] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[58] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[59] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[60] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[61] Jenkins, Brian Michael. Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade: Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?, RAND Corporation, The, 2012. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/olemiss/detail.action?docID=876741.

is important to note that the group had expected this reaction and had been prepared to rapidly disband the training camps and the units located within Afghanistan.[62] This preparedness demonstrates the planning and organization that the core al Qaeda group did during the early periods. The period of 2003-2006 marks the shift from centrally directed recruitment to franchise-directed recruitment.

During the 2007-2015 and the 2016-present periods of existence, al Qaeda's recruitment shifted toward the core recruiting franchises and the franchises directing the recruitment of individuals. During the 2007-2015 period, al Qaeda shifted into a full-fledged "franchise operation" with local affiliates taking over most of the training, thus leading to local concerns beginning to trump the global focus.[63] By this time, al Qaeda became stuck in the expansion step rather than the consolidation step of the recruitment cycle preventing it from focusing on specialization and expertise of recruits.[64] As the group focused on expanding its international reach with new franchises, there was little focus on trained and skilled recruits. Each franchise leader had their own opinion on the best recruitment methods; therefore, during this time al Qaeda's recruitment became very inconsistent. Take for example the difference in tactics of Younis al Maurentani, a senior operations man in Europe, and the head of al Qaeda in Libya. Younis al Maurentani proposed in a letter that recruits should take jobs with companies transporting sensitive materials, like gasoline, in the West and that recruits should attend university in the West to study subjects like physics and chemistry to help the group in the

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[62] Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud. *Understanding Al Qaeda: Changing War and Global Politics*. Pluto, 2011.

[63] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[64] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

future.[65] In contrast, the head of al Qaeda in Libya wrote on March 29, 2010, that speeches and publications should focus on reaching the "Muslim common people" rather than the elites as the common people "act according to their emotions," and are more likely to quickly respond to the group's recruitment.[66] He added that "a photograph which is attached to an inspiring song" will motivate a large number of the common people into doing things like giving money to the organization or joining the organization.[67] Recruiting common people versus recruiting people eligible to obtain higher education and specific jobs in Western countries are contrasting recruitment methods, thus showing how recruitment methods have shifted after becoming a franchise-dominated operation. The different recruitment methods resulted in some of the franchises having more capable recruits than others, thus resulting in inconsistency in the quality of attacks and activities of each group. The inconsistency in recruitment methods by the franchise organizations shows the shift from centrally organized recruitment to franchise driven recruitment.

Another way recruitment methods have shifted during the later periods of existence, is through the use of social media. During the early periods, the core al Qaeda was slow to shift to more online and social media-driven recruitment.[68] In contrast, the organization now has media specialists that produce recruitment and fundraising videos.[69] Hip hop videos are a popular call to arms. For instance, the song 'Dirty Kuffar' by Sheikh Terra, with Kuffar

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[65] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[66] "Al-Qaeda Recruitment Methods Revealed." Clarion Project, February 28, 2018. https://clarionproject.org/al-qaeda-recruitment-methods-revealed/.

[67] "Al-Qaeda Recruitment Methods Revealed." Clarion Project, February 28, 2018. https://clarionproject.org/al-qaeda-recruitment-methods-revealed/.

[68] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[69] Byman, Daniel L. "Al Qaeda's M&A Strategy." Brookings, December 7, 2010. https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/al-qaedas-ma-strategy/.

meaning unbeliever, has been downloaded millions of times and has lyrics such as: "Peace to Hamas and the Hezbollah, OBL pulled me like a shiny star, Like the way we destroyed them two towers ha-ha".[70] Video games are also a popular tool with an example being a game called 'Night of Bush Capturing' created by the Global Islamic Media Front which has players "embark on their own individual jihad with the aim of hunting down former US President George W. Bush".[71] These examples show how al Qaeda has embraced social media-based recruitment methods. The shift to using online, media-driven recruitment emphasizes the overall shifts in al Qaeda's recruitment methods throughout the various periods of existence.

Al Qaeda's recruitment methods have gone from centrally directed and quality driven to franchise directed and inconsistent. During the early periods, al Qaeda used training camps to create bonds between the trained recruits. During the later periods, the recruitment of individuals became the responsibility of the franchise organizations. Franchise based recruitment methods have led to a wide variance in recruitment methods as local goals tend to trump the overarching al Qaeda goal. These variances are one of the reasons al Qaeda has once again entered into a period of low activity, as the fewer number of expert recruits along with the focus on local goals have reduced the overall quality of tactics by the organizations.

Tactics

In the beginning, al Qaeda focused on "centrally directed and supported strategic terrorist attacks".[72] These centrally-directed attacks in the early period of the group include the 9/11 attacks, the 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia, and Djerba, and the bombing of the

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[70] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[71] Dornbierer, Andrew. "How Al-Qaeda Recruits Online." The Diplomat, September 13, 2011. https://thediplomat.com/2011/09/how-al-qaeda-recruits-online/.

[72] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

American embassies in Africa.[73] Additionally, the 2005 bombings in London and the transatlantic plot in 2006 were planned by the core al Qaeda leaders.[74] Now, the organization focuses on "individual jihadism and do-it-yourself terrorism," which leads to less destructive but still dangerous attacks that are much harder to detect.[75] Despite having not carried out significant attacks since 2005, al Qaeda remains capable of mounting plausible threats.[76]
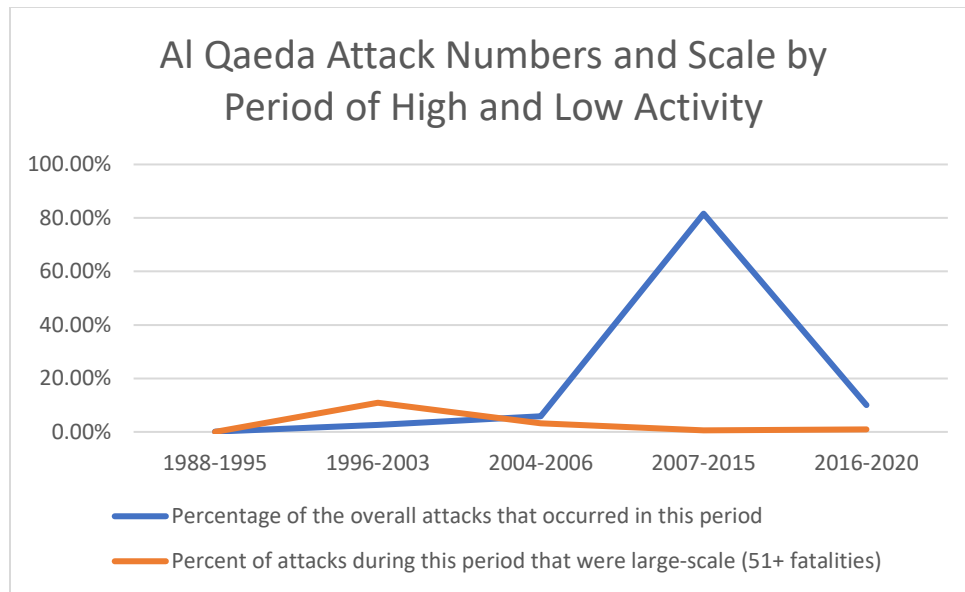
Figure 3

As shown by the Global Terrorism Database, the number of attacks committed by al Qaeda itself, drastically decreased after 2003. Overall, the core al Qaeda organization committed 94 attacks in its time.[77] There were only two attacks during the first period of low

[73] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.
[74] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.
[75] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.
[76] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.
[77] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

activity. These attacks occurred in Aden, Yemen in 1992 with only 3 fatalities.[78] During the

first period of high activity, 1996-2003, 48 attacks occurred. 19 of these attacks occurred in

2002 and 20 of them occurred in 2003.[79] The group carried out fewer attacks in 2004 and 2005

and dramatically decreased in attacks after 2006. Only 10 attacks have been carried out by core

al Qaeda since 2007. Despite this, there was a significant increase in attacks by all al Qaeda

affiliates between the years 2007-2014. This shows how the organization shifted from its core

group carrying out attacks to franchise groups carrying out attacks. The majority of attacks

committed by all al Qaeda affiliate groups occurred between 2007 and 2015. The groups who

committed the majority of these attacks are al Qaeda in Iraq, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

(AQAP), and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Al Qaeda in Iraq carried out 640

attacks, with the vast majority of them occurring between 2011 and 2013.[80] In 2013, the group

split from al Qaeda and became what is now ISIS. AQAP carried out over 1000 attacks with

the majority occurring between 2011 and 2015.[81] AQAP has carried out attacks since 2016,

but there have been significantly fewer attacks than during the period of high activity. Finally,

AQIM has committed the most attacks with over 1300. Their attacks took off in 2007 with

over 60 attacks that year and continued to grow until reaching its peak in 2014 with over 300

attacks.[82] While the group remains active, the group carried out less than 100 attacks in 2017

and 2018. The current period of low activity for the group started in 2016 when the total

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[78] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global
Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[79] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global
Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[80] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global
Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[81] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global
Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[82] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global
Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

number of attacks carried out by all al Qaeda affiliated groups was around 130 that year.[83] This total number continued to slow in 2017 and 2016 with both having less than 100 attacks total. The number of attacks helps indicate the level of activity during each period, and these attack numbers also indicate the shift in tactics the group faced when going from control by the core group to franchise driven.

The attacks committed by the core group of al Qaeda primarily centered on government (17%), military/police (25%), and transportation (24%) targets.[84] The targets during this later period, significantly depend on which franchise perpetrated the attacks. For instance, al Qaeda in Iraq primarily concentrated on civilians (45%) with only a small proportion of attacks targeting police (21%) and military (12%).[85] In contrast, the majority of AQAP's attacks were on military targets (56%) and only a few of the attacks were on private citizens (13%).[86] AQIM's attacks primarily targeted military (35%) and the other half was split fairly evenly between police (23%) and civilians (22%) targets.[87] The difference in target type between the various al Qaeda groups showcases how decentralized operations have become after al Qaeda shifted to a franchise organization. In the early periods, the core al Qaeda planned and executed attacks that targeted specific groups; however, as the organization has focused on franchises, each franchise plans and executes their own attacks, thus reflecting the difference in target types. The variance in target type emphasizes how local goals and tactics have become more

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[83] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[84] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[85] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[86] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[87] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

significant compared to the overarching al Qaeda goals and plans as the group has focused on its franchise organizations.

Since 9/11, al Qaeda has shifted its tactics. In the first two phases, the majority of attacks carried out by core al Qaeda were bombings/explosions. Bombings/explosions continued to be the main attack type through the 2007-2015 time period.[88] From 2014 to 2015, the number of bombing/explosion attacks dropped drastically from 120 to less than 60.[89] During the 2016-present period, armed assaults became tied with bombings/explosions as the most frequent attack type. One example of how tactics have shifted is the increase in the frequency of kidnapping. While the organization began committing kidnappings in the early 2000s, there was a large uptick in this tactic starting in 2008.[90] While the core al Qaeda organization carried out some kidnapping attacks, its main priority was on large-scale, destructive attacks. Thus, the uptick in kidnapping since 2008 shows a distinct difference in tactics between the core al Qaeda organization and the franchise groups. The group openly targets foreign nations for its kidnappings to gain media attention and pressure negotiators to agree to their demands in exchange for the release of victims.[91] These kidnappings continued to be a common attack type through 2016 with only 2 occurring in both 2017 and 2018.[92] The shift in attack type overtime emphasizes how franchise groups have taken control of planning attacks, and how they have different tactics compared to one another and core al Qaeda.

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[88] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[89] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[90] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[91] Shay, Shaul. Global Jihad and the Tactic of Terror Abduction: A Comprehensive Review of Islamic Terrorist Organizations. Sussex Academic Press, 2013.
[92] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

The majority of the organization's attacks had between zero and ten fatalities, with the largest percentage of these attacks occurring after 2003. Half of the organization's large-scale attacks with 100 or more fatalities, were carried out by the core al Qaeda in 2002 and before.[93] Out of the 27 attacks that had over 50 fatalities, 16 occurred after 2007, 5 occurred between 2003-2006, and 6 occurred in 2002 or prior.[94] This indicates that while the number of attacks has increased, the quality has decreased. This also emphasizes the difference in attack tactics by the core al Qaeda and the franchises. The core al Qaeda organization focused on planning a small number of high-impact and large-scale attacks. This quality over quantity mentality is seen in the fatality statistics. In contrast, the franchise organizations have focused on quantity over quality, meaning they have planned and carried out more attacks on much smaller scales. Overall, al Qaeda focused on large-scale attacks during the first periods of its life and as it has transformed into a franchise system, it has focused on small-scale attacks.

Throughout its 5 periods of existence, al Qaeda's tactics have shifted greatly. During the first period of low activity, there were only 2 attacks with a small number of fatalities carried out by the core group. During the period of high activity from 1996-2003, the core group carried out a high number of attacks with most being large-scale attacks. During the group's next period of low activity from 2004-2006, the group's numbers of attacks increased as the core group began recruiting franchises, but the scale and targets of the attacks began to shift. During the high period of activity between 2007 and 2015, the number of attacks skyrocketed as franchise organizations took off. During this time the type, target, and scale of attacks depended on the franchise organization, thus showing how local causes began

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[93] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[94] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

outweighing al Qaeda's global cause. Finally, in the current period of low activity, the number of attacks committed by all al Qaeda groups has significantly decreased. Overall, al Qaeda's tactics have shifted from a small number of large-scale attacks organized by the core group to small-scale attacks highly dependent on the franchise organization that carries them out.

Community Outreach

The primary community outreach al Qaeda does is by building and helping franchise groups. During the first periods of the group's existence, 1988-2003, the group did not focus on community outreach and franchise building, rather they concentrated efforts on planning their centralized attacks. During the low activity period of 2003-2006, the group began seeking out local groups in other areas to pledge allegiance to al Qaeda's cause. By the high activity period of 2007-2015, al Qaeda's operations centered around this franchise system. These so-called franchises are localized groups who receive resources like training, weapons, and money from core al Qaeda in return for fighting for al Qaeda's cause.

Al Qaeda's tactics have been characterized as absorbing "regional jihadist start-ups, and [convincing] them that their struggle is a component of al Qaeda's sweeping international agenda".[95] Al Qaeda supports the local group's struggles while it also pursues its global war against the United States and allies.[96] These new franchises serve as a confirmation of their mission, to overthrow Westerners and establish an Islamic government across the world, and as a means of extending their influence.[97] The relationship of these affiliate groups is symbiotic, as al Qaeda provides these organizations with support and the affiliates help the

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[95] Byman, Daniel L. "Al Qaeda's M&A Strategy." Brookings, December 7, 2010.
https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/al-qaedas-ma-strategy/.
[96] Byman, Daniel L. "Al Qaeda's M&A Strategy." Brookings, December 7, 2010.
https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/al-qaedas-ma-strategy/.
[97] Byman, Daniel L. "Al Qaeda's M&A Strategy." Brookings, December 7, 2010.
https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/al-qaedas-ma-strategy/.

group "radicalize and recruit distant recruits to carry out attacks on its behalf," making the organization resilient and opportunistic.[98]

During the second half of the 2000s, six official branches of al Qaeda were formed including al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, al Qaeda in Europe, al Qaeda in Egypt, al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.[99] In terms of the AQAP, there had been a presence of al Qaeda-linked jihadists for a long time in Yemen, but in 2009, Yemen and Saudi Arabian jihadists merged under the AQAP and took on a global focus.[100] Their attacks have included a bombing plot in December of 2009 where an AQAP recruit almost blew up a passenger airplane landing in Detroit and in October 2010 where they attempted to blow up cargo planes approaching US cities.[101] As part of the increasing role of franchises, many of al Qaeda's core members relocated to Somalia and Yemen, which also demonstrates the connectivity and mobility among the jihadists.[102] Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has attempted to expand its influence throughout the Sahel and Maghreb, including Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, Chad, and Niger.[103] In addition to these official branches, there have been numerous unofficial offshoots. These unofficial groups include a short-lived al Qaeda in Palestine, Fatah al Islam in Lebanon, Al Shabab, and American groups connected to Adam Gadahn and Anwar al Awlaki. [104] The outreach and

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[98] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

[99] Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud. *Understanding Al Qaeda: Changing War and Global Politics*. Pluto, 2011.

[100] Byman, Daniel L. "Al Qaeda's M&A Strategy." Brookings, December 7, 2010. https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/al-qaedas-ma-strategy/.

[101] Byman, Daniel L. "Al Qaeda's M&A Strategy." Brookings, December 7, 2010. https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/al-qaedas-ma-strategy/.

[102] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

[103] Jenkins, Brian Michael. *Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade : Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, The, 2012. Accessed March 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

[104] Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud. *Understanding Al Qaeda: Changing War and Global Politics*. Pluto, 2011.

expansion of franchises led to al Qaeda making strategic gains including advances in Iraq, a transnational impact, and increasing recruits.[105]

This franchise system is an important community outreach tool as it allowed al Qaeda's mission to survive while the core organization was under attack by government forces. By moving operations to franchises across the Middle East and Africa and the world, al Qaeda has achieved two things. First, by having global operations, their goal of countering the Western powers in Muslim lands is being actualized. The expanded reach of the organization indicates that they are closer to establishing an Islamic government throughout the world. The other thing that this franchise system has achieved is it has made al Qaeda more difficult to destroy. For instance, while Western governments were targeting core al Qaeda bases after 9/11, the manpower it would take to combat all al Qaeda organizations today would be much larger. Thus, the franchise system benefits the organization by making itself harder to defeat. While the franchise system showcased al Qaeda's adaptability and increased its ability to survive, there are drawbacks to the system as well. The main drawback to this system is that the franchises themselves hold their local cause higher than al Qaeda's global cause. Because of this, each franchise group has its own methods of planning attacks and recruiting as discussed in the previous sections. The discontinuity between organizations could explain the newest period of low activity from 2016 to the present. The decentralization of planning and the variance in tactics between franchise organizations has led to a decrease in the activity and overall skill of al Qaeda as a whole. Overall, while the franchise system allowed al Qaeda to survive during the 2003-2006 period, it may also be the cause of the newest period of low activity due to decentralization and inconsistency between the groups.

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[105] Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud. *Understanding Al Qaeda: Changing War and Global Politics*. Pluto, 2011.

Conclusion

Intensity of Al Qaeda's Community Outreach, Recruitment Methods, and Tactics Throughout the Periods of High and Low Activity

Period of Time	1988-1995	1996-2003	2004-2006	2007-2015	2016-2020
Community Outreach	Community outreach not a priority	Community outreach not a priority	Beginning of franchise system	Central focus is on supporting franchise organizations as they carry out most of the attacks	Franchise outreach still in play, though some franchises cease to exist
Recruitment	Core Directed Individuals Training Camps	Core Directed Individuals Training Camps	End of individual by core Beginning of franchise	Core recruiting franchise groups, franchises recruit individuals but have inconsistency in methods	Overall drop in recruitment by both groups
Tactics	No attacks	Beginning of attacks, small number of attacks by core, large-scale	Drop in attacks by core, but start of attacks by franchises, drop in large-scale attacks	Significant increase in attack numbers, all carried out by franchise groups, majority small-scale	Drop in attack numbers, still by franchise groups and still small-scale

Colors represent scale of intensity: Low ▢▢▢▢ **High**

Figure 4

Al Qaeda's first period of low activity can be characterized as a planning period. The group did not carry out attacks and did not focus on community outreach, rather the core al Qaeda organization focused on training recruits and planning its future large-scale attacks. Between 1996-2003, the group entered a period of high activity as the group began to carry out attacks. These attacks were carried out by the core organization and were large-scale. This group continued to be a single organization as community outreach was not a focus, and

recruitment was directed by the core organization and focused on recruiting individuals. During this period, al Qaeda's activities were highly centralized and well-planned. The group used its time during the first period of low activity to organize and plan its first period of high activity. As all of the activities were planned and directed by the core organization, the group efforts were highly centralized to its overarching goal.

As the group shifted into its second period of low activity, things began to decentralize. Although attacks decreased, recruitment efforts increased. This time, the group began recruiting franchise, or affiliate, organizations. As the group began to franchise, it began providing community services to these groups, like training and funding. In theory, these franchise groups would help the group achieve its goal of replacing the Western hegemony in Muslim lands. As the group entered its second period of high activity in 2007, the number of attacks skyrocketed. These attacks were carried out by the franchise organizations, and their tactics were highly dependent on the franchise. While the number of attacks increased, the attacks were overwhelmingly small-scale. Similarly to the tactics, recruitment of individuals was done at the franchise level, and different franchises used different methods. During this period, the core group focused on recruiting and supporting its franchises. While using franchise organizations to actualize their final goal seemed to be working, the variance in tactics, quality, and local goals of franchise organizations have led the group to enter another period of low activity. The number of attacks has dramatically decreased as have overall recruitment numbers. Many franchises prioritize their local goal over al Qaeda's main goal, which has led to major inconsistencies in the quality of activities. Additionally, some franchises have ceased to exist, so al Qaeda's reach has shrunk. Overall, while the group

remains active, it is no longer a centralized organization that carries out large-scale, well-planned attacks.

Chapter 3- Boko Haram Case Study

Historical Overview

On April 14, 2014, Boko Haram made international headlines when they kidnapped over 200 girls from a school in Chibok, Nigeria.[106] While this attack gave Boko Haram notability, the group formed over a decade earlier. Boko Haram gained popularity and community support due to chronic poverty, political corruption, and high youth unemployment rates within Northern Nigeria. [107] As communities in this region faced these problems as well as deteriorating infrastructures, their distrust of the Nigerian government grew.[108] These conditions allowed for Boko Haram to turn from an "obscure, radical Islamic cult" into an insurgency with support from the Northern population.[109] The name Boko Haram means "Western education is forbidden"; however, the group refers to itself as "Jama'atu Ahlissunnah Lidda'awati wal Jihad" which means "people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teachings and jihad".[110] Overall, Boko Haram's main goal is to replace the current, secular Nigerian state with an Islamic one.[111]

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[106] "Boko Haram Fast Facts." CNN. Cable News Network, September 8, 2019.
https://www.cnn.com/2014/06/09/world/boko-haram-fast-facts/index.html.
[107] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.
[108] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.
[109] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.
[110] Onuoha, Freedom C. Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?. US Institute of Peace, 2014.
https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf.
[111] Onuoha, Freedom C. Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?. US Institute of Peace, 2014.
https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf.

Boko Haram organized in the early 2000s under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf, a Muslim cleric.[112] The group was centered in Maiduguri, the capital of the Borno State in Northeastern Nigeria.[113] During the early year's Yusuf's preaching and sermons drummed up a lot of support for their group's cause. In 2009, the group turned to violence in response to a dispute between the group and the state's enforcement of a motorcycle helmet law. When members of Boko Haram refused to obey the law, a violent confrontation between the group and the state led to the death of 17 Boko Haram members.[114] This confrontation further worsened due to the state ransacking and confiscating materials from the group's hideout in Bauchi State; this led to the group mobilizing its members for attacks against the state.[115] During this uprising, Mohammed Yusuf was captured and later died in police custody.[116] Abubakar Shekau took over the group after Yusuf, and he was the one who led the group to begin its brutal and violent campaign.[117] Between 2009 and 2015, the group launched a massive, widespread violence campaign in which they gained control of territory and carried out thousands of attacks. Since 2015, the group has lost control of most of its territory and has split between factions, one being led by Abubakar Shekau and the other led by Abu Musab al

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[112] "Boko Haram Fast Facts." CNN. Cable News Network, September 8, 2019.
https://www.cnn.com/2014/06/09/world/boko-haram-fast-facts/index.html.
[113] "Boko Haram Fast Facts." CNN. Cable News Network, September 8, 2019.
https://www.cnn.com/2014/06/09/world/boko-haram-fast-facts/index.html.
[114] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.
[115] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.
[116] "Boko Haram Fast Facts." CNN. Cable News Network, September 8, 2019.
https://www.cnn.com/2014/06/09/world/boko-haram-fast-facts/index.html.
[117] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.

Barnawi, the son of Yusuf.[118] Despite the factions within the organization, Boko Haram remains active and continues to carry out attacks.

Periods of High and Low Activity

Boko Haram's activities can be classified into 4 periods of low and high activity. From 2001 to 2008, was a period of low activity where the group practiced open preaching to gain supporters.[119] During this period, Boko Haram was not a violent group, rather they focused on garnering public support through preaching and offering services to their local community. In 2009, the group began its campaign of violence after a dispute over a motorcycle law. This led to a period between 2009 and 2012 where the organization focused on violent, terroristic activities.[120] During this time, the group carried out a large number of attacks that primarily targeted police targets. The group shifted from using preaching to using money and violence as recruitment tactics. The activity between 2009 to 2012 indicates that this was a period of high activity. From 2013 to 2015, Boko Haram controlled territory in the northeastern part of Nigeria, and during this time, the organization served in a state-capacity.[121] The group continued to carry out a large number of attacks as well as use threats of violence as its primary recruitment tactic; thus, the period in which Boko Haram controlled territory is another period of high activity. From 2015 onward, Boko Haram lost its territory and returned to the defensive, marking this a low activity period. [122] Despite the group continuing to carry out attacks, the

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[118] Campbell, John. "Suspected Leadership Changes to IS-Backed Boko Haram Faction Continue." Council on Foreign Relations, March 12, 2019. https://www.cfr.org/blog/suspected-leadership-changes-backed-boko-haram-faction-continue.

[119] Thurston, Alexander. Boko Haram : The History of an African Jihadist Movement, Princeton University Press, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central

[120] Thurston, Alexander. Boko Haram : The History of an African Jihadist Movement, Princeton University Press, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central

[121] Thurston, Alexander. Boko Haram : The History of an African Jihadist Movement, Princeton University Press, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central

[122] Thurston, Alexander. Boko Haram : The History of an African Jihadist Movement, Princeton University Press, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central

number of attacks it carries out has decreased. Plus, the group has minimized its community outreach and recruitment efforts as it tries to defend itself and its remaining territory.

Recruitment Methods

Boko Haram's members come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. Its members include unemployed youths, political elites, bankers, drug addicts, university professors, and migrants from neighboring countries.[123] The majority of its members are disaffected youth included unemployed high school and university graduates.[124] Despite this, the group also has members that are wealthy, educated, and influential.[125] According to interviews conducted by Mercy Corps with members of the organization, there were no relationships between memberships and economic status or their education level.[126] The diversity in recruits shows that the group has appeal to people from all socioeconomic backgrounds and that its recruitment methods do not target just one type of person. The median age of group members, according to an analysis of 144 arrested members, is thirty years old.[127] A median age of thirty shows that the group recruits both youths and older adults. There were also no patterns between the employment status of members before joining and their educational level and whether that education was religious or secular.[128] The diversity in Boko Haram's membership indicates that the group does not recruit a specific type of person. Rather,

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[123] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.
[124] Onuoha, Freedom C. Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?. US Institute of Peace, 2014. https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf.
[125] Onuoha, Freedom C. Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?. US Institute of Peace, 2014. https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf.
[126] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).
[127] Onuoha, Freedom C. Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?. US Institute of Peace, 2014. https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf.
[128] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).

the group looks for individuals with any type of background who resonate with the group's message and goal. As such, the group's recruitment methods tend to focus on recruiting people in person rather than online, as this allows them to encourage all types of people to join.

During the first period of low activity, the group used open preaching, mainly by the leader Mohammed Yusuf, as its primary recruitment method. In this period of open preaching before the group turned to violence, many members joined after hearing the group preach in the capital of Borno State, Maiduguri. Boko Haram's propaganda used to recruit members primarily focused on creating a narrative about corruption. The main messages of the preaching focused on criticizing the neglect and irresponsibility of the government for the region, which resonated with many people in the area.[129] Mohammed Yusuf's sermons referred to the corrupt minds of the "yan boko", elites who received Western education in secular schools.[130] This narrative appealed to the impoverished and jobless Muslim youth in northern Nigeria.[131] These youths thought that the group was going to lead to a revolution to help improve their community.[132] In addition to the appeal to the impoverished youth, these sermons also inspired individuals who came from institutions of higher education. For instance, individuals attending institutions like the University of Maiduguri, Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, and Federal Polytechnic Damaturu withdrew from their schools to join the organization.[133] The sermons used during the first period of low activity inspired people from all backgrounds to support the group and its cause. During this time, the group was seen as more of a political, revolutionary

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[129] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.
[130] Onuoha, Freedom C. Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?. US Institute of Peace, 2014. https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf.
[131] Onuoha, Freedom C. Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?. US Institute of Peace, 2014. https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf.
[132] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).
[133] Ewi, Martin A., and Uyo Salifu. "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram." (2017).

group rather than a violent, terrorist group because the group was not carrying out attacks. This allowed the group to spread its message and to resonate with a larger group of people compared to their future recruitment methods.

In addition to preaching, the group would use personable methods to encourage people to support their cause. For instance, one-on-one interactions were a common technique to move people to support and sympathize with the group's cause.[134] These interactions made youths feel listened to and valued, which was the opposite of how they felt with the government. These one-on-one interactions helped create personal bonds between potential members and the group, thus encouraging many to join and support the group. Additionally, Mohammed Yusuf created a complex that included a mosque and Islamic school during this period.[135] This complex allowed for many people to hear and listen to Yusuf's sermons. Plus, it created a sense of community between the members of the group. Many of the people who frequented the mosque and school in this complex would later become fighters for the group due to the loyalty formed at the complex.

As the group turned to violence in 2009, religious piety and the *Salafi-Jihadist* messages from the period of open preaching stopped playing a role in the group's recruitment efforts. While the group maintained its goals and mission rooted in *Salafi-Jihadism*, the use of violent tactics caused the preaching of religious piety to not be an effective method of recruiting new members. In contrast, financial incentives increased in importance during the first period of high activity.[136] During this first period, and even more so during the second

[134] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.
[135] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.
[136] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.

period of high activity, the use of violence and threats as a recruitment method also increased. During these periods, Boko Haram continued to not use social media as a means of recruitment, rather they primarily recruited in person.[137] In fact, the main recruitment methods are in-person methods including friends and religious meetings.[138] These in-person methods allow for the group to make individualized recruitment efforts and create bonds between members of the group and potential recruits. Despite the group not recruiting on social media, individuals have posted how they were recruited on their social media. According to an analysis of social media posts, the most common recruitment tactic by the group during the periods of high activity were coercion and threats.[139] The second most common recruitment tactic was financial compensation.[140] The use of threats and compensation show that as the group turned to violence, it had a harder time recruiting new members as many were turned off by the violence and brutality of the group. As preaching encouraged fewer people to join after the group became violent, the group had to adjust their recruitment methods to continue to grow their organization.

Financial opportunities are one of the main reasons people joined Boko Haram. In a study by the Institute for Security Studies, 31.11% of respondents claimed that financial reasons were the primary motivation for people to join the group, and another 51.34% claimed these reasons as the second or third most influential factors.[141] An example of how Boko Haram recruited with financial compensation is when the group paid 7 individuals 7,000 Naira ($42) to blow up a church in Borno State in 2012.[142] Boko Haram's use of money to recruit fluctuates

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[137] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.
[138] Ewi, Martin A., and Uyo Salifu. "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram." (2017).
[139] Ewi, Martin A., and Uyo Salifu. "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram." (2017).
[140] Ewi, Martin A., and Uyo Salifu. "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram." (2017).
[141] Ewi, Martin A., and Uyo Salifu. "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram." (2017).
[142] Ewi, Martin A., and Uyo Salifu. "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram." (2017).

based on the role they are recruiting for. According to social media, the group pays anywhere from $1 for information to $50,000 for a suicide bomber.[143] As there is chronic poverty in Northeastern Nigeria, financial compensation encourages more people to support the group. Even if they don't necessarily support the group's methods or cause, some people will still join the group to receive financial assistance. Another example of the group's financial recruitment methods is in 2012, ex-combatants stated in an interview conducted by Olalekan A. Babatunde that interest-free loans were given to "artisans and entrepreneurs such as masons, barbers, welders, tailors, commercial motor bikers, and cab drivers," to encourage them into joining the organization.[144] As the group became a violent organization, they needed to shift their recruitment methods to inspire new recruits. Money, whether as compensation or a business loan, was one of the primary ways the group was able to gain new members during the periods of high activity.

Threats of violence were also a major recruitment tactic during the periods of high activity. Boko Haram would make people fear for their lives and their family's lives which would lead to them pledging their allegiance to the group.[145] For example, in Babatunde's interviews, one youth from Bama said he joined Boko Haram to prevent his family's home from being ransacked by the group during its attack on their town.[146] Once the group turned to violence, many joined to avoid getting killed. A former member recited in an interview conducted by Mercy Corps that Boko Haram "invaded our village and asked all the youth to come out and follow them or be killed," and once they killed one person, the rest followed

[143] Ewi, Martin A., and Uyo Salifu. "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram." (2017).
[144] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.
[145] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.
[146] Babatunde, Olalekan A. "The Recruitment Mode of the Boko Haram Terrorist Group in Nigeria." Peace Review 30, no. 3 (2018): 382-389.

them.[147] The use of violence as a recruitment method was extremely prevalent while the group controlled territory. As the group carried out numerous attacks that including robbing people and businesses and killing people, many civilians would join the group to prevent that from happening to them. The use of violence as a recruitment tactic worked as many individuals were afraid of the group.

Throughout all periods, community was an important recruitment method. As almost all of the former members in one survey stated that their friends, family members, and/or business partners had joined the group which impacted their decision to join.[148] Boko Haram's focus on recruiting in-person has stayed consistent throughout its existence; however, its other recruitment methods have shifted. During the first period of low activity, the group focused on open preaching as a way to inspire and encourage new members to join. As the group turned to violence, open preaching was less effective, so the group began to use money and violence as recruitment methods. While these methods brought new recruits into the group, they have their shortcomings. It is important to note that while financial compensation worked during these periods to gain new recruits, this method only works when the group has the money to fund this recruitment. As the group loses its territory, its financial resources are shrinking and becoming strained; therefore, the group will be less able to use money as a means of recruitment. Additionally, the use of violence as a recruitment method has its faults too. While violence scares people into joining, it does not create a sense of loyalty that open preaching did; therefore, recruits are less supportive of the group's goals and more just trying not to die. Due to the shortfalls of the recruitment methods used during the periods of high activity, as the

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[147] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).
[148] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).

group began to lose territory and entered the second period of low activity, its recruitment efforts decreased. As the group focused on defending itself, it had less money and time to recruit; therefore, recruitment has had an overall reduction in recruitment efforts during its current period of low activity.

Tactics

Boko Haram's tactics have shifted as the group has evolved throughout its existence. During the first period of low activity, the group did not carry out attacks. During its first period of high activity, it carried out attacks predominately aimed at government and police targets. In contrast, during its second period of high activity, the group carried out an even greater number of attacks that predominately targeted civilians. Finally, during the group's current period of low activity, it has carried out fewer attacks and also suffered a split in tactics as the group divided into two separate factions.

Boko Haram carried out over 2,600 attacks between its founding and 2018. As shown in the data from the Global Terrorism Database, Boko Haram began carrying out attacks in 2009 with attacks significantly increasing in number from 2011 and on.[149] The group carried out 10 attacks in 2009 and 17 attacks in 2010.[150] The group began carrying out attacks in response to the dispute between the group and the state. While the attack numbers began slowly, the number of attacks jumped to 125 in 2011 and to 426 in 2012.[151] During this first period of high activity, the group began launching attacks and significantly increased its

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[149] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[150] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[151] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

frequency and scope of attacks. In 2013, the attack numbers declined to 235.[152] During this time the group began to control territory, so it is likely that the group slowed its attacks as it consolidated its control over the region. Despite the slowing of attacks in 2013, Boko Haram carried out over 500 attacks in both 2014 and 2015.[153] The increase in these attacks is due to the fact that the group was attempting to both maintain the control of its current territory and expand its territory. Since 2016, the number of attacks Boko Haram has carried out has decreased, although the group still committed 243 attacks in 2018.[154] The number of attacks decreased during this period of activity as the group began losing its territory, so its focus shifted from trying to expand to trying to keep control over the territory it had. Overall, the number of attacks by Boko Haram reflects the shift of the group's aims throughout its life cycle from no attacks while the group focused on open preaching to a large number of attacks as the group aimed to control territory.

It is important to note that despite the number of attacks, the majority of Boko Haram's attacks have been small-scale attacks with few fatalities. Less than 1% of Boko Haram's attacks have had over 100 fatalities. Of these twenty-two attacks, only one did not occur in the 2013-2015 period of high activity.[155] Additionally, the group has only had 50 attacks with 51-100 fatalities. Of these attacks, thirty-seven occurred in the period of high activity between 2013-2015 and four occurred in 2009.[156] Overall, only 0.02% of Boko Haram's attacks have

[152] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[153] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[154] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[155] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[156] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

been large-scale with over 51 fatalities. In contrast, 14.4% of attacks have had 0 fatalities and 58% of attacks have had between 1-10 fatalities, thus showing the overwhelming majority of Boko Haram's attacks have been small-scale. The distribution of these low-fatality attacks is fairly even compared to the distribution of overall attacks, meaning that throughout all periods of high and low activity the proportion of small-scale attacks is even to the overall proportion.

Boko Haram has used a myriad of attack types, including armed assaults, bombings/explosions, and facility/infrastructure attacks. Armed assaults were the most common attack type during both periods of high activity, and bombings/explosions were the second most common attack types during those periods. In 2016 and 2017, armed assaults dropped to the second most common after bombings/explosions, but then returned as most common in 2018 as there was a significant decrease in bombings/explosions in that year.[157] The increase in bombings/explosions during 2016 and 2017 shows that the group was carrying out larger attacks as it defended itself from the military's attempt to defeat the group. The decrease in bombings/explosions in 2018 shows that the group did not have the resources needed to carry out the magnitude of a bombing/explosion attack. Additionally, assassinations were a common attack type in the early years of the group's existence. There were 26 assassination attacks between 2009-2012, and another 26 between 2013-2015.[158] With only one assassination occurring in 2018, this tactic was primarily used during the group's periods of high activity. The group used assassinations as a tactic to consolidate power in the region. As this tactic was primarily used against members of the government and military, this

[157] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101
[158] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

indicates that the group used this tactic to get rid of individuals who threatened the group's control over the region.

Additionally, the targets of Boko Haram attacks have shifted over time. In the early years, Boko Haram often targeted local banks to gain finances. For instance, Mohammed Abdullahi, the spokesman of Central Bank of Nigeria, stated in December 2011 that "at least 30 bank attacks attributed to Boko Haram have been reported this year".[159] The targeting of financial institutions during the early years is important as that is how the group generated revenue. This revenue allowed Boko Haram to fund its efforts and its recruitment tactic of financial compensation. The most frequent targets of Boko Haram attacks before 2012 were police targets, whether that be police stations, policemen in their homes, or patrols.[160] This is because the group began its violent campaign in response to a dispute between the group and the state. As the police were the ones enforcing the law, the group targeted them. Overall, though, police attacks make up only 10% of overall targets.[161] This is because the group's goal for its campaign of violence shifted from disputing one law to controlling territory, so it began to target other groups to achieve this new goal. For instance, private civilians have been the targets of 54% of Boko Haram attacks.[162] Attacks targeting private civilians dramatically increased in 2014, going from less than 100 in 2013 to around 300 in 2014 and just under 400 in 2015.[163] One reason attacks targeting civilians increased during the period when Boko

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[159] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.

[160] Agbiboa, Daniel Egiegba. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." African Conflict and Peace Building Review 3.1 (2013): 144-157.

[161] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

[162] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

[163] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

Haram controlled territory is because the group would use attacks to recruit members. As stated in the recruitment section, the group would attack villages, targeting the residents, and demand their loyalty; therefore, it makes sense that there is an increase in civilian targeted attacks as Boko Haram continued to expand its territory. Finally, military targets also saw an increase in 2015, likely due to the fact that the Nigerian military began to take back the territory Boko Haram controlled.[164] As Boko Haram began losing its territory, the proportion of military targeted attacks significantly grew. During the period of low activity, there were multiple months in which military targeted attacks were equal to or greater than private civilian attacks, thus showing how the group shifted its focus to target the military as it was fighting to not lose control of its territory. As shown in Figure 5, the number of attacks targeting civilians increased when the group switched to recruiting with violence. Additionally, the percentage of government targeted attacks increased as the group went on the defensive. This data included in Figure 5 best shows the shift in tactics throughout the periods of high and low activity.

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[164] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=30101

Boko Haram Attack Numbers and Target Type by Period of Low and High Activity

Legend:
- Percent of attacks during this period that targeted the government (police, military, and government)
- Percent of attacks during this period that targeted civilians
- Percentage of the overall attacks that occurred in this period
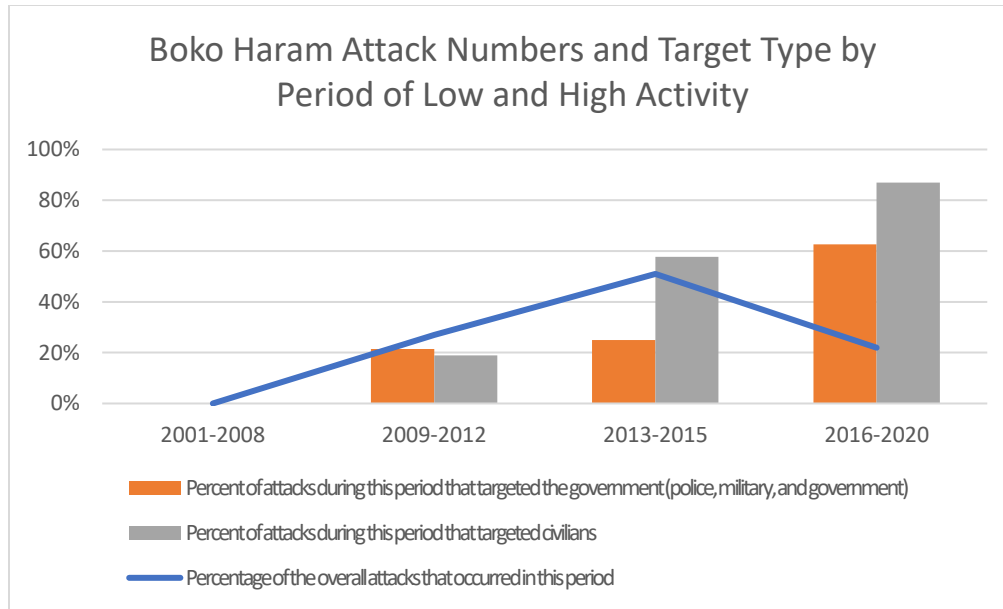
Figure 5

In 2016, the group split into two factions. The faction that won the support of the Islamic State has been the most active and poses the biggest threat today.[165] This group is still active today, with a recent attack on August 21, 2019 in the town of Magumeri.[166] The group torched a clinic, ransacked government buildings, and looted shops during this attack.[167] This split into two factions is important to note as one group has significantly decreased its carrying out of attacks, while the other faction continues to carry out attacks. This split shows that its members have different goals for the group, thus weakening the overall strength and capabilities of the organization

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[165] Carsten, Paul. "Islamic State Fills the Void in Nigeria as Soldiers Retreat to 'Super Camps'." Reuters, September 16, 2019. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nigeria-security-insurgency/islamic-state-fills-the-void-in-nigeria-as-soldiers-retreat-to-super-camps-idUSKBN1W10FU.

[166] Carsten, Paul. "Islamic State Fills the Void in Nigeria as Soldiers Retreat to 'Super Camps'." Reuters, September 16, 2019. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nigeria-security-insurgency/islamic-state-fills-the-void-in-nigeria-as-soldiers-retreat-to-super-camps-idUSKBN1W10FU.

[167] Carsten, Paul. "Islamic State Fills the Void in Nigeria as Soldiers Retreat to 'Super Camps'." Reuters, September 16, 2019. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nigeria-security-insurgency/islamic-state-fills-the-void-in-nigeria-as-soldiers-retreat-to-super-camps-idUSKBN1W10FU.

Boko Haram's tactics have changed as its goals and ambitions have changed. During its first period of existence, the group did not carry out attacks as it focused on open preaching. During its first period of high activity, the group got into a dispute with the state and began attacking mostly police targets; however, as the group carried out more attacks it began to work toward the goal of controlling territory. Once the group controlled territory during its second period of high activity, it continued to carry out more attacks and shifted to targeting civilians in order to gain members. Finally, as the group began to lose territory, its focus shifted on defending itself, so attack numbers decreased and began to target the military more.

Community Outreach

In terms of community outreach, Boko Haram provided many government services to the community in Northeast Nigeria. These services include financial assistance and education. While these services are traditionally provided by the state, they were either not or poorly provided by the Nigerian government in this region; therefore, Boko Haram assumed a state-like role by providing these services. Boko Haram began providing these services during the early 2000s, but it assumed an even greater state-like role during the 2013-2015 period.

During the early period of Boko Haram's existence, the group offered some government services, like financial support and education, to increase membership. The services that the group provided inspired many to support the organization because the government neglected to provide needed assistance and services in the region. One form of community outreach Boko Haram performed is offering small business loans to encourage new members to join. In the Mercy Corps interview of youths recruited into Boko Haram, many of them joined because they had accepted loans or wanted to receive support in the future.[168]

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[168] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).

These youths, like many of the people who joined the organization in the early years, owned businesses, ranging from small-scale traders to shop-owners, but they were unable to receive financial assistance from the government.[169] As most of the youth in the region could not provide the collateral or business plan required by formal institutions, Boko Haram filled "a critical gap in financial services" in the region.[170] By providing financial assistance to these youths, Boko Haram was able to increase its membership and support from the community during its formative years. Another service Boko Haram provided during these years is religious education for women. While there were schools for both genders in the region before Boko Haram's existence, many women had dropped out of school at an early age due to marriage and other factors or had no schooling at all.[171] As one woman from Borno State stated in an interview with Mercy Corps, "I just wanted to learn more of the Quran and my religion," as her reason for voluntarily joining the organization.[172] Offering religious education gave the group multiple benefits. First, it encouraged any woman who wanted to learn about her religion to join the organization, thus increasing the size of the group. Secondly, by providing religious education, Boko Haram was actualizing its goal of replacing secular education with religious teachings. Boko Haram provided members of the community with many services including education, financial assistance, and other general services during the first period of low activity. These services not only encouraged more people to join the organization, but they

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[169] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).
[170] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).
[171] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).
[172] Corps, Mercy. "Motivations and Empty Promises: Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. April 2016." (2016).

also encouraged communities in the region to put their trust in Boko Haram rather than the Nigerian government, thus making it easier for the group to later take over the region.

During the periods that Boko Haram controlled territory, the organization acted like a state by providing a myriad of services. Boko Haram controlled a large portion of territory throughout northeastern Nigeria from 2012 to 2015, and a faction of the group currently controls small areas of the Lake Chad area. [173] For both of these periods, the group acted as a state for these territories.[174] For instance, the group operates "courts, health services, and markets," in the region it controls, just as a state would.[175] While Boko Haram offered community services like loans and education during the first period of its existence, the organization focused on typical state services, like judicial and health services, during its period of territory control. Once again, by providing state services to the community, Boko Haram improves its popular support in the region. As the Nigerian government fails to provide adequate services and aid to this region, people will support whatever group provides those necessities, which between 2012-2015 was Boko Haram.

While one faction of the group continues to control a small territory in the Lake Chad area, overall Boko Haram has lost the majority of its territory and has decreased its community outreach services. As the group lost its territory, it not only lost its scope to provide state services, but it also had to shift resources to defending itself rather than to provide services. Boko Haram began providing community outreach in the form of financial assistance and education during its first period of low activity to gain support and membership. As the group

[173] Searcey, Dionne. "Boko Haram Is Back. With Better Drones." The New York Times, September 13, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/13/world/africa/nigeria-boko-haram.html.
[174] Searcey, Dionne. "Boko Haram Is Back. With Better Drones." The New York Times, September 13, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/13/world/africa/nigeria-boko-haram.html.
[175] Searcey, Dionne. "Boko Haram Is Back. With Better Drones." The New York Times, September 13, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/13/world/africa/nigeria-boko-haram.html.

began to control territory, the group increased its community outreach to include things like operating courts and markets. As the group lost its territory during the current period of low activity, it decreased its community outreach efforts due to the shrinking territory and finances.

Conclusion

Intensity of Boko Haram's Community Outreach, Recruitment Methods, and Tactics Throughout the Periods of High and Low Activity

Period of Time	2001-2008	2009-2012	2013-2015	2016-Present
Community Outreach	Offered financial and educational opportunities to the public	Continued to offer financial support to group members	Provided state services as it controlled territory	Drop in providing services as it lost territory, although a faction of the group continues to control a small area
Recruitment	Recruitment based on preaching, both educated and uneducated members, focus on financial opportunities	Increase in use of violence and coercion as recruitment methods	Use of violence and coercion continue to be used as recruitment methods	Decrease in recruitment efforts as group focuses on defending itself
Tactics	No attacks, open preaching	Beginning of attacks, quickly escalated into a high number of small-scale attacks with mainly police targets.	Continued in high number of attacks, mainly private civilian targets, increase in large-scale attacks	Decrease in number of attacks, increase in military targets, faction split resulting in different tactics

Colors represent scale of intensity: Low ⬜ **High**

Figure 6

Boko Haram began as a religious group that preached for a religious state that was not corrupt like the current secular one. The group used preaching to spread its message and garnered a lot of support in Northeastern Nigeria, a region that faced chronic poverty and did not receive enough resources from the Nigerian government. Between 2001 and 2008, the group did not carry out attacks, which allowed them to gain support from individuals of all backgrounds who wanted a better life. After turning to violence in 2009, the group's tactics

and recruitment methods shifted. The group became violent and carried out a large number of attacks targeting the police as a result of a dispute between the group and the state. As the group continued its campaign of violence, it shifted from targeting police in protest to using violence to actualize its overarching goal of creating an Islamic state. During this time, the group became more radical which caused preaching to not be an effective recruitment method, so the group began using money and violence. While these methods worked during the periods of high activity, they did not result in the same loyalty to the group that the previous recruitment had. Thus, as the group began to lose territory and had to focus its resources on defending itself against the Nigerian military, its recruitment faltered. Since 2016, Boko Haram has focused on military targets as it attempts to defend itself and its territory. As the group lost its territory, its community services began to disappear. Though the group has entered a period of low activity and has lost a significant amount of territory, a faction of the group remains active today.

Chapter 4- ISIS Case Study

Historical Overview

ISIS, otherwise known as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, is a Sunni-based terror group that can trace its origins back to 2004.[176] During this time, the Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi merged his group with al Qaeda creating the al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). [177] After Zarqawi was killed in 2006, Abu Ayyub al-Masri took over and renamed the organization Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). [178] While the group controlled some territory in Iraq in 2006, the group was largely defeated in Iraq by 2008.[179] Masri's death in 2010 lead to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi taking control of the group. [180] As the Syrian civil war began, Baghdadi took the organization to Syria to fight against the government.[181] After gaining strength in Syria, the organization reentered Iraq in 2013 and announced its new name of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.[182]

As stated above, ISIS is a Sunni-based terrorist group, and they have used Sunni disenfranchisement to gain support in Iraq and Syria. In Iraq, after the U.S. occupation in 2003

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[176] Hanna, Jason. "Here's How ISIS Was Really Founded." CNN. Cable News Network, August 13, 2016. https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/12/middleeast/here-is-how-isis-began/index.html.

[177] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.

[178] Hanna, Jason. "Here's How ISIS Was Really Founded." CNN. Cable News Network, August 13, 2016. https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/12/middleeast/here-is-how-isis-began/index.html.

[179] Hanna, Jason. "Here's How ISIS Was Really Founded." CNN. Cable News Network, August 13, 2016. https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/12/middleeast/here-is-how-isis-began/index.html.

[180] Hanna, Jason. "Here's How ISIS Was Really Founded." CNN. Cable News Network, August 13, 2016. https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/12/middleeast/here-is-how-isis-began/index.html.

[181] Hanna, Jason. "Here's How ISIS Was Really Founded." CNN. Cable News Network, August 13, 2016. https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/12/middleeast/here-is-how-isis-began/index.html.

[182] Hanna, Jason. "Here's How ISIS Was Really Founded." CNN. Cable News Network, August 13, 2016. https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/12/middleeast/here-is-how-isis-began/index.html.

led to "de-Baathification" of the Iraqi government, Sunnis were excluded from the national government.[183] As Baghdadi spent time in U.S. prisons, he interacted with many former Ba'ath party members who would later join the ranks of ISIS.[184] In Syria, the uprising and civil war was a conflict between Assad and the ruling Shia minority and the Sunni majority of the country.[185] ISIS's early success in the civil war led to many militant Sunnis joining.[186] Overall, ISIS has capitalized on Sunni disenfranchisement across the region to gain support. ISIS is able to capitalize on this Sunni disenfranchisement by keeping its main focus on the "near enemy" of Shia regimes rather than the "far enemy" of Western countries. The main goal of the group is to build a Sunni Islamic State in the Middle East and to consolidate its grip on the territory it occupies.[187] The near enemies for ISIS include the Iraqi and Syrian regimes and their Persian ally.[188] ISIS's focus on the near enemy rather than the far enemy contributes to its ability to capitalize on Sunni disenfranchisement.

Periods of High and Low Activity

Since its official founding in 2013, ISIS has had drastically different periods of high and low activity. From 2013-2016, the group experienced a period of high activity as it was extremely active and was able to occupy a large portion of territory. During this time, ISIS controlled territory in Iraq and Syria that was as large as the United Kingdom and had between

[183] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.
[184] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.
[185] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.
[186] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.
[187] Gerges, Fawaz A. ISIS*: A History*. Princeton University Press, 2017.
[188] Gerges, Fawaz A. ISIS*: A History*. Princeton University Press, 2017.

six and nine million people.[189] Its troops numbered more than thirty thousand.[190] ISIS's activities during this period of high activity can be characterized as a dual-recruitment approach, a large number of attacks, and community outreach in the form of state services. From 2017 to present, the group began suffering losses, both personnel and territorial, and had to go on the defensive; therefore, this period is considered a period of low activity. During this time, both local governments and western powers worked together in battling the group. As a result, ISIS went on the defensive and its activities shifted. Recruitment efforts significantly decrease, tactics shifted toward the defensive such as military targets and armed assaults, and due to the lack of revenue, the group stopped focusing on community outreach. All in all, ISIS's periods of high and low activity are significantly different from each other as the group shifted from an emerging organization to a state-like entity to what is now a group on the defensive.

Recruitment Methods

ISIS's recruitment and propaganda target two main groups of people, socially alienated people and professionals. This dual approach can be seen in the stark differences in ISIS propaganda where some have extremely violent and graphic messages while others have positive messages with smiling children.[191] While the group has constantly recruited socially alienated and easily radicalized individuals, there have been shifts in its recruitment tactics between the period of high activity and period of low activity. These differences are mainly seen through the shift in recruiting professionals and the overall media output by the organization.

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[189] Gerges, Fawaz A. ISIS*: A History*. Princeton University Press, 2017.
[190] Gerges, Fawaz A. ISIS*: A History*. Princeton University Press, 2017.
[191] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

At the beginning of ISIS's existence, the group did target educated professionals in addition to socially alienated people. The targeting of professionals occurred primarily during the lead up to and during the period of territory control. One example of the recruitment of professionals is in June 2014 when Baghdadi called for skilled people like "the scholars, fuqahaa' [Islamic jurisprudence experts], and preachers, especially the judges, as well as people with military, administrative, and service expertise, and medical doctors and engineers" to emigrate to ISIS territories and join the state.[192] Recruitment videos targeting professionals focused on the appeal of being a part of a successful community that follows Islamic law while also fulfilling one's religious obligation of hijra and jihad.[193] Another example of an attempt to recruit professionals is seen in a tweet from March 2015. A Twitter account tweeted a photo of a modern office with an ISIS flag stating that "a medical college was newly opened [in] Raqqa," thus showing the organization's focus on professional recruits during the state-building period.[194] The recruitment efforts during this period were to encourage professionals to contribute to the state-building process as the organization gained territory in the region. The dual recruitment methods during the period of high activity show two things. First, that ISIS had the resources to target two drastically different groups with very different propaganda materials. Second, this shows that the group prioritized its goal of serving in a state-capacity. The recruitment of professionals was an important aspect of ISIS establishing actual state-like institutions in the territory it controlled. Despite the importance of recruiting professionals

[192] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.
[193] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.
[194] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

during its period of high activity, ISIS dropped the targeting of professionals once it began losing its territory.

While ISIS has halted its targeting of professionals, the group has consistently targeted socially alienated individuals throughout the group's existence. For the majority of its recruitment efforts, ISIS has concentrated on promoting itself as a "big box retail option," meaning it has focused on reach, appeal, and freshness.[195] ISIS has primarily concentrated on the number of recruits rather than the quality of the recruits. This focus is seen through the demographics of ISIS recruits. To emphasize the quantity over quality factor, ISIS recruits tend to be young and have little higher education. The average ISIS recruit is about 26.7 years old, and only 9% of U.S. ISIS recruits have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.[196] The age and education level of the majority of ISIS's recruits emphasizes the contrast between the majority of ISIS recruits and the minority of targeted professionals during the state-building period. For many of its recruits, ISIS uses online propaganda to target a broad audience to attract those with a sense of social alienation.[197] This targeting tactic has appeal not only to alienated Muslims but to many demographic groups with the feeling of social alienation.[198] In fact, only 26 percent of foreign ISIS recruits were of Middle Eastern, North African, and/or South-

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[195] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.
[196] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.
[197] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.
[198] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.

Central Asian descent.[199] For instance, around 65% of U.S. ISIS recruits were either black or Caucasian.[200] These foreign, socially alienated recruits are a large part of ISIS's base. The group has been recruiting these foreign members since before its official founding. Radicalized individuals have been joining the organization since the summer of 2012.[201] Foreign individuals at that time mostly hailed from nearby countries, like Saudi Arabia and Tunisia.[202] As time went on, ISIS grew its efforts in recruiting foreign individuals both from nearby countries and Western countries like Europe and the U.S.

ISIS has used many types of media sources to recruit its foreign and domestic socially alienated members. During ISIS's period of territory control, its communications operations became decentralized with provincial media offices producing messages that appealed to all types of people.[203] Additionally, ISIS produced English propaganda in its online magazine, thus increasing the reach of its propaganda and foreign audience recruitment efforts.[204] These use of social media, internet, and other media allowed ISIS to recruit people all over the globe. These recruitment methods enabled the group to attract people from all walks of life to come and join the group. While the group has stilled recruited members during the period of low activity, its recruitment and propaganda output significantly declined. For instance, in 2018,

[199] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.
[200] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.
[201] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.
[202] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.
[203] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.
[204] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.

ISIS's overall media output declined by 90% compared to 2015. This media output decline corresponds with a decline in recruitment of US people beginning in 2016.[205] This significant drop in recruitment numbers and media output showcase the weakening of the group. As the organization lost territory and therefore lost a lot of its income generation, it had to focus on defending itself rather than growing its base of support. The defensive, survival mode that ISIS has been forced to take during the period of low activity reduced the resources and energy the group had to devote to recruitment.

Overall, ISIS's recruitment targets and methods have shifted as it has experienced periods of high and low activity. Throughout both periods the group targeted socially alienated people who skewed on the younger and less educated side; however, during the high period, the group used a dual recruitment approach and also targeted educated, professionals. The group targeted these professionals to help with the state-building process while ISIS controlled territory. The recruitment of professionals stopped as ISIS began to lose territory. During the period of low activity, ISIS's overall recruitment of individuals declined as the group had to concentrate resources on other factors like defending itself. Overall, ISIS's recruitment methods have shifted from a dual approach targeting professionals and socially alienated individuals from around the globe to extremely reduced recruitment efforts targeting the unskilled rather than professionals.

Tactics

During its period of high activity, ISIS's attacks were frequent, small-scale, and revenue-generating. The targets of attacks during this period shifted as the group gained control

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[205]Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018.
https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html..

of territory. In contrast, ISIS attacks during its period of low activity can be categorized as fewer and defensive, After its founding in 2013, ISIS committed a large number of attacks. In 2013 and 2014, the group committed over 1,200 attacks, and in 2016, the group had an all-time high of nearly 1,500 attacks.[206] In 2017, the attack quantity decreased slightly to around 1,300 attacks, and then it decreased drastically to under 800 attacks in 2018.[207] These attack numbers reflect the shift between the periods of high and low activity. As ISIS was gaining and expanding its territorial control during the period of high activity, the group carried out a majority of its attacks. As the group began to lose its territory, the number of attacks carried out decreased and the group shifted into a period of low activity.
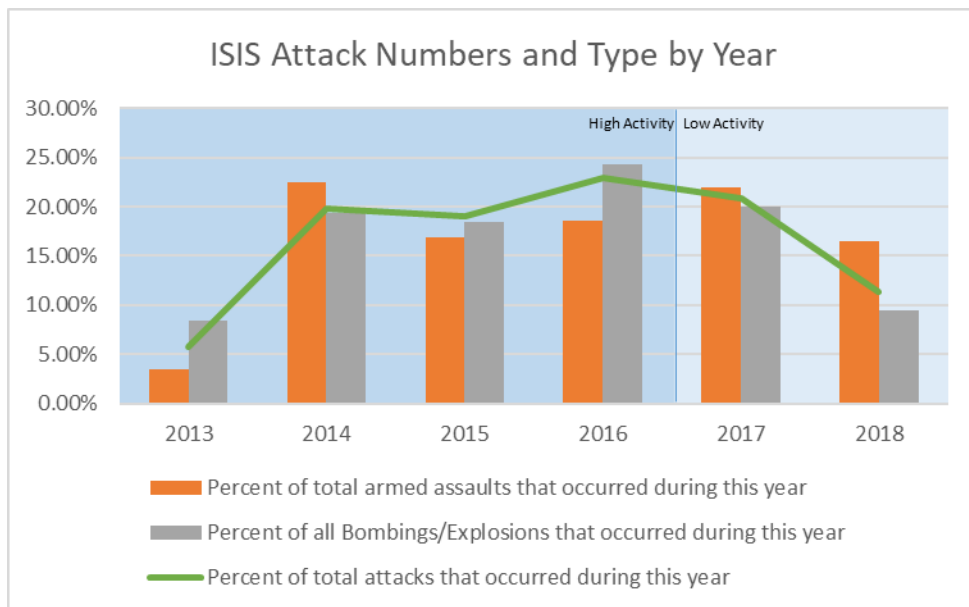

Figure 7

As shown in Figure 7, the most common type of attack carried out by the group is a bomb/explosion attack. There were over 800 bomb/explosion attacks in 2014. This number

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[206] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[207] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151

increased to over 1,000 in 2016, and then decreased back down to 800 in 2017 and reached a low of 400 in 2018.[208] The decrease in bomb/explosion attacks during the period of low activity may be indicative that as the group shifted its focus to preventing the loss of its territory, it shifted its attack types to more defensive tactics rather than offensive ones. For instance, armed assaults increased during this period of low activity. Armed assault attacks were most frequent in 2014 and then decreased in popularity during the period ISIS controlled territory.[209] As ISIS lost its territory in 2017, armed assault attacks increased in frequency, reaching nearly the same number as in 2014.[210] The increase in armed assault attacks during the period in which ISIS was losing territory show that the group's tactics shifted to more defensive in nature as they attempted to maintain control. Overall, ISIS carried out fewer attacks and changed its attack type during the period of low activity.

ISIS's most common target type is private civilians. ISIS's tactics regarding private civilian attacks have been described as "killing as many helpless victims it can in relatively low-tech ways". [211] ISIS has targeted the general Shia community ever since an AQI suicide bombing in 2006.[212] The group's tactic of killing Shia civilians is one of the main reasons why the group became its own entity rather than remained a part of al Qaeda.[213] The group has continued to indiscriminately attack civilians since its creation in 2013. Attacks targeting

[208] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[209] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[210] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[211] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.
[212] Hanna, Jason. "Here's How ISIS Was Really Founded." CNN. Cable News Network, August 13, 2016. https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/12/middleeast/here-is-how-isis-began/index.html.
[213] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.

private citizens make up 2,975 of the group's 7,404 attacks that occurred between 2013-2018.[214] There were around 600 private citizen attacks in 2014.[215] This declined in 2015 to under 500 attacks, and then drastically increased to nearly 800 in 2016.[216] This timeline suggests that as ISIS was gaining territory control, it committed attacks on private citizens, but then restrained these attacks as it served in a state-capacity. As the group began losing its control on the territory, the civilian-targeted attacks rapidly increased. Military target attacks show a similar story as military attacks increased from 2014 to 2015 and then stayed steady in 2016.[217] The number of military attacks jumped 400 in 2016 to 500 in 2017.[218] This shows that the military target attacks increased as the organization fought to gain territory, and then increased to an even higher number during the low activity period. During the period of low activity, local and foreign militaries were attempting to retake the ISIS-controlled territory, so it makes sense that during this time, ISIS's attacks against military targets would increase as they attempted to maintain control over their territory.

During its period of high activity, ISIS used many tactics to generate income to support its efforts. One tactic the group used to generate income was selling oil extracted from Iraqi and Syrian wells to local middlemen; these deals netted an estimation of $1 to $3 million a day.[219] Another way the Islamic State would generate money was through kidnappings. ISIS

[214] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[215] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[216] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[217] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[218] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151
[219] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.

made an estimated \$20 million in 2014 from ransom payments, mainly from kidnapped European journalists.[220] The tactic of hostage-taking was most popular in 2014 with nearly 200 hostage attacks.[221] There was a sharp decrease in hostage-taking during the period of low activity with less than 100 hostage-taking attacks occurring in 2018.[222] The frequency of these money-generating tactics during the period of high activity reflects the organization's ability to generate revenue during this time. As ISIS's ability to sell oil and carry out hostage attacks diminished during the period of low activity, so too did its ability to generate revenue. The lack of revenue-generating activities during this period implies that the group does not have the finances to do all the things it was during the period of high activity, including recruitment efforts and community outreach.

Despite ISIS having a large number of attacks, the majority of these attacks have been small-scale. 76% of ISIS's attacks between 2013 and 2018 had either 0 or 1-10 fatalities.[223] This is probably due to ISIS's tactic of focusing on quantity rather than the quality of attacks, meaning that the group's focus is on producing many small-scale attacks rather than one large-scale attack.[224] Out of the group's 6,451 attacks, only 31 have had over 100 fatalities and only 45 had 50-100 fatalities, thus showing the organization's concentration on small-scale attacks.[225] The vast majority of attacks with 50-100 fatalities occurred during the period of

[220] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.

[221] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151

[222] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151

[223] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151

[224] Williams, Heather J., Nathan Chandler, and Eric Robinson. *Trends in the Draw of Americans to Foreign Terrorist Organizations from 9/11 to Today*. Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2545.html.

[225] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40151

high activity, with 18 occurring in 2016. The timeline of attacks with over 100 fatalities is similar, as 12 of the 31 attacks occurred in 2014 and another 8 occurred in 2016. In contrast, only 6 of the over 100 fatality attacks and 9 of the 50-100 fatality attacks occurred during the period of low activity. While the vast majority of ISIS's attacks were small-scale, it is important to note the timeline of large-scale attacks as it shows that the group was capable of carrying out large-scale attacks during the period of high activity and was less capable during the period of low activity.

Overall, ISIS's attacks have been numerous, but small-scale. During the period of high activity, ISIS's attack types and target types shifted as the group gained control of territory. The group decreased in civilian targeted attacks and armed assaults as it gained territory and began to serve in a state-capacity. Additionally, during the period of high activity, ISIS had a focus on tactics that would generate revenue including selling oil and hostage-taking. As the group lost control of its territory during the period of low activity, its attack and target types shifted to military targets and armed assaults showing that it was on the defensive.

Community Outreach

ISIS's main community outreach tactic was to provide the basic services that a state provides. Considering the group controlled a large portion of territory during its period of high activity and its goal of establishing an Islamic Caliphate, it makes sense that the group would focus on serving in a state capacity. The Syrian city of Raqqa served as ISIS's capital. In Raqqa, the group created new judicial, police, and economic institutions, and the group took control of health and education services.[226] By providing these basic services to the population, ISIS

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[226] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.

solidified its aspiration to be an actual Islamic State, and it was able to generate revenue to fund itself.[227]

One of the main community outreach programs ISIS created was institutions to collect and generate revenue for its territory. One example of how the group generated revenue is through tax collection. While the group collected taxes from everyone under its control, Christians and other religious minorities faced additional taxes from ISIS.[228] The New York Times Caliphate publication shows a wide variety of documents from the ISIS territory demonstrating the many state services ISIS tried to provide. One example includes the group reclaiming land from a Shia family and then leasing it to a Sunni man for him to farm.[229] Before each planting season, farmers had to pay rent to ISIS.[230] Plus, before each harvest, farmers would need permission from ISIS, who would then take 10% as tax and provide a receipt that would allow the farmers to sell the remainder of the crop.[231] The establishment of institutional, organized tax collection emphasizes the fact that ISI attempted to create actual state institutions. The establishing of its tax collection not only contributed to ISIS's image of an actual state actor, but it also allowed the group to generate revenue to support its cause.

ISIS served in many other state capacities beyond tax collection. For instance, ISIS also ran its own DMVs and provided ISIS license plates. Additionally, the organization also

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[227] Bloom, Mia. "Constructing expertise: Terrorist recruitment and "talent spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 40, no. 7 (2017): 603-623.

[228] Laub, Zachary. "The Islamic State." Council on Foreign Relations, August 10, 2016. https://www.cfr.org/islamic-state.

[229] Callimachi, Rukmini, and Andrew Rossback. "The ISIS Way: Extreme Brutality and Detailed Record-Keeping." The New York Times. The New York Times, April 4, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/04/world/middleeast/isis-documents-photos.html.

[230] Callimachi, Rukmini, and Andrew Rossback. "The ISIS Way: Extreme Brutality and Detailed Record-Keeping." The New York Times. The New York Times, April 4, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/04/world/middleeast/isis-documents-photos.html.

[231] Callimachi, Rukmini, and Andrew Rossback. "The ISIS Way: Extreme Brutality and Detailed Record-Keeping." The New York Times. The New York Times, April 4, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/04/world/middleeast/isis-documents-photos.html.

repurposed Iraqi government-issued IDs into ISIS-controlled territory IDs, and ISIS issued their own birth certificates to babies born in their territory.[232] Issuing licenses and identifications show how in-depth the community outreach by the group was. Additionally, by changing the territory's residences' identification documents to ISIS ones, it created a physical acknowledgment that the group was the sole authority in that territory. ISIS also took control of education in its territories. Examples of educational services the group provided include the fact that the organization would issue workbooks and textbooks to children that indoctrinated the children with ISIS beliefs. For instance, on a page to learn the letters M and N, include the words martyr, sniper, gun, and woman (pictured in a black veil covering the entire body) next to words like moon, watermelon, and night.[233] The education efforts by the organization are important to note as they focused on indoctrinating the youth to believe in ISIS's cause and message. ISIS's community outreach during the period of high activity focused on establishing state-like institutions, including DMVs and schools, in the territory it controlled.

According to ISIS's own publications and newsletters, the organization brought security to the region. Farmers stated in one of the newsletters that before ISIS control, they would suffer from looting and robbery, but during ISIS control, they could now do their work without the fear of danger.[234] Other ISN issues claim ISIS's state control led to trade flourishing

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[232] Callimachi, Rukmini, and Andrew Rossback. "The ISIS Way: Extreme Brutality and Detailed Record-Keeping." The New York Times. The New York Times, April 4, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/04/world/middleeast/isis-documents-photos.html.
[233] Callimachi, Rukmini, and Andrew Rossback. "The ISIS Way: Extreme Brutality and Detailed Record-Keeping." The New York Times. The New York Times, April 4, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/04/world/middleeast/isis-documents-photos.html.
[234] Zelin, Aaron Y. "al-Hayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām's newsletter: "Islamic State News #3". Jihadology.net. June 10, 2014. https://jihadology.net/2014/06/10/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-newsletter-islamic-state-news-3/.

in the region, and another one mentions ISIS providing aid to refugee camps in the region.[235]

The ISIS newsletters show that the organization is trying to serve in a state capacity in the territory that it controls. These newsletters first indicate the group's efforts to serve as a media provider to the people in its territory and its potential supporters abroad. Secondly, these newsletters imply that during the period of territory control, the group took serious measures in providing services that a state would provide, including security and aid. The fact that ISIS's primary community outreach was in the form of state services epitomizes the organization's actions to realize its goal of becoming an actual state.

While the organization served in many capacities during its period of control, as ISIS lost territory, its focus on community outreach decreased. The documents from the New York Times piece show that ISIS continued issuing paperwork, and thus serving in a state capacity, right until U.S.-led forces retook the city of Mosul. For instance, there is a document from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock from November 2016 recording a transfer of money. The city was fully retaken from ISIS in July 2017.[236] While ISIS provided a large number of community outreach programs during its time as a state, these programs and services stopped after the organization lost control of its territory. In addition to the loss of territory disabling ISIS from serving in a state capacity, it also has financial impacts on the group. During the period of high activity, the organization was able to collect taxes from its citizens, but now that the group does not have control of this territory, its revenue-generating ability has diminished.

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[235] Zelin, Aaron Y. "al-Hayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām's newsletter: "Islamic State News #2". Jihadology.net. June 5, 2014. https://jihadology.net/2014/06/05/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-newsletter-islamic-state-news-2/.

[236] "ISIS Fast Facts." CNN. Cable News Network, December 5, 2019. https://www.cnn.com/2014/08/08/world/isis-fast-facts/index.html.

The lack of community outreach programs during the period of low activity is a result of both the loss of territory and the loss of revenue for the group.

Conclusion

Intensity of ISIS's Community Outreach, Recruitment Methods, and Tactics Throughout the Periods of High and Low Activity

Period of Time	2013-2016	2017-Present
Community Outreach	Provided state services to the territory it controlled	Stopped providing services as it lost territory.
Recruitment	Dual-approach recruitment, recruiting professionals, nonprofessionals, and foreigners	Drop in overall recruitment efforts
Tactics	Frequent, small-scale, and revenue-generating attacks.	Fewer attacks, increase in civilian and military target attacks.

Colors represent scale of intensity: Low ☐ **High**

Figure 8

The beginning of ISIS's existence saw a rapid rate of small-scale attacks that target civilians and the military. These attacks were predominately bombings/explosions and armed assaults. During the beginning, the group did not perform many community outreach programs, but they did focus on a dual recruitment approach in which they recruited socially alienated individuals to join their armed ranks and well-educated professionals to aid in building a state. As the group gained strength and control of territory, its efforts shifted to a greater focus on community outreach as the group began providing state services. ISIS carried out fewer attacks on civilians during this time, as they attempted to serve in a state-capacity. Additionally, the group continued to recruit professionals to help bolster its state capacity. The shifts during this period of high activity as ISIS emerged and controlled territory show that ISIS's main goal of

establishing an Islamic State drove the group's efforts. At first, the group focused on gaining territory, revenue, and people. Once it obtained those things, it attempted to become a state service provider to actualize its goal. In contrast, as the group began to lose territory, its efforts shifted toward defending itself. By losing territory, the group shifted its expenses to concentrate on defensive tactics rather than community outreach services or recruitment propaganda. As such, during the period of low activity, community outreach pretty much halted and recruitment efforts decreased significantly, especially regarding recruiting professionals. In contrast, ISIS increased its attacks on civilian and military targets and increased in armed assaults indicating its shift to the defensive. The difference between ISIS's activities during its period of high activity and its period of low activity shows that the group worked to actualize its goal of establishing an Islamic State, but as the group became under attack it shifted its efforts to preserve itself.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

The information from the three case studies shows that there are several common trends of terrorist organization's internal actions during periods of high and low activity. Trends that correlate with periods of high activity include the recruitment of skilled individuals, tactics aimed at generating revenue, and providing community service. Trends that correspond with periods of low activity include the recruitment of unskilled individuals and the consolidation of activities. First, I will take a look at these trends in more depth, and then I will discuss what these mean for future studies on terrorist organizations.

The examination of the three groups indicates that community outreach correlates with periods of high activity. Firstly, the groups increased their community services during periods of high activity. In both Boko Haram and ISIS's case, the group increased the scale of their community outreach as they gained control of territory. In addition to the trend of increasing community outreach during periods of high activity, community service also increases the popular support of these organizations. For instance, the financial and education services offered by Boko Haram during its first period of low activity encouraged many people to join Boko Haram's ranks. The people who were drawn in by these community outreach programs later became the fighters for the group as it started its campaign of violence. Similarly, small, localized groups pledged their allegiance to al Qaeda to receive money and training from the group. By providing services, terrorist organizations can increase their membership and support from the community, which helps strengthen the group during its periods of high activity.

Another trend that corresponds with periods of high activity is the recruitment of skilled and/or educated members. The recruitment of skilled people increases the group's status and capabilities. For example, during the first two periods of al Qaeda's life, the group focused on creating well-trained recruits by using training camps. These recruits are the ones who carried out the many large-scale, high-impact attacks during al Qaeda's first period of high activity. Well educated and skilled recruits improve the group's capabilities. This is why ISIS targeted professionals like doctors, nurses, and engineers during its period of high activity. It wanted to harness the skill of these individuals to create state-services as it began controlling territory. Skilled recruits enhance a group's capabilities in several ways, like carrying out more complex and large-scale attacks and providing specialized services like medical care. This technique correlates to periods of high activity because recruiting skilled individuals enhances and improves a group's capabilities.

Another trend that corresponds to groups entering and sustaining a period of high activity is the use of tactics aimed at generating revenue. All of the groups studied in this thesis have carried out attacks to gain resources. For instance, ISIS stole oil to sell on the black market as well as kidnapped individuals for ransom. Similarly, Boko Haram robbed banks to get more money. Tactics aimed at generating revenue seem to correlate with an overall increase in activity. As the groups gain more resources, they are able to carry out more attacks as well as spend money on recruitment and community services. Thus, we know that as groups use tactics to gain revenue, they are strengthening themselves and will be likely to increase their activities.

While skilled recruits improve a group's capabilities, unskilled recruits have the opposite effect. The recruitment of unskilled individuals is therefore associated with periods of low activity. As the group's recruitment methods focused on the number of recruits rather

than the quality, the group's capabilities diminished. For instance, as al Qaeda let the franchise organizations control their recruitment of individual members, the quality of attacks of the group became highly dependent on each franchise. While recruitment directed by franchise leaders saw an increase in members and attacks at first, in the long run, it led to another period of low activity. The inconsistency in recruitment led to attacks having less impact as they were smaller-scale and not as thoroughly planned compared to the attacks carried out by the well trained al Qaeda groups. The variation in attacks and recruitment has also led to some franchise groups having success while many others have died off; therefore, this shift to recruiting less skilled individuals has led to al Qaeda's most recent period of low activity. Similarly, as Boko Haram began using violence to recruit members, the quality and loyalty of its members decreased. The people recruited into the group were driven by fear rather than the group's goals, so the quality and motivation of Boko Haram has become muddled. The increase in recruiting members by force correlates with the decrease in attack numbers and the overall growth of the group. While recruiting unskilled individuals creates an initial increase in a group's activities, it ultimately leads to consistency and quality issues for the organization; therefore, it correlates with periods of low activity.

Another trend during periods of low activity for terrorist organizations is that they consolidate their activities. For instance, while there are many benefits of community outreach, it is typically one of the first activities the groups stop doing when faced with opposition. This is seen in both ISIS and Boko Haram's case studies, as both groups slowed or halted their community services as they began to lose territory. One reason for this is because as groups lose their revenue sources, like the territory they control, they have to reduce their activities. During times when the group faces opposition, they not only begin to lose their revenue

sources, but they also are forced to go on the defensive as they try not to be destroyed by state forces. Therefore, these groups reduce their activities like community outreach and recruitment efforts and consolidate their remaining resources on protecting themselves. During these times, there also tends to be a drop in attacks carried out and/or a shift to cheaper attack types as the group does not have plentiful resources. The consolidation of activities correlates to periods of low activities, as groups are forced to prioritize their resources and focus on fewer things, like protecting themselves.

While individuals and states with Western mindsets have been quick to claim that terrorist groups have been defeated during their periods of low activity, this is not the case. As shown in al Qaeda's case study, during the group's period of low activity from 2004 to 2006, the group pulled back on its attacks and recruitment; however, this was not because the group was defeated. Rather, the group organized a shift in its tactics that led to them being stronger, such as carrying out more attacks and having a larger global reach, than ever before. As these terrorist groups are based on a different ideology, they view success and defeat in a different manner. These groups view their struggle and fight as one that will continue for centuries to come, so they do not view setbacks and periods of low activity as their end. Rather, they use these periods to consolidate their activities and to figure out their next strategy.

When Western states declare these groups as defeated during these periods of low activity, they are allowing for the continuation of the terrorist's life cycle. If these states declare their defeat and ease their efforts in the fight against them, they are enabling the groups to regain their footing and adjust their tactics for their next period of high activity. This is seen in the recent withdrawal of US troops in Syria. In March 2019, the White House declared that

ISIS had been defeated and began to withdraw US troops.[237] By August 2019, the Pentagon released a report that ISIS was resurging in the area as troops left.[238] Terrorist groups consolidating and minimizing their activities does not mean they are defeated, rather it means they are in a period of low activity in their life cycle. By understanding the life cycle of terrorist groups and the trends that correspond with the different stages of the cycle, we are better able to assess the true status of these groups. Examining the life cycle of these organizations through the lens of their own ideology rather than Western ideology clearly indicates that these groups do not die off when they stop their activities. The slowing or stopping of attacks does not mean that these organizations are defeated, rather they are simply in a period of low activity. Thus, it is imperative for researchers to study these organizations through their respective ideologies if they want to find out how to truly defeat these organizations.

While this thesis gives a comprehensive look at the life cycles of al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and ISIS, there are avenues for future research. First, this study only looked at three internal factors of these groups. One factor that was beyond the scope of this research is that of leadership and the impact of charismatic leaders on the group's life cycle. The death of a leader or a new leader may potentially play a role in the periods of high and low activity. For instance, the death of Mohammed Yusuf was central to the beginning of Boko Haram's campaign of violence. While charismatic leadership was not in the scope of this thesis, further analysis may shed additional light on how the internal actions of terrorist organizations impact their life cycle. Additionally, with the scope of this study, only designated Foreign Terrorist

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[237] Browne, Ryan. "Pentagon Report Says ISIS Is 'Re-Surging in Syria' Following Trump's Troop Withdrawal." CNN. Cable News Network, August 8, 2019. https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/06/politics/pentagon-report-isis-syria/index.html.
[238] Browne, Ryan. "Pentagon Report Says ISIS Is 'Re-Surging in Syria' Following Trump's Troop Withdrawal." CNN. Cable News Network, August 8, 2019. https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/06/politics/pentagon-report-isis-syria/index.html.

Organizations that were rooted in *Salafi-Jihadism* were examined. Future research could look into if the impact of these internal actions and life cycle trends in groups other than those studied here have similarities or not.

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