INSECURITY: A CAUSE AND A PRODUCT OF CONFLICT, TOWARD THE NEED FOR INDEPENDENT INDIGENOUS CSOS

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the question of human security in the North-East after more than a decade long conflict with the insurgents. The paper unraveled that communities and towns do not have to flee, even though successes were made mainly as most villages and homes. It also discovered that people are still suffering from the consequences of the conflict. If the inequities that gave rise to it are left unaddressed, there is the likelihood of a relapse into conflict. Therefore, it is recommended that the government improve its work to provide security for the people. The formation of independent indigenous civil society organizations is paramount to checkmate the activities of the government. The approach employed PLS-SEM and tested two hypotheses for clear prediction and assumption as met. The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) can become important actors in reducing violence and facilitating the conditions necessary for building sustainable peace. However, such indigenous CSOs must shift focus and strengthen their abilities to mobilize expertise and resources from their domestic constituencies and reduce the excessive dependency on foreign donors. It must also reject any international support that resembles negative external imposition.

Keywords: Insecurity, Conflict, Northeast, Indigenous, Civil Society Organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The choice of the above topic is borne out of the fact that the Northeast and indeed Yobe state are flashpoints of Boko Haram insurgency, which gave rise to conflicts and violent extremism. It is, therefore, believed that in a society that pays scant attention to the safety of its people, the community is at risk of being forgotten by history. For this reason, one would begin by stressing that security is the most critical issue in conflict situations and no other considerations come close to it in importance. It is equally believed that a discussion on governance and post-conflict in the Northeast cannot-should not-occur without a clear focus on pre-conflict prevention in our society (Paul 1997). Hence, as individuals and groups, we need to focus on insecurity. Addressing the issue frankly will be critical for our governments to improve their work toward enhancing human security. Besides, if there can be no security in a state of conflict, then the conflict can be best avoided by enhancing human security to prevent conflict (Collins 2000).

As rightly observed by the former United Nations Secretary-General late Kofi Anan, "there can be no security without development, no development without security, and none of the above without human rights" (Anan 2005). This goes to show that in a state of insecurity – when most men have been mysteriously killed and have still been killed, school children have been butchered, when there are still men and child soldiers who were forcefully conscripted to serve as guerrilla fighters, when girls and women have been forcibly abducted and married to the extremist fighters, internally displaced persons, women widowed by the insurgency, escapees with "unwanted babies or pregnancies," refugees and their families, and sporadic killings and gunshots (David 2002). One cannot but say that talk of anything else is a luxury. Thus, even with a narrow understanding of security – halting the fighting and doing more to effectively protect those caught up in it is critical (Paffenholz 2009).

CAUSES OF CONFLICT

In the same vein, the roots of insecurity must be addressed in any attempt to build a viable future and retain peace (Cox 2008). For instance, if pervasive poverty and intolerance are widespread, corruption becomes the norm in the society; the absence of justice is glaring; if unscrupulous elements undermine the state monopoly of the legitimate use of force; the prevalence of divisive ideology; if unaccountable and poorly managed police threaten the population; the military or intelligence units; if the proliferation and misuse of small arms are not curbed; if the rule of law disappears; the rule of force is supreme; if victims remain unassisted; extremists repentant are not properly reintegrated; and deradicalized, the perpetrators of violence not prosecuted, then peace will remain elusive, and the relapse into conflict becomes all the more likely (Peter and Reilly 1998). For these reasons, the government must prioritize and act on essential elements that would enhance security not only in the Northeast but the entire country in general. As (Pouligny 2005) further puts it, these essential elements that would enhance peace include, among others, security-related issues such as security sector reform, dialogue and reintegration, countering violent extremism, promoting support for gender and social inclusion, promoting religious tolerance, and demobilization (Kaldor 2003).

Similarly, even the establishment of the North-East Development Commission may seem to stand out as a watershed commitment by the federal government. However, how this responsibility would be exercised will go a long way to answering many of our collective concerns regarding human security in the Northeast. But let's be clear: Will the commission's establishment provide much assistance for those caught in the fighting. After all, when borrowing from the words of John Pepper Clark, causalities' are not only those who are dead or wounded; we are all casualties (Peter and Reilly 1998). The question that readily comes to mind is how will the government respond to protect the population and future generations from those massive and illegal attacks on physical security that so often accompany conflict?

It is on record that there exist carefully articulated standards as the legal duties of the state and the federal government (David 2008), which address every aspect of security, for example, rights to necessities of life as food, clothing and shelter, right to live, right to physical integrity, to education, to health, to justice, rights to political participation, not

to be discriminated against, not to be tortured etc. As (Sen 1999) puts it, all these are individuals' entitlements and not merely an aspiration. These entitlements foster human development and provide a sense of direction for individuals to secure a life that they have reason to value. The denial will have very real significance for the security of those subject to the denial. That's why they need independent indigenous Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) comes, as they will play a watchdog role which serves as a check on the power of the government by providing feedback on its performances and a partnership role together with the government on policy implementation.

H_1: CSO has positive effect on Conflict.
H_2: Cultural organization has positive effect on conflict.

METHODS

The desktop analysis and structural equation modeling were used for a better outcome. Out of 250 questionnaires sent, 200 were returned, and approximately 80% were considered a good response. However, 30% of the responses were from universities in North-East, 40% from Civil society, and 30% from the cultural organization. Most of the respondents in this study were attached to a group, institution, or organization. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the proposed hypotheses. In particular, the partial least squares technique (PLS-SEM), a variance-based structural equation modeling technique, was applied.

RESULTS

Need for independent indigenous civil society organizations in the northeast

It is important to point out that the insecurity in the Northeast affected the presence of many CSOs, otherwise referred to as NGOs. They have been active in addressing some of the social problems in society (Kaldor 2003). However, their effectiveness in bringing about real change has been questioned due to varying factors, including increasing public distrust and uncertainty about their relevance and legitimacy. In addition, most of those presently on the ground are often seen as implementers of foreign policy agendas, and everything they do revolves around project timelines (Cox 2008). Against this backdrop, the formation of independent indigenous CSOs with clear mandates that are responsive to the circumstances on the ground is necessary. Such CSOs, by their very nature, must be independent of direct government control and management. Their presence and initiatives will play essential roles in bringing about sustained transitions. Understanding the Concept of CSOs: Undoubtedly, Paffenholz, in 2009, describes CSOs as an arena of human sociability. The possibility of hope and change resides; it creates an intellectual and political opening, where different actors can criticize and practically address contemporary social problems. Moreover, most scholars David 2008, Edwards 2004, John 2008, and Kaldor 2003 have all agreed that CSOs are complex and interconnected networks of individuals and groups drawn from rich histories of associational relationships and interactions.

These independent indigenous CSOs, if formed, can include a wide range of actors such as trade unions, community-based organizations, faith-based associations, women and youth organizations, employee associations, cooperatives, self-help initiatives, and cultural organizations. Thus, they can also facilitate and advocate for policies and actions that represent their constituents needs. Besides, they present a group of individual members who voluntarily form an association to promote the population's well-being by helping it resolve its problems and defend its rights (economic, social, and political), culture, and the environment (David 2008).

Second analyses

The Table 3 indicates the relationship between the variables is perfectively correlated which the Civil Society Organization and Cultural Organization are correlated with conflict at the level of 0.894, 0.671, and 0.782 respective. While Table 1 indicates the reliability and validity test of studies were met in AVE were above 0.5 and CR and Alpha Cronbach were ab0ve 0.7 and that justified relationships of the variables.

Table 1: Perception of model

Measurement					
Constructs	**Item**	**Loadings**	**AVE**	**CR**	**Alpha Cronbach**
Civil Society Organizations					
	CSO 1	0.925	0.865	0.852	0.800
	CSO 2	0.953			
	CSO 3	0.798			
	CSO 4	0.772			
	CSO 5	0.876			
Cultural Organization					
	CO 1	0.865	0.807	0.814	0.819
	CO 2	0.789			
	CO 3	0.698			
	CO 4	0.895			
	CO 5	0.786			
Conflict					
	CF 1	0.867	0.820	0.823	0.791
	CF 2	0.951			
	CF 3	0.765			
	CF 4	0.711			
	CF 5	0.806			

Table 2: Hypotheses testing

H	Relationship	B	SE	t-value	p	Decision
H1	CSO->Conflict	0.225	0.067	3.358	0.000	Supported
H2	CO->Conflict	0.322	0.079	4.076	0.000	Supported

Table 3: Relationship between the variables

Variable	(CSO)	(CO)	(CF)
Civil Society Organization	0.000		
Cultural Organization	0.894	0.000	
Conflict	0.671	0.782	0.000

As shown in Table 2, two proposed hypotheses were supported. CSO was found to significantly influence conflict with β=0.225, and p<0.05; therefore, H1 was supported. At the same time, cultural organization has (β=0.322, p<0.05), which was found to affect conflict significantly and, therefore, supported H2.

The relationship between the variables is perfectively correlated which the Civil Society Organization and Cultural Organization are correlated with conflict at the level of 0.894, 0.671, and 0.782 respective.

CONCLUSION

In concluding the above treatise, one cannot but say that the complex nature of insecurity gave rise to conflict in the Northeast. Likewise, the inability of the government to provide human security feeds violence and violent extremism, which did not remain confined within the region. As a result, the region in particular and the country in general are going through a crucial period in its future. Hence, the contribution of all stakeholders, including CSOs, needed to overcome the situation has been explored. It is hoped that they can play an important supportive role in the policy formulation process if formed. However, these cannot be achieved without the existence of a vibrant formation of independent indigenous civil society(s) capable of monitoring the government's actions and providing feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that let there be a system of government that is transparent and predictable, in which the legal responsibilities and obligations are put in place. This requires not simply the establishment of commission and committees. It, however, requires a sound system

to ensure social, economic, and political inclusion. It also requires an independent, effective, and professional judicial system and legal protections for personal safety and freedom. It requires the creation of a professional police force. It requires the government to eradicate poverty within the rural populace, make education accessible and qualitative to all irrespective of sex, and strive harder to provide qualitative manpower to drive the process of change, end gender inequities, and do more to strengthen democratic systems of governance. That is why it is important to establish independent indigenous CSOs that are responsive to the yearnings and aspirations of the ordinary people, who will pressure the government to live up to its expectation. Similarly, these independent indigenous CSOs must serve as watchdogs to checkmate the infiltration of NGOs with questionable missions and must also pressure the government to legislate on the infusion of some staggering issues that I referred to as "neo-colonial agenda" alien to the culture and beliefs of our people, for example, same-sex marriages.

Furthermore, such independent indigenous CSOs have to start working now. They must not wait until violence erupts; then, they look forward to foreign donors incorporating them as *ad hoc* staff or volunteers. We need collective commitment to make these things happen.

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