The Mitigating Role of Governance in conflict and State fragility: A study of Nigeria and Iraq

Mohammed Mustafa Qader *[1] Usman Abbo [2]

[1] College of Law Kirkuk University Republic of Iraq, PhD candidate at Ghazalie Shafie Graduate School of Government, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

[2] Department of Public Administration Federal Polytechnic Mubi Adamawa Nigeria

Abstract

Drawing from the centrality of the quality of Governance in promoting and sustaining nationhood and by virtue of the fact that most drivers of conflicts in society, such as greed and grievances are discovered to be anchored on the nature of the relationship between the state and society., This paper therefore, adopt the social identity theory to analyses the socio-political factors which pave the way for the emergence of Boko Haram and ISIS in Nigeria and Iraq respectively. The paper adopt a content analysis by extensively reviewing the findings of previous studies which have identified the drivers of conflicts in several context, as well as carrying an in-depth analysis of several researches on Governance reform with the view to strike a balance between the two. The article thus, conclude by arguing that only structural transformation of local Governance by emphasizing and entrenching inclusiveness, integration and effective local democracy can guarantee success in the fight against insurgence and domestic terrorism in both countries. This is because all the models of radicalization into political violence implicitly acknowledged that crisis of legitimacy is the beginning of civil strife.

Keywords: Governance, Conflict, Fragility, Nigeria, Iraq

Introduction

A very much acknowledged contributor to the persistence of conflict and war is state fragility, which has attracted significant academic consideration in the wake of the 'war on terrorism' as having ramifications not just for those residents who live in failing and failed states, but for whatever remains of the outside world also (Brinkerhoff, 2011). Fragile states can offer shelters for terrorists to lead operations that imperil the lives of peoples living far away from those nations. Fragile states have been alluded to as a 'sleeping giants' constituting a danger that requires coordinated and collaborative effort to dealt with (Bertocchi & Guerzoni, 2012).

The contribution of state fragility in conflict and civil war has highlighted the significance of governance in building peace, seeking after state reconstruction and preventing the occurrence of conflict (Rocha Menocal, 2011). While practitioners and researchers have produced substantial amount of information and experience-based lessons for building governance in nations with working governments and relative security, the condition of theoretical and practical knowledge regarding the building or reconstructing of effective governance structure in post-conflict and war-torn social settings is still in its earliest stages (Risse, 2013).

Essentially all definitions of fragility in the literature see the serious absence of state capacity as well as the attendant consequence of ineffective service delivery as the epi-center of fragility. Numerous definitions additionally incorporate political instability (Olowu & Chanie, 2015), lack of political will" (Bertocchi & Guerzoni, 2011), lack of voice and accountability (Zürcher, 2012) and a deficit of legitimacy (Grävingholt, Ziaja, & Kreibaum 2011). All these attributes significantly affect state-society relations through decreasing capacity and legitimacy of the state across key areas and functions.

Recently Nigeria has feature prominently among countries with some attributes of fragility and failure cheaply due to the persistent incidence of domestic terrorism and act of insurgency that have continue to give a negative impression of the Government capacity (Meagher, 2014). This paper therefore, attempts to provide a comparative analysis of how absence of good governance provides a fertile ground for the emergence and sustainability of terrorism in both Nigeria and Iraq by using the social identity theory. The rationale for making such comparison is twofold; firstly while the activities of the insurgence in both countries has strong connotation with the social identity theory base on religious inclination. The second, albeit more important is the fact that an extensive review of the key findings on drivers of violence shows that all these attributes are present in both countries. For instance Relative deprivation, horizontal inequality (Besancon, 2005), Ethnic/religious division, dominance, exclusion (Fearon & Laitin, 2003), Natural resource rents and unfairness (Tadjoeddin et al., 2003), Repressive, authoritarian government (Zartman, 1997), Unavailable, unresponsive, skewed public services(Vaux & Visman, 2005), Lack of security (Collier et al., 2003), Natural resource rents and 'lootables'(Soysa &

Neumeyer, 2007), High unemployment (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004), Poverty and weak/stagnant economic growth (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). Couple with the fact that Countries highly depends on natural resources are identified as especially prone to risk of civil war (Caselli & Coleman, 2013; Rustad & Binningsbø, 2012 & Janus, 2012).

The concept of Governance

Peters (2011) sees governance as economic policy-making and implementation, the delivery of service and responsible utilization of public funds and of administrative power. Yet another definitions address how government associates with different segments and with citizens. For instance, Risse (2013) considers governance to 'relate to the capacity of government to evolve a productive, effective, and responsible public management mechanism which foster citizen's inclusiveness and that which reinforces the democratic system of government'.

Frenk, and Moon (2013) conceptualized it as 'how institutions, rules and systems of the state executive, legislature, judiciary, and military operate at central and local level and how the state relates to individual citizens, civil society and the private sector'. Datta, (2013) view it as 'the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels' The last definitions unequivocally emphasize the connectivity between the political dimension of governance to with the technocratic components of macroeconomic management and the operational capacity of the public organization, which thus reflected in how governance is tended to in failed states. These integrative definitions describe how this paper treats governance.

Theoretical framework
Social Identity Theory

In as much as no individual is an island, social identity theory holds that individuals determine who they are and to which social group they have a place by participating in a procedure of putting individuals, including oneself, into groups, a subjective affiliation, and inclination toward one's own particular group and its importance (Hogg & Terry, 2014). To perfectly capture how the social identity works, require a comprehension of the concept of "belonging," which can be understood by analyzing the personality traits, orientation and perceptions, including cultural norms and behavioral attributed goals (Smith, 2014). These attribute plays significant role in explaining the feeling of belongings, the person who feels that the state is not receptive to their needs, particularly the basic security, which is freedom from need and fear, and may be compelled to searches out a substitute community (Zagefka, & Jamir, 2015).

To this end, once individuals appraise the conditions of their lives, their surroundings, and themselves, from one perspective, and the group or movement they wish to join on the other, they tend to evolve the social attributes that would permit them to join such group officially (Smith, 2014). A social group, in this way, depends on three interconnected factors: An insecure situation, which empowers the group to show particular social qualities and to which the disappointed, oppressed individual can relate; a device to bond the masses with the group and Self-interest (Zagefka, & Jamir, 2015).

Regarding the political atmosphere, the social group needs to underline the way that the state failed to provide the individual the essential security that they needed and merited. Also, the state may even have indirectly contributed in undermining security by neglecting to deliver it, as well as participating in action that is unsafe to all or some portion of the populace, therefore paving the way for the affected citizens to search for succor elsewhere. The group may likely capitalize on an existing sense of insecurity by raising a false alarm thereby portraying the scenario in a specific light as an approach to gain the support of individuals who might as of now share some of its perspectives and by elevating the group's capacity to manage those problems, along these lines underlining the group's quality and value. The test for contending social groups is showing to present and potential supporters that the group is adequately sufficiently effective to concentrate concessions from established political actors, who might just offer concessions as a component of a bargaining procedure with the individuals who represent a danger to them and to the state itself. Accordingly, a social group needs a bond to unify its individuals together and guarantee an enduring supply of newcomers, as the group will take part in exercises that could thin its positions in somehow (Zagefka, & Jamir, 2015).

Religion is an exceptionally powerful bond, particularly in times of social emergency that regularly happen when insecurity flourishes, which pave the way for the promoter of the religion to offer a radical interpretation that underlines individuals' sentiments of alienation. it is imperative to note that, religion has a strong tendency for identity cementation as it establishes the base for a message that addresses the spiritual and physical worlds (Cote & Levine, 2014).

The third component in the process is the group's self-interest the absolute necessity to act to draw in support and underlining the group's distinctiveness from possible competitors. Imperative here is that insurgence organizations are the same as all other groups in that they also seek to survive (Zagefka, & Jamir, 2015) It is thus precisely not the case that religious extremism feeds religiously inspired terrorism out of lack of awareness; it is instead a profoundly objective decision, and violence plays a key part in establishing the conditions that encourage the rise of social group.

When all the three pillars above are view from the parlance of the economics of religion, it thus provides insight into the religious-based social group. The economics of religion recognizes the presence of two groups: religious producers and religious consumers, with the previous needing to sell an item specifically a perspective that they trust the former will acknowledge. For this transaction to succeed, in any case, the religious producers require conditions that underscore their usefulness and even necessity for individuals (Mitchell, 2013).

Relevance of Identity theory to Nigeria and Iraq situations
In sum, while applying the social group identity theory to ISIS it becomes clear that the organization in Iraq seeks to make an insecure situation, either through its own particular brutal actions or in fostering strife with state powers. By narrowing the marketplace of religion, ideas, and in particular, identities, ISIS then exploits the situation by guaranteeing that if one follows its motivation, security physical, economic, social, social, and religious will surely take after. This can best be infer from its 16-point report, published soon after it assumed control Mosul, which proclaimed, "Individuals attempted secular forms of government: republic, Baathist, Safavids.It tormented you. Presently is the ideal opportunity for an Islamic state (Cronin, 2015). A similar pattern of strategy is also adopted by the Boko haram in the north-eastern Nigeria, as the sect continue to create and unsecure environment in the region by unleashing violence on innocent citizens which is stylistically geared toward exposing the weakness of the Government in providing adequate security for the citizenry (Omede & Omede, 2015).

Poor Governance and the foundation of fragility in Iraq and Nigeria
Iraq set out the starting conditions for the emergence of antinomian elements: increased sectarianism caused by insufficient valuation for the need to take part in social balancing to avoid grievances, the use of fierce tactics to venture power, and the capacity to draw in a surge of foreign fighters. In addition, the decades-long Saddam administration depended on trepidation to sustain itself as well as on an extensive patronage system, installed a society in which Iraqis instinctively consider having a connection with someone in power as the only means of benefiting from social security and state resources (Bouillon, 2012).The political situation was undermined by widespread corruption among the decision makers, with contracts "won" by companies and individuals with close ties to senior Iraqi politicians. Today, Iraq's economic system is to a great extent a result of the successive orders issued by the CPA, whose policies advanced the conditions for corrupt practices that had long been uncontrolled (Dodge, 2013).

For a considerable length of time, Iraqis depended on a system of patronage that saw millions just because they were members of the Ba'ath Party working for the state, giving them enormous power. The CPA policies, especially the decentralization project, served to highlight social identities, which implied that the patronage system changed just in so far as the fundamental identities supplanted the Ba'athists as the "connected" class. Instead of connecting social capital, which is the advancement of trust and collaboration among groups and it is an absolute necessity given Iraq's ethnic and social divisions that a system which advanced reinforced social capital or the advancement of trust and participation among groups evolved (Ali, 2013).

It is in this manner no surprise that post-2003 Iraq displayed an apparent total absence of trust across each feature of society and a constantly changing relationship between tribes, gangs, and the insurgency of the day. As reconstruction accumulated force, those who had been avoided from the economic system under Saddam seized the opportunity that accompanied de-Ba'athification and the imperfect reconstruction process to demand their share. Be that as it may, what distinguished these new actors from their predecessors was their willingness to take part in widespread violence (Muggah, 2013). The Syrian civil war shaped ISIS's tactics seizing territory, controlling smuggling routes, and working with nearby actors, most importantly it established a strong nexus with conflict in Iraq, where Sunnis clashed with the Maliki administration, with that of Syria, giving the Iraqi Sunni more support to strive for, an Islamic State of Sunnistan (Stigall, 2014).

In Nigeria, the political landscape is epitomized by intense shortage of social infrastructure and basic amenities of life such as sounds roads, effective public transport system, power, water, schools and hospitals. As a rule, the state depicts a character average of a ruthless rentier states exemplified by clientelism, patrimonialism and

repression (Meagher, 2014). Public policies and decisions of political office holders mirror the interest of the few ruling class and always spill out from top to bottom. Politicians impose laws, public policies and decisions that have no bearing on for the genuine needs of citizens. Indeed, even so, execution of laws, public policies or decisions is selective, regularly as per the interests and intentions of degenerate politicians (Afeno, 2012).

Democratic system in Nigeria obviously neglects the welfare of citizens. Nothing else best explains this situation than the issues of governance, where politicians have acted in manners that are without responsibility, transparency and responsiveness. Obviously, good governance can assure citizens of equivalent access to opportunities that ensure citizens self-completion. This absence of welfare, for which politicians have, best case scenario get to be expository about, is a shortage in Nigeria's democracy (Felix & Okumoko, 2014). This perpetually makes so many people to start questioning the capacity of liberal democracy in enhancing the living conditions of citizens (Omede & Omede, 2015).

The above factors provide impetus for some aggrieved citizens to start challenging the legitimacy of the western political system especially where the fundamental values of democracy are weakly internalized. More so as coercion and warfare were instrumental in establishing the western political system in the north by the British which saw the forceful annihilation of the pre-colonial emirate system fashioned along the Islamic caliphate model of governance. So with the inability of the new system to achieve societal transformation the insurgence leaders capitalize on that to gather support for their separatist agenda.

Governance as mitigating factors
In order to appreciate the role of Governance in mitigating violence and insurgency, there is the need to understand the environment that breeds the insurgency in the first place. It is imperative to note that both Boko Haram and ISIS adopted a strategy similar to Maoist insurgency strategy which is a multi-facets approach that revolves around Environment, popular supports and organization, which requires gradual implementation through three important stages as follows:
Organization-terrorism: which focus on political organization gaining popular supports through mobilization and spread of the insurgence ideology.
Guerilla warfare: this involves the use of hit and run strategy which aims at demoralizing the government and creating and insecure environment.
Mobile conventional warfare: this is the final stage characterized by offensive and open warfare between the Government force and the insurgence, involving capturing and overrunning territories (Ker, 2012).

The Maoist strategy of insurgency warfare has been copied and used by both ISIS and Boko Haram with the view to overthrow their respective government. However, it is imperative to note that the key factor in the success of this strategy is popular supports both passive and active but most importantly the active one. This is because gaining and sustaining popular support ultimately determines the survival or eitherwise of the insurgency by providing able bodies, expertise, food, shelter and momentum to the insurgence without which surely insurgency will fail (Ker, 2012).

The above highlight the role of Governance as the most crucial factor in the success or eitherwise of an insurgency, in the sense that supports and momentum enjoys by the group depend to a large extent on the manner in which Government respond to the plight of the masses (Olojo, 2013).   It is imperative to note that of all the considerable number of factors that have an impact on the advancement and result of rebellions, none is more essential than the government's reaction (Oyeniyi, 2010). Government reaction is the most vital element in light of the fact that the government has the capacity to rectify or refute the conditions that offered ascends to the revolt in the first place. What the government does or fails to do and how it performs has an immediate bearing on the strategy and method of fighting the insurgence adopt and the nature and degree of challenges they must cope with in the accomplishment of their mission. The more government reactions are informed, judicious, important, and prudent and disciplined, the more difficult it becomes for the insurgence.

Conclusion and recommendations
To this end, three important role needs to be play by the Government of both countries which involve:
Reconstituting legitimacy
Legitimacy depicts the citizen's recognition of a governing regime as lawful and appropriate. Without some degree of legitimacy, states experience difficulties in operation and loss of legitimacy to some portion of the society is one of the most important contributors of state fragility and emergence of insurgence. Reconstituting legitimacy in states like Nigeria and Iraq involve ensuring grassroots support and participation, reducing imbalances, entrenching accountability, fighting corruption and conducting free and fair election.

Re-establishing security

It is evident that the most important priority of both countries is on how to deal with the absence of security. This requires some vital actions such as military offensiveness, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. However the success of the last three heavily relies on the state capacity to restart the economy and create economic opportunities; reintegration will endure the likelihood of arm robbery and crime if economic opportunities are not present. Humanitarian and emergency relief is also very vital in order to address wrecked infrastructure and the internally displaced persons.

Rebuilding effectiveness

Reconstructing effectiveness has to do with the capacities and functions of the public sector. Good governance here means, for instance, satisfactory and working local democracy, broadly accessible health care and better schools, procurement of roads and transportation systems and consideration regarding social security nets. There is also the need to involve private sector in a kind of public-private partnership as this has proved to be very effective in infrastructural development in other countries.

References

Afeno, O. S. (2012). The Boko Haram uprising and insecurity in Nigeria: intelligence failure or bad governance? Conflict Trends, (1), 35-41.

Ali, A. A. (2013). Displacement in a fragile Iraq. Forced Migration Review, 43, 58-59.

Bertocchi, G., & Guerzoni, A. (2012). Growth, history, or institutions What explains state fragility in sub-Saharan Africa?. Journal of Peace Research, 49(6), 769-783.

Besançon, M. L. (2005). Relative resources: inequality in ethnic wars, revolutions, and genocides. Journal of Peace Research, 42(4), 393-415.

Besley, T., & Persson, T. (2011). Fragile states and development policy. Journal of the European Economic Association, 9(3), 371-398.

Bouillon, M. E. (2012). Iraq's state-building enterprise: State fragility, state failure and a new social contract. International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies, 6(3), 281-297.

Brinkerhoff, D. W. (2011). State fragility and governance: Conflict mitigation and subnational perspectives. Development Policy Review, 29(2), 131-153.

Caselli, F., & Coleman, W. J. (2013). On the theory of ethnic conflict. Journal of the European Economic Association, 11(s1), 161-192.

Collier, P. (2003). Breaking the conflict trap: Civil war and development policy. World Bank Publications.

Collier, P., & Hoeffler, A. (2004). Greed and grievance in civil war. Oxford economic papers, 56(4), 563-595.

Cote, J. E., & Levine, C. G. (2014). Identity, formation, agency, and culture: A social psychological synthesis. Psychology Press.

Cronin, A. K. (2015). ISIS Is Not a Terrorist Group. Foreign Affairs, 94(2), 87-98.

Datta, K. (2013). Governance–A Simple Attempt to Measure. Economic Affairs,58(4s), 485-491.

Dodge, T. (2013). State and society in Iraq ten years after regime change: the rise of a new authoritarianism. International Affairs, 89(2), 241-257.

Fearon, J. D., & Laitin, D. D. (2003). Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war. American political science review, 97(01), 75-90.

Felix, J. M., & Okumoko, T. P. (2014). Combating Insecurity in Nigeria: An Integrated Conflict Management Approach. Journal of Empirical Economics,3(4), 232-238.

Frenk, J., & Moon, S. (2013). Governance challenges in global health. New England Journal of Medicine, 368(10), 936-942.

Grävingholt, J., Ziaja, S., & Kreibaum, M. (2015). Disaggregating state fragility: a method to establish a multidimensional empirical typology. Third World Quarterly, 36(7), 1281-1298.

Grimm, S., Lemay-Hébert, N., & Nay, O. (2014). 'Fragile States': introducing a political concept. Third World Quarterly, 35(2), 197-209.

Hogg, M. A., & Terry, D. J. (Eds.). (2014). Social identity processes in organizational contexts. Psychology Press.

Janus, T. (2012). Natural Resource Extraction and Civil Conflict. Journal of Development Economics, 97(1), 24-31.

Ker, I. (2012). Diagnostic Review of Insurgency in Nigeria: The Cultural Dimension. In The Eminent and Expert Working Group Meeting on National Counter Insurgency Strategy.

Meagher, K. (2014). Beyond terror: addressing the Boko Haram challenge in Nigeria.

Mitchell, M. C. (2013). Religion, identity and politics in Northern Ireland: boundaries of belonging and belief. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Muggah, R. (2013). Stabilization operations, security and development: States of fragility. Routledge

Olojo, A. (2013). Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram. Retrieved August, 12, 2015.

Olowu, D., & Chanie, P. (Eds.). (2015). State Fragility and State Building in Africa: Cases from Eastern and Southern Africa (Vol. 10). Springer.

Omede, J., & Omede, A. A. (2015). Terrorism and Insecurity in Nigeria: Moral, Values and Religious Education as Panaceas. Journal of Education and Practice, 6(11), 120-126.

Oyeniyi, A. B. (2010). Terrorism in Nigeria: Groups, Activities, and Politics. International Journal of Politics and Good Governance, 1(1), 1-16.

Peters, B. G. (2011). Governance as political theory. Critical policy studies, 5(1), 63-72.

Risse, T. (Ed.). (2013). Governance without a state?: policies and politics in areas of limited statehood. Columbia University Press.

Rocha Menocal, A. (2011). State Building for Peace: a new paradigm for international engagement in post-conflict fragile states? Third World Quarterly, 32(10), 1715-1736.

Rustad, S. A., & Binningsbø, H. M. (2012). A price worth fighting for? Natural resources and conflict recurrence. Journal of Peace Research, 49(4), 531-546

Smith, E. R. (2014). Social Identity and Social Emotions: Toward New Conceptualizations of Prejudice. Affect, cognition and stereotyping: Interactive processes in group perception, 297.

Soysa, I. D., & Neumayer, E. (2007). Resource wealth and the risk of civil war onset: results from a new dataset of natural resource rents, 1970–1999.Conflict Management and Peace Science, 24(3), 201-218.

Stigall, D. E. (2014). Global Brief (Definition): The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is... Global Brief, 61-61

Tadjoeddin, M. Z., Suharyo, W. I., & Mishra, S. (2003, March). Aspiration to inequality: regional disparity and centre-regional conflicts in Indonesia. In UNI/WIDER Project Conference on Spatial Inequality in Asia, Tokyo, Japan (pp. 28-29).

Vaux, T., & Visman, E. (2005). Service delivery in countries emerging from conflict. DFID, London.

Zagefka, H., & Jamir, L. (2015). Conflict, fear and social identity in Nagaland. Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 18(1), 43-51.

Zartman, I. W. (1997). Governance as conflict management: Politics and violence in West Africa. Brookings Institute Press

Zürcher, C. (2012). Conflict, state fragility and aid effectiveness: insights from Afghanistan. Conflict, Security & Development, 12(5), 461-480.