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Contents

Nigeria:
Good governance as a tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period

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Abstract: The ongoing insurgency in Nigeria`s north east region bears features of violent extremism. Though, the conflict has not ended but the role good governance is expected to play in combating violent extremism when the insurgency comes to end is very significant. This study examined good governance as a tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north east Nigeria. It was conducted with the used of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The study found out that violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north-east Nigeria can be combated using good governance. It also recommended the promotion of good governance through the provision of employment opportunities, effective poverty reduction programs, encouraging sustainable post-insurgency peace building through multi-track diplomacies and unbiased social, economic and political rehabilitation projects.

Keywords: Combating, Extremism, Good-Governance, Post-Insurgency, Tool and Violent.

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Introduction

Good governance penciled on the ability of political leaders to impact positively on the life of citizens especially in the areas of social and basic amenity provision as well as developing and implementing public policies with maximum positive impact on the living condition of people (Almond, 2006). Society depends largely on the mannerism of its leader to achieve success. Therefore, the result of corrupt leadership in Africa is embodied as poor governance manifested in consistent political crisis, insecurity, new

conflicts, extreme poverty among the citizens, debilitating miasma of corruption and rising unemployment indices (Imhonopi and Ugochukwu, 2013). It is obvious that people in Nigeria`s north-east region have experienced several forms of deprivation of rights in social, economic and political aspects of lives since insurgency started in the region and to address these, good governance is needed as a working tool for achieving durable and sustainable peace especially in the area of combating violent extremism in the post-insurgency period in the region. Good governance leads to the establishment of a responsive regime suitable for utilizing the public commonwealth in the development of persons and infrastructures so as to further the growth of social, economic and political indices of the state.

Insurgency in northeastern Nigeria started in 2009 when the Jihadist rebel group Boko Haram started an armed rebellion against the Nigerian government. The group was led by Abubakar Shekau until August 2016 when he was succeeded by Abu Musab al-Barnawi. Of 2.3 million people displaced by the insurgency since May 2013, at least 250,000 have left Nigeria and fled into Cameroun, Chad or Niger. Boko Haram killed over 6,600 in 2014. The group have carried out mass abduction, including the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in April 2014. The violence escalated dramatically in 2014 with 10, 849 deaths in addition to initially 1,000 reported death cases in 2013. The insurgency spread in 2014 to neighboring Cameroun, Chad and Niger thus making the conflict a regional battle. Boko Haram has been called the world`s deadliest terrorist group, in terms of the number of people it has killed in the ongoing insurgency (Vanguard, 2016; BBC, 2016; Windsor, 2015; Buchanan, 2015). The replacement of Abubakar Shekau with Abu Musab-al-Barnawi happened after the battle for Konduga in which the Nigerian government forces forcefully pushed Boko Haram out of Konduga to recaptured the town back. It was announced that Shekau had been killed as the government forces displayed the picture of an insurgent killed in the battle as the dead body of Shekau. Shortly afterward, Shekau bounces back in his usual way and manner of sending messages to the Nigeria Government through the internet and announced that he was not killed in the battle for Konduga and that he still remains the leader of Boko Haram. It was later confirmed by the government forces that the insurgent killed was not actually Shekau. And that Shekau is still alive (Baba &Sheriff, 2018).

Nigerian government`s establishment of a state of emergency at the beginning of 2012, extended in the following year to cover the entire north-east Nigeria, led to an increase in both security force abuses and militant attacks (Nicholas, 2015). This, in turn, instead of arresting the insurgency, culminated in its severity than the pre-state of emergency period. The confusion and controversial conditions created under the state of emergency rule have not yet been addressed. Killings rose than before, brutality grew higher, civilians became helpless as some of the attacks on highways are done by people one cannot

ascertain whether they are Insurgents of Nigerian government forces. The security scenario in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states became undefined as the demarcation between those fighting in defense of national interest and those killing in the name of God became relatively narrowed. Insurgents devised several strategies with which they countered government forces tactics to contain them. Anxiety rose ever than before, military transfer of aggression on innocent civilians grew with time and as such several citizens fled their homes in anticipation of possible aggressive military raiding. This also contribute in building up the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP`s) by the insurgency (Baba, 2018; Baba & Sambo, 2016).

The declaration of a state of emergency rule in northeastern Nigeria by the federal government of Nigeria has failed in ending the insurgency the region is suffering from. Military alleged taking over of the Sambisa forest and its establishment of camp zero there in has also not ended attacks across the region. Insurgency at initial stage may be possibly contained but once extended, fire power hardly ends it. In some cases, insurgency live longer than expectation. It does not end easily overnight and military power has not successfully crushed it to end anywhere in the world. It ends itself for natural reasons like the death of its sponsors and strategists; in other, it melted and subdue itself into bodies of factions with several leaders fighting a common cause; at times, it broke into groups with different lords fighting against themselves for lack of unify aim of struggling thus, reducing their engagement of government forces. Dialogue rather than military power has subdued it in some cases but with resurgence witnessed in the advent of violation of agreement reached by parties involved in the conflict. In north eastern Nigeria, insurgency is still on but with reduction in waves of attacks and rise in military successes in neutralizing attacks and dislodging insurgents, it is expected that the conflict which many believed had lasted longer will soon come to end. And, the role of good governance in combating violent extremism in the post-insurgency period becomes sensitive.

Statement of the problem

Empirical studies on insurgency in north eastern Nigeria like Baba (2018) and Baba and Sambo (2017) have pointed out issues related with humanitarian crises amounting from the conflict. Nicholas (2015), Windsor (2015), Buchanan (2015), Baba and Sheriff (2018) offered a historical analysis of causes, effects and possible questions that may arise demanding answers in the post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria. But they were unable to identify and examine the role bad governance played in the promotion of the conflict.

A study by Joseph (2013) examined bad governance as a contributing factor to internal conflicts and good governance as its necessary solution. But no attention was paid to insurgency in Nigeria`s North-East region by him. His analysis pointed most at leader-

ship failure in governance with attention to Africa as a whole. He has not pointed at the age long insurgency troubling Nigeria especially in its northeastern region.

Studies by Ebegbulem (2009) or Imhonopi and Ugochukwu (2013) have not also been able to examine the role good governance is expected to play as a tool in combating violent extremism in northeastern Nigeria in post-insurgency period. Their analysis centered most on corruption`s effect on good governance. Little attention was paid by the scholars to governance and conflicts as well as ways through which good governance can be used to promote sustainable peace and discouraged violent extremism in post conflict period.

Baba (2018), Baba and Sheriff (2018) and Baba and Sambo (2017) adopted the primary method of data collection in their studies on the ongoing insurgency in northeastern Nigeria while studies by Nicholas (2015), Mark (2015), Akimbi (2015), More (2015), Karimi and Abubakar (2015) on the insurgency were conducted using secondary method of data collection. The adoption of both methods of analysis has not been witnessed or done in available studies on insurgency in Nigeria`s northeastern region.

However, it is in order to bridge up the above identified research gaps that this study was necessitated.

Objective of the study

The general objective of the study is to examine good governance as a tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria. Its specific objectives include;

1. To find out the possible composites of good governance in northeastern Nigeria.
2. To investigate the relationship between good governance and combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.
3. To identify ways through which good governance can be used to combat violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.

Research question

The questions of the study are:

1. What are the possible composites of good governance in northeastern Nigeria?
2. How will good governance relate with combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria?
3. What are the ways through which good governance can be used to combat violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria?

Hypothesis

In pursuance of the objectives stated and the questions raised, the following hypotheses are made:

Ho; Good governance is a tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.

1. H1; Good governance has possible composites in northeastern Nigeria.
2. H2; Good governance will relate with combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.
3. H3; Good governance can be used to combat violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.

Literature review

Insurgency in Nigeria`s north-east region is still ongoing with pocket of attacks and resurgence of the conflict occasionally witnessed in communities across the region especially in the most vulnerable states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. The ability to manage conflict conditions properly is an alternative measure towards the establishment and promotion of quality governance. Under the condition of peace and stability, infrastructural development is highly guaranteed. The development of infrastructure and sustainable peaceful condition for life improvement activities translate in good governance. Considering the destruction amounting from insurgency, the northeastern region of Nigeria need a bureaucratic system that encourages infrastructural development. This can successfully be achieved with effective and accountable governance system in place in the region. Core infrastructural development has atrophied with bureaucracies designed through good governance. Although, Joseph (2013) observed that the general low quality of governance in Sub-Saharan African countries is correlated to their level of economic development. This implies that the economy of the northeastern region of Nigeria is a sensitive factor in the security situation the area found itself in.

Good governance is an effective tool for combating violent extremism which may likely come up in the post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria. The need for economic and political development in north-east Nigeria make the desire for entrenching good governance and combating violent extremism an important issue. Ardo (2013) submitted that globalization has imposed on Africa, the dire need for good governance as the prerequisite to her economic and political development. But then, in Nigeria`s northeastern region, the dire need for good governance is first to combat violent extremism in the post-insurgency period leading to economic and political development of the region. Considering the security situation in this region, it is apparent that good governance is the most required tool for combating insecurity. Allence (2004), in a similar reaction, stated that "political institutions and governance are leading items

on African development agenda". The north eastern Nigeria is not an exception in this case. As insurgency in the region extended beyond expectation, people`s attention was drawn to political institutions, those heading them and their governing style thus making governance an important matter in post-insurgency peace building and rehabilitation in the region.

More (2015) reported that the insurgency in north eastern Nigeria "took place within the context of long-standing religious violence between Nigeria`s Muslim and Christian communities". Though, Boko Haram consistently claimed it is fighting to establish Islamic state and law in Nigeria. But then, the reasons why more Muslims are attacked and killed in the conflict than people from any other religion is enough reason to argue the basis that the group is fighting for the sake of Islam. Most of the communities attacked and persons displaced in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states which are the battle fronts had more Muslims than Christians. Suicide bombings that took place in most of the soft spots across Nigeria have claimed the lives of more Muslims than Christians. Several Muslim Ulamas in Major towns, especially in Borno and Yobe states, have been attacked while few others have been killed especially in Maiduguri, the Borno state capital (Karimi & Abubakar, 2015). In most of the camps, if not all where Internally Displaced Persons (IDP`s) are settled, there is hardly one without Muslims. This implies that the insurgency was affiliated with Islam by Boko Haram in order to deceive ignorant young ones who were ever willing to fight and die in the name of God into joining the group and build up more combatants needed to take up arms against the Nigerian state and authority (Baba & Sheriff, 2018).

In mid-2014, the insurgents gained control of swathes of territory in and around their home states of Borno, estimated at 50,000 square kilometers (20,000sq mi) and hold tight to this territory up to January 2015, but did not capture the state capital Maiduguri where the group was originally based (Akimbi, 2015). But the Nigerian Armed Forces DHQ (2015) shortly revealed that "Nigerian Troops Have Destroyed All Boko Haram Camps". The contradicting observation in this revelation as Baba and Sambo (2017) posited is the point that if all Boko Haram camps have been destroyed, then conquered territories have been liberated. If conquered territories have actually been liberated then there is no need to continue accommodating Internally Displaced Persons (IDP`s) in the various camps where hardships due to shortage of amenities is the order of the day. We may accept the fact that repairs especially reconstruction of facilities damaged need to be done before IDP`s can be returned to their various communities. But then, the problem as Mark (2015) earlier pointed out is the basic question of how long or soon it is going to take the Nigerian government in doing this so that the IDP`s most of whom are already hopeless of the possibility of starting a new life all over again can be given the hope of starting a life with prospect of achieving higher level and standard than before.

By May 2013 Boko Haram controlled large areas of territory in Borno State, including much of northern and central Borno and Damboa in southern Borno. The Nigerian military were already in Borno and Yobe States fighting a counter-insurgency campaign, as part of a Joint Task Force (JTF) that also includes the mobile police (MOPOL or riot police) and the department of state services (the domestic intelligence agency or state security service). However, Borno and Yobe are big states and the JTF were not able to patrol the whole region – they were more focused on the larger towns, including Maiduguri, and around their barracks. Boko Haram, therefore entrenched themselves in areas where there was a lighter military presence and also established 'camps' in the extensive savanna forest that extends across much of southern Borno and into parts of Yobe. From mid-May military reinforcements arrived in Borno and dislodged Boko Haram from some of these areas, even bombing them from the air. The military operation in north-east Nigeria is ongoing but although some information on the situation in Borno is filtering out, we still lack a detailed general picture because all of the mobile phone networks have been switched off in the three states under emergency rule. Information is mainly coming from press reports in Maiduguri, the state capital, from people in areas bordering Cameroun who can cross the border and make calls from there and from people leaving Borno State – including those who are relocating to other parts of the country.

On 14 May 2013, the Nigerian government declared a state of emergency in three northeastern states of the federation: Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. This was in response to growing violence by the militants operating under the rubric of Jama`atulahl al-sunnah li`l-da`wahwa'l-jihad (JASDJ) – 'The Association of the People of the Sunna for Proselytization and Armed Struggle'. The group is popularly known by the nickname 'Boko Haram', due to its opposition to secular and westernizing influences. Boko Haram emerged after breaking away from the reformist Salafi/Wahhabi groups in northern Nigeria that since the late 1970s have been challenging the established sufi orders, the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya. The ideology of Boko Haram draws selectively on Salafi ideas – which are diverse but hold that Muslims should live according to the rules and modes of conduct established by the Prophet Muhammad and the first three generations of his followers, the 'pious predecessors (al-salaf al-salih). Salafis emphasize the 'restoration of Islamic doctrines to a pure form', but the founding ideas of the Salafiyya movement in the early twentieth century also had a strong modernist streak encouraging educational reform and the acquisition of scientific and technological knowledge. The Boko Haram ideology, condemning secular education and any government or civil service work, deviates from Salafi doctrine. But Boko Haram do use technology, including the internet and mobile phones, and members of the group have acquired technical expertise to make explosives, including car bombs. It seems that as long as the knowledge helps their religious/political struggle, they are willing to utilize it (Iweze, 2014).

What is clear is that as Boko Haram fighters have been dislodged from some of the areas they were controlling or camped in, they have moved into more peripheral parts of Borno and over the borders into neighboring countries. Villages in the Gwoza Hills – the north-east extension of the Mandara Mountains that straddle north-east Nigeria and the far north of Cameroun – have been particularly badly affected as a result of militants relocating from the forested bush, including the Sambisa Forest Reserve and surrounding areas, into the mountains. Christians have been attacked by suspected Boko Haram militants in several villages in the Gwoza Hills and in Gwoza town, where some prominent local pastors and church members have been assassinated. There are also reports of opposing Muslim clerics and at least one traditional leader in the Gwoza area being killed – as has also been common practice by Boko Haram in other areas of the north. Most of the Christians have now left Gwoza town, mainly relocating to the vicinity of northern Adamawa but some have moved further, such as to Jos. Meanwhile, soldiers have been deployed into the Gwoza Hills and have been searching for guerrilla fighters in the caves (Nossiter, 2015). The military has carried out some aerial bombing and there has been a movement of refugees across the Mandara Mountains over the border from Nigeria into the far north of Cameroun. The northern and central areas of Borno have also seen military activity, with refugees and Boko Haram fighters moving across the border into southern Niger, especially to Diffa. Hostilities are reducing with time and attention in the north eastern region is drifting towards using good governance in combating violent extremism when the insurgency ends.

Methodology

The study was conducted with the use of secondary and primary methods. Secondary data were sourced through the use of journal articles, text books, magazines, newspapers, bulletins, diaries, conference and working papers as well as electronic materials. Primary data were obtained through the administration of structured interview on 30 respondents selected from a population of experts in governance and conflict studies in universities across north eastern Nigeria as the sample of the study using the stratified sampling technique. Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states because of their vulnerability to the insurgency were represented by 6 respondents each while Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba states were represented by 4 respondents each. Figure 1 below showed the location of north eastern Nigeria on map.

The instrument was administered by the researcher personally at different time in each of the 6 states. Primary data collected were analyzed using the frequency percentage (descriptive) with Correlation Analysis (CA) where statistical correlation was measured by coefficient correlation in which numerical values ranges from Ho to -1.0 gave the indication of the strength of relationship. Such as:

    r>o indicated positive relationship
    r<o indicated negative relationship
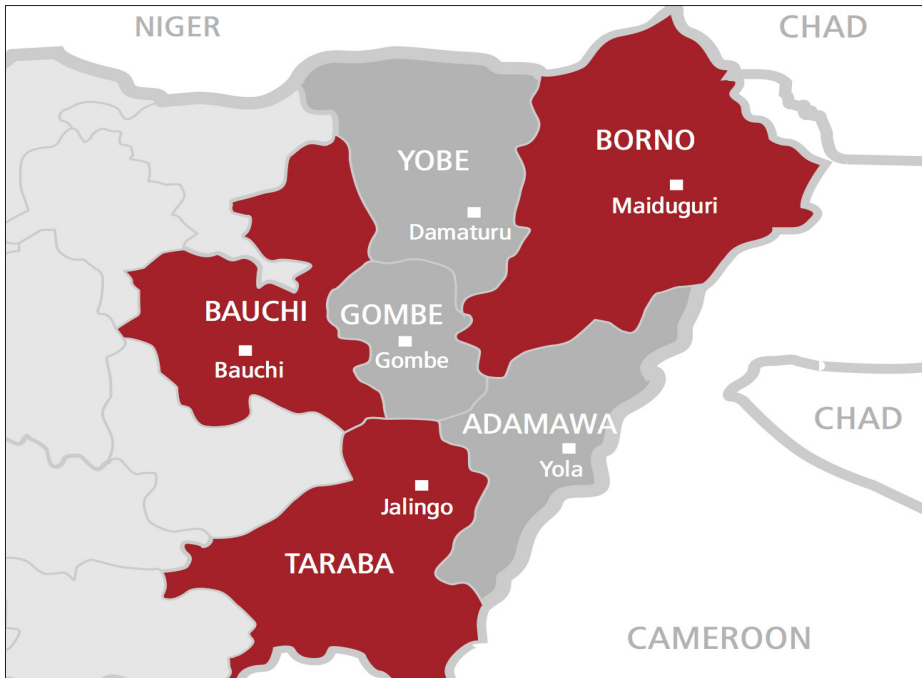
Figure 1: Map of North Eastern Nigeria showing areas of study marked with star

Source: http://aoav.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/
Screen-Shot-2013-12-12-at-02.29.10.png

r= +1.0 described a perfect positive correlation

r= 0.1 or –1.0 described a perfect negative correlation

The closer the coefficients are to +1.0 the greater the strength of relationship as specified below:

Value or r Strength of relationship

-1.0 to -0.5 or 1.0 to 0.5-----------------------Strong
-0.5 to -0.3 or 0.3 to 0.5-----------------------Moderate
-0.3 to -0.1 or 0.1 to 0.3-----------------------Weak
-0.1 to 0.1--Non-or very weak

The choice of this analytical tool has shown greater reliability as the correlation between good governance and combating violent extremism was confirmed by it. Furthermore, the frequency/percentage mean and standard deviation analytical tool was also adopted in testing the hypotheses formulated for the study and, it also showed greater reliability in confirming the correlation between good governance and combating violent extremism post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria.

Presentation and analysis of data

Below is the presentation and analysis of data:

Table 1: Combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period
in north eastern Nigeria through good governance

S/No	Addressing the research questions	1.0 SR	0.5 MR	0.3 WR	0.1 VWR
Q1	Good governance is an effective tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria.	21 70%	6 20%	2 6.67%	1 3.33%
Q2	Provision of employment opportunities, effective poverty reduction programs, encouraging post-insurgency peace building, provision of adequate social and basic amenities, unbiased social, economic and political rehabilitation projects are not the possible composites of good governance in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria.	2 6.67%	3 10%	5 16.66%	20 66.67%
Q3	There is a positive correlation between good governance and combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria.	24 80%	3 10%	1 3.33%	2 6.67%
Q4	Through the provision of the composites of good governance, violent extremism cannot be combated in north eastern Nigeria.	2 6.67%	4 13.33%	6 20%	18 60%

Q-Question, **PR**-Positive Relationship, **MR**-Moderate Relationship, **WR**-Weak Relationship and **VWR**-Very Weak Relationship.

Source: Author`s field survey (2020)

Table 1 shows a strong relationship between Q1 and good governance as an effective tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria. This is demonstrated by r>0 which is also r = +1.0 meaning perfect positive correlation. In Q2, table 1 shows a very weak relationship on provision of employment opportunities, effective poverty reduction programs, encouraging post-insurgency peace building, provision of adequate social and basic amenities, unbiased social, economic and political rehabilitation projects not been the composites of good governance in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria. This negative pattern of relationship is demonstrated by r<0 which is r = 0.1. Table 1 also shows a strong relationship on Q3 and there is positive correlation between good governance and combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria. This is reflected by 1.0 which is r>0 where r = 1.0 stands for perfect positive correlation. The correlation on Q3 on through the provision of the composites of good governance, violent extremism cannot be combated in north eastern Nigeria is a perfect negative correlation as 0.1 which is also r<0 and r = 0.1 refers to a very weak relationship.
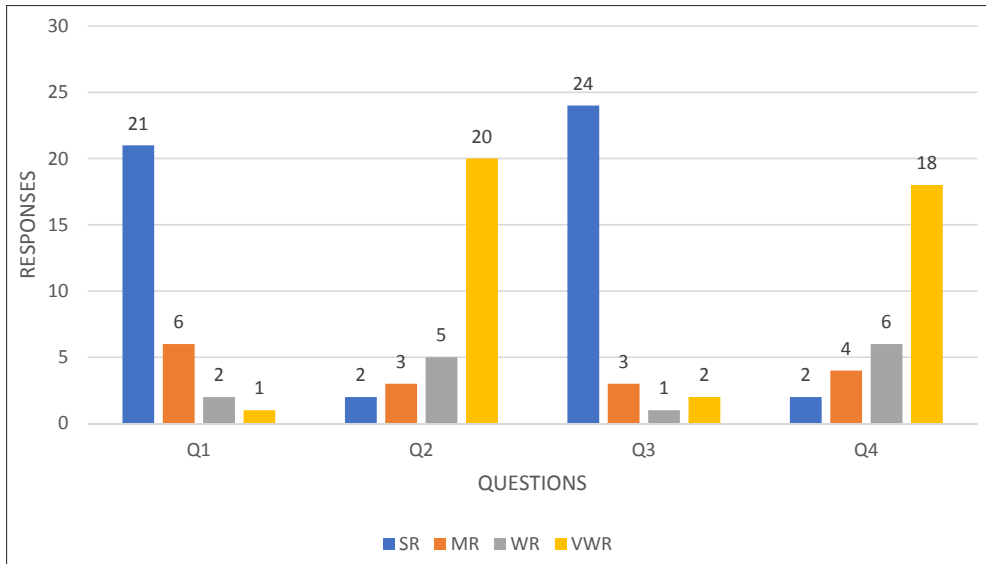
Figure 2: Combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period
in northeastern Nigeria through good governance

Source: Author`s field survey (2020)

Table 2: Testing the Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Frequency/Percentage						
	M	SD	SD	D	N	A	SA
Ho; Good governance is a tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in North eastern Nigeria.	2 6.67%	1 3.33%	2 6.67%	4 13.33%	21 70%	6	57.2
H1; Good governance has possible composites in north eastern Nigeria in the post-insurgency period.	1 3.33%	2 6.67%	1 3.33%	6 20%	20 66.67%	6	52.4
H2; Good governance will relate with combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria.	2 6.67%	1 3.33%	2 6.67%	4 13.33%	21 70%	6	57.2
H3; Good governance can be used to combat violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria.	2 6.67%	2 6.67%	1 3.33%	4 13.33%	21 70%	6	57.2

SD-Strongly Disagreed, **D**-Disagreed, **N**-Neutral, **A**-Agreed, **SA**-Strongly Agreed, **M**-Mean, **SD**-Standard Deviation

Table 2 tested the hypotheses formulated in pursuance of the objectives of the study. It shows the frequency percentage, mean and standard deviation scores for the 4 items on which hypotheses were formulated. The table (2) shows that all the hypotheses

have equal mean score of **M**=6. As hypothesis **H1** recorded a standard deviation score of **SD**=52.4 which is the lowest, table 2 shows that hypotheses **H1**, **H2** and **H3** recorded equal standard deviation score of **SD**=57.2. It was observed that frequency percentage (**FP**) average shows that 14.96% of the respondents chooses to agree (**A**) and 69.16% of them choses to strongly agree (**SA**) with the items and hypotheses tested for the study.

Discussion of results

Though, the insurgency in Nigeria`s north-east region has not ended. But when it does, good governance will serve as an effective tool for combating violent extremism in the post insurgency period in the region. The post-insurgency period is expected to be accompanied with several challenges of peace building and sustainability and these, good governance can very well have addressed. Bad governance amounting from leadership inability to improve the living conditions of people in the region contributed in the first place to the deterioration of security situation the region is suffering from. Therefore, good governance in the post-conflict era will not only restore the hope of security stability but also culminated in the development of services and facilities aimed at improving the living condition of people in the region. Leadership pattern where employment opportunities are available for the jobless youths in the region to be engaged with doing job is a necessary condition of good governance. Effective poverty reduction program that empower youths to become job giver than seekers counts as part of good governance. Idleness has created job to some of the insurgents because they had no support from the government to find one. Poverty alleviation scheme that shares money rather empowering youths in skill acquisition is better than sharing money on monthly basis thus leading to its politicization and exclusion of non-ruling party's loyalists from benefiting from the scheme.

The provision of adequate social and basic amenities such as water, electricity or power, medical or health facilities, schools to promote growth in literacy level and rate so as to reduced illiteracy, roads, effective housing system among others are part of good governance. In the post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria, it will be appreciative that unbiased social, economic and political rehabilitation projects count as composites of good governance. Rehabilitation project with inclusive dimension in which both victims and all other persons affected directly and indirectly by the insurgency are supported to have a second chance of living a descent life in the post-conflict era are part of good governance.

There is a positive correlation between good governance and combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria. The argument is that bad governance leads to frustration and grievances which culminated in the aggrieved taking arms against the state and government. Corruption is high among political leaders and poverty is high among the citizens. People`s life is married by severe hardship and

pathetic condition occasioned by low financial capability to afford the basic needs of life. Primary or physiological needs are beyond the affordable reach of most citizens while leaders wallow in flamboyancy with their spouses and kids to the admiration of the common citizens. These do not predict a stable security situation in the region but good governance does. The correlation between good governance and combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north eastern Nigeria is a positive one. It shows the connectivity of governance with security situation in the region. The region will be stable security wise if good governance and all its provides are delivered. But, short of these, instable security situation will for long torment the region as the correlation between bad governance and combating violent extremism is a negative one.

Major findings

As a result of the data collected, presented, analyzed and results discussed, the following major findings were made:

1. Good governance is an effective tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.
2. Good governance comprises providing employment opportunities, reducing poverty among the citizens, providing adequate social and basic amenities.
3. Bad governance breeds violent extremism leading to insurgency in this part of Nigeria.
4. Positive correlation exists between good governance and combating violent extremism in northeastern Nigeria.
5. Unbiased social, economic and political rehabilitation projects are likely to come up possibly as part of the composites of good governance in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.
6. Through the delivering of good governance, violent extremism can be combated in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.

Conclusion and recommendations

Due to the major findings made, the study arrived at the conclusion that good governance is a tool for combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria. It also reached the conclusion that the provision of employment opportunities as well as adequate social and basic amenities with effective poverty reduction programs are composites of good governance. The study also concluded that bad governance breeds violent extremism which culminated in insurgency in the north eastern region of Nigeria and that the correlation between good governance and combating violent extremism in the region is a positive one. It further concluded that in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria unbiased social. Economic and political rehabilitation projects are likely to come up possibly as part of the composites of good governance. The

study therefore, drew the conclusion that through the delivering of good governance, violent extremism can be combated in post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria.

Based on the conclusion drawn, the study recommended that:

1. Modalities for the promotion of good governance in the northeastern Nigeria should be started now and unto the post-insurgency period. This can be done through the provision of employment opportunities to engaged the idle youths as idleness has led some into taking job as insurgents. Employment opportunities can be created through the adoption of effective poverty reduction scheme in which jobless youth should be trained in skill acquisition rather than sitting at home and collecting monthly stipends. Empowering them through skill acquisition will make them job givers than seekers. Poverty reduction schemes in north eastern Nigeria like other regions of the country these days do not pay more attention to youths' empowerment. This should be discontinued or revived in north east Nigeria as the post-insurgency period is expected to be married by several challenges among which youth joblessness is tougher. Politicization of consideration of persons for placement in poverty alleviation scheme should also be discouraged. As a region just out of insurgency, the northeastern Nigeria in post-insurgency period will need a fair and equal opportunity to all irrespective of party affiliation for consideration in poverty reduction program.

2. Social and basic amenities should be adequately provided to the people in north eastern Nigeria to ameliorate the hardship promoted by inadequacy on one hand and bad governance on the other. Age-long insurgency had resulted in the destruction of several amenities and infrastructures in the region leading to hardship experienced by people in the area. Infrastructural development to ameliorate this hardship in necessary as part of entrenching good governance to avoid violent extremism in the post-insurgency period. An independent development commission empowered and charged with the responsibility of rebuilding destroyed infrastructures recorded by insurgency is required in northeastern Nigeria. A development commission to this effect had been established by the federal government of Nigeria but the sluggish nature of rebuilding infrastructures in the region make the capability of the commission in achieving this objective doubtable. Although, attacks are still on. Therefore, the incapability of the commission in rebuilding the region cannot be challengeable for now because rebuild facilities can again be destroyed resulting in work done equal to zero. But then, supports from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), International financial bodies like the World Bank, African Development Bank (ADB), among others should be solicited to come up as counterpart funders in the development project. More schools than those destroyed by the insurgency should be built. Affected schools should be renovated. Hospitals affected should be rebuilt. Bridges and culvert destroyed should be reconstructed. Water points affected should be repaired. And other civic institutions that render vital public services should be renovated and brought back to use. These will

make the post-insurgency period free from threat of violent extremism and possible resurgence of the insurgency it came out from.

3. Sustainable post-insurgency peace building mechanisms must be put in place as a precaution against violent extremism in the post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria. A multi-track diplomatic measures must be entrenched to ensure that aggrieved persons grievances are managed. Sustainable diplomatic mechanisms to harmonize persons in the region through persistent settlement of differences among them are needed. Stake holders in conflict management must take post-insurgency settlement as a unifying object of promoting sustainable peace in the region. Sustainable peace building and promotion must incorporate in itself, unbiased social, economic and political integration of persons irrespective of tribe, religion and other differences among people in the region. It should also be connected with rehabilitation of persons through sustainable rehabilitation projects the promote the social, economic and political well-being of people in the region. Those internally displaced should be rehabilitated. Recorded cases of abuse in the form of human rights violation during the conflict should be settled and victims duly compensated.

4. Durable and effective rule of law accompanied with active justice system should be entrenched and promoted in the post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria. Rule of law to which all as subjects are equal before it and which reign supreme above all is necessary. Justice system that dispense justice without fear or favor is also a necessary measure of avoiding a return to violent extremism and possible resurgence of insurgency in the region. Statements promoting hatred and encouraging disunity among people in the region should be thwarted using legal mechanisms and those promoting unity should be encouraged.

5. Post-insurgency forums for educating people on the need for peace and its advantages should be encouraged in north eastern Nigeria. The forums should bring the people of the region together in exchanging views and ideas on the need for sustainable peace in the region and how they can be partners to sustainable peace building in the region. Religion groups, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other humanitarian and charity groups can be useful in this aspect. People should be educated on the need for tolerance and forgiveness as well as be ready to harmonize with amicably with themselves despite their differences.

6. Political leaders in northeastern Nigeria should accept the challenges of delivering good governance to their people in post-insurgency period as a precaution against the rise of violent extremism and possible resurgence of insurgency. They should be willing to shun corruption in the administration of state and public affairs. Their attention should have shifted from amassing public wealth for personal gratification of senses to using it in the provision and delivering of the common public goods to their people. Accountability, prudence and commitment to utilizing the common public

wealth in providing the composites of good governance should reflect in their attitudes. Politicization of service provision and delivering should also be avoided by them. They should move closer to their people especially at the grassroot level periodically with a view to understanding their immediate problems and needs as well as how to improve their living conditions as good governance implies.

7. To also make the post-insurgency period in northeastern Nigeria free from violent extremism and return to insurgency, political leaders in the region should avoid the use of political thugs. Drop aside and abandoned political thugs haven groomed in violent can come up as a group to promote violent extremism and security instability in the post-insurgency period; development that will make peace far from achieving in the north eastern region of Nigeria. With jobs available, education affordable and poverty level reduced in north eastern Nigeria by political leaders, there will be no grouping of youth ganging up to destabilized peace and applicants for possible recruitment as combatants will not be available to violent groups. Therefore, leaders are expected to show much commitment through good governance in combating violent extremism in post-insurgency period in north east Nigeria.

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India–Kuwait:
Inter-Cultural Sensitivity, Cultural Intelligence and Conflict-handling Styles in Cross-cultural Interactions

Prachi BHATT

Abstract: The present explores inter-cultural sensitivity, cultural intelligence and conflict-handling style preferences of employees engaged in inter-cultural interactions. It further tests the influence of inter-cultural sensitivity, cultural intelligence on conflict-handling style preferences. Using self-report instruments, data was collected from respondents from India (N=103) and Kuwait (N=71) involved in work-related interactions with each other. Findings reveal that Indian and Kuwait respondents significantly differ on the three dimensions studied. The results also reveal that influence of cultural intelligence and inter-cultural sensitivity dimensions on conflict-handling style preferences vary for Indian and Kuwait employees. The present work contributes to the largely limited work in the area and offers valuable information facilitating better understanding and application of effective conflict handling styles in India–Kuwait cross-cultural work interactions.

Keywords: Conflict; inter-cultural sensitivity; cultural intelligence; conflict handling styles; India; Kuwait; cross-cultural interaction; effective conflict handling; cross-cultural conflict.

Introduction

With the deepened global exposure through various resources and channels, opportunities to interact with others across the borders have increased (Templer, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2006), and so has increased the scope of related conflicts. "Conflict style" is a culturally embedded, and culture plays a very important role in an individual's preference towards conflict styles (Ting-Toomey, 2006). A culturally diverse workplace is portrayed by differences in cultural values, attitudes, and work styles, which also have

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been the concerns for organisations (Chan & Goto, 2003; Sauceda, 2003). Thus, managerial focus has grown on the issues related to cultural diversity and conflicts induced due to cultural differences (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006), and on how to effectively manage them. Managing conflict is one of the new sets of global managerial skills considered important today. According to Miyahara, Kim, Shin and Yoon (1998), conflict and resolving conflict is a part of every culture, "the way it is expressed, perceived, and dealt with varies from culture to culture" (p. 506).

Understanding culture has evolved over region and time. In India, there lies a great opportunity for international and domestic companies to participate in the industry's growth and derive benefits out of it. According to the reports on India–Kuwait Trade and Economic Relation by Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2017; 2019), India–Kuwaiti relations have always had an important trade dimension involving a lot of cross-cultural interactions. This highlights the relevance to explore applicable cross-cultural aspects such as inter-cultural sensitivity (ICS), cultural intelligence (CQ), and conflict-handling styles of people belonging to globalized societies and working with each other.

Over the past few years, there has been an increased research focusing on the impact of cross-cultural aspects on conflict-handling (Gomez & Taylor, 2017; Bercovitch & Foulkes, 2012; Ting-Toomey, 2006). But previous studies on conflict management have majorly focused on investigation of western cultures' samples. But, studies that explore and compare conflict management styles between non-western cultures, such as Kuwait and India, are scant. Also, research assessing the association between conflict-handling styles, ICS and CQ dimensions are largely missing. Thus, the present study attempts to fill the gap by investigating the relationships between the above three important inter-cultural aspects and further attempts to test the influence of ICS, CQ on different conflict-handling style preferences of the Indian-Kuwait interactants.

The present study is beneficial on a number of levels. The results of this study can have important practical purposes in acknowledgement of the differences in ICS, CQ and conflict handling style preferences of India and Kuwait employees. Results can help to understand and to further facilitate future conflict management in the India–Kuwait intercultural work-settings.

1. Theory and hypotheses development

1.1 Conflict and culture

Conflict can occur in both cooperative and competitive contexts (Deutsch, 1973), which is concerned with low or high concern for self and low and high concern for others. Based on these two dimensions, five distinct behavioral conflict management strategies emerge i.e., integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising.

Obliging (high concern for others and low concern for self); avoiding (low concern for both self and others); compromising (medium concern for self and others); problem-solving (high concern for self and others); and forcing/ competing (high concern for self vs. low concern for others). Later, significant contributors simplified this typology (Thomas-Kilmann, 1974; Holt & DeVore, 2005).

According to Ting-Toomey, Yee-Jung, Shapiro, Garcia, Wright and Oetzel (2000), conflict interaction style "is learned within the primary socialization process of one's cultural or ethnic group. Individuals learn the norms and scripts of appropriate conflict conduct and effective conflict behavior in their ethnic and cultural environment" (p. 48). Researchers (Triandis, 2000; Vodosek, 2007) have proven that barriers and biases because of cultural difference, prejudices, and stereotypes increase the potential level of conflict in a culturally diverse setting more than in a culturally homogeneous workgroup. In cases of cross-cultural teams, cultural complexities emerge from different individualism or collectivism values (Staples & Zhao, 2006). Cultural tensions, misperceptions can exaggerate the conflict at both cognitive and affective levels (De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012; Tenzer, Pudelko, & Harzing, 2014). Difficulty in understanding different approaches and styles about other cultures influence work-teams immensely (Paletz, Miron-Spektor, & Lin, 2014).

In the Indian context, researches have largely compared groups such as gen Y and gen X (Mukundan, Dhanya, & Saraswathyamma, 2013), Muslims and Hindus (Croucher, Holody, Hicks, Oommen, & DeMaris, 2011), and gender (Jha, 2014) and found significant relationship between cross-cultural factors and conflict styles. Other researchers studied dynamics of negotiating behavior of Indians (Kumar, 2004), Indian software expatriates (Sulthana, 2016), and cross-cultural complexities in multicultural teams (Aza, 2017). Researches are scant covering conflict styles, ICS and CQ aspects especially in the Indian context, albeit these are important aspects for effectiveness in a culturally diverse work-settings.

1.2 Inter-cultural sensitivity and conflict

Inter-cultural sensitivity refers to "individual's ability to develop a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication" (Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 5). ICS is associated with a person's emotions toward inter-cultural interactions (Triandis, 1977). The feeling of participation in an intercultural communication is "interaction engagement". The way to orient to or tolerate counterpart's culture and opinion is "respect for cultural differences" aspect of ICS. Interaction confidence is "concerned with how confident the parties interacting in the intercultural setting". Interaction enjoyment dimension deals with participant's positive or negative reaction towards communicating with people from different cultures. The effort put in by a party in an

inter-cultural interaction to understand what is going on in an intercultural interaction is the "interaction attentiveness" dimension. ICS deals with the ability to learn and understand people belonging to different cultural backgrounds and hence being able to think and behave appropriately.

Indian organisations are faced with challenges of working in culturally different environments (Björkman & Lervik, 2007; Ting-Toomey *et al.*, 2000) as cultural complexities increase when interaction occurs cross-culturally. Gundara (2014) highlighted one possible way to manage and reduce conflicts encouraging the development of "interculturality". Cultural differences play a very important role in conflict-resolution between managers (Morris *et al.*, 1998). According to Awang-Rozaimie, Amelia, Aiza, Siti-Huzaimah, and Adib (2013), the magnitude of ICS moderately facilitates cross-cultural adjustment. Although cultural sensitivity has gained importance at workplace, but very few researches have explored it in relation with conflict-handling styles (Clements, 2017; Yu & Chen, 2008; Mao, 2010).

1.3 Cultural intelligence and conflict

Cultural intelligence (CQ) is "an individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings...a specific form of intelligence focused on capabilities to grasp, reason, and behave effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity" (Ang *et al.*, 2007, p. 337). CQ deals with the ability of an individual to discern appropriate interactions and not merely cognizant awareness of emotions or social occurrences (Thomas & Inkson, 2004). CQ is "meant to reflect the capability to deal effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds" (Thomas, 2006, p.78).

There are four components of CQ which include (a) cognitive, (b) meta-cognitive, (c) motivational, and (d) behavioral. Cognitive CQ "reflects knowledge of the norms, practices and conventions in different cultures acquired from education and personal experiences... those with high cognitive CQ understand similarities and differences across cultures" (Ang *et al.*, 2007, p. 338). Whereas, meta-cognitive CQ "reflects mental processes that individuals use to acquire and understand cultural knowledge... those with high meta-cognitive CQ are consciously aware of others' cultural preferences before and during interactions... they also... adjust their mental models during and after interactions" (Ang *et al.*, p. 338). Motivational CQ refers to the "capability to direct attention and energy toward learning about and functioning in situations characterized by cultural differences" (p. 338). It captures the ability to learn and act effectively in various situations. Finally, behavioral CQ is the "capability to exhibit appropriate verbal and non-verbal actions when interacting with people from different cultures... this includes having a wide and flexible repertoire of behaviors... exhibit situationally appropriate behaviors" (Ang *et al.*, p. 338). Behavioral quotient refers to the flexibility of an individual to demonstrate appropriate actions with individuals from other cultural contexts (Ng, Van Dyne, Ang, & Ryan, 2012; Ward, Wilson, & Fischer, 2011).

According to researches (Crowne, 2008; Engle & Crowne, 2014; Moon, Choi, & Jung, 2012), the international experience of individuals, however short, would impact CQ. CQ has evolved as a crucial dimension of success for individuals and organisations involved in consistent cross-cultural interactions (Ang, Van Dyne, & Rockstuhl, 2015). Researchers highlight importance of CQ in conflict-handling (Ramalu, Rose, Kumar, and Uli, 2010). CQ has been found to enhance accuracy of decision making (Ang, *et al.*, 2007), intercultural negotiation effectiveness (Van Dyne, Ang, Ng, Rockstuhl, Tan, & Koh, 2012; Imai & Gelfand, 2010), and interpersonal conflict resolution (Gonçalves, Reis, Sousa, Santos, Orgambídez-Ramos, & Scott, 2016). Caputo, Ayoko, & Amoo (2018), supports the moderating role of CQ between cultural orientations and conflict management style.

Scholars have argued that conflict is a culturally defined event. The management of inter-cultural interactions are emerging as a challenge in itself (Earley & Ang, 2003; Dusi, Messetti, & Steinbach, 2014). Hence, there has been a significant increase in the importance given to conflict-handling competencies of managers such as to understand, relate and behave in resolving conflicts across culturally diverse work environment. As Kuwait is one of the India's major trade partners, many deals and negotiations from time to time exist between them, but there is lack of evidence-based research that explores the dynamics between CQ, ICS, and conflict-handling styles in the India–Kuwait context. Thus, it seemed relevant to explore the ICS, CQ, and preferred conflict handling styles of the employees of these two countries who are engaged in cross-border interactions.

2. The method

One of the objectives is to explore and understand the difference in the ICS, CQ, and conflict handling styles of the employees from India and Kuwait interacting with each other. The paper also explores the correlations of ICS and CQ dimensions with the preferred conflict handling styles of the respondents. It further explores the influence of both ICS and CQ dimensions on the preferred conflict handling styles of Indian and Kuwait respondents, respectively. So, for the employees engaged in India–Kuwait intercultural interactions with each other, the objectives and the hypotheses proposed are:

1. To explore and understand the difference in the ICS, CQ, and preferred conflict handling styles of the respondents from India and Kuwait.

   H1: There is a significant difference in ICS, CQ, and preferred conflict handling styles of the employees of India and Kuwait.

2. To explore the co-relationship (for India and Kuwait respondents) of preferred conflict handling styles with ICS and with CQ, respectively.

   H2a: There is a significant co-relationship between preferred conflict-handling styles and ICS dimensions

H2b: There is a significant co-relationship between preferred conflict-handling styles and CQ dimensions.

3. To explore the influence of ICS and CQ dimensions on the preferred conflict handling styles of Indian and Kuwait respondents.

   H3: ICS dimensions and CQ dimensions influence the preferred conflict handling styles of Indian and Kuwait respondents.

2.1 Participants

Based on the objectives, the study sample entail respondents from India and Kuwait having the experience of cross-cultural interactions. Respondents were mainly engineers and managers working in major oil and gas companies belonging to both public sector and private sector companies of India and Kuwait.

2.2 Data Collection

Three widely cited tests were used to collect the data to ensure its robustness and accuracy in measuring the constructs used in the present study. To test participants' ICS, intercultural sensitivity scale was used (Chen & Starosta, 2000a). This scale has demonstrated a good internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranged between .79 and .89 (Chen & Starosta, 2000b; Graf & Harland, 2005; Petrović & Zlatković, 2009). As mentioned in the above literature review, the scale entails five factors i.e., interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness. 24 items were randomly ordered to be rated on a five-point likert scale i.e., (1 =strongly disagree, and 5= strongly agree). Also, chronbach alpha calculated for this measure was 0.68.

CQ scale (CQS), a 20-item scale developed by Ang *et al*. (2007) is one of the three most promising instruments for assessing cross-cultural competence (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013). CQS items were adopted for the present study (1=strongly disagree, and 5=strongly agree). In this research, cronbach's alpha for the total scale is .69 and for the subscales: .62 for meta-cognitive, .61 for cognitive, .68 for motivational, and .64 for behavioral quotient.

Dutch test for conflict handling was used to measure respondents' conflict handling style preferences. It captures two dimensions – concern for self and concern for others; five independent conflict management styles, as verified by De Dreu, Evers, Beersma, Kluwer and Nauta (2001) problem solving, yielding, forcing, avoiding, and compromising. It is a parsimonious and flexible instrument to assess conflict management styles at work (De Dreu *et al*., 2001). It is 20-items Likert scale (1 being Not at all; and 5 being almost always) is widely used and has demonstrated consistent and excellent psychometric qualities coefficient values in previous studies. To the pre-existing

instructions of the scale i.e., "Read each of the statements below and circle the response that you believe best reflects your position regarding each statement", was suffixed by i.e., "during my interactions with Indian counterparts" and "during my interactions with Kuwait counterparts" for Indian and Kuwait respondents, respectively. Chronbach alpha calculated for this measure was 0.72. The questionnaire was administered both online and in hard-copy.

Table 1: Demographic details

1	Gender	India: 24.2 % females and 75.7 % males. Kuwait: 20.0 % females and 80.0 % males
2	Age	India: 36.5 yrs. and Kuwait: 33.7 yrs.
3	Management level	India: Jr.-Mid 20.3%; Middle-Exec 37.8%; Exe. 41.7% Kuwait: Jr.-Mid 12.6%; Middle-Exec 43.6.0%; Exe. 43.6%

Table 1 reveals the demographic details regarding age, gender and management level of the respondents of the study. A total number of 174 filled questionnaires were used, i.e., 103 from India and 71 from Kuwait. The data was treated using SPSS 20.0.

3. Result

The following section deals with the findings obtained after employment of t-test and analyses. Firstly, the test of normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test as the sample size was more than 50) approved of using parametric tests for further analysis. Skewness and Kurtosis values are between −2 and +2 denoting the variables are approximately in a normal distribution.

Table 2: Mean, Inter-cultural sensitivity, and Cultural intelligence by country (one-way ANOVA)

		Interaction engagement	Respect for culture Differences	Interaction Confidence	Interaction enjoyment	Interaction attentiveness	CQ_Meta-cognition	CQ_Cog nition	CQ_Moti vaton	CQ_Beh ivior
Country, t-test		15.44	21.60	11.84	22.30	5.71	-6.05	-3.41	10.48	-1.10
p value		0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.27
India	Mean	23.88	24.63	19.26	13.08	11.06	2.25	2.94	3.82	3.50
Kuwait	Mean	19.32	18.07	15.23	8.59	9.94	3.01	3.45	2.59	4.04

*Note: * =p < 0.05; * *=p < 0.001*

Results (Table 2) revealed that there is a significant difference in ICS and CQ between employees of India and Kuwait. However, only for CQ behavior, the difference between the two country's employees was not significant.

Table 3: Mean scores, conflict handling styles
by country and gender (t-test) and managerial levels (one-way ANOVA)

		Yielding	Compromise	Forcing	Problem solving	Avoiding
Country, t (N=174)		7.21	6.72	8.97	10.22	3.86
p value		0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**
India	Mean	14.13	14.18	14.85	14.70	13.36
Kuwait	Mean	12.00	12.34	12.62	12.74	12.28
Gender, t (N=174)		0.17	-0.65	0.01	-1.41	0.86
p value		0.86	0.51	0.99	0.16	0.39
Male	Mean	13.27	13.38	13.98	13.66	12.99
Female	Mean	13.21	13.62	13.97	14.13	12.69
Managerial Level One-way ANOVA; (N=174) F (df=2)		4.59	1.63	0.51	0.87	1.80
p value		0.01*	0.20	0.60	0.42	0.17
Jr-Mid	Mean	14.03	13.67	14.20	14.17	13.37
Mid-Exec	Mean	12.71	13.10	13.81	13.69	12.63
Exec	Mean	13.46	13.65	14.04	13.68	13.01

Note: * =$p < 0.05$; * *= $p < 0.001$

Table 3 presents the mean, t-test (country) analyses testing the difference in preferred conflict handling styles between Kuwait and Indian respondents. For all the five conflict handling styles, Indian respondents scored higher mean values than their Kuwait counterparts. It can be noticed that the highest score in case of India is for the forcing style and in case of Kuwait, it is problem-solving. Scores of Kuwait employees were lowest on the yielding style, and Indian employees scored lowest on the avoiding style of conflict handling style.

H1 was accepted revealing significant differences in the three dimensions i.e., ICS, CQ (except CQ behavior), and conflict-handling styles across India and Kuwait respondents.

For both the Indian and Kuwait respondents, H2 is accepted revealed in the significant correlations (as highlighted in Table 4) between conflict handling styles & ICS; and between conflict-handling styles & CQ.

To test hypothesis H3, multiple regression analyses (Table 5 and 6) depict the factors that predict the preferred conflict handling styles of the employees involved in India–Kuwait interactions.

Multi-collinearity between variables CQ factors and ICS was checked. VIF values were found to be acceptable (less than 10) ranging between 1.02 and 2.20 across all the regression equations.

Table 4: Co-relation Analysis: CQ and inter-cultural sensitivity with conflict handling styles of Indian and Kuwait Employees

	Interaction engagement	Respect for culture Differences	Interaction Confidence	Interaction enjoyment	Interaction attentiveness	CQ_Meta-cognition	CQ_Cognition	CQ_Motivaton	CQ_Behivor
India									
Yielding	0.03	-0.09	0.06	0.06	0.00	-0.03	0.06	-0.08	-0.01
Compromise	-0.05	-0.17	0.200*	0.07	0.05	0.16	-0.08	0.05	0.14
Forcing	0.05	0.10	0.217*	.252*	0.05	-0.02	0.01	-0.12	-0.02
Problem solving	-0.02	0.11	0.09	.246*	-0.03	-0.11	0.10	-0.01	0.03
Avoiding	-0.204*	-0.06	-0.08	0.02	-0.16	-0.04	0.03	-0.16	-0.04
Kuwait									
Yielding	0.00	0.10	-0.01	-0.14	0.256*	-0.07	-0.13	-0.01	-0.11
Compromise	-0.04	0.04	-0.12	0.16	0.09	0.06	0.08	0.09	0.11
Forcing	0.10	-0.23	-0.08	0.17	-0.06	-0.09	-0.02	0.323**	0.02
Problem solving	0.03	-0.09	0.06	0.03	-0.09	-0.16	0.22	0.426**	0.04
Avoiding	-0.05	0.00	0.16	-0.239*	-0.14	-0.08	-0.16	0.06	-0.15

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis: Conflict handling styles of Indian employees in Indian-Kuwait intercultural interactions

India	Yielding	Compromise	Forcing	Problem Solving	Avoiding
(Constant)	14.74	10.90	8.10	10.20	18.00
CQ meta-cognition					
CQ_cognition					
CQ _motivation					
CQ _behavior					
Interaction engagement					-.20
Respect for culture Differences	-.16				
Interaction confidence		.17	.12		
Interaction enjoyment			.33	.42	
Interaction attentiveness					
F	4.71	4.20*	4.90**	6.50**	4.40*
DF	102	102	102	102	102
R2	.044	.040	.090	.060	.052
R2adj	-.049	.030	.072	.050	.042

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis: Conflict handling styles of Indian employees in Indian-Kuwait intercultural interactions

Kuwait	Yielding	Compromise	Forcing	Problem Solving	Avoiding
(Constant)	7.63	8.88	11.46	10.60	14.82
CQ meta-cognition					
CQ_cognition					
CQ _motivation			.48	.69	
CQ _behavior					
Interaction engagement					
Respect for culture Differences					
Interaction confidence					
Interaction enjoyment		.19			- .30
Interaction attentiveness	.44				
F	4.84*	.82	8.04**	15.30**	4.80**
DF	70		70	70	70
R2	.066	.108	.104	.180	.057
R2adj	.052	-.024	.091	.170	.043

Table 6 shows results highlighting the factors that predict the preferred conflict handling styles of the Kuwait respondents while interacting with the Indian counterparts.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study finds its relevance in the given times of increasing requirements to deal with differences and manage conflicts. The mean scores of ICS score and CQ scores of Indian and Kuwait respondents reveal that the Indian respondents were more positive towards the inter-cultural communication and Kuwait employees were more focused towards understanding the process of the ongoing inter-cultural communication. The t-test and mean score analysis revealed that the Indian employees were higher than their Kuwait counterparts on the affective components of inter-cultural interactions. Further, in case of India, CQ motivation was higher than their Kuwait counterparts. This finding creates an opportunity to further explore sources of motivation of Indian respondents behind adapting to cross-cultural environment, such as external events- praise, appreciation during cross-cultural interactions. Kuwait respondents have scored higher than their Indian counterparts in CQ meta-cognition, and CQ cognition, indicating that Kuwait respondents focus more on gaining knowledge and overall awareness about the Indian culture, which according to Ang *et al*. (2007) helps them to plan and strategize. They also give attention to norms, practices, conventions, etc., to understand the differences that exist between the two cultures. This implies that Kuwait respondents' interactions were centered on cognitive aspects, as opposed to their Indian counterparts' interactions which centered on affective aspects of cross-cultural interactions. This could also be attributed to higher uncertainty avoidance orientation (Hofstede, 1984) of respondents of Kuwait than in the case of India. Also, in a collectivist society like Kuwait, where offence is believed to have led to loss of face reflects the decisions taken in an interaction or situation. A strong stance by a counter-part in work-related interactions can be implied to motivate Kuwait respondents to be more task focused. Future research can explore the reasons behind considerable focus on cognitive or affective aspects in cross-cultural interactions.

Significant difference is evident in the preference conflict handling styles of both Indian and Kuwait respondents. In case of India, the scores for avoiding were low, and Kuwait respondents gave less preference to yielding style. It is evident that when Indian and Kuwait employees interact with each other, Kuwait respondents prefer problem-solving and Indians preferred forcing styles more than other conflict handling styles.

Correlation analysis reveals the relationship between preferred conflict-handling styles and CQ and ICS of respondents involved in inter-cultural interactions between India and Kuwait. In case of the Indian respondents, results reveal the co-relationship between conflict handling styles with ICS dimensions and no such co-relationship between conflict-handling styles and CQ factors. Yielding styles did not correlate with

either of the CQ or ICS dimensions. However, compromising style significantly and positively correlated with interaction confidence. Confidence while interacting of Indian respondents can be linked with their aim to explore potential of joint benefit for which both parties will give up something in order to reach an agreement (Yuan, 2010). Confidence while interacting with a counterpart of a different cultural background positively correlated with Indians' forcing style. Both forcing and problem-solving styles of conflict-handling emerged to be significantly and positively correlating with inter-action enjoyment. Comparing the effect-size of emerged significant correlations with interaction enjoyment reveal that Indian counterparts' positive feeling and positive response toward the interaction is more likely to influence use of controlling styles in India–Kuwait inter-cultural settings. Correlations also reveal that negative feelings with respect to participating in an inter-cultural setting may cause Indian counterparts to use avoiding conflict style.

The results (Table 4) exhibit that in case of the Kuwait respondents, interaction attentiveness, i.e., putting efforts to understand during an interaction, significantly and positively increases the likelihood of using the yielding style. Results reveal that likelihood of Kuwait employees to avoid issues at hand when they be subjected to feeling not so positive about the ongoing interactions with Indian counterparts. Also, we may explain this finding as the likelihood of using this style to maintain a harmony situation (Huang, 2016). The Kuwait respondents with their high CQ motivation are more likely to use problem-solving, and forcing styles than using yielding, avoiding, and compromise styles of conflict handling.

Multiple-regression analysis helps to understand preference concerning conflict handling styles of employees engaged in India–Kuwait inter-cultural interactions. In this study, the low R^2-square was observed in result of regression analyses. In general, an R^2 of 0.75 is strong, 0.5 is moderate and 0.25 is weak (Wong, 2013). However, the low R^2, indicating the large spread of data explained by independent variables, is often presented in social science, as human behaviour or satisfaction is difficult to predict (Frost, 2017). Also, Glenn and Shelton (1983) stated that eliminating the regression results with low R^2 is not appropriate in social research, instead, it is recommended for better understanding and to compare to other research. Moksony (1990) demonstrated that R^2 is not useful to compare either contribution of independent variable or goodness of the model fit and suggested to use the unstandardized regression coefficient for the explanatory power and the standard error for the goodness of fit.

In case of Indian respondents, no significant predictors emerge to explain their preference of using yielding style. But, in case of Kuwait respondents, interaction attentiveness predicts the use of yielding style of conflict handling. Interaction attentiveness is related to the effort to understand the ongoing process of intercultural communication. Yielding style deals with meeting the other person's needs. It also means sacrificing

one's own needs. It can be understood that as Kuwait employees try to increase their efforts for understanding the ongoing process and counterparts' needs, causing them to willingly sacrifice their own needs to meet the counterparty's needs. Inter-culturally sensitive individuals may resort to a yielding style when they do not need to give up too much of their personal needs, but to maintain a harmonious relationship by yielding something for other parties' satisfaction. Also, researchers have supported that 90% of managers are using collaborating and accommodating as a mode of conflict resolving, which is found to be more commonly used in handling conflict in middle-east including managers in Kuwait (Yousry, El-Halwany, & Shiha, 2014; Ali, Taqi, & Krishnan, 1997). Kuwait being a high-context communication environment (Berger, Silbiger, Herstein, & Barnes, 2015), conflict handling styles tend to be avoiding and obliging (Croucher *et al.*, 2012), which are contrary to the integrative and sometimes even main conflict style (Ryan and Daly, 2018). Also, another possible explanation could be high levels of cultural knowledge could lead to cognitive overload (Camerer, Loewenstein, & Weber, 1989; Hall, Ariss, & Todorov, 2007). However, further research may explore willingness to engage in sacrifice, or perhaps one's tendency towards altruism or possibly the role of information overload.

Interaction confidence tests how confident participants feel while managing the uncertainties in cross-cultural interaction contexts. Indian respondents' confidence predicts their preference towards using compromise style to handle the conflict situation. This particular style is also associated with their aim to reach a mutually acceptable decision that usually works for both parties. Also, the result can be explained with the help of Instone, Major and Bunker (1983)'s work, according to which individuals who have high self-confidence are more likely to use influence attempts and less coercive strategies than those subjects who have low self-confidence. Willingness of a person to understand the differences, and still hold a positive view of the process are the ones who will be willing to "give up something with the hope of getting something in exchange from the other party when needed" (Rahim, 1985, p. 84). These people change their own opinion either because they found sufficient reasons to do so or simply to avoid continued confrontation (Lussier, 2010; Reich, Wagner-Westbrook, & Kressel, 2007). In case of Kuwait respondents, no significant factor emerged to be influencing their preference of compromise style.

The confidence to manage cross-cultural interactions and enjoyment during such interactions has influence on the Indians respondents' forcing style of handling conflict while interacting with their Kuwait counterparts. However, interaction enjoyment i.e., positive effect, contributed more than interaction confidence to explain Indians' preference for forcing style. The results imply that enjoying the process of ongoing interaction improves the understanding which would further support use of problem-solving style of conflict. Result support previous researches (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005;

Greeff & de Bruyne, 2000) according to which individuals in positive moods or feelings are more likely to solve conflicts through collaboration. It can be inferred that interaction enjoyment would drive employees to work towards the best interest of both the parties in inter-cultural interactions.

In case of the Kuwait respondents, CQ Motivation predicts their preference for using forcing and problem-solving styles of conflict handling. Motivational CQ captures the ability to learn and act effectively in various situations. Here, Kuwait respondents' willingness to acknowledge and appreciate cultural differences, and positive reaction encourages them to not compromise with their interests but to take necessary actions to achieve them. At the same time motivation dimension of CQ encourages Kuwait respondents to consider other party's viewpoints and prefer problem solving approach in business interactions with Indian counterparts.

In case of the Indian respondents, results reveal that interactions which support participation or discussion to resolve problems, reduces their likelihood of using avoiding style while interacting with Kuwait counterparts than when they realise less participation in the interaction. It can be inferred that such interactions which fail to encourage Indian respondents' participation also fail to satisfy their own goals as well as that of others, accordingly affecting their preference for conflict aversive style i.e., avoiding. Also, research support that avoiding style is preferred non-confrontational style in collectivist cultures (Croucher, *et al*., 2012; Ali, Taqi, & Krishnan, 1997).

However, in case of Kuwait respondents, interaction enjoyment plays a key role while interacting with their Indian counterparts. Based on the result, interaction enjoyment negatively predicts avoiding style of Kuwait respondents. This reveals that Kuwait employees' negative reaction during the interactions leads to their preference to use avoiding style. Also, interaction enjoyment's significant negative relationship with avoiding style have found support in research (Tong & Chen 2008). According to Al-Sabah, (2015), when Kuwaitis have bad experiences or know there would be a difficulty in handling the demands of the other party, they resort to a method of "avoiding". Also, they usually use this style to maintain a harmony situation (Huang, 1999). The results regarding avoiding styles support that individuals from predominantly high-context cultures (which are often collectivistic as well) are more likely to avoid or oblige in conflicts (Ohbuchi, Fukushima and Tedeschi, 1999; Ting-Toomey *et al*., 1991).

5. Implications

Involvement of different communication styles, expectations, beliefs and conflict handling interactions across diverse cultures is inevitable. However, the influence of cultural diversification in managerial transactions has not been sufficiently recognized in the resaerch literature.

In India, experiences of overseas and expatriate assignments are prevalent, and demand of globally oriented managers with intercultural competence has increased (Srinivasan, 2017). Choice of a particular conflict-handling style would influence the conflict resolution process. relationships and tasks between the conflicting parties. It is crucial for employees working in global teams in India and Kuwait to have knowledge/skill to identify and resolve conflicts effectively. Thus, the results highlight cross-cultural aspects relevant for effectively managing conflict between employees belonging to two different cultures i.e., India and Kuwait, and draws implications.

Result supports that ICS (Chen & Starosta, 1997) and CQ (Triandis, 2006) have an influence on preferred conflict-handling styles of the Indian and Kuwait respondents, respectively. It highlights behavioural implications of parties in conflict. For e.g., the result reveal that both parties must encourage positive affect during the cross-cultural interactions which would promote participation from their counterparties. This would also encourage preference for problem solving style by Indian respondents and discourage use of avoiding style by Kuwait interactants. Indian respondents must learn to appreciate Kuwait respondents' concerted efforts in learning about Indian functioning, culture etc., which has been found to be influencing preference for problem solving style of Kuwait counterparts. The results also stress on the importance of acquiring CQ and ICS towards adapting to new and unfamiliar culturally diverse work environments. The study provides implications regarding skill-set required for selection of officials for global assignments. International and global business assignments demand a set of competencies in their leaders and managers belonging to different cultural backgrounds to interact and manage conflicts effectively. Another area of implications is sensitizing job incumbents dealing in cross-cultural scenarios through effective cross-cultural training programs. According to research, significant elements that need to be incorporated in inter-cultural trainings are CQ (Earley & Peterson, 2004; Janssens & Brett, 2006) and ICS (Jain, 2013; Chen & Starosta, 1997). CQ and ICS will enhance or support team collaboration and effective team decisions in overseas assignments. Managing conflict situations can become stressful and difficult, thus ignorance about diverse culture can be disastrous for employees involved in cross-cultural interactions or overseas assignments. Hence, intercultural training programs on improving ICS and CQ is important for companies seeking to enhance effectiveness of multicultural work interactions. In the context of globalisation, the results find its implications extending from India–Kuwait workforce to the global workforce dealing in multicultural work settings.

Present study also has limitations and poses future research possibilities. Participants working in the oil and gas sector could limit the generalizability of the results. Future research could explore the findings of the present reaserch with more representative samples. Studying conflict in a variety of cultural contexts would help in refining the understanding of conflict management in cross-cultural interactions. Assessment of

conflict style preference and ICS with the help of other data collection techniques such as observation, peer-rating could also improve the quality of responses. Hence, call for further research overcoming this limitation to confirm the results.

Other aspects of culture could also throw more light on the results presented in this study, for example, religion. Religion has been identified as one of the predictors of conflict handling in Indian context (Croucher, *et al*, 2011), hence studies could explore if these results remain true with the religion as predictor variables in case of India and Kuwait.

CQ motivation and interaction enjoyment emerge as two major aspects affecting forcing and problem-solving conflict styles of both Kuwait and Indian respondents, respectively. CQ motivation acts as one of the main drivers for individuals to learn and to be able to function in new and culturally diverse settings. Also, sense of enjoyment and positive feelings about the interactions are crucial. According to Chen (2006), positive attitude along with communication skills would reduce cultural difficulties and ensure effectiveness of international assignments. However, research exploring social interactions entailing give and take of positive cues while communicating with others, to better adjust, and adequately collect information in an intercultural interaction is needed. Further research regarding lingua-cultural differences could be insightful. Alnashi's (2012) work revealed that managers from different cultures tend to have different conflict management styles and that "face" plays a big role on the conflict styles used. Thus, study of verbal or non-verbal exchanges related to CQ motivation and interaction enjoyment can be instrumental in improving positive reaction in cross-cultural interactions between India and Kuwait. This can throw more light on the way participants infer meaning from an uncertain nature of intercultural interaction and perhaps able to sustain the relationship along with attaining the task.

Technological advancements in business, new virtual platforms of interactions are considerably used which influence team and individual performances (Walsh, Gregory, Lake, & Gunawardena, 2003; Yoo & Alavi, 2004). Hence, it seems a very relevant and practical question to be studied to explore the instrumental role of technology in managing conflicts in inter-cultural interactions.

Overall, the present research adds value to largely limited knowledge of the differences in conflict resolution style preferences across two globalised cultures and working environments i.e., of India and Kuwait. The result present interplay between ICS, CQ, and conflict-handling styles of employees and help realizing the extent to which it contributes to a more effective conflict management styles. The results find its application for people management and skill development of people involved in inter-cultural interactions. Along with opening avenues for future research, the results offer some valuable information to facilitate our understanding and applications for better conflict management in such cross-cultural work interactions.

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Zambia:
Assertion and Resistance. Reading Conflicts between the Zimbabweans and the Indian Diaspora

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Abstract: Over the period, the relationship between the native communities and the diaspora has become one of the incompatible relationship, and thereby led to the emergence of mistrust, division and resentment among the native communities. This has become more conspicuous concerning the native communities and the Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe (former Rhodesia). Within this backdrop, bringing the debate on the insider versus outsider, the article presents a complex picture of contemporary community conflicts between the native communities and Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe. The paper discusses the context and reasons of ethnic assertion among the native communities and their resistance towards the Indian diaspora. It explores the role of the state in the entire episodes of community conflicts in Zimbabwe. It argues that though the Indians are politically minority community, they have established their dominant position in economic sphere, and the economic prosperity of the Indian diaspora community has much contributed to the emergence of community conflicts in Zimbabwe.

Keywords: ethnic assertion, resistance, community conflict, Indian diaspora, Zimbabwe.

Introduction

Diaspora study has become one of the critical arenas of political discourse in the contemporary academic arena across the globe. Such discourse has emerged not only because of the nature of contributions that the diaspora community makes towards the host country but prominently due to the nature of relationship that has been established between the diaspora and native communities. Over the period, the relationship between the native communities and

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the diaspora has become one of the incompatible relationships, and thereby led to the emergence of mistrust, division and resentment among the native communities. This has become more conspicuous concerning the native communities and the Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe (former Rhodesia). Different levels of social, economic and political developments experienced by them has led to the emergence of incompatible and contested relationships, and thereby creating a situation of conflict, violence and dissonance. This simply highlights assertion, aggression, antagonism and resistance of the native Zimbabwean communities towards the Indian diaspora community. Within this backdrop, Zimbabwe is experiencing a series of conflicts, both ethnic and resource conflicts, between the Zimbabweans and Indian diaspora. Their distinct ethnic identities have become the ground for generating conflicts and gradually the ethnic conflicts have taken the form of resource conflicts in Zimbabwe.

Within this backdrop, bringing the debate on the insider versus outsider, the article presents a complex picture of contemporary community conflicts between the native communities and Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe. The paper discusses the context and reasons of ethnic assertion among the native communities and their resistance towards the Indian diaspora. It explores the role of the state in the entire episodes of community conflicts in Zimbabwe. It argues that though the Indians are politically minority community, they have established their dominant position in economic sphere, and the economic prosperity of the Indian diaspora community has much contributed to the emergence of community conflicts in Zimbabwe.

Diaspora, Ethnic Identities and Conflict

The relationship between diaspora and conflict has been well crafted by numerous scholars (Collier, 2000; Shain, 2002; Brinkerhoff, 2011; Van Hear & Cohen, 2016; Mariani, Mercier, & Verdier, 2018). They increasingly focus on the role of diaspora in conflict as well as post-conflict situation in countries of origin. Collier (2000, p. 14) considers that the diaspora usually involved in generating conflict because of their sound economic position and they do not necessarily go through the ordeals of conflict in the country of their origin. To quote Collier (2000), "They are much richer than the people in their country of origin and so can afford to finance vengeance. Above all, they do not have to suffer any of the awful consequences of renewed conflict because they are not living in the country" (p. 14). Shain (2002) also discusses the role of diaspora involvement in the conflict in the country of their origin. Brinkerhoff (2011) explores the relationship between diaspora and conflict in the way of engagement of diaspora in conflict societies. Brinkerhoff (2011) discusses the contribution of diaspora and their potential positive and negative impact over the countries experiencing conflicts, especially in the context of their country of origin. Van Hear and Cohen (2016) contextualised the role of diaspora in conflict with resources, social capital and class that the diaspora communities posses. However, the engagement of diaspora community

in conflictual relationship with the native communities has hitherto been neglected by the existing literature. Dotson and Dotson (1968) explore the community relationship between the Indian diaspora and native Zimbabwean communities, with an indication of incompatible relationship between them.

The incompatible relationship is the product of the larger debate on 'we' versus 'others', insiders versus outsiders, natives versus migrants, etc. These discourses take place along the line of native communities as insiders and the diaspora community as the outsiders or migrants. These binary debates usually provoke people to align themselves along the line of ethnicity. The process of such identification of the self also lead to the emergence of ethnic consciousness at the community level, which is different from other communities. To put it differently, identities are contextual and people develop their distinctive individual as well as community ethnic identities on the basis of their day to day interaction with the 'other'.

Brass (1985) defines ethnic community 'as an ethnic category that has adopted one or more of its marks of its cultural distinctness as used them as symbols both to create internal cohesion and to differentiate itself from other ethnic groups' (p. 17). An ethnic category, for Brass (1985) is "any group of people in terms of objective cultural criteria and that contain within its membership either in principle or in practice the elements for a complete division of labor and for production" (p. 17). Yinger (1997, pp. 3-4) considers three contexts to understand the ethnic communities/groups: (i) the group is perceived by others in society to be different in some combination of the following traits: language, religion, race and ancestral homeland with its related culture; (ii) the members also perceive themselves as different; and (iii) they participate in shared activities built around their common origin and culture.

Brass (1985) equates ethnic identity formation with a process that reflects three sets of struggles. One takes place within the ethnic group itself to control over its material and symbolic resources, which in turn involves defining the group's boundaries and its rules for inclusion and exclusion. The second takes place between ethnic groups as a competition for rights, privileges and available resources. The third takes place between the state and the group that dominate it and the population that inhibits its territory. Such ethnic identity formation can facilitate the process of ethnic assertion.

Ethnic assertion is nothing but the process of reconfiguring community distinct identities along the line of ethnicity. Ethnic assertion can crate the platform for the emergence of ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflict can sometimes be called as cultural conflicts because of the distinctive cultural differences that wide the ethnic differences (Horowitz, 1985). Ambagudia (2019) stated that various ethnic identities creates the regime of 'ethnic deprivation' while competing scarce natural resources, state sponsored privileges, opportunities and entitlements. Ethnic deprivation can also lead to the feeling of, what Ted Robert Gurr (1970) considers as, 'relative deprivation'. Relative deprivation is the

product of the ethnic comparison in social, economic, cultural and political spheres between ethnic communities.

Horowitz (1985) and Ambagudia (2019) argue that ethnic comparison would posit the communities in advantaged and disadvantaged positions along the line of their ethnic identities, and thereby precipitating the process of ethnic assertion among the communities more prominently. Hence, Horowiz argues that ethnic comparison is one of the prominent reasons of community conflicts. Community conflicts between the native and diaspora/migrants take place due to the competition to control over and access to scarce natural resources and state sponsored opportunities and privileges by invoking their district ethnic identities.

Brief History of Indians in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe, former Southern Rhodesia, is one of the land locked countries of Central Africa. It has a long history of immigration, which was facilitated by the then Rhodesia government, British Imperial government and private voluntary organisation (Mlambo, 1998). The Rhodesia government created social, economic and political conditions to attract the White settlers in the country. One of the Rhodesia settlers succinctly put the policy of the government, "Don't regard the country (Rhodesia) as a Black Man's country, where the white man is an intruder, an exploiter of Black labour, a superior; look on it as an empty country...to be settled with a white population..." (cited in Mlambo, 1998, p. 131).

The historical account of Indians in Zimbabwe indicates that they were brought by the British to ease their administration in Africa. Some of them also moved to the territory of Central Africa for the trade and business purposes. The Indians constituted around 30,000 out of a total regional population of perhaps 11 million (Dotson & Dotson, 1968, p. 3). According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India data, the total population of oversees Indians in Zimbabwe is 9500. Out of 9500, 500 are Non-Resident Indians and 9000 are the People of Indian Origin (Government of India Report, n.d.). The history of Indians migration to Zimbabwe indicates they have a long history of trade relation in Zimbabwe although the trade in Central Africa initiated by the Europeans. Originally, these Indians came to Africa under the umbrella of European power (Dotson & Dotson, 1968, p. 21). Over the period, the Indians established themselves in the areas of trade and business, which has resulted in their relatively better economic condition in comparison to native Zimbabwean communities. It is worthwhile to mention that Indians constitute a politically minority community in Zimbabwe.

Class Composition of Zimbabwean Society

Zimbabwe is a plural society and a developing economy. Zimbabwe is an agrarian society and the large chunk of Zimbabwean population is involved in farming. Out of the total

land areas of over 39 million hectares, 33.3 million hectares are used for agricultural purposes (http://www.fao.org/3/y4632e/y4632e0y.htm). As a class, they were basically self-sufficient peasant farmers. The government is, however, reluctant to promote the indigenous commercial farming (Moyo, 2000, p. 23, footnote 61), which not only affected their income generation but also largely impoverished their economic condition. Meanwhile, it has been stereotyped that the Zimbabweans, especially the Blacks, possess neither the knowledge nor the capital required for engaging in trade and commerce (Dotson & Dotson, 1968, p. 3). However, there was an increasing demand on goods and services in Zimbabwe which were not produced locally. Hence, the vacuum occurred in the field of trade and business in Zimbabwe. In this context, the Indians emerged to fill up the vacuum created in business and trade sectors.

Gradually, there was an expansion of trade and commerce, which were carried out by the Indians. The presence of Indians in Zimbabwe is mainly drawn from the Indian state of Gujarat, who are largely involved in trade and business. The Indians played the role of middlemen in trading relationship. They have been mediating in facilitating the transfer from relatively developed areas to less developed areas which largely constitute a market. Although the Indians constitute minority in terms of their share with the total population of the country, they are very active in in trade and business sectors. The Indians have succeeded in positioning themselves in this area of occupation. However, such economic position of the Indian diaspora has not been well received by the native Zimbabwean communities, which led to the emergence of ethnic comparison in economic sphere and orchestrated the ethnic resistance against the Indian diaspora community in Zimbabwe.

Understanding Conflict

The Zimbabwean society has a long history of hosting migrants, who moved to the country for one or the other reasons, and hence, creating a category of diaspora. Such history of the country has facilitated the continuous process of interaction and interface between the native and diaspora communities in Zimbabwe, which has taken the form of ethnic interaction and interface. However, the interaction and interface between them have not been well conceived by the native communities, and thereby led to the emergence of incompatible and conflictual relationship between them. The native communities equate the Indians with exploiters, traitors and looters of economy, who are allegedly more concerned with their own economic advancement rather than contribution to the economic development of the country. Such aspects have been triggered and have contributed to their adversial economic relationship. Zimbabwean society has experienced political, social, economic and cultural domination of settler minority over the African majority (Mlambo, 1998, p. 123). As a result, assertion, resistance, contestation and conflict have become the defining features of Zimbabwean society in the contemporary period.

The indifferent attitude towards the Indians is not the product on of the contemporary period only and the native ethnic communities of Zimbabwe are not the only actors who have developed incompatible relationship with the Indians. Such orientation was also developed at the policy level. The then Rhodesian state deliberately pursued the discriminatory administrative measures against the Indians way back in the early 1900.

As mentioned earlier, the colonial Rhodesia government wanted to establish a White Man's country. This was not the case with all the immigrants. The immigration policy of the Rhodesia government was lenient towards certain immigrants, especially the white immigrants (the Europeans). However, the Rhodesia government developed indifferent attitudes and racially discriminatory moves against the Indian diaspora community. For instance, the Rhodesia authorities issued two ordinances, the 1903 Immigration Restriction Ordinance and Immigrants Regulation Ordinance 1914, by mandating the criteria of signing the application form in European language. It has been alleged that the Rhodesia government imposed the language criteria in the both the ordinances primarily to restrict the Indian migrants to Rhodesia because of their racial differences and to facilitate the markets to the Europeans. The Indians were seen as the capturer of the market opportunities (Mlambo, 1998, pp. 143-144). The suggestion of the Indian engineer for allocating the land unsuitable for the White settlement to the Indians went unheard and seen as generating disenchantment of Europeans towards Indian diaspora (Mlambo, 1998, p. 144). In other words, the context of the conflicting relationship with the Indian diaspora set by the state.

Such discrimination and indifferent attitudes towards the Indian diaspora community have intensified in the recent period. The Indian diasporas in Zimbabwe have been excluded from certain spaces of the state and the ownership processes because of the escalation of racial and ethnic conflict/cleansing (Muzondidya, 2004, p. 228). Meanwhile, a series of resistance and attacks were carried out against diaspora communities in different parts of the African sub-continent. One such example is the attack on Indian businessman in Uganda in the 1970s. The Ugandan leader Idi Amin expelled 60,000 Asians, mostly Indians, from Uganda in August 1972. Most of these Indians fear their lives and took asylum in Britain. Meanwhile, the government captured their homes, shops, business houses and farms (Muzondidya, 2004, p. 229; Butcher, 2002; Zee News, 2002).

The incident of Uganda invariably influenced and provoked the native communities carry out the similar attacks against Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe. The Indian diaspora community in Zimbabwe has been attacked in 2002. Similar potential attack on Indian diaspora community was also anticipated in 2017. However, the Indian embassy was quick to announce the safety and security of the Indians in Zimbabwe (PTI, 2017). During the 2002 attack, the supporters of the President Robert Mugabe are threatening the Indians to confiscate land property. The supporters of the President included the war

veterans led by Andrew Ndlovu and the members of the black economic empowerment lobby group, the Affirmative Action Group (AAG), among others. The AAG emerged to deliver justice to the Zimbabweans. It believes that the destiny of the Zimbabweans should be decided by the Zimbabweans themselves not by the outsiders (The Herald, 2012).

The supporters considered the Indians diaspora as economic looters. They also alleged that 'nearly all the developed land in cities' are occupied by the Indian diaspora after 1980, the year new constitution came into force. Andrew Ndlovu, the Secretary of Projects for the War Veterans' Associations and supporter of the President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe, declared that "nothing will stop us from reclaiming commercial land from Indians. If they do not stop looting our economy, they will leave us with no choice but to go door to door making sure all Indians in the cities are complying with instructions from war veterans" (quoted in Muzondidya, 2004, p. 228). The supporters also alleged that the Indians have a major role in facilitating black market in Zimbabwe (Muzondidya, 2004, p. 228; Butcher, 2002).

The war veterans spread the seed of anti-Indian attitude in Zimbabwe. The Indian diaspora community was relegated to vulnerable position. As a result, the Indian diaspora instilled the sense of fear and insecurity in themselves in a country where their economic contributions are commendable over the period. As a part of their campaign and fulfilling their commitment to wipe out Indian from Zimbabwe, the AAG captured the property and house of the Indian businessman in a Zimbabwean city (Bulawayo). The Indians were left with no option but to vacate their houses and became homeless. They also had to lose their hard earned all land and properties. The AAG group sent out a written document to all the Indians settled in Bulawayo city and threatened to seize their property and resources.

The AAG titled the document as *Indigenisation versus Indians*, and thereby invoking the discourse on native versus outsiders based on their ethnic identities. The document reflected a number of provocative statements, which invariably considered Indians as exploiters, looters and oppressors, among others. The document also questioned the domination of the numerically minority Indians over the majority Zimbabweans of about two million people in Bulawayo, which has emerged as a business hub. The document alleged that less than ten Indians have captured half of the central business district (Bulawayo). The document invoked the consequences of Uganda and reflected that as long as the Indians are indulged in exploiting, marginalising and dispossessing the natives, the 'dominant position' will continue to be challenged and resisted. The document also indicated the commitment to confiscate the land and properties of Indians, so that the properties can be used for the benefits of the Black people (Muzondidya, 2004, pp. 228-229).

With the circulation of this document, *Indigenisation versus Indians*, the AAG group members captured an apartment belonging to an Indian businessman, Mr Narandas Hassamal. Both the acts of AAG and the war veterans led by Andrew Ndlovu came to the notice of the government of Zimbabwe. The government was quickly responded to this act with consequences. Andrew Ndlovu was arrested and he was charged with breaching a section of the Public Order and Security Act (Muzondidya, 2004, p. 229). However, the important take away from this act is the way in which the minority Indians are being treated in this land. In spite of their long service and loyalty to the host country, they are being treated as aliens. Hence, Muzondidya (2004) underlines that the important message emerging from these developments is the way in which subject minorities have continued to be constructed as aliens in Zimbabwe's post-colonial discourse about rights and entitlements.

Now question emerges, why such incident happened in Zimbabwe? Why the Indians were targeted although there are many migrants from Europe settled in Zimbabwe, who largely migrated during the colonial period? Why these white people were not targeted although they are also economically prosperous and many are in to the business sector? On the other hand, the Europeans have been facilitated by the government for their settlement (Mlambo, 1998, p. 124). The reason is that the white settlers are strongly connected to the country of their origin and are getting strong support from the home country which was not the case with the Indians earlier. This is because after independence, India was seen involved itself in resolving the domestic issues/problems than giving attention to the Indian diaspora community abroad.

As mentioned earlier that the economic engagement of Indians has offered dividend to them, and thereby indicated their relatively sound economic position than the local communities. In this context, the economic prosperity of the Indians in Zimbabwe appeared to be the main reason for rift between the the natives and the Indian diaspora. However, there are competing propositions to understand the contested relationship between the the native communities and Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe. Muzondidya (2010) argues that the unresolved legacies of polarisation and inequality is responsible for the economic crisis in this country. This is also one of the reasons for the racial conflict in Zimbabwe which aggravated anti-Indian orientation among the natives. The political authority of Zimbabwe, instead of resolving such issues, utilised such emotive issue of racial differences to mobilise support internally, regionally and internationally (Muzundidya, 2010, p. 1).

The political authorities also directly or indirectly stand by the attackers and aggravated the situation by delaying in taking actions against the perpetrators. In this entire process, the colonial mindset of subordination is still visible among the native communities in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, the orientalist approach towards the communities defined interns of exploiter and the exploited is somehow seen in the context of the relation-

ship between the native and Indian diaspora communities. Hence, the Indian diaspora community tends to be trapped in this binary relationship of we versus others, insiders versus outsiders and native versus migrants, among others.

The binary understanding of communities has also led to the development of native perspective. The native ethnic communities have developed their own perception in a sense that in a situation of competition over scarce resources and geographical spaces, where the gain for Indian diaspora community has been seen as the loss for the native communities of Zimbabwe. Hence, the dichotomy of loss versus gain has led to the assertion of native communities along the line of their ethnic identities, which has created the ground for resisting the relatively advanced Indian diaspora community in the race of ethnic competition to control over and access to resources. The whole episodes of the natives' attack on Indian diaspora indicate that their distinct identities were developed corresponding to their ethnic differences between the Zimbabweans, especially the Blacks, and the Indian diaspora. Such ethnic differences gradually led to the ethnic assertion along the resource relationship and invariably resulted in resisting the presence of Indian in the contested geographical space in Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

The Indian diaspora community has been targeted in their host country/countries because of their economic prosperity. The Indian diaspora community in Zimbabwe was targeted because of their economic positioning. The authoritative regime under the leadership of Robert Mugabe led to political crisis in Zimbabwe and the reason for the increasing insecurity of the Indians. Largely the dissatisfaction and the hostility on the part of native communities towards the Indians brought the insider and outsider debate on the surface. This incident brought in the issues of identity and resource conflict between these two communities in Zimbabwe. The minority Indians who have gone through all hardships in Zimbabwe and could able to establish themselves, do not have an easy life. They are frequently pushed to a situation of vulnerability as far as their social insecurity is concerned. The Zimbabweans consider the Indians as a threat and obstacle to their development (Lorenz and Weinberger, 1999, p. 314).

In this context, there is a significant role for the state. The state should initiate the measures to maintain the balanced and cordial relationship between the native communities and the Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe. The Indian diaspora community should also understand the reasons that generated the feeling of marginalisation among the native Zimbabwean communities and respect their genuine rights in terms of their access to natural resources and state sponsored benefits, opportunities and entitlements. On the contrary, the native communities of Zimbabwe should also understand the situation of Indian diaspora and recognise the later's contribution towards the economic development of the country. The failure to maintain balance between these

two standpoints would continue to reinforce the ethnic differences and thereby would lead to contested and conflicting relationship between the native communities and the Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe.

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Afghanistan:
Conflicts in the way of Peace Process

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Abstract: Afghanistan that remained the epicenter of terrorism and insurgency in the post 9/11 incident, suffered irreparable loss in both human and infrastructure, is now heading towards an era of peace and political stability. The signing of the peace agreement on February 29, 2020 by both the US government and the Taliban is a great development for strengthening democratization and power-sharing among the stakeholders in Afghanistan. However, certain hurdles stand in the way of peace and stability. This paper discusses some of the key areas such as the dilemma of Afghan presidential elections, Pakistan's controversial role, role of neighboring countries and the Indo-Afghan Nexus. Lacunae in the US-Taliban agreement to the exclusion of the Afghan government in the agreement and the threat of the ISIS are some of the other hurdles in bringing peace and stability in the country. Bargaining among the US and Taliban and the various stakeholders of Afghanistan is the only viable solution to the problem which provides the basis for theoretical framework.

Keywords: Peace, Hurdles, Afghanistan, Taliban, US.

Introduction

The US has been fighting the war against terrorism in Afghanistan for the last nineteen years. During this period, both Afghanistan and the United States have suffered huge number of casualties. The US did not fight the war alone but was assisted by the entire international community, under the nomenclature of International Assistance Security Force (ISAF), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces and, after the drawdown of the US forces in the post-2014 scenario, under the name of Resolute Support Mission (RSM). Now, the US and its allied forces have decided to withdraw all their troops from Afghanistan within fourteen months as per the US-Taliban Agreement of February 29, 2020. There seem some inherent hurdles in the way of peace and political stability in Afghanistan. The US-Taliban deal followed by the intra-Afghan talks envisaged for the swap of prisoners which will prove to be a milestone in the peace process of Afghanistan. But till now, no progressive development has been made that can give a clear picture of the peace process. Though the US, the Afghan government and the Taliban seem to be sincere in their efforts in bringing peace and stability to the war-stricken country of Afghanistan but some forces put hindrance in the way of peace. No single actor can be blamed to be a hurdle in its way but all the stakeholders and some regional powers also have to grind their own axe.

Afghan Presidential Election Dilemma

The long-awaited Presidential elections in Afghanistan were held in September 2019. Due to some irregularities and blame game by the contesting candidates, the result could not be announced until February 18, 2020 (FARR, 2020). Ashraf Ghani got 50.64% of the votes while his rival candidate Abdullah Abdullah got 39.5% of the votes but no settlement reached between the two candidates in a period of five months. Consequently, in February 2020, both candidates took charge of the office of presidency individually despite efforts by Zalmay Khalilzad, US special Envoy (Ambassador) to Afghanistan, to resolve the dilemma. Both the candidates took charge of their offices in their palaces. In the absence of a clearly recognized president of Afghanistan, it is difficult for Taliban to sign any agreement or enter into any sort of negotiation (FARR, 2020). The deadlock between the two presidents over the office of presidency may cause harm to the process of peace and stability in Afghanistan. This may even create a sense of despair for the international community and regional actors in their diplomacy and official correspondence with Afghanistan.

However, on May 17, 2020, the two rivals agreed on power-sharing formula and signed an agreement to this effect (ABC, 2020). Earlier, the two presidents had taken oath in their respective offices but the growing need of time brought them together:

a. It is an un-denying fact that both the candidates made claims to the office of presidency in the September election of 2019. The two were adamant to accept the result but circumstances compelled them for patch up.

b. The threat by the Trump administration to reduce or pull back $ US 1 billion already announced for Afghanistan.

c. Afghanistan's facing threat of extremism on a large scale since the signing of the US-Taliban Agreement.

d. The difficulty faced by the Taliban in holding intra-Afghan talks of the country.

e. The pressure from the US government to reach a settlement for the future of Afghanistan so as to expedite the withdrawal of the US forces.

f. The pressure from the US government to hold the intra-Afghan talks and make it a success.

These steps could not be agreed upon in the absence of consensus at the high echelon of the government. The patch up between the two presidential candidates was the *sine qua non* for bringing peace and stability in the country. This would be very fruitful in making the intra-Afghan talks successful and help resolve the issues confronted by the war-stricken Afghanistan. Much depends upon the future prospects of the intra-Afghan talks and US-Taliban agreement whether the US completely withdraw their forces or reside some forces in the form of Resolute Support Mission. It is also important whether both the Taliban and the Afghan government will fulfill their pledge of prisoners swap or not.

US-Taliban Talks

It is an agonizing fact that during the US-Taliban talks the government of Afghanistan was not made a party to the agreement which also creates a sense of mistrust over the Afghan government. At the commencement of the agreement the Afghan government should have been taken into confidence and would have been made a party to the contract. The Afghan government was neither a party to the negotiation nor a signatory though Khalilizad tried to keep Ashraf Ghani informed and take on board. As the talks progressed, the Afghan government showed its resentment over their exclusion from the talks while deciding the future destiny of their country. In fact, it was the Taliban that insisted on the exclusion of the Afghan government on the plea that it was not a legitimate government and a puppet of the United States (FARR, 2020).

The non-participation of the Afghan government has created a great hindrance in the way of future negotiations leading to the anger of Ashraf Ghani and other leading Afghan officials. As per the agreement, the Afghan government would release 5,000 Taliban in lieu of 1,000 civilians held by the Taliban. The most significant point is that the prisoners are held by the Afghan government and not by the US this puts a question mark on the legal position of the Afghan government, which is not a signatory to the agreement (FARR, 2020). At first, the Afghan government was reluctant over the release of the Taliban prisoners but by March 15, 2020 President Ashraf Ghani agreed to release 1,500 Taliban prisoners subject to the provision of undertaking to the effect that they would not return to fighting after their release (Thomas, 2020).

Now, since the patch up has been reached between the two presidential rivals, it is hoped that peace would shape the future destiny of Afghanistan. Regional powers, such as Russia, Iran, China and Pakistan welcome the patch up as this would expedite the withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan. They support the view that the release of prisoners held by both the parties would be in compliance with the Resolution 2513 (2020) of the UN Security Council. Special envoys on Afghanistan from Russia, Pakistan, Iran and China urged all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan, including the Taliban movement (outlawed in Russia), for paving the way for the negotiations, as per the joint statement circulated by the Russian Foreign Minister on May 18, 2020.

Despite the agreement, the role of Taliban has also been doubtful in coming to terms of with the law enforcement agencies. Afghan security forces suffered the bloodiest week so far during the last 19-year Afghan war whereby 291 members of the Afghan law enforcement agencies were killed and 550 others wounded in the multiple Taliban attacks last week. During the period of one week, Taliban conducted 442 attacks in 32 provinces of Afghanistan. The attacks besides killing 291 security personnel and wounding 550 security personnel also resulted in the death of 42 civilians, including women and children and wounding 105 civilians.

Pakistan's Controversial Role

According to the official of Pentagon, Michael Rubin, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence is opposed to a strong government in Afghanistan either due to Indian paranoia or the Pashtun nationalists that put a challenge to the territorial integrity of Pakistan (Times, 2020). Rubin further added that, *"Being victimized at times by some terrorist groups does not exculpate Pakistan for how intertwined its intelligence and security services have become with the Taliban and its fellow travelers, such as al Qaeda. This, of course, is best symbolized by the fact that Pakistan was caught red-handed sheltering al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad,"* Times, 2020). Rubin wrote in a piece titled 'Force Pakistan to close Taliban's sanctuaries with a deadline' in The Washington Examiner. He is of the view that throughout Taliban's insurgency, the Taliban have had to take shelter in the safe havens in Pakistan across the border. A handful of Taliban negotiators reside in Qatar be it the Quetta Shura, the Peshawar Shura, the Northern Shura, and the Haqqani Network, all reside in Pakistan (Times, 2020). Afrasiab Khattak, former senator also agrees with the statement of the Rubin and tweets that *"it is the high time for Pakistan to give a cut-off date for the Taliban sanctuaries on its soil after the recent development in Afghanistan. Taliban, sitting in Pakistan, shoulders the responsibility for suicide bombing in Afghan cities killing civilians. How can Pakistan absolve itself?"* Taliban's activities of violence are bad for the peace and good working relationship of both the countries (Times, 2020).

It is correct that in the past the Taliban had sanctuaries across the Pak-Afghan porous border but those sanctuaries have now been destroyed by the efforts and various

military operations of the Pakistani government (Tariq, 2018a). Of all the operations conducted against the terrorists, Operation Zarb-e-Aza was the most successful one in eradicating terrorism and insurgency from the country. The Peshawar School attack was the peak of terrorism in Pakistan that put the National Action Plan in vogue with its 20 points agenda bringing about an end to terrorist activities to a greater extent. There has been a tremendous decrease in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan after the implementation of the National Action Plan throughout the country.

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia and Central Asia, Alice Wells praises the efforts taken by Pakistan in the peace process of Afghanistan. She praises the initiative taken by Pakistan in encouraging the Taliban for the advancement of the peace process and taking action against the insurgent groups that are disrupting peace and tranquility (Wells, 2020). She also praises the arrest of leader of *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba*, Hafiz Saeed and dismantling terror financing structure. She says that the US-Afghan talks are the outcome of a yearlong struggle that has resulted in bringing down violence in Afghanistan. The patch up between the two presidential officials is also appreciated by her as a sign of good omen for the peace and normalcy in the country. She shows her great concern that the US is looking forward to the implementation of the much-awaited intra-Afghan talks. It is in the interest of Pakistan to advance the peace process in Afghanistan while US has always noticed solid cooperation from Pakistan in this regard (Wells, 2020).

These are the two diverse views from the US about the role played by Pakistan in bringing peace and political stability in the country. Pakistan has always been looking forward to a stable and peaceful Afghanistan as this not only guarantees the stability of Afghanistan but also of Pakistan and the entire region (Tariq, 2018b). A secure Afghanistan is very essential for the entire region of South Asia. The reconciliation between the two presidential officials, will no doubt, pave the way for the successful culmination of US-Taliban talks and intra-Afghan talks that will ultimately result in the withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan within the specified time frame of fourteen months (Tariq, 2020). Pakistan is a peace-loving country and always stands by the norms and values of international law and never interferes in the internal affairs of a neighboring country.

Role of Neighboring Countries

Due to the strategic location of Afghanistan, the neighboring countries also want to ensure their presence in one form or the other. The role of India, Iran, Russia and China cannot be gainsaid in this perspective. Of all these countries, the role of India is very alarming in the internal politics of Afghanistan. Since 2001, India has given $ 3 billion to Afghanistan for the purpose of reconstruction and business entrepreneurship. Its main concern is to minimize the role of Pakistan and prevent it from becoming a sanctuary for anti-Indian militants. Moreover, the Indians are not supporting the move of

the US government to reach an agreement with Taliban and disregard the Taliban as a legitimate actor (Maizland, 2020). India's strategic interest in Afghanistan is to weaken the security position of Pakistan in order that Pakistan may face security concerns from both its eastern and western borders (Tariq, 2015a).

Iran, a *Shia*-majority country, always sees Taliban as their foe for their being *Sunni* and supported by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (Maizland, 2020). Iran was in complete consonance with the US efforts in dethroning the Taliban in Afghanistan and installing a government of their own in 2001. The Iranian government, after the US-Taliban agreement, has sensed that the Taliban would be given some role in the power-sharing formula in Afghanistan; they (Iranians) have improved ties with Afghanistan. However, the two countries are confronted with the issue of drug-trafficking and opium addiction which may further deteriorate their relations in the future.

The Russians want to ensure their presence by strengthening their relations with Afghanistan that remained strained after their withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989. Now, their main objective in Afghanistan is to counter the US and NATO forces by playing more role in the peace-making process of Afghanistan. Russia has the credit of hosting many dialogues between the Taliban and Afghan representatives. So, the Russians are more concerned with curtailing the power of the US in Afghanistan and the entire region.

China sees Afghanistan the other way from the perspectives of economic and trade purposes. Beijing is interested in integrating it into the belt road initiative, a collection of development and investment project (Maizland, 2020). China's potential of largest foreign investment is concentrated over capturing the vast natural resources of Afghanistan and through it get entry into the Central Asian Countries. China supports the US-Taliban agreement for the peace and stability of Afghanistan and in the late 2019, both the Afghan government and Taliban attended a conference in Beijing.

The fact is that both the US and the Taliban have got exhausted of the 19 years long war in Afghanistan but neither was ready to disarm itself. The global and regional actors remained involved in the war and wanted to secure its vested interest in the war on the Afghan soil (Nasri, 2020). It has been seen that countries like Russia, Iran and China that were earlier opposed to Taliban, diverted their attention towards Taliban in order to thwart the rising power of the ISIS in Afghanistan. Their main objective in doing so was to secure a clear position for themselves after the US withdraws from Afghanistan (Nasri, 2020). All these forces are trying their best to facilitate the peace process in Afghanistan for the reasons of their vested interest in the post-withdrawal scenario.

The threat of ISIS

ISIS is another potential threat to the peace and security of Afghanistan. It is neither on the side of the Afghan government nor on the side of the Taliban but has its own hierarchy of actors that are fighting for its own cause. The group is the Islamic State

affiliate, also known as the Islamic State–Khorasan Province (ISKP, also known as ISIS-K). The strength of the ISIS was estimated to range from 2,000 to 4,000 until it collapsed in the late 2019 by the US offensives and combat forces (Thomas, 2020). The ISKP and Taliban fought on many occasions on territory or political grounds or other differences (Reuters, 2019; Snow, 2020). The US is not clear about their activities in any particular area, some of them claim that they are engaged in the western part of Afghanistan but they disagree among themselves about the nature of the threat (Neff & Barnes, 2019). The fact of their being involved in terrorist activities is clear from their claiming responsibility of a large number of attacks, many targeted towards the *Shia* minority in Afghanistan. Some of the ISKP claim that they have been threatened by Taliban either to agree to a political settlement or to a continued US counterterrorism presence (Ignatius, 2019).

Thus, one the greatest threat that affects the security of Afghanistan comes from the ISIS. The threat by the ISIS has drawn the attention of the regional powers such as China, Iran and Russia. They are only against the Afghan government or Taliban or the US troops in Afghanistan but also against the *Shia* sect in Afghanistan. The greatest challenge for the Afghan government is not only from the Taliban but also from the ISKP. Unlike, other terrorist organizations, the ISKP has no affiliation with any particular network which poses great security concerns for the Afghan government. Prior to the US intervention in Afghanistan in 2001, they were faced with only two great organizations; the Taliban and the Al-Qaeda but now the third one, the ISIS is adding further to the agonies of the Afghan government as well as the US government.

Indo-Afghan Nexus

India poses threat to the peace and stability of Afghanistan by keeping itself engaged in many sectors of the country. The most influential regional competition for influence in Afghanistan is the tug-of-war between Pakistan and India, each concerned with its particular objectives (Constantino, 2020). India's strategic interest in Afghanistan is more directed against the national interest of Pakistan and for that purpose assists India militarily and provides assistance for the reconstruction of infrastructure (Tariq, 2015b). The main concern of India rests upon making Afghanistan as a natural partner and reliable fortification to be used against the Islamic militants, including Pakistan-backed groups both in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

It is very significant that the theoretical framework for the US-Taliban and intra-Afghan talks has been set but the most important task is enforcement and practical manifestation of it that has caught the attention of the entire world. The US has done a marvelous yet a fiddly job by recognizing Taliban as a legitimate political force in Afghanistan (Nasri, 2020). Now, much depends upon the outcome of the intra-Afghan talks to which the US will be only observer. The intriguing part is very captivating that the globally declared terrorist outfit and globally banned organization was recognized as a legitimate power.

The recognition of a non-state actor by the US creates room for the future prospects of other terrorist organizations to be given legitimacy. The ISIS may demand for their legitimacy in Afghanistan in future.

Conclusion

The war-stricken country of Afghanistan is going through the process of transition since the US government has decided to leave Afghanistan within a period of fourteen months. An agreement to this effect was signed between the US government and the Taliban which envisaged the intra-Afghan talks but the outcome is yet to come. One of the greatest hurdles is the Afghan presidential elections that were held in September 2019 but the result was delayed for five months. Even after the lapse of five months the two presidential could not reach any agreement which further delayed the peace process in Afghanistan. It made it impossible for the Taliban to proceed further with intra-Afghan talks as it was very difficult for them whom to talk, Ashraf Ghani or Abdullah Abdullah. Now, the consensus between the two presidential candidates over power-sharing in Afghanistan will pay the way for peace process in Afghanistan.

The non-involvement of the Afghan government in the US-Taliban agreement is another hurdle that again puts a question mark on the legal position of the Afghan government. If the prisoners are held by the Afghan government then they might have been taken on board as the actual problem is between the Taliban and the Afghan government. The intra-Afghan talks are the peripheral side of the main agreement which provides for the release of prisoners and power-sharing scheme in the future set up of the Afghan government. However, the reliance of the US government over the Afghan government for expediting the peace process and signing of reconciliation with the Taliban prognosticates positive signs for settlement of all outstanding issues in the country.

Pakistan's controversial role in the Afghan peace process is also noteworthy. Both Rubin and Afrasiab Khattak blame Pakistan for nourishing the terrorist activities of Taliban and providing them sanctuaries along the Pak-Afghan border. But this is just the dark side of the picture; the bright side of the picture is presented by the US Deputy Secretary of State for South Asia and Central Asia, Alice Wells appreciates the role played by Pakistan in expediting the peace process in Afghanistan. She applauds the role played by Pakistan in motivating both the Afghan government and the Taliban to reach a peaceful settlement. This is a very positive view and is in consonance with the national interest and foreign policy of Pakistan as peace in Afghan can bring more comfort and stability to Pakistan.

The role of the regional powers with their vested interests is another complicating point in the Afghan peace process. Since 2001, India has spent $ 3 billion on various projects and infrastructure just to minimize the influence of Pakistan and maximize its own influence in Afghanistan though it does not share any border with Afghanistan.

The Iranians have their own sphere of influence in supporting the *Shia* community *vis à vis* the *Sunni* community. Support by the Iran for their religious community is a great impediment in the way of peace. The role of Russians is also concerned with grinding their own axe. Their support of the Taliban is to reduce the influence of the US troops and NATO forces so that they may enjoy the regional hegemony by having their presence in Afghanistan. China's concern is more of creating commercial and trade links with Afghanistan but that too is fraught with strategic interest of reducing the US influence and capturing regional market mechanism.

The ISIS poses threat to the future security and stability of Afghanistan. Its strength ranges from 2,000 to 4,000 personnel who are not only against the interest of the US in Afghanistan, the Taliban, and the Afghan government but also against the *Shia* community in Afghanistan. The ISIS is another emerging non-state actor which may further deteriorate security situation in Afghanistan after the US troops leave Afghanistan. The Indo-Afghan Nexus is another impediment in the way of peace process since Taliban are totally against the presence of the Indians in Afghanistan. The US-Taliban agreement, gave the Taliban legitimacy in the Afghan government which may create further space for other groups such as the ISIS.

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan shows that the theory of Realism has failed that has been used by the great powers for their vested interest and installing government of their choice under the norms of International Structure (Tariq, 2018c). Modern era is an era of liberalism and democratic government which believe in the power-sharing among the various stakeholders of the country. For a country like Afghanistan, federalism is the best remedy for the process of peace and resolution of conflicts (Tariq, 2018b). Since Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic country, the best option is the distribution of governmental powers between the center and the provinces in a just way. This will help resolve all the issues of ethnicity and accommodation of all groups in the governmental sphere.

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