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Local Voices in Global Sociology

Celebrating the 10ᵗʰ Anniversary
Of

Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology

Chief Guest: Professor **Farid Uddin Ahmed, Dean, Social Sciences**
Special Guest: **Professor KAM Saaduddin**
Chair: **Professor Monirul Islam Khan, Chair, Dept. of Sociology**

Sunday July 7, 2013: :Senate Bhaban, DU
9:30 am to 2:00 pm

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Note from the Editor

Ten years have passed. When I began working towards this journal back in 2003, I was not even sure it was a worthwhile enterprise. Academic journals in Bangladesh have very limited life-spans, rarely exceeding three to four issues. They all have good intensions behind them, often funding is also adequate, but they die a natural death simply because of the lack of research papers to publish. As it is, much of the publications are solicited and the contributing researchers are fewer in number than would be the case in a country with over eighty universities and a large number of research organizations. Indeed, researches, including in the social sector, worth millions of dollars are conducted every year in Bangladesh by numerous government and non-government entities. But very few, if at all, of these reach the reading public. They remain locked up as government files and in NGO folders. While on the other hand, the universities, unfortunately, are almost completely devoid of research funds. Whatever research is done by the faculty are out of their own pocket money or as consultants for the government agencies or NGOs and their reports meet with the fate just noted above. So that, to hope to publish a journal on a regular basis was more of a dream than could be attained as a reality.

The reading public, or to be more precise, the researchers, teachers and the students, are another matter of concern. Readership among the general public is limited to fiction and newspapers and magazines. Serious academic reading is totally absent there, primarily due to lack of interest but also because of the non-availability of academic journals. The ones who are expected to read, the researchers, faculty and students, simply do not read. I have noted this apathy my earlier editorial as well. There is very little need to read. To go ahead in life and career at the universities, either as a student or even as a faculty member, reading or doing research is no longer a requirement. Students pass their exams. reading hand written notes handed down through the generations or poorly compiled notebooks. Faculty members do not need to read for the simple reason that they are never challenged in the classroom. Also, there are other and more assured avenues of getting promoted. As a result even if regular journals existed, few would actually require reading these, either to impart knowledge or to get promoted. In the end, therefore, if a paper is published in a journal, only 3 people would read it, the editor, the reviewer and the author!

Given such a scenario, it was foolhardy to even conceive of a regular journal. The very few journals that get printed or are regular in circulation merely adorn the book shelves of the faculty, if and when received free of cost, but are rarely read. No one even contemplates paid subscriptions for any journal, volumes of journals lay waste, taking up precious space at the publishers' storerooms. The expenses are never met. Even bookstores do not want them, may be one or two copies and that too on loans to be paid back if sold. So that by all accounts it was a big NO, NO, to a journal publication.

But the urge to publish a regular journal of sociology was paramount, particularly for the fact that, sociology was being taught in Bangladesh as a formal discipline at the graduate and undergraduate levels for nearly fifty years then. There were close to hundred regular sociology faculty members at the universities and probably a thousand more at the various two and four year colleges and thousands of students, the government agencies and numerous NGOs who would require such a journal. The few past attempts made by the formal associations of the sociologists died their natural deaths and no one supported another such experiment.

Then an idea hit me. There was a thriving reading public out there in the international arena, where research on Bangladesh would be eagerly sought after. And I could reach them through the internet, which was not yet as big a thing as it is today but like everyone else I expected it to get bigger. Formal journals were still in hard editions and soft versions were literally frowned upon as "trash" by the big name journals. But I decided that this was the only way to go and managed to convince a few colleagues who also agreed to sit on the editorial board and with the little finances needed to rent a 100mb space on a local server I took the leap. At that time it felt like a challenge that I must surmount, but to think back, , it was just foolish of me to even to plan to construct the website, which I had to learn following a few text books written on the subject, for

the "dummies" like me. I have since forgotten the technique and have left the design as it was, but is very badly in need of reconstruction.

In any case, the Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology was launched on the internet as a free to download peer reviewed international electronic journal of sociology with its first issue in January 2004, with the promise of two issues per year. The first issue came out with the papers presented in a seminar on Max Weber, jointly organized by the Goethe Institute in Dhaka. The primary objective of the e-Journal, as stated in the website, was to promote research and publication by the Bangladeshi sociologists and to set up what could be called a "Sociology of Bangladesh". But the journal would also seek to be international, in its general objective, not only in its readership but also in the publication of research papers from all over the world.

The first few issues were, as noted above, purely solicited ones. Fortunately, the e-Journal received immediate recognition from the International Sociological Association (ISA) and from friends and scholars at home and abroad. And as I came to realize later, it was not only the first such attempt from south Asia but was one of the very few electronic journals anywhere in the world then. While in sociology it was probably second only to the pioneering Electronic Journal of Sociology (established in 1994 by Michael Sosteric, with Andreas Scheider as the editor-in-chief – Wikipedia), which was faltering because serious scholars and major publishers shied away from electronic journals as these were treated as frivolous publications. But the inevitable triumph of the electronic followed and soon even the non- electronic journals, including nearly all reputed journals, were forced to include an electronic versions. And today if you Google search for the e-Journal of Sociology, the first entry on the list, among 1.5 million entries, is the Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology followed by the original Electronic Journal of Sociology. ISA now lists Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology as one of the "core" journals of sociology along with the American and the British journals of sociology.

However, I overshoot, since soon after the first few issues my sources of articles started to dry out, although a handful of committed authors, S. Aminul Islam, Shahadat Hossain, and A. I Mahbub Uddin Ahmed among them, continued to send in papers when I needed them badly to keep the publication going. But then came the time of reckoning as the e-journal was about to die its expected natural death. The flow of papers dwindled to almost nothing; two issues were published with just enough materials for one. But more importantly, contributions from Bangladeshi researchers reached its vanishing point as no more articles could be solicited. The journal was only publishing papers received from abroad, mostly from Nigerian scholars. In utter frustration I noted in one editorial that the Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology might as well be called the Nigerian e-Journal of Sociology. I was at a point of giving up, except that the editorial board kept on supporting my dreams even when I was failing.

And just at about this point in time a US data base company by the name of EBSCO approached us for distribution rights. We, of course, readily agreed but remained fearful that we may not be able to continue much longer. But EBSCO did what we could not have dreamt at the time. The readership soared as university after university, associated with the data base, began to subscribe the BEJS for their own libraries and today nearly half a million sites have links to the Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology, with nearly all reputed university libraries subscribing. Along with that, the readership and the submission of papers also increased phenomenally. We could now afford the luxury of rejecting papers on the basis of peer reviews. And as it stands, we can accommodate only a fraction of the papers submitted to us, even after doubling the size of the e-Journal and the number of articles published in each issue, while the average waiting time for getting published has grown to over one year. Today, the e-Journal does not have to follow the authors, not even from Bangladesh, the authors follow the journal, sending and when needed, resending the corrected papers. And according to one website, the current readership of the BEJS, on a three month average, stands at 77 readers per day. For an academic journal this is quite remarkable, definitely better than the 3 readers, alluded to above.

As a matter of policy, the BEJS has always encouraged young and upcoming researchers. Often accommodating their first research papers distilled from the PhD thesis and many have gone a long way since their first publication in the BEJS. A case in point is Professor Usman Karofi who got his first publication in the BEJS out of his PhD thesis when he was still a student in Malaysia and is now a well established professor in Nigeria. Incidentally, Nigeria remains the largest

contributor to the e-journal but is now closely followed by Bangladeshi scholars. A whole new breed of young researchers have recently emerged in the various universities, particularly in Khulna University, and the NGOs of Bangladesh who are well versed in methodology and ready to tackle sensitive topics such as domestic violence or sexuality. The recent issues of the e-Journal are a testament to their rise in Bangladesh. I not only congratulate and encourage them but claim this as the greatest success of the Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology.

Ten years and ten volumes later, I feel that our objectives have been largely achieved, we are here to stay. Google lists most of the articles published in the BEJS in its scholarly website called the "Google Scholar". Google Scholar records the number of times an article has been cited by other researchers and I am often amazed by the number of the BEJS articles that get cited. The number of citations for an article often exceeds 50, which is exceptional for such a short existence of the journal. The most cited authors have so far been Habibul Haque Khondker, David Everatt and Shahadat Hossain, Mahbuba Nasreen, S. Aminul Islam and jointly S. Tahir and SMMR Naqvi. Some articles have been reprinted as book chapters, Shahadat Hossain, A.I. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed, Syed Anwar Hossain, and S. Aminul Islam are among the ones who have been reprinted. In a few cases the articles have been translated into other languages like Spanish and Turkish. On our part we have compiled two volumes out of the articles published in the e-Journal, one on Max Weber was published by the Goethe Institute, Dhaka and the other on Sociological Perspectives on Poverty by us, the Bangladesh Sociological Society. We are also planning a few more such volumes on the major topics covered in the e-Journal. Two possible volumes comes to mind as the next compilations, one on Religion in Bangladesh, from the special issue of the same name, and the other on Nigerian Society and Culture. These compilations, we hope, will have a more lasting impact on the academia.

Thus from now on it is a job of maintaining regular schedule and making publication in the e-Journal a little more challenging, as a result more competitive. Hopefully the number of submissions will continue to rise, giving us the scope of choosing and presenting the best of these in our future issues. The submissions from Nigeria and the rest of Africa are among the best in terms of methodology, they are concise, to the point and well supported theoretically, reflecting on the high quality of research and teaching there. Submissions from the region, Pakistan and India, do need to come up in quality. Most of the rejected submissions are from these two countries. Bangladeshi submissions are definitely improving in quality and the numbers are very encouraging, although the senior authors are again missing from the recent issues. Scholars from the developed countries are yet to publish in the e-Journal in big numbers, although some have done so. I feel that as time goes by and we get to tackle more serious topics, they too will have the confidence to publish in the BEJS.

The ten years and the ten volumes need to be evaluated in the backdrop of the more than 55 years or so of sociology in Bangladesh. Prior to the e-Journal, Bangladesh sociology remained limited to classroom teaching with very little publishable research. Publications amounted to a few PhD theses and some text books. Abortive attempts to launch journals earlier only attest to the failure of sociology to get going. Only a few articles, to the best of my knowledge, mostly by me and S. Aminul Islam ever got published in the major international journals like those of the American Sociological Association. Even the attempts made to get a regional standing also failed recently as the government rules prevented us from establishing a South Asian Sociological Society. So that sociology in Bangladesh prior to the e-Journal remained as a "sociology in Bangladesh". Few individual expatriates may have done better but as far as the mainstream is concerned, sociology in Bangladesh has remained in a nascent state, failing to make any worthwhile contribution in the international scene, all through its existence. That is, until the founding of the Bangladesh e-Journal of sociology. Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology has now taken it beyond borders into the international arena, where not only the journal but a large number of Bangladeshi sociologists have become internationally known. And for the first time in its history, Bangladesh sociology and sociologists from Bangladesh have found a footing in the global setting and can plan to establish a "Sociology of Bangladesh" with its own theoretical and methodological foundations.

The next ten years of the Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology will focus on attaining such a goal.

Patisars Today: Tagore, Modernity and Social Change in Contemporary Rural Bangladesh[1]

S. Aminul Islam[2]

Abstract: *In Patisar, Tagore developed his paradigm of modernization which he had started earlier at Shelidah and continued to practice later at Shriniketan. At the heart of this paradigm lay the notion of human-centred development - development of human capability set in the context of nature. He came to regard village and community as the theatre of development, rather than the city or the state. The paradigm highlighted human agency and volunteerism, and included cooperatives for mobilization of the poor, schooling for development of human capital, healthcare, infrastructure development, modernization of agriculture, development of cottage industries, micro-credit for indebted peasants, alternative dispute resolution for good governance, rural appraisal for knowledge generation and, above all, the growth of self -potency and human creativity. Tagore thus envisioned the most holistic modernization paradigm that has ever been articulated-- more comprehensive than the idea of 'second modernity' and cosmopolitanism proposed by Ulrich Beck, one of the leading sociologists of the world today, more philosophically grounded than human development, bottom-up development, green development or deep ecology.*

Key words: Tagore, Social change, modernity, rural development, Bangladesh

Introduction

In January, 1914, in an unparalleled move for a Nobel laureate, Tagore had deposited part of his award money into the agricultural bank of Patisar- one of the most inaccessible villages of the Bengal delta lying on the bank of Nagar across the difficult terrain of *Chalan Beel*. It grew a single crop in the year and went under flood water in the monsoon. Here the winter was harsh and bitter and poverty pervasive. In November, 1889 Tagore at 29 came to Eastern Bengal with the task of overseeing the family estates. Here in the bosom of nature, his literary works flourished. The charming landscape where 'heavens' were 'bare' in the moonlight, the vast water of the rolling Padma, the deep solitude that he found here and, his exposure to the suffering souls of the poor peasants not only shaped his literary vision, it also played an important role in forming his vision of modernization. Tagore became a central figure in articulating an alternative form of modernity - that both incorporated and challenged the hegemonic Western modernity from the interstices of colonial encounter. In Patisar, Tagore developed his paradigm of modernization which he had started earlier at Shelidah and continued to practice later at Shriniketan. At the heart of this paradigm lay the notion of human-centred development - development of human capability set in the context of nature. He came to regard village and community as the theatre of development, rather than the city or the state. The paradigm highlighted human agency and volunteerism, and included cooperatives for mobilization of the poor, schooling for development of human capital, healthcare, infrastructure development, modernization of agriculture, development of cottage industries, micro-credit for indebted peasants, alternative dispute resolution for good governance, rural appraisal for knowledge generation and, above all, the growth of self -potency and human

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[1] This is a slightly revised version of the paper prepared for and presented in the International Seminar entitled Tagore's Rural Reconstruction and Its Relevance Today, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, 1-2 May,2012.
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creativity. Tagore thus envisioned the most holistic modernization paradigm that has ever been articulated-- more comprehensive than the idea of 'second modernity' and cosmopolitanism proposed by Ulrich Beck, one of the leading sociologists of the world today, more philosophically grounded than human development, bottom-up development, green development or deep ecology. It can even be argued that Tagore spelt out and practiced most of the ideas of modernization or social development that has been proposed since the idea of underdevelopment was 'invented' in 1949.

The objective of this paper is threefold. Firstly, it seeks to examine Tagore's concept of modernity and his paradigm of modernization which he developed alongside his literary career. Secondly, the paper argues that the current economic crisis and crisis in sociological theory forces us to re-visualize the global future in terms of his ideas and practice of rural development. Thirdly, it encapsulates the social change that is taking place in rural Bangladesh as a consequence of sweeping forces of globalization and highlight from this case study why Tagore's ideas are still relevant for the future as a model of development.

Tagore's vision of modernity

Tagore's own vision of modernity developed in the context of the colonial encounter which led to opposing ideological terrains – westernization and traditonalization. Westernization fuelled a style of thought and life that proclaimed the superiority of the West and adoption of the ideology of the colonial masters. In opposition to westernization, traditionalism expressed the timeless superiority of Hinduism and eternal greatness of the Indian past. Tagore himself, as Sarkar(1970) and Kopf(1979) show, moved between these two poles throughout his career. What they leave out is that Tagore had also developed a distinct view of modernity of his own which had its roots in Brahmo modernism, but was largely shaped by his exposure to rural Eastern Bengal over the decade of 1890s when he stayed there to supervise the family estate. Brahmo movement in Bengal tried to strike a balance between Western modernity and the Indian tradition through religious reforms. It also produced a deep sense of nationalism and commitment for social reforms. Tagore carried within him these values and norms from the early periods of his life. In one of his early letters Tagore proclaims that somebody who does not love his own country, cannot do any good work for his country and similarly a person who does not love his own time, cannot do good work for his time (Tagore, 1963: 512).

Tagore stressed upon two central themes-- change is the essence of life and what is important is here and now. Time has an eternal flow. "We must be prepared for it or our life will be useless" (Tagore, 1963: 513). But the presence has no value without a past. So it is a bad thing to surrender blindly to the present era. He asserted that the Western modernity had both good and bad in it and its impact upon India was similarly both positive and negative. So it is the duty of each individual to examine the traditions of the past and the contours of the new for envisioning

the future of life and society. Tagore was from the beginning of his writings ferociously critical of the negative aspects of Indian tradition, the working of the colonial Bengali society and the educated urban elite of his time. He asserted long before V. S Naipaul (`that "[w]e are mimic men."… Look inside our mind, there lies corrosion, weakness, incompleteness, smallness, untruth…mistrust, fear" (Tagore, 1963:522). Tagore saw it as a form of paralysis. Indian tradition had greatness in the past. It had undergone decay under colonialism. The only trust people had was upon clericalism. But Tagore had great faith in the future. Once Bengal was in a state of great crisis, it was re-generated through the works of Chaytanya. He saw his time as pregnant with great future not with gunshots, but with great deeds. Although Western modernity was vitiated with crash materialism and hunger for plunder, it had also great power in the form of its search for knowledge and sacrifice for collective good. Tagore sought to harness this power of modernity for the regeneration of his own country. Tagore had set it as the mission of his life. He proclaimed in 1884: "Our sphere of activities lies near us, in our homes and in our neighbourhoods (cited in Sen, 1943 :6). If the spark of his vision of modernity was triggered by the ideological battlefield of the colonial city of Kolkata, it found its concrete experimentation in the rural hinterland of Eastern Bengal.

In his tract on nationalism published in 1883, Tagore articulated these ideas more clearly. In Swadeshi Samaj published in 1904 he re-articulated these ideas in greater detail. Tagore came to hold that in the Western modernity city was the centre of civilization. It was separated from the countryside. In this type of city "… civilization burns itself up with its own fires; and more brilliantly it flashes out for the time, the blacker becomes its fuel, until at last it is reduced to ashes"(Sen, 1943: 59). In short, Western modernity was "…digging holes not only into the very foundations of his livelihood, but also of his life" (Sen, 1943:60). Here Tagore was more profound than Weber (Gerth and Mills, 1958) who foresaw the chilling end of modernity and a polar night of icy darkness that lay ahead of Western modernity. Tagore's views on Western modernity and Eastern tradition can be summarized in the following way.

- Modernity was born in the city and driven by it. Any kind of urban-based civilization is doomed and bound to die sooner or later.
- Modern machine and industrialization generated 'greed of grain' which produced a huge gap between individual and collective interests, between the rich and the poor and led to the destruction of natural joy in productive activities. It has sacrificed people "… into the hungry jaws of the office" (Sen, 1943: 60).
- In Western modernity the driving force was the pursuit of wealth
- In Europe state was concerned with social welfare.
- Europe's strength lay in the state and its power. The critical institution of modernity was state and its organized violence.
- European modernity's another crucial feature was its search for knowledge and scientific achievement.
- The hallmark of Western modernity was power of enterprise undertaken both collectively and individually.
- The centre of pre-colonial Indian society was village and a harmonious balance between city and the countryside.
- The village had interdependence and organic unity that allowed it to function autonomously even in the absence of the state.
- In India social welfare was the responsibility of the society.

- In pre-colonial India, wealth was regarded as 'social trust' (Sen, 1943: 11). The pursuit of wealth was tempered with 'competitive generosity'(Sen,1943: 11)
- During the colonial rule the organic unity of society had come to an end. The institution of private property led to its destruction. The rural elite began to live in cities and wealth flowed from the countryside to the city. The natural bond between man and man was ruined. Individuals became both atomistic and alienated.

Thus Tagore had a much more complex model of modernity than what has been so far available in the social-scientific literature on modernization which naively assumed a polarity of tradition and modernity and an inevitable linear progress from tradition to Western, urban, industrial modernity. Thus the Western view of modernity assumed sociology of fate that fore-ordained the triumph of Western modernity and dissolution of all other cultural and social forms-- the destruction of the other, malevolent and evil. Tagore, on the other hand, spelt out three societal forms-- organic traditional society, transitional society of decay that had lost its organic unity under the weight of colonialism and organic modernity – outlines of a future society grounded in a synthesis of Western modernity and Indian tradition – a vision of modernity which was fundamentally different from Western modernity. Thus he talked about multiple modernities.

The paradigm of modernization

In Tagore estates in Eastern Bengal which originally comprised Birahimpur estate of the present Kustia district with headquarters at Shelaidah, Sajadpur of Pabna district, Kaligram Pargana with headquarters at Patisar in the present district of Rajshahi, he came into close encounter with peasants and common people whose 'suffering' became gradually 'intertwined' with his 'daily work'. He described his fundamental task of modernization as self- governance – to '…take the Government of the country in our hands….'(Sen, 1943:21). In Patisar, Tagore developed his paradigm of modernization which he had started earlier at Shelidah and continued to practice later at Shriniketan. At the heart of this paradigm lay the notion of decentralized self-governance undertaken collectively by village people. It was human-centred development from the below – development of human capability set in the context of nature. He came to regard village and community as the theatre of development, rather than the city or the state. The paradigm highlighted human agency and volunteerism, and included cooperatives for mobilization of the poor, schooling for development of human capital, healthcare, infrastructure development, modernization of agriculture, development of cottage industries, micro-credit for indebted peasants, alternative dispute resolution for good governance, rural appraisal for knowledge generation and, above all, the growth of self -potency and human creativity.

In this task, he clearly identified the nature of underdevelopment in rural society that he saw so closely, perhaps more closely than a professional anthropologist. The rural society, he showed, was characterized by

- Low productivity of agriculture
- Drain of economic resources from the village to the city
- Illiteracy and lack of education

- Lack of self-potency
- Indebtedness
- virulent diseases like malaria, typhoid, <u>Diphtheria</u>
- Deep fatalism
- High litigation
- Theft and robbery
- Famine
- Master-slave relationship and high dependency of the peasantry upon the zaminadars

Tagore saw the rural society "… as an uprooted tree in the new age" that "… quietly accept every misfortune, die without effort, attribute every injustice to destiny" (Sen, 1943: 22). He found that the lights from the huts of the village were disappearing; it was being increasingly covered by the jungle. Deadly diseases were spreading and famines became more frequent. He saw the village as a 'mad man' tearing up his own body through constant litigation.

Tagore fully articulated his vision of rural development in his address in the Provincial Conference of the Congress in Pabna in 1908. He suggested for clustering a number of villages into a division which would take responsibility for running schools, industrial arts, common grain fund, commodity bank, and agricultural bank. Each division should have a public space for collective activities and recreation and informal dispute resolution. All conflicts and disputes have to be resolved locally (Mukherjee, 1997).

The exemplar: beginning at Shelidah

Tagore found Shelidah a good place to start his work on rural development. There was an agricultural bank and an elementary school at Shelidah. Tagore recruited a band of young people to work with him. In the context of the above features of underdevelopment, when Tagore started his development work at Shelidah in 1899, he gave particular emphasis to the development of agential capability of peasants through the spirit of cooperation, education, higher agricultural productivity, good governance and provision of health care. He undertook it in Shelaifah and Patisar. The Estate of Birahimpur was divided into five divisions each headed by a chief along with two Hindu and two Muslim members elected from the area. The responsibility for development work in each area was given to this committee (Rafiq, 2011). Young development workers in cooperation with villagers and under the supervision of Tagore began to repair roads and dams, excavate tanks, and clear jungle. An experimental farm of more than 25 acres (80 *bigha*) was set up to introduce new agricultural techniques and new crops like American maize and potato in the area as early as 1899. He even toyed with the idea of nurturing silk worms in the area so that peasants could have alternative source of livelihood (Paul, 1988). Four schools including a girl's school and a gymnasium were set up (Sen, 1943). Meso level developmental enterprises such as a weaving school, sugar crushing mill, brick kiln, and jute and cloth trade were also attempted in the nearby district town of Kushtia so that it could forge a virtuous circle of

rural-urban development. A hospital was also established here. In 1906, Rathindranath Tagore, the poet's son was sent to USA for training in agronomy. He undertook the task of rural development at Shelidah from 1910 (Mukhopadhya, 1997). In 1907, Tagore had organized young volunteers for rural development called *Kishorebrati.* Adhikari (1974) *who* participated in it has described what they did for rural development. They consisted of a team of 24 boys and their task was threefold: to take part in agricultural work, to work for the ideal village and organize other young people for rural development. They had to work in the farms of their own and in other farms for learning modern agricultural techniques. They were also given responsibility to turn Komarkandi village into an ideal village. They had to collect detailed information about the village and its inhabitants. Their activities began after the school and continued into the evening. Tagore introduced a nationalist fair in Shelidah called *Katayani Mela* that generated awareness, patriotism, encouraged folk arts and provided recreation for rural people. Tagore also undertook to build up an ideal village called Lahinigram in 1915 (Karim, 2008). It did not, however, materialize due to the lawsuit by a local zamindar. The experiment for rural development here came to an end in 1919 when the Tagore estate was divided Shelidah fell into the hands of other members of the family.

The paradigm at Patisar

Patisar was almost a square village about a kilometre in length that housed the kutchery of Kaligram Pargana of Tagore Estate (Paul, 1407). The work on rural development at Patisar began in 1899 on the occasion of memorial service to Debendranath Tagore when Tagore established a Welfare Fund. In the past tenants used to pay a tiny amount to the zamindar for religious and cultural festivals of the community along with their rent. Tagore built upon this custom and persuaded his tenants to pay more for the general welfare. Every tenant had to pay about 6 percent of the rent to the Welfare Fund. Tagore matched this grant from his share of the rent. Later Tagore Estate made annual grant for development work here (Sen, 1943). For the task of development every village had a welfare society headed by an elderly person. The Kaligram Pargana was divided into three divisions. The village welfare societies were confederated into divisional welfare societies at the apex of which lay Kaligram Welfare Society headed by five chiefs. The total amount of money of the welfare was equally distributed among the divisions (Rafiq, 2011). Tagore found out a new source of income for this Fund. In the past, those who violated a social taboo had to offer an expensive feast. Tagore arranged that one could from then contribute to the Welfare Fund instead of the feast. In 1905 Tagore established an agricultural bank in Kaligram. This Fund provided money to run a high school and a charitable dispensary.

By 1915 Patisar had a full-fledged rural development programme that included a model farm, modern agricultural equipments brought from USA. A tractor was introduced for fast and deep ploughing and it became quite popular with the villagers. Roads were repaired, wells dug, jungles were cleared. Provision for proper medical treatment and medicines were made. As many as 200 rural schools including day and night schools were opened in the area. Two important innovations

were introduced here. The agricultural bank at Patisar provided micro credit to farmers at an interest rate of 9 percent. Borrowers were reimbursed 3 percent of the interest after they made full repayment and hence the effective interest rate was only 6 percent. Tagore introduced alternative dispute resolution in the area so that all disputes could be solved at the village level without resorting to expensive litigations. Tagore, in addition, planned for a rice mill at Patisar by floating shares of 5 and10 rupees. He also tried to introduce other income generating activities such as umbrella-making and pottery. The scale of the work was considerable. In a letter of 1916 Tagore mentioned that the work of rural development included 600 villages (Rafiq, 2011).

Expansion of the paradigm

Tagore had purchased about 7 acres of land outside the village of Surul near Santiniketan in 1912. In 1920 Tagore met Leonard Knight Elmhirst, an agronomist at Cornell who was considerably familiar with the problems of agriculture in India. He persuaded Elmhurst to join his task for rural development at what then came to be known as Shriniketan. The task for rural development at Shriniketan began in full earnest from 1922 when the Institute of Rural Reconstruction was set up with Elmhirst as its first director and with the financial support of Mrs. Willard Straight. The early phase of it consisted of preparation for the task. The second phase focused on rural appraisal through which detailed knowledge of the problems of rural life were gathered. The actual work of rural development started in the third phase from 1924. The landscape of Surul was a daunting challenge, even a nightmare for any development worker. The earth was barren and cultivation was difficult due to the quality of the soil. It was only suitable for a single crop in the year. There was scarcity of water. Malaria was a scourge for the area. Monkeys used to destroy crops regularly. The main task of agricultural modernization that was undertaken was an increase in agricultural productivity through scientific management, introduction of new crops, especially winter crops, extensive irrigation work, orchards, experimentation with new seed varieties, mixing of organic fertilizer with chemical fertilizer. It also included dairy and poultry farming and later sericulture and fishery (Dikshit, 2010)

A central plank of rural development strategy was to propagate volunteerism and a spirit of cooperation. Particular emphasis was given to establishment of cooperatives which included cooperative banks, credit societies, irrigation societies and health cooperatives which started to function from 1924. A central cooperative bank was set up at Santiniketan in 1927 and two years later 268 cooperatives became linked to this bank (Sinha 2010). The programme also undertook to revitalize the rural cottage industries alongside other non-farm activities such as weaving, leather work, shoe-making, pottery, sugar making, and sewing. The programme undertook a comprehensive strategy of agricultural extension work through organizing young volunteers called *Balakbrati* giving farmers information and advice for farming in a very hostile environment.

Education was also pursued vigourously with the establishment of shikkhashtra through which schools were set up for boys and girls and continuing education for adults. Healthcare became an

essential part of rural development programme. A health centre was introduced in 1923 which attracted hundreds of patients, mainly patients of malaria which was almost an epidemic in the area. Within a year healthcare was extended to 12 villages. The programme also started health campaigns for raising health consciousness among rural people. In 1923 it held 200 such campaigns (Sinha 2010).

Tagore's vision of modernity and its relevance for contemporary development discourses
The global crisis of today has made it imperative to revisit Tagore's idea of modernity and his experiments in rural development. It is also necessary to reexamine it for it is necessary to establish and recognize the legacy of Tagore as he foreshadowed many of the ideas of modernization and development that we deploy today. In spite of recent interest in Tagore's contribution in the field of rural development, the task is yet to be done. Finally, technological development has made it possible for a future with 'the end of city' and perhaps necessary to return to the village for a sustainable life in the planet in the context of the threats of environmental damage and climate change.

The rise of casino capitalism – the infinite search for paper assets and gambling on the future for high stake profit (Strange, 1997)) which began to develop from late 1970s is now fast becoming the predominant form of Western economy, the extraordinary pace of globalization, the fearful threat of climate change and the triumphant march of neo-liberalism that seek to destroy the welfare state have brought mankind face to face with a crisis that has no precedence. In this context Tagore has become vitally relevant for future development discourses and practices. Over the last two decades, the remorseless drive for hegemonic globalization has sacrificed humanity to, what Weber and Tagore both once saw,   as the 'iron cage' filled with 'little men' like 'little cogs' (Weber in Gerth and Mills, 1958).

What Harvey (2012: 156-7) describes as feral city has become the site of great dispossession.But the problem is that we live in a society where capitalism itself has become rampantly feral. Feral politicians cheat on their expenses; feral bankers plunder the public purse for all its worth….A political economy of mass dispossession, of predatory practices to the point of daylight robbery— particularly of the poor and the vulnerable, unsophisticated and the legally unprotected –has become the order of the day…. Thatcherism unchained the inherently feral instincts of capitalism….Reckless slash-and-burn is openly the motto of the ruling classes pretty much everywhere.

It has become now necessary to re-examine Tagore's vision of holistic rural reconstruction. In the context of escalating greed, an increasing polarisation, obsession with materialism and popular culture that neo-liberal globalization has induced, the paradigm of Patisar may hold clue to the global crisis of today whether it is a Chinese youth selling his kidney for an iPhone or farmers

committing suicide in India as a consequence of using genetically modified seeds or a hoodlum in Bangladesh killing for a few thousand taka.

It is useful to recall that although the use of the words growth and development are very old- the term "growth" in English dates from 1587, its current usage can be traced to Joseph Schumpeter's book *Theory of Economic Development* which was published in 1939. The first academic concern with underdevelopment led by Rosenstein-Rodan was undertaken between 1942 and 1945 with focus upon East and Southern Europe. The phrase 'underdeveloped areas' was possibly coined by Wilfred Bensen in 1942. On 20 January1949, President Truman's declaration placed two billion people of the earth as living in underdeveloped areas (Esteva, 2000). It opened the floodgate of books on economic development. The early works were mainly concerned with mere economic growth in the post-colonial countries. In 1960s, it became quite clear that theories and strategies of mere economic growth were not adequate for development of the post-colonial countries. The decade saw broadening of the concept in terms of social development that merely included items like health, leisure and freedom as indispensable components of development. The idea of economic growth faced a major challenge with the publication of the Club of Rome report titled *Limits to Growth* in 1970 (Meadows and Meadows, 1970) that radically changed the narrow technical conception of development and paved the flowering of the concept of sustainable development later. It also led to the idea of development from below which found that large-scale development projects imposed from above and administered by a managerial class did not work and that small was beautiful and indigenous knowledge was the wellspring of development as Schumacher and Robert Chambers began to highlight from 1980s. The decade also saw the birth of the concept of sustainable development. Although its roots are quite old, it mainly flourished over the decades from 1960s to 1980s. Concepts like deep ecology began to flourish from this time as well. In its specific sense, deep ecology which was first articulated by in 1972 by Arne Naess is understood to have 10 characteristics (Drengson, 1999). It includes holism, ontological integration of humans with other species, location of the self as a central node in the web of life in the cosmos and an emphasis on self-realization, eco-centric view of life, and grounding of all our values in the perception that human world and nature constitute an organic whole (Adams, 2003). Every single idea that deep ecology has spelt out was articulated by Tagore much more vigorously and put into action.

The idea of people-centred development emerged in 1980s that saw ordinary men and women as agents of development and a specific paradigm of human development in 1990s. The decade also saw the emergence of the ideas of post development that called for an end to all efforts for economic growth and return to nature. As Sachs described it the project of development was "a blunder of planetary proportions" (Sachs, 2000:1). Today "[T]he idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape." Thus the paradigms of development that have emerged over the last 75 years or so clearly demonstrates that what Tagore visualized in 1890s and trialed in

the first decade of twentieth century at Shelidah and later at Patisar are more radical than the current discourses of development.

The crisis of contemporary society has its resonance within sociology as well. It has found its expression in the idea of risk society and decolonizing sociology. Ulrich Beck, one of leading sociologists of the world today has shown that Western modernity has engendered a global risk society. As one journalist has put it:

> We live in a terrifying new millennium of global risks. There is a risk that you will be bombed on your way to work by terrorists. Should you manage to get through the day unscathed, there's a risk of you catching avian flu, BSE, or being washed away by a tsunami or obliterated by a hurricane as you lie in bed dreaming of happier times (Jeffries, 2006:12).

According to Beck, modernity has a Janus-like face; it has produced remarkable economic prosperity, but its success has also produced a whole array of great risks – risks that can destroy the very fabric of our society. While the crisis of modernity has prompted many to declare the end of modernity, Beck views it as an essential feature of industrial or first modernity organized around the notion of nation-state. The West is now passing into a second stage of modernity – second modernity which is cosmopolitan and is much better placed to deal with global risks. Yet it has not been reflected adequately in social theory.

> When a world order collapses, that's the moment when reflection should begin. Surprisingly, this has not   been the case with the type of social theory dominant today. The mainstream of social theory still floats loftily above the lowlands of epochal transformations (climate change, financial crisis, nation-states) in a condition of universalistic superiority and instinctive uncertainty. This universalistic social theory, whether structuralist, interactionist, Marxist or systems-theoretical, is now both out of date and provincial (Beck and Grande, 2010: 409-10).

Beck and Grande (2010) argue that what passes for typical social theory was grounded in the first modernity and is hardly useful for 21st century in the age of second modernity. The dominant social theories of the first modernity were produced in the age of empire when people of the third world were denigrated as backward and their cultures traditional which were destined to converge upon what once Manning Nash described as the 'golden road' the West had taken-modernity. Yet Beck's theory of second modernity has many limitations. Beck confuses between the actual process of modernization and a normatively constructed view of modernity. Also problematic is Beck and Grande's view of stretched vs. compressed process of modernization (Calhoun, 2010). As Maharaj (2010: 570) scathingly observes, "we are left in the air as to whether the various modernities are chasing the identical dream".

The present crisis in sociology has prompted many to move away from "… this "rusty" discipline, predominantly populated by the spectres of a line of white European erudite males" (Boatcă, Costa and Rodríguez, 2010:1; also Nazrul Islam, 2005; Aminul Islam, 2010).

From the interstices of a colonial periphery, Tagore experienced all the issues of modernity or modernization that social scientists are talking about today. Tagore's vision of modernity and his

experiments of modernization provide much more useful and provocative answers to the questions that are agitating the minds of all who are concerned with the fate of humanity and its future. He offers a more interesting and alternative view of modernity.

> Under our highly complex modern conditions, mechanical forces are organized, with such efficiency that the materials produced grow far in advance of man's selective and assimilative capacity to simplify them into harmony with his nature and needs. Such an intemperate overgrowth of things, like the rank vegetation of the tropics creates confinement for man.The nest is simple, it has an easy relationship with the sky; the cage is complex and costly, it is too much itself excommunicating whatever lies outside. And modern man is busy building his cage, fast developing his parasitism on the monster, Thing, which he allows to envelop him on all sides. He is always occupied in adapting himself to its dead angularities, limits himself to its limitations, and merely becomes a part of it (Tagore, cited in Elmhirst , 1976).

Yet the paradigm hardly expanded after the death of Tagore. Even Visva-Bharati abandoned several aspects of it. India went ahead with massive industrialization and manufacturing of built space. Tagore was hardly relevant for post-colonial development discourses in India or anywhere else. The pattern of development that took shape in South Asia has been aptly described by Gadgil and Guha (1995) for India. The development project entailed development of large urban centres through industrialization that consumed huge resources and housed a tiny class of omnivores. The rest of the country, the countryside held the overwhelming majority of people – the ecosystem people who depended for their livelihoods on nature – lived 'in the sea of poverty' (Gadgil and Guha, 1995:34). A third of the people were environmental refugees who had to leave rural areas due to poverty, landlessness or development projects that destroyed their sources of livelihoods.

Social change in contemporary Bangladesh

Bangladesh has experienced rapid social change over the recent years. Its economy and society has been increasingly inter-locked with the global economy mainly through the growth of garments industry, international migration and the new communication technology. The rural society has become inexorably linked to this process of change.

Rural development models in Bangladesh

After the partition of India, Pakistan went ahead with a similar kind of developmental project. Bangladesh followed the same terrain although with some variations. The contemporary rural society of Bangladesh has undergone considerable economic development. The path taken for rural development either with the support of government and donor agencies shows many of the features that Tagore experimented with at Patisar from a more profound philosophical perspective.

The modernization of rural society in Bangladesh was first showcased in the Kotowali Police Station of the district of Comilla in 1960s which came to be known as the Comilla Model of agricultural development. The model was launched as a pilot project in the Kotowali Police Station of Comilla in 1959 under the guidance of Akhter Hameed Khan who developed it. The Comilla Model used the area under the Kotowali Thana as the laboratory for experiments in rural development and had four components. Firstly, it took village as the primary unit of development

and primary village cooperatives were confederated at thana level. Secondly, it introduced rural works programme through which employment was provided and infrastructure facilities developed. Thirdly, it established   the Thana Training and Development Centre (TTDC) for imparting training to farmers so that they could take leadership in the adoption of modern agricultural techniques and practices. Finlly, the Thana Irrigation Programme provided water for the Green Revolution that was to ensue from here. The cooperatives constituted the basis for operation of deep tube wells, and use of HYV seeds, fertilizer and pesticide (Quddus, 1995). The Comilla Rural Academy turned into a laboratory not only for research and ideas for rural development in Bangladesh, but for early development of modernization theory through its association with the Michigan State University (Bertocci, 2002).

In many ways Comilla model was a replication of what Tagore experimented in the early years of the twentieth century. But it was less comprehensive and heavily subsidized by the state. In spite of early enthusiasm for it, it increasingly faced severe criticism. It was pointed out that the model favoured the middle peasants, the cooperatives were taken over by the rich and defaulting kulaks. The cooperatives could not be replicated properly outside the laboratory area. There was lack of meaningful participation by farmers in it and it failed to assist the poor. It hardly promoted the cause of social development (Khan, 1964; Bose, 1974; Blair 1978; Khan 1979; Vylder, 1982). The Comilla Model was introduced into the country through Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and later on administered through the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB). Over the years BRDB has achieved some success. It has led to the formation of 63,000 primary cooperatives with 2.3 million members, 449 thana cooperatives with capital formation of 8.5 billion taka. The total amount of credit disbursed stood at 96 billion taka (BRDB, 2012). The criticisms launched against the Comilla Model apply more so to the state-sponsored BRDB models.

The government has played an important role in the development of agriculture through subsidies, promotion of research and undertaken a variety of social protection measures for the poor and the disadvantaged. Other areas of vital intervention by the government are the expansion of education and gender equity.

From the birth of the new nation, NGOs began to play an important role in the relief and rehabilitation of a country devastated by the Liberation War. But soon they transformed themselves into development agencies playing vital role not only in the rural economy, but even internationally. Today Dr. Yunus, Grameen Bank and Microcredit are global brand names with global spheres of operation. BRAC is the largest NGO in the world which operates in a number of countries. The NGOs in Bangladesh have not become only famous and global leaders in development initiatives, their numbers have proliferated hugely. There may be between 22,000 and 24,000 NGOs in the country (the estimate includes unregistered informal clubs at the village level, Zohir, 2005). The NGOs have provided a broad range of services to the rural people designed towards an increase of agential power by organizing women and the poor into small groups, building awareness among them, injecting small cash for income generating activities,

expansion of agriculture, providing healthcare, non-formal education, gender equity and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). It is remarkable that almost every measure that NGOs have fleshed out and adopted over the last forty years or so were all tried by Tagore either at Shelidah, Patisar or Shiriniketan.

Modernization of agriculture

Bangladesh has achieved considerable success in the modernization of agriculture. The Green Revolution has spread rapidly making Bangladesh nearly self-sufficient in food production. There has been considerable mechanization in agriculture. The number of tractors increased from 300 in 1977 to 20,000 by 2005 and power tillers from 200 to 300,000. The number of deep tube wells increased from 4,461 to 27,117. Shallow tube wells from 3,045 to 12,899 during the same period. Mechanization has taken place in about 80 percent of land preparation and power-operated irrigation now covers 95 percent of cultivation (Rashid nd).

In 1947, the yield of aman rice was only 10.17 maunds per acre and of aus 7.96 maunds per acre. The average yield of rice in 1978 was 10.22 maunds per acre (Boyce, 1987). But by 1981 the yield of HYV rice had increased to 23 maunds and even 31.70 maunds per acre. By the middle of 1980s about 70 percent of farmers were growing modern varieties of crops (Hossain, Quasem, Jabbar and Akash, 1994). During 1960/61-1964/5 the total rice production stood at 9.7 million tons, on the average. A decade later the increase was only a million ton (Faaland and Parkinson, 1976). By 1999/2000 the total rice production stood at 23.1 million tons and the total food grain production 25 million tons which was more than what the country could consume (GoB/FAO, 2004). By 2009-10 rice production soared to 31.97 million tons (BBS, 2011).

The dynamics of modernization in rural Bangladesh can be best understood through micro-level studies. Westergaard and Hossain(2005) through their re-visit of Boringram have presented an interesting example of it. In 1975-76 Westergaard (1980) studied a village she called Boringram in Sherpur of Bogra which she re-visited in 1995-6. In this village, the yield of aman rice was 15 maunds per acre in 1970 and it had not increased over the preceding two decades. Only five or six households in the village used to produce surplus food. The Green Revolution had spread to the village in 1980s. At the time of re-visit, the yield of aman rice was 36 maund and that of boro 50 maund – a remarkable rise. The farmers had begun to use modern inputs for agriculture and even power tillers. It did not, however, lead to differentiation and polarization of the peasantry as many scholars had predicted over the two previous decades. The percentage of rich peasants owning 10 acres or more of land had dwindled from 9 to 2 percent. There was no increase in the number of landless families. The agricultural wages had increased sevenfold during these twenty years. The non-farm sector had grown considerably.

Only a few from the rich households attended schools and were engaged in teaching. Only one landless family could send its son to high school who dropped out later. Another such family could

send its daughter to the primary school. No one before 1970 had matriculated. By the middle of 1990s, enrollment in age group 6-10 stood at 81 percent both for girls and boys. The enrollment figure was about 50 percent in the age-group of 11-16. Boringram is not typical Bangladeshi village as it was only three miles away from Sherpur town.

Cultural change and modernization

There has been impressive growth of education all over the countryside similar to Boringram. Bangladesh has achieved an impressive record in terms of human development. Bangladesh is one of the leading countries which has gained most in terms of human development since 1970(UNDP 2010). The forces of globalization have also made considerable impact upon Bangladesh. In 2009 about 5 million people went abroad and most of them were low-skilled people from rural areas. The remittances have significant impact upon rural life (Islam, 2012). As Fraser (2011: 10) found from the field globalization has made significant impact upon the life of rural people even in terms of their family life and expectations.

> Our respondents make a very clear point: The expanding global labor market has profoundly affected people's lives in rural Bangladesh. The women we spoke to explicitly and implicitly connect changing economic circumstances and rapidly-changing local practices, including residence and marriage practices, investment in education, and expectations for their sons and daughters.

The forces of globalization are impacting upon Bangladesh rapidly and deeply, fundamentally changing its institutional ensemble and cultural life. The use of Internet in Bangladesh began in 1993 with only 500 users. It increased to more than 600,000 in 2009 and is projected to grow to 20 million by 2020. Bangladesh is now one of the fastest growing markets for cell phones. In 2009, the country had more than 50 million cell phones and the figure is projected to grow to 100 million by 2015. Today more than 50 percent rural people watch TV (Islam, 2012 for summary). In short, relative economic prosperity, migration, new communication technologies and exposure to modernity have drawn villages of Bangladesh to the orbit of global culture. In spite of economic prosperity that has been achieved over the last fifty years, social life in the country has been increasingly marked by greater inequality and fragmentation. Conflicts have escalated and a feral culture seems to be developing. Anomie has become widespread. The organic unity of social life has been destroyed by a runaway wersternization and extensive revivalism. A more sinister trend has been the emergence of feral or 'brutal culture' –an escalation of violence in everyday social life.

Power structure and demodernization

The rural power structure in Bangladesh has been viewed in terms of two distinct models - the first is in terms of gradual modernization in which key institutions of rural society like samaj and shalish that constituted the moral universe of Muslim peasants of Bangladesh (Bertocci, 1970; 1996) are being increasingly manned by younger and more educated leaders or taken over by formal institutions of local government like Union Parishad. The other model is known as the net – the growth of small rural gangs who become involved in land grabbing, looting and killing often

backed by the state through patron-client or neo-patrimonial ties (Islam, 1989 for a summary). Although the reality is much more complex (Islam, 2002), there is, no doubt, that rural society is becoming increasingly incorporated into the neo-patrimonial state which is creating both modernization and de-modernization – fostering ties of kinship and locality as well as corruption. As a consequence of globalization and de-modernization, the rural society is drifting towards a state of anomie only counterbalanced by the spread of either religious pietism or religious extremism. Islamization has become a powerful process of social change in the country. In 1975, the country had only 1,976 madrashas with enrollment of 375,000. The number of madrashas increased to 15,661 and the number of students 2,824,672 in 2002. It is estimated that the country has 15000 Qoumi madrashas with 2 million students (Nahar 2007). The veil has spread rapidly across the rural-urban divide. Thus rural society has become a contested site where a variety of conflicting value systems – Western modernity, demodernization, religious resurgence and neo-patrimonialism are competing for dominance creating, in its turn, a broad terrain of anomie and leading to the destruction of social capital in rural society.

Conclusion

Rural Bangladesh has been subject to a variety of rural development models. As a consequence, the Green Revolution has spread in the country, rural infrastructure has registered substantial improvement, and poverty has been considerably reduced. Schooling has expanded vastly. Women have been empowered. International migration, remittances and new communication technology have increasingly linked the rural society to the vagaries of globalization.

It has, on the other hand, led to fierce competition for scarce resources fuelled by endless greed or what Macpherson (1964) once called 'possessive individualism'. The moral universe of the rural society has been shattered by the forces of globalization, neo-patrimonialism, deep factionalism and political extremism. Economic growth has not brought in its train sustainable human well-being which lay at the heart of Tagore's vision. Tagore's paradigm of modernization that was trialed at Patisar may have more relevance and viability today – in this age of late modernity, 'second modernity' or postmodernity than it was ever before either in Bangladesh or anywhere in the Third World. Paul in his re-visit to his own village of Patisar in 1995 found an abundance of crops in the field, development of roads and highways, end of hunger, and profusion of consumer goods. But the old water bodies were gone. The river Nagar had become 'thirsty' (Paul, 1407:58). When Tagore visited Patisar for the last time towards the end of his life in 1937, the poet at the height of his glory moved from his raised podium to sit on a small stool on the floor with the simple peasants of his estate (Paul, 1407) perhaps to symbolically share his dreams with the wretched of the earth. In the 21st century his dreams for a return to the wellspring of life and an organic conception of modernity and cosmopolitanism linger on against Western modernity's 'cathedral of doom' (cited in Islam 1992; 172) as Kofi Awoonor-- another poet from another continent put it.

'On this dirty patch
A tree once stood
Shading incense on the infant corn.
Its bough stretched across a heaven
Brightened by the last fires of a tribe.
They sent surveyors and builders
Who cut the tree
Planting in its place
A huge senseless cathedral of doom.'

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Militancy: A Myth or Reality
An Exploratory Study of the Socio-economic and Religious Forces Behind Militancy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract: Militancy; as one of the burning social issues creates numerous personal, social and psychological problems that persevere to vacate the roots of social development, integration, stability and personality development of the subject victims. Consequently, militancy or terrorism remains a major area of concern throughout the globe. Based on the analyses of secondary information along with qualitative analyses, this study emphasizes over the forces behind militancy that are hidden in the realm of social, cultural, economic and religious spheres spreading the waves of violence generally in Pakistan and particularly in the research area.

The facts and figures derived from this study conclude that militancy is a multifaceted social menace that found its seeds in the socio-economic inequalities like the presence of social injustice, prevalence of intense poverty and religious misinterpretation among the masses. The study recommends the strength of state institutions, provision of equal and quality education, alleviation of intense poverty, provision of equal employment opportunities for the youth, arrangement of periodic and monthly seminars and workshops regarding the menace of militancy and its negative consequences, positive interpretation of religious teachings and directives etc. in order to minimize the intensity of the quagmire of militancy.

Key words: Militancy, violence, social injustice, deprivation, religious misinterpretation, illiteracy, poverty.

Background of the Study

Pakistan has been on the verge of confrontation since its very establishment and survival during the last few years has been experiencing the impacts of numerous social issues including terrorism and militancy. The roots of militancy can be traced back to many socio-political factors. Social deprivation, drug-smuggling, Afghan refugees, religious exploitation through *Madrassas* (religious seminaries) and training centers, and external factors such as the interplay of power politics at the international level, all have had their share in spreading militancy in Pakistan (Firdous, 2010). Moreover, a number of reasons, including easy access to arms and ammunition, bad governance, marginalization of the rural areas, non-availability of justice and a volatile geopolitical situation, make it vulnerable to all kinds of terrorist threats. Issues such as poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy are important contributing factors (Khan, 2009). However, research into the causes of extremism is only restricted to the roots of problems and there is little understanding of the drivers of extremism among researchers, analysts and policy makers alike.

A large number of people who join militant groups mostly belong to the lower socio-economic class in Pakistan. South Punjab and upper Sindh, which are gaining a reputation as safe havens

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for terrorist elements, are known areas of high poverty, which also rank very low in terms of education. Consequently, there is a large presence of *Madrassas* in these areas which, even if they are not necessarily producing terrorists, are definitely contributing to a mindset that encourages militancy. Members of this class have increasingly become more conservative, and even financed and supported militant outfits because of their inability to change the economic system in any other way (Saddiqa, 2011). This is not done consciously, but is driven by the realization that orthodox religious ideology provides greater sociopolitical space than the existing system. The Pakistani state has historically failed to build an alternate narrative, and the political-party system has failed to allay the concerns of ordinary people, which creates space for radicalism and militancy to grow (Saddiqa, 2011:158).

Pakistan's domestic instability is also linked to a number of different causes which are home-grown, such as social deprivation, drug-smuggling, Afghan refugees, religious exploitation through *Madrassas* and the role of religious scholars as well as psychological factors, have had their share in spreading militancy in Pakistan (Abbas, 2007:34). In addition, Pakistani people, at least some segments in the society, are often convinced by the shallow promises of implementing the Islamic system in its true sense (which they think is the ultimate source of solution of their problems) in the land by each and every political party that competes for securing political power in the country. The non-implementation of which until now cannot also be overlooked as a contributing factor to the already existing aggression in the society. Moreover, the clash between various sub-groups i.e. Sunni-Shia within the main religious domain further stir-up the existing aggression and violence. In Pakistan, the political use of Islam by the state promoted an aggressive competition for official patronage between and within the many variations of Sunni and Shia Islam, between the clerical elites of major sects and sub-sects. The focus on building an ideological state has undoubtedly affected Pakistan negatively in all areas that define a functional modern state where the Pakistan's government, its society and the military, are at ideological crossroads (Hashmi, 2009).

Rampant poverty and the egregious employment conditions of the area exacerbated the daily life of the people. Mostly through the offering of high salary from militants, the poor and unemployed people are merrily welcomed and are involved in militancy. The illiterate people were also involved without understanding the aftermaths of this menace for the future. They blindly follow the pseudo religious leaders of the region. Along with the other social issues, poverty and education are considered the main causes of the emergence of militancy in the region where the country spends only 1.5 percent of its GDP on the neglected educational sector while 22.3 per cent population lives on or below the poverty line in Pakistan (The News International, 2008).

Robert Kemp (2008) in his paper on extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan postulate that the rise of radicalism in Afghanistan and the *Pakhtun* tribal areas of Pakistan is rooted in the disintegration of tribal (in both countries) and state (mainly in Afghanistan, but increasingly in Pakistan)

structures; and the increased influence of religiously orthodox foreign elements who assumed prominence during the long drawn out conflict in Afghanistan. The current insurgency in Afghanistan and Pakistan has complex local roots, and is fed by poverty where Shinwari (2008) claims that Federally Administer Tribal Areas (FATA)[1] is the most backward region in Pakistan, with 60 percent of the population living below the poverty line. The intense rise of militancy and extremism in the beginning of 21st century in the country in general and in Malakand Division in Particular has been another added up toll on the country's existence and perpetuation.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to explore the possible linkage between militancy and the prevalent socio-economic, cultural and political situation in Pakistan. Besides, it examines the possible links between the incidence of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, misperception and misinterpretation of religious teachings among the people of the region, which ultimately results in the surge of militancy.

The Argument

The impelling factors that compel individuals and sometimes the whole community to challenge the government's writ using the most sophisticated strategic and war technology. Mostly the factors responsible for the issues like militancy and terrorism are hidden in multifaceted realms throughout the globe, which prevent the people to think rationally about the negative and long term consequences of the issue. The same is the dilemma with the people of the target region, who without rational thinking of the issue, its long term and even immediate ill consequences, got entangled with the issue. Studying the prevalent scenario with a detailed socio-cultural and religious background of the inhabitants of the region, an attempt has been made to understand the established relationship between militancy in the area with the ingrained misperceived and misinterpreted religious ideology of the region, exploitation of its relatively emotionally dominant culture, emotionally intertwined social system, role of mass media and the possible emotional implications of the geographical location or positioning of the region (Thaugard, 2005).

Religion, in general, is emotional in nature. Most of its aspects and practices contain emotional attachments or mechanisms, which are necessarily crucial in explaining the acquisition and maintenance of religious belief and also shed light on certain prayers and rituals. Religion is largely a product of the emotional and a bit of people's rational thinking. Emotional thinking involves both individual thought processes and social processes that transmit and help to maintain religious attitudes (Thaugard, 2005). Thus religion includes beliefs and practices that people have acquired and practice in the course of life and they are also steady enough to hold on to them, irrespective of the future consequences of the related decisions being made, or actions being done.

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[1] Such Federally Administered Areas includes agencies adjacent to the boarder of Afghanistan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan.

Besides, militancy since its beginning was a blend of cultural impositions and religious fundamentalism where the deep-rooted cultural restrictions upon the masses and resultantly sowing the seeds of rigid and fundamental religious ideologies further intensify the issue. Moreover, it is proclaimed that the religion of the region (Islam) includes *Jihad*, or struggle against non-Muslims. Within this perspective, along-with Afghanistan, Pakistan, in general and the region under study in particular, has experienced as well as been victimized by the issue of militancy.

One of the prominent reasons for the rapid spread of militants' (*Taliban*) ideology and gaining support was the successful conversion of the masses to implement a full-fledged *Sharia* that believe in the execution of quick justice and observance of the true Islamic principles. *Taliban* commanders were of the opinion to setup strict Islamic *Sharia* courts in *Buner* (a district in Malakand Division) as they had already done in Swat (another district in Malakand Division) (The Daily Dawn, Peshawar, Wednesday, April 12, 2009). No doubt, such fundamental laws as justice and equality were lacking in the region, and people were desirous enough to attain them by whatever means. Events of social injustice may provoke moral shocks, indignation, and anger and thus move citizens to action (The Daily Dawn, Peshawar, Wednesday, April 12, 2009).

Culture; as a way of life moulds the personalities of individuals and provides the grounds for learning from the practices they have in their surrounding, which automatically make them unique, conservative and emotionally strong which according to Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson and Jean Briggs are culturally determined forces (Ekman, 1972). *Pakhtun's* culture, customs and traditions are characterized by the values of bravery and brotherhood that compel the masses to have sentimental attachment with those who channelize the pathways of militancy and so many other destructive and emotional activities (Yang, 2003).

Objective of the Study

- To investigate the correlation between socio-economic factors and militancy
- To find out the deeply-rooted cultural restrictions resulting in militancy in the area
- To identify the role of religious misperceived and misinterpreted notions, which spread militancy

Methodology

This research focuses on those forces, which create waves of insurgent militancy in Pakistan. The study is based on secondary information collected through library sources, internet, research papers, articles, magazines, books, reports of both governmental and non-governmental organizations etc. The collected data have been framed qualitatively (that provides a method for examining social research data without converting them to a numerical format; Babbie: 2004) with reference to various forces hidden in the realm of social, cultural, economic and religious spheres observed from secondary information through the mentioned sources. The literary approach of

the study basically focuses on a generalized contextual prevalence of militancy throughout the globe that has been further delimited to Pakistan and the specified area under study.

The current research patently show the multifaceted forces of militancy and terrorism that have been further divided into a few categories including social forces, cultural restrictions and impositions, economic deprivation and religious, when misperceived and misinterpreted, which often compel and create the currents in the minds and hearts of militants to be violent. Besides, the data sorted for the current paper is based on secondary sources and empirical findings in the form of facts and figures that have been mentioned for the purpose of clarifying the issue more authentically as well as to provide remedial measures and recommendations for policy makers and other organizations working in the field.

Literal Forces behind Militancy

Militancy or terrorism that has been globally debated and researched is among the igniting matters of concern in the present scenario of modernity. The following discussion explicitly explains those forces which are regarded as responsible for the prevalence and existence of militancy in the region. Such forces have been identified through the in-depth study of relevant material in the existing literature on militancy and terrorism.

Social Forces

Social factors facilitate the spread of violent terrorist ideologies and the mechanisms by which they do so. Plenty of research exists (such as Ahmad, 2011, Daraz et all, 2012) to back up the notion that one's behavioral choices are powerfully influenced by one's social and political environment. An individual is, perhaps, more likely to become a terrorist or militant in a repressive society in which exposure to violence, poverty, and political disempowerment is a regular occurrence than in a relatively free society in which legitimate outlets for rage and frustration and prospects for a better life exist. Yet majorities of people, even in the harshest of socio-political circumstances, do not become terrorists or give moral or financial support to terrorist organizations. Moreover, the vehement militant movements have generally emerged from relatively affluent quarters. In fact, alleviating poverty generally leads to an upsurge in support for militant movements. Musharraf (the then President of Pakistan and Army Chief) likened global terrorism to a tree in which the leaves are individual terrorists, the branches are terror organizations and the roots are illiteracy, poverty and unresolved political disputes such as the Palestinian conflict. The leaves and branches will keep growing back until the root causes of terrorism are addressed, he said. "We tend to take a shortsighted perspective, dealing with leaves and branches", Musharraf said, "we must address the root causes with sincerity and a lot of vigor, which one doesn't see" (Kenrick, 2006).

There may be two hidden motives to discourage education and increase poverty in Swat and other areas of Malakand Division. Ignorance and poverty breed extremism and this is actually

happening in Swat where unemployment is also on the rise. People are drawn towards militancy because they are given a handsome remuneration for becoming a Taliban. State-of-the-art weapons, handsome salaries and the assurance of paradise in the hereafter are some of the temptations that lure the youth. These young men are the major source of strength and power for the militant leaders. Through them militants have succeeded in banishing the influential people of Swat and have compelled political leaders to kneel before them (Khan, 2008).

Poverty and Militancy

Pakistan is a developing country and is considered to be a semi-industrialized nation comprising of 170 million people, out of which more than 20 percent live below the poverty line. The Gross Domestic Product or GDP of Pakistan in 2010 stood at 167 billion dollars, constituting only 0.27 % of the world economy. Pakistan is considered to be the world's 27th largest economy, based on its purchasing power. This economy is deteriorating day by day, as core inflation has now reached 12%, according to the economic survey conducted by the government (Ahmad, 2011). Terrorism itself has cost Pakistan 6% of its GDP in 2009–2010. In such a run, the fact can't be repudiated altogether that the potential for militancy and extremism already existed in Pakistan due to its fragile social structure since independence in terms of poverty, unemployment, ignorance, economic stagnation, radical ideologies, bad governance, injustice and rigid culture.

Pakistan ranks prominently among the poorest countries of the world. The per capita income is drastically low and the state of some basic human resources is extremely disappointing. The people have been deprived of modern facilities in education, health, communication and good food. As such the people are worried because of a lack of the income source and they are unable to fulfill their needs to live a life parallel to their neighbors. In this age of competition they feel deprived of their rights and inferiority complex prevails upon them (Nasir & Hyder, 1988:474). In this regard, results derived from a survey conducted in the research region show a large number of unemployed youth indicating poor employment opportunities and is a sure sign of poverty. A few have received some form of education from either the government school system or the *Madrassas.* As they plan to get jobs and to raise families they find that their chances of employment are non-existent. These large groups of youth drift endlessly looking for an opportunity to make a living so that they can start a family. Unfortunately for them such opportunities are few, except when the militants offer them jobs.

Swat is a populous district that is religious and believes in *Jihad* based on their history. About 58% household' respondents said that they supported the militants on grounds of religion. Unrest combined with poverty, unemployment and tension related to land, and exploitation of tenants and peasants by landlords in Swat formed a formidable sea of discontent. During the survey, households were asked if people joined militants for the sake of employment. A resounding 75% thought that unemployment forced the youth to join the militants. In another penetrating analysis it was found that one way in which income inequality may contribute to militancy is that the better

life options, that become available by joining the militants, allow one to become a powerful person in society. It is apparent that many people also joined the militants to improve their livelihoods by entering the terrorist leadership hierarchy that enables one to share in the spoils that the terrorists collect through criminality (Aziz, 2010).

Unemployment and Militancy

Unemployment has been plaguing the country throughout its existence and especially after the global recession the situation has further worsened. The worsening economic condition has also forced the government to slow down investments in development projects, which has resulted in unemployment. Foreign investment has been fleeing from the country, due to the existing security situation. Since the start of the war on terror in 2001, Pakistan has received billions of dollars in aid and is still unable to stabilize its economy. It is mostly due to the rising tide of militancy and volatile security situation that the entrepreneurs and businessmen have pulled out their investments. These economic conditions, along with the rising inflation and growing unemployment, have presented the radicals with a tool to exploit the public for their own agenda (Ahmad, 2011).

The rise of extremism and militancy has been directly linked to the failing economy by many observers. It is human nature that, whenever an individual or nation faces difficult times, they project the blame on others, so they can vent their grievances. Throughout history fascist and dictatorial regimes have used this ploy to unite their nation against a certain country, ethnic or religious group. The religious extremists have been using the same ploy on the ignorant Pakistani people. The lack of education and awareness among the masses has also contributed to its spread. This is a vicious circle, where the failing economy gives rise to terrorism and the increase in terrorism deteriorates the economy. The extremists target minorities, mostly belonging to different sects and religions, while blaming the west for imperialism. They convince people that all the problems they face in their lives are due to these Western countries conspiring along with their collaborators. The word "collaborators" is mostly associated by these extremists with the minorities or state officials. They have branded the whole economic system as a Zionist conspiracy and persuaded the people of it being the reason for their economic woes. A person who is financially weak also remains disturbed and these insecure minds are easy to indoctrinate with poison. These terrorists are not to be underestimated in their skills of persuasion, as they have been fully trained in the art of psychological warfare.

Besides this, these networks also lure the people with financial and monetary rewards. Due to the strong financial resources of these networks, they are able to pay these individuals even regular salaries. This was evident in Swat and can still be seen in the Taliban controlled areas. The Taliban and other extremist groups pay regular salaries to their foot soldiers and commanders and also promise to financially support the families of the militants who are killed during conflict. This promise is also made to the suicide bombers, along with the promise of heaven. It is clearly

evident that, the fanatics exploit the economic situation of these people for their personal benefits. They use the finances they gather through extortion, kidnappings, drug trade and robberies to woo these people. They in fact convince the ignorant individual to make a deal with the devil. It is also a fact that these fanatics make a great contribution, towards the worsening economic situation. The bomb blasts in business districts, the suicide targeting innocent shoppers, threats to business establishments and their constant fear tactics, have added to the unemployment and poverty.

The Taliban and their extremist allies have also created an illusion of Robin Hood (person who steals from the rich to give to the poor), in the eyes of the impoverished. They claim to take from the rich and give to the poor. They also claim to fight against the feudal and capitalist system. They lure the people by giving them the vague concept of "*Khilafat*", of which they are themselves not clear (Ahmad, 2011). Working class people in Pakistan have had different impressions of Swat created in their minds after reading newspapers and watching the electronic media in the last three to four years. Swat has become important news for all of us due to the increased militancy of the Taliban after 2007. The events in Swat are distant happenings for many Pakistanis from working class backgrounds as it was a tourist area which most people could not afford to visit.

Why did the working class youth of Swat turn towards the Taliban? On the one hand, the social gap between the working class and the Khans of the area had widened so much over the last couple of decades that people did not relate any more to the traditional *Jirga* system under the tribal rules. On the other hand very high levels of corruption among government functionaries did not allow common people to exercise and assert their economic, social and political rights. During a discussion with a group of commoners in Matta Tehsil, the second biggest Tehsil of Swat district, it was evident that they would not have taken any responsibility under the tribal system to safeguard the Khans from the wrath of the Taliban. All 44 factories have been closed rendering 40,000 workers jobless for more than two years. Over 55,000 workers employed in hotel industry are out of jobs. Lady Health Visitors have set bright example of workers' struggle. Unemployed youth of the region found it very easy to get a job from the Taliban with lot of money and authority. They used this money and authority to settle scores against the Khans and in most cases in their personal feuds as well (Mehmood, 2001).

Another survey also collected information on a militant's employment status before he left for the front, and found that 50 percent of the militants did not have jobs in the year before they left. A further 25 percent worked part time, while the remaining 25 percent worked full time. The results were adjusted for the fact that many militants were studying before recruitment and did not enter the workforce at all, but even so, about a quarter of the sample were entirely unemployed in the year before joining the jihad. Of those who had worked either part or full time, the paper reports that "several" were highly skilled, but does not provide data on the numbers (Aftab, 2008:3), and

to that there is no such survey that could provide the best information on income of the militants or their families or on assets held by the households.

Illiteracy and Militancy

Increasing educational attainment is likely to reduce conflict risk, especially in countries like Pakistan that have very low levels of primary and secondary school enrollment. Education quality, relevance and content also have a role to play in mitigating violence. Education reform must, therefore, be a higher priority for all stakeholders interested in a more peaceful and stable Pakistan. Debate within the country about education reform should not be left only to education policymakers and experts, but ought to figure prominently in national dialogues about how to foster security. The price of ignoring Pakistan's education challenges is simply too great in a country where half the population is under the age of 17 (Rebecca & Graff, 2010:1).

There has been much debate concerning the roots of militancy in Pakistan, and multiple factors clearly come into play. One risk factor that has attracted much attention both inside Pakistan and abroad is the dismal state of the national education sector. Despite recent progress, current school attainment and literacy levels remain strikingly low, as does education spending. The Pakistani education sector, like much of the country's public infrastructure, has been in decline over recent decades. The question of how limited access to quality education may contribute to militancy in Pakistan is more salient now than ever, given the rising national and international security implications of continued violence (Rebecca & Graff, 2010:1). Poor school performance across Pakistan would therefore seem an obvious area of inquiry as a risk factor for conflict. Poor education is a risk factor for militant violence in Pakistan; this analysis helps to disentangle the reasons why education and militancy may be linked, either because poor education creates widespread grievances, negative worldviews and opportunities for militants to recruit or because schools fail to impart critical citizenship skills.

Analysts have largely failed to carefully examine Pakistan's education landscape, leading to mischaracterization and over-simplification of the role of educational institutions in fueling Pakistani militancy. Understanding the characteristics and weaknesses of Pakistan's education sector is a key to develop better explanations of the link between education and militancy. Currently, there are 47 million illiterate adults in Pakistan, a number that is expected to increase to nearly 50 million by 2015, making Pakistan one of the few countries in the world in which the illiterate population is growing. In contrast, India's illiterate population is expected to decrease by more than 8 million by 2015, and the illiterate populations of Iran and Bangladesh are forecast to decrease by 1.8 million and 350,000, respectively. After Nigeria and India, Pakistan has the highest number of out-of-school children, with 6.8 million kids between the ages of 5 and 9 leave the school in early period.

In 2002, under the Pervez Musharraf government, an effort was made in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks to "secularize" Pakistani schools as a way of helping to mitigate terrorist militancy (Rebecca & Graff, 2010:11). Literacy is considered as the main pillar that guarantees the development of a society. Literacy combined with skill play a vital role in the development of any segment of society. In Pakistan, there are potentially numerous connections between the education system and the mounting occurrence of militancy, and these have been largely overlooked by security experts whose main focus has been the role of *madrassas*. Though some *madrassas* clearly do have an impact on the political and security climate, their role is limited. The study of Abbas (2005) about militants also profiled the socio-economic characteristics of the household of the deceased militants, in addition to collecting a range of information on the household's religious convictions, support for the militant's decision to leave for jihad etc. His findings with regard to education were similar to earlier study of Fair (2011 and 2012) in that only 4 percent of the deceased militants were reported to have attended a *madrassa* full time, and levels of education attained by the group were higher than the average for Pakistan (Abbas, 2005). About 94 percent of the militants had had some form of formal education, with 40 percent having completed high school (Aftab, 2008:3).

According to the Refugee Review Tribunal Research Response, the public school system in Pakistan works on the basis of a curriculum that is highly likely to engender intolerance and promote the concept of conflict resolution through violence. Children from low income households who tend to use public services are thus exposed to a schooling that essentially does not encourage free thinking, inquisitiveness, or tolerance of any sort of difference. Combined with a lack of employment opportunities for the average graduate, this is a combustible mixture in an environment where armed conflict is presented as a religious duty. Unlike the core of the Afghan Taliban that are not *Madrassa* educated where most of them are semi-literate or illiterate. Those who have received some educational training have generally attended local schools but not *Madrassas*. Based on what little information there is about the militants, it seems that the leadership of the TIP consists in large part of men who have worked or continue to work in shops, as day laborers, as hawkers and peddlers, or in the case of the current leader, Maulana Fazlullah, as a chair-lift operator (RRT, 2009) .

Two sets of studies by scholars of Pakistan shed light on the question of how schooling fuels militancy, but there remain large gaps in this research. In line with research on the background of terrorist recruits globally, one strand looks at the profiles of Pakistani militants and seeks to determine their educational background, income and other biographical information. Fair (2011 and 2012) conducted an insightful survey of families in the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who lost at least one child in militant violence in Afghanistan or Kashmir: A minority of militants was recruited in *Madrasas* or in public schools, while none were recruited in private schools. Fewer, than a quarter ever attended a *Madrassa*, and of those *Madrassa* alumni most also attended public school. A majority had the equivalent of a 10th-grade education; whereas the average

Pakistani child only attends school through grade 6.99. The study suggests that there is not a strong link between militancy writ large and either lack of education or *Madrassa* attendance. However, when the same study examined a smaller set of militants who were suicide bombers in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, Fair found that most did attend a *Madrassa*, primarily in North and South Waziristan tribal agencies. She reasons that given the thin levels of support for suicide bombings in both countries, militant groups have no choice but to recruit among low skilled *Madrassa* students.

Studies such as this are important given the dearth of robust information about the profile of militants in Pakistan. However, they are also prone to three main shortcomings that may skew the endings. First, blunt measures of educational attainment may overshadow the quality of schooling those former students either militants or peaceful citizens received, which may be just as important. We discuss education quality and militancy in the next section. Second, focusing on the perpetrators of successful attacks ignores the larger pool of attackers who were not successful and were likely to be less skilled and educated. Third, it takes more than a skilled recruit to sustain a successful militant movement. Militants achieve greater success in environments that are conducive to their operations, where public support is high. Looking narrowly at the background of attackers misses the larger picture of the community of support for militants.

A second line of research moves beyond individual militants to examine the communities of support that anchor militant groups in a society. Several scholars (Abbas, 2005; Ahmad, 2011; Fair, 2011 and 2012; Daraz et al, 2012) have done significant work on public attitudes toward militancy in Pakistan. Here, the evidence is equally unclear. On the one hand these studies find that higher the level of education obtained by respondents, the less likely they are to support the Taliban and Pakistani sectarian groups. However, the number of years spent in school seems to have no impact on support for Al Qaeda, with which the Pakistani public is least familiar, and on Kashmir-related militancy. One study suggests that support of Kashmir-related groups is tied to the quality of education, and particularly, the narrow anti-India worldview that is reflected in the curriculum and in textbooks, hypothesizing that the longer students are in school the more they are exposed to this perspective. Again, the evidence underscores the importance of the quality of education obtained. This is confirmed by another recent study showing that support for terrorist attacks in Pakistan is thin but tends to correlate with respondents' holding extremist views (Rebecca & Graff, 2010:27).

Four broad approaches to education and conflict which we refer to as the grievance, worldviews, skills and opportunity arguments stand out in the effort to explain why education and conflict risk are often linked. The first is that education systems can either serve to exacerbate or conversely to mitigate constituents' grievances against their government, which in turn can make citizens more or less likely to support militancy or to actually join a militant group. The second argument is

the education system's power to shape students' worldviews and thereby either instill a more militaristic or radical outlook, or help students challenge extremist beliefs and develop more constructive and tolerant alternative realities, thus reducing the likelihood that they will support or join the militants. The third argument holds that education systems can either teach peaceful "citizenship" skills, including literacy, thus equipping students with the means to seek to peacefully resolve conflicts, or schools can engage in what some specialists call "war education" by condoning violence and fostering the escalation of physical violence. And the fourth claim which is more controversial when it comes to terrorist groups but does apply in contexts of civil war is that limited access to high quality education means that students are likely to have fewer employment prospects, which can increase the opportunity for militant groups to recruit (Rebecca & Graff, 2010:30).

Religion and Militancy

Religion; a symbol of collective life, sentiment and compelling force over its followers cannot be ignored in the intensification. In this context, taking the Islamic ideology for guarantee, considered it their prime responsibility to practice the rituals of *Zakat* from their Gold and Cash amounts. Women of the area got united and become a single moral community when they started giving their jewellery to Maulana Fazallullah (was a religious leader of the area). Giving up jewellery has a lot of significance and a source of salvation in Pakhtun society (Shaheen, 2010).

Religious sentiments and religious authorities have played a key role in political and military affairs in the Pakhtun inhabited lands for hundreds of years. Especially in times of invasions and external occupation, the call for Jihad (holy war) and the role of religious leaders have been prominent. Calls for Jihad were made against Sikhs in the seventeenth century when they occupied what is now KP and later in 1847 when the British replaced the Sikhs as the paramount power. Islam has played a key role in the history of Pakistan itself. In 1949, the Pakistan Constituent Assembly passed a resolution for all laws to be in consonance with Islam. The wars of 1947, 1965 and 1971 against India were steeped in religious narrative. With the advent of Zia-ul-Haq, and later the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the western border of Pakistan became a veritable jihadist base that attracted foreign Mujahedin (Aziz, 2010). The ties between religiously inspired groups and officialdom in Pakistan continued after the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan in 1989, and the subsequent disinterest of the U.S. in Afghan affairs. Jihadist training camps were tolerated and supported on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistani border. Training camps and jihadist bases continued to exist in parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) after 2001. Thus, the Taliban of Swat and then in Malakand had ample historical as well as mythological resonance for their call for resistance, Jihad and religious revival. Close to 83% of respondents in survey were of the view that people of Swat were influenced by religious personalities, while 67% of respondent households agreed on the close connection between religious education and militancy. Also 67% had the opinion that calls for Jihad against the U.S. in Afghanistan had encouraged militancy in Swat. A full 78% agreed that the Pakistani government's

alliance with the U.S. in the "war on terror" had encouraged people to support militants. A 70% of the households stated that the Afghan Taliban assisted Swat militants (Aziz, 2010).

Conclusion

The current study concludes that the problem of militancy lies in the realm of multifaceted and hidden forces and is accompanied by the feeling of deprivation, amongst a large majority of the people. In Pakistan, there is a strong linkage between rising religious bigotry/terrorism and poverty and role of dictatorial rule, based on well defined hierarchal pyramid. James C. Davies gives a psychological explanation of why people revolt by explaining a gap that exists between what people want and what people get. His theory explains that when frustration becomes widespread and intense, society seeks violent means and once the frustration becomes focused on the government, the violence becomes coherent and directional. Decades of military oppression, establishment's greed, chronic illiteracy, high unemployment and callus attitude of the military/bureaucratic alliance inculcate a feeling of despair and dejection in Pakistan. Under the circumstances, the frustrated youth becomes an easy prey for the recruiters of hate and rejection, postured under the brand of religious extremists. In this regard, the biggest force behind the issue of militancy is lack of education and then of quality education for common man. Since the country has not been able to configure best education system for the nation, we have reached a stage where nobody wants to send his child to government schools and good private schools are out of reach. So a common man has been deprived of his birth-right to get an education.

Besides, the facts and figures derived from this research show that the Pakistanis are at the lowest levels in the world human development index. The country is facing the problem of extreme poverty and unemployment where 22.3 per cent population lives on or below the poverty level as well as majority of the educated youth is out of jobs, and even if some of them get jobs these jobs are not according to their level of education or skills. The people have been deprived of modern facilities in education, health, communication and good food. Such people are worried due to lack of income resources and they are unable to fulfill their needs to live a life parallel to their neighbors. In this age of competition they feel deprived of their rights and inferiority complex prevails upon them. To fulfill their daily basic needs and of their dependents, the common people have no alternative ways and means except to adopt the violent professions, to be militants and terrorists. It has also been found that deep-rooted and century old economic and income inequalities contribute to spread militancy as the better life options that become available by joining the militants and to become a powerful person in society. It is apparent that many people also joined the militants to improve their livelihoods by entering the terrorist leadership hierarchy that enables one to share in the spoils that the terrorists collect through criminality.

Besides, the current study found that militancy, since its beginning, was and is a blend of cultural impositions and religious fundamentalism where the deep-rooted cultural restrictions upon the masses and resultantly sowing the seeds of rigid and fundamental religious ideologies further

intensify the issue. Most of the people belonging to different regions of the county (having deep-rooted socio-cultural and religious background), without rationally thinking over the issue, its long term and even immediate ill consequences, adopt this profession and got the issue practically in hands. Actually they support the militants and militancy on the ground of misperceived religious ideology without knowing the real essence of religious teachings.

Remedial Measures/Recommendations

A cursory look at the forces behind militancy indicates that in Pakistan in general and in the research area in particular the phenomenon has not come to fore overnight. It has taken years and decades to flourish and involves many factors. Since militancy is multifaceted, the solution has to be multi pronged. In view of the forces described, the possible remedies could include:

- Strengthening state institutions and devise systems whereby peoples' interests are safeguarded and not of elite's.

- The whole education system should be revamped with a view to have common system of education throughout the country. The standard of education imparted in Governmental schools should be improved to a level comparable with developing countries. Relevant and lucrative technical and vocational training should be provided to youth, which is compatible with requirements of today's industrial needs. This would also add value to the human capital and would provide them employment opportunities.

- Poverty is said to act like a "Magnifying Glass". It magnifies everything, poor's happiness and also sorrows. The sense of deprivation when increases manifold, it drives masses towards violent ways. It may be manifested in our changing social behaviors and extreme cases can propel people to terrorist activities to satiate the sense of deprivation. Government must make concerted efforts towards poverty alleviation. In the presence of poorly educated masses stricken by abject poverty, people with heinous desires would keep getting recruits to become militants for terrorist activities.

- Aggressive diplomatic campaign should be resorted to, to expose regional and international players that are striving to create problems for the victimized nations and are actually hampering the efforts for war against terror. Despite making most of the sacrifices and contribution to this war, the concerned are only being posed as part of problem rather than solution.

- The solution of long standing political issue involving Muslims should also be advocated like Palestine and Kashmir issues. These issues are part of motivational strategies for hiring recruits. However, if sincere efforts are not made in this regard, in all likelihood, the conflict will go on.

- All efforts must be made through different means to isolate innocent people lured by malicious elements. The use of force against such elements will then prove to be of tremendous help.

- The war against militancy and terrorism is going to be a long drawn war and not a battle. Winning the war involves wisdom to make political choices, meticulous planning and

execution, character to learn lessons, strategic retreats and even shaking hands with arch adversaries. The first aim should the battle's agility on a ground away from the motherland that could ensure peace and security. In addition, sincere efforts to remedy the underlying forces which create conducive environment for violent attitudes to flourish. Only then the desired dream can be fulfilled through the provision of decent livelihood to the populace and at the same time, serve as a good neighbor.

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Religion and Violence in Nigeria: 1980-2012

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Abstract: *Nigeria's recent history is replete with religious violence. Religious clashes with attendant loss of life and property are a reoccurring phenomenon. Mainstream conventional religious groups seek to change society according to their interpretation of religion. Religious violence in Nigeria is mostly between adherents of the two major religions in the country, Christianity and Islam. Heightened social identity, competition for resources and political power are underlying factors, so are pervasive poverty, corruption, and the long winded route to development of the nation. In recent times the religious group, Boko Haram group has been at the centre of acts of violence. The Boko Haram is an Islamic group engaged in violent conflict with the Nigerian authorities. The group uses violence, assassinations, urban warfare, kidnap and bombings as instruments of advancing its interests. The group initially engaged in peaceful proselytising and non-violence, metamorphosed into a Jihadi faction with the aim of establishing a theocratic Sharia state. Some of these acts of violence can be traced to the failure of the leadership to engender balanced development in all regions of the nation and cater for the growing needs for economic and social justice among all sections of the Nigerian society.*

Keywords: Nigeria, Islam, Sharia, Violence, Boko Haram

Introduction

Nigeria is a multi ethnic and multi religious society, the mosaic of cultures and religions gives the nation a peculiar character in terms of political and social relations. Inter-group rivalry along ethnic, religious and other lines is a common phenomenon, and over the decades, especially from the 1908s, has given rise to violent clashes between these groups. Religious violence in Nigeria cannot be said to be entirely religious, that is because most have ethnic, economic, or political underpinnings. A crises could begin as either as an ethnic or political conflict and metamorphose into a religious crises, or vice versa. Religious conflicts have occurred at different times and places in Nigeria; however, the period under study is 1980 to 2012.

Going back to May 1980, clashes occurred between Muslims and Christians in: Zaria city of Kaduna. The genesis of the violence could only be traced to the sour relation between adherents of the two religions. No lives were reportedly lost but Christians suffered substantial set back as many properties belonging were destroyed. One of the widely reported religious crises with substantial loss in life and property occurred in Yan-Awaki area of Kano, a predominantly Muslim city. The crises is attributed to the *Maitatsine* religious sect, it is estimated that 4,177 people died directly as a consequence of the attacks by members of the sect on non-sect members and police men during the crises (Danjibo, 2010). In another part of the country, clashes between the *Maitatsine* sect, the public, and law enforcement officers resulted in extensive destruction of properties, and loss of 118 lives. The sect was also at the centre of the violence that engulfed the cities of Jimeta and Yola in March 1984. The *Maitatsine* sect unleashed violence resulting in wanton destruction of properties in April, 1985. In 1986, there was an inter-religious clash between Muslims and Christians in Gombe. Similarly, in May, 1986 adherents of the two religions clashed on the grounds of the first established ivory tower, University of Ibadan. One of the hot

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beds of religious crises in Nigeria is Kaduna State; in March, 1987,there were clashes between Muslims and Christians in the College of Education, Kafanchan; the crises has left a lingering acrimonious relationship between adherents of the two faiths that has lasted to date. The burning of Mosques by Christian Kajes and retaliatory attacks by Muslims had far reaching effects; neighbouring towns like Katsina, Funtua, Zaria, Gusau were engulfed by a wave of religious riots. Many lives were lost, as had become the norm for such occurrences.

Like clerics, young people and students are not left out of religious violence, in Kaduna Polytechnic in Kaduna State it is was common for intra and inter religious riots to break out every while. In some cases of religious violence, sects have been the source of violence, for instance, the Shi'ite sect under the auspices of Islamic Movement of Nigeria embarked on peaceful protests against what it called an offensive and blasphemous publication by a magazine; the march was subverted by street urchins consequently ending in violence (Adesoji, 2010; CSMN). Others are the acrimonious, nationwide debate on Sharia (Islamic law) at the Constituent Assembly in October/November 1988, the Bayero University crisis of 1989, the Bauchi/Katsina riots of March, 1991, the Zangon-Kataf riot of May 1992, the Kano civil disturbance of December 1991 and the Jos crisis of April 1994 (Imo 1995: 21-23; Ibrahim 1997: 512-516; Enwerem 1999: 124). Similarly, between 1999 and 2008, 28 other conflicts were reported, the most prominent being the Shagamu conflict of July 1999 and the recurrent Jos crises of 2001, 2002, 2004 and 2008 (Akaeze 2009). The intractable Jos Ethno-religious crisis has recurred severally between 2008 and January 2010; it remains a potentially explosive issue till date.

Background to the Boko Haram

One of the major challenges faced by the nation in recent times is the outbreak of violent uprising by a religious group locally called *Boko Haram*. The multi ethnic and religious nature of Nigerian society, the high sensitivity to religious issues by Nigerians coupled with the long military rule are factors identified as having militarized the psyche of most Nigerians (Adesoji, 2010). But poignant and alarming issue is the attempt by adherents of various religions to forcefully impose a religious ideology on others. These attempts manifest a growing religious sensitivity as one of the most religious countries in the world, and the failure to effect deterrent measures in the past. The effects of heightened religious consciousness have had adverse social, political and economic consequences on the nation. Apart from the carnage and destruction of property, the growing distrust and animosities among Nigerians of different faiths and tribes, the issue of religious violence poses a threat to national security and continued existence of the nation (IISS, 2011).

The Boko Haram, prior to 2010, was largely an unknown group. They kept to themselves, a sort of micro state within the larger Nigerian state. Adesoji (2010:3), views the Boko Haram insurgency as another forceful attempt to Islamise Nigeria. He maintains that it "was not the first forceful attempt to impose a religious ideology on a secular Nigerian society"; but the Boko Haram group like the rest of Nigerians advocates for change and responsible governance. The Boko Haram

approaches the issue of national development from the perspective of violent change. The group has taken the *jihadi* stance to dealing with the challenges faced by the nation. This in no way justifies the groups approach to issues, but its agenda can be contextualised in the continued underdeveloped state of the society in spite of the potential it holds in terms of human and mineral resources. Herskovits (2012), pertinently points out that "It was clear in 2009, as it is now (2012), that the root cause of violence and anger in both the north and south of Nigeria is endemic poverty and hopelessness"; Bill Clinton adduced poverty as the main reason behind the violence (Abubakar and Wakili, 2012). The Boko Haram uprising is significant, not only because it challenges the legitimacy of the state through promoting Islamic revivalism, but its actions are an indictment of a nation that is fast being acknowledged to be a failed state. Government ineptitude has become apparent with regular outbreaks of violence of many kinds despite its continuous promises to bring them under control.

Virtually all the religious crises that have occurred in Nigeria ended in some form of violence, either to persons or property. They have been explained or justified by one reason or the other depending on the narrative of the group. Some acts of religious violence have underpinnings in intergroup rivalry for recognition by the state or access to political power and state resources (Albert 1999a: 285-286; Ladan 1999: 101). For instance, several lives have been lost in Jos, Plateau State over the perceived threat posed by non-Christian and non-indigenous people like Hausa and Fulani who have settled in the state over the decades by the local ethnic group. The same argument applies to the Zangon-Kataf riots (Williams 1999; Ibrahim 1998: 39-66). Although almost all the crises have been subsumed under religion and explained by even some authors as religious factors, it is apparent that other extraneous and underlying factors like social identity, economic disequilibrium, poverty, and political power have all played a role (Ibrahim 1997: 521-524; Sulaiman 2008: 20-26). Ibrahim (1998) asserts that most, if not all ethno-religious crises have behind them a perceived domination by external or illegitimate groups.

It should be noted that the northern zone of Nigeria has a high rate of poverty. Indicators of development show a region that needs high investment to improve standards of living; a combination of factors like economic dislocation, deprivation, and income inequalities, as well as poverty continue to pose challenges to the region. However, Boko Haram, spokesmen have warned that their fight is an ideological one and not for worldly comforts, they admonish that the group cannot be induced by material rewards like the Niger Delta militants. The group aligns itself with the Sunni sect of Islam but prominent Sunni Scholars and intellectuals have challenged the group's ideology and methods. The approach and methods of the Boko Haram has been likened to that of the Maitatsine sect.

The Boko Haram
The group popularly known as Boko Haram officially calls itself *Jama'tu Ahlus Sunna Lidawati Wal Jihad*. It was identified to have metarmophosed over the decades and at one time was

refered to as *Ahlusunna wal' Jamma Hijra;* the Nigerian Taliban. It is also called the *Yusufiyya* named after the leader (Fasure 2009: 2; Omipidan 2009b: 48; Sunday Tribune 2009). There are indications that the late leader Yusuf and maybe some elements may have belonged to the Shiite group under the leadership of Ibrahim El-Zakzakky, before a crisis that fissured it into two ideological camps. The splinter group was Kano-based *Jama'atul Tajdidi Islam* (JTI) headed by a former Zakzakky stalwart, Abubakar Mujahid; that was in the early 1990s. Yusuf ostensibly also became a member of the JTI faction and was even appointed the *amir* (leader) for Borno State (Suleiman 2009: 19-23).

The Shiites, officially known as the Islamic Movement of Nigeria, emerged in Nigeria in the late 1970s under the leadership of Ibrahim El-Zakzakky, then an economics student of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The major objective of the Shiite is to establish an Islamic government or state governed modelled after Iran; the source of its leaders inspiration and ideology. Sharia was to be established through preaching and subtle influence on society. The sect shares certain similarities to Iran in its sympathies for Palestinians, and hold Israel and the United States of America as aggressors. The Shiite sect has been in violent confrontation with the state and has no regard for its apparatuses like the police and the judiciary which it considers as instruments of oppression (Olugboji 1995:6). Even though the sect gives the impression of embracing peaceful means to further its ideology, there is a latent aspect that condones violence: apart from revolutionary rhetoric's, members of the group are known to have engaged in violent street protests, clashing with anti-riot policemen, and could resort to the use of arms if given an opportunity. On several occasions, members of the Shiite sect have engaged non-shia groups in violent confrontation around the country; they see their fallen brethrens as martyrs (Albert 1999a: 286-288).

It could be said that the Boko Haram revolutionary transformation is borne out of genuine aspiration to reform society. The leader of the group Mohammed Yusuf, once a member of the Shiite sect radicalized the group under his leadership. According to Oyegbile and Lawal (2009: 68), the group assumed a hard-line position after one of its leader had left for studies in Saudi Arabia leaving Yusuf at the helms of affaires. Another version has it that Yusuf was a member of another group called Nigerian Taliban but because of its extremism, he continued to work towards making Nigeria an independent and just State. It would appear that Yusuf prepared himself for the leadership role that he later played in the Boko Haram sect with his membership in other fundamentalist groups. It is also not impossible that the Boko Haram sect was just one facet of the multifaceted and well-linked fundamentalist movement, the true extent of which can hardly be determined. The reason that Yusuf decided to sever his ties with the Taliban – if in fact, he actually did – could have been informed not by his opposition to their extremist tendencies but rather by his desire to realize his long-term dream of reform, which, perhaps, was slowed down by others who were not as committed as he was.

It seems that the group did not explicitly give the name "Boko Haram" to itself; rather the name could come from the external view of its basic beliefs: "Boko Haram" is derived from a combination of the Hausa word *Boko* meaning "book" and the Arabic word *haram* which means something forbidden, ungodly or sinful. Literally, it means "book is sinful", but could mean Western education is sinful, sacrilegious or ungodly and should therefore be forbidden. A common refrain by scholars and commentators on the Boko Haram is what is erroneously believed to be the groups jettisoning of Western education, Western culture, science and technology (Adesoji, 2010). However, some arrested members of the group were discovered to be graduate of tertiary institutions, some even had masters degrees. The group uses phones and the internet for communication and dissemination of information. It uses modern cars and bombs in its attacks. According to Madunagu, *et al*, (2009), the group even sent its members abroad for medical training and others fields of knowledge to provide ancillary services when the group embarks on attacks. This is misleading because many Islamic activists, Boko Haram or otherwise have encouraged members to embrace both Islamic and Western education if they are to live fulfilled lives and cast off Western hegemony. Alongside this line of thinking was the group's advocacy for the propagation of, and strict adherence to Islam by all and sundry regardless of personal inclinations. The membership of Boko Haram cuts across a broad spectrum of Nigerian society, but as would be expected a large number of members come from poor, lower class backgrounds. Some members were identified to be former university lecturers, students, bankers, a former commissioner, and others are officers of Borno State government. The group may have included people of questionable character like rehabilitated drug addicts, street urchins and similar under class people (Olu 2009: 9).

The conditions under which the Boko Haram have emerged shares similarities to the socio-economic conditions that have fostered similar movements elsewhere. Since the mid 1980s living conditions have grown worse: mass poverty; inequality in educational, political and employment opportunities; pervasive illiteracy because of limited educational opportunities; growing unemployment; and corruption in high places, and the misuse of resources have become common place; many people are appalled by standards of living (Usman, 1987: 2). These problems swelled the army of vulnerable people whose disillusionment and impoverishment made them easy prey in the hands of people who promise to bring change for the better. In particular, the corruption among the political elite who have failed to utilise the country's vast wealth to improve the lives of citizens has been a cause of disenchantment. This, coupled with stolen election mandates, has led to growing disillusion with the Western system of governance, among unemployed young men (McConnell, 2009). The Boko Haram phenomenon is often blamed on the northern states, for being Muslims, adherents of Islam "a religion of violence". These views disregard the socio-economic conditions that spawned such movements (Ibelema 2009:18; Makinde 2009: 6).

The Insurgency

The violent approach to issues of the Boko Haram came to the limelight in the 2009; with the insurgency at its peak between the beginning and end of July. The violence occurred in four northern states: Bauchi, Kano, Yobe and Borno. Borno state witnessed the highest casualties maybe because it was the leader, Mohammed Yusuf's, and the movement's home base. The immediate cause of the riot was the attack on the group's settlement at the Dutsen Tanshi area of Bauchi on 26 July 2009 by security men. Members of the group were allegedly arrested for being in possession of bomb making materials which were ostensibly seized by the police. This led to reprisal attacks by the sect members on police formations in Bauchi and eventually in three other states (Hines, 2009; McConnell 2009; Bakare, Adedeji and Shobiye 2009).

The violence was contained after the capture and killing of the group's leader, Mohammed Yusuf, under police custody. The establishment had claimed he was killed in the conflict; however, images recorded on phones and posted on the internet disputed that. It is estimated that over 700 people, mostly sect members, were killed, and public buildings like police stations, prisons, government offices, schools and churches were destroyed (Nwankwo and Falola 2009: 2; Oyegbile and Lawal 2009: 67-71).

The death of the group's leader, Mohammed Yusuf did not end matters, the scattered members rallied round a new figure in the name of Abubakar Muhammed Shekau. The new leader raised the level of the groups attacks and brought it to international limelight. There are no known connections between the group and other jihadist groups outside the country but the mode of operation is very similar thereby raising suspicion of links to Taliban, al-Qaida, al-Qaida in the Magreb and other jihadi groups in Afghanistan, Algeria, Pakistan, Kashmir and elsewhere. The Boko Haram leaves its signature of unbridled violence in targets it has hit, the group has assassinated perceived enemies from various walks of life; traditional title holders, teachers, journalists, people believed to be spying and informing on them, most especially military and paramilitary personnel. Unconfirmed reports allege that the group has attacked and robbed banks as institutions of *riba,* (interest) but more importantly to fund the activities of the group. There has been speculation that the group receives financial support within Nigeria from its supporters. For instance, a former Commissioner in Borno State is recognized as one of its sponsors. There might be other sponsors, such as businessmen and high ranking government functionaries. The incentive to donate to the group could be innocuous deriving from desire to promote religion for heavenly rewards. It cannot be ruled out that disciples, admirers, partners or associates of the group leader donated to it out of religious zeal without thought of promoting violence.

Patrimonialism is very pervasive in Nigeria, and prebendal politics has almost become the norm. Politics and undue emphasis on acquisition of power primarily for access to resources and wealth plays a role in the emergence of the Boko Haram as a *jihadi* group. The unabashed contest for political patronage by various social groups gives the impetus to engage in acts that are inimical

to the interests of other contestants and groups. Politicians aggrandise wealth in office with the aim, amongst other things, of "settling" members of their "constituency". Therefore, funds designated for various public works are embezzled, leaving infrastructure to decay to the stage they become un-repairable and contracts have to be awarded at highly inflated prices to enable contractors pay kick-backs. Schools hospital, roads are in such a state of disrepair that everyday life has become hectic for the common citizen. The hope of redemption by religious men becomes an attractive alternative and any call to change the course of decay and reformation is keenly heeded to, as many believe the "prophets" who shall raise the nation to greater heights have come at last. It is in this context that we should view the agitation for Sharia law in some northern states.

The Muslim population of the northern states rallied round the call for the introduction of Sharia law, as it was believed to usher in a new and religious approach to public administration, allocation, just distribution and use of resources. However, it turned out to be a forlorn hope, some state governors who had advocated and introduced Sharia as the state penal code were more interested in using religious sentiment to mobilise support for themselves but failed to deliver the services expected of them. Consequently, the northern region continued to deteriorate economically with standards of living plummeting. The Boko Haram might have observed this decadence and sought to reverse the trend. In the groups thinking, the major culprits were leaders who had been trained in Western oriented schools. Western education was therefore a corrupter of morals, encourages greed, laziness and could not be relied on to lift the nation to greater heights 'nor souls to enter paradise'. Religion is important in life and a secular state could bring about needed development as evidenced in Saudi Arabia, Iran and some other semi-Islamic theocratic states. Based on this thinking, the Boko Haram called for the withdrawal of the national constitution as a condition for negotiating peace with the establishment.

The Boko Haram continues to be an issue of national priority. The general disappointment with the political elite could have been the basis for the yearning for change through violence. The group is not alone in this as the violent protests after the 2011 elections have shown. Mass rampages, burning and killing followed the announcement of election results. The ruling party was believed to have once more rigged election, frustrating people's desire for a change in the manner the states and country was being run. Most proponents of Sharia, other than Boko Haram view the introduction of Sharia law as the best option out the morass the nation had descended to.

The Violence Continues

The group has escalated attacks on targets within the nation, one of them being the United Nations building bombing and the other, an attack on the Inspector General's convoy. Boko Haram has since the killing of its leader promised revenge. In respect of a court ruling in favour of the group, the Borno state government has paid the sum of 100 million naira as compensation to the families of members killed by the police. Notwithstanding these palliatives by government, the

group went on to carry out attacks in churches and schools killing dozens of people; these attacks occurred in Madala, Niger state; Jos, Plateau state, Gombe State University, and Bayero University Kano (Agbese *et al*, 20121-5). According to the group's spokesman, Abu Qaqa, the attacks were in revenge for Muslims killed in Jos, Plateau state. Around 200 people were killed in Kano in multiple coordinated attacks. The violence has not abated and more attacks have followed the ones mentioned earlier.

The office of the newspaper, *This Day* in Abuja was attacked by a suicide bomber killing two people. Similarly the Kaduna office of the same newspaper was targeted killing three. The group is also blamed for the attack on the Convoy of the Police Commissioner of Taraba state which killed eleven people; all of these happened in one week (Igidi, 2012: 1-5). Since the beginning of the year 2012, there have been attacks on primary schools in Maidugri. Schools were bombed or burnt by unknown assailants suspected to Boko Haram, but it could have been elements hiding behind the Boko Haram crises to create fear and disenchantment among the population as is mentioned below.

Some disgruntled elements hide under the shadow of Boko Haram to carry out acts of violence in parts of the nation considered to have a high density of Christian population. For instance, in Bauchi a Christian had attempted to detonate a bomb in a village church (Mohammed, 2012:1-5). Similarly, in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state a Christian man attempted to blow up a church after disguising himself in a caftan and turban, apparels commonly worn by Muslims (Abubakar and Eguyanga, 2011:1-5). Herskovits (2012) notes that, "Boko Haram has evolved into a franchise that includes criminal groups claiming its identity". This aptly describes the actions of some criminal gangs colluding with bank officials to stage robberies in the wake of Boko Haram crises. Christians have in some cases carried out retaliatory attacks as evidenced by a bomb attack on an Islamic school in Sapele, Delta state (Abubakar and Eguyanga, 2011:1-5). Indeed the activities of Boko Haram has led to heightened tension between Muslims and Christians with calls for a sovereign national conference to discuss the continued existence of Nigeria as it is, or split. The nation is divided against itself and tensions continue to run high after every incident. Military check points and sandbags give the impression of war; news of the seizure of large shipments of arms adds to the atmosphere of fear.

Northern Nigeria developmentally is lagging behind the southern states, the bustling city of Kano and commercial centre of the north has become a shadow of its former self after violence erupted on 20th January, 2012. Boko Haram fighters had planted bombs in cars in several locations around the city, while others attacked several government buildings, virtually shooting anybody in sight. It is estimated that over two hundred people were killed on that fateful Friday, a holy day for Muslims (Johnson, 2012:14).

Conclusion

It has become evident that the most likely option for peace with the group is through dialogue. Elders in Borno state have called for this approach from the begging. Attempts by the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs were frustrated by government after the initial talks were leaked to the press. This might be due to calls by some groups and individuals for government to treat Boko Haram as a terrorist group and not engage it in dialogue. The Group followed up the breakdown in talks with an escalation in attacks. There have been calls by northern leaders to resume dialogue with the group as the current military approach has not been effective enough in curbing the group (Abbah *et al* 2012; Adebayo, 2012). The problem of religious violence has become more entrenched over the decades and government lackadaisical manner of handling such issues leaves a huge backlog of grievances unaddressed. Religious violence poses a grave danger to national and regional security. The issue needs to be approached holistically as the recurrent nature of intra and inter-ethnic and religious crises will likely end in anarchy or the disintegration of the country.

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Suicide Bombing and Religious Fundamentalism in Nigeria : The Case of Boko Haram

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Abstract: *This paper begins by noting that development becomes realizable in an environment where there is security of lives and property. It notes that religious violence constitutes a most important area of focus in contemporary social science, particularly within the discipline of Sociology. The paper further considers that while governments at the various levels of the Nigerian society exist to protect the lives and interest of the citizenry, the issue of religious violence has often proved a difficult area of intervention within the larger constraint of interethnic wars and conflict oriented relationships. The paper seeks an example in the recent uprising of the religious group called Boko Haram, which has rendered highly unsafe the lives of Nigerians as several people have lost their lives consequent upon sporadic bombing attacks by the group. The raging argument had been whether the group is fighting a religious war or otherwise as many religious leaders within the Islamic sect in particular had openly condemned the attack as being callous and ungodly. The paper therefore sets to examine the perceived causes of the heinous crime and possibly clarify the extent to which it is a religious war against the people, its consequential effect on the socio-political and religious set up in the country and subsequently proffer solution towards the curbing or complete overhauling of this recent socially disturbing phenomenon.*

Key Words: Nigerian, Suicide bombing, religious war, Boko Haram, religious violence

Introduction

Nigeria assumed the status of a colonial state in 1914, at which time the antecedent and separately administered groups of provinces became unified and subjected to the same colonial administrative framework. In October 1960, Nigerian became independent sovereign state and some fifty-one years later, the country still continues in its search for social and political development. The present situation in which there are continuous and recurrent threats to peace and tranquility poses a great concern with regards to how to facilitate the society's development in a precarious situation. It could be observed that among many problems bedeviling the Nigerian nation such as corruption, unemployment, infrastructural decay, hunger, etc. the ugly incidence of insecurity of lives and properties has taken a front burner. Religious intolerance is not peculiar to Nigeria alone as it is a rampant phenomenon in most other pluralistic societies of the world.

Religious violence includes all forms of violence that centre around religious precepts, texts or doctrines. It also includes violence against religious institutions, persons, or objects, when the violence is motivated by the religious aspect relating to the target of the violence. Violence, according to Oxford English Dictionary amounts to going "far beyond (the inflation of) pain and the shedding of blood". Similarly, Alagbe (2005) writes that:

> The word "violence" can be defined to extend far beyond pain and shedding blood. It carries the meaning of physical force, violent language, fury and more important forcible interference"

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Religious Violence (Antecedents)

Adeniran T, (1994) noted that:

> One fundamental attribute of history is that it offers ample opportunities to study past mistakes, understand present crises and guard against future reoccurrence. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, history appears to have a penchant for repeating itself

Nigeria has a long standing history of religious crisis. Incidentally one fundamental attribute of history is that it offers ample opportunities to study past mistakes. However, history appears to have a penchant for repeating itself as far as the Nigerian socio-political situation is concerned. Since 1980, when religious violence first broke out in Kano there have been several others as listed by Attahir& Dunmoye (1994) and represented below.

	Date	Location
(1)	December 18-29,1980	Kano
(2)	October 26-29,1982	Bullum-Kuttu
		Maiduguri (Borno State)
(3)	October 29,1982	Rigasa (Kaduna state)
(4)	October 30, 1982	Kano
(5)	February 27th- March, 1985	Jimeta, Yola
		(Gongola State)
(6)	April, 1985	Gombe (Bauchi state)
(7)	March 7-12, 1987 Zaria&	Kafanchan, Kaduna,
		Funtual (Kaduna state)
(8)	April, 1991	Kastina (Kastina state)
(9)	April, 1991	Tafawa Balewa Bauchi (Bauchi State)

Ethnographic Background of Boko Haram

Boko Haram is a Nigerian Islamist group that seeks the imposition of *Shariah* law in the northern states of Nigeria alongside the philosophy that western or non-Islamic education is a sin. The official name of the group is *Jama'atu Alissunna Lidda'awat wal-Jihad* which in Arabic means "people committed to the propagation of the prophet's teaching and Jihad". But the residents of Maiduguri where it was formed in 2002, dubbed it *Boko Haram* which when translated from Hausa language means "western education is forbidden". Residents gave it the name because of its strong opposition to western education, which it sees a**s** corrupting Muslims. Some analysts view the group's emergence as the extension of the Maitatsine riots of the 1980s and the subsequent ethnic and religious tension in the 1990s.

It became widely known consequent upon sectarian violence in Nigeria in 2009. The group opposes Western education and Western culture. It also rejects modern science and its discoveries. The group presently has undefined structure and chain of command. The group also forbids the wearing of shirts and pants and the act of voting in elections. In its view, the Nigerian

state is run by non-believers.   Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf is reputed to have formed *Boko Haram* in 2002 in Maiduguri (Schweitzer, 2007). He establishes a religious complex that included a mosque and a school. Many poor families from across Nigeria and from neighboring countries enrolled their children in the school, which also served as a recruiting centre for *jihadis* to fight the Nigerian state (Beevor 2002). In 2004 it moved to Kanamma, Yobe state, where it set up a base called 'Afghanistan',used to attack nearby police outposts, killing police officers (BBC, News 2009,03-10)

The group, according to Gubio (2011), was initially called the *Yusuphia Sect Movement (YSM)* named after Yusuf Mohammed, their late leader. And after sometime, they called themselves *Al-Yusuphnna Jinad*. Gubio (2011) argued that it was because they were mismanaged by the Nigerian press that the group is named *Boko Haram*. Thus reflecting their grievances against 'Western education': *Boko* means "Western education" *Haram* means "forbidden".

It is on record that one of the people who started the movement was a university graduate in person of late Yusuf who was reckoned to have memorized the whole Quran at the age of 12. He was noted for some form of deviant behavior even as a child. Gubio noted that he never wanted to pray together with his teachers because he always disagreed with them. He led separate congregational prayers, even when he was in school. When he started his movement because of his mastery of the Quran and of course, of the way he spoke, he succeeded in attracting quite easily the attention of young folks like himself. So, they would gather around him because they saw him as a hero that was speaking what they wanted to hear.

Theoretical Framework.

Structural- functionalists consider crime to be an inevitable part of the society. Through public outrage and legal punishment, the majority of people in a given society, recognize, accept and adhere to a shared set of moral guidelines and rules (Ogunbameru, 2008). Without crime, there would be no legal system or shared morals in our society. As well, a stable crime rate is a sign of a healthy society. However, when crime rate becomes uncontrollable, the people's trust in the state is weakened with the risk of a decline in the strength of commitment and patriotism. At this extreme, there are no more shared moral guidelines establishing what is right and wrong, moral and immoral, normal and deviant.

Plausible Reasons for the Sectarian Violence

While Islam as a religion professes to have peace as its main focus, yet, some portion of the Book can be misrepresented by overzealous adherents. In the Qur'an and the Hadith, Muslims are enjoined to uphold justice and forbid evil. They are instilled with the sense of waging such a struggle under an enlightened leadership. Oppositionary consciousness according to Attahir & Dunmoye (1994) is a reminder of the Islamic ideals. Its attainment is fully supported by a Qur'anic Surah which commands.

> O you who believe be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah even though it
> be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relations—whether he be rich or
> poor Allah has a better right over them both so follow not (your) low desires lest you
> deviate. And if you distort or turn away from (truth) surely Allah is ever aware of what
> you do.

The precarious state of the nation's security can be blamed on the handiwork of the miscreants and unemployed youth. The incessant violent attacks in the North are functions of economic injustice where more than 80% of the populace are not sure of three meals a day argued Umar (2011). The *Almajiris* (underage beggars), who have no opportunity of acquiring Western education are willing tools in the hands of the miscreants unleashing terror in the society.

Another plausible factor aiding the menace of religious violence includes lack of transparency in governance. The absence of accountability in governance has a high potency of breeding distrust among the citizens, the resultant effect of which may manifest in form of violent expression of emotions and grievances.

Another fear being ascribed to the group according to Gubio is that Western education will take away shield of rural dwellers and make them to become 'spoilt children' and they will become arrogant and never be able to go to their parents in the rural areas, and every activity in the rural areas becomes cancelled.

Gubio (2011) stated:

> ……most of the people who were in the rural areas and went for Western education
> never went back to their parents. And most of the cultures, traditions and behaviours of
> the people were becoming different from that of the original back ground they were
> given. They noted that if was even different from the dictates of Islam

The concern expressed with regards precedence being given to the Western culture at the detriment of African culture is indeed pertinent, but the approach is equally questionable as life is held is high esteem in African setting.

The *Boko Haram* debacle can also be viewed as the bandwagon effect of the introduction of S*haria* (Islamic law) in Zamfara and Tabara states. The sect wanted the same law introduced in Borno State. Whereas, the governor at the time according to Gubio, Governor Mala Kachala introduced *Sharia*, but the one that succeeded him did not continue S*haria*. Tracing the history of the group, Gubio observed that in 2001, most of the graduates in the sect burnt their certificates and later migrated out of Borno state to a place called Kanamma in Yobe state. The place provided them an independent enclave, although they were dislodged by security agents after series of complaints from residents within their immediate enclave. However, two years later, which was in 2003, they went to the hills of Gobra somewhere close to Borno state to establish their new secretariat . But again, they were quickly dislodged by a task force. And since then they have refused to live separately. Hence they started living within communities in Maiduguri, with some of them in other places in the country. And then they built what they call their headquarters

named *Markash* around the house of their late leader. Most of the young people disowned their parents to join the movement and that explains how their population escalated.

Cost of Mayhem:

Since recrudescence of *Boko Haram* in 2009, an apocalyptic scale of violence had been unleashed by the sect. Several scores of death innocent souls, aside losses in material term had been traced to the group.

The Nation of Friday, June 17, 2011 p.4 further buttresses this assertion:

A chronicle of bombings	Casualties
• **October 1, 2010-50th** Independence celebrations, Abuja	15 dead, many injured
• December 24, 2010 five blasts in Jos, (Christmas Eve)- Plateau State.	31 dead
• December 31, 2010 (News Year Eve)- Army Barracks, Abuja.	30 dead.
• **March 3, 2011-**Niger State (PDP's campaign rally)	Three dead, 21 injured.
• March 20, 2011 (A botched bombing near a church in Jos)	Two dead
• **April 1, 2011** a police state in Maiduguri, Borno State.	No casualty recorded
• **April 8, 2011-** INEC office in Suleja, Niger State on the eve of the rescheduled National Assembly elections.	15 dead, 35 injured
• **April 9, 2011-** polling centre bombed in Maiduguri	No casualty
• **April 15,2011-** INEC office in Maiduguri.	Many injured
• **April 16, 2011-**A hotel in Kaduna in the night of Presidential Poll.	Eight people injured
• **May 29, 2011-** Two explosions (Presidential inauguration eve) in Zuba, outskirts of Abuja & Bauchi)	15 people dead, 35 injured
• **June 7-**A bomb attack targeted at police officers in Maiduguri, Borno state.	11 dead

• **June 16 2011 (**Police Force Headquaters)	
• **May 19,** Maiduguri	
• **Friday April 22,**Jos	Three killed, two badly injured
• **March 19,** Maiduguri	Two killed
• **April 25,** kano	Many injured

Further to the above, the Islamist militants set off bombs across some areas in Nigeria on 2011 Christmas day. Three churches were aimed at but devastating havoc was melted on St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Madala; a satellite town of about 40km (25 miles) from the center of the capital Abuja where at least 27 of the worshippers were killed. The other two churches were the Mountain of Fire and Miracles church in the central, ethically and religiously mixed town of Jos, and a church in northern Yobe State at the town of Gadaka. (A sucide bomber killed four security officials at the state security service in one of the other attack which struck the northeastern town of Damaturu)

The alarming trend in terms of loss of human lives probably lend credence to the claim made by human right groups that more than 250 people have been killed by Boko Haram since July, 2010 (www.time.com). The most recent Kano multiple bombing of Friday 20th January, 2012, has been the most devastating of all the bombings so far as more than 250 people died in the incidence.

Similarly, Umar (2011) was quoted as having said that about 150 people were reportedly killed in Yobe state on the eve of sallah. While Ekhom (2011) observed that 60 law enforcement officers; policemen, and many other who were supposed to protect lives, were killed in Damaturu attack.

The *Guardian* newspaper reported that: In Borno state, suspected *Boko Haram* gunmen reportedly killed a prison guard and three other civilians in three separate attacks at a barbing salon in London Chiki, Shehuri and Abaganaram wards of Maiduguri. The killing of Mallam Ali Gana'a, a cleric in kelevi ward , Maiduguri had also been blamed on *Boko Haram* sect as confirmed by the field operation officer, Joint Task Force (J.T.F.) Col. Victor Ebhaleme (The *Guardian* newpaper of October 31, 2011). Thus the group posed economic, social and political threat to the nation; (Kiristilere 2011).

The bombing of Police headquarters in Abuja on Thursday 16, June 2011 culminated in the death of two people with 73 vehicles been either burnt to ashes or damaged. (The *Nation* June 17, 2011). The table below gives an insight to the enormity of the losses of human lives to the dastardly act of bombing within a period of seven month.

Attack on the United Nations (UN) building in Abuja on August 26, 2011, in which 23 persons were confirmed dead and many more badly injured resulted in a decision by the United Nations to

suspend all official travels to Nigeria "until further notice". This constitutes a major collateral damage being suffered by the country over the continuous bombing and killings unleashed on it by the *Boko Haram* sect. For now, the country has to contend with the loss of right to host global food security meeting of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which was moved to Senegal. The reason stated in the letter by the agency, according to The *Guardian* newspaper, is due to the UN suspension of all official travels to Nigeria "until further notice"

In another instance, Mark (2011) observed that the cost of the onslaught of *Boko Haram* has been devastating. He stated as follow:

> "Innocent lives have been mindlessly wasted and properties wasted and properties wantonly destroyed through bombs explosions and related acts of violence. Emotions have been ruptured, rivers of tears ripped open, and the land needlessly drenched with the blood of helpless innocent citizen. Indeed, what we have witnessed are gravely discordant with our cultural and religious values of the sanctity of life and our age long tradition of being our brothers keeper".

Aside from the already established cost, it stands to reason that the country would suffer indirect loss of revenue through a decline in the patronage of its hospitality industry and other services. The security threat, as presently being experience, would likely have a negative impact on the current efforts of the federal government to attract foreign investors and entrepreneurs.

Proffered Solution to the Problem: Way Forward

The need to resolve or possibly offset the growing trend of death and depredation caused by the *Boko Haram* onslaught cannot be over emphasized in view of the enormity of waste being recorded. The truce terms of the radical sect makes the hope of having peace restored to look like a ruse. Among such terms according to Haruna 2011 are:

> …Strict application of Sharia law in the 12 northern states that adopted Islamic legal code in 1999. They also demanded the resignation of the newly elected Governor Kashim Shettima of Borno state as well as the prosecution of former Governor Ali Modu Sherrif and senior security officials for the killing of their leader, Mohammed Yusuf, in 2009.

The group seemed implacably committed to the use of violence to further its cause as the demand for strict implementation of Sharia in the far north of today would be very hard to achieve bearing in mind the secular nature of the Nigerian state. It also seems unrealistic that the Governor of Borno would heed the call for his resignation.

However some experts are canvassing for dialogue as major device towards resolving *Boko Haram* logjam .Umar (2011) was quoted as saying:

> Dialogue is preferable. I believe the Boko Haram members have some grouse against the government. Without dialogue you can't get their point of view. I believe we must dialogue with any group of people that have a problem with Nigeria, be it Boko Haram or the Niger Delta militants, or the people having problems in Plateau state. Government will lose nothing by talking to them. At the end, government may discover that what is tearing the nation apart is a minor issue that could be easily resolved.

It is instructive that the presidential committee on the security challenges posed by the threat anchored its report on dialogue with the sect, and a call for its disarmament. On the other hand, some authority believed that violence act would remain intractable until when perpetrator of it are brought to book. In a view expressed by Odita (2011) he stated:

> Boko Haram should be looked at from a serious security point of view that is beginning to constitute a serious threat that is likely to affect our overall economic fabrics, including tourism. If people get scared to come and invest in our country, we will lose out and our development would suffer. So, it is time for the government and all Nigerians to look at this holistically. We must find out those behind all this and unmask them.

Vigilance is also being proposed as the panacea to the menace of religious violence. This is in tandem with the view expressed by Ekhomu (2011) that, the biggest threat in Nigerian today is "IED threat", which implies Improvised Explosive Device. He warned that whenever one feels a sense of unease around a strange looking person, *that* the fellow should leave the scene. He stated that:

> "And when you notice an altercation break out, leave immediately, instead of trying to be a Good Samaritan and end up losing your life"

The use of force is been suggested by some. They based their argument on the idea that when a group of people decide to take up arms against their nation and murder innocent members of the populace, the only way to prevent anarchy is to deal with the issue firmly.

Gubio is of the view that the group must be handled with firm caution; being a group that does not want to operate or recognise the existing Nigerian government neither do they want to know the Nigerian constitution nor the Nigerian laws.

"Carrot and Stick" approach is being proffered as the measure of ensuring a lasting solution to the problem by Obasanjo (2011); who stated:

> What I will do to bring an end to the serial killings and bombings in the northern states, was the adaptation of the carrot and stick approach on the Niger Delta militants, where I invited 35 different leaders of the militants from the region and listened to all their grievances against the Federal Government and their traditional leaders, whom they alleged had been conniving with the latter.

The carrot would include looking into the problem of poverty and unemployment in the north, while the stick could be in the form of dialogue and massive intelligence gathering by the security personnel to root out perpetration of the alleged serial killing and bombings.

It is imperative upon the Nigeria police force, as a pivotal institution charged with maintaining internal security in the country to expose its personal to proper training and re-training in the vital areas of intelligence gathering and under-cover operations in order to measure up to the prevailing challenges. Provision of modern equipment for the force to enhance effective crime fighting and prevention is also of immense value. Inter-agencies collaboration of security and intelligence agencies has to be further encouraged. Intelligence gathering agencies such as

National Intelligence Agency (NIA), State Security Services (SSS), Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and such others should be equipped in all ramifications to be able to cope with contemporary security challenges.

A sort of house cleansing is being suggested by some experts. For example, former security Adviser to the Rivers State Government; Sara Igbe (2011) called for a probe into the complexity of security agencies in the incidences of bombing in the country, describing them as terrorist acts which could not have succeed without the support and connivance of some security agents. He stated:

> Most terrorist acts across the world are politically-motivated and their success depend largely on the co-operation and support they have from security agents and persons in high places. Government should urgently investigate the roles of the security agents and other functionaries irrespective of their closeness to the corridors of power.

The claim by the sect that it had brought in over 100 suicide bombers from Somalia should not be dismissed. Rather it is expected to place a burden of responsibility on the Nigerian immigration service by stringently screening immigrants into the country.

There is also a used a need to investigate or identify the kind of misery, grievances, misgiving, deprivations and despair that cause some people to take pleasure in terminating human lives, including their own sometimes. The investigation should be done with the view to effecting radical change in society and channel such deadly instincts towards peaceful ends based on dialogue, negotiation, resolution of conflict and mutual healing.

The Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) and the Nigerian Immigration Services (NIS), though Para-military in nature, have overwhelming role to play in stemming the tide of violence in the society. The NCS is expected to tighten the noose on illegal proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs),explosives and other offensive weapon. Similarly, NIS should mount a formidable campaign against the influx of illegal immigrants and effectively monitor the international borders since some of them could be willing hand for perpetration of violent crimes.

The scourge of bombing and assault on the innocent citizens can be counteracted if major political, economic and social grievances can be identified and justly resolved. This view is predicated on the believe that the deeply felt and legitimate grievances resulting from bad leadership reflecting in poor governance, rampant corruption, economic mismanagement, painful economic reforms, deteriorating state of grossly inadequate infrastructure, widening income differentials between the rich and the poor, worsening unemployment situation, worsening rate of youth restiveness, and mass poverty may constitute a significant part of the sources of deprivation which their attendant misery and despair could make resort to violence by a variety of politically and/or socially alienated persons or groups inevitable.

The teaching of good morals by clerics has also been stressed as a panacea to the current insecurity posed to the country by such outlaws as the *Boko haram* sect members and militants in the Niger Delta (Suntai 2011).

In the search for greater peace and tranquility in the county, the National assembly enacted Terrorism (Prevention) Act, 2011.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The agenda of greater quality of life encompasses, poverty reduction, gender equality, provision of quality infrastructure in adequate volume, protection of human rights, effective healthcare delivery, qualitative education among others. However, developmental effort can only bear minimal result in a conflict ridden and insecure environment. It therefore goes to say that security and peace are *sinequa non* for human development. Considering the enormity of the waste already recorded on the basis of the attack mounted by *Boko Haram* and the psychological damage which the threat of their attack had caused the living, it therefore becomes imperative for all Nigerians to re-new their commitments to brotherly love, tolerance, forbearance, moderation, goodwill and mutual understanding. The shuttering economy should be reviewed to make it more responsive to the needs and inspirations of the greatest number of people as there should also be transparency governance.

The security agents should rise to the challenge of identifying the sponsors of the group with a view to bringing them book. The government should open a channel of communication with the group as a measure of resolving the logjam. It is high time that government found lasting solution to myriad of problems such as poverty, corruption, unemployment, drug abuse etc which are likely precursors to the manifesting menace of insecurity.

Nonetheless, the evil of the attack by the extremist group is laden with the benefit of turning attention of the managers of the security agencies to manpower development, capacity training, discipline, personnel motivation, professional ability and career growth of the rank and file. It is also envisioned that the problem will engineer a synergy between security agencies culminating in intelligence-sharing which is considered to be a potent security strategy.

Mass education of the populace may be another measure of tackling the problem. Training of the people to identify and deter potential terrorists is likely to be more effective, efficient and a cheap option of curbing the crime. Oyofo (2011) observed that:

> All these metal detectors, security walk-through troughs, CCTV cameras, convex mirrors, atom detectors, uncomfortably garbed police in full metal jackets are unrelated to terrorism and definitely not counter terrorism. They should be utilized only as backups proof of intent or suspicion by trained personnel and to provide forensic evidence only, as is done elsewhere, for now. Human beings rule this sphere. Nigeria need not be different. We can use what we already have, to achieve what we want and we have well over 154 million clever people.

Oyofo inferred that most countries of the world including North America, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Pakistan have invested heavily in counter terrorism training of their citizen and thereby suggested that same experience should be applied to the Nigerian situation too.

The expansion of bother domestic and foreign intelligence operations for effective of intelligence gathering with a view to fight the menace across the borders of the country is being solicited by Okechukwu (2011). He stated:

> ......core intelligence agencies like the Department of State Services (DSS), National Intelligence Agency (NIA), Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) and Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) should e enlisted in the anti terror campaigns

The intelligence wing of the Nigeria Police (i.e Force Criminal Investigation Department, FCID) should be empowered to enable it rip the terror mayhem of the present time in the country in the bud. The scope of the intelligence gathering should be broad and deep for both terrorism prevention and core, with the prime requisite being unraveling tenor groups in Nigeria and those who train fund and direct them and how best to counter their nefarious designs or plans.

The current unpleasant suicide bombing attack being experienced in Nigeria may yield some form of positive result if the experience of Britain (after the lull in the terror campaigns of the Irish Republican Army, IRA, in Northern Ireland following a historic pence deal with the government sometime ago is brought to bear. Another inspirational example is post apartheid South Africa which is now enjoying relative peace after a successful management of the country period of violent upheavals. Such countries are a teachable lesson on the awesome power of responding to conflict through dialogue negotiation, restoration of peace, reconciliation and social justice, which, no doubt, are part of the hallmarks of a democratic and civilized society. The terrorist attack, if well managed, may also leave in its heels a virile, efficient and committed security outfits in the country.

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Climate Change and Migration in Bangladesh: Golden Bengal to Land of Disasters

Mahmuda Khatun[1]

Abstract:*This paper focuses on the relationship between climate change and migration in Bangladesh. The country is expecting 49 million, 63 million, and 78 million displaced people in 2010, 2015, and 2020 respectively due to climate change. Bangladesh is the most vulnerable country in the world because of frequent floods. The country becomes the third and the sixth most vulnerable country in terms of tsunami and cyclones. Drought will affect eight million people by2050. In future, the combined effect of high population growth and displaced population will make the country more vulnerable to social and economic underdevelopment. With increasing climate change vulnerabilities, people will consider taking an advantage of international migration if resources became exhausted. For resolving the problems of many more environmental migrants in upcoming years, this is high time to think about future floods of environmental migrants and the adaptation measure necessary for the survival of many.*

Key words: Climate Change in Bangladesh, Migration, Flood, Cyclone, Drought, River Erosion, Sea Level Rise

Introduction

The much acclaimed Stern Review (2007) narrates that Bangladesh will be one of the most vulnerable countries in the world due to climate change. The review also describes that both sea-level rise and climate change would force many more to leave their homelands in the future (Stern, 2007). Current estimate suggests that the temperature of Bangladesh will increase up to one to five degrees by the year 2100. Increasing temperature will affect production of some corps negatively. The two major crop productions (Boro Rice and Wheat) will reduce to a one-third if temperature increases by a four degrees and moisture stress increases by sixty percent (World Bank, 2000). If precipitation increases, which is more likely in the case of Bangladesh, she will receive more water during monsoon and less water during winter causing floods and droughts respectively. Both will lead to a significant reduction in food production, a vital threat for the food security and survival of people (Ahmed et al. 1999). If this is the case, migration induced by climate change is more likely to occur. This paper is an attempt to explore the relationship between climate change and possible impact on the migration process. The ultimate result of climate change can transform once famous Golden Bengal in to a Land of Disasters.

Stern Review also mentioned that both sea-level rise and other climate-induced changes could submerge one-fifth of the current territory of Bangladesh (Stern, 2007). Sea level rise has already caused land erosion, increased salinity in coastal areas, and affected biodiversity leading to reduction of food production and fisheries in Bangladesh. Current sea-level rise trend suggests that 1meter increase in sea level will submerge around 18 percent of the country's coastal belt (Stern, 2007; Sarwar and Khan, 2007). In fact, more than one million people have already lost their homes - 70 percent of these people became landless due to river erosion. Initially, these

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people stayed in nearby areas. Now days, affected people have adequate knowledge that slow siltation process and high population pressure will make their condition worse and ultimately force them to move to somewhere safe especially to the urban areas (RMMRU, 2007).

In Bangladesh, severe flooding caused three-thousand people to leave their residences daily, heading to Dhaka, the capital (Black et al., 2008). Afsar and Baker (1999) argued that these moves are temporary and mostly internal in nature. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction reported that Bangladesh is the most vulnerable country due to flood (cited in Akter, 2009:9). The country becomes the third and the sixth most vulnerable country due to tsunami and cyclones. Moreover, in the future, frequent flood will force another six percent to move out, compared to two percent due to cyclones. With this background, the country is expecting 63 million, and 78 million displaced people by 2015, and 2020 respectively and climate change will cause all these massive environmental displacements (Akter, 2009).

However, climate change affects some regions more than the others. Northwestern and Southwestern Bangladesh are more vulnerable to the climate change induced environmental disasters as North gets severe droughts and South gets floods, cyclones, tidal surges, and saline intrusion (Akter, 2009). Bangladesh went through six severe floods in last 25 years causing 45 million people to be internally displaced (International Organization for Migration, 2010).

Table 1: Primary Environmental Disasters in Bangladesh

Common Environmental Disasters	Geographical Spreads
Sea Level Rise and Flood	One fourth of the total area inundated annually on average. May increase to 36% in case of severe flooding. Half of Bangladesh is less than 12.5 meters above the mean sea level.
Cyclone	On average, 1-3 severe to moderate storm every year. Some travel as far as 200 Km inland.
Drought	Common, despite the presence of abundant water resources, western regions are particularly vulnerable to drought.
River Bank Erosion	Recurrent in 35 sub-districts of Bangladesh.

Source: Sharma and Hugo, 2009:4, Alam, 2003:432, Bangladesh Water Development Board, 2010:6, International Organization for Migration, 2010:28

Several primary environmental disasters (Table 1) may enhance the vulnerability of the country due to climate change. Many scientific literature mentioned floods and cyclones as major concerns for Bangladesh. However, droughts and riverbank erosion also caused human sufferings aggravated by the climate change.

Against this backdrop, migration worked as an adaptation strategy and a safety net for the affected families experiencing climate change vulnerability (International Organization for Migration, 2010). Myers (2001) estimated that Bangladesh alone would produce 26 million

climate refugees in the future. Alam (2003) reported that high population growth, climate change, and frequent disasters would cause millions to enter the neighboring country of India. However, he failed to provide any concrete evidence on the migration from Bangladesh to India.

Some studies found that there is a positive association between asset loss and the decision to migrate (Rayhan and Grote, 2007; Paul, 2003). Some claimed that population pressure, landlessness, and unemployment in the rural areas forced people to settle down in the risky areas, which in turn made them more vulnerable to the climate change and environmental degradation (Islam, 1992). However, people move out of dire necessity, moving from home is the only option left for them (Lein, 2000). Both people and government use migration, as an adaptation strategy because the process could potentially lower down the population pressure where eco-system is quite vulnerable along with the fact that resettlement is an essential step for the vulnerable people (Martin, 2009).

In general, the poor households are more vulnerable to the climate change and lack both social and financial capital to undertake the long-distance movements. In some cases, they want to move to nearby areas but the risk is higher if they do so. However, prior knowledge and social network present at the place of destination make migration easy for some displaced persons. If they know they would be getting financial assistance from their social networks, migration decision is quick. Even then moving to the other place is not a panacea either, as they seek help from the people of the same socio-economic status. Moreover, their skill, training, and lack of proper education make it difficult to get jobs when they arrive at the place of destination (Kartiki, 2011).

Golden Bengal to Land of Disasters: Migration as an Adaptation

Flood and Migration: Flood is one of the main reasons people migrate from one place to another in Bangladesh. The overall situation is not in a good shape because of the climate change. Climate change affects the flood situation in three different manners. In the recent past, climate change has altered the timing of the monsoon, which caused severe floods in the country. Climate change has increased precipitation and number of wet falls. It has also increased the number of strong cyclones responsible for producing unexpected floods (Mirza, 2011). Forty-eight small to big floods struck Bangladesh since 1954 (Planning Commission, GOB and UNDP Bangladesh, 2009). This low-lying delta experiences several different types of floods – flash, riverine, rain, and storm-surge. The last flood in 2007 affected 16 million people, damaged 85,000 households and 1.12 million hectares of the cropland. Three main causes of the frequent floods in the country are excessive precipitation, low topography, and the flat slope. These three factors intensify the flood situation because of the current geographical location, the pattern of climate, the unification of three major river systems in to one, construction of the embankment, the influence of tides and cyclones, and the long-term environmental changes of the country.

Annual Flood Report by Bangladesh Water Development Board stated that the combination of all these factors would influence the magnitude of the flood. This report also mentioned, "A higher sea level will inhibit the drainage from the rivers to the sea and increase the impact of the tidal surges. Deforestation in hilly catchments causes more rapid and higher runoff and hence more intense flooding (Bangladesh Water Development Board, 2010: 5)." Figure 1 shows the major floods and inundated areas from 1954-2010. In general, at least one-fourth of the country submerged during the flood. However, both 1998 and 2004 floods inundated 61 and 68 percent areas of the country respectively. The trend line shows that on average 25 to 40 percent areas go under water even if the country gets low to moderate flood.
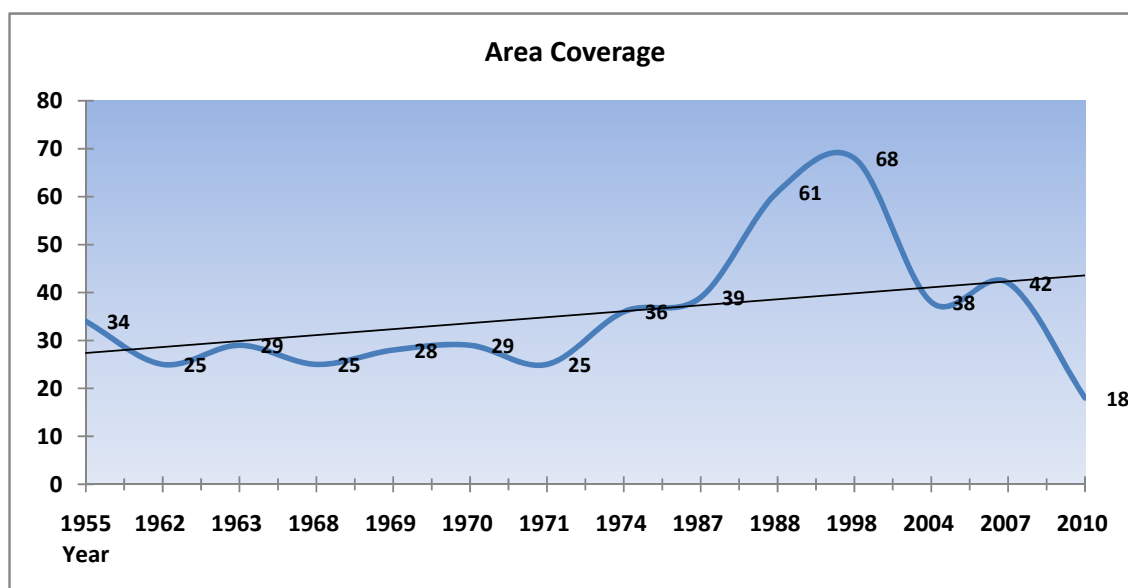
Source: Bangladesh Water Development Board, Annual Flood Report 2010

Figure 1: Major floods and area inundated, 1954-2010

The inundation map (Figure 2) shows that virtually all parts of the country are vulnerable to moderate to high floods. Bangladesh had received floods every three years for the last twenty years, affected people do not defer their decision to migrate because risk becomes higher if repeated flood occurs in the same land (International Organization for Migration, 2010). Rayhan and Grote (2007) reported that at least one member migrated permanently from one-fourth of the households. Out of five households, four households' members left their home because of unemployment due to repeated flood, which took place in the area. Majority of them migrated to the urban areas (89 percent). Only a few, six percent migrated to other rural areas and five percent migrated to another country. However, new prediction reveals that the situation would further deteriorate due to climate change by the end of the century. Some argued that poor people would be the potential migrants as they live in the flood-prone areas. In fact, poor live in the char areas (low-lying islands). People can live in the char lands without buying land or paying rent to anyone. Decision to live in the char areas made them extremely vulnerable to floods (Asian Development Bank, 2008).

More and more flash floods become part of the daily life with the changing nature of climate because of intensified precipitation (Mirza et al., 2003) (Figure 2). Average discharge of three major river systems will increase due to climate change leading to the severe floods in Bangladesh.

Figure 2: The Inundation Map of Bangladesh

Central and Northeastern part of the country will see more changes in depth and spatial extent of flood produced by peak discharge of the Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers. However, an increase in low temperature will cause more flash floods than an increase in high temperature. A two-degree change in temperature will bring more floods than a six-degree change because of increase in the peak mean discharge of three major river systems, namely Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna. Moreover, severe floods will strike half of the flood prone areas. Even places that have never experienced flood at all and have experienced moderate flood will go through severe changes in receiving flood. Ultimately, this will hamper the crop production, especially the rice production (Mirza et al., 2003).

Cyclone, Strom-Surge and Migration: In Bangladesh, cyclones and storm surges are the two important causes of migration. Over the years, Bangladesh has developed a very good warning

system helping to minimize the impact of cyclone and storm surge. However, the country faces frequent cyclones and storm surges where a significant regional difference exists (Figure 3). Twenty-six cyclones hit Bangladesh since 1970 (Akter, 2009). The two major cyclones killed 500,000 and 140,000 persons in 1970 and 1991 respectively. A very strong cyclone named SIDR struck the country in 2007 but still people managed to take refuge in shelters. Therefore, compared to previous cyclones, death toll was low (3,500 persons) yet displaced more than a half million people (650,000).

However, the fourth assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that the wind peak intensity and the precipitation would be higher whenever tropical storms hit Bangladesh in the near future because of climate change (International Organization for Migration, 2010). Some studies found, "increases in the frequency and intensity of tropical cyclones in the last 35 years can be attributed in part to global climate change" (Emanuel 2005, Webster et al., 2005 and Bengtsson, Roger and Roeckner 2006 cited in World Bank, 2010:4). World Bank projected that another 7 million coastal people will confront cyclones by 2050 because of the changing climate. With this, total number of damaged houses will increase to 1.6
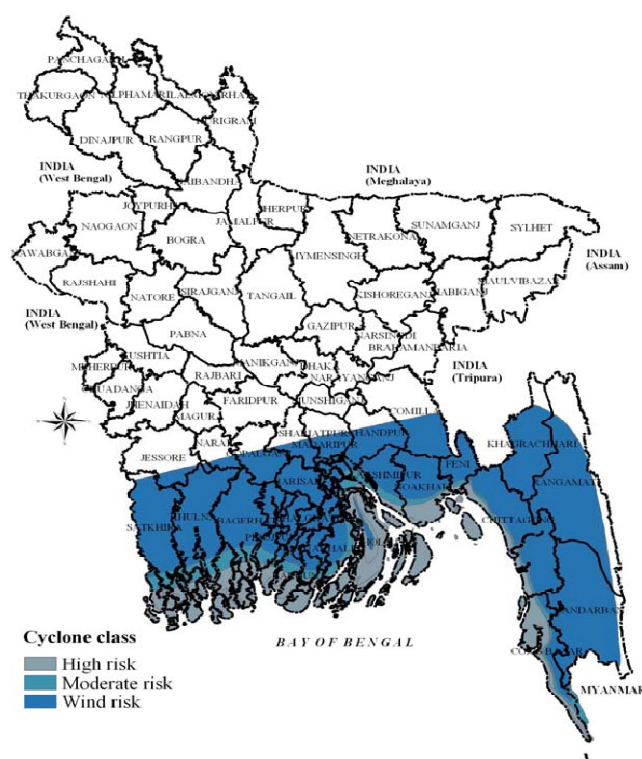

Figure 3: Typical Cyclone Affected Areas of Bangladesh

Source: Climate Change Cell, Comprehensive Disaster Management Project, 2006

million because of cyclones induced by the climate change. The reason Bangladesh will continue to encounter climate change is the rising sea level and the melting ice caps (ice mass consisting less than 50,000 square-kilometers). Moreover, Warmer Ocean will bring in more intense cyclone activity (World Bank, 2010).

Some predict that the overall number of storms may decrease but the intensive tropical cyclones will increase in the future. Cyclone Bijli displaced 200,000 people. The last devastated cyclone Aila, that hit the country in May 2009, displaced 76,478 families of Satkhira and Khulna districts (International Organization for Migration, 2010). However, the New York Times reported, "In coastal Bangladesh, emergency officials moved about 500,000 people to temporary shelters after they left their homes to escape tidal waves churned by high winds (May 25, 2009)." Nine-months after Aila, around 200,000 people were still reported to be homeless. Initially, people moved out to the nearby areas, returned after a while to their homes. A vast majority became seasonal migrants, as they feared no employment opportunities would be available for them in the surrounding areas (International Organization for Migration, 2010). Nevertheless, the long distance migration took place between rural and urban areas. In most cases, Dhaka and Chittagong become the preferred areas as places of destination because of the job availability. City offers all kinds of jobs for almost everyone regardless of their skill and background. Because of this, urban slums have been growing at quite a fast rate of 4% per year, which accounted for 86% of the total urban population. However, even after coming to the urban areas they have settled in places that made them further vulnerable to climate changes (Black et al., 2011). Table 2 provides summary of types of migration that have taken place due to climate changes, major destinations, and factors associated with migration.

Table 2: Migration variants and relationship with climate change

Type of Migration	Area of Origin	Destination	Main factors	Sensitivity to Climate Change
Localized displacement	All affected regions	Cities (Dhaka)	Flood risk, monsoon	High-but depends largely on other factors too
Localized displacement	River communities	Often inside own or in neighboring communities, sometimes urban areas	River erosion	High-but in some cases people move back to land after event
Seasonal moves to urban areas	Rural areas	Nearby cities, capital	Need to diversify livelihoods, often main source of income	Medium-decline of productivity possible, risk of saturation of cities
Long-term rural-urban	Rural areas	Mainly Dhaka and Chittagong	Difference in labor demand, security of employment	Low-as climate related effect outweighed by other factors

Source: Black et al., 2011: 444

Droughts and Migration: The IPCC assessment narrates that droughts will affect 8 million people by 2050 (Huq, 2011). FAO (2007) reported that the droughts in Bangladesh are products of two related factors: climate change and lack of surface water. In general, drought is "absence of moisture or large-scale downward movement of air within the atmosphere, which suppresses rainfall" (FAO, 2007:10), but in case of Bangladesh, the definition of drought involves the latter attribute (Chowdhury, 2010). Climate change can make any of these factors to go wrong (FAO, 2007). However, droughts pose threats to livelihoods of the affected areas, agricultural production, and economy of both the rural and urban areas. Even though the droughts caused more devastation than the floods, for some reason droughts received less attention from policy makers and researchers. Recent information confirms that the land use changes in Bangladesh made the country more vulnerable to droughts (Shahid and Behrawan, 2008). So far, Bangladesh has experienced quite a few droughts since 1973 (Table 3).

Northwestern part of the country encounters more droughts than the other parts of the country (Figure 4). This has an enormous impact on the crop production as the production of all winter crops goes down with the arrival of droughts. Droughts also come with land degradation, low livestock population, unemployment, and malnutrition (Chowdhury, 2010). Drought prone inhabitants of North Bengal took a different strategy for their survival. They did not consider migration as an alternative option believing that they had survived many droughts and droughts do not last forever. In general, however, an obvious response to droughts is migration to the other rural areas or urban areas because jobs are available there (Paul, 1998).

Approximately, droughts, which hit the country between1961 and 1991, affected 47 percent areas and 53 percent of the people. Evidence suggests that each drought affects 3 percent of the total population (Akter, 2009). Like other disasters, drought is a recurrent event in Bangladesh.

One of the most vulnerable districts to droughts in Bangladesh is Rangpur. Around 5 percent of the slum population living in Dhaka comes from Rangpur, affected by severe drought called Monga. Another 20 percent of this region used seasonal migration as a survival strategy. One-fourth of the chronic poor also took advantage of droughts by becoming seasonal migrants. However, their migration decision did not change even after they have received cash assistance and information assistance about how to cope with the droughts (International Organization for Migration, 2010).

Table 3: Major droughts and its impact in Bangladesh

Year	Impact
1973	Drought responsible for the 1974 famine in northern Bangladesh, one of the most severe of the century.
1975	Drought affected 47 percent of the country and more than half of the total population.
1978-79	One of the most severe droughts in recent times with widespread damage to crops reducing rice production by about 2 million tons, directly affecting about 42percent of the cultivated land and 44 percent of the population.
1981	Severe drought adversely affected crop production
1982	Drought caused a loss of rice production of about 53,000 tons while, in the same year, flood damagedabout 36,000 tons.
1989	Drought dried up most of the rivers in Northwest Bangladesh with dust storms in several districts, including Naogaon, Nawabganj, Nilpahamari and Thakurgaon.
1994-95 & 1995-96	The most persistent droughts in recent times, caused immense crop damage, especially to rice and jute(the main crops of Northwest Bangladesh)and to bamboo clumps, a main cash crop in the region.

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2007:15

In future, with the changing climate droughts will bring more dry years suggesting,

> "a year with a certain percentage of below average rainfall. Temperature increase of 1.3^0C and precipitation decrease of 9% would reduce runoff into the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers by 27%, 21%, and 15% respectively. If runoff drops to 22% in kharif season, drought-prone areas would expand to include north-western to central, western and south western regions" (Planning Commission, GOB and UNDP Bangladesh, 2009:36).

Countless people will leave their homes, need shelters, and assistance from the government with the changing climate condition.

River Erosion and Migration: River erosion is still high in Bangladesh, which is a threat to livelihood for many. Increasing monsoon generating heavy rainfall may escalate river erosion. Recent evidence suggests,
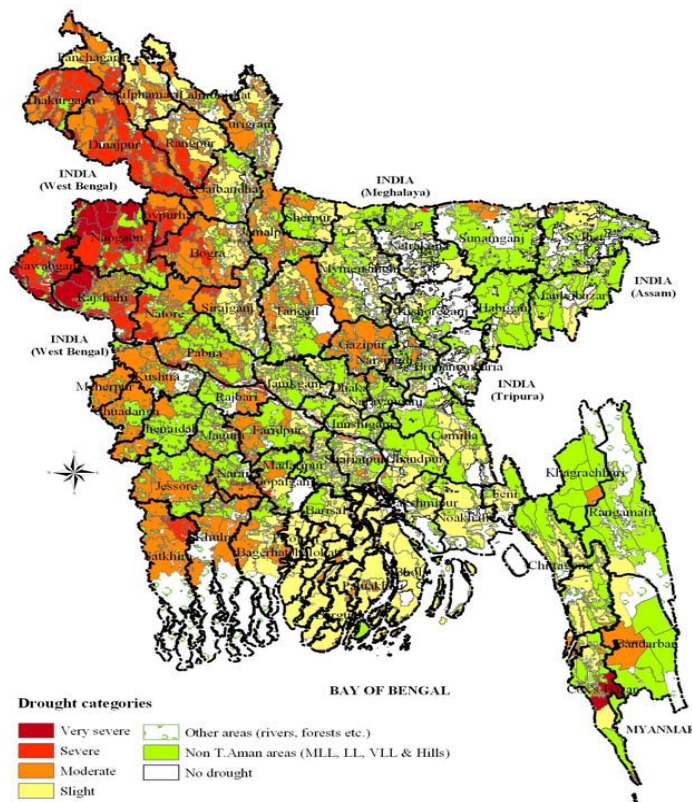
Source: Climate Change Cell, Comprehensive Disaster Management Project, 2006

Figure 4: Drought affected Areas of Bangladesh

"as a result of the Green House Gas (GHG) emission, the atmospheres are getting warm day by day resulting the glaciers liquefy. The huge quantities of melted water from Himalaya are speeding up through the Ganges and Brahmaputra and crashing to the coastal estuaries of Bangladesh. The intensity of tidal waves causes erosion in the south-Western coast of Bangladesh". (Equity and Justice Working Group, 2007: 1-2).

Moreover, unpredictable changes in the tidal surge also cause river erosion. The following table shows the overall affected areas and population by river erosion from 1996 to 2000.

Table 4: River Erosion in Bangladesh, 1996-2000

Year	Affected Areas (acres)	Affected Population
1996	71,680	10,103,635
1997	7,756	173,090
1998	41,519	321,000
1999	227,755	899,275
2000	219,310	415,870

Source: Equity and Justice Working Group, 2007:1

Some families have experienced displacement as many as seven times due to river erosion. Resource rich people can avoid migration by relocating themselves to the nearby areas where they have more land. Resource limited people have to rely on the relatives and the social networks for moving out to an unknown place. However, they chose two different options to cope with river erosion. They move in to the other rural areas during harvesting season and sowing season to make more money. However, their long-term plan motivates them to go to the urban areas. If the river erosion becomes severe, they prefer group migration and settle down in the different parts of the country as a group (International Organization for Migration, 2010). A recent research shows that each year over 0.1% people become homeless due to river erosion (Akter, 2009). CEGIS (2005) evaluation report mentioned that the riverbank erosion is higher along the coast of the Jamuna River (87,790 hectares) compared to the Padma River (29,390 hectares) (Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, 2007). Hutton and Haque (2004) found out that more than 40 percent of their study respondents had left their homes at least three to four times, 36 percent moved between 5 to 10 times, and 14 percent displaced at least 10 times. Only a few reported displacement once or twice (5 percent and 8 percent). Figure 5 depicts the areas affected by riverbank erosion in Bangladesh.

On average, cyclones displace 3 million and floods displace 39 million people. River erosions displace 50,000 and drought displaces 5 million. In future, the combined effect of high population growth and displaced population will make the country more vulnerable to social and economic underdevelopment (Akter, 2009). Akter also estimated that the flood, drought, and cyclone would displace 47 million people by 2009. The figure will rise to 78 million by 2020 (Figure 6).

Conclusion

The evidence from Stern Review shows that the developing countries cause a little damage to climate but they are currently experiencing or will experience more environmental hazards because of their limited capacity for adaptation (Stern, 2007). With her current economic growth and social development, it would be extremely difficult for Bangladesh to cope with the climate change vulnerabilities. Affected people mostly use migration as an adaptation strategy. The
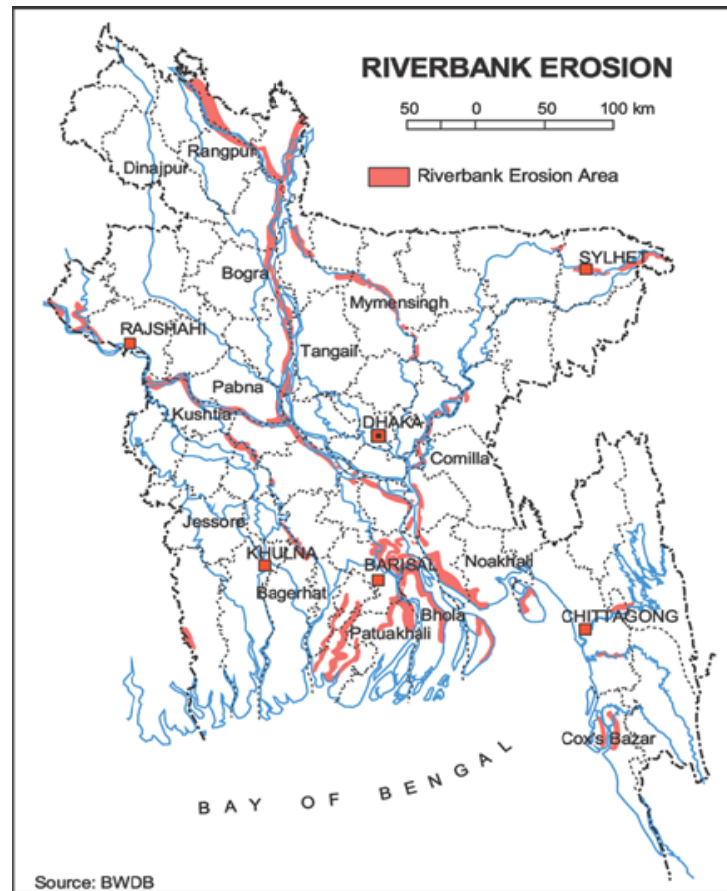
Figure 5: Riverbank Erosion

predominant pattern of migration is internal in nature, mostly from rural to urban areas. Until now, international migration did not play any role in helping displaced persons whose displacement is caused by the climate change related factors. One popular misinterpretation about them is that the displaced persons experience displacement because of their poverty. This last statement made them economic migrants but not environmental migrants. In contrast, these people often become poor after they lose their households, croplands, and other valuable assets encountering flood, drought, cyclone, and erosion. Figure 7 provides a picture of the overall vulnerable areas due to any of the above factors. There is no escape from these factors inducing high rural to urban migration. A fisherman once described, "The sea has been coming closer and closer. God only knows what will happen. Everything will come to an end (Warner et al., 2009:13)."

Displacement due to flood, drought and cyclone

Year	Value
2009	47
2010	49
2015	63
2020	78
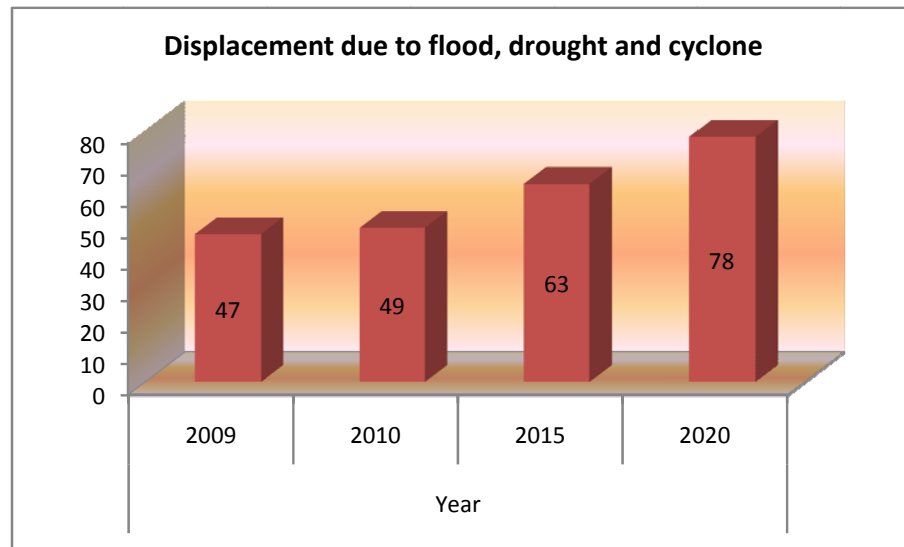
Source: Akter, 2009:9

Figure 6: Projected total displacement due to flood, drought, and cyclone

As a viable adaptation process, international migration is still not an option for many who do not want to leave their homes. Increasing climate change vulnerabilities causes many to consider taking advantage of international migration if resources became exhausted. Climate changes make some parts of the world more vulnerable than the other parts. A large majority will have no homes due to climate changes. By the year 2050, one out of every ten people will be environmental migrant. Bangladesh alone will produce 26 million environmental migrants in future (Myers, 2001). This huge number of environmental migrants will need food, shelter, jobs, education, transportation facilities, and so on. These people will leave their
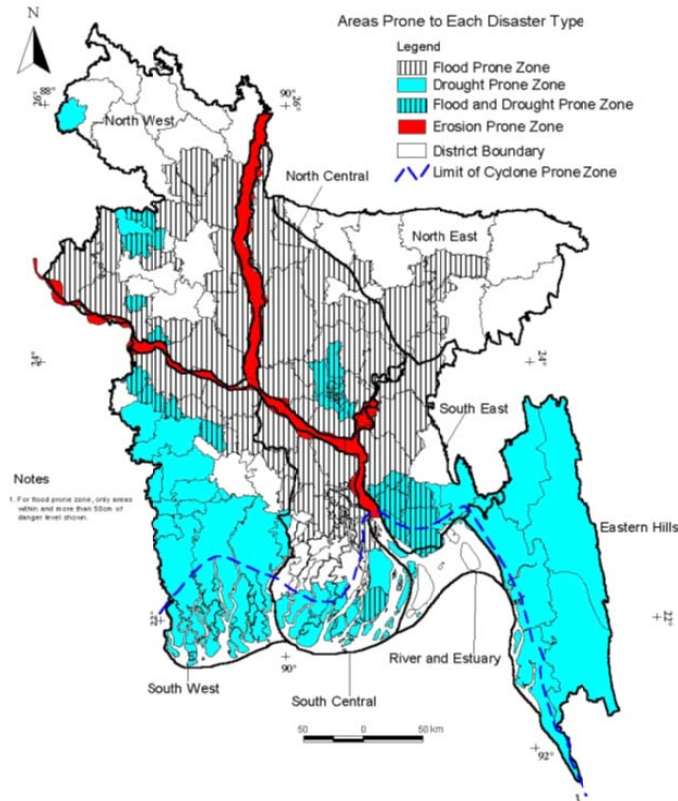
Source: Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, 2007: 20

Figure 7: Vulnerable Areas of Bangladesh

homes for the places, which they believe, are safe from the calamities of climate change. "If climate change makes our country uninhabitable, we will march with our wet feet into your living room"- Atiq Rahman, a fellow Bangladeshi Environmental Scientist, warned global communities at the 1995 Berlin Conference (cited in Roberts and Parks, 2007:2). Most Bangladeshi will take the same course of action as the most Tuvaluans are doing right now: leaving home and migrating to the developed neighboring countries like New Zealand and Australia. For resolving the problems of many more environmental migrants in upcoming years, this is high time to think about the future floods of environmental migrants and the adaptation measure necessary for survival of many.

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Environmental Challenges and the Quest for Social Justice in Dam Communities of Nigeria

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Abstract: *While the Nigerian government is focusing its attention on building new dams, the problems and challenges posed by the existing dams to the people and environment across dam communities of Nigeria seem to have been neglected or glossed over. This paper examines the environmental challenges posed by existing dams and how these problems have aggravated grassroots activism and the quest for social justice in dam communities of Nigeria. The paper also examines the institutional arrangement that has been put in place by the government of Nigeria to address these agitations and how effective this might be. On the whole, the paper draws on the concept of community participation to interrogate the socio-cultural and ecologic chasm that certain large dam projects appear to have created between the state and local communities.*

Keywords: environment, environmental degradation, Dams; HYPADEC; Community participation, Nigeria.

Background

Dams, especially large ones, function to provide water and energy; they are therefore indispensable mechanisms for economic growth. Large dams[4] are also centres of attraction for travelers and tourists. They provide employment for the unemployed and are rich sources of fresh fishes. Following the importance attached to large dams, reports have shown that between 30% and 40% of irrigated land worldwide depend on dams while 19% of world electricity is generated from them (World Commission on Dams [WCD], 2000). By the end of the 20th century, as many as 45,000 large dams have been built across the world (WCD, 2000) with a staggering $2 trillion spent on them (International Rivers Network, [IRN], 2003). China, Japan and the United States are some of the leading dam builders in the world while Africa houses the least number of large dams as shown in the report submitted by the World Commission on Dams[5] in the year 2000 (WCD, 2000) (see table 1 for countries with the biggest dams in the world).

However, as African population continues to grow[6] and as the new scramble for natural resources in the continent increases, the construction of large scale dams is increasingly becoming necessary due to increase in water and energy needs. Indeed, China has intensified its commitment to assisting Africans in the area of infrastructural development. Thus, the

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[4] Any dam that is 15m^2 high or that contains a reservoir volume of more than 3 million cubic metres is defined as large dam (WCD, 2000).
[5] The World Commission on Dams was inaugurated in 1998 by the World Bank and World Conservation Union (IUCN) to critically review the development effectiveness of large dams and to develop standards, criteria, and guidelines to inform future decision making (Brinkerhoff, 2002). The Commission submitted its report in year 2000 which inadvertently generated mixed-reactions.

[6] Churchill (1993) has predicted that the period three decades (1990-2020) of explosive growth in energy demand and supply in the developing countries. This, he attributed to the growing population trends in those countries (quoted from Cernea, 1997).

government of China has begun to invest huge resources to building large dams[1] across African shores through her financial institutions and corporations like the China Export-Import Bank and the China Machinery and Equipment Import and Export Company. For example, the China Export-Import Bank promised to support the multi-billion dollars proposed Mphanda Nkuwa Dam on the Zambezi River in Mozambique, in addition to the existing Cahora Bassa and Kariba Dams on the same river (Pottinger, 2006). In 2006, the Nigerian government accepted a US$2.5 billion loan from the Chinese government, out of which $1 billion was meant to finance the Mambilla Hydropower Dam located in Gembu, Taraba State, in the Northern part of Nigeria[2]. Furthermore, the government of Nigeria has proposed additional 234 dams of various sizes and functions to be built by 2015 across rivers and Sub-basins in Nigeria (Shuaib, 2009).

Table1: Countries with the Biggest Dams According to Size and Functional Quality

RANK	COUNTRIES	DAM'S FUNCTIONS			
		Electrical Energy	**Water for Drinking**	**Irrigation**	**Flood Control**
1.	China	China	USA	China	China
2.	USA	USA	United Kingdom	India	USA
3.	India	Canada	Spain	USA	Japan
4.	Spain	Japan	Japan	Korea	Brazil
5.	Japan	Spain	Australia	Spain	Germany
6.	Canada	Italy	Thailand	Turkey	Romania
7.	Korea	France	South Africa	Japan	Mexico
8.	Turkey	Norway	Brazil	Mexico	Korea
9.	Brazil	Brazil	France	South Africa	Canada
10.	France	Swedish	Germany	Albania	Turkey

Adapted from the World Commission on Dams (2000).

While the government of Nigeria is focusing its attention on building new dams and refurbishing the old ones to meet the increased demand for electricity, the problems and challenges posed by the existing large dams to the people and environment across dam communities of Nigeria seem to have been neglected or glossed over. Over the years, dam communities of Nigeria have faced the challenges of displacement caused by floods, destruction of arable lands and degeneration of forests and wildlife resources. Water borne and water washed infections are also common in dam communities of Nigeria due to frequent exposure to flood waters. These incidences are common phenomena across dam communities of Nigeria partly due to the fact that the issue of environmental protection is of less interest whenever it comes to building dams, coupled with the pressure to meet the increasing demand for water and energy as well as alleviation of poverty.

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[1] There is a growing concern among civil society and dam-affected peoples' movements around the world that China's own poor record on protecting human rights and the environment may mean double tragedy for African rivers (see ttp://www.internationalrivers.org/campaigns/chinese-dams-in-africa).

[2] See also http://www.internationalrivers.org/campaigns/chinese-dams-in-africa

This paper examines the environmental challenges posed by existing dams and how these problems have aggravated grassroots activism and the quest for social justice in dam communities of Nigeria. The paper begins by critically exploring the global debate surrounding the construction and deconstruction of large dams. It provides an overview of environmental challenges in dam communities as a legitimacy for grassroots activism for social justice. The paper also examines the institutional arrangement that have been put in place by the government of Nigeria to address these agitations. It ends on the critical examination of the idea to confront environmental challenges in these areas and how effective this might be.

Dams Development and Environmental Challenges: A Global Perspective

Discourses about the construction of large dams have been polarised into two contending views. First is what can be called the 'developmental discourse'. According to this view, the construction of large scale dams is a demonstration of the supremacy of mankind over the natural environment (Curtin, 2000). From this point of view, sustainable development is linked to large scale centrally controlled schemes like dams (Vyas, 2001). This is because large scale dams are capable of cushioning the effects of natural flooding and meeting the increasing demand for water and energy. In the same vein, large dams have been widely seen as engines of growth and important flood control mechanisms. This line of thought has been epitomised by the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Nehru, who described the Bhakra-Nangal Dam (built on the River Sutluj near Bhakra village in the state of Himachal Pradesh) as "the temples of modern India" (Roy, 1999) symbolising India's "…will to march forward with strength, determination and courage" (McCully, 1996).

While the construction of large scale dams is indeed a prerequisite to economic growth, especially in developing countries where majority of the people have limited access to water and electricity, studies have shown that excessive infrastructural development in water resource management is capable of inducing a significant degradation of downstream ecosystems with a great deal of negative impact on the people (Pearce et al., 2006). The setting up of the World Commission on Dams (WCD) was to examine the developmental dimensions of large dams as well as the reality of their adverse impacts on the people and environment. The WCD became important given the pervasive ecosystem destruction caused by large dams. The destruction has resulted in the loss of vegetation that not only impinges on the ecosystem and biodiversity but also on the livelihoods of people living close to the affected rivers (WCD, 2000). Hence, the second dominant view can be described as the 'adverse impact' discourse. From both the ecological and socio-cultural points of view, this discourse looks at large dams beyond their 'developmental symbolism'.

Apart from physical displacement[1] caused by large dams, a more profound ecological impact of dams has been reported. Research findings have shown that more than 60% of the world rivers

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[1] The report submitted by the WCD indicates that between 40 to 80 million people have been displaced worldwide to give way to large dams (WCD, 2000).

have been fragmented due to impoundment (WCD 2000). Such impoundment often alters the hydrological components of the rivers; degenerates natural environment; and destroys the habitats and ecological functions of the rivers. McCully (1996) indicated lost of fisheries, lowered water quality and diminished water supply, increased waterborne disease transmission and severe economic shortcomings as some of the consequences of large dam projects. Gup (1994) indicates that the construction of a large dam on a river is a catastrophic event in the life of a riverine ecosystem. Ferradas, (2000) reported that Bayano Dam in Panama had serious ecological and health impacts on the rivers and the people. Schistosomiasis, malaria (Sleigh & Jackson, 1998), hemorrhagic fevers, intestinal parasites and filariasis (including onchocerciasis) (Lerer & Scudder, 1999) have been reported after the completion of dam and irrigation projects.

However, a relatively new wave of academic discourse has emerged as the third dimension in the discourses in the construction of large dams. The discourse is driven mostly by anthropologists and environmental sociologists. The discourse is linked to the 'adverse impact' discourse. This approach examines the socio-cultural and ecological contexts of natural resources often destroyed to build dams. The approach argues that the meaning of water and land upon which dams are built goes beyond what they physically represent in the eyes of the dam builders and the state. In most cases, people are connected to their natural environment (forests, water etc.) socially, economically and spiritually. Beside clean water and energy, natural resources and environments are sources of medicines and healthy diet. Unfortunately, studies have shown that the development of infrastructural facilities like dams often robs indigenous people of their natural and cultural rights over land, rivers and forests which are taken away for the construction of dams. The local people also rarely benefit directly from these dams. Moreover, where villages are submerged, the displaced people are disconnected from their past and ancestors as the graves of their ancestors are washed away. There is also strong evidence to suggest that the relocation arising from the construction of the Mahaweli Hydro and Irrigation Project in Sri Lanka, the Sardar Sarovar Project in India, the Kainji Dam in Nigeria, and many others, did result in massive loss of communal access to land and forest (see Olawepo, 1997; 2010).

Although, resettlement packages - based on economic compensation - have emerged as a means of restitution for projects-caused asset-dispossession (Cernea, 2003), most of these schemes have failed to bring succor to the affected people. Lin (2001) observed that where the so-called 'relocation benefits' or 'compensations' are paid at all, they have failed to reach the targeted populations and marred by corruption allegations and mismanagement which had served to further impoverish the local people affected by dam construction (Fernandes et al., 1989; Scudder, 2003; 2005). The resettled victims of dam projects are therefore worse-off after relocation (Scudder, 2003; 2005). Cernea (2003) summarizes the challenges faced by the displaced people in development projects like dams as landlessness, homelessness, marginalisation, increased morbidity, food insecurity, loss of access to common property, social disarticulation and education loss. Their 'new' relocations are often characterized by uncompleted

and dilapidated structures, bad roads and vulnerable environment. This may have been caused by poor and hasty environmental impact assessment (EIA) and/or non-adherence to the findings and recommendations of EIA. Evidence abounds to suggest that incidence of failed EIA is most rampant in developing countries like Nigeria.

The Nigeria Experience: A Retrospect

Kainji, Jebba and Shiroro dams (built in 1968, 1985 and 1990 respectively) are some of the Nigeria's major dam projects (table 2 shows notable dams in Nigeria). These dams have contributed immensely to socio-economic growth and development of the Nigeria state. For instance, hydropower dams situated in Niger, Kebbi, Kwara, Kebbi and Plateau States generate not less than 50% of electric power consumed in Nigeria (Ugwo, 2002). Beyond this, large dams are developmental spectacles – much like airports, soccer stadia, steel plants and skyscrapers. Beyond the developmental impacts of these dams, they also have negative consequences on the people and their environment, which are often skimped over at policy levels. Although not much different from the rest of dam communities in around the world, physical displacement, the disintegration of the social fabrics of the communities caused by such displacement, landlessness, impoverishment, denial of communal right to natural resources and so on, are some of the negative consequences of large dams to host communities in Nigeria. For instance, the construction of Kainji Dam in the 1960s displaced more than 50,000 people (IRN, 2003) leading to massive relocation. Five communities were also submerged to erect the Challawa George Dam in Kano State. More than 40 villages were destroyed to construct the Jebba Dam (Kainji Lake Research Institute, 1983).

Furthermore, studies have shown that dam communities of Nigeria have also suffered a great deal of ecological problems and socio-economic losses due to dams built in their areas. For instance, the Kainji, Tiga, Challawa and Shiroro Dams have consistently modified the terrestrial ecosystem and the natural flow of rivers with negative impacts on the quality of water (Commonwealth Education Fund, 2003). Besides, the annual recorded breakdowns of these dams have also subjected local communities to miserable and pathetic conditions. More than ten communities were flooded in October 1998 following defects from the Kainji Dam (Yaqub, 1999). Another flooding occurred in 1999 in these communities

Table 2: Some Notable Dams in Nigeria

S/N	H.A	Dam	Active Capacity (mcm)	Height (m)	Objective	Completed Year
1	1	Zibiya	121	21.5	Irri/W.S	1990
2	1	Zobe	170	18.9	Irri/W.S	1983
3	1	Bakolori	403	48.0	Irri/H.P	1982
4	1	Goronyo	833	20.0	Irri/W.S	1984

5	1	Kainji	11,500	65.5	H.P	1968
6	1	Kubli	62	23.0	Irri	1992
7	2	Kontagora	200	32.0	Irri	?
8	2	Asa	344	27.0	W.S	?
9	2	Kagara	39	31.0	W.S	?
10	2	Jebba	1,000	40.0	H.P	1983
11	2	Omi	220	43.0	Irri	?
12	2	Zaria	29.8	15.0	W.S	1974
13	2	Kangimi	59.3	19.2	Irri/W.S	1975
14	2	Shiroro	6,050	105.0	H.P	1989
15	2	Suleja	48.5	27.8	W.S	?
16	2	Usuma	100	45.0	W.S	1984
17	3	Balanga	63	41.0	Irri	1987
18	3	Dandi Kowa	1,770	42.0	Irri/H.P	1988
19	3	Kiri	325	37.0	Irri	1982
20	4	Doma	28.5	15.7	Irri	1982
21	6	Ikere Gorge	565	47.5	Irri/W.S/H.P	?
22	6	Oyan	254	30.4	Irri/W.S/H.P	1983
23	8	Erinle	92.5	27.0	W.S	1989
24	8	Gari	203	22.0	Irri	1980
25	8	Challawa	900	38.0	Irri/W.S	1992
26	8	Watari	92.7	19.8	Irri	1980
27	8	Tiga	1,845	47.2	Irri/W.S	1975
28	8	Kafin Zaki	2,500	40.0	Irri	?
29	8	Tomas	56.6	13.7	Irri	1976
30	8	Jakar	54.4	14.3	Irri.	1976
31	8	Alau	106	9.5	Irri/W.S	1972

Adapted from Okoye and Achakpa (2007)
Note: H.A: Hydrological Area, Irri: irrigation, W.S= Water Supply; H.P= Hydropower; U.C= Under Construction

displacing thousands of people (Okoye & Achakpa, 2007). In August 2001, when Tiga and Challawa Dams (both in Kano State) malfunctioned, more than 20,000 people were displaced; hundreds of hectares of land submerged; and properties worth millions damaged (International Rivers Network [IRN], 2007, Okoye & Achakpa, 2007). In 2003, the breakdown of Shiroro Dam inundated 25 communities displacing more than 14,000 people; livelihoods such as farmlands, cattle and boats were also destroyed (Ujorha, 2004). One of the most recent experiences was the sudden release of water from Bakolori Dam and others that displaced thousands of people in Jigawa, Kebbi and Sokoto States. During this event the Usmanu Danfodio University (UDU) in Sokoto State was cut-off from its immediate environment with other 14 towns and villages relocated in Kebbi State (Nigeria Television Authority, 2010).

Given the foregoing, it is believed that environmental challenges in dam communities are not only deplorable but are specific to people living around such projects. This group of people is therefore vulnerable simply as a consequence of their location and residence. Moreover, because of the scattered nature of settlements around dams, many of these settlements are unable to attract, on their own, development projects like industries that could have replaced the loss they suffer through forceful seizure of their land for dam projects. Therefore, the abandonment that follows is enough to earn dam communities the status of socially deprived communities which must be addressed through a social justice principle.

The Quest for Social Justice in Dam Communities of Nigeria

In Nigeria, new waves of grassroots anti-dam activism have been reported across dam areas in Nigeria (The Sun, 2008). Local communities affected by the activities of dams have formed alliances with academics, researchers and NGOs to demand for social justice as well as economic empowerment for sustainable local development. Such activism has therefore attracted development experts, planners and policy makers. One of the motivations that informed the emergence of such activism is the general belief in dam communities that the water and land on which dams are built are "cultural assets". This is worsened by the age-long neglect, perceived injustice and environmental deprivation that the local people have endured over the years (Akpan, 2005). The past decade has therefore witnessed an unprecedented political movement in the four Northern States of Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara and Niger on the part of the political elites to demand for a better share from the natural resources of their land used by the Federal Government for the generation of hydro-electricity (Ugwu, 2002). However, while it is increasingly clear that the dams cannot be removed from their land the demand for equal distribution of the benefits of the dams is therefore legitimate. Under different political platforms, governments in the four states have demanded that their states be included in the application of the 13% derivation principle under Section 162 Sub Sec. 2 (a) of the 1999 Constitution (Ugwu, 2002). Indeed, the demand for the control of natural assets by these states has again given fresh impetus to the on-going discourses surrounding resource control, revenue allocation as well as the principle of derivation in Nigeria. Therefore, the display of 'loyalty' by the political elites in dam affected states has tactically shifted the debate and demand for social and environmental justice in dam communities to the political domain, thereby given it a new developmental outlook.

A team of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academics (including geographers and environmental sociologists), with support from a number of politicians and policy makers, has, therefore, made a case for the establishment of a body constitutionally mandated to address the lingering socio-economic and environmental crises in dam communities of Nigeria. The body is known as the Hydro Power-producing Areas Development Commission (HYPADEC) modeled after Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). The call for the establishment of HYPADEC follows a consensus among the political elites that the levels of poverty and environmental degradation in

dam communities are as a result of dams situated in their areas. Indeed, HYPADEC, like the NDDC, has been projected and structured to meet the needs and aspirations of the local people in dam affected states; provide social amenities such as health, education, road, water, electricity and river transportation. The end result is to alleviate sufferings of the local people and ecological disasters faced by them (Ugwu, 2002) while simultaneously stimulating local growth and development. After more than five years of deliberations at the Lower and Upper houses of National Assembly, the HYPADEC bill has been passed into law and assented to by the President of Federal Republic of Nigeria. In his appreciation speech at the floor of the Senate Chamber of the National Assembly, Senator Kuta, a strong member of the team calling for the establishment of the HYPADEC said:

> On behalf of myself, the other Senators from Niger State, the Senators from the other Member-States and the host communities, I wish to show our profound appreciation to Mr. President, Commander-in-Chief ... for signing into law, the Hydro-Electric Power Producing Areas Development Commission Bill. Our appreciation also goes to the leadership of the National Assembly, their Excellencies, the Governors of Member-States and the entire membership of the National Assembly for the overwhelming and wonderful support during the preparation and the passage of this Bill (quoted from the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2010, p. 362-363).

The bill as passed proposes that a total of 30% of the revenue generated from the operation of any company involved in hydroelectric dams in any of the member states shall be paid to the Commission (Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission, 2011). The bill further provides that "50% of the money due to member states of the Commission from the Ecological Funds" be credited to the Commission (Community Action for Popular Participation, 2002). Other mandates of the Commission shall include to:

i) Formulate policies and guidelines for the development of Hydroelectric Power Producing Areas;

ii) Tackle ecological problems that arise from overloading of dams in the Hydroelectric Power Producing Areas and advise Federal and State governments on the prevention and control of floods and environmental hazards;

iii) Prepare schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Hydroelectric Power Producing Areas and estimate the cost of implementing such schemes.

Other issues to be handled by the Commission shall include:

a) Regulate the activities and programme on the two rivers embarked on by Inland Waterways, the River Basin Development Authority (RBDA), state government, industries, private entrepreneurs, communities and local governments.

b) Protect the rights of riparian communities from either lack of water or untimely and excessive release of water by upstream users.

c) Monitor the utilization of water by all users especially for irrigation and power generation.

d) Ensure that all programmes of the various agencies are technically, economically, financially and environmentally acceptable.

e) Investigate and resolve issues relating to environmental degradation due to flooding and dredging of the river (Sule, 2003).

This appears to be a landmark legislation which is capable of rapidly transforming the development outlook in many dam areas of Nigeria. This is because the mandate of this Commission is likely to guarantee access to deprivable resources like water, electricity and good roads for the people of the dam areas. The implementation must however take adequate cognizance of the possible socio-political and cultural challenges in the path of transformation process.

HYPADEC: The Road Ahead

It needs to be emphasized that HYPADEC is a new development project meant to bring succor to the people affected by dams. It is not clear yet if there is a physical structure in place to house the Commission. However, since the pronouncement of the establishment of the HYPADEC, quite a reasonable number of people have raised important questions, most of which are germane to the successful implementation of the activities of the Commission. In other words, the new plans to solve the social, economic and ecological problems in dam communities of Nigeria have attracted unprecedented attention from within and outside the government. On the one hand are individuals or groups of analysts who see the new plans as major political step capable of ameliorating the problems in dam communities of Nigeria. To this group, the establishment of the HYPADEC is in line with the recommendations made by the WCD and other organisations which have called for a decentralized ownership of natural resources to addressing problems associated with dams in their respective countries. As a result, HYPADEC has been designed to address the age-long perceived social injustice in dam areas of Nigeria and simultaneously attend to the lingering socio-economic and environmental challenges in the areas. According to one of the leading political figures that championed the establishment of the HYPADEC, "the establishment of HYPPADEC will in no small way cushion the effects of the hardship being faced by the inhabitants" and would further make the people of the affected communities and States ... "to feel that they are part and parcel of the projects located in their land" (quoted from Ogbeide, 2011).

However, there are those who are pessimistic about the establishment of the HYPADEC. To this group of analysts, the stated objectives of the proposed Commission are simply unachievable given the socio-political environment in Nigeria. First of all, the composition and constitution of the whole processes that led to the establishment of the Commission have been challenged. The bill establishing HYPADEC has failed to make provision for the involvement of the local people directly affected by the activities of the dams in the transformation process. Rather, the Commission is protected against the influence of such people as demonstrated in Clause 5 (3) of the Bill which restated the exclusion of the local people: "the Commission shall not be subject to the control or supervision of any other authority or person in the performance of its function under this Act other than the President" (CAPP, 2002). Thus, there is no provision for the involvement of

the communities in the nomination and appointment of the Board Members of the Commission. Rather, provision is made for the Advisory Committee that consists of the Governors of the affected states, whose overall influence has been preempted by the same Clause 5 (3) of the Act. This deliberate exclusion of the vulnerable population in the development that directly concerns them is an attempt to put in place a continued systematic deprivation of the people; the path they have travelled through, the deprivation in relational issues of inadequate social participation, lack of power and poor impact in the distribution of resources to the communities. Indeed, by the Clause of 5(3) of that Act, the Commission would have failed at conception because the Clause had acted to shield from participation, the same group the Commission was meant to empower.

A legitimate apprehension among analysts and the general public is the endemic corruption and the functioning of the new Commission. Although corruption is a global phenomenon, Nigeria is still rated as the 3rd most corrupt country in the world (Transparency International [TI], 2010). The Nigerian dailies are inundated with cases of corruption in every sector of the Nigerian economy and polity. Compared to South Africa where a former Police Commissioner was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for accepting a bribe of R166,000 ($20,750.00) to Nigeria where a former Inspector General of Police, an equivalent of the Police Commissioner in South Africa, admitted to have stolen 17 billion Naira ($113 million) and was released barely few weeks into his jail term after entering into a ridiculous plea bargaining. The N10 billion ($66 million) corruption allegations against key former leaders of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly is another good example of a country where corruption is deeply entrenched (www.punchng.com). In *Corruption and Environmental Degradation in Nigeria and its Niger Delta*, Ehwarieme and Cocodia (2011) noted that corruption levels have continued to fuel the ecological disasters in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Enweremadu (2008) sees corruption as the major stumbling block to socio-economic development in the Niger Delta rather than inadequacies of the revenue sharing formula and limited economic opportunities. They argue that the increasing frequency and the intensification of corrupt acts among political actors, community leaders and private oil companies operating in the Niger Delta have been the hallmark of politics in the region. They mentioned that of the four past governors of the major oil producing states (Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom, Delta and Rivers) three have either been accused or convicted for large scale corruption. Indeed, it is in the news that one of these governors is serving a jail term in the United Kingdom for money laundering. Thus, given the widespread corruption in Nigeria, there is a growing paranoia among the public that commissions are established to pave way for corrupt political elites to embezzle public funds. This cannot also be disconnected from the fact that Nigerians have witnessed the establishment of countless number of development commissions, many of which are riddled with all kinds of corrupt allegations.

Finally, the current definition of dam affected areas remains vague. Initially and at the moment, HYPADEC member states are defined as Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Niger and Plateau on the basis of hydropower dams in their respective states. The mandate of the Commission excludes States

where dams are built to supply only water for domestic and national consumption. These communities have also suffered environmental injustice as a consequence of the dams built on their land and water. The biggest challenge therefore is how the government intends to tackle the socio-political and cultural challenges that may hinder the effective operation and implementation of the mandates of the HYPADEC.

Conclusions

The Nigerian population is growing rapidly. It remains one of the fastest growing populations in the world. The Nigerian State is therefore faced with the challenges of meeting increasing demand for water and electricity for economic growth and development. In this light, the construction of large scale dams might still remain a plausible option. Besides, evidence available among the political class suggests that large scale dams are still considered as indispensable mechanisms for growth and economic development. Many still perceive large dams as embodiment of an impressive achievement and one of the most visible manifestations of civil engineering in order to meet the water and energy crises in Nigeria. In view of this, the campaign for the stoppage of large scale dams, as seen in some parts of the world, is not only difficult in Nigeria, it is unrealistic. The major challenge, however, is how to build and construct dams in such a way that are less threatening to the people and environment. Thus, as more dams are being proposed, there is the need for dam builders and the state to try to minimize the negative impact of these dams through better environmental impact assessment (EIA) and execution and address the problems with existing dams that are responsible for the emerging grassroots activism and the quest for social justice in dam communities of Nigeria.

After many years of political neglect and abandonment, it seems that the Nigerian government has resolved to tackle development challenges in the affected dam communities through the establishment of HYPADEC modeled after the NDDC in the Niger Delta region. The establishment of this Commission has become important against the backdrop of looming youth violence in most dam communities of Nigeria and age-long neglect and degradation. However, there are concerns in some quarters that a number of developmental salient challenges and issues need to be resolved in order for the Commission to have a smooth take-off as well as safe-landing. The seemingly paranoia as expressed in some quarters is informed by the fact that many previous commissions have misplaced their mandates and priorities. Some of the salient issues raised bother on how the newly established commission be devoid of the corruption challenges facing the Nigerian society as a whole. Others include how the commission can be structured to ensure equitable distribution of resources in dam communities and how the so-called benefits meet the affected or targeted populations. There is therefore the need for development planners to begin to look into the contradictions embedded in the law establishing HYPADEC and see how local people can be actively involved in the planning and execution of the project designed to cater for their needs.

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Demand Structure and the Consumption of Garri in Owerri North Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria.

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Abstract: This study analyzed empirically the demand structure and the consumption of garri in Owerri North L.G.A. of Imo state, Nigeria. Simple random and judgmental sampling techniques were used to select communities and their markets and 80 respondents. A set of pretested and structured questionnaire was used in data collection. The result of the multiple regression analysis with semi log, as lead equation showed that the critical and significant determinants of monthly budget share for garri among low income consumers were household size, price of garri and monthly incomes at given levels. The combined effect of all the variables explained 77.8% of the variation in the monthly budget share for garri at 1.0% risk level. The result of the multiple regression analysis with exponential functional form as the lead equation showed the critical and significant determinants of monthly budget share for garri among the middle income consumers were number of years spent in school, household size and monthly incomes. All the variables explained 81.8% of the variation in the monthly budget share for garri among the middle income consumers. The result also showed that the own price elasticity of demand for garri was 0.03 while cross elasticity of demand for garri and fufu, samovita, yam floor and cassava floor were 2.3,1.8, 1.4 and 1.4 respectively. The income elasticity of demand for garri was 0.3. The logistic regression estimation showed that the determinants for preference of garri include price, colour perception, age and education which were statistically significant at 1.0% risk level. All consumers in different income are advised to patronize garri of all colours in order to act as impetus to farmers to produce more.

Key Words: Demand, Structure, Consumption, Income and Elasticities

Introduction

Cassava (*Manihot spp*) is an important crop widely cultivated in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although, the crop is grown virtually in all parts of the sub-continent, production is specific in the humid tropics (Okereke *et al*, 2001). Cassava plays a major role in efforts to alleviate Nigeria's food crisis because of its efficient production of food energy, all year round availability, tolerance to extreme stress conditions and suitability to various farming and food systems (Awa and Tumanteh, 2001).Cassava is capable of providing food energy much more than maize, sorghum and rice (Achinihu and Owuamanam,2001). Garri, a product from cassava, constitutes more than 70% of total cassava consumption in Nigeria (Dorosh, 1989). Thus, garri is one of the staple food items consumed in Nigeria. It therefore implies that garri is eaten by every family irrespective of their socio-economic status and religious background. Thus, garri commands much interest and hence gets a considerable preference on the household daily budget. This means that there will be across the board high demand for the product.

Evidence had shown that food production in Nigeria has not kept pace with the increasing population. The annual growth rate of the food sub-sector is 2.0 percent while the annual population growth rate is 3.3 percent (NBS, 2001). This presupposes that a wide gap existed

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between food supply and the demand for food by the nation's populace. The seasonality of agricultural products causes price instability. Evidence has shown that periods of surpluses are usually supplanted by periods of scarcity. These vagaries in the price variable cause unpredictable fluctuations in the demand and supply factors. In addition, there are other factors that influence the purchase decision of consumers such as organoleptic features as colour, taste, aroma, texture, physio-chemical and hydrogen cyanide (HCN) residues.

Ezedinma and Oti, (2001) stated that the traditional methods of cassava processing into garri are often contaminated with undesirable extraneous matters that make them unhygienic thereby affecting demand and consumption. There is therefore the dire need to know the demand structure for garri at a micro setting such as Owerri North Local Government area of Imo State, so as to build a bridge between, processing, availability, affordability and consumption. The significance of this study will to a large extent contribute to good farm policy formulation and market strategies that will enhance the growth of the food sector. This research is anchored on the following specific objectives

i   to determine the factors that influence the monthly budget share for garri at low, medium and high income levels in the study area.
ii   to estimate own price, cross price and income elasticities of demand for garri in the study area.
iii to determine factors that influence preference for a particular garri brand in the study area.

The following hypothesis were tested:

Ho_1 Monthly budget share for garri among low, medium and high income groups is positively related to literacy level, age, household size, price and monthly income.
Ho_2 Own price, cross price and income elasticities of demand for garri is zero.
Ho_3 Preference to a particular garri type is positively influenced by price, colour, taste, texture, age of consumer and educational level of consumers.

Materials and Method

The study was carried out in Owerri North Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria. The choice was purposive. This was informed by the predominance of civil servants and existence of a large daily market in the area. The L.G.A was created in 1996 and had a population of 289,721 (NBS, 2000). It lies between latitudes 4° 5' and 6° 5' North of Equator and Longitudes 6° 30' and 8° 9' east of Greenwich meridian. Owerri North LGA is bounded in the North by Mbaitoli and Ikeduru LGAs and west by Owerri West and Owerri Municipal LGAs of Imo State, Nigeria (IMSG, 1997).

Random sampling technique was used to select eight markets from eight communities. The eight communities and their markets selected were Emekuku, Awaka, Orji, Naze, Uratta Egbu and Obube. Judgmental sampling technique was used to select garri buyers from various daily markets in the area. Data was obtained with the use of structured and pretested questionnaire administered on the respondents. Objective one was achieved using multiple regression analysis

while objective two was analyzed with demand elasticity indicators. Objective three was realized with Logit regression model.

The implicit model of the ordinary least square (OLS) multiple regression is stated thus;

$Q = F(X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5, ei)$……………………. (1)

Where

Q = Monthly Budget share of garri (₦)

X_1 = Years spent in school

X_2 = Age of the consumer (years)

X_3 = Household size

X_4 = price of garri (₦)

X_5 = Income per month (₦)

The demand function was regressed using four different functional forms namely linear, exponential, double log and semi-log and the one with the best fit in terms of a priori expectation, statistical and econometric criteria was used as the lead equation.

The own price elasticity is stated thus:

$$ep = \frac{\partial Q}{\partial p} \cdot \frac{p}{Q} \quad \text{……………………………………… (2)}$$

Where: ep = price elasticity

$$\frac{\partial Q}{\partial y} = \text{slope of the linear demand curve}$$

Q = quantity demanded

P = price of commodity.

The cross price elasticity is stated thus:

$$Exy = \frac{\partial Qx}{\partial py} \cdot \frac{Py}{Qx} \quad \text{…………………………. (3)}$$

Where:

Exy = cross elasticity of commodity X with regard to commodity Y

Qx = Quantity demanded of commodity X

Py = price of commodity Y

The income elasticity is specified as

$$\frac{\partial Q}{\partial y} \cdot \frac{y}{Q} \quad \text{……………………………… (4)}$$

Where

Q = quantity of the goods demanded

Y = Consumers income

The Logit model is generally implicitly specified thus

$Zi = bo + biXi_1i + b_2X_2i + ----- + bp Xij$ ………….. (5)

Where

Z_i = unobserved continuous variable for the ith case.

X_{ij} = the jth coefficient (independent variables)

P = number of predictors.

This model is explicitly explained as:

Z_i = $bo + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6$

Z_i = preference to the garri type

X_1 = price of garri (₦)

X_2 = Colour of garri (Dummy: white I; Yellow = 0)

X_3 = Taste (Dummy: sweet taste = I; sour = 0)

X_4 = Texture (Dummy: fine = J; Gritty = 0)

X_5 = Age (years)

X_6 = Number of years spent in school.

Result and Discussion

Monthly Budget Share of Garri by different Income Consumers

The factors that influenced the monthly budget share of garri by the different income groups are shown in Tables I and 2. The income groups under study were low, medium and high income groups. The bench mark for the stratification was according to Okorji (1999) and Ezeh (2007) that categorized monthly income levels of ₦50, 000.0 0 and below ($333.33 and below) as low income, ₦50, 001 – ₦100, 000.00 ($333.33 – $666.66) as medium income and above ₦100, 000.00 (above $666.66) was high income group. In the study area, only the low and medium income groups were identified and presented based on the above bench mark.

The result in Table1 shows the factors that influenced the budget share for garri among the Low income households in Owerri North LGA of Imo state Nigeria. It shows that all the estimated functions are significant. ($P < 0.01$). This implies that the functional forms are adequate in explaining the variations in the dependent variables. However, among the four functional forms (Linear Exponential, Double and Semi-Log) used for estimating the monthly budget share of garri among the low income consumers in the study area, the semi-log functional form was chosen as the lead equation based on econometric and statistical reasons such as the number of regression coefficients that are significant, the value of R^2 (0.778) and the significant level of F-ratio ($P < 0.01$).

Specifically, household size is directly related to the monthly budget share of the low income consumers. The coefficient is 2.526, while the standard error is 0.952 and the variable is statistically significant at 1.0% probability level. Expectedly, consumers with large household size

are likely to spend greater proportion of the monthly budget on garri – the basic staple and other basic household requirement. Although, Christianity restricts the number of wives in the household, many low income household sizes are relatively large. This situation has posed serious problems in recent times, due to the present economic crises and is responsible for the high rate of malnutrition, illiteracy and unemployment, especially in the rural economy (Ryon *et al* 1986; Okorji 1999 and Ezeh, 2007).

The price of garri made marginal contribution to the equation. The coefficient (0.976) is positive and the standard error is 0.149. The variable is statistically significant at 1.0 percent risk level. The sign of the variable is in conformity with a priori expectation in that a higher price would cause the consumer to allocate a larger proportion of the monthly budget to garri purchase. This is because higher prices cause the value of real incomes to fall, thus causing a large share of the budget to be devoted to the purchase of the commodity. But when prices fall, the value of real income rises, greater quantity of the good in question can be bought with reduced amount of the budget (Oji, 2002).

The coefficient of the income per month of the low income consumers (8.612) made positive contributions to the equation and the standard error is 3.768. The variable is statistically significant at 5.0% alpha - level. The sign is in accordance with a priori reasoning. Expectedly, the positive sign implies that the monthly budget share of the low income consumers to garri increases as the monthly income increases.

Table 1: Estimates Of Factors That Affects The Monthly Budget Share For Garri Of Low Income Consumers In Owerri North Local Government Area Of Imo State, Nigeria.

Variables	Functional Forms			
	Linear	Semi-log+	Exponential	Double log
Constant	-80.203	6.070***	5.869***	1.600
	(229.309)	(1.044)	(0.210)	(1.183)
Number of years				
Spent in school (X1)	1.534	0.010	0. 010	0.156
	(10.286)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.250)
Age (X2)	0.249	0.288	0.000	- 0.041
	(3.896)	(0.361)	(0.004)	(0.154)
Household size (X3)	14.896	2.526***	0.076***	0.080
	(25.410)	(0.952)	(0.024)	(0.085)
Price of garri (X4)	3.593	0.976***	0.003***	0.858***
	(0.263)	(0.149)	(0.000)	(0.102)
Monthly income (X5)	0.003	8.612***	3.612**	0.025
	(0.004)	(3.768)	(1.768)	(0.097)
R2	0.784	0.778	0.708	0.758

R Squared Adjusted	0. 765	0. 693	0.674	0.724
F-ratio	42.721***	25.654***	20.877***	21. 936***

Source: computations from field survey data, 2010.

[+] = Lead equation
***, *: indicate variables are statistically significant at 1.0% and 5% risk levels respectively.
 Figures in parentheses are standard errors.

The result of the multiple regression analysis on the factors that influence the monthly budget share for garri of medium income consumers in Owerri North LGA of Imo state, Nigeria is shown in Table 2. Of the four functional forms (Linear, Exponential, Double and Semi-Log) used for estimating the monthly budget share for garri among the middle income consumers, the exponential functional form was chosen as the lead equation based on econometric and statistical reasons, such as the number of regression coefficients that are significant, the value of R^2 (0.818) and the significant level of the F-ratio ($P < 0.01$).

The coefficient of the number of years spent in school (-0.55) is marginal and negative while the standard error is 0.037. The variable is statistically significant at 90.0% confidence level. The sign of the coefficient is in conformity with a priori expectation that the monthly budget share for garri of medium income consumers would reduce as the number of years spent in school increases. Consumers with high level of education are expected to evaluate food product by their prices and specific nutritive quality rather than by popularity before allocating a given share of the monthly budget to the commodity (Henseliet et al, 2007; Maduagwu, 2008).

The coefficient of household size is 0.252 and the standard error is 0.082. The variable is statistically significant at 99.0% confidence level. Accordingly, it is expected that middle income consumers with large household size would likely spend a greater proportion of their monthly budget share on garri, which is the basic staple food available and affordable all year round.

The coefficient of income per month (6.993) is positive with a standard error of 1.029. The variable is statistically significant at 1.0% probability level. The sign of the variable is in consonance with a priori expectation. It implies that as the monthly incomes of the middle income consumers increases, the budget share allocated to garri purchase would also increase.

Table 2: Estimates Of Factors That Affect The Monthly Budget Share For Garri Of Middle Income Consumers In Owerri North L.G.A , Imo State, Nigeria

Variables	Functional Forms			
	Linear	Semi-log	Exponential[+]	Double log
Constant	973.131	-12697. 09	7.363***	9.452***
	(2576.184)	(41934.622)	(1.058)	(1.042)
Number of years				

Spent in school (X_1)	-124.782	861.051	-0.055*	0.031
	(93.259)	(5260.284)	(0.037)	(0.038)
Age of consumers (X_2)	12.821	199.864	-0.030	0.004
	(17.464)	(3863.966)	(0.013)	(0.007)
Household size (X_3)	103.579	651.999	0.252***	0.093
	(184.084)	(1881.962)	(0.082)	(0.074)
Price of garri (X_4)	1.474	-480.997	5.21^{E-005}	-3.71^{E-005}
	(1.337)	(2459.769)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Monthly income (X_5)	0.022	3335.760	6.993***	-278E-006
	(0.025)	(3653.827)	(1.029)	(0.006)
R2	0.263	0.10	0.818	0.282
R Squared Adjusted	-0.147	-1.401	0.515	-0.116
F-ratio	0.642	0.066	32.698***	0.708

Source: computations from field survey data, 2010.

+ = Lead equation
***, *: indicate variables are statistically significant at 1.0% and 10.0% risk levels respectively.
Figures in parentheses are standard errors.

Estimate of Own Price, Cross Price and Income Elasticities of Demand for garri

The values of the own price, cross price and income elasticities of demand for garri is shown in Table 3. The result shows that the own price elasticity of garri was 0.03. This shows that a percentage change in the price of garri would result in a less than proportionate change in the quantity demanded of it, hence being perfectly inelastic. This result compared favourably with Effiong (2004) that obtained -0.83 as own price elasticity in pork demand in Cross River State of Nigeria. This reinforces the readily availability of garri with very minimal variation in the price level.

The values of cross price elasticities of demand for garri with fufu, samovita, yam flour and cassava flour were 2.3, 1.8, 1.4 and 1.4 respectively. This implies that a one percent increase in price of garri, will increase the consumption of fufu by 2.3, samovita by 1.8, yam flour by 1.4 and cassava flour by 1.4 in the study area. This indicates a strong degree of competitiveness and substitutability of these goods with garri.

The income elasticity of demand for garri is shown in Table 3. The Table shows that the income elasticity of demand for garri was 0.3. This implies that as consumers' income increase, a smaller or declining portion of their income will be spent on the product. This result is consistent with Effiong (2004) result in the consumption of pork. Engel's law in terms of elasticity agrees that food is income elasticity. However, a change in consumer's money income will have a significant influence on consumption of the product either increasing or decreasing consumption.

Table 3:   **Estimate of Own Price, Cross Price and Income Elasticities of Demand for garri in Owerri North L.G.A, Imo State Nigeria**

Category of Demand Elasticity	Commodity	Elasticity Coefficients
Own Price	Garri	0.03
Cross Price	Garri and Fufu	2.3
Cross Price	Garri and Semovita	1.8
Cross Price	Garri Yam flour	1.4
Cross Price	Garri and Cassava flour	1.4
Income	Garri	0.3

Source: Computation from field survey data, 2010

Factors That Influence The Preference Of Garri

The results of the Logistic regression on the factors that influence the preference of garri by consumers in Owerri North LGA of Imo state, Nigeria is shown in table 4. The logistic regression estimation for the variables showed that the effect coefficient Exp (B) for price, colour perception, age and education were statistically significant at 1.0% risk level as shown by the Wald test.

In terms of price, the result revealed that higher prices induced medium income consumers to have the preference and the willingness to consume white garri. Similarly, the perception of colour had a positive relationship with preference. This shows that there exists dominant preference for white garri in the study area, contrary to the widely held scientific opinion that yellow garri contains more nutrients especially vitamin A supplied by the colour additive than the white garri. This result is inconsistent with the Umberger *et al*, (2003) assertion that quality and health peculiarities are important factors for preference and willingness to consume food.

With odds ratio of more than one, both the effect coefficient of age and education had positive significant influence on preference for white garri. By implication, increasing age and education impacted positively on preference and willingness to consume white garri in the study area. Older consumers with higher level of education are expected to evaluate food products by their price and specific quality rather than by popularity (Henseliet *et al*, 2007). The Cox-Snell and Nagel Kerke R^2 values are attempting to provide a logistic analogy like the coefficient of multiple determination (R^2) in OLS regression. At 70.4% and 94.3% for Cox-Snell and Nagel Kerke respectively, the regression line fit the data appreciably high and imply the extent of explanation of the variation in the dependent variable. The result consolidates the findings of Nwachukwu *et al*, (2008), who had similar outcome.

Table 4: Estimate Of The Logistic Regression Analysis On Factors That Influence The Preference Of Garri In Owerri North LGA, Imo State, Nigeria

Variable	B	Standard Error	Wald	Exp (B)
Step price (X_1)	4.213	1.646	6.551	1.237
Colour perception (X_2)	-40.212	21.332	3.553	0.000
Taste (X_3)	17.616	16.841	1.094	44.000
Texture (X_4)	18.374	5071.222	0.000	95.392
Age (X_5)	0.049	0.24	4.168	1.051
Education (X_6)	0.065	0.039	2.778	1.015
Constant	0.51	5.578	0.000	1.053
Step 1- 2 log Likelihood		12.320		
Cox and Snell R^2		0.704		
Nagel Kerke R Square		0.943		
Chi – square		97.331		

Source: computations from field survey data, 2010

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research found out that the determinants of the monthly budget share for garri among low income consumers in Owerri North LGA in Imo state, Nigeria with Semi-log as lead equation were household size, price of garri and monthly incomes while the determinants of the monthly budget share for garri among middle income consumers with exponential functional form as the lead equation were number of year spent in school, household size, and monthly increase.

The values of own price elasticity of demand for garri was 0.03 while cross price elasticities between garri and fufu, samovita, yam flour and cassava flour were 2.3, 1.8, 1.4 and 1.4 respectively. The income elasticity of demand for garri was 0.3.

The logistic regression estimation showed that price, colour perception, age and education were the critical determinants of preference for white garri and were statistically significant at 1.0% risk level.

The study recommends the institution of policy that would increase the consumers' incomes which would directly have a compensating effect in enhancing farmers' incomes.
All consumers in different income strata (low, middle and high) are encouraged to consume garri of any colour as this would be added impetus required by farmers to produce more and increase their incomes in so doing.

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North-South Relations: Exploring the role of Italian NGOs in post-apartheid South Africa

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Abstract: This article makes an expose of the role of NGOs using three case studies of Italian NGOs operating in South Africa as its methodology to articulate the aspect of development assistance within the context of North-South development cooperation. It posits a model for understanding NGOs based on two intersecting continua - of ideological independence on the vertical axis and sources of funding on the horizontal axis. This model is the major contribution of this article.

The model defines those NGOs with a combination of little or no external funding and a lot of independence as sovereign gem NGOs. Those with a high level of independence coupled with high levels of foreign funding as a rarity hence called Rarity/Independent NGOs. These NGOs have foreign funding but follow their own agenda. NGOs termed Pawns are those with a lot of external funding and but little ideological independence. NGOs without external funding but parrot the agenda of an external organisation are termed slave/dependent/puppet NGOs characterised by low levels of external funding and low level of ideological independence. The article posits that the role of NGOs should be transformational rather than be paternalistic; the motives for intervention should be both philanthropic and developmental in order to bring legitimacy to Northern NGOs operating in the South.

Key words: Foreign Policy, Non-Governmental Organisation, International Cooperation, Development Assistance, Politics

Introduction

Italy and South Africa somehow share a similar history, one that was characterised by foreign domination albeit at different historical junctures. Italy shook off foreign domination and became a unified nation state in 1870. South Africa on the other hand shook off the shackles of domination under apartheid in 1994. Hence, we have two democracies, one relatively old and one relatively new. In the same vein Italy as an old democracy entrenched itself in the world economic system and became one of the eight industrial powerhouses of the world. South Africa, as a new democracy, is regarded as an emerging economy, characterised by dualism, namely a developed and a less developed economy. However, it is important to note that Italy achieved its industrial status following the implementation of the US backed Economic Recovery Program (ERP) under the Marshall Plan. Italy's economy had been crippled by its defeat in the Second World War that ended in 1945. South Africa with its policy of separate development, apartheid, created economic disparities that presently call for assistance from different stakeholders, including foreign aid, to redress. It is against this backdrop that the Italian Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have ventured onto the South African development landscape in a quest to address problems created by apartheid.

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The term NGO has a very broad application in South Africa far and beyond its traditional usage. As argued by Abugre (1994: 121) the term, in South Africa, applies to a complex web of civil society organisations, quasi-government bodies like the Independent Development Trust (IDT), organisations affiliated to liberation movements and even multi-lateral agencies. Some sections of South African opinion classify even the European Union (EU) and the World Bank and bilaterally funded projects as NGOs once they are not executed directly by government ministries. Some Italian NGOs fall within this categorisation. It is therefore the preoccupation of this paper to explore the motive of Italian aid to South Africa in general and the Italian NGOs´ role in particular.

This would be achieved by carrying out a historical scan of the South African-Italian relationship (pre and post-apartheid). Of interest would be Italian foreign policy vis-à-vis development cooperation, programme areas, types and mandate of NGOs, beneficiaries and impact of their programmes. As a point of departure it is important to highlight the general characteristics of developing countries and the historical background of South Africa in particular, as this provides setting for development assistance.

General characteristics of developing countries

Despite the obvious diversity of countries and classification schemes employed by various multi-lateral institutions most developing nations share a set of common characteristics. South Africa with its two-tiered economy, one rivalling other developed countries and the other with only basic infrastructure, shares most of the common characteristics of developing countries. According to Todaro (2000: 30) most developing countries share common problems in varying degrees. These problems are linked to their economic, social and political situations. Most of these problems relate to

> "… widespread and chronic absolute poverty, high and rising levels of unemployment and underemployment, wide and growing disparities in the distribution of income, low and stagnating levels of agricultural productivity, sizable and growing imbalances between urban and rural levels of living and economic opportunities, serious and worsening environmental decay, antiquated and inappropriate educational and health systems, severe balance of payments and international debt problems and substantial and increasing dependence on foreign technologies, institutions and values systems", (Todaro, 2000: 32).

In as much as there are common characteristics, it is important to note that the size, historical and colonial background, endowments in terms of physical and human resources, ethnic and religious composition, industrial base, foreign dependence and power distribution of countries determine their structural diversity. As a case in point, South Africa, has a broad-based, industrialised economy that paradoxically exhibits most of the characteristics associated with developing economies. Todaro (2000) notes that this is reflected in the division of labour between formal and informal sectors, a highly uneven distribution of wealth and income, a dependence on commodity exports and a legacy of government intervention. This was exacerbated and entrenched with the institution of apartheid by the National Party in 1948. This skewed the economy to the extent that South African whites (14% of the population) own 88% of the country's private property and along

with foreign investors, over 90% of commerce and industry, (Todaro, 2000). This effectively "shuts out" the majority black population; over 50% who live below the poverty datum line and 40% of rural black children are stunted by malnutrition. Income distribution remains one of the most unequal in the world. Hence, UNDP (1994) was apt when it observed that "… if white South Africa were a separate country, it would rank 24th in the world (just after Spain). Black South Africa would rank 123rd in the world (just above Congo). Not just two different people's, these are almost two different worlds". This scenario, on one hand, has been compounded by an alarming increase in HIV/AIDS, currently at 18.8% prevalence rate for adults aged 15 – 49 years, (http//www.unaids.org/en/Regions_Countries/south_africa.asp). On the other hand unemployment in the Oct-Dec 2011 quarter was 23.9% (Stats Sa, 2012). With just over a decade following the democratic dispensation, the South African government is still optimistic of future economic growth, reduction in unemployment and correcting the existing inequities.

The enormity of problems in developing countries, South Africa included, call for comprehensive intervention strategies whether local or foreign. One strategy had been the channelling of foreign direct investment (FDI) to developing countries. According to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Council of Ministers, foreign investment holds the key to improved growth. It is stated, "… sub-Saharan Africa attracts between 1% and 2% of global foreign direct investment". The greatest of this goes to Nigeria, South Africa and Angola, (www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid/insight/insight_africa/). It is evident that problems in developing countries set the tone for intervention, be it in foreign direct investment or otherwise. It is under such auspices that the Italian government through its sectors, public, private and voluntary, has taken a keen interest in ameliorating some problems bedevilling the South African community. Before analysing their impact on South African development it is necessary to first explore the policy that guides such intervention. In this regard, history of relations between the two countries would be explored, how Italian development cooperation is viewed, how NGOs are incorporated into law and their areas of operation.

History of Relations between South Africa and Italy

As insinuated above, for one to understand the role of foreign aid in promoting development, one must first grasp the history and objectives of Italian foreign aid as well as that of other donors. From a bilateral point of view, it is important to note that Italian-South African relations stretch from apartheid to the present day. This is mainly because the two countries share a common history, one that is punctuated by struggle for independence, freedom and unity. This is epitomised in the remarks of President Mbeki during the Italian President Ciampi's state visit to South Africa in 2002. Mbeki remarked that:

> "… as South Africans who are engaged in what we call with pride our African renaissance, we cannot but admire and draw strength from the history of your country and the revolutionary changes that came about as part of and as result of what we now call the Italian renaissance", (http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2002/at11.htm).

Owing to this convergence, it was natural for Italy as an older democracy to condemn apartheid and participate in the restoration of human dignity and equality for all the people of South Africa. This was achieved through policies that sought to minimise trade relations with the apartheid regime. Later Italy was to participate in European Union Policy on Africa. This resulted in the 1986 European Economic Community (EEC) ban on trade and investment with apartheid South Africa, (http://www.countrystudies.us/south.africa164.htm). President Mbeki acknowledged "… we will not forget the contribution of your country to our liberation struggle, and especially the outstanding assistance by the people of Regio Emboli to our movement", (http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2002/at11.htm). It is evident that Italy was averse to the system of apartheid as shown by its involvement in the slapping of sanctions against the apartheid regime and offering of material assistance to the suffering masses of South Africa. The relationship continued to grow up to the normalisation or political transition and the democratic dispensation in South Africa.

Following the normalisation of political activity in South Africa, Italy was instrumental in having the European Union (EU) sanctions lifted. In fact, it was the first member of the Union to sign an economic agreement with South Africa, (http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/bilateral/italy.html). The EU also accorded South Africa duty-free entry on most of its exports in early 1995, and the two were negotiating terms for the purchase of South Africa's agricultural products. In 1996 the EU also granted South Africa a qualified membership in the Lome Convention that came into effect in 1997. This accorded African, Pacific and Caribbean countries preferential access to European markets, (http://www.countrystudies.us./south.africa/64.htm). Italy is also supportive of South African instituted New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Such a relationship ushered in Italy as one of South Africa's leading trading partners and in 2001 it was the 6th largest trading partner. In the same vein investment inflows increased as compared to the period prior to 1995. The same could be said of tourism and Italian funding for development assistance, (ibid).

It is important to understand the motive behind such cooperation. This would be achieved by glancing at driving forces behind Italian foreign policy vis-à-vis development assistance to third countries in general and South Africa in particular. It would also be of interest to assess the expectations of South Africa in receiving development aid. Hyatt (2000 cited in Grodeland, 2010) notes that about 95% of Bosnia's NGOs received foreign funding in 1999, although this proportion has been somewhat reduced in recent times. NGOs in Serbia played a key role in removing Milosˇevic´ from office, in Bosnia distributing humanitarian assistance during the war to internally displaced persons, while those in Macedonia were active during elections (Grodeland, 2010). Deacon and Stubbs cited in Grodeland (2010: 177) suggest that instead of strengthening civil society, Western donors have been castigated of engaging in a new form of "colonialism" or "new feudalism", by foisting their agendas on local communities and keeping local NGOs in 'a state of dependency'.

Italian Foreign Policy

Having looked at the history of relations between Italy and South Africa, it is important to draw out what motivates Italian foreign policy. This is an attempt to assess whether foreign policy has an impact on the work of Italian NGOs or development aid in general. Italy's involvement in Africa, just like other western countries, is driven by challenges and opportunities that Africa poses in terms of global security and other interests of the international community. The proximity of Africa to Europe and therefore Italy means Italy is also affected by problems emanating from Africa. This means Italy finds itself involved in Africa's problems that range from health and humanitarian emergencies, environmental degradation, and conflicts to poverty among others. Away from the gloomy side of things, Africa wields great economic potential characterised by untapped natural resources and potential markets. Though implicitly stated it is clear that Italy would want to cooperate with Africa as it relies on some of the resources from Africa such as gold, diamonds and steel products. As acknowledged by the Italian Foreign Affairs, development cooperation is premised on two priorities. These are stated as:

> "… the need for solidarity to safeguard the life and human dignity of all the planet's inhabitants. The second is to employ cooperation to establish, improve and consolidate global economic interdependence, which will distribute economic growth to all people through market expansion and improved circulation of production. Italy's development cooperation policy intends to pursue these objectives with its economic, cultural and security diplomacy, consolidating our country's role and image worldwide", (http://www.esteri.it/eng/4_28_66_75_247.asp).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs further observes that such cooperation stemmed out of a series of technical and economic assistance initiatives offered to former Italian colonies from the 1950s and 1960s onwards, (ibid). Law 38 of 1979 first regulated such assistance. This was revised in 1987 with the approval of Law 49. This followed the global reorganisation of systems linked to AID. There may be good intentions in promulgating such a law, however, the aid may come with strings attached. Italian cooperation normally entails recipient countries to "build and reinforce their institutions through good governance, respect for human rights and democratic participation in economic development of all members of society, without discrimination", (http://www.esteri.it/eng/4_28_66_75_247.asp).

With such a foreign policy in place, it is natural for the Italian government to expect stakeholders from its land, in pursuit of development programmes in other areas, to further the aims of foreign policy. In this regard policy has been put in place to enable Italian NGOs to take up challenges in developing countries. Hence, any NGO that harbours thoughts of receiving assistance from government for its operational budget has to fulfil certain obligations. Such qualification is highlighted below.

NGO acknowledgement of qualification

For Italian organisations to function as NGOs as stipulated by article 28 of Italian Law no. 49 of 1987 paragraph 4, they must:

- be non-profit and obliged by law to utilise all revenue, even that deriving from accessory commercial activities,

- not be dependent on profit-generating entities nor associate in any way with the interests of Italian or foreign public or private profit-generating entities,

- be willing to undergo periodic controls as deemed necessary by the Directorate General for Development Cooperation for the purposes of maintaining qualification;

- fulfil the obligation to present an annual report of the status of the programmes underway. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversees the law governing operations of NGOs with developing countries. Of importance in this regard is the associated executive regulations (article 30, 40 and 41). If NGOs fulfil these obligations, they are then deemed as qualified by the Decree of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Qualified NGOs can apply to receive contributions for the cooperation activities they promote for amounts of up to 70% of the total budget of the programmed initiative. They can also be tasked with carrying out specific cooperation programmes whose costs are covered by DGCS funding. The following types of activities are usually considered for qualification:

- carrying out of short and medium term programmes in developing countries,

- selection, training and deployment of civil service volunteers,

- on-site training of developing country citizens.

(http://www.esteri.it/eng/4_28:66_75_247.asp).

It is important to note that Italian cooperation initiatives are also carried out in harmony with other sectors of its foreign policy such as peacekeeping initiatives and management of migration. Bilateral and multilateral (UN, World Bank, OECD) and EU regulations also drive Italian development cooperation. The current buzz is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) brought forth by the Millennium Declaration of the UN General Assembly in September 2000. The Italian NGOs operating in Africa are expected to play a role in these commitments. For a list of these commitments see, (www.un.org/millenniumgoals/). This raises questions as to how autonomous or independent of government are Italian NGOs. The very fact that NGOs owe their legitimacy to the state in terms of registration or recognition and financing somehow effectively means they are an extension of government. The fact that they are "controlled" by the state also raises questions on accountability. To whom are they are accountable? Is it to the people they serve or the organ that finances them? Does this assistance really contribute to sustainable development, and does it produce the intended results? Who defines the development problem, that is, who sets the agenda for policies and programmes? How are plans developed, who determines the objectives, the strategies, the timetable, the resources? How are plans implemented? Who manages, monitors, who is accountable? Does implementation build capacity? Who benefits from international assistance? How is the benefit measured? What is the impact on sustainable development? It could be a matter of opinion but one that is important in the quest to understand the landscape of cooperation between Italy and South Africa. It would be

necessary as well to glance at the flipside of relations vis-à-vis the expectations of South Africa in cooperating with Italy.

What South Africa expects from development assistance

 It is crucial to unlock the expectations of South Africa as it joins the queue of aid-receiving nations. As observed by Fehnel in Fitzgerald et al (1997: 369) the South African government counts heavily on international assistance to support a wide range of initiatives in the public, parastatal and private sectors in a quest to shore up the economy from a decade of recession and give tangible meaning to hopes for a new dispensation. Thus, it is envisaged that cooperation and solidarity are necessary ingredients for solving some socio-economic dilemmas facing South Africa. This was epitomised by President Mbeki in 2002 when he received President Ciampi of Italy. He highlighted that:

> "… it is in this context of common success in South Africa and the aspirations of all of Africa's people that we feel so inspired that you come here as a brother and friend to us all. Like you, Mr President, our own actions are informed by our consciousness of the importance of solidarity, of the necessity of constructive engagement between North and South. In this context we are deeply appreciative of the critical role that Italy has played and will continue to play for the betterment of Africa and the world", (http//www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2002/at11.htm).

In the same vein, South Africa expects buy-in to some of the continental programmes, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) that are in place on the continent. Such a partnership is seen as an ingredient for success as Italy is one of the economic powerhouses in the world and one of the top trade and investment partners of South Africa. South Africa also expects cooperation in the development of small and medium sized enterprises (SMMEs), science and technology, arts, culture, education and sport.

It is clear that South Africa expects to gain materially or otherwise from cooperation with Italy and vice versa. It is evident from the South African point of view that without foreign assistance, development activities could be difficult to initiate. The question is whether such cooperation leads to sustainable development as would be later established in this paper. Before getting to that it is necessary to shift focus to particular Italian NGOs operating in South Africa. In this regard 3 Italian NGOs would be highlighted as case studies. This is to gain some insight into their operations rather than generalising, as it is not a representative sample. Hence, Italian NGOs namely CESVI, CISP and Xena would be described and their work analysed with a view of bringing to the fore their impact on the target population.

Description of Italian NGOs Operating in South Africa
1. CESVI – Coperazione e Sviluppo
CESVI is an Italian independent association, established in 1985 in Bergamo. It works in more than 30 countries all over the world, Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and the Middle East. CESVI stands for Cooperazione e Sviluppo, that is, Cooperation and Development. It claims as its

philosophy the idea of giving the recipients of aid a leading role, working together to own natural benefit. It is therefore committed to ensuring that international aid does not become mere charity nor is it influenced by the donors´ self-interest.

CESVI´s assistance to people in need around the world can be divided into three main categories:

- Immediate help to ensure survival and to overcome emergencies.
- Rehabilitation and reconstruction of systems destroyed by war or natural calamities.
- Cooperation programmes and projects for the development of underprivileged social groups and poor communities.

(www.cesvi.org).

CESVI has been present in South Africa since 2002. It is engaged in a project to fight HIV/AIDS in a shantytown on the periphery of Cape Town. It points to South Africa, where distribution of resources is dramatically unjust and social inequality feeds into most serious tensions. It further points to the fact that millions of people live in absolute poverty pushing most of them to the periphery of cities thereby creating shanty towns where social degradation is evident. Unemployment is between 60 and 80%, people lack access to water, health and sanitary services, domestic and street violence is rampant and the spread of HIV/AIDS is in catastrophic proportions. CESVI has a programme that attempts to address social and sanitary concerns of poor people and is working in the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the periphery of Cape Town. In 2005 CESVI also undertook the construction of a house or shelter for women who are victims of domestic and street violence. It also came up with an occupational plan for domestic refuse collection in zones not covered by public service. It collaborates with local partners and has recorded 1 000 people as direct beneficiaries and 120 000 people as indirect beneficiaries. It employs 10 people, 1 expatriate and 9 locals. It is financed by Fondazione Cariplo, Media Friends, Media World, Saturn and other private donors, (www.cesvi.org).

2. CISP – Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli

Translated in English, International Committee for the Development of People is a European NGO that was formally established in 1983. It is based in Italy and operates in international cooperation field and in the fight against social exclusion. One of CISP's main missions is to participate in the planning of development policies through a constructive dialogue with principal actors involved in their preparation and implementation. It carries out development, rehabilitation and humanitarian programmes as well as projects of applied research in about 30 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and Eastern Europe. Its priority sectors in development cooperation include rural development, food security (agriculture, fishing, aquaculture and small-scale breeding) and poverty alleviation, rural and urban health, education and training, natural resources and environmental management, and support to the peace processes). In emergency and humanitarian aid, CISP has been operating in the following contexts: global attention to refugee communities, returnees and displaced people, health services, disaster preparedness,

reconstruction and reactivation of productive activities after natural catastrophes or conflicts, (htttp//www.cisp-ngo.org/ENG/ENGcontent.htm).

When it comes to lessons, CISP notes that it learns from experience, drawing practical lessons from it as a way of improving the quality of the implemented activities. Therefore, on this basis, it edits publications in which it studies and deepens the theory behind the programmes run in the field.

As far funding is concerned, CISP's activities rely on contributions and funds from individuals and institutions. Among these are: the Commission of the European Union, the General Directorate for Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs (DGCS-MAE) and the Department of Civil Protection. Other donors include UN agencies and institutions from other industrialised countries, governments of the countries where CISP works, foundations, universities, companies and charities, (http//www.cisp-ngo.org/ENG/ENGcontent.htm)

In South Africa CISP has supported the following projects:

Support for the implementation of the local business service centres strategy in the Northern Cape Province.
The aim is to support South Africa's poverty alleviation and reconstruction strategy through the improvement of the sub-sectors of SMME development training and employment creation.

Support to small enterprises in Northern Cape Province
The project aims at development of training materials, organisation of training courses for Department officials and small entrepreneurs and creation of a credit scheme for small enterprises.

Support to the programme of the "Local Business Service Centres" (LBSC) in Northern Cape Province

The project aims to support the development of micro and small-scale enterprises through the training and technical assistance.

Support to Civil Society's Organisations in the Northern Cape
The project aims at promotion of democracy and pluralism of civil society through strengthening of the role of NGOs in the analysis, participation and dialogue with other institutions in the province.

3. XENA

This is a cultural association based in Padova, Northeast of Italy. It was founded in 1995 and runs youth projects that are open to the participation of the countries that are not members of the European Union. This organisation runs the Euro-African Network, a training course in Cape Town in intercultural learning and youth working. The participants of this training course are drawn from youth workers from 7 countries, with as many cultures and languages, belonging to

Africa and Europe. Why was South Africa viewed as the ideal place for such a course? South Africa is viewed as a country with a particular background against which to develop and deepen intercultural issues. It's a country with 11 official languages, many ethnic groups and a historical/political situation that needs a lot of work to further breakdown the old prejudices and fences, (http://www.xena.it/eurafrnet.html). The project is run in collaboration with other youth trainers from Cape Town. It is viewed as creating the possibility of a rich network between Africa and Europe in the field of youth work. The project was funded by the European Union of which Italy is a member.

Discussion

At face value, the picture painted in the above sections shows the invaluable role played by Northern aid and NGOs towards the development of the South. Lipschutz (1992) and Mathews (1997) as cited in Reimann (2006), argue that the decline in the influence of the state and the spread of international activism resulting from the revolution in the information and technology field, spurred the growth of international NGOs. It is undoubted that Northern NGOs have filled in where national governments have failed. There are many instances where pockets of poverty have been alleviated. CESVI and CISP work in Cape Town is testimony to this. To add to this, the issue of capacity building among communities and their southern partners is evident. This is shown by the fact that most Italian NGOs are collaborating with local partners in order to reach their target areas. They have even chosen programme areas where government has not made its presence felt. The HIV/AIDS policy is a case in point for South Africa. The country has been blamed at highest level, such as UN forums, for not having progressive HIV/AIDS policies. No matter what intention, Italian NGOs such as CESVI and CISP have chosen to work in the area of health, where HIV/AIDS is a major component. The work of CESVI in HIV/AIDS prevention in the periphery of Cape Town has resulted in 1,000 direct beneficiaries and 120,000 indirect beneficiaries. One is bound to argue that this is a drop in the ocean given that over 5 million South Africans are infected and many more at great risk. What is obvious though is that they reached a segment of the population that would otherwise be "wiped off" due to government "inactivity" on the issue. There is a tendency in development literature to compare NGOs to governments in terms of scale. There is an argument to the effect that NGOs cover a small geographic area. This is clearly demonstrated by the case studies presented earlier. All organisations operate in different pockets of Cape Town. While this is valid an argument we beg to differ with the proponents. Our argument is that NGOs in general are not meant to replace or take over the functions of government. They are there to complement the efforts of governments, since they even owe their legitimacy to national governments. Politicians have, however, distorted this by telling people that NGOs would look after them when called to account for their inactivity. Therefore, comparing the capacity of NGOs to state capacity is not only unfair but borders on ignorance of what role each party is supposed to play. The emergence of a new pro-NGO norm internationally in the 1980s put "top-down" pressure on countries to involve NGOs in domestic and international politics giving the NGOs some legitimacy and political space in countries that previously did not sympathises with them (Reimann, 2006). He, thus, argues that

intergovernmental NGOs and NGOs have emerged in large part due to 'top-down processes of political globalization, i.e., the globalization of political structures, institutions, and Western liberal democratic values'.

NGOs constitute a major part of the Italian foreign policy. This is shown by the legislation governing their operations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes an active role in overseeing the legislation governing operations of NGOs. It even pays up to 70% of the operating budget of these NGOs. This shows growing confidence in NGOs by the Italian government to advance values of its foreign policy. This was unlike the period just after the democratic dispensation when foreign governments and donors channelled their funds to South African government's reconstruction and development programme (RDP), (Habib and Taylor, 1999). Donors now prefer to channel funds straight to NGOs for development work. Bilateral and multilateral funds are channelled to government though. The growing confidence may also be a manifestation of the belief that NGOs are in direct contact with the grassroots or local organisations and are more effective and efficient way of disbursing resources. In a way they are perceived as being in a better position to carry out the developmental approach to sustainable development or facilitate change.

The issue of funding is very contentious in development aid debate. The fact that most Italian NGOs derive their funding from their government raises eyebrows as to their sovereignty and accountability. Is it the question of "he who pays the piper callas the tune". In such a scenario it is difficult to ascertain the independence of Italian NGOs operating in South Africa. The question is whether they are carrying out surrogate activities or they are trying to alleviate the condition of the poor. Their accountability is also brought under the spotlight. Are they responsible to the people they serve or their funders in the North? The fact that their operations fit into activities, principles and legislation laid out by the Italian government, forces one to conclude that they are an extension of that country's foreign policy.

A scan of principles governing Italian NGOs´ operations in Africa point to the need for development approach as opposed to the welfare approach. In fact, the work of CESVI and CISP is a move away from a welfare approach, one that is characterised by immediate relief from poverty through the provision of material and human resources to the poor – developmental approach. We see an approach that is characterised by support for projects aiming at increasing local capacity to meet the social and economic needs of the community. The support for the health and sanitation project and the capacitating of small to medium enterprises are cases in point to this effect. The fact that partners or collaborators are involved in the whole project cycle means they benefit in information and knowledge exchange. The project has also resulted in employment creation for locals. Although this is on a small scale, it can go a long way in changing the lives of those involved. In as much as Italian NGOS have been credited with facilitating change in South Africa's impoverished areas, yet they have also been criticised for not

addressing the economic and political relations within the country. It is common knowledge that structural factors are the major impediment to poverty alleviation. Any sustainable effort should work towards structural transformation, a terrain where many NGOs have been found wanting.

Partnership and collaboration are words that feature prominently in the rhetoric of Italian NGOs operating in South Africa. These words are much used and frequently abused. They have found credence in a world trying to move away from the master-serf relationship to that characterised by equality. In other words, partnership has become a politically correct phrase meant to legitimate the operations of Northern NGOs in the South. It may also be that donors in the North insist on this. Hence, it can be used as a gimmick to hoodwink the potential funders. Case examples in this paper show that Italian NGOs in South Africa rely on their "local partners" to implement the programmes. This relationship is aptly summarised by Rossiter and Palmer (1990: 44) who note that "… Northern NGOs need Southern partners much more avidly than vice versa. After all, they provide the justification for and means through which development work in the South can be conducted. But the relationship is fraught with possibilities for abuse, especially on the Northern side". This has brought to the fore arguments about Northern paternalism characterised by transfer of resources to the South. In this regard, Northern NGOs provide significant sums of money to Southern counterparts in order to mobilise and educate public opinion within donor countries. Any bypassing of the Southern counterparts would run the risk of diminishing the interest and understanding of people in those countries of the needs and realities of communities in less developed countries, (Rossiter and Palmer, 1990). Some operational and pragmatic imperatives have necessitated the sprouting of NGOs as Reimann (2006) observes:

> Wary of giving too much to governments in the developing world, unwilling to greatly expand the UN's operational capacity, and not always willing to expand their own bureaucratic and operational infrastructure, donor states have turned to service NGOs as a solution for implementing aid and providing relief in humanitarian crises (Reimann, 2006).

However, a case in point that illustrates the double standard of the relationship between Italian NGOs and their South African counterparts is the issue of funding. In as much as Northern NGOs use their Southern "partners" in fundraising drives and implementation, nowhere is it mentioned that they release funds to Southern NGOs to allocate as they see fit. Instead they (Southern partners) have to fit into a neatly packaged project. Salamon (1995 as cited in Reimann, 2006) claims that NGOs cannot survive without donations from private individuals as well as grants and subsidies from governments, elite institutions and foundations. It is the funders who have tended to define the agenda. NGOs are seen as societal actors who can 'persuade, pressure and teach states new ideas, values, and practices" (Reimann, 2006:59).

As alluded to earlier, it is fashionable to work with Southern "partners". This qualifies for another scramble for Africa. In Southern Africa the trend has been to scramble for new partners in the newly independent states. When Zimbabwe attained its independence in 1980 there was an influx of Northern NGOs positioning themselves for post-independence development. With the

independence of Namibia in 1990 a scramble of partners by Northern NGOs was evident. This reached its peak with the independence of South Africa in 1994. As the new democracy in Southern Africa the scramble was unprecedented. Even those who supported apartheid wanted to be seen as contributing to the development of South Africa after the "evil" apartheid era. This meant having partners if they were to implement any programmes. The process even entailed claiming partners belonging to certain Northern NGOs. It is therefore not surprising that Xena chose South Africa as it ultimate destination for the implementation of its Euro-African Network project.

Towards a Framework/ Model for Understanding NGOs Based on their Independence and Funding

We posit the following model for NGOs based on two dimensions – the level of independence and the level of external funding (See Fig 1: Perceptual Map of NGOs). NGOs that belong in quadrant A are NGOs with little or no external funding, therefore, they are self-financing and enjoy a lot of independence. These NGOs have been called the *sovereign gem NGOs.* Those in quadrant B have a high level of independence coupled with high levels of foreign funding – these are a rarity hence called *Rarity/Independent NGOs.* These have foreign funding but follow their own agendas. NGOs in quadrant C are termed *Pawns* because they enjoy a lot of external funding and have little independence. In this case it is analogous to the case in which it is the piper who calls the tune. In quadrant D are NGOs without external funding but parrot the agenda of an external organisation. These are termed *slave/dependent/puppet NGOs* characterised by low levels of external and low level of ideological independence.

High level of independence

Sovereign gem NGOs High level of independence and low level of external funding HL **Quadrant A**	*Independent NGO* (Rarity) High level of independence and high level of external funding HH **Quadrant B**
And Low level Of External funding Low level of external funding and low level of independence LL *Slave/Dependent/Puppet NGOs* **Quadrant D**	High level of External funding High level of external funding and low level of independence HL *Pawns* **Quadrant C**

Low level of independence

Figure 1: Perceptual Map of NGOs

When we look at independence we are looking at ideological independence. The tendency has been that NGOs from the North because of ideological differences with Governments in the South work against these governments rather than with them especially those involved in advocacy and human rights issues especially where cultures and understanding of democracy is at crossroads and conflicting. This article adopts the definition of ideology from the American Heritage Dictionary (n.d), which defines ideology as a body of ideas reflecting the social aspirations of an individual, group, class, or culture or a 'set of doctrines or beliefs that form the basis of a political, economic, or other system'. Reimann (2006) observes that Non-western states, are skeptical of NGOs and thus view them as an imposition from ''above'' by wealthy, western countries.

In a study of Macedonian NGOs, Grodeland (2010) observes that all NGOs were largely negative about international NGO's despite their sources of funding. However, foreign-funded NGOs spoke well of the international community than those with mixed sources of funding (that is, comprising of local and foreign funding) who cherished "new thinking", but were not satisfied with NGO dependency syndrome. Those locally-funded NGOs harboured negative sentiments of the international community especially regarding the strings attached to the funding with some even accusing international organizations of criminality associated with money laundering. (Grodeland, 2010).

The role of a good NGO from the North is that of one that respects the Southern agenda, people-centred, people-focused, willing to learn and adapt, supports the ideals of self-reliance, empowerment, sustainability; advocates the cause and agenda of the South, one that is non-paternalistic, creates job opportunities for local people, facilitates rather dictate development initiatives, allows target beneficiaries to steer their own development and additionally one that shuns political patronage and immersion in local politics. Edwards (2004) as cited in Frödin, (2009) observes that NGOs are viewd as a source of common and shared meanings and a symbol of community solidarity as well as a 'counterbalance against both government and corporate power'. Given such non-hierarchical co-ordination and steeped in trust, loyalty as well as informal relationships, this presents a problem as some NGOs may become closed to outsiders, unaccountable for their actions and unrepresentative to outsiders and can conflict with other structures of governance (Rhodes, 2000 cited in Frodin, 2009).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has shown that Italian development cooperation has traditionally been undertaken for the main reasons of: humanitarian reasons; commercial interests; security objectives; historical and cultural links including international prestige. These motivations have been advanced by Italian NGOs operating in various capacities in South Africa. Reimann (2006) argues that participation in local and international fora has given NGOs an avenue to survive as organizations by virtue of access to decision-makers which in itself provides them with the legitimacy and influence they need to justify their existence. In as much as evidence points to the

overriding paternalistic orientation of NGOs in South Africa, it is also evident that they have made a positive contribution and difference in pockets where they operate. This is admissible given that NGOs are smaller than nation states in terms of capacity and resources. However, if Italian NGOs want to make a lasting impression on South African development scene they must:

- Continue to speak out about the causes of and possible solutions to poverty and underdevelopment. Highlighting macro changes in political and economic relationships between North and South could be one way to achieving this.

- Learn from experience and have flexible responses to different changing situations.

- Not rely on rhetoric.

- Assist South African NGOs establish and strengthen themselves, and to achieve a reasonable degree of financial autonomy.

- Be prepared to facilitate NGOs attempts to generate their own resources, for example, creation of financial reserves.

When beneficiaries are able to define their own agenda as a pillar of aid effectiveness, this allows donors to concentrate on building local capacity as well as institutions that can sustain growth (Rosenkranz, 2012). The role of NGOs is thus enormous given the enormity of the problems. We conclude that the role of NGOs should be transformational rather than be paternalistic; the motives for intervention should be philanthropic rather than charity in order to bring legitimacy to the operations of Northern NGOs operating in the South in mutually beneficial partnerships capable of sustaining growth.

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Breaking the Silence: Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs) Among Women in Slums of Khulna City, Bangladesh

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Abstract: Reproductive tract infections are public health problems in women of reproductive age and can result in serious consequences if not treated. The objective of the study was to estimate the prevalence and risk factors of reproductive tract infections (RTIs) which increase the vulnerability among the slum dwelling married women of Bangladesh. A community based cross-sectional study was undertaken among the three hundred married women of reproductive age (15-49 years) in Khulna City, Bangladesh who were drawn through purposive sampling techniques and interviewed using a structured questionnaire. The study results revealed that among all the respondents, 72.6 per cent reported one or more symptoms of RTIs. Only, 31 per cent of the respondents were aware about RTIs and 21 per cent about HIV/AIDS. Bivariate analysis indicated statistically significant association between educational level, age at marriage, place of delivery and awareness about RTIs with presence of self-reported symptoms of RTIs among the study population. Regarding the results of this study, improving literacy and increasing awareness level among married women about reproductive health is needed to reduce incidence of RTIs in the study area.

Keywords: Khulna, women, reproductive tract infections, health

Background

Reproductive tract infections (RTIs) are recognized as a major public health problem and rank second - after maternal morbidity and mortality - as the cause of healthy life loss among sexually-active women of reproductive age in developing countries (Aggarwal *et al.,* 2009). In Bangladesh, there is no national prevalence data on RTIs or STIs. However, the limited number of prevalence studies point to an alarming and totally different picture where a high number of women have confirmed infections. A clinic-based study found 60 per cent of   women suffering from RTIs, including nearly 4 per cent with *gonorrhoea* and less than 1 per cent with *syphilis* (Chowdhury *et al.,* 1995). Meanwhile, a rural study found 56 per cent of women had RTIs of which 23 per cent were STIs (Hussain *et al.,* 1996). An earlier study on 3000 women in *Matlab* Thana showed that 22 per cent of the women had symptoms of RTIs. When examined, 68 per cent of those women had confirmed evidence of infection (Hawkes *et al.,* 2002). A study by Save the Children (USA) showed that 56 per cent of the rural women had RTIs, of whom 67 per cent sought any treatment. Traditional methods or 'Bangla treatment' were selected by most of these women. Infected men sought treatment outside the immediate community, whereas the women placed their faith on the village practitioners (Hussain*et al.,* 1996).

RTIs, as a silent epidemic for women of reproductive age in developing countries, studies in India, Bangladesh and Egypt have shown that 52-92 per cent of women are suffering from RTIs (Bhatti and Fikree, 2002). RTIs cause more than just physical discomfort. They lead to infertility, ectopic

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pregnancy, cervical cancer, fetal wastage, low birth weight, infant blindness, neonatal pneumonia and mental retardation. Thus RTIs affect more than the health (The Population Council, 1999). The morbidity associated with RTIs also affects the economic productivity of many individual men and women, and consequently, of whole communities.

In *Matlab* Thana, a population-based study of nearly 3000 women was conducted. Twenty-two percent of the women reported symptoms of RTIs. When examined, 68 percent of those women had confirmed evidence of infection. Factors which influenced the presence of RTIs included IUD and *tubectomy* acceptance. More than one-third of IUD users and *tubectomized* women complained of symptoms, while less than 10 percent of non-users and approximately 15 percent of hormonal method users believed that an abnormality consistent with RTI was present. Examination-confirmed, symptomatic infection was also seven times as common among IUD users and *tubectomized* women as among non-users (Wasserheit, 1989).

Health care users in a Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition urban clinic were studied to determine RTIs prevalence (Chowdhury *et al.,* 1995). The study sample included regular clients of the clinic, newly registered clients but excluded antenatal and lactating women. Mean age of marriage of the respondents was 15.5 years and age at first child birth was early 18. The early age of marriage and child birth indirectly reflects early initiation of sexual activity. Final diagnosis based on laboratory findings showed a RTIs prevalence of 60 per cent. Bacterial *vaginosis* was the most common type of infection. The prevalence of syphilis alone was 0.5 per cent, of *gonorrhoea* nearly 4 percent and a combination of syphilis and *gonorrhoea* was found in 0.5 percent of cases. RTIs, generally seen as a 'silent' epidemic, is one of the major public health problems causing a significant proportion of gynecological morbidity and maternal mortality in developing countries. In 1999, an estimated 340 million people were infected with curable STIs (WHO, 2001). Studies on women in developing countries have found RTI's prevalence rates ranging from 52 to 92 per cent (National Academy Press, 1997).

The consequences of RTIs vary from none to severe which include stigmatization, reproductive impairment, domestic abuse and abandonment. Pregnancy-related complications, as well as congenital infections, can also result from RTIs. Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) can develop, leading to infertility, ectopic pregnancy and chronic pain (UNFPA, 2004).

Further, the impact of RTIs on the transmission of HIV infection and the morbidity and mortality of HIV adds substantially to the total health impact of RTIs. Untreated RTIs are responsible for 10-15 per cent of fetal wastage and 30-50 per cent of prenatal infection. While not all RTIs are curable, they are all preventable. Treatment of these infections and prevention of their relapse is complicated by the fact that 30-50 per cent of women with infections, up to 70-75 per cent in the case of Chlamydia, and a smaller but significant proportion of men, does not have any symptoms (Ranjan and Sharma, 2002).

Studies have indicated association of factors like lack of education, early marriage, menstrual hygiene practice, contraceptive usage, knowledge about RTIs, treatment-seeking behavior with the prevalence of RTIs. The facts that attainment of education clears various misconceptions about many illnesses, including RTIs, and encourages preventive practices, have been authenticatedin various studies conducted in Bangladesh (WHO, 2002).

The health-seeking behavior of women is dependent on various socio-economic conditions like caste, place of residence, education, work status of women and standard of living. In rural communities, the cultural beliefs and practices further hinder the health-seeking behavior. Married women are reluctant to seek medical treatment because of lack of privacy, lack of female doctors at the health facility, cost of treatment and their inferior social status. RTIs have an additional element of shame and humiliation for many women because they are considered unclean. Women do not seek treatment for RTIs due to lack of awareness, asymptomatic nature of RTIs and lack of treatment facilities(Dixon and Wasserheit, 2001).

Reproductive health practices among Muslim women in Bangladesh have been little researched, perhaps because of the widespread notion regarding the rigid religious norms over sexual behavior and against the use of contraceptives. A community based cross-sectional study was undertaken among married women of reproductive age (15-49 years) having at least one child in Khulna City of Bangladesh. The objective of the study is to understand the socio-demographic and cultural factors contributing to the RTIs among them. This article presents the finding of the study which is based on the assumptions that:

1. lack of education has a significant impact on women's health;
2. menstrual hygiene has a direct correlation with prevalence of RTIs;
3. women become more prone to reproductive infections during pregnancy and repeated pregnancy increase their vulnerability;
4. age at marriage has direct correlation with prevalence of RTIs; and
5. untreated STIs in pregnant women can lead to spontaneous abortion, stillbirth, and low birth weight; lack of awareness increases the likelihood that infections remain untreated, and thus leads to both further spread of infection and long-term complications.

Besides these, factors like religion also play a significant role. According to the study on reproductive morbidity among the slum dwelling women in Khulna City, Muslim women have higher likelihood of getting RTIs/STDs, that is, Muslim women have 1.278 times higher risk of getting RTIs/STDs as compared to women of Hindu and other religion.

Materials and Methods

The methodology of this study is an integration of qualitative and quantitative methods based on the data collected from slum dwelling people of Khulna City, Bangladesh using purposive sampling technique that employed detailed information on women's knowledge, awareness and practices of reproductive health. Quantitative data on socio-demographic characteristics and health practices-menstrual health and hygiene, awareness and prevalence of contraception, number of pregnancies, antenatal care, still birth and abortions, knowledge and awareness of RTIs/AIDS/HIV and treatment seeking behavior of the study population was collected through a structured interview schedule. In addition, qualitative information was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and individual interviews to explore community member's perceptions about girl's education, age at marriage and reproductive health. FGDs were conducted with groups consisting of 10-12 men and women in the age group of 35-50 years who had at least one child or of marital status. Based on the population and prevalence rate of RTIs as per earlier studies, a sample of 300 married women in the age group of 15-49 years was selected.

Data analysis was performed with SPSS version 16 software for all quantitative data. The chi-square analysis to assess the bivariate relationships between independent and dependent risk factors was utilized. The following variables were considered: respondents' age, education level, age at marriage, religion, family type, house type, menstrual hygiene, contraception usage, age at first pregnancy, place of delivery, non-live birth, knowledge and awareness of RTIs and treatment-seeking behavior.

This study has several limitations; the study was conducted among people who are closed and sensitive culturally, the questions framed in the schedule could not be asked in too much depth. The respondents in the younger age group were not allowed to express themselves openly and freely. There were limitations in the tool design; the treatment-seeking behavior could not be explored. In addition, the sample size was not large enough to determine an accurate prevalence of RTIs/STDs.

Vulnerability Assessment for RTIs

In reference to the risk assessment, the study has found that people living in slum areas in Khulna, are in at high risk of RTIs. The following figure (Figure 1) presents the conceptual framework for the risk factors of above stated diseases recognized in Khulna City. The postulated causal web includes program efforts and socio-economic factors as determinants in addition to lack of awareness and related risky behavior.

Findings

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic and other behavioral patterns associated with reproductive health of the study population. The mean age of the respondents is 30.5 years, with 80 per cent of them belonging to 24-49 year age group. Most of the (70 per cent) of the
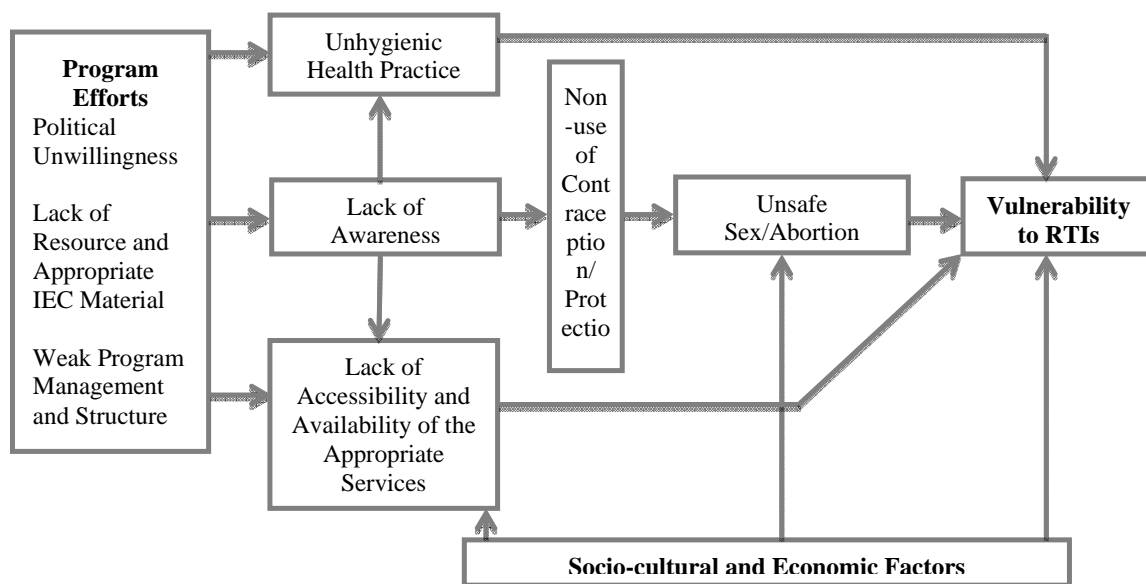
Figure 1. Conceptual Hierarchical of the Vulnerability Assessment for RTIs

respondents belonged to the Muslim religious belief and only 30 per cent to the Hindu religion. Illiteracy is very high among the respondents, 83 per cent of the respondents were illiterate, of which 93 per cent belonged to Muslim religious belief. Only 13 per cent of the respondents lived in joint family, 87 per cent lived in nuclear family. The mean age at marriage among the respondent is 16.0 years. The mean household size is 6.7, much higher than the national average of 4.9 in rural areas as per NFHS-III report (2005-06).

Table 1

Summary Result of the Descriptive Analysis

Factors	Muslim (n = 210)	Hindu (n = 90)	Total
Age Structure of the Respondents'			
15-24 yrs	46 (21.90 %)[*]	14 (15.6%)	60 (20%)
25-34 yrs	93 (44.29 %)	46 (51.1%)	139 (46.33%)
35-49 yrs	71 (33.81%)	30 (33.3%)	101 (33.67%)
Educational Status			
Illiterate	197 (93.81%)	54 (60.22%)	251 (83.66%)
Literate	13 (6.19%)	36 (39.78%)	49 (16.34%)
Family Types			
Nuclear	177 (84.3%)	84 (93.3%)	261 (87%)
Extended/Joint	33 (15.7%)	06 (6.7%)	39 (13%)
Age at Marriage			
Below 18 yrs	183 (87.14%)	56 (62.2%)	239 (79.7%)

Above 18 yrs	27 (12.86%)	34 (37.8%)	61 (20.3%)
Types of House			
Katcha	56 (26.7%)	17 (18.9%)	73 (24.3%)
Pucca	154 (73.3%)	73 (81.1%)	227 (75.7%)
Menstrual Hygiene (using protection)			
Yes	50 (23.8%)	89 (98.8%)	139 (46.3%)
No	160 (76.2%)	1 (1.2%)	161 (53.7%)
Ever Used any Contraception			
Yes	09 (04.3%)	43 (47.7%)	52 (17.3%)
No	201 (95.7%)	47 (52.3%)	248 (82.7%)
Number of Pregnancy			
Less than two	25 (11.9%)	11 (11.4%)	36 (12%)
Two and five	99 (47.1%)	62 (68.8%)	161 (53.7%)
Six and eight	67 (31.9%)	16 (17.7%)	83 (27.7%)
Nine and above	19 (9.1%)	01 (1.1%)	20 (6.6%)
Place of Delivery*			
Home	196 (93.33%)	73 (81.1%)	269 (89.7%)
Institution	05 (6.77%)	15 (16.7%)	20 (6.7%)
Non-live Birth**			
Yes	64 (30.4%)	20 (22.2%)	84 (28%)
No	119 (56.7%)	61 (67.8%)	180 (60%)
RTIs Awareness			
Yes	46 (21.9%)	47 (52.3%)	93 (31%)
No	164 (78.1%)	43 (47.7%)	207 (69%)
Self-reported Symptom of RTIs			
Yes	156 (74.3%)	62 (68.9%)	218 (72.7%)
No	54 (25.7%)	28 (31.1%)	82 (27.3%)
HIV/AIDS Awareness			
Yes	25 (12.4%)	39 (43.3%)	64 (21.3%)
No	184 (87.6%)	51 (56.7%)	235 (78.7%)

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Values in parentheses are percentages.
*3.6% of the respondents have not had their first (1st) delivery.
**12% of the respondents did not respond.

Majority of the respondents (75.6 per cent) lived in *pucca*houses (house made with high quality materials throughout, including the floor, roof, and exterior walls, is called *pucca* house) and only 17 per cent lived in *kutcha*house (house made from mud, thatch, or other low-quality materials is called *kutcha*house). More than 50 per cent of the respondents owned land and 97 per cent had their husbands as the main earning members.

Almost all the respondents (99 per cent) reported regular menstrual cycle; only three respondents reported irregular menstruation. More than half (53.7 per cent) of the respondents did not use any protection during the menstrual cycle; 99 per cent of them belonged to the Muslim religion. A significant number (62.2 per cent) of the respondents did not take bath during the menstrual cycle.

Awareness about contraception is practically universal, 99 per cent of respondents reported to have the knowledge of one or more methods of contraception. Only 30 per cent of the respondents were aware of birth control spacing methods. 17.3 per cent of the respondents have ever used any family planning method of which 82.7 per cent belonged to the Hindu religion and 17.3 per cent belonged to the Muslim religion. Female sterilization (*tubectomy*) is the most common method adopted by the respondents in the study area.

The mean number of children ever born to women aged 15-49 years is 4.1 percent. Only 21.5 per cent of the respondents have received antenatal check-ups during pregnancy whereas, 93 per cent of the deliveries had taken place at home, only 7 per cent at hospital or at health facilities. Prevalence of RTIs was reported more among the respondents who had delivery at home (75.1 per cent) compared to those who had delivery in the hospital (55 per cent). A significant number of the respondents (32 per cent) reported a still birth, miscarriage or abortion in their lifetime.
About 72.6 per cent of the respondents reported symptoms of one or more RTIs, the most common self-reported symptom being vaginal discharge and swelling in the genital area. Some women also reported a genital ulcer which is a STD. Prevalence of self-reported symptoms of RTI was higher (47 percent) among women in the 25-34 years age group.

Only 31 per cent of the respondents were aware about RTIs. Awareness about HIV/AIDS amongst the respondents is also very low. Hereby, 21 percent of the respondents have heard about HIV/AIDS whereas, only 19 per cent of the respondents were aware of all the modes of transmission of HIV/AIDS.

Of the 72 per cent of the women who reported symptoms of RTIs, 70 percent of the women did not seek any treatment for the problems from any healthcare provider. Most of the respondents (66.6 per cent) utilized home remedies to treat the infections. Only, 23 per cent of the respondents consulted specialists and 15.7 per cent sought treatment from the PHC.

Bivariate analysis
Bivariate analysis shown in Table 2 indicates statistically significant association among educational level, age at marriage and presence of self-reported symptoms of RTIs. A higher percentage of illiterate women reported symptoms of RTIs than literate women (p <.05) (see Figure 2). More women who were married before 18 years reported RTIs symptoms than those married after 18years of age (p < .05) (Figure 3).

Table 2

Summary Result of the Bivariate Analysis

Factors	Without RTI (n = 81)	With RTI (n = 217)	Chi Square (x^2)	*P*- value
Educational Status				
Illiterate	57 (70.37%)	193 (88.94%)	15.052	< .001
Literate	24 (29.63%)	24 (11.06%)		
Age at Marriage				
Below 18 years	53 (64.63%)	185 (85.25%)	15.581	.001
Above 18 years	29 (35.37%)	32 (14.75%)		
Place of Delivery*				
Home	67 (82.7%)	202 (93.08%)	3.878	.049
Institution	09 (11.2%)	11 (5.07%)		
RTIs Awareness				
Yes	35 (43.2%)	58 (26.73%)	7.201	.007
No	46 (56.8%)	159 (73.27%)		

Source: Field Survey, 2012

*6.1% of the respondents did not respond who hadn't RTIs; 1.75 of the respondents also hadn't respond who having RTIs

Place of delivery and awareness about RTIs has statistically significant association with presence of self-reported symptoms of RTIs among the study population. A higher number of women delivering at home reported symptoms of RTIs than those who had delivery in the institutional setting (p = .049) (Figure 4). Lack of awareness about the infection had a significant association with presence of the self-reported symptoms. A higher percentage of women who were not aware about RTIs reported symptoms of RTIs than those who were aware, which is also statistically significant (p < .05) (Figure 5). However no association was found between menstrual hygiene, contraceptive usage, age at first pregnancy, non- live birth and RTIs presence.

Discussion

Almost two third (72.6 per cent) of the women reported one or more symptoms of RTIs, the finding is statistically significant. This finding corroborates the finding from other studies, such as Aggarwal *et al.,* (1999), on RTIs among married women of reproductive age having at least one child who were living in slums of Khulna City.

In another study, Nandan *et al.,* (2002) also found that majority of women with RTIs/STDs were having vaginal discharge. The high prevalence of such diseases among the slum dwelling married women of Khulna City can be attributed to illiteracy, early age at marriage, lack of awareness and inaccessibility of healthcare system.
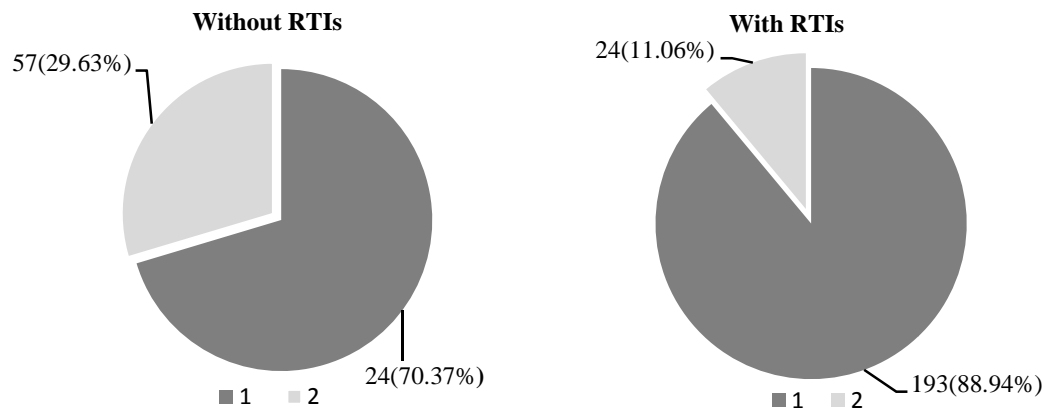
Without RTIs

57(29.63%)

24(70.37%)

■ 1   ■ 2

With RTIs

24(11.06%)

193(88.94%)

■ 1   ■ 2

Figure 2

Education and Self-reported Symptoms of RTIs

A higher percentage of illiterate married women reported symptoms of RTIs than literate women, which is statistically significant ($p < .001$). Pawanarkar and Chopra (2004), in his study also reported a higher prevalence of lower rate of RTIs among illiterate women. Nandan *et al.,* (2002) also had similar findings where prevalence was highest among the illiterate group and that gradually diminished with the improvement of literacy status. In Bangladesh, girls are sent both to formal school and *Madarasa* for religious education; however most of them get dropped from the formal schooling before or on completion of primary level of education.
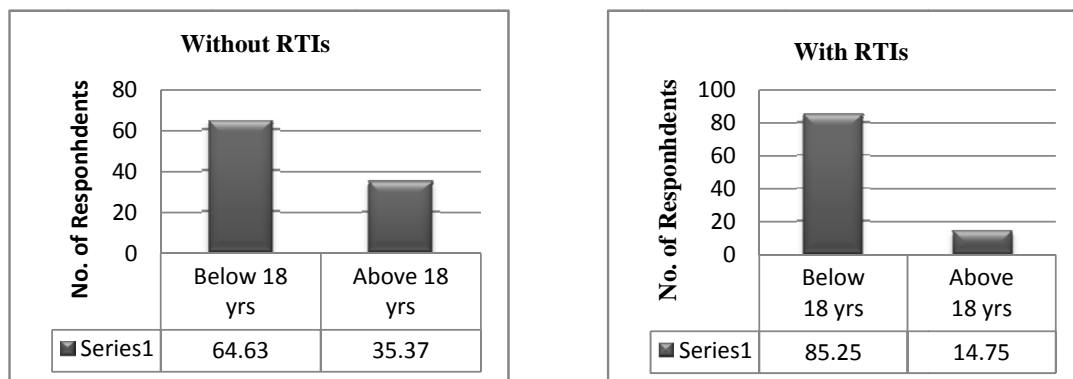
Without RTIs

No. of Responhdents	Below 18 yrs	Above 18 yrs
■ Series1	64.63	35.37

With RTIs

No. of Responhdents	Below 18 yrs	Above 18 yrs
■ Series1	85.25	14.75

Figure 3

Age at Marriage and Self-reported Symptoms of RTIs

The main reasons for dropping out ranges from cultural beliefs to lack of separate higher level schooling facility within the vicinity of the village, *"the girl attains maturity after 8th grade and our*

society does not find it appropriate for the girl to go out of house; girls should not be educated more; cultural beliefs does not approve" (from FGD of men from slum named *Basto Hara*at Khulna City).

High percentage of women living in nuclear family was (90.4 per cent) suffered with RTIs than those living in joint family (9.6 per cent). Higher percentage of respondents living in *pucca* house (78 per cent) reported to be suffering from RTIs than those living in *kutcha* house. The high incidence of RTIs among the respondents living in nuclear family and living in *pucca* house can be attributed to unhygienic in their way of living and lack of awareness about reproductive health and hygiene. A study by Chellan (2004) indicated that women living in *kutcha* houses reported more symptoms of RTIs which is not same as the present findings. So, these findings require further exploration to understand the reasons.
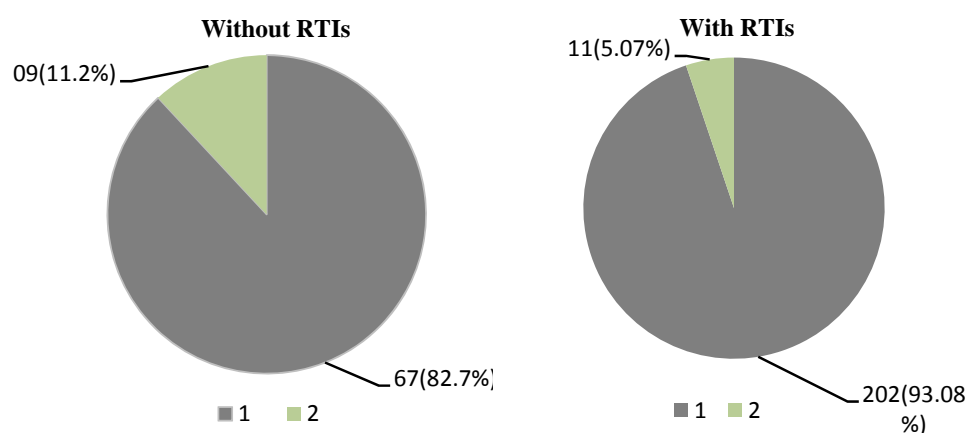

Figure 4

Place of Delivery and Self-reported Symptoms of RTIs

Prevalence of RTI symptoms was higher among women in the 25-34 years age group. However, statistically the age of respondent did not have significant impact on prevalence of RTIs. This is different than the findings of the study conducted by Nandan *et al.,* (2002) in Agra where association between prevalence of RTIs/STDs and age was found to be statistically significant. Though, in the same study approximately half of the symptom-positive women (48 per cent) were in the age group of 25-34 years. Majority of the study population were Muslim (70 per cent) with higher prevalence (71.6 per cent) compared to Hindu community (68 per cent). This was similarly observed in another study conducted by *Ram et al.,* (2006) where majority of subjects studied were Muslims and prevalence of RTIs was also observed highest among them.
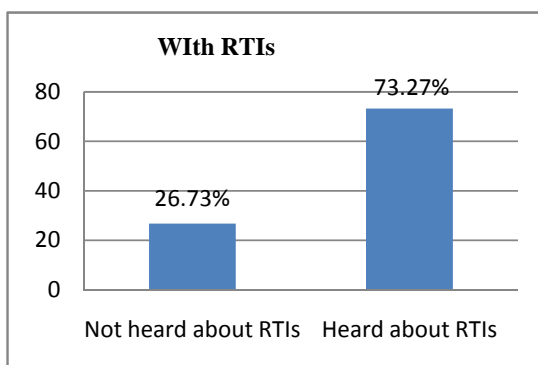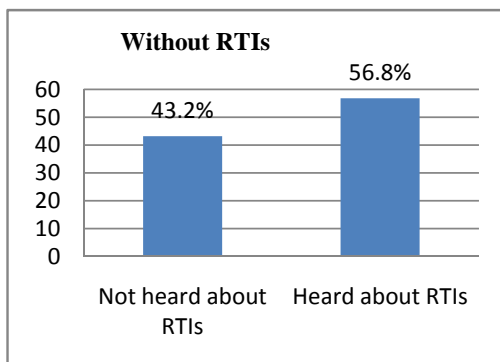
Without RTIs

WIth RTIs

Figure 5

RTIs Awareness and Self-reported Symptoms of RTIs

More than half of the married women having at least one child did not use any protection during the menstrual cycle. However, bivariate analysis does not indicate any statistically significant relationship between menstrual hygiene and presence of RTIs symptoms. This is different from findings of another study where direct correlation between menstrual hygiene and RTIs prevalence has been indicated. The main reason for not using any protection cited by the women is that religion prohibits them from using any form of protection. Another reason reported was that use of protection leads to increased body heat which affects sex life. Those who reported using protection mainly use cloth.

Contraceptive prevalence among the slum dwelling individual of Khulna City is very low as found in this study that only 17.3 per cent of the married women have ever used any family planning method at any time in their life. The main reason behind the low prevalence is religious beliefs among the Muslims. A study conducted by Khan (1974) among Muslim couples in Bangladesh also revealed similar pattern, that is, less acceptance of family planning due to religion. Female sterilization (*tubectomy*) is the most common method, which most women adopt only after completion of desired family size followed by three other spacing methods. 72 per cent of the women have undergone sterilization, of which 78 per cent of women (29/37) have self-reported symptoms of RTIs, however statistically there is no association between contraceptive usage and self-reported symptoms of RTIs. This is different to the finding of a study conducted on RTIs/STIs among women in Khulna City, where 30 per cent of the women who had undergone *tubectomy* reported RTIs Prevalence of other contraception methods of birth control pills, condoms, IUD (copper T) is also very low.

Mothers, who were younger than 20 years of age at the time of first birth, were associated with a 1.7 times higher neo-natal mortality rate and 1.6 times greater infant mortality rate than mothers having first child between 20 and 29 years (NFHS-III, 2005-06).In the slums of Khulna City, the mean number of children born to women aged 15-49 years is 4.1, much higher than national average of 2.9 (NFHS-III, 2005-06). The mean number of children born increases steadily with age, reaching a high of 3.9 children for all women aged 25-34 years and 6.1 children for women in the age group of 35-49 years. A cross-sectional survey conducted in Karnataka state of India has also indicated similar findings where age at first pregnancy has relation with RTIs (Bhatia *et al.,* 1997). The mean age at first pregnancy is 18.2 yrs, 61.8 per cent of women who had their first pregnancy after 18 yrs of age reported symptoms of RTIs. A significant percentage (77.4 per cent) of the respondents experiencing non-live birth reported symptoms of RTIs. The high

prevalence of non-live birth can be attributed to the fact that the women are made to undertake too much of physical labor, both at home and at agricultural field.

Higher percentage of women (75.1 per cent) delivering at home reported symptoms of RTIs than those who had delivery at an institution (55 per cent) and statistically significant association was found between the place of delivery and presence of self-reported symptoms of RTIs. This corroborates the findings of Bhawsar *et al.,* (2005) conducted in Punjab state in India, where the women who delivered at home had higher odds of reporting RTIs than those who delivered at a health facility. The reason can be lack of safe delivery practices by the untrained traditional midwives or family members who perform the delivery.

Socio-cultural reasons prevent exposure to any media source in Khulna City which can be reason for lack of awareness about RTIs and reproductive health. Also, the poor health service in the study area contributes to the lack of knowledge as women ignore the symptoms or go for self-treatment. Statistically significant association was also found between lack of awareness about RTI and self-reported symptoms of RTIs. A higher percentage of women (77.3 per cent) who were not aware of RTIs reported symptoms of RTIs than those who were aware (62.4 per cent).

Of the women who reported symptoms of RTIs, 70 per cent did not seek any treatment for the problems from any healthcare provider. Most of the women (66.6 per cent) adopted home remedies like taking solution of '*Henna'*, '*Multani Mitti'* (Fuller's earth), leaves of '*NeemTree'* (*Melia Azdirachta*), various ayurvedic roots, and so on, as treatment for RTIs. These findings clearly indicate that majority of women silently suffer without seeking advice or treatment. Gaash *et al.,* (2004) in their study conducted in Kargil area in India also revealed that 77.3 per cent of women who had symptoms pointing to RTIs did not seek any treatment for their problems. NFHS-II (1998–99) also found out that, among women who reported any reproductive tract problem, 64 per cent had not seen anyone for advice or treatment. The Muslims have deep faith on the *Hakims* (traditional medical practitioners) practicing in the area and visit health facilities only when variety of other options like home remedies, treatment through quacks, hakims, and so on, have been tried and have failed. The stigma and taboos attached to the infection can be seen as the main reason for not consulting doctors or health specialist. Another reason for not seeking any treatment at the government or private medical facility is that no gynecologist or lady doctor is available in the area. Most women respondents shared that they would prefer to consult with female physicians as they feel shy in being examined by a male health provider. In Bangladesh, due to lack of infrastructure and resources, the care and treatment is not good in government facilities which prevent people from seeking treatment there.

Factors behind RTIs/STDs epidemic in Bangladesh

Here, the following secondary data depicts the several underlying factors behind RTIs or STDs epidemic as it is termed as silent killer for women in reproductive age. In Bangladesh, about half of the populations live in absolute poverty in a way that one person earns one dollar a day or less. The economic vulnerability leads people to migrate inside and outside the country to earn money. The Bangladesh economy relies on more than 1.5 million migrant workers, including truck drivers, businessmen and laborers (PANOS 1997). About 75,000 Bangladeshi go abroad every year for employment (Chowdhury *et al.,* 1996). These migrants who spend much of the year away from their families are known to engage in risky sexual behavior as they have no knowledge about safe sex. The 'safe sex' is a practice, which protects people not from conception rather from spread of STDs.

Poverty as well as family pressure to maintain livelihood forces many women into commercial sex. There are more than 100,000 commercial sex workers in Bangladesh (PANOS, 1997). Some studies report that each commercial sex worker has an average of four to six clients each day. This means that every day in Bangladesh, over half a million men pay for sex (UNAIDS, 1997). The most frequent visitors to prostitutes are businessmen, students, rickshaw pullers, truck drivers and foreign tourists (NAC, 1990). Several studies have shown that a marked increase of STDs and HIV infection has occurred in this population over the past few years (Dey, 1994). Neither they have any knowledge about the disease, its transmission and prevention nor do they practice safe sex (PANOS, 1997).

Though Bangladesh is a conservative country, polygamy is not uncommon here. Besides the migrants and CSWs, these practices are going on by the general people under the blanket of a blissful innocence both in rural and urban areas. For example, in one study, it was found that about half of the young men have had premarital sex, while the level was somewhat lower for females because of greater social control and greater disgrace for themselves and their families if discovered, risk of pregnancy, doomed prospect of good marriage, and much earlier age at marriage (Aziz and Maloney, 1985; Naved, 1996). Unmarried men are most likely to have sexual relations with unmarried kin because they find it hard to know other girls, but sometimes also with married brother's wife (Aziz and Maloney 1985). Khan and Arefeen (1992) point out that professional prostitute is usually unavailable in the rural areas, and rural men who go to prostitute almost always do so when visiting the larger urban areas. It is easier for a married man to indulge in sex with a number of women with less social risk. Why and in what circumstances men practice extramarital sex? If the wife is sick (includes sickness due to menstruation or childbirth), ugly looking, pretty but cannot satisfy her husband, a man may go to other women (Naved, 1996). However, these findings report a number of occurrences, especially in cases where the husband

is away from home for extended period of time (Aziz and Maloney 1985; NAC 1990). These people are also practicing unsafe sex as the condom use rate is very low (3.8%) (PANOS, 1995). In summary, even if there are some discussions, the above stated factors indicate that the country is not totally out of danger for an explosive outbreak of RTI/STD and HIV/AIDS as well.

Conclusion

This exploratory study provides preliminary information about RTIs among the slum dwelling married women in Khulna City, Bangladesh. The high incidence of self-reported symptoms of RTIs among the women in Khulna City is attributed to high incidence of illiteracy, early age at marriage, poor health practices and lack of awareness about RTIs/STIs. This calls for an immediate need for a community-based integrated intervention in the study area. Women need accurate health education about reproductive health to reduce stigma of RTIs and to enhance health-seeking behavior. So, at the very outset, the magnitude of the problem of RTIs is a growing public health problem in developing countries, like Bangladesh, which require immediate attention from the policy makers and service providers. Here, the health services should also be made more accessible so that women feel comfortable in seeking treatment and are not deterred by concerns over privacy and confidentiality.

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