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FAITH-BASED ORGANISATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF *MARKAZOSSHABAB AL-MUSLIM FIL FILIBBIN* IN LANAO DEL SUR

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the contribution of faith-based organisations in social development with special reference to *Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin*. It is geared towards finding out the factors that led to the formation of *Markazosshabab al Muslim fil Filibbin* in the Philippines and its values and principles upon which it was established. This study serves as a contribution to the study of faith-based organisations and social development and the role of democracy in this. Furthermore, it hopes to find out how these values and principles, upon which *Markazosshabab* is established, shape its outlook and define the type of developmental activities and programmes it pursues in the Philippines. Then, the implementation of these developmental activities is addressed. It is also equally important to figure out the nature of the relationship between the *Markazosshabab* and the Philippine government. This research has mainly administered interviews as the main source of data complemented by documents, theses, magazines and reports and a thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. The findings of this study reveal that the main factor that led to the formation of the *Markazosshabab* was a religious one. It is Islam that triggered the foundation of this organisation. *Markazosshabab* was founded on Islamic tenets in which its guiding principles are evident in its organisational objectives and mission. By that, all of its programmes and activities are based upon these objectives rooted in Islamic values and principles. However, this organisational sphere of influence is limited. Though it has spread to other places in the Philippines, its main area of concentration is the Meranao people. This is due to some factors and challenges it faces in implementing and widening its activities and programmes. Also, it is found out through this study that there is an existing relationship between the *Markazosshabab* and the Philippine government and this is in the form of cooperation and coordination. The findings of this study further reveal that the existence of Islamic organisations such as the *Markazosshabab*, is allowed because of the democratic system of government and the objectives of *Markazosshabab* that support governmental programmes. Indeed, faith-based groups such as *Markazosshabab* is a potential partner of the Philippine government in realising social development. Lastly, this study would like to propose a future study that is built on the same assumptions and to conduct additional research which include other stakeholders of this organisation since this study is limited to executive members only.

ملخص البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف إلى مساهمة المؤسسات الدينية في التنمية المجتمعية وتركز على "مركز الشباب المسلم في الفلبين"، وهي موجهة نحو استكشاف العوامل التي أدت إلى تأسيس "مركز الشباب المسلم في الفلبين"، وكذلك القيم والمبادئ التي تأسس عليها. تمثل هذه الدراسة بادرة مساهمة في دراسة المنظمات الدينية، والتنمية الاجتماعية، ودور الديمقراطية فيهما. وعلاوة على ذلك، فإنها تأمل في معرفة كيف أن هذه القيم والمبادئ التي أنشئ عليها "مركز الشباب"، تشكل آفاقه وتحدد نوع الأنشطة التنموية، والبرامج التي يسعى إلى تنفيذها في الفلبين، ثم طريقة تنفيذها. كما كان من المهم أيضاً معرفة طبيعة العلاقة بين "مركز الشباب" والحكومة الفلبينية. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة على المقابلات كمصدر رئيس لجمع المعلومات، واستكملها من الوثائق، والأطروحات، والمجلات، والتقارير. كما استخدم التحليل الموضوعي لتحليل البيانات. توصلت الدراسة إلى أن العامل الديني والعاطفة تجاه الإسلام كان هو العامل الرئيس الذي أدى إلى تأسيس "مركز الشباب". وقد عكست أهدافه التنظيمية ورسالة المبادئ الإسلامية التي تأسس عليها، واعتمدت جميع برامجه وأنشطته على هذه الأهداف المتجذرة في القيم الإسلامية ومبادئها. ولكن يبقى مجال النفوذ التنظيمي للمركز محدودا. وبالرغم من أن المركز أراد تركيز انشطته وبرامجه على شعب الميراناو، إلا أنه انتشر إلى مناطق أخرى، ولكن ظل مجال التأثير المؤسسي له محدوداً بسبب العوامل والتحديات التي واجهت تنفيذ برامجه وتوسيعها. كما كشفت هذه الدراسة وجود علاقات تعاون وتنسيق بين "مركز الشباب" والحكومة الفلبينية. ومن النتائج المهمة التي كشفت عنها هذه الدراسة أيضاً هي أن وجود المؤسسات الإسلامية مثل "مركز الشباب" مسموح به بسبب وجود نظام ديمقراطي للحكم في الفلبين، وبسبب أن أهداف "مركز الشباب" تدعم البرامج الحكومية. كما تشكل المؤسسات الدينية مثل "مركز الشباب" في الحقيقة شريكاً محتملاً للحكومة الفلبينية من أجل تحقيق التنمية المجتمعية. وأخيراً، تقترح هذه الدراسة عمل المزيد من الدراسات

المستقبلية التي تبني على الافتراضات نفسها، وإجراء بحوث إضافية تشمل شركاء المصلحة الآخرين في هذه المنظمة؛ لأن هذه الدراسة تقتصر على الأعضاء التنفيذيين فقط.

APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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This work is profoundly inspired by and dedicated to my late father whose works and legacy are felt and enjoyed by many including me

Aleem Mohammad Qassem Tarusan

To my mother whom I believed that I am being enveloped by the mercy and protection of Allah throughout this journey because of her prayer, support and blessings

Sahirah H. Isah

To All my family members and relatives who believe in me

To all youths and individuals who dedicate their lives to bring goodness to society

To the Muslim Ummah

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
COMELEC	Commission on Election
CNEA	Citizens's National Electoral Assembly
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CUBCP	Catholic Ulama Bishops Conference of the Philippines
DepEd	Department of Education
DRE	Direct Recording Electronic Devices
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
FBO	Faith-based Organisation
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IID	Initiatives for International Dialogue
KMP	Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
NAMFREL	National Movement for Free Elections
NCCP	National Council of Churches in the Philippines
NCMF	National Commission on Muslim Filipinos
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSCB	National Statistics Coordination Board
OMA	Office on Muslim Affairs
PPCRV	Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting
PVO	Private Voluntary Organizations
PPOC	Provincial Peace Council
RRM	Rural Reconstruction Movement
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
ULP	Ulama League of the Philippines

CHAPTER ONE

MARKAZOSSHABAB AL-MUSLIM FIL FILIBBIN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: A GENERAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The ascendance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as critical components of social development in contemporary world is closely tied to the triumph of the liberal ideology after the Cold War. In fact, one of the fallouts of this liberal triumphalism is the economic deregulation which has created a vacuum between what the state provides and the expectations of its citizens. This economic deregulation was a by-product of the peculiar macroeconomic and political conditions of the late 1970s[1]. As a result, many organisations including faith-based or religiously-inclined ones began to emerge with the purpose of complimenting the role of the state, especially in the areas of public services and advocacy. Extensive academic interest into this trend started in the late 1980s when the NGOs began to assume centre stage in both developed and developing states. The NGOs generally tend to have people-centred approach towards development and social services. According to Korten, NGOs are created to expand the capacities of people.[2] The World Bank defines NGO as any "private organisation that pursues activities to relieve suffering, promotes the interest of the poor, protects the environment, provides basic social services, or undertakes community development".[3] There is a growing consensus that NGOs have become

[1] Peltzman, Sam, "TheEconomic Theory of Regulation after a Decade of Deregulation", *Brookings Papers, Microeconomics 1989,* https://web.archive.org/web/20160304092837/http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Projects/BPEA/1989%20micro/1989_bpeamicro_peltzman.PDF (Accessed 13 May 2017)
[2] Korten DC, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and Global Agenda*, (West Hartford, Conn: Kumarian Press, 1990).
[3] Anup Shah, "Non-governmental Organizations on Development Issues", *Global Issues*, http://www.globalissues.org (Accessed 29 May 2013).

partners in the pursuit of social development. For instance, Pieterse notes that NGOs play "key roles on the ground and in development co-operation. This success reflects not only the strength of NGOs and grassroots politics but also the 1980s' roll-back of the state, the advance of market forces and the breakdown of regulation".[4]

Closely related to the emergence of NGOs as agents of development, is the role which religion plays in these organisations. In recent years, attention has been shifted to the role of religion and development. Debates and discussions mount concerning the link between these two variables. Traditionally, religion is often associated with retrogressive practices that hamper, rather than promote development. Due to this factor, it is not surprising that the forces of colonialism have tried hard to ensure the secularisation of their colonised territories. The rationale for this is quite simple to fathom. In their view, modernisation with its liberalising principles could not really occur in religiously inclined societies. Consequently, religion is separated from public life and becomes confined to rituals and incantations. However, events that followed closely the period of decolonisation in Asia and parts of the world seriously challenged the centrality of modernisation theories in facilitating development. Decolonised societies have failed to transform despite heavy doses of modernising structures. This shows two inter-related developments in these societies. First, the mushrooming of NGOs that seeks within the liberal environment, compliment the state in discharging its responsibilities. Second, related to this is the resurgence of religion in the development discourse in these states. Faith-based organisations (FBOs) are increasingly becoming more visible as partners in the push

[4] Jan Nederveen Pieterse, My Paradigm or Yours? Alternative Development, Post Development, Reflexive Development, *Development and Change*, 29, (1998): 344

for development in these states.[5] In World Bank directory, there are estimated 387 recognised FBOs of differenct faiths.[6] Those are only FBOs registered officially in the World Bank data-base of national and international character such Habitat for Humanity, Muslim Aid, Lutheran World Relef, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief, among others.

These developments are leading to initiatives that integrate religion as important driver of development especially in the developing countries. For instance, during his tenure at the World Bank, James Wolfensohn created the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) which examines the involvement of faith institutions in dialogue and action on poverty.[7] Marshall remarks that religious organisations possess resources and strength, depth of commitment to fighting poverty, community trust and direct involvement in community work, largely focusing on healthcare and education.

In constitutionally secular states such as the Philippines, the role of religion as a positive driver of social change is not wholly lost to the authorities. Churches and other faith communities that work in areas of poverty eradication, healthcare, education and other forms of social services are visible and vibrant. In fact, there are several existing legal instruments that aim to protect these types of organisations and at the same time maintain a harmonious relationship with the state. For instance, Article III, Section 5 of the Philippine's Constitution states that while respecting religious freedom, it requires these types of organisations to register with the

[5] Clarke, Gerald, "Faith-Based Organizations and International Development: An Overview, in *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Seculars*, edited by Clarke, Gerald and Jennings, Michael, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 19.

[6] "Directory of Faith-Based Organizations", <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/PARTNERS/EXTDEVDIALOGUE/0,,contentMDK:22363829~pagePK:64192523~piPK:64192458~theSitePK:537298,00.html> (Accessed 1 July 2016)

[7] *Religion and International Development* <,http://www.pewforum.org/2006/03/06/religion-and-international-development/> (accessed 21 June 2014)

Securities and Exchange Commission and the Bureau of Internal Revenue in order to be granted tax-exemption status.[8]

Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin (Philippine Muslim Youth Centre) is an example of FBO partnering with the government of the Philippines in order to promote development. With focus in the areas of poverty alleviation, youth and women empowerment, and job-creation through literacy and education campaign, environmental and energy conservation, health and social services, information and public relations, peace and inter-faith dialogue, electoral reforms and good governance advocacy, infrastructure and construction of projects, this organisation has been very active for about three decades in Lanao del Sur, a mostly Muslim-majority part of the Philippines. *Markazosshabab* was registered by the government of the Philippines as an NGO under the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1983. Its declared goals include promoting moral and spiritual uprightness, providing basic services to the people, enjoining what is lawful and forbidding what is harmful, respecting the basic rights and duties of man to others, his society, the environment, and to God Almighty.[9]

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of *Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin*, as a faith-based non-governmental organisation. The organization is formed on the basis of Islamic values and principles. Its base is in operating in Lanao del Sur in the Philippines. The main objective of this NGO is to promote social development. Specifically, using this organisation as the case study, this research is interested in

[8] *Philippines 2012 International Religious Freedom Report*, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/208472.pdf.> (accessed 24 April 2014)
[9] Magazine of Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin in its 30th anniversary.

examining how faith-based non-governmental organisations, founded on certain defined values and principles, promote social development through conceiving and implementing programs in various areas related to poverty alleviation, access to education, youth and women empowerment in the society. In addition, this research attempts to study *Markazosshabab* activities from 2003 to 2013.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The following reasons are justifications in conducting this research. Firstly, there is a vast literature on the role of NGOs as a critical sector that contributes to development. Attention has shifted to NGOs since the 1980s when they first became prominent as agents of development due to the failure of the state to satisfactorily deliver services to the people. Most of those studies are, however, confined to NGOs in general. Faith-based organisations, as a sub-set, are not given much attention. In the contemporary world, religion has increasingly played a vital role in public sphere. Considerable part of it is directly related to the issue of social development. Scholars are increasingly pushing for a research agenda that focuses on the nexus between religion and development.[10] Therefore, this study takes *Markazosshabab*, a faith-based organisation steeped in Islamic values as its case study. It investigates whether an NGO with Islamic character and outlook, operating on the basis of Islamic values and principles promotes social development.

It is also important to note that the Philippines, besides its higher level of poverty and income inequality, also suffers from a long-standing conflict in the Mindanao which attracts a number of scholarly enquiries as this conflict has, to some

[10] See Rakodi, Carole, A Guide to Analyzing the Relationships Between Religion and Development, Religion and Development Programme, <http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/files/resources module/@random454f80f60b3f4/1315399993_working_paper_67___complete_for_web.pdf> (accessed 13 October 2013)

extent, effects on the development of that country. None of these studies, however, focus exclusively on the role of FBOs in ameliorating tension and resolving the conflict in Mindanao notwithstanding tons of evidence suggesting the positive role played by these types of organisations.[11] The wider implication touches on the question of development, which would not be possible in a community torn by conflict. This investigation, thus, intends to fill this gap by specifically focusing on these types of NGOs and examining the role which they are playing towards the development of the Philippines. Findings of this study is expected to attract another dimension of the role being played by religious NGOs in helping the Philippine government in development programmes especially on social aspects of development. In addition, this study serves as a reference material for future researchers who will undertake similar studies. It can also be used by other Islamic organizations in a secular and democratic state. Lastly, this study is limited to a decade from 2003 to 2013 to examine if there are changes or improvements within this period in terms of policy, programmes and implementation of mission and vision.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine the factors that led to the formation of Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin in the Philippines and the values and principles upon which it was established.

[11] See A Publication of the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network, *Challenges to Human Security in Complex Situations: The Case of Conflict in the Southern Philippines & Human Development Network*, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (Second Edition)

2. To examine how these values and principles shape the outlook of Markazosshabab and also define the type of developmental activities and programmes it pursues in the Philippines.
3. To find out the nature of relationship between the Philippine government and Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin
4. To expose the extent to which development programmes and projects of Markazosshabab are implemented.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What are the factors that led to the formation of *Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin in the Philippines* and what are the values and principles upon which it was established?
2. How do the values and principles upon which Markazosshabab was established shape its outlook and define the type of developmental activities and programmes it pursues in the Philippines?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between the Philippine government and Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin?
4. What is the nature of the development programmes and projects that Markazosshabab implemented?

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

Non-governmental organisations, including their faith-based variants, are part of the wider civil society. Civil society is usually called the third sector since it is different from the state as the first sector and the market as the second sector. Within this third

sector, there are non-profit organisations that seek to build a bridge between the state and the community with emphasis on the welfare of the general public or specific communities. Civil society is defined by Salamon et al., as a sector between the state and the citizens which includes organisations that are "not profit distributing". Furthermore, it is noted that they are "self-governing and voluntary".[12] Faith-based organisations are among the many variants that operate within this space that is called civil society. It is important to note that the concept of faith-based organisations within the wider NGO discourse is developed only recently by researchers and policymakers. This was due to the increasing recognition of the role which religion could play towards development.[13] In this review, attempt is made to examine relevant and related literature that deal with the role of NGOs in promoting development. The review focuses on the role of FBOs in promoting development, and more specifically the nexus between Islamic organisations and development.

1.6.1 Faith-Based Organizations and Development

A number of studies sought to examine the linkage between religion and provision of social services which has role in promoting social development. In separate studies, Moyer et al., and Reese show the role which FBO, as part of the third sector, plays in promoting development among local communities.[14] Using cases from Kenya, Moyer et al., show that FBOs are capable of affecting sustainability through religious and ethical social capital, connectedness to communities, and an integrated approach to

[12] Salamon, L. M., Anheier, H. K., et al, *The emerging sector revisited: A summary*, Center for Civil Society Studies, 1999).1.
[13] *Faith-Based Organizations In Community Development*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research, Foreword.
[14] Moyer J.M. et al., "Working for God and Sustainability: The Activities of Faith-Based Organizations in Kenya", *Voluntas*, Vol.23, (2012).959–992; Laura, Reese A, "A Matter of Faith: Urban Congregations and Economic Development", *Economic Development Quarterly*, vol, 18, no 50 (2004).

development and environment. It is, however, interesting to note that not all researchers share this view. For instance, some analysts argue that FBOs are not a viable alternative to government programmes due to their dependence on funding from government in most cases.[15]

This observation is important since the relationship between FBOs and governments exists in some countries. There are governments with established links to faith-based organisations, while others are not. In a study of the donor policy and practice of the UK's Department for International Development Goals (DFID) in its engagement with FBOs in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Gerard Clarke reveals that collaboration is associated with challenges stemmed from the engrained secular positioning of the concept of development.[16] Examining the contributions of faith-based groups, Peterson finds that religion is a significant motivating factor. He finds that religious NGOs often introduce alternative ways of orienting, organising, and positioning themselves within local communities to facilitate greater grass-root participation in developmental activities.[17] Kniss and Campbell also stress that this observation is fairly accurate, and that variations in religious traditions make very little difference in the size of programme or in the actual programme and activities which these organisations pursue.[18]

What, however, remains fairly indeterminate is whether a relationship between FBOs and the state increases their effectiveness or otherwise. In separate studies,

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[15] Laura A. R., 61

[16] Clarke, Gerard, Agents of Transformation? Donors, Faith-based organizations and international development, *Third World Quarterly*, vol.28, no.1 (2007), 77. See also Hannah Lambie-Mumforda & David Jarvisb, The role of faith-based organisations in the Big Society: opportunities and challenges, *Policy Studies*, vol.33, no.3, 2012.

[17] Marie Juul Peterson, "International Religious NGOs at the United Nations: A Study of a Group of Religious Organization", The Journal of Humanitarian Action and Policy, <https://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/847> (accessed 12 April, 2013)

[18] Fred Kniss and David Todd Campbell, "The Effects of Religious Orientation on International Relief and Development Organization", *Journal for Scientific of Religion*, vol.36, no.1(1997), 102.