

PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

Volume 12, Issue 1
May 2019

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Volume 12, Issue 1
May 2019

Editor:

Dr. Erik Juergensmeyer

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A Study of the Effectiveness of a Youth Peace Education Program

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Keywords: Peace Education, Arts in Peace, Youth Programs

Abstract

Based on the premise that students can be active learners and change makers, rather than passive recipients of knowledge, this study evaluated the effectiveness of the peace education program, READING PEACE PALS, delivered to six-to-nine-year-olds at a Boys and Girls Club. This program infused art, literacy, and community mentorship to teach conflict resolution skills. This study assessed the program's effectiveness by utilizing Kirkpatrick's (2016) model for evaluating training effectiveness and statistically assessed affective, cognitive, and behavioral learning, and the results/impact of peace education to examine perceptions of impacts of youth learning on the community and society. Youth and mentors responded positively to all forms of learning, and the impact of youth learning indicated overall effectiveness. The findings have profound implication for research, training, and practice in peace education as this model program provides evidence that participants perceived that this program has positive impacts on youths' lives, communities, and society.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A YOUTH PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Introduction

Peace education seeks to engage students in becoming active, critically thinking, and contributing members of their local community and the larger global society. From the onset of this article, the authors argue that peace education is best accomplished by giving students the tools, skills, and knowledge to affect positive changes that impact them the most. In a world where media,

technology, and peer groups often address conflict with violence, it is imperative that youth are given alternatives. Therefore, the READING PEACE PALS program incorporated responsible community mentors to assist youth in reading peace-themed books and discussing alternatives to violence and bullying. Because marginalized youth often operate in communities and schools wrought with violence and may feel discomfort when talking openly about their experiences, this program infused creative art in the form of drawings and meaningful song lyrics or poems to engage youth with the topic of peace education and literacy. As Freire (2000) argued, “As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as permanent re-creators” (p. 69), and the hope is that youth will perceive that they can impact society based on their new learning.

This program infused peace education with art, literacy, and conflict resolution and sought to test the effectiveness of the program in relation to Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick’s (2016) conceptualization of effectiveness of a training that includes the following four main components: 1) the reaction toward learning, 2) the acquired knowledge, 3) the new skills that result, and 4) the impact of the learning. These components follow the three domains of learning detailed in Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy of learning. The first component corresponds to affective learning and is popularly linked to Bloom’s notion of learning known as the positive emotions that emerge as learning takes place. The second component aligns with cognitive learning, which Bloom (1956) defined as the process and quantity of knowledge gained, and the third component parallels behavioral or skill learning, which Skinner (1953) defined as the influence learning can have on forming skill and behavior. The fourth and final component refers to impact/results, which Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) defined as “the degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training” (p. 12).

This paper will proceed with a survey of research in peace education and evaluation processes that have been referenced in past research. Next, the quantitative methodological design will be detailed with an overview of the Likert survey that was constructed for this study. The final section will be devoted to reviewing the results of the statistical data analyses that utilized Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to assess learning types and impacts to determine the effectiveness of READING PEACE PALS program detailed in this study.

Literature Review

Peace Education and a Reduction in Violence and Bullying

The definition of peace education depends on the setting, context, and scope of the conflict and the problem that the program seeks to address (Salomon & Nevo, 2002). For the purposes of the READING PEACE PALS program, the working definition of peace education is “the process of teaching people about the threats of violence and strategies for peace” (Harris, 2008, p. 15), which includes teaching “listening, reflection, problem-solving, cooperation and conflict resolution . . . nonviolence, love, compassion and reverence for all life . . . Peace education confronts directly the forms of violence that dominate society by teaching about its causes and providing knowledge of alternatives” (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 9). While traditional education has focused on teaching the basic disciplines of reading, writing, arithmetic, and memorizing information, peace education

seeks to change behavior and prevent violence through the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Harris (1988) argues that “societies are economically, socially, and politically stratified, and that schools reproduce that stratification; so that schools, rather than ameliorating the class divisions which cause structural violence, replicate and reinforce those divisions” (p. 27). In addition, traditional education tends to create peer competition rather than cooperation and collaboration. However, others argue that “[t]he goal of education is to provide individuals with tools that lead to coexistence and the creation of positive interpersonal relationships and solidarity in society” (Majcherova, Hadjuova, & Andrejkovic, 2014, p. 463). In addition, “Schools should be a place where children feel safe and comfortable” (Majcherova, Hadjuova, & Andrejkovic, 2014, p. 463).

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2016), “In 2015, about 21 percent of students ages 12–18 reported being bullied at school during the school year,” which is down from almost 32% in 2007. However, research also shows that youth often do not report bullying that they experience or are witnesses to (Delara, 2012). This is problematic for those who perpetrate or are victimized by bullying because research demonstrates that both victim and perpetrator have a greater chance of involvement in future violence (Ttofi, Farrington, & Loeber, 2012).

While bullying and violence in U.S. schools have been slowly declining (U.S. Department of Education, 2016; Perlus, Brooks-Russell, Wang, & Iannotti, 2014), National Voices for Equality, Education, and Enlightenment (NVEEE, 2016) report that a child is bullied every 7 minutes and that adult intervention occurs 4% of the time, peer intervention occurs 11% of the time and 85% of the time, no intervention occurs. While the decline is reassuring, the incidents of bullying and violence that result in the harm or loss of any youth to suicide or homicide are tragic and unacceptable. For example, cyberbullying, a form of online bullying, threatens youth and “evidence suggests that victimization is associated with serious psychosocial, affective, and academic problems” (Tokunaga, 2009, p. 277). Moreover, bullying and cyberbullying have been linked to suicidal ideation, with victimization being “more strongly related to suicidal thoughts and behaviors than offending” (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010, p. 206).

Cyberbullying through social media, email, text, chat messages, and picture sharing sites and apps poses real threats to youth who are connected to smart phones and online environments, especially since over 97% of U.S. youth have access to the Internet (Tokunaga, 2010). Since, bullying occurs where respected adult presence is lacking (Haber & Daley, 2011), the influx of technology results in youth potentially being subjected to bullying even in the safety of their homes (Mustacchi, 2009). Bullies can operate anonymously and cause greater psychological damage, while victims can feel more alone and vulnerable. Therefore, we must provide youth with skills to manage their emotions and social interactions and teach alternatives to the pattern of meeting violence with violence when they are young

The ability to effectively address violence and bullying at a young age has the potential to free people from the tension, anxiety, and stress that are endemic of aggression and bullying (Majcherova, Hadjuova, & Andrejkovic, 2014, p. 465). Salmivalli (2009) explains that “raising

children's awareness of the role they play in the bullying process, as well as increasing their empathic understanding of the victim's plight, can reduce bullying” (118). Therefore, programs such as the READING PEACE PALS program, are needed in order to uncover the effectiveness of bullying programs as well as attempt to gain insight into children’s perceptions of peace and/or conflict resolution programs.

Mentoring programs are another way of addressing issues of social injustice by offering youth the opportunity to observe alternatives by pairing them with older responsible individuals. In fact, peer mentoring programs in school settings have demonstrated behavioral and well-being improvements (Mentoring and Befriending, 2011). For example, one study led to a 78% increase in bullying awareness among those mentored with 65% learning how to effectively address bullying (Gladson, 2011).

This study recognizes the challenges in current education when it comes to peace education; therefore, the researchers were interested in discovering the role that mentorship may have on promoting literacy and peace education for youth and the impact this learning has on society. From the onset of this study, the interest was to discover if mentorship might provide a systemic approach in teaching youth about peace education while promoting literacy.

Utilization of Art with Children

While many people may not associate the arts in the forms of dance, drama, drawing, film, poetry, storytelling, and others “as conventional forms of conflict resolution . . . They are indeed powerful platforms to promote peace, change and conflict transformation” (Farahat, Goesel, & Georgakopoulos, 2016, p. 37). In fact, the utilization of art with youth has proven successful because youth are able to connect the stories and songs they hear to their lives and surroundings (Barkhordari, et al., 2016, p. 226). Barkhordari et al. (2016), in their literature review on the importance and use of arts-based curriculum in peace education, concluded that “[a]rts education through various methods including visual arts, performing arts, cinema, and music provides different methods for revolutionizing the mind” and that “art is a key to promoting peace in young learners and can facilitate this promotion through emotional and communicative tools, methods, and contents” (p. 220).

Engaging in the arts provides “a momentary space where children can act like children and build confidence through the refinement of a skill such as drawing, writing, rapping, or dancing” (Marie & Williams, 2008, p. 8). In addition,

One of the most powerful protective factors for youth is a caring, supportive relationship with an adult. Trustful relationships with artists offer youth opportunities to enliven hopes and dreams through art and to communicate their fears, problems, and frustrations. CR processes help complex and challenging youth-adult relationships to succeed (Klink & Crawford, 1998, p. 1).

Teri Williams (2011) explains that “[f]or youth, there are often minimal constructive outlets for

expressing concerns regarding violence. Without channels for creative, constructive approaches to conflict issues, youth are often ill-equipped to respond to violence” (p. 11). Although the cycle of violence facing youth has been well documented, “youth often do not have adequate vehicles by which to respond to the violence they encounter. This disempowerment continues to fuel the cycle of conflict” (Williams, 2011, p. 19).

Evaluation of Programs

Evaluation “is natural for human beings. We do it all the time. We collect information, we process it, we give it meaning and a value and we act or react according to it” (Kloosterman, Giebel, & Senyuva, 2007, p. 7). Yet, the relationship between evaluation and peace education has at times been as tumultuous as the relationship between peace education’s place within the hierarchical and power structure of traditional education. Some argue that if peace education enters the realm of general education, it will undoubtedly lose its unique status as fighting for social justice and become a part of the system of dominance and control (Burns, 1981; Galtung, 1985; Haavelsrud, 1976; Jares, 1999). Others argue that peace education must become a part of the common vernacular in order to make the greatest impact on the most people (Wintersteiner, 2015). Similarly, there are those who argue that evaluation in general and evaluation of peace education programs in particular have the potential to cause more harm than good because they argue that the very nature of evaluation ultimately negates the very value the program originally sought to overcome. However, if “transformative agency” inherent in peace education (Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011, p. 221) remains the focal point, peace education programs and philosophy will maintain “its core and distinguishing features” (Brahm, 2006, p. 1).

Until recently, the evaluation of peace education programs has not received adequate attention or scholarly focus (Ashton, 2007; Nevo & Brem, 2002). When evaluation has occurred, it has often been inconsistent (Ashton, 2007) mostly because peace education operates in a multitude of varying contexts and settings with distinct goals and outcomes (Salomon, 2004). Thonon and Ospina (2015) explain that “few peace education initiatives take into account, while defining monitoring or evaluating, the context in which they are developed” (p. 243). Hence, “evaluation needs to assess how the context (the whole) determines a peace education project (the part), but also how a peace education project (the part), has an impact in its context (the whole)” (Thonon & Ospina, 2015, p. 244). The *impacts as well as the specific goals/purposes* of peace education appear to be significant in the assessment of peace education programs; thus, impacts and goal/purposes may be worthwhile to investigate. The current study focuses directly on assessment with these elements.

Antibullying program creators and practitioners, like peace education program creators must be cognizant of the fact that changes might take years (Harris, 2003 – presentation at American Education Research Association Conference) and that by their very nature, these programs are often unpredictable and dynamic (Stave, 2011). Therefore, program creators and organizations must define their “own evaluation practice and tools, respond to external demands, and be prepared to engage in constructive in-depth dialogue about various visions of success” (Felice, Karako, & Wisler, 2015, p. xix).

It appears from the above survey of research that a one size fits all approach is counterintuitive in peace education; therefore, the current authors argue a successful peace education program should not be evaluated by the same yardstick, but rather by purposeful forms of assessments that aim to investigate outcomes that are relevant and meaningful. The current authors take the approach that peace education represents a form of education and in the context of education, the outcome and assessment of effectiveness has widely and popularly relied on learning outcomes (Kearney & Beatty, 2004). In this vein, the established focus on learning outcomes as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of a course or teacher presents a compelling framework for examining the effectiveness of a peace education program and assessing the perceptions of the people who deliver it, such as the mentors in this study.

Research Questions

This study addresses peace education learning and is guided by the main overarching purpose of determining the effectiveness of the READING PEACE PALS peace education program through the following research questions: RQ1: Do youth perceive affective, cognitive, and behavioral learning in relation to this peace education program? RQ2: Do students perceive impact in relation to their learning in this peace education program? RQ3: Are youth and mentor perceptions of impact significant? RQ4: Will the effectiveness of the READING PEACE PALS program be established in this study?

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine if the READING PEACE PALS program would enhance children's perceptions of affective, cognitive, and behavioral learning of literacy, as well as peace education (understood here as teaching them positive conflict resolution skills, and perceived impact on society). This program was created and designed by the first author with funding from a grant intended to address some of the most serious problems being faced by those in the community with the main purpose to improve the quality of life of community members.

Conceptualization of learning outcomes

Affective learning

Bloom (1956) classified affective and cognitive learning as two areas in his original classification of learning, where affective learning denotes the positive emotions that result when learning occurs. The most frequently used measure of affective learning was originated by Andersen (1979) and later modified by Kearney, Plax, and Wendt-Wasco (1985), and has been confirmed and validated in repeated studies (Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 2004). We altered this questionnaire to squarely address youth and mentor perceptions of the READING PEACE PALS program instead of a generic course.

Five questions were given to students and four to mentors to measure their response to affective learning. Students were instructed to respond to the following scales in terms of the READING PEACE PALS program they had just completed. Questions included the following: 1) The behaviors recommended by my mentor were? 2) The topic/content/subject matter read by my

mentor was? 3) The training I received by my mentor was? 4) The skills learned by my mentor were? 5) My mentor was? Mentors were asked to what extent they perceived affective learning for youth in the peace program with questions such as the following: 1) The behaviors stressed in the program for the student have been ... for his/her life? 2) The topic/content/subject matter stressed in the program for the student has been ... for his/her life? 3) The training stressed in the program for the student has been ... for his/her life? 4) The skills in the program for the student have been ... for his/her life? Both youth and mentor questionnaires utilized a seven-point Likert-type scale with the student version response scale using bad-to-good and the mentor questionnaire as worthless-to-valuable.

Cognitive learning

The process and the amount of knowledge gained is cognitive learning. While cognitive learning assessments have been less consistent, a widely-accepted measure consists of student self-reports regarding perceptions of their own learning (Kelley & Gorham, 1988; Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney, & Plax, 1987; Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 2004). Based on the general consensus that cognitive learning can be captured through self-reports of student learning, survey questions were created and constructed that invited youth to self-report their own cognitive learning after having participated in the READING PEACE PALS program. Mentors were asked to share their perceptions of youth cognitive learning by rating the youth they mentored.

Seven questions were given to students and three to mentors to measure perceptions of cognitive learning. A few examples for the student survey are as follows: 1) How much did you learn about effective behaviors from your reading peace pal? 2) How much did you learn that you liked from your reading peace pal? 3) How much did you learn about how to read from your reading peace pal? 4) How much did you learn about peace and conflict from your reading peace pal? Mentors questions consisted of questions such as: 1) How much do you perceive that the student learned from you as a reading peace pal? 2) How much do you perceive that the student learned about how to read from you? 3) How much do you perceive that the student learned about peace and conflict from you? Based on a seven-point Likert-type scale, the student version was labeled as nothing-to-everything and the mentor questionnaire as worthless-to-valuable.

Behavioral learning

Skinner (1953) popularized behavioral learning and discussed how learning can impact behavior. Behavioral learning has often been measured by looking at the degree to which students take another course with the same teacher or if they take similar courses, and if students conform with the behaviors addressed in the class and by the instructor (Kelley & Gorham, 1988; McCroskey et al., 1996). This study utilized a Likert-scale survey based on this conceptualization of behavioral learning.

Four questions were provided to both the students and mentors to measure their response to behavioral learning. To measure behavioral learning, students responded to the following prompts: 1) I will engage in behaviors recommended by my reading peace pal in my life. 2) I will apply the topic/content/subject matter recommended by my reading peace pal. 3) I will use the training I

received in my life. 4) I will use the skills recommended by my reading peace pal in my life. Mentors also responded to the following prompts to assess their perceptions of youth behavioral learning: 1) I perceive that the student will engage in the behaviors recommended by me as a reading peace pal in his/her life. 2) I perceive that the student will use the training she/he received by me as a reading peace pal in his/her life. 3) I perceive that the student will use the skills that I recommended as a reading peace pal in his/her life. Responses ranged from 1 to 7 with seven representing the highest score and 1 the lowest score.

All the Likert-scale surveys utilized in this study were designed and developed by integrating the Kirkpatrick (2016) model of training evaluation to determine effectiveness. Three constructs of learning and impact/results are illustrated in Table 1. We assessed youth and mentor perceptions of the READING PEACE PALS program based on the Kirkpatrick (2016) model.

Effectiveness conceptualized in term of learning outcomes

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) define effective training as “well-received training that provides relevant knowledge and skills to the participants and the confidence to apply them ...” (p. 5). In the learning environment, learning has popularly been connected and associated as an outcome to effectiveness (Gibbons, McConkie, Seo, & Wiley, 2009; Honebein & Honebein, 2015). However, learning outcomes are often caught up in the Instructional Design Iron Triangle (Honebein & Honebein, 2015) of effectiveness, efficiency, and appeal, where effectiveness measures student achievement, efficiency measures the cost and/or student time, and appeal measures continuous student participation (Reigeluth, 1983). A successful instructional method “is defined as the achievement of learning goals and instructional outcomes (effectiveness, efficiency, and appeal)” (Honebein & Honebein, 2015, p. 940).

In addition, Thweatt and Wrench (2015) argue that “affectively learned content should impact multiple aspects of an individual’s life, over time, and thus must be measured in these terms” (p. 499). Additionally, Housley, Gaffney, and Dannels (2015) argue that affective and cognitive learning should not be viewed as separate constructs but should be viewed in tandem. They argue that “sophisticated and thoughtful attention to affective learning could [. . .] teach students how to recognize, be aware of, respond to, value and enact with the world around them” (p. 501). Moreover, Mottet (2015) states that “cognitive and affective learning are so closely connected and interdependent that separating them is an artificial bifurcation that is no longer theoretically valid or empirically supported [. . .] researchers today strongly suggest that cognition and emotion are ‘two sides of the same coin’” (p. 508). Furthermore, Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2015) explain that “knowledge and reasoning divorced from emotions and learning lack meaning and motivation and are of little use in the real world. Simply having the knowledge does not imply that a student will be able to use it advantageously outside of school (p. 5). Mottet (2015) concludes by arguing that “new measures of learning should capture cognitive and emotional processes involved in learning as well as how they interact to impact and are impacted by learning” (p. 509). Lane (2015) argues that

We have the opportunity to triangulate research methods to test and refine instructional

message theories that explain and ultimately predict student transformational learning related to each of the three domains of learning . . . Moreover, if we continue to incorporate advanced quantitative statistical modeling techniques (i.e., hierarchical linear modeling and structural equation modeling) that use nested designs to test our instructional theories, we will be more confident in our results as we reduce random error as well as violations associated with assumptions of independence that frequently occur when we aggregate data across multiple instructors, types of courses, and class times. (p. 514)

Therefore, the three forms of learning and impact/results viewed collectively will determine the effectiveness of a program. This study seeks to uncover if the READING PEACE PALS program increases the perceptions of affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning of literacy for youth and if there are positive impacts.

Reading Peace Pals Mentorship Program

In this mentorship peace education program, mentors paired with one or two children to work on art projects and read a peace-themed book. The art comprised drawings and creating lyrics as creative forms of expression for sight and sound respectively. First, youth were given a choice to draw art or develop lyrics. In the Peace Art activity, youth were asked to contemplate different perspectives of peace and then draw what peace looks like to them. Upon completion of the artwork, mentors asked them about the meaning and importance of their art. Alternatively, some youth chose to compose Peace Lyrics. Children who selected this activity developed song lyrics to address how they would prevent or stop youth violence, or included lyrics to a song about a past bullying incident they witnessed and how they would have resolved the situation.

After integrating peace into the arts, youth and mentors discussed the meaning of their art, how they could apply their creation of art into their lives, and their feelings about peace in the schoolyard, at home, in their communities, and/or in the world. In the last stage of the program, mentors paired with children and each mentor listened to a youth read a book that focused on peace education. All books were pre-selected by the researchers as age appropriate and focused on peace, anti-bullying, and conflict resolution. Mentors assisted youth in reading the book to aid their literacy and concluded by discussing the main contributions of the books. Mentors also asked youth what they could do to make their lives more peaceful and how they could promote peace around them. Following the completion of the Peace Pal Mentorship Program, all mentors and children received Likert surveys to evaluate student learning and outcomes and the effectiveness of the program.

Participants

Sixty-five adult mentors and 110 children from Boys and Girls Clubs participated in the program and were asked to complete the questionnaires. Fifty-six mentors and 95 children returned completed questionnaires. Mentors were recruited through e-mail and invitation throughout the community, and students were recruited through the director of the Boys and Girls Club. All participants filled out consent forms, and minors were required to secure parental consent prior to the start of the study. Participant demographics are displayed in Table 2.

Model

The analysis approach employed structural equation modeling. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a more powerful alternative to multiple regressions (Arminger, Clogg, & Sober, 1995). Advantages of SEM compared to multiple regression include more flexible assumptions (particularly allowing interpretation even in the face of multicollinearity), use of multiple indicators per latent variable, the opportunity of testing models overall rather than coefficients individually, and the ability to test models with multiple dependent variables (Bollen, 1989).

Model Assumptions

Sample Size and Power

SEM is based on covariances that are less stable with small sample sizes. Based on the work of Bentley and Chow (1987), the ratio of five observations to one free parameter is needed.

Multivariate Normality

Multivariate normality was tested using Mardia's coefficient. Mardia's coefficient ($P < 0.05$) indicated non-normal multivariate data. We treated our data as continuous because response scales varied between seven and nine choices; nevertheless, it is common to have a departure from normality when treating ordinal scales as continuous (Hutchinson & Olmos, 1998). Therefore, we used robust standard errors using the method developed by Satorra and Bentler (1988) in our statistical model.

Structural Model Steps

Model Specification

First, the model is specified to describe which relationships are hypothesized to exist or not to exist among observed and latent variables.

Model Identification

SEM's goal is to find the most parsimonious summary of the interrelationships among variables that accurately reflects the associations observed in the data. Both the structural and measurement models are described in this step.

Estimation

After specifying the model, determining that the model is identified is the next goal. Collecting data from a sufficiently large sample of participants and addressing any problems with the data, the researchers were at the point of estimating the model.

Model Fit and Interpretation

Once estimated, the model's fit to the data must be evaluated. The objective is to determine whether the associations among measured and latent variables in the researchers' estimated model adequately reflect the observed associations in the data. For the students, the SEM modeled the latent variables affective, cognitive, and behavioral, along with the demographic measures age, grade level, gender, and race, on the dependent variable "Do you think your learning from the

Reading Peace Pal will impact positive results in your community, society, or world?" For the mentors the SEM used latent variables affective, cognitive, and behavioral, along with the demographic measures age, job, gender and race, on the dependent variable "Do you think your learning from the Reading Peace Pal will impact positive results in your community, society, or world?" The dependent variable was measured on a seven-point scale with higher scores indicating a more positive response.

Additional Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated for each study dimension. Multivariate normality was examined and the demographic variables were included as the following groups: gender, grade level, race, mentor gender, mentor race, and mentor education. The statistical analysis was conducted using R 3.2.2 and LAVAAN. Statistical significance was found at $p < 0.05$, and 95% confidence intervals were presented for measures of effect size.

Results, Data Findings, Analysis, Discussion

The average age of the children was 7.5 (± 0.75), the majority of the students were in the 1st or 2nd grade (69%), there were slightly more boys than girls in the sample (53% to 47%, respectively), and most of the students in the sample identified as African American (75%). The average mentor's age was 36 (± 12.10), 32% of the mentors identified as educators, 87% were female, and 34% were white. Demographics are presented in Table 2. Descriptive results are presented in Table 3.

Student Responses

A total of 95 students returned complete surveys. Using Maria's multivariate test, evidence was found that indicated the data did not conform to the normality assumption, chi-square = 6368, $p < 0.001$. Therefore, the structural equation was modeled using robust standard errors with the Satorra-Bentler adjustment.

The reliability for each construct was calculated using Cronbach's alpha and omega reliability. In addition, the amount of variance extracted for each construct was calculated and reported. Coefficient omega may be a more appropriate index of the extent to which all of the items in a test measure the same latent variable. Both measures of reliability were within an acceptable range (Table 4). The average variance explained for the three constructs ranged from 43% for the cognitive subscale to 57% for the behavioral.

The final structural equation model was statistically significant, and all tests indicate a very stable model: (1) $\chi^2(95) = 196.33$, $p = 0.165$; (2) CFI = 0.913; (3) TLI = 0.901; (4) RMSEA = 0.033 [95% CI: 0.000 to 0.053]. Results are presented in Table 5.

Students responded positively to all items on the survey (Table 5). This indicates that they rated the peace education program favorably. Nevertheless, the final SEM model indicates that adjusting for the covariates age, grade level, gender and race, the behavior measure is the only variable that significantly predicts the Reading Peace Pal program (Table 5) ($R^2 = 0.36$, $P < 0.01$). Interpreting

the standardized parameter estimates indicates that a one-unit change in behavioral score increases the likelihood that students believe the Reading Peace Pal will impact positive results in their community, society, or world by 0.45 of a standard deviation.

Mentor Responses

A total of 56 mentors returned complete surveys. Using Maria's multivariate test, evidence was found that indicated the data did not conform to the normality assumption, chi-square = 1085, $p < 0.001$. Therefore, the structural equation was modeled using robust standard errors with the Satorra-Bentler adjustment.

The reliability for each construct was calculated using Cronbach's alpha and Omega reliability. In addition, the amount of variance extracted for each construct was calculated and reported. The reliability estimates were acceptable for the cognitive and behavioral constructs, but marginal for the affective measure. The average variance explained for the three constructs was good, as it ranged from 42% for the cognitive subscale to 75% for the behavioral.

The final structural equation model was statistically significant and all tests indicate a very stable model: (1) $\chi^2(55) = 97.3, p = 0.359$; (2) CFI = 0.986; (3) TLI = 0.983; (4) RMSEA = 0.029 [95% CI: 0.000 to 0.075]. Results are presented in Table 5.

Mentors also responded positively to all items on the survey (Table 5). This indicates that they were generally pleased with the program. The final SEM model indicates that adjusting for the covariates age, job, gender and race, the cognitive measure and race significantly predict the impact of the Reading Peace Pal program (Table 5) ($R^2 = 0.51, P < 0.01$).

Interpreting the standardized parameter estimates indicates for every one unit increase in cognitive score, the likelihood that mentors believe the Reading Peace Pal will impact positive results in their community, society, or world will increase by 0.48 of a standard deviation. Furthermore, African Americans believed that the results would have less of an impact in their community, society, or world than other racial groups by almost one-half of a standard deviation.

Discussion

Youth and mentors rated the READING PEACE PALS program favorably, yet the final SEM model demonstrates that the behavioral learning component was the most significant as evaluated by youth. In other words, the program had the largest impact on addressing youth-perceived behavioral learning. The findings of this study supported that youth are not just passive actors in their worlds, but they perceive that they can affect change; thus, equipping youth with the skills to enable them to be agents of positive change may very well be fundamental to creating a more peaceful society. Therefore, it is imperative that youth are given the tools and the outlets to "comprehend the problems they face, the reasons why they should invest themselves as agents of change, and a willingness to move forward against the tide to construct practical, sustainable systems for peace" (Williams, 2011, p. 57).

Mentors perceived that the most valuable learning construct was the cognitive measure. In other words, the more knowledge youth gained, the more mentors perceived that the program will

positively impact communities and societies. Interestingly, though all racial groups viewed the program favorably, African American mentors felt the program would have less of an impact than did other racial groups. Without further follow up with these mentors, it is difficult to ascertain why they held this view. However, we must be wary of overgeneralizing this finding and be cognizant that this is only one variable and that all groups perceived the program would have an impact.

The READING PEACE PALS program evaluation clearly demonstrated that both youth and mentors were satisfied with the program and that youth were positively impacted by the READING PEACE PALS program. Therefore, this study clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the peace education program in relation to Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2016) framework for evaluating a training program. This research adds to the growing body of literature on peace education effectiveness as well as the growing body of evidence in research that it is powerful to infuse the arts, literacy, and mentorship within peace education programs to enhance their effectiveness. In the current study, the effectiveness of the program was evidenced in the positive learning outcomes (affective, cognitive, and behavioral) As well as participants' favorable responses as to the perceived benefits of the program.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The strength of the current study is that it points to a positive relationship in peace education with pervasive learning outcomes and impacts/results for society along with a powerful framework inherent in the Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006, 2016) model of training evaluation to analyze the effectiveness of the peace training program. If youths' along with their mentors' perceptions are accurate, then it appears that the findings in this study may very well provide evidence in support of teaching youth the following: 1) learning alternatives to violence at a young age through the acquisition of conflict resolution skills and techniques; 2) taking personal ownership in promoting peace by allowing youth to have a voice to express peace themselves; 3) partnering with mentors who serve as good role models to accompany them on their journey to learn about peace with the added value of learning other vital life skills such as literacy; and 4) becoming positive agents of change in their own lives and within their families, schools, communities, and world. Since the findings pointed to youths' strong perceptions that peace can grow and spread throughout society and create a more peaceful world, it seems to be even more essential that the role of modern society must be "to educate people to have high moral standings, which will benefit their personal lives and all of society. The end of bullying requires people with great senses of responsibility who understand themselves, others and the world in which they live" (Majcherova, Hadjuova, & Andrejkovic, 2014, p. 465).

A limitation of the study could be the number of participants in the study. Ideally it would be beneficial to have more youth populations from various states and countries; however, the goal of this preliminary program was to find evidence that it supported positive finding to further roll out this peace program on a national and international level in the future.

Future Research

This research demonstrates the effectiveness of the READING PEACE PALS program regarding the three constructs of learning as well as the impact/results of the program to add to the growing body of research regarding program effectiveness in peace education programs. In addition, this study adds to the growing body of research that incorporates the use of the arts in peace education and conflict resolution.

Future research could continue to evaluate the relationship between affective, cognitive, and behavioral learning as addressed above. In addition, future research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of peace education programs whose effectiveness is often cloudy due to the dynamic nature and context in which such programs occur as well as the diversity in programs and participants. Moreover, future research could replicate this study with a larger number of participants across several schools or clubs that address marginalized students as well as contexts in which violence is rampant. Furthermore, future research could look at what relationships exist between perceptions of peace education programs and race. Future research could also compare the positive perceptions of peace education programs that incorporate a mentorship component with those that do not to see if mentorship improves peace education in general. Finally, a longitudinal study that tests the true impact of the program would go a long way toward demonstrating the effectiveness of this and similar peace education programs.

Conclusion

This research provided strong evidence that peace education can be significantly impactful when youth learn alternatives to bullying and violence by being empowered to express their conceptualizations of peace with strong mentorship from their communities. This study has profound implications for practice and research in conflict resolution as the findings in this study supported the effectiveness of this peace education program based on the positive impacts in the form of various learning outcomes. Youth along with their mentors perceived that youth can successfully tackle bullying and violence, and perceived that they can be active peace makers and agents of change in their societies. This study illustrates that peace can grow with youth, and it may permeate throughout society and aid in creating a more peaceful world.

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Table 1

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's Model Applied to the Current Study

Step	Question
Step 1: Reaction Assessment	How well did the youth like the learning process? (Affective Learning)
Step 2: Learning Assessment	What did youth learn? (Cognitive Learning)
Step 3: Behavior Assessment	What new skills resulted from the learning process for the youth? (Behavioral Learning)
Step 4: Results Assessment	What are the results/impact of the learning process for the youth? (Impact/Results of Learning)

Table 2*

Participant Demographics

Child Variable	Measure	Count (Percent)
Age	6 – 7 Years Old	42 (44.7%)
	8 – 9 Years Old	52 (55.3%)
Grade	Grades 1 - 2	65 (69.1%)
	Grades 3 - 4	29 (30.9%)
Sex	Male	49 (52.7%)
	Female	44 (47.3%)
Race	African American	70 (75.3%)
	Other	23 (24.7%)
Mentor Variable	Measure	Count (Percent)
Occupation	Education	18 (32.1%)
	Mental Health	7 (12.5%)
	Social Science	6 (10.7%)
	Student	10 (17.9%)
	Other	15 (26.8%)
Sex	Male	7 (13%)
	Female	48 (87%)
Race	African American	18(27.7%)
	Hispanic	14(21.5%)
	White	19(29.2%)

Other	5(7.7%)
No Response	9(13.8%)

* *Note.* Not all participants chose to respond to every demographic question.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (Mean +/- SD)

	Grade			Sex		Race	
	Overall	1-2	3-4	Female	Male	AA	Other
Student							
Impact (N = 95)	6.54 (1.12)	6.45 (1.29)	6.72 (0.59)	6.39 (1.38)	6.65 (0.83)	6.57 (1.31)	6.51 (1.07)
Affective (N = 95)	6.67 (0.80)	6.70 (0.82)	6.55 (0.75)	6.69 (0.58)	6.62 (0.97)	6.75 (0.51)	6.62 (0.88)
Cognitive (N = 95)	6.34 (0.98)	6.37 (0.90)	6.26 (1.16)	6.22 (1.15)	6.42 (0.81)	6.43 (0.58)	6.29 (1.09)
Behavioral (N = 94)	6.53 (0.90)	6.55 (0.94)	6.47 (0.83)	6.59 (0.74)	6.45 (1.04)	6.62 (0.66)	6.48 (0.98)
	Occupation			Sex		Race	
	Overall	Education	Other	Female	Male	AA	Other
Mentor							
Impact (N = 56)	6.19 (0.96)	6.13 (0.93)	6.22 (1.06)	6.10 (0.99)	6.57 (0.79)	6.15 (0.93)	6.33 (1.07)
Affective (N = 56)	6.35 (0.86)	6.03 (1.06)	6.47 (0.74)	6.22 (0.90)	7.00 (0.10)	6.34 (1.02)	6.40 (0.83)

Cognitive (N = 56)	5.38 (1.48)	4.93 (1.67)	5.58 (1.31)	5.27 (1.51)	5.95 (1.08)	5.38 (1.25)	5.39 (1.55)
Behavioral (N = 56)	5.94 (1.18)	5.81 (1.21)	6.03 (1.10)	5.89 (1.17)	6.43 (0.75)	5.97 (1.40)	5.85 (1.13)

Table 4.

Constructs Reliability Measures

Student	Affective	Cognitive	Behavioral
Alpha	0.79	0.83	0.80
Omega	0.79	0.83	0.81
Variance Extracted	0.49	0.43	0.57
Mentor	Affective	Cognitive	Behavioral
Alpha	0.69	0.80	0.92
Omega	0.63	0.80	0.92
Variance Extracted	0.42	0.64	0.75

Table 5

Final SEM Model Parameter Estimates

Measure	Estimate	SE	Z-value	P(> z)	Std.Dev.
Affect	-0.07	0.15	-0.46	0.65	-0.04
Cognitive	0.36	0.25	1.43	0.15	0.17
Behavioral	0.59	0.17	3.55	0.00	0.45
Age	0.15	0.13	1.16	0.25	0.15
Grade	0.09	0.23	0.39	0.70	0.09
Sex	0.16	0.17	0.96	0.34	0.16
Race	0.20	0.20	1.03	0.30	0.20

Measure	Estimate	SE	Z-value	P(> z)	Std.Dev.
Affect	-0.05	0.14	-0.37	0.71	-0.05
Cognitive	0.39	0.14	2.74	0.01	0.48
Behavioral	0.26	0.16	1.63	0.10	0.23
Age	0.01	0.01	1.47	0.14	0.01
Job	0.31	0.23	1.32	0.19	0.31
Sex	-0.03	0.31	-0.10	0.92	-0.03
Race	-0.47	0.21	-2.23	0.03	-0.47

PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

Volume 12, Issue 1
May 2019

'It Tore My Heart Out': Environmental Heroism and the Conservation of Wetlands

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This article proposes the concepts of *swamp-philía* and *paludal heroism* through a case study of a prominent Western Australian wetlands activist, David James, in relation to global activism in defense of swamp environments. James has been the champion and unsung hero of bushland and wetland conservation in the Forrestdale area near Perth where he has lived for more than sixty years. Positioning James as a kind of Thoreau of the antipodes, the article draws from audio and video interviews conducted with the passionate conservationist since 2009 to develop an oral history-based approach to documenting wetlands heroism. In many ways, the story of James is exemplary of a life spent devoted to wetland conservation. Yet, his story is not an isolated one but parallels the work of swamp conservationists such as Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Luc Hoffmann, Anselmo de Barros, and Anu Muhammad. Drawing from theories of biophilia and eco-heroism, the article concludes that paludal heroism is essential to the integrity of swamp ecosystems around the world.

'IT TORE MY HEART OUT': ENVIRONMENTAL HEROISM AND THE CONSERVATION OF WETLANDS

Hope and the future for me are not in lawns and cultivated fields, not in towns and cities, but in the impervious and quaking swamps [...] A town is saved, not more by the righteous men in it than by the woods and swamps that surround it.

-Henry David Thoreau, from "Walking" (2017, pp. 122–123, published originally in 1862)

In a climate change epoch, in which each year harrowingly turns out to be “the hottest on record” (Nature, 2017)—marked by more and more habitat destruction, species decline, unrestrained urbanization, and other serious ecological problems—environmental heroes reassert hope, empowerment, transformation, and possibility against prevailing despair. From all corners of the globe and of all ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds, eco-heroes devote themselves to “other-regarding choices over self-interested ones” (Kohen, 2013, p. 8) for the betterment of humankind and more-than-humans. Since 1990, the Goldman Environmental Prize has honored “grassroots environmental heroes” and has acknowledged “individuals for sustained and significant efforts to protect and enhance the natural environment, often at great personal risk” (Goldman Environmental Foundation, 2017). Recent Australian recipient, octogenarian Wendy Bowman, for instance, successfully defended her family farm in Camberwell, Hunter Valley, New South Wales, against the incursions of a multinational mining company. In 1990, moreover, Bob Brown received the inaugural award. Brown founded the Tasmanian Wilderness Society and galvanized a successful nationwide campaign in the 1980s to block the construction of the Franklin River dam (Terry, 2013). Indeed, environmental heroes, such as Brown and Bowman in contemporary Australia and Thoreau before them in the nineteenth-century United States—as well as other contemporary wetlands heroes discussed later in this article—are moral exemplars who highlight that “each life, no matter how long or short, can have great significance if lived well” (Kohen, 2013, p. 8).

Through interviews conducted with exceptional Western Australian conservationist David James between 2005 and 2017 (Friends of Forrestdale, 2017b; Giblett, 2006; James, 2009; 2015), this article will describe a particular subgenre of eco-heroism termed *paludal heroism*. This form of heroic behavior, I suggest, centralizes the defense of swamp habitats, wetland ecosystems, and their interdependent human-non-human occupants. According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (Hoad, 2003), the adjective *paludal* derives from the Latin term *palūd* for marsh and denotes organisms, soils, and conditions associated with marsh environments. Referring to a herbaceous wetland in which the water table remains above the surface of the soil, a *marsh* in North American parlance corresponds to the British signifier *swamp* (Allaby, 2010). The concept of eco-heroism formulated in this article invokes *paludal* as a general descriptor for wetlands, delimited by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance as:

areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres. (Ramsar, 2003, Article 1, Signed 1971)

The discussion, moreover, will claim that a subset of biophilia—henceforth termed *swamp-philial*—inspires acts of paludal heroism and appropriately characterizes those human lives dedicated to (and, at times, consumed by) wetlands advocacy and conservation. Following social psychologist Erich Fromm’s articulation of the concept as “the love of life” in his book *The Heart of Man* (1964, 9), biologist E.O. Wilson (1984) defined *biophilia* as the love of life or “the innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes” (p. 1).

To be certain, David James and other paludal heroes in the tradition of Thoreau immerse themselves physically, mentally, and emotionally in the many lives and processes of wetlands

(Giblett, 2013, p. 12). For David, the conservation of wetlands, including Forrestdale Lake and Anstey-Keane Damplands south of Perth, Western Australia, is not exclusively a scientific project or ecological preoccupation. His paludal heroism, in contrast, is a long-term “naturalcultural” enactment borne out of an affinity for swamp nature and predicated on the complex imbrication of biological diversity with cultural heritage and sense of place (Haraway, 2008, p. 16). Approaching his local community as a multispecies assemblage of diverse organisms emplaced within the Swan Coastal Plain of Western Australia, David is a paragon of “ecosocial heroism” who assumes “community leadership roles by envisioning diverse forms of ecosocial justice” (Boyd, 2016, p. 91). In the interviews I conducted with him, David foregrounds the value of conservation for the community of organisms living in, and adjacent to, the vulnerable wetlands south of Perth, specifically, between the quickly expanding suburbs of Armadale, Forrestdale, and Piara Waters:

The challenge now is to save the land despite the massive encroachment of housing and current government attitudes because the land is worth so much money now. Real estate prices in Perth now are just exorbitant. (James, 2015, min. 8:04–8:20)

In particular, the self-trained naturalist communicates the urgent need for wetlands conservation through negative affect—that is, of “feeling miserable” if deprived of access to the precious bushland that has contracted progressively during his lifetime as a result of suburban development propelled by swelling human populations and ill-conceived government agendas (James, 2015).

In contrast to Bowman and Brown, however, David is an unsung community hero committed to paludal habitats typically denied the esteem conferred to more aesthetically gratifying and visually impressive environments such as, for instance, the Franklin River in Tasmania and the old-growth eucalypt forests near Walpole, WA (see Ryan and Giblett, 2018). As two interlinked ecological virtues proposed in this article, *swamp-philía* and *paludal heroism* are essential correctives to the continuing degradation of wetlands in Perth and elsewhere in Australia and the world (Kingsford and Thomas, 2004). Through his environmental activism, political advocacy, and community outreach, David James inspires these virtues in members of the community afflicted with “nature-deficit disorder” (Louv, 2005)—or, more precisely, swamp-deficit disorder—for whom wetlands are unappealing impediments to economic hyper-rationalization and technocratic growth.

The Sodden Roots of Swamp-philía and Paludal Heroism

Since its early formulation by Erich Fromm in 1964 and subsequent popularization by E.O. Wilson twenty years later, the biophilia hypothesis has been applied to a range of fields including developmental psychology, architectural theory, and environmental conservation (Joye and De Block, 2011, p. 190). Biophilia, nevertheless, remains a contested concept open to various interpretations and limited by internal inconsistencies (for example, Levy, 2003). Notwithstanding the debates surrounding biophilia’s origins (as either an evolutionary and genetic or acquired and experiential trait) and ethical significance (as either an anthropocentric or ecocentric framework for protecting the natural world), most theorists concur that the principle centralizes states of human affect (Clowney, 2013; Fromm, 1964, 1973; Joye & De Block, 2011; Kellert, 1997; Levy, 2003; Wilson, 1984). In *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973), Fromm characterizes biophilia further as “passionate *love of life* and of all that is alive; it is the *wish to further growth*, whether in a person, a plant, an idea, or a social group [emphasis added]” (366). Fromm maintains that biophilia is not only a generalized sense of affection for life but also a compelling desire to

contribute to the actualization—the growth—of non-humans through tactile engagement with the lives of “all that is alive” (p. 366). In a similar mode, theorists have postulated more recently that, in sharp contrast to biophobic (life-hating or life-negating) responses to the non-human world, the biophilia hypothesis is grounded in “affective affiliation” and as a consequence “posits an intimate emotional link between humans and the living world” (Joye & De Block, 2011, pp. 191–192).

In his book *Biophilia: The Human Bond with Other Species* (1984), Wilson argues that natural selection has resulted in an “adaptive affinity” in humans for other living forms and for inanimate lifelike processes and things (Joye & De Block, 2011, pp. 189). Rather than acquired through experience and direct contact, biophilia is regarded as the upshot of human evolution and, to some extent, is hardwired genetically. In other words, it is part of the human condition. From an evolutionary viewpoint, biophilic responses to wetlands, therefore, would derive not from detached aesthetic pleasure but from deep-seated affinities for flora and fauna that on an ancestral basis supplied vital sources of nutrition, medicine, and protection (Joye & De Block, 2011, p. 200). By way of comparison, Dorion Sagan and Lynn Margulis (1993) invoke the less melodious term *prototaxis* to signify the genetic predisposition of lives to respond to other lives discernibly. With its salient congruences with biophilia, prototaxis is a phenomenon that occurs broadly in bacteria, protists, fungi, plants, animals, and other organisms (Simaika & Samways, 2010, p. 904). Biologist Ivan Wallin proposed the term in 1923 to specify “the innate tendency of one organism or cell to react in a definite manner to another organism or cell” (Wallin qtd. in Sapp, 1994, p. 121). Instead of the love, affinity, and affection of the biophilia hypothesis, the prototaxis principle hinges on electrical potentials, moisture, light, temperature, and other quantifiable variables (Sapp, 1994, p. 121). Some commentators, however, conceptualize biophilia as a learned—rather than programmed, genetic, or innate—response to the natural world. John Simaika and Michael Samways (2010, p. 95), for example, maintain that the human bond with the environment is invariably acquired and nurtured. In their view, biophilia derives from experiences of, and associations with, the non-human domain.

Whether an inborn desire or learned response to the natural world, biophilia is thought to underlie an ethics of environmental conservation by countering the anti-ecological impulses of reductionism, utilitarianism, and instrumentalization. In this context, Stephen Kellert (1997) characterizes biophilia as “a deep and enduring urge to connect with living diversity” and “a broad affinity for natural diversity” that “reflects the human tendency to impute worth and importance to the natural world” (pp. 1–3). As an environmental virtue, biophilia is “a character trait whose target and affective content consist of caring for and about non-human life” (Clowney, 2013, p. 1010). Fostering the development of biophilic dispositions in individuals and communities, moreover, depends on current knowledge of ecological science, including biodiversity issues and the environmental implications of human behaviors and decisions (Clowney, 2013, p. 1011). In emphasizing the benefits conferred to human health and well-being through affinity with nature, not the least of which is the long-term survival of *Homo sapiens*, however, biophilia in the sense elaborated by E.O. Wilson verges on “anthropocentric environmentalism” (Levy, 2003, p. 227). This mode of environmentalism contrasts with biocentric environmentalism predicated on the intrinsic rights of non-humans and their habitats beyond a use-value paradigm. Marshalling a robust dichotomy between anthropocentrism and biocentrism, I argue, proves to be counter-productive insofar as it re-inscribes the culture/nature schism separating humankind from the non-human and driving perilous human exceptionalism. An innate affinity for the environment and a

propensity for attraction to living beings, instead, have the potential to benefit humans and non-humans alike because culture *is* nature, and vice versa. In this context, the posthumanist premise of natureculture—as human-non-human physical and metaphysical incorporation—is foundational to the idea of wetland naturecultures.

What, then, are the distinguishing features of swamp-*philia*, defined as the love of wetlands and the innate tendency to focus on slough lives and processes? I will briefly describe three features: multisensorial engagement, corporeal immersion, and ecological understanding. To begin with, a “swamp lover” (Thoreau, 2017) appreciates the specific sensory affordances of wetlands. Indeed, one of the omissions in the majority of theorizations of biophilia is the corporeal dimension of “affective affiliation” with the natural world (Joye & De Block, 2011, pp. 191–192). Experiential knowledge derived from sensory interaction with the non-human milieu can inspire expressions of environmental empathy and justice based in transcorporeality as the permeability between bodies (Scott, 2016). As Rod Giblett (2014, p. 183) notes, swamps are uncanny environments that restrain sight and confound hearing yet amplify the proximate senses of touch (of water, mud, mosquitoes), smell (of decay, sulfides, musk), and taste (of fruits, crustaceans, wild rice). Thoreau noted:

that peculiar fragrance from the marsh at the Hubbard Causeway, though the marsh is mostly covered. Is it a particular compound of odors? It is more remarkable and memorable than the scent of any particular plant,—the fragrance, as it were, of the earth itself. (1906, p. 288)

Following Thoreau, swamp-*philia* engenders experiential, embodied, and sensorially-rich bonds with wetland habitats that, in turn, provoke conservation values and imperatives within the individual and community.

Calling attention to the tactility of wetlands, David James, for instance, recounts memories of turtles, known as tortoises then, in the 1950s and 1960s at Lake Forrestdale. He details physically immersive experiences of being *in* the lake, which is located on the eastern perimeter of the Jandokot Mound, an area beneath the Swan Coastal Plain, distinguished for an elevated water table:

While swimming or canoeing in Lake Forrestdale as a kid, it was common to see numerous tortoise heads poking out of the water as they came up for a breath of air. It was always fun trying to count them. Often when swimming in the lake *we felt tortoises scooting away from under our feet*. They were so numerous we couldn’t help *treading on them* [emphasis added]. (James qtd. in Friends of Forrestdale, 2017b, p. 5)

Tortoises “scooting away from under our feet” and the perception of “treading on them” as he swam in Forrestdale Lake as a child are somatic memories inspiring his life-long commitment to Perth’s suburban wetlands and its diverse species:

Looking out for baby tortoises was a yearly event as they were regularly seen crossing Commercial Road in Forrestdale or crawling about the lake’s fringing bushland [...] Each winter when James Drain flowed strongly into the lake, masses of tortoises were seen

struggling against the current as they tried to get to the swamps west of Lake Forrestdale. (James qtd. in Friends of Forrestdale, 2017b, p. 5)

As David later elaborates, many of the tortoises “struggling against the current” were run over by traffic on Commercial Road.

Another characteristic of swamp-philia linked closely to multisensorial experience is bodily im(sub)mersion. For Thoreau (2017), physical transactions with wetlands were both fortifying and baptismal: “I enter a swamp as a sacred place,—a *sanctum sanctorum* [holy of holies]. There is the strength, the marrow, of Nature” (p. 123). Through the all-encompassing sensation of entering the earth-water-body, the swamp-philiac comes to love the wetland in its ontological liminality—as an environment existing as an in-between state neither as solid nor fluid, yet both. Swamp-philia, furthermore, is defined by knowledge of ecological science, specifically of biodiversity and the interactions between wetland species (Clowney, 2013, p. 1011). In this regard, Thoreau (2017) associated his affective responses to, and physical immersion in, wetlands to then-current scientific perceptions of plants, as evident in his observation that “there are no richer parterres [formal gardens] to my eyes than the dense beds of dwarf andromeda (*Cassandra calyculata*) which cover these tender places on the earth’s surface” (122). In the spirit of Thoreau, David James reveals that ecological information is integral to swamp-philia insofar as science supplies another medium for engendering human-non-human affinities. As a case in point, David details the rare plant life of Anstey-Keane Damplands during our *en plein air* interview: “*Regelia ciliata* is the dominant shrub here. It has mauve flowers and dies in bush fires but comes back very quickly and grows in dense thickets. It is ideal habitat for wrens and bandicoots because it becomes so thick that foxes cannot get into it” (James, 2015, min. 2:18–2:33).

David’s experiential knowledge of wetland ecology enhances “an intimate emotional link” (Joye & De Block, 2011, pp. 191–192) that, in turn, invigorates his sense of locale (Anstey-Keane), place (Swan Coastal Plain), and biogeographical region (Southwest Australia). An innate love for wetland nature, thus, can be grounded to some extent in scientific principles, conservation processes, and technical nomenclature. In becoming a self-trained naturalist, David followed the work of professional botanists, such as Neville Graeme Marchant and Gregory John Keighery, botanist-illustrator Rica Erickson (1908–2008), conservationist Penny Hussey, and members of the Wildflower Society of Western Australia (D. James, personal communication, September 23, 2009). To this theorization of swamp-philia as multisensorial, immersive, and ecological, I add the notion of paludal heroism, characterized as heroic behavior on behalf of wetlands performed either as a one-off incident or consistently over the life of an individual, organization, community, or movement. Although environmental heroes have been acknowledged for their ecosocial contributions (Goldman Environmental Foundation, 2017) and analyzed in general terms for their ethics (Boyd, 2016; Dooley, 1986; Hultman, 2013), there have been scarce attempts to either narrativize or theorize wetland heroism as a distinct phenomenon within contemporary environmentalism. One example that foregrounds wetland heroism is the documentary film *The Last Stand: Heroes at Ballona Wetlands* (Laffey, 2004), depicting the campaign to preserve the last intact wetland ecosystem in the Los Angeles basin. The preponderance of eco-heroism studies, nonetheless, pertains to the defense of forests, oceans, or natural monuments rather than swamps (for example, Terry, 2013). The account of paludal heroism that follows distinguishes between *paludal activism* and *paludal heroism*. The latter term fulfills the principle of supererogation as

moral exemplariness that goes above and “beyond the call of duty [and] includes acts of tremendous heroism or saintliness that go beyond what anyone could reasonably think of as being morally required” (Archer & Ridge, 2015, p. 1577). Put differently, supererogatory behavior exceeds that which is usually demanded of others and, although morally valuable, cannot be expected of the general population (Archer, 2013, p. 447).

At all stages and of all kinds, heroic behavior is predicated on “recognizing the limits of our existence” (Kohen, 2013, p. 5). Biophilic heroes, additionally, acknowledge the living earth as the actual limit of human-non-human inter-being. Supererogatory action on behalf of the natural world becomes possible when the eco-hero considers the life he or she wants to have lived in interdependent relation to the lives of other humans and other-than-humans (Kohen, 2013, p. 8). Such a conceptualization of paludal heroism is inherently multispecies and relational as well as simultaneously self- and other-affirming. Local heroes, such as David James, contest the degradation of their communities and devote themselves whole-heartedly to the resolution of anthropogenic problems because they are compelled by a feeling of duty (Colby & Damon, 1992, pp. 20, 70). The paradox of environmental supererogation, however, is that those who perform heroic acts to protect the natural world—often at considerable personal expense over time—tend to claim that they were merely following the call of duty. Eco-heroes are inclined to classify their own acts as obligatory (to be expected; usual), rather than supererogatory (not to be expected; exceptional) (Archer and Ridge, 2015, p. 1578). In minimalizing the supererogatory standing of their actions on behalf of wetlands, nonetheless, paludal heroes indirectly assert their moral depth:

moral heroes do exhibit very real and exceptional moral depth in their identification with the relevant moral values [...] they also typically get so carried away by their enthusiasm for those values that they fail to recognize their own very real sacrifices, and thereby mistake what is actually supererogatory for a moral obligation. (Archer & Ridge, 2015, p. 1590)

Paludal heroism, accordingly, involves exceptional acts intended to protect the community of beings in, and near, a wetland environment. These supererogatory feats can go unnoticed both by the individual performing the acts and the larger activist community of which he or she is part. This is especially the case when smaller-scale heroic acts are carried out diachronically throughout one’s lifetime, often without due recognition.

Important features of the supererogatory paradox described above are humility and modesty. Both virtues underscore the significance of not inflating the esteem one receives and of limiting the potential distraction from “what is really important” that can result from excessive concern for recognition and entitlement (Ridge, 2000, p. 281). As the next section will elaborate, David’s paludal heroism is constituted by the virtues of humility and modesty, rendering the actual extent of his accomplishments over many years difficult to determine. David enacts eco-heroism as part of the fabric of his life and on an everyday basis through sustained devotion to the wetlands of his community rather than through hyper-masculinist “eco-warriorism” (Finke & Shichtman, 2013), for instance, perfected in the trope of activists chaining themselves to bulldozers. His practice of eco-heroism, moreover, resists extreme hierarchical differentiation between subjects of culture (humans) and objects of nature (non-humans). For David, the conservation of wetlands benefits all beings, not just wrens and bandicoots and not just naturalists and saunterers. In this light, my

formulation of heroism in this article diverges from the view of moral heroism as invariably homocentric (or anthropocentric) and opposed to biocentric (or ecocentric). Patrick Dooley (1986) positions eco-heroism as problematically coupled to an anthropocentric ontology prioritizing non-human well-being narrowly in terms of future human generations. From Dooley's standpoint, supererogation leads invariably back to human privileging (1986, p. 55). He asks: "Is our ethical responsibility toward the environment a matter of ethical duty or a matter of ethical heroism" (Dooley, 1986, p. 49). Whereas ethical duty leads to "sensible and good practice," moral heroism is "optional and arduous" as well as untenable in the long-term (Dooley, 1986, p. 55). Contrary to Dooley, I maintain that the actions of paludal heroes exemplify the forms of multispecies ethics that are essential to countering the degradation and destruction of wetlands and the life forms that depend on them.

A Life of Swamp-philia: Conservationist Extraordinaire David James

Born in the early 1950s, passionate activist and self-trained naturalist David James has lived near Forrestdale Lake in Western Australia all his life. The Lake is located on the Swan Coastal Plain, shared by Perth, and protects numerous endangered plant, animal, and insect species (Giblett, 2006). Nearby Anstey-Keane Damplands is one of the most ecologically significant wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain and, in fact, more biologically diverse than the internationally renowned Kings Park and Botanic Gardens overlooking the central business district of the city (Giblett & James, 2009). As David James elaborates, the actual extent of the biodiversity of Anstey-Keane has not yet been established by ecologists: "This place is probably only eighty percent known. There's still a twenty percent unknown factor here" (James, 2015, min. 2:00–2:04). The Damplands area lies at the northern tip of the Pinjarra Plains, a system of flat damplands—defined as moist, shallow sinks—containing the best soil on the Swan Coastal Plain for agricultural and, later, industrial development since the nineteenth century (Beard, 1979, p. 27). An active member of numerous community-based conservation organizations and the current President of the Friends of Forrestdale (FoF), David expresses exasperation over the constant and overwhelming pressures on the remnant parcels of Pinjarra Plains habitat. His leadership within the Friends, however, provides a practical outlet for responding to his ongoing environmental concerns. Indeed, throughout Australia, volunteer-based Friends Groups perform landscape monitoring and often acquire specific knowledge of local sites and habitat conditions (Cooke, 2008). Social networks developed within Friends Groups and between Friends and other community organizations, moreover, enhance the sharing of skills, knowledge and experience while promoting a feeling of solidarity through mutual purpose and common vision. Launched in 1990, the Friends of Forrestdale is one such volunteer group tasked with protecting Forrestdale Lake Nature Reserve and adjoining reserves, including Anstey-Keane Damplands, Piara Nature Reserve, and Gibbs Road Swamp, all of which are located within the three-thousand-hectare (or seven-thousand-four-hundred-acre) Jandakot Regional Park (SERCUL, 2017).

For David James, Forrestdale Lake and Anstey-Keane Damplands constitute "emotional geographies" in Perth's rapidly expanding southern reaches (Davidson, Bondi, and Smith, 2016). These landscapes nurture humans and non-humans physically and metaphysically but also themselves require reciprocal forms of care from us. Even after receiving state government attention, however, crucial sites for biodiversity remain vulnerable to the hazards and vagaries of development and of government policy. This is acutely so for Anstey-Keane, classified as Bush Forever Site 342. In 2000, the Ministry for Planning and the Department of Conservation and Land

Management launched the Bush Forever program, identifying more than fifty-thousand hectares of bushland for protection or eighteen percent of the original, pre-European-settlement vegetation of the Swan Coastal Plain. The sites “incorporate associated vegetated conservation category wetlands. These wetlands are recognized as being some of the most biologically diverse habitats” (Ministry for Planning, 2000, p. viii). As of October 2017, two high-conservation-value Anstey-Keane blocks, earmarked for eventual inclusion in Jandakot Regional Park, are privately owned, unfenced, unmanaged, and susceptible to off-road vehicle damage and the illegal dumping of rubbish (Friends of Forrestdale, 2017a). The Friends currently recommend that the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) acquires the two blocks without hesitation before further environmental degradation occurs. David’s swamp-philia, indeed, is informed by these ongoing issues and pervasive problems. The impending possibility of losing what remains of the emotional *paludography* around him is exacerbated by affective memories of what existed during his upbringing in the area:

When I was young, we took the bush for granted. There were miles of bush in Forrestdale. We played in the bush. We walked in the bush. We collected birds’ eggs. The bush was everywhere. We *didn’t worry* about it because there was plenty of it. But as the years have gone by, the bush has rapidly declined [emphasis added]. (James, 2015, min. 8:20-8:40)

His pointed kinaesthetic recollection involves playing, walking, collecting eggs, and other somatic acts, revealing the imbrications between feeling (as emotion), feeling (as memory), and feeling (as sensation).

David’s remembrance of his worry-free childhood, additionally, suggests the phenomenon of floratemporaesthesia as “a sense of time formulated through close attention to the physical registers of vegetal life in space” (Ryan, 2017, p. 114). Whereas the natural world was once “everywhere” and, as a consequence, local residents took its presence for granted in their everyday lives, the gradual shrinkage of the bushland marks the movement of time in David’s temporally expansive sense of place. A particularly traumatic memory for him was the levelling of the Damplands by bulldozers over forty years ago to make way for a development scheme that was then suddenly abandoned soon after the devastation:

Sometime back in the 1970s, this whole block was bulldozed flat. For a while, the City of Armadale wanted to turn it into a recreation reserve. That idea was dropped almost immediately. It *tore my heart out* to see the whole place bulldozed. They chained it all with big chains. I came out one morning and it was all flat. That’s why all the trees here [points] are rather small because it was all knocked down a few years ago [emphasis added]. (James, 2015, min. 3:11–3:37)

Latent within “affective affiliation” and “an intimate emotional link between humans and the living world” (Joye & De Block, 2011, pp. 191–192) is the potential for intense and occasionally debilitating states of grief, depression, mourning, and melancholia:

I’ve *loved birdlife and wildflowers* since I was a kid. It’s a natural thing for me. If I just couldn’t walk to a piece of bush somewhere nearby and observe everything, I’d feel pretty *deprived and miserable*. If you’ve experienced wildflowers and birds and natural history

when you were young, you appreciate it when you get older. You feel it if it's not there. If a child is brought up without any appreciation of bushland, they don't miss it later in life [emphasis added]. (James, 2015, mins. 7:06–7:32)

As an affection for wetlands and the inborn predisposition to attend sensitively to slough lives and processes—as love of the “birdlife and wildflowers” of paludal environments—swamp-*philia* entails the risk of feeling “deprived and miserable.” This excerpt from my video interview with David at Anstey-Keane also parallels eco-pedagogical arguments about childhood interaction with the natural world as an effective medium for developing emotional affinities alongside an ethics of responsibility for the environment later in life (Payne, 2017).

David's participation in a range of conservation organizations dedicated to preserving Western Australian wetlands, notably the Friends of Forrestdale, Wetlands Conservation Society, Wildflower Society of WA, Conservation Council of WA, and the Western Australian Naturalists Club, represents an extended “period of, shall we say, activism with organizations that are actually trying to preserve the environment” (D. James, personal communication, September 23, 2009). To be certain, although wetlands activism is integral to their exertions, paludal heroes such as David greatly exceed what is normally expected of locally-focused environmentalists. In his longstanding commitment to advancing conservation and preserving sense of place for the well-being of the entire wetlands community, David is a moral exemplar devoted to paludal activism beyond the call of duty alone. In the following passage, he relates the success of his collaborative efforts in the 1990s to acquire protected status for certain parts of the unsung Anstey-Keane Damplands complex:

we started a big campaign with all our friends in the conservation movement. We petitioned politicians, begged and wrote letters to the Department of Conservation and Land Management. Eventually the Labour Government of the day had the foresight to buy the place. Jump a few years ahead and now the place has become part of the Jandakot Regional Park. I've been on the park consulting committee for seventeen years now. This parcel of Anstey-Keane is recognized as the most floristically rich part of the park. We're tickled pink about that. (James, 2015, min. 1:00–1:36)

This is not to claim, however, that duty and obligation do not figure meaningfully into eco-heroism but, instead, to suggest that these virtues supply the substratum for a supererogatory being-in-the-world consisting of a multitude of acts performed over many decades of one's life.

Rather than sporadic—for example, centered on dramatic stand-offs with multinational conglomerates or law enforcement agencies—David's continuous enactment of paludal heroism is woven into the fabric of his existence in Forrestdale. His devotion to environmental well-being, moreover, tracks seamlessly between internal and external struggles. In our field interview, David invokes the term “worry” recurringly to convey his anxiety over the future of the local wetlands:

It's just a shame that nowadays I have to spend so much time fighting to protect the bush rather than going out enjoying it, which is a worry, but we still get time to do that. (James, 2015, min. 8:40–8:47)

As the political intergrades with the personal, wetlands conservation becomes both ecologically and emotionally complex. At times, the most formidable obstacle is not of the human kind but, rather, an invasive species that has become as menacing to the integrity of the environment as bulldozers, rubbish-dumpers, and thoughtless legislation:

One of the biggest challenges for us and the government is to try to keep weeds out. I would say that weeds pose the biggest challenge along with the lack of water. The rainfall has diminished in the last few years, which is a worry for all our wetlands, including this damplands. It is rather worrying how the lack of water will affect the site over time. (James, 2015, min. 4:35–4:53)

States of negative affect—including worry and anxiety—beset the paludal hero and render wetlands conservation challenging. The marginal conservation status of bushland areas, such as Anstey-Keane, compounded by lack of water, fencing, funding, and human-power as well as weak government support for wetlands cultures take their toll on eco-heroic individuals and communities. While some would be tempted to abandon the work and move on, David stands his ground in Forrestdale despite the losses and heartaches. Without a doubt, his heroism is based on obligation but also exceeds mere duty in its temporal extent and personal intensity. Although David is no longer immersed physically in Forrestdale Lake due to water depletion and other hydrogeological changes, he is certainly engrossed emotionally and spiritually in the wetlandscapes of Forrestdale at all times. His example reminds us that paludal heroism—in the sustained mode in which he enacts it—is indispensable to the future of wetlands in Perth and elsewhere on the planet. While his form of heroism does not necessarily make the evening news, it is immensely vital for preserving the paludal landscapes that remain and on which we depend.

Paludal Heroes and the Wetland Conservation Tradition

David James is an environmental hero whose community-based conservation performed over four decades has focused on saving the wetland ecosystems of the steadily multiplying southern suburbs of Perth, Western Australia. David's supererogatory behaviour has necessitated confronting a multitude of environmental villains—including off-road vehicle drivers, rubbish dumpers, real estate developers, self-interested politicians, invasive weeds, and so forth—on behalf of the local human-non-human community of inter-beings. Although exceptional, his all-consuming dedication to the paludal world is not an isolated instance but, in contrast, can be understood within a broader historical and international context of wetlands heroism, in certain instances, leading directly to habitat conservation. In the following section, I will briefly present five very different case studies of swamp-*philia* and paludal heroism in the lives of the writer-naturalist Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) in the swamps of Massachusetts; author-environmentalist Marjory Stoneman Douglas (1890–1998) in the Everglades region of Florida; ornithologist-conservationist Luc Hoffmann (1923–2016) in the Camargue of France and the Coto Doñana of Spain; journalist-activist Francisco Anselmo de Barros (1940–2005) in the immense Pantanal wetlands of west-central Brazil; and economist-activist Anu Muhammad (born 1956) in the extraordinary mangroves of the Sundarbans region of Bangladesh. Compelled to action in part by their affective affinities for the natural world, these heroes are paragons of exemplary moral behavior and environmental virtue in defense of wetlands.

Henry David Thoreau stands out among paludal biophiles for his unusually evocative accounts of walking, wading, and crawling through the wetlands of the Concord, Massachusetts, area to collect wild fruits and appreciate the sensuousness of swamp-dwelling plants (Ryan, 2015, pp. 174–187). In particular, the intimate senses of taste and smell galvanized Thoreau’s affinity for swamps and their botanical denizens. Rod Giblett (1996) aptly characterizes Thoreau as the “patron saint of swamps” (pp. 229–239). Drawn into wetlands by his curious palate and nose, the writer-naturalist, moreover, is the patron saint and epicure extraordinaire of swamp species, as evident, for instance, in his anecdote of the “fungus-like smell when broken” of “swamp apples” or galls and puffs (2000, p. 17). Thoreau regarded wetlands as “sacred places” (2000, p. 31) as well as bountiful sites of heightened gustatory and olfactory affordance:

Yes, though you may think me *perverse*, if it were proposed to me to dwell in the neighbourhood of the most beautiful garden that ever human art contrived, or else of a dismal swamp, I should certainly decide for the swamp [emphasis added]. (Thoreau, 2017, p. 123)

His preference for “a dismal swamp” reflects the maturation of a multisensorial aesthetics of the paludal hinterlands—rather than of the gentrified spaces—of the Concord environs. Approaching the bog as home, habitat, and health, Thoreau’s paludal attraction verges on perversity for its reversal of the dominant Kantian aesthetic paradigm of beauty privileging the symmetry of visual forms. The swamp lover (2000, p. 33), for example, evokes the fruits of one blueberry species (*Rubus sempervirens*) as “little blue sacks full of swampy nectar and ambrosia commingled, whose bonds you burst by pressure of your teeth” (p. 33).

Thoreau’s philia is especially palpable in the section “High Blueberry” from *Wild Fruits* in which he gives an account of harvesting swamp blueberries (2000, pp. 30–36). In his narrative, however, paludal biophilia is not the exclusive domain of humans who bear the capacity to love wetlands but also applies to non-humans with sensori-emotional affinities for swamps. Confined to the edge of the wetland and flourishing when the water level is high, the blueberry species “loves the water so much” (Thoreau, 2000, p. 30). Indeed, this paludal section of *Wild Fruits* develops a vivid analysis of the corporeal habitus one should adopt in order to navigate swamps on foot as well as the unique sensuous rewards that ensue. As a case in point, the naturalist recalls the spreading tops of blueberry bushes arching over winding paths and forming:

a perfect labyrinth to which there is no clue, but you must steer by the sun—paths which can be convenient only to rabbits, where you make your way with difficulty, stooping low and straddling from tussock to tussock in order to keep out of water, guided perhaps by the accidental rattling of your companion’s tin pail. (Thoreau, 2000, p. 33)

In the mode practiced by Thoreau, swamp-philia demands a willingness to stoop low, straddle, and steer by the sun, as the familiar indicators of direction become obscure and disappear. Other wetlands transactions similarly require “stooping close to the ground and brushing off the berries with my pack” while anticipating omnipresent soppiness underfoot: “When I see their dense curving tops ahead, I expect a wet foot” (Thoreau, 2000, pp. 31, 30). The compensation takes the form not only of refreshingly acidic fruits but of flowers effusing “an agreeable, sweet and berry-promising fragrance” and which “embody for me the essence and flavor of the swamp. When they

are thick and large, bending the bushes with their weight, few fruits are so handsome a sight” (Thoreau, 2000, pp. 30, 31). The Concordian’s aesthetic openness towards swamps underlies his affinity for all paludal things and informs his conception of wetlands as sacrosanct spaces of moral growth actualized through bodily exertion.

In the early- to mid-twentieth century, another American swamp-phile and paludal hero, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, emerged prominently as a staunch and passionate defender of the threatened Everglades of southern Florida. By the time she died at age 108 in 1998, she was widely known as the “grande dame of the Everglades and the state’s pre-eminent conservationist” (Basse, 1998). Stoneman was raised in Taunton, Massachusetts, fifty miles south-east of Thoreau’s swamp haunts at Concord (Everglades Information Network, 2017). She worked as an assistant editor of *The Miami Herald* newspaper before turning her attention to independent journalism and wetlands activism—two activities that remained closely entwined during her lifetime. Through her potent combination of writing and activism, Stoneman became central to the successful campaign to create the Everglades National Park in the 1940s and went on to co-found the conservation organization Friends of the Everglades in the late 1960s. A region of six-hundred-thousand hectares of subtropical wetlands stretching from the Kissimmee River near Orlando to Florida Bay, the Everglades has been described as “the country’s greatest wetland” (Davis, 2009, p. 4) and “a national treasure” (Grunwald, 2006, p. 3). Designated an International Biosphere Reserve, a World Heritage Site and a Ramsar Convention Wetland of International Importance, the Everglades encompasses a diversity of species including the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*), the Florida panther (*Puma concolor*), the manatee (*Trichechus manatus laterostris*), and hundreds of birds, such as the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and roseate tern (*Sterna dougallii*) (Davis & Ogden, 1994, p. 3). Since the 1700s, however, nearly half of the overall area of the Everglades has been drained for development and agriculture. Wading bird populations, furthermore, have been reduced to one-fifth of their levels in the 1930s while the endemic panther was almost exterminated (Davis & Ogden, 1994, p. 3).

Published in 1947, the same year as the inauguration of the Everglades National Park, Douglas’ non-fiction account, *The Everglades: River of Grass*, exemplifies the idea of wetland natureculture, for instance, in its first two chapters on “The Nature of the Everglades” and “The People of the Glades” and subsequent wending through tales of discovery, adventure, conquest, ecology, and drainage. The book begins with a direct and evocative declaration of the biocultural value of the Everglades:

There are no other Everglades in the world.

They are, they have always been, one of the unique regions of the earth, remote, never wholly known. Nothing anywhere else is like them: their vast glittering openness, wider than the enormous visible round of the horizon, the racing free saltiness and sweetness of their massive winds, under the dazzling blue heights of space. They are unique also in the simplicity, the diversity, the related harmony of the forms of life they enclose. (Douglas, 2007, p. 5)

Like Thoreau, Douglas integrates visual (horizon, blue heights) and non-visual (saltiness, sweetness) impressions with multispecies awareness (forms of life). In this naturalcultural mode, her non-fiction would prove indispensable to transforming “the country’s most menacing swamp

into its most cherished wetland” (Davis, 2009, p. 5). Later in the chapter, Douglas enumerates the pernicious tropes deployed to characterize the Everglades since Anglo-European settlement of the Florida peninsula:

a series of miasmatic swamps, poisonous lagoons, huge dismal marshes without outlet, a rotting, shallow, inland sea, or labyrinths of dark trees hung and looped about with snakes and dripping mosses, malignant with tropical fevers and malarias, evil to the white man. (Douglas, 2007, p. 6)

Beginning with the confronting declarative “the Everglades were dying,” the final chapter, entitled “The Eleventh Hour,” narrates the decline and disappearance of the unique wetlands ecosystem (Douglas, 2007, p. 349). Her swamp-philia prompted her protest against the construction of the Everglades Jetport, or Big Cypress Jetport, in 1968, planned as the largest airport in the world. After intense public resistance, however, jetport construction ceased in 1970 and remains unfinished except for a single runway (Davis, 2009, chapter 30).

The work of paludal heroes, such as Thoreau and Douglas, partly involves attempting to reclaim wetlands from public discourses that construct swamps derogatively as miasmatic, poisonous, rotting, dismal, and malaria-infested wastelands. This process of reclamation requires literary finesse as well as political shrewdness, as the work of renowned ornithologist and conservationist Luc Hoffmann demonstrates. Wielding exceptional ecopolitical dexterity, Hoffman co-founded the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in 1961 and helped to establish an international wetlands conservation treaty, the Ramsar Convention, ratified in 1975 (Ramsar, 2003). Hoffmann’s early wetlands advocacy and activism focused on the Camargue, located between Arles in France and the Mediterranean Sea, and the Coto Doñana, on the Atlantic coast of Andalucía, Spain (Luc Hoffmann Institute, 2017; Moss, 2016; WWF, 2013). In 1954, Hoffman founded Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat, a research center dedicated to the Camargue wetlands, and served as managing director of the station until the mid-1970s. A Ramsar site and a UNESCO reserve, the Camargue is one of the most biologically diverse places in Europe and, for example, is home to a major flamingo colony (Mitsch and Gosselink, 2015, p. 78). Coto Doñana, moreover, is regarded as “one of the most valuable wetlands in Europe” and “a sanctuary for millions of migratory birds and endangered species” (WWF, 2013). In the 1950s, Coto Doñana was originally identified as having high conservation value by the biologist José Antonio Valverde. Hoffmann and other WWF biologists subsequently studied the marshes during their “Doñana Expeditions” and advanced Valverde’s campaign to save the Guadalquivir Marshes, leading to the establishment of the Coto Doñana National Park in 1969. In 2004, the Luc Hoffman Medal for Excellence in Wetland Science and Conservation was created (Wetlands International, 2017).

Some paludal heroes are wholly self-sacrificing, giving up their lives in the defense of wetlands, as Brazilian activist Francisco Anselmo de Barros did. In November 2006, de Barros died after setting himself on fire at the end of a demonstration in Campo Grande, the capital and largest city of the state of Mato Grosso do Sul. De Barros was protesting plans to construct a sugarcane processing facility in the Pantanal wetlands, which would have turned the Paraguay River into a navigation channel for large vessels and the Upper Paraguay Basin into a site for ethanol plants. Prior to his death, De Barros had devoted thirty years to wetlands activism as the founder of one of Brazil’s oldest conservation organizations, the Mato Grosso do Sul Nature Conservation

Foundation (Fuconams) (Wright, 2009, p. 93). Encompassing over two-hundred-thousand square kilometers and extending from Brazil into Bolivia and Paraguay, the Pantanal is the largest wetlands complex in the world (Por, 1995, p. 1). In fact, the Spanish root of the word *Pantanal* means “wetland” (Por, 1995, p. 1). Frustrated by political inaction and corruption, de Barros declared that “since we have no votes to save the Pantanal, we will give our lives to save it” (ECO, 2017). Paludal heroism remains a matter of life and death also for the Bangladeshi economist-activist Anu Muhammad, who has been arrested, beaten, and threatened during his seven-year campaign against a proposal to build a coal-fired plant at Rampal Upazila in southern Bangladesh (Anas, 2017). The planned Rampal Power Station is a joint venture between India and Bangladesh that activists claim would destroy the Sundarbans, one of the world’s largest mangrove forests and a UNESCO World Heritage site. Muhammad’s defense of the Sundarbans enacts paludal heroism by shifting between the natural and cultural effects of the plant. He characterizes the mangrove forest as “a huge natural safeguard against frequent cyclone, storm and other natural disasters in the country” and concludes that “the lives and properties of up to four million people who live on it will be threatened if there is no Sundarban” (qtd. in Anas, 2017).

Conclusion

This article has proposed *swamp-philía* as an affective affinity for wetlands and *paludal heroism* as a subgenre of environmental heroism focused on human efforts to protect swamps, sloughs, bogs, marshes, and related ecosystems. Demonstrating these ideas, the conservation work of David James over forty years in the southern suburbs of Perth, Western Australia, can be contextualized within an international movement of unrelated individuals who have loved wetlands and have devoted themselves to the defense of the non-human domain. This local-global perspective on David James’ eco-heroism—as both profoundly rooted in his human-non-human community in Forrestdale but also of international reach and relevance—responds to eco-cosmopolitanist urges to consider the localist preoccupation of environmental activism within a global imaginary (Heise, 2008). Located at various biogeographical scales, communities of paludal activism share in common an innate affection for wetlands and an appreciation of the ecological significance of these essentially unsung habitats in an epoch in which every year predictably becomes “the hottest on record” (Nature, 2017). The all-consuming devotion of paludal heroes inspires us to re-imagine the value of wetlands and re-envision our relationship to its human and non-human populations.

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PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

Volume 12, Issue 1
May 2019

Non-State Armed Actors and Counter-Insurgency Measures in Northern Nigeria: The Emergence of *Civilian JTF* as Strategic Complementarity or Manifestation of Military Deficiency?

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Abstract

Since the violence started in 2009, thousands of people have been killed in clashes between security forces and Boko Haram members across different locations in north-eastern Nigeria. The scale of violence against civilians by the armed group is among the highest in Africa. While the government has made significant strides in the war against the insurgents, recovering swathes of previously occupied territory and freeing hundreds of abductees, the group remains a significant threat. In the last three years, the Nigerian government has claimed to have decimated Boko Haram on several occasions, but violence affiliated with the terrorist organization continues to plague Nigeria and its neighbors. The Nigerian Army, Air Force and Police have been working together as a “Joint Task Force” to fight the Islamist militant sect for several years. In 2013, vigilantism, the recourse to non-state actors to enforce law and order, crept into the counter-insurgency calculation due to the glaring lack of government commitment to the security of their own soldiers. Thus, vigilantes, locally known as the *yan gora* but popularly referred to as the *Civilian JTF* emerged and volunteered to assist the Special and Joint Task Force in fighting the violent insurgents terrorizing their homes. This essay unpacks the general trends evident in this development, being the product of a review of recent literature on issues of vigilantism in the context of non-state actors and insurgency. Using earlier work on Boko Haram and counter-insurgency as a frame of reference, this essay examines the roles of the non-state actors- in

diametrically opposed ways, that is, Boko Haram Insurgents and the *Civilian JTF*- in the armed conflict.

NON-STATE ARMED ACTORS AND COUNTER-INSURGENCY MEASURES IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: THE EMERGENCE OF *CIVILIAN JTF* AS STRATEGIC COMPLEMENTARITY OR MANIFESTATION OF MILITARY DEFICIENCY?

Introduction

Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has experienced different types of violent conflicts that have negatively impacted on the country's population across the six geopolitical zones. As expected, peace and security have been badly undermined by the episodic, yet recurring conflict disorders causing harm, displacement and even death (Oshita, 2017, p.9). The rising wave of insurgency has assumed a crisis dimension in Nigeria – resource-based and sectarian insurgency have claimed many lives, destroyed sources of livelihood, and created a climate of perpetual fear and insecurity across the country. Nigeria's conflict with the Boko Haram group is arguably the greatest security challenge to confront the country since independence. The Nigerian armed forces, trained in conventional warfare, have found it difficult to effectively counter the activities of the Group (Falode, 2016). In Nigeria, non-state actors' groups function under varying degrees of support and concealment within sub-sections of the local populace. For Boko Haram, it is concentrated in north-eastern Nigeria largely because this is where it has found support amongst elements of the Muslim Nigerian population which dominates the north of the country (Waddington, 2014).

Feeding on popular discontent related to unresolved social tensions and diminishing economic opportunities, Boko Haram's early incarnation under fundamentalist salafist mallam Mohammed Yusuf saw itself as a buffer to the mainstream political authorities, (Bello, 2012 cited in Friel 2014, p. 6) but was nevertheless a non-violent one when it emerged at the turn of the millennium. Since January 2016, it has been hitting counter-value targets in the Contested Zones (CZs). The Group now relies heavily on the use of underage suicide bombers in its bid to destabilize the Nigerian state. The Nigeria-Boko Haram war is not yet over. It has only entered into a 'new phase' (Falode, 2016). The continued resilience of Boko Haram under the Buhari government calls for a second look and re-evaluation of some of the earlier rumours and notions about the sect. One proactive approach in the fight against terrorism that is often cast aside, although it plays a significant part in the case of Boko Haram terrorist sect in the north-east region, is civilian JTF (Bamidele, 2016, p. 134). (The name "Civilian JTF" is being used to show the association between the JTF (comprising the Nigerian army, Police and State Security Services) and the civilians who have volunteered to serve as vigilantes in the fight against Boko Haram in Borno state.) Generally, in Nigeria and elsewhere, vigilantism appears to be a common response to ambivalence and discontent about the authority of the state.

The conflict in northeast Nigeria is complex, driven by a mix of historical, political, economic, and ethnic antagonisms. Resolving it will require a deep understanding of conflict dynamics, as well as the motivations and capabilities of various key actors. One of such identified for further analysis in this essay is the civilian community, essentially the *Civilian JTF*. As Boko Haram splinters and morphs into more discrete guerrilla forces, with renewed emphasis on terrorist attacks, it is timely to rethink the role of vigilantes and their governance and prepare for their transformation (ICG, 2017). While the government has made significant strides in the war against

Boko Haram, recovering swathes of previously occupied territory and freeing hundreds of abductees, the group remains a significant threat. In the last two years, the Nigerian government has claimed to have decimated Boko Haram on several occasions, but violence affiliated with the terrorist organization continues to plague Nigeria and its neighbours.

The Nigerian Army, Air Force and police have been working together as a “Joint Task Force” to fight Islamist militant sect Boko Haram for several years. Vigilantism, the recourse to non-state actors to enforce law and order, crept into the counter-insurgency calculation due to the lack of government commitment to the security of their own soldiers. Thus, vigilantes, locally known as the *yan gora* but popularly referred to as the *Civilian JTF* emerged and volunteered to assist the Special and Joint Task Force in fighting the violent insurgents terrorising their homes. Thus, in recent years, to make up for its inability to do so itself, the Nigerian Army has tried to improve the safety of civilians by leaning on civilian joint task forces (CJTFs), which are militias and self-help groups being mobilized for self-defence against Boko Haram.

The rest of this article is divided into eight sections. Beginning with the introduction and followed in that order by a conceptual analysis of non-state actors and vigilantism. The third section interrogates the background to Nigeria’s lingering Boko Haram insurgency while section four focuses on the emergence of the Civilian ‘JTF’ as a community arrangement. In furtherance of this, section five discusses the success story of and reservations about the Civilian ‘JTF’. The sixth section presents the analysis of Nigeria’s military counter-insurgency strategy and its shortcomings while the seventh section suggests policy recommendations for continued counterinsurgency in Northeast Nigeria. The last section concludes the essay with a submission that vigilante groups can be highly effective in providing local security, particularly, in fragile states like Nigeria.

Non-State Actors and Vigilantism: A Conceptual Analysis

Considering the degree of dispersion of non-state armed actors, their potential influence and their effects on international politics, and learning about the possibilities and chances of success of strategies and concepts regarding an interaction with them, appears crucial (Hofmann and Schneckener, 2011, pp. 2-3). The rise and expansion of violent non-state actors has been engendered by the process of globalization. With the support of globalization, violent groups have come to be powerful threat which the nation-states in most cases are not adequately prepared to encounter (Aydinli, 2006). Identifying non-state parties to armed conflicts becomes increasingly complex. As seen in recent conflicts in Syria, Libya, Yemen, or the Central African Republic, turmoil or inter-communal tensions escalate into armed conflicts, armed groups fragment increasingly, and some armed groups operate transnationally. Over the past decade, international jurisprudence developed numerous indicative factors to identify organized armed groups (Rodenhäuser, 2018).

A definition of non-state armed actors has proven difficult owing to their many types and characteristics. Generally speaking, non-state armed groups are defined as distinctive organizations that are (i) willing and capable to use violence for pursuing their objectives and (ii) not integrated into formalized state institutions such as regular armies, presidential guards, police, or special forces. They, therefore, (iii) possess a certain degree of autonomy with regard to politics, military operations, resources, and infrastructure. They may, however, be supported or instrumentalised by state actors either secretly or openly, as happens often with militias

paramilitaries, mercenaries, or private military companies (Hofmann and Schneckener, 2011, pp. 2-3).

The concept of non-state actors is generally understood as including any entity that is not actually a state, often used to refer to armed groups, terrorists, civil society, religious groups, or corporations; the concept is occasionally used to encompass intergovernmental organizations (Clapham, 2009). From a legalistic or 'technical' point of view, UN experts Biró and Motoc (2005, p. 7) report that: 'a non-state actor can be any actor on the international stage other than a sovereign state.' Non-state actors often work to influence governance in positive and negative ways. These actors can include business and religious leaders, elders, NGOs and militia groups. Conflicts involving non-state armed groups present particular challenges for transitional justice processes, as explained by Bellal (2017). These groups—including armed opposition groups, paramilitary groups, terrorist groups, vigilante or self-defense groups, mafia-type organizations, urban gangs, and mercenaries—can have a wide range of structures and ideologies and operate according to different incentives than governments (*ibid*). They also do not necessarily fit in the same legal frameworks, with different legal standards potentially applicable in different situations.

The UN Security Council (UNSC, Resolution 1540 (2004), for instance, has defined non-state actors quite broadly as an 'individual or entity, not acting under the lawful authority of any State'. The African Union's Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention) defines 'armed groups' as 'dissident armed forces or other organized armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of the state'. For the European Union (EU), ANSAs 'retain the potential to deploy arms for political, economic and ideological objectives, which in practice are often translated into an open challenge to the authority of the State' (Factsheet – EEAS Mediation Support Project, November 2012). Conciliation Resources (2004 quoted in Dudouet, 2007, p. 4) consider ANSAs to be armed actors operating 'primarily within state borders, engaged in violent attempts to challenge or reform the balance and structure of political and economic power, to avenge past injustices and/or to defend or control resources, territory or institutions for the benefit of a particular ethnic or social group'.

Non-state actors include all actors in the public domain, including, for example, local nongovernmental organisations (NGOs); religious and faith-based organisations; tribal, traditional and other structures and networks of authority; workers' organisations; women's and youth networks; private sector organisations; media; academia; local community-based groups; and even influential individuals. Together, these actors are often referred to as 'civil society' (Smits and Wright, 2012). However, they should be regarded as informal systems of authority that co-exist or compete with each other and sometimes with the state. Socio-political settlements govern their behaviour and their attitudes towards and relations with state institutions, external actors and donors. Non-state actors are relevant to any transitional process, be it as constructive partner or potential spoiler. Groups explicitly engaging in illicit activities or armed violence to achieve their goals are outside the scope of this concept of non-state actors. International non-governmental organisations (INGOs) are a mechanism used to reach local actor level (Smits and Wright, 2012). In spite of some similarities among them, NSAs represent a great deal of heterogeneity. Some may have clearly defined political objectives, while this may be less clear-cut in other cases. Some may control territory and have established administrative structures parallel to or instead of those of the state, while others have loose command structures and weak control over members. Some operate

in rural areas conducting guerrilla type warfare, while others are mainly urban phenomena. Some concentrate on attacking military targets, while others attack civilians as a matter of strategy. NSAs may be composed of men, women and children. In some groups, female members comprise an important percentage of combatants and other members (Ladan, 2014).

Vigilantism is a security phenomenon that is situated at the intersection of these two trends. It can be at the same time autonomous from the state, when the state is perceived as not willing or able to provide security; and at the same time, it can act in tandem with the state, against certain social groups that are perceived as un-wanted or as threatening to the social order (Mireanu, 2014, p.8). As an autonomous movement, vigilantism is a form of citizenship that does not need the involvement or authority of the state to achieve its goals (Johnston, 1996, p. 226). Vigilantism appears as a reaction to the state's perceived inability or unwillingness to enforce the law (Johnston, 1996, p. 231), and supplies security to the population's demand for crime control (Johnston, 1996, p. 232). Vigilante groups step in to fill the security gap left by weak, incapable or unwilling state agencies (Sen and Pratten, 2008 cited Mireanu, 2014, p. 5). The support of the state is on the one hand not required because the vigilantes have the capacity to provide security themselves, and on the other hand it is not feasible because it has been intervening inefficiently or not at all up to that point (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974, p. 545).

Vigilantism is characterized by 'lethality', 'autonomy' and extra-legality (Greenberg, 2005; Jarman, 2007). In effect, vigilante formations apply lethal force, operate without the explicit support or authority of the state and adopt extra-lethal methods (Jarman, 2007). However, vigilantism would not be possible in the absence of social support from at least some segments of the population. The importance of this support and the participation of the population in decisions and practices of security have been increasing with the expansion of neoliberal modes of governance, which place great emphasis on societal self-management and community empowerment. Security is one of the commodities that social groups have to increasingly provide for themselves, as the state is loosening its grip on services, and privatizing many of its agencies (Eick, 2003).

Vigilantes have emerged at various times in African history, but only recently have they been given renewed attention in the field of African studies as well as in other disciplines. Many scholars tend to attribute their emergence to a general failure of African governments to guarantee order and security, which they believe weakens the legitimacy of the state (Roy, 1996; Boone, 1998; Englebort, 2000 cited in Grätz, 2011). Others have provided a very different explanation, regarding vigilante violence as a consequence of multi-centered power figurations, legal pluralism, and multiple modes of political action from below in present-day African societies (Grätz, 2011). For weak African states confronting armed insurgencies, turning to vigilante groups presents a risky dilemma. Often lacking the resources to fight insurgents on their own, governments may be tempted to subcontract certain security functions to vigilantes. Many of these groups mobilise to protect their own communities, and their local knowledge and community networks can make them more effective than state security forces (Dalby, 2017). But relying on them also poses grave dangers. Vigilantes tend to expand their roles, commit abuses, and sometimes end up challenging state authority. On this front, African states facing these dilemmas today can learn from the past. As detailed in a recent report by the International Crisis Group, the experiences and trajectories of the Kamajors in Sierra Leone, the Zande Arrow Boys in South Sudan, the Civilian Joint Task

Force (CJTF) in Nigeria, and the Teso Arrow Boys in Uganda all contain important lessons (Dalby, 2017).

In Nigeria, concerns about safety and security are substantial. Here, crime is high, and the police are considered corrupt and inefficient. The structure of law enforcement does not help. Police are run at the federal level despite long-standing calls for state forces (Spencer, 2017). Despite proclaimed reforms by successive governments, there has been little improvement in crime-fighting efforts (Van Der Spuy and Röntsch, 2008). Growing allegations of corruption and incompetence in crime fighting have been continually levelled against the Nigeria Police (Hills, 2008), compelling the government to establish some security and anti-corruption agencies such as the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), the State Security Service (SSS), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (Odekunle, 2004; Obuah, 2010). Given that Nigeria has many diverse languages, cultural practices and terrain, the centralised police face many difficulties. These conditions are conducive for vigilantes – civilians who undertake their own crime control (Spencer, 2017).

The increasing rate of crime and violence caused by insurgent groups, with the attendant loss of lives and property, has brought the north-eastern part of Nigeria to world attention. Fourchard (2011) notes that in Nigeria ‘vigilante’ is a term initially proposed by the police in the mid-1980s as a substitute for an older practice known as the ‘hunter guard’ or ‘night guard’ system. Non-state policing is thus not a new phenomenon, but a first attempt to introduce community policing in order to improve the image of the police. Nigerian vigilante movements have an ambiguous relationship with the state. While they sometimes (in their state-sponsored guise) defend against insurgency, they are also actively part of insurgent processes.

- Most vigilante groups invoke notions of themselves as the protectors of a ‘moral community’
- Vigilantism forms part of a quest for modes of citizenship beyond that of the nation – religious or ethnic forms of belonging, for example.
- Vigilante work is a resource for poor, unemployed youth, and a means by which the marginalised may insert themselves within the state apparatus.
- Claims of extrajudicial executions and torture carried out by vigilante groups have led to attempts at prohibition by the federal government, and ongoing contests with local authorities over the right to judge and punish crimes.
- The institutionalisation of shari’a implementation and state co-option of the Bakassi Boys were both introduced by state governors, part of a range of tactics by which governors have exploited the room for manoeuvre that now exists between state and federation (Pratten, 2008).

Vigilante groups are not generally considered a danger to society in northern Nigeria. Often, they are considered heroes (Murdock, 2013). Many states in northern Nigeria have implemented Sharia law. In 2000, the Hisbah vigilante group was set up in Zamfara and Kano states in northern Nigeria amongst claims that the federal police failed to effect Sharia. When complaints of extrajudicial killings escalated, the state governments set up monitoring committees. By 2003, laws to regulate

the *Hisbah* were passed. They became a highly structured organisation, operating in uniforms and marked vehicles, and even broadcasting a weekly radio programme (Spencer, 2017). Contemporary Nigerian vigilantism represents the articulation of claims to a set of rights based on the historical and spiritual legitimacy of young powerful men defending the community under local religious injunction and protection. The development of *Hisba* committees in northern states, for example, draws on a religious idiom of legitimacy and discipline (Pratten, 2008).

As weak African states face growing insurgencies, they do what weak states tend to do: subcontract certain security functions to non-state actors or vigilante groups, many of which had taken up arms to protect their communities (ICG, 2017). This is instantiated in the increasing involvement of the civil society in counterterrorism operations and intelligence. The role of volunteer vigilantes in the context of counterinsurgency in North-East Nigeria depicts this trajectory, although the trend has been bolstered by the increasing helplessness of the Nigerian state in protecting communities from the onslaught of insurgency in the region, which has necessitated a resort to self-defence (Okoli, 2017, p. 37).

Why Nigeria's Insurgency Lingers: Focus on Boko Haram's Changing Tactics

The goal of safe guarding national security, territorial authority and sovereignty of nation-states by state actors has been on the ascendancy, assuming a global dimension. The reason being that terrorism, both international and local, has been accepted as a potent threat to the security and sovereignty of nation-states and their citizens. The Nigerian nation-state has never enjoyed an appreciable period of stability that could guarantee security and sustainable development. Each phase of Nigeria's political history is punctuated by different security challenges - military coups, electoral violence, religious disturbances, militancy and banditry (Abdu, 2016, p. 2). The north-east of Nigeria is clearly the most insecure part of Nigeria in recent years. The level of insecurity may not be uniformly spread across the six states, but the challenges of governance are almost common (Abdu, 2016, p. 21). Nigeria is crisscrossed with political and social fault lines that threaten the security of its people. First, there are historically rooted ethnic and religious tensions, as well as localized clashes over land and resources between herders and farmers. Then, there are the more recent sources of conflict, such as contention over rich natural resources, including oil in the Niger Delta region, armed criminality and drug trafficking, and identity politics. Finally—and perhaps most urgently—is the rise of Boko Haram's violent extremism (Dietrich, 2015, p. 3).

Nigeria has witnessed a deteriorating internal security situation since the return to civilian rule in 1999. This may be seen from the proliferation and involvement of non-state actors in security across the different sections of the country (Monguno, 2016, p. 85). Nigeria being the largest and most populated had its own specific causes, and even within Nigeria, different regions have witnessed different levels and drivers of insecurity such as militancy in the Niger Delta, Bakassi Boys in the south east, O'dua Peoples' Congress in the south west and the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east. As a result, citizens across the country are living under various levels of insecurity, which can in some cases be debilitating and almost overwhelming (Ibrahim, 2016, p. 59). The conflict in Nigeria has deep roots. The current chapter began in July 2009, when Mohammed Yusuf, the Salafist founder and spiritual leader of Boko Haram, was killed in police custody in Maiduguri during a violent government crackdown on the fundamentalist group. Because of its extreme tactics, indiscriminate violence, and unpopular ideology, Boko Haram

currently lacks true grassroots support—although its grievances are shared by many northern Nigerians and its goals resonate with a large percentage of Nigerian Muslims.

Attack objectives include punishing and intimidating civilians, breeding distrust of the Nigerian government within northern Nigerian populations, obtaining survival resources, and defeating the counterinsurgency. While Boko Haram has conducted operations in other parts of Nigeria such as Abuja and a suspected attack in Lagos, attacks have been primarily focused on northeast Nigeria (Burns, 2015). For many years, Boko Haram's activity was mainly concentrated in Nigeria's Borno state, its historic stronghold. But since early 2014, the threat has become regional, and attacks on civilians and military positions have multiplied in northern Cameroon since March 2014 and in southern Niger and western Chad since early 2015. Evidence of Boko Haram's recent regional expansion, as noted by Burns (2015), can be seen in an Amnesty International report which documents at least 380 civilians and dozens of security personnel killed by Boko Haram fighters in northern Cameroon since January 2015. The violence Boko Haram unleashed has led to over 100,000 displaced and 7,000 refugees on Chadian territory by the beginning of 2017 (ICG, 2017). The ability of Boko Haram to drive openly in massive convoys across the northeast had been nearly eradicated by mid-2016, but it has retained the ability to launch suicide attacks that can destabilize the region. Such attacks are cheap, require relatively little training or coordination, and are good for intimidation even while as the group becomes weaker (Leach, 2016, p. 10).

Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad ("People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad"), better known by its Hausa name Boko Haram, is a Salafist jihadist terrorist organisation based in the northeast of Nigeria (Cook, 2011), in the areas predominated by the Kanuri people. Loosely translated from the local Hausa language, 'Boko haram' means 'Western education is forbidden' or that is it a sin. Ideologically, Boko Haram is a radical Salafist Islamist group that seeks the establishment of an Islamic state and Islamic law. This goal is effectively impossible, as Boko Haram does not have the support of the Nigerian Muslim populace, nor can it hope to overthrow the Abuja based government (Waddington, 2014). On December 26, 2011, the day after Boko Haram's bombing of a church in Madalla, Niger State, Boko Haram spokesperson Abu Qaqa said: "There will never be peace until our demands are met" (Abbas Jimoh et al, 2011).

Boko Haram has variedly stated that their motivation is really religious dominance, desire to seize power in northern Nigeria so as to advance their political, and their perception of the true Islam and Sharia. Other motivation and incentive to fight include the desire for self-actualization or independence, and identity preservation. The means they seem to be using include support from al-Qaida in the Maghreb and Al-shabaab in Somalia; others include, guerrilla style resistance and criminality skills, and acquired genocidal tactics framed against some ethnic and religious groups in Northern Nigeria. What is noteworthy about the period between 2002 and 2009, according to Ker (2012, p. 12), is the fact that Mohammed Yusuf is believed to have successfully gained a huge followership comprised of individuals aged between 17 and 30 years old. Yusuf's movement developed after 2002 and was successful enough to invest in educational infrastructure and other facilities in a neighbourhood of Maiduguri. Yusuf died while in police custody in July 2009 in a crackdown that also resulted in the death of hundreds of his followers. After Yusuf's death, the Nigerian government wrongly declared Boko Haram finished. Instead, the group rallied around

his deputy, Abubakar Shekau, and steadily increased the intensity and violence of its attacks. According to Marchal (2012), Boko Haram has to be understood in different ways:

Firstly, it refers to the long history of the region and the recurrence of radical Islamic movements. Secondly, Boko Haram has deep roots in the social and economic marginalisation of a large section of the northern states' population. A third understanding of Boko Haram emphasises the revenge dimension and questions the behaviour of the law enforcement agencies, their poor respect for the rule of law and the militarisation of any response to challenges to the central state. The fourth vision sees Boko Haram as a tool used by northern Nigerian elites to express their grievances against the lack of interest showed by the central state. Lastly, because of its developing connections with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and possibly al-Shabaab, Boko Haram is changing the scope of its grievances and providing the ground for a lasting confrontation between radicalised Muslims and others in Africa.

While this group use terrorism styled-tactics against civilians or other 'soft targets', they also regularly attack Nigerian military and security forces. This requires the ability to coordinate relatively large forces against 'hard' targets, and, as has been displayed, a willingness to incur casualties and continue fighting. This suggests a more 'traditional' insurgency (Waddington, 2014). Since 2009 it has been driven by a desire for vengeance against politicians, police, and Islamic authorities for their role in a brutal suppression of the group that year. But the group has proved itself to be very adaptable, evolving its tactics swiftly and changing its targets at the behest of a charismatic leadership (Walker, 2012). Boko Haram's brutal campaign includes a suicide attack on a United Nations building in Abuja in 2011, repeated attacks that have killed dozens of students, the burning of villages, ties to regional terror groups, and the abduction of more than two hundred schoolgirls in April 2014 (Sergie & Johnson, 2015). Following an escalation of violence by Boko Haram, the federal government declared a State of Emergency (SOE) in Yobe, Borno, and Adamawa states in December 2011 (Dietrich, 2015, p. 3). The state of emergency, which remained in effect for six months, did not ameliorate insecurity. Nor did regulations issued in April 2012 that detailed emergency powers granted to security forces to combat the Boko Haram threat. The group carried out more attacks and killed more people during this six-month period than in all of 2010 and 2011 combined (Human Rights Watch, 2012).

The Nigerian government's assessment that Boko Haram was an al-Qaeda-linked terrorist movement left it with few options other than using force to deal with the group. Analysts say the focus on a link to international terrorist organizations ignores the context in which Boko Haram emerged and emphasizes security issues that may only radicalize the group further (Sergie & Johnson, 2015). The government's response to the spate of insecurity is seen by many as worrisome and condemnable. Thus, poor governance, as manifested in the lack of responsive political leadership, poor institutionalization of democratic governance, endemic institutional corruption among others are believed to have led to the intensification of violence and terrorism which is threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria.

As threatening as the Boko Haram insurgency is, countering it has been problematic, not only because of their mode of operation, but mostly because of the centrifugal nature of the Nigerian state. Series of explanations are given on the rationale behind the existence and radicalization of

the sect (Hassan, 2014, p. 12). While Boko Haram cannot be neatly characterized as an insurgency or terrorist organization, its origins appear rooted in grievances over poor governance and sharp inequality in Nigerian society. Against a background of pervasive poverty, corruption and widespread unemployment, nearly three decades of military rule in Nigeria saw massive deterioration in government institutions and weakened governance capacity at all levels. Igbuzor (2011) sees the state of insecurity in Nigeria as a function of government failure. That failure manifests in the incapacity of government to deliver public goods to its citizens. This lack of basic necessities has created a growing army of frustrated Nigerians who resort to violence with little or no provocation or opportunity.

The sect can be viewed as a conservative, fanatical Islamic sect, fundamentally opposed to secular statehood and western political ideology by engaging in a Jihad-inspired perpetuation of terror as its principal means to establish a Nigerian state rooted in Salafist proselytism. In terms of its structure and modus operandi, the organization could be categorised as amorphous (combining sophisticated combat techniques and technology with a variety of target victims), anonymous (due to the lack of an organised group of interlocutors with whom, policy agencies could engage), and internally fragmented without a centred leadership (Amaliya, 2014).

Their activities have affected economic and social activities. National resources that should have been channelled to more useful ventures have been used for counter-insurgency acts. In the North-East, as stated in Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution's 2016 report on *strategic conflict assessment of Nigeria* (2017:15), the impact of insurgency on all aspects of human security, that is, economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, social and political security, are apparent in this zone. This has created an atmosphere of fear, despair and material lack for the displaced and those still in the states in the zone. The state of human insecurity in the zone has not been helped by allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) leveled against the managers of the camps of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The visible and invisible actors in the landscape of conflict and insurgency have cut across local and international spheres – which have made an outright defeat of terrorism quite challenging for the government.

Curiously, one of the main lessons in the fight against Boko Haram in Nigeria is that the sect has shown an incredible capacity for regrouping after major setbacks (Adibe, 2016). The Group's activities were seen as that of civil, social and religious disobedience to established norms within Nigeria. The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) made extensive use of roadblocks and mass arrest at the sites of attacks by the Group to curb and contain its activities (Walker, 2012 cited in Falode, 2016). NPF's inability to check the Group forced Nigeria to form the Joint Task Force (JTF) in 2003. The JTF is a combination of military and police personnel specifically tasked with checking and containing the burgeoning Boko Haram menace. The next section will discuss the activities of the *Civilian Joint Task Force* and what precipitated it.

The Emergence of *Civilian Joint Task Force* as a Community Security Arrangement: Driving Critical Forces

A primary responsibility of the state to its citizens is providing security. In fulfilling this duty the Nigerian state has deployed security forces in response to the violence in the north-eastern part of the country perpetrated by the proscribed Boko Haram sect. The deployment of the Nigerian military forces, together with other security agencies, has not yet ended the insurgency (Office of

the National Security Adviser, 2015) in spite the claim of its technical defeat by the present administration. However, both the soft and heavy-handed approaches of the Nigerian government have divided Nigerians along two opposing lines: those who support the use of coercion, and those who support conciliation (Agbiboa, 2015, p. 13). Advocates of the coercive approach argue that force rather than dialogue is more effective in dealing with terrorist organizations. However, there is a legitimate concern that coercive responses is forcing Boko Haram to shift their bases and arena of violence, with grave consequences for Nigeria's neighbours (Agbiboa, 2015, p. 13b).

By encouraging state security forces to pursue and destroy Boko Haram terrorists within the bound rules of engagement, this strategy (a hard-line counter military action strategy) addresses Boko Haram as a one-dimensional terrorist movement, isolated from any political environment or circumstance that may have fostered the rise of the group. Although the Nigerian military has been able to recapture territory formerly occupied by the terrorist group, this strategy has also proven to be ineffective in containing the group's increasing lethality (Ayandele, 2017). An effective military strategy in countering terrorism might thus be one that emphasizes the need for the discriminate, surgical use of force so as not to alienate populations who might eventually support the government by (i) protecting the local population, (ii) promoting good governance, (iii) eliminating enemy safe-havens, and (iv) training the locals to take the fight to the insurgency (Ayandele, 2017). This strategy and its fall-outs will be examined in one of the subsequent sections.

Initially, the pressing issue was the state's legitimacy and the willingness of local people to cooperate with the Nigerian security forces in the counter-insurgency campaign. For over four years, the Nigerian military lost much local support due to the bluntness of its tactics. Many non-combatants have – allegedly – also been killed by the military in the counter-insurgency campaign and others have been wrongly detained. In some quarters the soldiers were reportedly more feared in Maiduguri than Boko Haram (Higazi, 2013). The vigilante fight against Boko Haram started in 2013, in Maiduguri, the Borno state capital and the insurgency's epicentre, under the twin pressure of mounting jihadist violence and security force retaliation (ICG, 2017b).

The Joint Task Force (JTF), led by the Nigerian army, quickly realised the vigilantes' potential as a source of local knowledge, intelligence and manpower and set out to help organise it, with the assistance of local and traditional authorities. Operating under the unofficial but revealing name of *Civilian Joint Task Force* (CJTF), vigilantes were essential in flushing Boko Haram out of the city, then began replicating throughout the state. The official use of vigilantes to fight the movement spread further in Nigeria, then to Cameroon in 2014 and Chad in 2015, where the groups are known as *comités de vigilance* (ICG, 2017b). These youths are largely motivated by the understanding that they know the insurgents in their midst, and they decide to collaborate with the official JTF by 'trailing, capturing and handing over' known or suspected insurgents to the relevant security agencies (Hamza and Sawab, 2013). For the region's overstretched and under pressure militaries, they have somewhat filled the security gap and provided local knowledge.

Two major changes transformed Boko Haram into the movement we know today, demonstrating group adaptability. First, local vigilante groups began to emerge at the neighbourhood level in Maiduguri, quickly spreading to other areas and coalescing into the 'Civilian Joint Task Force' (CJTF). These vigilantes, fed up both with Boko Haram and accusations from security forces for

perceived collaboration, took matters into their own hands, patrolling their neighbourhoods in order to identify and root out terrorist elements (Mahmood, 2016). Two, the Nigerian Government declared a state of emergency across the three northeastern states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa, allowing for additional manpower and equipment to combat Boko Haram in its area of origin. These events, as explained by Mahmood (2016):

Transformed Boko Haram, as sect members fled urban confines for rural hideouts. Boko Haram had primarily been an urban phenomenon up until this point, and the rural flight drastically changed group dynamics. With the departure from cities, security in urban centers of Borno and Yobe state dramatically increased, but at the expense of rural insecurity. Boko Haram responded with a more brutal outlook towards civilians, increasing targeting in response to perceived complicity with vigilante actors, and routinely slaughtering dozens if not hundreds in attacks on lightly-guarded or unprotected rural communities.

Fundamentally however, one reason for the emergence of civilian JTF as a community security proposed as an option for the future of combating terrorism in Nigeria for Boko Haram terrorism and post-Boko Haram terrorism settings has been the inability of hard approach of military containment has up to now fail to cope with the globalisation of crime, such as the emergence of transnational organised crime (TOC). Terrorism is often intertwined with TOC and, in many cases, is the catalyst that breeds and sustains it (Enders, Sandler and Gailulleov, 2011 cited in Bamidele, 2016:135). Thus, the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) may have provided a template for community-based security that can be applied elsewhere, if refined (Siollun, 2015). The creation of civilian JTF as part of the mechanisms for combating the menace of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria represents a veritable example of citizen-driven communal response to security challenge and an indication of how terrorism can be tackled and prevented.

The civilian JTF group exploits their knowledge of the communities to identify suspected Boko Haram members or other suspicious individuals (Okereke, 2013). The vigilantes were protecting themselves from a dual threat: both from Boko Haram and from government security forces, which were inflicting collective punishment on communities suspected of harbouring militants, sometimes setting fire to houses and shops or randomly arresting – and in some instances, executing – passers-by (Human Rights Watch, 2012, p. 59). In private, according to a VOA report (see Heather Murdock, 2013), some vigilantes confirmed that “when the military swept into the region after emergency rule was declared in May 2013, they felt they had to join civilian security groups so soldiers would not mistake them for Boko Haram”. In addition, the focus of Nigerian government special military Joint Task Force (JTF) comprising the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Air Force and Nigerian Navy and Para-Military institutions such as the Police, and State Security Service (SSS) on military containment, and the hard approach, may have failed and can be argued to have contributed to the escalation of Boko Haram terrorism without the joint effort with the civilian JTF (Bamidele, 2016:131-132).

The CJTF is a cross between a neighbourhood watch scheme and ruthless vigilantes. Due to Nigeria’s massive ethno-linguistic diversity, and the federal nature of its security forces, police officers and soldiers are often deployed in areas they have never been to before and where they are complete strangers, with no understanding of the local culture or language. This makes it very difficult for them to gain the cooperation or trust of locals. This is where the CJTF can be of

assistance. Although it is armed only with rudimentary weapons such as sticks, knives, and old rifles, the CJTF's local knowledge, and in some cases individual knowledge of Boko Haram members, has helped them "out" Boko Haram members to the army (Siollun, 2015). The use of charms and locally fabricated small arms by the Vigilante and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) is also a factor in the fight against BH insurgents (Kankara, 2015). In his analysis, Agbiboa (2015, p. 14b) submits that far from being lawless mobs, *the yan gora* function as community-based police forces:

The emergence of anti-Boko Haram youth vigilantism in Maiduguri occurred from the grassroots, in reaction to the failure of the Nigerian military to protect civilians against Boko Haram. While the *yan gora* originated in acts of necessity undertaken in the face of relentless terror, their noble intentions also have a tenuous existence in the middle of endemic corruption, political factionalism, and electoral machinations that speckles the Nigerian political landscape. Most youth involved in the *yan gora* are largely teenagers without basic education. Some have lost their parents and siblings to Boko Haram attacks and are on a revenge mission. Others have been maimed and incapacitated for the rest of their lives in the process of fighting Boko Haram.

The CJTF has since become regimented into sectors and sub-sectors, with Maiduguri and other hot spots they are defending having sectors and sub-sector leaders. CJTF members operate a number of checkpoints in Maiduguri where they conduct stop and search operations (Agbiboa, 2015:14). Soon after its emergence, security services and civilian authorities became closely involved in the Civilian Joint Task Force's organisation, management and operations. The army-led Joint Task Force quickly recognised the vigilantes' potential. With the help of local and traditional authorities, it organised them according to its own command structure, establishing a CJTF unit for each of Maiduguri's ten security sectors.

The civilian JTF claim they have 45,000 members, led by local businessmen and former civil servants. Their ranks reflect the spectrum of Maiduguri society, from Christians to the unemployed, to former Boko Haram. Aside from parade ground drilling, the state government has also introduced civics lessons for the young men, previously noted for their eagerness to lynch suspects (Anyadike, 2014). The Borno state government was quick to embrace the civilian JTF. It provided training to 1,700 volunteers in 2013 through a Borno Youth Empowerment Scheme, kitting out the graduates in sky-blue uniforms, providing vehicles, and a monthly stipend of around US\$100 (ibid). Support and authorization of this civilian JTF often enable the formal mechanism (special government Joint Task Force (JTF) to function and operate (Campbell, 2013). The CJTF has its own internal hierarchy, in which each community CJTF unit reports to one of 10 district commands, which in turn is overseen by a state-level leadership council. It is modelled on the military: Districts correspond to the army's zonal commands, and checkpoints throughout the region are often jointly managed. Sometimes, even military raids are conducted alongside CJTF members (Matfess, 2017). While speaking on the training slated for the civilian JTF, the Borno state deputy governor, Zannah Mustapha (cited in Premium Times, October 28, 2013), however cautioned that:

Government decided to introduce a reorientation course for members of the group to change their perception and instil discipline in them," the deputy government said on Monday. The

first batch of trainees comprising 700 civilian JTF had just concluded their course and hopefully by next month another group of 1,000 will begin training. The main duty of the civilian JTF is to assist law enforcement agencies in their job of providing security to the society; that is why they sometimes join the military at the check points. This does not give them a licence to take laws into their hands by harassing or arresting innocent members of the society.

The Civilian JTF's successful operations may have confirmed local perceptions that such a non-official force is necessary to counteract the deficiencies of the military. Although official regulation has not completely eradicated abuses, it appears more fruitful than bans. Moreover, the effectiveness of vigilantism in combating crime cannot be contested. With enhanced training and accountability mechanisms these groups could provide an important component of community policing (Spencer, 2017). However, as most literature indicate, vigilante groups in violent conflict pose a dilemma: they can protect civilians and help regular forces overcome deadly insurgent groups but also risk attacking rival communities or preying on towns and villages they are supposed to protect. This will form part of my discussion in the next section.

Civilian 'JTF' and Collaborative Efforts: Success Stories and Moments of Reservations

Residents throughout the region turned to the CJTF to provide protection against Boko Haram. For many, its fighters are hometown heroes, a reflection of the community's resistance to the jihadists, and a response to the military's failings (Baca, 2014). Armed with machetes and sticks, these local youth mobilized themselves against Boko Haram elements in their communities, complementing the counter-terrorism efforts of the state's Joint Task Force (JTF) (which has now been disbanded and replaced with the army's 7th Infantry Division) and the Multinational Task Force (MJTF) through provision of combat support and intelligence gathering (Agbiboa, 2015:14). The CJTF's cooperation with regular security forces has also helped deter attacks in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State and biggest city in north-eastern Nigeria and push the militants out into more rural areas (Siollun, 2015). Anyadike (2014) posits that it is these volunteer vigilantes dubbed "Civilian JTF" that are largely credited with pacifying the city rather than the military's Joint Task Force (JTF):

Whereas the often blundering and brutal JTF regarded everyone in Maiduguri as a potential Salafist, the community-rooted volunteers - officially the Borno Youth Association for Peace and Justice -actually know who Boko Haram members are.

The *yan gora* has recorded great success against Boko Haram since its formation in 2013. In March 2014, members of the CJTF killed at least 207 Boko Haram militants who stormed a military barracks and a neighbourhood of Maiduguri. In particular, the CJTF's cooperation with regular security forces has also helped deter attacks in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State and push the Islamists out into more rural areas. In late 2014 the *yan gora* played a fundamental role in repelling multiple attacks on Konduga, for example, which is critical because the town stands between Maiduguri and Bama, the second city in Borno, which from September until March 2015 was controlled by Boko Haram (Agbiboa, 2015, p. 14). According to the Civilian JTF spokesperson and legal adviser, 'We are not going to be weary; we will intensify our efforts by ensuring that our communities are peaceful and the residents are free from attacks and molestation by the misguided

insurgents' (Nigerian Eye, February 21, 2015). Whatever the truth, CJTF members acknowledge that the security forces, and particularly the army, which had the JTF lead, were quick to appreciate the potential of a vigilante response in Maiduguri (ICG, 2017a). The army later provided standard military training to about 200 members to create a "CJTF Special Force", with greater weapon skills and operational capability that could be used in front-line operations. As part of the success story, the International Crisis Group (2017a) confirms that:

Having witnessed the growth of Boko Haram groups in their communities, vigilantes often know some of the militants and their business partners, as well as who from their immediate environment is unexplainably absent. On many occasions, they have prevented suicide attacks or limited their impact by detecting suspicious characters early. By late 2013, Maiduguri was largely purged of Boko Haram cells, and there have been few subsequent attacks in the city, other than suicide operations, often against refugee camps on its periphery. CJTFs carried out intelligence, surveillance and protection missions in their communities, notably operating checkpoints and patrolling to check on newcomers in public spaces (mosques, markets and the entrances of villages and towns). As some communities were displaced, CJTF have followed, often continuing surveillance in their IDP camps or host communities.

While the state political leadership and local residents have commended the efforts of CJTF, with the Nigerian president referring to them as "new heroes of the nation", there are growing concerns that these vigilante groups are "brewing trouble" which could transform into new militias if their activities are not regulated by the state (Agbibo, 2014b). For instance, as the threat from Boko Haram wanes, there are mounting cases of the CJTF targeting the civilian population they claim to protect. They enjoy near-impunity, and the current lack of a comprehensive demobilisation plan, points to a potential crisis ahead. The threat is so pressing that Borno State Governor Kashim Shettima has characterised the CJTF as "more dangerous than Boko Haram". In a February interview he said: "If we fail to care for them, they could become Nigeria's Frankenstein" (Matfess, 2017).

Vigilantism, because it emerges from the weak state's inability to maintain law and order and is frequently fed by a desire for revenge for personal losses, has a built-in bias for rough justice (ICG, 2017c). Reportedly instrumental in curbing Boko Haram activities in Maiduguri, the CJTF stands accused of carrying out many of the same heavy-handed tactics allegedly employed by Nigerian security forces, including extrajudicial killings of Boko Haram suspects. The CJTF's campaign touched off a spike in intra-Kanuri violence, as vengeful Boko Haram fighters slaughtered villagers accused of backing the CJTF and clashed with vigilante groups (Baca, 2014). Also, analysts fear the CJTF's activities are endangering civilians. According to Human Rights Watch report (2014):

The rise of...the so-called Civilian Joint Task Force has added a worrisome new dimension to the violence. CJTF members inform security forces about presumed local Boko Haram activity; the Islamist group then retaliates against both the neighborhood vigilante group and the broader community

In the process of supporting the JTF's counter-insurgency operations, some of the youths have lost their lives. On several occasions some of the youths have been ambushed and killed by Boko Haram insurgents. For example, in July 2013, members of the Civilian JTF invaded the villages of Mainok and Dawashi in Maiduguri in search of insurgents. Following the invasion, Boko Haram insurgents killed about 43 members of the vigilante group in a fierce retaliatory attack (Stratfor, 2013; see also Nigeria Watch Database) In August 2014, Amnesty International released footage showing what appear to be Nigerian soldiers and Civilian J.T.F. members near Maiduguri, cutting the throats of suspected Boko Haram members and then pushing them into an open grave (Okeowo, 2014).

Jacob Zenn (2013) argues that to survive, the Civilian J.T.F. has had to evolve from stick-wielding vigilantes to a more sophisticated group: "It's a catch-22, because if they remain lightly armed, they are at high risk of being massacred by heavily armed Boko Haram insurgents. But if they are armed, they essentially become like soldiers." Once they assume their militarized roles, they may become what soldiers are in the region: both protection and threat. Already, there is discord within the CJTF's ranks. In particular, many members express frustration over perceived favouritism. Only a handful of CJTF units are provided with a relatively regular salary from the state government, while the remainder make do with infrequent hand-outs or tributes from the communities they defend (Matfess, 2017). Another observable trend, as captured by Dowd and Drury (2017), is an increase in anti-civilian violence, driven by reprisal attacks on opposition communities:

In the states where CJTF forces have been active, Boko Haram violence against civilians typically intensifies in the period following clashes with the CJTF. For example, CJTF forces engaged in clashes with Boko Haram in Yobe state in June 2013; the following month, records of anti-civilian violence by Boko Haram in Yobe state doubled. A similar pattern holds for subsequent months of recorded clashes, with Boko Haram violence against civilians tripling in July 2015, following clashes with the CJTF the previous month. The average number of anti-civilian violence events per month in Borno also increased dramatically in the period following the emergence of the CJTF there, compared to the period preceding its formation.

Though the involvement of the Civilian JTF in the fight against sectarian insurgency has been useful to the counter-insurgency operations of the official JTF, the activities of the local vigilante group are fraught with arbitrary killings and human rights abuses. In the longer term, vigilantes may become political foot soldiers, turn to organised crime or feed communal violence. Vigilantism can be a powerful counter-insurgency tool, but there is a compelling need to confront the immediate concerns it raises, notably in terms of impunity, and to begin planning for its long-term post-conflict transformation (ICG, 2017). Nevertheless, the involvement of these vigilantes in counterinsurgency in North-East Nigeria marks a departure from the military-centric to civilian-oriented counterinsurgency operations (Okoli, 2017, pp. 50-51).

Military Counter-Insurgency Strategy and the Shortcomings

Insurgency is a crime against public order because it is a pattern of internal disturbances and tensions that poses serious problems of public safety and public order for the relevant authorities, which can eventually lead to situations that threaten the life of a nation and tempt the government

in power to proclaim a state of emergency. Internal disturbances involves situations of confrontational acts of violence, which can assume various forms, of the way from the spontaneous generation of acts of revolt to the struggle between more or less organized groups and the state authorities in power. In these situations, the authorities in power call upon extensive police forces, or even armed forces to restore internal order (Ladan, 2014).

The Nigerian military comprises an army, navy and air force. Its primary mandate is to defend the state from external aggression and internal insurrection. In the last decade, however, the military has been in steep decline. Its inability to subdue the insurgency by militant groups in the Niger Delta left the government with no option other than to offer the militants an amnesty in 2009 (ICG, 2009). Inadequate funding, corrupt procurement and poor maintenance result in serious equipment and logistics deficits. It has been able to reverse Boko Haram's advance since early 2015 only with help from the forces of Nigeria's poorer neighbours and support from foreign technicians and mercenaries.

Shortly after Muhammadu Buhari was inaugurated as Nigeria's new president in May 2015, he boldly declared that Boko Haram would be defeated by the end of the year (Zenn, 2016). The Nigerian and international public were rightfully sceptical. The prior administration under Goodluck Jonathan had declared several times that Africa's most deadly militant group would be "soon be history" or that its leader Abubakar Shekau was dead, only to see both Boko Haram and Shekau re-emerge stronger than before (Zenn, 2016). (The group's leader, Abubakar Shekau, evades capture, prompting the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Tukur Burutai on July 21, 2017, to issue a forty-day ultimatum to his men to capture Shekau, dead or alive. On more than one occasion, the Army declared Shekau dead, even if he had resurfaced in videos spewing threats and ridiculing the army. In defence, the army has claimed Shekau has a body double masquerading as the leader. Yet, findings from *Daily Trust* (2017) research show that the group seemed to have had more impact in 2017 than it did in 2016, doubling the number of casualties it recorded. The group killed 379 people in 57 attacks in 2016. This number includes 327 civilians, 49 soldiers and 3 immigration officers, while 2, 200 people were reportedly injured in these attacks. In 2017, the group recorded three times more attacks than it did in 2016, with a reported 124 violent incidents, including the suicide bombing in Biu, which was blamed on the group. These attacks caused the deaths of 637 civilians, 68 soldiers and four policemen, bringing the total number of people killed to 709 so far (December 3, 2017). With the 13 people officially reportedly killed in the Biu suicide bombing, the number rises to 722, representing a 90.5 per cent increase from the previous year.)

At the 72nd United Nations General Assembly, Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari reportedly thanked the King of Jordan for donating military hardware to his country to fight Boko Haram – the insurgent group whose violent campaign started in 2009. For the same reason, he is also said to have thanked US President Donald Trump for selling long sought after military aircraft to Nigeria. Before, Buhari, his aides and officials in the military hierarchy claimed that Boko Haram has been "technically defeated," "largely defeated," and the "war largely won" (Africa Check, 2017). While admitting that the sect's activities had led to loss of many lives and displacement of innocent people in the country, the President boasted that since his assumption of office in May 2015, Boko Haram has been "systematically decimated" (Adetayo, 2016).

Specifically, in December 2015, the then new president of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, declared that the Boko Haram has been ‘technically defeated’ (BBCNews, December 24, 2015). In fact, Buhari’s election in 2015 was made possible in part by the deteriorating security situation due to the government’s slow response to Boko Haram as well as rising levels of poverty and corruption within the government. The electorate viewed Buhari, a former general, as a leader who could address one of Nigeria’s greatest internal threats, Boko Haram. Buhari explained that Nigerian forces have restricted the Boko Haram insurgency to fighting with improvised explosives devices (IEDs) and mostly limited their force to the center of Borno state, the BBC reports. But Buhari’s critics say his administration has exaggerated its success, noting that Boko Haram continues to carry out deadly suicide attacks and has spread into neighbouring Niger, Cameroon, and Chad (VOA News, December 24, 2015).

It is politically understandable why President Buhari feels he should convince Nigerians and the world that he has defeated Boko Haram. The defeat of Boko Haram was one of the central pillars of his campaign and he had promised Nigerians that he would defeat Boko Haram (Utietiang, 2016) by December 2016 having given the military the marching orders to rout the insurgents out of the north-east six months earlier. A day before Buhari’s address to the UN General Assembly, Boko Haram is reported to have killed 12 people and injured 26 others in an attack on a community 36 km from the capital of Borno State, Maiduguri. The next day, Nigerian troops fought suspected Boko Haram fighters in the militants’ known hold-out of Sambisa Forest, which authorities had declared taken (Africa Check, 2017). Only four days after the interview, Boko Haram showed Buhari that they have not been ‘technically’ defeated. Using two women, they detonated bombs in Madagali, a town in Borno State, killing at least 30 people. They unleashed other multiple attacks on that day and the days following (ibid).

Nigerian military have over the years, been famed for their conventional war victories and exploits. The Nigerian Army, Navy and Air Force, are renowned for not losing any war within its territory as well as in their regional and international peace enforcement duties. Unfortunately, developments within the nation’s northeast region and other parts of the country where Boko Haram terrorists held sway have dragged the military into uncharted waters of unconventional warfare. For Nigeria, Nigerians and their armed forces, Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency (CTCOIN) Operation is a new challenge they were reluctantly drawn into when Mohammed Yusuf’s led Boko Haram started its ‘retaliatory’ onslaught against state institutions (Iroegbu, 2017).

The Nigerian government began to develop a coherent strategy to deal with Boko Haram’s insurgency after widespread violence broke out in Borno, Yobe and Bauchi States in July 2009. This strategy focused on the employment of hard (military) power through kinetic operations against the radical extremist group. A joint military task force codenamed Operation Restore Order I and III was established in 2009 to conduct large-scale military operations in Borno and Yobe states where Boko Haram had strong bases (Ihejirika, 2012). The government also established new permanent military units in the two states (Oladeji et al, 2012). In response to the scourge, which threatens not only Nigeria’s territorial integrity but also regional stability and the security of millions of people, the concerned countries (Cameroon, Niger and Chad) stepped up their military responses. These national initiatives then sparked off joint efforts that led to the establishment of the MNJTF, under the auspices of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (Assanvo et al, 2016)

The Country Reports on Terrorism released by the United States Department of State in July 2016 forecast Buhari's premature declaration of victory and the concomitant revival of Boko Haram's insurgency. Detailing the progression of terrorism and counter-terrorism initiatives globally, the US briefing provided a grim account of the trajectory of the Boko Haram insurgency and attempts by the Nigerian state to curtail it (Cummings, 2017). Acknowledging that the Nigerian government and its regional partners have made progress in fighting the sect – delineated by the government's liberation of all insurgent-administered territory, its arrest of high-ranking militant commanders such as Khalid al-Barnawi, and the brokering of the safe release of a large number of the so called Chibok girls – several key deficits in Nigeria's counterterrorism policy was noted. Most notably, the report detailed the lack of cooperation between Nigerian security agencies and its Lake Chad Basin counterparts in intelligence sharing and coordinating its counterterrorism strategies. The Buhari administration was also cited as being unable to secure areas which were liberated from the Islamist militants but yet proceeded to repopulate these communities without providing adequate protection (Cummings, 2017).

The government's strategy so far has appeared to be schizophrenic at times, vacillating between vowing to "crush" Boko Haram, pleading with them to negotiate, and offering them an amnesty. The government's approach has been of saying the right things but at the wrong time, or of doing the right things but in the wrong way (Siollun, 2015). The Nigerian government's response to Boko Haram has been fraught from the beginning. Former President Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian southerner, behaved as if the insurgency is a creation of northern Muslim leaders and thus their problem to solve. It took him more than three weeks to speak publicly about the abduction of the schoolgirls (Okeowo, 2014). Government critics charge that the military has been slow to respond to the threat posed by Boko Haram because officials are benefiting from the war in the north, siphoning money from the country's \$6 billion security budget (ibid).

Actions taken by the government were often heavy-handed, failing to discriminate between militants and civilians, and involving punitive strategies against large portions of the population. This dualistic approach is particularly significant, and destructive, in cases where perceptions of grievance and inequality underpinned the powerful mobilisation strategies of insurgent groups in the first place (Dowd and Drury, 2017, pp. 145-146). As posited by Walker (2012), tactics employed by government security agencies against Boko Haram have been consistently brutal and counterproductive. Their reliance on extrajudicial execution as a tactic in "dealing" with any problem in Nigeria not only created Boko Haram as it is known today, but also sustains it and gives it fuel to expand.

The military took its task with shades of half-truths and outright falsehood. Often times, casualty figures on the side of the troops are altered and attacks by insurgents are downplayed (Nwabufo, 2017). Indeed, the underestimation of Boko Haram helped fuel the narrative that the Nigerian army fighting the terrorists was under-equipped, ill-motivated, cowardly, or heavily compromised. This underestimation also probably explained why the army, which Buhari vowed to better motivate and equip with more sophisticated weapons than Jonathan did, was given only three months in September 2015 to defeat the terrorists. In retrospect, that deadline was counterproductive because it unduly raised public expectations and put enormous pressure on both the military and the government (Adibe, 2016).

Before the government crackdown in 2009, Boko Haram's capabilities were limited to drive-by shootings and improvised explosives. After the crackdown, the group started targeting churches, police stations, news outfits and are now chiefly into suicide bombing. As bomb and gun attacks in Northern Nigeria have shown, Boko Haram - once a small religious sect - is now a flexible dynamic organisation capable of changing tactics and targets (Liolio, 2012). Added to this is the fact that Boko Haram has established strong links with foreign extremist groups, including al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and al-Sheba in Somalia. These external groups have influenced Boko Haram with both tactical knowledge and ideological influence. Hence this is no longer a purely Nigerian problem (ibid).

On a positive note, the Nigerian security forces have focused on disrupting Boko Haram logistics routes that send in food and weapons into Borno State from neighbouring countries while counter-insurgency operations have focused on destroying the camps and safe havens such as in Sambisa Forest where Boko Haram has been able to store weapons and captives, recover from, and prepare for attacks (Zenn, 2016). Nigeria's security forces achieved some successes in degrading the potency of Boko Haram in the last three years through the killing of some of the sect's key leaders and the destruction of key operational cells. The inability of Boko Haram to extend its terrorist activities beyond the northern region is also a measure of the security forces' success in curtailing the group's activities.

However, the fluidity and adaptability of the terrorist group in the different phases have made it difficult for Nigeria to evolve a coherent strategy to contain its activities. More generally, as observed by Freedom House (2015), the military is hampered by pervasive corruption and mismanagement as well as a lack of resources and reinforcements, leading to waning morale among its troops. Residents reported seeing soldiers running away during confrontations with Boko Haram. "Soldiers say they do not have enough equipment — they often appear to lack protective gear — and do not get paid on time, if at all" (Okeowo, 2014). In 2014, a military tribunal sentenced 12 soldiers to death for attempted murder and mutiny; they had shot at their commanding officer after a convoy of their fellow soldiers was ambushed by Boko Haram (Okeowo, 2014). While assessing the military counter-terrorism strategy, Waddington (2014) contends that:

Nigeria's military performance against Boko Haram is difficult to gauge because of a long-standing trend towards falsification of after-action reports by military spokesmen, and limited press access to military operations. What is clear is that the current approach to combating Boko Haram is not working. As a counter-terrorism force, the Nigerian military has shown itself to be heavy handed – often engaging in retributive raids while failing to effectively leverage intelligence to proactively combat future terrorist attacks. As a counter-insurgency force, the Nigerian military has a long record of human rights offences, including illegal detentions, torture, and extra-judicial executions

The brutal nature of JTFs counterinsurgency operations has exacerbated the level of violence perpetrated against civilians—civilians are often trapped in the cycle of retaliatory violence perpetrated by both the JTFs and insurgents (Odomovo, 2014, p. 57). As a report by the Associated Press (AP) indicated, within the first six months after the declaration of a state of emergency in

2013, a total of 3,335 corpses were deposited by the operatives of the JTF in just one hospital – Sani Abacha Specialist Teaching Hospital in Maiduguri, Borno state (Lawan 2013). According to the AP report, “the number of detainees who died in military custody more than tripled” in June, just a month after a State of Emergency was declared on 14 May 2013. Moreover, over 950 people suspected to be members of or associated with the Boko Haram sect were reported to have died in detention facilities operated by the JTFs in the north-eastern cities of Maiduguri and Damaturu, in Borno and Yobe states respectively (Amnesty International, 2013 cited in Odomovo, 2014, p. 54).

Policy Recommendations for Continued Engagement/Counterinsurgency

Insurgencies are brought about and perpetuated by a spectrum of complex political, social, and economic dynamics within a country. Therefore, in order to effectively counter an insurgency, the COIN government must devise a whole-of-government approach that draws from and coordinates the activities of a broad spectrum of government agencies to address the range of dynamics at play. These include the agencies responsible for the diplomatic, economic, development, intelligence, and law enforcement functions of government (McQuaid and Asfura-Heim, 2015). Introducing a comprehensive reform program, which is likely to involve significant costs, may be challenging in the country’s present economic situation. But it cannot be avoided (ICG, 2016, p. 19). Even with a viable counter-insurgency strategy, long-term challenges will continue beyond Buhari’s first term in office (Zenn, 2016). Akinola (2013:1) argues that the effective formulation and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to prevent and counter insurgency requires an incisive understanding of the political, socio-economic and religious/ideological drivers of public support for Boko Haram. As suggested in the Crisis Group Africa Report (2016, p. 19):

The starting point must be a serious reassessment of security challenges, articulation of defence and security policies to address them and a roadmap that repositions the military and security services to implement the policies effectively. Earlier defence policies focused largely on responding to external threats, but more recent developments— from militancy in the Niger Delta to insurgency in the north east and pastoralist-farmer clashes spreading southward from the north central states – have highlighted more pressing internal threats. These have deep political, social and economic roots, meaning that strategies and policies require more input from non-military stakeholders.

In any insurgency, the COIN government competes with the insurgency for the support of the local population. To prevail, the COIN government must foster a sense of trust that it is the legitimate authority in power—over the insurgent group. In broad terms, practicing good governance, adhering to the rule of law, remaining responsive to the needs of the people, and, in general, demonstrating that the state has the population’s protection and interests at heart all contribute to government legitimacy. Government legitimacy can be bolstered through establishing trust that the COIN government is capable of defeating the insurgent group and restoring order in a way that does not result in greater misery and harm for the populations living in the areas affected by the conflict (McQuaid and Asfura-Heim, 2015).

The tendency of insurgencies to become long, messy, and difficult to terminate is a strong incentive for the Federal Government of Nigeria to develop the political will and work diligently towards the expeditious ending of JAS insurgency by simultaneously pursuing policies and programs on

the two likely outcomes of stalemate in near future and negotiated settlement or victory in the long run (Office of the National Security Adviser, 2015). There should be an exit strategy for ‘Civilian JTF’ when the insurgency ends. In the meantime, the group should be better regulated or disbanded altogether. But the implications of doing so without a well thought out exit strategy and well managed process could be disastrous. It becomes imperative for government to develop an effective and comprehensive policy for managing the CJTF post-insurgency. This would entail a more nuanced understanding of the composition of the group and a resolution of the allegations of abuse levelled against some of its members (Office of the National Security Adviser, 2015).

To neutralise the current threat of Boko Haram, it is necessary to improve intelligence gathering among security agencies in Nigeria; national forces have to be proactive in nipping planned attacks in the bud before they are executed (Agbibo, 2014). There are ways for the state to limit long-term damage, both while cooperating with vigilantes and after the insurgent threat subsides. Where possible, governments should view partnering with vigilantes not as a stop-gap or temporary alliance of convenience, but as an opportunity to pursue the long-term objective of bolstering state legitimacy at the local level (ICG, 2017). The gravest dangers are posed when vigilantes pursue their own political-ethnic agenda; lack strong command and control structures, enabling battlefield commanders to promote their own interests; are largely unsupervised by either local or national authorities; or are ignored, unrecognised and cast aside once their military utility has expired (ibid).

A political order undergirded by a network of non-state actors and local strongmen is hardly optimal for building effective national institutions. But in fragile states facing civil conflict, such an imperfect order can be the lesser of two evils. If this is the case, governments can still limit the damage. They can consider cooperation with vigilantes as an opportunity to pursue the longer-term objective of bolstering state legitimacy at the local level. Again, close cooperation with groups’ leaders and local elites, oversight of the groups’ actions, and effective management of members’ expectations and recognition of their efforts is important (Dalby, 2017).

In situations of armed conflict and violence, as could be deduced from this study, civilians face numerous dangers, including death, injury, and threats to their physical and sexual integrity and to family life. It is thus, a public knowledge that the conflict has resulted in widespread displacement and a deepening humanitarian crisis. Escaping from attacks across the three most-affected states, IDPs are taking shelter in the relative safety of urban centres. Though the relationship between armed forces and humanitarianism is complex and problematic, compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL) by both states and armed non-state actors (ANSAs) is very important. A genuine and workable agenda for enhancing the protection of civilians entangled in the Boko Haram armed conflict is hereby recommended. While military force should not be regarded as the first or only response to such situations, there is a powerful case that it can play a central role in preventing the worst abuses of civilians and stabilising a post-conflict situation.

More research is also needed to improve our understanding of the military’s comparative capacities in assistance, and its ability to understand and incorporate local perceptions of security into the planning for military- or civilian-led protection and assistance programmes. Finally, it is also imperative that government should coordinate as much as possible with other relevant groups, organizations, or individuals, bearing security concerns in mind. Engagement is more likely to succeed if approaches and messages are consistent. When they are well coordinated, different

forms of engagement can be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Conclusion

When talking about civil-military relations or cooperation, it is not referred to the classical discussion on who should lead a state's armed forces, civilians or soldiers, (see Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1960) but to the cooperation of both entities during a military mission. Such an analysis is relevant due to the growing contact between the military and civilian organizations, not only in missions during armed conflict but also in its aftermath (Koth, 2013, p. 1). As discussed in this study, such cooperation is also very strategic to counterinsurgency with particular reference to vigilantes. Though they have been essential in turning back the Boko Haram tide, but the jihadist group remains resilient. As the conflict continues to evolve, so will vigilantes. They are enmeshed with high politics, particularly in Nigeria, and local inter-communal relations, business operations and chiefdoms (ICG, 2017b). The situation is compounded by the absence of direct government control over the vigilante group which has apparently given them the privilege to take the law into their hands by getting involved in various acts of human rights abuses, including harassment, extortion and extra-judicial killing of suspected insurgents in their neighbourhood (Odomovo, 2014, p. 55).

As could be deduced from this study, drawing from available literature on the subject matter, two dominant perspectives accurately answer the question posed in the topic. While some analysts maintain the cynical view that such an engagement is either symptomatic of the failure of the Nigerian state in terms of security provisioning, which has invariably necessitated the role of civil groups in filling the gap (Odomovo, 2014; HRC, 2015; Matfess, 2016), others hold the position that it is indicative of a functional civil-military synergy dictated by the imperative of anti-terrorism (Amnesty International, 2015; Stovenson, 2015). In the final analysis, it can be arguably affirmed that, with greater knowledge of the local community and terrain than officials, vigilante groups (particularly, in fragile states like Nigeria) can be highly effective in providing local security, far more than the state because they often have greater legitimacy in their communities and they can be more effective in identifying, tracking and combating insurgents.

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PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

Volume 12, Issue 1
May 2019

Peace-Based Leadership: a Solution to the Presidential Third Term Syndrome

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Keywords: Presidential Term Limits, Third-Term Syndrome, Peace-based Leadership

Abstract

This paper explores the concepts of peace-based leadership as a solution to the presidential third-term syndrome that has become one of the major causes of instability in the developing world. The paper begins by defining peace-based leadership followed by an overview of the countries that have been rocked by third-term syndrome. The paper then focuses on the exploration of the causes and effects of the unconstitutional attempts to run a third-term by presidents. The final part of the paper explores the possibility of adopting peace-based leadership values as a solution. The analysis presented in this paper is informed by Galtung's positive peace theory and Wilber's integral theory also called the All Quadrants, All Levels, All Lines (AQAL) Model.

PEACE-BASED LEADERSHIP: A SOLUTION TO THE PRESIDENTIAL THIRD-TERM SYNDROME

Introduction

In the 21st century, humanity is faced with complex challenges that require urgent attention. In order to effectively deal with these challenges there is need to develop appropriate leadership models which will help society towards attaining a more desirable human condition. Rittel and Webber (1979) describe the challenges faced by modern society as wicked problems which call for a shift in leadership approaches from the hero leader models to models that emphasize on interconnectedness and the building of systemic capacity (Sowcik 2015, p. 59). Peace-based

leadership has gained currency in the emerging discourse of leadership and has been presented as a model of leadership that can be adopted by modern society to deal with complex challenges and build positive peace. This paper identifies the third-term syndrome as one of the wicked or complex challenges facing society today especially in Africa. The paper goes on to present peace-based leadership as a solution to the challenge of the third-term syndrome. The paper makes use of make use of Wilber's integral theory All Quadrants, All Levels, All Lines (AQAL) Model as explained by Miller and Green (2015) to articulate the relevance of peace-based leadership as a solution.

Defining Peace-Based Leadership

The term Peace-based leadership is new in the field of peace, leadership and conflict studies. It is rather problematic to come up with a concrete definition without factoring in the aspects of effective leadership in the concept of peace. Leadership is about convincing or forcing a large group of people to follow and accept one's governance ideas as well producing results purported to benefit the group. Hence peace-based leadership is the ability to convince a large following by mainstreaming peace in governance. Public policing, constitutionalism and governance principles will be peace oriented. Hence it can be agreed that peace enhances good leadership and vice versa (Miller & Green, 2015).

Peace leadership is focused on creating a positive peace, while including essential elements such as working against forces of violence and aggression, or negative peace (Galtung, 1996). It is an integral process to understand individual leadership capacities, relationships with others and representative groups, and the interrelated systems underlying interactions around the world (Wells, 1985). In this respect, peace leadership is much more than, what Einstein referred to as the "mere reduction of violence," as it requires proactive, intentional practices to shift patterns of thinking, knowing, and doing in the face of strongly held beliefs and cherished ways of being, (Green & Miller, 2015).

It is vital to look at the characteristics and roles of peace-based leadership as well as skills and practices that can stimulate peace. Green et al (2015) notes that the purpose of leadership is to promote positive peace hence the leader must be of good morality. Furthermore, the peace-based leaders must utilize the techniques of peaceful governance. This sentiment concurs with the Sane Individual Theory of Peace which posits that for there to be peace in the world people of good morality should occupy leadership positions. This is to avoid psychological deviants from power because they view violence and war as the immediate solution to problems.

Ganz (2010) discusses more on peace-based leadership practices necessary for leading social movements including building relationships; crafting public structures that facilitates peace; providing checks and balances on those with power. Reychler and Stellamans' work on peace building leaders (2005), also reveals some practices and characteristics that define peace-based leaders; these are:

- The ability to come up with strategic approaches to peace including communication,
- Having negotiation, and mediation skills
- The ability to create peaceful and integrated structures
- The willingness to engage in adaptive work

Peace-based leadership as described here is a socially responsible leadership which encompasses concern for others and concern for consequences. Implicit in Reychler and Stallmans' characteristics listed above is the importance of accountability and dependability without which efforts to build sustainable peace are doomed.

Negative and Positive Peace

For one to fully comprehend the meaning of peace-based leadership there is needed to define the term peace. For the purpose of this paper we have decided to adopt Galtung's Negative and positive peace theory as a way of defining peace. The concept was coined by Johan Galtung (1964), and he defines negative peace as the absence of direct violence and war while positive peace is the integration of human society. This therefore shows that negative peace entails the absence of physical, visible direct violence with the presence of structural and cultural violence. On the other hand, positive peace is the absence of violence in any form. Galtung's concept of positive peace is central to the understanding of peace-based leadership. Leadership in this paper is defined as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Yukl, 2006). In the context of the peace discourse and of this paper a leader is expected to promote inclusive participation and dialogue.

The Evolution of Presidential Term Limits

While term limits date back to classical Greece and Rome, they are a relatively recent innovation in Africa (Dulani, 2011). An examination of 98 presidential-system constitutions enacted in Africa from independence until 1990 shows that only six (South Africa (1961), Comoros (1978), Tanzania (1984), Liberia (1986), Tunisia (1988), and Comoros (1989)) included presidential term-limit clauses. However, the democratic transitions of the 1990s resulted in the popularization and adoption of presidential term limits across the African continent. Out of 64 constitutions adopted or amended between 1990 and 2010, more than three-quarters (49) incorporated tenure limitations. All but one set a maximum of two terms, while Seychelles' set a three-term limit.

Despite the widespread adoption of term limits in the early 1990s, both new and old generations of African leaders continue to seek ways to drop these rules or to identify loopholes that would enable them to remain in power. Across the continent, almost 30 African countries have contemplated the removal of presidential term limits since 1998 (Dulani, 2011). In Eritrea, constitutional term-limit clauses have simply been ignored, and President Isaias Afwerki remains in power after more than 22 years. An attempt by West African leaders in May 2015 to adopt a common position in favor of a maximum of two terms for all presidents in the region failed following disputations from the presidents of Togo (which abolished term limits in 2002) and Gambia.

Methodology

The authors of this paper have opted for a qualitative literature-based research methodology using document analysis of online resources, reports, working papers, discussion papers, scholarly and valid newspaper articles, and books on the topic under study.

Constitutions and Presidential Terms

A major argument in this paper is that the respect for the constitution, particularly by political leaders, is one of the pillars of positive peace. In the 20th century, African continent witnessed a

change in their constitutions in which presidential terms of office were limited. Be that as it may, some African presidents the likes of Yoweri Museveni wanted an indefinite term of office. Such leaders with the support of some scholars argued that limiting presidential term is against the principles of democracy. They argued that one should continue to rule as long as the majority citizens are voting him into office (Namakula, 2016). However, this line of thinking has lost support in the sense that most developing countries' governance has a veneer of democracy yet they are despotic and authoritarian in reality. The presidential term of office limit has been embraced and welcomed as an opportunity for change. Furthermore, electoral processes have failed to bring change and peace because the processes are believed to be manipulated and marred with electoral malpractices (Namakula, 2016).

Many countries placed their hopes on constitutional presidential term limit to bring about change and peace. It has been noted that progressing democracies in Africa, such as Ghana, South Africa and Tanzania embraced and enforced presidential term limits, and subsequently the capacity of supported term limit provisions to facilitate peaceful transfer of power became a core measure of democracy. However, incumbent presidents in some countries like Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Gambia and Congo among others have caused outburst of conflicts and violence by seeking to extend their presidential terms. In such cases, presidents attempt to or succeed in amending the constitutional sections on presidential term limit to allow them a third-term. This has become to be known as a "constitutional coup" (Wilmot, 2015).

Attempts by sitting presidents to temper with constitutions are pure negations of the concept of Peace-based Leadership as described earlier. Peace-based leadership is centered on delivering on the needs and expectations of the governed masses. The next section of this paper presents examples of presidents whose decisions to extend their terms beyond constitutional limits have negatively affected their countries.

Third-Term Syndrome: Case Studies

Third-term syndrome is a disease that has been affecting third world countries' governance systems, infected by their power-hungry leaders who cling on to power. This happens when their term of office constitutionally lapses and they do not pass on the power baton stick but rather they seek another term by amending constitutions. Yoweri Museveni of Uganda appeared to be a peace oriented leader soon after his inauguration in 1986. He was quoted as saying that, "the problem of Africa in general, and Uganda in particular, is not the people but leaders who want to overstay in power." However, in 2005 he failed to live up to his words as he managed to amend the national constitution on the section of presidential term limit allowing himself a third-term in office (Kotze, 2017). In Cameroon Paul Biya has successfully carried out a "constitutional coup" that was allowing only a two term limit. The 1996 supreme law should have prevented him from running for a third-term, but in 2008, infected by the third-term syndrome he revised the constitution to eliminate presidential term limits. It was thought by many political commentators that he is most likely to run again in 2018 (Eze, 2016), and he duly ran and won the elections.

Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi came into power with many expecting him to be a democratic leader who was going to establish peace through his leadership style guided by good governance principles. The high expectation was based on the fact that Nkurunziza as a former university lecturer would apply rational reasoning in governance for the benefit of the general populace.

Furthermore, he was Burundi's "Minister for Good Governance" that would have moulded him to become a peace-based leader. Nkurunziza with such governance experience was supposed to come up with policies that would uphold the principles of positive peace. This is because his country had been affected by civil war and unrest since independence from Belgium in 1962. In early 1970, Burundi was involved in a serious social protracted conflict between Hutus and Tutsis. It further worsened in 1993 when the first Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye, was assassinated. This background history prior to his presidency would have inspired him to cultivate peace-based leadership. However, he chose to follow the African trend of leaders who evade constitutions by extending terms of office (Kotze, 2017).

Nkurunziza's argument was that he had not been actually elected the first time; he said he was elected by parliament, so it didn't count. This culminated into violence to the extent that about 300,000 people fled to neighbouring Rwanda and Tanzania, and army generals attempted a coup (Kotze, 2017).

Mr Nkurunziza's CNDD-FDD party scored a widely-expected landslide win in parliamentary polls held on May 29, which were boycotted by the opposition and condemned internationally as neither free nor fair. In 2015 July 21, presidential elections were held, with Mr Nkurunziza defying international condemnation to run for a third-term. The elections were boycotted by the opposition. It was going to take a peace-based leader less effort to know that highly disputed elections are a recipe of direct violence hence stepping down was the option. Therefore, democratic peace thinkers would have judged him correctly and praise him for that decision (Kotze, 2017).

The 2012 presidential election in Senegal was the most controversial, hotly contested and violent in Senegal's democratic history. The incumbent, 85-year-old Abdoulaye Wade, proposed constitutional amendment that would have ensured his success in the next elections by reducing the number of votes needed to win an election. Wade democratically embraced the two-term office limits, but then said that the rule did not apply to him because his first term had begun before the law was passed (Eze, 2016).

The citizens were against president's amendments and took to the streets protesting in the capital. Riots became the order of the day and sensing the danger Wade withdrew the proposal however, continued with his controversial presidential third-term in office. To the surprise of many, he did not rig the polls and was defeated, and conceded after a second round runoff election. But now Mr Wade has said he will remain as head of his party for the 2017 elections "until a new and promising leader is found."

Paul Kagame has effectively ruled Rwanda since the genocide of 1994, which saw 800,000 people massacred in 100 days. He was initially vice president but accepted as de facto ruler; in 2000 he was elected president. The 57-year-old has served the two seven-year terms permitted by the constitution but has remained worryingly ambiguous about his intentions ahead of 2017 elections. And on July 17 parliament voted to support a change in the constitution, allowing him to run again. The opposition are currently attempting to appeal against the vote in the Supreme Court but are struggling to find a lawyer to represent them.

“I belong to the group that doesn’t support change of the constitution,” said Mr Kagame in April. “But in a democratic society, debates are allowed and they are healthy. “I’m open to going or not going depending on the interest and future of this country” (Telegraph, 2015). These statements clearly show that Kagame is not ready to leave office and he view himself as the only person capable of improving the future of Rwanda. These sentiments are not peculiar but are said by most African leaders who do not want to leave power. Therefore, the validity of the rational that African problem is of leadership crisis that lacks peace in its leadership style.

The third-term syndrome has had detrimental effects on the African continent. When leaders overstay in power through manipulating constitutions, the end result is the development of political insecurity in those countries. The toppling and murder of Qaddafi in the Libyan Arab spring in 2011 has led to massive violation of human security, entrenchment of terrorism, the crisis of sovereignty and legitimacy in a once prosperous dictatorial state (Agbelengor, 2017).

Operationalization of the AQAL framework

It is now evident that disrespect for presidential term limits in Africa has generally led to disaster. It has been established from an analysis of the case studies presented above that many conflicts in Africa are caused by leaders who do not want to leave office. Most African leaders defended their move of seeking a third-term in office on the pretext that it does not apply to them because it was introduced during their term of office.

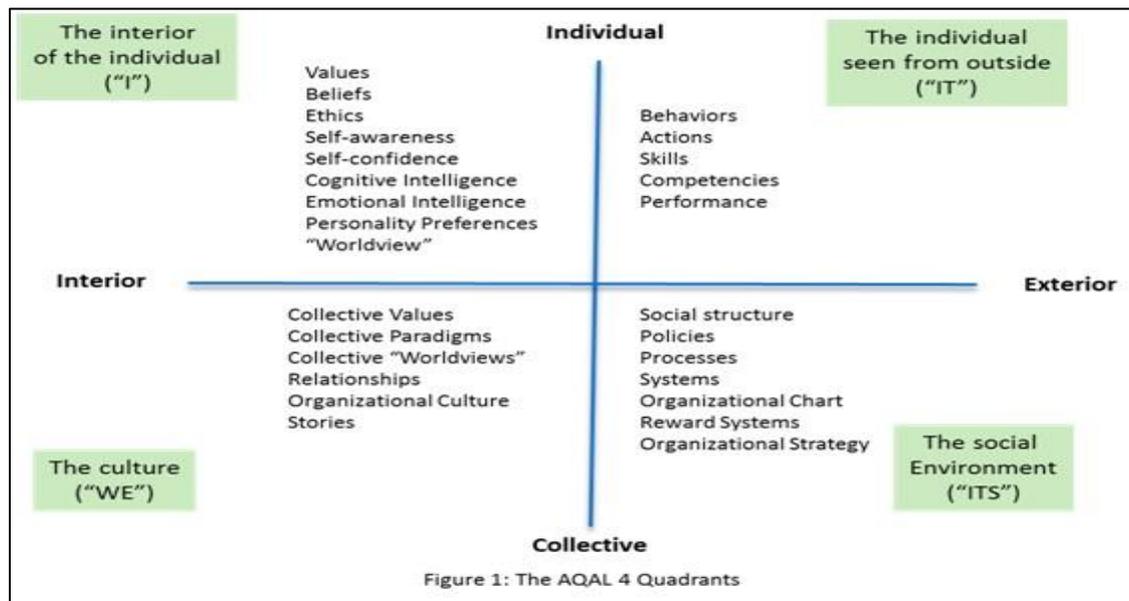
The decision to extend the presidential term stalls a country’s efforts to build positive peace. Such decisions are a sure sign that the leadership is gravitating towards dictatorship. The call for the extension of presidential term is usually characterized by a total disregard of the will of the people and a lack of respect for the constitution which is designed to protect the rights of the people. This stands in sharp contrast to Miller and Green (2015) views on peace-based leadership.

Miller and Green argue that peace leadership involves the mobilization of action for the benefit of society. They further argue that positive peace can be created when a leader is responsive to the needs of the people by enabling them to “live in liberty to their fullest potential, free from the oppression of powers who seek to wield dominance” (Miller & Green, 2015).

Miller and Green in their quest to capture the complex dynamics of peace-based leadership make use of Wilber’s integral theory All Quadrants, All Levels, All Lines (AQAL) Model. The authors of this paper are also convinced that the same framework can be used as a backdrop to the understanding of the dynamics around the third-term syndrome among African leaders.

The AQAL model is presented as a square with four quadrants (see figure 1 on next page). The two quadrants on the left (I and We) represent the interior conditions of a leader both at the individual and community levels. The nature of this quadrant calls leaders to begin with an examination of their readiness to engage peace by determining the degree to which they embody peace themselves. The quadrants at the right (IT and ITS) are the corresponding exterior representations which refers to the leader’s exposure to and use of available knowledge and skills on peace making and peacebuilding. The ITS quadrant describes a leader’s interaction with systems policies and processes which are meant to build peaceful environments. Miller and Green (2015) argue that though presented as separate elements, each process in peace leadership is a part

of a nested and interwoven whole. They further posit that the AQAL model provides a way to hold the whole in consciousness and study the practices needed to bring forward just action.



An AQAL Perspective On Constitution Manipulators

As discussed earlier the AQAL model presents peace-based leadership as a continuum which begins from the inner workings of a person's heart or mind, moving to how the leaders relate and influences and is influenced by the local and global communities.

When one looks at a leader who seeks to extend their term of office beyond the dictates of the constitution one's attention is drawn towards the (I) quadrant which deals with the inner workings of an individual's mind. The individual's mind would most likely be characterized by greed, lack of empathy, selfishness and power hunger. Gaffey (2015) posits that the most obvious factor driving so many African leaders to extend their terms indefinitely is the human desire for authority and prestige. He further argues that many presidents face an uncertain future after leaving office in terms of personal and financial security.

The bottom left quadrant for such a leader is most likely to be characterized by a gulf between the leader's goals and those of the local people. The promotion of factionalist ideas which lead to social fragmentation may be evident. Victimization of opponents to the leader may be achieved through direct violence or structural violence.

The disconnect between the leader and the led which begins in the local community (WE Quadrant) spreads to the global level which is represented by the bottom right quadrant (ITS). The ITS quadrant demonstrates the fact that the leader is no longer building linkages with global systems that seek to promote peace. In many instances the leader will then be regarded as being illegitimate and a liability in the global peacebuilding systems and sub systems. Gaffey (2015) states that some leaders who extend their mandates to govern take advantage of weakness in the global peace and security infrastructure for instance he cites the lack of will by the African Union

to deal with leaders who overstay their constitutional limits. He also argues that AU voices are only loud when there is a military coup.

The top right quadrant (IT) in the case of a rogue leader will show elements of lack of understanding of the real meaning of positive peace. The leader tends to ignore and refuse to tap into the rich traditions of peacebuilding that exist out there as he or she pursues selfish interests. A rogue leader may also demonstrate a lack of peacemaking and conflict resolution skills such as negotiation and mediation. Countries where constitutional coups have occurred have generally been characterized by the absence of the rule of law, distributive justice, absence of civil rights, and absence of basic freedom of individuals (Agbelengor, 2017).

A leader who fits the profile presented above demonstrates a lack of social responsibility. Socially responsible leadership is characterized by elements that include concern for others and concern for consequences. Other elements of socially responsible leadership include accountability and dependability (Sowcik, et al., 2015).

Peace-Based Leadership as a Solution to the Third-Term Syndrome

Through the analysis of the work of the work of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr. Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement (GBM) in Kenya, Miller and Green (2015) are able to use the AQAL model to clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of peace leadership in building positive peace. Dr Wangari was able to build a local movement which addresses issues of poverty and environmental degradation into a formidable peace movement.

Dr Wangari had the internal drive to face a complex challenge facing Kenyan women. She then turned her ideas into action which involved engaging local women into forming a movement around the issue of environmental degradation and poverty. As peace leadership involves engaging the IT quadrant, she then facilitated the training of women in negotiation, mediation and other relevant skills. The GBM was able to influence policy change at the level of the government and as a result of its success it has become a global example of peace leadership in action (Miller & Green, 2015).

A major argument in this paper is that exposure to values and ethics of peace-based leadership can be a panacea to the third-term syndrome that from time to time grips the African continent. A number of leaders have emerged as shining examples of peace-based leadership in Africa and these leaders include Joachim Chissano of Mozambique. He was president from 1986 to 2005. Chissano won the prize for African leadership in 2007 for his leadership qualities and his role in leading his country from conflict to peace and democracy. His work as a mediator in Uganda was also recognized by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation which gave him the award (Mail & Guardian, 2007).

Unlike many other African leaders, Chissano was able to voluntarily step down from office at the end of his term. The decision to leave office and not to pursue a third-term was regarded as a demonstration of Mozambique's democratic maturity.

Other African leaders who were awarded the Ibrahim prize are President Pohamba of Namibia (2014), President Pedro Pires of Cape Verde (2011), President Mogae of Botswana (2008), and

Mandela (2007). In 2016 the foundation failed to find a deserving candidate among the former African presidents (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2017).

Peace-based leadership is based on such values as accountability, responsiveness, transparency, empathy and compassion. If these values become entrenched in the leadership culture across the continent sustainable positive peace can be guaranteed.

Conclusion

The paper has argued that the third-term syndrome which has emerged as a serious challenge facing the African continent has brought a lot of suffering to ordinary people. The march towards the attainment of positive peace in a number of countries has been brought to a halt by leaders who have decided to temper with their constitutions in order to extend their terms in office. Wilber's integral theory also called the All Quadrants, All Levels, All Lines (AQAL) Model was used as the basis of discussion of the principles of peace-based leadership. The paper proposed the adoption of the values of peace leadership as a solution to the scourge of the third-term syndrome. The paper provides examples of leaders who have successfully adopted peace-based leadership principles successfully and posits that the presence of such leaders on the continent is a sign that all hope is not lost.

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