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PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

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The Peace Studies Journal (PSJ) is a leading and primer journal in the field of peace, justice, and conflict studies internationally. PSJ, founded in 2008 out of the initiative of the Central New York Peace Studies Consortium was established as an informal journal to publish the articles presented at the annual Peace Studies Conference, but in 2009 PSJ was developed into an international interdisciplinary free online peer-reviewed scholarly journal. The goal of PSJ is to promote critical scholarly work on the areas of identities politics, peace, nonviolence, social movements, conflict, crisis, ethnicity, culture, education, alternatives to violence, inclusion, repression and control, punishment and retribution, globalization, economics, ecology, security, activism, and social justice.

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LOCALISM AND PEACEBUILDING MECHANISMS IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

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Abstract

This article discusses the mechanisms of peacebuilding architecture in Africa with a broad spectrum on the interplay of local influences and tendencies within the current modules. In this regard, current modules are explored with a view to understand the dynamisms of peacebuilding in Africa. It unravels the traditional peacebuilding architecture vis-a-vis the series of metamorphosis that have somehow enabled the efficacy of the subject matter despite the high conflict volatility and vulnerability often experienced across the regions of the continents. It considered the prevailing strategies drifted through the local institutions of governance in response to the conflict-prone environments. It was argued that localism engenders workability and public legitimacy for peacebuilding strategies in most African countries. It concluded that local instincts still remain driving force for peacemaking and peacekeeping mechanisms in African context

Introduction

A cross-section of studies has attempted to discuss peacebuilding mechanisms across cultures both in developing and developed countries. The inevitability of conflict makes the attempts to be considerate, most especially in third-world countries which are princely susceptible to communal crisis and internecine wars. Evidences of these conflict insurgences abound across the globe, as it is being reported in Syria, Ukraine, Iran, Northern Ireland, Iraq, Sudan, Central African Republic, Libya, among others volatile environments (Barnett et al., 2007). Though, in recent times, the mechanisms of peacebuilding processes are modern and redefined with a high impulse from International agencies. Concerted efforts from these agencies dictate the pace of peacebuilding mechanisms recourse to traditional and indigenous approaches (localism) towards peacebuilding architecture in Africa among other levelled continents.

Remarkably, effect of localism is obtainable in most developing countries, especially on peacebuilding strategies; because improving human security is one of the central tasks of indigenous authority at the local level instituted through various traditional conflict prevention, resolution and reconciliation methods used in settling land dispute, marital and inheritance cases as well as social justice system as it varies from one kingdom/empire to another (Oladoyin, 2001). In brevity, the traditional governance system adopted the followings as means of facilitating durable peace among citizens and communities: discussion with respected local figures on conflicting issues; storytelling and airing of grievances, emphasis on community relationships, and total reliance on local institutions (Toriola, 2001; Oyeshola, 2005).

The Continent of Africa has evident illustrations of localism and peacebuilding strategies: parts of which are fine-tuned to design peacebuilding architecture by the United Nations (UN) in 2005 (Barnett et al., 2007). Exploration of these African peacebuilding strategies becomes significance owing to its consistent relevance on the current debate and conceptual clarifications. The contemporary view of peacebuilding emphasizes a preventive mechanism before the conflict starts or resumes. A careful review of literatures showed that sufficient mechanisms have not captured these dual modules of peacebuilding (Dawson, 2004; Cannon, 2009; Ogoloma & Ukpere, 2011; Lemay-Hébert & Toupin, 2011; Osimen et al., 2015). Hence, there is the need to spur up more working mechanisms for peacebuilding with the instinct from broad spectrum of local tendencies in Africa. Therefore, this paper explicates on peace-making and peace-keeping which constitutes the local basis of peacebuilding architecture in Africa.

Current Modules of Peacebuilding Discourse

This article deems it fit to clarify the notions of peacemaking and peacekeeping as it relates to the current modules of peacebuilding architecture. This is, with the intent, to thematically understand the doctrines, its inherent characteristics and potentialities. Altruistically, the interrogation of the African peacebuilding mechanisms is therefore a deserved gesture towards harnessing the efficacy of these modules so as to make it adeptly workable in developing countries of the World.

Defining Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding efforts are wide in responsibilities with emphasis on high level of inclusiveness of actors in governmental and non-governmental organisations. The efforts address two cardinal tasks: on the one hand, by seeking to address the root causes of before the conflict, during the conflict and after the conflict; on the other hand, by evaluating the immediate, short and long terms impacts of the conflict on the governing areas (Schirch, 2013; Ojo & Lamidi, 2020). Basically, human security becomes the central focus of peacebuilding with a view to ensuring individuals, groups and communities enjoy freedoms from fear, humiliation and wants. Thus, the concept of peacebuilding could be alluded to two broad meanings which are about examination of driving factors and approaches of conflict mitigation.

Peacebuilding, in practical terms, is a social exercise aimed at coordinating and developing detailed multi-leveled strategies for restorative justice, humanitarian assistance and development in crisis-ravaging areas (Sanz & Tomlinson, 2012; Lamidi, 2019a). Peacebuilding stresses that socio-political, diplomatic and educational reform programmes could void violent conflicts and instability sources. It could also be defined as conflict prevention; because it aims at mitigating, managing, resolving and transforming core aspects of the conflict drivers via government intervention as well as non-state actors' peace processes and traditional negotiation and dialogue. Explicitly, peacebuilding plays significant roles in unravelling the fundamental causes of conflicts and violence; and facilitating reconciliation and preventive measures to curb further violence and instability. These roles are geared towards changing attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs as well as transforming conflictual issues between individuals and groups toward harmonious and peaceful co-existence (Noll, 2013). Also, there are closely related terms to peacebuilding which include, but not limited to conflict resolution, crisis management, civil transformation; socio-political stabilization; post-reconstruction; and statebuilding. Hence, peacebuilding stands as centered approach to a whole set of integrated terms which support peace promotion and sustenance.

This concept is not imposable on certain sectors. Rather, peacebuilding is a broad term usable for explaining a range of interrelated responsibilities of social order. However, it is important to maintain that not all human security or development programmes substantially contribute to peacebuilding. A variety of ways has shown the possible distinction of peacebuilding from security exercise and traditional development. According to Schirch (2013), the distinctive peacebuilding characteristics feature the followings, such as: participatory nature of conflict assessment; conflict sensitivity aimed at reducing the violent risks and social divisions; mediation of differences between the conflict drivers; management of local capacities in constructive conflict resolution; engagement of local ownership; inclusive social dialogue with a view to building trust and consensus and trust among the relevant stakeholders.

Peacemaking

Peacemaking is simply a pre-conflict-oriented resolution mechanism (Noll, 2013). From its circular perspective, peacemaking is a facilitative mechanism to give equal chances to discuss about impeding factors within their environment, mainly before the emanation of conflict from the problematic factors. The essence of this concept is to, as often as possible, allow individuals to recognise their mutual interdependence prior to social competition and conflicts.

The significance of this conceptual exercise does categorise it as only an action prior to conflict; its diplomatic pursuit often makes it to precede or occur in parallel with sustenance of peace after occurrence; and, this requires the consent of disputants so as to bring combatants to the peace table after conflict, and avoid post conflict (Dawson, 2004). In a holistic view, peacemaking is long enduring approach to conflict at all levels whose principles may be attempted before any social mayhem. It aims at subduing violent provocations, and its principles may be applied. The module of peacemaking underlines pacifism. According to the UN as quoted by Ouellet (2003), peacemaking is geared towards channelling conflict into non-violent dialogue. Strategies have been outlined for peacemaking through communal dialogue, negotiation and reconciliation.

Two social processes of peacemaking are exemplified, first, being rooted into the mind of citizens, thus necessitating civic education of children at their tender age (Oluyemi-Kusa, 2007). These social lessons, pre-arranged for the children, were meant to inculcate the understanding that conflict was immoral as they grow up through the socialisation processes (Lamidi, 2019b). Secondly, peacemaking addresses the tactical way of vulnerable groups in pre-conflict resolutions (Boutros-Ghali, 1992; Mutunga, 2005).

Diverse views have been expressed on this concept depending on the ecology observed by writers and scholars. However, a ubiquitous element could be drawn that peacemaking would only subsist when there exists a consent-based recognition of legitimacy between the conflicting parties (Insight on Conflict, 2016; Lamidi, 2019a). This underlines the impulse of local institutions as most defined organisation for providing congenial space for preventive mechanisms before the escalation of conflicts.

Peacekeeping

In recent times, more than two organised groups get involved in the peacekeeping processes in post-conflict environments. Osimen, et al. (2015) asserted that “peacekeeping is, military term, involved the use of security agencies and joint civilian task force personnel to support in the implementation of peace agreements reached between governments and/or among parties engaged in conflict.”

Moreover, peacekeeping, according to Darfur Australia Network (2008), refers to ancient forms of peace operations:

“It is an exercise where an instituted group would be given an assignment to maintain orderliness between two conflicting parties in a crisis who have agreed to a ceasefire, so that they can keep the peace. It must accomplish certain obligations: the reason for the involvement of parties in an external intervention; it only takes place in a conflict between two or more countries within a defined battlefield; respect for accepted laws of armed conflict by combatants; fairness to both sides; and, minimum use of force” (p. 2).

No agreement has yet been reached among specialists on what the actual meaning of peacekeeping is. Essentially, Oyeshola (2005, p. 67) asserted that “the term peacekeeping has been used to analogue an extensive variety of actions aimed at resolving international conflicts”. According to

Habu, (as cited in Chigozie & Ituma, 2015), peacekeeping is a mitigating technique, envisioned and advanced by the UN, this definition defiles the simple meaning of the concept. The term is not found in UN charter.

However, peacekeeping is the maintenance of neutral balance by lightly armed troops as an interposition force following a ceasefire to separate combatants and promote an environment suitable for conflict resolution. It is important to stress that peace-keepers have no mandate to use force in resolving conflict, except in self-defence because peacekeeping groups are constituted to put an end to the rebellious acts among warring parties. Other important features of peacekeeping exercise include: neutrality, limited military capability and permission of host country. More essentially, Darfur Australia Network (2008) opined that, at first, peacekeeping creates avenue; and secondly “conducive space for diplomatic efforts to address the underlying causes of conflict (Chigozie & Ituma, 2015, p. 4). It is a subtle rather than army solution.

Peacekeeping has a central focus on the preservation and building the necessary conditions for peace sustenance where an agreement had already been reached by the conflicting parties to ceasefire with consent to “the deployment of a peacekeeping mission. However, peace – like war – is a protracted process; and, a peace agreement may exist, only later to unravel” (George & Stedman, 2002, p. 23). Therefore, peacekeeping emphasizes the process of implementing peace agreement.

In support of Walters’ (2011) argument, Pamela Aall of the U.S. Institute of Peace, as cited by Ouellet (2003) used Cyprus, Korea and Sri Lanka as examples of how sometimes third parties (external groups) can make things worse, not better. This implies that internal mechanisms of local governance in Africa remain a necessity in peacekeeping. In this study, however, peacekeeping is operationalised at the re-insurgent phase of the peace process that aims at consolidating peacebuilding in post-conflict environment.

Localism as a Concept in Peace Discourse

Localism is a connotation which emphasizes any political philosophy that prioritises local actions and responsibilities above others (Bush, 2004). The idea of localism evokes the contradictory human emotions of the intimate, identity, security and freedom. This alluded to the fact that great possibilities of peace building seem more plausible at the local level. Localism stresses nearness of actors and institutions (Olowu & Erero, 1997; Lamidi, 2018). In this regard, it allows for gathering direct experiences and strengthens the organised efforts toward solving communal problems. Also, the concreteness of localism tends to shape outlook on peace building beyond the state reconciliation strategies.

Local peace building is almost found in most African States. This claims some degrees of evidence in traditional conflict resolution and adjudication (Lamidi, 2019a; Elfversson, 2019) This is assumed by many forms of local institutions such as local councils, traditional chiefs, local management committees, community development committees, and any other native groups. The legitimacy of these institutions on local peace building is premised on their claims to represent the interests of people at the grassroots level. Moreover, the variety of these institutions on peace building attests to the strength and significance of localism in modern communities.

Broadly, localism is a clear reference to individual or group attachment to a particular place and ideology. It reflects subsequent attitudes and behaviour that flow from such an affiliation. Localism then stands for peace building consequent upon its connotation of a mode of human relationship characterised by cohesiveness, commitment and harmony (Lamidi & Ajayi, 2019). In this instance, this seems plausible because basic values are deeply shared in a small geographical area with relative homogenous population. Nonetheless, when a local population become spatial, some elements of disintegration might come up in the peace building steps, thereby breaking the tendencies of local actions into discord.

There is a direct relationship between localism and peace building. The former establishes lines of resolutions to conflict as well as the limits of the peace building agents. This enables the impact of localism to be directly concentrated on peace building (Adeyeye, 2016). Peace building, like localism, is of local concern; and a quest of communities with conflict instances. While the understanding of conflict dynamics remains residual to the local authorities. This could be identified to be a beauty of localism. Also, it is upon the understanding that the capacity of the local authorities ignites the process of peace building.

A unique feature of localism is simply its inducement of collective strength and security of a local community. It represents an outlook which depicts the philosophies behind the occurrence with an environment. However, there seems to be restrictive tendencies because whatever the outlook portends, it is a probable manifestation within the limited geographical environment of the community. This seems more advantageous because the restrictiveness encourages face to face contact, thereby leading to increased understanding, trust, cooperation and participatory influence. Though, such limitations might have several functional consequences for the inhabitants in the community. Yet, the intimacy, consensus and participatory features of localism can make unique force in peace building. This is because it generates deep affection and loyalty to a particular locality. Also, local experience on peace building can then be used to help solve problems outside of the immediate community.

Theoretical Review

This section attempted to provide a device or scheme for adopting and applying the assumptions, postulations and principles of theories in the description and analysis of the key concepts that informed this study so as to understand, explain, analyse and predict the phenomena within the purview of subject matter. For the purpose of this paper, four relevant theories to localism and peace building were reviewed, such as: Structural-Functionalism theory, Burton's Human needs theory, Integrative Ties Theory and Constructivist/Essentialist or Primordialist theory.

Structural-Functionalism Theory

This theory attempts to explicate the complex system of society and the workability of its parts for the promotion of peace and stability. It hinges upon two components which are social functions and structures respectively. On the one hand, functionalism addresses complex nature of society with an integrative term of its composite elements; namely customs, institutions, norms, and traditions (Barnard, 2000). This theory was popularized by Herbert Spencer who explains in

biological perspectives that parts of society are seen as “body organs” working together for the good functioning of the body system as a whole (Lenski, 2005). On the other hand, it shares macro-level orientations on the social structures of the society with notable focus on the composite elements and their effectual roles on the functioning of societal system.

The theory of structural-functionalism evolved to describe methodological stage of development in social sciences. It was far beyond a specific school of thought based on its generalisation across societal cultures. Mainly, Emile Durkheim maintained that social interaction would only remain functional through collaboration between social and cultural phenomena (Turner & Jan, 2005). The analysis of socio-cultural phenomena is predicated upon their respective functions within the society. The individual phenomenon is not significant in terms of social status and positions, rather in terms of the behaviour associated with the patterns of social relations. As a result, the social structure offers broad spectrum for the behavioural roles in connection with social statuses. The implication of this theory on peacebuilding is that the functionality of conflict elements is largely associated with behavioural roles in their patterns of social relations on the subject matter at the local areas.

In many contexts, functionalism is most often used interchangeably with structural functionalism. This is because the theoretical disposition “sets out to interpret society as a structure with interrelated parts” (Barnard, 2000) with the intercepting role of each structure. On the contrary, dysfunctionality sets in, when the failure of any of the structure becomes noticeable. It is otherwise referred to as the disorderliness in the system. Within the context of this paper, the theoretical postulations have relative explanatory tools relevant for understanding and analyzing the contributory role of governance institutions at local level (localism) in sustainability of peace and tranquillity at community level. The activities of local institutions are geared towards maintenance of peace and order by complementing the statutory functions of both government and non-governmental organisations, thereby improving the socio-economic well-being of the people. In the same vein, the notion of dysfunctionality or disorderliness could also explicate instances of the incapacitation of the governance institutions at local level (localism) in maintaining and sustaining peaceful co-existence at various communities in an adequate and timely manner.

Burton’s Human Needs Theory

This Burton’s theory of human needs argues that every individual needs opportunities for survival and success in society. This tendency indicates how individuals behave and interpret the processes and structures of society around them. These individual attributes are sharply different giving the contrasting nature of culture, profession and socio-economic forces. Burton suggested that the thought process of individuals is most often facilitated by experience as well as the desire for respective successes (Burton, 1997). He described structural violence among individuals, groups and communities as resultant outcome of discontinuity in smooth human needs actualization.

This theory appears to be closely related to the arguments of frustration-aggression theory which gives the idea that relative deprivation of human needs can be enough reason for conflict (Nnoli, 2006). The necessity of peace building could be adduced to possible conflict eruption as a result of human needs deprivation. Burton further stated that human innate needs, such as foods and waters, are not culturally unique, rather universalistic in nature (Jeong, 2008). In spite of their

commonalities, conflict theorists argued that human needs constitute main sources of problems and tensions in their economic environment. This also depicts congenial playground for easing the impediments faced by peace building actors. The understanding of human needs become an important activity for peacebuilding actors. These needs include problems of identity recognition, intellectual stimulation, and physical security and control over life (Nicholas, 2008). Thus, in order to prevent conflict, Burton human needs theory emphasizes the necessity of understanding human needs by satisfying their needs in a harmonious society.

Integrative Ties Theory

Two sociologists William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani drew this theory from the concept of tension which was envisioned with tendencies of a social system towards disintegration (Gamson & Modigliani, 1963). The sources of tension are inhibited in severity of explicit disagreements between individuals, groups and communities. Thus, the two theorists came out of shell to propagate the integrative forces that would keep individuals, groups and communities as peaceful components of the social systems (Gamson & Modigliani, 1963).

The term ‘tension’ was conceptualised from four property perspectives which drew in relation to peace building. Firstly, it could either reduce by “decreasing disintegrative forces” or “increasing integrative ties” (i.e., people-to-people initiatives and cross-cutting ties). Secondly, its level of integrative ties could contrariwise relate to tension arising from the kind and amount of disagreement of the conflict types (for this reason, a few integrative forces will have less impact in a system, thus an integrative tie need to be optimised). Thirdly, the level of integrative ties could also inversely be linked to the optimum rate of conflict settlement, thereby lowering the tension of crisis. This implies that optimisation of integrative ties would, at least, enhance stability of tension with high impact on re-ordering the disconnected composite elements in the community system. Lastly, there is a proportional relationship between tension and integrative ties in terms of nature, existence and their levels. More logically, an inverse relationship could also be established. This is simply because an increase in integrative ties would reduce tension; while upsurge in tension would lead to disintegrative ties among the composite elements in any locality (Gamson, 1992; Gamson & Modigliani, 1963; Gawerc, 2006).

It should be clearly noted that Gamson advanced the perspective of this theoretical postulation, in the sense that the integrative forces do not, in most cases, present total benefits to all concerned parties (Gamson, 1992). In addition, Kreisberg (2001) suggested that high integration could have less meaning from liberated adaptation to slavery depending on whether it was either a little, mutual, or severe imposition and/or more of unilateral imposition. In fact, Kreisberg further discussed that greater mutuality could only achieve accommodation of peoples’ views, but with a relative tendency of reducing integration among community groups. Cultural differences might possibly be resultant effect from the domination, and thereafter, the composite elements begin to jostle for leadership and autonomy within the integrative ties (Kriesberg, 2001; Gawerc, 2006). In spite of the above, integrative ties presents a clear perspective of dynamics on peacebuilding within the local community setting and the diverse roles of their composite groups.

Constructivist/Essentialist or Primordialist Theory

Scholars, such as Ranger (1983), have argued that “traditions” are “invented”; the “nation” as “imagined” (Anderson & Wallace, 1983); ethnicity as “constructed” (Lentz, 1998); “locality” as “produced” (Appleby, 1949); and “community” as “symbolically constructed” (Cohen, 1993). These works are of particular relevance to this study as they extensively consider the role of historical consciousness in the making of the local community. The constructivist paradigm has, to a large extent, helped scholars to re-examine views of the ‘essentialist’ or ‘primordial’ school of thought about society and community, nation and ethnicity, custom and tradition. It allows reflection not only on the emergence and change of the phenomena concerned, but also on the malleability of the categories themselves. However, primordialism or essentialist reasoning about community has not lost relevance as it gained strength with the emergence of ethno-nationalism that asserts ancient foundations of national roots.

For the individual, the local community may invoke a peculiar sense of attachment, belonging and ‘home’ stemming from an individual’s historiography. A particular local community becomes of fundamental importance – in everyday practice or in memory – if an individual was born or grew up in it, lives there today, lived there at some points in time in the past. More indirectly, the local community may be important because an individual views himself or herself as linked to it by descent which has served as means of identity in similar ways. Inability of African States to provide adequately for economic and security wellbeing of her citizen in this twenty first century has further amplified primordial sentiment within the region as inclination or relapse to ‘home’ associations as a coping strategy becomes the alternative (Manzuri & Rao, 2013). Forms of pre-colonial local identity (kinship used to define intra and inter-communal relationships) began to be used in the self-definition of one’s indigenous or local communities. The problem with this theory is that it fails to tell us why some individuals choose to destroy the institutions they have; irrespective of whether they are constructed or held to be primordial.

Stigler Menu

This set of choices was propounded by Stigler in 1957. It explicates two principles of jurisdictional design for governance activities across cultures in the World. The menu was generic in proposition and logical in terms of its applicability within the public space. Broadly, it is about proximity of representative government to local domain and determinant rights by the citizens for service provisioning. Firstly, this menu stresses that catering for citizens’ needs would appear more efficient and effective owing to the closeness of government to the people. Secondly, it emphasizes that the citizens should exercise rights on the amount of quality and quantity of social services to be provided. The two principles provided simple expectations and guidelines for resolution and mediation of the local peace by the people and government. Home-grown solutions stand at best for peacemaking and peacekeeping at the local areas.

Localism and Peacebuilding: Institutional Dynamics

A careful review of the work of Bush (2004) revealed that for a localism to be strong and effective, it must be characterized with five distinct features. Each of these localist features was noted by extant studies to have significant impact on conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Legitimate leadership is a foremost of these distinguishable features which is intimately tied to a transparent and representative process of elected community leaders that enjoys legitimacy as an established institution (Bush, 2004; Lamidi, 2018). In most cases, the institution of government at the local level pre-dates any form of government both at state and national levels. For this reason, elected community leaders are more often recognized, respected and trusted individuals who are capable to bridge varied interests and ideas, thus assisting the reconciliatory roles of localism in communal conflicts.

An important feature of a localism is due to its localness and proximity to core citizens who are the recipients of the basic services. Over time, the decentralization character of a federation has further legitimized the increasing role of local authorities in the delivery of basic amenities for peace and social stability, including early childhood education, primary and secondary schooling, public health care and social assistance.

Also, the focus on peacebuilding at the local level has to be strengthened upon working relations between the localism and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and NGOs that are active at the local level. Scholars of peacebuilding, like Lemay-Hébert and Toupin (2011), Urvin (2012), Sanz and Tomlinson (2012) and Chigozie and Ituma (2015), are of the view that localism are better responsive to the communities and the marginalised groups with a strong capacity to device constructive approaches to work with and develop partnership framework for identifying new solution to local challenges.

Furthermore, participatory governance is one of the underpinning theories of localism (Kamarack, 2002; Newland, 2002; Sehested, 2003; Ijere, 2014; Rahman, 2016). This is sequel to the fact that the governance type provides opportunities for every community member to become partners in government by facilitating a decision-making framework for setting policy priorities on key community issues such as democratic process, service delivery and maintenance of peace and order. Bush (2004) substantiated the argument that citizen participation in the just listed community issues would, to a very large extent, reinforce public confidence and legitimacy in the localism. Moreover, the tripartite alliance on citizens participation, partnership with civil society and the private sector has the capacity to foster greater transparency and accountability in localism priority setting, budgeting and service delivery (Shah & Shah, 2006; Adeyeye, 2016; Rahman, 2016).

The research work of Bush (2004) and Sanz & Tomlinson (2012) affirmed the institutional capability of localism in strengthening public participation for peacebuilding. In Bush's view, localism plays a crucial role in facilitating involvement of local stakeholders in promoting peacebuilding, community-based peace initiatives which involve peace advocates from the ground. It therefore seems to be realistic that "public participation and community based mechanisms, such as dialogues, consultations and public information campaign may be effectively

undertaken by the localisms in partnerships with conflict reconciliation committees in the community, or even at the national and international levels” (Asiyanbola, 2007, p. 13). Such strategic partnerships, as eulogised by Olayiwola and Okorie (2010), has the tenacity to optimise positive peacebuilding impacts.

In addition, it is important to note that localism is not just a means of delivering key community services, but also represents a highly effective mechanism for ensuring that the local realities are adequately incorporated into national policies and programmes. Olowu and Erero (1997) emphasized on the capacities of localism and its effects on government efforts to address local issues. The social service delivery at the local level crosses jurisdictional boundaries and cuts through many lines of government responsibilities.

This current trend has been laudable, rather than relying on individual local entity, localisms are concurrently tackling issues using integrated and holistic approaches. Osimen et al.(2015) however observed that these new trends have succeeded in defining and reaching specific resolution mechanisms for communities and designing local services and peace initiatives to meet specific needs of the communities. To this end, these salient features are essential dynamics in understanding the role of localism in peacebuilding, and the latitude of work that exists in strengthening the effectiveness of their roles.

Case Studies on Peacemaking in African Traditional Communities

Prior to the adventurism of colonialism and slave trade, each community in Africa had unique systems on varied peacebuilding components, such as conflict monitoring, communal confidence-building, peace education as well as cultural and human dependence characters (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). More remarkably, the indigenous institutions were relatively well-established and highly respectful, such that their decisions command wider acceptability and public legitimacy compared to the colonial model of institutions that is currently put in place mostly in all African Countries. Existing studies have credited the insurgence of conflicts in Africa to the two (2) major events of imperialists which truncated the indigenous peace setting (Adebanwi, 2004; Ademowo, 2015; Lamidi, 2019b). One of these is slave trade which spurred intra and inter-communal conflicts as people were scrambling for slaves to sell to the Europeans. The other is that most of the efficacious indigenous institutions, especially for justice administration, were either portrayed to be primitive or weakened to its ineffectiveness by the colonial adventurers. However, Olaoba (2005), Omotosho, (2004) and Nwolise (2005) as cited in Ajayi and Buhari (2014) proclaimed that legal systems in Africa were more advanced than the colonialists’ courts, because the former was aimed at the management and resolution of conflicts rather than pronouncing judgments as it is being carried out by the latter up till date.

The rationale behind peacemaking in African communities could not be dislodged from the inevitable causes of conflict in human setting, such as different perceptions of human interactions and their needs, seeking for powers, imbalance value system and human desires, as well as differences in individual goals and opinions (Adam, 2000; Isumonah, 2003) Specifically, what appear to be most discernible conflicts in African communities are mainly on ownership of physical properties, i.e farmlands and houses; social issues, among which are matrimonial fall-outs, chieftaincy matters, family affairs; as well as social vices, such as murder cases, theft,

robbery, rape and any other form of gangsterism and hooliganism (Mutunga, 2005; Ademowo, 2015).

Peace and security are two pivotal indices in any human society. A meritorious acknowledgement could be bestowed on communities in Africa because efforts to achieve these indices had been well-established before the arrival of colonial masters (Ouellet, 2003; Dawson, 2004). Thus, conflict resolution in Africa is not part of governance issues attendant upon by colonialism. Simply put, conflict resolution is not the idea of colonial expatriates. Deductively, peacemaking in Africa had been in existence, prior to colonialism, for the prevention of the identified conflict bordering on ownership of physical properties, social issues and social vices (Mutunga, 2005; Oluyemi-Kusa, 2007). However, the colonialists' inputs could also be noted in the entrenchment of equity and justice principles in African judicial system. Nevertheless, there has been a high premium placed on peaceful resolution of conflicts with a view to restoring social harmony with the conflicting parties; and settling disputes by persuasion rather than the resort of coercion.

Empirical evidence could be found across countries in Africa. Ademowo (2015) emphasized that the concept of "African Palaver" is widely used to describe various communal problems in many African countries. However, these problems are not left unresolved. Similarly, different terminologies are being used in most of these communities in Africa for peacemaking and conflict resolution process. For instance, among *Oromo* indigenes mostly found in East Africa, there was an indigenous peacemaking mechanism called *Gada* system. It is referred to an institution for preventing the escalation of insurgence and outbreak of violence.

In Liberia, Kpelle community has a different peacemaking institution with that of *Oromo* people. The Liberian version was not permanent and not in charge of all conflictual issues compared to that of *Gada* system in East Africa. The peacemaking in Kpelle community is termed "*House of Palaver*" or "*moot*" (Ogoloma & Ukpere, 2011). Its formation is conditional in respect to the nature of uproar and parties involved in the saga which, if not taken of, might lead to conflict. For making peace on each case, the "*moot*" would comprise kinsmen of the Kpelle community and associates of the involved individuals and groups (Ademowo, 2015). All cases are addressed with high sense of honesty and transparency, such that the verdict would be wholesomely accepted by all parties. This would be symbolically shown by sharing a drink which means that the verdict accepted and that the issue would not metamorphise into crisis.

In Cameroon, the *Ardzo*, which means "to say or to talk", is a notable peacemaking mechanism in the *Beti* society in the country. It is a method for settling conflict-prone issues through dialogue. The process of peacemaking in *Beti* society has a similitude with the modern judicial system. The constituted elders in *Ardzo* administer justice by following three consecutive stages: a. inviting the conflicting parties to *Ardzo* sitting; b. providing avenue for hearing and cross-examining the troublemakers, thereby divulging the truth, fundamental issues and concerns to the *Ardzo* members; and c. just like in the modern judicial process, the elders will then retire to a secluded place to make their verdict and come open to deliver it (Dawson, 2004; Agwu, 2007; Ademowo, 2015). At the end, the sanction for any verdict is not by punishment; rather the guilty parties will provide reconciliatory compensations

In Tanzania, peacemaking exercise is carried out during festival among the Arusha people. This underlines the tenacity nature of most cultural activities in managing and resolving conflict within a culturally-bound community in Africa. Just as it is in Tanzania, *Golib* festival was instituted for the prohibition of vendettas between and among individuals, groups and societies, clans and villages in the Arusha domain (Osimen et al., 2015; Ademowo, 2015). The philosophy of *Golib* festival is premised on the emphasis that availability of abundant food, coherence and fecundity would deter pandemonium in human society, and interests of all the people in the community will be harmonized. An implementable lesson should be learnt by modern government in Africa from the *Golib* doctrine that when there is abundant basic needs, most communities will be less-prone to conflicts in Africa.

In Kenya, a set of respected elders called *Gikuyu* is shadowed with the responsibility of conflict prevention (i.e peacemaking) between and among community members so as to avoid the use of supernatural powers, property destruction and open hostilities as well as bloodshed (Remi, 2007; Ademowo, 2015). The need for peaceful co-existence is of high and primary concern in African setting. This is occasioned by consistent input by indigenous groups and support from modern government to maintain peace, tranquility and harmony among individuals, groups and institutions.

In Chad, the *Toubon* community had a good platform for peacemaking. The society provides a constituent assembly called *Cofono*, mainly with the aim of averting the danger of violent conflict. This assembly accommodates all sex and age categories of people in the community. Equal chance is being given to all participants to debate on the ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of discrepancies so that all views are heard, harnessed and decided upon for good justice delivery (Cannon, 2009).

In Mali, the use of “Palavar” is based on the restoration of harmony rather than punitive judicial system. It is not in any form retaliatory rather it corrects and unites the disputing parties so as to enjoy lasting and peaceful relationships (Agwu, 2007 & Noll, 2013). The judicial process could also be similarised with that of *Ardzo* in Cameroon vis-à-vis the modern legal system. The process embraces the principle of natural justice: that you cannot be a judge in your own case; and there must be fair-hearing in the court proceedings (Remi, 2007).

In Nigeria, Ogoloma and Ukpere (2011) synopsisized that no institution is left out in the quest for peacemaking in the country as it is among other African nation-states. Though, peacemaking responsibilities had been placed on some institutions within the polity. However, enhancement of peace and harmony should be cross-sectional duties of both formal and informal institutions in all strata of the society, as summed up by Ademowo (2015), such as family, elders (within a lineage), clan, females born in a family or village, council of elders, king-in-council, hunters association, village or town assembly, age grades, masquerade system, oracles and deities etc. All the above-named social groups serve as institutions for the maintenance of peace and the resolution of conflict.

The issues of peacemaking in Africa have been addressed from diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives across Africa. Human existence is appraised to be treasure which no harms or inflictions must tamper, thus the need for human unification and integration in a web for protection against violent conflict, social crisis, political mayhem and economic suffering. It is quite noted in

Tanzania example among other that peace is a precedential factor of human existence, welfarism and survivor. The process of peacemaking has thus become the assignment for all in African traditional communities.

Empirical Discourse on Peacekeeping in African Communities

Peacekeeping is one of the tasks of peacebuilding with a view to averting the re-insurgence of communal conflicts. In Africa, intractability is a notable feature that characterised communal conflicts. Though, this sounds horrid about Africa but candid due to high cases of conflict upsurge and re-occurrence within and between communities across nations in the continent. Yet, the frequent tendency of conflict appears insuperable in the Continent of black nations (Agbu, 2006). The African peculiarities, among other continents in the World, predicated mainly on the odious explosion of armed conflicts, civil wars, political tensions, intra and inter-state disputes on boundary and dawdling pace on economic growth and prosperity. These abnormalities, most often, aggravate the enhancement of peaceful co-existence among the African communities.

More aggravating, despite the successes recorded by International Organisations in resolving numerous conflicts across the globe, the situation of conflicts in Africa is yet to be tamed, thus making the continent to be theatre of violent conflict with high evidences of humanitarian disaster (Adar, 2004; Agwu, 2007). Examples are abound in the political and economic crises in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya of the Northern part, Influx of *Al-Shabab* and *Al-Qaeda* groups into the Central and East Africa, Trans-border terrorism, militancy and uncountable number of ethno-religious driven conflicts in most West-African countries, and issues on xenophobia in some countries of the Southern part of Africa.

In all of these cases, extant literatures have shown that negotiation and military reciprocity have been the mostly used methods of peacekeeping among states in Africa. It has however been observed that a myriad of problems have posed challenges to negotiating a peaceful agreements to end intra and inter-conflict in African communities (Isiaq, 2012). Nevertheless, it does not mean that peacekeeping is impossible. Reasonably, great political will and utmost sincerity of the conflicting parties seem requisite to putting an end to conflicts in Africa. In addition, abolition of violent conflict does not come to an end, when an agreement is reached by conflicting parties. Rather, the management of post-conflict situations is very crucial because it is during the aftermath of conflict that the agreement reached by the warring parties becomes implemented (Benson & Lamidi, 2018). The peacekeeping processes become commendably efficient, if the contents of peace agreement are properly executed. However, the fragility of peacekeeping has been experienced in Rwanda, Sudan and Namibia (Lambourne, 2004). These unfavourable outcomes in the above-mentioned countries necessitate the broadening of peacekeeping scope into the establishment of a functioning open society through community dialogue, comprehensive development strategies, increasing human rights, justice and restoration, building bridges between different communities, law and order, security amongst other governance objectives.

Irrespective of the conflict typologies, reconciliation is a first point of call in the design of successful peacekeeping processes. This implies that the warring parties must be – though at thought individually, but collectively in action – ready to put aside their differences and design a reconciliatory process aimed at putting an end to the conflict. The International community can

play a monitoring role in the actualisation of reconciliatory issues. However, the establishment of both criminal tribunals and truth commissions were the notable international support to deal with the post-conflict situations in Sierra-leone and East-Timor. Unlike any other conflicts in the continent, the peacekeeping in Sudan and its various peace processes have gulped up huge human and material resources (Omede & Saka, 2005). The peacekeeping also enjoys the greatest support, from within and outside the continent, of which Nigeria remains prominent on peacekeeping among other conflict ravaging countries in Africa.

The peacekeeping efforts in Africa have been more of the affairs of international organisations, while little or no internal mechanism could be observed among governments, local institutions, and Civil Society Organisations in the Continent (Charles, 2005; Isiaq, 2012). This external dependency needs to be redressed because a foot-dragging attitude has recently been observed in the response of International communities to crisis issues in Sudan, Somalia, Libya and Rwanda. Moreover, these peacekeeping efforts of International groups have also been claimed to propagate capitalists' agenda. Adducing from this, the peacekeeping efforts which aims to obstruct the re-insurgence might, if care is not taken, be the source for another ensuing conflict. A good example is the proclaimed efforts of NATO to calm down the uprising crisis in Libya. Surprisingly, what was meant to be a peacekeeping exercise led to the killing of the Libyan President (Muammar Gaddafi), thus placing in the country in some sorts of political and economic imbalance.

The new paradigm in peacekeeping is that its efforts should not be a sole responsibility of a country among other ones. Rather, an integrated framework must be designed to ensure that nothing or less should be expected from external organisations that may have unpleasant agenda instead of peacekeeping activities for the prevention of crisis re-insurgence. This note becomes cautionary because attempts of Western blocs' organizations to resolve conflicts in Third-World countries have spatially generated, in most cases, the nurturing of anger, discomfort and injustice by the conflict ravaging communities in the developing countries. A good example to this trend is the up-to date unrest and crises in Iran, Iraq, Palestine, East Timor, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt to mention a few, after series of reconciliatory efforts by UN, European Union, specifically United States of America and other international groups.

Concluding Remarks

This article has cautiously exploited dimensional intricacies of peacebuilding mechanisms across cultures in Africa, with indicators of its significance in the current modules. One of the laudable factors for peacebuilding operationalisation is the localness of the concerned institution, which is tagged localism in this article as well as its inherent features which make peacebuilding mechanisms workable within the African space. Also, the emergence of conflict is not always without a privy notice or signal which can be, at first and at best, noticeable by local institutions. With respect to peacemaking, it becomes evident that prevailing strategies are drifted through the local institutions of governance in response to the conflict-prone environments. While, peacekeeping emphasis is placed on integrated framework designed to ensure that nothing or less should be expected from external organisations. In addition, this paper recommends preventive diplomacy as required action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.

Remarkably, the resolutions of the conflicts are, without exception, executable by the local institutions. The view is further stressed by Stigler Menu on the basis of the principles of jurisdictional designs that are applicable across the globe. As evident across the African cultures, a remarkable feature of the African peacebuilding mechanism is that it does not aim on justice delivery but goes further to ensure that the delivered justice enables peaceful co-existence scenes and harmonious relationships between and among conflicting people or communities.

The article carefully ascribed the mechanisms of peacebuilding in Africa on peacemaking, as discussed under the case studies of peacemaking under African traditional communities; and elucidated part of the mechanisms empirically feasible on peacekeeping process. In essence, these milieus are brought to the 'front-burner' to facilitate more working mechanisms for peacemaking and peacekeeping, as current modules of peacebuilding architecture across the globe, with the instinct from broad spectrum of local tendencies in Africa.

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INFECTIOUS DISEASE IMPACTS ON CONFLICTS: NEW RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

The study of epidemiological phenomena and in particular the consequences of the spread of infectious diseases on conflict theatres is an emerging area of peace and conflict studies. In this short paper, we offer a perspective of existing work and potential avenues of research in the field through a historiographic approach, highlighting several parameters of the potential impacts of infectious diseases on conflicts.

Introduction

The effects of localized conflicts on the spread of contagious diseases are an object of contemporary study raised for several years by academic research (Gayer et al., 2007) and which allow a better understanding of these phenomena in the context of pacification policies and aid to populations affected both by conflict and by the damage of an infectious disease (Long, 2011). The bulk of academic work has so far focused on the study of the potential aggravations that the context of a conflict can create by promoting the spread of infectious diseases due to the particular conditions of conflicts. However, it is also interesting to raise the question of the influence of infectious diseases epidemiological waves in the course of conflicts in order to better understand how the parties to the conflict react to these epidemiological events and thus better manage these health and social crises from a general peacebuilding perspective. Our work here undertakes to draw up a general state of the art of the question through the general study of conflicts and epidemics, while proposing a historiographical approach in order to lay the foundations for future work on the study of conflictual behaviour in the presence of an infectious diseases circulation.

The Circulation Effects of Infectious Diseases on Themes of Conflict

The general approach used by researchers in terms of epidemiological research has generally focused on the opposite question to the one we are asking here, namely the effects of conflicts and political instability on the frequencies of onset and development of diseases, whether contagious or not. Some studies have thus highlighted the fact that economic instability or the frequency of human rights violations are slightly related to the development of diseases and epidemics within populations (Beyrer et al., 2007). Other studies have also highlighted the fact that conflicts could generate large displacements of populations gathering in makeshift camps in which health conditions favour the development and transmission of infectious diseases (Gayer et al., 2007). Beyond these results focused on the consequences of conflicts on the circulation of infectious diseases, there are also certain works which try to highlight mechanisms of influence between conflicting events and increase of certain types of diseases (Kerridge et al., 2013). Some recent work even puts quantitative models into perspective in order to better understand these conflicting impacts on the arrival and spread of infectious diseases (Banerjee, 2019).

This central question in the field of epidemiological research, but also in peace and conflict studies, makes it possible to better manage the health and humanitarian aspects of conflicts in order to avoid any development or worsening of epidemic waves in the theatre of conflicts. However, the question of the direct influences of the infectious diseases circulation on the conflict area and its inherent challenges is a field of research in its own right, much more directly linked to peace and conflict studies. This field of research deserves to be further developed in order to better understand the trajectories and the evolution of conflicts in epidemically tense environments.

The question of the impact of infectious diseases on the conditions and outcomes of conflicts was raised in the early 2000s, from an internal perspective, and specific to the conditions of the armed forces and in particular of combatants faced with the disasters of the conflict added to those of an epidemic (Connolly & Heymann, 2002). Thereafter, Altman's work highlighted the fact that the presence of infectious diseases does not favour the occurrence of civil conflicts in a given territory (Altman, 2010). However, it seems that even if the circulation of infectious diseases does not

favour the appearance of new civil conflicts, it could well reinforce certain specific characteristics of the already existing conflicts, such as ethnic inequalities, socio-economic disadvantages or economic instabilities (Frank, 2018).

The question is therefore to understand how already existing conflicts are affected by the appearance or amplification of important epidemiological phenomena. This question is currently at the heart of an emerging research process that we want to emphasize here, and to which we wish, through these few words, to stimulate a research dynamic, through a historiographical approach, in order to understand the human reactions and behaviour in conflict.

It is this perspective, more focused on the study of conflicts than on the study of epidemics, that certain works are starting to highlight these processes (Cooter, 2003; Smallman-Raynor & Cliff, 2004) in order to better understand the management of conflicts in recent health crises such as the case of the Ebola virus (Gonzalez-Torres & Esposito, 2016). However, it seems important to carry out a historical *mise en abyme* here in order to inform future research in the field of peace and conflict studies.

Conflicts and Infectious Diseases in History

The history of epidemics offers us a very interesting number of events that may help us to better understand the influence of the infectious diseases appearance during conflicts.

The Plague of Athens (430 BC), having declared itself in the midst of the Peloponnesian War, allows us to see from ancient times the importance of the health aspect in times of conflict. Indeed, it seems that this epidemic, by its devastating effects, greatly influenced the outcome of the conflict, as well as the actions of the belligerents, in particular on combat strategies and societal organizations (Soupios, 2004). The unequal distribution of infections between the two camps also seems to be an important parameter which influences the continuation or not of hostilities and therefore the chances of domination according to the way in which the parties in combat are affected by the epidemic (Nielsen, 1996).

Thus, if one of the parties can take advantage of the weakness of the other belligerent party, when the latter is affected by an epidemic, it also happens that hostilities can be put on "pause" when a health crisis occurs. This was the case during the Hundred Years War and the Black Death pandemic (from 1347 to 1351), when almost all the fighting ceased in the face of this infectious disease devastating power which deprived the belligerents of the forces of combat (soldiers, commanders) and support (cultivator, artisans). However, this "pause" in interstate conflict seems to reveal the appearance of other internal conflicts, with the temporary deregulation of civil societies at the time (Cohn, 2002).

The conditions of conflicts, and even their existence, can therefore be called into question by the arrival and spread of infectious epidemics. This is perfectly illustrated when the armies are directly subject to epidemics within their ranks, implying great strategic upheavals, as for example the case of the epidemic of smallpox in the ranks of the Washington's army during the American Revolutionary War (Becker, 2004).

It is also very interesting to study and understand how infectious diseases spread in the specific conditions' context of a conflict. Highly viral infectious diseases, such as the sixth cholera pandemic, allow us to study in detail how infectious diseases are spread in rebellious conflicts, for example, and how this spread will influence rebellious behaviour, the final outcome of the rebellion and therefore of the conflict (Smallman-Raynor & Cliff, 1998).

It is also interesting to see to what extent epidemics were and are still part of the daily life of war and how the armies were able to manage these health crises while continuing the fighting. Indeed, epidemics have been able to influence a large number of historical geopolitical issues (Marr & Cathey, 2013), and the outcomes of great conflicts of the past century may also have been influenced by the management and containment by armies of sanitary problem facilities. This is the case for the First World War (Byerly, 2005), as well as the Second World War (Snyder, 1947), which had their share of infectious diseases within the belligerent armies, obliging the various parties to adapt while the fighting continued.

More recent conflicts and infectious episodes provide a perspective on historical experiences regarding the influence of infectious diseases on conflict.

The example of Ebola is fairly representative of the circulation of a pathogen in a conflict zone. Its circulation and its impact on conflicts is an area that research has taken into account (Kasereka et al., 2018), but which deserves a broader treatment. Likewise, the different episodes of dengue fever in Yemen push the belligerents to organize civil life differently in the midst of a civil war, with the lack of infrastructure difficulty and the harshness of the fighting (Alghazali et al., 2019).

An in-depth study of all these mechanisms through several studies would make it possible to better understand the real influences on the behaviour of armed groups as well as of the individuals making up these groups. The whole conflict psychology linked to these health events can help to better understand the conflicts and their evolution.

It would be interesting to produce several behavioural models on the geopolitical scale of conflicts, but also on the scale of combatant groups, whether they are rebels or not. These future works will make it possible to better understand the mechanisms at work as we have touched on them here through a historiographical approach.

Finally, and beyond conflicts, it is also interesting to study the effects of the circulation of infectious diseases within the framework of post-conflict periods and peacebuilding processes, as was the case for example in Sierra Leon (Shaffer et al., 2014).

Conclusion

Understanding the effects that external events can have on the conditions and the course of conflicts is one of the major points of studying conflict and peace mechanisms.

Indeed, understanding how conflicts evolve makes it possible to implement peace more effectively in a world where conflicts are becoming more complex (Goodhand, 1999). This seems particularly true with regard to the impact of infectious diseases on conflicts, which could lead us to envisage

a dual crisis management, both socio-political and health related, in unique models of peacebuilding which would make it possible to provide innovative and complementary solutions to emergencies.

The historical approach we have taken here allows us to refocus the object of study and offer an interesting basis for reflection in the face of the various academic issues raised by this question of the circulation impacts of infectious diseases on the theatre of conflicts.

This field of study thus seems particularly important and current in view of the importance and the constancy of the circulation of infectious diseases on the ground and in areas particularly affected by conflicts. In addition, the possibility of increasing number of pandemics (Jones et al., 2008) pushes us to widen this field of research and to understand the mechanisms of human behaviour in the face of such health events.

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NUCLEAR WAR, MILITARISM, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF NONVIOLENT DEFENCE

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Abstract

Nonviolence scholars have long refused to accept that the notions of defence, security and protection remain the preserve of nuclear warfare and militaristic violence. Indeed, contrary to dominant perception, there is much research that evidences how nonviolent action, when strategically applied, can be effective, even in the most brutal of contexts. Crucially, though, ongoing challenges remain as to how the potential of nonviolent defence should be promoted and realised? Should, for example, nonviolence researchers and activists target their efforts towards elite decision-makers? Does the presentation of compelling evidence make these decision-makers more likely to consider nonviolent forms of defence? Whilst this top-down focus has been the dominant approach, this essay argues that the development of nonviolent defence will benefit more by shifting our attention away from dominant power-holders, and moving it towards those pursuing radical, grassroots social change, where a more receptive basis for engagement, movement-building and struggle can be found.

Introduction

One of my most vivid memories from my postgraduate studies is from a security-studies class on ethics and the laws of war. During one discussion, one student forcefully delivered a small monologue which condemned the “idealistic peaceniks” in the class and reminded them that “it is all well and good for people to dream of Mother Theresa or Mahatma Gandhi walking up to a violent perpetrator and asking them to kindly desist from what they’re doing, but it’s just not going to work”. His point, ultimately, was that militaristic violence, whether it be the war in Afghanistan or the US nuclear strike on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is necessary because without it we are rendered insecure and vulnerable in a dangerous world.

This sentiment might be thought to represent the view of an aspiring security-studies student keen to assert his politico-realist credentials, but it is also reflective of the lingering hold and dominance of militarist arguments which justify the development of nuclear weapons and the overall preparation and application of war. Whilst many peace and nonviolence scholars and activists are (understandably) confounded by the logic of nuclear preparation and war, depicting it as irrational, immoral and self-defeating, the ongoing salience of the nuclear argument lies, I suggest, in its powerful interlocking of practical and moral dimensions.

The moral argument – a crude consequentialism – acknowledges the destruction of nuclear war. Regardless though, the key moral factor for nuclear proponents is the consideration of the consequences for a country which does not or cannot offer its own nuclear threat or action. Whilst the devastation of nuclear war is to be regretted, its possibility needs to be accepted as an unfortunate necessity, because a renunciation of the potential application of this violence would only precipitate even worse carnage at the hands of what Tory politician Julian Lewis calls “the rogues, the villains, the bandits, the dictators and the tyrants” (Lewis, 2006, p. 673).

What is striking about this moral foundation, though, is where the contextual and consequential analysis usually begins. Consider the illustrative example provided by Lewis – “a security guard who is the only person in a position to prevent a terrorist from opening fire on a queue of passengers in an airport lounge” (Lewis, 2006, p. 669). Lewis’ argument, like many before him, is that “according to most people’s values, not only is it morally correct for him to shoot the armed terrorist, it would be profoundly unethical for him to decline to do so” (Lewis, 2006, p. 669). But from what context, we might ask, did this “terrorist” come from, and why have they resorted to such action? Lewis’ argument suggests that the presence and threat of ‘terrorists’ is not only inevitable, but that, to use Arundhati Roy’s words, is “a hateful, insane scourge that spins on its own axis, in its own orbit and has nothing to do with the world around it, nothing to do with history, geography or economics” (Roy, 2009, p. 183). Strenuously denied is any link between terrorist violence and the military industry. And ignored is the way in which war preparation consumes huge funds that could have been deployed to more socially productive areas and, in so doing, worked to ameliorate or prevent the emergence of conditions where people feel such violence is necessary.

Even so, the militarist argument also rests on the notion that there is no alternative – that in our current world, rather than a violence free utopia, nuclear warfare provides us with the only realistic avenue for warding off the threats posed by those who would do us harm. “How else”, they ask,

“might we respond to a ‘bandit’ or a ‘rogue’ who stands ready to inflict great harm upon our country and its people?”. Their answer – there is no other way. Only through deterrence can we hope to protect ourselves, because only then are aggressors less likely to attack, given the horrific damage a retaliatory action would cause.

Much has been written on this presumption of deterrence, but what I find particularly interesting is how it rests on a rather hypocritical assumption of rational opponents. That is, the nuclear argument begins with the idea that we are perennially surrounded by innumerable, ruthless and irrational violent actors. And yet, at the same time, it promotes deterrence on the basis that these same incomprehensible opponents will, in response to such a retaliatory threat, behave in accordance with certain rules and logic.

Nonviolent Defence

Despite common perception, nonviolence scholars and activists have long refused to accept that the notions of defence, security and protection remain the preserve of nuclear warfare and militaristic violence. Perhaps the most significant development, though, occurred with the work of Gene Sharp (Sharp, 1973, 1990). Sometimes referred to as the Machiavelli of nonviolence, Sharp was openly opposed to the principled nonviolence of pacifists, arguing that its focus on ethics and morals, rather than pragmatics and efficacy, prevented a broader and more mainstream take up of nonviolent methods. What Sharp did was to emphasise that nonviolent action was not powerless passivity, or a process where love, compassion and the willing enduring of righteous suffering would magically transform or convert an opponent. Rather, nonviolent action was an active method for waging struggle, where activists would employ various methods to undermine, coerce, defeat and destroy their opponent.

Sharp’s primary contribution was to highlight how oppressors are not innately possessed of unique power, but that they derive it from the consent and co-operation of those they seek to rule. If nonviolent activists can strategically deploy their methods and tactics in a way that erodes this co-operation, then the power of the oppressor is diminished, and ideally, destroyed. Applied to nonviolent defence, Sharp’s pragmatic nonviolence argued that all aggressors and invaders, regardless of their supposed ruthlessness, ultimately depend upon acquiescence from the target population in order to achieve their goals. Where populations are able to apply co-ordinated and strategic actions which deny this, aggressors are less able to achieve their goals and more likely to reassess their willingness and capacity to engage in a complex contest with a people united in their nonviolent opposition.

Whilst it is commonly thought that nonviolent action is dependent upon so-called reasonable opponents, such as the British are sometimes characterised in pre-independent India, there are numerous historical examples which suggest that nonviolent action, strategically applied, can also be effective in the most brutal of contexts. In Denmark, for example, during the second world war, a 17-year old student responded to the German invasion of Denmark by publishing *Ten Commandments of the Danish Resistance* including “you should not work in Germany, if working for the Germans you should perform poorly, you should work slowly for the Germans (and) you should destroy everything which could be useful to the Germans” (in Ackerman & DuVall, 2000, p. 212). Over the coming years, the Danish resistance, whilst not exclusively nonviolent,

successfully used a range of nonviolent methods to protect Danish Jews and deny Nazi control over the country and its resources (Ackerman & DuVall, 2000). In 1943, for example, when German troops announced a round-up of Danish Jews, Danish people provided warnings and safehouses, before helping to transport as many as possible of the Jewish population to safety in Sweden. After this, in response to a German-imposed curfew, Danish workers engaged in a huge walk-off from work, claiming that, because of the curfew, they had to return home early to water their gardens. Rather than returning home, though, these workers congregated in public places, rallying against the occupation and helping to build a movement which, whilst not preventing or repelling the invasion, denied the Nazis their primary goal of controlling the Danish population and benefitting from their resources.

There are, of course, other examples which could be mentioned. Importantly, though, none of the examples from which researchers and activists commonly draw are perfect or complete. These nonviolent struggles were, by and large, ad-hoc initiatives, kicked off in response to what was occurring around them. In this sense, they were reactive rather than proactive. Rather than a deficiency, though, the nonviolent action literature uses these examples as a springboard to ask: what if the power and impact that was gained through these largely spontaneous and unplanned resistance movements could be enhanced, improved and strengthened through planning and training? What if populations, well before the threat of invasion, engaged in sustained training in nonviolent skills and discipline so that any such invasion could be met with a strategic program of nonviolent resistance?

Top-Down or Bottom-Up?

Such a development, though, has been hard to achieve – and it is important to consider why. In particular, it may be useful, in exploring the lack of take-up on nonviolent defence amidst the ongoing salience of the nuclear/militarist logic, to inquire as to how, and to whom, the idea of nonviolent defence has been targeted and promoted. One interesting point of departure here is Bertrand Russell's (2010/1959) *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare*. Here, Russell writes that “we must learn to view the whole matter in quite a different way” (p. xxx) and that “we must find a way of avoiding all wars, whether great or small and whether intentionally nuclear or not” (p. 15). Russell's argument is that nuclear warfare represents a threat to humankind, and that this threat “must be viewed as some new epidemic would be viewed” (p. xxx). “If”, he argues, “this were realized by the statesmen and populations of East and West, many difficulties which now seem insuperable, or nearly so, would disappear” (p. xxxi). And the only thing necessary for this transformation, according to Russell, is a rational analysis from the nation's leaders: “Given a sane and sober consideration of what is involved, this harmony on the problems of nuclear weapons would inevitably result. It would not be necessary to invoke idealistic motives, although they could be validly invoked. It would be necessary only to appeal to motives of national self-interest” (p. xxxi).

This somewhat self-assured though simplistic assessment, that states can and will employ “common sense” when it comes to nuclear weapons because it is logical for them to do so, can be contrasted with Randolph Bourne's well-known notion that “war is the health of the state” (Bourne, 1918). That is, states are unable or unwilling to come to their “common sense” regarding

war because it is an essential replenisher for the institution, generating uncritical uniformity and obedience that reinscribes the state as the primary institution to which we should be aligned.

This difference between Russell's and Bourne's ideas points to an important distinction between various approaches to the promotion of nonviolent defence. For Gene Sharp and his many contemporaries, the priority has often been to target and convince those in power. The primary intention is to present an impressive and robust body of evidence to these power holders, and to assume that this empirically-substantiated form of struggle will be taken up by government, not because it is the right or ethical thing to do, but because it is the practical or, to use Russell's term, the "common sense" thing to do. In this approach, political and military elites are asked to adopt nonviolent defence as a way of defending the country and its borders, but there is minimal or no attention given to other social, political and economic issues within which the military paradigm is entwined.

For others, like Brian Martin, the development of nonviolent defence is best targeted not at elites ostensibly concerned with the protection of national territory, but at the grassroots (Martin, 1993). Here, the intention is to build the localised capacity for community-led, rather than government-led, nonviolent resistance against aggression. And in prioritising the grassroots or bottom-up approach, equal emphasis is given to many other interlinked sites for radical social change – capitalism and patriarchy, for example – because without this form of accompanying change, nonviolent defence is highly unlikely to be adopted. To think that the entire military system can be replaced and transformed without also transforming the surrounding social, political and economic structures is, as Martin writes, "implausible" (Martin, 1993, p. 1).

Conditioned as we are to think of defence as a country-based, militaristic process, it can be difficult to conceive of nonviolent defence in this grassroots mode. There are, however, important examples from which we can draw. In Colombia, for example, the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado has, for over twenty years, nonviolently defended itself within the ongoing conflict between the Colombian government and FARC (Anderson & Wallace, 2013; Masullo, 2015; Uribe De H, 2005). In 1997, declaring themselves a community of peace, the community made public its principles which guide the actions of its members. These include what they call "neutrality" towards the war, and non-collaboration with armed actors which prohibits owning/carrying arms or providing any logistical or intelligence support to armed groups. Moreover, this autonomous Peace Community has been bolstered through the presence of unarmed protective accompaniment practised by organisations such as Peace Brigades International and Fellowship of Reconciliation. And whilst the Peace Community has not been without its tragedies – over 300 members have been killed, most at the hands of state and paramilitary forces – it is a self-directed grassroots initiative that continues to not only defend itself through purely nonviolent means, but also to resist the neoliberal political-economy which has prompted the violence within which the community struggles.

Some nonviolence researchers maintain that nonviolent defence, as conceived and promoted by Sharp, remains a viable and important first-step in the journey towards a nonviolent future. And it is worth noting that some national governments have, at times, expressed interest in developing national nonviolent defence systems. In Lithuania, for example, nonviolent defence was employed against the crumbling Soviet Union – a process, in part, brought about by Sharp's influential work

which was read and then translated at the insistence of the then Director General of National Defence. And in 1991 the Supreme Council adopted a resolution which included the following: “In the event a regime of active occupation is introduced, citizens of the Republic of Lithuania are asked to adhere to principles of disobedience, nonviolent resistance, and political and social noncooperation as the primary means of struggle for independence” (in Miniotaite, 2002, p. 74). Crucially, though, Lithuania subsequently sought, and gained, entry into NATO. And since this time, whilst still given some minor attention, nonviolent defence has largely been considered a small supplement to the primary program of military defence – an “understandable” result, according to Grazina Miniotaite, given the “many types of security threats (that) exist, and (that) scholars and analysts have not articulated how civilian-based defense could effectively address this diversity of risk” (Miniotaite, 2002, p. 65).

Miniotaite’s conclusion, despite the resurgence of the militaristic paradigm and its supposed prerogative on security and defence, is that “the inclusion of civilian-based defense in the official security conception of Lithuania is but one step in the task ahead” (Miniotaite, 2002, p. 65). Perhaps, but there is a more complex possibility that needs to be considered by those who continue to promote the elite-reform approach. Namely, whether the very structure of the military, as well as the accompanying social, political and economic structures within which it thrives, necessarily stifle the genuine possibility of ever realising such a project, or of moving beyond an initial first step. And even if this supposed realistic and pragmatic first step is achieved, as in Lithuania, its enmeshing with current structures, and the way in which this subversive and transformative concept is placed under the control and direction of political and military elites, means that its essential radical or revolutionary character is undercut. As Martin explains, “power over the development of social defence would have been put in the hands of those most likely to oppose its radical potential”, meaning that any such progress ultimately strips nonviolent defence of “its most important democratic features and provid(es) no real threat to established institutions which underlie the war system” (Martin, 1993, p. 31).

This understanding of the challenge, perhaps futility, of getting political and military elites to take up the idea of nonviolent defence has not just been expressed by those critical of centralised power structures and governmental hierarchies. Stephen King-Hall, for example, a former British Naval Officer and member of parliament, was an early proponent of nonviolent defence, arguing that the nuclear-dependent defence policy of the United Kingdom in the 50s and 60s was problematic and self-defeating. Interestingly, though, in attempting to promote his ideas, King-Hall noted the acute resistance from his establishment colleagues, describing his efforts in persuading them as being like a “confirmed vegetarian” telling “a society of meat eaters ... that all meat was poison” (King-Hall, 1961, p. 164).

More recently, long time nonviolence scholar, activist and educator, George Lakey (2016), highlighted a similar dynamic. Reflecting upon his nonviolent defence against terrorism course at Swarthmore College, where students engaged with eight nonviolent tools and were asked to consider how they could be used to defend a country against the threat of terrorism, Lakey highlights how he was invited to discuss his ideas with the Pentagon. In pursuing such a meeting, Lakey’s hope was to engage with these ‘experts’ about how the United States government could replace a militaristic response to the threat of terrorism with a strategic nonviolent approach which harnessed the collective power of all eight nonviolent tools, not just one or two applied in isolation.

Crucially, though, the Pentagon, whilst explaining that they had “no problem with the ideas”, essentially explained how “that kind of systemic shift is beyond the capacity of the United States government” (Lakey, 2016). Lakey’s primary learning from the interaction: “the US government is configured in a way that it can’t provide an effective nonviolent response” (Lakey, 2016).

Conclusion

Whilst the idea of appealing to elites and gaining policy traction with nonviolent defence implies a more pragmatic approach that seems more appropriate for the harsh realpolitik of the twenty-first century, the ideas presented here suggest that it is an approach which, at best, undercuts and distorts its social change potential, and at worst, acts to stifle or prevent its possible emergence. It may seem like a paradox, but perhaps the most realistic option for the development of the radical concept of nonviolent defence involves shifting our attention away from dominant power-holders, and towards those pursuing radical, grassroots social change, where a more receptive basis for engagement, movement-building and struggle can be found.

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CORRUPTION WITH HUMAN FACE? DECIPHERING NIGERIA'S POLITICAL GRAFT, ELITE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND AMORPHOUS WEALTH REDISTRIBUTION

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Abstract

The use of a corruption pyramid tree as a lever to build linkages with the lower class is gaining momentum in Nigeria. Rather than competitive solutions to national development, Nigerian masses, having observed the futility in taming the kleptomaniac elite, seem more inclined to gain improved resource decentralisation or value creation from corrupt enrichment. In doing this, they encourage increased local benefits in contrast to the tradition of profligate spending and evident capital flight. Even the government's redistribution scheme- as part of the Nigeria National Social Safety Net Program- of distributing the recovered loot to 300,000 households in 19 of Nigeria's 36 states has also remained amorphous. This study seeks to contribute towards the understanding of inter-relationships between public treasury looting and the declining humanity of the poor. It comprises a qualitative examination of secondary material readily available in the public domain and a survey carried out in 2019. This study investigates the perception of Nigerians on how proceeds of corrupt practices by the elite should be utilised for common good; thereby seemingly legitimising what ordinarily is a crime. It suggests how citizens' passion for democratic accountability can be activated to reverse the subtle trend of legitimising corruption and engender wealth redistribution.

Introduction

There is another sense in which politics under-develops Nigeria. This is the use of political power for the accumulation of wealth...The wealthiest people in Nigeria are generally people who have acquired wealth through state power: by political corruption, by access to state contracts, agency rates or concessions such as import licenses – which does not usually involve them in direct productive activity.

- Claude Ake (1996)

In 2018, while canvassing a new approach to managing the menace of corruption and under-development in Nigeria, a former Nigerian envoy to Israel, Ambassador Ignatius Olisaemeka, posited that though corruption was an illegal act, public officers who fell to the temptation of corruptly enriching themselves must endeavour to invest their loot in Nigeria rather than stashing it in foreign banks and enriching the economies of those countries. Olisaemeka states, “there was corruption during our time but it was internalized more than we do it now. They did not export it (loot) to the United States, they did not export it to the United Kingdom, they did not export it to Dubai, they ploughed it into the Nigerian economy” (*New Telegraph*, 2018, p. 5). Two years earlier, at a civil society workshop attended by this writer in the nation’s capital territory, Abuja, an apparently frustrated participant, who complained about the futility of CSOs’ advocacy/engagements in partnering with government to bring thieving public office holders to justice, noted that:

Is it not frustrating that while we shout ourselves hoarse on the need for probity and accountability in government, many of our leaders are still pilfering our resources for personal use while the rest of us suffer from basic necessities of life? I think it is high time they (corrupt leaders) are encouraged to invest the looted monies here so that ordinary Nigerians can benefit (Franklin, personal communication, 2016).

These two scenarios encapsulate the emerging perception of Nigerians concerning the ruling elite and the high-level of corruption in the country on the one hand and by inference, the country’s greatly flawed value system which celebrates even wealth obtained by questionable means on the other hand. While almost all Nigerians complain about corruption, actual public tolerance for the practice remains too high. Even President Muhammadu Buhari, while addressing the Nigerian community in Paris on November 12, 2018, expressed his frustration with public officials who loot Nigeria’s treasury and stash their loot abroad to deny Nigerians of viable resources that could develop the nation. He states, "I am doing my best now to utilize our resources to develop the country. We are already getting results on road, rail and power. My frustration is that some people still have plenty stolen money stashed in Europe, US and other countries" (Toromade, 2018, p.21). Buhari’s ascension to office in 2015 was partly a function of popular discontent with unfettered pillaging by politicians since the transition to democracy in 1999 and more so in the years leading to 2015 (Timipere & Tubodenyefa, 2018).

When corrupt individuals and other criminals obtain illicit funds, they seek out ways to disguise the illegal origin of the money and to store the value somewhere safe (Transparency International, 2015). It is widely accepted that the misappropriation of public funds and assets by corrupt elites has been a major cause of Nigeria’s underdevelopment (Global Witness 2012). Nigerian people are effectively robbed of wealth by an economy that enables a tiny minority of the population to get rich by allowing wealth to flow out of Nigeria. Little wonder, Nigeria faces what has been

called the resource curse—abundant oil which fuelled a political spoils system and pervasive corruption. For decades, proceeds of corrupt practices in Nigeria have found their way to foreign countries for safe-keep. While host countries take advantage of the money that is secretly being invested into their economies, Nigeria and its people continue to bleed under suffocating human conditions

Problem Statement, Objectives and Study Questions

Nigeria still remains one of the most corrupt nations on the planet. Transparency International (2019) ranked the country 144 out 180 in its 2018 corruption perceptions index. Thus, “corruption remains an endemic issue in Africa’s largest economy, harming its public finances, deterring business investment, exasperating inequality, reducing the standard of living, and weakening the social contract between the government and its people” (Musser, 2019, p.57). By the 2017 estimations of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC): after the high cost of living and unemployment, Nigerians consider corruption to be the third most important problem facing their country, well ahead of the state of the country’s infrastructure and health service (Ani, 2018). The failure to lift citizens out of poverty, according to Ani (2018, p.12) “is an indictment on successive Nigerian governments which have mismanaged the country’s vast oil riches through incompetence and corruption”. If corruption is not dealt with immediately it could cost Nigeria up to 37 percent of its GDP by 2030 (Mohamad, 2019).

The post-colonial Nigerian state has been notorious for its high level of corrupt practices- moving in geometrical progression with each passing decade. Fundamentally, governance practices are being ruined by corruption, and destabilization of government institutions continually hinders service delivery. Corruption has thus been a major obstacle in the process of economic development and poverty eradication in the country. For many years, what has emboldened those involved in the corrupt practices is the failure of the anti-graft agencies and successive governments to bring the culprits to book (Eze, 2015). Now, the use of proceeds from high-level corruption to maintain the local content chain by the rapacious elites with a view to pacifying the growing needs of the poor is gaining momentum in the country. Put differently, benefits captured by local elites are sought after by the masses, thus favouring *rentier* attitudes rather than competitive solutions to national development.

This study contributes towards understanding of the inter-relationships between public treasury looting by Nigeria’s ruling class and the declining humanity of the poor. In the web of this contraption, Nigerian masses seem to be seeking to gain improved resource decentralisation or value creation from corrupt enrichment by encouraging increased local benefits (investments in local industries and more patronage) in order to improve wellbeing and quality of life. Now, the pauperised citizens, having observed the futility in taming the kleptomaniac elites (in and out of government), have started demanding community investment. This is a euphemism for social responsibility or local content of proceeds of corruption; indeed, a sort of democratisation of proceeds of corruption or perverse version of *new localism*.

Interest in governmental probity and accountability, which largely remains at the level of advocacy among civil society groups, tends to have waned drastically among the masses. Some interrogations, therefore, arise naturally. For example, what are the underpinning forces for the

masses' resort to this variant of local content demand? How can citizens' passion for democratic accountability be activated to reverse the subtle trend of legitimising corruption in Nigeria? Besides the law enforcement and investigation techniques to prosecute corruption, what other mechanisms can be employed to tame this menace in Nigeria? Indeed, how can citizens' trust in government and capacity to fight corruption be restored?

This study comprises a qualitative examination of secondary data readily available in the public domain and primary sources of data gathering. It examines how Nigerian elites unabashedly engage in the exclusive elements of neo-patrimonialism (corruption, rent-seeking, stealing resources, personal enrichment) and the emerging trend of demand for investment of looted funds in communities. The impact of this monstrous wave, exacerbated by the high degree of political power concentrating in personal rule, on the development enterprise in Nigeria is explored. It also interrogates the utility and citizen perception of government's social investment policies in addressing poverty in the country.

Conceptual Explanation and Focus of Study

Corruption is a world-wide phenomenon that has raised considerable research interest within the fields of sociological, political and economic studies (Budak & Rajh, 2012). Corruption is an outcome—a reflection of a country's legal, economic, cultural and political institutions. It can be a response to either beneficial or harmful rules. For example, corruption appears in response to benevolent rules when individuals pay bribes to avoid penalties for harmful conduct or when monitoring of rules is incomplete—as in the case of theft. Conversely, corruption can also arise because bad policies or inefficient institutions are put in place to collect bribes from individuals seeking to get around them (Djankov et al., 2003).

Most discussions of corruption in Africa echo Joseph Nye's widely-used definition of corruption as "behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence" (Nye, 1967, p. 419). According to sociologists, corruption is a symptom of dysfunctionality of the relationship between the state and the people, characterized by bribery, extortion and nepotism (Altas, 1968, p. 11). According to the definition by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) corruption is "the abuse of public office for private gains" (World Bank, 2014; IMF, 2015). On the other side, Transparency International (TI) defines the corruption as the misuse of entrusted power for private gain. Countries with poor governance have been seen to experience high levels of corruption and this has caused a lot of harm through negative effects on both poor and private sector activities (OECD, 2014). Berman describes the environment in which corruption thrives, as very similar to Matteson Ellis' description of "weak state institutions" (Wrage, 2014). Berman defines corruption as occurring "in conjunction with other governance challenges, like excessive bureaucracy, an absence of working systems and a shortage of either manpower or skills, or both (Warge, 2014 p. 32)."

However, the focus of this study is grand corruption which refers to "the acts of the political elite by which they exploit their power to make economic policies. This occurs when a corrupt political elite change either the national policies or the implementation of national policies to serve its own

interests at some cost to the populace” (Jain, 2001, pp. 74-75). Grand corruption is synonymous with political corruption or what some scholars would refer to as corruption in high places. The thesis of this study is that the root of Nigeria’s arrested development is intrinsically associated with the role of Nigerian elites. Over the last two decades of civil rule, debate on the governance and management of Nigeria’s natural resources has intensified because of the increasing evidence that these resources are financing conflict and corruption.

Grand corruption, with its corresponding devastating socio-economic consequences on national development and the well-being of the masses, continues to deepen the level of inequality in the country. Surveying the relationship between inequality and corruption across 30 Commonwealth countries between 1995 and 2008, Batabyal and Chowdhury (2015), for example, claim that: “It is the poor in society that are often the hardest hit by the effects of corruption, being the most reliant on public services and the least capable of paying the high price associated with fraud, bribery and other forms of corrupt activity, to attain those services” (p. 51)

Study Rationale

Given Nigeria’s enormous resources, it is puzzling that a huge portion of the populace lives in poverty. This vast incidence of poverty in the midst of plenty has been linked to the endemic corruption in the country. If Nigeria’s transition to democracy and the adoption of good governance institutions have not resulted in pro-poor policies, then the intervening variable must be interrogated. Rampant corruption is a symptom of widespread failure of institutions throughout the country. Focusing attention on elites enables an analysis of their power, their control over resources and their influence over political, social and economic decisions as well as over institutions and practices. What really distinguishes political systems from one another is the degree to which the elites ruling them seek to use their power in the service of a broad public interest or simply to enrich themselves, their friends and their families. More important to this study is the perception of the direct victims of corrupt practices as to how proceeds of such should be utilised for common good; thereby seemingly legitimising what ordinarily is a crime. This contradiction finds meaning in the unabated inhuman conditions in which many Nigerians find themselves in over decades- precipitating a turning point where demands are made for local content component of looted commonwealth to ameliorate their living standard. While political graft imposes the largest direct financial cost on a country, petty bribes have a corrosive effect on basic institutions and undermine public trust in the government. The focus here however, is on political graft as public office in Nigeria provides unrestricted access to primitive accumulation of wealth for personal use.

Methodology

A combination of literature review and survey, in addition to field observation, was taken to map the various dimensions and perceptions of the citizens about corrupt elite and the investment from proceeds of loot. This enabled me to unveil and validate the citizen’s perception of grand graft, investment of looted wealth in Nigeria and the government’s social investment programmes. Data generated from the survey was complemented with extensive literature review on the subject. This included an analysis of books and monographs, analytical reports and statistical publications by international organisations and local NGOs, government gazettes, and journal/newspaper articles.

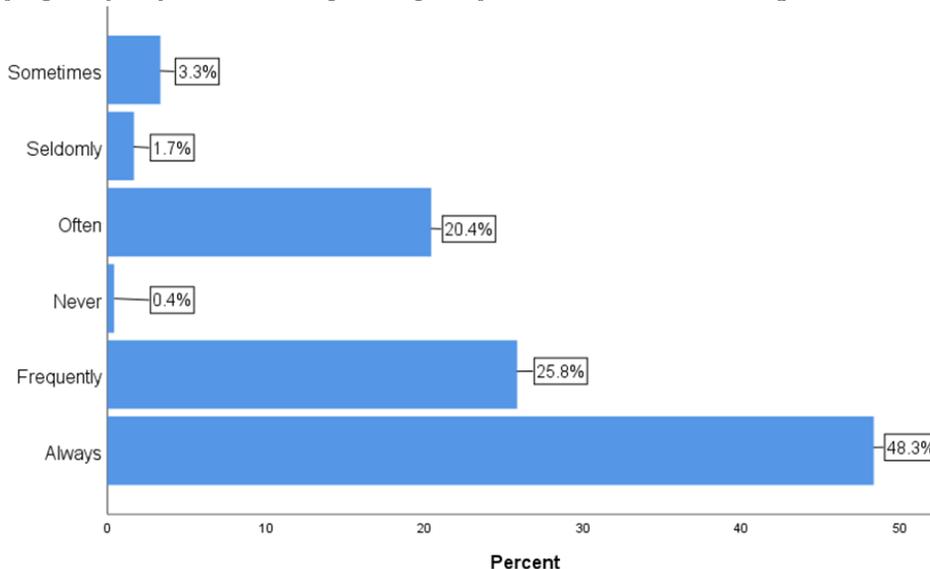
This study also adopted a descriptive analysis for the secondary and primary data. Though the survey targeted a sample population of 1000 respondents, only 240 responded. They include individuals under numerous societal groups: men and women, civil servants, artisans, youths, community leaders, religious leaders, students, politicians, etc.

An Overview of how Corruption Strangles Policy

Corruption is one of the greatest challenges facing governments as it undermines and distorts public policy, leading to the misallocation of resources. Delavallede (2006) argues that public corruption distorts the structure of public spending by reducing social expenditure, as education, health and social protection. She finds a negative and significant relationship between corruption and education, health and social insurance expenditures. Studies have also revealed that corruption can have adverse distributional effects as it hurts the poor disproportionately. Countries with high levels of corruption achieve lower literacy rates, have higher mortality rates, and overall have worse human development outcomes. Corruption deepens poverty by reducing pro-poor public expenditures, by creating artificial shortages and congestion in public services, and by inducing a policy bias in favour of capital intensity, which perpetuates unemployment (FATF Report, 2011).

According to the Economic Freedom of the World, Nigeria has one of the world’s least open economies, coming in at 125 of the 152 countries rated. Nigeria fails most dramatically on business regulation, legal system/property rights, sound money, and free trade (Bandow, 2015). Such policies discourage foreign investment in what should be the continent’s best market. Corruption risks are pervasive throughout all institutions of government. Cases of ghost workers and padded budgets show how pervasive corruption is in public spending. The point for worry is that corruption has, in the last thirty or so years, assumed a dimension that threatens the authority and power of the state, and the continued existence of the country (The Guardian, 2016). Indeed, as the figure below shows, 74 percent of the respondents in this study are of the strong opinion that corruption has sunk into the business culture in Nigeria (indicating *always* and *frequently*), and this can be seen majorly in the government ministries, departments and agencies.

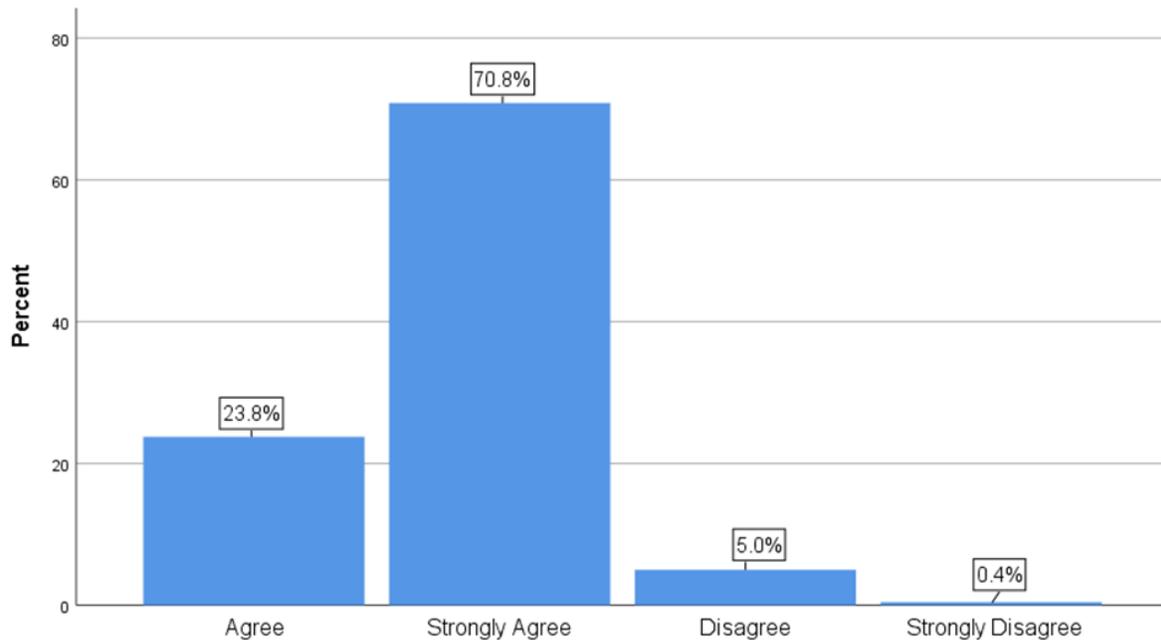
How frequently do you think corruption is part of the business culture in Nigeria?



A report published by Amundsen in 2010 states that corruption in Nigeria serves two main purposes: (i) to extract rents from the state, which includes rent-seeking behaviour in the form of embezzlement, abuse of power, bribery, nepotism and cronyism, among others; and (ii) to preserve power, that is, to ensure that an individual maintains his/her position of power or gains access to such a position through activities such as electoral corruption, judicial corruption or the distribution of public jobs (Amundsen, 2010). A country bedevilled with dysfunctional governance systems such as inefficient revenue systems, inappropriate allocation of resources, weak delivery of vital public services, rent seeking and malfeasance (Hawthorne, 2013) among others cannot distance itself from unwelcome outcomes.

There is a body of empirical evidence in the literature on the impact of natural resource abundance on socio-economic underdevelopment in resource-rich countries. Like several other resource-rich countries, Nigeria became a “rentier state”, where the political class seeks the control of the state – by diverse means that include corruption – in order to capture the rents generated from natural resources for personal enrichment (Gillies, 2009). Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa, and this is mainly because of its oil resource. Sad enough, despite pumping roughly 2 million barrels of oil per day, most of its population lives in abject poverty. The cycle of poverty keeps growing with all its attendant consequences even as the rate of unemployment remains perpetually high. Thus, the link between natural resources and a poor economic performance within Nigeria has been established. In the literature, this situation is called the “Natural Resource Curse” or the “Paradox of Natural Resource”. The huge flow of oil wealth means the government does not rely on taxpayers for its income, so does not have to answer to the people — “a situation that fosters rampant corruption and economic sclerosis because there is no investment in infrastructure as the country’s leaders cream off its wealth” (Burleigh, 2013, p.8). In its Annual Report, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (2012) observed that “corruption in the public sector remains a sore spot in Nigeria’s quest to instil transparency and accountability in the polity. The failure to deliver social services, the endemic problem of power supply and the collapse of infrastructure are all linked with corruption” (p.2). Little wonder, many of the respondents (about 70 percent) strongly believe that the infrastructural decay and the level of poverty in the country are caused by the corrupt political leaders.

Do you think corrupt politicians are responsible for the level of poverty and Infrastructural decay (under development) in Nigeria?



Plundering the State and Commonwealth: The Nigerian Elites at Work

Many government officials are believed to collude with crony foreign multinationals, especially in the extraction industries, to short-change Nigeria and keep them in poverty. *The Plunder Route to Panama: How Oligarchs Steal from Their Countries*, an investigation by the African Investigative Publishing Collective in partnership with Africa Uncensored and ZAM, examines the role African political leaders – in collusion with foreign interests – have played in undermining economic development and exacerbating poverty on the continent through the blatant theft of their countries' natural and mineral resources. The number of super-rich on the continent is growing fast. According to New World Wealth, the number of high-net-worth individuals (people with assets over \$1 million) in Africa rose at twice the pace of the rest of the world in the past 15 years (Bird, 2015 p.3). Its 2016 Africa Wealth Report states there are about 165,000 high-net-worth individuals in Africa, with combined wealth of \$860 billion (McCluskey, 2016). The Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, once declared that the Nigerian treasury lost over N1.34 trillion, over quarter of the country's budget, to 55 Nigerians through corrupt practices between 2006 and 2013 (Okoroafor, 2016).

In political or grand corruption, the leader maximizes personal wealth rather than the welfare of the population. Grand corruption also has the tendency of killing democratic political institutions in a country. In Nigeria, corruption has grown more desperate and its corroding influence is more wide-ranging, having the elites as arrowheads of the predatory mission- a horrible culture which has seen billions flow into the pockets of a select few. A majority of Nigerians have, for so long, been victims of the destructive, rapacious, numerically small elite that thrive on and perpetrate corruption. Some of the notable attributes of predatory rule include: a high degree of political

power concentrated in personal rule and sustained by a narrow coalition without a coherent ideological justification; the use of this power to control and distribute economic resources; the failure to use such resources for any observable developmental purpose; the systematic erosion of both public institutions and the rule of law; and a consequent degradation of the economy (Bavister-Gould, 2011). Despite producing oil for over half a century, Nigeria continues to post unenviable records of underdevelopment. In its 59 years of independence, the country's considerable natural wealth has been controlled by the clique of tribal elders and military dictators who have dominated the political landscape. Wealth is so concentrated among the rich in Nigeria that the top five richest people own enough capital to completely end extreme poverty in their country.

The common understanding usually forged between the rapacious prebendal elites offer the chance of perpetually holding on to power while looting the commonwealth. Incredibly, while small businesses and traders are disproportionately taxed, while the rich benefit from arbitrary tax relief. For instance, between 2004 and 2010, inequality in Nigeria significantly worsened, according to Oxfam, with the upper class benefiting from dubious tax wavers and legislators receiving earnings that were among the highest in the world (Akinwotu & Olukoya, 2017). It has also been documented how those individuals classified as “ultra-high-net-worth” pay wealth-management professionals hefty fees to help them avoid taxes, debts, legal judgments, and other obligations the rest of the world considers part of everyday life (Harrington, 2015). It is also hard for African governments to tax the rich because they hide their wealth using the offshore financial system. According to Ventures Africa, Nigeria's taxation system benefits the rich and burdens the middle class. In 2014, a report by the former minister of finance, Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, found the Nigerian government had lost approximately 800bn naira (£1.9bn) to tax wavers and concessions to businesses and corporations between 2011 and 2013. The report concluded these wavers led to no measurable benefit for the Nigerian economy (Akinwotu & Olukoya, 2017).

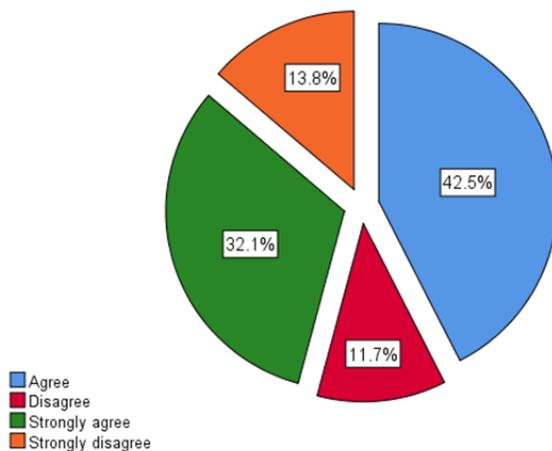
Today, many of these elites have acquired wealth through connections to the state or via participation in the state itself through politics, the civil service or military. Since 1999, Nigerians have endured what Adebayo Williams refers to as “an anti-democratic political elite” which has turned spaces of governance to sites of “feeding frenzy, of permanent plundering by a succeeding band of marauders”, and this, for him, amounts to elite conspiracy against “democratic growth and the genuine economic and political transformation of Nigeria” (Amuwo, 2012, p. 171). This position is reinforced by the Nigerian Vice President, Osinbajo:

The Nigerian elite – political, business and religious – regardless of faith and ethnicity, think alike, and are driven by largely similar motivations. The elite are usually self-centred, selfish and unprepared to make the sacrifices either in service or self-restraint that leaders of successful communities must make.... The conspirators include Christians and Muslims from all the Geo-political zones. They are in government, legislature, judiciary and the press. They are united, protect each other, fight for each other's and are prepared to go down together (Godwin, 2017, p.14)

Corruption by high-level officials such as state governors who control vast financial resources directly impedes the provision of adequate health and education to Nigerians by diverting the resources that might otherwise flow to basic services (Human Rights Watch, 2011). Much of

Nigeria's stolen billions are laundered through western financial institutions or, for instance, London's property market. Some of these funds have been in western financial systems for years. To give just one example, Sani Abacha, Nigeria's late military dictator (1993-98), is suspected to have looted up to \$5bn (£3.5bn), of which \$2.2bn is apparently still being withheld by European banks two decades later. Switzerland once agreed to return a portion – \$321m – of the Abacha loot (Adekoya, 2016). Interesting, much as the Western media assiduously report the miserable living conditions in the country occasioned by grand corruption, they fail to explain how the proceeds from the looting are indeed sitting in Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and the offshore enclaves controlled by the West. This may have partly informed why about 74 percent of the respondents in this study are of the opinion that stolen funds by corrupt public officials should be invested in the country with the goal of creating more economic opportunities and developments internally.

Do you agree that corrupt Public office holders should invest looted funds in the country rather than being stashed in foreign countries?



The hopelessness of the nation ever getting free from this leadership-imposed strangulation, according to Agbaje (2014), has created pessimism in the mind of average Nigerians about the possibility of fast recovery and thus reduced the impetus by Nigerians to embrace hard work and productive life as authentic means to wealth creation and self-actualization. On the part of the ruling class, it has only resorted to artificial 'sense of belonging' in patronising the people and not necessarily for consent-seeking. Thus, the contract between rulers and the ruled breaks down because the ruling class does not need to tax the people to fund the government— so it has no need of their consent. Though many of Nigeria's pressing concerns have been exacerbated and prolonged by corruption, political corruption creates rents for those within political organisations, including their supporters at the bottom of the pyramid.

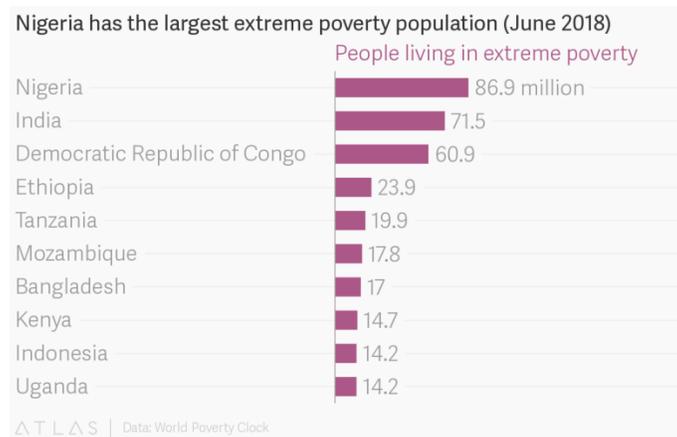
Corruption, Inequality and Poverty in Nigeria: The Nexus

The adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) represents a landmark achievement for the international community given the fact that it clearly identifies corruption as a key obstacle to sustainable development. In fact, various reports and researches have suggested that corruption, either directly or indirectly, is the bane of poverty in Nigeria (Damilola, 2019). The manifestations of extreme poverty in the country are everywhere in the deplorable living condition of so many citizens (The Guardian, 2019) and this pathetic situation cannot be divorced from the high level of corruption in the country.

Even without figures, one can perceive that poverty pervades Nigeria. Available statistics puts the national incidence of poverty at 75.5 per cent, with 70.7 per cent for urban areas and 79.2 per cent for rural areas. The quality of life in Nigeria is absolutely deplorable (The Guardian, 2019). Overall, about 90 million people - roughly half Nigeria's population - live in extreme poverty, according to estimates from the World Data Lab's Poverty Clock. Around June 2018, Nigeria overtook India, a country with seven times its population, at the bottom of the table (Abdullahi, 2019). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) designed to reduce poverty failed woefully in the country (The Guardian, 2019). The truth of the matter is that endemic corruption in Nigeria has severally been linked to the present vast incidence of poverty in the midst of plenty. In other words, Nigerians sink into a deeper abyss of poverty just as resources meant for human development are being feathered away (Damilola, 2019). In expressing his concerns about the endemic looting of the public treasury by the successive Nigerian leaders, the former World Bank president, Wolfowitz posits that:

Nigeria presents a classical example of how people in a resource rich country could wallow in abject poverty". However, the reason for this paradox lies in the corrupt nature of the ruling elite, which seems to have filtered down and infected the fabric of the socio-political, economic and cultural environment of the society in a way that some people have concluded that the Nigerian culture may have been embedded in monumental corruption (Powel, 2004).

The resultant inequality in society has led to frustration, hopelessness and despair, and laid the foundation for militancy and insurgency. Because corruption invokes uncertainty and inequality both at the macro level (policies that are agreed upon by government) and at the micro level (the implementation of these policies in daily life), it has remained an epitome of bad-quality government (van der Meer, 2017). It goes without saying that any serious attempt at fighting corruption is a potent move to alleviate poverty in the society.



President Buhari had, shortly before the 2015 general elections while delivering a speech at Chatham House, London, posited that recovered loot would be used to fund his party's programmes on education, health, social infrastructure, youth employment and pensions for the elderly. Paradoxically, evidence from the previous poverty alleviation programmes of government have failed to change lives, perhaps owing to the adopted approaches that often ignore the root causes of poverty, and consequently do not follow through the causal sequence. For instance, the number of Nigerians living in extreme poverty increased by 35 million between 1990 and 2013 alone (Kazeem, 2018). Indeed, many of these programmes became "an instrument to further syphon public funds in the name of poverty eradication" (Damilola, 2019 p.51). In 2013 for instance, the Senate Committee on Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P)- a scheme set-up to lessen the effect of partial removal of petroleum subsidy on Nigerians- revealed that N500 billion (around €12 billion) out of the N800 billion (around €19 billion) meant for the scheme was missing.

Ordinarily, Nigeria is an attractive destination for private sector investment with strong fundamentals such as natural resources, large market, and young population. However, the prevailing difficulties in accessing finance, inefficient bureaucracy, ambiguous and inconsistent regulations, corruption and poor infrastructure, have made such attraction a nullity for the private sector. Lacking an environment conducive to sustainable and equitable social development, the Nigerian society has overtime been bedevilled with persistent poverty and growing inequality. In fact, evidence suggests a two-way causal relationship between poverty and inequality. The capacity of the state to implement redistributive and progressive economic and social policies can be hampered by high levels of inequality- often a factor in rising levels of crime and social unrest, which are inimical to growth. Since "reducing inequality has value in its own right, and also yields substantial benefits in terms of both poverty reduction and growth" (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2010), it is expected that the government works on its existing social investment programmes to be more integrated and grounded in universal principles such that they can act as powerful drivers of social inclusion, enhance well-being and reduce inequality.

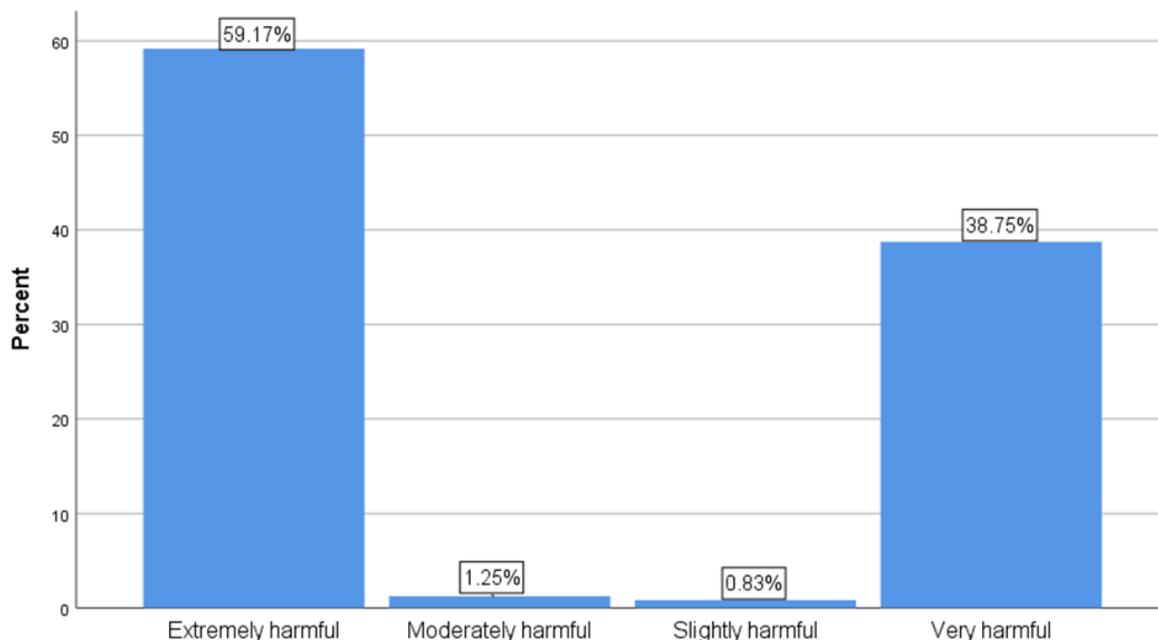
Nigerians' Perception about Corruption, Poverty Alleviation Programmes and Wealth Redistribution

Except for some civil society staggered interventions, the Nigerian citizenry has, over time, not been able to rise in protest against official corruption in high places and the impunity of

government against the people and the rule of law, as may be readily found in the western societies. The country's value system—which celebrates wealth obtained by questionable means—is greatly flawed and this accounts for why the masses place corrupt elites on a high moral pedestal when they invest in the country and continually curse/chastise those whose loot is stashed in foreign banks. The debate, over the years, has been oscillating between who stole more from the collective till and who, among the predatory elites, benevolently left some manageable crumbs for the populace to feast on through investments in the country. The latter is beginning to dominate the public discourse among the masses who, out of frustration, seem to have come to the reality of appreciating the benevolent elites- who use looted funds to pacify them.

Now, corruption has reached a level in Nigeria such that an average citizen believes that there is an inextricable link between corruption and democracy. Corruption has become a culture in Nigeria such that many are tempted to assume that the situation- which has continued to attract unprecedented patronage-is irredeemable. Because patronage frequently evolves into corruption and prebendalism, the strategic allocation of public positions and contracts to friends and allies continues to guarantee higher odds of staying in power and direct or indirect access to public resources for personal enrichment (van de Walle, 2007). Not surprisingly, about 98 percent of the respondents in this study see the level of grand corruption in Nigeria as very/extremely harmful. Thus, the current effort of the president Muhammadu Buhari's administration therefore, which is fight corruption and initiate social investments as a means of wealth redistribution, requires continuous examination.

How harmful do you think grand corruption is to the country?

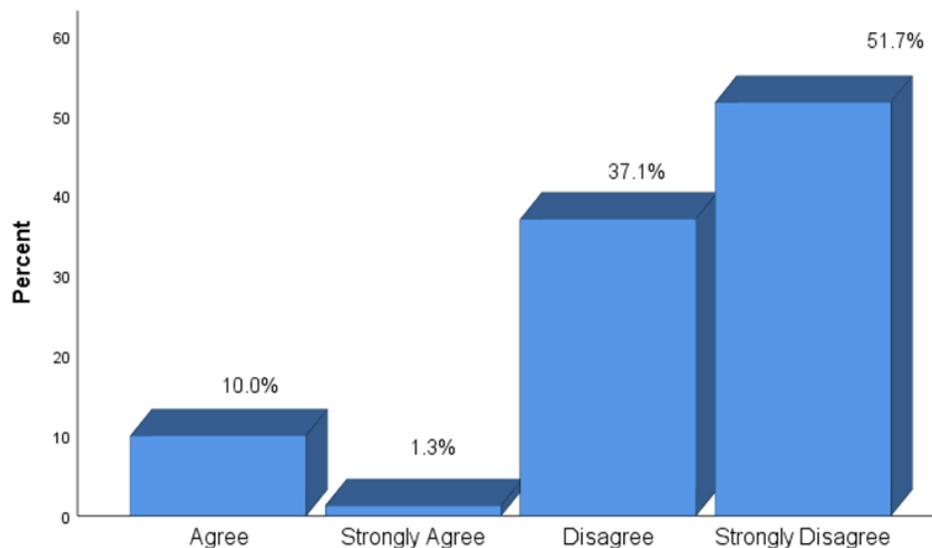


The redistributive power of the government's social investments (seen as interventions which aim to address poverty, vulnerability and risk) and packaged as the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (which aims to provide meals to school children), the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Programme, the Government Enterprise Empowerment Programme (which

provides soft loans ranging from N10,000 to N100,000 for artisans, traders, market women, amongst others) and the N-Power initiative (designed to hire half a million unemployed graduates), under the present administration, has received little attention from the general public when juxtaposed with the realities on the ground.

One of these realities is that while Nigeria scores high in the Corruption Perception Index, it scores low in the Human Development Index (ActionAidNigeria, 2015), implying that investment in citizens' welfare is low because the incidence of corruption is high. What really are the intervening variables between 2015, when the present administration came on board, and now? In the table below, it is revealed that about 88 percent of the respondents kicked against the effectiveness of anti-corruption war in alleviating poverty among the citizens. They do not see its impact on the excruciating poverty in the country. However, about 10 percent of them are of the opinion that the anti-corruption war is really effective in alleviating poverty in Nigeria.

Do you think the anti-corruption war has reduced the poverty level among citizens in the last four years?



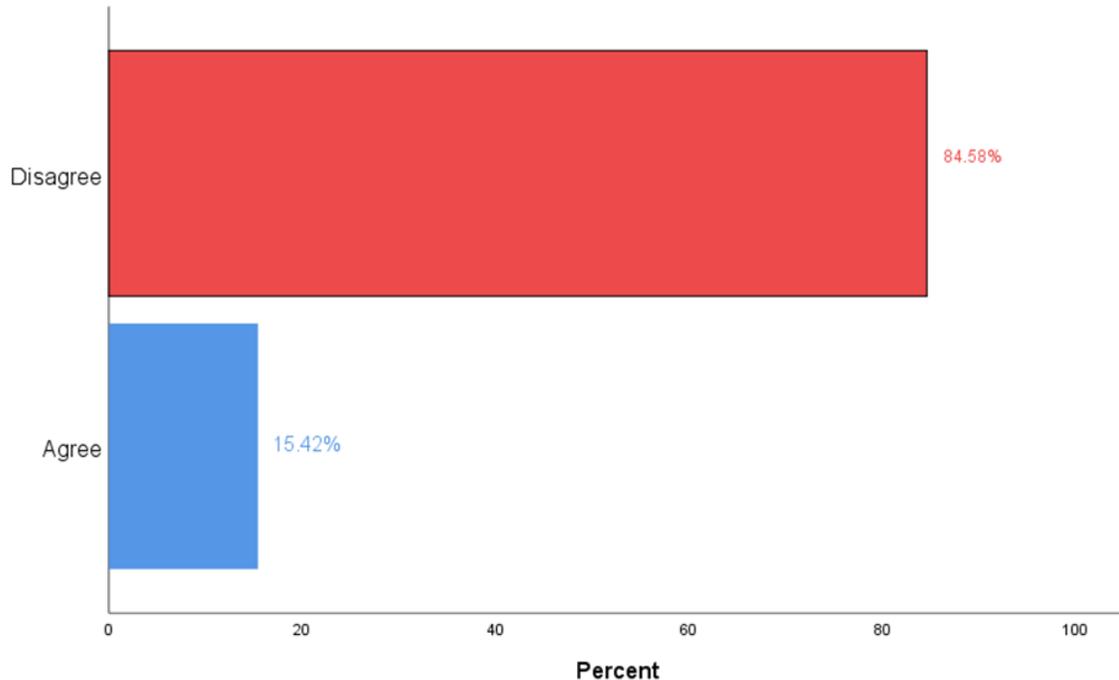
The presidency recently noted that a total of 620,947 poor and vulnerable Nigerians are currently benefitting from the National Cash Transfer programme- a key component of the National Social Investment Programme of the Federal Government (The Nation, 2019). Ordinarily, findings suggest that cash transfers can be effective instruments to redistribute income to the poor (Lindert et al.,2006) via the direct cash transfers and for reducing long-term poverty via incentives for investments in human capital. According to the World Bank (2014), across 130 countries of the world, around a billion people currently receive cash transfers, mostly from governments.

Do you think the social security programs of the Federal Government actually benefit the poor people?

	Percent %
Agreed	20.0%
Strongly Agree	3.8%
Disagree	76.3%

In this study however, as indicated in the above table, about 76 percent of the respondents do not see substantial benefits for the poor through the federal government social security programmes. Nevertheless, 23 percent are of the opinion that government social security programmes really benefit the poor. In retrospect, billions of Naira has been spent over the years on social security policies. For example, about one trillion Naira was spent on social security in 2018 according to the Central Bank of Nigeria (The Guardian, 2018)) whereas the level of poverty index increased by 1.3% in the same year. This reflects the fact that this expended huge amount failed to address poverty alleviation. In fact, many Nigerians became more cynical when the cash transfer initiative was glamorously popularised on the eve of the 2019 general election. It was seen as an official strategy of buying votes.

While the federal government allocated N500 billion in the 2016 budget for the implementation of its social welfare agenda and allocated the same amount for social programmes in the 2017 budget (Financial Nigeria, 2017), shortfall in budgetary releases in the last three years (16% in 2016, 36% in 2017 and 53% in 2018) have hampered the effective implementation of the programme and the goal of uplifting the living standards of the poor citizens. Though a commendable initiative, being the first time, the country would unveil plans to rescue the poor from their poverty, many respondents in this study (84.5 percent of them) do not believe government's promise to lift 100 million Nigerians out of poverty in 10 years is realistic. They are of the opinion that funds for such programmes are usually mismanaged by some corrupt government officials and political leaders.

Is the Government's promise to lift 100 Million Nigerians out of poverty in 10 years realistic and sincere?

Nigerians seem to believe the legal pace is too slow and impact of recovered loot not felt. For instance, in spite of the existing Administration of Criminal Justice Act that seeks to limit the use of appeals in criminal trials, increase coordination among justice institutions, and create new pre-trial management techniques that allow faster commencement of substantive trials, its efficacy/potency has not been put to use in corrupt cases handled since the inception the present administration.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Almost all successful cases of development in the last fifty years have been based on creative--and often heterodox--policy innovations. Within developing countries, many governments face growing domestic pressure to address corruption and realizing that individuals and institutions remain accountable and transparent in their dealings is central to any anti-corruption war. Expanding press freedoms and civil society activism expose an increasing number of corruption scandals (O'Donnell, 2006). The decision of successive Nigerian governments to create multiple institutions for combating corruption in public and private sectors is itself a confirmation of the endemic nature of corruption in the country (ActionAid, 2015). Until 2015, the temptation to give in to graft was especially high in cases involving wealthy political figures on trial for corruption.

Since the advent of the current representative democracy in 1999, the Nigerian government has attempted to address governance issues through a series of reforms and by establishing anti-corruption bodies. It has also developed various social protection interventions. In reality, ensuring this impact is felt by the citizenry has been very challenging owing to some of the gaps discussed in this study. Thus, more effective ways of sustainably reducing poverty levels should be adopted.

As a starting point, policy responses must be informed by the links between social and economic policies, between institutions of the state, market and household, as well as relationships of politics and power. For the anti-corruption war and social investment programmes in Nigeria to achieve their goals to support better outcomes, particularly in alleviating and reducing the poverty gap among Nigerians, addressing inequality in the society, and generally by supporting both economic and social development, this study makes the following recommendations:

One, redistributing incomes to promote a more equitable society is seen as one of the fundamental ways of tackling poverty. Indeed, reducing inequality and developing human capital is crucial to any efforts to eliminate poverty in Nigeria. Also, it is generally believed that education and knowledge transfer play a very important role in terms of poverty reduction (Liu, 2018), particularly in addressing longer-term poverty. Over decades however, expenditure on health, education and social welfare by the government of Nigeria is low (Holmes et al., 2012). Yet, at the root of poverty lies the deprivation of people's access to basic necessities such as food, healthcare and sanitation, education and assets (Abdullahi, 2019). And the evidence-including from India-shows that solving these issues generally lifts populations out of extreme poverty (Abdullahi, 2019). Nigeria should demonstrate more commitment to these crucial sectors through improved budgetary allocations, not only by the central government, but by other sub-national governments where most rural poor reside. Over the years, these federating units have shown a lack of capacity and/or the political will to effectively provide key services for their residents.

Two, routinely abusive behaviour by public officials has been an obstacle to building public trust and stimulating collective action. Governance must be demystified and made less attractive for criminal-minded people and dubious dealers who pose as leaders and politicians. This can be done simply by stripping political offices of all needless appurtenances (The Guardian, 2018). For instance, the gargantuan aberration known as 'security votes' stands as a case in point in all states of the federation. So much money domiciled, without check, in the hands of one person is the perfect recipe for rampaging corruption. Such egregious effects of office should simply be erased or at the very least moderated by serious checks and balances (The Guardian, 2018). Overall, support for efficient and transparent financial management and functioning accountability mechanisms, at all levels of government, must be sustained over a long period.

Three, attempts to address corruption must be coordinated with efforts to address other closely related problems, such as weak rule of law, physical and economic insecurity and weak political accountability. In other words, investing in human capital potential and creating jobs for women and young people are core to poverty eradication initiatives (Abdullahi, 2019). This will, no doubt, increase financial access and opportunities for these groups in rural communities and advance technological innovation. Similarly, the Nigerian government should adopt a pattern of growth and structural change that generates productive employment, improves earnings and contributes to the general welfare of the population. This is a fundamental precondition for poverty reduction. This must be complemented with adherence to the dictates of the rule of law and political accountability in the conduct of public governance. The rule of law, transparency and accountability of public sector serve as the foundation for the good governance and the economic growth of a country. Building a society governed by the rule of law presupposes that public sector institutions will ensure that no one is above the law, by making public their decisions and operations on the one hand; and issues that affect all citizens, irrespective of social status, shall be

treated with fairness, equity and justice, on the other hand. Above all, in order to “minimize the opportunities for the abuse of state power, proper checks and balances need to be in place” (El-Ayouty et al., 2003).

Four, for any society to advance, the elite must positively engage and mould public opinion in the national interest (Mbadiwe, 2017) because the quality of a nation’s leaders and the values they attach to life determines the quality and quantum of a nation’s developmental success or failure. Democracy has an inbuilt mechanism for controlling corruption and this must be adequately employed to salvage Nigeria from the development catastrophe in which it is currently enmeshed (Ogundiya, 2012). According to President Buhari (Daily Trust, 2017), “to set this country on the path of greatness and prosperity, complete elimination of all forms of corrupt practices must be in the front burner and our collective consciousness always”. Thus, the only effective leadership is by example and the federal government must earn and claim without an iota of doubt, the moral high ground from which it can prosecute the war against the hydra-headed corruption monster (The Guardian, 2016). As a state policy, the Nigerian government should spend more on programs aimed at redistributing income from more wealthy Nigerians to the less wealthy. Levying taxes on the non-poor and making transfers to the poor will also advance this course. More importantly, structural economic change to facilitate a more diversified and inclusive economy is desirable to move the country out of perpetual “potential greatness” and backwardness.

Five, there is general consensus, according to Visser (2005), that the private sector remains one of the best placed institutions to make a significant positive contribution towards improving social, economic and environmental conditions in Africa. To reduce the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups, sustainable programmes must be put in place through public and private initiatives that “provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised” (Holmes et al, 2012, p. 5). More importantly however, the private sector is recognized as a critical stakeholder and partner in economic development, a provider of income, jobs, goods, and services to enhance people’s lives and help them escape poverty (International Finance Corporation, 2011). Today, the major employer and creator of jobs in most countries is the private sector (International Finance Corporation, 2011). Experiences in many African countries have proven that a business-friendly environment with attractive legislative incentives offered by government can facilitate more investments from private sectors for economic development (Liu, 2018). Nigeria should intensify efforts in addressing insecurity and everyday corruption that pervade the country with a view to creating a conducive environment where the private sector can thrive. As a matter of fact, public and private sector policies in the country need to be coherent and complementary in order to maximize development impact. Also, the private sector in the country has a key role to play in addressing the challenges of increasing inclusive growth, reducing poverty, and improving people’s lives.

Lastly, citizens should, rather than embracing their oppressors and demanding for crumbs as compensation, hold public office holders to account. They should pressure government to prosecute corrupt individuals in the country to serve as deterrent to others. The power of the people to make government accountable and responsible has been demonstrated in other climes and it can work in Nigeria especially if there is a synergy between the government and the civil society groups. The goal of effective corruption control, according to Kosmehl (2019), “requires a state-

society model with a political power structure balanced between institutional and civil society forces that regulates the corruption-free distribution of public goods and punishes corruption as a deviation from the norm". Obviously, contributing to poverty reduction and development involves helping to create societies free from oppression and strengthening the ability of poor people to improve their lives through their own means and resources. Government, through its Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), should continually contribute to making it possible for poor people to improve their living conditions. At individual level, citizens must demonstrate appreciable level of political power and their ability to influence decisions that affect their lives should be a reflection of this mental freedom.

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WORK, OPPORTUNITIES AND REINTEGRATION OF WOMEN INMATES AS FACTORS FOR PEACEBUILDING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY IN THREE MEXICAN PRISONS

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Keywords: Mexico, Peacebuilding, Gendered Peacebuilding, Violence, Gender Violence, Prisons, Inmates Social Reinsertion, Prison Labor Programs

Abstract

Mexico is one of the 26 least peaceful countries in the world. From this perspective, examining peace from the context of the prison system makes sense, not only because cycles of violence are reproduced within and emerge from prisons but also because prisons are microcosms that reflect the absence of structural peace in the country. In this environment, women are doubly victimized, first, for their gender and, second, for their status as prisoners. This qualitative study explores the work of a civil society organization that seeks to contribute to the redignification, rehumanization and empowerment of women inmates in Mexico through inmate training, paid work and workshops. These topics have not been sufficiently studied in the context of Mexico and Latin America. Through 32 in-depth interviews and a series of observations conducted in three prisons in greater Mexico City, we explore inmates' perceptions regarding their circumstances and the programs in which they participate. The results indicate that these programs contribute to their emotional well-being, personal growth, sense of self-sufficiency, motivation and hope. They also help them feel that they are not being judged and that they are valued as women and human beings. Our findings lead us to conclude that programs such as these, if carefully implemented and sustained, have the potential not only to reduce violence but also to actively contribute to peacebuilding in specific locations through the strengthening of social cohesion, respect, human empowerment and gender.

Introduction

Mexico is not a country that lives in peace. Based on measurements taken over a period of several years, the Global Peace Index (Institute for Economics and Peace [IEP], 2018) continues to place this nation among the 25 least peaceful in the world. However, these circumstances are not limited to the conditions of violence in which the country has lived since approximately 2006 insofar as peace is not exclusively defined by the absence of war or violence (Galtung, 1985). In fact, while the negative aspect of peace is understood as the absence of violence or the absence of fearing violence, the positive aspects, or active components, of peace include the “attitudes, institutions and structures” that build and sustain peaceful societies (IEP, 2018). Therefore, a small but perhaps very important portion of this series of circumstances can be explored by studying how the prison system functions in a society. This can tell us something about what this society does to process the crimes or offenses committed that constitute a violation of the law and how it resolves the need to ensure that treating the crime does not feed into, or breed, violence. A society that takes positive peacebuilding seriously needs institutions that guarantee the upholding of the rule of law and mechanisms that ensure that impunity is low enough to not incentivize crime. However, at the same time, a society must find ways of ensuring that its prison system, through social readaptation and reintegration, actively contributes to building the pillars that generate and sustain peace. Otherwise, cycles of violence become intractable and never-ending.

This study does not attempt to explore all of these aspects; rather, it examines the very particular case of a civil society organization that strives to accomplish at least a small part of this task. Through this investigation, we hope to contribute to the body of knowledge on the subject, specifically focusing on what such action represents for peacebuilding in a country as Mexico. The Organization Studied offers paid work, in addition to other types of workshops, to a number of female inmates inside different prisons in the state of Mexico. The use of these types of programs by very different types of organizations in various countries is widespread. Nonetheless, our literature review found that, at least in Mexico, these types of programs are not sufficiently researched in a systematic way. In fact, we found a lack of qualitative inquiry into these types of initiatives throughout Latin America. Therefore, we considered it worthwhile to pose questions such as the following: How do program participants perceive these programs and their impact? Why is it important to learn about how program participants perceive these programs? How is the program participants’ perception socially constructed, and to what extent can it aid us in assessing the real potential impact of these programs? To what extent are these programs linked to gender issues, or do they result in new perceptions of gender empowerment on the part of the participants? What can this case teach other organizations and initiatives with similar objectives of promoting the common goals of building conditions for structural peace with a gender perspective in Mexico or in countries with similar conditions of violence?

Considering the above, the objective of this study is to explore how participants perceive the results of the programs and workshops through the systematization of the information gathered through 32 in-depth interviews (with 28 inmates and 4 ex-inmates) as well as direct observation in prisons and through the qualitative analysis of this information. At the same time, the study seeks to understand the strengths and potential areas of weakness of these workshops and programs. Thus, on the one hand, we offer fresh information for documenting the results of the work conducted by the Organization Studied and for making recommendations or contributing to the enrichment of

these very specific programs and workshops. On the other hand, for the academic and journalistic communities and the social and political sectors of the country, we offer a case study that documents the potential reach of workshops and programs such as those implemented by the Organization Studied so that such programs may be replicated or improved to contribute to building the conditions for structural peace in the country.

There is no overly academic way in which to affirm the following: what we found in our interviews, our observations and analysis of the information is that these programs transform the lives of their participants, when they are not factually saving them. Therefore, the elements we detect lead us to sustain the argument that these types of initiatives cannot be the exclusive duty of civil society organizations. Their implementation—or the launching of similar programs—should be deemed a macro endeavor of national public policy in countries that are absolutely serious about peacebuilding as a long-term project. This article attempts to explain why this is the case.

We start with the background and the conceptual framework. The methodology is then presented as well as the results. The findings are then discussed, explaining how these can be directly related to peacebuilding with a gender perspective. Some recommendations are offered at the end of the paper.

Background and Conceptual Framework

This study is based on different approaches. First, we aim to contribute a peacebuilding perspective to issues related to incarceration and the potential social reintegration of male and female inmates. This approach includes the incorporation of *noncomplementary behavior*, one of the conceptual tools that we will review. Second, we attempt to explain what gendered structural violence entails and how it is linked to the experiences of incarcerated Mexican women, with the aim of understanding this type of violence in relation to its counterpart, structural peace, from a gender perspective. Lastly, we will discuss some of the previous studies that are related to our study and that were conducted in different parts of the world, particularly in Mexico, to explain how our study contributes to the existing literature on the subject.

Prisons, Reintegration and Peacebuilding

This study's starting point is understanding that peace includes, but is not limited to, an absence of violence (Galtung, 1985; Alger, 1987). The negative aspect of peace—that which must not exist, in order for a society to be considered at peace—consists of the absence of violence and the absence of fear of violence. The positive aspect of peace includes those factors that actively generate or constitute it. These factors include all “attitudes, institutions and structures that sustain peaceful societies” (IEP, 2018). Thus, based on the study of the political, economic, social and cultural circumstances of dozens of countries that present high levels of peace throughout the last decades, different authors have explained the structural factors behind these countries' state of peace (Galtung, 1985). Condensing these concepts, the Institute for Economics and Peace describes eight indicators in which these societies, clearly and consistently, demonstrate better

performance than nonpeaceful societies. These are the eight pillars or backbones of positive peace: (1) a well-functioning government; (2) the equitable distribution of resources; (3) the free flow of information; (4) a sound business environment that is solid and conducive to businesses and companies; (5) high levels of human capital (generated through health, well-being, education, training, research and development); (6) acceptance of the rights of others; (7) low levels of corruption; and (8) good relations with neighbors, or what is better known as social cohesion (IEP, 2018).

From this perspective, it can be said that crime and violent crime are manifestations of the absence of peace in a society, which is not only due to the use of violence in the committing of such crimes. For example, studies throughout various decades and in very different countries consistently show that the greater the conditions of inequality are, the greater the number of violent crimes committed in a given context (Fajnzylber et al., 2002; Szalavitz, 2017). It is for this reason, among others, that the equitable distribution of resources becomes one of the pillars that sustains peaceful societies.

For the above reasons, a society that strives to build peace must address the building and/or solidification of each of the indicated pillars. On the other hand, it must ensure that when violent events, crimes or violations of the law occur, not only will there be retribution or consequences for such violations. It must also ensure that the factors prompting such violence will be transformed into positive actions that ensure respect, social cohesion and strengthening of human capital (which includes issues such as health or emotional well-being) and other active components of peace.

Social reintegration is more than an aspiration related to the prevention and reduction of crime or violent crime. It is a necessary condition for building peace from the roots up. This includes the fact that the reintegration efforts implemented from the time that inmates are incarcerated have the potential to reduce the tendency to commit crimes and display violent behavior, as has been shown in previous studies (Richmond, 2016). Furthermore, our study appears to indicate that the broader impact of social reintegration is a result of the design and implementation of adequate programs, which can potentially actively contribute to peacebuilding in different areas.

Noncomplementary Behavior: An Alternative?

According to Hopwood et al. (2013), complementarity is the most basic dynamic pattern in interpersonal theory. This pattern is generated when the interpersonal motives of each person coincide, and it reflects the baseline pattern for future relationships (Hopwood et al., 2013, pa. 28). This exchange is reflected in reciprocity, which can be expressed in two ways: (1) the vertical dimension (domination or submission relationships) and (2) the horizontal dimension (kindness attracts kindness, and remoteness attracts remoteness) (Hopwood et al., 2013, pa. 28). According to Hopwood, the normal course of action for a situation would be that one person behaving coldly towards another would lead to the other person being cold in return. This would cause the first person to become even more cold, and so on (Hopwood, 2016, pa. 10).

Along these lines, sensitivity to rejection (RS) is a function of cognitive affective processing that is perceived during interactions (Meehan et.al., 2018, p.119). Individuals with high RS anticipate rejection and other related responses (for example, hostile behaviors or social isolation). These reactions can lead to an even greater undermining of interpersonal relationships, generating greater

rejection in others and fostering a self-cycle of negative results (coldness, hostility). The RS studies focused on daily life have confirmed this pattern of reciprocity and correspondence that is naturally produced in social interactions (Meehan, et al., 2018 p. 109).

Hopwood (2016) suggests that noncomplementary behavior is linked to a change in the predicted behavior or response (pa. 15-17). In other words, a kind or caring response is offered in the face of a negative sign, communicative act or behavior. Despite the discomfort or risks to which this may lead on occasion, it can often result in a positive transformation of relations. The author explains that in psychotherapy, occasional high-impact noncomplementary moments can have a positive impact in the context of a trusting relationship (Hopwood, 2016, pa. 21-22). The question related to the present study is posed by Cisneros (2016) as follows: What guarantees that subjugation to the punishment of imprisonment will resolve the problem of violation of the law? This being the case, we ask ourselves what happens when, in response to criminal offenses or violation of the law, aside from imposing consequences and penalties, one offers paid work, opportunities, and a space that rehumanizes and redignifies those who have behaved antisocially. This study explores a case in which this is precisely what is done.

Gender Perspective

Gender theory is often overlooked in modern theories of peacebuilding (Confortini, 2006). For years, gender violence has been considered a subproduct of negative peace, while the importance of the construction of gender roles in the basic constitution of the absence of positive peace has been ignored. It generally remains unacknowledged that the existing structure in the gender sphere is not a consequence of violence but rather something that is intangibly implicated in historic and present reality. Interactions of power are critical factors for understanding the exercising of violence as a complex process in which social relations of gender and power are legitimized, constructed, replicated and established (Confortini, 2006).

From birth, women and men are taught to act relative to their biological sex. For this reason, the lives of numerous women and men have been restricted from the onset by their biological reality. In general, it is more difficult for women to access positions in the public sphere (Butler, 1999). Men, on the other hand, are taught to repress their feelings and act with certain virility and aggressiveness, which in some way operates as a limiting and aggravating factor of different types of violence because men are continuously obligated to prove their masculinity (Cacho, 2018). In the majority of contemporary societies, biological sex has been constructed and used to represent ideas regarding femininity and how a woman should behave (Lorber, 2010).

Therefore, gender issues cannot be limited to the “acceptance of the rights of others” as established in the pillars of peace (IEP, 2018). The incorporation of feminist theories and a gender perspective in peace studies is essential for understanding the structures that violate and harm the advancement of equality to successfully contribute to the building of different structures.

Prison and Gender in Mexico

Women who are confined in the Social Rehabilitation Center of Mexico's National Justice System [Centro de Rehabilitación Social del Sistema Nacional de Justicia de México] are allegedly

responsible for one or more crimes, whether due to an act or omission that violates the norms dictated by the Mexican legislative system (Azaola & Bergman, 2007b). According to the data of Mexico's National Institute of Statistics and Geography [Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía de México - INEGI], there are 9,601 women incarcerated in state prisons and 1,121 in federal prisons (INEGI, 2017). In total, women represent 5.1% of the prison population, compared with the 217,000 incarcerated men (Franco Barrios, 2017). Most of the women currently in Mexican prisons are there due to crimes of violence, murder and drugs, followed by theft, kidnapping and extortion (Franco Barrios, 2017).

Prisons are responsible for reproducing a space of gender inequality (Azaola & Bergman, 2007a). Gender performativities (subjectivities) are widely visible in prison, and the effects of gendered structural violence are evident in the way in which women are treated (Naanous, 2018). In most cases, these women suffer oppression before they are incarcerated, and once they are in prison, they lack those elements that would enable them to rebuild a life away from crime (Salinas Boldo, 2014; Naanous, 2018).

In this sense, women continue to be assigned gender appropriate activities, including “domestic crafts, needlework and other kinds of domestic work that reinforce the social, economic and psychological dependence that put the majority of them in jail in the first place” (Hobson, 1990, p. 127). Although the programs of the Organization Studied here operate well and have managed to teach and empower women financially and psychologically, this organization continues to provide stereotypical activities for women. This type of situation can tend to accentuate the lack of a gender perspective found among the authorities (Naanous, 2018).

In Mexico, women are doubly victimized: first, due to their gender and, second, due to their status as prisoners. Thus, for women, punishment is experienced in both a real and symbolic way. Women within the system have been deemed the keepers of morality. Therefore, upon committing crimes, they break with this conception (Salinas Boldo, 2014). In fact, some studies suggest that judges tend to be much harder on female offenders than men because they are not seen as fulfilling the role of the “good woman” that is expected of them (Giacomello et al., 2018). Additionally, once they are released from prison, they must carry the extra stigma of having failed to meet society's expectations. This indicates the relevance of exploring the role played by the Organization Studied in terms of its contribution to the financial and psychological development of the female inmates aimed at preventing their recidivism (Naanous, 2018).

Studies Regarding Reintegration and Work in Prison

The psychosocial effects incurred in individuals who spend time in prison have been widely documented. For example, in a recent study conducted in Europe, Meijers et al. (2018) found that three months of incarceration in a negative or impoverished environment can cause decreased self-control, increased risk-taking behavior, and decreased attention span. The indirect consequences of this negative environment are chronic stress, lack of sleep, and aggressive behavior. This is relevant because when individuals are affected in this way, they are less able, even than before they entered prison, to lead their lives without breaking the law. Conversely, a successful return to society requires autonomous behavior directed towards goals and self-control. This study partially

explains why worse conditions in prisons can be related to higher indices of recidivism (Meijers et al., 2018, p. 4-5), which, naturally, from the perspective we have indicated, is directly linked to the difficulty of peacebuilding in a society.

Thus, “why work while incarcerated?” Richmond (2016) asks this in a study that consisted of interviews with 70 female and male inmates in prisons in Pennsylvania (pp. 236-238). The author tells us that there is sufficient evidence to corroborate that work in prison reduces bad behavior within the institution. It has also been shown that men who participate in work programs in prison are less likely to reoffend (Richmond, 2016). Interestingly, Richmond mentions that, according to his study, women do not consider money to be such a necessary part of their lives:

For the women, simply being employed while incarcerated is not significant. The additional money that inmates can make in prison industries is important to the men and allows them to feel independent. Money did not seem to be as pressing of a concern to the women. While it allows them to purchase items such as food and toiletries from the commissary, their need for money is not as strong. This may be due to the fact that women are receiving support from families on the outside (p. 244).

This last finding was one of the topics explored in-depth in our interviews, first, because the economic and family conditions in Mexico are extremely different from the conditions in a country such as the United States and, second, due to the particular type of programs implemented by the Organization Studied. What Richmond does determine is that the programs explored by his study improve women and men's self-perception (the feeling of no longer being in prison, trusting in themselves, a sense of accomplishment). Richmond's study also showed that these programs function as incentives for staying out of trouble and developing one's interpersonal skills (the desire to maintain their job motivated inmates to overcome obstacles; they learned to work with people from diverse contexts and with different personalities, generate a community and move away from the “criminal mentality”). In conclusion, it is suggested that work in prisons provides inmates with structure and purpose, develops self-esteem, and generates positive social ties (Richmond, 2016).

For their part, Uggen & Staff (2001) conduct a broad literature review regarding the impact of employment on ex-convicts. This review leads the authors to conclude that work, particularly in the case of older ex-convicts, as well as criminals with addictions, can effectively bring about a “turning point” towards a conventional lifestyle and that it is also effective in reducing crime and recidivism (p. 14). Other studies, such as that of Gaes (2008), review existing evidence regarding the impact of educational programs in prisons based on post-liberation results (p. 1). The conclusion is that correctional education reduces recidivism and increases the possibility of employment (Gaes, 2008, p. 11).

In short, the evidence gathered in different parts of the world appears to indicate that work and educational programs for prison inmates have positive effects in terms of reductions of crime and violence and could therefore contribute to peacebuilding in a society.

The Case of Mexico

Villa y Caña (2017) indicate that social reintegration does not work in Mexico, which is reflected by the high indices of repetition of offenses. These indices are 60%, according to the Decentralized Body of Prevention and Social Reintegration [Órgano Desconcentrado de Prevención y de Reinserción Social] (Villa y Caña, 2017, p. 1). The authors remind us that Article 18 of the Mexican constitution establishes that reintegration should be achieved through work training or other related activities. Nonetheless, historically, this does not effectively occur (Villa y Caña 2017, pa. 3-5). These findings are corroborated by Córdova (2016), who, based on a qualitative study that uses in-depth interviews with inmates and personnel in two prisons in Mexico City, concludes that the function of social reintegration exceeds the institutional scope of these prisons. This calls into question the existing system's efficacy in achieving social readaptation in Mexican prisons. Similarly, through a study that uses the workshop as a research tool, employing dialogue and coexistence with women in Mexican prison centers, Leal et al. (2015) explain that despite the fact that prisons are established with a discourse of social and labor reintegration, they do everything but prepare convicts for a life outside of prison. The authors indicate that, by contrast, the resistance expressed in the workshops that they explored might serve as beneficial practices for reintegration, which contrasts with the institutional practices of punishment, control, isolation and mortification of the individual (p. 118). That is, according to the authors, the inmates use the workshops as mechanisms of resistance through the resignifying of such practices. In their words: "The product proposed for reintegrating the subject (i.e., the workshops) is readjusted: it is consumed more for the purpose of forgetting and expressing oneself than for learning certain social skills aimed at individual correction or reflection" (p. 131).

With regard to our literature review, it is worth mentioning that Rosales, Ortíz and Limas (2005) noted that the research regarding the perceptions of female inmates in Mexico is extremely scarce. Rosales et al., conducted a study based on interviews, mainly using questionnaires applied to women inmates regarding their perceptions of certain reintegration programs. These programs include schooling, work training and employment in certain workshops (Rosales et al., 2005). The most relevant conceptual aspect that the study contributed for the purposes of our study is that of feminine subjectivity given that, as explained above, due to matters of gender, the structural causes that drive women to commit crimes differ from those that cause men to commit crimes to a certain degree (Rosales et al., 2005). However, there are aspects of feminine identity that affect the process of readaptation such as maternity, feminine corporality and even the way in which women experience their religious beliefs. Nonetheless, the author reports that the programs that she studied do not appear to benefit the inmates (Rosales et al., 2005, p. 21). In this sense, we deemed it important to explore other types of programs, such as those implemented by the Organization Studied, and to explore in greater depth what has been revealed by the existing studies.

In a more recent study, Córdova concurs that the academic research on the subject of employment and social reintegration in Mexican prisons is scarce, and therefore, in her study, she uses for inspiration models from other geographic locations, the realities and contexts of which differ from the Mexican context (Córdova, 2016).

We found sound quantitative studies such as that carried out by Estrada et al. (2014), who sought to define the profile of formal and informal support networks in relation to the social reintegration of users of the program of the Directorate of the Post-Penitentiary System and Care for Released Prisoners of the State of Jalisco, Mexico [Dirección del Sistema Postpenitenciario y Atención a Liberados del Estado de Jalisco, México]. Similarly, we found few qualitative studies regarding this topic in Mexico. One such study was an undergraduate thesis consisting of an observational, cross-sectional and descriptive study of 35 inmates of the Correctional Center of Social Readaptation of Ecatepec [Centro Penitenciario de Readaptación Social de Ecatepec] who participated in vocational workshops (Gonzalez Plata 2013). Gonzalez Plata concluded that due to the average level of motivation, the workshops affected the inmates in a favorable way (i.e., decreasing anxiety and the lack of future prospects). For their part, León & Roldán (2007) conducted a qualitative study in the Tepepan Women's Center for Social Readaptation (Mexico City) [Centro Femenil de Readaptación Social Tepepan (CDMX)], which consisted of consulting technical files and conducting in-depth interviews to explore the participants' feelings and perspectives relative to the underlying causes of their situations and the circumstances leading up to their offense. The study also explored how the participants perceived their work in prison. The majority of the participants expressed that it did not make sense to work in the institution (cooking and cleaning) because the amount of money that they earned was not enough to cover their expenses and provide for their families. It is interesting to note that the majority of the women thought that the work was useless insofar as they ended up working in the same way that they did in their homes (the majority of the inmates were housewives). In other words, this type of work reinforces women's domesticity (Gonzalez Plata, 2013, p. 100), which is one of the issues reviewed above and explored in the present study.

Our study draws from this literature, which served both to develop our interview protocol and to develop the categories of analysis that we used. However, given the lack of in-depth qualitative evidence regarding paid work inside women's prisons in Mexico, and in Latin America in general, our investigation seeks to contribute to the existing literature, especially from a peacebuilding point of view with a gender perspective.

The Organization Studied

The Organization Studied is a civil society group formed in 2011 by young women who were students at the time: three lawyers and one psychologist. They began by taking recreational activities to prisons, such as games and movies, as well as presentations and celebrations such as *posadas* (traditional celebrations in Mexico). However, the young women soon realized that these activities did not have a relevant impact on inmates. Therefore, they decided to bring knitting classes to the prisons with the aim of providing inmates with a trade.

One of the organization's founders describes her association as a group that seeks to “create opportunities of a different life goal for women deprived of their freedom through training and access to dignified and quality employment, through which they can satisfy their basic needs, support their families and occupy their time in prison with constructive activities” (Organization founder, personal communication, January 15, 2019).

Once the employees of this organization enter into contact with the inmates and build enough trust with them, they present them with a program of comprehensive social reintegration so that, in addition to paid work, they might have access to complementary activities that strengthen their process in different areas such as psychological care, art, culture, sports and educational workshops. As the organization founder explains: “The women gain access to opportunities that not only empower them during their time in prison but also provide them with tools and skills that allow them to better themselves and be prepared for the challenges of life as free women” (Organization founder, personal communication, January 15, 2019).

Methodology

Location

All of the information in this study was collected inside three prisons where the participants are deprived of their liberty and where they engage in work with the Organization Studied. The three prisons are located in greater Mexico City, in the state of Mexico. The observations and interviews were conducted on patios, in cafeterias and around work tables in public areas inside the prison, as we were not allowed to interview the participants in private. However, all of the interviews were conducted such that there were as few distractions as possible.

Participants and Sampling Strategy

The total number of participants in the programs of the Organization Studied varies from month to month and even from one week to another because many of the participants enter while others leave. Nevertheless, during the months leading up to the study, the average number of inmates registered in any one of the aforementioned programs was 67 individuals, all women, 19 of whom were being held in the prison that we will call A, 26 in prison B, 15 in prison C, and seven who continued to work with the organization even though they have been released. Our team was able to interview a total of 32 of these participants, ensuring that our sample would represent the proportion of prisons A, B and C mentioned above as well as the ex-inmates (28%, 39%, 22% and 11%, respectively). Similarly, we sought to represent the participants' age groups: 18-24 years: 3 participants; 25-35: 10 participants; 36-45: 13 participants; 46-55: five participants; and 56-65: one participant.

Aside from the criteria of the proportion of prisons and age groups, the participants were chosen randomly. Additionally, we attempted to represent the highest number of workshops and programs implemented by the Organization Studied (several of the women we interviewed participate in more than one workshop simultaneously). From prison A, 11 of the women interviewed participate in the knitting workshop, five in the psychology workshop and one in the human development workshop. From prison B, 14 of the women interviewed participate in the knitting workshop and three in the art psychotherapy workshop. From prison C, five participate in embroidery, 2 in textile weaving, one in “Empowerment for women”, two in yoga, five in meditation, one in a workshop called “Postcards of life”, one in a Mandala workshop, one in a “book club” and one in a personal image workshop.

It is important to note, however, that the only workshops that provide inmates with a source of income are those in which they make products to sell (weaving, embroidery and textile weaving). These are the most highly attended workshops, and a large part of the conversations during the interviews refers to them.

The procedure for contacting and recruiting participants, as well as conducting the study, adhered to Mexican laws regarding the privacy and protection of personal information. Each participant signed an informed consent form before her interview, and the security of the information provided adhered to the ethical standards of the Universidad Iberoamericana.

Data Collection

Data collection consisted of 32 individual in-depth interviews carried out on-site. A semi-structured interview protocol was used, in part taken from the literature review and in part designed to investigate in-depth the categories that we wanted to explore. The questions were varied, and they were explored in-depth by the interviewers to extract as many details as possible regarding the relevant issues addressed by the women interviewed. We were not allowed to bring electronic equipment for recording interviews into the prison. For this reason, we decided to conduct each interview with a team of two people. One person was the interviewer and only took notes relevant to his or her interview. The second person was only engaged in writing, in the fastest and most literal manner possible, each phrase and word emitted by the woman interviewed. Although it was impossible to capture 100% of each conversation, the interviewer pairs met and exchanged data to ensure that the transcription was as true as possible to the interview. Only in the case of four ex-inmates who were interviewed in conditions of freedom could we record the interviews and transcribe them word-for-word in their totality.

Additionally, during each visit, both team members engaged in thorough observation of the outside and inside areas of the prison and of the activities of the inmates, in the hopes of complementing the issues mentioned by the participants. Upon completing each interview, the interviewers wrote notes in two columns. In one of the columns, they explained in detail what they had observed. In the other, they described how they felt during the observation and interview (Janesick, 2004).

Data Analysis

All of the interviews were transcribed as explained above and subsequently processed using the qualitative software *NVivo 12.0*. For the analysis, both pre-existing categories (taken from the literature review and our pilot interviews) and emerging categories were used. With this objective, words, phrases or complete paragraphs were selected, which were then coded within these categories for the purpose of detecting patterns and repetitions as well as the emergence of new topics.

The following table shows the pre-existing categories used.

Table 1.0 Pre-existing categories

A. Factors prior to prison and general topics
Dysfunctional or disintegrated nuclear family

Physical violence
Sexual abuse
Unemployment
Low salaries/economic problems/needs
I did not commit any crime/I am here for unjust reasons
References to issues of structural violence
Conception of well-being as tranquility or emotional peace
Conception of material well-being
B. Psychological, social or psychosocial effects from being in prison
Affected by abandonment by a partner/spouse or man
Fear of recidivism
Physical handicaps (illness, injury)
Emotional distress
Decreased attention
Fear/apprehension regarding what might take place outside of prison/fear of rejection
Symptoms of stress
Lack of motivation
Fear of being in prison
Feelings of aggression on the part of inmates (physical or emotional)
Feelings of aggression on the part of custodians (physical or emotional)
Feelings of injustice due to the conditions in which I live
Unfair/improper treatment by the prison authorities (not custodians)
Affected by some punishment received
I'm bored/there is nothing to do
Subhuman conditions (dehumanizing, below that which is human)
Basic needs (water, food) are not being met
Untrained/poorly prepared custodians
Corruption/the corruption in prison affects me
I am affected by confinement/there is no nature/there is no open space
I am affected by the feeling that I am less of a person because of my prisoner status (here, I am nobody, I am not important)
Not being able to see my children affects me
The conditions I live in are not bad/they are good
I have learned to value things that I did not value before
General lessons learned from being in prison (not from the Programs)
C. Perceived possible improvements due to the Programs
Emotional well-being due to the Programs
Feeling of self-betterment
Better prepared to confront life outside of prison
Development of skills/knowledge
Development of skills for facing life outside of prison
Improves my quality of life inside prison
I use the income for myself
I use the income for my family
I value my ability to earn money

The Programs keep me busy/my mind occupied and keep me out of trouble
The Programs keep me busy (before I would get bored)
Less stress or improvement in stress
Greater motivation
The Programs give me work experience
The Programs improve my coexistence/interaction with other inmates
The Programs improve the environment in the prison
The Programs give me goals/hope
The Programs help my self-esteem/self-confidence/pride
The Programs give me a sense of self-sufficiency (keep me feeling like myself/not needing others)
The Programs make me feel like I am not in prison
The Programs make me feel accomplished
The Programs make me feel responsible (responsibility increases)
The Programs help me feel safe from violence or aggression
The Programs help me support my household/children/family
For me, the programs mean something different/something personal/something of myself (resignification)
Appreciation for listening to them and making their voice heard
D. Gender themes
Feminine subjectivity/feminine identity
Masculinities
Gender condition helps (they do not treat me as badly for being a woman/they treat men worse)
My being here is the direct consequence of a man
My being here is the indirect consequence of a man
E. Problems or areas of opportunity
Problems of time
Problems of coordination (work/material disorganization)
Logistical problems
The Programs do not help me face life outside of prison
The work experience provided by the Programs will not be useful for working outside of prison
The Programs do not help me with my emotional needs
The Programs do not improve my quality of life in prison
The Programs do not develop skills
The Programs do not improve self-esteem/self-confidence
The Programs do not give me hope
The Programs are only remedial/they are not long-term solutions

Some of these themes appeared frequently during the interviews. Others appeared only a few times or not at all. Many more categories emerged during the interviews, as shown in the results section.

Trustworthiness

It is worth noting that this was a very particular study in terms of the emotional impact that it produced in each of the researchers. It would be dishonest to say that we remained entirely “neutral” in our reactions to what we heard, observed and experienced throughout the months that we visited the prisons. For this reason, this study should be read keeping this limitation in mind.

That being said, a considerable effort was made to guarantee the reliability of the results. This included the following elements: (a) a combination of qualitative methodological tools was used that included not only the in-depth interviews but also detailed observations aimed at providing additional objective elements that could be compared with findings; (b) interviews were conducted in teams of two and the notes of the two interviewers were subsequently contrasted to control the bias of one or the other of them; (c) interviews were conducted by seven different researchers, which helped control potential individual biases; (d) note taking included the feelings and impressions of the researchers, who were frequently affected by what they observed during several months of visiting the prisons, which helped control potential biases rooted in cumulative emotions; (e) concurrently, continuous meetings were held, in which the entire team participated to compare information and feelings and to contribute to the control of potential group biases; and (f) contrast tests were performed between the results of the participants from the three prisons where we worked as well as between the age groups and participants of different workshops or programs. The results of all of these contrast tests showed that the major patterns that we detected remained, almost without variation.

Limitations and Transferability

This study offers results that are exclusively related to the 32 inmates or ex-inmates who participate or participated in the Programs of the Organization Studied, whose operations are limited to three prisons in greater Mexico City. While it could be said that the sample is representative of the universe of participants in the Programs of this organization, this same sample does not represent the totality of inmates who participate in similar programs in other prisons or locations. For this reason, these results are not immediately transferable to other projects or similar organizations. However, the repetition of patterns and their consistency with elements detected in the literature, as well as the relevance of themes that stand out the most in the interviews and observations, appear to suggest that this limited case study has much to teach and contribute, not only for application to similar cases but also with regard to the Mexican prison system and peacebuilding in general.

Results

General overview

Given the number of general categories—both pre-existing and emerging—that were frequently mentioned, we separated them into seven subsections to provide a better view. Even so, it is worth noting the most generally recurring themes. The most frequently repeated categories were as follows: *Development of skills/knowledge*, which was mentioned 194 times (f) and mentioned by

100% of the participants at least once. *I value earning money* was mentioned 188 times by 97% of the participants. *Emotional well-being due to the Programs* was mentioned 185 times with 100% of participants mentioning it at least once. *I like the Programs* (f=172; 97% of participants) and *I keep busy or I keep my mind occupied and stay out of trouble* (f=159; 97%) were the next most recurring themes. Other frequently mentioned categories included topics related to their identity or feminine subjectivity (f=131; 91%) and greater motivation due to the Programs (f=125; 91%). Also, of note are references to a negative environment or atmosphere in the prison (f=149; 94%) and the *Lack of their basic needs (water, food, lack of space) being met* (f=112; 84%).

In other words, an overall consideration of the patterns that stood out most during the interviews includes the negative environment in which the participants live, and the lack of basic subsistence needs being satisfied. Nonetheless, in an even more recurring way, the participants tended to elaborate on the benefits that, from their perspective, the Programs offer. Some of these benefits are from the material perspective, such as earning money or even learning new skills, and others are from the emotional perspective, which include a sensation of greater well-being and valuing the ability to keep themselves busy and in this way stay out of trouble in prison, and even topics related to the reinforcement and valuing of their gender identity. Table 2.0 shows an overview of the 10 most recurring categories in the entire study:

Table 2.0 General overview

Categories	Number of coding references	Percentage of participants who mentioned it at least once
Development of skills and knowledge	194	100%
I value earning money	188	96.9%
Emotional well-being due to the Programs	185	100%
I like the Programs	172	96.9%
The Programs keep me busy and help me stay out of trouble	159	96.9%
Negative environment in prison	149	93.8%
Themes related to subjectivity/gender identity	131	90.6%
Greater motivation	125	90.6%
Lack of basic needs	112	84.4%
Unfair or improper treatment by the authorities	98	90.6%

We will now describe the themes most frequently mentioned in each of the following subsections:

A. External (outside of prison) and structural environment

In this subsection, we include all of the references to themes related to the interviewees' life before prison or the references to topics that have to do with structural factors that, according to the perception of the woman interviewed, underlie the crime and violence in her social environment.

The most frequently mentioned category in this subsection, *Reference to issues of structural violence or systemic corruption*, was mentioned 93 times (f) and was noted at least once by 72% of the participants. This means that while there were various references made to the interviewees' lives before going to prison, such as their job (f=80; 97%) or having a family or a social support network that continues to provide care in one way or another to some of the women we interviewed (78%), the better part of our conversations with the inmates revolved around the structural conditions that facilitate violent crime in a country such as Mexico, which, in their experience, includes factors such as inequality, poverty or their dysfunctional nuclear families (f=77; 59%). It is notable that in this section, 69% of the women we interviewed affirmed that they were in prison due to some injustice. According to them, they had not committed any crime and were unduly accused.

Here are some extracts from the interviews that reflect the above topics:

I thought that in 144 hours the lawyer would solve everything. We presented receipts, IRS (Hacienda) documents, proof of my training so they would see that I did not need to do it (the crime), [...] we showed that what the accused was saying was illogical, but the judge decided that there was still probability and that meant that I had to stay [...] Thus I spent months, without information or notifications, and the judge recommended that I plead guilty to a sentence of one year and five months. But why would I accept something I did not do? We went to question the evidence of the accuser because there were many illogical things. They put for example that my vehicle license plates were evidence because I apparently passed near the crime scene. For the judge that was enough. [...] My lawyer recommended that I probably plead guilty, as the judge said. I refuse to plead guilty. (Participant 25).

Your friends end when you go to prison. You have no more friends now. They say that you find out who your true friends are when you are in prison and in the hospital. I don't have friends (Participant 8).

They killed my family. They killed my entire family. It was four years ago. Now I only have my 23-year-old son. He lived somewhere else, with his in-laws, so nothing happened to him. And me, I wasn't in my house when it happened (Participant 12).

Because only those of us who are here know what really happened, we know how the system works. I know what the process is like. I will not plead guilty to the second crime, because I didn't do it, it's police rubbish (Participant 1).

I don't know, but they don't care about us. In this system, the only people they care about are those at the top of the pyramid, not us (Participant 22)

B. The environment inside prison

A total of 94% of the women we interviewed made at least one reference to the *negative environment* that, according to them, exists in prison (see Table 3.0). This category emerged during the interviews with a frequency of 149 repetitions and essentially referred to the *hostility and conflict* that the women experience in their surroundings. The *lack of basic needs*—water, food,

lack of space or minimal conditions for subsistence—was mentioned 112 times by 84% of the participants. In fact, on 94 occasions, 97% of the participants indicated that they live in *subhuman conditions* or below what is humanly acceptable or in *dehumanizing conditions* (for example, similar to how animals are treated). Also notable is the frequency of references to unfair or improper treatment by prison authorities (not custodians but rather prison directors). This category was mentioned on 98 occasions by 91% of the participants. The theme of *emotional distress resulting from being in prison* emerged 95 times among 88% of the participants.

Table 3.0 The environment in prison

Categories	Number of coding references	Percentage of participants who mentioned it at least once
Negative environment	149	93.8%
Lack of basic needs	112	84.4%
Unfair or improper treatment by the authorities	98	90.6%
Emotional distress	95	87.5%
Subhuman conditions (below the minimum requirement for a dignified and human life)	94	96.9%

The following extracts give examples of what was typically mentioned regarding the above or similar categories.

Here the custodians let in cell phones, drugs. The inmate that is best at a task will screw all the others, the one that cooks well, also will screw them all. Sometimes the cooks sell you the same products that the institution gives us to eat (Participant 15). They say that words are weapons, and here, you can see the level of morality by the swear words people use. For example, they say things like “go fuck yourself” or “bitch” [...] At least they respect me because of my size, but I ignore their insults and they get even angrier. They're like little girls. Sometimes they wet my bed so that I can't sleep well or they make it dirty (Participant 23).

The main problem is the food. The meat is rotten or raw, or badly cooked. The rice is uncooked, often hard and going bad. In the other prison, they sold pork chops, onions, cilantro, and so you could cook. And when visitors come, we have to eat the food cold because there aren't even ovens (Participant 14).

Even visiting is hard. Those who come have to pay, for food or whatever. Each person per visit costs \$500 (Participant 23).

The food is really horrible. We don't have water in the cells. There are two faucets that everyone has to use, and sometimes there is no water at all. There are a lot of problems due to water, I think it's because of the over-crowding, there are a lot of us. I would say that the water and drugs are the worst part about being here in prison. Even though I don't use drugs,

if they smoke pot in my cell, I get dizzy. The custodians don't even come up here and they don't see what is happening (Participant 24).

How do they categorize us? Are we citizens? Because in my work (participant is a veterinarian), heads of cattle are supposed to have certain conditions like space, care, sufficient food, etc. Here there isn't any space or water or light or ventilation. How do they categorize us? What are we? With 110 people in only one cell, what are we? A bed is 60 cm x 1.60 m, and two prisoners sleep in each one. Everyone else sleeps on the floor and under the beds, and if they still don't fit, they take up the entire hallway, and imagine what it's like going to the bathroom, and then sometimes there is not even water. I've had an infection for three days, and I asked for medication, medicine I've never had to take before. Since I'm a doctor I took really good care of myself out there. Here, I asked for antibiotics. The nurse gave me Naproxen. There was no doctor. The doctor came much later and told me "there is no medication, I don't know why you called me" [...] Each cube (mosaic) measures 25x25 cm, and they only give you one cubby to put your things in, and they don't care. I say to them, so where do I put it? And they say however you can, that it's not their problem. So, I have to take my things everywhere, I tie them up and carry my can so that I can sit and put my things inside (Participant 25).

Water, sometimes we don't have it. Well, sometimes there isn't any hot water either, both things. Then 3 or 4 days will go by that we can't shower because there isn't any water (Participant 13).

You get used to everything. From being hungry to not having anything to eat, that is the worst... Getting used to the fact that there is no food or getting sick. For example, I have bad allergies. When it's cold, I get really sick from my allergies, and the medical care is not good here (Participant 28).

Communication, the director isn't aware of the internal goings-on. The authorities are corrupt. They cut every program. If she had more to do with how the prison is managed, this wouldn't happen. Donations never make it here; they sell you medicine that was donated, and she doesn't know about this. She doesn't have to come, but she shouldn't have cut herself off from the real people. Since all of the authorities are in collusion with one another, I don't know who to turn to. There should be more follow-up with medical care. I asked for some medication a month ago, and they haven't given it to me. It's a real trial. If there were follow-up, there would be more quality care. I have a right to health care, and it doesn't work. They are constantly cutting off the water (Participant 18).

Loneliness. Well, the thing is, I have always been alone, but even just the word "prison" is really strong, it's really scary (Participant 17).

Very very bad. I was depressed. It's really horrible, and in the beginning, I didn't get out of my bed, I just cried all the time. It's my first time in jail, and I didn't know what to expect. It happened so quickly, how I ended up here. I felt very frustrated. I didn't want to do anything or talk to anyone (Participant 20).

Well, I felt really bad. I have a 17-year-old son who's at a very difficult stage. He doesn't have a father or mother, only my mother and my sister who take care of him. He goes out into the street, got addicted, and from here all I could do was talk to him and talk to him. He dropped out of school. It's for this reason that I felt really low. The meditation teacher told me some very wise things that helped me to feel calmer (Participant 24).

C. Perceived benefits due to the Programs

As indicated above, this is the most saturated of all the subsections. From the outset, this factor reflects the value that the women we interviewed assigned to being able to work and participate in the programs (see Table 4.0), highlighting the *Development of skills and knowledge* (f=194; 100% of participants), the valuing of *earning money* (f=188; 97%), and, in particular, the possibility of spending their money on themselves or things that are important to them (f=91; 94%), in addition to the *Emotional well-being that they experience due to the Programs* (f=185; 100%). In particular, three out of every four women indicated that they feel *less stress due to the Programs* (f=82). Additionally, 97% of the participants indicated that *they like the Programs* and that the Programs keep their *minds occupied*, which keeps them out of trouble, or *offer an alternative* that is meaningful (f=159). A total of 91% indicated that they feel more *motivated* due to the Programs (f=125). Other notable findings include categories such as experiencing a *feeling of self-betterment* (f=87; 84%). Eight out of every ten of the women interviewed indicated that they felt the Programs helped them *overcome their situation and not give up* (f=76); 72% of them indicated that the Programs generate a *sense of self-sufficiency* (due to feeling that they can take care of themselves and do not need other people). This was noted on 73 occasions during the interviews. Three out of every four women reported *having goals, hope or security about the future* (f=72) due to the programs. Therefore, it is not surprising that 84% of the women we interviewed mentioned on at least one occasion that they are grateful or satisfied with the team that develops and implements the Programs (f=87).

Table 4.0 Perceived benefits due to the Programs

Categories	Number of coding references	Percentage of participants who mentioned it at least once
Development of skills and knowledge	194	100%
I value earning money	188	96.9%
Emotional well-being due to Programs	185	100%
I like the Programs	172	96.9%
The Programs keep me busy and help me stay out of trouble	159	96.9%

The following extracts reflect typical references with regard to this subsection:

It enriches me, it teaches me [...] It's great that someone tells you that you can do things. They teach you to be responsible, you realize that the entire world is not against you, but that you do it to yourself and this makes you feel responsible (Participant 1).

They have helped me to be stronger in everything. They help you to realize that you are self-sufficient. If I learned how to knit, I can do anything that I want (Participant 11).

Learn something new. I didn't know how to embroider. And I know that out there this work pays well, so when I leave, I will have something to do. I also learned how to make little dolls (Participant 15).

I am better. Much better. I want to always be well. It motivates me that they pay me, it motivates me to know that they will pay me (Participant 16).

Day after day I get out of that bed so I can work, to be able to pay a lawyer who will help me get out of here. It motivates me to be able to give them (my family) money from what I earn here so that they can buy things, even if it's just to buy some candy (Participant 17).

Working here so that I don't have to ask them for anything. I don't want to depend upon their help. They have their own problems, and I don't want to be a burden (Participant 19).

It's as if they kill you in life, but here inside (the room where the Programs are implemented) is my only refuge [...] I no longer want to kill myself. With this workshop, I am busy, I focus on other things (Participant 9).

Yes, because I have something to do, I get away from all of this, I go into my bubble of work, and a lot of stress goes away (Participant 10).

You're more focused, it makes you see new qualities, you feel like you have personal accomplishments, you see that you contribute and are part of something. They value your work, and this makes you valuable (Participant 7).

It makes me calm. Knitting and wanting to finish the doll to see how it turns out. It gives me peace (Participant 14).

I feel like I am ready to go out. When I leave, I will work. I have a friend who sells potato chips [...] it might also be an option to work in some potato chip stand. I have security, and if not, I'll sell dolls (Participant 12).

D. Themes related to gender

The category of *masculinities* is generally used for understanding two different aspects. The first is the construction of the conception of men and the way in which a patriarchal and *machista* society affects women (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The second aspect refers to the way in which a context of violence is formed within a social fabric, specifically violence towards women. Masculinities define the agenda for being a man, the structure, and the ways in which a man is expected to act, as well as the way in which institutions function insofar as how individuals learn

this series of constructs (Connell, 1995). The process through which masculinities are formed is practically invisible, and a large part of institutions contribute to their construction: schools, military service and churches. From childhood, these constructs are replicated and teach stereotypes of how a man and a woman should behave (Tong, 1998).

Gender performativity can be explored through the notion that all gender roles are constructs through which individual behavior becomes something that society can accept or defy. These gender performances recreate the social meanings of the feminine or masculine sex. The concept of gender follows certain norms in society through which people perceive the elements of a context of inequality and binary hierarchies such as masculine and feminine (Butler, 1999, p. 43).

Thus, in category D, we group all of the references that we identify as being related to gender condition. Three topics stand out in this subsection. The first of them, *Feminine subjectivity/feminine identity*, refers to each time the participants expressed something related to their gender identity or the recognition of their gender subjectivity. This category had a high frequency, 131 occasions, and nine out of every ten women interviewed mentioned it at least once. The second theme that we coded was that of *Masculinities, her gender role or gender issues in general* (f=86; 78% of participants). Lastly, nine out of every ten women interviewed stated that their gender condition helped them or that they were *not treated as badly* in prison because they were women and that men are treated worse (f=55). As we noted in the methodology section, there were some other categories that we pre-coded for this subsection. However, these categories were not mentioned enough to reach saturation.

The following extracts illustrate subsection D:

It is the first time that I have worked alone on something. It was always with my husband; now I've learned to do it alone. It makes me feel like I am capable of doing and finishing any job that is put in front of me (Participant 14).

What happens is that for the first and second year, your family is with you, but afterwards, they leave you. They even change their cell phone numbers and avoid you. We women are ignored more than men, that's why it is more important for us to make money (Participant 15).

Yes, because women normally behave better, so as a woman prisoner, it has a greater impact on you, and also, I have children (Participant 28).

I am different. You should have seen me when I came to this place... and if you saw me now that I'm out of prison, you'd say: "What happened to you?" People on the outside are surprised when they see me. I was little, like this [makes a gesture with her hands] little. I'm telling you, a housewife with a husband who... who humiliated you, hit you and all of that, and now, an independent woman, very sure of herself. A woman who wants to be both father and mother. Of course, it's not easy, because I have my problems, but I can do it. (Participant 30 – ex-inmate).

Women are better off than men (in prison). Men are beaten, they deny them food, there are deaths, injuries, beatings, and this doesn't happen with women, this doesn't happen to us (Participant 11).

Yes, because they give more priority to men (Participant 17).

Well, yes, if the son and husband are in prison, the family prefers to see them over the woman (Participant 12).

It was a robbery, but with violence, I always did what he told me to do, he manipulated me. So, it happened that he told me that we were going to go collect money from a friend of his, but no, this friend was the one from the robbery (Participant 23).

E. Criticism and areas of opportunity for improvement of the Programs

In the interview protocol that we developed, special attention was paid to exploring critical commentaries, suggestions or possible areas of opportunity that the participants identified with the aim of enriching or improving the Programs. The first thing that should be noted is that the number of overall mentions in this subsection was relatively low compared to other subsections. This indicates that the majority of the women interviewed were highly satisfied with the Programs and did not feel the need to suggest improvements. Even so, the following themes identified in this subsection should be noted. There were 93 occasions in which our participants provided suggestions such as the directors of the program coming more often to have more time with the inmates. It is notable that most of the participants mention a desire to have more workshops that are similar to the knitting, weaving, meditation or yoga workshops. Some suggestions included having literary workshops or similar workshops; 21 of the 32 women interviewed spoke of existing workshops that are not those implemented by the Organization Studied. There were 41 references to logistical problems such as the occasional lack of material or that they are paid too late, and specifically, there were 19 references to a lack of coordination in the Organization Studied.

The following gives examples of references related to this subsection:

Nothing, everything is fine. Well, no, I would offer more workshops (Participant 11).

More workshops. That's the only thing (Participant 18).

I think a reading workshop. I would like a writing workshop, a workshop on verbal and nonverbal expression (Participant 25).

I want them to increase production and not take so long to pay me because they sometimes take a long time [...] right now they still haven't paid me for August, two weeks ago (Participant 28).

I like everything. But I think it would be good that they give us more work. (Participant 14).

F. Relevant themes in interviews with ex-inmates

We decided to dedicate a section to identifying specific categories that emerged from the interviews with ex-inmates who participated in the Programs while in prison and who, now that they are free, keep in touch with or continue to work for the Organization Studied. These four participants form part of our total sample, and therefore, the majority of coded categories are included within the previous subsections. The following themes are coded in addition to the aforementioned categories (see Table 6.0). Notably, the four ex-inmates interviewed stated that they highly value the fact that the Organization Studied *maintained contact and followed up* on the participant once she was released (f=33). Similarly, the four ex-inmates mentioned that they were grateful to the Organization because it marked a fundamental turning-point in their life (f=19). Similarly, the four women highlighted that the Organization provided them with useful tools for coping with life outside of prison (f=19). That being said, it should be noted that three of the four women mentioned on 16 occasions that working with the Organization outside of prison was different than working with it inside prison. All four women indicated that working with the Organization after prison can only be used as extra income because it is not enough to live on. Remarkably, three of the four ex-inmates interviewed mentioned 24 times the difficulties they experienced readapting to life outside of prison and the prevalence of negative feelings such as fear, uncertainty, and frustration due to lack of work, not being accepted or not fitting in. In this sense, we can affirm that, for these women, work with the Organization Studied is highly valued; however, its impact outside of prison is limited. This perhaps represents another area of opportunity for this and other similar organizations.

Table 6.0 Relevant categories in interviews with ex-inmates

Categories	Number of coded references	Participants who mentioned it at least once
They followed up on me once I left prison	33	4
Negative feelings upon leaving	24	3
The salary provided by the organization only as extra income	21	4
The Programs changed my life	19	4
They gave me tools to better cope with life after prison	19	4

Here are some extracts from the interviews with ex-inmates that reflect the aforementioned themes:

Even to this day, being outside, the organization has helped me. Because it is really hard, I swear, it is really hard (Participant 30).

Yes, yes, I come to sign, and I have to let them know about everything. Every move I make, I have to let them know. So, I said to them: "I need an employment letter because I have to send it to the judge." And she, well, the Organization, has never told me no. It has been really good to me (Participant 30).

Well, aside from, well, what I learned, because I'm telling you that I had no idea what it meant to pick up a knitting needle or weave or anything, this... well, I don't know... I

learned a lot of things, aside from the fact that it was good because when I left, they continued giving me work while I was looking... for a job (Participant 32).

Yes, the thing is, it's not a lot of money... it's very little, but it's a reliable income (Participant 29).

I would say to them, like this: "Oh, give us more work, because what we earn isn't enough" like that. And they would say: "Okay, yes, we would like to give you, um, a lot" Right? But... well, sometimes depending upon the requests, it was what they gave us, and we were not only those outside, but also inside and all that (Participant 32).

This world is...really, really stressful. There are people... trust me, I have known people, and I say "known" because everything is extreme when you leave. The street is strange, sleeping in a bed is strange, sitting at a table is strange, your family is strange. So, at least in prison, you know that you shouldn't trust anybody. That is, you should be a good prison mate, but only to a point. You know that there, it's just you, and you should look out for yourself. So, you know that you are alone, and you don't hope [...] People on the outside are... selfish sometimes. They only think of themselves. If they are going to benefit in some way, it's fine. And if not... (Participant 30).

It's scary. Yeah, because before I would see the cops, and it would really scare me. When they (the Organization) said to me that we would meet here at Prison C, I felt *horrible*. I felt like they were going to put me in prison again, and I didn't want to come (Participant 31).

Well, they've been really nice. They listen to you. I like them a lot... More than the knitting, *the way that they talk to us*, and how they can orient you, how they advise you. Without knowing you, or anything (Participant 29).

Look, in these places... there aren't going to be many people like them. And I think that one way of thanking someone is by doing things well. I am very grateful. And believe me that these (the Organization staff) will be people who I won't be able to say no to. Really, I think that if some day if I see the psychologist again, I am going to give her a big hug and cry with her. Really. They are people who are very dear to me, even outside of prison (Participant 30).

It's that... well I... I am REALLY grateful to all of them for everything and the truth is that I really like them a lot, I really started to care about them because they are so lovely in... well, in everything. Right? They worry about just everything. And I think, why do they worry when we are, well... nothing. Right? We are strangers to them. I mean, when you begin working at the Organization, you arrive there, and they don't know who you are. In reality, they don't know if you have good intentions in going to work with them or... because inside a prison, there are all types of people, well, not only inside a prison, we know that here on the outside it's the same. Right? (Participant 31)

G. Memos regarding observations and interviews, commentaries of the interviewers

This subsection is a very special one for the investigating team. On the one hand, it represents our observations from each of our visits to the prisons. On the other hand, it is the place in this paper that we devote to expressing our feelings and emotions, clearly recognizing our subjectivity and the challenge that we confront as social scientists when we try to separate ourselves from our object of study. Each visit to prison brought with it observations on the part of the interviewers, resulting in memos that detailed what was observed before, during and after each interview, as well as a column where the interviewer wrote what he or she had felt throughout the process. The detailed analysis of the notes taken reveals the following (see Table 7.0)

The most repeated category in the memos was that of *Negative feelings* in the interviewers (such as fear, sadness, anger or anxiety) (f=211), but followed by *Positive feelings* in the interviewers in reaction to what they experienced or heard from the women they interviewed (f=141). This naturally reflects a mix of emotions. For one, it was only with great effort that we were able to hold back tears in each interview, and for another, these feelings were interwoven with emotions of satisfaction, joy and motivation due to what the women told us owing to their participation in the Programs. On 79 occasions, the interviewers mentioned having been left with a positive perception of the woman interviewed; on 39 occasions, they mentioned that their impression of the woman interviewed was negative (they did not believe her, or they were scared of her). The notes contain 38 references to issues of structural violence such as the systemic corruption that can be observed inside prisons. Specifically, there were 44 references to having observed conditions in the prisons that were assessed as dehumanizing or subhuman (as was the obvious lack of basic needs being met such as water in the bathrooms). There were 17 references to insufficient or inhuman conditions for children who, in prison, live with their inmate mothers. On 17 occasions, the memos mention sensing a negative or hostile environment in the prison. Other themes that were notable in this subsection include the following: *Untrained or poorly prepared custodians* (f=14), *Unfair treatment on the part of prison authorities* (not the custodians) (f=14), 10 references to having observed the *use of alcohol or drugs in the prison* and 10 references indicating that the group of inmates working in the Programs of the Organization Studied were in a bubble that separated them from the rest of the inmates, a close group that did not make problems with other people. These elements that are observable in the prisons appear to confirm several of the references made by the women interviewed.

Table 7.0 Notes regarding observations and interviews

Categories	Number of coded references
Negative feelings	211
Positive feelings	141
Positive perception of the woman interviewed	79
Negative perception of the woman interviewed	39
References to issues of structural violence	38

Here are some of our notes analyzed in this subsection:

It was strange to come home, to shower with hot water and eat something delicious after learning that they sometimes don't have water, and after smelling their food, I had an idea of what it might taste like (Interviewer).

It made me sad to see the conditions of the zone, and a little afraid (Interviewer).

I felt like I trusted the woman I interviewed, I cried quietly, I could not believe where I was. I didn't want to miss the smallest detail, I wanted EVERYTHING to be in my notebook. YOU CAN SEE THAT SHE LOVES THE ORGANIZATION (Interviewer).

I felt fortunate for my situation. I felt grateful to be there. I felt like I was one more, among women like myself (Interviewer)

The atmosphere in the workshop was pleasant. The room is like a bubble inside the prison (Interviewer).

I loved how when we asked her: What have you lost as a result of being here?, she said, "I haven't lost anything, I have gained something." That really got to me (Interviewer).

Yes, I sense the difference between the environment of those who are in the workshop and those who are not. It's like they're more relaxed (Interviewer).

I found it alarming that a prisoner has to get a pregnancy test from outside the prison: Who did she have sex with? Was it consensual? Why doesn't the institution provide this? Will she abort or what will happen with the baby? (Interviewer).

We sat on the bench, and we immediately began to observe the conditions in the prison at that moment, because it always looks different. This time it was really dirty, there are less people than normal, and I see babies for the first time since we began the study (Interviewer).

In her comments, the member of the Organization's team who is accompanying us states that the best thing about the project is that, for a few moments, the inmates feel like they are not being judged or labelled, they feel like someone believes in them. "The most rebellious", she says, "are the most committed". "There is an inmate who told us that she wants to die because she is going to be freed." She also tells us about the protection afforded to rich inmates through payments and how having money guarantees them privileges (Interviewer).

The interviewee says that she hopes the prison director will receive this information, and my feeling is one of extreme frustration because, the truth is, it is very unlikely that what she is asking for will happen, even though I promise to try (Interviewer).

As she speaks, I conclude that this inmate has the keys to the problem: scarcity leads to disputes. And the inability to implement rules in the distribution of scarce resources (basic resources including everything from water to light or space) generates inequalities. This increases disputes and inequality inside prison. A real microcosm of our societies.

Solutions: End scarcity, along with inequality and privilege. Clear rules, even for those working with the Organization. I detect various holes in the program, precisely in the area of being sensitive to the fact that if there are no rules, disputes will emerge, even among these wonderful participants of their programs. They are lacking integration, group cohesion, how to make one woman care just a little about what happens to another, and how to make the Organization incorporate these ideas (Interviewer).

Listening to her story, I break down. She cries, and I almost cry. I hold on. I empathize, and I think: I am an idiot. A real idiot. A little while ago she loaned me a piece of toilet paper to clean off the water on the bench where we are sitting. And as she speaks of the scarcity of basic things—like toilet paper—I realize that I took a little piece of paper from her that SHE COULD NOT SPARE: I feel like an idiot, but I cannot do anything because I don't want her to feel bad or offended (Interviewer).

Comparison and contrasting of results

Some tests were performed to detect possible variations in the repetition of the categories among the different groups of the women interviewed. This included (a) contrasts between the women interviewed from the three different prisons, (b) contrasts between age groups, and (c) topical contrasts between the inmate and ex-inmate participants.

The most frequently mentioned categories among the contrasted groups are almost identical. However, with regard to the differences, it can be noted that the women interviewed from Prison A, probably due to the conditions in which they find themselves, mention certain categories more frequently such as *Negative environment*, *Lack of basic needs*, *References to disputes or conflicts inside prison* and *Unfair treatment by prison authorities*. These themes do appear among the women interviewed from Prisons B and C, but with relatively less recurrence. However, the positive factors of the Programs and the Organization Studied do tend to appear with similar frequency among the women interviewed from the three prisons. These factors include topics such as the *Development of skills*, *Emotional well-being due to the Programs*, the valuing of *earning money* and gender topics such as *Feminine subjectivity or feminine identity*. The age and number or nature of the Programs in which inmates participate do not appear to cause variations as regards the topics most frequently mentioned by the inmates.

Discussion of results from a gendered peacebuilding perspective

The results reflect a combination of elements that must be organized. First, the women interviewed place a considerable emphasis on structural issues that are not directly linked to their life conditions as inmates, which end up being reflected in their more immediate environment due to their situation of deprivation of liberty. In other words, their social and family context, or the circumstances to which they were subject before entering prison, intertwine with systemic corruption, which, in their view, is one of the primary factors that involves them in the supposed committing of crimes. However, concurrently, these structural factors of Mexican circumstances are also involved in their prison situation, translated into an internal corruption, in the lack of access to basic services and minimal basic subsistence needs (such as water, space or unspoiled food), not to mention the possibility of being reintegrated into their society.

Nonetheless, at the same time, the women we interviewed reflected satisfaction with earning their own money, their improved emotional state, having their daily life occupied productively and being free of the problems that are common in their prison, all of which is only possible due to the Programs in which they participate. Thus, what we have here is a double empowerment: first, there is the rehumanization that occurs as a result of feeling that they are not being judged and are being treated with dignity. Second, there is the empowerment that results from feeling capable of producing their own resources and not depending on a man or their family.

In other words, the results reflect the mix of the tragedy that women live inside the prisons of one of the least peaceful countries in the world and, simultaneously, the power of a noncomplementary behavior which is redignifying and rehumanizing—especially if it includes a gender perspective—embodied in the work of a very small organization that offers them paid work, learning tools and a little compensation for their work. Both are important.

The first—the undignified circumstances of prison life—are important because it is impossible to think about peacebuilding in a country that is as fraught with violence as Mexico in a context such as that described in this study. The interviews exhibit not only the weight of structural violence and gender violence inside and outside of prison but also the lack of adequate conditions for subsistence, the lack of respect for minimal rules of coexistence, and the prevalence of privileges and corruption, which tend to feed back into the cycles of violence that, in theory, should be mitigated in a prison system. However, even so, as we explain above, peace is not limited to the absence of violence. Therefore, what this study reflects does not end with the factors that propitiate or reproduce the aggressive spirals inside prisons.

It is essential to add to this the absence of elements that guarantee that, regardless of the crime committed by the inmates, their prison term results in an active component for peacebuilding for the future. These elements are absent until an organization such as the one we studied is introduced into the prison context. For this reason, understanding the results of the interviews is just as important, if not more important, than the problem itself of the structures that subjugate the prison system.

Being able to feel like dignified, valued, productive and motivated human beings—despite these structures—allows the inmates to transform their sense of well-being and provides them with what we could call internal peace during their experience in prison. Furthermore, the women we interviewed, through their participation in the Programs, become small pillars of social peace in their micro environment. In other words, they live in a context that doubly accuses them (as women and as criminals), stigmatizes them and doubly makes them pay the price for their presumed acts through circumstances that make them feel less than human and affects them emotionally. Therefore, it appears natural that the work of an organization that makes them feel just the opposite is highly valued by them. The combination of both elements, the material (due to the money they earn and how they spend this money) and the emotional, ends up empowering them as women and human beings. As a result, apart from affirming that they feel less driven to become involved in acts of violence, the participants, who are visibly grateful, show themselves to be committed to the Organization Studied and other program participants, thus functioning as factors of social cohesion.

The links between the micro and macro are not minor. Consider this example: One of the women interviewed told us the following: “If somebody bothers me, I hit them. I consider them to be equal to me, for this reason they say ‘*lo que te choca te checa*’ (a smack keeps you in line). The truth is, they really exasperate me. And because of our tempers, we clash a lot. That's why I'd rather be alone, to avoid problems.” This phrase is very revealing in terms of what peace means or, to put it more precisely, what breaks peace. "I'd rather be alone" is the breakdown of any opportunity for social cohesion. The lack of minimal conditions for sustaining existence provokes clashes, and therefore, the participant chooses to separate herself and, in this way, avoid these clashes. This, simply put, implies the loss of hope that these so called “Centers of social re-adaptation” might function as such. Under such conditions, there are no opportunities for a country to build peace; there is no possible reintegration but rather a condemnation to propagate cycles of structural and material violence.

By contrast, the interviews themselves appear to be showing us that within a context of re-dignification, gender empowerment, and gainful employment, prison stays could be turned into valuable time for building peace in a society.

Recommendations for future investigation

As we explain above, this qualitative study is of a limited nature and discusses only the participants interviewed. For this reason and because we detect that, at least in Mexico and Latin America, there is a need for more research on programs similar to those that we studied, a first recommendation is to replicate this case study in other prisons and regions, applying similar interview protocols to document the benefits and possible areas of opportunity of these programs. Similarly, the results of this study could be used to develop one or various quantitative instruments with the aim of applying them to much larger samples of female or male inmates and validating the findings presented above.

General recommendations

Despite the limited nature of this study and recognizing the need to validate the results in broader samples, we consider that, due to the high repetition of certain patterns, the findings presented above allow us to make a number of recommendations:

1. Even considering its extensive strengths, the Organization Studied and other similar organizations should pay special attention to logistical matters that have the potential to produce conflicts among the participants given the environment to which they are subjected, an environment that already presents very negative circumstances in which the participants must struggle to survive. Topics such as the lack of material for their work, the lack of rules or neglectfulness with regard to responsibilities, specifically where and how material should be safeguarded and late payment, may downplay some of the Programs' accomplishments.
2. Based on what we detected in the interviews, adding to the Programs' group integration activities that include all of the participants can increase potential benefits.

3. The women interviewed vehemently request that there be more similar workshops, and while it is understandable that the capacity of a small organization can be extremely limited, perhaps it is possible to conceive of collaborative projects between the public, private and social sectors or group projects among various organizations to expand the benefits reported above.
4. The ex-inmates highlight in the interviews the value of the Organization Studied maintaining contact with them and following up on them. Nonetheless, it is also mentioned that once they leave prison, the resources they receive from the Programs are insufficient. This results in an eventual reduction of communication with the organization and, eventually, a loss of communication altogether. This implies that if the aim is to have a greater impact, associations such as the Organization Studied would need to consider means for greater and higher quality production, increasing their reach and obtaining greater financial viability. To this end, we again suggest that organizations consider projects in collaboration with the private sector, especially with socially responsible companies.
5. The most important recommendation that this study can make to the Mexican government and Mexican society, as well as other societies, is the development and implementation of short-, medium- and long-term policies aimed at incorporating programs similar to the ones studied here, but in a more systematized and far-reaching way. This study offers preliminary evidence regarding their effectiveness as instruments for building peace from its roots. Eventually, a prison system that uses similar tools could transform itself from being a factor that contributes to the reproduction of violence to one that aids in building a more peaceful society.

Conclusions

Despite its limited nature, this study offers preliminary evidence that allows us to understand how the precarious life conditions in Mexican prisons are tied to other topics related to the absence of structural peace in the country and the reinforcement of cycles of violence that, in theory, should be broken. Furthermore, the study shows that a fundamental part of the absence of structural peace has to do with a gender perspective that, if understood and addressed, has the potential not only to stop the aforementioned cycles of violence but also to contribute to building positive peace in a small environment. The interviews in this study, in fact, show the dark side of life in prison. However, at the same time, they show the enormous potential of a project implemented on a small-scale that offers skill development, work and pay to women deprived of their freedom in prisons, which are used as tools for re-dignification, human empowerment and, particularly, gender empowerment, emotional well-being, motivation and hope. Such projects allow the participants to turn their prison experience into a catalyst for greater and better social cohesion, which are fundamental pillars of positive peace (IEP, 2018).

Simply put, the organization that we studied is a bit like learning how to knit. But not dolls of yarn but learning to weave the threads that have been broken, the threads of the social fabric that has been damaged. Consider for a moment a prison system that reproduces this type of program on a larger scale, not in the hands of a small organization that struggles daily against the current in an attempt to get ahead, but rather in a systematic way. Imagine that even when serious crimes have

been committed, the national prison system were to react with noncomplementary behavior and offer opportunities instead of rotten food, a lack of medicine, and the absence of space and basic services. This small case study offers evidence showing that the impact of such policies for Mexico, a country that for too many years has been placed among the 25 least peaceful countries in the world, could be surprising.

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ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A PACIFIST UTOPIA- AND WHY IT MATTERS

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Abstract

The issue of local peace ostensibly poses challenges to accounts of utopia. The problem this essay addresses is whether a utopian arrangement must be capable of resisting external invasion. I argue that it cannot be a conceptual truth that all utopias must be able to fend off invasion. The thesis is that some utopias may actively oppose any sort of national defense mechanism whatsoever. This opposition most plausibly stems from a commitment to some form of pacifism. This argument is important both in itself and because it allows a means of determining which sort of external factors matter when we attempt to determine whether an arrangement is a utopia.

Introduction

The issue of local peace ostensibly poses challenges to accounts of utopia. The problem this essay addresses is whether a utopian arrangement must be capable of resisting external invasion. I argue that it cannot be a conceptual truth that all utopias must be able to fend off invasion. The thesis is that some utopias may actively oppose any sort of national defense mechanism whatsoever. This opposition most plausibly stems from a commitment to some form of pacifism. This argument is important both in itself and because it allows a means of determining which sort of external factors matter when we attempt to determine whether an arrangement is a utopia

Brief Preliminaries

For the purposes of this paper, I will not offer an account of what utopia looks like. Instead, I offer a decidedly brief functional account. Utopia is a superlative social arrangement. It is the arrangement that yields maximum possible level of well-being for each individual within it. There is no alternative arrangement in which the individual enjoys greater well-being. This is to hold across all conceivable arrangements; it is not localized to all available arrangements.

As this characterization suggests, I take seriously Robert Nozick's idea that there is no single social arrangement that is best for everyone (Nozick, 1974). I take it that individual differences in preferences, temperament, values, and beliefs are reasonably pluralistic enough such that no single version of utopia will fail to be best for all individuals involved. I think that some matrix of those four concerns, broadly construed, can be used to determine a person's level of well-being. A utopian arrangement will be one that maximizes the well-being of each member more than, or as much as, any conceivable alternative arrangement. Thus, I cannot offer an account of what institutions utopia must contain, because I think that there is no answer to that question that is not extremely parasitic on the preferences, temperament, values, and beliefs of the individuals in the putative utopia.

This brief account, of course, makes it possible that there is more than one utopia for each person. Two arrangements might tie in the amount of well-being they provide to each member. I do not reject Pareto Optimality as part of an account of utopia, of course. Pareto Optimality refers to a condition's being such that everyone in it is better off than in any alternative and it is impossible to increase one individual's well-being without decreasing someone else's. As long as no individual can be made absolutely better off by moving from one regime to another, more than one regime can be Pareto Optimal. The best arrangement for each person is the one that provides that person with the greatest level of well-being possible. There might just be more than one such arrangement. This account of utopia is superlative. The point about multiple utopias matters because I will argue that there are conceivable utopias that are unable to resist violent invasion. I will not argue that all utopias lack that ability. Indeed, many probably do not. Nonetheless, I will hold that these utopias are utopias even if some of us would not like to live in them.

Some have endorsed a comparative account of utopia. Comparative accounts come in degrees. To distinguish my account from a comparative account, contrast it with John Danahar's comparative notion of utopia. He defines a utopia as:

Any prospectively achievable scheme of radical social-political improvement which would, if installed, leave every affected party better off and none worse while respecting the rights of all (Danaher, 2019, p. 138).

Danaher thus holds that (1) a utopian system must be pareto superior to whatever it replaces; (2) it is radical; (3) it must be achievable; and (4) everyone's rights are respected. It is obvious that each of these conditions by itself would fail to amount to a utopia. However, condition 1, in particular, is a comparative idea. Conditions 2 through 4 seem to constrain the available courses of implementing the putative utopia. The radicality requirement leaves out small steps to utopia, for example. The practicality requirement excludes arrangements that might satisfy all the other criteria, but which are unavailable. The respect for rights limits the means through which utopia may be implemented.

I do not think that the conjunction of Danaher's 1 through 4 amounts to a plausible account of utopia. To see why, think of the United States as it is today. This country is not a utopia by any reasonable metric. Somalia has for a long time scored lower than the United States on almost all measures of well-being. There is significant government corruption, lack of private property rights, rampant absolute poverty, and so on. However, suppose that thirty years ago, Somalia made a radical change in its policies such that they tracked those of United States. Suppose, better, that they had respected everyone's rights in doing so. Finally, pretend that Somalia *now* has precisely the outcomes as the United States. I think it is reasonable to believe that Somalia would have satisfied all four of Danaher's criteria. But Danaher's analysis would yield the conclusion that Somalia would be a utopia even though it is nearly identical to the non-utopian United States. Now, I agree with Danaher that two arrangements could be identical, while one is utopian and one not. However, I think that Danaher identifies the wrong reason for why this is so. Our imaginary Somalia is not superlative. Its imagined improvements are wonderful; but those improvements do not make it utopia. What would make it utopia is that it is Pareto Optimal, not that it achieves conditions 1 through 4.

My criticism of Danaher serves two purposes here. First, I want to make the superlative account of utopia plausible by showing the flaws in a comparative account of utopia. Second, I think that my general thesis would be easier to defend if Danaher were right. There could be a system that satisfies his four criteria yet lacks the ability to defend itself against external invasion. Thus, I think it is good for the present argument that I reject Danaher's conception of utopia.

Utopia as Political Equilibrium

Given that utopia is to be the best arrangement for each of the individuals within it, it should not be surprising that some suggest utopia must be able to resist invasion. Loren Lomasky writes that utopia "possesses homeostatic defenses against crashing and burning when subjected to pressures from within or without" (Lomasky, 2002, p. 63). Accordingly, he judges that "(b)eing inherently self-sustaining counts in favor of a regime's utopian standing; carrying the seeds of its own destruction counts against" (Lomasky, 2002, p. 63). Lomasky might be pointing to at least two distinct issues here vis-à-vis invasion. One is that individuals who lack the ability to defend against invasion would be better off, all things equal, in a regime that could so defend itself. If U is a potential utopian arrangement, and if we add protection against invasion to U, it is, for that reason,

much more likely to be a utopia. Thus, when those of us outside the arrangement reflect on it, we might judge that an arrangement lacking a means of defense against invasion is inferior to one that has it. In this vein, Lomasky observes that we “appraise a social order not as a time-slice, or even a series of time-slices, but as a temporally continuous entity constituted by its history and prospects” (Lomasky, 2002, p. 63).

Alternatively, Lomasky might be pointing to the evaluative states of the individuals within the potential utopian regime. Perhaps individuals who believe their own arrangement to be nearly utopian would nonetheless fear invasion. That fear, all by itself, would disqualify the arrangement from being a utopia because the members would not see themselves as being in utopia. Thus, by their own lights, they do not live in utopia.

The difference here is between an internal analysis of utopia and an external analysis of utopia. A full development of this distinction is beyond the purposes of this paper. However, I can say enough to clarify two interpretations of Lomasky’s challenge. An internalist analysis, much like internalism in epistemology, requires the members of the regime to believe that they are in utopia and to have access to the justification for that belief. So, if individuals fear foreign invasion, they will not believe that they are in a utopia. If individuals do not at least believe that they are in utopia, they cannot be in utopia. The previous paragraph points to the internalist concern.

Part of the rationale for an internalist analysis of utopia is that utopia is meant to be inspiring. If individuals do not believe that they are in the best conceivable arrangement, that seems to suggest that they are not. We often think of utopian arrangements in which everyone believes themselves to be in something like utopia. For example, whatever we make of the putative utopia in *Men Like Gods*, H.G. Wells has the individuals in his utopia refer to themselves as “Utopians.” The members of the utopia take themselves to be in a utopia. An externalist analysis of utopia does not require the agents to believe that they are in utopia and it does not require them to have access to the justification for any such belief. Instead, what matters is that the arrangement satisfies the criterion of yielding the maximum possible well-being for each member in it.

Many Christians take the Garden of Eden to have been a utopia. One fascinating omission from the story of Adam and Eve is any belief on the part of Adam and Eve that they were in utopia. Certainly, the first humans would have lacked the knowledge that any alternative arrangements were possible. Perhaps they need not have believed that they were in utopia for them to have been.

If we read Lomasky to hold that if people fear being conquered and they would thus not take themselves to be in utopia, he presents an internalist evaluation of utopia. If we read him to hold that the mere threat of being conquered, whether people fear it or not, shows that they could do better in an alternative arrangement, he presents an externalist evaluation of utopia. In the following section, I will argue that Lomasky’s thesis cannot be a conceptual truth about utopia, no matter which of the two interpretations we adopt.

Utopias and External Invasion

One reason Nozick’s idea that there are different utopias for different individuals is insightful is that it allows for an easy wedge into issues like the present one. If we can imagine a halfway

reasonable worldview held by a collection of individuals while failing either to fear invasion that they cannot prevent or to be worse off while being unable to fend off invasion, then there is a ready way to address Lomasky's concern. It seems that we can imagine such people. It is not uncommon for the religious to be opposed to violence. Perhaps Gandhi is the most prominent exponent of such a position (Gandhi, 1996). The groups in question are, at least ideologically, extreme Pacifists. Despite Gandhi's popularity, I will use Anabaptism to illustrate the sort of utopian arrangement that challenges Lomasky's claim. Anabaptism is a variant of Christianity that takes very seriously the New Testament injunctions against any sort of violence. Interestingly for the purposes of this paper, Christians are urged not to have too great an attachment to the things of this Earth. In at least two of the synoptic gospels, Christians are enjoined neither to resist evil nor to have ill will for those who might commit it. "Do not resist one who is evil" and "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:39 and 5:44; Luke 6:27–30). Similarly, 1 John 2:15, writes, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The idea here is not that this is the only way, or even the best way, to read the relevant gospels. Instead, I wish only to show that there is a conceivable worldview that undermines Lomasky's suggestion.

We could imagine committed Anabaptists living in a community that, by their own lights, is a utopia. The system is constructed as each member thinks it ought to be. Stipulate that, excluding the issue of national defense, the Anabaptists have sufficient reason to believe that the arrangement best satisfies the condition of maximizing each of their well-beings according to some reasonable matrix like the sort I mentioned at the beginning of this paper. When it comes to the issue of foreign invasion, our imagined Pacifists fear no evil. Indeed, while our Anabaptists believe themselves to live in utopia, they are not so attached to it that they fear losing it. While there has never been an Anabaptist utopia, something relevantly similar has happened in history. Anabaptists were persecuted in Europe and at least some of them did not defend themselves.

Nothing hinges on whether any such group is religious or not. The brief peek into the relevant texts was just to show that this group is not without some justification for their beliefs. Of course, there are relevantly similar secular alternatives (White, 2008). What the imagined Anabaptists are to illustrate is that a group with a robust commitment to the principle non-violence, even in self-defense, could be a utopian arrangement. This suggests that Lomasky's claim about national defense is mistaken; a utopia could lack not merely the ability, but the willingness, to defend itself from invasion. It will do no good to insist that the group would actually be better off if some other group were to serve as its proxy national defense. *Ex hypothesi*, our Anabaptists oppose violence. It is not merely their own violence that they oppose, but all violence. They would thus take themselves to be in an unacceptable position if others were to do on their behalf what they think ought not to be done.

It is natural here to be skeptical of the sort of internalist view I have adopted. People can be wrong about what contributes to their well-being. Our Anabaptists, we might say, are simply mistaken in their stringent commitment to non-violence. We thus cannot rely on their own beliefs and values in order to construct a matrix that determines how well they are doing. This is to shift to an externalist analysis of utopia. Accordingly, I will address that interpretation of Lomasky's challenge.

There are three general problems with the externalist challenge as I have just rendered it. First, and most crucially, it cannot be a conceptual truth that *all* utopias have reasonable protection from external invasion. I think that it is logically possible that the relevant details of the Pacifist story I told above are true. The matrix that includes the beliefs and values of our Pacifist *could* be true in some logically possible world. They might even be true in this one. There is thus a logically possible world in which an arrangement is a utopia even though it lacks a means of defending itself from invasion. Perhaps that is the only claim I need to show that Lomasky's challenge fails.

The argument that the previous paragraph pushes works as follows: Lomasky seems to hold that it is a necessary truth that all utopias have some form of national defense. I symbolize this claim as follows: $\Box (U \rightarrow N)$, where U is 'utopia' and N is 'has a means of national defense.' My argument is that it is possible that an arrangement could be a utopia while lacking (and eschewing) national defense. So, I think I have established $\Diamond(U \cdot \sim N)$. If that is true, then we can conclude that Lomasky is wrong. [$\Diamond(U \cdot \sim N) \rightarrow \sim \Box (U \rightarrow N)$]. Despite what I take to be the success of this argument, there are other points worth making against the externalist challenge.

Second, no one needs to hold that people cannot be wrong about what is in their interest. Internalists can agree that individuals can be wrong in their judgment about which arrangement best maximizes their well-being. All I need to defend the claim that utopia might lack, and even reject, a national defense is the claim that it is logically possible that Pacifism of the sort envisioned here is correct.

The third concern I have with the externalist challenge is that it seems at odds with common language. Common language allows the locutions, "It was utopia, though it didn't have a means of defending itself" and "Those utopians do not want to defend themselves against invasion." These propositions do not seem to make us flinch. They are perfectly sensible; the only question we might have about them is why the utopia did not want a means of national defense. This would not, all by itself, suggest that the regime could not be utopia. 'Utopia' does not seem to require a means of national defense. However, "It's utopia; it must have a means of national defense" seems to welcome us to ask why the absence of that institution relegates to the non-utopian arrangements. This suggests that national defense is not itself part of the concept of utopia. I do not hang as much weight upon the final point as the previous two. I think that on either the internalist or externalist reading, however, I have shown that there are good reasons to reject that claim that all utopian arrangements must have a means of defense against invasion.

Conclusion

We can generalize the point Lomasky pushes to this: It is a mistake to think of utopia in isolation from its surrounding environment. Human well-being is contingent upon the general environment those humans inhabit. A collection of hopeful utopians would probably not be in utopia if a drought caused them to die of starvation. This point is well-taken and correct as far as it goes. I believe that the issue of national defense allows us to clarify how we think about utopia and environmental factors.

For any arrangement, there will be a subset of external factors that *can* bear on the condition of those in the utopia. A proper subset of those factors, I contend, will thwart the principles that are

involved in the calculation of the individuals' well-being within that arrangement. Some factors, like the availability of my dear paneer mutter – or national defense, as I have argued – do not *necessarily* bear on the well-being of the individuals involved. To determine which factors *do* matter to any particular regime, we need to reference the preferences, temperament, values, and beliefs of the individuals within the arrangement. We cannot take it as a given that a means of national defense will be part of all utopias. Groups that are stridently committed to non-violence could arrange themselves in utopian communities without constructing an institution of national defense.

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GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND VIOLENCE INTERVENTION: THE CASE FOR SEXUAL MINORITIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The passing of the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA) in Nigeria has led to an increase in different types of violence against sexual minorities. This paper examines the 2014 Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act in Nigeria and its effects on sexual minorities. The paper also explores the structures that fuel homophobic sentiments and victimization in Nigeria. The theories of structural and direct violence are used to further examine how sexual minorities experience indirect and physical violence. Considerations for how to create awareness about the impact of the SSMPA on sexual minorities so as to eliminate violence of all forms against them are also explored.

Introduction

In 2011, the Nigerian Senate passed its first anti-gay bill, the Same-Sex Prohibition Act (SSMPA) which calls for a prison sentence for anyone convicted of homosexuality as well as punishments for anyone who supports sexual minorities (Purefoy & Karimi, 2011). The bill was first proposed in 2006 but was turned down by the National Assembly in 2007, but in 2011 the bill was passed by the Senate and in 2013 by the House of Representatives (Abati, 2016). In 2014, the bill was finally passed into law, making it illegal to identify as and support non-heterosexuals and their activities in Nigeria, if convicted, the penalty is up to 14 years imprisonment in some states (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Although colonialist laws outlawed homosexuality, SSMPA takes it a step further by criminalizing sexual minorities (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Homosexuality is abhorred in Nigeria and religion is believed to be a huge influence on the bill, because homosexuality is believed to be an immoral act promoted by the media and Westernization (The Economist, 2011; Vanguard, 2018). According to a former Nigerian presidential spokesman, the SSMPA "is a law that is in line with the people's cultural and religious inclination. So, it is a law that reflects the beliefs and orientation of Nigerian people..." (Bowcott, 2014, para. 4). Faith leaders in Nigeria saw the passing of the bill as a step in the right direction (Nzwili, 2014). It is pertinent to note that anti-gay laws and sentiments are not unique to Nigeria alone, but present in many other African countries. In Zambia, Kaunda (2015) notes that homosexuality is also a criminal offense that is punishable by imprisonment.

Studies have shown that compared to heterosexuals, non-heterosexuals experience a lot of violence (Sekoni, et al, 2015). For example, findings from a study carried out in Lagos, Nigeria demonstrate that men who have sex with men (MSM) experience different forms of violence including aggression, alienation, suspension from school, service refusal, workplace discrimination, eviction from home, and sexual assault such as rape (Marshall et al., 2011). They are also more likely to be depressed and suicidal than heterosexuals, (Marshall et al., 2011). Findings from a 2016 study of homophobia and homosexuality among Nigerian undergraduate students show that more than 70 % of the participants believe that homosexuality is immoral and unacceptable, over 60% do not feel comfortable with a non-heterosexual roommate, over 50 % of the participants are described as having homophobic feelings towards homosexuals, and about 4.9 % claimed to have damaged the belongings of sexual minorities (Mapayi et al., 2016). Similarly, A study conducted to learn about college students' perception of homosexuality, shows that participants expressed strong views against homosexuality, attributing negative social behaviors to homosexuality (Eprecht & Egeya, 2011, p.378). Although other studies have found positive attitudes towards sexual minorities among university students (Okanlawon, 2020).

A critical reflection of gender norms calls for an analysis of how social norms and expectations are entrenched in structures and institutions. Feminists describe gender as being socially constructed; these social constructions impose and dictate expected behaviors and actions based on one's biological sex (Risman, 2004). According to Reardon (1996), the attributes that define masculinity and femininity; men and women are socially defined (p.18). Understanding sex, gender roles, and expectations allow us to see how individuals are obligated to play a role already structured for them before they were born (Harro, 2000). These social expectations and

assumptions not only forge unequal relations but they enable inequities. Expectations of gender roles mean that sexual minorities most often conceal their identities and sexuality for fear of being victimized as non-binary individuals (Gander, 2017). The low acceptance rate of non-heterosexuals and the negative narratives about them is strongly associated with societal norms and laws (Mapayi et al., 2016).

Through socialization, individuals are taught about gender norms, and they are socialized into a system that was built on the essentializing of gender roles. Socialization is not voluntary (Sosteric, 2015), as individuals have expectations they have to adhere to. Hence, behaviors outside the socialization framework are seen as a challenge to the systems in society that are built on heterosexual norms. This means that agents of socialization like the family, schools, media, government, religious and cultural institutions, through the cycle of socialization, continue to perpetuate the oppression of groups. The connections between culture, the support of the SSMPA, and socialization is further reinforced by some faith leaders in Northern Nigeria who argue that increasing non-heterosexual activities are part of the broader insecurity challenges pervading communities and to address this, parents must ensure that their children follow the right path (Dangida, 2019).

Impacts of the SSMPA

According to Human Rights Watch (2016), “the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act contributes significantly to a climate of impunity for crimes committed against LGBT people, including physical and sexual violence. LGBT victims of crime said the law inhibited them from reporting to authorities due to fear of exposure and arrest” (para. 8). Apart from fostering physical and indirect violence, the act is a blow to people’s self-respect and freedom of choice and goes against the Nigerian Constitution which includes respect and freedom from torture, and other human rights treaties approved by the Nigerian government (See the 1999 Nigerian Constitution). Because of gender norms and expectations, sexual minorities are compelled into heterosexual relationships to conceal their identities, Nigerian gay activist, Michael Ighodaro asserts that “Most people don’t come out at all. They stay in and grow up and get married and have a family and they hide who they are” (Gander, 2017, para. 9). The prohibition of gay relationships has not only led to an increase in violence against sexual minorities but also led to blackmail and extortion in some instances by security forces (BBC, 2019).

Since the criminalization of homosexuality, there has been an increase in the arrest of homosexuals and those suspected of the crime (Adediran, 2018; BBC, 2017; Cooley, 2017; Human Rights Watch, 2016), a situation that Amnesty International (2014) decries as extremely oppressive and exploitative. Also worrisome is the nature of the violence against sexual minorities, for example, they are arrested by the police not because of a crime committed against anyone but because of their gender and sexual preference which is believed to be against cultural norms and societal beliefs. Other people may also be arrested based on perception in the sense that a part of the law forbids public affectionate display, and people may be persecuted based on their perceived and not real sexual orientation and identity. Olumide Makanjuola the executive director of The Initiative for Equal Rights attributes the support of the SSMPA to unawareness of the implications:

...clause 4.2 of the act talks about public shows of amorous affection between people of the same sex. This is one of the sections aimed at criminalizing freedom of association based on perceived identity, as well as criminalizing people because of their association or knowledge of someone being lesbian, gay or bisexual...when the act was passed, Nigeria witnessed an increase in human rights violations from law enforcement and communities, all arising from perceived sexual orientation...The huge support for the SSMPA is born more out of ignorance and misunderstanding. Many Nigerians do not realize that with the way the Act is set up, the dangers of the law can affect anyone – even if they are not an LGB person...it can apply to two male friends hugging or female friends sharing a bed; in short, any form of public affection between people of the same gender is criminalized. Yet, many support the SSMPA because they choose to allude to the conjecture that the LGB community in Nigeria were clamouring for same-sex marriage. (Makanjula, 2017, para 4-5).

The law forbids human rights and civil society organizations from supporting sexual minorities, by prohibiting support for gay people, the law made it restrictive for homosexuals with HIV to access healthcare (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Because of the law, homosexuals are going underground, and this makes it difficult to treat those with HIV/AIDS (The Economist, 2014). As of 2017, 3.1 million people in Nigeria are living with HIV/AIDS, Nigeria has the second-largest HIV epidemic in the world, and one of the highest rates of new infection in sub-Saharan Africa and SSMPA and its consequences mean that men who have sex with men face difficulties accessing HIV services (Avert, 2017). Consequences of the SSMPA also include stigma and discrimination from peers and loved ones (Gander, 2017), loss of jobs, and denial of spiritual fulfillment (The Economist, 2010).

Cultural Perspectives

Those who support the SSMPA believe that the law will discourage non-heterosexual orientation as being gay negates reproduction (Igwe, 2018). Reuben Abati a former presidential spokesperson who had previously supported the law acknowledged the gross human rights violations of the SSMPA and argues that even though Nigeria is a signatory to many international human rights treaties, and has enacted and supported several national and local human rights protection laws, it fails to uphold and protect these basic rights and as a result, many people, particularly minorities have been subject to varied forms of violence (Abati, 2016). Abati further opines that many Nigerians base their support of the 2014 Same-Sex Prohibition Act on culture and tradition:

Minority groups are often targets of violence in Nigeria... the most violated in recent times are members of the LGBTQI community...There have been reported cases of persons with suspected LGBTQI orientation being subjected to various forms of violence: kidnapping, extortion, rape, assault, inhuman and degrading treatment, denial of access to justice and curtailment of their fundamental rights. The state looks the other way, the rest of society says serves them right...There is no plan or structure in place for protecting gay persons in Nigeria from outright violation even by the police and the state...The Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act 2014, which is a particular source of anxiety and the target of protest by the Nigerian and global LGBTQI community, establishes a legal basis for formal discrimination on the grounds of sexuality. This law forbids any form of gay marriage, or

civil union (sections 1-3), the registration of gay clubs, societies and organisations or the holding of gay meetings (section 4(1)) and the display of amorous relationship between two persons of the same sex in Nigeria (section 4(2)...But it remains a popular law with the majority of Nigerians who rely on culture and traditional values, public morality as defined in Section 45 (1) of the 1999 Constitution, and the fact that Nigeria being a sovereign nation should be free to make its own laws and not subject itself to Western notions of sexuality. (Abati, 2016, paras 12-15).

Among other things, the excerpt above highlights how traditional belief systems have influenced the social condemnation of same-sex relationships. Thus, there is a need to consider the place of culture and how cultural ideologies about gender and social relations influence state sanctions against same-sex marriages. This is because culture plays an important role in the lives and actions of people, it provides insights and understanding of the world to people; guiding their behavior, and enabling them to evaluate and negotiate their environment, practices, and relationships (Mazrui, 1990). Hence, culture defines the social order of any given society and subsequently influences how they approach peace and resolve conflicts. There are two dimensions to the forms of violence against sexual minorities in Nigeria; there is the social condemnation of non-heterosexual relationships and the state sanctions against it. One may argue that from the cultural perspective, custodians of culture and traditions deem it fit to support the law because of the fear that same-sex marriages may erode traditional values.

However, there are arguments that non-binary identities are not alien to African culture (Tamale, 2013; Kaunda, 2015). For example, there is the argument that the construction of sexuality in Africa has been influenced by many factors including colonialism and other socio-cultural and political elements, and these influences have undermined the diverse experiences and notions of sexualities that existed in Africa (Tamale, 2011). In the sense that ...” while homosexuality may have been frowned upon in precolonial Africa, it was not criminalized.” (Tamale, 2013, p. 35). Today, the story of Richard Akuson (2019) a lawyer and activist who says he was severely beaten in Nigeria because of his sexual identity, and the stories of several other sexual minorities in Nigeria and other countries that have anti-gay legislation demonstrates that the idea of heterosexuality stemming from deep patriarchal structures and norms is a structure that influences direct and indirect violence against gender non-conforming individuals. This paper calls for a reassessment of the socio-cultural attitudes that have influenced both direct and indirect violence against sexual minorities.

Theoretical Background: Direct & Indirect Violence

Galtung (1969), opines that violence can be direct and or indirect. Direct or personal violence is present where people die or are harmed particularly during violent conflicts. In this circumstance, people are hurt because of the action of some people, in other words, people carry out acts of violence on others (Galtung, 1969).

Indirect violence (Galtung, 1969) is premise on the understanding that individuals become victims of structural violence when social injustices that could have been avoided happen to them These social injustices are forms of violence because although they are not physical, people are indirectly

harmed because there are institutions that limit them from achieving their full potentials as individuals. Indirect violence is social injustice, and it is not visible as physical violence because it “is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently, as unequal life chances” (Galtung, 1969, p. 171). Structural violence is entrenched in social structures, that flourish on established institutions and experienced in everyday lives (Winter & Leighton, 2001). These structures violate human dignity; they breed discriminations and violence; they also marginalize people by limiting their abilities (Rylko-Bauer & Farmer, 2016), simply put, structural violence is synonymous with “institutionalized injustice” (Nevins, 2009, p. 915).

Therefore, when sexual identity and orientation become a basis for denying people equal rights and freedom then structural or indirect violence is present. In other words where there are systems that deny people equal life chances based on their sexuality then indirect violence or social injustice is present. Indirect violence is therefore systematic because it has become normal and it “shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances. (Galtung, 1969, p. 171). In this regard access to resources such as healthcare jobs, opportunities, and other life-changing opportunities are denied to non-binary individuals because of their gender non-conformity. Further, structural violence can result to direct violence where people are physically harmed, and as Christie (2006) affirms, “a range of cultural narratives support violence including, for example, ideologies that normalize social exclusion and violence” (p. 6). The theories of direct and structural violence highlight the experiences of sexual minorities and how their plight has been enabled by institutions and social expectations and cultural values

Intervention

Some Western governments and organizations have called for the Nigerian government to rethink its anti-LGBTQ law, (Eyoboka et al., 2018; Ndiribe et al, 2014; Amnesty International, 2014). Some of these governments have threatened to cut off aid donations if the Nigerian government does not repeal the SSMPA (Nsehe, 2011). However, the Nigerian government has support from some faith leaders (Eyoboka et al., 2018). The UN general assembly has repeatedly denounced violence against groups and individuals because of their sexual identity, in 2011, the first UN resolution on sexual orientation and gender identity was passed, leading to UN’s first official report, where findings formed the basis for the continued call for an end to discriminatory practices against sexual minorities (OHCHR, n.d). Organizations such as the Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International continue to fund studies to publicize the spate of violence against the LGBTQ community in Nigeria.

From within Nigeria, organizations like The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs), are promoting the rights of sexual minorities through public awareness and education (The Initiative for Equal Rights, n.d). From outside Nigeria gay rights movement is championed by individuals like Michael Ighodaro, who suffered physical and indirect violence in Nigeria based on his sexuality before seeking asylum in the United States (Gander, 2017), Bisi Alimi, is another activist in the diaspora, he is said to be the first gay man to declare his identity on national TV in Nigeria (Iyanda, 2008). Like Michael Ighodaro, Bisi Alimi fled Nigeria, due to his experiences of violence (The Guardian, 2011). To change the narrative about sexual minorities Richard Akuson started a magazine because he “...wanted to start meaningful conversations around gender norms and masculinity that speak specifically to our realities as gay men within a culture that is poisonously patriarchal and deeply

homophobic.” (Akuson, 2019, para, 2). *She Called Me Woman* is a collection of stories as told by LGBTQ women in Nigeria (BBC, 2018). The stories are told as an act of resistance and reclamation, the book can also be seen as a strategy to deconstruct the negative narrative of sexual minorities from within Nigeria. There are also views that with more education and awareness about the implications of the SSMPA for heterosexuals and sexual minorities there will be less support for it. As many Nigerians support the SSMPA because they lack a deep understanding of how the law criminalizes sexual minorities and others based on perception not reality (Makinjuola, 2017). This view also aligns with the call for a more inclusive religious teaching as a way to better the experiences of non-heterosexuals (Asue, 2018).

Considerations for Change Through Dialogue and Education from Within

Conflict transformation thrives on building relationships as well as addressing the immediate and underlying causes of violence; this would include seeking ways to end direct and structural violence. Peace and Conflict Studies theories are rooted in the use of soft power to transform conflicts; soft power is the ability to influence and get results without the use of force or violence (Nye, 2004). The soft power approach would contain features such as building relationships, creating opportunities for dialogue, and using creativity to transforming conflicts (Lederach, 2003; 2005; 1995), and to humanize sexual minorities. The use of this approach will be to create spaces and build structures that allow for a creative approach to inclusive dialogue and education.

Tamale (2011) argues that as people worldwide are seeking to address different forms of oppression, it remains a challenge in Africa to include the experiences of sexual minorities in the same way other social justice issues are being highlighted. Arguably, education on gender and sexuality is pivotal in addressing this gap and in creating awareness about the issues affecting sexual minorities. Thus, “raising awareness through formal and informal education on sexualities” is one avenue through which the voices of sexual minorities can be heard and given equal considerations as other social injustices without which “the African renaissance or the transformation that we are striving for will forever remain a mirage.” Tamale, 2011, p.4). Lederach (2005) calls for a new vision of transforming conflicts through creativity. And positive images and ideas can be used to impact and change public perceptions (Van Tongeren et al., 2005). This should be centered around initiating conversations to engage with the environmental norms and societal dictates that guide the behaviors of individuals in a community as a way to understand and address the sentiments and norms that may increase violence against sexual minorities. Conversations from within Nigeria can be initiated to understand the plights of sexual minorities. This idea can also be supported by activists in and outside of Nigeria.

The media is one way of creating awareness and educating others about the issues of violence against sexual minorities. Diasporas have often used the media to pass messages that can educate the public on the need for peace and tolerance through the funding of awareness programs in the media, and this has provided creative ways of addressing issues (Mohamoud, 2015). Dialogue and awareness creation through the media can play a crucial role in educating the general public about the negative impacts of the SSMPA on sexual minorities. For example, in South Africa, there is a radio program started by gays and their supporters to change the popular narratives that dehumanize sexual minorities (BBC, 2016). Also, the silencing of issues that affect sexual minorities exacerbates their challenges. Therefore, funding awareness programs on radio,

television, and print media are strategies individuals and groups working to change homophobia in Nigeria can utilize. Fortunately, the media has evolved in a way that is more accepting of differences. In this era of social media, activists have powerful resources that they can use to challenge the status quo. Messages have been passed through Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube about tolerance and diversity. Movements like #metoo have reached far more people than the conventional means of communication. This medium has given voices to different people who would otherwise not have the opportunities to be heard. Supporters of sexual minorities in and outside of Nigeria can also use the media by creating and sponsoring programs that promote tolerance, and respect. The foundation of this approach is to transform the dehumanization of sexual minorities so that they can be seen as individuals with needs and not as the *other*. Because conflict transformation has to do with devising ways to transform marginalized people from the *other* to humans with basic needs (Van Tongeren et al., 2005). However, this is just one way of reducing homophobic sentiments and violence, a lot still needs to be done such as addressing the root causes of gender inequality and systemic violence.

Conclusion

This paper has examined gender, sexuality, and violence in Nigeria, using the theories of structural violence and direct violence to understand the plight of sexual minorities in Nigeria. The paper has also explored how violence against sexual minorities can be sustained through socialization. Further, this paper has argued that transforming violence against sexual minorities calls for the use of soft power and creativity, through education and dialogue. Most importantly there is still work to be done in ensuring the presence of an enabling environment devoid of all forms of inequality. There is also room for more research studies on how other strategies can be used to address the homophobic sentiments that fuel violence against non-heterosexuals.

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BACK TO THE FUTURE: LEARNING FROM HERBERT HOOVER'S "INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONALISM" TO RESTRAIN U.S. SECURITY POLICY IN THE FUTURE

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Abstract

Evaluation of Herbert Hoover's presidency is dominated by his failures in battling the Great Depression. In fact, Hoover's policies may have turned a mundane cyclical economic recession into the worst economic disaster in American history. Yet lost in all this is a national security policy that was the best of any president in the twentieth century, unsurpassed so far in the twenty-first, and one of the best in American history. That analysis is based on adherence to the restrained security policy (only reluctant military intervention) anticipated by the Constitution's framers and practiced, with some exceptions, for more than the first century of the republic's existence. The framers realized the geographical advantages that the United States had, far away from most of the world's zones of conflicts, thus allowing them to keep the U.S. military small and out of other countries' business; the "Independent Internationalism" of the Hoover administration comported well with the framers' vision.

Major Outcomes of Hoover's Security Policy

Herbert Hoover gave up the “dollar diplomacy”—the use of U.S. military power, especially in Latin America, in support of the objectives of American business—of his Republican predecessors and instead ran a policy of what has been called “independent internationalism” (Wilson, 1974; Robinson and Bornet, 1975). Others have described it as “involvement without commitment” (Herring, 2008). The policy eschewed permanent and entangling alliances, as well as military and economic coercion—as the Constitution’s framers would have done—while avoiding “isolationism” (Eland, 2016). Also, Hoover astutely believed that military intervention overseas usually caused more problems at home than it solved, including the loss of American freedom (Wilson, 1974). Many at the American Constitutional Convention also shared the same belief.

If keeping the nation at peace is the Holy Grail of U.S. foreign policy, the vessel was very full during the Hoover presidency. Hoover was committed to the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Latin America and to improvement of relations within the Hemisphere, keeping the United States out of a war with Japan over Manchuria, and global disarmament.

Hoover's General Security Policy Orientation

Although some have called Hoover a “pacifist” or “isolationist,” he was neither. Although Quaker in up-bringing and reluctant to use political, economic or military coercion abroad to promote abstract ideals, he did believe in using force to defend the continental United States and its freedom. Because the League of Nations was all about using potentially all three types of coercion automatically, Hoover, as his predecessors Harding and Coolidge, kept the country aloof from the organization, even pledging cooperation on moral sanctions only on a case-by-case basis (Myers, 1940). Hoover did cooperate with the League in non-political endeavors, such as international disarmament conferences (Wilson, 1974).

The limited mission of defending the country and its freedom is all that the Constitution permits the federal government to do under the language “provide for the common defence.” And in security policy, Hoover believed in sticking closely with the framers’ original antimilitarist and anti-alliance orientation and made no claims to expand the president’s role in foreign policy beyond the limited role provided in the Constitution. (Unfortunately, he wasn’t so scrupulous in stretching the chief executive’s constitutional purview at home, where he was the first president in American history to get involved in ameliorating an economic downturn through general government intervention in the economy in one form or another—a role for the central government not found in the Constitution.) Finally, he did not use his power in security policy to divert public attention from his domestic economic problems.

Hoover’s commitment to internationalism was rooted in the belief that the United States should act as a model for other countries. He did not believe in using aggressive diplomatic or military actions against autocratic countries that repressed internal opposition or had distasteful ideologies (Wilson, 1974). In practice, his foreign policy demanded freedom of action, and he believed that foreign peoples and nations should fight their own battles. During his four-year term, Hoover passed up more chances for U.S. intervention abroad than any other president in the twentieth

century during a similar duration. As a result, during his term, no Americans died in foreign conflicts. (DeConde, 1981).

Revolutionary Latin American Policy Paid Immediate and Future Dividends

U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America is discussed first, because the region is very important to U.S. security but often has taken a back seat in American history to policies toward more glamorous areas of the world, such as Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East. Yet the Latin American region, especially Mexico and the Caribbean sub-regions, is in closer geographical proximity to the United States than are other areas of the world. In addition, the Panama Canal has traditionally been regarded as the jugular vein of the American defense system (DeConde, 1951) and the gateway to the isthmus is through the Caribbean. Thus, a higher priority for Latin America in U.S. foreign policy was (and still is) needed. Hoover gave it the highest priority in U.S. relations abroad. Every nation should strive to have equal and friendly nations in its own backyard. Hoover's more benevolent policy to the region, largely continued by Franklin Roosevelt, would pay big dividends during World War II.

Several reasons explain why Latin America historically has been given less importance in U.S. foreign policy than it deserves. First, the countries there have not been as wealthy and as powerful as in other regions. Second, since 1823, the Monroe Doctrine has governed U.S. policy toward Latin America. The doctrine aimed to keep great European powers out of the Western Hemisphere in exchange for avoidance of U.S. meddling in European affairs. The Roosevelt Corollary (1904) to the Monroe Doctrine, formulated by President Theodore Roosevelt after the Spanish-American War, went farther and gave the "Colossus of the North" the prerogative to intervene in the affairs of any Latin America to ensure political or economic "stability" to obviate any excuse for European intervention in the region. However, in reality, the corollary was merely a pretext for U.S. meddling in the internal affairs of Latin American countries to "protect" them from European interference.

For 30 years after the Spanish-American War, the United States had overseen and policed Latin American countries, including the internal affairs of those nations. To allegedly ensure Caribbean security, particularly that of the Central American isthmus and later the Panama Canal, the United States had intervened militarily in Panama, Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. In reality, many such interventions also were done to support U.S. business interests in enforcing contracts and collecting debts—called "dollar diplomacy". Hoover explicitly rejected this mercantilist policy (Myers, 1940). Early in his administration, Hoover asserted, "I can say at once that it never has been and ought not to be the policy of the United States to intervene by force to secure or maintain contracts between our citizens and foreign States or their citizens" (DeConde 1951).

Before World War I, Woodrow Wilson had launched two invasions of Mexico. However, after the war, all the European powers had been weakened by the cataclysmic bloodbath, making any European threat to the Panama Canal recede. Yet post-war presidents Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge, otherwise very good presidents, continued unnecessary U.S. policing of the region. When Hoover took office, the United States was meddling, directly or indirectly, in six Caribbean nations. Thus, relations between the United States and Latin America were bad because of past

U.S. “gunboat diplomacy,” and anti-Americanism was rising (Herring, 2008). Laudably, Hoover, like few prior presidents, decided the nearby region needed to be a top priority for his administration.

Hoover aimed to change the interventionist U.S. policy toward Latin America. Although Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) is usually credited with initiating the “Good Neighbor” policy toward the region to unite the Americas in the face of the rise of the Axis powers, Hoover, his predecessor, began bettering relations much earlier during his ten-week, ten-country pre-inaugural tour there, even using the term “good neighbor” repeatedly in his speeches. Hoover pledged that the United States would quit meddling in the internal affairs of Latin American countries, something that the Coolidge administration had refused to promise. (However, Coolidge did withdraw U.S. forces from Santo Domingo (now the Dominican Republic)).

Coolidge’s Under Secretary of State Reuben Clark had written the Clark Memorandum, which renounced the Roosevelt Corollary as a way for the United States to intervene in the internal affairs of Latin American countries by ostensibly shielding them under the Monroe Doctrine from European intervention. However, Coolidge didn’t agree with the document, and it languished in the State Department’s files. Yet the memorandum was destined to become one of the most important statements of U.S. policy toward Latin America in the twentieth century (Ferrell, 1957). Hoover, as Coolidge’s Secretary of Commerce, knew of the memorandum, published it when he became president, and then went beyond it by renouncing virtually all intervention in Latin American affairs—that is, military interventions for political and commercial reasons and even the legal right to do them. Hoover didn’t intervene militarily despite Latin American countries falling into numerous depression-induced revolutions, defaulting on their U.S. loans, and confiscating American assets through nationalization (Ferrell, 1957).

The supreme test of Hoover’s non-intervention policy occurred as he took office. A revolt against the U.S.-friendly Mexican President Emilio Portes Gil arose in northern Mexico and almost cut off the Mexican capital from the United States. Unlike Woodrow Wilson, Hoover resisted directly intervening using the U.S. military in a conflict right on the U.S. southern border, but instead kept on an arms embargo against Mexico that helped the government and hurt the rebels. Hoover provided export licenses for weapons and sold surplus war stocks to President Gil. The United States’ closest Latin American neighbor was thus able to put down the revolt without direct U.S. action and thereafter maintained a very good relationship with the Hoover administration (DeConde, 1951).

Another test came in January 1931, when a revolution toppled the president of Panama, a country which contained the strategic U.S.-built canal. The Panamanian government even requested that the United States send troops. Although one American had been killed, Hoover did not exercise U.S. treaty rights to snuff out the revolution, as President Coolidge had warned that he would do in any Panamanian revolt. A few months later, in May 1931, Hoover also avoided intervention when Panamanian police had a dust-up with U.S. military police.

A third major test of Hoover’s non-intervention policy came in April 1931, when Nicaraguan rebels led by the famous General Augusto Cesar Sandino attacked and killed nine Americans. Secretary of State Stimson announced a new protection policy, which stated that American

business people did business in Latin America at their own risk and should not expect to be protected by the U.S. government, even if their lives and property were in danger. The Hoover administration offered only limited protection in coastal areas. This approach was a reversal of the Coolidge administration's policy that American business people and their property would be protected by the U.S. military "wherever they may be." Yet if American business people reap the substantial rewards of doing business outside the United States, they should also assume the risks of operating outside the physical and legal security of U.S. territory.

A fourth test came in mid-1932, when revolts broke out just off U.S. shores in Cuba, which had been a virtual U.S. protectorate since being wrested from a decrepit Spanish Empire during the Spanish-American War. The Platt Amendment of 1901, which was folded into a permanent U.S.-Cuban bilateral treaty, gave the United States a legal right to intervene in the island's internal affairs. Although Hoover didn't repeal the Platt Amendment, he refused to intervene in the conflict. Abjuring a legal right to intervene in such an important nearby nation sent a positive message to all Latin America that the days of Yankee imperialism were over (at least for a while).

All in all, more than twenty revolutions in Latin America--driven by the worldwide economic depression--occurred during Hoover's four-year presidency, and two thirds of them were successful. Normally, this unstable situation would have been very threatening to a hemispherically dominant status quo power, such as the United States, but Hoover ran a very successful security policy by staying neutral in the factional conflicts within such countries (DeConde, 1951).

Therefore, Hoover largely kept his pledge of non-intervention throughout Latin America, and FDR reaped the benefits of Hoover's four-year track record when he began mustering nations of the Western Hemisphere to meet the Axis challenge (Ferrell, 1957). Thus, Hoover should get more kudos than he does for having avoided being dragged into non-strategic, resource-sucking internecine wars within countries in the hemisphere, when better relations with nearby nations ultimately brought big dividends later when the stakes were higher. Some authors even have argued that in Latin America, FDR took advantage of the war in Europe to backslide into Taft administration-like "dollar diplomacy" of the 1909-1913 period (Myers, 1940,). However, the one blemish on Hoover's Latin American policy--the imposition of high tariffs under the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930, which harmed Latin American exports to the United States--FDR ameliorated with a series of bilateral reciprocal trade agreements that lowered tariffs on the imports of those countries.

One major aspect of Hoover's policy was ending U.S. military occupations of Caribbean countries, which was the most prominent and controversial issue in U.S.-Latin American relations. By the end of his term in early 1933, with the help of Congress, Hoover had withdrawn U.S. Marines from Nicaragua, ending a virtually two-decade long martial presence in that nation. For some time, the United States had had rights to build an alternative canal across Nicaragua, but Hoover's Canal Board made no recommendation to build the canal. The Nicaraguan insurgent leader, General Sandino, said that U.S. forces would need to leave the country before he would end his rebellion. He kept his promise a month after the last of the U.S. Marines left in January 1933. Sandino ended the insurgency and disarmed his men in exchange for public lands, amnesty, and public works

projects to employ his followers. Thus, Hoover's withdrawal from Nicaragua paid immediate dividends (DeConde, 1951).

In what should have been lessons for the modern day in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq, the residents of Haiti resented foreign occupation, the imposition of an alien culture and democracy by force, and the failure of the occupation to understand their social problems much more than they appreciated the goodies handed out by the U.S. occupiers, such as roads and medical facilities. Hoover also would have ended this long occupation (since the Wilson administration in 1915), but the Haitian legislature refused to approve the terms of a treaty ending the occupation. However, Hoover set up the plans that allowed FDR to make the withdrawal by executive agreement in 1934. In the meantime, U.S. relations with Haiti improved substantially as Hoover allowed Haitians to take over most public functions, ended martial law, and refrained from meddling in Haitian congressional elections (DeConde, 1951).

As part of his new benign orientation toward the Western Hemisphere south of the U.S. border, Hoover relaxed U.S. policy on recognition of Latin American governments. The moralistic Woodrow Wilson would only recognize such governments when they were based on democracy and the rule of law, thus using non-recognition to meddle in countries' internal affairs. In contrast, the realist Hoover—not because of a pragmatic reaction to the many revolutions in Latin America during his presidency spawned by the Great Depression, but mostly out of principle—would recognize a government if it de facto controlled a country's territory (that is, no rebellion challenged it), pledged to uphold international obligations, and intended to hold elections “in due course.”

For the special case of the five Central American republics, however, the Hoover administration, like its predecessors, agreed to abide by the non-recognition policy adopted by the countries themselves in the Treaty of Peace and Amity in 1923. That policy provided governments coming to power by revolution or coup should not be recognized as legitimate if the elected representatives of the people had not constitutionally reorganized the government (Ferrell, 1957).

To promote stability in Latin America and thus to lessen the need for U.S. intervention, Hoover, in compliance with a multilateral international treaty signed in Havana in 1928, did sometimes use embargoes on arms exports against unrecognized rebels who were opposing internationally recognized governments; he also promulgated such weapons bans against warring Latin American states—both with varying degrees of success.

In the latter scenario, Hoover successfully settled conflicts between Guatemala and Honduras, which agreed to arbitration over their contested border, and among Peru, Chile, and Bolivia over the provinces of Tacna and Arica, which had been in dispute for more than fifty years (Stuart, 1949; Ferrell 1957). The Hoover administration was less successful in mediating a dispute that arose when Bolivia seized part of the prospective oil region of Chaco from Paraguay and when Peru grabbed the village of Leticia from Colombia. In the former incident, a full-blown war erupted shortly after Hoover left office; in the latter case, the dust-up was settled by Peru returning Leticia back to Colombia, but only after the Peruvian dictator was assassinated and his successor turned out to be more amenable toward a settlement (Ferrell, 1957).

Hoover (Genuinely) Kept Us Out of War (with Japan)

In Manchuria--a mineral-rich and agricultural area claimed by Nationalist China and ruled by a sympathetic nationalist local ruler--both Japan and the Soviet Union long had treaty rights in this region of imperial competition (Ellis, 1968; Herring, 2008). In mid-1929, China and the USSR, both signatories of the Kellogg-Briand Treaty that had outlawed war, had a military altercation over a Soviet-controlled railroad in Manchuria. The aggressive Chinese Nationalists, seeking to expand their influence northward from the Great Wall, snatched the railroad; the Soviets then invaded the region.

As Alexander DeConde noted, “The quarrel over Manchuria threatened no vital American interest...” (DeConde, 1981). Yet, the United States tried to mediate the conflict between the two countries but was handicapped by Soviet perceptions that the Americans were siding with China to further their own economic interests in Manchuria (in reality, those interests were few). Hoover’s foolish refusal, like that of his presidential predecessors, to grant diplomatic recognition to the USSR had something to do with this Soviet hostility. (However, Hoover did look the other way for an unofficial U.S. commercial relationship with the Soviet Union and even financed U.S. exports to that nation, so that the United States would not lose potential trade with the USSR to other competitors.) (Wilson, 1974) Nevertheless, Hoover managed to successfully rally the countries that signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 and the Nine Power Treaty of 1922, guaranteeing the independence and the integrity of China, to put pressure on the two countries to withdraw their forces from Manchuria and sign a settlement in late 1929 (Myers, 1940).

When Japan invaded Manchuria in September of 1931, violating its obligations under the Open Door, the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and the Nine Power Treaty, DeConde similarly noted, “The fighting there, as in 1929, did not threaten American security, nor did it menace other tangible American interests” (DeConde, 1981,). Hoover insightfully noted at the time that, “These [Japanese] acts do not imperil the freedom of the American people, the economic or moral future of our people. I do not propose ever to sacrifice American life for anything short of this”. Although Japanese and Soviet investment in Manchuria was substantial, British and American investment was not. Hoover also concluded that war with Japan would not only be a naval war, but would involve American forces in China arming and training Chinese (Myers, 1940; Ferrell, 1957).

In fact, some high officials in the Hoover administration sympathized with Japan. The Japanese had many economic interests in Manchuria, including heavy investment by Japanese companies there, as a market for Japanese manufactured exports, and as a source of vital raw materials for Japan’s industries. Hoover noted that the anarchy in China--and especially in a Manchuria that was then ruled by a military adventurer who the Chinese failed to control--caused Japan severe economic pain from shrunken imports of raw materials from China and reduced exports of manufactured products to that nation. Also, the Japanese feared being surrounded by a Bolshevik Soviet Union and an aggressive China that could go communist (Myers; 1940).

In his memoirs, Hoover, when explaining his actions in 1931, noted Japan’s large stake in Manchuria and that the United States could not patrol the world. Hoover thought that of the three contending parties for Manchuria, Japan would maintain more stability than either the communist Soviet Union (Hoover hated Bolshevism), which had meddled in the region two years earlier, or

Nationalist China, ruled by a stridently nationalist Chiang Kai-shek, which also had done so. The high-level professionals at the State Department also agreed that Japanese control of Manchuria might be the least of all possible evils (Current, 1954). (Besides, the United States couldn't get too moralistic about Soviet and Japanese designs on Manchuria when the United States was still occupying Nicaragua and Haiti—although as noted earlier, Hoover was working to end those occupations.) Britain and France also exhibited a preference toward Japan as a bulwark against Soviet communism in Asia (Ellis, 1968).

In addition, Britain, which was the largest Western investor in China, had great interests there. Thus, at least one other nation had more of an incentive to push back against Japan aggression than did the United States. In fact, both Britain and France were very reserved during the Manchurian crisis, because they didn't want war with Japan either—despite their leadership roles in the League of Nations and that the dispute was between two other members of that organization, Japan and China. (The United States had not joined the League of Nations.) Furthermore, the Great Depression (Great Britain was forced off the gold standard in late 1931) and memories of the recent horrors of the Great War preoccupied all three Western nations.

Despite that Japan's invasion of Manchuria was an issue between two members of the League of Nations (Japan left the organization as a result of the crisis), the League declined to impose multilateral economic or military sanctions against Japan. Thus, American business merely would have been harmed if the United States would have unilaterally imposed an economic embargo. In short, economic sanctions were not a viable alternative during a worldwide depression. And given the history of even multilateral economic sanctions having diminishing economic bite over time and usually being ineffectual in achieving their ambitious political goals—such as inducing Japan to withdraw from Manchuria—they would likely have been futile anyway.

And Hoover believed that such sanctions would lead to U.S. war with Japan (they eventually did in 1941), so he refused to impose them. (Hoover did eventually recommend to Congress a more limited arms embargo on Japan in case the League took that action, but Congress nixed that idea and the League never imposed even this limited sanction anyway.) However, Secretary of State Henry Stimson wanted to at least threaten economic or military sanctions (and maybe to impose them) to deter Japan, but Hoover, a man who had lived in Asia, believed that the Japanese would call the U.S. bluff, thereby leading to war. Hoover correctly believed that Stimson's seeming willingness to fight a war to enforce peace was flawed logic; Hoover was willing to fight to defend home soil but not to wage war for an amorphous ideal in faraway East Asia. Finally, he believed that China, as it had many times before in its long history, would either assimilate or expunge the Japanese.

Instead of imposing economic or military sanctions against Japan, Hoover remembered that Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state, William Jennings Bryan, had used a policy of non-recognition in 1915 during a previous Sino-Japanese altercation. Therefore, in early January of 1932, Stimson issued identical diplomatic notes to Japan and Nationalist China stating that the United States would not recognize political or territorial alterations by force that violated U.S. treaty rights in China and that were contrary to the Kellogg-Briand Treaty of 1928, which outlawed war, and to the Nine Power Treaty of 1922, which required nations to uphold China's territorial

and administrative integrity and Open Door policy for foreign economic activities in that country (DeConde, 1981; Current, 1954).

The U.S. non-recognition policy--also adopted by the other great powers through the League of Nations (to avoid imposing economic sanctions) did not cause Japan to retreat from Manchuria. In fact, the Japanese responded to Hoover's non-recognition policy by sarcastically making oblique reference to the prior U.S. annexation of Hawaii and the Philippines in East Asia and to the embarrassing American effort to put a naval coaling station at Samsah Bay in China in violation of the "Open-Door" policy. The United States had championed the Open-Door policy to give all great powers access to coerced Chinese trade, while attempting to impede other powers from carving the country up in violation of China's territorial and political integrity (Ferrell, 1957). However, the non-recognition policy did satisfy the "just do something" pressure that many governments face in times of international turmoil, even though their vital interests are not at stake.

In January of 1932, Japan then bombed and sent ground forces to Shanghai, the economic jewel in China proper, mainly because the city was in disorder but also to break the Chinese economic boycott against Japan, which had been enforced by arson and murder. Although Hoover was preoccupied with the economic cataclysm at home, he did order U.S. troops, Marines, and the entire U.S. Navy's small Asiatic squadron to that international city to protect Americans in the city--more from the Chinese than the Japanese, according to a high-level State Department official--and reinforced American military bases in Hawaii and the Philippines. Hoover restrained Stimson from using the U.S. fleet to threaten Japan, saying that he would fight for the continental United States but not for Asia. He then led the mediation effort to try to solve the crisis (Current, 1954).

The arrival of the American Asiatic squadron in Shanghai and the U.S. threat to break out of the Washington Conference Treaties of 1922--building more battleships and fortifying U.S. bases at Guam and the Philippines--if Japan didn't respect the Open Door and the integrity of China, may have helped motivate Japan's withdrawal from Shanghai. (However, it didn't prevent the Japanese from setting up the puppet state of Manchukuo in Manchuria.) Yet, despite Western conjecture that the Japanese incursion into Shanghai was the second part of a plan to occupy large swaths of northern and central China, the military move was a rogue action by their regional naval commander unconnected to the invasion of Manchuria and was an embarrassment to top military officials in Tokyo. As soon as Chinese forces were ejected from the city, Japanese forces withdrew from it (Ferrell, 1957).

Some post-World War II internationalists, mainly Democrats, succeeded in promoting in the popular mind the dubious narrative that if Republican Hoover had stood up to the Japanese in 1931 and 1932, World War II (in the Pacific, at least) could have been avoided. (Some other analysts argued that Hoover's non-interventionist security policy was fine for the low threat environment and war weariness of the 1920s but became out of date in about 1930 because of the rise of totalitarian militaristic threats (Herring, 2008). However, those analysts had the luxury of Monday morning quarterbacking and were doing so backward through the lens of the alleged lessons of the later appeasement of Hitler at Munich in 1938 and having incorporated the implicit perspective that the United States should police the world using its military, often through one-sided collective security alliances that are a fig leaf for unilateral armed intervention. Perhaps instead, analysts ought to look at Hoover's policy toward Japan with the severe constraints that World War I had

placed on it. The horrendous meat grinder of the First World War had made other great powers—especially France and Britain, the latter of which had many more economic interests in China than the United States—no more eager to push back against Japan than was Hoover. The war had exhausted those countries.

As for the United States, although the duration of U.S. involvement in World War I was much shorter than it was during World War II, American casualty rates were astronomically higher during the first conflict. Thus, by the unnecessary U.S. entry into the Great War to “make the world safe for democracy,” to prosecute the “war to end all wars,” and to attain a peace based on Woodrow Wilson’s idealistic Fourteen Points, Wilson was caught flat-footed when secret agreements among U.S. allies were revealed showing that the war for them was to expand their colonial empires at the expense of the war’s losers. Therefore, from the end of the war in 1918 up until 1940, even when Adolf Hitler was overrunning half of Europe, the disillusioned American public understandably didn’t want to be anywhere near another such bloodbath.

Thus, Hoover likely could not have dragged the country into war with Japan even if he had wanted to do so. In fact, the war-weary American public had elected the non-belligerent Harding, Coolidge, and Quaker Hoover because they were averse to faraway wars that sucked away lives and national resources. In addition, the United States and other Western nations were too preoccupied with the international economic cataclysm to worry about developments in faraway Manchuria (Iriye, 2015). Furthermore, Hoover realized that only a substantial revision of the post-Versailles Treaty state of affairs would have dissuaded Japan and Germany from foreign military escapades. Finally, had Hoover intervened against Japan, he might have been accused of exaggerating a foreign policy crisis to distract from the horrendous economic collapse at home. The worldwide economic collapse had allowed the militarists to take power in Japan and made the western world leery of another war to rebuff their territorial appetites, especially when their extent was at first veiled. At the time, few understood the import of the Manchurian crisis (Ferrell, 1957).

Franklin Roosevelt maintained the same non-interventionist foreign policy as Hoover till 1937 (Adler, 1974). Even then, FDR didn’t impose strangling economic sanctions on American exports of oil and scrap metal to Japan until Japan invaded Indochina in 1940--long after it had invaded China proper in 1937--and had to wait until the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor to rouse the leery America public to war.

Furthermore, given the poor state of its Navy, it is unlikely that the United States could have won a war with Japan in 1931 (Current, 1954; Ellis, 1968). The American fleet commander reported that his ships were old, and the crews were too small and poorly trained (Ellis, 1968). Of course, if the United States, under Hoover, refused to police the world, the U.S. Navy didn’t need to be even equal to other navies, given the intrinsically excellent geographic position of the country far away from the world’s centers of conflict. In addition, Monday morning quarterbacking aside, in 1931, it would have been hard to predict that Japan would have invaded China in 1937 and other countries in East Asia after that. In fact, in 1931, Japan had gone farther than just invading Manchuria but then pulled back after kicking out Nationalist Chinese forces from Shanghai in China proper.

Thus, few U.S. economic interests in Manchuria, a war-weary American public and Congress leery of overseas military adventures, and a weak Navy limited Hoover's actions during the 1931 Manchurian crisis, even if he had wanted to be more interventionist with the U.S. military (Ellis, 1968). The only other option was economic sanctions, which definitely would not have worked economically without multilateral cooperation (especially on the part of League leaders Britain and France); they likely would not have worked even multilaterally to compel the Japanese military to exit Manchuria—a major political goal that sanctions have historically been unsuccessful in achieving. George C. Herring (2008) sums it up best:

It has been conventional wisdom since the 1940s that a firm Western response in 1931 would have prevented World War II. The so-called Manchurian/Munich analogy, which preached the necessity of resistance to aggression at the outset, became a stock-in-trade of postwar U.S. foreign policy. To be sure, the paralyzing impact of the depression and the sharp divisions among the Western powers resulted in a weak response...But there is no certainty that a firmer response in Manchuria would have prevented subsequent Japanese and German aggression.

Nor did the non-response necessarily ensure future war. Neither Japan nor Nazi Germany at this time had a master plan or explicit timetable for expansion. The plain hard truth is that the Western powers in 1931 lacked both the will and the means to stop Japan's conquest of Manchuria. However attractive economic sanctions may seem in retrospect, their track record through history does not inspire confidence. They generally succeed only when the major powers unite behind them, which was assuredly not the case in 1931-1932. The Western democracies together could not have brought to bear enough military power to stop Japan. To have gone to war in 1931 might have been more disastrous than a decade later.

As for the implication that Hoover's policies might have contributed to the rise of Hitler in Germany (who was named chancellor in January 1933 only two months before Hoover left office on March 4, 1933) one should look elsewhere for the primary responsibility. In January 1933, the true meaning was uncertain of Hitler's rise to power and its ramifications for the European power equilibrium (Ferrell, 1957). In searching for more direct causes for the Fuhrer's ascension, the ill effects of the Great Depression and hyperinflation (both caused by World War I) led many in Germany to turn to the hyper-nationalist Hitler. Also, in late March 1931, the aforementioned French (and British) unease with the German-Austrian customs union led France to demand repayment of short-term loans to the two countries, resulting in financial collapse for both of them.

Furthermore, at the World Disarmament Conference in 1932, it became apparent that political turmoil in Germany was the principal threat to world peace. Then-German Chancellor Brüning had discussions with the Americans about his moderate proposals for revising the Versailles Treaty, which had ended World War I, to bolster the German Republic and to facilitate a possible disarmament agreement. All present, except the French premier, were favorable to the German proposals. France's stubborn refusal to discuss them nixed the effort. A few months later the German Republic fell, Hitler took power, and peace evaporated (Myers, 1940).

Finally, Britain and France should have begun building up their militaries earlier to meet the resurrection of the nearby German threat; traditionally, the faraway United States had stayed out of most of Europe's wars. (And the world would have been better off if the United States had

remained on the sidelines during World War I and let Germany likely win a 15-round decision, which would have resulted in exhausted European powers, in only a small adjustment to Europe's borders, and in the much lower likelihood of Hitler's rise and World War II in Europe.)

To the extent that Hoover's poor economic policies contributed to the worldwide depression, one might allocate some very indirect blame to him for the Nazis' ultimate rise. However, other major causes were German economic collapse and hyperinflation, which were caused by World War I, and the punitive post-war Versailles Treaty, which rubbed Germany's nose in defeat after the first war. In the treaty, the allies, especially France, extracted from Germany territorial concessions, substantial reparations, and a "war guilt" admission, which unfairly shamed Germany for causing the war--when blame should have been shared by both victors and vanquished.

If one wanted to blame someone in the United States for enabling the rise of the Nazis, it should not be Hoover, but Woodrow Wilson, who as a "neutral" had made huge war loans and exported many arms to the allies, but not to Germany, and then had entered World War I to tip the advantage away from Germany to Britain and France. Wilson had allowed the allies to unfairly continue the starvation blockade long after the armistice, blame Germany for the war, make the Versailles Treaty punitive toward Germany, and he had himself demanded the German Kaiser's abdication—all of which later paved the way for the German bitterness that allowed Hitler to rise and rule Germany. Finally, World War I was a big cause of the Great Depression; both led to the rise of Hitler, Mussolini, and a militaristic Imperial Japan and sapped the will and resources of Western nations to resist their aggressions (Ferrell, 1957).

Attempt at Naval Disarmament Was Successful

At President Warren Harding's initiative, the Washington Conference of 1920-1921 led to the first arms limitation agreement among the great naval powers. The treaty, however, limited only battleships and aircraft carriers but not cruisers, destroyers and submarines. The United States had fallen behind other countries in constructing vessels in the ship classes not limited. However, in the London Naval Treaty of 1930, building on the prior bilateral Rapidan agreement between Britain and the United States for naval parity, the largest naval powers agreed to limit all categories of naval warships--including cruisers, destroyers, and submarines--until 1936. The treaty was the first comprehensive naval arms limitation treaty in modern history, with all ship categories covered (Ferrell, 1957). The treaty also regulated the wartime conduct of submarines against merchant ships.

However, during the treaty negotiations, for their participation in the new treaty, France tried to extort from Hoover, the driver of the effort for further naval disarmament, a security guarantee. Laudably, Hoover stubbornly refused this pressure, because he thought such a measure would obligate the United States to defend France in time of war. The British had much more at stake in Europe than did the United States but remembered that the Entente with France had dragged them into the meat grinder of the Great War, and thus also rejected France's demand for a security guarantee. Thus, France and its rival Italy were not ultimately parties to the treaty--so only Japan, Britain and the United States participated (Myers, 1940).

The Navy League, the lobbying group in the United States for greater naval expenditure, then began pressuring to build up the American fleet to the London Treaty's limits. However, Hoover noted that U.S. land and naval forces were greater than the levels prior to World War I, thus causing fear of the United States among some countries. Hoover cut naval construction for the 1931-1932 fiscal year and terminated all naval shipbuilding for the following year. His rationale was that this move would contribute to peace and a more robust U.S. economy. Nevertheless, during his four-year term, Hoover completed 80,000 tons of new ship construction and started another 100,000 tons. (Also, army materiel was mechanized, and aircraft inventories were increased by 40 percent.)

By the end of the first term of the Roosevelt administration (1933-1937), before any acute foreign danger to the United States arose, FDR had nearly doubled the Navy's yearly budget from the average annual sum spent during the four years of the Hoover administration (Myers, 1940; DeConde, 1981). Despite the London Treaty setting a ratio of 10-10-7 for battleships and large cruisers, 10-10-6 for light cruisers, and parity for submarines among Britain, the United States, and Japan, respectively, the agreement was unpopular in Japan, political extremism there increased; the Japanese government eventually renounced the treaty in 1935, leading to the naval arms race that Hoover had tried so heroically to stop (Herring, 2008).

In contrast to naval disarmament, the Congress and President-elect Roosevelt ignored Hoover's effort to ratify a treaty on the "Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War," signed by Calvin Coolidge in 1925, or alternatively pass a law giving the president discretion to limit or halt U.S. arms exports in instances when other arms manufacturing nations also had ceased their sales (Myers, 1940).

At the World Disarmament Conference in 1932, Hoover proposed to cut the tonnage of naval warships—battleships, aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, and submarines—by one-third below the levels of the London Treaty of 1930, reduce land armies by a third, and abolish all offensive weapons, such as tanks, chemical weapons, large mobile guns, and all bombers and bombardment from the air (to save civilians). The American General Staff and the Technical Committee of the Arms Conference supported the practicality of Hoover's proposal. Hoover was even willing to use debt owed to the United States by other countries as a lever to get their agreement to his disarmament efforts (but FDR, his successor, was not). Wisely, however, Hoover was not willing to give France and Britain security guarantees, in case they were attacked, in exchange for their arms reductions—which was the main sticking point to obtaining an agreement (Iriye; 2015).

In the end, Hoover's initiative was not adopted by other nations before he left office. Had offensive weapons, such as tanks, large mobile guns, and bombers been abolished by treaty in 1932, Hitler would have had more difficulty in amassing such weapons to attack other countries beginning in 1939 (Myers, 1940).

Independence of the Philippines

In late 1932, Congress--motivated by bigotry to end Filipino immigration into the United States and by pressure from American labor and agricultural lobbying interests to stanch competition from Philippine sugar, tobacco, and coconut oil--voted to give the Philippines its independence

after a decade-long transition period. In this interregnum, the Philippines would have a commonwealth status—that is, restricted autonomy and self-government.

On principle, Hoover was opposed to the United States possessing colonies and believed that the separation of the Philippines should be complete, including relinquishing U.S. military bases there. Hoover didn't want any intermediate status that implied U.S. responsibility for the defense of the islands—against internal turmoil or a foreign aggressor—but no authority over them. He also feared that the short period of adjustment away from free trade with the United States could result in Philippine economic instability, which would prevent the islands from affording their own defense and might even lead to economic collapse (Myers, 1940). Also, Secretary of State Stimson may have convinced Hoover that U.S. withdrawal from the Philippines at that time would have exacerbated Japanese intransigence in Manchuria (Current, 1954). Hoover vetoed the bill for Philippine commonwealth status, apparently thinking that Filipino leaders opposed partial independence, which they initially did after Congress overrode his veto. However, they later accepted this halfway status (DeConde, 1981; Adler 1974).

Hoover's Security Policy Compared to Other Presidents Since 1900

Herbert Hoover had the least interventionist security policy of any president since 1900. Thus, the policy comported the best with the constitutional framers' anti-militarist notions of staying out of unnecessary foreign wars and avoiding entangling, permanent alliances. He didn't even intervene in Latin America, traditionally the United States' backyard playground. (Hoover's foreign economic policies were not as good as his security policies—that is, the Smoot-Hawley tariff and the debt moratorium and standstill agreements in international finance.)

Gerald Ford earned a distant second place for the most restrained presidential security policy since 1900. Although unlike Hoover, he was not an advocate of the restrained security policy of the framers or of their conception of a modest executive role in foreign affairs, Ford served only two-and-a-half years in the White House, thus permitting him to get into less mischief abroad than any other post-World War II president. His main transgression was the attack on Cambodia during the Mayaguez incident in 1975. Instead of negotiating with the Cambodians for the release of the captured ship Mayaguez and her crew, who were held hostage, he used Marines to attack a Cambodian island, which could have resulted in the death of the captives. He undertook this reckless action to show that the United States was still standing tall as some of Southeast Asia was falling to communism after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from that region and because he wanted to appear tough before he was up for re-election in 1976—hardly good excuses for getting lots of Marines killed. Ford also became involved in the Angolan civil war using covert action, for which Congress, in a rare move, laudably cut off funds.

Jimmy Carter wins third place for his non-interventionist orientation, with the only direct blemish on it being the mission to rescue American hostages in Iran. This intervention might be excused by arguing that when the Iranian government condoned students overrunning the U.S. embassy, they attacked American soil under international law. Carter could have attacked Iran in retaliation, but that action probably would have resulted in the hostages being killed. Instead, Carter opted for a much more sensible military rescue of the hostages, which failed because of military

incompetence. The captives were later released through Carter's long negotiation with the Iranian government.

More damning for Carter was his indirect funding and arming of the radical Islamist Mujahideen freedom fighters in Afghanistan to give the Soviet Union its own "Vietnam." In that effort, he was successful. His successor, Ronald Reagan, doubled down on Carter's policy, and the Soviets withdrew after almost a decade of futilely fighting against the Afghan guerrillas. However, many Reagan-friendly analysts have overstated the effect of this Soviet loss on bringing about the end of the Cold War and the toppling of the Soviet Union. Although this brushfire war may have been a drain of resources at a time when the price of oil, the Soviets' major export, had plummeted, the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire was mainly caused by a dysfunctional communist economy that had stagnated. More important, Carter and Reagan, out of the ashes of this intervention, inadvertently helped create al Qaeda, which turned out to be the most significant threat to the U.S. homeland since the War of 1812.

Carter also should be docked for the Carter Doctrine, which was an overreaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which Carter's aid to the Mujahideen had provoked. In it, he pledged to "defend" Persian Gulf oil supplies, previously the bailiwick of Britain and then later Saudi Arabia and pre-revolutionary Iran. At the time Carter promulgated the doctrine, the United States did not have the military forces needed to project power into that distant region. Reagan again doubled down on the Carter policy and undertook one of the few peacetime military build ups in American history, in part, to safeguard such Gulf oil supplies, which cost less than all the military forces needlessly "securing" them. Because significant profits can be made selling oil into the world market, that is the best mechanism for getting the commodity to consumers. Oil exports travel around wars and even through them. Military forces are only useful if a country is trying to put its thumb on the supplies of petroleum going to other nations. Many of the United States' fruitless and costly wars in the Middle East could have been avoided if Carter had not created his doctrine to "defend" Gulf oil.

HOLDERS OF fourth place, serving after the horrors of World War I, Harding and Coolidge were fairly restrained in their security policies, except that they still carried on some interventions in several Latin American countries (Coolidge was trying to ameliorate this policy). As their successor, Hoover dumped the policy altogether. In fifth place is Dwight Eisenhower, a former general who could boast, as could Hoover, that no American military personnel were killed on his watch. His only overt military intervention was his invasion of Lebanon in 1958. The mystery remains as to why Ike conducted this military adventure, perhaps to show that he wasn't afraid to intervene militarily somewhere—anywhere.

Although Eisenhower--as a general who had seen the horrors of large-scale conflict in World War II--had a good record in minimizing overt military interventions, he accelerated smaller unconstitutional covert actions (wars). He overthrew democratically elected left-of-center governments in Iran and Guatemala and formulated the plan for the invasion at the Bay of Pigs in Cuba by Cuban exiles, which his successor John F. Kennedy executed disastrously. Also, during the Cold War, Ike committed the United States to defending numerous non-strategic countries in far flung parts of the world by expanding the Pax Americana policy of creating permanent, entangling alliances, which Harry Truman had begun. Furthermore, Eisenhower warned against

the “military-industrial-complex” that Truman had originated during the Korean War but that Ike himself had made permanent during peacetime.

Even worse, Eisenhower laudably reduced the defense budget but did so by paring down expensive conventional forces and instead building massive numbers of comparatively cheaper nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles. This build up started a dangerous nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union that almost ended in nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 during the Kennedy administration and during the Able Archer nuclear exercise in 1983 during the Reagan administration.

Even though the security policies of Ford, Carter, Harding/Coolidge, and Eisenhower had flaws, and were a distant second, third, fourth, and fifth places to Hoover’s “independent internationalism”, they were heads above other presidents since 1900. The next batch of presidents in rank would be William Howard Taft, who used “dollar diplomacy,” which employed the U.S. military to enforce contracts of American business in Latin America; Teddy Roosevelt, more belligerent before and after being president but still used military force to steal what became the Panama Canal Zone from Colombia and flexed U.S. muscles as a rising world power by sending the Great White Fleet on an around-the-world cruise; and Barack Obama, who passed for a “restrained” president in the post-Cold War world. He reduced the U.S. military role in Afghanistan and Iraq but overthrew Muammar Gaddafi in Libya using air power and conducted small unconstitutional air wars in at least Syria, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. Beyond these chief executives, presidential belligerence goes up dramatically—with presidents since 1900 who started major wars or dramatically expanded America’s role as an interventionist global superpower.

Hoover and the nation’s founders would have shuddered at such foreign adventurism, which leads to death and destruction abroad and big government and erosion of civil liberties at home.

Conclusion

After the debacle of the Vietnam War quagmire, “independent internationalism” warnings against imperialism, foreign entanglements, and excessive defense spending—which Hoover and also Republican Senator Robert Taft had advocated, again became fashionable (Adler, 1974). Taking advantage of the United States’ geographic distance from the centers of the world conflict, the Constitution’s framers originally had formulated this very propitious foreign policy. The policy had succeeded, with a few exceptions, in shielding the U.S. from foreign wars and their exorbitant resource drain--so that the country could develop the largest and most prosperous economy in the world. That successful foreign policy, based on the bedrock of the nation’s advantageous geography, was then finally abandoned after World War II when the United States decided to police the globe by initiating commitments to defend many countries around the world using one-sided alliances, creating far-flung overseas military bases do so, and conducting copious military meddling in the affairs of other countries to reduce “threats” to such allies and increase “stability.”

Given that nuclear weapons, intercontinental-range missiles, and long-range bombers have allowed the defense of the United States without overseas alliances, bases, and military adventures, perhaps a reversion to Hoover’s and the framers’ more rational, peaceful, and affordable foreign

policy is in order. And given the current \$21 trillion national debt; exhaustion of the American public with the bogs in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the other seven simultaneous wars that the United States is presently conducting in the developing world (Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Somalia, and the worldwide fight against ISIS, al Qaeda); and the consequent election of a populist president who has largely promised a less overextended U.S. foreign policy abroad, the time to do so may be now. Going back to the future--with a re-adoption of Hoover-style "independent internationalism" likely would achieve a period of strategic and economic renewal to ensure the United States retains its great power status for a long time to come.

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XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE ON AFRICAN NATIONALS IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

Xenophobia in South Africa is a phenomenon analogous to hatred and violence towards colonialists initially but of recent, African nationals. Contemporarily, the level of violence has exacerbated to a boiling point characterized by the outright destruction of properties and the killings of African nationals in South Africa. Unfortunately, despite its notoriety, the conflict has been allowed to escalate over the years, and adequate attention has not been given, neither have sufficient policies been implemented towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict. It is imperative to note that if not properly managed, this conflict has the potential of transforming into a genocide of great magnitude. This paper, therefore, seeks to examine various occurrences and climes of xenophobic attacks in South Africa and determine the various causes of the conflict. This paper further seeks to examine the current security regimen in place as well as the role of the

international community in violent conflicts such as this. It will then proffer recommendations to fill likely gaps identified in the course of this study

Introduction

Migration is a global phenomenon that is as old as human existence on earth. For instance, early men and women moved from region to region in search of better livelihoods and sometimes for the pleasure of discovery. Since then, human movement from areas of social and economic distress to those with better prospects for survival and self-actualization have continued unabated. Logically, in contemporary global geopolitical parlance, this has meant high South-North flows of people seeking greener pastures and self-actualization in the more developed regions of the world. Tellingly, amongst the world's regions, Europe, North America, and Western Asia have the highest migrant populations of 64 million, 45 million and 22 million respectively (UN, 2006).

South Africa has been faced with the rapid influx of both legal and illegal foreign immigrants entering and living in the country. It has been on record that, more than 2.2 million immigrants were residing in South Africa from the 53 African States Dauda, Sakariyau, & Ameen, (2018). In 2011, the South African statistical records showed that Zimbabwe had the largest immigrants in South Africa, followed by Mozambique among other foreign nationals (Molathwa, 2012).

South Africa is one of the countries in Africa where foreigners or immigrants love to visit and perhaps stay due to its industrialized setup and conducive atmosphere. The country is one of the most industrialized countries, if not the first of its kind, in Africa. In fact, the buoyant nature of the South African economy has attracted people from all walks of life to migrate into the country (Adeogun & Faluyi, 2018). Similarly, Bremmer (2019) opined that South Africa will continue to attract immigrants from across the continent to its shores, and to its cities in particular, given that its level of economic development is unrivaled in Africa and immigrants tend to thrive in the informal retail sector.

Unfortunately, South Africa has experienced violence against African foreigners since 2008, and it has become an almost chronic problem. The uncontrolled influx of migrants has been categorized over the years as legal, documented, illegal or undocumented. On occasion, such realities have led to what has been called 'xenophobic' or 'Afro-phobic' violence. Ngcamu & Mantzaris (2019). These acts of violence against African nationals/migrants were termed as xenophobic as nature. Xenophobia, simply put, is the fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers; it is embodied in discriminatory attitudes and behavior, and often culminates in violence, abuses of all types, and exhibitions of hatred Solomon & Kosaka, (2013).

It is imperative to note that xenophobia is not a problem only accustomed to South Africa. As Augustine & Isike (2013) note, the problem of xenophobia is by no means limited to just South Africa. Discrimination against foreigners takes place around the world, especially in countries experiencing political or economic upheaval. However, xenophobic violence, in particular, has become a longstanding feature in post-Apartheid South Africa. Since 1994, tens of thousands of people have been harassed, attacked, or killed because of their status as outsiders or foreign nationals (Freemantle & Landau, 2015).

In 1969 Ghana issued the Aliens Compliance Order which resulted in more than three million foreigners, mainly citizens of Nigerian, Burkina Faso and Niger, being deported. This Ghanaian crusade was later retaliated in 1983 with the "Ghana Must Go" xenophobic and Afrophobic

campaigns in which two million Ghanaians (and other nationals) were deported from Nigeria Zenda, (2019) The xenophobic actions in countries like Ghana, Angola, Nigeria, Uganda, and South Africa were attributed to economic issues. The reaction of xenophobia in Kenya and Chad were caused by war on terror Bremmer, (2019). Gordon (2019) submits that xenophobic prejudices in Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon were attached to politics and economic considerations. He states that the deportation of Angolans by the Congo Kinshasa was attributed to the political issues of the country then. Therefore, the idea behind the deportation or expulsion of foreign nationals among African countries is to create opportunities for the indigenes in their native land. This has formed part of the arguments in those countries where xenophobia has taken place, having forgotten that other nationals who reside in their country are contributing either directly or indirectly to the economic development of the country Hart, (2016).

Unfortunately, these spates of xenophobic attacks in South Africa have increased exponentially over the years. The fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers is evident in discriminatory attitudes and behaviors and often emerges in forms of violence, destruction of property and unconstitutional killings of African migrants. The most recent spates of violence on African nationals was on September 1st, 2019, where shops owned by several African nationals were destroyed and the shop owners killed. Regrettably, these heinous acts of violence have not been given adequate attention, neither have stringent policies been implemented to curb them. If not properly managed from its root causes, these xenophobic attacks have the potential of transforming to a genocide, even worse than the Rwandan genocide of 1994. Also, the victimization of African nationals by South Africans can destabilize the long-term relationship between South Africa and other African countries. Thus, it is pertinent that all dispute resolution methods are exhausted in order to prevent its further escalation and to promotion peacebuilding strategies. This paper, therefore, seeks to examine various occurrences and climes of xenophobic attacks in South Africa and determine the various causes of the conflict. This paper further seeks to examine the current security regimen in place as well as the role of the international community in violent conflicts as this. It will proffer recommendations to fill likely gaps identified in the course of this study

Conceptual Clarification

Xenophobia: Xenophobia, that elegant-sounding name for an aversion to persons unfamiliar, ultimately derives from two Greek terms: *xenos*, which can be translated as either "stranger" or "guest," and *phobos*, which means either "fear" or "flight." *Phobos* is the ultimate source of all English *phobia* terms, but many of those were actually coined in English or New Latin using the combining form *phobia* (which traces back to *phobos*). Xenophobia itself came to us by way of New Latin and first appeared in print in English in the late 19th century Merriam-Webster (2010)

Violence: Violence consists of actions, words, attitudes, structures or systems that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damage and/or prevent people from reaching their full human potential Fisher et al., (2000).

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored both on the social identity theory and the frustration-aggression theory

Social Identity Theory

Tajfel and Turner's (2016) social identity theory explains that part of a person's concept of self comes from the groups to which that person belongs. An individual does not just have a personal selfhood, but multiple selves and identities associated with their affiliated groups. A person might act differently in varying social contexts according to the groups they belong to, which might include a sports team they follow, their family, their country of nationality, and the neighborhood they live in, among many other possibilities (Learning Theories, 2019). Tajfel proposed that the groups (e.g. social class, family, football team, etc.) which people belonged to were an important source of pride and self-esteem Vinney, (2019). Groups give us a sense of social identity; a sense of belonging to the social world. We divided the world into "them" and "us" based through a process of social categorization (i.e. we put people into social groups). Prejudiced views between cultures may result in racism; in its extreme forms, racism may result in genocide, such as occurred in Germany with the Jews, in Rwanda between the Hutus and Tutsis and, more recently, in the former Yugoslavia between the Bosnians and Serbs Leod, (2019).

Theoretical Application

The South Africans are known to use derogatory slang to describe foreigners, precisely, the strange sounds of foreign languages, especially those spoken by African foreigners. As Augustine & Isike (2013) note, *Makwerekwere* is a popular slang used to label African immigrants in South Africa, and in some cases in Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland. It is an inter-linguistic slang that is modified according to the language of the user. For example, a Zulu would say *A Makwerekwere*, a Sotho would say *Makwerekwere*, while an English speaker may drop the prefix altogether and simply say *Kwerekwere*. It is evident from the above that the South Africans classify themselves as the "in-group" while other African migrants were recognized as the "outgroup". One could safely argue that the classification of the African migrants as the out-group developed into discriminatory attitudes which later escalated into acts of violence such as habitual killings and destruction of properties owned by African migrants. The dichotomy and classification led to reprisal attacks on South African owned properties in other African states.

Frustration Aggression Theory

Frustration-Aggression Theory was adopted from Dougherty and Pfaitzgraff's (1971) Theory of Frustration and Aggression. The theory is anchored on the premise that aggression is always a function of frustration and the occurrences of aggressive behavior always presuppose the existence of frustration. Dougherty & Pfentzgraff, (1971). Aggression is defined as an action with the intent to harm and can be physical or non-physical. As to the principal hypothesis, Dollard et al. (1939) posited "that the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression (6)". Frustration, in this context, was specified as the thwarting of a goal response, and a goal response, in turn, was taken to mean the reinforcing of a final operation in an ongoing behavior sequence. At times, however, the term 'frustration' is used to refer not only to the process of blocking a person's attainment of a reinforcer but also to the reaction to such blocking. Consequently, 'being frustrated' means both that one's access to reinforcers is being thwarted by another party (or possibly by circumstances) and that one's reaction to this thwarting is one of annoyance. It was soon recognized

that the initial claims – (a) that aggression is always based on frustration and (b) that frustration always leads to aggression – were far too general.

Theoretical Application

The xenophobic attacks in South Africa could be a result of frustration on the side of the South Africans who are not happy with the rate of unemployment in the state, while the African nationals are also frustrated by the hardships they face. As Dollard (1939) posited, “the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression”. Thus, they displace their frustration through the destruction of properties and habitual killings of African nationals in the state. On the side of African nationals, upon hearing of the news of the violence against their brothers in South Africa, they become angry and displace their aggression on South African’s owned properties in their state.

Methodology

This study utilized the qualitative method and adopted historical and documentary research designs. For this study, the researcher also adopted convenience and purposive sampling. This paper relied solely on secondary sources of data that were analysed using thematic content analysis. These include official government documents, reports, journal articles and books. It also included past interview transcripts from media outlets such as PUNCH, BBC, Al Jazeera, journals, textbooks, and videos..

Results, Findings, and Conclusion

Accounts of Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

The cases of xenophobic violence as narrated by victims have been troubling and unsettling to say the least. With the recent spates of violence and attacks on Africa nationals as narrated by media outlets, the led to Nigeria and other African states to take proactive measures towards rescuing their citizens from the state. A private airline named the “Air Peace” volunteered to repatriate Nigerians from South Africa. The repatriation came in after the riots in Pretoria and Johannesburg. The airline successfully returned 829 Nigerians from South Africa (APNEWS, 2019). Upon arrival, the returnees gave troubling accounts of what they experienced in the state many lost their investments, families and homes.

This study observed that Africa nationals in South Africa lost their investments as a result of the Xenophobic attacks. A respondent said:

I returned because the problem had assumed a dangerous proportion. I could no longer bear it. From the moment I arrived in South Africa, I faced war. I went there in 2012.” He furthered before I left South Africa, they killed one of my brothers. He showed displeasure saying he lost, I lost up to R200,000 (approximately N5m) (PUNCH, 2019).

Likewise, another respondent who lost his investments as a result of the spates of attacks said that:

I lost everything. They had not stopped the attacks. I was in South Africa for 14 years. I lost a lot of things, but I am very happy that I am back. I thank God. In the last attack, they burnt down my shop. It was worth R1,200,000 (approximately N30m). If I could have that money in Nigeria, I'd be a big man. I could not get anything. I came back empty-handed, except for some of my clothes and shoe. He furthered that a lot of Nigerians are out there crying, and they wish to come back home PUNCH, (2019).

This study observed that Africa nationals experienced violent attacks in South Africa many of them were psychologically traumatized because of the attacks.

A respondent said:

The violence I experienced there can never be blotted out of my memory in this lifetime. Throughout the period, my kids did not go to school – they missed their exams. Everywhere was chaotic. The citizens were burning people's things, looting foreigners' properties and committing all manner of crimes PUNCH, (2019)

The most unsettling of all these accounts was that of a Nigerian teenager, aged 15 years old. She said:

The situation in South Africa is better imagined than experienced. I am very happy the government and Air Peace brought us home PUNCH (2019)

Similarly, another respondent revealed that:

The situation is terrible my brother I am telling you, we were all scared, they go from home to home looking for Nigerians, that's what they are looking for. This time it is not about segregation of white from black, it is about the oppression of other Africans AL JAZEERA, (2019)

Not only Nigerians were affected. According to AL JAZEERA (2019), more than 700 people from other countries, including Malawi and Zimbabwe, have sought refuge in community centers. Many left their homes with little more than a few bags when the violence began. For example, a Mozambican man who has lived in South Africa for over 30 years was interviewed at the airport in Johannesburg. He lost everything in the riots and registered for a temporary travel document to return home. He explains:

What made me run is that I saw how they were attacking people, attacking them like dogs. And some of the people who were attacking us were people that have known us for a long time. That's what hurts me the most AL JAZEERA, (2019).

From the various accounts of persons, many claims to have expressed violent attacks from South Africa, some even went further to term these attacks as xenophobic in nature. These accounts were given by Nigerians who were repatriated from South Africa following the waves of attacks on Africa nationals.

An Overview of the Causes of Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa

Tracing the history of xenophobic violence in South Africa, one must inevitably come across the May 2008 attacks on African nationals. However, it is imperative to note that the violence against African nationals did not begin with these attacks, they were the outcome of several events, as Hambar (2009) opined that violence against foreign nationals did not begin with the May 2008 attacks. Since 1994, hundreds of people have been harassed, attacked, or killed because of their status as outsiders or non-nationals. Of a similar view, Harris (2002) explains that the literature on the causes of xenophobia in South Africa can be classified into three themes: the isolation, scapegoating and biocultural hypotheses.

Structural Causes of the Xenophobic Violence

Hambar (2009) blamed vigilantism as one of the factors responsible for the 2008 xenophobic attacks. He viewed vigilantism as the fear, often exploited by political parties keen to criticize the current government that crime is spiraling out of control. Furthermore, he believed this fear and sense of helplessness contributes to a climate in which the excesses of vigilantism become attractive, and police abuses are another consequence. Unfortunately, when this propaganda was promoted, there were rumors that most of the crimes were committed by African nationals, which lead to discriminatory assaults of African migrants in the country and negatively affected the foreign image of migrants in the region Harris (2002), opined that while there was a considerable inflow of white immigrants during this period, Black African immigration to South Africa was extremely limited. Thus, there was minimal contact between South Africans and black foreigners. The end of apartheid and South Africa's re-entry to the international arena sparked a massive inflow of African migrants into the country. This resulted in hostility and hatred towards foreigners, especially African immigrants. The xenophobic attacks on the apartheid regime and the legacy of apartheid was deep and rigidly entrenched inequality for black people. While political and civil freedom soothed the wounds of apartheid, the long term, and worsening economic inequality has deepened resentment and caused antipathy toward brothers and sisters from other African countries Pandor, (2019). The racial segregation fertile ground for xenophobia in several ways: First, "it created racialized notions of identity and worth, which encouraged Black South Africans to see themselves not only as inferior to whites but also as separate from the rest of the continent." Second, it encouraged separation and compartmentalization of various populations as a means of governance and discouraged integration or contact between groups. Finally, its institutionalized violence as a means of communicating grievances and achieving political ends." CRAI, (2009). A 2014 survey by the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) revealed that "levels of xenophobia and intolerance of foreigners are increasing in Gauteng", as "thirty-five percent of all respondents said we should send all foreigners home now.", and similar studies have continued in this trend. Misago, Freemantle, & Landau, 2015.

Proximate Causes of the Xenophobic Violence

Another factor responsible is the increase in unemployment rates and the economic downturn in the country. Mogoeng, the current Chief Justice of South Africa (2019) posited that in 2008 that

the largest African-on-African attack happened and why is it that a large-scale attack of that nature is happening in 2019. He adds that there was an economic problem in 2008 and there's a serious economic problem now. Many people have been retrenched, there are no jobs and life is expensive," he further added that people were committing violent attacks, like those seen in the Johannesburg CBD recently, because they were desperate (BBC, 2019). Likewise Ukwandu, (2017) opines that South Africa believes that foreigners are taking jobs from them, while others claim that black African foreigners are taking women from them, and yet others claim that foreigners are bringing crime into the country. As of July 2019, national unemployment rates stood at 29% impacting an estimated 6.7 million people. Some 56.4% of 15-24 year-olds and 35.6% of the 25-34 year-olds remain jobless with 71% of those in unemployment spending a period of a year or longer looking for work. Dahir, (2019). From the above one can safely assume that South Africans blame the African nationals for taking their jobs both skilled and unskilled. Yet data from the government agency Statistics South Africa showed there were 2.1 million international migrants in South Africa out of a population of 51.7 million in 2011. (Population figures have since jumped to 55.7 million).

In addition, South African politicians have consistently complained about the influx of foreign citizens, with some claiming they were burdening factors including the national healthcare system. The government has also cracked down on migrants coming into the country, potentially reducing their numbers over the years. For instance, between January 2012 and December 2016, the Department of Home Affairs deported close to 370,000 people majority of them from neighboring Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Lesotho. Dahir, (2019).

Social media has equally played a key role in fuelling tensions among Nigerians and has led to reprisal attacks in Nigeria. According to News 24, (2019) some posts purporting to show the violence contain old images, or footage from a different country altogether. Tens of thousands of Facebook and Twitter users have watched videos showing people frantically jumping out of a burning building. The populace was made the footage shows the deadly violence in Johannesburg while in reality, it was not filmed in South Africa at all, but in India. It happened when a horrific fire in the western Indian city of Surat, which made people jumping down the building and its wake, the fire killed 20 teenagers last May. As a result of this, South African businesses have been targeted in reprisal attacks in Nigerian cities as Nigerians violently attack South African owned shops in Nigeria. It suffices from the above to assume that social media has played a key role in fuelling reprisal attacks in Nigeria,

One could safely argue that African nations are blamed for the hardships the citizens face in their country. However, these assumptions do not hold water. According to statistics, there are about 3.6 million migrants living in South Africa, a country of more than 50 million. Most of these migrants are from Zimbabwe, Mozambique or Lesotho. Statistics South Africa estimates from 2016 put the Nigerian population at just over 30,000 or about 2 percent of foreign-born residents. The figures show that African nationals still constitute the lowest in South Africa. Thus, the African nationals are wrongly blamed for the current situation faced by South Africans. On this note, one could relate the xenophobic attacks with frustration and aggression theory. This is evident as the South Africans displace their aggression on African nationals. Thus, this conflict has its tenets in the structure of South Africa as a country, it is likely that South Africans are experiencing post-apartheid syndrome. According to studies carried out by Organisation for Economic Co-operation

and Development in 2018, they revealed that on the contrary, Africa nationals have played key roles in strengthening South Africa's economy. They further revealed that immigrants may raise South Africa's income per capita up to 5% and further observed that immigrants are less likely to displace native-born workers. (See OECD/ILO, 2018).

Obligations of the International Community and South Africa in Xenophobic Violent Conflict

The concept of globalization is predicated on the reality that no State exists in isolation and such there is a constant relationship amongst state to ensure the collective survival of all. This relationship cuts across the economy, resources, military, education, et cetera. Any attempt to disrupt this cordial relationship or undermine the sovereignty of any state resulting from violent conflict imposes several obligations on various international actors to ensure the peaceful coexistence of States.

Obligation of South Africa

International law is based on the concept of the state. The state in its turn lies upon the foundation of sovereignty, which expresses internally the supremacy of the governmental institutions and externally the supremacy of the state as a legal person. Watts & Jennings, (1992) The central role of territory in the scheme of international law may be seen by noting the development of legal rules protecting its inviolability. The principle of respect for the territorial integrity of states is well-founded as one of the linchpins of the international system, as is the norm prohibiting interference in the internal affairs of other states. General Assembly, United Nations ,(1970)

A number of factors, however, have tended to reduce the territorial exclusivity of the state in international law Shaw, (2008). These factors often come by way of obligations on the State. Max Huber once articulated thus:

Territorial sovereignty, as has already been said, involves the exclusive right to display the activities of a State. This right has a corollary a duty: the obligation to protect within the territory the rights of other States, in particular, their right to integrity and inviolability in peace and in war, together with the rights which each State may claim for its nationals in foreign territory. Without manifesting its territorial sovereignty in a manner corresponding to circumstances, the State cannot fulfill this duty. Territorial sovereignty cannot limit itself to its negative side i.e. to excluding the activities of other States; for it serves to divide between nations space upon which human activities are employed, in order to assure them at all points the minimum of protection of which international law is the guardian. Amos & Bright, (2014)

What are these corresponding obligations? The State owes towards other States: It must protect lives and properties of nationals of other States residing within her territory; it must conduct itself towards such aliens in a manner permitted by international law; it must respect the territorial integrity and political independence of other states. The State also owes obligations to the international community as a whole: it must not commit or permit her territory to be used for the

commission of acts of genocide torture or piracy, and it must not conduct itself in a manner amounting to threat to international peace and security or acts of aggression et cetera. (Amos & Bright, 2014).

The relevant poser here is whether South Africa has fulfilled its corresponding obligations to protect the lives and properties of nationals of other States residing within her territory; also, whether South Africa has conducted itself towards such aliens in a manner permitted by international law. In this regard, it is imperative to note that systemic and deeply entrenched xenophobic attitudes and behavior in South Africa are clear evidence that responses and interventions designed to address the problem have been largely ineffective. National government and relevant local authorities have thus far either tended to ignore the problem or to categorize violence against foreign nationals and other forms of xenophobic behavior as part of 'normal' crime with no need for additional targeted interventions. (Masuku, 2019). The South African Government has reiterated that the attacks against foreign nationals in South Africa are not xenophobic but normal crimes DW, (2019). Despite this claim, a Johannesburg Mayor Herman Mashaba has frequently linked the city's failures to illegal foreigners. Former deputy police minister Bongani Mkongi was rebuked by the government for allegedly saying it was 'dangerous' that a South African city was '80% foreign'. The former Minister for Health now Minister for Home Affairs, Aaron Motsoaledi accused 'foreign' nationals of what he called "burdening the country's health system". Amnesty Organisation, (2019). Statements like the foregoing by South African leaders provide justifications for violent attacks. Thus, the strategies by government to combat xenophobia cuts across tighter borders, strict regulations over businesses operated by foreigners, arrests, and mass deportation of illegal foreigners have not worked in the past because they tend to centralize foreigners as the problem that needs to be solved hence strengthening the justification for attacks. The South African Police have taken the position of accomplices in these attacks over the years, Tinei Takawira, a driver, told Human Rights Watch that after he was identified as a foreigner in a protest against employment of foreign truck drivers by South Africans he was stabbed as the police looked on without apprehending the attackers or helping him get medical care. The police claimed their mandate was to monitor the protest and not to arrest people Human Rights Watch, (2019).

It suffices from the foregoing to affirm that South Africa has neither fulfilled its corresponding obligations to protect the lives and properties of nationals of other States residing within her territory nor conducted itself towards such aliens in a manner permitted by international law. The Writers also submit that assuming without conceding that the attacks are mere crimes that are targeted at foreign nationals and even South Africans this is not a justification for the South African government to stand aloof while there is wanton destruction of lives and properties in South Africa.

Obligation of Foreign National's State

The principle of passive personality under International Law on State Jurisdiction focuses on the nationality of the victim and as such is invoked by a state to try an offender for offenses committed against its nationals abroad Amos & Bright, (2014). The Principle is said to be based on the duty of a State to protect its nationals abroad and that the sovereign asserting this jurisdiction 'is concerned with the crime's effect, rather than where it occurs' McCarthy, (1989).

This principle of jurisdiction is the most controversial and most susceptible to abuse. Many scholars still find it the most controversial in one form or the other. This is a well-established concept, although there are uncertainties as to how far it extends in practice and particularly which are included within its net (Shaw, 1990). This is particularly so because until recently when the possibility of terrorists targeting nationals of a state abroad became more rampant, (McCarthy, 1989) the jurisdictional principle was known not only for being exercised in questionable circumstances.

The principle of Passive Personality may be difficult to implement should the Countries of the victims of xenophobic attacks attempt to prosecute offenders who are South Africans. This is particularly because South Africa has maintained a position of denial on xenophobic attacks and it will be a violation of International law to invade South Africa for the purpose of effecting an arrest without the consent of South Africa. Nevertheless, the authors are of the opinion that countries, where the victims hail from, should sever ties with South Africa until the safety of their Nationals is guaranteed and effected. Also, the affected Countries should make provisions for evacuating their citizens in violent prone communities in South Africa who are willing to return to their home country.

Obligations of the United Nations and Member States

The United Nations Charter (hereinafter 'UN Charter') is relevant in assessing the obligations of the United Nations in the event of violent conflict and aggression against foreign nationals. The United Nations was constituted with the determination to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. Imperatively any attempt to jeopardize this purpose resulting from violent conflict and aggression, the United Nations is empowered to impose sanctions or armed forces under extreme situations to prevent such violation. It was apposite to state that, genocidal attacks, violent attacks, murder, and discriminatory treatment amongst others resulting from xenophobia are a violation of the determination of the United Nations.

Pursuant to Article 39 of the UN Charter, the Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security. Additionally, the UN Charter provides that in order to prevent an aggravation of the situation, the Security Council may, before making the recommendations or deciding upon the measures provided for in Article 39, call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. Such provisional measures shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, or position of the parties concerned. The Security Council shall duly take account of failure to comply with such provisional measures Article 40 of UN Charter, (1945)

The Security Council is required not to resort to armed force as the first option but is enjoined to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations. Article 41 UN Charter, (1945). Nevertheless, should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be

inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations Article 42 United Nations Charter, (1945).

The various provisions of the UN Charter on responding to violence and aggression which precludes peaceful coexistence is robust, however, the United Nations seems to be in slumber in taking appropriate steps. The involvement of the United Nations has only been seen through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), they have been involved by deploying additional staff and resources, including relief items, emergency shelter, psycho-social care, legal assistance, and support with recovery of lost livelihoods, child protection and protection against sexual and gender-based violence. The UNHCR has also called on State authorities to take every possible measure to ensure people's safety and welfare. (Yaxley, 2019) These are laudable efforts but to what extent have they been able to forestall future reoccurrence. These are merely reactionary measures after attacks. The Security Council of the UN is to be actively involved to ensure that measures are taken to prevent reoccurrence. This will help in ensuring that the Government of South Africa does not take its obligations to protect the lives and properties of foreign nationals seriously.

Obligations of the African Union and the Member States

The African Charter demonstrates the obligations of the African Union to protect human rights as an indivisible construct. The African Charter recognizes that human rights transcend individual rights. That is what a person's right can be infringed, not only as an individual but also as a member group. Hence the African Charter is concerned with 'human and peoples right.' Pursuant to Article 1 of the African Charter parties undertook to recognize the rights duties and freedoms enshrined in this Chapter and shall undertake to adopt legislative or other measures to give effect to them. The obligations imposed on State parties by this article are two-fold: 'to recognize' and 'to give effect to'. These obligations are cumulative in nature; a State that has recognized the rights without taking the further steps of making them +effective through an efficient and independent judicial system; through the provision of effective legal aid system as well as through other necessary measures would yet be in breach of Article 1.

The all-encompassing character of Article 1 has also been variously affirmed by International institutions. In (*Association of Victims of Post Electoral Violence & Interights v. Cameroon, 2002*) the African Commission declared that article 1 imposes an obligation of result and not just of diligence. This was to the effect that a State cannot be discharged of its obligation under the Charter by showing it had exercised diligence in the protection of human rights if the diligence did not, in fact, prevent human rights abuses. According to the Commission:

... the obligation which ensues from Article 1 imposes on the State of Cameroon the need to implement all the measures required to produce the result of protecting the individuals living on its territory. The use of the legal technical human and material resources that the State of Cameroon claims to have did not produce the expected result namely that of guaranteeing the

protection of human rights Association of Victims of Post Electoral Violence & Interights v. Cameroon, (2002)

The Commission also stated that Article 1 imposes on the State parties to the Charter the need to put in place, within their territories, all measures conducive to producing the result of preventing all violations of the African Charter irrespective of whether the violations are committed by a machinery of the state or by non-State actors.

In addition to Article 1, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has also held in Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum v. Zimbabwe, (2002), that:

To fulfill the rights means that any person whose rights are violated would have an effective remedy as rights without remedies have little value. Article 1 of the African Charter requires States to ensure that effective and enforceable remedies are available to individuals in case of discrimination. Article 1, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has also held in Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum v. Zimbabwe, (2002)

The African Charter recognises the following rights relevant to this study: right to non-discrimination and equality; right to life; right to dignity ; prohibition against torture, cruelty, slavery, human or degrading punishment; right to liberty and security of person; right to have one's case heard; freedom of movement and residence; right to property; right to work under equitable and satisfactory conditions; right to protection of family; equality of all people and right against domination; freedom of disposal of people's wealth and natural resources; right to economic social and cultural development; right to national and international peace and security; right to general satisfactory environment conducive to development.

It is imperative that in meeting the obligation under Article 1 of the African Charter in relation to the aforementioned rights, South Africa has recognised the rights, but the authors however must interrogate to what extent South Africa has given effect to realising the rights in the face of xenophobic attacks. On the 3rd of September 2019 President Cyril Ramaposa posted a video message on Twitter in which he condemned violence and called for it to stop immediately. The violence, however, has not stopped. (Human Rights Watch, 2019). South Africa's Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill (The Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill) B9-2018 is a significant step towards the criminalisation of xenophobia however, this bill is yet to be passed to Law. Although the police are charged with protecting all residents of South Africa from physical harm, they have often expressed ambivalence towards the rights and welfare of 'outsiders' or have been actively hostile and complicit with violence against them Misago, Freemantle, & Landau (2015). The Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court has casually asserted that "South Africans are not xenophobic... desperate people resort to desperate measures... there are no jobs, and life is expensive (McKaiser , 2019). His desperate avoidance of the word 'xenophobic' is a feeble refusal to accept that there is a false dichotomy between being frustrated by poverty and expressing that frustration as violent hatred against foreigners McKaiser ,(2019). Through empathic with the plight of poor people the authors submit that some acts of violence are inescapably xenophobic regardless of the structural injustices that its perpetrators suffer daily.

To this extent, South Africa has not met its obligation as a member of the African Union as there is no physical manifestation of protection following all their strategies. The constant denial and complacency of the South African Government on xenophobic attacks should have generated sanctions and other measures from the African Union as the core principle upon which it is founded- human rights have been violated.

Pragmatic Peaceful Means of Resolving Xenophobic Violent Conflict

Dispute resolution is the primary role of modern international law. This is in contradistinction to the role assigned to International Law prior to the later part of the 20th Century. Under that era, international law was seen as a means of preserving and consolidating sovereign absolutism and this included the right to conduct wars with or without provocations, and for any purpose whatsoever. Indeed, the Westphalia concept of sovereign absolutism sufficiently opposed the notion of compulsory submission to peaceful means of resolution of international disputes. The drafters of the 1899 Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Dispute introduced peaceful settlement of dispute (Amos & Bright, 2014).

Article 2(3) of the United Nations Charter provides: 'All members shall settle their international dispute by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered'.

Article 33 provides:

1. The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.
2. The Security Council shall, when it deems necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means.

The subsequent headings will consider some diplomatic methods of dispute settlement according to Article 33 as follows:

1. Negotiation
2. Good Offices and Mediation
3. Inquiry or Commission of Inquiry
4. Conciliation

Negotiation

Negotiation is perhaps the most utilized procedure in resolving international disputes; it is the point of entrance into the peaceful settlement of disputes Amos & Bright, (2014). It basically involves discussions between the interested parties with a view to reconcile divergent opinions, or at least, understanding the different positions maintained. (Georgia v. Russian Federation, Preliminary Objection, 2011). In most cases, it does not involve any third party, at least at that stage, and so differs from other forms of dispute settlement mechanisms. Amos & Bright, (2014).

The essence of negotiation here is to help facilitate a solution to the incessant attacks so the affected States and South African can reach a peaceful resolution and implementation strategy. They may also negotiate how affected States can help in facilitating implementation.

Good Offices and Mediation

Good offices and mediation involve the use of a third party to encourage the contending parties to come to a settlement. The third-party may be an individual or a number of individuals, a State or group of States, or an international organization. This method aims at persuading the parties in a dispute to reach satisfactory terms for its termination by themselves Amos & Bright, (2014) By the combined reading of articles 2, 3, and 6 of The Hague Convention, (1907), good offices may be initiated independently by one or more friendly States or upon the request of either contending States. Under article 4 of the Convention, the State(s), and in modern times, an international organisation offering good offices or mediation is to endeavor to reconcile the opposing claims and appease the feelings of resentment which may have arisen between the contending States.

The Good Offices and Mediation could be used in this instance as there are opposing claims with regards to whether attacks are xenophobic in nature or just ordinary crimes. The ascertainment of this will help South Africa and affected States to resolve these issues amicably.

Enquiry or Commission of Inquiry

The Hague Convention of 1907 made provisions for the constitution of commissions of inquiry in deserving cases, but the Charter of the United Nations provides for enquiry. Whether enquiry or commission of inquiry, the role assigned to them is basically the same. They are set up to precisely ascertain the facts in contention between the feuding States and facilitate a solution of the dispute by elucidating the facts by means of an impartial and conscientious investigation. The use of enquiry of commission of inquiry is conducive to situations where differences on factual matters exist between the parties Amos & Bright, (2014). The Enquiry or Commission of Inquiry can also be used to ascertain the facts in contention as aforementioned and facilitate solution through the elucidation of facts by means of an impartial and conscientious investigation. This could be set up by international organisations like African Union and the United Nations or States themselves to guide them in decision making

Conciliation

Conciliation is the process by which a third party investigates the basis of a dispute and thereafter submits a report embodying suggestions for settlement. It is extremely flexible, and its reports are not binding in nature. This differentiates it from arbitration awards. By clarifying the facts and discussing proposals, the conciliator may stimulate negotiations between parties Amos & Bright, (2014). Conciliation can be used to ascertain acts as aforementioned to gather reports, clarify facts, discuss proposals and stimulate negotiations. The Conciliation process can be facilitated by States or International Organisations. This will help facilitate peace.

Peace Education

Peace Education plays a vital role in the promotion of peace amongst individuals. Also, a major tool for Peace Building. Peace Education is about learning what peace is, what damages peace, what are the factors that lead to war? And, what peace means at all levels. UNESCO, (2016). According to Teachers without Borders, (2008) Betty Reardon says, “The ultimate goal of Peace Education is the formation of responsible, committed, and caring citizens who have integrated the values into everyday life and acquired the skills to advocate for them”. Betty Reardon (1988) opines that, “The ultimate goal of Peace Education is the formation of responsible, committed, and caring citizens who have integrated the values into everyday life and acquired the skills to advocate for them”. Coleman McCarthy (1966), in the same light, submits that “Unless we teach children peace, someone else will teach them violence”.

Thus, since these attacks has its tenets in the structure of the country and such negative perspectives about the African nationals are embedded in the minds of many, the best mechanism towards curbing, and ultimately seeking peaceful resolution to this conflict whilst achieving sustainable peace is the promotion of peace education through several media platforms such as social media, newspapers and broadcast media, as this will help bridge the gap amongst parties and positively influence the minds of many South Africans. It is also pertinent for these programs to be directed towards the youths and children in the society so as to teach and educate the children on the importance of accommodation whilst positively influencing worldviews and perceptions held by them about African nationals.

The Role of Social Media

As observed in this article, one could safely assume that social media has played key roles in promoting violence and hatred amongst parties, especially leading to reprisal attacks by Africans who were affected by these attacks. Thus, it is pertinent sensitization with regard to the flow of information through social media platforms aimed at curbing the amount of fake news that has proliferated on social media.

Conclusion

Conclusively, the recent spates of xenophobic attacks in South Africa are a symptom of problems existent in South Africa that have underpinnings in the structure and world view of the citizens. One could safely argue that the apartheid regime and the increase rate in unemployment and economic downturn in the country can be blamed as the structural and proximate causes of the xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Unfortunately, these recent spates of attacks have led to the reprisal attacks and the death of persons and destruction of properties. Little attention has been given by the state government towards seeking a sustainable solution to this crisis that has the potential of transforming into a genocide like the Rwanda genocide of 1994. As with all genocides, they begin with social classifications such as the ingroup and outgroup, like the Hutsi and Tutsi’s in Rwanda, and if left unchecked, the consequences would be detrimental to all states, with its effects lasting for years and existent through generations. To this end, it is therefore imperative that diplomatic methods of dispute settlement such as negotiation, good offices and mediation and inquiry or commission of inquiry and conciliation are adopted to promote peacebuilding strategies

in the state. The international community equally has a major role to play in the resolution of this conflict. It is pertinent to note that, there is no justification for the heinous crimes committed against Africa nationals in South Africa as they have also played key roles in growing South Africa's economy as recent studies have shown.

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Conflict-Sensitive Climate Change Adaptation in Conflict-Affected Communities

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Abstract

As the world braces for the impacts of climate change, adaptation and mitigation are the leading strategies to alleviate those effects. The severity of climate change impacts varies by region and by the capacity of individuals, communities, and states. Weak and fragile states are some of the most vulnerable to climate change's adverse impacts, but conflict-affected communities are the most susceptible and ill-equipped. Peacebuilding operations and climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCA/M) are traditionally separate communities of practice. However, pursued independently, they can destructively impact each other and potentially create negative feedback loops. Conflict-sensitive adaption is an emerging practice to bridge CCA/M and peacebuilding. Underlying environmental, social, economic, and political assumptions continually shift for resource-dependent livelihoods in peacebuilding. However, challenges remain between CCA/M and peacebuilding. This paper explores the impacts of conflict-sensitive adaption in post-conflict Nepal and concludes that conflict-sensitive adaption is critical for integrating CCA/M and peacebuilding.

Introduction

The impacts of climate change mix with economic, social, and political problems of the most fragile and conflict-affected states, producing devastating outcomes. Approximately 2.7 billion people are at risk of heightened violence due to interactions between climate change and state problems (Smith & Vivekananda, 2007). Climate change's impacts on water and food security, economic development, and increasing severity of natural disasters are all posing a compounding threat to communities and states (UNHCR, 2009). Climate change threatens to outstrip the adaptive capacity of the most vulnerable nations (Schellnhuber, 2010).

Conflict-affected states are the most susceptible and unprepared to adapt to climate change (Biermann & Boas, 2012). Many post-conflict peacebuilding operations exclude climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCA/M) measures. Consequently, this increases the exposure of the most fragile communities to the shocks of climate change (Hammill & Matthew, 2010). The separation between CCA/M and peacebuilding neglects the relationship between the environment, natural resources, conflict, and peace (Arsel, 2011). Conflict and climate change both have immense effects on the environment that post-conflict societies depend on for recovery. Pursuing peacebuilding and CCA/M separately can produce negative feedback loops (Vivekananda et al., 2014). Avoiding these negative cycles is this paper's impetus. The research question is, how can peacebuilding and CCA/M be integrated together.

This paper argues that conflict-sensitive adaptation must be built into peacebuilding. This is because conflict-sensitive adaptation supports long-term peacebuilding by shift negative feedback loops into positive ones and prepares the globe's most vulnerable populations to the impacts of climate change. Furthermore, conflict-sensitive adaptation assists in preventing the resurgence of violence. Conflict-affected communities are some of the most prone to reoccurring conflict.

This paper begins with a conceptual roadmap of peacebuilding, CCA/M, and environmental peacebuilding. Outlining these concepts is necessary from their diverse lineages integrated into conflict-sensitive CCA/M. This paper then presents the impacts of climate change on peacebuilding, war-torn communities, and fragile states. The Sahel region is used to demonstrate the compounding effects of climate change on recovering and fragile societies. Proceeding, this paper turns to integrate peacebuilding and CCA/M. Post-conflict peacebuilding and CCA/M in Nepal exposes the complicated relationship between peacebuilding and CCA/M. These two communities of practice affect each other in various ways, ranging from resource accessibility, food security, and political legitimacy. This paper concludes that conflict-sensitive adaption can be pursued in a double-loop feedback strategy to assist conflict-affected society recovery.

Conceptual Framework

Climate change is a new dimension in peacebuilding operations, hence, why it is critical to reconsider peacebuilding frameworks. Peacebuilding generally entails a "prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities" (HPCR International, n.d.). The Peace Research Institute of Oslo expands the framework to integrate (1) social, economic, and environmental dimensions, (2) governance and politics, (3) security, and (4) truth and reconciliation (Hauge, 2004). However, as Matthew (2014) asserts, peacebuilding must include time perspectives that

account for climate changes' non-linear and uncertain nature. Capacity development is becoming the focus of peacebuilding in contrast to concrete problem-solving to address this need (Hammill & Matthew, 2010). The OECD defines capacity building as the following:

The process by which individuals, groups and organizations, institutions and countries develop, enhance and organize their systems, resources and knowledge; all reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives (OECD, 2006).

Peacebuilding and CCA/M have distinct and overlapping objectives, but the process and capacities used to achieve their ends require similar methods of engagement, dialogue, and inclusion (Smith & Vivekananda, 2007). Transforming peacebuilding to operate within uncertainty through adaptive processes is critical for sustainable peace.

Adaptation and mitigation play similar but differing roles in CCA/M. While mitigation seeks to reduce the impact of climate change, adaptation involves permanent adjustments in life (NASA, n.d.). The UNFCCC developed a comprehensive definition of adaptation:

[A]djustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts . . . [and] changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change (UNFCCC, n.d.).

However, incorporating CCA/M into peacebuilding requires accounting for how “climate surprises” interact with unstable assumptions and operating terrain of conflict-affected communities (Streets & Glantz, 2000). Integrating a double loop learning framework to monitor, adjust, and evaluate CCA/M helps overcome conflict-induced uncertainties (Dinshaw et al., 2014). Figure 1 outlines the double-loop learning process.

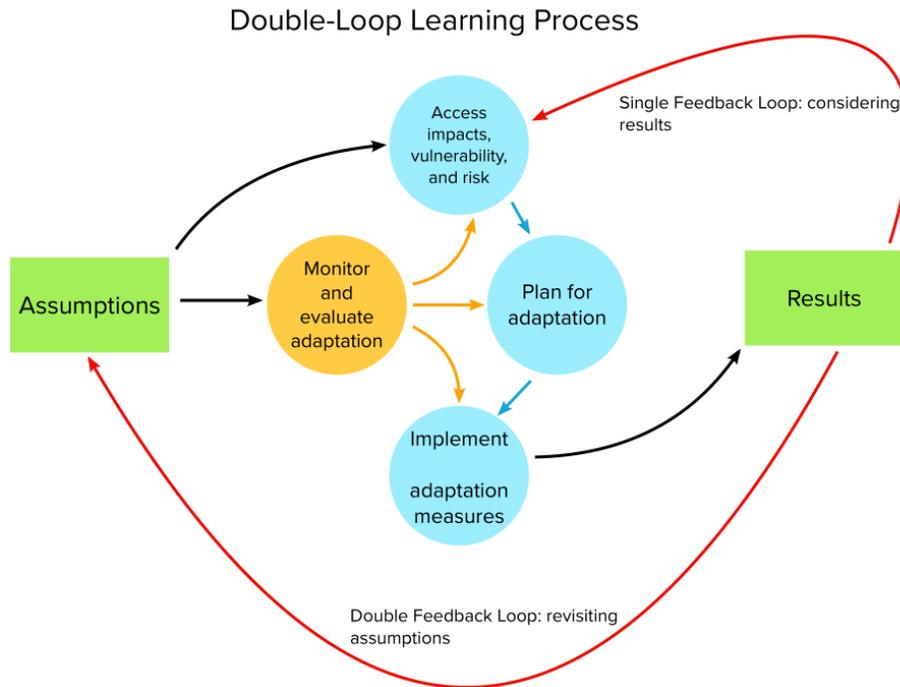


Figure 1: Modification and integration between Ayesha Dinshaw et al. (2014). *Monitoring and Evaluation of Climate Change Adaptation*; UNFCCC. (n.d.). *What do adaptation to climate change and climate resilience mean?*

Revisiting the post-conflict environmental, socio-economic, and political assumptions mitigate undermining adaptive measures (Brown & McLeman, 2009). Revisiting assumptions is a continuous process on the household, community, and national level because of the direct and indirect constellation of conflict drivers affecting the societal and environmental foundations of adaptation.

Environmental peacebuilding is one framework to unpack the assumptions between peacebuilding and CCA/M. Forty percent of intrastate conflicts over the past sixty years are linked to natural resources (UNEP, 2009). Mismanaging conflict-commodities, such as oil, gold, coffee and diamonds, can result in heightened socio-political instability (Vandever, 2013). CCA/M measures can conflict with resource-dependent livelihoods, and mismanaged exploitation of natural resources undermines CCA/M. Conca and Dabelko (2002) note environmental peacebuilding's "contractual environmental[ism]" and "environmental interdependencies" build bridges of cooperation between conflicting parties. Evaluating access to, distribution of, and economic risks are crucial for post-conflict resource governance (Hammill et al., 2009). However, access to fertile land, timber, water, and pastures are all vital resources for resource-dependent livelihoods. Environmental peacebuilding and post-conflict environmental assessments are tools to unpack the complicated political and social relationship between conflict-affected communities and natural resources (Machlis & Hanson, 2008; UNEP, 2000). Integrating CCA/M with peacebuilding and natural resource management is fundamental and possible through the lens of environmental peacebuilding.

Climate Change, Conflict and Peace

Climate change impacts society in a non-linear or even distribution between or within countries. The International Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stresses the heightened risk to counties in South Asia, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa due to their “geography, poverty, inadequate infrastructure and fragile governance” (Field et al., 2014, p. 84). Peacebuilding countries and countries in conflict have the most vulnerable communities to climate change with the least adaptive capacities and highest natural resource dependencies (Adger et al., 2013). Severe climate change impacts and weak governance create negative feedback loops, perpetuating environmental degradation and human insecurity (Vivekananda et al., 2014). A lack of CCA/M weakens fragile states.

A link exists between environmental change, peace, and security (Hsiang & Burke, 2014; Barnett, 2001). While the environment impacts the entire conflict cycle, the pre-conflict, post-conflict, and during conflict also impact the environment. Schellnhuber (2010) calls these “conflict constellations” between environment, social, economic, and political factors. Climate change has the potential to tip conflict constellations to their breaking point, as these constellations are impacted by climate-induced “intensive risks,” like natural disasters, and “extensive risks,” such as long-term changes in rain patterns (Mitchell, 2013). The combination of intense short-term and persistent long-term climate-induced changes can exceed fragile and conflict-affected communities’ adaptive capacities and push conflict constellations into crisis. The Center for Climate and Security understands climate change as a “threat multiplier” because of the climate’s high impact potential on stable and unstable societies alike (CNA Corporation, 2007).

Even with growing evidence between climate change and conflict, it is crucial to avoid oversimplifying their relationship. Environmental determinism masks the intersection between social, political, and economic drivers on conflict (Barnett & Adger, 2007). For example, conflict analysts incorrectly linked climate change as the primary driving igniting the Syrian Civil War in 2011. Climate change and drought played a role, but as Selby et al. (2017) note, economic factors and Assad’s regime’s brutality drove Syrian’s to revolt (Selby et al., 2017). Decoupling environmental factors from the social and political contexts risks misrepresenting the indirect and direct drives of conflict.

Climate change has wide-ranging impacts on human security: (1) changes in rainfall and temperatures patterns affect water and food security, (2) increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters, (3) destabilizing environmental-induced migration, and (4) rising sea levels resulting in coastal land loss and habitat destruction (Dupont & Pearman, 2006; UNHCR, 2009). Climate change can devastate the natural resource base that peacebuilding operations are dependent on for recovery and stability. Amounting to \$125 trillion USD per year, ecosystem services are unprotected from climate change disruption in peacebuilding countries (World Economic Forum, 2019). Women are especially prone to hardship from changes in the environment due to pre-existing gender roles across the developing world (Bazirake, 2013). In sum, destabilizing the natural resource base and ecosystem services of resource-dependent livelihoods has a high impact on the drivers of conflict.

Climate Change in the Sahel

Climate change is acutely affecting the Sahel region. Fragile governance, dependency on rain-fed agriculture, and animal husbandry mixed with environmental change and conflict are creating a more volatile region. The Sahel is a strip of land between the tropical south and Saharan Desert. Approximately 60 million residents live in the 5000 km stretch between Senegal on the Atlantic coast to Eritrea in the Horn of Africa (see figure 2) (Epule et al., 2017). The name Sahel derives from Arabic, meaning the “edge” or “shore.”



Figure 2: This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

Challenging political and socio-economic conditions beset the region. Climate change is amplifying state fragility that is compounded by the distrust of government institutions (Benjaminsen et al., 2012). The IPCC claims Sahel countries are at high risk of conflict from climate change and political instability (Petrocelli et al., 2013). However, there remains a distinct social and economic divide across the region. Over 80% of the region’s inhabitants’ livelihoods depend on natural resources (Hamro-Drotz, 2011). In Niger, resource-dependent livelihoods are less able to withstand climate shocks because almost 50% of the population lives in poverty (World Food Program, 2020). Sahelian farmers and herders are occupational categories traditionally linked to ethnic and caste identities (Turner, 2004). These distinct socio-economics are becoming the lines between conflicting parties.

Climate change impacts the Sahel through temperature rises, increasing natural disasters, and changing rainfall patterns (Hamro-Drotz, 2011). Annual rainfall of 450-500 mm has decreased 100 mm per year, and average temperature increases range from 0.2 to 2^oC (Epule et al., 2017). Erratic and decreasing rainfall averages are forcing 50% of Sahelian residents into food insecurity

(Verpoorten et al., 2013). The Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) combats food insecurity and the consequences of increasing drought and desertification (PreventionWeb, n.d.). However, rapid-onset disasters such as flash flooding are a chronic issue. Over 40% of the population in CILSS countries have endured at least seven floods, and climate-related flooding displaced 20 million people in 2008 alone (Hamro-Drotz, 2011; International Organization for Migration, 2010). Climate change impacts on Sahelian residents are far-reaching and continue to grow.

Political, socio-economic, and climate change factors negatively intersect to exacerbate migration, food insecurity, and conflict across the region. Prolonged droughts and desertification are forcing farmers and herders further south in search of fertile land and water. However, seasonal migration patterns are becoming permanent shifts to southern urban centers for farmers and pastoralists in search of secure work (Petrocelli et al., 2013). Migration is becoming the *de facto* adaptation strategy for thousands. Already 2.5 million people have been displaced because of Sahel environmental change (Torelli, 2019). Desertification and drought-driven migration increase the interactions between livelihood systems. Farmer-herder conflicts throughout the Sahel are becoming resource conflicts over limited land-use; however, pastoralist-pastoralist and farmer-farmer conflicts are growing too.

Decreasing resource availability, population growth, and poor governance add to the intensity and frequency of these conflicts (Turner, 2004). For instance, northern pastoralists are grazing further south for extended periods, placing greater pressure on resources and creating conflicting claims with farmers (Azuwike & Enwerem, 2009). Food insecurity grows with Sahel's environmental change. Niger alone has 900,000 people in extreme food insecurity and 1.2 million needing food aid (Hamro-Drotz, 2011). However, climate change is only one of the forces causing insecurity across the region. As Berazneva and Lee (2013) note, location, urbanization, poverty, regime repression, and civil society all play a crucial role in food security. Nonetheless, environmental change, poor governance, and socio-economic factors create an insecure reality for thousands.

Conflict-sensitive Adaptation

Conflict-sensitive adaptation integrates peacebuilding and CCA/M through comprehensive policy design, addressing the interplay between climate-induced environmental change and conflict constellations. Fragile post-conflict settings usually have a strong dependency on natural resources that require proper governance, access, and distribution for peace and adaptation (UNEP et al., 2007). Maladaptation from a lack of CCA/M in peacebuilding is harmful to the peace process and human resilience from climate impacts driving post-conflict relapse. For instance, underemployment and inadequate reintegration of former rebels in post-conflict Sierra Leone resulted in uncontrolled illegal timbering. Known as "chainsaw gangs," these groups sneak into protected areas and harvest valuable wood, selling it on the black market (Hammill & Matthew, 2010). The resulting deforestation destroys valuable watersheds, undermining ecosystems serving as natural barriers to environmental stress (Hammill & Matthew, 2010). Post-conflict environmental degradation creates win-lose or lose-lose outcomes for a society that transpires from disassociating peacebuilding and CCA/M.

Conflict-sensitive adaption is leading peacebuilding and CCA/M integration. Post-conflict context and assumptions, how planned activities will interact with the post-conflict context and assumptions, and building a malleable process between activities and context are critical for conflict-sensitive adaptation (Tanzler et al., 2013). CCA/M interacts with peacebuilding as a (1) technical challenge, (2) socio-political transformation, (3) the cause of conflict, or (4) as conflict transformative (Tanzler et al., 2013). Designing these four areas requires (1) long-term inclusive participation, (2) environmental assessments and targets, and (3) integrating environmental, social, and economic dynamics (UN Environment, 2019). Table 1 outlines potential intersections for conflict-sensitive adaptation. Addressing where peacebuilding and CCA/M intersect and how to plan for those intersections are critical in designing effective and sustainable conflict-sensitive adaptation.

Potential Crossover between peacebuilding and CCA/M		Peacebuilding			
		Socio-economic and environment	Politics and governance	Security	Reconciliation and Human Rights
Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation	Drivers of vulnerability	Literacy, health, gender factors; environmental and social impact assessments	Decentralized decision making, integration of drivers into a national action plan	Reintegration of vulnerable sectors	Human rights impact assessments
	Response capacity and capacity building	Land-use planning, transportation	Screening tools	Community-level capacity development	CCA/M and peace education
	Climate risk and vulnerable sectors	Crop varieties and agriculture resilience, more resilient infrastructure	Early-warning systems, e.g. flood modelling, and climate impact predicting	Disaster response programs	
	Climate change		Government commissions	Participatory monitoring	Climate justice dialogues
	Regional and global cooperation	Trade associations		Regional planning	

Table 1: modification and integration between Matthew, R. (2014). *Integrating climate change into peacebuilding*. *Climatic Change*, 123(1), 83–93; Hammill, A., & Matthew, R. (2010). *Peacebuilding and Climate Change Adaptation*. *St Antony's International Review*, 5(2), 89–112.

Micro-hydropower in Nepal

CCA/M in Nepal brings mixed results and essential lessons in reconciling adaptation and mitigation measures in post-conflict peacebuilding. Service provisions and state legitimacy form a complicated relationship due to continuing conflict dynamics in Nepal. From 1996 to 2006,

Nepal went through an armed conflict between the government and the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN). Multi-party democracy was instituted in 1991 following a series of royal dynasties, and these political revolutions raised hopes for greater social and economic progress (Nickson, 1992). Formed in 1995, the CPN began an armed resistance called the “People’s War,” following a series of unmet demands stemming from deep-rooted socio-economic caste inequalities (OHCHR, 2012). The conflict resulted in 17,000 casualties and more than 100,000 displaced people (Peace Direct, 2017). The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed by both parties ended the conflict in 2006.

Nepal is located on the side of the Himalayan mountains composing three regions: the Himalayan region (dark brown), mid-hill region (light brown), and lowland region (light green) (see Figure 3) (Nepal Tourism Board, 2020). Nepal’s geography makes the country prone to climate change impacts that disproportionality affects the poorest and most difficult to access communities (Denskus, 2009).



Figure 3: This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

An ingrained caste system linking socio-economic status and social mobility exacerbates inequalities in Nepal (Krampe, 2016). Figure 4 shows the poverty level, Gini coefficient, and percentage of the population with access to electricity prior to (1995), during (2003), and after the conflict (2010). Electrification is critical for lifting individuals out of poverty, increasing food security, and encouraging development (Krampe, 2015). Furthermore, the sharp disconnect between society and the state played an essential role during the conflict and continues to. Krampe (2016) notes that the long-standing disconnect between society and the state is part of a center-rural divide remaining after the CPA (Krampe, 2016)

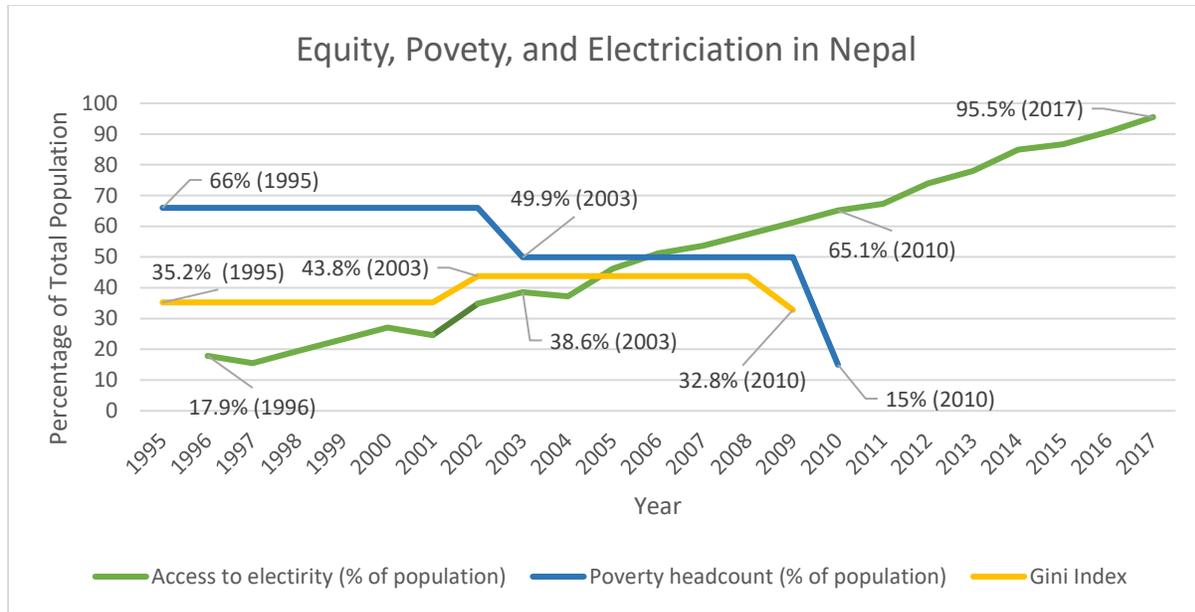


Figure 4: Data retrieved from The World Bank (Licensed Under CC BY-4.0) (<https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS&country=NPL>)

Micro-hydropower dams are the easiest method to provide electricity to rural and hard to access communities in Nepal that offer a clean, renewable energy switch from biomass energy dependency. Micro-hydro plants provide sustainable energy and reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation as a power source in Nepal (Krampe, 2014). And with benefits to social standing and economic development, micro-hydro dams are a CCA/M measure and peacebuilding activity. For instance, some communities can triple their harvest because of electrification and improved irrigation methods that increase their food security and market potential (Krampe, 2016). Nearly 400 micro-hydropower plants have been made since 1996 (UNDP, 2013). One dam provides electricity for approximately 1,000 people and requires only \$29,000 to plan and build (Yee, 2012). Reliable energy brings a host of benefits for businesses, healthcare, and education.

However, increasing rural self-sufficiency harms state legitimacy in the peace process due to pre-existing center-rural divides. Peacebuilding is highly dependent on political legitimacy for post-conflict stability (Galtung, 1969; Migdal, 1988). Rural and community lead adaptation is not corresponding to political development or perceived state legitimacy, and new informal governance structures are growing and increasing self-reliance and local autonomy in Nepal (Krampe, 2016). Community-level capacity development is critical for building peace and adapting to climate change, but challenges persist in constructing effective conflict-sensitive adaption.

Conclusion

Tremendous potential remains to Integrate CCA/M and peacebuilding in post-conflict contexts. Peacebuilding devoid of climate change considerations renders the most susceptible individuals,

communities, and states unprepared to address climate-induced environmental changes. Maladaptation not only undermines climate adaptation efforts but the long-term viability of the peace process. The Sahelian case study expresses the compounding effect of climate change on conflict drivers. Poor governance, conflicting livelihood systems, and ill-managed natural resource dependency create devastating conflict constellations.

Conflict sensitive adaption is one means to address the gap between CCA/M and peacebuilding. Working with the underlying shifting dynamics and the complex interactions between conflict-affected communities and environmental change requires flexible policy design working in a double-loop feedback strategy. The post-conflict Nepali context demonstrates how underlying conflict dynamics and climate adaption can produce unintended and unforeseen consequences. Continuing to develop conflict-sensitive adaption is vital for conflict-affected communities and post-conflict states. Climate change impacts will continue whether they are addressed or not, and conflict-sensitive adaption is critical for successful post-conflict recovery.

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“THE COUNTRY IS COMPLETELY DESTROYED:” TOWARD A NATIONAL PROJECT OF RECOGNITION, REPARATION, AND RECONCILIATION FOR THE AMERICAN WAR AGAINST IRAQ

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Abstract

The United States has been fighting a war against Iraq for nearly 30 years, inflicting immense, ongoing harm to the Iraqi people. The mass of Americans has not engaged in critical reflection about this war. There is a substantial need to develop a *national project* that fosters understanding, acknowledgement, and redress for the people of Iraq. This project has three elements: critical collective *recognition* of the death, injury, and pain caused; material *reparation* for destruction throughout the country; and *reconciliation* to bring a measure of substantive justice. I call for and contribute to developing such a project. I build recognition by sketching the scale, character, and duration of American violence in Iraq, drawing upon 15 qualitative interviews with Iraqis who resettled in the United States after 2003 and publicly available data. Engagement with the experiences of survivors of American aggression and examples of the war’s effects should activate empathy for those injured, killed, and displaced and kindle a desire to work with Iraqis to seek justice for the harms committed by the United States.

Introduction

The United States has been fighting a war against Iraq for nearly 30 years. Since 1991, its government and military have inflicted massive, widespread, and ongoing harm to the Iraqi people. Conservatively, the American war has caused hundreds of thousands of deaths, and many times more physical and psychological injuries. Millions have been displaced from their homes, some temporarily and many others permanently. Throughout the war, American soldiers and their allies have committed numerous atrocities such as rape, torture, murder, and massacres. Extensive bombing and battles have caused catastrophic destruction throughout the country. Although many other states have fought against Iraq during this conflict, particularly the United Kingdom, the United States has led the war since its inception and overwhelmingly caused the most harm. The U.S. governments' justifications for continued violence have shifted over time. However, at root, the war in Iraq—as so many other conflicts before and since—has been fought to project and maintain American imperial hegemony in the region and beyond (Kinzer, 2007; Kumar, 2012).

No American leader, and very few military participants, have been held to account for the tens of thousands of people they have killed and injured or the destruction their actions have caused. Nor has the ongoing war spurred serious, critical reflection among a mass of the American people on the immense toll our government and military's violence has wrought for millions of Iraqis. The United States must end its war. However, stopping American violence is necessary but not sufficient. There is an urgent and substantial need to develop a *national project* that fosters a deep understanding, acknowledgement, and redress for the people harmed by the United States in Iraq (Sontag, 2003).

Significant and sustained activism, education, and struggle have compelled some Americans—belatedly and partially—to recognize, commemorate, and address earlier crimes committed by our society and government. Substantively remedying the historical and contemporary effects of the genocide and ongoing subjugation of indigenous peoples, the enslavement and brutalization of millions of Africans and generations of African-Americans, and many other crimes requires a great deal of continued work. Such projects are active and ongoing. However, despite repeated demands from Iraqi and American activists to acknowledge and make amends for the vast harms committed, as of yet, no such recognition, to say nothing of comprehensive plans for redress, have cohered around the horrors of the United States war against Iraq. Therefore, in this article I reiterate the call for, and contribute to building, such a project, to make American aggression as morally and politically repugnant as genocide and slavery and to press Americans to know, to remember, and to act.

A national project of this kind is normative and political; it is rooted in opposition to American imperialism and it unequivocally rejects the notion that the United States has a right to bomb, assault, and invade other societies. Moreover, it seeks to build more peaceful relations and bonds between and among people. This project has three central elements: critical collective *recognition* for the vast death, injury, and pain caused to the people of Iraq; material *reparation* for the destruction wrought throughout the country; and *reconciliation*, led by Iraqis, to bring a measure of substantive justice. Each of these elements requires long-term, sustained processes. Although each can be pursued simultaneously, collective recognition informs, supports, and agitates for reparation and reconciliation.

Because of its global military and economic dominance, no external power can compel the United States to adhere to the international law it imposes on other governments or to redress the damage it causes. Therefore, we Americans must make our government and military take responsibility. Unless a mass of Americans broadly—and the perpetrators and their supporters more specifically—are repeatedly confronted with the realities of our war and made to take on a deep, serious understanding of the breadth and depth of the destruction and human suffering we have caused, reparation and reconciliation are unlikely to take place. For these reasons, this article focuses on building recognition among Americans while outlining what reparation and reconciliation might look like in the conclusion.

I further these goals by sketching a picture of the scale, character, and duration of American violence and destruction unleashed upon Iraq. To do so, I draw upon 15 qualitative interviews with Iraqis who left their country after 2003 and resettled in the United States as well as human rights reports, government documents, and media accounts. Critical engagement with the experiences of victims and survivors of American aggression and unvarnished examples of the war's devastating effects can begin to build recognition that activates empathy for those injured, killed, and displaced and kindles a desire to work with Iraqis to seek justice for the harms caused. Because the war against Iraq has always been American-led, this article focuses on the need for a national project among American society. However, British and other societies responsible for significant harm must also develop similar projects.

This article begins by elaborating on what critical collective recognition entails in the context of building a national project. It then turns to the experiences and interpretations of the war among the individuals I interviewed. After that, it focuses on the American destruction of Iraq and the harms done to millions of Iraqis. Thereafter, it explores how no deep recognition for the ramifications of our government's actions has developed among the American public and lays out the willingness of many Americans to justify state violence. Finally, I close by outlining steps toward reparation and reconciliation and the need to connect this national project to other American crimes to create a more peaceful society and challenge the American imperial project.

Critical Collective Recognition

Acknowledging that there is unaddressed harm is a necessary first step toward remedying it. Therefore, fostering a national project is a long-term endeavor that begins by developing critical collective recognition among a mass of Americans for the immense injury done to the people of Iraq. It is not sufficient that a slight majority of Americans have said that the war against Iraq was a “mistake” in recent years (Gallup, 2019). Framing the war as a mistake—rather than an intentional, relentless campaign of violence against another society—obscures the harms it has caused. There is a significant disconnect between Americans' perceptions of war and the views of those under attack. For example, in polls conducted in March and April 2003, overwhelming majorities of Americans (more than 80%) said that their government was doing everything it could to avoid civilian casualties in Iraq. When polled the following year in March and April 2004, only 11% of Iraqis—those experiencing the war—believed the U.S. was “trying a lot” to avoid harming civilians (Larson & Savych, 2007).

Building recognition requires directly confronting the American government's violence and demythologizing the American role in the world. The United States has no right to invade other countries at its whim. Contra the claims of its leaders—and a persistent belief among many Americans (Gallup, 2020; Hartig & Gilberstadt, 2020)—U.S. actions are neither exceptional nor altruistic. The U.S. government pursues its declared and clandestine interests, often with extreme violence. Moreover, despite government assertions that it takes unique steps to fight “surgical,” “precise” and “humane” conflicts (Bush, 2003; Purkiss & Serle, 2017; Sherry, 1991), such warfare does not, and cannot, exist. Enforcing sanctions (Weisbrot & Sachs, 2019), firing missiles, invading countries, and overthrowing governments cause incalculable damage and destruction.

Inculcating recognition is not only an intellectual endeavor but also an embodied, affective process. One can, and should, feel something about the crimes our government has committed and the suffering it has caused. Working with and through these feelings furthers recognition. Perhaps the first feeling is discomfort or disbelief that we could intentionally inflict so much suffering. Perhaps the feeling begins with empathy, the ability to try to understand the pain of others. Perhaps it begins with rage at fellow citizens' capacity for brutality and cruelty. These emotions must have a political valence; they must be directed into action taken with Iraqis to address the suffering and end the brutality.

Simply seeing the pain of others is not sufficient to create action of the kind needed (Sontag, 2003). Americans must face the war; the following sections of this article undertake this work. This engagement must be done with care and respect when confronted with the stories and experiences of real people. However, as Sontag (2003) has argued, compassion “is an unstable emotion. It needs to be translated into action, or it withers” (p. 101). Therefore, Americans must also engage in *sustained* learning, teaching, and education about the war that foregrounds Iraqis' agency. We can only develop a transformative recognition if we understand that those harmed by the American government and military are fellow human beings with a right to define, seek, and obtain justice for the transgressions committed against them.

The forms and content of activities that build recognition are open-ended and I do not wish to be overly prescriptive. They might include art installations, listening sessions, teach-ins, archival research, college courses, intentional dialogues, school curricula, protests, museums, documentary films, and so forth. For example, between 2003 and 2005, activists from around the globe held the *World Tribunal on Iraq*, which publicly reviewed evidence of American and British crimes and pressed for accountability. In 2008, war resisters organized the *Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan* events during which American soldiers and Iraqi civilians publicly testified to the destruction wrought by the 2003 invasion. In a joint Iraqi-American effort, in 2013, the Federation of Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq, Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq, and Iraq Veterans Against the War submitted a report to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights seeking a thematic hearing to identify, acknowledge, and redress the harms caused by the war (The Center for Constitutional Rights, 2013). Each of these endeavors is a touchstone and potential model for activities that can build a comprehensive national project.

As these examples demonstrate, some Americans are already convinced of the need for such a project. Many activists, scholars, journalists, and others have worked to end the war and to educate fellow citizens about its deadly consequences. For those individuals, the remainder of this article

should serve as a resource that shows clearly the harm done to the people of Iraq and offers a framework for conceptualizing the work of addressing it. There are also, perhaps, some Americans for whom no amount of evidence could shake their belief in the unique, benevolent character of American society no matter how much violence it inflicts around the world. Indeed, for some members of this group including George W. Bush and the architects of the 2003 invasion, the violence itself is the tool of the American “humanitarian” impulse to spread “freedom,” “liberty,” and “democracy” (Anderson, 2014; Nguyen, 2012; Pan, 2005; Seymour, 2012). However, as Edward Said reminds us:

Every single empire in its official discourse has said that it is not like all the others, that its circumstances are special, that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort. And, sadder still, there always is a chorus of willing intellectuals to say calming words about benign or altruistic empires, as if one shouldn't trust the evidence of one's eyes watching the destruction and the misery and death brought by the latest *mission civilizatrice* [*sic*] (1979, p. xxi).

In his 2011 speech marking the (temporary) end of U.S. war in Iraq, then-President Barack Obama (2011) uncritically voiced this exact argument, declaring Americans “special” because:

Unlike the old empires, we don't make these sacrifices for territory or for resources. We do it because it's right. ... And let us never forget the source of American leadership: ... a unique willingness among nations to pay a great price for the progress of human freedom and dignity.

Critical collective recognition requires deconstructing the imperial hubris Said identifies—and that leaders like Obama articulate—and opposing the belief that the United States can, and even should, remake other societies through catastrophic violence. The task is to mobilize and reiterate the evidence of the vast harms committed, to convince a critical mass of Americans that this constitutes a grave injustice, and to spur them into action to rectify it. I begin my effort to build and reinforce recognition by turning in the next section to the experiences of a group of Iraqis displaced by the 2003 invasion and thereafter to show how the American war has destroyed Iraqi society.

Speaking with Iraqis

More than 170,000 displaced Iraqis have come to the United States in the years since the 2003 invasion. Between September 27, 2017, and February 27, 2018, I conducted 15 semi-structured, qualitative interviews with Iraqis who left their country after 2003 and resettled in the United States. Seven individuals arrived as refugees. Five received Special Immigrant Visas (SIV) available for those who worked with the American military or government in Iraq and faced danger as a result. Two were asylum-seekers, one whose application was successful and one whose status was pending at the time of interview. One interviewee came to the United States on a student visa after seeking refuge in Syria. All interviewee names used in the remainder of this article are pseudonyms and I have lightly edited quotations drawn from interviews for clarity. I cite participants' words with their pseudonym and the date of their interview throughout the rest of the text.

The research project for which I conducted these interviews focused on participants' lives and experiences with political engagement as newcomers living in the United States. However, during conversations, an unanticipated, recurring topic was the devastation the American invasion and occupation caused to Iraqi society. Nearly everyone I spoke with elaborated, at least briefly, about their experiences during the conflict. Some shared their views concerning the war, offering a range of perspectives.

For example, several individuals noted that in 2003 they had initially supported the idea of removing Saddam from power, only to become disillusioned with the lack of a U.S. post-invasion strategy and in light of the violence it unleashed. Wissam, 35 and a former asylum-seeker residing in Chicago, IL, said that in the period leading up to the invasion:

We were really pro it because I was born under the Saddam regime and I was thinking of leaving even before he was thrown out. So, it wasn't that pleasant. But, the problem was, we trusted the U.S. government, they know what they're going to do after that. But, after that, now everybody says: 'Oh we wish we could go back to Saddam's days' (Interview, October 22, 2017).

Tariq, a 33-year-old SIV recipient living in Rochester, NY asserted: "In 2003, if you were there, and you saw how the U.S. Marines and Army came, everybody welcomed them, you will say: 'We didn't know that Iraqis, they love the U.S. They have no problem with us'" (Interview, November 2, 2017). During the war, Tariq joined the American Marines as a translator because in his view, "people like me, they think that if the U.S. came to help us, we should help ourselves." However, his attitude changed. "The turning point," he said, came when the American government and military "left everything open to al-Qa'ida. They moved into Iraq. This is the point that I started [to believe the] U.S. did a really bad job with us and they killed us" (Tariq, Interview, November 2, 2017).

Contra Wissam and Tariq, Hashim, a 34-year-old SIV recipient residing in Chicago, IL, alluded to opposition to the invasion saying, "wars never solve anything. Actually, they make things worse" (Interview, October 1, 2017). Another individual Walid, 39 living in Buffalo, New York, opposed the war:

We like solving things without violence, without war. In a diplomatic way. We were tortured by Saddam Hussein, but I disagree about the war in Iraq. There's too many [other] ways. There is no mercy in the war, unfortunately. There are going to be too many mistakes (Interview, September 27, 2017).

Amidst nuanced opinions about the 2003 invasion, the theme that the U.S. war had "destroyed" Iraqi society emerged as a consistent thread. As Hashim said:

Everyone knows there were no good reasons to destroy the country and to make the people immigrants and kill so many people in Iraq just because of Saddam Hussein and his administration at that time. The country is completely destroyed. I mean, the Iraqi people don't deserve that. This is something that is just not fair (Interview, October 1, 2017).

The following section turns to demonstrate what this destruction has meant for Hashim and

millions of others. Rather than present a history of the conflict or an exhaustive account of American crimes, I seek to characterize the vast harms committed against the people of Iraq in clear terms.

What does it Look Like to Destroy a Country?

Iraqis have experienced decades of insecurity and violence under authoritarian and repressive governments as well as multiple, consecutive conflicts. Sarah, 39, living in Brooklyn, New York, explained there was a:

Very bad situation there because before 2003, before the American war, [Iraq] had another war with Kuwait, with Iran, and all the wars affected the people. So, this suffering is not from just 2003. Before, it was very hard for these people to live this destroyed life (Interview, November 30, 2017).

The United States has supported multiple repressive Iraqi governments. It is implicated in all of the conflicts Sarah referenced and began interfering in Iraq more than half a century ago. In 1960, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) attempted to assassinate Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul Karim Qasim (Wise, 2009). It then built links with the then-marginal Ba'ath Party, supporting their 1963 coup to remove Qasim. Seeking to purge leftist opposition in the country, the CIA provided lists of Iraqi Communist Party members and their allies to the Ba'athists, which they used to track and murder at least 700 people (Frontline, 2014). The Ba'athists remained in power for the next 40 years, with party member Saddam Hussein rising to the Iraqi presidency in 1979. The American government supported Saddam's brutal regime while it carried out many of its worst crimes. During the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, the U.S. provided Saddam with economic aid, battlefield intelligence, and components to build chemical weapons (Tucker, 2014). It simultaneously supplied Iran with weapons in violation of an international arms embargo and American law (Cleveland & Bunton, 2009). U.S. intelligence provided critical targeting information to enable Iraqi sarin gas attacks on Iranian forces (Harris & Aid, 2013). Saddam remained a U.S. ally throughout his government's genocidal campaign against Iraqi Kurds between 1986 and 1989 (Roth, 2004).

When Saddam invaded Kuwait in 1990, the U.S. turned on its former friend. It led a multi-country coalition in an air war against Iraqi forces in Kuwait and Iraq itself. The massive five-week bombing campaign killed as many as 82,000 Iraqi soldiers and 7,000 civilians (Cleveland & Bunton, 2009) and destroyed thousands of buildings (Ahtisaari, 1991). The now-infamous "Highway of Death" events demonstrate the one-sided nature of the conflict. As Iraqi soldiers retreated from Kuwait, U.S. warplanes destroyed vehicles at the front and rear of the column of forces before heavily bombing along the highway. Blocked in by ruined vehicles, soldiers were trapped under the assault. American pilots who participated described the attacks as "shooting ducks in a pond" and "shooting fish in a barrel" (Coll & Branigin, 1991). Coalition forces also intentionally and extensively bombed civilian infrastructure in Iraq including roads, power plants, food warehouses, and water purification facilities (Sherry, 1991). In one instance, American warplanes dropped laser-guided "smart" bombs on a civil defense air-raid shelter in Baghdad, killing 200-300 civilians (Sherry, 1991). A United Nations humanitarian mission report filed in 1991 characterized the devastation inflicted by the bombing in the following way:

The recent conflict has wrought *near-apocalyptic* [emphasis added] results upon the economic infrastructure of what had been, until January 1991, a rather highly urbanized and mechanized society. Now, most means of modern life support have been destroyed or rendered tenuous. Iraq has, for some time to come, been relegated to a pre-industrial age (Ahtisaari, 1991).

During the conflict, the United Nations imposed, and the U.S. supported and enforced, unprecedented, comprehensive sanctions on Iraq. The sanctions regime, compounded by the destruction of essential infrastructure, shattered the Iraqi health system (Gordon, 2010). Lack of food, clean water, and healthcare led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of children under age 5 between 1990 and 2003 (Dyson, 2006). Journalist Jeremy Scahill (2018) said of his time reporting from Iraq during this period that “hospitals were like death rows for infants. There were no medical supplies. Birth defects that weren’t found in modern medical journals were appearing. Syringes were being reused and hospital floors were being cleaned with gasoline.” In 1996, when confronted with the prospect that sanctions had killed 500,000 Iraqi children, then U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and later Secretary of State under President Bill Clinton Madeleine Albright said: “We think the price is worth it” (Mahajan, 2001). In 1999, former UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq Denis Halliday, who resigned in protest of the enormous suffering caused by the sanctions, described them as “deliberately, knowingly killing thousands of Iraqis each month. And that definition fits genocide” (Siegal, 1999). War continued between 1991 and 2003. American and British warplanes dominated Iraqi airspace, flying hundreds of thousands of sorties, dropping thousands of bombs and missiles, and killing and injuring hundreds of civilians (Ali, 2000).

After more than a decade of low-level conflict, the 2003 invasion began a new destructive phase of the war. As Nora, 27 and living in Harrisonburg, Virginia, succinctly put it: “the U.S. said that they’re liberating [Iraq], but they’re invading actually” (Interview, February 6, 2018). The United States and its allies launched a large-scale assault on Iraq on March 20, 2003. The initial aerial bombardment and ground attack killed more than 7,000 civilians and many more Iraqi combatants defending against the invasion. The U.S. military targeted 50 Iraqi leaders, including Saddam Hussein, for “decapitation” airstrikes during the assault. The bombings struck none of the targets but did kill dozens of civilians. Although on a smaller scale than in 1991, American warplanes again targeted infrastructure such as media outlets, telecommunications, and the electrical grid (Docherty & Garlasco, 2003). The invaders quickly defeated the Iraqi army, overthrew the government, and dismantled the state. The Americans then restructured the Iraqi government and economy, privatizing public goods and resources for the profit of U.S. and other foreign companies (R. Kramer, Michalowski, & Rothe, 2005). Unlike in 1991, the 2003 escalation involved a large-scale military occupation by American soldiers and mercenaries—euphemistically referred to as “contractors”—as well as much smaller numbers of allied forces.

Sarah said that after the invasion there was “No education. No electricity. No stable life. No jobs. The war destroyed the country” (Interview, November 30, 2017). Nada, 57 and an SIV recipient living in New York City, said of life after 2003:

The situation in Iraq is so, so difficult. ... During one year in my country, I couldn’t sleep.

I feel always I'm very scared of everything. Who's knocking on the door? When my kids or my son or my husband went to college or school or his work, really, sometimes when they went, I heard some bombs. I didn't know what I will do at that time (Interview, November 1, 2017).

Violence continues to the present. The American coalition, anti-occupation forces, and groups such as al-Qa'ida and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have killed at least 200,000 civilians, and more than 80,000 combatants, since March 2003. Hundreds of thousands more individuals have been injured. These estimates come from Iraq Body Count (<https://www.iraqbodycount.org/>), which tracks and cross-references media reports of violent deaths with morgue and other records. The figures are certainly incomplete and destroyed infrastructure, lack of healthcare and inadequate food access caused by the invasion have killed as many or more people. Multiple studies conducted in the years since 2003 have estimated a significantly higher death toll (Burnham et al., 2006; Guilliard et al., 2015; Hagopian et al., 2013).

American and allied bombardment and battles have destroyed tens of thousands of homes, hospitals, mosques, and other buildings throughout the country. In 2004, for example, U.S. forces twice laid siege to Fallujah. On April 1, Marines surrounded the city and launched an assault that killed hundreds of civilians, destroyed thousands of homes, and forced the majority of the city's 200,000 residents to flee (McCarthy & Beaumont, 2004; Rayburn et al., 2019). American and allied forces again attacked the city on November 8, 2004. A U.S. Army Captain who led a 13-day tank assault on the city, told *The Boston Globe* "I really hate that it had to be destroyed. But ... [t]he only way to root them out is to *destroy everything in your path* [emphasis added]" (Barnard, 2004). The second assault killed more than 1,000 civilians and damaged or destroyed 70% of the homes in Fallujah, thousands of businesses, 100 mosques, and multiple government buildings (Jamail, 2012). The siege killed so many civilians that the city's soccer stadium had to be converted into a graveyard (Glantz, 2017).

Shelling and bombing from ground and air—first against Saddam's government, then anti-occupation fighters, and most recently ISIS—has repeatedly reduced large sections of cities like Ramadi and Mosul to rubble (George, 2016; Sim, 2017). According to Amnesty International (2017), the U.S.-led aerial assault against ISIS in Mosul demonstrated an "alarming pattern" of "destroy[ing] whole houses with entire families inside. The high civilian toll suggests that coalition forces ... have failed to take adequate precautions to prevent civilian deaths, in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law." The massive debris created by heavy bombardment and the use of weapons such as cluster bombs and depleted uranium have left many areas contaminated and polluted with toxic and radioactive materials. Studies have found a correlation between this pollution and significantly increased birth defects and cancer rates among Iraq's population (Busby, Hamdan, & Ariabi, 2010; Chulov, 2010; Zwijnenburg & Weir, 2016).

The American occupation officially ended in 2011. However, American soldiers remain in the country, although at a much-reduced level. As 27-year-old Abdullah, living in Brooklyn, NY, argued, "If the military, they go to a civilian place, any military, they wouldn't act nice. They would be rude. They would attack people. They would be aggressive" (Interview, January 14, 2018). The occupying army battled individuals and groups resisting their presence and policed the country. American and allied occupiers belligerently patrolled Iraqi streets (Roberts, 2005),

shooting, injuring, and killing thousands of civilians (Zielbauer, 2007b). In the months after the 2003 invasion, American soldiers fired upon crowds of anti-occupation protesters on at least five separate occasions, killing dozens of people and injuring many more (Amnesty International, 2004a; Bouckaert & Abrahams, 2003; Howard & McCarthy, 2003). For example, on April 15, 2003, soldiers fired on demonstrators in Mosul, killing seven and injuring dozens. Two weeks later, on April 28, soldiers in Fallujah killed 17 protesters and injured 75 others. A 2003 Human Rights Watch investigation into civilian killings by American soldiers found a pattern of “over-aggressive tactics, indiscriminate shooting in residential areas and a quick reliance on lethal force” (Abrahams, 2003, p. 4). A 2007 congressional investigation uncovered a similar pattern among Blackwater mercenaries (House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 2007). To give a sense of the scale of this violence, the U.S. Army recorded 4,492 “escalation of force” incidents between January 2005 and January 2006. Only 67 instances (1.5% of the total) involved anti-occupation fighters (Rayburn et al., 2019, pp. 548–549); the rest involved civilians. Meaning, in 2005 alone, American soldiers fired on civilians more than 4,400 times.

Sometimes American soldiers and mercenaries shot civilians by accident. Other times they did so intentionally (Schmidt, 2011). These forces have committed numerous murders and massacres since 2003 (ACLU, 2007; Chappell, 2019; Glantz, 2017; Kennard, 2012; Schofield, 2011; Whitlock, 2009). Some events are well-known; for example, the 2005 massacre of 24 civilians in Haditha (Schmidt, 2012) and the 2007 killing of 14 in Baghdad’s Nisour Square by Blackwater mercenaries (Neuman, 2017). We should also remember other, perhaps less infamous, crimes. In May 2004, for example, a U.S. helicopter gunship attacked a wedding in the village of Mukaradeeb, killing more than 40 people, including 15 children. As witness and survivor Haleema Shihab told *The Guardian*, at 3 a.m. “the American soldiers started to shoot us. They were shooting low on the ground and targeting us one by one” (McCarthy, 2004). Consider as well, the “Iron Triangle Murders,” one of multiple killings and attempted cover-ups. On May 9, 2006, American soldiers killed four unarmed Iraqis during a raid on Thar Thar Island. The soldiers first shot and killed a man and detained three others, all unarmed. The Americans then released the men and told them to run before shooting them, in an attempt to make it look like they had tried to escape (Zielbauer, 2007a). In one of the most disturbing known crimes, on March 12, 2006, five American soldiers broke into the home of 14-year-old Abeer Qassim Hamza al-Janabi. They killed Abeer’s mother, father, and younger sister before gang-raping, killing Abeer, and setting her body on fire (MacAskill & Howard, 2007).

Although the killing of Abeer and her family is shocking in its brutality, cruelty has been endemic to the post-2003 invasion. In the first year of the occupation, the American military arrested and detained thousands of individuals (Amnesty International, 2004b), the overwhelming majority of whom (between 70% and 90%) were innocent of any crime (ICRC, 2004). U.S. forces engaged in the widespread torture of prisoners (Brody, 2004). The most well-known abuse took place at the U.S. run Abu Ghraib and Camp Bucca prisons where American soldiers beat, sexually assaulted, and raped captives (Taguba, 2004). Far from isolated incidents, American forces tortured Iraqis—sometimes to death (White, 2005)—in numerous locations throughout the country (Brody, 2004). For example, three American soldiers told Human Rights Watch (2005) that they and their comrades at Forward Operating Base Mercury near Fallujah routinely beat prisoners, forced them into “stress positions” until they passed out, and denied them food and water for their amusement.

American forces also turned over captives to their Iraqi allies for interrogation, abuse, and torture (Leigh & O’Kane, 2010).

Finally, the invasion destabilized Iraqi society. Ali, 37 and an SIV recipient who worked as a translator with the American military, said:

People changed all of a sudden after that war. There was one person [Saddam Hussein] holding the law and holding everything together in one hand. When he was gone, everything went upside down. When you think about it, it’s ruined. The country is gone. It’s torn apart. There is no law to protect you. And you go to the police station [the officer would say]: ‘What can we do? We can’t do anything’ (Interview, January 14, 2018).

The invasion and dismantling of the Iraqi state sparked legitimate armed anti-occupation resistance and opened space for intercommunal violence. Militias formed and recruited Iraqis and foreign fighters to resist the American and other occupying forces (Cockburn, 2016). Armed groups pursued their own goals and sought revenge against members of Iraqi society. The U.S formed, trained, funded, and fought alongside Iraqi police and paramilitaries. Some of these groups, including the notorious special police commando Wolf Brigade, acted as death squads engaging in widespread torture and killings with U.S. knowledge, if not approval and collaboration (Mahmood, O’Kane, Madlena, & Smith, 2013). Organizations such as al-Qa’ida in Iraq and later its offshoot ISIS flourished in the chaos of the American war and launched campaigns of violence against occupation forces, the new American-imposed Iraqi government, and the population. As Wissam argued, before 2003 there were:

Certain people or certain red lines you didn’t cross and you stay safe. Now, you don’t know who’s your enemy. Your enemy is unseen. [You don’t know] who is going to take your house, take your rights. So, it’s very hard. ... Every party has its own militia and they fight all the civilians [who are] the victims. And they keep fighting with each other (Interview, October 22, 2017).

Although the contours and intensity of the war have fluctuated since 1991, it continues. As Abdullah argued, the American war “made Iraq a total mess and it made Iraqis pay for that until this day” (Interview, January 14, 2018). He continued:

We still have violence. We still have a lot of corruption, a lot of killing in Iraq. ... If you were [to ask me whether I was] with or against the war based on the results that we are having right now, I would say 100% I’m against it. But, maybe if you asked me in 2003, if you would bring knowledgeable people who were actually trying to help Iraq and who ... have a plan after the regime falls, I would say, yeah. I wouldn’t say a war ... but, maybe there’s another solution. So, unfortunately, that thing happened and it was a huge mess. ... The majority of the people, their lives completely got destroyed. ... And there are thousands of people who got killed, completely innocent people. And I don’t think people should support decisions that will lead to killing a lot of innocent people (Abdullah, Interview, January 14, 2018).

Many Americans have supported war against Iraq since 1991; many still do. With this picture of

the scale, character, and duration of the harm committed established, the next section explores Americans' amnesia about support for war and their troubling willingness to authorize violence against civilians

Forgetting Decades of War and Justifying Violence

Some Americans have developed a clear recognition of the harm they have caused in Iraq. Several individuals I spoke with said that Americans occasionally apologize to them for the war. When this happens, Hashim responds "it's not your fault, don't apologize. ... It's just politics. It's not the people" (Interview, October 1, 2017). Marwa, 48, and now living in Buffalo, NY, explained:

Some people, they say sorry. They know what it's like there. The American army attacked Iraq and that's why we are here. Some people, and they are veterans, they say sorry. ... I say no, don't say sorry. Saddam Hussein, he was very bad. I'm not [someone who] liked him. I'm happy when they took Saddam Hussein out. I was so happy (Interview, November 25, 2017).

Ali said that when Americans find out he is from Iraq, "not all of them but most of them," apologize and acknowledge, "we ruined your country because of a false war." "I feel happy when I hear that," he said, "because if my country didn't have war I wouldn't be here, you know?" (Interview, January 14, 2018). Critical collective recognition has to have the capacity for the complexity within these individuals' insights. The Saddam regime was brutal; it committed crimes against humanity. Acknowledging these facts does not justify or absolve the United States' crimes against the people of Iraq. Moreover, in many cases, the U.S. supported and enabled Saddam's brutality.

However, there is significant evidence to indicate that Americans have not developed a serious, critical recognition of the ramifications of our government's war. Consider an interaction described by Nora:

I have met people who don't know where Iraq is. Literally, a lady asked me about my accent and she's like: 'Where is that [Iraq]?' And I was very, very, very depressed and I was like: 'Where is *that*?' I told her: 'Do you know the Middle East?' She said: 'No.' 'Do you remember 2003? George W. Bush had a war on a very, very small, dumb country claiming that they had a nuclear weapon?' She said: 'Oh, I don't know why, but I remember there was a war, the United States was part of it.' I was like: 'I am that small dumb country. Do you know where that is? Your country has been in two wars and you don't know why these people are coming in [as refugees]?' We are coming in because we're fleeing the war (Interview, February 6, 2018).

This encounter is illustrative of a broader lack of engagement and reflection among Americans about our government's actions. Polls suggest that, indeed, the majority of Americans cannot locate Iraq on a map (Morning Consult and Politico, 2020; The Council on Foreign Relations and National Geographic, 2016; The National Geographic Education Foundation, 2006). More importantly, polls conducted in 2014 and 2015 found that 39% and 38% of Americans, respectively, recalled supporting war against Iraq in 2003 (Ekins, 2014; Frankovic, 2015). However, contemporaneous polls conducted in the months before suggest that 63% of Americans supported invading the country; 72% approved of the war in the days after the invasion (Gallup,

2019). Similarly, a 2018 *HuffPost/YouGov* poll found that only 34% of respondents remembered “very well” the justifications for the conflict (YouGov, 2018). Twenty-eight percent of those surveyed reported that they “don’t remember” whether they supported the war in 2003 and only 33% indicated that they had done so. Moreover, despite the devastation caused in Iraq, large numbers of Americans continue to believe that preventatively attacking other countries is justified. Polls conducted between 2003 and 2017 show that, on average, more than 50% of Americans supported using military force against countries that “may seriously threaten the U.S. – but have not attacked it” (Tyson, 2017).

Not only do half of Americans believe that preventatively attacking other countries is justified, but many also support violence against *civilians* to ensure victory in war. In polls conducted during the 1991 air war, 50% of respondents said that American bombers should “attack all military targets in Iraq including those in heavily populated areas where civilians may be killed.” Only 43% said to avoid attacking heavily populated areas (Larson & Savych, 2007, p. 52). Similarly, when asked in March 2003 “Do you think the United States should strike Iraqi military targets even if they’re located in areas where civilians might be killed?” 49% said strike, while only 42% said avoid (Larson & Savych, 2007, p. 174). Moreover, when asked to prioritize their concerns on the eve of the invasion, more Americans feared the potential cost of the conflict (21%) than possible civilian casualties (18%). Nearly as many (17%) reported a negative effect on the U.S. reputation internationally as their top concern (Larson & Savych, 2007). Most troublingly, in a 2011 *Gallup* poll conducted in 131 countries, Americans were the most likely to justify their military *intentionally targeting and killing civilians*. Forty-nine percent of Americans said violence against civilians is sometimes justified; compare that to only 8% of Iraqis (Gallup, 2011).

All of these findings suggest a deep disregard for the lives of those injured and killed by American wars. It is essential to challenge and change these attitudes. Critical collective recognition requires, and perhaps can help to spur, a much deeper reflection and reorientation of American attitudes toward violence. It is vital to instill a more comprehensive and substantive understanding of the consequences of American imperialism. As Abdullah argued, the United States is “not a normal country,” it is a “superpower.” As a result:

You might not feel it, but whatever decision politically you take, it could affect the lives of millions of other people. It did affect my country and it’s affecting other countries. ... I would like the USA to stay away from interfering with the internal affairs of other countries. Because, usually when they interfere, unfortunately, whatever country the USA touches, it turns into a huge mess after. So, that should tell you something. They are doing something wrong (Abdullah, Interview, January 14, 2018).

Conclusion: From Recognition to Reparation and Reconciliation

This article has demonstrated the immense and ongoing violence of the American war against Iraq and the pain and suffering it has caused to millions of people. With this established and reiterated, by way of conclusion, let us briefly consider the two other interconnected aspects of a national project to redress the harm caused by the American war in Iraq: reparation and reconciliation. Certainly, no program of compensation or contrition can ever *fully* heal individuals’ physical, emotional, and moral injuries or rebuild Iraqi society. Nevertheless, we must make serious efforts

that work toward this goal, even if it is ultimately unattainable. The United States has already spent \$2 trillion fighting its war against Iraq and \$6.4 trillion overall on the so-called war on terror (Crawford, 2019, 2020). It continues to allocate tens of billions of dollars per year to continue fighting. Therefore, there is no question that the U.S. *can* fund programs for reparation and reconciliation. It is only a matter of political will to end the war against Iraq and reallocate resources to building rather than destroying.

Reparation. Developing a critical collective recognition should catalyze Americans to push for the implementation of mechanisms to alleviate material suffering in the short-term and to transfer resources to those harmed to assist (re)building fulfilling lives in the manner of their choosing in the long-term. As I have argued elsewhere (Keyel, 2016), one way to provide relief is through the expansion of permanent resettlement in the United States for Iraqis. I advocate for the creation of a universal program that provides access to immigration, work authorization, and American citizenship for every Iraqi who seeks it. This could be accomplished by expanding the existing Special Immigrant Visa program, removing the requirements that recipients faced threats because of their work for the U.S. occupation forces.

Direct cash payments are another mechanism by which to assist those harmed in the short and long-term. This form of reparation should be viewed as a *return* of resources taken from the victims of American aggression during the war. The American government has made payments to individuals when soldiers have killed or injured their family members (Zielbauer, 2007b). Such payments are *ad hoc*; Iraqis need systematic reparations that provide material support, acknowledgement of the scale of the damage done, and apology. The payment of money can never bring back loved ones killed, compensate for limbs lost or return precious items and memories. However, in conjunction with contrition, a systematic program of reparations may reduce, if even in a small way, the material, physical and psychological burden of war.

There are historical and contemporary examples—often contingent and insufficient—of financial reparations paid by U.S. local, state, and federal governments to those they have harmed (Hassan & Healy, 2019). In many cases after conflicts, states pay reparations for wars they have waged. Iraq, for example, is still paying reparations to Kuwait for its destructive 1990 invasion (Reuters, 2018). Reparations can also carry a significance beyond the important transfer of resources from perpetrators to survivors. Rather than functioning solely as punishing indemnities, reparations can be a tool to (re)build relationships and (re)initiate and sustain post-conflict bonds between former enemies (Mallard, 2011). Payment of reparations could be a practice of care, addressing the specific and particular needs of those harmed by the American war (Robinson, 2011). Such possibilities are strengthened when reparations are part of sincere attempts to seek justice for harm committed.

Reconciliation. The harm done to millions of Iraqis can only be remedied in the long-term if the perpetrators are held to account. Iraqis should determine the forms and fora in which these processes take place. Some may favor retributive justice. For others, restorative justice may be possible. In the former case, existing institutions and structures can be mobilized to hold the perpetrators responsible. I maintain that waging war is always a crime; bombing, invading, and occupying are violent transgressions against people and their societies. However, existing international law draws distinctions between legal and illegal conflicts. The 2003 invasion of Iraq

violated well-established statutes against aggressive war and was illegal under international law. As an aggressive war, every act of violence committed therein is illegitimate. Moreover, since 1991, the United States has committed specific war crimes including targeting civilian infrastructure, torture, indiscriminate destruction, collective punishment, and forcibly transforming Iraq's economy (R. C. Kramer & Michalowski, 2005; R. Kramer et al., 2005). Seeking legal recourse under inadequate existing structures may not be sufficient to bring justice to the Iraqi people. However, partial remedy may be better than none.

American civilian and military leaders and participants who justified, launched, and prosecuted the war beginning in 1991—George H.W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Colin Powell, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, Tommy Franks, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and many others—should submit themselves to authorities empowered to adjudicate their responsibility for the crimes they have committed. Such bodies could include domestic Iraqi courts, the International Criminal Court (ICC), and/or an international criminal tribunal along the lines of those set up in Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia, and elsewhere under the auspices of the United Nations. If those responsible will not voluntarily submit themselves to face justice by the same standards they have imposed upon other individuals and governments, they should be charged, taken into custody by American, Iraqi, and/or international authorities, and brought to the appropriate forum to stand trial for their crimes. In the case of George H.W. Bush, who died in 2018, posthumous proceedings will be necessary.

Beyond, and perhaps in conjunction with, retributive justice, restorative justice can offer an opportunity for survivors to face perpetrators and tell their stories. Within a restorative framework, perpetrators also publicly acknowledge their role in crimes. In this way, it may be possible for perpetrators to demonstrate responsibility, for survivors to heal and, perhaps, to forgive and to build bonds between these individuals and groups. Reconciliation is not an event, but an ongoing set of processes initiated and led at multiple levels between and among individuals, communities, organizations, and states. A long-term reconciliation endeavor could take the form of truth and reconciliation commissions. Historical and ongoing examples may provide guidance such as the post-Apartheid experience in South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which investigated crimes committed against First Nations peoples, and the recent Tunisian Truth and Dignity Commission.

Speaking to the potential for reconciliation, during our conversation Sarah said that she believed not only had Iraqis been harmed by the war but that “The American people, some families, lost maybe the husband, the father, the brother or the son because of the war. ... Too many American people suffered from this. It's not good. The war, it's not good for any country” (Interview, November 30, 2017). Ultimately, it is up to the people of Iraq to decide whether reconciliation with Americans is desired or possible.

Finally, the war against Iraq is only one of many American crimes, both historical and ongoing, in need of recognition, reparation, and reconciliation. The genocide of indigenous peoples and the centuries of slavery cited in the introduction, the half-century occupation of the Philippines (1898-1946), the wars against Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia (1954-1975), the ongoing war against Afghanistan began in 2001, the borderless drone assassination campaign and many other crimes require similar, continuous efforts. These are the interconnected crimes of American empire and

understanding and addressing them in such a way is essential to build necessary momentum toward transforming its society in a more peaceful direction and dismantling the American imperial project.

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THE ROLE OF PILGRIMAGE FOR THE PEACE OF PILGRIMS: A STUDY IN ST. LALIBELA ROCK-HEWN CHURCHES, AMHARA NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA

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Abstract

It is common to see thousands of pilgrims journey to the St. Lalibela Rock-Hewn churches of Ethiopia. But, it is uncommon to see studies on the role of pilgrimage for peace; much of the research is focused on the economic importance of pilgrimage in the country. Accordingly, the objective of this paper is to investigate the role of pilgrimage for the peace of pilgrims in the study area. To achieve this objective, this study employed 20 purposively selected pilgrims for in-depth interviews, in addition to four key informants, personal observation and document reviews to collect data. In addition, one focus group discussion containing eight pilgrim discussants was held with the pilgrims to elicit group ideas about the issue. Thematic categorization and analysis was then used to analyze the collected data. This study revealed that pilgrimage provides different forms of inner peace for the pilgrims, including purification, relinquishment of self will, relinquishment of separateness, relinquishment of negative feelings, and avoiding of habits of

worry, fear and anger. Moreover, this study argues that pilgrims achieved outer peace, such as upholding human dignity, challenging prejudice, building tolerance, promoting non-violent behavior, resolving and transforming conflicts, sharing resources, caring for the environment, and making inter-personal and inter-communal linkages. Finally, seeing the ability of pilgrimage to cultivate both inner and outer peace, this study recommends that pilgrimage be used as a means of peace education. It is also recommended that this subject is studied further, and in similar sacred sites within Ethiopia.

Introduction

Pilgrimage has been defined in numerous ways by different scholars. Sykes (1982) defines it as a journey to a sacred place as an act of religious devotion. Similarly, Brandon (1970) defines it as a sum total of three factors: a holy place; attraction of people to this place; and the ability of the place to provide spiritual or material benefit. Turner (1973) argues that pilgrimage is the journey of the soul from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity. On the other hand, Crim (1981) defines pilgrimage as a journey to one's local sanctuary. Brandon's definition of pilgrimage is appropriate for this study as the research site, St. Lalibela, is a holy place, people are attracted to this place, and it offers both spiritual and non-spiritual benefits for the pilgrims.

Traveling to sacred sites is not a new phenomenon (Blackwell, 2007). Thus, the medieval Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem; the Hajj of two million Muslims each year to Mecca; and the journey of 20 million Hindus each year to the River -Ganges (Collins-Kreiner, 2010a; Rinschede, 1992) are the manifestations of the issue. Many scholars agree that pilgrimage is one of the oldest forms of tourism (Collins-Kreiner, 2010a; Digance, 2003; Olsen and Timothy, 2006). Nowadays, there are two alternative forms of pilgrimage that can be recognized: religious and secular (Collins -Kreiner, 2010a, 2010b; Hyde and Harnan, 2011; Okamoto, 2015). Accordingly, Collins- Kreiner (2010b) explains that while pilgrims travel for spiritual reasons, tourists travel for more secular reasons. Secular tourists are motivated by architecturally exceptional church buildings, and important historical associations (Nolan & Nolan, 1992).

Religious tourism is an activity through which tourists seek spiritual grace, looking for proximity, immersion or contact with the sacred aspects of life (Wright, 2008). Rinschede (1992) has defined it as the type of tourism in which travelers are motivated either partially or solely for religious reasons. As religious tourism is becoming one of the most important types of tourism all over the world, there are now studies on the role it has on the world. According to Refai (2015), the role of pilgrimage in the form of religious tourism is one of the most effective tools to foster inclusive and sustainable development. In so doing, he identifies three main benefits of religious tourism: it raises awareness of humanity's common heritage and provides resources for preservation, it can contribute to local development and it builds cultural understanding.

Ethiopia is a country with numerous sacred sites which have a great potential to be included in the worlds' religious tourism map. Hence, thousands of people from inside and out are traveling to religious sites of Ethiopia. However, studies have shown that religious tourism in Ethiopia is problematic. For example, a study by Erimias (2014) identified poor transport access to the site, less governmental attention for the poor road infrastructures of the site; the topographical difficulty of the site, unsuitable church administrative structure, and absence of tourism product development as main challenges that have been hindering religious tourism development in Gishen Mariam, Ethiopia.

In addition, a similar study was conducted on the issue of pilgrimage in the town of Labella, which is known as a religious paradise, especially for Orthodox Christian fellows as it is a unique replica of Jerusalem, with its 11th-century monolithic rock-hewn churches. This study revealed that pilgrimage tourism is the biggest source of income for the local community and the nation at large (Berhanu, 2018).

In nutshell, the aforementioned studies focused on the economic implications and challenges for pilgrimage tourism development. However, the role of pilgrimage for peace has not been widely discussed in academic literature. This is where this paper makes a contribution. Hence, the aim of this paper and its main theoretical contribution is to investigate the types of peace that pilgrims achieved from their journey to the sacred place of St. Labella Rock- Hewn churches of Ethiopia. It will investigate the following questions:

- What is the role of pilgrimage for the inner peace of pilgrims in St. Lalibela Rock Hewn Churches of Ethiopia?
- What is the role of pilgrimage for the outer peace of pilgrims in the study area?

Research Methodology

Description of the Study Area

Lalibela is found in the North Wollo Administrative Zone of the Amhara regional state. Administratively, the town of Lalibela was initially governed under the municipality of the Lalibela town administration of Lasta Woreda. Geographically, Lalibela is situated at 12002'034"N and 39002'611"E, at an altitude of 2480m. The town is 701 km far from Addis Ababa. The present topography in and around Lalibela constitutes valleys and gorges and rugged mountains which include flat-topped plateaus and steep-sided volcanic plugs. Lalibela and its surroundings are therefore characterized by impressive landscape features including many rock-hewn and built in cave churches, which are the most important tourist sites of the country (Berhanu, 2018).

Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was applied between December 2018 and April 2019 in the area of St. Lalibela Rock-Hewn churches of Ethiopia. The study is concerned with the investigation of the peace of pilgrims as a result of their pilgrimage to the sacred place. The reason for employing this approach is due to its importance of investigating the feelings and experiences of individual pilgrims.

Research Design, Participants, and Data Sources

The research strategy chosen for this study was a case study so as to explore the peace of pilgrims. Hence, pilgrims from different regions of Ethiopia, religious leaders, and Lalibela Town Culture & Tourism Office experts were the main participants of the study. This research work was dependent on primary and secondary data as main sources of information.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The research was conducted during the Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter holiday celebrations between December, 2018 and April, 2019. The reason for choosing this period was the fact that the majority of visitors come to St. Lalibela during this time. To achieve the purpose of this study,

twenty-eight sample participants were purposefully selected for interviews. A semi-structured, in-depth interview was forwarded to a total of twenty pilgrims. The majority (eight) were from Amhara region, while six participants were Tigri pilgrims, and another six were from Oromo. Moreover, a slightly higher number of participants were female (eleven) than male. In addition to the interviews, one Focus Group Discussion FGD, containing eight pilgrim discussants was held to elicit group ideas about the issue. Both the interview and FGD guiding questions were formulated with semi-structured responses in order to obtain diverse but targeted results.

Furthermore, four key informants (two Tourism Bureau officials and two priests) were interviewed in their respective offices. Personal observation and document reviews were also employed to collect data.

Methods of Data Analysis

Data collection and data analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative research (Creswell, 2003). Thus, the data analysis began by translating of the data in to English language and attempts have been made to keep the originality of the research. The researcher analyzed and interpreted the data gathered through focus group discussions and interviews thematically based on the specific objectives of the study. Then, finally, the researcher triangulates the primary data obtained through focus group discussions and key informant interviews with the secondary data to maximize the validity of the findings.

Results and Discussion

To this end, the study identified two major peace of pilgrims: inner and outer peace.

The Role of Pilgrimage for the Inner Peace of Pilgrims

The participants of the study explained that their pilgrimage to the St. Lalibela Rock-Hewn churches provides them with an inner peace via detaching themselves from the material world. Love and compassion are the basis for inner peace (A priest key informant interview, 2019). Moreover, according to Norman (1966), purification of desires and motives, the relinquishment of the feeling of separateness and negative feelings are the steps for creating inner peace. Pilgrimage helps the pilgrims to have emotional healing, to be liberated from their own fear, and to avoid worrying (Griffin and Raj, 2017). Likewise, the participants of this study achieved the following forms of inner peace as a result of their pilgrimage to the St. Lalibela Rock-Hewn churches of Ethiopia.

Avoiding Anxiety

It is commonly known that anxiety is one of the enemies of inner peace. Analogously, a priest key informant argued that “the beginning of anxiety is the end of faith; and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety” (Interview with a priest, 2019). Though anxiety is both a common and serious problem, pilgrimage helps the pilgrims to avoid their anxiety through different mechanisms of God’s teachings.

The first way is via learning God's promise of peace during their pilgrimage time. According to a priest, the pilgrims were preached to about how Jesus offers His peace to His disciples, so they need not be troubled or afraid. Thus, the pilgrims realized that the peace that Jesus provides is real peace. Therefore, making a pilgrimage to the St. Lalibela Rock-Hewn churches helped them to be free from their anxiety. The second way is through learning of God's solution for peace. The pilgrims were able to learn that they could avoid their anxiety through prioritizing God over other things. Similarly, as to the participants of the study, making a pilgrimage to the sacred place is the manifestation of their prioritizing of God that can help them to avoid anxiety.

The other way of avoiding anxiety was through developing their faith to God via praying. In line with this idea, a priest stated that "praying about everything with a thankful heart helps the pilgrims to be free from anxiety" (Interview with a priest, 2019). The pilgrims, especially those who were motivated by religious motives, were able to pray about worry with a very thankful heart and that cultivates inner peace for their soul via avoiding anxiety. In a nutshell, pilgrimage helps the pilgrims to avoid anxiety with the help of God and God's promise to the sacred churches. Pilgrimage has reconciled the pilgrims back to the God of peace. It has taught the pilgrims how to enjoy true peace of mind by avoiding anxiety.

Healing from Sin

Pilgrimage helps pilgrims to achieve inner peace through healing of their sin. A priest in the church explained that "the Church is endowed with divine healing power" (Interview with a priest, 2019). Therefore, by making pilgrimage to this sacred place, the pilgrims believe that they can be clean from their sin through praying and admitting their wrong act to the churches. A priest argued that "sin is the moral depravity that results from wrong acts" (A priest key informant interview, 2018). For him, sin is the way of making the soul dirty which can be cleaned via making a pilgrimage to sacred places and praying there. Similarly, the pilgrims argued that "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not." This shows that how God is merciful in that God is always healing us irrespective of our sinful acts if we are going to sacred places and praying there.

According to the participants, they travelled to this holy place specifically to be healed by God. John (3:17) reads that "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." This shows that God come to this sinner world to heal us, and now it is our time to go and make a pilgrimage to a sacred place, a place where God's spirit is manifested, for us to be healed from our sin.

Relinquishment of Self Will

Pilgrimage helps the pilgrims to relinquish their self-will. The Bible warns pilgrims that if they do not have self-control, they will be slaves to what controls them. This shows how much controlling one's self is the very foundation for living a life of selflessness that reflects Jesus and brings glory to God. According to a priest key informant, there are two ways of life: God's way and Satan's way. With the help of God's spirit, we must choose God's will. Choosing self-will is rebellion against God. A big part of what the pilgrims learn from their pilgrimage is being willing to give up their own self-will and instead make God's will their own. A pilgrim participant explained the biblical teachings that cause him to relinquish his self-will in the following manner:

During my pilgrimage to the rock hewn churches of Lalibela, there were different biblical teachings that make me to relinquish my self-will. Thus, give for the needy, you will be given, nothing is yours in this uncertain world; none of your wealth will follow you at time of your death, and if you have two, give one for the needy. These and other religious teachings at the time of my pilgrimage to the sacred place make me to put my self-will aside and think for others wellbeing which produced high moral satisfaction in the history of my life (Pilgrim interview, 2019).

The above explanations depicted that the pilgrimage produced moral satisfaction for the pilgrims via making them to relinquish their self-will due to the lessons they learned from the biblical teachings during their pilgrimage time. In turn, this shows how much the pilgrims are opting God's will over their personal will as a result of their pilgrimage to the Rock-Hewn churches of Lalibela.

Relinquishment of Separateness

Pilgrimage also helps the pilgrims to forget their aloneness. When people are making a pilgrimage in groups, they did not feel their separateness. Despite not knowing one another previously, they simply communicate and are friendly of each other due to trust. A pilgrim from the study area explained it in the following way:

I am living alone at my home. Thus, I always feel that I am helpless and separated. However, when I come to here, St. Lalibela Rock-Hewn churches, I have forgotten my separateness. Here, people are friendly. All pilgrims are helping one another. We all have the sense of belongingness and oneness. Therefore, the pilgrimage helps me to forget my separateness and cultivates a sense of togetherness with others (Interview with female pilgrim, 2018).

On the other hand, a priest argued that “draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (Interview with a priest, 2018). It is this what the pilgrims are doing, they draw near to God by making a pilgrimage to the sacred place and God draws near to them that produces pleasure for the pilgrims by avoiding their sense of separateness. As to the pilgrims, God is a God of relationship and community. That is evident in God's very nature. God is the trinity-three in one; God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. This signifies that God never leave pilgrims alone, but they are designed to be in community with God and with one another.

Making the pilgrimage to the Rock- Hewn churches of St. Lalibela provides pilgrims with the ability to avoid their feeling of separateness. The first way is via connecting with God. During the pilgrimage, the pilgrims were able to read holy books, pray, participate in worship, which all makes them to forget their separateness through drawing to God. Secondly, the pilgrimage enables pilgrims to be connected with fellow pilgrims. So, the pilgrims developed trusted friendships that can help them to forget their feeling of separateness.

Relinquishment of Negative Feelings

Making the pilgrimage to this sacred site helps pilgrims to avoid pessimistic feelings like disbelief, despair and sadness. Instead, the pilgrims are able to produce positive feelings such as faith, hope, love, joy, and peace. Likewise, one of the FGD discussants explained how his pilgrimage to St.Lalibela Rock-Hewn Churches enabled him to forget his negative feelings in the following manner:

It was during my despair and sadness time that I went to the rock hewn churches of Lalibela. However, my pilgrimage to the sacred place helped me to forget my sadness and despair through developing joy and hope. When I was seeing the rock hewn churches of Lalibela, really I was surprising, how people in the 11th c can produce these magnificent rock hewn churches? I believed that it is the spirit of God, not of people in the then time can build these saint churches in this abstract and complex standard (Interview with pilgrim, 2018).

The above explanation shows that the pilgrimage to the sacred place of Lalibela cultivated joy and hope for those who felt sadness and despair in their lives for different reasons.

Avoiding the Habit of Worrying

Pilgrimage helps the pilgrims to avoid their worrying habit. A priest argued that “if you have been in the habit of worrying, let go of worry and embrace the peace that Jesus offers you” (Interview with a priest, 2018). The priest further explains that worry doesn’t have the power to prevent anything bad from happening in our lives. Similarly, Matthew (6:25-34) reads that “I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear.” This explanation depicts that the heavenly God knows what humans are in need of. Thus, the pilgrims thought about the ways they could avoid their habit of worrying during their pilgrimage.

The first way is praying to stop worrying. The pilgrims realized that they can avoid their worry through their trust in God. The second way was being thankful for what they had. According to a priest, there is nothing wrong with taking our questions and concerns to God. But we should not go to God out of anger and demand that God work everything out the way we want. We should humbly go to God in prayer, with a thankful heart, and ask God to give us that peace that will open our minds to understand and accept God’s plan. The third way is by understanding that worry is not from God. The pilgrims realized that God is not the source of worry but rather love and peace. The basis of their worry ultimately comes back to the fact that they are not trusting God. In sum, making a pilgrimage to the sacred churches of Lalibela helps the pilgrims to be free from worry through praying to God, thanking God, and by realizing that worry is not from God.

The Role of Pilgrimage for the Outer Peace of Pilgrims

In addition to inner peace, the pilgrimage also cultivates outer peace for the pilgrims in this study. According to Loreta and Jasmin (2010), the major themes of outer peace are human dignity, non-prejudice and tolerance, non-violence, challenging the war system, resolving conflicts, caring for the environment, and sharing of the earth’s resources. Likewise, the pilgrims in the study area

stated that their pilgrimage to the sacred place provides them with the following categories of outer peace:

Upholding Human Dignity

Making the pilgrimage helped pilgrims to develop the principle of human dignity. The principle of human dignity is rooted in the belief that God creates human beings in God's image. Analogously, pilgrim FGD discussants argued that "Human dignity is an inalienable essential part of every human being and is an intrinsic quality of the human person" (Pilgrim FGD, 2019). Furthermore, a pilgrim interviewee stated that "Human beings are qualitatively different from any other living being in the world because they are capable of knowing and loving God, unlike any other creature. Therefore, all pilgrims in this sacred place are dignified (interview with a priest, 2019). This shows how belief in the dignity of the human person is the foundation of human morality.

According to a priest, the foundational concepts for the vision of Human Dignity are emanated from both the Biblical and theological visions of the human person. While the biblical vision of the human person argues the human is made in the image and likeness of God, the theological vision states that the principle of human dignity rests on a foundation of faith which affirms that God is the source and creator of all life. This signifies how the human is morally responsible for the protection of human dignity in that doing well and avoiding evil is the quality of us human beings.

The pilgrims in the study area were able to realize the foundation of human dignity through the religious teachings during their pilgrimage time. As mentioned above, the pilgrims from different parts of the country were respected and dignified one another via thinking that all humans are created in the image of God so that no one is better than the other.

Challenging Prejudice and Building Tolerance

Nowadays, humans have become increasingly unkind towards those who differ in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, gender and socio-economic class. People usually use differences as an excuse for prejudice and discrimination. Despite this reality, the pilgrimage to the sacred place helped pilgrims to avoid prejudice and build the habit of tolerance with other fellow pilgrims. The pilgrimage teaches pilgrims about tolerance of diversity. According to UNESCO (1978), tolerance is the way of acceptance, respect and appreciation of the rich diversity of cultures. Likewise, the pilgrims stated that "our pilgrimage to the Rock-Hewn churches cultivated a lesson of tolerance in which all pilgrims from different ethnic groups and backgrounds are living harmoniously in the pilgrimage site" (FGD with Pilgrims, 2018). This signifies how avoiding hateful propaganda towards those that are different is important to avoid prejudice and build tolerance among pilgrims at the sacred site.

Promoting Non-Violent Behavior

Pilgrimage also helps the pilgrims to promote non-violence behavior. According to a priest in the study area, people have three options to counter violence. Firstly, people may choose doing nothing

about the violence they encounter. But this is not the right option that people should choose, because doing nothing for violence means the perpetuation of the repressive system. Secondly, people may opt to respond to violence with violence. This also perpetuates the cycle of violence and hostility. The third option that people must choose is responding to violence through non-violent means. This is the preferred way of seeking justice which is recommended by orthodox Christian religious teachings.

According to the conversation between the FGD discussants, non-violence is the refusal of doing harm to other humans. This is similar to definitions given by Mohandas Ghandi, such as, “a person and his deeds are two different things,” “hate the sin but not the sinner,” and “an eye for an eye will make the world blind (Loreta and Jasmin, 2010). As Martin Luther explains, non-violence is a way of defeating injustice, not people. In the same fashion, the pilgrims argued that “the orthodox bible preaches us if someone slaps your left face, give your right face” (interview with a pilgrim, 2019). Therefore, this way of preaching causes the pilgrims to be non-violent during their pilgrimage time and later in their post pilgrimage life.

Transforming and Resolving Conflicts

Pilgrimage provides pilgrims with ways that they can transform and resolve conflicts during their pilgrimage. Thus, the first way is through God’s teaching on marriage. Jesus taught that marriage is to be for life. He gave only one reason to dissolve a marriage, that reason is fornication (Matthew 5:31-32). In so doing, the pilgrims learned how to resolve their family conflicts and develop their commitment to their marriage which could be a big step toward preserving family peace.

Secondly, the pilgrims learned conflict resolution from Jesus and by His apostles’ teachings on family. They are taught that husbands are to love and respect their wives (Ephesians 5:25-29), that wives are to love and submit to their husbands (Timothy 2:3-4) and that children are to obey and honor their parents in the Lord (Ephesians 6:1). These are biblical verses that were preached to the pilgrims at the pilgrimage site, which then increased their commitment to their families, producing peace and harmony in the home.

Another importance of pilgrimage for the pilgrims was making peace with enemies. The participants explained how Jesus teaches them to make peace with enemies. God showed love toward us when we were God’s enemies (Romans 5:6-11). Likewise, Martin Luther King argued that “Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into friend” (Loreta and Jasmin, 2010). As to the words of a priest, God loves us if we can love our enemies, not friends (a priest interview, 20180). Analogously, as to Gandhi, it is easy enough to be friendly to one’s friends. But to be friend with your enemy is the essence of true religion. The other is mere business. To conclude, the above explanations help us to argue that by being transformed by love, enemies can become friends and the pilgrims learned to love their enemies as God loved them.

Sharing of Resources

The pilgrims were taught to share resources with others. Through their pilgrimage, they learned that selfishness and a lack of sharing are wrong. Accordingly, true religion is “to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1: 27). Likewise, 1

John (3:17-18) asked if anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? These and other verse teachings helped pilgrims to practically implement the concept of sharing via apportioning their resources what they had for the needy.

In sum, the pilgrims realized that Jesus crucified on the cross to save humanity which motivated them to share what God has entrusted to them including time, energy, or resources for others. They are reminded not to set their affections on things of this earth, nor store up treasures that have no eternal value. Thus, the biblical teachings during the pilgrimage taught the pilgrims that sharing keeps one humble and free them from the love of money.

Caring for the Environment

In addition to giving care for the fellow pilgrims, the pilgrimage provides lessons in giving due regard for the environment. For example, Genesis (2:15) reads that “the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” This helps the pilgrims to recognize that all created things belong to God. A priest argued that “God commissions us to rule over the creation in a way that sustains, protects, and enhances his works so that all creation may fulfill the purposes God intended for it” (Interview with a priest, 2019). This helped the pilgrims to realize that they must manage the environment not simply for their own benefit but for God’s glory.

Thus, there are numerous things that the pilgrims were doing in their pilgrimage time that help protect God’s creation, such as respecting the soil, protecting the trees, and cleaning and reducing waste at the sacred place. With regard to how man is mandated to take care of other creatures, Genesis (1:25-28) reads in the following way:

God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.

From the above explanation, the pilgrims learned that protecting the environment is a God given responsibility. Moreover, this shows that God gives man dominion over all other life on the earth and has implicit responsibility to keep what was explicitly given to Adam. Therefore, making a pilgrimage to the sacred place cultivates the idea of environmental peace for the pilgrims.

Making Inter-Personal and Inter-Communal Linkages

As can be seen in this study, pilgrimage cultivates both inter-personal and inter-community linkages among pilgrims. Despite their differences, pilgrims were making inter-personal and inter-communal friendships. This is a result of the biblical teaching they heard during their journey in which Jesus said that “a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have

loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34). Furthermore, the pilgrimage causes pilgrims to be honest and open their heart for other fellows in the pilgrimage. This creates real trust of one another which results strong inter-personal linkage.

In addition, the pilgrimage helps to improve inter-community linkages. The pilgrims at the sacred place came from different ethnic groups within Ethiopia, such as Amhara, Oromo, and Tigri. Today, there are conflicts between the Amhara ethnic groups and the Tigreans as well as between the Amharas people with Oromo peoples, due to ethnic based politics in Ethiopia. But, despite these conflicts, those ethnic groups were able to pray, eat, and travel together at the pilgrimage site. This illustrates how powerful pilgrimage is in making inter-communal linkages among communities, even those who are in conflict with one another.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The objective of the study was to explore the role of pilgrimage to the St. Lalibela Rock-Hewn churches of Ethiopia in achieving peace. The study revealed that pilgrimage to this sacred place helped pilgrims to achieve both inner and outer peace of different kinds. Pilgrims were able to wash their sin via healing and to reconcile themselves with the God of peace. Therefore, the role of pilgrimage for peace education in general and for the peace of pilgrims in particular needs to be studied in other similar sacred places of Ethiopia.

Limitations of the Study

The study is based on domestic pilgrims and did not take in to account the foreign pilgrims within the area. Thus, there might be some additional attributes that are also important for the peace of pilgrims. However, the findings are useful in understanding the implication of pilgrimage for peace in domestic pilgrims.

Further Studies

Further studies can be carried out to explore the political, social, health, cultural and environmental implications of pilgrimage. Furthermore, studies can be done on the role of pilgrimage for inter-ethnic and inter-state peace.

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