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Editorial foreword

Our Journal has finally reached the threshold of its 10th edition. For the past nine years, we have offered opportunities to students to contribute to the world of peace and conflict studies by proposing new perspectives and ideas, challenging existing ones, and finding out patterns and mechanisms that shape our societies and the dynamics of violence. As we embark on a journey of editions going into several digits, we have transformed the functioning of the Journal to involve more students. Thus, we now work with two rounds of blind reviewing with different reviewers, before a final round conducted by our editorial board. Our hope is that the Journal can also function as a catalyst to get students more involved in academia, providing fertilisers for young scholars to grow the seeds that will raise our common understanding of the dynamics of our world. In this edition, our authors have accosted a variety of subjects. Olivia Rehnström re-imagined truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms to improve their effectiveness in reconciliation. Lucas Tamayo Ruiz showed how trauma, and the control of the narrative by the victims, could be turned into a mechanism for conflict resolution. Continuing on a more low-level approach, Sunniva Tveitnes Homme compared intersectional identities and their impact on the practice of land-grabbing in the Philippines and Indonesia, which can be considered as a form of non-violent conflict. Non-violent conflicts whose successes Jonas Holmberg analysed as having been declining in recent years because of a decrease in mobilisation. Building up on the importance of mobilisation, Robert Andersson looked into the impact of progovernmental government violence on electoral outcomes. Finally, Timothy Lyon explored the role of gender in radicalisation and de-radicalisation, focusing on Boko-Haram in Nigeria.

On behalf of the Pax et Bellum Journal's Editorial Board, I hope that our authors' contributions to our field prove themselves useful and valuable to you.

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Effect of progovernmental pre-electoral violence upon electoral outcome

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The effect of progovernmental pre-electoral violence upon electoral outcome

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Abstract

Electoral violence can have dire consequences for a society, but remains a strategy employed by incumbents to secure electoral victory. This paper explores if electoral violence instigated by progovernment side actually does increase the incumbent's probability of electoral victory. The novelty of the question derives from taking into account a differentiation between the instigating side as progovernment or anti-government, which previous studies have not done. The argument is that as the opposition is likely to have other motives and resources available than the incumbent, anti-government violence should target other spectrums of the population and thus have a different effect on the electoral outcome than progovernment violence.

The findings give consistent statistical significance to a positive relationship between progovernment instigated violence and probability of incumbent electoral victory when controlling for electoral fraud and anti-government violence. This supports the hypothesis and suggests that incumbents do benefit, at least in the short term, from applying electoral violence. However, long-term backlash may still occur and the consequences for the society are dire. The relationship between anti-government violence and electoral outcome did not achieve statistical significance. Further research are needed to improve the nuance of the findings in this paper and better understand electoral violence from different actors' perspectives.

Keywords

Election; incumbent violence; opposition

1. Introduction

Electoral violence is a continuing phenomenon affecting the development of many democratizing countries. Consequences can be dire. Not only does it cause harm to those directly victimized by these forms of events, it can also spread fearfulness through population segments, reduce trust between individuals and groups, polarize societies along ethnic lines and decrease democratic prospects (Birch, Daxecker and Höglund 2020; Höglund 2009).

In order to minimise electoral violence in practice it is necessary to gain knowledge of how the phenomena functions theoretically, how it is used as a strategy, when it is applied, and which societal circumstances are at the root of the problem. The academic sub-field of electoral violence is quickly developing and researchers are untangling these questions bit by bit (Birch, Daxecker and Höglund 2020).

For example, Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016) investigated the fundamental question of the effect that electoral violence has upon electoral outcome. As the incumbent is generally the greatest instigator of violence (Straus and Taylor 2012) and acts rationally, they argued that it should be an effective strategy for the incumbent to win the election. The study's findings reinforce the author's argument in the context of pre-election. However, incumbents tended to underestimate the risk of protests by the opposition after a violent electoral victory and thus in some cases be toppled in the post-election phase (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016). Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016) used the National Elections across Democracy and Autocracy (NELDA) dataset (Hyde and Marinov 2012; 2021) to reach their conclusions. The dataset captures all national and popular elections globally from 1945 until 2020, but in the version used by Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016) it ended in 2012. NELDA let them capture if violence had occurred but they could not control for if it was actually the incumbent, or progovernment groups, that instigated the violence.

This paper argues that controlling for opposition or anti-government violence is necessary. The opposition may be constituted by several different actors but as they are all different from the incumbent in respect of available means, supporter segment and motives, violence instigated by anti-government actors may have other targets and methods than progovernment instigated violence. Thus, it should also affect the electoral outcome differently and not in the favour of the incumbent. Therefore, this paper explores a similar research

question to Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016), but with a differentiation of the instigating side;

Does progovernment instigated electoral violence lead to increased probability of incumbent electoral victory?

The main contribution of the paper is to add a nuance of differentiation between instigating sides to the debate of the effect of electoral violence upon electoral outcome. If the findings suggest a positive answer to the research question it would be necessary in future research to create and test data upon how different types of actors use electoral violence and their motives thereof. That would enable the development of targeted and flexible tools or methods to mitigate both the use of violence and its effect on elections in practice, thus maybe end the continuation of the phenomenon of electoral violence.

The differentiation of instigating sides is possible thanks to the use of the Electoral Contention and Violence (ECAV) dataset (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019; 2021). ECAV collects data of contentious and violent events related to elections globally, describing the involved actors, type of event, deaths and more, everything geocoded. For each election it uses the same identification code as does NELDA, making the datasets combinable and enabling their usage in this paper.

To answer the research question, the paper proceeds as follows. Firstly, the findings of previous studies are presented and discussed, before their conclusions are used to develop the theoretical argument. The argument is summarized in the main claim, that progovernment instigated electoral violence should increase the probability of incumbent electoral victory. Secondly, the research design to solve the question is disentangled. A quantitative cross-sectional analysis is used with the combination of NELDA and ECAV datasets. All events of violence, with known sides of instigation, are aggregated upon each election that they are associated with, whereby the level of violence rather than mere occurrence is taken into account. Thirdly, 1302 elections that did or did not contain electoral violence are used in the Results and Analysis chapter and are the subject for both descriptive statistics and a logistic regression as well as two robustness checks. The findings are then discussed previous to the Summary and Conclusion chapter which finalises the paper with practical implications and suggestions for further research.

2. Theory

2.1. Previous Research

Electoral violence has been established as a distinct form of political action in contemporary research, stimulating a quickly developing field with present focus on issues such as institutional causes, altered voting behaviour, electoral outcomes and conditions leading to high-stake elections. It is structurally caused by ethnically polarized politics and majoritarian institutions, perpetrated as a strategic method by political actors. While studies on macro-level consequences specifically are few so far, scholars have found, for example, that incumbent perpetrators can win elections even if the violence they instigate are condemned by voters, and that free speech, among other democratic rights, is endangered by the phenomena (Birch, Daxecker and Höglund 2020).

2.1.1. Electoral violence as a strategy

Perpetrators, both incumbents and opposition, use electoral violence in relation to other available strategies to manipulate the electoral outcome and gain victory, such as institutional manipulation or vote buying (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). Which strategies are used is assumed to depend upon the estimated costs and effects in each situation, as different strategies are useful for different targets and at different stages of the electoral process. Targets can be both institutions and voters, and the costs of the strategy can be disaggregated to implementation, legitimacy if discovered, and risk of repercussions, for example by increased risk for *coups d'état*. Institutional manipulation should, according to a study, be the cheapest technique for incumbents and intimidation by electoral violence second best for use, with vote buying the most expensive (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). However, institutional manipulation, which is suggested to include tactics such as distorting the registration process, vote counting or election timing, functions only when the targeted institutions, often the electoral bodies, are weak and democratisation level is low (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016; van Ham and Lindberg 2015). Institutional manipulation decreases when the institutions get stronger and is replaced as a favourable strategy by vote buying and intimidation, both of which increase simultaneously with each other (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). These methods are often used upon different segments of the population. In Kenya, for example, vote-buying tactics are divided along the ethnic lines on which the political parties base their support in the purpose of mobilizing voters. The parties use violence as intimidation mainly to target other segments

than those selected for vote-buying in the purpose of demobilization (van Ham and Lindberg 2015; Gutiérrez-Romero 2014).

A study by Rauschenbach and Paula (2019) follows this suggestion of different strategies used upon different voter population segments. Incumbent's vote buying as a part of clientelism was found to be used to mobilize supporters, rather than swing-voters as previously believed, as swing-voters would be more expensive to mobilize for the instigators cause than those already sympathizing. Incumbents' intimidation by electoral violence, however, targeted both opposition strongholds and swing-voters, which suggests that the vote-share of the incumbent is calculated to increase if both the clear opposition and potential opposition voters are too afraid to vote. Furthermore, the authors also found *fearfulness*, a proxy for intimidation by violence, in the strongholds of the incumbent, which can suggest that electoral violence was also conducted by the opposition (Rauschenbach and Paula 2019). This would support the previously mentioned study where it was proposed that incumbents and oppositions engage in electoral violence reciprocally (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). However, no assumption of perpetrator can be easily made, as Wahman and Goldring (2020) have presented that the incumbent too has strategic reasons to commit violence in progovernment strongholds. This is explained as a tactic to reduce the oppositions possibilities to establish themselves in that area by suppressing political competitiveness, and is particularly noticeable in sub-nationally polarized constituencies (Wahman and Goldring 2020)

2.1.2. Consequences of electoral violence

Several other studies have begun to distinguish the effects of electoral violence upon electoral outcomes. Alesina, Piccolo and Pinotti (2019) could demonstrate how the Sicilian Mafia used pre-electoral violence to intimidate voters successfully. For example, after a massacre on Labour Day in 1947, the vote share for leftist anti-Mafia parties declined drastically, with the largest decrease in the municipalities near to where the massacre had been (Alesina, Piccolo and Pinotti 2019, p. 451). The pattern is general, electoral violence instigated by incumbent should, just as fraud, increase the probability of incumbent electoral victory. The success of violence can be admitted to either the causal mechanisms of opposition boycott or intimidation. The latter can in turn be divided into three sub-mechanisms; reducing probability of opposition supporters to vote, mobilize supporters or mobilize/demobilize swing-voters (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013; 2016).

However, the consequences of electoral violence go beyond electoral outcomes. Firstly, in Sicily, the politicians focused more on the problems of organized crime when homicide rates increased. But when the level of *political* homicides specifically increased, the attention declined, as measured by speeches in legislative assemblies by elected politicians. This relation was especially true for those typically holding stronger anti-Mafia views, such as those from left-leaning parties (Alesina, Piccolo and Pinotti 2019). Secondly, in areas of political violence in Africa, it has been demonstrated that political knowledge among the electorate declines due to fear, which in turn may contribute to less informed voting in the future (Söderström 2018). Thirdly, the violence used to alter the electoral results can also cause backlash for an instigating incumbent by generating risky post-election dynamics, such as further violence, often expressed in protests challenging the official results. This risk is often underestimated by incumbents who wish to use electoral violence and can force the incumbent to concessions, such as leaving office, holding new elections or similar measures (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016). Not only direct protest is a risk for incumbents choosing to apply violence as an electoral strategy. As political elites and leaders are significantly more prone to justify electoral violence than the general public they misperceive the effectiveness of the strategy, underestimating the cost of voter-backlash. This can be partly due to lack of information of voter's preferences, but confirmation bias and over-confidence may also be involved (Rosenzweig 2021).

2.1.3. When and where electoral violence is used

Not all elections are marked with electoral violence or fraud despite assuming that it will increase probability of electoral success. The risk of backlash consisting of post-election protest and violence may be intimidating, as well as institutional constraints. These constraints can, firstly, be in terms of direct inability to execute certain powers, such as implementing a state of emergency, mobilizing the police or military or issuing special directives. Secondly, they can reduce the incumbent's will by the risk of being held legally and politically accountable in a later stage, for example by legislators or courts (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013). As previously mentioned, when institutions are weak, incumbents are more prone to use the strategy of institutional manipulation than electoral violence. With stronger institutions, manipulation becomes more difficult and thus violence, together with vote buying, are the preferred strategies (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). With these complementary findings

in mind, it is possible to assume that electoral violence is not needed where the incumbent has enough control of the institutions to artificially produce an electoral outcome. It is needed where institutions are stronger and more independent, but when these institutions gain the possibility to constrain or intimidate the incumbent from using violence, the risk can be mitigated. Thereby, electoral violence is a risk factor during democratization but should not be a threat in consolidated democracies.

Those incumbents that choose to use electoral violence as a method despite the risks it can have may mostly be the ones assuming they will have an uncertain or unfavourable result in the election. They may gain this information from pre-election polls or similar, but it makes the phenomena of electoral violence not necessarily being a symptom of non functional democracy, but rather that the democracy has allowed a potentially strong opposition to threaten the incumbents' rule (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013). At the same time, however, strong political parties have been found to reduce electoral violence. Much like institutions, political parties can constrain the actions of leaders, as well as providing the tools needed to focus on persuading tactics rather than violence (Fjelde 2020). To find the balance between when the strength of political parties reduces violence and when incumbents perceive a threat large enough to employ violence must, however, be awaited in future research and is beyond the scope of this paper.

2.1.4. Identifying research gaps

All of the studies discussed above pinpoint different aspects of electoral violence in general and the use and consequences of the phenomena specifically. While some of the studies are not directly generalizable due to methods used, such as Alesina, Piccolo and Pinotti (2019) who concentrate on the case of Italy, the patterns found are relatively consistent across the field. Electoral violence is a successful strategy to win an election during specific circumstances and phases of democratization, but risks causing political and legal consequences as well as post-election protests, which in turn might be violent or met by violence.

At the same time, the presented articles do leave gaps of knowledge that open up for further studies. Firstly, Rauschenbach and Paula (2019) did find *fearfulness* in the incumbents' strongholds, a phenomenon that their theoretical argument could not fully address. The fearfulness in opposition strongholds and among swing-voters was explained by violence instigated by the incumbent with the aim to intimidate them from voting. If fearfulness in

incumbent strongholds is caused by direct violence for intimidation the question remains if it was the opposition that was the perpetrator (Rauschenbach and Paula, 2019). As Wahman and Goldring (2020) pinpointed, some incumbents may use violence also in their own strongholds. It is also a possibility that fearfulness as a proxy for intimidation is unsuitable and that the fearfulness also can be caused by news reports or rumours of how other voter segments have been treated.

Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2013; 2016) similarly assume that most of the electoral violence is perpetrated by the incumbent rather than the opposition. They therefore investigate their research questions without controlling for the acts of the opposition. While an incumbent may gain electoral success by using violence, as their results suggest, their theoretical argument is based on that it is the incumbent that strategically chose to perpetrate the violence upon specific segments of the population. Furthermore, the authors conclude that an incumbent is more likely to use electoral violence when threatened by a strong opposition (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013; 2016). However, as strong political parties reduce electoral violence, it is not clear under what circumstances an incumbent believes electoral violence would be effective (Fjelde 2020). While a strong opposition should have more power to use electoral violence reciprocally, a weak opposition may have more motives as electoral violence might be perceived as one of few options to gain influence. Any such a relation between incumbent and opposition would still fit well with the findings that the opposition and the incumbent can engage in violence reciprocally, that *violence feeds violence* (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). However, an incumbent may not necessarily benefit from a generally violent situation throughout a society. Using violence to target specific segments of the voters, the effectiveness should decline if other segments are targeted by the opposition. As Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2013; 2016) assumed the violence is instigated by the incumbent, a gap has been left where differentiating for incumbent and opposition electoral violence could be fruitful.

As a final point, Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016), who investigates the relation between incumbents' electoral violence and success on election as well as political survival in the post-election dynamics, do only include elections in which the incumbent won the election. To increase the nuance of their results, even elections that the incumbent lost can be investigated.

2.2. Central Concepts

Before continuing to the theoretical argument, it is useful to describe the definitions of the key concepts. Firstly, the dependent variable is *probability of incumbent electoral victory.* The concept of *electoral victory* means to gain more votes in an election than other candidates and/or parties. The other side of *electoral victory* is *electoral defeat* and is thus a dichotomous concept. The *electoral victory* does not imply which measures were taken to win. However, a victory claimed without electoral process, such as military takeover, is not included.

Secondly, the independent variable is *progovernment instigated electoral violence.* The independent variable includes three important terms in need of explanation. Firstly, while several scholars prefer to use the term "incumbent" when discussing the perpetrator of electoral violence (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013; 2016; Straus and Taylor 2012), there remains uncertainty of the incumbent's direct involvement. An incumbent can on the one hand give orders or directives directly influencing the behaviour of military, police or supporters. On the other hand, the incumbent can incite unrest or action indirectly through speeches or similar communication, with or without violent intent. For example, the incumbent may need covert action not to be blamed for unpopular violence (Birch, Daxecker and Höglund 2020). Therefore, the incumbent and government still share responsibility for the actions of their supporters regardless of level of independence, as the incumbent either perpetrates or allows the violence to continue (Wilkinson 2004, p. 4 - 11).

However, in this paper the term *progovernment* is used, as it allows for the second term *instigated* to be used without causing conceptual misinterpretations. To *instigate* is to be the actor who initiates a violent event, for example by attacking a demonstration. While it is not always possible to trace instigation to the incumbent, despite Wilkinson's (2004, p. 4-11) argument that they share responsibility, it is still possible to state that the side of the violent instigator was *progovernment.*

The third term, *electoral violence,* is a well-used concept that has sparked its own research field. While the field has yet to settle on a common definition, it is by several scholars described as all types of acts or threats that involve physical or psychological harm and intimidation, in the purpose of altering the outcome or process of the election (Schneider and Carroll 2020, p. 174). This can be complemented with the description of Höglund (2009) where electoral violence is a sub-category of political violence mainly distinguished by four dimensions; actor, target, motive and timing. The actor ranges from militias to political parties

that may participate in the election and use the violence to increase their chance to win the election. However, there may also be groups seeking to disrupt the election, deeming it illegitimate. Targets range from other political groups and specific individuals, such as the incumbent leader challenged in the election, to non-bodily-harming violence directed at institutions or ballot boxes. The motivation is often to alter the electoral outcome to one's own advantage but can also be to discourage the usage of elections as an institution. Electoral violence differs from political violence most clearly with its timing. While no exact date can be set for when electoral violence begins or ends, it is directly related to the issue of the election, either before or after (Höglund, 2009)

2.3. Theoretical Argument

2.3.1. Causal mechanism: From Violence to Victory

Electoral violence does not have a direct and immediate effect on the electoral outcome. To start a violent scene, even in the midst of voting, does not change systematically which votes are casted. Rather, violence only has an effect on an election through a process of events, a causal mechanism. Several scholars describe violence to be an effective strategy to intimidate segments of the electorate from voting by fear of repercussions, and it can also cause the opposition party to boycott the election all together, both working in the incumbent's favour (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013, p. 150; Rauschenbach and Paula 2019). This form of demobilization of voters is the most typical use of electoral violence, and set free resources for the incumbent to use mobilizing strategies, such as vote-buying, for other segments of the electorate (Rauschenbach and Paula 2019; van Ham and Lindberg 2015; Gutiérrez-Romero 2014). Furthermore, violence may also cause displacement of people which in turn prevents them from voting. One such example exists from Kenya in 1997 where people were forced to leave their homes due to violence during the election period (Högberg 2009).
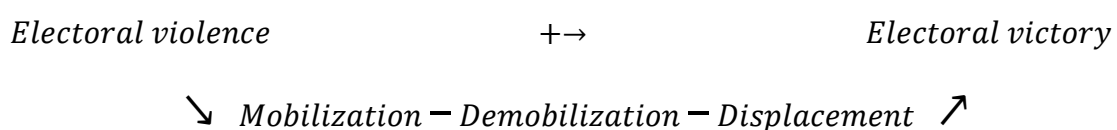
Electoral violence $+\rightarrow$ *Electoral victory*

↘ *Mobilization* − *Demobilization* − *Displacement* ↗

Figure 1: Causal mechanism

2.3.2. Incumbents and electoral violence

In several recent studies it is assumed that the most common perpetrator of electoral violence is the incumbent (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013; 2016). This is based on the finding by Straus and Taylor (2012, p. 28-31) that the great majority of electoral violence was indeed conducted by the progovernment side, especially in the case of pre-electoral violence. The reason for an incumbent to use violence as a strategy follows the rational assumption: Electoral victory is the prize for which parties in an election contend, the goal of contenders must be to win. To achieve this, their strategic acts should make them use methods that help them in their strife and avoid methods that cause backlash. As electoral violence continues to be a global issue, it follows that instigation of electoral violence should lead to electoral victory (Glaser 2019, p. 13-15). It may be argued that the risk of post-election protest and violence and other long-term consequences to society would be evidence for the irrationality of incumbents who instigate pre-electoral violence. However, this tendency is rather the opposite and fully rational in the short-term. If the incumbent perceives an immediate threat to the possession of his or her position, a long-term focus may be less prioritized than to solve the problem of the moment (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016).

While there may be several groups with various levels of independence from the incumbent acting for the incumbent's sake, the incumbent and the government still share responsibility for their actions. As Wilkinson (2004, p. 4-11) argue when it comes to ethnic violence, the incumbent either directly perpetrate the violence, such as by commanding military or police, or allows the progovernment violence by non-interference, support or incitement. Furthermore, the incumbent may have an interest to act covertly and not have direct ties to the violence perpetrated, and may therefore use a larger amount of indirectly associated groups, such as militias or criminal gangs to be the visible perpetrators (Birch, Daxecker and Höglund 2020).

2.3.3. Opposition violence and the necessity to control for perpetrator

Van Ham and Lindberg (2015) point out that incumbents and opposition engage in electoral violence reciprocally. Their conclusion is further supported, although as a side-effect, by Rauschenbach and Paula (2019) when finding *fearfulness* in the incumbents' stronghold and

by Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2013; 2016) who argue that incumbents' resort to electoral violence when facing a threat from a strong opposition. At the same time, Straus and Taylor (2012, p. 28-31) found that the great majority of electoral violence was conducted by the incumbent, Fjelde (2020) found that strong political parties reduce electoral violence, and Wahman and Goldring (2020) discovered that incumbents as well could target incumbent strongholds. While the debate is increasing in nuance and depth it is clear at least that the incumbent is not necessarily the sole perpetrator. Therefore, it is necessary to control for the opposition's violence. As tactics, methods, targets and motives probably differ between incumbent and opposition, the effects upon which segments of the population are reporting *fearfulness* or which party gains increased probability of election victory should also differ. Thereby, the incumbent should not necessarily benefit from the anti-governmental violence and thus must the instigator of violence be taken into account.

2.3.4. Main claim

The discussions in the sections above lead to the question if progovernment instigated electoral violence can lead to increased probability of incumbent electoral victory. Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski tried a similar question in their paper "Surviving Elections: Election Violence, Incumbent Victory and Post-Election Repercussions" (2016).   They found that incumbents may use pre-electoral violence to demobilize opposition supporters by preventing them from voting or provoke a boycott of the election, thus increasing the probability of electoral victory. However, they simultaneously risk their long-term manipulative strength as well increasing the probability of post-election protests. Rosenzweig (2021) in turn found that incumbents often miscalculate the effectiveness of their pre-electoral violence and the cost it brings in form of voter backlash. These findings are intriguing, but they do not take into account the pre-electoral violence perpetrated by the opposition. As Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016) only include incumbent violence in their study, it remains possible that opposition violence mitigates the effect incumbent violence has on the electoral outcome, and must thus be taken into account. To account for the violence of the opposition whilst testing a similar question as Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016) is thereby the purpose of this paper.

The proposed theoretical argument gives that progovernment instigated electoral violence should increase the incumbent's probability of winning the election. That means that

the independent variable of instigating electoral violence has a positive relationship with the dependent variable of electoral victory. However, the sole presence of electoral violence is not enough to contribute to manipulation of the electoral outcome. A single event may not be enough to discourage opposition supporters from voting throughout a country. Therefore, the level of electoral violence is of importance to count. The higher level of progovernment violence should give higher probability of incumbent electoral victory.

Progovernment Instigated Electoral Violence   →   *Probability of Incumbent Electoral Victory*

Figure 2: Proposed relation of the variables

2.4. Hypothesis

From the theoretical considerations above the following hypothesis is generated. It implies a positive relationship between progovernment instigated electoral violence and electoral victory for the incumbent.

H1: "*If progovernment actor or party instigate electoral violence, the probability of incumbent actor or party electoral victory increases.*"

2.5. Scope condition

The theoretical argument only applies to countries with national popular elections that are competitive between at least an incumbent and an opposition. Without competition there is no need for manipulative strategies as the outcome of the election is given beforehand. Neither is manipulative strategies such as electoral violence needed if the public does not take part in the vote, for example if the vote is held only within a committee. The theory is also only applicable to countries that are not consolidated democracies as these only have marginal risk of electoral violence that may alter the electoral outcome (Daxecker et. al. 2019; 2021). The remaining applicable countries are those in the spectrum of democratization that have national popular elections with a genuine opposition but yet have a risk of violence being committed in such a way that it may alter the electoral outcome.

3.Research Design

3.1. Methods

To investigate the question and find if the hypotheses hold, a quantitative cross-sectional statistical analysis will be used. A quantitative method is most suitable as the question stimulates to find a generalizable pattern rather than disentangle the causal mechanism. Cross-sectional method contributes to this generalizability by studying each election's characteristics separately, but it does not control for pattern-changes in individual countries over time as a time-series method would. To do a time-series investigation would contribute to our understanding of how previous electoral violence affects the present situation and if or when electoral violence becomes a political norm. However, that goes beyond the scope and resources available for this study.

The unit-of-analysis is *election* as based on the implications of the dependent variable, the outcome of the election. This follows the units used in the NELDA dataset, wherefrom the data for the dependent and control variables are found. Herein is included only all national and popular votes, giving that the election must be to select an individual or a party by a country-wide vote that the people participate in. This excludes, for example, cases where a closed group or party cast the vote. It does not matter, however, whether the election is deemed free and fair (Hyde and Marinov, 2012; 2021). The data of events from the ECAV dataset is aggregated upon each election.

The data is used to present descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables, as well as to evaluate the reasonability in separating progovernment and anti-government violence. Thereafter a logistic regression upon the dependent variable is performed, in order to test the theoretical argument. This is both sufficient to draw conclusions about the relationship of the variables and a statistically correct method as the dependent variable is dichotomous (Kellstedt and Whitten 2018, p. 277-280). In the main regression, as well as in the regressions of the robustness checks, the variables concerning progovernment violence, anti-government violence and electoral fraud are gradually introduced in order to more clearly evaluate the effect of the variables. The dependent variable, probability of electoral victory, is expressed as *incumbent party lose* in the regression tables, due to the definition of the nelda24 variable in the NELDA dataset, *"did the incumbent party lose?"*. Due

to this, a positive sign on the coefficients, a value above 1, should be interpreted as a negative relationship with probability of electoral victory. For example, should the independent variable Progov achieve a coefficient larger than 1, this should be interpreted as progovernment instigated violence does not increase incumbents' probability of electoral victory.

Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski (2016) investigated a similar question as is made in this thesis, the relation between incumbents' electoral violence and success on election, but they also looked into the incumbents' political survival in the post-election dynamics. The method of this paper to some degree resembles how Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski proceeded with their data with some important exemptions. Firstly, Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski only relied on the NELDA dataset. In this paper the data they had is complemented with ECAV which enables controlling for which side instigated the violence. Secondly, Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski did only include elections in which the incumbent won the elections, wherefore this study can increase the nuance of knowledge by also testing elections where the incumbent lost (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016). Thirdly, in this paper no societal measures such as GDP or population size is used as control variables which may be a weakness as it could influence an incumbents' choice of electoral strategies (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016, p. 471).

3.2. Materials

To be able to conduct a quantitative analysis upon the research question two intertwined datasets are to be used. The National Elections across Democracy and Autocracy (NELDA) dataset gives information on all popular national elections held globally in recognized states, capturing issues such as if the incumbent won, if it was competitive or not, and if there were allegations of fraud. With over 4000 elections covered by 58 different variables it includes an election no matter how democratic it may be described as, in order to ensure that all forms of popular national elections can be researched. It is only cases that are not national, or were for example an unelected committee formed base of voters, that the election is not included. (Hyde & Marinov 2012; 2021).

The Electoral Contention and Violence (ECAV) dataset records all events of electoral violence and non-violent contention globally as reported by news agencies. It codes geographic location, the actor and target, as well as if the actor or target is pro- or anti-government. It

separates initiator of event from initiator of violence and if the action was directed or undirected. With over 18000 events recorded ECAV offers possibilities and coverage other datasets, such as SCAD, does not allow (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019; 2021). However, just as other similar datasets, ECAV remains vulnerable to reporting bias. The completely true picture of what has occurred cannot be guaranteed if the sources under- or over-reported certain types of events, and the scale of the issue is difficult to assess. However, international news agencies' tendency to give attention to elections may help reduce the bias (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019, p. 718).

While news reports are the main source of ECAV event-related data, the NELDA dataset forms the basis for the election-specific data, such as dates and types of elections. The datasets therefore share common identification variables for each election, making them easily combined and stimulating the usage of both of them. However, ECAV only holds data between the years 1990 and 2012, creating a limitation which this paper must follow (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019; 2021).

3.3. Case selection

Not all elections and events in the NELDA and ECAV datasets are applicable to the question researched and have therefore not been included in this paper. In the following section is outlined the motivations of case selection.

Firstly, the theoretical argument only includes competitive national and popular elections. As all elections in the NELDA dataset are both national and popular, a selection had to be made only based on competitiveness, using the nelda3 variable *"was opposition allowed?"*. All elections with a negative answer were dropped (Hyde and Marinov 2012; 2021). Furthermore, countries that have been consolidated democracies throughout the time period are not covered by the argument as the risk of electoral violence impacting the electoral result is marginal. They are not included in the ECAV dataset and have thereby also been dropped from the NELDA dataset. This includes the countries of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States, which all have been dropped using their country code (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019, p. 3). As the paper researches the relationship between

electoral violence and the outcome of the election, post-electoral violent events as well as non-violent events have been excluded. The first because they cannot affect the results of the election and the latter because they do not fulfil the purpose of the paper.

Secondly, the dependent and independent variables have to be known for any relationship to be detectable. Therefore, all cases without a clear winner of the election according to the operationalisation of variable nelda 24 *"did incumbent party lose?"* as well as all cases without a clear side of violent instigator have been excluded. As it is known in the great majority of elections if the incumbent won or not the first is not a problem. However, identifying the side of violence instigator presents several difficulties, which are discussed in detail in the Limitations section.

Thirdly, the data from ECAV only covers cases from 1990 to 2012. If there was violence in any elections in the NELDA dataset from before or after this period it will not be detected. Thereby, all elections covered in NELDA before 1990 or after 2012 have been dropped.

3.4. Control variables

Scholars have found that electoral violence is often used in combination with other types of electoral manipulation or fraud. One example is vote buying that may be used as a complement to violence targeting different segments of the population. Institutional manipulation is another example. In other words, the readiness to use electoral violence may be accompanied by a readiness to use other forms of fraud (van Ham and Lindberg 2015; Rauschenbach and Paula 2019). Therefore, to measure the effect that electoral violence singularly has upon electoral victory, fraud has to be controlled for. But to uncover different forms of fraud, especially institutional manipulation, can be difficult and therefore not always visible in the statistics (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016, p. 481). However, the NELDA dataset offers two variables that allow controlling for fraud as much as possible. These are nelda11 *"before elections, are there significant concerns that elections will not be free and fair?"* and nelda49 *"did any monitors refuse to go to an election because they believed that it would not be free and fair?"*. The nelda11 variable is coded Yes if there was concern, domestic or international, that the election was not to be free and fair, or that the election did not fulfil the basic criterias of being competitive. The nelda49 variable more closely captures international concern, asking if election monitors explicitly refused to observe the election due

to pre-election concerns. None of these variables can capture if electoral fraud actually occurred, but gets close enough by focusing on the concerns, international and domestic, that fraud would occur (Hyde & Marinov 2021).

Furthermore, when studying the effects pre-electoral violence can have upon electoral outcome, previous scholars have not taken into account the effect of anti-governmental pre-electoral violence (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016). In the Theory chapter, it is argued that as anti-governmental groups are likely to target other segments of the population with violence than the progovernment side, the incumbent should not benefit from that violence. Therefore, it is necessary to control for the instigator of every violent event. This is done by separating pro-government and anti-government violence, counting the number of events related to each election, and thereafter using the anti-government violence variable as a control.

3.5. Operationalisation of variables

The datasets of NELDA and ECAV give good opportunities for answering the research question in this paper. However, their variables set limitations on which operationalisations of the variables that are possible to make. With the risk of missing some unique perspective on the situations of elections, the data is still comprehensive enough to conduct a quantitative study for investigation of the proposed research question.

The dependent variable, *probability of incumbent electoral victory,* is operationalised using the nelda24 variable *"Did the incumbent's party lose?"* in the NELDA dataset. The variable has four possible answers in the dataset, *"yes", "no", "N/A"* or *"unclear"* (Hyde & Marinov 2012; 2021). In the purpose of having clear statistics, only cases with the answer *"yes"* or *"no"* will be included, thus being a dichotomous variable.

The independent variable, *progovernment instigated electoral violence,* is to be operationalised in two steps. Firstly, the variable Violence Initiator in combination with the variables of Actor1Side, Actor2Side, Target1Side or Target2Side of the ECAV dataset is used to determine which actor involved in the event actually initiated the violence, who is thereafter identified as *progovernment* or *anti-government* (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019; 2021). Secondly, the number of events instigated by either side in relation to a specific election is

counted, allowing for control for levels of violence rather than occurrence. All details of coding can be found in Appendix 3: Script of code.

These operationalisations are reliable in the sense that by using the attached code and the combined NELDA and ECAV datasets, it will yield the same results. Similar data or alternative coding should also retrieve similar results. At the same time, there is a risk that the data is biased, as discussed in the following section 3.6. Limitations of the data (Kellstedt and Whitten 2018, p. 111-114).

Both of the operationalisations are also deemed to achieve validity. Firstly, the concepts concerning electoral victory and progovernment violence are closely related to the operationalisations of incumbents' victory or loss of the election and identified instigator of violence, respectively. Secondly, the operationalisations clearly exclude what is not meant to be included in the theoretical concepts. Thirdly, the concepts and operationalisations are not directly related to each other and therefore should not cause circular or spurious results (Kellstedt and Whitten 2018, p. 111-112, 114-116).

3.6. Limitations of the data

In the previous sections it was mentioned that all events without a known instigator of violence have been excluded. This step is necessary in this paper to answer the research question; if progovernment instigated electoral violence benefits the incumbent. As discussed in the Theory chapter, previous research (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016) has not controlled for the violence of the opposition that by differences in motives, targets and tactics should not increase the probability of incumbents' re-election. The ECAV dataset allows for this differentiation between progovernment and anti-government violence to be made as they separate the initiator of the violence from the initiator of the event, fulfilling the contribution and purpose of this paper (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019; 2021). It must be noted that in the case selection process, 1543 events were excluded due to this lack of information. There still remains enough events and cases to draw statistical conclusions, however the dropped events might have had some impact on the end results.

Furthermore, the founders of ECAV do admit a risk for reporting bias due to the sources of information. International new agencies tend to focus on developed countries and those of strategic importance, democracies tend to have relatively high levels of reports concerning

progovernment violence and authoritarian regimes tend to underreport progovernment violence while overreporting anti-government violence. The ECAV founders suggest several statistical tools to be used to decrease impact of, and control for, reporting bias (Daxecker, Amicarelli and Jung 2019, p.718). However, it is beyond technical availability to use these tools in this paper wherefore eventual reporting bias remains uncontrolled.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1. Descriptive statistics

4.1.1. Summary of variables

In the combined dataset of NELDA and ECAV 1302 elections during the period from 1990 to 2012 are covered. This is made through the independent variable for pro-governmental violent events Progov, the control variable for anti-governmental violent events Antigov, control variables nelda11 and nelda49 for indications of fraud, and nelda24 for identifying electoral winner.

Variable	N	Mean	Sd	Min	Max
nelda24	1302				
... no	830	63.7%			
... yes	472	36.3%			
nelda11	1302				
... no	784	60.2%			
... unclear	35	2.7%			
... yes	483	37.1%			
nelda49	1302				
... N/A	37	2.8%			
... no	1173	90.1%			
... unclear	47	3.6%			
... yes	45	3.5%			
Progov	1302	1.077	6.629	0	149
Antigov	1302	1.825	15.366	0	481

Table 1: Summary of descriptive statistics

The distribution of the dependent variable gives that the incumbent party won in 830 elections, or 63,7 %, giving the opposition victory in 472 elections. In 60 % of the elections, there were no pre-election indications of electoral fraud and while 483 elections, or 37,1 %, had such concerns, in just 3,5 % of the elections, or 45 of them, it is clear that monitors refused to participate. The Progov and Antigov variables show firstly that there are elections without any sign of violence. Most of the elections that do see violence have a generally low number of events, therefore the mean number of events is below two and the median is zero for both instigating sides. However, it should be noted that there are elections with high elevations of violence, as the maximum number of events is 149 for Progov and 481 for Antigov.

At the same time, for Progov, there are only three notable elections with extreme amounts of events in comparison to most other elections. This makes the distribution of violence extremely skewed which motivates a log-transformation of the Progov and Antigov variables to be used in the regression analysis. As a robustness check, the outliers will be excluded to capture if these specific elections contribute to a notable change in the coefficients, driving the results differently than the general pattern.
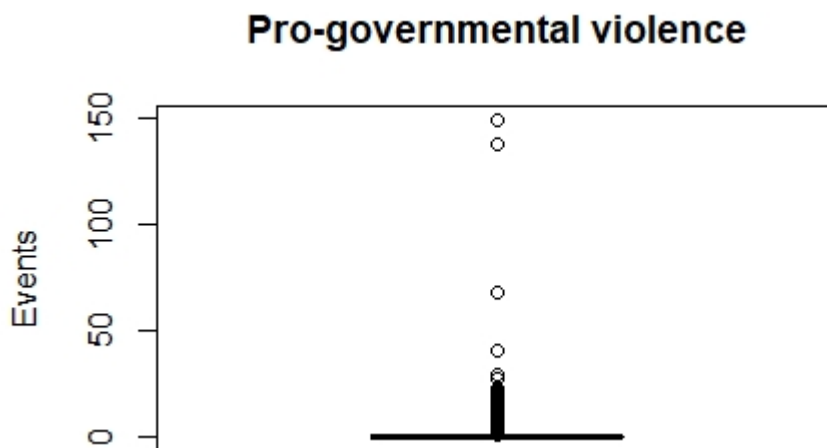

Figure 3: Boxplot of Progov variable

4.1.2. Progov variable covariation with control variable Antigov

Previous research has argued that progovernment groups as well as anti-government groups engage in electoral violence reciprocally (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). To some extent, there seems to be covariation between the variables. While most of the elections did not see

violence, those that did often had violence conducted by both sides. However, in those instances the anti-government side often instigated a larger number of events than the progovernment side. For example, in the most extreme outlier of the case selection on both variables, which was the election in Iraq in 2005, the anti-government side was attributed 481 events while the progovernment side was attributed 149. In 97 elections was the progovernment sole perpetrator against 107 where the anti-government side was the sole perpetrator. By conducting a Pearson's correlation test a statistically significant positive coefficient of 0,66 is given.

It is beyond the scope of the paper to enter a discussion of the implications of covariation between anti-government and progovernment violence. It is enough to state the necessity of controlling for instigator of violence as the variables may often be present simultaneously and have different effects on the electoral outcome.
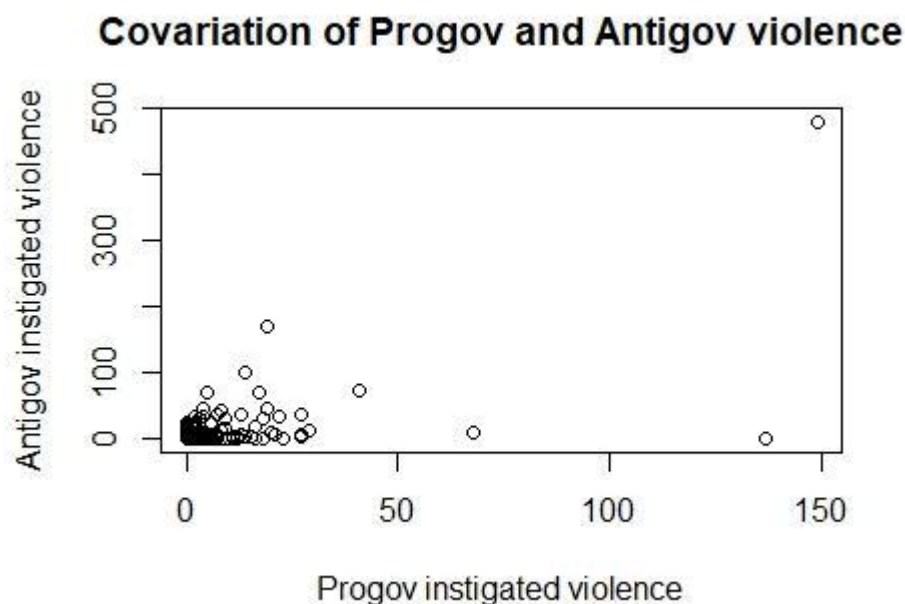

Figure 4: Scatterplot of Progov – Antigov covariation

4.2. Regression analysis

In the table below, the results from the logistic regression with log-transformed *Progov* and *Antigov* variables is presented in three models. In the first model, only the independent variable is included to demonstrate general connection with the dependent variable. The second model introduces the control variable for anti-governmental violence to disentangle if it

changes the effect of the progovernment violence. In the third model, electoral fraud is controlled for with two variables, if there was concern about the freedom and fairness of the election beforehand, and if monitors refused to participate in the election due to concerns of freedom and fairness.

The Progov variable has a consistent and strong statistical significance with a p-value of less than 0.01 throughout the models. The coefficients are odd-ratios and the Progov coefficient is below 1 in all models, thus suggesting that the independent variable has a positive relationship with the dependent variable. That would mean that when the progovernment side instigates electoral violence, the probability of incumbent electoral victory increases.

	Incumbent party lose		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Intercept	0.630^{***}	0.617^{***}	1.592
	t = -7.495	t = -7.674	t = 1.332
Progov	0.632^{***}	0.552^{***}	0.639^{***}
	t = -4.084	t = -4.238	t = -3.094
Antigov		1.196^{*}	1.179
		t = 1.695	t = 1.491
Free/fair Concerns Unclear			1.359
			t = 0.867
Free/fair Concerns Yes			0.405^{***}
			t = -6.592
Monitors refuse No			0.518^{*}
			t = -1.874
Monitors refuse Unclear			0.274^{**}
			t = -2.570
Monitors refuse Yes			0.156^{***}
			t = -2.916
Observations	1,302	1,302	1,302
Log Likelihood	-842.629	-841.206	-802.086
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,689.258	1,688.411	1,620.171
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		
	Coefficients are odds-ratios		

Table 2: Logistic regression

The first control variable, Antigov, does not reach a statistical significance within the common threshold of 0.05 and may therefore not contribute to conclusions about the effect on electoral outcome. It is at the same time notable that the coefficient is positive, thus suggesting a negative relationship between the occurrence of anti-government violence and probability of incumbent electoral victory, which follow the theoretical argument.

Concerns regarding freedom and fairness from before the election was the first control variable to take into account the potential effects of fraud as alternative manipulative strategies for the incumbent, while the second control variable for fraud was if monitors did refuse to participate in the election. Both of these have statistically significant results with coefficients suggesting a positive relationship with the dependent variable, alas to use fraudulent strategies should increase an incumbents' probability of electoral victory.

4.3. Robustness checks

4.3.1. Regression without log-transformation

Without log-transformation of the continuous variables of Progov and Antigov the coefficients of the nominal or dichotomous variables also vary, however the sign of all the coefficients remains the same, above or below 1. It must be noted that several of the coefficients have a stronger statistical significance without log-transformation. Monitors refuse No and Monitors refuse Unclear achieves statistical significance within the 95 percent confidence. So do the Antigov variable, wherefore the anti-governmental violence remains an interesting concept to acknowledge.

4.3.2. Regression without outliers

Most of the elections have no or only a few violent events occurring, instigated by either progovernment or anti-government sides. At the same time, there are 8 elections that contains relatively extreme levels of violence, such as the election in Iraq 2005, where there was reported 481 events of anti-governmental violence and 149 events of progovernment violence. It is therefore of importance to make sure it is not these outliers that drove the result of the

main regression. This is made by excluding all events containing more than 50 events instigated by either side.

The control variable Monitors refuse Unclear gain more prominent statistical significance and the values of the coefficients vary to a minor degree. Otherwise, to regress with excluded outliers did not affect the signs and significance of the coefficients, suggesting that the outliers are not driving the result.

4.4. Discussion

4.4.1. Effects of progovernment violence and fraud

The Progov variable achieved coefficients below 1 consistently within 99 percentage statistical significance, not only throughout the models of the logistical regression but also in both robustness checks. It is therefore clear to state, as does previous researchers (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016), that progovernment violence does favour the incumbents' probability of electoral victory. Thereby, the hypothesis is supported. Incumbents who use violence are generally rational and strategic when their goal is to win the election.

However, it must be noted that in the majority of elections there were no reported violence and still the incumbent parties won in 830 elections compared to 472 where they lost. Thus, the finding that violence helps the incumbent does not imply that incumbents should use violence in all circumstances or that it will always lead to their victory. As previous scholars have stated, to not use violence can be equally rational and strategic when the risk of backlash is too great (Rosenzweig 2021; Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013)

When answered yes, both of the control variables for fraud, if monitors refused and if there were concerns beforehand, also received statistical significance with negative coefficients. This suggests that the phenomenon is similarly successful to alter electoral outcomes on the same basis as the argument above. This finding goes well into the work of current debate in which it has been argued that electoral violence and fraud in the form of vote buying can be used simultaneously and target different population spectrums (van Ham and Lindberg 2015; Rauschenbach and Paula 2019). This highlights the necessity to take both of these phenomena into account when researching one of them. They are dynamic with each other and may also be used in wider combinations with other tactics or strategies. At the same

time, exactly how they are used together is not yet fully understood and may need further inquiry.

4.4.2. Effects of anti-government violence

In the main regression, the Antigov variable did not reach statistical significance within 95 percentage confidence, thus it cannot support the theoretical argument. However, the sign of the Antigov coefficient was positive, suggesting that if it had been significant, it would have had a negative impact on the incumbents' re-election, thus following the theoretical argument. In other words, while no conclusions can be drawn in this thesis, anti-government electoral violence could possibly be a method by opposition actors to gain influence in electoral outcomes. Despite lack of statistical significance, there are two reasons to not fully drop the discussion of the Antigov coefficients sign. To begin with, in the robustness check regression without log-transformation, the coefficient did achieve statistical significance. This indicates an insecurity of the true impact anti-government violence might have that can be cleared with further investigation, such as with more advanced statistical methods or a different approach to the problem. Furthermore, in the descriptive statistics it is clear that there is a covariation between progovernment and anti-government violence, which follows the argument of van Ham and Lindberg (2015) that incumbents and opposition engage in violence reciprocally. That anti-government electoral violence would not have any effect at all in such a dynamic setting does not seem probable. However, as mentioned, this discussion of the Antigov coefficient should as of now only be regarded as a side note until further inquiries have been made upon the subject.

5. Summary and Conclusions

5.1. Summarizing the thesis

The purpose of this study was to gain better understanding of the relationship between progovernment instigated electoral violence and electoral outcomes, specifically how the probability of incumbent electoral victory is altered, using the following research question as point of departure:

"Does progovernment instigated electoral violence lead to increased probability of incumbent electoral victory".

Previous scholars have asked similar questions before and found positive relationships between electoral violence and electoral victory, but they have not controlled for the actors instigating the violence (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2016). The necessity to differentiate between progovernment and anti-government violence was stated with the argument that due to their different sets of available methods and resources, if they used violence as a strategy, they would likely target different segments of the population with different tactics, thus having different effects on the electoral outcome. Therefore, to control for anti-government electoral violence was the main contribution of this paper.

The theoretical argument presented claimed that as rational actors, incumbents would only use electoral violence if it worked strategically toward their goal. With the risk of backlash, such as voter condemnation or post-election protest, violence would still not be an entirely irrational strategy as losing the election could be perceived as a more immediate threat than post-election dynamics. The theoretical argument derived at the following hypothesis:

H1: *"If progovernment actor or party instigate electoral violence the probability of incumbent actor or party electoral victory increases."*

A quantitative cross-sectional method was used to test the argument and hypothesis. With the combination of two datasets, NELDA and ECAV, it was possible to aggregate data on violent events upon each election, counting the amount of progovernment and anti-government violence associated with a singular election. Thereafter, the 1302 elections used could be presented in descriptive statistics and run through both a logistic regression and robustness checks.

The findings showed a consistent 99 percentage statistical significance for a positive effect of progovernment instigated electoral upon the incumbents' probability of electoral victory, thus supporting the hypothesis. A similar relationship was found for the control variables of fraud albeit without the same consistency. This follows the argument of previous

researchers that violence as a method of intimidation can be used simultaneously with fraudulent methods such as vote-buying on different spectrums of the population, and they both generally work to increase the incumbents' chances of winning. It can therefore be concluded that violence instigated by progovernment side is strategically used to increase the incumbent's probability of electoral victory.

On the other hand, no statistical significance could be achieved for anti-government violence except for in one of the robustness checks. While there is covariation between the violence instigated by the two sides, suggesting reciprocal use (van Ham and Lindberg 2015), it would take more research to determine the actual effects of anti-government violence upon electoral outcomes. Because of this, the purpose of the paper is fulfilled to a large degree, but not fully. The hypothesis has been confirmed with great certainty and anti-government violence controlled for, however understanding of the effect of violence from different actors has to await further studies.

5.2. Implications

The main conclusion of this paper is that incumbents can increase their probabilities of re-election by applying progovernment instigated electoral violence strategically, and also in combination with methods of fraud. It cannot be highlighted enough, though, that this does not imply that such strategies and methods will work in the incumbents' favour in all conditions or create foundations for a long-term success of either the incumbent or society. This thesis, in other words, does not recommend the usage of violence. To begin with, the case selection of this paper is relatively narrow. Consolidated democracies are excluded due to minimal chances both for electoral violence to have an effect and for electoral violence to occur in the first place. Consolidated autocracies can also be said to be excluded as only national and popular elections that had a legal opposition were included. Thereby, the findings can only apply to countries in the spectrum between, that witness some form of democratization process. According to arguments of previous researchers, incumbents use electoral violence when they no longer can use institutional manipulation (van Ham and Lindberg 2015). Therefore, the group of situations where the findings of this paper is applicable is even smaller. Furthermore, to use electoral violence to win an election is only a short-term strategy that does not account for long-term effects. Those incumbents that do apply violence often underestimate the risk of post-electoral protests as well as for the loss of support generally (Hafner-Burton, Hyde, Jablonski 2016;

Rosenzweig 2021). As a final point against the use of electoral violence is the dire consequences it has on society. It does not only disturb the development of a functioning democracy. It also reduces trust in society, causing polarization between ethnic or political lines, creates fearfulness and of course causes bodily harm to those directly affected.

Straus and Taylor (2012) showed that the incumbents instigated most of the electoral violence. To differentiate between progovernment and anti-government violence and control for the latter is therefore not to relieve incumbents of their responsibility. As Wilkinson (2004) stated, the incumbent either perpetrates or allows violence to occur. The purpose of the thesis, as described above, was to contribute to one step into a deeper understanding of the phenomena in order to find tools to mitigate electoral violence. To reach this, however, further studies are needed.

5.3. Further research

This paper has contributed one step towards greater understanding of the interaction between progovernment and anti-government electoral violence, but to improve the results, further studies could take several measures. Firstly, the sizes of the odd-ratios coefficients in the logistic regressions have not been interpreted due to limited knowledge and time-resources. To do so would give another perspective on the influence levels of the control- and independent variables upon electoral outcome. Secondly, in this paper the amount of violent events in each election was counted instead of using the mere presence of violence as independent and control variables. However, more dimensions of the events can be used and may contribute to different interpretations. For example, the amounts of deaths in relation to each event or election, or number of involved individuals on each side. Thirdly, the method used in this paper has been cross-sectional on singular elections. To use time-series and measure several consecutive elections in several countries would deepen our understanding of how previous electoral violence affects present situations and if or when electoral violence becomes a political norm. Fourthly, further studies are needed to understand the relationship between anti-government violence and the opposition's probability of electoral victory. As the opposition is generally weaker than the incumbent from the start, it is possible that the probability would increase at a slower pace. But it is also important to acknowledge that the opposition is most often not united. Thus, if measured as a collective, results could become spurious if one party's violence led to another party's increased electoral victory.

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The decline in success of nonviolent conflicts

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The decline in success of nonviolent conflicts

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Abstract

This paper investigates the decline in success of nonviolent conflicts. While nonviolent conflicts are known to have higher efficacy compared to violent conflicts, this disparity has decreased since the 1990s. Previous scholars have divided the causes behind the success of nonviolent conflict into three categories: (1) mobilization; (2) resilience; and (3) leverage. The hypothesis is that one or more of these factors have changed and is the cause behind the decline. The research uses a large-N quantitative method, comparing the two time periods of 1945 – 1999 with 2000 – 2013. The resulting descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and likelihood ratio tests show that mobilization has dropped alongside a decrease in how successfully nonviolent campaigns utilize leverage over their opponents. These findings invite further investigation into why this decline in efficacy of nonviolent conflicts has occurred.

Keywords

Non-violence; mobilisation; resilience; leverage

1. Introduction

Previous research has emphasized the need for peace and conflict research to incorporate nonviolent resistance into its understanding of conflicts. Chenoweth & Cunningham (2013) highlight the fact that research on civil resistance has only begun taking an empirical form since the 2000s. Stephan & Chenoweth (2008) is one of the first large-N studies on civil resistance and demonstrates the logic behind why and how civil resistance works, arguing that achieving widespread, cross-cutting, and decentralized mobilization is key for the success of nonviolent campaigns. They also dispute the inherent claim within peace and conflict research that violent resistance is the most effective means of change, showing that nonviolent conflicts achieved success at almost double the rate of violent conflicts between 1900 – 2006. Interestingly, the success rate of nonviolent conflicts has been on a decline in the last decades. This is a research puzzle many scholars have tried to answer, with no clear consensus. My aim is to contribute to the growing literature on nonviolent conflict and the conundrum that is its recent decline is success. Thus, this paper will try to answer the question "why has the success rate of nonviolent conflicts decreased since the 1990s?".

I propose and test the following three hypotheses based upon Schock's (2013) framework for analyzing nonviolent conflicts: (1) the impact of mobilization is different over time, (2) the impact of resilience is different over time, and (3) the impact of leverage is different over time. Using quantitative analysis on data from the Nonviolent and Violent Conflicts and Outcomes 2.1 (NAVCO) Dataset (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019a) I find that contemporary campaigns have become less successful at mobilizing members as well as utilizing leverage over their opponent.

With this first section having introduced the topic, the second part of the paper will review the current literature on the field of nonviolent conflict. Then, the third section will present the theory behind the success of nonviolent conflict. The fourth section shows the chosen methodology, with the fifth presenting the analysis. Finally, the last section shows the conclusion of the thesis and suggests avenues for future research.

2. Previous Research

Chenoweth (2020) puts forth seven possible explanations for why nonviolent movements have decreased in success. Three regarding the environment movements find themselves in, and four regarding the movements themselves. The first of the environmental changes is that movements may be facing more entrenched regimes. In facing repeated challenges by imprisoning oppositionists, stoking fears of foreign conspiracies, and obtaining diplomatic cover from international supporters, these regimes have grown resilient in the face of challenges from below. The regimes in Russia, Iran, Belarus, Turkey, and Venezuela have all prevailed. However, this explanation has major shortcomings. Many regimes are seen as immutable, until they suddenly are toppled by a nonviolent struggle, where they suddenly are claimed to be weak after all. Many stable autocratic regimes, such as Pinochet's Chile, Honecker's East Germany, Mubarak's Egypt, and Bashir's Sudan, succumbed to this fate (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 76). The second explanation is that governments are learning and adapting to challenges from below. Given the record of nonviolent conflicts, state actors are more likely to perceive them as the massive threat they are. Consequently, they have developed strategies to suppress nonviolent movements in a savvier way. One prominent strategy is to infiltrate and divide movements from within. Lastly, Chenoweth (2020, p. 76 – 77) puts forth the retreat of the United States' role as a global superpower with a pro-democracy agenda. Although many critique this agenda as just being imperialism shrouded by liberalism, the national order created by the US and other Western nations have coincided with human rights expansions. These global trends may have created space for dissent in countries around the world. While this line of thought may have some merit, it also overstates the degree to which the United States has been a beacon of democracy and human rights around the world. Their long history of supporting coups in foreign nations to install right-wing autocrats, such as General Augusto Pinochet in Chile and Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi in Iran, is a glaring hole in this argument. Furthermore, it also overstates the degree to which democracies hold leverage over how autocracies conduct their internal affairs. In short, Chenoweth (2020) dismisses the environmental arguments as they lack empirical support and turn to the changing nature of the campaigns themselves.

The first of these arguments is the decline in participation (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 77 – 78). While there have been impressive mass demonstrations in recent years, campaigns, at their peaks, have been smaller than the successful movements of the 1980s and 1990s. From two

percent of the population in the 1980s, to two-point seven percent in the 1990s, starting a decline down to an average of one-point three percent since 2010. The second cause could be the overreliance on mass demonstrations (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 78). Because most people associate civil resistance with demonstrations and protest, it is increasingly the type of action launched by people seeking change. Street protests are easy to organize and improvise on short notice. However, mass demonstrations are not always the most effective way of applying pressure on elites, especially when they are not sustained over time. Techniques such as general strikes and mass civil disobedience require more planning but are much more disruptive to economic life and state authority. It is this behind-the-scenes planning and organizing that allow movements to build and sustain mobilization in the long term, a factor lost to the contemporary leaderless movements. Third, a possibly related factor to the overemphasis on demonstrations is the reliance on digital organizing, particularly via social media (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 78 – 79). Social media is good at assembling a massive number of participants on a short notice. It also allows people to share their grievances broadly across thousands or even millions of people, whilst also being a means for communication not controlled by mainstream institutions or governments. The problem is that the resulting movements are less equipped to plan, negotiate, and establish shared goals, as well as sustain their ability to disrupt a regime. Furthermore, easier communication also entails easier surveillance. Those in power can monitor, single out, and suppress prominent dissidents. Autocrats have also used social media to rally their own supporters, as well as to spread propaganda and misinformation. The fourth and last factor that can explain the decrease in success is that nonviolent movements increasingly embrace or tolerate radical, violent-wielding, flanks (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 79). Even if only a minority of a movement is violent, regimes can cast violent skirmishers as a threat to public safety and use indiscriminate repression to suppress the movement. Violence makes it difficult for the movement to paint the repression as unjust and the participants as innocent victims. Regimes often infiltrate nonviolent movements to spur on violent tactics at the margins, to use as justification for violent repression.

While the four movement arguments put forth by Chenoweth (2020) provide more compelling explanations compared to the three environmental arguments, there is a lack of comprehensive studies analyzing the decline in success more broadly. This study aims to fill the research gap by conducting a more comprehensive study, putting together the theories explaining the success in nonviolent conflicts with the empirical puzzle that is their decline.

3. Theory

This paper will use the terms "nonviolent struggle", "nonviolent resistance", and "civil resistance" interchangeably to mean the same thing: the sustained use of nonviolent methods by civilians to spur political change. This is different from the traditional meaning of the word "nonviolence", which originates from Gandhian tradition and entails a philosophical and moral conviction and commitment (Schock, 2013, p. 278; Chenoweth & Cunningham 2013, p. 273). Nonviolence in the context of civil resistance is not necessarily a moral choice; often it is a strategic choice. Furthermore, civil resistance is distinct from occasional street protests, as civil resistance is understood to be more purposive, coordinated, and sustained (Chenoweth & Cunningham, 2013, p. 273).

The theoretical framework of this paper is mostly based upon Kurt Schock's overview of the practice and study of civil resistance (Schock, 2013). His division of previous literature into three key concepts provides an excellent structure for theories regarding civil resistance. These three concepts are: (1) mobilization; (2) resilience; and (3) leverage.

Mobilization refers to the process of acquiring people, resources, and support for a campaign (Schock, 2013, p. 282). Civil resistance scholars have emphasized the extent of mobilization, which Stephan & Chenoweth (2008) find increases the likelihood of campaign success. Nonviolent resistance movements have a lower barrier of participation compared to violent resistance. Stephan & Chenoweth (2008) argue that the physical, moral, informational, and committal barriers are lower in civil resistance movements and contribute to their higher level of mobilization.

While mobilization is a necessary component, it is not sufficient. Challengers must sustain their mobilization when faced with repression, a factor decided by the movement's resilience. It refers to the ability to withstand and recover from repression (Schock, 2013, p. 283). While social psychology factors such as fearlessness play a part in this, ultimately resilience relies on the tactical interactions between the challenger and its opponents. This can take the form of devising new or adapting to a change in protest tactics, to meeting repression of methods of concentration such as protests with methods of dispersion such as boycotts.

The last component, leverage, refers to the capacity of challengers to utilize different dependence relations to undermine the power of the opponent (Schock, 2013, p. 283). The two
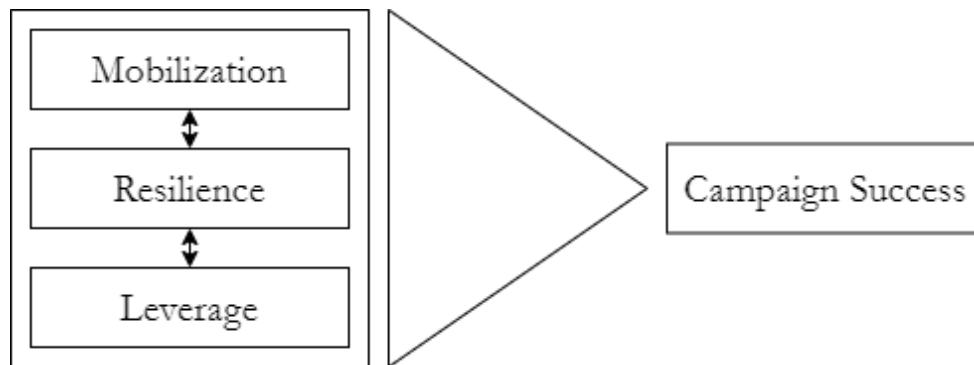
main dimensions of dependence relations are political and economic dependence. Political dependence stems from the anarchist perspective that prioritize social roots of power rather than state structures and political institutions (Schock, 2013, p. 281). Rulers depend on the consent or acquiescence of the ruled. If people perceive the government as unjust or corrupt and withdraw their consent, the government's claim to legitimacy and ability to command authority is diminished along with its capacity to rule (Schock, 2013, p. 283). Administrators, police, military, or workers in key sectors such as energy or transportation refusing to carry out their duties would severely undermine state power. The importance of the defection or neutrality of state security forces in nonviolent conflicts is highlighted by Stephan & Chenoweth (2008, p. 22) and Nepstad (2013, pp. 337 – 338). Economic dependence comes from the need of state resources to constantly be replenished. Citizens refusing to pay taxes undermine state power. States do not only rely on the cooperation of their own citizens, but also on other countries and increasingly non-state transnational entities (Schock, 2013, p. 284). Former allies or trade partners withdrawing support or imposing sanctions also undermines the state's capacity to rule.

All three concepts are necessary, but not sufficient individually, for the success of a nonviolent campaign. In addition, Schock's (2013) three main concepts have two further related concepts to keep in mind. These are backlash (Hess & Martin, 2006; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011) and radical flanks (Ryckman, 2020; Sutton et al. 2014; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).

Backlash, also called backfire, can be understood as the cost in legitimacy and authority from a state that uses violent repression against civilians engaging in nonviolent resistance. Hess & Martin (2006) argue that the backfire dynamic may win over neutral or uninvolved third parties, thus creating opportunities for the challengers to use their power and influence as leverage over their opponents. As with resilience, backlash is dependent on the tactical interaction between the challengers and their opponents (Hess & Martin, 2006, p. 262). This can arguably be linked to the findings of Sutton et al. (2014, pp. 566 – 567), who find that the pre-existing campaign infrastructure increases the likelihood of increased mobilization and state security force defections post-repression. A pre-existing campaign infrastructure arguably allows challengers to organize a counter to their opponents' attempt to inhibit outrage. Increased mobilization and higher chance of security force defection helps a nonviolent struggle achieve its success. The impact of state security force defection alone increases the

likelihood of success by forty-six times (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008, p. 22). Furthermore, Sutton et al. find that parallel media institutions, both traditional and new, increase the likelihood of international backlash (2014, p. 568). As Hess & Martin (2016, p.262) highlights, communication is key to overcome censorship and counter elite perspectives. This could be an explanation for why pre-existing campaign infrastructure and parallel media institutions have these effects. Chenoweth & Stephan (2011, p. 68) find that repression decreases the likelihood of violent and nonviolent campaign success by 35 percent. However, they argue that the tolerance of government crackdown changes if the campaign is violent contra nonviolent. When controlling for violent repression, they find that nonviolent movements are considerably more effective than violent movements, reinforcing their claim that repression is more likely to backfire when used against nonviolent movements. They also contend the idea that repression in and of itself determines the outcome of campaigns (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, p. 69). These findings on the notion of backlash can be connected to Schock's (2013) concepts of both mobilization and leverage. If backfire occurs, it can lead to both increased internal backlash and thus higher mobilization, but also international backlash, giving leverage to the challengers through political and economic dependencies. Backlash is more likely to occur when repression is perceived as unjust, a factor dependent on the strict adherence to nonviolence by the repressed, as well as whether it can be communicated to wider audiences, a factor dependent on communication.

Ryckman (2020) finds that the existence of radical flanks, and thus the capacity for organizational violence, increases the risk of a nonviolent campaign escalating into a violent campaign. This factor is counteracted by the campaign's progress (i.e. whether it is achieving its goals), which decreases the risk for escalation. In short, she finds that nonviolent movements with violence-wielding groups that fail to make progress are likely to escalate. Connecting this to Stephan & Chenoweth's (2008) findings mean that radical flanks should be connected to lower rates of success, as violent campaigns are less likely to succeed. This is further supported by their more in-depth book on nonviolent conflicts (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, p. 68) where they argue that repression must be perceived as unjust and that the regime cannot offer self-defence or public safety as an excuse, for backfire to occur. Adhering to nonviolence is difficult if the movement includes a radical, violence-wielding, flank.

Figure 1: *Theoretical framework for the success of nonviolent conflicts*

This theoretical framework will act as a base for explaining the success, and decline in success, of nonviolent conflicts. It allows for drawing general conclusions of the trajectory of nonviolent conflicts. Chenoweth (2020) highlights possible factors that explain the decline in success of nonviolent conflicts. The most compelling of these come not from environmental factors, but from a change in the movements themselves. These are: (1) decline in participation; (2) overreliance on demonstrations; (3) organizing protests through social media; and (4) increased tolerance of radical flanks. The first two factors fit neatly into Schock's (2013, p. 282) definition of mobilization, arguably along with the third. The way in which a campaign is organized is linked to its ability to gather people, resources, and support for a campaign. The fourth factor, radical flanks, is heavily related to the resilience of a campaign. How a nonviolent campaign reacts to repression is dependent on its nonviolent discipline, and its chance of success should increase if it remains nonviolent, which is dependent on whether the movement contains violent-wielding subgroups. Thus, Chenoweth's (2020) arguments explaining the decline in success fit into Schock's framework for the success of nonviolent conflicts. However, her second and third reasons are not able to be tested in this paper. Available data either lacks information about resistance method and use of social media or does not stretch back far enough to test a change over time.

To answer the research question "why has the success rate of nonviolent conflicts decreased in the last decades?", it is necessary to first look at how the causes of success in nonviolent conflicts changed over time. This gives ground for three hypotheses:

> H_1: *The impact of mobilization is different over time.*
>
> H_2: *The impact of resilience is different over time.*
>
> H_3: *The impact of leverage is different over time.*

4. Research Design

4.1. Method

This thesis will use the quantitative method of logistic regression. A large-N quantitative design is suitable for this kind of analysis as the research gap in the previous literature concerns why there has been a decrease in the success rate in nonviolent conflicts in the last decades. Such a research endeavour entails a large number of cases to ensure generalisability. Regression allows for testing the relationship between variables in isolation of other, potentially confounding, variables. The independent variables are mobilization, resilience, and leverage, and the dependent variable is campaign success. To answer the proxy question "how have the causes of success in nonviolent conflicts changed over time?", the same regression testing for factors examining mobilization, resilience, and leverage will be run on data split into different time periods. From this, it is possible to see which factors are important for campaign success over time, what has changed, and ultimately why the success rate has decreased. Following the multiple regression models, likelihood ratio tests will be run on the three concepts individually to see which single factor best predicted success in both periods.

The time periods chosen are: 1945 – 1999 and 2000 – 2013. These time periods describe the evolution of nonviolent conflict. The first period is during a time where nonviolent conflicts were largely overshadowed by violent ones, with violent conflicts being twice as frequent as nonviolent conflicts in the 1940s and 1950s (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 71). Starting with a decrease of violent conflicts in the 1970s together with a steady increase in nonviolent means of struggle, nonviolent conflicts surpassed violent conflicts for the first time in the 1980s. From the 2000s onwards, violent conflicts continued their decline while nonviolent conflicts became more common, leading to double the number of nonviolent conflicts compared to violent ones – the reverse as during the 1940s and 1950s. The success rate of nonviolent campaigns also began from 1945, starting from 21 percent (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 75). This peaked during the 1990s when the success rate reached as high as 65 percent. From the 2000s onwards, this number has steadily decreased, going as low as 34 percent from the 2010s onwards, nearing the same level as 1945. In short, this can be dichotomised as the "rise" and "fall" of the success of nonviolent conflict.

The data used is primarily from the Nonviolent and Violent Conflicts and Outcomes 2.1 (NAVCO) Dataset (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019a). It includes 384 campaigns disaggregated

into 2717 campaign-years. A campaign is defined as: "a series of observable, continuous, purposive mass tactics or events in pursuit of a political objective" (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). NAVCO is a consensus dataset on conflicts between 1945 and 2013 and does not include all conflicts. It only selects conflicts which during at least one campaign-year held maximalist goals, i.e. overthrowing the current regime, expelling foreign occupation, or achieving self-determination. Furthermore, all campaigns are also "mature" campaigns, meaning that they mobilize at least 1000 participants in at least one campaign-year, and have coherent organizations linking episodes of activities together over time. These rules apply both for nonviolent and violent conflicts. For the violent conflicts, the UCDP definition of at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar-year applies and is needed for their inclusion. Thus, any claims made in this paper only apply to conflicts meeting these criteria. A caveat for the coding of some variables is that NAVCO follows the "absence of evidence is evidence of absence" guidelines when a campaign is otherwise well-documented. Furthermore, coders can also make inferences if there is a missing data point based on other relevant data and if the coder has no reason to believe a variable may have changed.

As for the later shown control variables, one is taken from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) 11.1 Dataset (Coppedge et al. 2021). V-Dem is a country-year dataset that measures the complex concept of democracy along five principles: electoral, liberal, participative, deliberative, and egalitarian. The dataset is a multidimensional and disaggregated dataset to measure these principles. It covers the years 1789 – 2020, and splits this into historical data (1789 – 1920) and contemporary data (1900 – 2020). The twenty-year overlap is due to new and revised coding but will not matter for this analysis as the chosen period only stretches back to 1945. The NAVCO dataset includes V-Dem ID codes, making it easier to merge these together. The other dataset used for one control variable is part of the Correlates of War project, the National Material Capabilities (NMC) dataset (Singer, 1987). It collects measures for making an indicator for national military capability, the Composite Indicator of National Capability, and covers the period 1816 – 2016. This dataset was selected on a similar basis as V-Dem, that NAVCO includes a Correlates of War ID that allows for easier merging of datasets.

With these three datasets being panel data, and the interest is variation over time, the analysis will use fixed effects. Thus, the analysis will account for heterogeneity across the units and better isolate the independent and dependent variable(s) over time. A drawback in doing this is that fixed effects are sensitive to random error within the dataset, compounded by the relatively small sample size (Clark & Linzer, 2014, p. 402). While a random effects approach

does not have this problem, it instead has a higher risk of bias within its pooled estimator. With the drawback of fixed effects in mind, I have chosen it as the preferred method as it aligns closer with an analysis of change over time.

4.2. Independent Variables

The independent variables are the key factors for nonviolent conflict success provided by Schock's (2013, pp. 282 – 284) theoretical framework. Each independent variable will use three operationalizations from the NAVCO dataset, resulting in a total of nine variables.

4.3. Mobilization

The first variable needed to measure a campaign's mobilization is the total number of participants. It is operationalized as the highest recorded or estimated participation at a peak event. The value incorporates all number of people who have taken part in the campaign, ranging from active organization to popular participation in street protests (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). This lack of distinction between participants should not matter, as nonviolent conflicts do not require as much from its participants as compared to violent conflicts, which is why nonviolent struggles have higher mobilization overall. In line with practices adopted by Ron Francisco in his data on European Protest and Coercion (2019), vague numbers such as "hundreds of thousands" and "hundreds" are coded as 200,001 and 201 respectively. The size of nonviolent conflicts can be hard to state definitively, as participants are not necessarily part of any formal organisation, so such estimation is required. As argued by previous research, the number of participants is key for the success of nonviolent conflict. Furthermore, Chenoweth (2020, pp. 77 – 78) brings up a decrease in participation as a possible explanation for the decrease in success for nonviolent conflicts over the last decades.

The second variable is the diversity of mobilization. NAVCO defines a movement as diverse when there is evidence that the movement spans two or more sub-categories of the population (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). The dataset codes for nine socio-demographic measures of diversity: (1) gender; (2) age; (3) class; (4) urban/rural; (5) ideology; (6) party; (7) regional; (8) ethnic; and (9) religion. All nine variables are coded binarily. These will not be considered independently, but rather aggregated into a single number stating along how many categories the movement is diverse. The importance of the diversity of mobilization is brought up by Stephan & Chenoweth (2008, pp. 41 – 42) who found that broad mobilization is needed

to produce loyalty shifts and challenge the regime's legitimacy. Thus, it is both easier and more logical to aggregate the diversity categories into a single diversity variable on how cross cutting the mobilization is.

The third and last variable is the campaign's structure. It measures to the extent to which there is a clear hierarchical structure for decision-making (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). This variable is binary. It declares whether there is a clear centralized leadership structure, often but not necessarily focused on a single leader. It is also coded as a one if parallel political parties or "shadow governments" exist. The centralization of a movement is brought up by Stephan & Chenoweth (2008, pp. 41 – 42) who argue that centralized movements are worse at achieving success, as regimes can more easily suppress opposition leaders and thus the entire movement. On the other hand, Chenoweth (2020, p. 79) also argues that contemporary movements' reliance on social media has created a lack of organization, planning, and ability to negotiate, and thus has lowered their chance of success. Either way, the centralization of a movement is linked to its ability to mobilize people, resources, and support.

4.4. Resilience

The first variable measuring a movement's resilience is the effect repression has on the campaign. NAVCO measures the impact of state repression on a campaign with an ordinal variable (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). If there is no repression, it is coded as zero. If there is no substantial campaign activity following repression, the movement is suppressed and coded as one. If there are still some activities, but the campaign sees lower mobilization following repression, it is coded as two. Conversely, if the campaign sees higher mobilization following repression, backlash has occurred, and it is coded as three. This variable directly measures how well a campaign can withstand state repression. This will be turned into a dummy for backlash, i.e. whether the outcome coded as three in NAVCO occurred.

The second variable is whether the campaign uses traditional and new media institutions. Traditional media encompasses newspapers, radio, and television, while new media encompasses internet media such as news websites, news blogs, and online radio/video feeds (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). This variable is coded in NAVCO as a binary variable. As previous research suggests, the effect of repression is dependent on the ability of a movement to communicate the unjust nature of the repression (Hess & Martin, 2006; Sutton et al., 2014). If a movement can effectively communicate to domestic and international audiences that

repression is occurring, it is more likely to generate backlash and sustain in the face of repression.

The third variable is the campaign's adherence to nonviolent discipline. If the movement breaks its nonviolent discipline in the face of violent repression, it will lose its ability to paint participants as innocent victims (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 79), give justification for indiscriminate state repression (ibid), as well as increase the risk of escalating into a violent conflict (Ryckman, p. 337). A campaign's nonviolent discipline will be measured with the proxy of its response to a radical flank. In NAVCO, this is a categorical variable (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). If there is no radical flank, it is coded as a zero. If the campaign displayed a clear commitment to nonviolent discipline in response to the violent flank's actions, it is coded as a one. If the campaign signals clear toleration of the radical flank, it is coded as a two. If the campaign shows internal disagreement whether to disavow, tolerate, or embrace the violent flank, it is coded as three. This categorical variable will be turned into a dummy variable, where zero indicates no nonviolent discipline (i.e. 2 or 3 in NAVCO), and one indicates nonviolent discipline (i.e. 0 or 1 in NAVCO).

4.5. Leverage

The first variable measuring the leverage of a campaign is the defection of state security forces. Previous research finds strong support for the positive impact of state security force defections on nonviolent conflict success (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008, p. 22; Nepstad, 2013, pp. 337 – 338). In NAVCO, this is coded as a binary variable: zero for no defection and one for defection. State security forces are defined as internal security forces, police, or the military (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). Defectors are defined as those formerly associated with the official police or military apparatus who publicly announce their support for the campaign, which includes things such as the police refusing to act on state directives to crack down on the opposition. This variable does not include non-state actors, only those with formal ties to the government.

The second variable is the defection of leaders associated with the state. Schock (2013, pp. 283 – 284) highlights the finding that essential administrators refusing to carry out their duties undermine state power. This variable is coded as a binary variable in the NAVCO dataset (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b): zero for no defection and one for defection. They define state officials as the top non-military leadership of the state, such as prominent politicians and

cabinet ministers. They are considered to have defected when they break with the state to publicly announce their support for the opposition campaign. This variable does not include prominent economic elites or other non-state actors.

The third and last variable is international sanctions. This is a dichotomous variable in NAVCO (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b): zero for no sanctions and one for sanctions. The variable codes for any formal sanctions against the state as a direct consequence of its actions towards the campaign. This falls under what Schock (2013, p. 284) calls economic dependence, specifically the state losing former trade partners.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable, campaign success, is coded in NAVCO as both a binary "yes" or "no" variable. This variable declares whether the campaign achieved at least one stated maximalist goal. In most cases, this occurs within a year of the campaign's peak. Sometimes, a campaign's goals were achieved years after its peak in terms of membership, but the success was a direct result of the campaign's activities (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b). If such a link can be demonstrated, the campaign is coded as successful.

Control Variables

I have selected four control variables based upon previous research on nonviolent conflict. The first control variable is population. Population is present in other quantitative analyses on nonviolent conflict (Sutton et al., 2014; Ryckman, 2020). It is necessary to control for population as the mobilization of nonviolent conflicts is dependent on the population of a country. This is operationalized in NMC as the number of people living in a country (Greig & Enterline, 2021). The data is partially from national censuses, but also from the United Nations Statistical Office. Missing data has been estimated using a formula to interpolate datapoints. This data is reliable, as it is taken from and corroborated with multiple sources. The only issue the authors bring up regarding their data is during territorial boundary changes, which the authors attempted to account for through estimation.

The second control variable is wealth. Wealthier states have better communication technologies which should make it easier to establish campaigns, whilst also having higher capacity for state repression (Sutton et al., 566). Furthermore, it can proxy individual wealth, a

factor which affects citizens' economic leverage over the state. This is operationalized as GDP per capita and taken from the NMC dataset.

The third control variable is repression. Chenoweth & Stephan (2011, p. 68) find that repression decreases the likelihood of success by 35 percent. Furthermore, repression is heavily related to the key concepts of mobilization, resilience, and leverage through the backfire dynamic (Schock, 2013, pp. 283 – 284). Repression is operationalized in NAVCO as an ordinal variable with four values: (0) no repression, e.g. few or no actions taken by the state; (1) mild repression, e.g. use of economic fees to increase cost for opposition; (2) moderate repression, e.g. physical or violent action aimed at coercing opponent, imprisonment of campaign members; and (3) extreme repression, e.g. physical or violent action with the express intent to kill opponents. This variable looks at repression from the perspective of the campaign instead of the state and it only measures the most repressive episode during the campaign-year.

5. Analysis

Before the regression analysis, I will present descriptive statistics of the chosen periods, and analyse them briefly.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: *Descriptive statistics of period 1945 – 1999.*

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Success	256	0.195	0.397	0	1
Participants	214	580640.668	1548336.214	200	10000000
Diversity	250	6.440	2.503	0	9
Centralization	255	0.306	0.462	0	1
Backlash	253	0.609	0.489	0	1
Traditional media	253	0.391	0.489	0	1
New Media	253	0.154	0.362	0	1
Nonviolent discipline	226	0.792	0.407	0	1
Security force defection	249	0.249	0.433	0	1
Political defection	254	0.264	0.442	0	1
International sanctions	253	0.237	0.426	0	1

Between 1945 and 1999 there were 256 campaign-years, and 19.5 percent were successful in achieving their stated goal(s). The mean participation per campaign-year was

580 000, and quite diverse too – along a mean of 6.44 dimensions. Around 30 percent of movements had clear hierarchical structures during this period. The backlash effect was also quite prominent, occurring in over 60 percent of campaign-years. Traditional media institutions were part of 39.1 percent of campaign-years, with their new media counterpart in only 15.4 percent. Nonviolent discipline was high, being maintained in 79.2 percent of campaign-years. Security force- and political defections, along with international sanctions, happened in around a fourth of campaign-years.

Table 2: *Descriptive statistics of period 2000 – 2013.*

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Success	171	0.216	0.413	0	1
Participants	160	154815.700	403439.816	100	2000001
Diversity	158	4.057	2.408	0	9
Centralization	165	0.327	0.471	0	1
Backlash	166	0.392	0.490	0	1
Traditional media	166	0.235	0.425	0	1
New Media	166	0.078	0.269	0	1
Nonviolent discipline	112	0.857	0.351	0	1
Security force defection	170	0.135	0.343	0	1
Political defection	171	0.222	0.417	0	1
International sanctions	171	0.205	0.405	0	1

The period 2000 to 2013 saw success in 21.6 percent of campaign-years. The mean number of participants was around 150 000, and diverse along a mean of four dimensions. About a third of movements were centralized along a clear hierarchical command structure. Backlash was present in 39.2 percent of campaign-years. Traditional media institutions were built and/or used in 23.5 percent of campaign-years, with new media institutions in only 7.8 percent. Nonviolent discipline was very high, being maintained in over 85 percent of campaign-years. Security force defections occurred during 13.5 percent of campaign-years, with political defections and international sanctions in around 20 percent.

The apparent climb in success between 1945 – 1999 and 2000 – 2013 is due to the data structure being in the campaign-year format instead of only campaigns. Contemporary campaigns are usually shorter lasting compared to their historical counterparts. That aside, the most apparent change between the periods is mobilization. Contemporary campaigns have much lower mobilization, with a staggering decrease of 400 000 participants. This falls in line with the first of the four arguments for the decline in success of nonviolent conflict provided by Chenoweth (2020, pp. 77 – 78), being a fall in participation. Recent campaigns are also not

as cross-cutting, losing a mean of 2.4 diversity dimensions. As Stephan & Chenoweth (2008) find, successful mobilization is not only numerous, but cross-cutting. Contemporary movements are slightly more centralized in their structure and mobilization. The backlash effect is less frequent in the latter period, occurring in only 39.2 percent of campaigns-years in 2000 – 2013 compared to 60.9 percent in 1945 – 1999. The use of media institutions decreased substantially. Interestingly, new media institutions are less common in contemporary movements compared to their historical counterparts. This is arguably due to how NAVCO defines new media institutions, excluding social media, explaining the decrease. Unexpectedly, nonviolent discipline was better maintained during the period 2000 – 2013 compared to 1945 – 1999, which directly opposes what Chenoweth (2020, p. 79) proposes as the fourth reason for the decline in success. Finally, contemporary movements are worse at utilizing dependence relations as leverage, with security force defections almost halving, along with minor decreases in political defections and international sanctions.

Regression Analysis

Table 3: *The impact of mobilization, resilience, and leverage on campaign success.*

	Dependent variable:	
	Success	
	(1)	(2)
$\log_2$ Participants	1.050	2.303[**]
	t = 0.489	t = 1.972
Diversity	0.985	1.071
	t = -0.108	t = 0.225
Centralization	3.034	0.195
	t = 1.553	t = -1.024
Backlash	4.120[**]	10,523.720[*]
	t = 2.158	t = 1.857
Traditional media	0.685	373.470[*]
	t = -0.530	t = 1.693
New media	0.176	0.005
	t = -1.622	t = -1.486

Nonviolent discipline	11.754***	0.511
	t = 2.734	t = -0.321
Security force defection	10.523***	3.263
	t = 3.034	t = 0.689
Political defection	2.347	4.879
	t = 1.191	t = 0.785
International sanctions	3.423	21.599
	t = 1.472	t = 1.116
$\log_2$ Population	0.715*	0.846
	t = -1.824	t = -0.354
$\log_2$ GPD per capita	1.152	2.961
	t = 0.417	t = 1.145
Repression	0.590*	0.007*
	t = -1.712	t = -1.825
Constant	0.181	0.000
	t = -0.378	t = -1.475
Region fixed effects	Yes	Yes
Observations	166	84
Log Likelihood	-46.858	-15.536
Akaike Inf. Crit.	131.716	69.072

Note: Coefficients are odds-ratios. *$p<0.1$; **$p<0.05$; ***$p<0.01$

Model 1 shows the regression results from the period 1945 – 1999. The first three variables, measuring mobilization, are not statistically significant. This is quite surprising, as mobilization has both theoretical and empirical support for success (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). Neither the participation, diversity, nor centralization of mobilization predict success for this period.

As for the three resilience variables, both backlash and nonviolent discipline predict success, while neither media institution predicts success. Communicating unjust repression with internal and external audiences is critical for achieving backlash (Hess & Martin, 2006;

Sutton et al., 2014) and maintaining mobilization in the face of repression. Model 1 finds that maintaining nonviolent discipline is correlated with success, increasing the odds for success by a factor of twelve at the 99 percent confidence interval, while the backlash effect itself quadruples the odds for success at the 95 percent confidence interval. Media institutions not predicting success is unexpected, as they have been found to increase the likelihood for backlash (Sutton et al., 2014, p. 568).

The final three variables measure leverage. Unsurprisingly, security force defections are strongly correlated with the success of nonviolent conflicts, which corroborates with the findings of Stephan & Chenoweth (2008). Model 1 finds that security force defections increase the likelihood for success by a factor of eleven at the 99 percent confidence interval. Political defections are found not to be important, along with international sanctions.

The control variables in model 1, while only at the 90 percent confidence interval, find that more populous countries have a lower chance for success. A twice as large population entails a 30 percent decreased likelihood for success. Repression is found to decrease the likelihood for success too, with higher repression decreasing the likelihood for success by 41 percent, in line with Chenoweth & Stephan's findings (2011). GDP per capita does not affect the likelihood for success.

Model 2 shows the results for the period 2000 – 2013. Participation is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence interval. Doubling the amount of participants doubles the likelihood for success. Diversity is not found to be important, and neither is centralization. This goes against the case studies conducted by Stephan & Chenoweth (2008) who found that mobilization needs to be cross-cutting and decentralized for a nonviolent conflict to succeed.

Resilience is surprisingly not a significant predictor for success in model 2. While backlash and traditional media institutions are significant at the 90 percent confidence interval, their exaggerated coefficients question their authenticity. These high numbers could be a result of the small sample size in conjunction with the use of fixed effects. The backlash effect increases the likelihood of success by a factor of over 10 000, while the creation and/or use of traditional media institutions increases the likelihood of success by a factor of 370. Maintaining nonviolent discipline does not predict success in model 2.

The last concept, leverage, does not predict success in model 2. Security force defections should be strongly linked with success, as this has previous empirical support

(Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). Furthermore, the impact of political defections and international sanctions has theoretical support (Schock, 2013) and should also predict success.

Population and GDP per capita are the controls in model 2 that lack statistical significance and do not affect the likelihood of success. Repression on the other hand is significant at the 90 percent confidence interval and has a major impact on the success of nonviolent conflicts. Increased repression decreases the likelihood of success by more than 99 percent. This extreme finding has a similar issue as the resilience variables in that it is difficult not to question its authenticity and could be a result of the small sample size in conjunction with the use of fixed effects.

Comparing model 1 to model 2, i.e. the period 1945 – 1999 with 2000 – 2013, the findings are as follows: (1) Mobilization matters more for contemporary nonviolent conflicts, in particular participation; (2) Resilience arguably predicts success in both periods to some degree, specifically backlash. Maintaining nonviolent discipline was important for the success of historical conflicts but does not predict success in contemporary conflicts; and (3) Leverage predicted success in historical conflicts but not in contemporary conflicts.

Table 4: *Likelihood ratio test on mobilization, resilience, and leverage regressions for 1945 – 1999.*

Variable	Period	Log likelihood
Mobilization	1945 – 1999	-65.848***
Resilience	1945 – 1999	-61.578***
Leverage	1945 – 1999	-57.628***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4 shows the log likelihoods and their significance of three different regression models, each testing either for mobilization, resilience, or leverage. This gives an overview of which single concept best predicts success. For the period 1945 – 1999, leverage was the main predictor for success. This does not however exclude mobilization and resilience as being key factors for the success of nonviolent conflicts in this period, only that leverage has a larger impact compared to them.

Table 5: *Likelihood ratio test on mobilization, resilience, and leverage regressions for 2000 – 2013.*

Variables	Period	Log likelihood
Mobilization	2000 – 2013	-25.693**
Resilience	2000 – 2013	-28.641***
Leverage	2000 – 2013	-27.389***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5 shows the same as table 4, but for the period 2000 – 2013. Here it is clear that mobilization was the key concept that predicts success. The same applies for this period as for table 4, this finding does not suggest that resilience and leverage is not important for the success of contemporary nonviolent conflicts, only that mobilization better predicts success on its own.

The findings from the log likelihood ratio tests in table 4 and table 5 support the findings from the main regression in table 3. These are: (1) Mobilization best predicts success for contemporary conflicts; and (2) Leverage best predicts success for historical conflicts. While the specifics of resilience changed (i.e. nonviolent discipline), it remained a predictor for the success of nonviolent conflicts in both periods.

6. Discussion

Chenoweth's (2020) four explanations for the decline in success are: (1) decline in participation; (2) overreliance on demonstrations; (3) organizing protests through social media; and (4) increased tolerance of radical flanks. As mentioned previously, a drawback of this paper is that it does not test for her second and third reasons due to lack of data. The descriptive statistics find a large decrease in participation between 1945 – 1999 and 2000 – 2013. Participation is found to be statistically significant in regression model 2 but not in model 1. These findings together lend some support to Chenoweth's (2020) first explanation for the decline in success, being decline in participation. Mobilization is worse in contemporary conflicts, as found by the descriptive statistics, being both smaller in volume but also less cross-cutting, while remaining equally centralized. The degree to which mobilization is cross-cutting and centralized has theoretical and empirical support for campaign success (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008), but was not found to be statistically significant in this study.

Jumping to Chenoweth's (2020) fourth explanation for the decline, increased tolerance of radical flanks, the analysis finds the opposite. Contemporary movements are better at maintaining nonviolent discipline compared to their historical counterparts, as shown by the descriptive statistics. However, the regression analysis only finds nonviolent discipline a predictor for success in historical conflicts. Even though contemporary movements are better at maintaining nonviolent discipline, it does not have a significant impact on their success. This finding contradicts previous research which states that maintaining nonviolent discipline is key for achieving backlash (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, p. 68; Chenoweth, 2020, p. 79). Instead, the contemporary movements appear to achieve the backlash effect independently of the degree of nonviolent discipline. Historical movements align closer to the expected relationship, with both nonviolent discipline and backlash being correlated with their success. The creation and/or use of media institutions do not affect this relationship in either period. This finding contradicts previous research, that communication is key to achieve backlash (Hess & Martin, 2006; Sutton et al., 2014). For contemporary conflicts, it is possible that communication, like organisation, has shifted more to social media. Social media is outside the chosen definition of media institutions and would explain their low impact. However, this does apply to the historical conflicts due to them not having access to social media. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the impact of media institutions is not significant for the success of nonviolent conflicts.

A finding not related to Chenoweth's (2020) four explanations is the lower impact of leverage for contemporary movements compared to their historical counterparts. Specifically, security force defections have been found to increase the success of nonviolent conflict (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008), and is similarly found in the historical movements. The contemporary movements lack such a relationship, with no significant impact of security force defections on success. Furthermore, security force defection occurred almost half as frequently in contemporary conflicts compared to their historical counterparts. The other tested factors, political defections and economic sanctions, lack significant effects in both periods.

The results from the descriptive statistics, regression, and likelihood ratio tests find support for the first hypothesis, that the impact of mobilization is different over time. Mobilization better predicts success in contemporary conflicts. The second hypothesis, that the impact of resilience is different over time, was not supported. Resilience remained an important factor in both time periods. The third and last hypothesis, that the impact of leverage is different over time, was supported. Leverage better predicts success in historical conflicts. Having answered the proxy question of how the causes of success in nonviolent conflicts changed over

time, it is possible to answer the research question: "why has the success rate of nonviolent conflicts decreased in the last decades?". The falling impact of leverage and rising impact of mobilization is the cause behind this change. Contemporary conflicts have lower participation compared to historical conflicts, a mean of 150 000 compared to 580 000. The increased impact of mobilization in contemporary conflicts signals that the few movements that achieved mass mobilization were more likely to succeed. As for the lack of a relationship among the historical conflicts, this could be because of the higher mean participation; if more historical movements achieved mass mobilization, the correlation between participation and success would be lower as some failed despite mass mobilization. Ultimately, the goal of mobilization and resilience is to successfully utilize dependence relations and sufficiently undermine the power of the opponent. This is where contemporary movements fail in relation to historical movements. Historical conflicts achieved security force defections almost twice as frequently and had a statistically significant impact on success, in contrast to contemporary conflicts.

7. Conclusion

Using a framework created by Schock (2013) to explain the causes behind the success of nonviolent conflicts, this thesis aimed to see what factors have changed over time, and ultimately explain the decline in success of nonviolent conflicts. Comparing two periods, 1945 – 1999 ('the rise') with 2000 – 2013 ('the fall'), the regression analysis and likelihood ratio tests showed that leverage was the key concept behind the success of historical conflicts, while mobilization is the key for contemporary conflicts. Combined with the descriptive statistics showing a large decline in participation and security force defections between the two periods, the cause behind the decline is found to be these two changes: (1) contemporary conflicts achieve lower mobilization; and (2) contemporary conflicts cause security force defections to a lower degree.

Future research could investigate this puzzle with more recent data. The NAVCO 2.1 dataset limited this study to the year 2013 which does not fully encompass the nature of contemporary nonviolent conflicts. Furthermore, case studies analysing why contemporary conflicts achieve lower mobilization and security force defections is necessary, both as an interesting topic but also to get at the root cause of the decline. While this study could not include the impact of social media and resistance type, these factors might be behind the decline and are worth taking a closer look at when data becomes available.

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Relation between conflict-related trauma and reconciliation

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When Bereavement Makes Enemies Human

On Trauma, Empathy and the Parents' Circle

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Abstract

Across the world, one common feature that unites societies suffering under violent conflict is the experience of trauma. Most commonly, this trauma is understood as a paralyzing force that inhibits its victims of thinking clearly and rationally, creating the need for others, mostly political elites representing these constituencies, to speak out in their place. By appropriating their constituencies' trauma, then, political elites are enabled to instrumentalize it to legitimize their political goals, such as the perpetuation of the violent conflict itself. In this paper, however, I argue that trauma can also be a powerful source of agency for the traumatized, with the potential to transform them into agents with the capacity to create frameworks for peace. In examining the case of the Parents Circle/Families Forum (PC/FF), I show how the experience of trauma through the conflict enables the victims of trauma to understand the irrationality of the armed conflict, countering the political elite's narrative and prompting them to promote a peaceful solution to the war. Furthermore, their efforts can be a powerful source of reconciliation by engaging across conflict lines, thus promoting both sympathy for and empathy with the supposed enemy.

Keywords

Reconciliation; empathy; sympathy

1. Introduction

Societies embroiled in the turmoil of a violent conflict, to a bigger or lesser extent, witness deeply hurtful and disturbing events, both on a collective and an individual level (Kelman & Fisher, 2016). People lose their relatives to the war, groups persecute and are persecuted by other groups, and the social fabric of society is heavily torn. These events, in turn, create deep scars on all sides of the conflict; what is commonly referred to as trauma. This trauma is oftentimes said to be a hindrance for reconciliation between two peoples after the conflict. How can a father forgive the soldier that killed his son? How can he ever relate to him as a human being, and not as the enemy who so deeply disrupted his life (Prato, 2005)?

This paralyzing understanding of trauma, standing in the way of reconciliation, however, is questioned by Prato (2005), who claims that the notion of trauma is oftentimes monopolized by the state to further justify the continuation of the war. As she argues, trauma can alternatively be viewed as a source of agency for its victims. Through it, they might find the momentum to promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict. While advancing the idea that this trauma can be used to advance peaceful goals on a political level, she remains relatively vague on the effects trauma can have on the reconciliation between two peoples (Prato, 2005). The acknowledgement that trauma encourages its victims to work towards peace with their opponents doesn't necessarily imply that it also helps them to go one step further and reconcile with the former enemy. In this paper, thus, I will address this gap by asking: *Can conflict-related trauma promote reconciliation*? To answer this question, I will use Halpern and Weinsteins' (2004) concepts of sympathy and empathy as a way to understand re-humanization, a crucial aspect of inter-personal reconciliation. After further developing my theoretical argument in the next chapter, I will describe my research design, before applying the theoretical framework to the case of the Parents' Circle/Families Forum (PC/FF), an Israeli-Palestinian NGO whose members are bereaved parents promoting reconciliation between the two peoples of the conflict.

2. From Trauma to Empathy, and from Empathy to Humanization

2.1. Trauma in Conflict – State monopoly or source of individual agency?

Trauma and victimhood play a crucial role in the development of social-psychological dynamics of violent conflict (Bar-Tal, 2000). In a setting of violent conflict, conflict parties will develop a set of psychological traits to explain, cope with and continue their violent enterprise (Kelman & Fisher, 2016) In this context, I define conflict parties as social groups identifying with the armed groups involved in the actual fighting, e.g. Protestants and Catholics in the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Bar-Tal (2007) sees a set of needs, coping mechanisms and resilience strategies at the core of the above mentioned traits. As he explains, the parties will have the urge to satisfy a set of physical and, crucially, psychological needs that may arise during the conflict. At the same time, they will also have the need to cope with the stress caused by the conflict, including the stress caused by the loss of valued elements of life such as homes and loved ones. Lastly, the leadership will need to develop strategies to withstand the enemy without their troops becoming demoralized by their own actions (Bar-Tal, 2007). As a result of these three challenges, a society will develop a set of societal *beliefs*, *shared emotions* and *collective attitudes* that define their position toward the conflict. These beliefs, emotions and attitudes are then echoed and disseminated by societal institutions, such as the media, political and religious elites, etc., who encourage their adoption and entrenchment. Critically, not everyone in a conflict party needs to share this set of beliefs. However, Bar-Tal claims that "at the climax of intractable conflict, these societal beliefs are oftentimes shared by the great majority of society members" (Bar-Tal, 2007: 1435).

These societal beliefs then are categorized by Bar-Tal in three clusters: an *ethos of conflict*, a *collective emotional orientation* and a *collective memory*. The ethos of conflict is defined as "the configuration of shared central societal beliefs that provide a particular dominant orientation to a society at present and for the future" (Bar-Tal, 2007: 1438). On the other hand, emotional experiences become intensely embedded within societal frameworks. As a result, members of a society will develop a set of collective emotional orientations, chiefly amongst them an orientation of fear. Lastly, a conflict party will develop a common narrative of the conflict. This narrative does not need to be completely loyal to the real development of

the struggle and thus results in a biased and selective account of the violent past. However, it fits the society's needs and challenges as described above (Bar-Tal, 2007).

One of the main elements that binds the ethos of conflict, the shared emotional orientation and the collective memory is that they all construct a self-perceived victimization of the in-group. The ethos of conflict is characterized by a belief in one's own victimhood in the conflict, as well as a dehumanized character of the opponent. The collective emotional orientation, oftentimes dominated by fear, is rooted in a perceived repetition of violence and injustice geared towards one's group, creating trauma and grief and fostering one's own role as a victim. Lastly, collective memories will depict one's society as the victim of the opponent for the entire duration of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007). Critically, because of the mentioned de-humanization of the opponent, the other side's victimhood is somehow deemed as "different" or "less burdensome" (Kelman & Fisher, 2016).

These perceptions of victimhood give way to a narrative of (individual and collective) trauma (Prato, 2005). The traumatic experience, however, is again geared only toward the in-group, while obliterating and negating the other side's experience of trauma. This narrative is then propagated and encouraged by societal infrastructures, chiefly amongst them the political elites that have a vested interest in the conflict, as it serves to legitimize the continuation of the war (e.g. by pointing toward the need to seek justice for one's own victimization) (Bar-Tal, 2007).

Prato (2005), however, points toward the fact that societal institutions oftentimes not only propagate but also monopolize the narratives of trauma. She argues that these often take agency and voice away from those actually having experienced traumatic events, such as the loss of loved ones or the destruction of one's home. As she points out, trauma on the individual level is here seen through a western psychoanalytical prism. In this paradigm, it appears to be a paralyzing force caused by an overwhelming amount of emotional baggage that cannot be processed properly. Thus, victims of trauma are assumed not to be able to talk for themselves, and hence the "need" for political elites to speak out for them; their trauma-induced *irrationality* begs for the political elites to channel their voices in a *rational* way (Prato, 2005).

Against this backdrop, Prato questions this understanding of trauma, one that is paralyzing and devoid of agency. She claims that trauma can be a source of agency that can run counter to the trauma narratives appropriated by political elites (Prato, 2005). People who

have experienced a traumatic event, such as the displacement from their homes, the loss of a family member or the experience of physical violence, may find that they do not see themselves represented by or their views resonating with the trauma narrative of the state institutions, as these do not and cannot address their needs, either in the short term in the case of e.g. displacement, or ever, in the case of a close death, for example. As she explains, "[i]f such losses cannot be mourned, it is not because of an intrinsic inaccessibility of private pain to public narratives, but rather because of a disjuncture between such pain and present politics" (Prato, 2005: 119).

The lack of ability to mourn through elite narratives of victimhood runs against the self-proclaimed reality of state institutions that victims of trauma will be able to find solace in the idea of vengeance and justice for their loss. By enabling this realization, the traumatic events may lead these people to understand and point out the very *irrational* perception of trauma propagated by the elites, and centrally the understanding of one's own trauma being any different from the other side's trauma (Prato, 2005). While still seeing the opponent as a party with diverging views on political issues, the traumatized may highlight the irrationality of pursuing these goals through violent means, showcasing the deep and irrational rupture it has brought to their personal lives. This, in turn, will inevitably question the relative relevance of the struggle. In this sense, while not neglecting one's own political agenda, victims of trauma may be moved by their trauma to stand for a peaceful resolution of the violent conflict and to continue the political bargain through negotiation and dialogue (Prato, 2005).

2.2. Relating as Humans – The Role of Empathy for Reconciliation

Trauma, in the understanding introduced above, can not only act as a force toward conflict resolution and the achievement of a negotiated settlement, but can also create momentum toward reconciliation between people. As viewed by Kelman (2008), reconciliation is a consequence of successful conflict resolution. In his framework, reconciliation is successful when:

1. Societies agree on a set of individual and group *interests*, coordinated by a set of enforceable rules to which individuals comply,

2. When individuals and groups have a set of *relationships* managed through a system of roles with which individuals can identify, and

3. When personal and group identities express a *value system* that individuals are able to internalize.

Crucially, reconciliation is characterized by the "removal of the negation of the other as a central component of one's own identity" (Kelman, 2008: 9). It involves the restitution of the other side's humanity to acknowledge the mutually constructive relationship between one's own and the other's fate.

To rehumanize the other side, however, it is crucial that one not only relates to the other side's pain and suffering but sees them as complete human beings with individual personalities and thoughts. These two forms of relating to other human beings are what Halpern and Weinstein (2004) call *sympathy*, on the one hand, and *empathy* on the other. According to them, a person is able to sympathize with their (former) opponent if they are able to relate to the other side's suffering, i.e. if they can relate to them on an emotional level. While constituting a crucial first step toward reconciliation, Halpern and Weinstein (2004) argue that by only sympathizing with the other, one is still just seeing the other side as a bearer of guilt and of sorrow, without actually relating to her as a person with a full personality. To do this would mean to empathize with the other side; relate to her both emotionally and cognitively, and have a genuine interest and openness to the many sides that characterize a human being's inner richness (Halpern & Weinstein, 2004). Only when opponents show empathy for each other, they really see each other as humans, and thus are able to reconcile.

In this sense, the fact that victims of trauma already acknowledge the other side's trauma as being equal to their own places them in a position of sympathy toward their opponent. Furthermore, their pursuit of a peaceful settlement of the violent conflict might encourage them to collaborate with other bearers of trauma to achieve their goal. Although effects like in-group pressures and personal cognitive dissonance might encourage them not to cooperate (Bruneau & Saxe, 2012), victims of trauma are also likely to acknowledge the potential of combining the humanizing effect of talking with someone from the outgroup on the one hand, and the legitimizing effect of hearing the same from someone from the ingroup on the other hand. The most powerful tool they have for this purpose is to share their stories and allow people from the other side to relate to it (Simbulan & Visser, 2016). In this context, increasing contact between conflicting parties and encouraging perspective-giving and perspective-taking has shown to decrease mistrust and fear of the outgroup, while increasing understanding of their position (Bruneau & Saxe, 2012; Ron & Maoz, 2013; Spears, 2008; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005).

Thus, I arrive at the conclusion that *H1: The occurrence of conflict-related trauma will promote reconciliation by increasing the amount of sympathy between conflicting peoples.* The collective work, however, will force victims of trauma to cooperate, and thus understand how the other thinks, works and reasons. This way, they will not view each other as victims of trauma alone, but as full human beings with individual traits and personalities. Thus, through their work, they will be able to empathize with each other, and thus restitute each other's humanity. This is why I also conclude that *H2: The occurrence of conflict-related trauma will promote reconciliation by increasing the likelihood of victims of trauma empathizing with each other.*

3. Research Design

In this paper, I will be looking at the Parents' Circle / Families Forum (PC/FF), an Israeli-Palestinian NGO fostering peace and reconciliation between the two peoples (Meisler, 2022a). The PC/FF was founded by Yitzhak Frankenthal and a few other Israeli families in 1995 with the goal of promoting dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians. They bring together families on both sides of the conflict who have lost a family member to the conflict between Israel and Palestine, and who have thus experienced highly traumatic events due to it (Meisler, 2022a). By a combination of dialogue activities, public advocacy in the media and public meetings, they aim to spread the understanding that sustainable peace between Israel and Palestine will need a process of reconciliation to be effective (Meisler, 2022e). Thus, it is a very good typical case for an instance where trauma has been used to advance reconciliation across enemy lines, which is especially well-suited for a theory-building study such as the present one.

This study also addresses the counterfactual in that there are few NGOs in the setting of this particular conflict, and arguably none with this amount of recognition (Meisler, 2022b), which work across conflict lines, pointing to the fact that: (1) not everyone who has suffered trauma has engaged in political action to promote reconciliation, but also (2) only people who have suffered conflict related trauma have engaged in joint reconciliation work across conflict lines enabling them to empathize with each other.

At the same time, it could be argued that NGOs that do not work across conflict lines would be able to achieve similar results, thus rendering the necessity for such an intergroup effort unnecessary. While I do believe that NGOs that do not cross conflict lines can have a

significant effect on societies' proneness toward reconciliation, intergroup contact in a regulated and sanctioned framework has been shown to have significant effects on reconciliation (Ugarriza & Nussio, 2017). Thus, I believe that intergroup efforts, including the ones outlined in this study, do have the possibility to make a contribution that the former cannot.

This theory comes with a few scope conditions attached to it. On the one hand, it can only be applied to cases where NGOs have a relative amount of freedom to operate and are not suppressed by the state apparatus, as this would considerably hinder their ability to conduct reconciliation work. On the other hand, it can only work in a setting where contact across party lines is possible. In some conflicts, for example, it might be very dangerous to operate in the opponent's territories, even as a civilian, thus strongly inhibiting the feasibility of the cooperative efforts.

In violent conflict settings, many different actions, events or dynamics can be perceived as being deeply traumatic for the victims. Thus, I will operationalize my independent variable, the presence of conflict-related trauma, as *the existence of a deeply disruptive event in an individual's life caused during and as a direct cause of a violent conflict.* Although I do acknowledge that there are several deeply traumatic events that might only be indirectly related to violent conflict, such as forced labor or famine, they fall outside the scope of my theoretical framework, and can thus not be discussed in this paper.

On the other hand, as pointed out above, I am distinguishing between the development of sympathy and empathy in the efforts toward reconciliation by the trauma-bearing individuals and groups. Thus, I am operationalizing my first dependent variable, the presence of sympathy, as *the capacity to relate to and acknowledge the suffering and pain of one's opponent.* In that sense, although constituting a relevant step toward reconciliation, it does not, in itself, suffice to reconcile two individuals.

My second dependent variable, the presence of empathy, will be defined as *the capacity to understand and relate with members of the opponent's group both on a cognitive and an emotional level, recognizing each other as individuals with personalities and own identities beyond their conflict identity.* This stage of relatability can be equated with reconciliation, as it encompasses the full re-humanization of the opponent. Crucial in this case is that sympathy and empathy are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, sympathy is a fundamental part of,

and therefore a prerequisite for empathy. However, sympathy is only a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for empathy to develop, as described above.

Although I acknowledge that the operationalization of the two dependent variables is quite broad, the processes of sympathy and empathy will develop in a variety of ways depending on each individual, and thus will appear in a number of different forms (Halpern & Weinstein, 2004). Thus, I believe that a wide definition of these two concepts is needed in order to be able to efficiently capture every form that these might take.

Lastly, I will use accounts, reports and interviews by and with members of the PC/FF itself for my analysis. The most obvious pitfall with this source of data is its probable bias. Especially in assessing if and how much their efforts to create a sense of sympathy in Israeli and Palestinian society have had an effect, the results can be expected to be heavily skewed toward a positive outcome of their work. However, this study is not trying to assess the strength of the trauma-bearing groups in the development of empathy and sympathy. Instead, I am merely trying to establish if there is such an effect at all. Thus, while the results on the degree of success in creating empathy and sympathy need to be assessed critically, the establishment of their mere presence would already signify an affirmation of the respective hypotheses. At the same time, the agency of the victims of trauma, as described in this study, is mainly manifested by the promotion of their discourse and narrative of trauma. By utilizing their sources, I am thus able to preserve their agency. Furthermore, their accounts can be said to provide very high validity, while the reliability is compromised by the relatively small amount of sources used for this study.

4. Case Study – The Parents' Circle/ Families Forum (PC/FF)

4.1. Fostering an Understanding of Trauma of the Out-group in the PC/FF

The PC/FF organizes a whole array of activities aimed at exposing the pain that comes with the loss of one's child, spreading the message of peace and slowly pushing for a gradual reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians (Meisler, 2022e). As they explain on their website, their main activities are so-called Dialogue Meetings. In these meetings, Israeli and Palestinian parents meet with adults and youth from both sides to discuss the loss of their children, their emotional journey and how this has led them to pursue the work they do to prevent other people from undergoing the same experiences. The meetings are always held by two PC/FF representatives, one Palestinian and one Israeli (Meisler, 2022d). Crucially, these meetings are not devoid of tension, as grievances and discussions about the conflict itself come up during the meetings. However, the direction of the conversation is always redirected toward the fact that the PC/FF representatives are not there to convince anyone of any political goal, or that one agreement should be considered over the other; they are there to make the attendees understand that the suffering of a Palestinian mother after the loss of her son to an IDF soldier is the same as the pain of an Israeli mother who has lost her daughter to a rocket by Hamas. As one of the participants puts it, "… the crying and the tears are the same" (Ling, 2014).

At the same time, they point at the irrationality of the accounts by Israeli and Palestinian media that parents are happy that their sons will be martyrs in the Palestinian or IDF soldiers in the Israeli case. As the same woman points out:

"...according to the television programs the Palestinian mothers are glad that their sons are Shahids [martyrs]. Do you think that's right? It's nonsense. I meet with these Palestinian moms, our pain is exactly the same…"

(Ling, 2014)

Members of the PC/FF explain how, at the beginning of their sessions, there oftentimes is a very noticeable tension in the room; within the duration of the session, however, this tension eventually dissipates. One representative claims that the initial tension is largely due to the fact that most people only read and hear about the opponent's side in the news or in books, without having much contact with ordinary people of the outgroup. As she puts it: "… After all, most of the people we meet in Palestine have never met and spoken with an ordinary Israeli civilian,

all they know are soldiers and settlers" (Damelin, 2021b). Thus, they initially tend to hold a dehumanized view of the other. However, as the sessions go on, participants tend to feel sorry for the two representatives of the PC/FF, and voice that they also feel sorry for the other side's bereaved parents and relatives (*Dialogue Meeting at Urban High School - The Bereaved Families Forum*, 2021). The sessions tend to be characterized by a combination of anger at the other side's perceived actions and understanding of the other side's suffering (Ling, 2014). Thus, while not being able to relate to the reasoning behind the violent acts of the other side, they are still able to mourn the death of people on their respective opponent's side. They, thus, develop what I have described as sympathy.

4.2. The Drive for Empathy Through Trauma in the PC/FF

The members of the PC/FF not only promote reconciliation externally but also internally. When they started their work, the group was constituted of a few families. Since then, the group has grown to over 600 families working together to promote reconciliation and to point out the irrationality of distinguishing between one's own and the other side's trauma (Meisler, 2022a). The sheer increase of members in itself can already be seen as an achievement in the direction of intergroup reconciliation, as this represents an increase in people both committed to reconciliation and interacting with members of the other side. Oftentimes, families will join the group after having attended one of the dialogue groups, a presentation or another of the activities organized by the PC/FF. One member describes the experience that led her to join with the following account:

"When I started to listen to them and start to listen to their stories and how they lost their loved ones, that really touched my heart and for the first time, I looked at them as a human, like me. [...]We share the same pain. We share the same fears."

(CNN, 2021)

To be able to work together, however, the members of the PC/FF are forced to relate to each other on a cognitive level as well. As with the dialogue meetings, the group makes sure that all their activities have both Palestinian and Israeli representatives present at the events (Meisler, 2022e). Thus, they need to cooperate, plan and design their different activities, as well as then carry them through collectively. Through this cooperation, the members of the PC/FF get to know each other and get to know their stories related to, but critically also beyond

the loss of their family members. What initially is a bond created through the common experience of losing a family member develops into a relationship that encompasses the collective pursuit of peace and reconciliation, a sense of mutual respect and understanding and a genuine curiosity to understand the other person's way of thinking (Meisler, 2022c). Through their cooperation, members of the PC/FF even create a separate sense of identity, one that runs counter to the political elite's discourse of incompatibility between the two peoples and their fundamental difference, especially in their capacity to experience trauma. As one member puts it during an interview: "[i]t's not my dream alone, I'm part of an organization of 600 families, that's why I came here today" (Damelin, 2021a).

Crucially, members of the PC/FF show a great deal of understanding and openness toward the other members' reasons and feelings that lead them to do actions that they might not deem personally appropriate. As one member puts it: "I will never, ever fight what another bereaved parent says" (Damelin, 2021a). This openness shows that members of the PC/FF go even further by actively tolerating opinions that go counter to their own. This is especially astonishing given the polarized state in which the two conflict parties find themselves. Furthermore, the question of whether the members of the PC/FF would forgive the perpetrator who killed their relative is kept a personal one and its handling is seen as up to each individual (Damelin, 2014). This fact questions the common understanding that, for a society to move forward, the victims need to forgive the perpetrators for them to reconcile on the group level. In the case of the PF/CC, forgiveness is not seen as a necessary condition for reconciliation, but as a personal choice serving the inner psychological needs of every individual, detached from the collective capacity to pursue reconciliation.

Thus, through their work in the PC/FF, its members engage in personal contact with each other, relate on both cognitive and emotional levels, and respect differences that might arise. They not only can relate to each other's suffering and loss but show a genuine interest in their inner workings, forming friendships and collegial relationships. They relate to their fellow PC/FF colleagues as humans in their full capacity with personality and individuality. Thus, we can say that the members of the PC/FF experience a sense of empathy towards each other, and thus are reconciled with their former enemy.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, I have shown how the experience of trauma can, counter to dominant narratives, be a source of agency for the victims of said trauma to promote reconciliation. Concretely, I have explained how, in the case of the PC/FF, its members were pushed by their traumatic experience to engage in societal work, where they pointed out the irrationality of the political elite's narrative, which claims that the ingroup's trauma is somehow more relevant than or different to the outgroup's trauma. Through this, they encouraged people to fight for a peaceful resolution of the violent struggle that caused their trauma in the first place. This, I argue, enables the attendees of their dialogue meetings and speeches to relate to the other side's suffering, and thus sympathize with them. While not necessarily being able to agree with the other side's motivations, attendees of the PC/FF's sessions do develop an understanding for the other side's loss and acknowledge the shared grief that unites both parties - they develop a sense of sympathy. Sympathy, as I explain, is a crucial step toward reconciliation.

Furthermore, I have shown how, through their collective work, the members of the PF/CC relate to each other as full human beings, engage emotionally and cognitively with each other, and even develop a common identity rooted in their common struggle against the violent conflict. They are able to relate with each other beyond their shared experience of loss, thus understanding each other's identities in a much more comprehensive way. Lastly, and crucially, they relate to each other in a way that allows for the tolerance of deeply individual needs and decisions, such as the decision to forgive the killer of their lost one. Thus, I argue, the members of the PC/FF are able to empathize with each other, enabling their full reconciliation.

This paper is a timid first step into discussing the role that trauma might play as a source of agency to bring about reconciliation, and opens many further paths of inquiry that should be followed. One might ask, for example, if both parties react the same to the victims of trauma's efforts to reconcile? Previous research has shown that dominant groups in a conflict tend to show better results when engaging in exercises of perspective-taking than non-dominant groups (Bruneau & Saxe, 2012), of which the listener's experience at the PC/FF dialogue meeting can be seen as an example. Would, therefore, the PC/FF's efforts show better results with Israeli than with Palestinian audiences? Furthermore, this case study has focused on one particular form of trauma, namely the loss of a family member to the war. Further research should investigate if a similar dynamic can be perceived with victims of other forms of trauma, such

as displacement, humiliation or physical harm. On a different note, this paper has focussed strongly on societal reconciliation across conflict lines; however, there is reason to believe that these efforts could also promote the resolution of the armed conflict at large, assuming that their effect is large enough. Future research endeavours could thus investigate the role of organizations promoting societal reconciliation for conflict resolution processes. Lastly, scholars could investigate the actual effect of groups like PC/FF to promote reconciliation, where an effect on reconciliation would not only be, as here, established, but also measured.

Lastly, I would like to make a few ethical considerations regarding this paper. Firstly, I would like to point out the fact that, although trauma has been shown to be an effective source of agency for its victims, this trauma is obviously not desirable and should be avoided by all means. The point of this study is rather to show how, after experiencing a traumatic event, and crucially counter to dominant political narratives, the victims of trauma are able to channel their experience into agency to prevent this trauma from perpetuating itself.

Furthermore, I do not believe that any mentioned party will be harmed by this study's content. The names of the participants in the discussions and interviews have been removed, as they seemed to be unnecessary for the overall argument of the study. Lastly, as I've been discussing the appropriation of narratives and the recapturing of agency by victims of trauma, I believe it is important to mention that all data was publicly available on the internet. By doing so, it is put at the disposal of the public, leading me to assume the PC/FF's consent to use their data.

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De-radicalising the women of Boko-Haram

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De-radicalising the women of Boko-Haram

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Abstract

State military methods as part of counterterrorism have repeatedly shown that they are inherently flawed and continue to incite further violent extremism. Terrorist organisations are created and flourish in areas and communities that are severely socio-economically deprived and alienated from a state government. Global actors must look at reasons behind radicalisation in communities and establish general frameworks for de-radicalisation as part of peaceful counterterrorism. To improve contemporary counterterrorism, it is crucial to investigate what roles gender play in radicalisation and de-radicalisation since contemporary terrorist organisations employ men and women to carry out acts of extreme violence. Boko Haram is emblematic to contemporary terrorism and the organisation's methods and successes suggest how contemporary counterterrorism should look like to create successful frameworks of de-radicalisation.

Keywords

Counterterrorism; de-radicalisation; gender

1. Introduction

The case of Boko Haram in Nigeria is emblematic of contemporary problems with terrorism. Nigeria's struggle with the armed group suggests how contemporary global actors and scholarship on counterterrorism should adapt to consider de-radicalisation as valid methods of counterterrorism (Bryson and Bukarti, 2019: 3). Furthermore, Nigerian governmental military counterterrorism responses to terrorist organisations continue to fail. This proves that the use of violence does not work to stop the problem of spread and support of violent and extreme ideologies on a local and global level. Therefore, alternative measures are needed. Alex P. Schmid (2016: 27), a leading scholar on counterterrorism, argues that the problem of terrorism and counterterrorism in academia needs modern revision. Schmid explains that one way of advancing contemporary scholarly work on counterterrorism is to focus on de-radicalisation programmes as part of countering local extreme radicalism. He (2016: 30) states that "This should have one of the highest priorities. Such programs have mushroomed in recent years. Yet without systematic, rigorous, and comparative evaluations of de-radicalisation programs, no real progress towards more promising practices can be made".

Contemporary extreme violent terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram have proven to be deviant from former islamist terrorist groups leading up to the 2000s in the sense of utilising women for carrying out extreme violent acts (Khelghat-Doost, 2019: 853). Furthermore, UNODC (2017: 109) states that "the specific needs of women and girls deserve special consideration; unfortunately, those needs are often neglected." when developing de-radicalisation programmes, which is also the case in Nigeria. This suggests that the focus on women in Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes must be evaluated and discussed to further contemporary academic scholarship on counterterrorism, highlighting a gap in the literature. It is hence crucial to explore the roles and stereotypes attached to women in north-eastern Nigeria where Boko Haram has its stronghold. There is also a need to compare these findings to how Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes view former female members of Boko Haram. Therefore, the dependent variable in this article makes reference to how former female members of Boko Haram are treated in Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes. The independent variable is norms and social roles are attached to women in north-eastern Nigeria (Van Evera, 1997: 28-29). The research question that this paper seeks to answer is *to what extent norms and stereotypes attached to women in north-eastern Nigeria affect the approach of Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes towards former female members of Boko Haram.*

This article seeks to evaluate how aspects of gender affects and can improve de-radicalisation to further counterterrorism. This will be done by comparing the gendered focus of Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes: Operation Safe Corridor (OSC), the Kuje Prison Project, and The Yellow Ribbon Initiative by the Neem Foundation. Firstly, the literature review discusses theories surrounding radicalisation and de-radicalisation, and what role women have in the processes. The methods chapter highlights my reasons for using semi-structured interviews, and the ethical considerations that were considered for this paper. Furthermore, this chapter establishes the paper' reasons for investigating Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes. The findings of this paper are divided into three chapters. The fourth chapter focuses on explaining the patriarchal structures of Nigeria, and its connections to how Boko Haram successfully recruits women to carry out violent extremism. The fifth chapter introduces Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes and explains the focus and methods of the programmes to de-radicalise members of Boko Haram. The final chapter of the findings focuses on comparing the programmes to already existing literature on radicalisation and de-radicalisation to establish how successful these are at de-radicalising former female members of Boko Haram. Finally, the conclusion draws on the article's discussions to offer advice to improve contemporary scholarship and policies on the problem of counterterrorism.

2. Literature Review

To understand the processes of de-radicalisation and the theories that surround them, it is important to explore the reasons why de-radicalisation is central when discussing methods to counter violent extremism. The United Nations General Assembly (2015: 1) describes violent extremism as "a diverse phenomenon, without clear definition. It is neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality or system of belief". Schmid (2016: 26) argues that research on violent extremism is a relatively new phenomenon mainly developed by national governments because of early 21st century extreme terrorist acts such as the attacks on the World Trade Center. He (2016: 27) continues by stating that radicalisation lacks a generally agreed definition among international actors and scholars. International actors such as the European Union offer definitions that are too broad and are hence not feasible to base research on, resulting in the impossibility of cumulative research. Other than Schmidt, scholars from different academic backgrounds have sought to define violent extremism and radicalisation,

focusing mainly on politics, religion, and ideology (Midlarsky, 2011: 7; Bötticher and Mares, 2012: 54-58; Bale, 2009: 85).

The lack of a generally agreed upon definition regarding violent extremism and radicalisation has led to several different ways of handling de-radicalisation. Contemporary terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram "have shaped our image of violent extremism and the debate on how to address this threat." (United Nations General Assembly, 2015: 1). De-radicalisation methods are hence a response to counter contemporary violent extremism. Horgan and Braddock (2010: 280) describe de-radicalisation as a series of processes concerning the psychological and social aspects of an individual which leads to the reduction of the individual's involvement in, and support of a violent extremist group. Their view on de-radicalisation suggests that a holistic approach involving the family and community in which the extremist individual will reintegrate back to, is crucial in the process of de-radicalisation. Not involving the surrounding community could lead to persistent prejudice towards the de-radicalised individual, resulting in individual recidivism. Therefore, Horgan and Braddock (2010) argue that a holistic approach is the only way of successful de-radicalisation. However, while such an approach may be the ideal way of handling de-radicalisation, it would be less resource and time efficient than focusing on individual change, offering an explanation to the current state of de-radicalisation programmes.

2.1. Theories of Radicalisation

Malthaner and Waldmann (2014: 980) state that home-grown terrorism has been the main target of radicalisation and violent extremism research with the focus being on why individuals become radicalised. There is a substantial lack in scholarly work regarding the connections between a radical environment that enables individuals to radicalise, something that Malthaner and Waldmann (2014) define as a "Radical Milieu". The phenomenon of a Radical Milieu can be seen all over the world where terrorist organisations exist. It is the creation of a social environment that develops a moral support for a radical organisation because of feeling alienated or oppressed by a government. Waldmann (2008: 25-27) states that the field of research concerning the connections between social environments and terrorist groups has not been given enough attention as the focus has been solely on individual radicalisation. Furthermore, a Radical Milieu can shape how individuals radicalise in different ways. It works as a gateway for people's different personal reasons towards radicalisation (Waldmann, 2008). While the idea of enabling environments deserves more attention in

counterterrorism, one must also consider Horgan's holistic approach since cases where individuals become radicalised because of personal vulnerability exist.

Malthaner and Waldmann (2014: 984-985) continue by explaining the origins of a Radical Milieu, stating that escalating and continuing confrontations between state forces such as police or military and civil protest movements may result in social environments that allow radical movements to organise and flourish. Marc Sageman (2014: 6) offers an explanation to why research on environmental causes has been left out of scholarly work. This being the lack of primary sources offered by states regarding their struggle with homegrown terrorist organisations. For security reasons, state governments choose to withhold information that would be useful for scholars to investigate radicalisation and terrorist phenomena such as the creation of Radical Milieus. Sageman (2014) argues that the withholding of data and statistics eventually leads to a stagnation within academic research regarding terrorism. However, Schmid (2016: 27) disagrees with Sageman and states it is not governments that created a stagnation within the scholarly field of counterterrorism, but rather that the focus of academic research is at fault. While government withholding of data is negative to academia, Schmid is correct in disagreeing with Sageman since one could apply a bottom-up strategy and research individual communities without relying on state information to conduct research on radicalisation and terrorism.

Even though several internationally renowned counterterrorism scholars agree that a holistic view of researching an enabling environment or a Radical Milieu must be at the centre of radicalisation research, the focus has remained on the vulnerable individual being drawn to and manipulated into radicalisation by terrorist groups (Schmid, 2016: 26-27). Stephens, Sieckelinck, and Boutellier (2019: 3-4) argue that the main theme within the literature on countering violent extremism is to create resilient individuals. This is done in three ways: the first one being to develop cognitive resources in individuals, the second being to foster positive character traits, and the third one being to promote and strengthen democratic values. A second theme highlighted in their work is building resilient communities to counter violent extremism (Stephens, Sieckelinck and Boutellier, 2019).

Savage and Liht (2013: 47) argue that the purpose of developing cognitive resources is to steer individuals away from black and white thinking concerning politics and ideologies towards understanding and accepting pluralism in a society. Davies (2009) goes further and argues that individuals should be taught to engage with critical thinking in the society they live

in, creating an active participation in society through their citizenship. The idea of developing character traits such as empathy in individuals is based on the idea that positive psychological traits remain stronger than factors that pull people towards terrorist organisations. The idea of promoting and strengthening democratic values, it is suggested, happens through education on human rights (Feddes, Mann, and Doosje, 2015: 6). Miller (2013: 188) suggests that human rights education would have the effect of establishing a shared base of values that would deter individuals from being radicalised. While these arguments are crucial to counter radicalism, solely focusing on individual traits will not be effective if a holistic approach is not involved to counter enabling environments. If a community is not engaged, then de-radicalised individuals return to communities with the same economic and social issues that originally paved the way for radicalisation.

The idea of a resilient community is based on individuals being protected by the environment they live in against radicalisation. Stephens, Sieckelinck, and Boutellier (2019: 7) explain that "community resilience and engagement" are the main themes within the literature regarding radicalisation. Community engagement is the idea that the relationship between a population and the state needs to be strengthened to hinder radicalisation. Cherney and Hartley state that ensuring a community's lasting connection and communication with the police is a way of securing this. Briggs concurs by explaining that communities play an active present role that a national government fails to do for local individuals. The state is too distanced from individuals and a strong community is seen as more important and legitimate for the local population. The idea of a resilient community is independent of state involvement. Briggs explains that the idea is based on a community being strong enough to deal with, and prevent radicalisation on its own, without relying on state involvement. Ellis and Abdi explain that the crucial parts of maintaining a resilient community incorporate social relationships within a community, strong bonds to nearby communities, and between a community and its local governmental institutions. The theory of a resilient community supports Schmid's argument that academic scholarship regarding counterterrorism is possible from a bottom-up approach, something that this paper supports (Cherney and Hartley, 2015: 750; Briggs, 2010: 971-972; Ellis and Abdi, 2017: 290; Schmid, 2016: 27).

2.2. Theories of De-radicalisation

Luke Bertram explains that de-radicalisation lacks an underlying framework since applying de-radicalisation methods becomes difficult when there is no general definition of

radicalisation. This results in different methods to prevent it, which creates different understandings regarding how to counter violent extremism. Furthermore, it is crucial to discuss radicalisation to understand de-radicalisation. The ideas promoted by mentioned scholars regarding the issues surrounding the focus on the radicalisation of an individual is further problematized by what constitutes a de-radicalised individual. These are the crucial differences between disengagement and de-radicalisation. Ashour describes ideological de-radicalisation as a successful change of a radical individual's deeply rooted beliefs. Furthermore, that behavioural de-radicalisation is when a radical individual denounces violence. Radical ideology is hence changed through de-radicalisation and violent extreme behaviour is changed through disengagement (Bertram, 2015: 121-122; Ashour, 2007). However, it is almost impossible to determine if an individual is ideologically de-radicalised from an outside perspective, making disengagement important.

Horgan explains that disengagement is the process intended to make a radical individual stop committing extreme violence. De-radicalisation, on the other hand, indicates a complete change in the individual's ideological beliefs which results in the individual distancing itself from groups that apply and promote extreme violence. Furthermore, Horgan argues that the focus should be on de-radicalisation since making a radical individual reject the use of violence does not mean that the individual rejects its radical ideology. The disengaged individual might still propagate a radical ideology. Striegher, on the other hand, suggests that the focus of de-radicalisation of an individual should be that of disengagement. It is easier to make an individual denounce extreme violence than it is to change their ideology, and that this is the first step towards de-radicalisation. However, Islam agrees with Horgan, and states that the approach offered by Striegher is inadequate. Disengagement plays a central part of de-radicalisation but disregarding a holistic process increases the risk of recidivism towards violent extremism. Contrarily to individual approaches, Schmid argues that de-radicalisation processes should focus on collective de-radicalisation in settings such as prisons (Horgan, 2009: 152; Horgan, 2008; Striegher, 2013: 20; Islam, 2019: 7; Schmid, 2016: 31).

While Striegher's idea that disengagement is important to stop radical violence, Horgan's, and Islam's views that disengagement is inadequate remain crucial since a disengaged person could ideologically radicalise others, who may not share their rejection of extreme violence. While being less time and resource efficient to focus on ideologically de-radicalising individuals, this would lead to less risk of spreading violent extremism in communities (Horgan, 2009: 152; Striegher, 2013: 20; Islam, 2019: 7). While Schmid is correct

regarding the idea that a collective focus may make de-radicalisation more efficient, solely focusing on prisons for collective de-radicalisation is problematic. Former members of a radical group may not be sentenced to prison since they can choose to step away from a group. One cannot treat captured radicals the same way as the ones who stepped out of a violent extreme organisation since they will be at different levels in the process of de-radicalisation.

2.3. Women and De-radicalisation

It is crucial to understand that women are the vanguard for all aspects of contemporary violent extremism. Women are used by terrorist organisations to carry out attacks and contrarily, women's practitioner involvement in de-radicalisation is crucial to the success of different de-radicalisation programmes (D'Estaing, 2017: 103). Cornwall, Harrison, and Whitehead (2007) state that the research regarding women's involvement in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is to this day based on myths and stereotypes concerning gender. Female radicalisation in Nigeria was covered in a 2015 article published by *Foreign Policy Magazine* regarding prejudice and myths surrounding female involvement in radical groups, proving that Cornwall's, Harrison's, and Whitehead's (2007) argument remains relevant (Koppell, 2015). Brown (2013: 51) argues that women's roles in rehabilitation and reintegration work is reduced to the woman being considered having a small influence on people, no matter her previous expertise and experience. An example of this is the case of women in counterterrorism groups in Libya in 2015. While the role of women became subject to increased danger in Libya, their efforts were considered less important during de-radicalisation (UN Women, 2015: 224).

Women have recently become a central focus of PVE and CVE, but not because of their expertise. Gender myths remain prevalent since mothers and wives are judged based on if someone in their proximity is a violent extremist. D'Estaing (2017: 108) highlights a report by the Quilliam Foundation regarding widespread patriarchal arguments in places such as Nigeria that "good mothers do not produce radicals". D'Estaing (2017.) argues how this process is dangerous and unfair for women since it puts them at risk of experiencing prejudice and violence from their community. The focus on women's role must be redirected since women are powerful mediators in families that are distant from the government level. These women represent stability with the power to influence not only individuals but a community towards PVE and CVE measures. Furthermore, women's active participation in rehabilitation processes have been empirically proven to improve the rate of de-radicalisation. Another aspect of PVE

and CVE that needs consideration is that women are more frequently being utilized by terrorist organisations to carry out suicide bombings, spying, and recruiting (Ní Aoláin, 2015; Bloom and Matfess, 2016: 106).

To summarise, the gap in literature is presented by a combination of issues. Women require specific attention in de-radicalisation programmes but are left out of de-radicalisation processes in Nigeria. This accompanied by Schmid's (2016: 30) argument concerning how to improve counterterrorism studies suggests a gap in the literature. Contemporary terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram understand the social, cultural, and economic neglect of women in fundamentally patriarchal states such as Nigeria which means that the use of women to carry out extreme violence goes unchallenged by the Nigerian Government (Khelghat-Doost, 2019: 859). It is therefore crucial to explore the norms and roles attached to women in north-eastern Nigeria, where Boko Haram has its stronghold. Furthermore, to explore how these norms affect the focus on women in Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes to evaluate how effective the programmes are, as well as discover what improvements can be made. Finally, to explore what a global audience can learn from these programmes.

3. Methodology

3.1. Interviews and Limitations

The approach of this paper was qualitative and used semi-structured interviews since this method allowed me to conduct reliable interviews that followed an interview guide with open-ended questions, which enabled me to follow up with probing questions that ensured clarity and depth. Therefore, the method was both an in-depth probing research method and it provided empirical evidence since the interviews were cross-examined with each other and triangulated with already existing scholarly work and data regarding my research topic. Cross-referencing the results of my interviews ensured the validity of my research. The act of observing and triangulating my interview data allowed me to answer my hypothesis (Adams, 2015: 496; Lamont, 2015: 79-84; Goubil-Gambrell, 1992: 589).

It is important to point out that during this paper, Covid-19 prohibited me from travelling and doing field work. Therefore, I chose to conduct online semi-structured interviews. While probing questions in semi-structured interviews allowed for depth, they also posed the risk of manipulated or biassed answers given that interviewees may be put on the

spot or feel pressured to reply according to what is socially desirable. However, these issues were taken into consideration during the research process. Furthermore, the interviewees were experts on the topic and had nothing personal to gain from giving biassed responses. This paper utilised a small snowball sample size, which introduced issues of bias as well as made the results of the interviews relatively hard to replicate. Therefore, I had to be careful to not draw general assumptions from the interviews. Online interviews allowed me to overcome issues surrounding Covid-19 and the impossibility of conducting face-to-face interviews. However, this methodology did not provide as much information as a face-to-face interview would as it was difficult to pinpoint where interviewees put emphasis on topics or to read their body language and facial expressions (Harris and Brown, 2010: 2; Fontana and Frey, 2000; Bryman, 2008; Gunter et al., 2002: 236).

It was not feasible to transcribe every interview to its fullest given time constraints. However, full recordings of all interviews were filed in accordance with my alma mater, University of Aberdeen's ethical guidelines and said recordings can be provided if needed as proof of interview conduct. Albeit few, there were ethical issues that were considered during my work. I therefore adhered to the UoA ethical guidelines which assured good research ethics. Themes that were considered and evaluated for this paper are privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and potential harm to the interviewee. Informed consent was secured before each interview and said consent was retractable at any time during the research process. Anonymity of participants was protected with passwords on my laptop and mobile phone. Furthermore, I kept in mind that participants could refuse to answer questions if the question made them uncomfortable or would prove harmful to them (Allmark et al., 2009: 49-50). As consent was given by the participants for the purpose of a dissertation, their identities will for the purpose of this publication be anonymous and referred to as 'Interviewee 1', 'Interviewee 2', and 'Interviewee 3'.

3.2. Selection of Case

Boko Haram's effects on global counterterrorism agendas and the general understanding of radicalisation towards Boko Haram presented why de-radicalisation programmes in Nigeria needed to be scrutinized. This paper hence implemented and adhered to the radicalisation, and de-radicalisation theories: vulnerable individual and Radical Milieu, and disengagement and de-radicalisation of ideology. Furthermore, the paper applied these to the Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes: The Prison Programme in Kuje Prison, The Yellow

Ribbon Initiative by the Neem Foundation, and Operation Safe Corridor. The purpose was hence to apply existing theories to Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes as a comparative analysis to determine if the approaches of the programmes are accurate. A comparative analysis allowed me to use widely renowned scholarly counterterrorism debates and theories and applied them to the case of Nigeria to provide groundwork on how de-radicalisation should be successfully executed (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 214).

4. Women and Boko Haram

4.1. Nigeria's Patriarchy as an Enabling Factor for Female Radicalisation

Nigeria is a large country that is home to numerous ethnicities and religions. Nigeria is deeply polarised, and its several states seldom face the same issues as each other. The conflict with Boko Haram is widely considered to be a northern problem, distant from the southern states. However, something that crosses state borders in Nigeria is the structure of a deeply rooted patriarchy (Anyadike, 2017; Madunago, 2008: 668). Interviewee 3 is a Programme Manager for Social Cohesion, Stabilisation, and Reintegration at a Nigerian organisation. In a phone interview for this paper, they stated that especially northern Nigeria experiences a "significant" patriarchy and that "Females are subjugated, and their voices are not heard in their community. They don't have a sense of belonging and are not allowed to offer input in society" (Interviewee 3, 20 November 2020). Although the situation is improving for Nigerian women, the Nigerian woman is seen as being reliant on her husband. The role of women is to take care of children and domestic duties. In general, women experience severe setbacks when pursuing 'male occupations' such as education. Furthermore, these roles can be traced back and explained by the way that governmental institutions are shaped (Wole-Abu, 2018).

Nigeria's patriarchal structures and social norms that are attached to women have proven to have a spill over effect onto the Boko Haram insurgency. The culture in north-eastern Nigeria is heavily connected to conservative Islam. Police forces and the military, that consist of mainly males, are reluctant to carry out physical searches of females. Groups like Boko Haram exploit religious culture and the military's refusal to physical searches of women (Khelghat-Doost, 2019: 859). 'Interviewee 1' is an expert on the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. In an interview for this paper, they stated that "between 2015- 2017 there was a high level of Boko Haram suicide bombings where women carried out the bombings" (Interviewee

1, 28 October 2020). Women are not seen as threats and Boko Haram exploits this for an element of surprise that results in several casualties. Interviewee 1 (2020) states that Boko Haram's reason for using female suicide bombers is that "Women wear the traditional Muslim dress (Burqa). It was hence easier for women to conceal weapons and IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices)". Because of military and police reluctance to physically search women, female suicide bombers are an effective strategy for Boko Haram. (D'Estaing, 2017: 108).
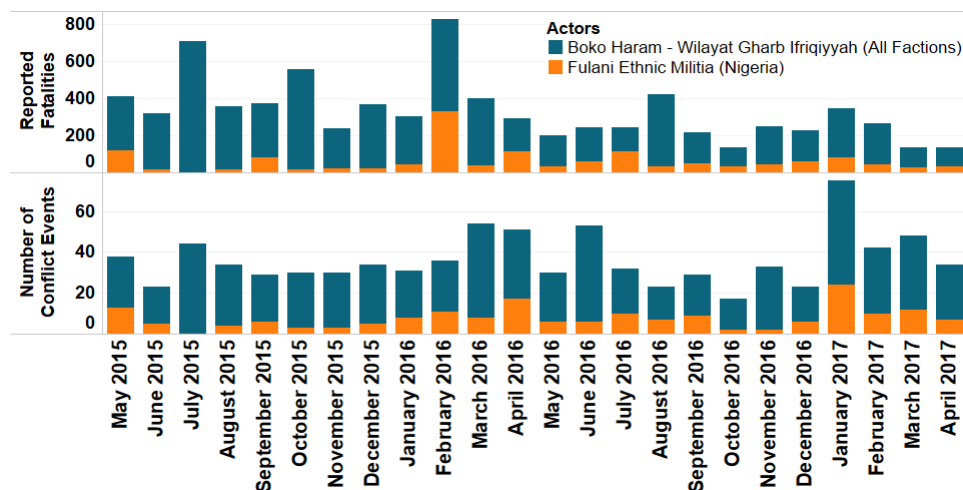

Figure 1: Boko Haram and Fulani Ethnic Militia Activity, Nigeria, May 2015-April 2017 (ACLED Data, 2017).

The period that is being highlighted in Figure 1 from ACLED Data represents the time where women were widely used to carry out suicide bombings as part of one of Boko Haram's main ways of carrying out terrorism. Therefore, the majority of the 'Number of Conflict Events' and 'Reported Fatalities' caused by Boko Haram in the graph are the results of female suicide bombers. The graph shows the efficiency of female suicide bombers, which resulted in hundreds of attacks, and thousands of casualties (ACLED Data, 2017). Interviewee 2 is an African Security Expert. In an interview for this paper, Interviewee 2 (17 November 2020) stated that "Suicide bombings are nowadays a low-level threat to the Nigerian Government if compared to other Boko Haram attacks.". Furthermore, that "Boko Haram use women and men to carry out the same roles, foot soldiers, suicide bombers, and to spy." (Interviewee 2). Bloom and Matfess (2016: 109) therefore argue that Boko Haram uses women for suicide bombings, but also for tasks such as spying since it offers the same advantage. Women are not considered perpetrators and can gain access to public places because of the police and military neglect of the female threat (Bloom and Matfess, 2016).

4.2. Women's Radicalisation to Boko Haram

As supported by Khelgat-Doost, and Bloom and Matfess, Interviewee 1 (2020) states that "Boko Haram understood the way women in Nigeria were perceived by communities and the Government and decided to use that to recruit and utilize the position of women.". The reasons why people join Boko Haram in north-east Nigeria are manyfold and can be mainly accredited to the idea of enabling environments, but the idea of vulnerable individuals is present. Furthermore, Interviewee 1 (2020) states that "Boko Haram spreads across eastern Nigerian states. Hence, people that join from state A may be because of personal reasons and people that join from state B may be because of environmental reasons, and people from state C may be because they were forced or kidnapped.". This is further supported by the fact that Boko Haram consists of people from all backgrounds, whether they are wealthy, poor, elderly, young, employed, unemployed, educated, or uneducated (Babatunde, 2018: 382). This confirms that individual vulnerability and an enabling environment both play a part in why people join Boko Haram, and it proves that Interviewee 1's argument is valid.

Boko Haram's strongest foothold in Nigeria is in the north-eastern states such as Borno. It is crucial to understand the contemporary socio-economic situation of these states to understand radicalisation in the area. In 2017, north-eastern states in Nigeria experienced up to 80% poverty rates while poverty rates in southern states remained below 30% (Lawal et al., 2017: 81). Interviewee 2 (2020) states that people become radicalised because of "A variety of factors such as deteriorating social-economic factors, especially in the north-east in Borno state.". Interviewee 3 (2020) highlights that "there are few opportunities for livelihood" in the north-east, and that there is a "lack of investment in local, border and far to reach communities", which leads to poverty. Furthermore, Boko Haram exploits the economic insecurity of communities and that "many of the members have not been able to provide for their families" (Interviewee 3, 2020) Hence, as opportunities to have a sustainable income are scarce in states like Borno, people in local communities turn to Boko Haram for a livelihood.

The extremist religious ideology that Boko Haram preaches has proved to be a central reason why both educated and uneducated people join. A report by Kaffenberger and Pritchett (2017: 3) states that the literacy rate in states like Borno is only around 19% of people who finished primary school. Furthermore, a 2013 study by Bold et al. (2017: 8-9) demonstrates that Nigerian teachers are severely undereducated, and around 30% of teachers are absent from their teaching jobs, resulting in "orphaned" classrooms. Interviewee 3 (2020) argues that this

results in students "lacking education and critical thinking, to question ideologies". Low-ranking foot soldiers in Boko Haram do not necessarily understand or care for the group's ideology but are interested in the socio-economic opportunities the organisation offers. The translation of "Boko Haram" is "Western education is forbidden" in a northern Nigerian Hausa dialect. Contrarily to uneducated people that lack the understanding of Boko Haram's ideology, educated religious members denounced their 'Western' higher education and joined Boko Haram when commanded by the group's preachers. These educated people often play important roles for Boko Haram as preachers or generals (Eveslage, 2013: 47; Babatunde, 2018: 385).

Women are not offered education to the same extent as men in north-eastern Nigeria. Interviewee 1 (2020) adds that "Women may simply become members of Boko Haram because their husbands or boyfriends are members of Boko Haram.". This results in women's entry points into Boko Haram being affected by the socio-economic situations of males in their proximity (International Crisis Group, 2016: 9). Adaobi Tricia Nwaubani is a journalist and author that investigated the kidnappings of the Chibok Girls. Nwaubani (2017) interviewed Dr. Fatima Akilu, who is the executive director of the Neem Foundation. In this interview, Akilu offered her stance and experiences regarding the lives of former female members of Boko Haram. Akilu states that "Those who were treated better were the ones who willingly married Boko Haram members or who joined the group voluntarily. Most women did not have the same treatment." (Nwaubani, 2017). Because of this, Interviewee 1 (2020) argues that "For de-radicalisation programmes to work, the process has to be able to understand the entry points of individuals and use the data or the records to design a de-radicalisation programme.".

A recurring method that Boko Haram uses is abduction of women and girls to serve as wives, slaves, and potentially soldiers. The women are forced into marriages with male members of the terror organisation to serve as "Bush-wives" (McAllister, 2015). Interviewee 3 (2020) states that through his work, they have seen that "Boko Haram radicalise women as a tool to radicalise men.", and that "These women are sexually abused, and forced into marriages". Hence, a reason for Boko Haram's recruitment of females is based on exploiting women to get men to join the organisation by promising said men marriages and sex slaves. Furthermore, the radicalisation or sympathy for Boko Haram begins mainly after the women have 'joined' the group. Interviewee 3 (2020) states that "New members are often radicalised after the point that they join the group. They go through preaching stages, or brainwashing, and most people that have joined are radicalised based on other factors than the reasons to why they joined.".

A final example that highlights the issue of female empowerment in Boko Haram is the case of the Chibok Girls. The Chibok Girls were 276 (mostly Christian) female students that were abducted by Boko Haram in April in 2014, from the town of Chibok in Borno state. The campaign to recover the kidnapped women received the name "#BringBackOurGirls" (Oyewole, 2016: 25-27). Regarding female Boko Haram members, Akilu states that "These were women who for the most part had never worked, had no power, no voice in the communities, and all of a sudden they were in charge of between 30 to 100 women who were now completely under their control" (Nwaubani, 2017). Furthermore, some of the female students that were abducted in Chibok alongside many other 'wives' of Boko Haram had refused to return to the communities they used to live in. The reason for this was because "most of the women are returning to societies where they are not going to be able to wield that kind of power." (Nwaubani, 2017), referring to the power that the 'wives' had in Boko Haram.

In 2016, Boko Haram divided into mainly two factions. One was led by Abubakar Shekau, and his faction uses women to carry out violent extremism. The second group led by Abu Musab al-Barnawi distance itself from including women in violence. However, women also play a great role in the al-Barnawi's group as powerful wives or to help plan violent attacks. Shekau's faction has proved more deadly than al-Barnawi's, killing 78 times more people in attacks in 2017. This suggests that the strategic use of women in attacks leads to higher mortality rates (Bryson and Bukarti, 2018: 11; Agbaje, 2020: 4). In 2018, Shekau's faction released a video that showed some of the Chibok Girls abducted in 2014 saying "We are very happy here. We thank God for his mercy on us. You are saying you will come and take us. Where will you take us to? May God save us from disbelief. We are the Chibok Girls that you are crying to bring back. By God's will, we never return to you." (Bryson and Bukarti, 2018: 13-14). The kidnapped woman who made this statement may have opposing views to what she was forced to show outwards. Furthermore, she may experience Stockholm syndrome. However, it is crucial to understand that she may have converted to and now sympathises with Boko Haram's ideology.

Examples like the one mentioned in the last paragraph problematize campaigns such as "#BringBackOurGirls". Although tragic, 'our girls' may become loyal wives, soldiers, spies, or suicide bombers for Boko Haram. The idea of saving women from Boko Haram might be justified in many cases. However, one must consider if these women have become radicalised and will hence need to be de-radicalised before returning to their communities. Although campaigns seek to bring back women from Boko Haram, female returnees often experience

severe stigma from their communities. While males experience stigma as well, women's experiences are mostly concerned with if the woman returns to her former community pregnant, as a mother, or married to a Boko Haram soldier or general. The woman and potential children are considered to have "bad blood" by their communities, making reintegration almost impossible. Furthermore, the entry point of the woman to Boko Haram does not matter. She could have been kidnapped, but solely being with Boko Haram for an extended period makes the woman considered "bad blood" (International Crisis Group, 2016: 15).

5. Nigerian De-radicalisation Programmes

Women are involved in Boko Haram and assist the terrorist organisation in planning and carrying out violent extremism. It is therefore crucial to understand the Nigerian Government's view on these individuals and the methods that are used to make them step away from their radical ideologies. Interviewee 1 (2020) states that "the Nigerian Government views the militant women on the point of victims of circumstances rather than willing perpetrators". Interviewee 2 (2020) continues by saying that whatever the entry point of a woman, "Women that decided to come out of the movement may need to be de-radicalised.". Finally, Interviewee 3 (2020) states that "The Nigerian Government does not recognise militant women. And hence, they don't treat them in any way.". The views attached to radicalised women by the Nigerian Government are deeply troubling and it is hence crucial to discuss what is done to de-radicalise women in Nigeria.

5.1. Operation Safe Corridor

Operation Safe Corridor (OSC) is the largest Nigerian, and only non-prison Government run de-radicalisation project, which started in 2015. OSC focuses on rehabilitating former "low-risk" Boko Haram male militants. The program focuses on religiously re-educating defectors or 'clients', without providing much vocational training, or social help (Felbab-Brown, 2018: 74). The programme coordinator of OSC is General Bamidele Shafa (2020), and he states that OSC targets people who were forced to join Boko Haram. He explains that Boko Haram members may have been looking for a chance to remove themselves from Boko Haram. Therefore, the Nigerian Government can help if the militants willingly lay down their arms (Shafa, 2020). The process that OSC uses consists of four stages; 1. Gathering data of 'clients' through documentation and profiling, 2. Building trust with a 'client', 3. De-

radicalisation, and 4. Reintegration, which is designed to take place over 16 weeks (Bryson and Bukarti, 2019: 14-15). However, 16 weeks is a short time to change individuals' ideological beliefs and OSC does not openly share specific details and data regarding their de-radicalisation methods.

Interviewee 2 (2020) explains that OSC is a "Cooperation between civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations, and local state ministries.". In a 2016 stakeholders meeting, the issues discussed did not focus on gender. The meeting rather highlighted that north-eastern communities involved in reintegration must receive socio-economic help from the Government to repair damages caused by Boko Haram. Furthermore, the meeting called for the Government to involve communities in the de-radicalisation process to ensure clarity on the structure of OSC (Centre for Democracy and Development, 2016: 1-5). What was recommended in the 2016 stakeholders meeting did not come to fruition. As of 2018, roughly 100 men that had completed the programme had not been returned to their communities due to a fear of community retaliation. Furthermore, the Government has not clarified what consists of a "high-risk" or "low-risk" individual (Interviewee 2, 2020). Interviewee 2 (2020) describes the OSC process as "hidden from plain view", which creates "conspiracy theories about what OSC is." among communities. Keeping the process hidden results in communities refusing to take back returnees since these individuals are still considered radicals by the communities.

Interviewee 2 (2020) describes the Government's stance on women as "Unfortunately for the women, they are being rescued. Women do not voluntarily lay down their arms, they are rescued.". Therefore, militant women in Boko Haram are not considered to be a threat by the Nigerian Government, which correlates to the patriarchal structures in Nigeria that subjugate women. Since OSC targets people that lay down their arms, women are not considered for de-radicalisation because of the victimisation of women (Khelghat-Doost, 2019: 859). Hence, Interviewee 2 (2020) argues that the Nigerian Government's focus on women is to resettle the women with new husbands to take care of them. It is not a focus on empowering women to counter recidivism, but to find a new man to care for her. This effectively highlights Nigerian patriarchal structures as women in Boko Haram pose an equal threat as their male peers, but they receive less attention in de-radicalisation because of their gender.

5.2. The Neem Foundation

The Neem Foundation is an NGO, and its main goal is to work against insecurity created by the Boko Haram insurgency and other agents. The organisation consists of people that helped create and organise Operation Safe Corridor (Bryson and Bukarti, 2019: 10). Through the Yellow Ribbon Initiative that was created in 2017, the Neem Foundation (2019) seeks to de-radicalise and reintegrate women, men, and children associated with Boko Haram. By offering psychological help, and creating PVE programmes on a community level, the Neem Foundation (2019) tries to rehabilitate former members of Boko Haram. Furthermore, the organisation seeks to prevent people from joining Boko Haram by strengthening communities. The initiative's main rehabilitating method is based on psychologically improving individuals' emotional, and moral critical thinking. The Neem Foundation provides help for people who experienced trauma in the shape of sexual harassment, violence, poverty, and eventual stigma and rejection from the community that the person tried returning to (International Civil Society Action Network, 2019: 100).

Unlike the Nigerian Government, the Neem Foundation is gender-neutral and considers men and women as equals in its de-radicalisation programme. The Neem Foundation recognises the different roles women have as wives, soldiers, spies, and mothers in Boko Haram. The Yellow Ribbon Initiative is one of the only ways for former female members of Boko Haram to return to 'normal' life in their former communities. The Neem Foundation recognises the importance of looking at women's entry to Boko Haram. The organisation argues that the main reason for voluntary female engagement with Boko Haram is due to the lack of economic opportunities or social influence in their communities. The programme's main approach to de-radicalisation is hence based on assessing risks surrounding community connections, personal ideology, and psychology, as well as economic factors. Therefore, the programme focuses on personal empowerment and offering vocational training (International Civil Society Action Network, 2019: 100-101). Interviewee 3 (2020) explains that the assessments are based on profiling, and risk, vulnerability, needs assessments, to measure cognitive capabilities, remorse, opportunities, and risk of recidivism. Furthermore, Interviewee 3 (2020) is aware of the limits of these assessments and even though they may offer good indications of an individual de-radicalisation process, people can conceal their ideological beliefs.

While the gender-neutral approach of the Neem Foundation is positive, there are points that need to be considered when discussing the organisation's methods. The director of the Neem Foundation, Dr. Akilu, stated in 2015 that 20 women and girls who were members of Boko Haram had been "saved" and on their way to be rehabilitated (Bloom and Matfess, 2016: 117). This announcement may have been worded to please a larger audience. The Neem Foundation clearly recognises the importance of PVE measures in communities and considers men and women equally in their roles in Boko Haram. However, the discourse surrounding women in Boko Haram is based on them being victims in need of saving. Therefore, one can ask to what extent were the women "saved", or were they simply abducted again, but by a different actor. Akilu recalls accounts of women who seemed to be on track to a rehabilitated life with prospects. However, when the women who were "saved" have husbands, brothers, or fathers who are still with Boko Haram, the incentives to return to the group have proven crucial to the failure of rehabilitating former female Boko Haram members due to the lack of opportunities for women in north-eastern Nigeria (Nwaubani, 2017).

Interviewee 3 (2020) states that "If you send a de-radicalised person back to a community where the narrative that led them to radicalisation in the first place is still prevalent, then the person may radicalise again.". This suggests that the Neem Foundation understands that a holistic approach involving de-radicalising communities is needed to be taken to rehabilitate Boko Haram members. However, the Neem Foundation is an NGO and while their work may have a great impact on an individuals' lives, their efforts are limited if the Government refuses to recognise the role of communities in the de-radicalisation process. Had the points raised in the 2016 stakeholders meeting for OSC regarding the need for governmental funding towards communities to build social and vocational opportunities come to fruition, then de-radicalised communities would be prepared to handle issues regarding de-radicalisation in north-eastern Nigeria (Centre for Democracy and Development, 2016: 1-5). However, the absence of governmental recognition has resulted in issues of recidivism, and further radicalisation.

5.3. The Kuje Prison Project

The idea of using prisons to target several people for de-radicalisation at once have gained traction in recent years and should be further developed as presented by Schmid (2016: 31). His main argument being that rigorous evaluations of said methods need to be carried out to justify their popularity (Schmid: 30). The Nigerian Government tasked the Office of the

National Security Advisor (ONSA) with creating a CVE programme to de-radicalise former members of Boko Haram. ONSA was set to cooperate with the Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS). The result was OSC and the idea to de-radicalise Boko Haram prisoners. Hence, the Kuje Prison Project was started in 2014 as a testing ground for the process (Bryson and Bukarti, 2019: 10; Barkindo and Bryans, 2016: 1). To which facility a Boko Haram member is sent for de-radicalisation depends on whether they were arrested or gave up their arms. As Interviewee 2 (2020) states, "OSC is only for people who give up their arms. If the Government arrests you, you get sentenced.". Furthermore, it is still crucial to de-radicalise violent extremists in prisons as to prevent revolts or hinder the spread of the radical ideology once the prisoners are eventually released from prison. Therefore, members of Boko Haram were separated from other non-radical prisoners to prevent the spread of the ideology within Kuje Prison (Barkindo and Bryans, 2016: 8).

The Kuje Prison Project became the main centre of de-radicalisation for prisoners. It was thought to be best having one main prison for testing the programme as it allowed the Government to concentrate resources and professionals to maximize the results of the project. Kuje focuses on both individual disengagement from violence and ideology in their de-radicalisation programme. This is mainly done by reteaching moderate Islamic, and Christian beliefs and engaging in social events such as sports. Furthermore, Boko Haram inmates have been offered vocational training and education to reduce illiteracy. This was an attempt to increase critical thinking and cognitive capabilities among the Boko Haram prisoners to make them step away from their radical ideology (Barkindo and Bryans, 2016: 17). The methods used are based on individual de-radicalisation where risk assessments were conducted from a general framework. The focus is placed on individuals as trying to de-radicalise a certain group could result in resistance from individual prisoners that could affect the de-radicalisation process of other prisoners. The end framework used consists of building trust, risk and needs assessments, and how to meet prisoners' risks after prison and reduce their violent capabilities (Barkindo and Bryans, 2016: 6-11).

Kuje Prison is a state-run facility which means that the prison project adopted the Government's idea of who is a perpetrator. The Nigerian Government's opinion that women cannot be perpetrators means that they were instead returned to their communities and were not sentenced to prisons like Kuje. Therefore, women are left out of being rehabilitated in this format. Alternatively, Interviewee 2 (2020) suggests that since Boko Haram consists of mostly male members, more resources are invested in de-radicalising men instead of women. Kuje

was originally planned to handle both men and women, but the result was different. The reason for not incorporating women was as Interviewee 2 (2020) stated, "a lack of resources". A prison based de-radicalisation programme designed for women requires that children be cared for when the woman is going through the programme. Furthermore, that separate accommodation for women and men is provided to assure safety for women and children, and vocational training that provides the women with skills that would match women's roles outside of prison so that they are not frowned upon by their communities. Finally, the staff working with the programme would need to be equal parts women to men, to assure that the needs of women are catered for (Bryson and Bukarti, 2019: 27).

Interviewee 1 (2020) states that "there has to be a focus on capacity building for women practitioners. Especially in areas in north-eastern Nigeria where engaging with a woman requires a lot of cultural sensitivity.". The norms and roles attached to women in Nigeria have not just affected the direct rehabilitation of former female members of Boko Haram, but the religious aspect of men and the "nature of their culture means that they will not want to be engaging with women." (Interviewee 1, 2020). Unfortunately, this is an issue associated with the Kuje Prison Project and OSC, because of the Government's views on women, and the limits in funding for de-radicalising women.

6. Theoretical Debates and De-radicalisation in Nigeria

6.1. The Focus of Nigerian De-radicalisation

OSC, the Neem Foundation, and the Kuje Prison Project rarely share information with each other and outside actors. The reasons being to protect the identities of people going through de-radicalisation. Furthermore, the Nigerian Government does not want to share its ways of dealing with violent extremists (Bryson and Bukarti, 2019: 10). Regarding OSC, Interviewee 2 (2020) states that researchers and civilians do not "hear much or know details about it because it is a government project.". Furthermore, this directly correlates with Sageman's (2014: 6) argument that research surrounding terrorism becomes stagnant since governments keep results and methods of de-radicalisation classified as it is considered a state security issue. However, as Schmid (2016: 27) argues, it is possible to bypass the governmental level, and instead utilize a bottom-up approach. Interviewee 2 (2020) continues "Most of these issues are local so you can bypass state governments as long as you get a buy-in from local

traditional leaders", and that Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes "would be more successful on this level instead of hidden state methods". Contrarily to OSC, the Neem Foundation (2019) is working with a bottom-up approach and is striving towards rebuilding communities from local perspectives.

As presented, all three programmes adhere to a framework consisting of documentation, risk and needs assessments, and trust building. This framework has a strong connection to evaluating individuals' psychological mindsets (Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge, 1990: 19-21). The methods of the programmes correlate to the scholarly idea of creating resilient individuals. Through focusing on literacy training, sports, social events, and religious teaching, the Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes in this paper adhere to ideas presented by Liht and Savage (2013: 47), Davies (2009), Feddes, Mann, and Doosje (2015: 6), and Miller (2013: 188). The programmes rely on improving cognitive capabilities such as critical thinking for their 'clients'. Furthermore, to make violent extremists gain an understanding for human rights, and improve their sense of empathy, sympathy, moderate religion, and democratic values to create and accept pluralism. The programmes are hence focused on building character traits that will reduce the risk of individual recidivism towards violent extremism.

To understand whether the programmes are effective, it is crucial to apply the theories concerning vulnerable individuals versus Radical Milieus or enabling environments. Interviewee 1 (2020) argues that a holistic approach to de-radicalisation should be the focus, even though this approach is more costly and resource craving. They argue that all programmes discussed in this paper focus on individual vulnerabilities and are "based on treatment and rehabilitation and not de-radicalisation.", no matter what they express outwards (Interviewee 1, 2020). By looking at the programmes' frameworks that focus on hindering individual recidivism, Interviewee 1 is correct in saying that the focus is based on individual vulnerability. The Nigerian Government has not included communities in its de-radicalisation programmes. The Kuje Prison Project solely deals with violent extremists on an individual level, and OSC was recommended to include communities in the process but has not started doing this yet (Barkindo and Bryans, 2016: 8; Centre for Democracy and Development, 2016: 4).

In the case of the Neem Foundation, Interviewee 1's argument remains valid. While differing, the methods used by all programmes focus on individual rehabilitation. Therefore, while the Neem Foundation also works with communities, the main framework for de-

radicalisation is based on individuals' vulnerability. However, there are reasons why this is the case. Interviewee 3 (2020) and Akilu (Nwaubani, 2017) express an understanding regarding the importance of communities in the de-radicalisation process. Furthermore, the Neem Foundation (2019) states that it seeks to apply a community bottom-up approach to de-radicalisation. As Horgan and Braddock (2010: 280) argue, a holistic approach, while costly, is the most effective. Ignoring to de-radicalise a community could lead to de-radicalised individuals being alienated. Furthermore, if a de-radicalised individual returns to a community that still experiences the same issues that led to individuals' original radicalisation, issues concerning recidivism may take place for the de-radicalised individual. Interviewee 3 (2020) states that "If a de-radicalised person who expresses more positive humane thinking because of the de-radicalisation process returns to a community where this way of thinking is frowned upon, the person might feel like an outcast and experience recidivism".

Malthaner's and Waldmann's (2014: 980) concept of Radical Milieus has become reality in north-eastern Nigerian states. As presented by Lawal et al. (2017: 81), communities in north-eastern Nigeria suffer greatly due to high unemployment, and poverty rates. Schools in states like Borno lack resources and cannot offer education that leads to critical thinking. Furthermore, the statistics presented by Kaffenberger and Pritchett (2017: 3), and Bold et al. (2017: 8-9) regarding literacy rates in north-eastern Nigeria explain why people cannot critically evaluate Boko Haram's extreme ideology. Therefore, illiterate people in north-eastern Nigeria are more prone to radicalisation, as stated by Interviewee 3 (2020). This indicates a severe lack of governmental spending on schools and human development in north-eastern Nigeria, which has resulted in a direct alienation between communities in states like Borno and the Government. Therefore, suggesting that Malthaner's and Waldmann's theory of Radical Milieus has manifested in north-eastern Nigeria, and Radical Milieus act as enabling environments for Boko Haram to recruit members. Furthermore, proving that the individual de-radicalisation focus of Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes is faulty.

The Nigerian Government must therefore conduct PVE and CVE, and counter Radical Milieus by applying Stephens', Sieckelinck's, and Boutellier's (2019: 7) arguments regarding community engagement to strengthen the connections between north-eastern communities and the state. Interviewee 1 (2020) describes the Boko Haram insurgency as "asymmetric warfare", and that the Government has to apply an "intelligence led strategy" to be successful against Boko Haram. Furthermore, the "Intelligence, information, and data mainly comes from the local population." (Interviewee 1, 2020). As Cherney and Hartley (2015: 750) argue, stable

connections between communities and the state ensures a stable flow of information from communities. Therefore, proving that Nigeria needs to change its view regarding community involvement. If the Government continues to ignore the fact that their methods are alienating communities in the north-east, then communities will continue to drift away and remain Radical Milieus, furthering the Boko Haram insurgency. If Nigeria was to establish resilient communities through de-radicalisation efforts, then people would be less inclined to radicalise in the north-east, as presented by Cherney and Hartley (2015), Briggs (2010: 971-972), and Ellis and Abdi (2017: 290). Maintaining resilient communities would allow the Nigerian Government to control and use the intelligence stream that is needed to counter Boko Haram.

6.2. Disengagement and Ideological De-radicalisation

The CVE measures applied by Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes take the shape of mainly disengagement from violence and de-radicalisation of ideology. OSC mainly focuses on maintaining disengagement since its 'clients' have already laid down their arms before joining the programme. Furthermore, OSC mainly handles de-radicalisation of ideology by teaching moderate Islamic and Christian beliefs to its 'clients'. The Kuje Prison Project focuses on mainly disengagement from violence and to teach moderate religious ideas, as well as offering limited chances to vocational and social training. The Neem Foundation focuses mainly on psychological help to enforce disengagement and offer tools for ideological de-radicalisation. It is problematic that these programmes seldom share information with each other. This enforces Bertram's argument that agents who do not share definitions and frameworks surrounding radicalisation and de-radicalisation fuel the issues concerning how to run efficient de-radicalisation projects. As argued by Interviewee 3 (2020), it is crucial to understand that it is almost impossible to determine the success of de-radicalisation as people can conceal their beliefs and ideology. Therefore, a visible disengagement from violence has received great attention in Nigerian projects and overall academia (Felbab-Brown, 2018: 74; International Civil Society Action Network, 2019: 100; Barkindo and Bryans, 2016: 11; Bryson and Bukarti, 2019: 10; Bertram, 2015: 121-122).

In the case of Boko Haram, many of the organisation's foot soldiers are not ideologically radicalised. They are members of the group due to the socio-economic opportunities that were non-existent in the Radical Milieus that they came from. Therefore, the focus of Nigerian programmes remains on disengagement, which is supported by Striegher's view that visible disengagement is the central part of the de-radicalisation process. Horgan and

Islam believe that de-radicalisation of ideology should be the focus of de-radicalisation programmes. They argue that the risk of recidivism is substantial when ideology is not the main target of de-radicalisation. Although individuals may no longer apply extreme violence themselves, they may affect other people in their Radical Milieu to take up arms for Boko Haram's cause (Striegher, 2013: 20; Horgan, 2009: 152; Islam, 2019: 7). Interviewee 3 (2020) effectively explains the situation as returning a disengaged individual to a Radical Milieu may result in recidivism since the same socio-economic issues that led to the individual's radicalisation remain in the community. Therefore, highlighting two crucial things. Firstly, that without de-radicalising the Radical Milieu in a community, de-radicalisation programmes are inherently faulty. Secondly, that Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes need to focus mainly on de-radicalisation of ideology, with disengagement being an important part of the process.

6.3. Theoretical Debates and the Women of Boko Haram

This paper has shown that the focus and processes of the Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes are flawed because they target the idea of vulnerable individuals instead of Radical Milieus. Furthermore, that the prioritisation of disengagement from violence over de-radicalisation of ideology is faulty. It may seem that this paper' comparison of OSC, the Kuje Prison Project and the Neem Foundation is a futile endeavour since they do not all focus on or incorporate women in de-radicalisation. However, Schmid (2016: 30) states the importance to compare de-radicalisation programmes to advance scholarship on de-radicalisation, as the area of de-radicalisation has been neglected in academia. Furthermore, it is crucial to establish general working frameworks for de-radicalisation that incorporates everyone affected by violent extremism and recognise that every case is different and may need specific consideration (International Crisis Group, 2016: 9). The gender aspects of the OSC and the Kuje Prison Project manifest the main failures of Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes.

Executing de-radicalisation programmes should be done from a gender-neutral point of view that recognises different individuals' personal radicalisation process. Interviewee 1 (2020) argues that the Nigerian Government has an "overwhelming perspective that sees women as victims and an equally strong perspective that considers men as perpetrators". Women can be both perpetrators and victims of Boko Haram, while men may join Boko Haram because of the lack of socio-economic opportunities, making men, women and north-eastern communities victims of neglect enforced by the Nigerian Government. Furthermore, this is supported by Cornwall's, Harrison's, and Whitehead's (2007) argument that the research and execution of

PVE, CVE, and de-radicalisation programmes are based on gender myths and stereotypes. Their argument correlates to the case of Nigeria where OSC and the Kuje Prison Project solely handle men as perpetrators and neglect the position of women within Boko Haram. The Neem Foundation (2019) is the only programme in this paper that effectively employs a gender-neutral perspective in its de-radicalisation process. Therefore, the Nigerian Government opposes research and neglects the role of women in Boko Haram due to Nigeria's patriarchal structures.

As Bloom and Matfess (2016: 109) explain, women have been increasingly used by contemporary terrorist organisations. Women are used to carry out violent terrorism by Boko Haram due to the organisation's knowledge that the Nigerian Government does not consider women as perpetrators. The year 2015 represented one of the deadliest years of the Boko Haram insurgency during which women were widely used to carry out suicide bombings (ACLED Data, 2017). Contrarily, Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari declared a military victory over Boko Haram in 2015, but the insurgency remains active to this day (British Broadcasting Company, 2015). The Nigerian Government's refusal of recognising female perpetrators in Boko Haram remains ignorant. The year 2015 was the first time during the Boko Haram insurgency that Nigeria increased its number of military personnel. The increase was by more than 20 percent, as shown by The World Bank.
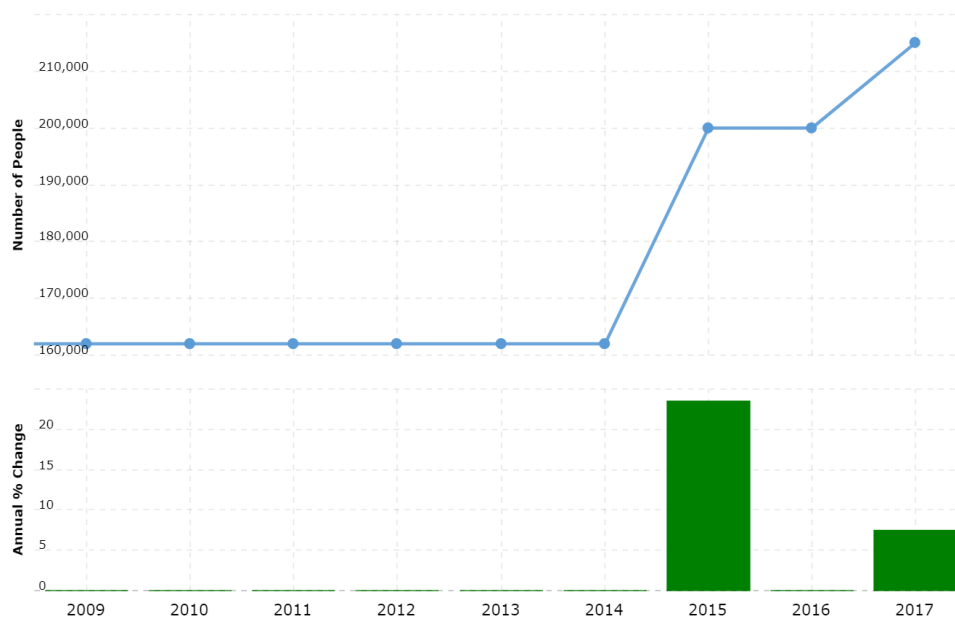

Figure 2: (The World Bank, 2020).

This graph demonstrates the increase of Nigerian military forces 2009-2017 and combined with the data from ACLED, it shows that the Nigerian Government recognized the deadly effect of Boko Haram suicide bombings and violence. However, the Government still refused to recognise the role of women in the attacks.

While the Neem Foundation's de-radicalisation programme mainly focuses on methods based on vulnerable individuals, they do correctly have a gender-neutral approach. Men and women in Boko Haram both need to be de-radicalised. However, certain methods, and de-radicalisation practitioners need to be adjusted based on the gender of the individual going through the process of de-radicalisation. Women act as mothers and wives in Boko Haram and may experience severe sexual harassment in the group. As presented by UNODC (2017: 109), de-radicalisation programmes must recognise the specific needs and events that women have endured during their stay with groups like Boko Haram. The Neem Foundation is the sole agent that recognises this out of the three programmes discussed in this paper. Furthermore, the Neem Foundation remains the sole recogniser of the important fact that women's role as mothers and wives make them powerful mediators in Boko Haram (International Civil Society Action Network, 2019: 100). D'Estaing (2017: 108) argues that recognising the important role of women in groups like Boko Haram will assist in de-radicalising men since women carry a lot of influence over the men in their proximity. Therefore, suggesting that the Neem Foundation understands women's social importance within families.

Finally, Interviewee 1 (2020) states that in places like north-eastern Nigeria where the culture is significantly patriarchal, "engaging with a woman requires a lot of cultural sensitivity", meaning that women are needed as practitioners in de-radicalisation programmes. Therefore, Nigerian programmes need to "focus on capacity building for women practitioners" (Interviewee 1, 2020). Interviewee 1's statements are supported by Ní Aoláin (2015) and D'Estaing (2017: 108). They explain that including women as practitioners in PVE and CVE projects makes the projects more successful at de-radicalising both men and women. Furthermore, that these are more successful than projects that lack female practitioners. While NGOs such as the Neem Foundation are effective at utilising female practitioners, the Nigerian Government needs to change its patriarchal view to improve OSC and the Kuje Prison Project. Therefore, the main issue that is opposing the work of the Nigerian Government's attempts of de-radicalisation is its and the country's persistent patriarchal views and structures, and refusal to recognise women in Boko Haram as perpetrators.

7. Conclusion

By evaluating and comparing the methods and targets of Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes, this paper has managed to raise relevant issues that explain how de-radicalisation should be improved to further contemporary counterterrorism. Boko Haram is emblematic of contemporary terrorism. Highlighting how Boko Haram exploits socially, culturally, and governmentally Nigerian patriarchal views of women to use females as perpetrators of extreme violence has shown how and why Nigeria fails to counter violent extremism. While the Nigerian Government created OSC and the Kuje Prison Project as a response to the Boko Haram insurgency, it did not fund these projects enough considering the neglect of female Boko Haram members in these programmes. Despite the Kuje Prison Project being originally planned to handle women, and that the OSC was recommended by local north-eastern Nigerian actors to de-radicalise women. Furthermore, the funding instead went to militarily tackle the Boko Haram insurgency, as the Nigerian Government responded by vastly increasing the size of its military forces in 2015. However, Nigeria's military approach to the Boko Haram insurgency has failed, despite President Buhari's multiple claims that the military struggle against Boko Haram has been won in the past.

According to this paper, the first major contribution that the case of de-radicalisation programmes in Nigeria offers scholarship on counterterrorism is that one must determine the reason for people's radicalisation. The case of Nigeria highlights why the scholarly focus on recidivism and vulnerable individuals is misplaced and why theories of enabling environments such as Radical Milieus should be further researched. The theory effectively describes why socio-economically vulnerable communities in north-eastern Nigeria experience high rates of people joining terrorist organisations like Boko Haram. However, it is important for local programmes to consider individual entry points into violent radicalism to effectively de-radicalise people, but these entry points are often connected to societal and structural issues, and not solely due to individual vulnerability. The second major scholarly argument that the case of Nigeria supports is that emphasis should be put on de-radicalising ideology, while incorporating disengagement in programmes' processes to de-radicalise violent extremists. Disengagement from violence has proved important, but unless the focus of de-radicalisation is on countering radical ideologies, then the risk of recidivism towards violence is greater.

This paper has shown that the main issue that the case of de-radicalisation programmes in Nigeria offer academia surrounding contemporary counterterrorism is that de-radicalisation

needs to be gender-neutral. Men and women in Boko Haram can equally be victims of circumstances if one investigates individual entry points, just as both genders can be perpetrators of violent extremism. To improve Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes, attempts must be made to change the fundamentally patriarchal structures surrounding the norms and roles attached to women in Nigeria. For counterterrorism to be successful when dealing with contemporary terrorist organisations that use women to carry out violent extremism, all aspects of why women are involved in terrorist groups must be considered. Furthermore, women's roles within and outside a terrorist organisation must be considered equally to their male counterparts. Finally, it is crucial that female practitioners are widely involved in de-radicalisation programmes to ensure that female members of organisations like Boko Haram receive equal attention to their male peers. Establishing gender-neutrality within de-radicalisation programmes is therefore the first step towards creating successful counterterrorism through the lens of de-radicalisation. As presented by Schmid (2016: 30), comparing Nigerian de-radicalisation programmes in this paper has effectively highlighted problems and offered solutions to how contemporary counterterrorism should be conducted via the lens of de-radicalisation.

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Intersectional Identities and Land Dispossession

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Intersectional Identities and Land Dispossession

A Qualitative Analysis of How the Gendered Politics of Land Dispossession has affected Indigenous Women in Southeast Asia

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Abstract

Land grabbing has long been present in Southeast Asia, but with the spike in commodity prices in 2008, land grabbing intensified. The procedure is highly problematic as it often occurs at the expense of peasant farmers, land stewardship, food sovereignty, and human rights. So far, the literature has paid insufficient attention to the vulnerability of indigenous women and their intersectional vulnerability of gender and ethnicity when facing land dispossession. Such neglect poses far-reaching analytical limitations and questionable political implications. It is essential to bridge the gap between land-grabbing studies and the gendered implications of land dispossession on indigenous women to generate more nuanced analyses of the issue. Through a qualitative in-depth comparative analysis of the general implications of land dispossession on indigenous women in Southeast Asia and two case studies of the Cordillera Administrative Region in the Philippines and Kalimantan in Indonesia, the paper tries to answer how does the gendered politics of land dispossession affect indigenous women? It finds that indigenous women have higher physical and economic vulnerabilities due to land dispossession than non-indigenous women. These vulnerabilities are further heightened due to the lack of representation in decision-making. However, how these vulnerabilities play out highly depends on national and local factors.

Keywords

Indigenous peoples; indigenous women; land dispossession; intersectionality

1. Introduction

Land grabbing studies early established themselves as a politically charged, high-profile and diverse field that underscored Southeast Asia as a particular concern (Schoenberger et al., 2017). Although both policymakers and academics have been careful not to present a concrete definition of land grabbing, it can broadly be defined as the control over larger than traditionally held areas of land by an actor acquired by any means, both legal and illegal, for large-scale projects (Baker-Smith & Attila, 2016: 2). Land grabbing has long been present in Southeast Asia, but with the spike in commodity prices in 2008, the practice of land grabbing intensified. Concerns over food shortage and a scarcity of investment in agriculture led the World Bank and many Southeast Asian governments to promote large-scale land deals (Hirsch, 2020: 349). It was perceived as necessary to reallocate land to individuals, companies or other actors who could organise such profitable large-scale farming. The "grabbing" of land was seen as a crucial aspect to enabling large-scale commodification. However, land grabbing is not exclusively used for large-scale farming. It has also become a common practice to enable other activities dependent on large land areas, such as speculation, extraction and resource control.

Regardless of the underlying purpose for land grabbing, the procedure is highly problematic as such reallocation of land usually occurs at the expense of peasant farmers, agroecology, land stewardship, food sovereignty and human rights (Baker-Smith & Attila, 2016: 2). Though the severity of the consequences arising in the aftermath of land grabbing are known, little work has been done to systematically outline these consequences. This paper aims at exploring how one specific group, namely indigenous women, has been affected by the consequences of land grabbing.

In the aftermath of the global land grab, as the period from 2008 came to be known, the literature on land grabbing proliferated. However, the literature has primarily focused on procedures that shape land grabbing, such as land tenure and land reforms, and given little attention to the consequences of land grabbing, such as land dispossession (Schoenberger et al., 2017). Further, within this already limited scope of work on the implications of land grabbing, perspective including the gendered politics and gendered implication of land grabbing is even further limited. In recent years there has been a noticeable increase in published work on the issue. Nevertheless, gender and the gendered implications of land grabbing continues to be overlooked in the literature. This paper argues that not acknowledging the specific position of women draws on a faulty assumption that "local communities" are

homogenous groups with similar interests and identities. This is problematic because the politics concerning land grabbing and land dispossession builds on changes which are all subject to gender inequality and gendered assumptions. Thus, women are inherently affected differently than men. Looking at local communities as homogenous groups overlooks this crucial aspect.

The neglect of the gendered implications of land grabbing is even more problematic when gender intersects with group affiliations that are notably more vulnerable to such practices, such as indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples are disproportionately affected by discrimination and oppression based on their ethnicity (Park & White, 2017). This has rendered them part of the poorest groups in their societies, most politically disempowered and socially and culturally victimised. Further, indigenous women are even more discriminated against and marginalised based on the intersectionality of their gender and ethnicity (Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), 2019: VIII).

Such neglect of the specific and particular vulnerability indigenous women face in the aftermath of land grabbing and land dispossession poses far-reaching analytical limitations and questionable political implications. If one aims at creating a coherent picture of the implications of land grabbing, such narratives must be included. Thus, there is an urgent need to further acknowledge and systematically outline these vulnerabilities, both in the academic literature and policy recommendations and initiatives. Only when the vulnerable position of indigenous women and the specific consequences they experience is acknowledged can one hope to produce effective and appropriate political initiatives regarding land grabbing and land dispossession.

Thus, it is essential to bridge the gap between land grabbing studies and the gendered implications of land dispossession on indigenous women to generate more nuanced analyses of the issue. It is this intersection between gender and ethnicity this paper sets out to investigate. Thus, the paper asks, *"How does the gendered politics of land dispossession affect indigenous women?"*

In what follows, the paper aims to answer the research question set out above. The paper applies a feminist agrarian economic theory as the guiding theoretical framework. This framework is outlined in chapter two. Further, the paper presents a qualitative in-depth comparative analysis of the general implications of land dispossession on indigenous women in Southeast Asia followed by two case studies of the Cordillera Administrative Region in the

Philippines and Kalimantan in Indonesia, respectively, to illustrate how the general regional trends unfold at the local level. Chapter three presents a further description of the methodology used, chapter four presents the results of the in-depth comparative analysis, and chapter five presents the results from the two case studies. Finally, the sixth chapter will conclude on the implication of the findings and the need for further research.

2. Literature Review and Theory

2.1. Defining the Concepts: Land Dispossession and Indigenous Peoples

Building on Levien's (2017: 1) definition of the phenomenon, this paper defines *land dispossession* as the practice where the state makes people relinquish their land and landed resources involuntarily, irrespectively of whether the land is under formal or informal tenure. It should be noted that this definition makes an important differentiation between land that has been acquired through voluntary sale and coercion. Authors, such as Hall et al. (2011), Hall (2012) and Li (2014) have all argued that the line between coercive and voluntary sale is blurred and that sales can be forced by other actors than the states. This paper does not want to undermine the strong and important dynamics of such coercive sale. Nevertheless, the categories are necessary to distinguish between the large scale of coercive dispossession and willing sellers.

Secondly, in regards to *indigenous peoples*, intergovernmental organisations and scholars have provided an increasing body of definitions to conceptualise the group. However, these definitions have often remained broad in scope, and as a result, indigenous peoples as a group are often presented as a vaguely defined group (United Nations (UN), 2007; World Bank, 2019). The vague definitions have one troubling implication – other minority groups such as ethnic and cultural minorities can claim to be indigenous peoples and further claim legal, political and economic rights reserved exclusively for indigenous peoples. Thus, to separate non-indigenous minorities and indigenous peoples, this paper will draw on the comprehensive definition provided by Jansen and Jiménez (2017). Thus, indigenous peoples are defined as "Persons that were living in a specific region before colonising powers invaded their territory. Today that refers to peoples that descend from or have some historical, territorial, cultural and/or linguistic continuity with those original (pre-colonial) inhabitants" (Jansen & Jiménez, 2017: 26).

2.2. Literature Review: Identifying the Gaps in Land Grabbing Studies

The literature on land grabbing has, over the last decades, grown substantially both in size and in scope. Many scholars have emphasised what they see as an important connection between land grabbing and neoliberal capitalist policies. Further, these scholars have argued that this connection was further strengthened during the commodity boom in 2008, resulting in a rapid increase in land grabbing in the region (Hirsch, 2020; Peluso & Lund, 2011; Pichler, 2016; Pichler & Brad, 2016). Kunz et al. (2016) illustrate how neo-capitalist objectives seeking to maximise capital and increase economic growth have been used to legitimises land grabbing. They argue that small-scale farming has come to be seen as ineffective and hindering economic growth. In contrast, large-scale farming is seen as efficient and fostering development and economic growth. Thus, small-scale farming has to forgo to enable large-scale farming in the name of economic growth. Such rationale, they argue, is further strengthened by the rhetoric used by international organisations such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. Thus, land grabbing becomes an essential part of pursuing and enhancing national development aims presented in a neoliberal capitalist framework.

Though the link to neo-capitalism might be both correct and powerful, other scholars have highlighted that it overlooks how land grabbing can be used to strengthen state-building and state control (Peluso & Lund, 2011; Pichler, 2016; Pichler & Brad, 2016; Woods, 2011). Land grabbing cannot simply be seen as a means to enhance development as such practices are also tightly connected to state-building and state control. In Myanmar, land grabbing has been a tactic used to enable the militarisation of territory in areas populated by the regime's opposition. Thus, through land grabbing, the state can strengthen its power and control the opposition or other forces they deem inappropriate (Woods, 2011). Further, Peluso and Lund (2011) have argued that this is a broader trend in Southeast Asia in general and not necessarily specific to Myanmar. Following this notion, land grabbing is a strategy used by the state to control fragmented and graduated sovereignty by militarisation of specific areas.

Other scholars have emphasised the link between land grabbing and environmental protection rather than state power and economic aims. This is increasingly being referred to as *green grabbing.* Pichler and Brad (2016) distinguish green grabbing from land grabbing motivated by economics or state power as green grabbing acquires land to pursue environmentally-friendly policies rather than leasing it out to plantations and investors. One such green gabbing initiative that has been heavily criticised is the Reducing Emission from

Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD). REDD has been criticised for increasingly driving land grabbing in Southeast Asia and consequently increasing land dispossession. Additionally, it has been noted that such policies tend to benefit "middlemen" – non-governmental organisation and carbon trader – rather than the farmers of the land (Peluso & Lund, 2011).

Other scholars have emphasised that green grabbing has provided small-scale local farmers with more autonomy and a larger place in decision-making procedures than what they would have possessed without such initiatives (Pichler, 2016: 184). It should be emphasised that such arguments are based on a comparison between green grabbing and land grabbing for other purposes. Thus, green grabbing might provide local farmers with more autonomy and decision-making power than land grabbing for other purposes. However, this is not to say that green grabbing is a desirable process.

What is striking is how the literature on land grabbing has paid substantial attention to land tenure and land reforms. The literature has effectively focused on the ownership of the land, denoted land tenure, and the reforms introduced to alter such land tenure, denoted land reforms (Schoenberger et al., 2017). The implications of land grabbing, such as land dispossession, has gained limited attention (Leiven, 2017). Though there is a growing literature, it is relatively scarce compared to the two above-mentioned issues.

Additionally, within the relatively scarce literature on land dispossession and its implications, its gendered implications are even further neglected. Looking at an extensive overview of land grabbing studies published by Schoenberger et al. (2017), it is evident that the gendered nature of the issue has been largely omitted. The overview analyses an extensive amount of works on different areas of land grabbing studies. However, the overview is presented without once making explicit reference to women, gender or gendered implications. The lack of acknowledgement of the gendered aspect of land grabbing in Schoenberger at al. (2017) extensive overview illustrates how the pool of work on the topic does not deal sufficiently, if at all, with the gendered aspect of the problem.

There has indeed been a move in recent years to increasingly include the gendered implications of land dispossession. However, this field remains meagre in relation to the vast amount of research on almost every other aspect of land grabbing (Park & White, 2017). The lack of acknowledgement of the gendered implications of land grabbing is problematic primarily because it builds on an underlying assumption that "local communities" are

homogeneous groups sharing similar interests, identities and aims. Overlooking this aspect poses far-reaching analytical limitations and poses questionable political implications as it neglects the specific vulnerability of women to such practices. The social relations, dynamics of production and reproduction, power and property in agrarian formations and their process of change are all subject to gender inequality and gendered assumptions (Park, 2019). Thus, women are inherently affected differently than men. The "gender blindness" present in much of the literature is troublesome as the literature that does exist on the topic indicates that women are more negatively affected than men by such practices (Daley & Pallas, 2014). Thus, there is an urgent need to give more attention to this aspect to create more nuanced and holistic analyses of land dispossession.

There has been quite substantial work within land grabbing studies on indigenous peoples, and the implications land grabbing has on these groups. However, the work has not sufficiently accounted for the gendered implications of land dispossession and the specific consequences such practices have on indigenous women. The importance of including the narratives of indigenous women and the consequences they suffer due to land dispossession arises from the fact that indigenous women find themselves at the intersection of two vulnerable groups as both women and indigenous peoples. Thus, indigenous women face both the issues related to their gender and the issues related to their ethnicity, putting them, arguably, in one of the most vulnerable positions in relations to land dispossession (AIPP, 2019: VIII). By presenting a systematic overview of how the gendered politics of land dispossession has affected indigenous women, the paper aims to bridge this gap in land grabbing studies and create a more holistic picture of the situation.

2.3. Framing the approach: A Feminist Approach to Agrarian Political Economy

To assess the implications of land dispossession on indigenous women, one needs a theory that enables an assessment of the agrarian changes as well as the incorporation of gender and the gendered implications. The paper will apply what it refers to as a feminist agrarian political economic theory, using both an agrarian political economic theory to assess the implications of agrarian policies of land dispossession and feminist political economic theory assessing the gendered implications of such policies.

By using an agrarian political economic theory centred around capitalism and development, the thesis is able to assess agrarian changes in the modern world, such as land dispossession. Applying such a theory, according to Bernstein (2010), allows for an investigation into "social relations and dynamics of production and reproduction, property and power in agrarian formation and their process of change, both historically and contemporary" (Bernstein, 2010: 1). However, while this theory allows for a good insight into the implication of land dispossession, it does not enable the focus on gendered implications necessary to answer the research question posed above. The theory does not incorporate aspects such as difficulties of unequal power relations, patriarchal agrarian and environmental agendas. Thus, the agrarian political economic theory provides a good framework for assessing agrarian change and development more generally. However, the lack of attention given to gender and its implications deems the theory too narrow to answer how the gendered politics of land dispossession affects indigenous women.

The inability of agrarian political economic theory to assess the effect of land dispossession on indigenous women stems from its underlying assumptions of dichotomies such as public/private and commodified/non-commodified (Park, 2019). Such theories do not pay sufficient attention to the intersection of these dichotomies and the blurred boundaries between the two spheres (O'Lauglin, 2009). When investigating issues concerning indigenous peoples, the fluidity of boundaries between commodified and non-commodified becomes increasingly important. Witcherich (2015) illustrates this by highlighting how indigenous peoples have historically been redefined and integrated as economic actors to fit what she categorises as neo-liberal theories. Due to the uncommodified nature of certain aspects of indigenous cultures and activity, when incorporated into such neo-liberal theories, indigenous groups have been cast as unequal partners on unequal terms, in comparison to their opposing neo-liberal commodified economic actors, or worse, they are excluded and expelled due to

their "inefficiency". Therefore, this paper deems it essential that the theory at hand enables a breakdown of such traditional dichotomies to generate a more nuanced picture.

For these reasons, a feminist political economy is better suited, as it presents such breakdowns. A feminist political economic theory aims at unpacking the "systemic relations between the domestic, economic and political structure" (Razavi, 2009: 188). Through such a focus, it can go beyond dichotomies as public/private and commodified/non-commodified as above-mentioned.

Further, a feminist framework would allow the paper to go beyond simply looking at the issue of women regarding land dispossession. Instead, it would enable the thesis to investigate the implication of the gendered politics of land dispossession. This allows the paper to look at how political, social and economic forces shape potential gender inequalities regarding land dispossession and illustrate their implications not only for women but also for the community as a whole. Thus, a feminist framework moves beyond simply identifying the issues of land dispossession for women and allows the paper to look at the gendered implications of land dispossession (Deere, 1995).

Nevertheless, the feminist political economic theory is too simplistic to allow for a holistic picture of the agrarian situation in Southeast Asia concerning land dispossession. Thus, this paper sets out to apply a feminist agrarian political theory that includes the aims of both agrarian political economy and feminist political economy while correcting the shortcomings of the theories as presented above. Park defines the aims of such a feminist agrarian political economic theory as: "an approach that investigates how gender, class social relations and dynamics of production and reproduction, property and power are mutually constituted in agrarian formations and their processes of change" (Park, 2019: 48).

3. Methodology

To fully understand the effect land dispossession has on indigenous women, this paper applies a qualitative comparative method. It will conduct a comparative analysis of the broader region of Southeast Asia followed up by a comparative case study of the Philippines and Indonesia. By combining the two approaches, the paper hopes to illustrate both the universal vulnerability of indigenous women in the region while also highlighting the uniqueness between different regions, their women and their issue concerning land dispossession. Thus, the methodology was chosen as it was deemed to minimise the possibility of generating both

false universalism and false uniqueness. In other words, the methodology chosen enables the paper to illustrate similarities across the region while highlighting that there are important contextual factors to be taken into account.

As pointed out in the literature review and theory section, there seems to be a lack in the literature on the specific issues that face indigenous women regarding land dispossession due to their intersectional vulnerability. Thus, the comparative analysis aims at creating a clearer picture of these issues by conducting an in-depth comparative analysis drawing on secondary and primary literature. Thus the analysis will draw on the literature on the gendered implications of land dispossession and how this applies to indigenous women.

The second section of the analysis will conduct a comparative case study between the Philippines and Indonesia. This analysis will base itself on an intersectional approach analysing the intersection between gender and ethnicity. This method was chosen because it enables the exploration of the intersectionality between gender and ethnicity, which, as discussed in the earlier chapters, is missing in the current scholarship. Such an assessment is enabled as an intersectional approach builds on the assumption that multiple identities, here gender and ethnicity, can co-exist and co-generate complex outcomes, rather than strictly ordering such identities into different categories which are mutually exclusive or ordered hierarchically, e.g. issues of women more pressing then issues of indigenous peoples or vice-versa. The analysis will use primary data collected by the Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) drawn from personal accounts by indigenous women. Drawing on life-stories allows the intersectionality of gender and ethnicity to emerge in the way the indigenous women tell their stories (Christiansen & Jensen, 2012: 114). Thus, by applying such an intersectional method, the thesis can explore the intersectional vulnerability indigenous women are subject to as a consequence of land dispossession.

The paper aims at addressing two issues through the intersectional comparative case study. Firstly, the case studies will allow the paper to illustrate how the broader trends from the first section of the paper unfold at the local level in different contexts, creating a more tangible picture of the situation. Secondly, based on the comparative case study, the paper is able to illustrate potential differences and their contextual importance. These two aspects – the universal nature and the context-specific nature of the implications of land dispossession on indigenous women – might seem contradictory. However, only by illustrating the universal

issues pressing on indigenous women at a regional level while also acknowledging the diversity and uniqueness of cases can a holistic picture be created.

The two cases, the Philippines and Indonesia, were chosen according to the most similar system design. Both countries have close proximity in regime type (Freedom House, n.d.), similar level of state income (World Bank, n.d.), growing level of decentralisation (Choi, 2019) and existing framework to ensure the protection of indigenous peoples and their rights (UN, 2020). Further, both states have seen a recent trend of militarisation of indigenous peoples' land areas and criminalisation of indigenous peoples (UN, 2020). However, they differ as the two regions have used land dispossession to enable two different industries. In the Philippines, land dispossession has enabled dams and mining projects, whereas, in Indonesia, it has enabled mainly plantations. Thus, by looking at the two countries, the paper will be able to identify specific consequences of land dispossession on indigenous women and whether the different purpose of the land dispossession influences the implication land dispossession has on indigenous women.

Thus, based on the combination of in-depth comparative analysis of broader trends at a regional level and case studies to illustrate the contextual elements on local levels, this paper will enable a reassessment of the data presented in a gendered framework and be able to look into the before embarking on the next chapter, two limitations regarding the methodology have to be addressed. Firstly, the analysis is heavily dependent on primary data produced by Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) as most of the primary data is drawn from the four volumes of *HerStory* (2019, 2016, 2014, 2013) published by them. These four volumes consist of a large number of interviews with indigenous women on land and land dispossession issues. It has to be acknowledged that the heavy reliance on data retrieved from AIPP and limited variation of sources is a limitation within the methodology. Ideally, the paper would draw on different data sources to exclude potential biases that could arise by retrieving data from primarily one source. However, due to the lack of literature and work conducted on land dispossession and indigenous women, primary sources on the topic are scarce. Thus, the limited amount of work conducted on the issue is reflected in the lack of variety in sources used. However, due to the substantial number of interviews and their regional diversity, the paper argues that its findings still have external and internal validity.

It is important to note that indigenous women cannot be assumed to be a homogenous group of actors. The intersectional axes of power and social difference give indigenous women subjectivities and positionalities far from homogenous (Park, 2019; 221). However, indigenous women are subject to some overarching systematic vulnerabilities simply because they are born women. These are the vulnerabilities the first part of the paper on regional trends sets out to identify. The way these vulnerabilities play out and the severity of these vulnerabilities differ between different groups and countries, as the case studies set out to illustrate.

Further, the paper was not able to conduct fieldwork or interviews with indigenous women. Such data collection would have increased the validity of this thesis. However, through AIPP's (2013, 2014, 2016, 2019) HerStory, the paper has been able to include indigenous women's voices and experience to a large extent. The AIPP has intentionally attempted to directly translate the interviews with only minor technical editing to preserve the authenticity and integrity of the indigenous women's stories and experience (AIPP, 2019:. IX). Thus, although the paper is somewhat limited due to the lack of fieldwork and interviews, the AIPP (2013, 2014, 2016, 2019) data collection largely compensate for this shortcoming. The ability of the data collection to create a space for indigenous women to voice their concerns and issues places the four volumes at the heart of the analysis.

4. The Implication of Land Dispossession on Indigenous Women in Southeast Asia

This section presents a systematic overview over what it has identifies as the three main vulnerabilities within the intersection of gender and ethnicity of indigenous women in relations to land dispossession: economic vulnerability, physical vulnerability and the amplification of the two former elements due to the lack of political representation of indigenous women at different levels of decision-making.

4.1. Indigenous Women's Economic Vulnerability

Drawing on the Land Matrix (2013) and the analysis presented by Doss et al. (2014), it is clear the land dispossession has specific consequences on the poorest in society and especially women. In most Southeast Asian states, women have relatively lower cash income vis-à-vis men. This inequality in cash income is further heightened as a consequence of land dispossession. After land has been reallocated to be used for large-scale projects, women

usually do not qualify for entering the workforce of the new projects. Thus, women who already have a lower cash income often lose their income or suffer severe reductions in their income due to land dispossession (Doss et al., 2014: 7).

This reduction in relative cash income for women due to land dispossession is vital because the market privileges those with the economic means to buy land rights (Daley, 2005). Thus, because women generally have a lower income than men, an income that is further reduced in the aftermath of land dispossession, they are less likely to gain new land or claim rights over the land they formerly used to prevent future land dispossession. The ability to gain land rights through the market by economic means is a crucial aspect as it is one of the only ways for women in Southeast Asia to gain land rights. It has been a trend within Southeast Asian states to uphold the traditional lack of land rights for women and undermine their existing land rights (Park & White, 2017: 1105). Hence, land dispossession harms women as it takes away their current cash income and largely prevents them from gaining new cash income. Further, reduction in income, in turn, reduces women's likelihood of gaining land rights, in addition to the hindrances they already face due to legal and political obstacles.

Such economic vulnerability is further amplified for indigenous women as they find themselves at the intersection of the two most economically vulnerable groups as women and indigenous. Historically, indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia have been disproportionately represented among the poor and are still regarded as being among the poorest of the poor. Therefore, when land dispossession alters women's relative income, this has substantial implications on indigenous women as their income before land dispossession is already highly disadvantaged as indigenous (ILO, 2017).

The burden and vulnerability of such economic disadvantage of indigenous women are even more problematic as within many indigenous communities, the responsibility of sustaining the family lies with the women (AIPP, 2010). Their traditional livelihood usually takes the form of food gathering, agricultural production, and herding, among other activities. These are activities that are greatly limited by land dispossession. Consequently, land dispossession leaves indigenous women in a position where their livelihood is heavily restricted. At the same time, their ability to join the workforce of the new large-scale project is also heavily restricted. Thus, putting indigenous women in an extremely economically vulnerable position.

However, the gendered politics of land dispossession and the implication for indigenous women in the form of lost or reduced possibility of traditional livelihood, reduced possibility of cash income and issues of joining the new workforce on large scale projects are not merely an issue for indigenous women. Due to the reliance on indigenous women to sustain the household, the implications on indigenous women have further consequences on indigenous communities' livelihood in general. By increasing the economic vulnerability of indigenous women in the aftermath of land dispossession, indigenous communities suffer reduced economic security and food security (UN, 2020: 6).

Compensation programs aiming to take care of the reduced food and economic security of indigenous peoples, which arises from the gendered politics of land dispossession, have been incorporated in many development plans across Southeast Asia. Such programs aim to support indigenous groups that are subject to forced land dispossession by providing them with access to services and the market, improving their food security and productivity, and generally their standard of living. However, many of these programs have had the opposite effect. The resettlement programs, as they have become known, have often increased poverty, malnutrition and lead to a higher mortality rate (AIPP, 2010: 12). Further, in many Southeast Asian states, indigenous peoples lack identification papers or birth certificates which effectively exclude them from social service schemes (ILO, 2017: 8). Thus, the initiatives set up to reimburse indigenous peoples for the implications put on them by the gendered politics of land dispossession have been largely unsuccessful.

4.2. Indigenous Women's Physical Vulnerability

Land dispossession can often be an incredibly violent process, where killings and physical harassment are common. The frequency of violence has intensified in recent years with the increase in militarization of conflicts related to land dispossession, which entails that the military is increasingly involved in conflicts over land dispossession (UN, 2020). However, the violence that takes place is heavily gendered. Reports have shown that men are far more likely to get killed than women. Although women are less likely to get killed, they are specifically vulnerable to physical violence in the form of sexual harassment, rape, and other atrocities (AIPP, 2010: 12). Such physical violence towards women has also intensified due to the increased militarisation, as sexual violence towards women is an increasingly common tactic used in militarisation by state officials (AIPP, 2010: 12). Thus, land dispossession and

the rising militarised nature of the process increase women's physical vulnerability through gender-based violence.

Although sexual violence is a tactic used towards women in general, the UN (2020) has reported that indigenous women are much more likely to be victims of sexual violence than non-indigenous women. Although data on the issue is hard to gather, it is assumed that six out of three indigenous women will experience sexual violence at least once throughout their life (Statistics Canada, 2022; 1). The increasing trend of militarisation of indigenous peoples' land and criminalisation of indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia and the known connections between the two and sexual harassment have further heightened the physical vulnerability of indigenous women (UN, 2020). Thus, the historical predisposition of indigenous women towards sexual violence and the increase in practices known to deploy such gender-based violence renders the physical vulnerability of indigenous women high.

The physical vulnerability of indigenous women is further heightened in recent years following their increased participation in human rights activism. As indigenous women are seen as less likely to be killed than their male peers, they are often put at the forefront of protest and demonstration to represent their communities (Park & White, 2017). This further increases their physical vulnerability. Although they are less likely to get killed, participating in protest and activism increases their likelihood of being victims of sexual violence and other forms of gender-based physical violence.

4.3. Indigenous Women's Lack of Representation in Decision-Making

Although the two vulnerabilities presented above, economic vulnerability and physical vulnerability, are substantial on their own, the lack of representation of women in decision-making is further intensifying these vulnerabilities. Although women's participation has significantly improved in recent decades, women remain underrepresented in political institutions at all levels – national, regional and local – throughout the region (Choi, 2019: 225). Such lack of women's representation and participation in decision-making has been directly connected to the limited degree to which they are accounted for in land deals and land dispossession compensation programs. When women are not represented in the decision-making procedure, development programs and policy initiatives have often been insufficient in accounting for the specific vulnerabilities and implications they pose on women (Daley & Pallas, 2014: 184).

This being said, the representation of women varies significantly within the Southeast Asian states. In 2019, the Philippines (29,5%) and Vietnam (26.7%) both had higher figures at the national level than the global average (23.4%), whereas in Thailand, under 5 percent of the political officials were women. The regional average of women in legislative positions in 2019 was 19,7 percent. Thus, there is indeed a great variety of women's legislative representation within Southeast Asian states (Choi, 2019: 231).

It is worth mentioning that the connection between the representation of women and increased attention given to women's interest is contested. Such an argument builds on a disputed assumption that descriptive representation is inherently good. Descriptive representation – the idea that a group elects an individual who reflects their own experience or characteristics, in this case, gender, to represent them – has been criticised by several authors (Bird, 2005; Pantoja & Segura, 2003). Choi (2019) highlights how in the Philippines, the relatively high numbers of women representation at all levels have not led to a similar increase in representation of women's interest. Instead, it has been argued that in certain instances, women are used as "term breakers" or "political alternates" (UN, 2020). Thus, the women are not represented as a political candidate but merely as someone who can keep the seat to protect their family's interest in the government until a male member can run for a seat. Thus, merely looking at the number of female representatives at the legislative level might create a faulty picture of the increased representation of women's specific vulnerabilities, as women do not necessarily represent women's interest.

Thus, one needs to shift the attention towards how well women's interests are represented instead of female representatives. If one looks at the issue from a perspective of representation of women's interests, it becomes clear that regardless of the varying degree of women in legislative positions in Southeast Asia, women's interests remain heavily underrepresented across the region. The lack of representation of women is, arguably, one of the underlying reasons for the continuation of "gender blind" land deals and framework to compensate for land dispossession (Daley & Pallas, 2014; UN, 2020). Thus, the lack of representation of women's interests has the potential to intensify the already vulnerable portion of women concerning land dispossession.

For indigenous women, representation of their interest and opportunities to express their specific vulnerabilities is even further restricted as indigenous peoples. In addition to the under-

representation of women's interest, indigenous peoples as a group have long been struggling with gaining political representation in Southeast Asia. Reports have been issued documenting how indigenous peoples are actively excluded from the political sphere (UN, 2015). Further, many indigenous governance systems in Southeast Asia are traditional only for men (AIPP, 2017). Women are seen as inferior and weak, and in many indigenous communities, they have effectively no voice in political affairs (AIPP, 2014, p.12). Thus, the limited political space open for indigenous women makes it hard for these groups to voice their specific vulnerabilities due to land dispossession.

This chapter has illustrated that indigenous women have specific economic and physical vulnerability regarding land dispossession. The limited available opportunities for indigenous women to seek change through active political participation further heighten these vulnerabilities. The lack of participation also allows the "gender blind" policies concerning land dispossession to continue. This is problematic as the lack of representation of women's interest results at best in a continuation of the status quo of women's vulnerabilities and, at worst, an intensification of them.

5. Case Studies: Regional Trends Unfolded at the Local Level

Although there are regional trends in the intersectional vulnerability of indigenous women as illustrated above, the issue is also heavily context specific. This chapter illustrates how indigenous women's specific vulnerabilities, as presented in chapter 4, have taken place at the regional level in the Cordillera Administrative Region in the Philippines and the Kalimantan in Indonesia. By drawing on records of personal accounts and events by indigenous women, the chapter investigates the limited but existing political space open for indigenous women to voice their experience with land dispossession and its implication.

5.1. Cordillera Administrative Region, the Philippines

The indigenous human rights defender Betty Belen emphasised that indigenous women in Cordillera experience a triple burden of land dispossession. First, they are exposed to physical harassment, both sexual and non-sexual, second, they lose their livelihood, and third, they lose their food security (AIPP, 2017a). Human right defender Bae Annabel Mansiguiao further emphasises that the physical harassment of indigenous women has increased due to the heightened militarisation of issues concerning land dispossession in the region (AIPP, 2017c). Indigenous women report that soldiers are groping women on the accusation of them hiding

money in their groin or holding them at gunpoint until they do as the soldiers say and want (AIPP, 2019). Thus, the physical vulnerability, sexual and non-sexual, of indigenous women in the Philippines is concerning.

Further, although indigenous women's loss of livelihood and food security, as reported by Belen (AIPP, 2017a), is problematic on its own, the restricted accessibility of social security systems for indigenous women in the regions makes the implications of such loss even greater (AIPP, 2016). When faced with such losses, indigenous women have attempted to apply for social security schemes but are commonly faced with rejection (AIPP, 2019; AIPP, 2013). In some instances, whole villages have been refused social security schemes, even though they are qualified (AIPP, 2013). The reported difficulties of indigenous women and their communities to gain social security benefits highlight the high economic vulnerability of indigenous peoples and women and how it seems to be a neglected area of the government (AIPP, 2014).

Several indigenous women have taken matters into their own hands in the void of political acknowledgement and lack of social security schemes available to them. When a group of indigenous women were economically exploited at work and did not receive their rightful support through the judicial system, they decided to resolve the issue themselves. They unionised and educated themselves on their rights to gain the knowledge and leverage to negotiate over their terms. Slowly but surely, they were able to gain increasingly more rights through their activism and union work (AIPP, 2013: 11-13). Similar examples of reported internal resolution by indigenous communities due to neglect by the judicial system include issues concerning child predators (AIPP, 2019: 26) and rapists (AIPP, 2013: 62).

Further, indigenous women within the region have also been very active in protests and activism regarding land grabbing. Though it is difficult for indigenous women in the Philippines to gain political representation, as they are actively being oppressed and subject to criminalisation (AIPP, 2014: 7), these women have been at the forefront of protests against land dispossession. Although this has led to increased empowerment and agency of indigenous women, it also increases their physical vulnerability. There are always risks associated with protest. However, due to the increased criminalisation of indigenous people, indigenous activism is especially subject to harsh scrutiny by the government (AIPP, 2016; AIPP, 2013). Leticia Bul-at explains how her village mates, both men and women, were imprisoned due to their peaceful opposition against a new dam project (AIPP, 2016). Further, the increased

gender-based violence in the region makes such protests additionally costly for indigenous women. However, this is a risk increasingly more indigenous women are willing to take to ensure a better future for their children (AIPP, 2019).

Thus, within the Cordillera Administrative Region, indigenous women's physical and economic vulnerability remains high, political representation remains low, and there are increasing trends of militarisation and criminalisation. Despite this, indigenous women are actively opposing their current situation through protest and activism. Many indigenous women activist have been asked, "Why do you put yourself at such risk when you get nothing back?" Bai Madalna Kundag's clearly illustrates why:

"We, the women, will boldly struggle to defend our ancestral lands. Because our struggle is for our children and the youth, for them not to be laughed at and be discriminated. Let us not allow them to grab our lands. (…) Let us not be slaves, we should resolutely fight."

(AIPP, 2017b)

5.2. Kalimantan, Indonesia

Assessing the specific experience of land dispossession by indigenous women in Kalimantan is challenging due to the lack of organisation at the local level to enable these voices to be heard. In local communities, low levels of political organisation of indigenous women are still the norm, leaving indigenous women at the community level as informal groups lacking representation. At the national level, there is indeed a growing network of indigenous women activists fighting for the recognition of the specific vulnerabilities of indigenous women regarding land dispossession. However, these activists are limited due to their small number and lack of connection to the local levels (AIPP, 2020). Regardless, the limited visibility of indigenous women in Kalimantan should not be perceived as a consequence of lower levels of specific vulnerability. Instead, it is a powerful illustration of the lack of representation and acknowledgement of such vulnerabilities.

The indigenous women within the Kalimantan region are indeed subject to increased economic vulnerability due to land dispossession. Within the indigenous communities, the women are seen as the ones responsible for the family's welfare through food gathering, small-scale farming and herding. However, with the establishment of large-scale plantations in the region, indigenous communities have been displaced away from the natural resources

destroying their livelihoods. Further, it is difficult for indigenous women to get jobs at the newly established plantations. Indigenous women lose their livelihood and are restricted when seeking new sources of income to sustain their family. Thus, reduction of livelihood and limited ability to get hired at the plantations increases the economic vulnerability of indigenous women substantially in the aftermath of land dispossession (AIPP, 2014: 6-8).

Additionally, the establishment of large-scale plantations has unintentionally been the source of recurring great forest fires. The first fire took place in 1997 and lasted an entire year. Since then, they have been a recurring phenomenon (AIPP, 2016: 55-60). These fires are extremely harmful due to their pollution and destruction, and in 2015 more than ten people died due to the fires (AIPP, 2016: 57). One of the issues for indigenous women regarding the forest fires is the destruction of their rubber farms. These rubber farms are one of the only independent sources of income for indigenous women in the aftermath of land dispossession. When these are destroyed due to forest fires, in addition to the reduced food security and livelihood of the wider community, it places indigenous women in a highly economically vulnerable position (Levien, 2017: 15). Thus, indigenous women's already vulnerable economic position is further heightened due to the damage caused by the forest fires.

It is also difficult to assess the physical vulnerability of indigenous women as a consequence of land dispossession due to the lack of reporting on the issue by women themselves. The lack of disaggregated data on the intersection of ethnicity, gender, and race has several explanations, including lack of legal recognition as indigenous peoples, historical discrimination, and lasting tabus regarding sexual violence (Network of Indigenous Women of Asia & AIPP, 2021; 8). However, the limited reports that exist on the issue illustrate that both sexual and non-sexual are prevalent (Levien, 2017). However, the physical vulnerability of indigenous women in Kalimantan is not limited to physical violence. Their physical vulnerability is further heightened as the number of indigenous women suffering from skin diseases and cancer resulting from pesticides used at the plantations increases (Ranu Welum Foundation, n.d.). The women who can get one of the few jobs offered at the plantations effectively increase their physical vulnerability while trying to reduce their economic vulnerability, as they are exposed to chemicals causing them severe health issues. This problem illustrates the complicated interplay between the two dimensions of vulnerabilities that indigenous women are subject to.

Therefore, within the Kalimantan region, indigenous women's physical and economic vulnerability remains high. Further, due to the limited degree of local organisation and mobilisation of indigenous women's perspective and voices, these vulnerabilities are not as visible as they may be in different regions. This, in turn, allows the government to overlook the issues in policy recommendations and initiatives. The specific use of land for plantation has specific consequences, such as fires and the use of pesticide, which further heightens the vulnerability of indigenous women in the region.

6. Conclusion

The focus of this research was to systematically analyse the specific vulnerabilities of indigenous women regarding land dispossession. As such, this thesis aimed at answering the following research question: *How does the gendered politics of land dispossession affect indigenous women?* This inquiry was explored based on a feminist agrarian political economic theory through an in-depth comparative analysis of the general trends in Southeast Asia. Further, the paper illustrated how these trends unfolded within two regions, Cordillera Administrative Region and Kalimantan. Ultimately, the findings show land dispossession increases the economic and physical vulnerability of indigenous women due their intersectional vulnerability as women and indigenous peoples. These two vulnerabilities are further amplified due to the limited political space available for indigenous women to voice their experience and concerns.

While illustrating the presence of economic and physical vulnerability and lack of political representation of indigenous women, the two case studies also illustrated how these trends unfold differently between the two local communities. In the Cordillera region, economic vulnerability is further heightened due to the lack of available social security schemes. In contrast, in Kalimantan, it is further heightened by the loss of rubber farms due to forest fires caused by the plantations. Further, in Cordillera, the physical vulnerability of indigenous women is primarily linked to physical violence, both sexual and non-sexual. However, in Kalimantan, the physical vulnerability is connected to violence and increasing health issues arising from work available to them in the aftermath of land dispossession. Thus, the case studies illustrate that although there are broad universal trends, the way they unfold hinges on contextual factors.

The main strength of this reproach is that it aims to fill a notable gap in land grabbing studies on land dispossession and its effects on indigenous peoples. This contributes to the understanding of how the specific vulnerabilities of indigenous have a significant effect on the local communities. Further, the paper illustrates how neglecting these vulnerabilities undermines the economic vulnerability of indigenous women and indigenous communities more broadly. As such, the thesis establishes the acknowledgement of the regional trends of indigenous women's vulnerability and its implications as a key concern to be dealt with.

This paper has only scratched the surface of what needs to be uncovered on the topic. By systematically analysing the specific vulnerabilities of indigenous women regarding land dispossession, this thesis has presented a starting point to conduct further research on the topic. However, as the case studies illustrate, how these trends unfold at the local levels varies and are dependent on local and national factors. Thus, to create a holistic picture of how land dispossession affects indigenous women in Southeast Asia, further research into the local context needs to be conducted. This is essential both for the accuracy of the academic literature to create a comprehensive picture of the situation and for policy-makers to generate successful policy initiatives which suit the local situations.

Indeed, before the specific situation of indigenous women is acknowledged, policies and political initiatives on the issue can never reach their full potential. This is due to the significant social and economic implications the specific vulnerability of indigenous women causes on their broader communities. If development programs do not acknowledge the key role of indigenous women in the welfare of indigenous communities, any attempt at creating a sufficient and successful compensation program will fail. Thus, if political initiatives hope to be successful, the specific vulnerabilities of indigenous women as presented in this research needs to be included.

Ultimately, the value of this research is that it aims at creating a starting point for exploring how the gendered politics of land dispossession affects indigenous women and implicitly their local communities more broadly. In answering one question, inevitably, many more arise. More research is needed, and without it, the political initiatives will most likely continue to be unsuccessful. What the thesis has made abundantly clear is that land dispossession rarely makes things better for indigenous women and, in most cases, makes things worse.

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Reimagining truth-seeking and truth-telling as reconciliatory mechanisms in post-conflict societies

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Alternative Truths as Reconciliatory Mechanisms in Post-Conflict Societies

A Comparative Analysis of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in South Africa and Timor-Leste

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Abstract

Truth and reconciliation commissions (TCRs) make use of truth-seeking and truth-telling as reconciliatory mechanisms in the aftermaths of intrastate and intra-ethnic conflicts. TCRs are the subject of scrutiny by many scholars who argue that these mechanisms are incompatible with some local needs, norms and contexts, and therefore suggest that other reconciliatory methods may be more successful. This essay argues that truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms can be successfully used for reconciliation efforts if they are reimagined. This is because any incompatibility between these mechanisms and the realities of some local contexts are rooted in the narrow understandings of what truth(s) are relevant for reconciliation, stemming from the fact that they were founded within 'regimes of truth' that reflect Western liberal normative ideals. Two TCRs will be examined through engagement with survivor and victim testimony: the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, deemed largely successful, and the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor, deemed largely unsuccessful. It will be illustrated that the understandings of truth that informed both TCRs reflected the local norms and needs of survivors and victims in South Africa than it did those in Timor-Leste. Ultimately, the essay finds that truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms need to better align with: one, local practices for reconciliation and addressing conflicts; and two, the needs of the victims in regard to what truths, or what information, they need for healing and reconciliation.

Keywords

Conflict resolution; truth commissions; local norms

1. Introduction

Truth-seeking and truth-telling as reconciliatory mechanisms are intended to help achieve restorative and rectificatory justice in the aftermath of conflicts and have frequently been utilised in intrastate and intra-ethnic contexts in the past forty years. Varying slightly from case to case, the purpose of finding truth according to the truth and reconciliation commissions set up to uncover it is to promote individual and communal healing, to peace-build and shape a collective memory, and to acknowledge the past and the suffering of victims and survivors (Robins, 2012: 84; Vella, 2014: 93; Villa-Vicencio, 2010: 45).

Truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) are the subject of scrutiny by many scholars who examine the successes, failures, and limitations of TRCs. Theories on the viability of TRCs presented by scholars Louise Vella, Rosalind Shaw and Simon Robins will directly be engaged with in this essay to determine how TRCs, truth-seeking and truth-telling can best align with local needs and norms in the contexts of which they are implemented. The aforementioned scholars all emphasise an incompatibility of truth-seeking and truth-telling with some local contexts and therefore suggest that other reconciliatory mechanisms may be more successful.

This essay builds on this idea that reconciliatory processes need to align with local needs and norms, but it asks a vital question: are truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms actually incompatible with the realities of some local contexts or is the reason for the incompatibility rooted in what truth(s) are sought and how they are collected? This essay will consider how 'regimes of truth,' a concept proposed by Michel Foucault, have led to narrow understandings of how truth factors into reconciliation that reflects Western liberal normative ideals. Truth-seeking and truth-telling can be made compatible with local norms and needs if their uses are reimagined. This essay will analyse the successes and failures of two TRCs to determine how the commissions used truth-seeking and truth-telling to meet–or to not meet–local needs and norms. First, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SATRC), which has generally been deemed successful, will be inspected. Second, the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR) will be examined, which was comparatively unsuccessful. The local contexts of South Africa and Timor-Leste in the aftermath of their respective conflicts will be analysed through testimonies from victims and survivors and by the engagement with prominent scholars' research on the cases.

It is concluded that the current understanding of what truth is necessary for

reconciliation and how it should be collected suited the local norms and needs of victims in South Africa better than it did victims in Timor-Leste. Likewise, it will be argued that if a broader understanding of what truth is necessary for reconciliation had been adopted in the case of Timor-Leste, truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms would have been more successful. Ultimately, to be effective, truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms need to better align with: one, local practices for reconciliation and addressing conflicts; and two, the needs of the victims in regard to what truths, or what information, they need for healing and reconciliation.

2. The Theory: Challenging the 'Regimes of Truth' of TRCs in Favour of Alternative Truths

Several scholars have examined the effectiveness of TRCs in the environments they have been implemented in and many find a similar fault in many of them: the truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms are at odds with local expectations and practices surrounding truth, memory, justice, and reconciliation. In her critique of the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Louise Vella (2014: 94) argues that truth-seeking reflects normative values that were incompatible with local normative understandings and cultural practices of truth, justice, and reconciliation in the Solomon Islands and thus, the TCR was limited in achieving its peacebuilding goals. Likewise, Rosalind Shaw (2007: 186-7) warns of the actual non-universality of what she calls 'universals'–the presumption that mechanisms of transitional justice are built on universally applicable norms like human rights and democracy– and that when applied in some local contexts, unexpected and unwanted outcomes ensue. Finally, in his analysis of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) in Timor-Leste, Simon Robins (2012: 84) argues that because truth-telling as a mechanism can overrule local approaches to addressing conflicts, the use of this mechanism in Timor-Leste did not align with the needs of the victims and survivors and therefore did not promote individual and communal healing. Furthermore, Robins (2012: 84) proposes that a victim-centred approach is necessary to any successful reconciliatory process, meaning that "the goals of transition [are] defined by those most affected by conflict."

A victim-centred approach to using truth-telling and truth-seeking in reconciliatory processes can be achieved if the 'regimes of truth' that developed these mechanisms, and

continue to dictate how they are used, are challenged. According to Foucault (1980), 'regimes of truth' determine how pasts are retold. He argues that these regimes dictate:

> [The] types of disclosure which [the society] accepts and makes function as true; mechanisms and incidences which enable one to make true and false statements; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; [and] the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (1980: 131)

Current transitional justice discourses stem from Western liberal normative ideals, and these ideals in turn control the 'regimes of truth' of TRCs implemented to address conflicts. It is from this that the incompatibility between truth-telling and truth-seeking with some local norms and needs is rooted. Truth-seeking and truth-telling are largely victim-focused and the processes predominantly consist of either publicly or privately collecting victim testimony and data on their experiences to construct a pattern of events and, to ultimately, publish a public report (Hayner, 2002: 11, 20, 22). Additionally, truth-telling is considered vital for individual and collective healing and that the very act of telling one's story is therapeutic for victims (Robins, 2012: 84).

The Western liberal epistemological approach to knowledge and fact-finding therefore influences TRCs' 'regimes of truth.' The most important truth is the kind that can be collected as empirical data for the sake of the empirical data: it is collectible and investigable; it can be written down in reports and books; it can, ideally, be backed up by numerical data; it can be read and re-read; it is made up of the intangible stories of many so that one, collective, 'macro-truth' can emerge that is accessible to everyone. Truth-seeking and truth-telling for the sake of this kind of knowledge is what is ultimately at odds with local norms and needs. The current 'regimes of truth' that informs TRCs procedures–and most scholars' bias in judging these procedures–favours this kind of truth and knowledge. This kind of fact-finding, after all, provides TRCs with as close to an "objective" and all-encompassing truth–a 'macro-truth'–as possible. It is evident by Vella's, Shaw's, and Robins' writings that they, too, do not question what truth-telling and truth-seeking could be. Instead, they immediately conclude that these mechanisms, as used by TRCs currently, do not suit the needs and norms of the local contexts they write about.

Testimonies from victims and survivors make it clear, however, that they still want and need some truths. But these may be truths that do not fit into the current 'regimes of truth' because it begs for a different kind of technique and procedure for acquiring knowledge and requires that TRCs consider this knowledge vital to truth-finding. Therefore, this essay suggests

that truth, and the truth-seeking and truth-telling procedures that go with it, should be reimagined. They should include other investigative processes not currently utilised for finding truth but that, at their foundation, are looking to establish a truth just as important as the empirical 'macro-truth' depending, of course, on the needs of the locals. What kind of alternative truths these could be will be elaborated on in the case-study of Timor-Leste. Here, suggestions will be made about what kind of truths and procedures for truth-finding would have better suited the local needs and norms of the victims and would thus have successfully promoted healing and reconciliation. Specifically, it will be illustrated that truth-telling and truth-finding can be reimagined as procedures that include a more active kind of acknowledgement of suffering. To provide an example of this, it will be suggested that physical investigations into finding out the truth about missing and dead victims should, and can, be encompassed into TRC efforts when local norms and needs indicate a larger need for these kinds of truths.

3. The Cases: South Africa and Timor-Leste

To determine why the 'regimes of truth,' as informed by Western liberal normative ideals and utilised by TRCs in the aftermaths of conflicts, suit some local norms and victims' needs better than others, two cases where TRCs were implemented will be analysed: first, the essay will analyse the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SATRC) established in 1996 at the end of apartheid, which was deemed generally successful in its truth-seeking and truth-telling efforts; second, the essay will analyse the arguably unsuccessful Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR, according to its Portuguese acronym) established in 2001 to address abuses from all sides during the Indonesian invasion from 1974-99. These cases were chosen primarily for the equally important similarities and differences in their local contexts. The many similarities are what make a comparison possible to begin with. However, the fact that so many similarities exist between two cases that have such drastically different outcomes in terms of success–or lack thereof–indicates that analysing these differences will yield an answer to why. Likewise, being one of the earlier cases wherein transition justice mechanisms were adopted, the SATRC, regardless of its successes and limitations, is often used as the model truth commission against which other truth commissions are compared to (Villa-Vicencio, 2010: 44). It will then be illustrated that the successes of each respective TRC was not rooted in the fact that victims and survivors needed truth-seeking and truth-telling to heal and reconcile in the South African case, but not

in the case of Timor-Leste. Instead, it will be suggested that a reimagination of what truth-telling and truth-seeking could entail in order to better suit local norms and needs could have resulted in better successes for CAVR.

The SATRC was created in 1996 in response to the dismantling of apartheid – the oppressive system of institutionalised racial segregation officially implemented in 1948 and designed to maintain South Africa's white minority's authoritarian domination over political, economic and social spheres in South African society. South Africa has a long history of colonialism; the region was first under Dutch colonial control and then under English colonial control, from which South Africa gained its full independence in 1931. The majority of the white minority living in South Africa were and are Afrikaners, settlers of predominantly Dutch descent. In 1948, the National Party came to power and officially implemented the system of apartheid, responding to any domestic opposition to the oppressive and abusive laws by the majority Black African population with detentions, torture, killings, disappearances and massacres. The dismantling of apartheid and the truth-seeking of crimes committed by perpetrators under the system were considered vital to the anticipated transition to democracy that had started in the decade before the SATRC was set up. It is on these grounds that the truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms are considered by many scholars to have been successful; the uncovered truth created a foundation on which national healing and the subsequent development of a South African citizenship and democracy could occur, and the truth-finding efforts by all actors involved indicated that reconciliation was, in fact, underway (Fullard and Rousseau, 2009: 2; Buckley-Zistel, 2014: 152).

The truth-telling and truth-seeking endeavours by the SATRC was, for many victims, much more about the official acknowledgement of already well-known abuses and crimes against humanity, and not about clarifying uncertain motives, causes and events, which is made the primary focus of some TRCs (Hayner 2002: 20; Villa-Vicencio, 2010: 45). The techniques of these truth mechanisms were carried out in a way that aligned with Western liberal approaches to collecting and compiling information. Truth-seeking and truth-telling occurred predominantly in public hearings where subjective truths were encouraged and where the desired outcome was the findings of patterns of abuse to form a national narrative and for victims to experience a therapeutic catharsis (Hayner, 2002: 2, 36; Villa-Vicencio, 2010: 49). Giving victims a 'voice' was thus a principal truth-seeking and truth-telling technique. But not only was this approach suitable for finding the 'macro-truth' that was deemed necessary for the transition to a democracy, these techniques also aligned with individual needs, expectations

and local norms. The next section of this essay will explore this theory through testimonies from victims and survivors and by examining common local approaches to dealing with conflict and reconciliation.

The CAVR was established in 2001 to investigate human rights abuses and crimes against humanity committed against East Timorese nationals from 1974-1999 from all sides involved in the Indonesian invasion that commenced in 1975. Timor-Leste, or East-Timor, as it was known prior to 2002, was a Portuguese colony for centuries but remained underdeveloped and unconnected to the global commercial network throughout that period (Dunn, 1997: 283). In 1975, in response to the dwindling interest from Portugal to continue the colony's gradual decolonisation process and the threat of Indonesian military attacks at its borders, the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) declared Timor-Leste an independent state (Dunn, 1997: 283-86). Indonesia saw this as an opportunity to fully invade and did so with the intent of subduing FRETILIN and any local resistance; the Indonesian army's campaign of "encirclement and annihilation" from 1977-1978 forced resistance members into the countryside and mountains to hide (Robins, 2012: 86). The next twenty years was marked by fighting between the Indonesian army and Timorese resistance, which exposed Timorese civilians to rape, massacres, killings, displacements, disappearances, detention and torture predominantly at the hands of Indonesian forces, but some at the hands of the resistance movements. CAVR was set up to prioritise reconciliation, both domestically and with Indonesia, over criminal justice, and any effort to consult with local populations and victims of the conflict to determine their expectations and needs of transitional justice was limited in both scale and scope (Robins, 2012: 88). The truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms therefore ended up mirroring Western liberal notions about what kind of truth was valuable for reconciliation, and how it should have been collected; namely, they prioritised writing a 'macro-truth.' By the time CAVR submitted their report to parliament in 2005, they had collected 7669 statements and conducted over 1000 interviews with victims (Robins, 2012: 88).

There was an attempt by CAVR to engage local restorative practices to promote reconciliation; the Community Reconciliation Process (CRP) was created to deal with less serious crimes and had community leaders lead public hearings in which victims and perpetrators could participate (Robins, 2012: 89). However, the outreach by both CRP and CAVR was so poor that few people knew the two were related and only a small minority of the population had any contact at all with either body; according to Robins (2012: 97) between

three and four per cent of people participated in the CRP and only two per cent of the adult population were contacted by CAVR to provide statements. Despite the poorly executed attempt to engage with local norms for reconciliation, the approach taken by the CAVR to truth-seek did not align with the local needs and expectations. This ultimately led to a failed truth-seeking mission and missed opportunities for reconciliation. However, the issue with CAVR lies not only in the outreach, as Robins claims, but also in the narrow understanding and limited techniques of truth-seeking and truth-telling. The following section will consider victim testimonies and Robins' research findings to determine that victims and survivors did, in fact, need truth to heal and reconcile. By reimagining what truth in the context of reconciliation and healing can entail and how it can be collected, this essay will illustrate how CAVR could have approached truth and reconciliation and achieved better results.

The SATRC and CAVR operated in vastly different post-conflict societies and contexts, but there are certain similarities in both cases. For one, both commissions deal with long-running conflicts. In the case of South Africa, the apartheid era lasted for 46 years and was preceded by decades of similar racial policies. In Timor-Leste, the conflict lasted for 25 years. Both commissions also aimed to use truth-seeking and truth-telling as mechanisms for reconciliation and healing; this is particularly important for the sake of this comparison because the inherently similar goals of both TRCs yet differing outcomes demands study. It is also notable that Christianity is widely practised in both countries, with Catholicism dominating in Timor-Leste and Protestantism in South Africa (Robins, 2012: 87; Office of International Religious Freedom, 2018: 2). Both conflicts also occurred in post-colonial societies. However, South Africa was a former British and Dutch colony that was, compared to Timor-Leste, much better connected to the global commercial and communication network. The conflict also occurred between colonial settlers and local populations with the government and its associated bodies being the primary perpetrators. Timor-Leste, on the other hand, was a former Portuguese colony with little colonial settlement and development in comparison; the conflict in Timor-Leste occurred instead due to the invading Indonesian forces who perpetrated most of the atrocities. Moreover, compared to the fact that few Timorese knew much about CAVR and its efforts, Villa-Vicencio (2010, 47) points out that "few, if any, South Africans failed to have an opinion on the [SA]TRC." Wide-reaching public engagement and general outreach by the TCRs is one of the most notable differences between the two. Furthermore, the transition to democracy was a propelling force that brought apartheid to an end in South Africa, thus informing the SATRC's end-goals, whereas independence and self-government factored into

the conflict in Timor-Leste and the subsequent efforts of the UN's intervention (Dunn, 1997: 281). Finally, the most important difference in both cases culminates in the differing needs and expectations in the context of the local post-conflict norms by the affected victims; this will be explored in the section below.

4. Discussion: Reimagining 'Regimes of Truth' and the Value of Alternative Truths for Reconciliation

Through testimonies and collected research by other scholars it becomes clear that victims and survivors from South Africa and Timor-Leste both needed truth-seeking and truth-telling to heal and reconcile, but that local contexts and specific needs meant that the sought-after truth looked different in each case.

In South Africa, the truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms as they are commonly implemented by TRCs were largely what victims and survivors wanted and needed. One survivor, Thembi Simelane-Nadimeng, expressed her need to know what happened to her sister who was abducted by the South African security police, saying that she favoured knowing the truth over retributive justice: "I am favouring prosecutions now because it is the only option I have, but it I had an option to sit down and talk [with Nokuthula's abductors] I would choose that" (Villa-Vicencio, 2010: 63). It also becomes clear that truth through testimony is what some victims wanted by how they express their frustration over what they perceived to be untruthful confessions from perpetrators. Monica Godolozi, a widow whose husband disappeared, learned of his fate when several policemen testified that they had kidnapped him and two other men, killed them, and dumped their bodies. Godolozi believed the policemen were lying about not torturing the men before killing them and that therefore, she could not forgive them: "There's nothing they could do to make me forgive them—except, if they told the truth, then yes. Anybody who tells the truth, I can forgive them" (Hayner, 2002: 2). Another woman, Elizabeth Hashe, whose husband had died in the same circumstance as Godolozi's husband, readily welcomed the truth. In a hearing the policemen's confessions she said "At least now I know a bit of the story" (Hayner, 2002: 2).

In the same interview with Hayner, Hashe also emphasised her desire for peace: "How are we going to find peace if we don't forgive? My husband was fighting for peace for all of South Africa. How can you correct a wrong with a wrong?" (Hayner, 2002: 2-3). Another survivor, Simpson Xakeka, when asked by Hayner how he felt about giving his statement about

being shot during a march in Daveyton said that "Emotionally it helped a great deal. It helped me to come to terms with it" (Hayner, 2002: 151). Hayner then asked why Xakeka thought it helped, and he replied, "There's a saying in our culture that 'coughing it out relieves everything.' I'm not going to forget what happened to me, but talking about it provides emotional relief" (Hayner, 2002: 151). Not only does Xakeka admit that this kind of truth-telling was what he needed to heal, but he also alludes to the local norms on how to address conflict that informed his belief in this. Chairman of the SATRC, archbishop Desmond Tutu, shared similar sentiments about how local practices influenced the willingness of victims and survivors to engage with truth-telling. He observed that "Retributive justice is largely Western. The African understanding is far more restorative - not so much to punish as to redress or restore a balance that has been knocked askew. The justice we hope for is restorative of the dignity of the people" (As cited in Villa-Vicencio, 2010: 66). Truth-seeking and truth-telling, being mechanisms of restorative justice, are therefore particularly well suited to the South African context.

Furthermore, the truth-telling and truth-seeking in South Africa allowed for a 'macro-truth' to emerge. This 'macro-truth' was essential in nation-building and any participation in the creation of this shared memory allowed for individuals to feel as though they contributed to building the nation directly; this phenomenon suggests that reconciliation through a 'macro-truth' in South Africa was successful (Buckley-Zistel, 2014: 152). Finally, it has already been established that the truth-telling and truth-seeking efforts by the SATRC was less about uncovering and revealing suffering, and more about officially and publicly acknowledging suffering. It will be illustrated shortly, in the analysis of Timor-Leste, that the power of truth-seeking and truth-finding to acknowledge suffering is just as important and powerful to healing and reconciliation as uncovering facts and collecting data to create a 'macro-truth' is, dependent, of course, on local needs.

Testimonies collected from, and interviews conducted with, victims and survivors in Timor-Leste after the CAVR's report was released reveals two things: first, that they were unsatisfied with the truth-telling and truth-seeking mechanisms and that CAVR was largely unsuccessful in helping them heal and reconcile; second, that despite the disappointment with CAVR's truth-finding, truth was still something that was very much needed for them to heal and reconcile. Robins (2012: 93), in his field research, found that justice for victims and survivors was perceived as "economic support, recognition, truth about the fate of the missing and access to remains." One mother of a missing man said that "the main thing we ask is to tell

the truth: what have they done to them, to give clear information that we took them away" (Robins, 2012: 96). The brother of a missing man said "Now we have independence we want to investigate and ask why you killed Timorese people that looked for food to eat. You can tell us why you shot unarmed people" (Robins, 2012: 96). The information this man seeks is the kind of truth the CAVR sought to deliver in its final report, but the limited outreach of the commission's efforts means confusion and anger remains in many victims' and survivors' minds. The overwhelming number of families that Robins interviewed had not received any information about their missing and presumed dead relatives and they had therefore not had access to their bodies; regardless of their relatives' fates, access to their bodies was considered of utmost importance (Robins, 2012: 95). Even though most Timorese are Catholic, beliefs about malign spirits resulting from a lack of the proper burial rituals are pervasive across the country (Robins, 2012: 95). In an interview, a man with a missing brother said:

> We cannot live in peace, because the spirits are too strong ...[They are the spirits of] those who died without knowing where they are buried ... You know, us Timorese, how we deal with the spirits. We know they died, but just think we did not get to bury them, and they died disgracefully, because we were not able to do any rituals. (Robins, 2012: 95)

The lack of knowledge, or truth, about the fates of loved ones means many Timorese cannot heal and reconcile. Moreover, the kind of truth that many Timorese seek is official acknowledgement and recognition of their suffering and sacrifices. Specifically, the majority of families wanted memorials erected in the name of their missing family members, especially when there were no bodies to bury (Robins, 2012: 94). One woman whose husband is missing iterated her sentiments about this when asked what she needed to heal: "Firstly, something that can't fade with time: a monument that will stay, for those who died in order to always be remembered by everyone, [including the] next generation" (Robins, 2012: 94). Monuments and memorial sites can, and should, be considered a kind of truth-telling through acknowledgement. These sites are a way of making collective memories tangible, visible, and surviving – all of which are outcomes that align with contemporary notions of what truth-telling and truth-seeking should achieve. Finally, Robins discusses the success of the valorisation program in Timor-Leste by the Veterans' Commissions which recognised the sacrifices of tens of thousands Timorese military and civilian veterans of the liberation struggle by giving them medals of honour and, in some cases, monetary compensation (Robins, 2012: 89). Robins (2012: 99) found that this program best addressed the victims' and survivors' needs of families with dead or missing relatives and had, overall, excellent outreach. Arguably, the reason this

program was so successful was because it provided the kind of truth-telling that the victims and survivors needed: official acknowledgement of the suffering and sacrifices of the individuals and families. The children of a missing man who received a medal to honour his participation in the fight for independence said that "Yes, we are happy [with the medals and pension], it means a history of my father's sacrifice to help free the country; although he is not here with us but this is something that honours him" (Robins, 2012: 99). The daughter of another missing man who also received a medal said "If we receive [a medal], we will consider we have received the body of my father" (Robins, 2012: 99). Robins does not consider the valorisation program to be an example of truth-telling because the goal of the program was not to truth-tell.

This essay argues that programs like the valorisation program should, and could, be considered a viable method of truth-telling. Acknowledgement is evidently an important part of the truth-telling process for victims and survivors and the 'regimes of truth' that inform TRCs approaches to truth-finding recognises this. But, acknowledgement is rarely made the prioritised outcome of truth-telling, rather it is considered an automatic outcome of a process that has it as a primary goal to construct a 'macro-truth' for the sake of nation-building and an empirical historical understanding of events. Acknowledgement needs to be considered a primary goal, too. If this is done, TRCs are more likely to consider reimagining techniques of truth-finding to expand their metaphorical toolbox of mechanisms to include, perhaps, the erection of monuments as a method of truth-telling. It is worth noting that some TRCs do recommend actions for the local government to take to continue the reconciliation process, but these are not always acted upon. In the event that these actions consist of acknowledgement or further truth-telling that actually align with the local populations' needs, the TRC should reallocate some of their efforts to acting upon these recommendations themselves if they are able to.

Of course, it could be argued that expanding truth-telling and truth-seeking mechanisms like this means that TRCs will act beyond their purview. But, the TRC's purview, as well as the 'regimes of truth' that informs it, should be challenged to determine how TRCs can be adapted to best serve local norms and needs. If local populations and elites consent to, and participate in, the erection of memorials, the buttressing of recognition programs like Timor-Lester's valorisation program, and the physical searches and uncovering of graves, these mechanisms should arguably be included as truth-seeking and truth-telling techniques. Had CAVR expanded their truth-telling and truth-seeking mechanisms to specifically meet the local needs for truth

and considered local norms dictating the importance of burial ceremonies, truth could have been more successfully utilised as a tool for healing and reconciliation.

5. Conclusion

Truth-telling and truth-seeking mechanisms do not have to be incompatible with local needs and norms for reconciliation and healing. Rather, by challenging the current 'regimes of truth' informing TRCs' approaches to truth-finding and reimagining what truth-telling and truth-seeking processes can entail, in accordance with local needs and norms, these mechanisms can, in fact, be successful. This essay examined the SATRC in South Africa and the CAVR in Timor-Leste to determine why, in South Africa, truth-seeking and truth-telling were considered successful by many victims and survivors in bringing about healing and reconciliation, whereas in Timor-Leste, it was not. Ultimately, it was found that local contexts, norms, and needs by victims dictated that although truth was needed by victims and survivors in both countries to heal, the kind of truth that was needed had to be uncovered and told in vastly different ways. This essay concluded by suggesting that truth-seeking and truth-telling should have been reimagined in Timor-Leste's case to include processes that prioritised acknowledgement of suffering and more physical methods of finding truth, like uncovering mass graves and finding the bodies of missing people. Therefore, in future implementations of TRCs in the aftermath of conflicts, stronger engagement with victims and survivors to determine what truths are needed and wanted, and how these truths should be revealed, is vital for the success of the commissions in helping the local populations heal and reconcile.

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