

Proceedings of international conference:

"10TH PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION CONFERENCE [PCRC2023]"

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Producer: Tomorrow People Organization

Publisher: Tomorrow People Organization

Quantity: 200 copies

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Reproduction of Masculinity over the Gendered Traditional Mediation Practices in Kurdish Society

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Abstract

Traditional mediation practices refer the role of cultural and community values, beliefs, norms and religion in mediation process. These practices which engage with social life constitute an alternative to the legal system of the state. And they offers people a different way against a legal system if the law system does not work properly. In Kurdish Society, tribe is the main carriers of culture and tradition. So tribal values, beliefs and norms have a potential to shape the social conflict and peace practices. Blood feud (xwin) is the main form of conflict, while blood money (béj/ bés) and peace dinner (nane aşitiyé). When we look at these practices, it will be seen that by these activities different femininity and masculinities are performed. In other words, the traditional mediation methods in Kurdish society are intensely gendered. Moreover, the values produced by this structure, the area in which it moves, the power it represents, etc. are gendered in favor of masculinity. Hence, bottom-up peacebuilding, which includes traditional mediation processes and focuses on the resolution of intertribal conflicts in Kurdish culture, is also gendered. The aim of this paper is to discuss the practices and motivations for gendered peace and the possibility of de-gendering these practices. For this purpose, a case study will be done between May and July 2023. In the study, in which in-depth interviews and observations will be used, mediators and tribal representatives who took part in different conflict resolutions in Mardin (Turkey) are interviewing. The conflicted tribes and mediators in the region are known by everyone. Thanks to this awareness, it will be easy to reach the first interviewers. The next ones will be reached using snowball sampling. In this essay, both the observations and field notes will be included in the data analysis. Also the statements of the interviewees will be quoted and their experiences and answers will be interpreted. The preliminary result of this study claims that gender equality is very important for the more widespread and effective use of peace methods from bottom in Kurdish culture, because current practices intensely nurture male power and exclude women altogether.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Bottom-up Peacemaking, Gender, Kurdish Tribe, Masculinity, Mardin

Regional crisis management governance requirements

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***Abstract:** Regional crises include natural disasters, conflicts, unexpected events and any other cases that cause damage and costs for one or several countries involved and material and life losses for the countries. Therefore, requirements from the governance side should be taken into consideration and implemented so that such management crises and related losses and costs are minimized. This research, by reviewing the literature on the governance of these crises, identified the governance requirements and after two rounds of interviews with experts, identified the final requirements. Finally, a questionnaire was prepared and the validity and reliability of the questionnaire was measured with the help of SPSS software. The questionnaire data was analyzed by quantitative methods and by examining the structural equations, the research model was extracted and their relationships were identified, and finally, by the structural equation modeling methods, the final model of regional crisis governance requirements in the six main dimensions of process, structural, Background, content, behavior and orientation including 19 components and crisis management including 5 components (human base, social base, economic base, physical base and natural base) were identified and drawn .*

Introduction

Despite its continued use, there is no accepted definition of crisis. How to define "crisis" has remained a problem for tens of years and various meanings have been presented based on the framework, communication of companies, sensitivities and other factors. The table below provides a wide range of definitions and descriptions of crisis that currently exist in dictionaries, government documents and crisis literature. (Cockram & Heuvel, 2014)

Table 1-Crisis Definition

Definition of crisis	resource
A turning point for being better or worse	Webster's Dictionary
a decisive or unstable time or state of affairs that is imminent; A situation that reaches a .critical stage	Crisis management guidance and good practice
An inherently unnatural, unstable and complex situation that represents a threat to strategic goals and threatens the reputation .or existence of any organization	NATO
It is a national or international situation in which priorities, values, interests or goals .are threatened	UK Business Innovation and Skills Authority
A situation or even an abnormal feeling that exists in the daily business environment and threatens the performance, security and .reputation of the organization	Crisis management planning for the inevitable affaires
It is an unstable time or a state of affairs in which imminent change is certain	Organizational and communication crisis
An event or a series of special, unexpected and unusual events that creates a high level of uncertainty and threat, or is a threat to .high-priority goals in any organization	Crisis management policy, public leadership under pressure

From the point of view of pathology, a crisis includes a complete or partial interruption of the activity of a group or society with loss of life, material damage and widespread environmental damage, and the affected society is not able to compensate and contain it with the resources it has.

Crises are divided into two categories according to the speed of occurrence: natural crises caused by climatic and geological phenomena, while man-made crises caused by human activities in industrial fields, exploitation of natural resources, military, social, economic issues, It is political, ideological and cultural (Beiroudyan, 2006)

Crises in their essence are the platform for the formation of threats and opportunities that, depending on the type, intensity and environmental extent of the crisis, can put a country's system in difficult and risky situations. Increasing the structural and functional capacities of the system in order to respond appropriately and fairly to the needs and wants of the people is the driving factor for shaping the resistant structures of the people to deal with the crisis. Crisis control and

containment based on a system-oriented and integrated thinking and in the form of crisis management is a strategic necessity that is agreed upon by all thinkers and experts on strategic issues and the importance of governments in investing heavily in the establishment and development of this crisis management system, they emphasize. (Souri, 2016)

Crisis management is not specific to a specific issue or phenomenon, crisis management is a science of management that aims to control the influencing factors in the normal management process with the help of the management system and tries to return the situation to normal. Crisis specialists, basically, for every Three characteristics of time, threat, and information have been considered for a phenomenon that becomes a crisis. At the time of any crisis, crisis managers face uncertainty in decision-making due to the lack of necessary information, insufficient time, and the threat of uncertainty. Mental and psychological pressures on the crisis managers at that point of time, if they do not have the necessary characteristics, not only reduce the damages, but also cause the waste and loss of capital, manpower, places and facilities and increase the damages that result from each The crisis is coming. (Okhi, et al., 2020)

Humanitarian aid cannot be declared during an emergency. Countries and organizations should see it as a basis for emergency planning and preparedness efforts. Using resources appropriately and being able to secure those that are unavailable depends primarily on identifying their availability, their location, and the resources to obtain them. All these activities and all necessary documents for information recording, control, monitoring and follow-up during relief should be prepared and tested in advance . (Zare Mehrjerdi, Karimi, Olya, & Sadegheyeh, 2022)

Discussion

Definition of crisis : Crisis is derived from the Greek root of the word “Krisis”, which means an urgent decision, and it means a disturbance or distress or a sudden and severe physical and mental disorder that changes the course of normal conditions.. (Larousse, 2003) The decision to define the crisis due to the different nature of the decisions related to the crisis, it is natural that the decision-making methods in crisis conditions are very different from the decision-making methods in normal conditions; Therefore, a crisis exists only when a decision-making element creates such a challenge, and this decision-making challenge generally has three characteristics: threat, surprise, and time pressure. Crisis is an inevitable reality in social life. Crises have taken managers by surprise, imposed heavy costs and have the ability to develop into other dangerous situations. Based on this, optimal management of crises and achieving an action model appropriate to the crisis and the circumstances can reduce many problems and additional costs during the crisis and bring about effective crisis management.(Gholamzadehfard, 2021)

The key to these definitions and concepts is: a) instability and change b) threat as a determining factor in any crisis that exceeds the natural state and causes instability and change.

The difference between crises may be "sudden impact" that occurs with little or no warning and may last for days, weeks, or months. The origin of crises can be external in the form of an out-of-control incident such as a natural disaster, or it can be internal as a result of accidents in the workplace or as a result of preventable and systemic errors. Regardless of the origin of the crisis,

the cause or manifestation of the crisis, each incident is described through the following key characteristics:

Table2 -Key Properties of the crisis

Characteristic of the crisis	Property
A crisis is a unique or rare incident that occurs as a surprise in the organization. Surprise is the result of the organization not predicting or planning for the accident or not paying attention to the organization's plans in the event of an accident.	unpredictable
Crises introduce a severe level of dynamic threat and have the ability to affect high-priority organizational goals and also have negative or unpleasant consequences for organizations, stakeholders and their industries.	dynamic threat
Crises require a response in a time period that is not defined by the organization. This period of time is often very short and the time for decisions and actions to reduce impacts is limited.	Urgency/Pressure
Also, pressure is imposed by a potential agent for wrong decisions with harmful or life-threatening consequences	Urgency/Pressure
Uncertainty is the result of decisions made in the face of incomplete, wrong or ambiguous information.	uncertainty
Crises can potentially affect or disrupt the entire organization and sometimes even exceed organizational, geographic, economic, etc. boundaries.	Absence of borders
Crises are events that affect the public interest and the media and their influence, while in the media, information is always spreading and distributing quickly before the facts are investigated.	Media review
Crises are characterized by multiple stakeholders, and decisions cause interdependent outcomes or impacts. The complexity is inherently caused by the fact that the characteristics of crises have effects on each other. In addition, organizational norms may be lost due to the crisis.	Complexity

Definition of crisis management

Crisis management is a systematic effort to prevent crises or manage them effectively when they occur. (Rezvani, 2006)

In another definition, crisis management refers to five categories of organization, communication, decision-making, recognition of crisis factors, and design. It is easier to control the crisis when the organization of the crisis-fighting forces is more. (Yar Ahmadi Khorasani, 2005)

Therefore, crisis management is an applied knowledge during which, by systematically observing crises and analyzing them, necessary preventions can be carried out, and in the event of

a crisis, measures can be taken to reduce their effects, as well as provide quick relief and improve and restore the situation. (Ulmer & Seege, 1998)

Therefore, crisis management is called a set of advanced and special plans and methods that are used to prevent and control crisis to increase resilience . (Nudell, 1998)

Stages and cycle of crisis management: Crisis management consists of three main stages before, during and after the occurrence of a crisis, for each of the following stages, activities must be categorized and adjusted. According to the above three stages, a cycle is considered for crisis management activities. In this cycle, prevention and preparation activities are related to the time before the crisis, coping is related to the time of the crisis, and reconstruction is related to the time after the crisis.. (Khanke & Hoseini, 2018)

Stages and cycle of crisis management: Crisis management consists of three main stages before, during and after the occurrence of a crisis, for each of the following stages, activities must be categorized and adjusted. According to the above three stages, a cycle is considered for crisis management activities. In this cycle, prevention and preparation activities are related to the time before the crisis, coping is related to the time of the crisis, and reconstruction is related to the time after the crisis. (Tasimi, 2011) These conditions can be physical, social, economic, environmental or related to management processes .(Ardalan & Shamsi, 2007, p. 7)

Capacity: is the opposite term of vulnerability and consists of positive factors that increase people's ability to adapt to risks. Capacity can evoke physical, organizational, social or economic methods and facilities, as well as skilled personal or group characteristics, such as leadership and management. Capacity can also be described as capability (Ardalan & Shamsi, 2007, p. 10) .

Features and indicators of crisis management that can be effective and efficient in crisis management and support it more than before it . (Hosseini, 2015)

Governance

Governance includes all the processes of governing, whether it is the government, market or network and its scope includes a family, formal or informal organization or territory, or whether it is done by law, norm, power or language. Governance differs from government in that it focuses less on the government and its institutions and more on social actions and activities. (Bevir, 2012, p. 10).

Governance requirements: Requirement is a concept that has wide meanings such as covenant, obligation, duty, compulsion or responsibility, and it has different meanings depending on the field or context in which it is used. Governance requirements include: any dos and don'ts, standards, principles, frameworks, rules related to the subject of governance, basic laws, subject laws, and other upper-level documents, as well as books, articles, and any scientific reference that must be followed in the design of the governance model.. (Mosleh, et al., 2023)

The theoretical framework of the research

In order to provide a comprehensible picture of the general concept of the research, the theoretical framework for explaining the governance requirements of crisis management was presented using upstream documents, concepts, theories, study of scientific theories, .environmental-comparative study and interviews with experts

Mirzaei Ahranjani (2002), believes that the three-pronged model is capable of analyzing phenomena in society. This model includes three dimensions of structure, content (behavior) and

context (texture) . (Mirzaei Aharanjani, 2002). Based on exploratory studies and to increase accuracy with the approval of experts, these three dimensions were developed into six process, structural, contextual, content, behavioral and orientation dimensions. The relationship between the dimensions (factors) of process, structure, context, content, behavior and orientation is such that the relationship of phenomena is done in the mutual interaction of these six dimensions with each other. Distinguishing and distinguishing these six dimensions is purely theoretical and for the purpose of analyzing and understanding the concepts of governance phenomena. On the other hand, the 5 dimensions of human base, social base, economic base, physical base and natural base make the structure of crisis management. Finally, the modeling of structural equations explains the degree of connection and the model derived from the connection between the components of two structures.

Research Methodology:

This research is survey-analytical and applied in terms of purpose, which was conducted in a mixed qualitative-quantitative manner, and to obtain basic information, document and library research and review of scientific writings were used, and the results of the studies in the format The two constructs of governance requirements in 6dimensions and crisis management in 5 dimensions were classified and presented in the form of tables. In the next step, to check the overlap and validity of the classified propositions of both fields, interviews were conducted with 22experts, and finally unrelated and repetitive propositions were removed and related propositions were left, and by preparing a questionnaire and polling 40people from Experts in both fields have been used. In formulating the questionnaire questions, the Likert scale was used to measure the opinions of the respondents and the analytical method used in this research is the use of structural equation modeling based on which the results of the questionnaire are entered in the model analysis process and the final model is extracted.

Findings

According to the research findings, 32people (%80) of the research sample are men and 8 people (%20) are women. %42.5have a doctoral degree, %5have a postdoctoral degree, and %52.5have a master's degree. %70had more than twenty years of experience in crisis management and %30had less than twenty years of experience in crisis management. Using background literature, experts' opinions, questionnaire data analysis and structural equation analysis, 140 propositions of governance requirements in the form of 6process, structural, contextual, content, behavioral and orientation dimensions and 21 components and 22crisis management indicators It was identified in the form of 5components of human substrate, economic substrate, social substrate, physical substrate and natural substrate, which were included in tables No. 3and 4. Of course, for the sake of brevity, the indicators are not included in the table of governance requirements.

Table 3- Dimensions and components of Governance requirements structure

Component	Dimension	Structure
Public Service	Process	Governance requirements
The source of power		
Financial processes		

Evaluation and control		
Legislative processes		
Hard and soft Infrastructures	Structural	
Institutions		
Structures		
Transnational environment	Background	
National environment		
Transnational environment of the country		
The internal environment of the governance structures of the country		
Educational system	content	
Macro control and supervision system		
Research and development system		
Governance style		
Culture	behavioral	
Motivation		
Conversation	orientation	
Tendencies		
Values		

Table 4- Dimensions and components of the crisis management structure

Indicator	Component	Structure
Education	Human Platform	Crisis Management
Skill		
Knowledge		
Information		
Improve the ability to reduce risk	Social platform	
Trust		
Norms		
Networks		
Facilitation in cooperation and coordination	Economic platform	
Availability to resources investment		
Increase capacity		
Distribution of wealth		
Poverty Reduction	Physical platform	
Habitability		
General facilities		

Acts	Natural platform	
Communication facilities		
Increased security		
Natural resources		
Transportation facilities		
Evacuation facility		

Identifying the components and indicators affecting crisis management is very valuable in determining crisis management governance requirements and will be effective in improving crisis management performance, but it will be difficult to focus on all factors at the same time. Hence, determining the impact of each governance factor on each of the dimensions and components of crisis management will provide a new insight to data managers and managers to make decisions with greater confidence and deeper insight.

For this purpose, structural equation modeling technique was used in this research. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by examining the cross-sectional loading of the items using the Giffen and Shtrab method and the differential validity of the Makonon variables (Fornell and Larker method) as well as the opinion of experts.

Also, the reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed by calculating Cronbach's alpha, AVE and CR indices.

Finally, three-stage factor analysis using structural equation averaging method extracted the research model and it was confirmed by examining the significance and path coefficients in each of the constructs and dimensions of the model.

(Table 5 and Figure 1)

Table 5- Determination coefficients and significant values of dimensions and components of the final model

Dimension / component	The coefficient of determination	Significant values of t	Structure	Component	The coefficient of determination	Significant values of t	Dimension
Human Platform	0.906	60.368	Crisis Management	Public Service	0.744	14.838	Process
Social platform	0.889	49.752		The source of power	0.682	13.155	
Economic platform	0.773	17.988		Financial processes	0.731	19.112	
Physical platform	0.855	41.368		Evaluation and control	0.825	43.212	
Natural platform	0.829	33.062		Legislative processes	0.645	8.927	

Process dimension	0.591	6.331	Governance	Hard and soft infrastructure	0.865	56.239	Structural	
Structural dimension	0.583	6.209		Structures	0.851	51.475		
contextual dimension	0.825	23.644		Transnational environment	0.729	14.783	Background	
Content dimension	0.866	63.681		National environment	0.860	52.027		
Behavioral dimension	0.826	54.857		The internal environment of the governance structures of the country	0.828	22.460		
Orientation dimension	0.775	32.643		Educational system	0.713	18.137		
					Macro control and supervision system	0.835	39.893	content
					Research and development system	0.637	19.014	
					Governance style	0.851	53.241	
					Culture	0.850	43.754	behavioral
				Motivation	0.855	39.173		
				Conversation	0.828	36.327	orientation	
				Tendencies	0.915	71.043		
				Values	0.918	70.841		

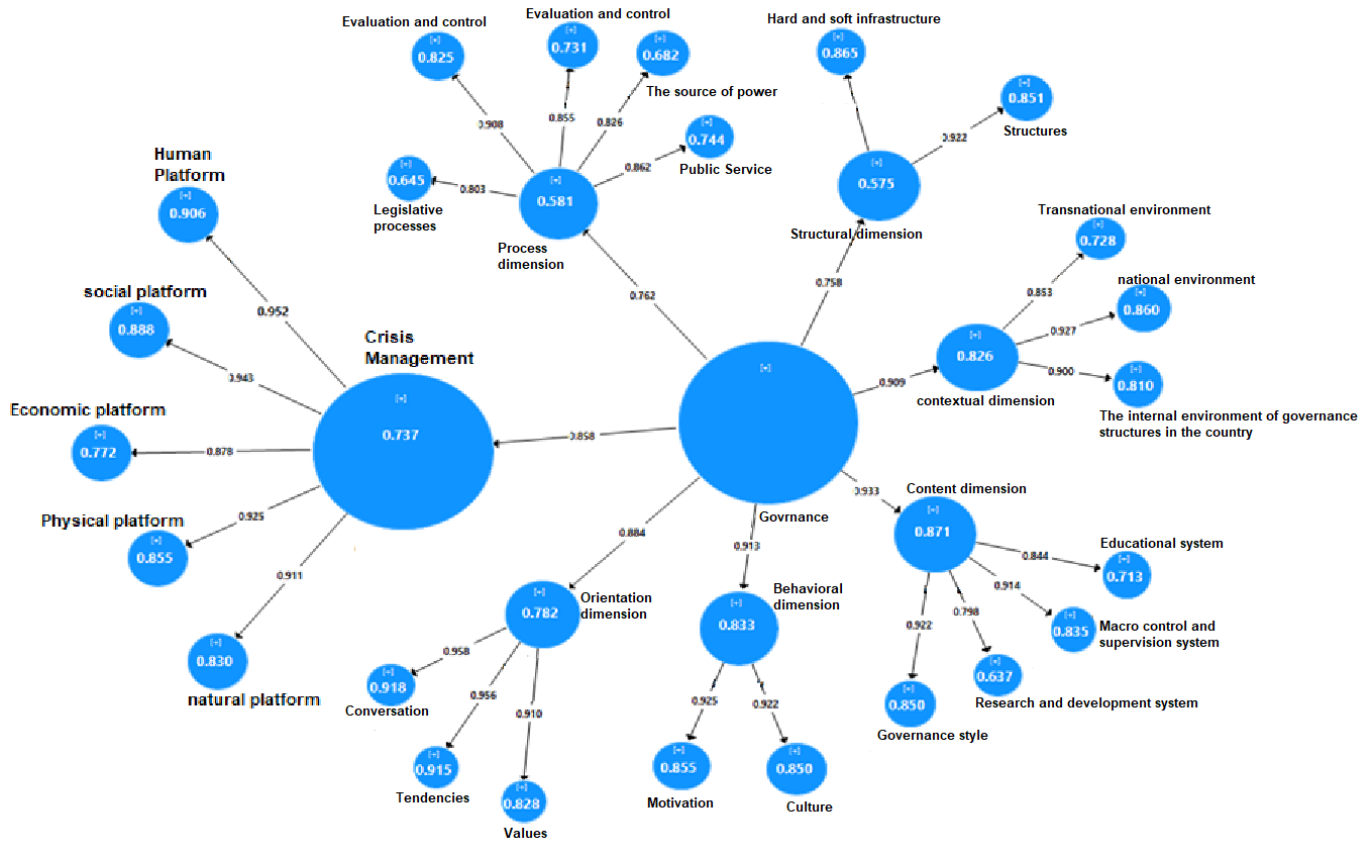


Figure 1- The final research model

Finally, by comparing the coefficients of the path between the two, the influence of each level of the structure of each of the components of crisis management came, which is explained in diagrams 1 to 5:

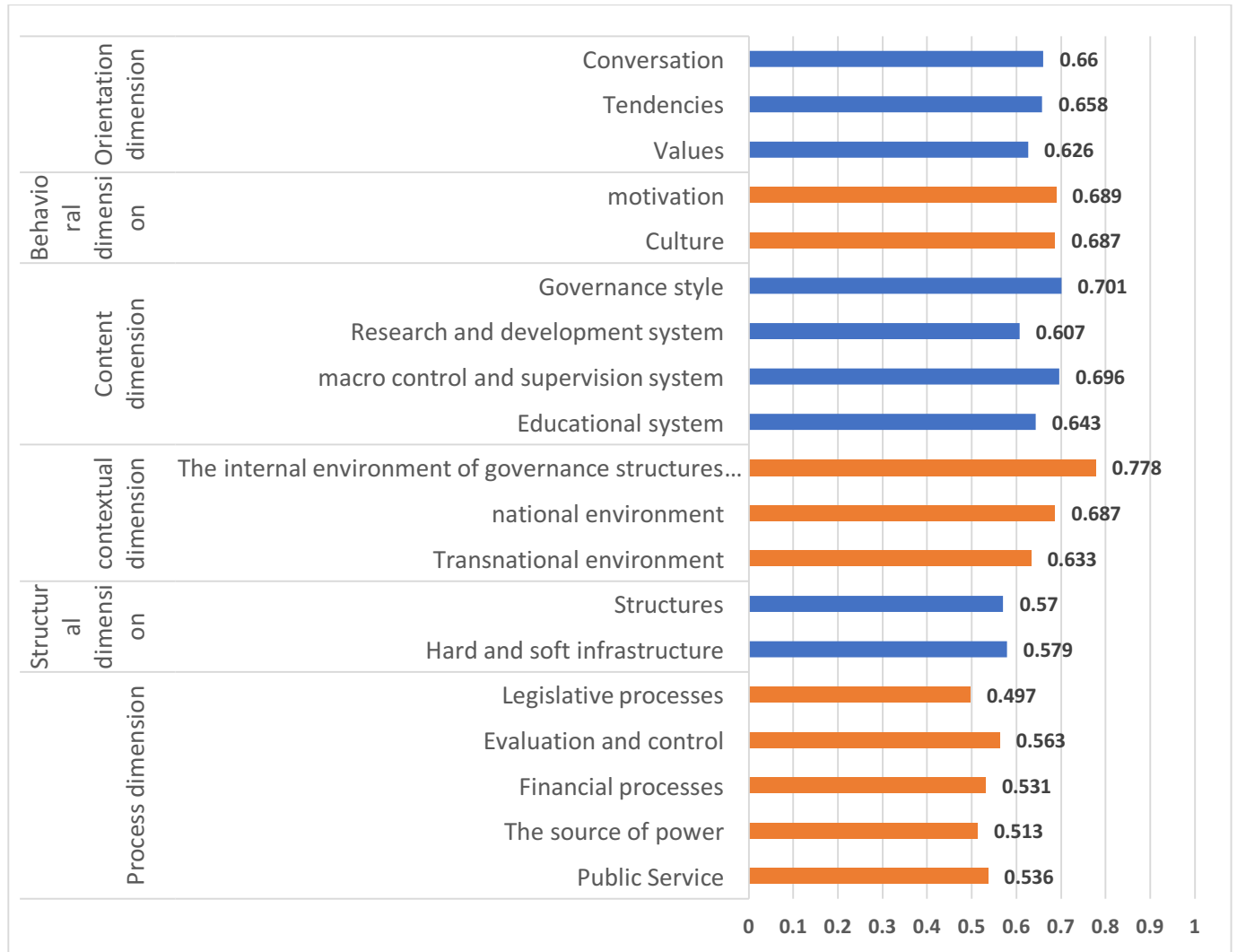


Diagram1- The impact of the components of governance requirements on the human platform

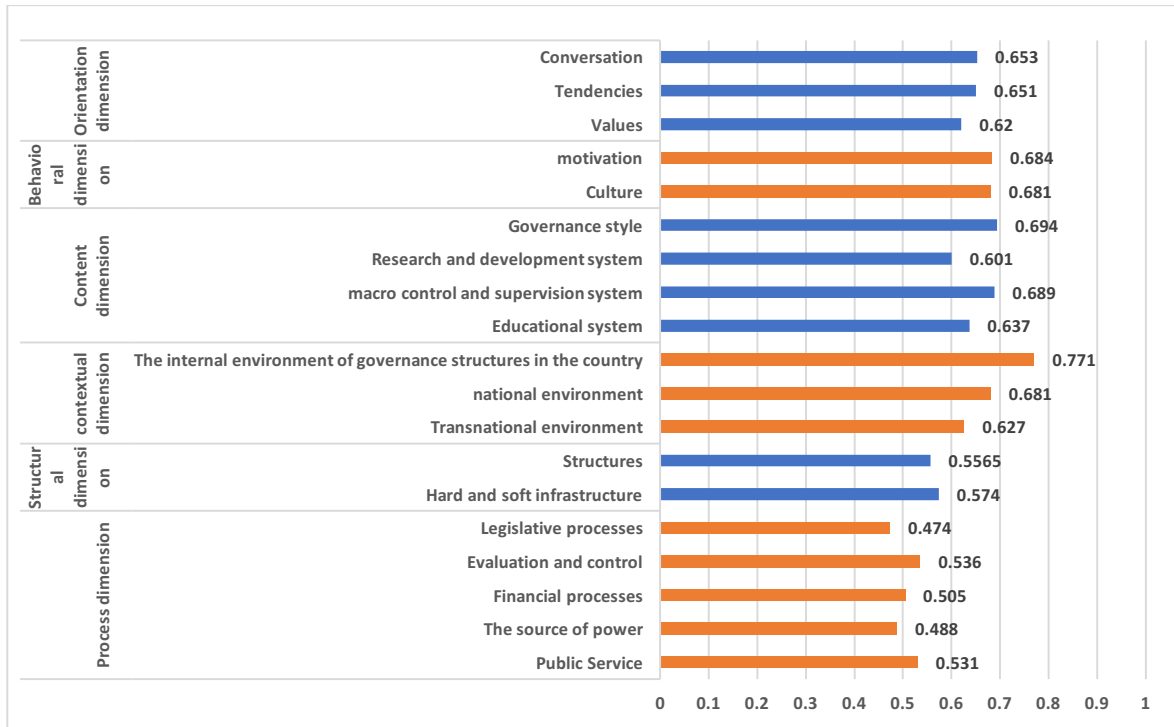


Diagram 2- The impact of the components of governance requirements on the social platform

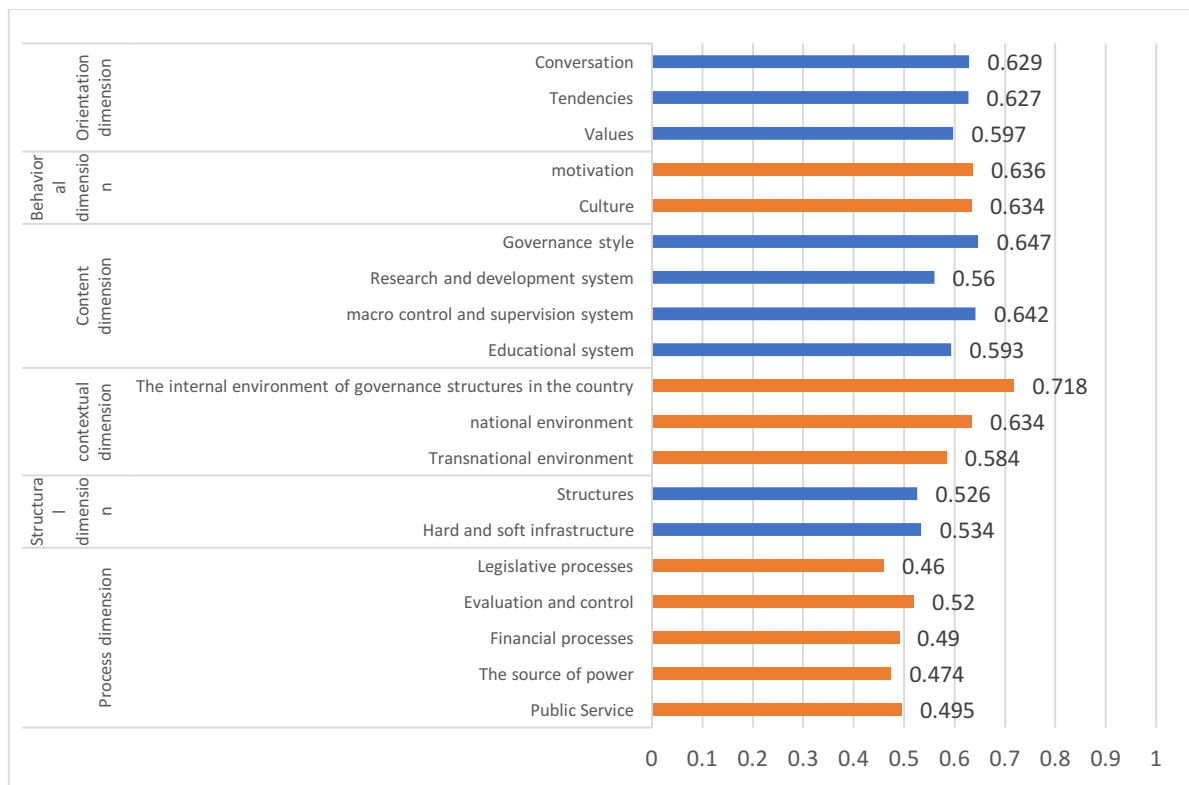


Diagram 3- The impact of the components of governance requirements on the economic platform

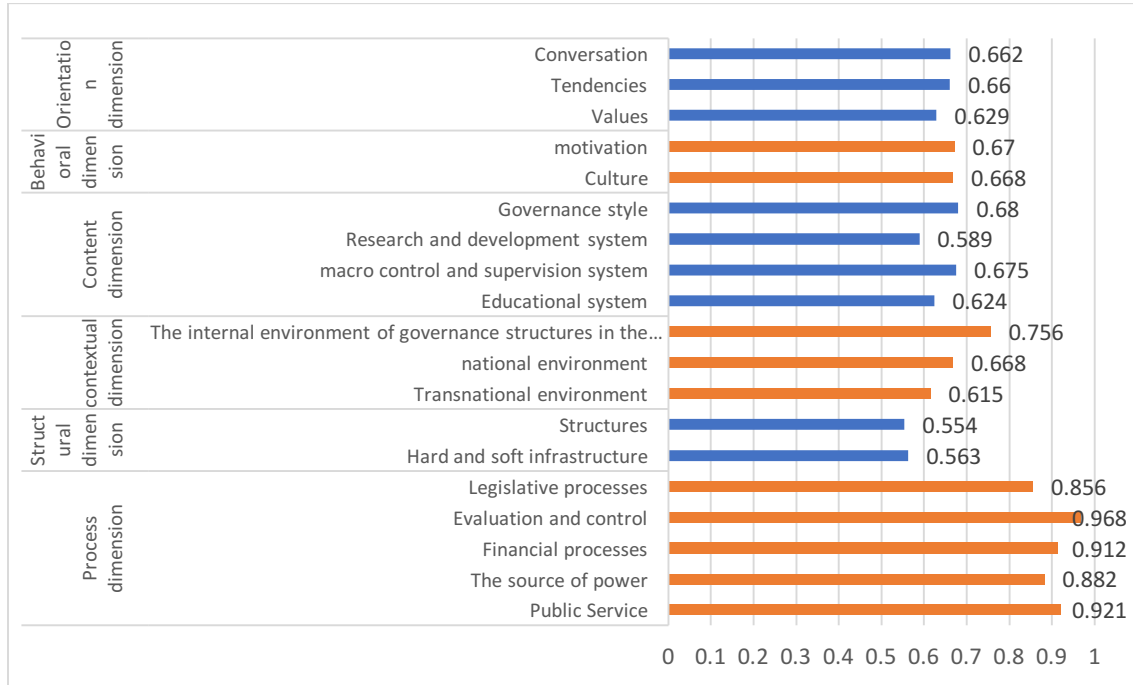


Diagram 4- The impact of the components of governance requirements on the physical platform

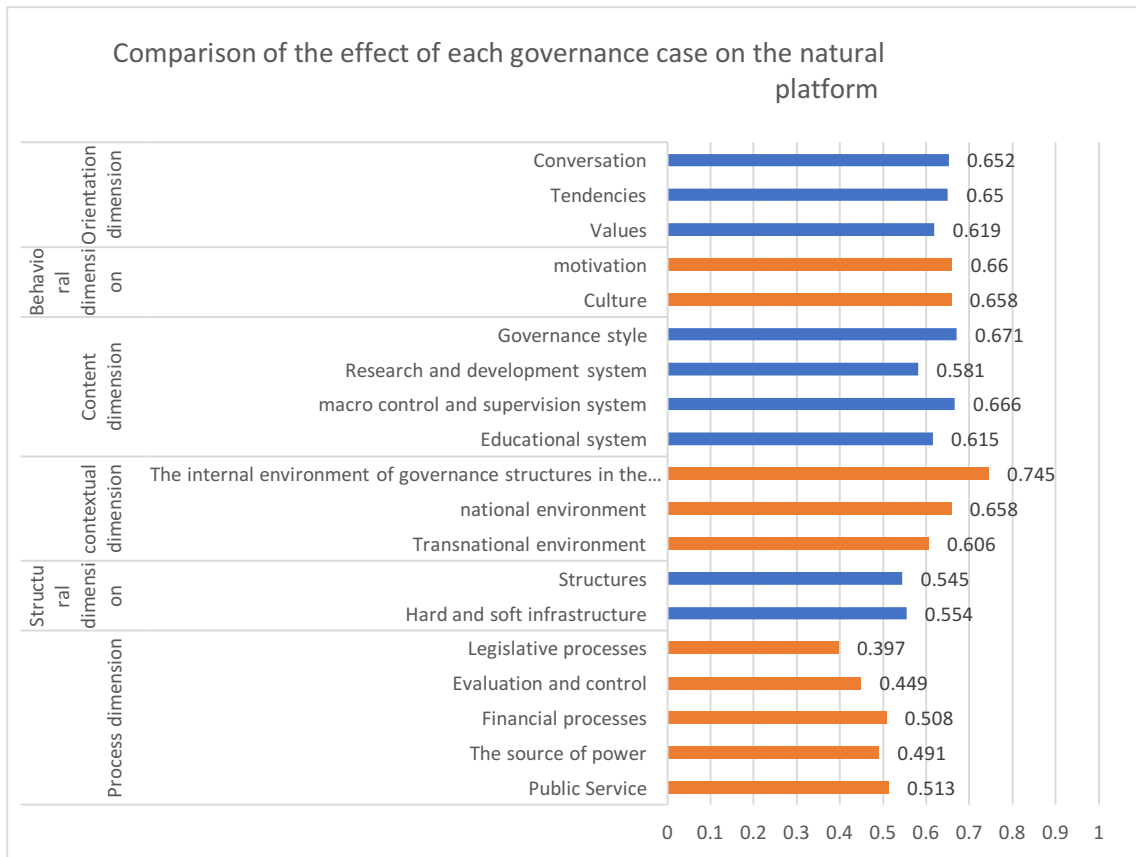


Diagram 5- The impact of the components of governance requirements on the nature platform

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Systemic Prevention effect in security crisis management

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Abstract

The process of change and transformation in the modern era has accelerated the pace of development in societies. Our society is not excluded from this process. Although we can make predictions about these processes and prevent personal and structural vulnerabilities, our societies suffer from heavy institutional pressures. They are necessarily obliged to adapt themselves with democratic patterns of power production and increase their tolerance threshold.

Some officials and policy-makers consider destabilizing and crisis-creating phenomena as consequences of their unpredicted activities; therefore, they emphasize on preventing these phenomena as functional and promising issues. However, we are always faced with these questions: Does this development in decision-makings and interactions create social constraints and crises? If crises are the possible outcome of this bureaucratic process, are their social consequences less than political-security consequences? Can “management”, as an academic discipline, analyzes and deal with such crises in different parties and among various social strata or struggling powers?

The present article is trying to clarify and recognize the literature that contributes to crisis managers to stand against crises through providing proper theories, patterns, hypotheses, mechanisms, and methods. At the end of the article an approach is introduced which is focused on the value of crisis prevention through paying due attention to the signs of crisis emergence. This approach is also emphasizing on the necessity of managers’ concentration on proper recognition and understanding of these signs.

Keywords: crisis; crisis management; prevention; information; crisis education.

Introduction

The category of "security crisis" explains the unfortunate and predicament that most of the decision makers and politicians in all parts of the world have experienced. Of course, despite its breadth, we believe that theorists have always had a wrong understanding of this concept, and in fact, this concept should be considered as the most fundamental concept in all studies related to security and play a key role in this sector.(Richardson,1994:22) For this reason, the category of security crisis is considered a fundamental concept, which has a direct relationship with the existence of uncertainty and is a prominent feature in all human relations, especially international relations and politics. The fact that until now, the importance of this issue is not properly known, as a result of the existence of conventional and common thoughts that caused the works and ideas of the early theorists of this concept to not gain enough credit (theorists such as John Herz, Herbert Butterfield and Robert Gervais) and also, the opportunity to confirm the theoretical and practical horizons of these theories will be lost.(Hasheminejad,2018: 52-53) We believe that an accurate understanding of the dynamics and capabilities that exist in the thinking related to the security crisis can have a significant impact on answering key questions in security-related research and can be more than the impact of traditional concepts such as "war", "strategy". , "conflict" and so on.

The origin of uncertainty and instability

What we mean by explaining uncertainty as an existential essence in human relations is that this concept is not a temporary and fleeting phenomenon, but an inseparable part of the existence of individuals and groups.(Morton,1936:235) Although the level of importance and how to understand it is different among different people, but in the end, it is unavoidable. Of course, the category of insecurity cannot be related only to uncertainty; Because uncertainty is like a house that has several rooms, but in the life of some people, it has less security than the house of others.(Rezaeian,2019:14-16) In fact, it is preferable to live with instabilities and uncertainties, which according to Kenneth Boulding is called "sustainable peace", than with the insecurities that follows, according to Stanley Hoffmann, "a situation of war". When governments cooperate with each other or when societies establish the principle of security in security organizations, even in an atmosphere of uncertainty, the level of security will be remarkable.

The existence of uncertainty in international relations means that governments (that is, their decision makers, military designers and planners, or foreign policy analysts) cannot know about

the current and future motivations or tendencies of those who can be in the military arena. They hurt, to be sure. We call this situation one of the cases of insoluble uncertainty, which, in our opinion, is at the center of problems and predicaments that lead to the creation of a security crisis.

Successful management of today's crises, which are associated with numerous political-security consequences, is dependent on effective administration of individuals, parties, and institutions mobilized for crisis control at its various levels. It is also dependent on proper communication for qualitative efficiency and the effect that it has on public opinion. Basically, security analysts believe that the best strategy for crisis management is prompt identification of potential or emerging problems in order to prevent the emergence of such crises in future. By prompt identification of problems, we can survey the environment regularly in order to find signs of threats and risks. This identification can deal with past incidents and their consequences.(Burnett ,2018:98) It also can deal with incidents that are affected by past developments and emerge in present and future conditions. Unpredictable incidents which impose their bombshell effects on the environment should mostly be viewed and surveyed through the above-mentioned outlook. However, a limited number of everyday incidents lead to opposition or crisis. They are not necessarily associated with significant and serious losses. Therefore, they are more adaptable with proper indications of public participation and presence. It is easier to control incidents that are predictable.(Turner ,1978:55)

As a result, there are two prevalent approaches in crisis management. The first approach emphasizes on prevention. In this approach, officials identify problems before reaching their critical stages and manage them before getting rooted in society. The second approach emphasizes on getting informed of issues when they are at a prompting or bothering stage and embarking on their management. The main advantage of prompt identification and preventive measures is their ability to eradicate crisis-generating phenomena from their early stages.(Davies,2005:41-42)

The Importance of Crisis Prevention

“Crisis” can be described as a disturbing situation that affects the whole system or organization. It challenges basic presuppositions in a system or organization. Coping with crisis is usually dependent on decisions that are not made according to daily and current administrative methods. Crisis is originated from numerous emergency situations. These emergency situations are usually categorized into two groups: natural disasters and induced disasters.(Ash , and Ross ,2019:174)

Natural disaster, as its very name suggests, is a natural incident. It is a phenomenon which is not affected by man's presence or performance. Floods, earthquakes, droughts, volcanoes, sicknesses, traffic crashes, fires resulting natural events, landslides, etc. are some examples of natural disasters. These disasters affect the whole system, or even the whole country, with all its institutions. However, socio-political events are usually traceable and can be pursued according to potentials and capabilities of countries. These events are usually associated with the term “crisis management.” Sabotage, opposition, war, terrorism, abduction, hostage taking, high-jacking,

environmental pollution, drug addiction, computer crimes, embezzlement, vicious and threatening acts, and crisis in the administrative system are some examples of these incidents. They are the outcome of autocratic performance and behavior of individuals and groups. As a result of consequences of political power and social status of countries during recent years, “crisis management” has been widely highlighted and propagated. Nowadays, this term refers to all cases that are associated with the emergence of challenges or contradictions. It includes different issues, from reaction to family disputes to reaction to wars and terrorist activities.(Ghoshal,2015:69-70).

Research methodology

Richie Twas considers crisis management as the analysis of social crises, as well as, the adoption of methods through which social institutions identify and resolve their problems and challenges. However, crisis management, in his opinion, does not mean waiting for, and expecting, every incident. Rather, it means thinking of unimaginable and incredible issues that can have destructive results for the whole institution or country.

Every phenomenon that includes different levels and phases of public interest is considered as national interest. It is quite different from those events and incidents that have been formed during a specific period of time and are categorized as national expedience. According to the nature of the subject and the investigated components, the approach governing this research is descriptive-analytical. And the type of research is applied-developmental in terms of purpose. The method of collecting information was done in two ways: library and field.

The Importance of Environment in Socio-political Crises

Due to rapid changes caused by population growth, technological progress, and trans-boundary political, economic, and cultural developments, our current environment has been transformed to a crisis-stricken atmosphere. As a result, a minor incident in one part of this environment affects its other adjacent parts. The evolution theory considers crises as necessary and useful. According to this theory, crises are mechanisms for survival of the fittest, because during them powerful social institutions survive and weak and inefficient ones collapse. From the power perspective, crises interrupt national power systems and inability to control them is considered as an affliction for socio-political system. Crisis refers to a situation in which normal management patterns are not workable. Due to time constraints, limited control, and high uncertainty, crisis management is quite difficult. But there is a question: why, despite all political, social, and grand educations, crisis managers are not introduced in the country?

Nowadays, management of political, or even security, crisis is a broad area of study which requires potentials and capabilities such as strategic programming, decision-making, problem solution, social communication management, information management, power and policy management, management of socio-psychological processes, and, especially, media management. Currently, in addition to providing courses on crisis identification (identification of crisis-generating signs, crisis prevention, crisis-outcome analysis, and crisis evaluation) and related concepts, academic circles offer training courses on issues such as level of vulnerability; capability of differentiation

between various kinds of crises and their related skills; and capability of identification of information needs. According to theoretical studies and experimental achievements, managers of both private and public sectors are not efficiently prepared for facing these challenges. (Annan and Freeman ,2017:201) In fact, they should be situated in critical conditions and receive necessary educations. In other words, it is commonly assumed that current management courses and educations are not proper for critical conditions. Rather, they might even produce impractical and contradicting outcomes. Educational institutions and socio-political centers think that they are fully understanding and training crisis management. Even managers imagine that they have achieved necessary potentials for crisis management. However, an evaluation of outcomes and consequences of real social crises indicate that managers have just proved their inefficiencies in such conditions and have imposed heavy economic and security losses on the country and society. As a result, one of the basic and strategic challenges of the management system of the country is weakness of knowledge in the field of crisis management.

De-securitization Crises

Contemporary crises are now one of the main characteristics of societies. They threaten the security of societies and create sensitivity among people. (Boulding,1956:85) Since the main subject of these crises is man's role in his socio-political environment, people are generally dealing with the emergence of these problems and their associated challenges. The trend of global issues, mass media development, information and communication technology development, collapse of the authority of governments, and public participation process are quite effective in the formation of new security crises. However, due to positive and clear functions of these phenomena, they cannot be easily excluded and transformed. Even some of these trends are uncontrollable. Contemporary security crises have a changing, complicating and correlating nature. It is quite difficult to specify their boundaries. Uncertainty, diversity, complexity, multi-dimensionality, time-intensity, human considerations, economic costs, and dynamism of security crises in different fields oblige us to redefine crisis management in its new form. (Moore,2014:61-63)

Evaluated crises in the traditional realm of security indicate that managers are always inclined to reduce reasons of huge and complex problems to a very simple factor or source. Crisis management experts believe that there is no single prioritized approach for dealing with crises. They argue that crises can emerge at every time and in whatever shape. Security crises are the result of a chain of various factors and it is quite difficult to identify real reasons of crises in their de-securitization function. At the same time, we can consider these crises as the consequence of various causal elements, as well as, different mistakes and blunders of political elites. Committing consecutive blunders and mistakes can intensify the consequences of a very simple problem. However, modern crises are not outcomes of simple mistakes; rather, they are the accumulation of minor mistakes and diversions in the long-term that cause security crisis. It is quite clear that various factors have contributed to this horrible tragedy. (Boin and Langadec ,2020:142) Insecurity in society and social management crisis are resulted from disordered thought in the management of social vulnerabilities and threats. These crises are resulted from management styles and methods. In other words, they are rooted in improper, mimetic, and inapplicable theories of management in vulnerable socio-political environments. Theories of human sciences and management, unlike

those of natural sciences, affect man's perceptions of his developments and his outlooks towards future. (Reason, 1990:71) Committing mistakes imposes losses on personal or institutional interests and can have destructive consequences for the society. In natural sciences, when we prove that "The sun turns around the earth" but are forced or obliged to reject it, reality is not hurt. In other words, the sun and the earth do not follow this incorrect statement that "The sun does not turn around the earth." However, incorrect decision, statement, or theories in the management can have tragic consequences. Kert Levin has argued that "Nothing is more practical than a careful and good decision." Nevertheless, the opposite of this statement can also be true: "Nothing is more dangerous than a bad decision." As a result, we can conclude that "Improper decisions in social or political management disturb good initiatives and management institutions." It activates inter-institutional crisis in the power-generating bureaucracy which is rooted in the objective-oriented socio-political action by government agents. Therefore, crises are not created in the vacuum. In fact, they are natural consequences of improper and illogical decisions in the past or present. Conditions can create new crises that are sometimes too expensive and difficult to compensate. Organizational, administrative, and gradual crises last for a very short period of time, but security crises are long-term phenomena and are felt only after societies realize their dangers. (Coombs, 2021:21-22)

All governmental agents, especially those engaged in state functions and performances, are expected to predict and favorably manage insecurity-generating crises, because these agents are required to fully understand and manage inter-institutional interactions in order to create the feeling of satisfaction and confidence among the public. (Yell, 1983:289)

They should realize that ripple effect of crisis in a socio-political system can overshadow other systems. This effect can, in addition to a social guild or strata, affect an economic system. In other words, crisis in one stratum can spread to other strata. As a tangible example, suppose that auto-industry is working on designing and manufacturing a car that has a speed of over 200 km/h, but there are no proper road infrastructures in place. In such a situation, we will be faced with numerous road accidents which can lead to crisis. Therefore, one industry can affect other industries. The above-mentioned ripple can affect other domains, such as economy, livelihood, and security or even contribute to the change in patterns of participatory behavior.

Unfortunately, in many countries there has been nothing further than organizational analysis of crises. These crises have introduced little literature to the socio-political domain. Therefore, interaction between them and national security objectives/interests leads to different perceptions, which, in turn, intensify the crisis and deteriorate the situation. These crises are the result of socio-political mismanagement and emphasis on traditional, old, and inefficient theories of management in the country. (Keown-McMullan, 2017:129) At the same time, modern performance-oriented theories have been ignored in the interacting institutions. Therefore, coping with these crises is dependent on changing managers' outlooks and mentality towards the crisis. We are not intending to exaggerate over the capability of individuals in the management and control of security-generating systems. However, we cannot explicate all these crises by resorting to the theory of "chaos and order in disorder" which is rooted in patterns of social action; rather, we cannot clarify the originality and authenticity of security-generating regulations by referring to natural laws.

Natural laws are the result of discovery, but security-generating laws are the result of innovation and situation. Natural laws have existed before being discovered, but other laws are designed and imposed by man.(Rosenthal, Kouzmin ,2016:54-55)

The order that exists in the nature are not constructed or deconstructed by man. But, social order is created by man. Therefore, we cannot compare man-made and social crises with natural crises. We can, based on the above-mentioned argument, conclude that governmental policy-making managers are currently required to interfere in the affairs in order to prevent crisis among various social strata.(Richie,2017:25)

Research findings:

The security crisis is a two-level strategic dilemma in the relations between governments and other factors, each level having two categories related to it, which forces decision makers to choose one of them. The first and main level is related to the challenge of interpreting the motivations, inclinations and abilities of others, and the second level is related to the challenge of reacting in the most rational way to react.

Level 1: The interpretive challenge: In fact, it is the problem that decision makers on issues related to security face when they are forced to choose between two important and usually unpleasant options regarding the military policies and political positions of others. Choose one. This challenge is created as a result of feeling the need to make a decision in the context of the existence of insoluble uncertainty about the motivations, inclinations and abilities of others. In fact, the people in charge have to decide whether the military techniques they intend to develop should be for self-defensive purposes only (in order to increase security in an unstable world) or offensive purposes (in order to change the current situation in their favor).)

The second level: the challenge and the reaction problem: it starts when the challenge of interpretation is solved. In this situation, decision makers must determine how to react. Should they show with their words and actions that they will reciprocate for protective reasons? Or do they act in a way that leads to peace of mind? If the category of reaction is based on a false suspicion about the motivations and tendencies of others, it may provoke the hostility of the other party. While the other party may not have any hostile intentions; On the other hand, if the category of reaction is based on misplaced trust, it may face problems from those who have hostile intentions. When the leaders and decision-makers solve the challenge of their response in a way that creates mutual hostility, while basically none of them had such an intention, a situation occurs that we refer to as the security paradox.

There are many driving factors in creating insoluble uncertainty. They can be limited to several factors: informational and psychological phenomena and, in fact, the vague symbolism of weapons that philosophers refer to as "the problem of other people's minds". Collectively, these cases lead to the conditions for the concept originally theorized by Herz and Butterfield. Practitioners of disarmament science are certainly familiar with the strategic meaning of the idea

of the ambiguous weapon symbol, although it may not be known by this name. This concept actually refers to the challenge (or according to many people, the impossibility) of making a distinction between offensive or defensive weapons. According to traditional thinking, whether you consider a weapon as an offensive or defensive weapon depends on whether your finger is on the trigger or not. This subjective interpretation is also seen in international politics, but in practice it is much more complicated. For example, if it is argued that it is possible to distinguish between an offensive weapon (sword) or a defensive weapon (shield) in the case of personal weapons, military strategists may claim that such distinctions are meaningless and impossible in practice; Because a shield can be an integral and vital part of an offensive action, when it is used as a combined weapon with a sword. Achieving such an understanding has caused the interpretation of Russian, Chinese and American strategic planners and other planners to change over the years regarding the various programs of American ballistic missile defense shields. In general, stimuli such as ambiguous symbolism and the problem of other people's minds lead to the creation of policies among nations, the obvious feature of which is inevitability in uncertainty or instability. This is why the security crisis is the most fundamental concept in security studies; this concept alone includes the situation of the future space during which the thoughts of political groups are formed.

Conclusion

At the end of this research, it was concluded that decision makers in the field of international politics often face challenges such as limited time and information. In such conditions, what helps them to compensate for their incomplete information is their philosophical and theoretical understanding of how to proceed in this unstable world. According to this issue, three logics are mentioned below that form the intellectual structure of theorists and international policy thinkers regarding the category of security crisis:

- **Coercive logic:** It is an idea that in the space of international politics, one can never get rid of competition and conflict to maintain security. Human nature and disorderly conditions in the international arena are such that people will be forced to live in a conflict-ridden world.
- **Reform logic:** It is an idea that the conditions of competition and conflict to maintain security can be improved or partially reduced for a while, but it will never disappear. In these conditions, the goal and purpose of governments and societies is very important, because it can improve the worst conditions of chaos.
- **Superiority logic:** It is an idea that human society is self-based. Humans are in the form of individuals and groups, agents and brokers, and in this way, a human society can achieve what it has chosen. Although inherent limitations in the structure of a society are always very effective. The creation of a peaceful global society will be possible, although it may seem unlikely at the moment.

From these three logical situations, special behaviors in the international arena are derived.

Jabri's thoughts are of the opinion that the search for security is one of the most basic and basic measures and since groups cannot trust each other in conditions of chaos and disorder, therefore

the relations between governments are competitive, violent and always in conflict. There is an aura of insecurity. In the conditions of chaos between governments, logic dictates that they maximize power, especially military power. In such a view, the rational behavior is not to trust anyone and do whatever is in your best interest. There is a possibility of cooperation, but only if it has short-term benefits. Governments are known as "self-governing bodies". An ideal example of such a view in contemporary international relations theory is "offensive realism".

In the reformist logic, it is accepted that the international system is technically anarchist. But the opinion is that this anarchy or chaos is not necessarily equivalent to anarchy and violent conflicts. One of the main points of view in this logic is to focus on the concept of "security regimes". In this situation, it is trying to apply predictable order in security relations through mutual learning and institutionalizing relations. Another view of reform logic is the view related to the English school, although it is strange that the supporters and preachers of this theory have not adhered to this theory and the implementation of security in a comprehensive and constructive way. The thinking of the English school about society is focused on issues such as the establishment of international law institutions, the development of moderate diplomatic processes, and experiencing norms such as bilateral clarification of military activities. As a result, it is possible to create a society of governments with a predictable order and therefore, to improve the security crisis. One of the distinctive features of the supremacy logic is the diversity of viewpoints and theorists who agree with it - from the centralization of power at the global level, which is necessary to create a world government, to the decentralization of traditional anarchist theory. Some views are reformist and others are very transformational and revolutionary. But what is similar in all of them is the belief that what has brought us to the place we are in is history and not necessity and the other is that it is possible (although it is very difficult) that a world system It created something very different - for example, a system in which challenges such as the challenge of interpreting and reacting are resolved and replaced by a successful trust-building policy. One of the problems that we face in the logic of supremacy is that different views in this logic try to relate the origin of the security challenge in the world of politics to one cause (including capitalism, democracy and anarchism).) and suggest a solution for it. Therefore, one of the challenges of the superiority logic is that its diverse viewpoints are one of the reasons for the lack of agreement. Thus, it is the duty of every security studies researcher to decide which of these three logics and viewpoints related to it the best is. It will follow the conditions for international politics and which of them will be considered the best and easiest guide for future politicians. In our opinion, although offensive realism can probably guarantee security to a certain extent in the short term (especially for the superior powers), in the end, the effects that follow will lead to the advancement of the "war system" and, as a result, the use of More dangerous weapons lead. Security regimes, which are understood and implemented based on the philosophy of rational self-governance, "will always contain the results of their destructive process". One of the complex approaches in reform logic is related to the view of the English school, which often focuses on the capabilities and possibilities available to diplomats in order to create a stable order in the international community through the development of common interests and values that help to increase public security. does Another thing is that in our opinion, the idea of safe communities is the most desirable method for those who have no opinion on this issue, and communities should live under forced conditions and in

war conditions or preparations for war. The concept of security crisis has been debated a lot and its practical manifestations have been interpreted in different ways, which were not always positive; despite this, the implementation of the idea of safe communities fundamentally challenges some of the basic patterns of thinking (anarchic logic) related to the Westphalian era. Of course, paying special attention to the bright future in secure communities does not mean that we believe that the members of such communities will finally "get rid" of the challenge of the security crisis, because the category of uncertainty and instability, as mentioned in the previous sections It was mentioned that it is a part of human existence. But what we claim and believe in is that the creation of such safe communities has been able to help change the conditions of the political arena to a great extent; As the conditions of the security crisis have also improved to a great extent and because the way of fighting has turned into an unimaginable way.

So preventive strategy is the best strategy in crisis management. Through this strategy, potential and emerging issues are timely identified. It can prevent the emergence of crises in future. Information gathering for obtaining on-time awareness of environmental developments can be carried out in following ways:

- Expert individuals and staffs gather environmental information about specific fields of their expertise;
- Related news and information can be collected through following up the mass media and news agencies and by taking advantage of keywords for classification of topics;
- Specialized information sites, crisis keywords, and guiding topics that are important for socio-political fields can be followed up. In order to understand outlooks of ordinary people in this regard, we can take advantage of television channels and other forums.
- Internal information sources can also provide invaluable information which should not be ignored.
- National information systems of many countries have been designed and implemented for meeting such a need. They collect and maintain information related to real and corporate individuals, as well as, their changes. This information is, according to rules and regulations, at the disposal of users. It is quite clear that through getting equipped with information technology and systems, we can easily establish national information systems.

Practical Research suggestions

Governmental agents are often incapable of dealing with socio-political crises which are rooted in public opposition. The reason for this state of affairs is the patterns and processes which are adopted by these agents. In order to be efficient in dealing with such crises, we should observe following requirements:

- Order-Authority Pattern: all behaviors of an individual in his leadership capacity are based on his power and influence for achieving desired objectives which are called "leadership pattern." If this pattern is adopted, it will be referred to as "management style" or "management method", because organizational outcomes are more important for the manager. An evaluation of management methodologies indicate that most incapable managers resort to the "order-authority pattern" as a management method. These managers

have failed in creating and applying capabilities and elements which are included in their respective domains. The performance and management initiatives of these managers have numerous mal-effects on their organization. There are, generally speaking, 3 more management patterns: order-encouragement; argumentative-supportive; and participatory-authority. But the order-authority pattern is considered as a risky model of management, because the mal-effects of its implementation are tremendous and in irrecoverable. Managers who use this pattern divide individuals in their organization into two groups of the capable and the incapable. They believe that more authorities should be given to the capable sections and individuals. They emphasize on the necessity of adopting a more order-oriented approach towards weak sections and individuals. However, if managers who are used to take advantage of risky patterns are allowed to deal with crises, they will be able to bring everything to the normal status. Therefore, a single commanding authority should try to identify capable managers at critical times and authorize them in their affiliated domains. This commanding authority should behave authoritatively with other individuals in order to control the crisis and bring normal order back. It is quite clear that, in normal conditions, we should deal with everyone based on his potentials, inclinations, and requirements and adopt a style which is compatible with him.

- Crisis Management Team: it is necessary to specify a small team of top managers as the team for dealing with the crisis and providing information and communication supports. It is suggested that the top manager of the organization and the public relations manager of that organization be included as permanent members of this team and other members be selected based on the kind of crisis.
- Evaluation of the Status Based on Information: showing reaction without sharing enough information is like shooting towards a target and then asking what the target is. This kind of reaction can make you a victim of the first wave of crisis. Therefore, we are required to move gradually and adopt necessary steps. We should be assured that correct information is provided timely and we can specify our information strategy. In fact, crisis assessment is the first step for gathering information about crisis. Without preparation in this regard, we cannot show any proper reaction to the crisis and we should wait until the crisis team has been formed. Furthermore, swift establishment of crisis management team and prompt adoption of information strategy for a critical situation can never be as effective as the previously established and trained teams.
- Specify Important Messages: when you realize what kind of information is generally expected by our audience, what kind of information will you provide for them? The important point is that you should not send more than 3 important messages to your ordinary audience. However, you can send some messages to your special audience.
- Establishing Communication Channels: there are various internal and external methods for providing information about a critical situation. Each of these methods has its own peculiar effects. Advantages and disadvantages of each method should be assessed separately and based on requirements of each organization.
- Psychological Self-control of Managers: regardless of the nature of the crisis, some audience does not react favorably. This can be quite disappointing. Therefore, what should be done?

1. Control yourself and your nerves;

2. Look at reactions objectively and find out whether a mistake has been made or not? Or is the reaction the result of interpretations of other partners of the crisis?

3. Do you have any other method of communication with other partners of the crisis in order to change their perceptions?

4. Is there any other method that can create more unfavorable effects in these audiences?

5. Is it useful to embark on initiatives for further communication?

- Management for the Future: when we are in a good and calm condition, planning and programming for dealing with crisis may seem a luxurious and redundant initiative. In such a situation, the manager believes that there will be no crisis and if he is faced with a crisis, it will be easily managed. However, researches have indicated that any delay in designing crisis control programs can easily triple the losses of that crisis. Such a delay can also cause irrecoverable losses, whereas through an appropriate programming, we can provide a proper operational framework for managing future crises.

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A Discourse of The Indonesian National Armed Forces Involvement in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in The Frame of Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

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ABSTRACT

This study scrutinizes the prospective role of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) in post-conflict peacebuilding, emphasizing civil-military cooperation (CIMIC). Despite its legal mandate for peacebuilding, the TNI encounters reservations due to fears of potential human rights infringements and its perceived repressive image. In contrast, the high public trust level of 93% indicates a possible path for TNI's peacebuilding involvement. However, this necessitates a robust commitment to human rights, adaptability to civilian regulations, and assurance of non-repressive approaches. Augmented collaboration with civilian institutions under civilian supremacy could potentially facilitate this shift. Applying the theory of change perspective, the study highlights the significance of civil-military cooperation, public trust, and soft military power in peacebuilding. The successful execution of peacebuilding missions hinges on balancing responsibilities between civilian leaders and military officers, bolstering civilian control over the military. The analysis confronts the contradiction between public trust in TNI and peace activist concerns, stimulating a nuanced dialogue for state policy development regarding military roles in peacebuilding.

KEYWORDS: Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), CIMIC, theory of change

INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian National Armed Forces/*Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI) plays an indispensable role in safeguarding national security, assuring territorial integrity, and mitigating multifaceted threats (Sukma, 2003). The TNI, under the auspices of Indonesian Law number 34 of 2004, is tasked with peacebuilding responsibilities, utilizing soft power strategies in military operations devoid of warfare. Despite this legal endorsement, the TNI's active role in peacebuilding has attracted skepticism, particularly from peace activists apprehensive about possible human rights abuses linked to military interventions (Tadjoeddin, 2001).

This sense of skepticism sharply contrasts the elevated levels of public trust in the TNI, as emphasized by surveys conducted in 2022 (The Jakarta Post, 2022). These conflicting perspectives reflect the intricacies involved in military participation in peacebuilding, highlighting different stakeholders' divergent expectations and concerns. The divergence in perception, however, does not negate the necessity for the TNI's involvement in peacebuilding missions. Rather, it underscores the importance of ensuring that such missions are conducted within a framework that respects human rights and upholds the principles of peace and justice. This disjunction accentuates the immediate need for a more nuanced analysis of this issue, an in-depth reassessment of the TNI's role, and a comprehensive investigation into the potential for civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) in peacebuilding efforts. The apparent paradox also calls attention to the pivotal role of transparent communication and accountability in fostering public trust while responding effectively to the concerns of peace activists (Bruneau, 2006).

A pivotal moment in the evolution of the TNI's peacebuilding role was their intervention in the aftermath of the Aceh conflict. Since 2005, the TNI has been deeply engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding in Aceh, with CIMIC serving as a crucial component (Aspinall, 2008). This experience furnished valuable lessons on the intricacies of civil-military cooperation, the determinants influencing the success of such collaborations, and the implications these might have on future peacebuilding operations involving the TNI (Wibisono & Sugiarto, 2016).

While the TNI's participation in peacebuilding is recognized, an exhaustive analysis of its role within the CIMIC framework is scarce. The CIMIC paradigm developed as a result of the burgeoning recognition of the need for military forces to engage positively and productively with civilian entities during and post-conflict situations. CIMIC encapsulates the collaborative efforts of military forces and various civilian actors—including international organizations, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, and the civilian population—to promote humanitarian and reconstruction activities in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations (Pugh & Goodhand, 2004).

This study aims to explore the discussion about TNI's participation in post-conflict peacebuilding using the CIMIC framework. The objective of analyzing past and present situations is to uncover the reasons behind TNI's approach to CIMIC, evaluate its effect on peacebuilding, and suggest potential paths for Indonesia's civil-military cooperation strategies. The goal is to expand the understanding of civil-military collaboration in post-conflict peacebuilding, providing information that could influence policy and planning in Indonesia and similar situations around the world.

THE ROLE OF THE INDONESIAN NATIONAL ARMED FORCES IN POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING

In the effort to establish peace in post-conflict Indonesia, the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) have played a key role. The military has effectively used its power to create and maintain a safe environment that is conducive to peacebuilding, particularly in situations marked by instability and uncertainty. The TNI has skillfully adapted its approach to suit Indonesia's changing political and social climate and the global community. This adaptation has included a greater emphasis on civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) and the use of 'soft power' tactics. These tactics involve non-coercive methods like diplomacy, cultural influence, and economic incentives to achieve foreign policy objectives (Nye, 2004). Since the early 2000s, the TNI has adopted a more collaborative approach in its dealings with civilian entities, seeking to build bridges, foster mutual understanding, and work towards common goals in the realm of peacebuilding (Laksmiana, 2011). This shift in military strategy represents a significant departure from conventional military doctrine and acknowledges the critical role of civilian engagement and cooperation in achieving lasting peace and sustainable development.

The TNI's involvement in post-conflict peacebuilding was highlighted in the wake of the Aceh conflict, which ended in 2005. In this transitional period, the TNI not only fulfilled their traditional security roles but also played a pivotal part in facilitating the disarmament process, a crucial initial phase in the transformation from conflict to peace. Apart from their regular responsibilities, they also assisted in reintegrating ex-combatants into society. This crucial task demanded a cautious and comprehensive approach, which included diplomacy, patience, and detailed reorientation programs (Kingma, 1997). Moreover, the TNI played a vital role in rebuilding vital infrastructures like roads, schools, and hospitals. Their contributions helped to restore essential services, revitalize the local economy, and create a sense of normalcy among the people (Barakat, 2005; Barakat & Zyck, 2009). During this time, the TNI implemented CIMIC strategies that promoted a collaborative approach to peacebuilding and strengthened the relationship between military and civilian parties, including international peacebuilding organizations. Caspersz and Wallis (2006), as well as Egnell (2013), have proven that the implementation of these strategies has been effective in encouraging collaboration among military and civilian groups. It also helps deal with the challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding and creates a climate of trust and teamwork.

Despite the critical role of the TNI in peacebuilding, their involvement has been fraught with challenges and controversies. Critics have been quick to highlight the potential of TNI's engagement in post-conflict environments to exacerbate tensions, especially in regions marked by contentious civil-military relations, thus potentially undermining trust-building efforts that are integral to the peacebuilding process (Schulze, 2007). Furthermore, the TNI's historically repressive image in conflict resolution has considerably influenced the perspectives of peace activists, thereby reinforcing their skepticism towards military involvement in peacebuilding. Concerns around potential human rights violations linked to the TNI's peacebuilding activities have underscored the pressing need for the military institution to prioritize respect for human rights, uphold the rule of law, and align its operations with civilian regulations (Human Rights Watch, 2006). This narrative, primarily fostered by peace activists, presents a significant challenge for the TNI, as it hinges on the perception of military force as inherently incompatible with peacebuilding. However, the reality seems more nuanced, given the high level of public trust in the TNI. This suggests that despite the critiques, the TNI has managed to establish a credible standing in society, providing a solid basis for their peacebuilding role moving forward.

The TNI undeniably plays a crucial role in peacebuilding amid the intricate post-conflict scenarios faced by Indonesia. The necessity for robust civil-military collaboration, enhanced civilian oversight of military activities, and the incorporation of a human rights-centric approach in peacebuilding operations are integral to ensuring long-term peace and stability (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007). To tackle these issues effectively, the TNI needs to exhibit a tangible commitment to human rights, as reflected in its ability to conform to civilian norms, particularly during peacebuilding missions. Implementing confidence-building measures that promote transparency, accountability for potential past misconduct, and guarantees against repressive practices to conflict parties could significantly contribute to this effort. At the same time, the TNI should strategically harness its soft power by fostering collaboration with civil institutions in joint assignments under civilian supremacy. This strategy could help cultivate an atmosphere conducive to civil-military cooperation, thus counterbalancing any prevailing negative perceptions and potentially reshaping the TNI's role within the broader peacebuilding landscape. Indeed, the dynamics of human rights considerations, societal trust-building, and effective civil-military cooperation are critical for the TNI to contribute to Indonesia's peacebuilding endeavors positively. Understanding these dynamics forms the crux of this research, providing a lens to evaluate and guide the TNI's future peacebuilding efforts.

Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC): AN OVERVIEW

Civil-Military Cooperation, commonly called CIMIC, is comprehensive approach military organizations use to establish effective collaboration with civilian entities during peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. While the military's primary purpose is to maintain security,

CIMIC acknowledges the intrinsic value of creating synergies with various civilian stakeholders to achieve sustainable peace and stability.

Conceptualized and developed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the late 1990s, Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) has emerged as a strategic tool specifically designed to bridge the often-significant gap between military and civilian efforts in conflict and post-conflict settings (NATO Standard AJP-3.19, 2018). The doctrine of CIMIC, which has gained widespread recognition and implementation, places substantial emphasis on the critical importance of facilitating effective and meaningful collaboration between military forces and a diverse array of civilian entities, including but not limited to international organizations, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, and the civilian population at large. By fostering an environment of shared objectives and mutual respect, the CIMIC model has demonstrated its capacity to enhance the overall efficacy of peacebuilding operations and to drive the evolution of a more holistic, integrative approach to the complex challenges of modern warfare and post-conflict reconstruction.

At its core, CIMIC embodies an inclusive approach that aims to ensure that military operations are thoughtfully integrated and meticulously coordinated with the broader humanitarian and developmental goals that invariably come into play within conflict or post-conflict regions (Soeters, Rietjens, & Voordijk, 2008). This inclusive vision provides a strategic and highly functional platform enabling military forces to actively and effectively participate in a range of critical missions beyond traditional combat roles. Such missions may include, but are certainly not limited to, providing humanitarian relief, facilitating and overseeing reconstruction efforts, and spearheading development activities. Simultaneously, the CIMIC framework acknowledges the continuing obligation of these military forces to maintain security and order, ensuring that these twin responsibilities can be managed in a complementary, rather than conflicting, manner. By embracing this broadened mandate, the military can make significant contributions to the stability and resilience of societies emerging from conflict, bolstering long-term peace prospects and fostering sustainable development.

While the practical utility of CIMIC was initially identified and leveraged predominantly within peacekeeping operations, it has been progressively and extensively recognized as highly valuable in broader peacebuilding efforts. This crucial extension of CIMIC's role is not a theoretical construct but is substantiated and demonstrated worldwide in various contemporary conflict and post-conflict scenarios. In these complex, multifaceted situations, military entities and civilian agencies are observed to collaborate extensively, effectively leveraging their distinct skills, perspectives, and resources to facilitate a smoother, more sustainable transition from conflict to lasting peace. These collaborations, facilitated by the CIMIC framework, allow the synergistic alignment of varied yet complementary efforts. These joint initiatives range from restoring essential infrastructure, providing critical social services, reinforcing local governance structures,

and fostering reconciliation and communal healing. As a result, the impact and reach of peacebuilding initiatives are intensified and more widely distributed, contributing to an environment conducive to establishing durable peace and preventing conflict relapse.

However, the practical application and operationalization of CIMIC is not without its fair share of inherent challenges and complex obstacles. Effectively implementing CIMIC necessitates efficient coordination, a profound mutual understanding of respective roles and responsibilities, as well as the equitable sharing of resources between the military and civilian entities. These requirements must be met often within the context of intricate, highly dynamic, and challenging circumstances (De Coning, 2017). Moreover, the integration of military forces within civilian sectors further necessitates the military personnel to demonstrate high degrees of adaptability and sensitivity towards civilian norms, cultures, and needs. To enable this, it is incumbent upon military organizations to undertake extensive training and orientation efforts, providing their personnel with the skills and perspectives necessary to engage productively within civilian environments. Furthermore, the dichotomy between military objectives and the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence often poses challenges in finding common grounds for collaboration. This necessitates fostering a shared understanding and respect for the guiding principles and operational constraints of all parties involved, further adding to the complexity of CIMIC's successful implementation in peacebuilding contexts.

The complex nature of CIMIC implementation may pose challenges, but its contribution to global peacebuilding is essential. CIMIC is a recognized model for promoting collaboration, communication, and support between military and civilian entities. The ultimate goal is to achieve enduring peace, societal recovery, and sustainable development in conflict-affected regions. Understanding how CIMIC is efficiently used within the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) in the aftermath of conflict is crucial. It is also important to consider the experiences and challenges faced by the TNI and customize CIMIC to fit the cultural, social, and political contexts of post-conflict peacebuilding.

4 THEORY OF CHANGE FRAMEWORK

The theory of change is a framework that outlines the relationships between actions and desired outcomes. It helps understand how to achieve specific goals and objectives. A logical and testable hypothesis identifies how certain activities or interventions lead to desired impacts or changes (Coffman & Beer, 2016). In the context of CIMIC and the TNI involvement in post-conflict peacebuilding, the theory of change provides a framework to analyze and understand how the TNI can integrate into peacebuilding efforts. It allows for a systematic exploration of the relationships between CIMIC activities, public trust, non-aggressive military power, and their potential impacts on state policies.

In this context, the theory of change establishes a hypothesis for the process of change and how the TNI can align with civilian-led peacebuilding initiatives through non-violent interventions. It tracks the TNI's roles and functions as they incorporate civilian methodologies in their peacebuilding approach. The theory emphasizes the importance of addressing root problems or contradictions that contribute to conflicts so the TNI's involvement achieves comprehensive and sustainable conflict resolution. Stakeholders can use the theory of change to examine potential pathways for desired outcomes in post-conflict peacebuilding missions involving the TNI. It emphasizes transforming relationships between military and civilian actors, fostering cooperation and understanding, and promoting shared responsibilities in peacebuilding efforts.

The theory of change provides a structured framework to assess the potential integration of the TNI into peacebuilding efforts. It facilitates an exploration of the relationships between CIMIC, public trust, the application of non-aggressive military power, and their potential influences on state policies (Binnendijk, 2003; Galtung, 1969). Adopting this perspective allows for an analysis of the TNI's involvement in peacebuilding through CIMIC and its impact on trust-building and collaboration between military and civilian actors in post-conflict contexts.

Galtung's views on conflict posit that resolving conflicts involves transforming relationships between parties, similar to the principles of civil-military cooperation (Galtung, 1996). Consequently, considering the plausibility of the TNI's participation in post-conflict peacebuilding missions through cooperation with civilian institutions, which remains relatively unexplored in Indonesia, becomes essential. As military organizations increasingly embrace cooperation with non-military entities, the TNI's potential contribution to peacebuilding through CIMIC gains relevance.

In examining civil-military relations, it is crucial to consider the concept of a 'political army,' as observed in the Indonesian Military (TNI). A 'political army' perceives involvement in domestic politics and government affairs as essential to its legitimate duties. This characterization highlights the TNI's enduring political influence in Indonesia, where it plays a significant role in shaping the nation's destiny and maintaining stability (Cribb, 2002). Understanding this dimension is critical when analyzing the TNI's involvement in post-conflict peacebuilding and navigating civil-military cooperation complexities.

Bland's theory of shared responsibility and Schiff's concordance theory contribute to understanding civilian military control. These theories propose that civilian control is established and maintained through shared responsibilities between civilian leaders and military officers and cooperation between the military, political elites, and the general populace (Bland, 1972; Schiff,

1981). Examining these theories in the context of the TNI's peacebuilding involvement helps grasp how cooperation and collaboration between the military and civilians can shape post-conflict outcomes.

Huntington's perspective emphasizes a distinct separation between civilian and military groups, with civilians acting as political masters and the military safeguarding society from external threats (Huntington, 1957). While this model has its merits, examining it in the context of peacebuilding and potential civil-military cooperation provides valuable insights into how the TNI can navigate its roles and responsibilities to contribute positively to post-conflict peacebuilding endeavors.

In general, the theory of change offers a robust analytical framework to understand the potential role of the Indonesian National Armed Forces in post-conflict peacebuilding within the context of CIMIC. By adopting this lens, one can explore how the TNI's involvement can lead to positive outcomes through collaborative efforts with civilian actors and potentially influence state policies. A comprehensive dialogue considering various theories and perspectives can contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between military and civilian actors in peacebuilding missions, leading to more effective and sustainable peacebuilding efforts in Indonesia and beyond.

5 OBSTACLES IN THE CIMIC

CIMIC undeniably plays a pivotal role in peacebuilding operations, acting as the linchpin that melds military actions with humanitarian and developmental goals (Pugh, Cooper, & Goodhand, 2004). It bridges the gap between disparate entities, fostering a synergy necessary for comprehensive peacebuilding missions. Notwithstanding its significance, the operationalization of CIMIC frequently confronts several hurdles. Although contextually nuanced, these challenges also exhibit broader general characteristics prevalent across different regions and situations. They encompass factors like coordination difficulties stemming from divergent organizational cultures and operational methods between civilian and military bodies, varied perceptions of security, and a deficit of mutual understanding and trust. The successful execution of CIMIC mandates necessitates overcoming these impediments, thereby ensuring a harmonious interplay between military objectives and humanitarian ideals, which ultimately serve as the bedrock for lasting peace and stability.

The cultural divide between military and civilian entities is a significant barrier to effective CIMIC. Each group carries its unique operational culture and mandate, often leading to misunderstanding and tension that can undermine their joint efforts. With military organizations typically functioning within a hierarchical and disciplined structure, starkly contrasting the more

flexible, participatory, and consultative norms favored by civilian actors such as NGOs, the potential for miscommunication and friction is palpable (Egnell, 2010). Such divergence can cause communication gaps, making cooperation between these two distinct bodies challenging. Recognizing this, it becomes clear that the successful integration of the TNI into peacebuilding missions necessitates a paradigm shift that emphasizes responsibility sharing between civilian leaders and military officers under the CIMIC framework. As a result, both military and civilian entities need to develop a shared understanding and joint strategies for achieving peacebuilding objectives, thus bridging the gap between these two critical players in post-conflict settings.

Navigating from the cultural divide, another significant hurdle arises around issues of trust and perceived intentions. This challenge is particularly acute in scenarios where military forces—such as the TNI—are required to operate in areas tarnished with a history of military abuses or repression. In such contexts, their involvement in peacebuilding activities may trigger suspicion and apprehension, impacting the willingness of civilian entities to engage and collaborate. This reluctance can subsequently hamper the overall effectiveness of CIMIC strategies, creating a hurdle for peacebuilding missions (Coning, 2017). The TNI has the ability to assist in peacebuilding efforts greatly. This is due to the high level of trust placed in them by the public, as well as their mandate to use soft power for peacekeeping. However, it is crucial that the TNI prioritizes human rights and incorporates civilian norms into its approach. By taking that action, they can establish credibility and trust among peace activists, which will provide a solid foundation for implementing CIMIC strategies and enhancing their effectiveness.

Another hurdle to effective CIMIC arises due to differing short-term and long-term priorities between military and civilian entities. It's commonplace for military forces, such as the TNI, to be preoccupied with immediate security issues, ensuring an environment conducive to other activities. Conversely, civilian actors are more likely to be engrossed in the execution of longer-term development goals, focusing on sustainable peace and socio-economic advancement (Bryden & Hänggi, 2005). The alignment of these disparate objectives towards a collective aim can often present considerable complications. Yet, reconciling these varying priorities is critical for productive CIMIC implementation, ensuring that immediate and long-term goals are adequately addressed in peacebuilding endeavors.

The issue of resource allocation comes into focus as another obstacle to effective CIMIC. Notably, military forces, such as the TNI, often have access to more substantial resources, both in terms of personnel and financial capacities, compared to their civilian counterparts (Pugh, Cooper, & Goodhand, 2004). This disparity can create power imbalances that inadvertently affect the dynamics of collaborative efforts. Civilian entities might feel overshadowed or sidelined due to the overwhelming resources of the military, thus obstructing the ideal functioning of the CIMIC framework. It is essential that such imbalances are addressed proactively to ensure that

all actors involved in the peacebuilding process are duly recognized and equally valued, fostering a cooperative and constructive atmosphere.

The culmination of CIMIC-related challenges circles around transparency issues concerning military actions and the principle of accountability. This concern becomes even more pronounced in contexts where civilian oversight over military activities is not firmly established or when there's an absence of clear-cut legal frameworks that dictate the actions and role of military forces in the context of peacebuilding (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007). In these blurred lines of jurisdiction, tensions may arise and hamper the efficiency of peacebuilding missions. However, the Indonesian National Armed Forces can counteract these challenges by adopting a steadfast commitment to human rights and conforming to civilian rules and regulations. This demonstration of commitment could help the TNI build trust and confidence, thereby paving the way for productive peacebuilding initiatives in Indonesia. Despite the roadblocks, the critical importance of CIMIC in peacebuilding continues to remain irrefutable, thus underscoring the importance of ongoing efforts to strengthen collaboration, mutual understanding, and shared objectives between military actors and civilian counterparts.

6 OPPORTUNITIES AND PROSPECTS

Despite the many challenges and obstacles, CIMIC has great potential and opportunities for peacebuilding. A successful collaboration between military and civilian actors can lead to comprehensive and sustainable solutions in regions distressed by conflict, paving the way for socio-political stability and economic development. CIMIC functions as a facilitator, bridging the cultural, operational, and resource-related gaps that may otherwise obstruct a unified approach to peacebuilding. Indeed, CIMIC's strategic importance is underscored by its ability to reconcile the immediate security concerns of military forces with the long-term developmental goals of civilian actors. The synergetic efforts thus result in not just immediate resolution of conflict but also long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction, and progress of the war-torn regions, thus underscoring the pragmatic and strategic significance of CIMIC in post-conflict scenarios (Pugh, Cooper, & Goodhand, 2004).

One of the substantial opportunities inherent in the CIMIC framework is the potential for pooling resources and leveraging complementary capabilities from military and civilian entities. Each entity brings distinctive strengths to the fore in peacebuilding endeavors, creating a harmonious synergy that could be significantly impactful. On the one hand, military forces like the TNI can offer security provisions, formidable logistical capabilities, and rapid response to crisis situations, which is critical to stabilizing post-conflict regions and creating an environment conducive to development interventions. On the other hand, civilian entities, encompassing international organizations, local government bodies, and non-governmental organizations,

contribute specialized expertise spanning various sectors, including but not limited to governance, development, human rights, and grassroots community engagement. This collaborative approach maximizes resources and ensures a holistic and comprehensive response to the multifaceted challenges that typically characterize conflict and post-conflict settings (De Coning, 2017).

Participating in CIMIC offers a unique chance to combine short-term security measures with long-term developmental goals for mutual benefit. The integration of military actions with civilian endeavors can facilitate a two-pronged approach to peacebuilding operations; these could address pressing security concerns while simultaneously making progress towards rectifying the foundational socio-economic conditions that breed conflict in the first place. A balanced application of military and civilian strategies can lead to a more comprehensive and effective peacebuilding process, with military efforts focused on stabilizing the situation and civilian initiatives targeting the underlying issues that trigger unrest, such as economic disparity and social injustice. This harmonized approach in CIMIC endeavors can significantly enhance the prospects of achieving lasting peace, making it a powerful tool in post-conflict scenarios (Egnell, 2010).

Combining military resources and civilian expertise in the context of CIMIC also unlocks opportunities for fostering improved cultural understanding. The inevitable interaction and dialogue that occurs between these distinct groups can yield an enhanced mutual understanding and respect, breaking down existing cultural and communication barriers (Bryden & Hänggi, 2005). This understanding goes beyond mere coordination and enters the realm of societal impact. Importantly, the expansion and effective implementation of CIMIC strategies can be instrumental in re-establishing public trust, particularly within regions that have witnessed contentious civil-military histories. Military forces can actively rebuild trust by adhering strictly to human rights principles, fostering a culture of collaboration with civilian entities, and contributing positively to overall community welfare, laying the foundations for societal reconciliation (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007). This potential transformation in public perception and trust underscores the promise inherent in broadening the reach and depth of CIMIC within peacebuilding efforts.

Despite the inherent difficulties, CIMIC exhibits tremendous potential for development. This potential lies predominantly in the realm of continuous learning, adaptation, and improvement, influenced by previous experiences and lessons learned. The assimilation of these experiences into the development of military doctrine and training is a crucial aspect of this process (Pugh, Cooper, & Goodhand, 2004). Concurrently, civilian entities stand to benefit significantly from an enhanced understanding of the operational culture and constraints characteristic of military forces. This two-way channel of learning and understanding serves to fortify the synergies between these two critical pillars of peacebuilding. Essentially, CIMIC offers many opportunities

and prospects that highlight its important role in peacebuilding. Navigating the challenges strategically and maximizing the benefits of harnessing CIMIC for sustainable and effective peacebuilding operations is crucial.

7 conclusion

The examination of CIMIC within the context of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) engagement in post-conflict peacebuilding affords an insightful foray into the complexities of blending military endeavors and civilian initiatives for durable conflict resolution. The TNI's endeavors, underscored by the dichotomy of commanding public trust while simultaneously grappling with concerns voiced by peace activists, illustrate the intricate navigation required in undertaking peacebuilding missions. It is important to maintain a delicate balance between demonstrating a commitment to human rights, respecting civilian rules, and efficiently utilizing soft power when working towards peacebuilding on a larger scale.

When considering the TNI's role in peacebuilding, it becomes apparent that the military institution has a complex responsibility to promote peace and avoid violating human rights. Past examples, such as the TNI's involvement in the aftermath of the Aceh conflict, demonstrate the potential of CIMIC. However, there are challenges to this approach, such as cultural differences, conflicting priorities, trust issues, and resource imbalances. Despite these difficulties, working collaboratively has significant benefits, including sharing resources, aligning security concerns with long-term development objectives, and promoting cultural understanding and trust. Moving forward, the TNI needs to address these challenges while simultaneously learning from past experiences and incorporating these lessons into training and development strategies for military and civilian personnel.

In conclusion, this study underlines the significant role of the Indonesian National Armed Forces in post-conflict peacebuilding within the CIMIC framework. The discourse suggests that by adhering to the principles of cooperation, human rights respect, and sincere alignment with civilian regulations and objectives, the TNI has the potential to reshape its peacebuilding missions. Such an evolution could stimulate more nuanced policy discussions regarding military roles in peacebuilding at a state level. Consequently, this could pave the way for a more effective and sustainable peace pathway within Indonesia, potentially even serving as a global example. This comprehensive exploration of civil-military cooperation, with a keen focus on the TNI's role and potential, provides an insightful outlook into the multifaceted and dynamic field of peacebuilding.

FUNDING: This research received no external funding.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Journalism, Peace, and Conflict: Peace Workers and Journalism Academics' Perspectives on Methods of Reporting Conflict in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria, a country characterised by diverse ethnicities, religions, and socio-political complexities, the relationship between journalism, peace, and conflict is a crucial study area. The nation's history, marked by social and political turbulence, underscores the significance of how journalists report on conflicts. Their methods shape public perception and influence policy decisions, potentially aggravating or mitigating tensions in this complex landscape. This study aims to review war journalism-oriented news reporting methods and develop novel conflict reporting methods to transform conflicts into peace, national security, and peacebuilding. The study employs critical participatory action research methods using Focus Group Discussion to gather constructive proposals from journalism education academics and peace workers on news reporting methods that can help transform conflicts into a tool for peacebuilding and national security promotion. The study involved six focus group discussions of 48 participants from peace workers and journalism education academics in selected Nigerian universities. The study established that Peace workers and journalism academics have critiqued the current methods of reporting conflict in Nigerian news media, identifying several problematic issues. These include biased reporting on social media, ethnic profiling, misrepresentation of facts, media sensationalism, bias, propaganda, the desire for relevance, preference for negative news, and a lack of professionalism. Panelists defended peace journalism as a means of guaranteeing peacebuilding. It is a method of covering news to advance communication, understanding, and peaceful settlement of disputes. The discussion explores the idea of specialisation within mass communication programs, with suggestions for double majors or minors in areas such as conflict analysis.

Key Words: Journalism, Peace, Conflict, National Security, Crisis, Conflict Transformation, peace journalism, Journalism education, Curriculum

Introduction

An unstable role interplay between journalism and conflict threatens sustainable development, national security, and peaceful coexistence. While conflicts also occupy much media space and intensify the news cycle, journalists and media organisations are sometimes destroyed. Journalists' outputs in conflict situations could form the basis for social mobilisation and political engagement. Journalism entails producing and disseminating news, information, and commentary on issues of public concern regularly (Schudson, 2011). One of the determinants for deciding what is news or what should be disseminated is conflict. This is because the 'news values, such as drama, sensationalism, adventure, and human interest' are laden in conflict (Ogunyemi, 2017, p.2). Conflict is a recurring matter in global affairs. It is synonymous with dispute or disagreement 'involving a certain class of individuals, groups, or entities' (Reuben, 2009, p.50). The emphasis or narratives journalists make of conflicts can escalate or deescalate with serious consequences on people, resources, security, and peaceful resolution.

Conflict comprises civil war, territorial conflicts, transnational terrorism, sectarian conflicts, political instability, interstate conflicts, and criminal violence (GCT, 2016). Nigeria has experienced many of these conflicts since independence, including the civil war, Niger Delta crisis, electoral violence, Boko Haram insurgency, herders/farmers crisis, banditry, and kidnapping. On the other hand, journalists rigorously apply journalistic norms in conflict reporting to maintain journalistic authority as more and more conflicts are cropping up (Ogunyemi, 2017). The constitution of UNESCO, according to Magder (2003), provides that 'communication can promote tolerance and provide the foundation for a politics that makes it possible to change peacefully (without violence and social turmoil) the rules we live by' (p.30).

In covering conflict or crises, it is customary and constitutional for the media to direct public attention towards negotiations and restore communication among parties and groups of citizens (Santos, 2023). Conflict has always been attractive to the mass media (Akpoghiran & Otite, 2013) and is also a criterion for what is considered news. Whenever conflicts arise, the news media become actors by their normative and constitutional requirements by disseminating information and spreading and dispelling rumours that enhance or inhibit conflict transformation. The news media can help society identify and promote acts aimed at transforming conflicts, which, according to Lugalambi (2006), can identify the "cultures of peace whereby peace is cherished as a value" (p. 107).

Therefore, in conflict situations, the social responsibility of journalists is to nurture the public interest and champion a 'common vision' based on core principles around which citizens ought to be encouraged to unite as well as cultivate public consensus by helping to focus citizens' attention on issues of collective concern to produce agreement and persuade people to voice their opinions (Lugalambi, 2006). Thus, fair and accurate journalism and media content that builds confidence and counteracts misperceptions may potentially lead to conflict prevention and transformation (Melone et al., 2002).

However, the relationship between journalism peace and peace is debated among several actors and scholars. For instance, scholars tag the current methods of reporting conflicts as war journalism-oriented news reporting (Lynch & Galtung, 2010), which emphasises the superficial

and sensational aspects of conflict (Lumbaca & Gray, 2011; Ross, 2007; Cohen-Almagor, 2005; Nacos, 2002) and celebrates conflict as a primary news value (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). However, the perspectives of those journalism educators and peace workers have not been examined. This study aims to review war journalism-oriented news reporting methods and develop novel conflict reporting methods to transform conflicts into peace, national security, and peacebuilding.

Statement of the problem

In the complex landscape of Nigeria, a nation marked by diverse ethnicities, religions, and socio-political complexities, the intersection of journalism, peace, and conflict becomes a critical focal point for examination. Against the backdrop of a history punctuated by periods of social and political turbulence, the methods employed by journalists in reporting conflict play a pivotal role in shaping public perception, influencing policy decisions, and potentially exacerbating or mitigating tensions.

The perspectives of peace workers and journalism academics provide valuable insights into the nuanced challenges faced by media practitioners in Nigeria. As the nation grapples with recurring instances of conflict, there is a growing need to understand the dynamics between journalism and peacebuilding. The coexistence of various narratives within the media landscape and the potential impact of journalistic practices on peace efforts underscores the significance of exploring how conflicts are reported.

Objectives of the study

The study seeks to

- i. Identify the perspectives of peace workers and journalism academics on the current methods of reporting conflict in the news media in Nigeria.
- ii. Determine how the current methods of reporting conflict help build peace or promote more violence in Nigeria.
- iii. Ascertain the best methods of reporting conflict in Nigeria that can reduce tension, promote peaceful resolution, and promote national security.
- iv. Establish the training required of journalists reporting conflict in Nigeria.
- v. Suggest what the general role of the media should be in reporting conflict and conflict transformation in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Overview of existing research on the representation of peace and conflict in the media Journalism plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion and contributing to the discourse surrounding peace and conflict. In the context of Nigeria, a country with a complex sociopolitical landscape, the role of journalism in reporting conflict becomes particularly significant. This literature review examines the perspectives of peace workers and journalism academics on reporting conflict in Nigeria, focusing on fostering peace and understanding.

Journalism is a crucial mediator between conflicting parties and the public in pursuing peace. Scholars such as Allan and Zelizer (2004) argue that framing news stories can significantly influence public perception and exacerbate or alleviate tensions during times of conflict. Journalists act as information gatekeepers, shaping narratives that can escalate or de-escalate conflicts (Entman, 2012). Peace journalism emerges as an alternative paradigm to traditional conflict reporting. Scholars like Lynch and Galtung (2010) advocate shifting from sensationalism and violence-centric reporting to a more constructive and solutions-oriented approach. Peace

journalism emphasises the importance of presenting a holistic view of conflicts, giving voice to marginalised perspectives, and exploring avenues for resolution (Lynch, 2008).

Nigeria's diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural landscape uniquely challenges conflict reporting. Scholars like Ogbeche and Omoweh (2019) highlight issues such as media ownership, political interference, and ethnocentrism as factors that can compromise the objectivity of reporting. These challenges contribute to the perpetuation of stereotypes and can hinder efforts to promote peace and reconciliation. Peace workers, often engaged in conflict resolution and community-building initiatives, offer valuable insights into the impact of journalism on their efforts. Studies by Ibeanu (2015) and Yusuf (2018) underscore the importance of accurate and unbiased reporting in fostering trust among conflicting parties. They emphasise the need for journalists to act as mediators rather than exacerbators of conflict. On the other hand, journalism academics play a crucial role in shaping the next generation of reporters. Research by Ezeoha (2017) and Ibrahim (2020) explores the pedagogical approaches in journalism education that can contribute to more responsible and peace-oriented reporting. Key recommendations include integrating peace journalism principles into curricula and emphasising ethical reporting practices.

In discussing the role of media in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, Savrum and Miller (2015) state that the media exacerbates ethnic relations, intercultural relations, and conflict resolution in situations where it heightens negative impressions of conflict resolution proposals. They argued that the established news media represent a source of information that the public has relied on for what they expect is reliable information about important issues. As a result, news reports reflect the perspective of a particular interest group, which jeopardises peacebuilding and conflict resolution. About the Cyprus conflict, Savrum and Miller (2015) conclude that the news coverage of the processes connected with the Cyprus conflict resolution by the established media portrays a shallow level of positive headlines regarding the reconciliation proposals and the resolution plans.

Acknowledging that the role of media in conflict is increasing by shaping and reshaping the nature of conflicts, Saleem and Hanan (2014) observe that the media's role in conflict resolution largely depends on organisational interests and ideology. This has been evidenced since World War II, in which Hitler used media for propaganda. Then, in the 1990s, media efforts helped resolve the Yugoslavia conflict. In recent times, in 2003, the U.S. used media to wage war against Iraq in its pursuit of punishing Saddam Hussein and trace weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Among all the key players in conflict resolution, Savrum and Hanan (2014) explain that the media enjoys a unique position because it is a source of information for all the key players and the world outside; it can create channels for communication; any of the key players can manipulate it to achieve their objectives. The media also acts as a watchdog, making a stakeholder accountable by criticising and creating awareness and acting as a central pillar in the dynamics of the conflict resolution process, and any player can refer toward it. Another important reason for the media's critical position in conflict resolution is that the media can escalate or de-escalate conflict. Whereas the media escalates conflicts by initiating tensions, sensationalising events and indulging in false propaganda against adversaries, it can de-escalate conflict by persuading the conflicting parties, governments and communities to resolve any conflict and help shape public opinion for this task. Although the media sometimes works as a 'mirror' in a conflict when it is only concerned with transmitting facts to people without taking any position (Savrum & Hanan, 2014).

Evaluating conflicts and Nigerian media using the coverage of herdsmen and farmers' clashes by national newspapers, Aja et al. (2022) found that the Nigerian newspapers' direction of coverage of the conflicts is highly damaging and dominated by a criminality frame. The scholars maintained that many of the selected newspapers' reporters are yet to imbibe the principles of peace journalism in their news reporting, hence the need for journalists to be trained in peace journalism skills to facilitate the resolution of conflicts.

Given the role of journalism in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, Akpoghiran and Otite (2013) advised journalists not to allow their personal views and emotions, as well as ethnic, religious, political and ideological sentiments, to influence their reports on conflicts. This is because Ugondo et al. (2022) found that journalists profile ethnic or religious groups in their conflict reports. They misrepresent facts using photographs of previous events and happenings in other places into current conflict situations. Although Demarest and Langer (2021) explained that Nigerian newspapers do not explicitly use divisive language when discussing conflicts, they rarely stress underlying structural causes either. While there is a willingness among Nigerian journalists to avoid potentially escalatory language, a dearth of resources and capacities impedes independent and in-depth analysis concerning the underlying drivers of conflicts.

Numerous studies have examined the practical application of peace journalism in various conflict zones. For example, Keeble and Tulloch (2015) explored the role of peace journalism in reporting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, emphasising the potential for media to contribute to conflict resolution through balanced and constructive reporting. Research has sought to understand the impact of peace journalism on audiences. Allan and Matheson (2008) conducted a study on the effects of peace journalism training on journalism students, finding that exposure to peace journalism principles increased the likelihood of students adopting a more peace-oriented approach in their reporting.

This literature review highlights the intricate relationship between journalism, peace, and conflict in the Nigerian context. The perspectives of peace workers and journalism academics underscore the need for a paradigm shift in reporting methods, moving towards a more constructive, context-sensitive, and peace-focused approach. As Nigeria continues to grapple with multifaceted challenges, the role of journalism in promoting understanding and contributing to conflict resolution remains paramount. Future research should delve deeper into the practical implications of implementing peace journalism principles in the Nigerian media landscape.

Theoretical framework

The study is anchored on Peace Journalism Theory. The theory provides a comprehensive and insightful theoretical framework for examining the interplay between journalism, peace, and conflict, specifically in the context of reporting conflicts in Nigeria. This theoretical perspective, initially proposed by Johan Galtung and developed by scholars such as Lynch (2008), advocates for a transformative shift in how news is reported to contribute to conflict resolution and foster a more nuanced understanding of conflicts.

Peace journalism is rooted in several theoretical frameworks that guide its principles and practices. Galtung's (1969) concept of "structural violence" is foundational, emphasising the importance of addressing underlying systemic issues rather than merely reporting on overt conflicts. Lynch (2010) further developed the idea, introducing the Peace Journalism Model, which includes ethical considerations, dialogue promotion, and a focus on systemic causes of conflict.

Critical components of peace journalism theory are ethical responsibility, balanced reporting, constructive framing, humanising the other and contextual sensitivity. Peace Journalism emphasises the ethical responsibility of journalists to report with accuracy, fairness, and impartiality. Journalists are encouraged to critically examine their biases and avoid perpetuating stereotypes that may contribute to conflict escalation. The theory underscores the importance of presenting a balanced and comprehensive view of conflicts, considering multiple perspectives and voices. Journalists are urged to move beyond simplistic dichotomies and explore the root causes and underlying issues contributing to conflicts.

Again, peace Journalism promotes constructive framing, focusing on solutions and opportunities for dialogue rather than sensationalising violence. It encourages highlighting initiatives, individuals, and organisations working towards peace and reconciliation. The theory advocates for humanising all parties involved in the conflict, avoiding dehumanising language or imagery that may contribute to further animosity. Journalists are encouraged to depict the common humanity of individuals affected by conflict, fostering empathy and understanding. Peace Journalism Theory recognises the importance of understanding conflicts' cultural, historical, and social context. Journalists are urged to avoid simplistic narratives and provide audiences with a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding conflicts in Nigeria.

In the Nigerian context, where diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural factors contribute to conflicts, Peace Journalism Theory provides a framework for navigating the complexities of reporting. By adopting the principles of this theory, journalists can contribute to conflict resolution by promoting dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation among different groups.

Despite its noble objectives, peace journalism faces challenges and criticisms. Löffelholz and Weaver (2008) identified issues related to newsroom structures, professional norms, and economic pressures hindering peace journalism's widespread adoption. However, by employing Peace Journalism Theory as a theoretical framework, researchers can critically analyse media content, newsroom practices, and the impact of journalism education on reporting conflicts in Nigeria.

This framework provides a lens through which to assess the effectiveness of media in contributing to peacebuilding efforts and advancing a more constructive narrative surrounding conflicts in the region. Peace journalism is a field of journalism that emerged as a response to the criticism of traditional media's role in perpetuating conflict and violence. This approach promotes understanding, tolerance, and non-violence by presenting news stories highlighting solutions and peacebuilding efforts rather than sensationalising violence.

Methodology

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method was employed to study the experiences, views, and opinions of peace workers and journalism educators on the symbiotic relationship between journalism, peace, and conflict resolution. Focus group discussion (FGDs) is a qualitative research method that involves a small group of participants engaged in a guided discussion facilitated by a moderator. As defined by Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2005, p.887), focus groups are “collective conversations or group interviews”. The method involves ‘bringing together a group or series of groups of individuals to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator’ (Gunter, 2000, p. 42). With FGD, the researchers better understood and explained the nexus between journalism, peace, and conflict transformation in Nigeria. This method is beneficial for exploring

attitudes, perceptions, and experiences on peace journalism and conflict reporting and the range of perspectives on novel methods that can help transform conflict and promote peacebuilding.

Population: Journalism educators in Nigerian tertiary institutions and peace agents were the population for the study. They comprised six (6) focus group discussions set up from the six geographical regions of the country: North West, North East, North Central, South-South, South East and South West. Each group comprised eight (8) participants drawn from Nigerian higher that offer journalism or mass communication training and peace agents, making up 48 participants. The population also represented five up to seven universities in each geopolitical region and two peace agents. The tertiary institutions were considered because the Nigerian Union of Journalists prescribes a minimum of a National Diploma to qualify as a journalist. Since these are trained from tertiary institutions, the views of those who train them would be essential for understanding how journalism, peace, and conflict relate, and what consequences such interrelationships have on peacebuilding or conflict transformation.

Participants: The 48 participants were selected purposefully to ensure diversity and representativeness. They comprised peace workers with a decade of experience in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria and journalism educators with more than five years of teaching. The participants were selected through the snowball sampling technique. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique used in research, particularly in social sciences, where existing study participants recruit future participants. The process began with an initial set of 11 participants (seeds) that the researchers knew and were sure of their experience and participation in the study. These seeds were asked to refer others who met the criteria for the study. This process continued, creating a snowball effect as more and more participants were added to the sample of 36 for journalism academics and 12 for peace agents. Letters of invitation containing the address, date, and time of the meeting were sent to all participants. Follow-ups were also done through text and WhatsApp. A central venue within each geographical region convenient for the participants was selected and participants were mobilized to participate.

Moderators:

The researchers were moderators responsible for guiding the discussion, keeping the conversation on track, and ensuring all participants could express their views. The moderators followed a predetermined set of open-ended questions but allowed for flexibility to explore emerging themes.

Discussion Guide:

A discussion guide was structured, outlining topics and questions prepared in advance. It served as a framework for the discussion, covering critical areas of interest. The guide included introductory and follow-up questions to encourage participants to share their thoughts.

Conduct of the FGDs:

The FGDs were held physically at Enugu (South East Region), Calabar (South-South Region), Lagos (South West), Kano (North West), Jalingo (North East), and Jos (North Central). The FGDs capitalised on the discussion generated among participants. The participants were encouraged to not only respond to the moderator but also to the anecdotes conveyed by other participants and to engage in further reflection of personal experiences as others speak. Analysis was based on the participants' naturally occurring discourse or spoken words. This data was descriptive and elaborate because it went beyond superficial explanations. The data represented genuine attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and the justifications of the perspectives.

Duration:

Each FGD lasted between 2 to 3 hours with light refreshments. This timeframe allowed for a detailed topic exploration without causing participant fatigue. These FGDs were conducted in two months (February and March 2023).

Recording and Transcription:

The FGDs were recorded with participants' consent. Transcription of the discussions enabled researchers to analyse the content more thoroughly and identify recurring themes.

Analysis:

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data from focus group discussions. The researchers identified the themes that emerged from the participants' responses.

Results

The transcripts from the FGDs were examined and emergent themes were identified in line with the study objectives. Where necessary, the exact words of the participants are quoted for emphasis.

1. *Perspectives of peace agents and journalism educators on the current methods of reporting conflict in the news media in Nigeria*

Participants identified problematic reporting methods including biased reporting on social media, ethnic profiling, misrepresentation of facts, media sensationalism, bias, propaganda, the desire for relevance, preference for negative news, and the lack of professionalism. These issues collectively contributed to the challenges in reporting conflicts and terrorism in Nigeria. First, the participants described the current manner of reporting on conflicts as biased reporting, where the narrative is shaped based on personal biases, such as religious or ethnic affiliations of reporters and news sources. The FGD in the Southeast region of Nigeria, in particular, maintained that the way the media in Nigeria reports conflicts actually fuels them because there is no significant change, there is no significant shift from the traditional way of reporting. In other words, the media in Nigeria is not conflict-sensitive. The group stressed that there are certain reports that should be in the media. Discussant 2 in the group buttressed the point, further, citing that “What’s is the essence of a reporter saying that a Hausa man killed a pregnant Igbo woman?”

The FGD held in the North-West region of Nigeria also submitted that the reportage of conflict is inadequate.

Inadequate in the sense that ideally, in news reporting and writing, there is what is called, the issue of balancing. But what is actually happening presently is that you find out that the reporters simply rely on the readily available information normally given to them by security agencies. Ideally, the reporters, journalists or correspondents are supposed to be there where these issues, crises, and conflicts actually happen, with the view to see things by themselves so that they can be able to evaluate objectively as well as report to the people for their own consumption and they are the people that would now make a decision on what is going on.

Citing instances like the coverage of Boko Haram, Discussant 7 in the group explained that the media do not report conflict events as a national issue where everybody should be concerned. It is not being reported as something that could spread to other parts of the country, and whatever happens to one part of the country would affect, either directly or indirectly, other parts of the

country. To them, conflict is being reported more like a regional issue than a national issue. Discussant 1 in the North-West FGD expressed further that “If you look at the pattern of the news coming from the media, you would say that they tend to emphasize more on the crisis than peace. Rather than looking at it from a national perspective, they are looking at it from a regional perspective”. The group called for a rethink by journalists in their manner of reporting conflicts. While the journalists are reporting these crises, they should also have another component from the reportage that would also promote peace, peaceful coexistence, and unity in the entire country. For discussants at the South-West Nigeria FGD (2022), being biased, news reports of conflicts are also far, far below what is expected. The group noted

What is expected goes beyond being embedded by conflict parties. The military would invite reporters and give them handouts, a briefing about what has happened and that is what they relay to the public. What is missing actually is to contextualize those reports and to also do some independent reporting in a way that will illuminate the issues.

Participants expressed concerns about media bias and the use of media for propaganda. They noted instances where media outlets lack concrete facts and may contribute to the spread of misinformation, which can further fuel vulnerabilities in society. Along the same line, the FGD in South-South Nigeria observed that the way conflict is being reported in Nigeria is lopsided. It does not take cognizance of getting the balance or fairness as it is in the tenets of journalism practice. In the view of the South-South FGD, “most journalists do not do background checks and relay the information in such a way that it will be balanced”.

Reasons were also adduced by discussants as to what is responsible for the biased reporting of conflicts in Nigeria. One key issue mentioned was the reliance on social for news as many observed that “most of the news we read or watch are products of social media” (South-South FGD). More emphatically, North-Central FGD (2022) stated that “most of these problems are from bloggers. People just pick up their phones and open blogs and start posting stories”. The traditional media merely take information from some of these social media handles without providing detailed interpretations to guide the public regarding the issue they are reporting. So, “what you discover is that these platforms are merely serving as conduits through which these organizations project and promote their ideologies” (South-East FGD, 2022). These FGDs highlighted instances where media outlets, particularly bloggers, misrepresent facts by using old videos or images to create sensational stories. This misrepresentation according to them, can lead to the spread of fake news, contributing to the escalation of conflicts. Hence, social media has made journalists feel reluctant to go to areas where things are happening and just rely on the information they get on social media without actually authenticating what transpired there or if it is just someone’s opinion (North-East FGD, 2022).

The second reason for the poor reporting of conflicts by the media is the desire for relevance, to be the first to report, for the sake of securing the largest audience and advertising revenue. Among the North East FGD (2022) discussants, journalists and individuals reporting on conflicts were highlighted as a factor contributing to biased reporting. The need to be the first to report a story may lead to a lack of thorough fact-checking and verification. Again, the discussion pointed out that not everyone reporting on conflicts is a trained journalist, and this lack of

professionalism can contribute to the spread of misinformation and biased narratives. The South-East FGD (2022) observed that because the media want to serve their interest of higher sales.

Glorification of conflicts was the third reason discussants provided for the poor reporting of conflicts. The discussants explained how the media prioritises negative news over positive stories. The belief that bad news sells more and attracts attention leads to the reporting of conflicts and crises rather than focusing on efforts toward peace and resolution (North-Central FGD, 2022). Highlighting the emphasis on conflict as a news determinant, the North-West FGD (2022) observed that the reporting of conflicts in the country is creating more violence than promoting peace in the country, which is generally due to a lack of patriotism. Most journalists don't even know why patriotism means talking less than practising it. They are more promoting violence than peace in the country.

The emphasis on sensational headlines, breaking news, and the re-circulation of old news contributes to media sensationalism. This approach may lead to the distortion of facts and creating unnecessary tension in society. Discussants suggested that the media understands the preferences of the Nigerian populace, which tends to favour negative and revenge-focused narratives. This understanding may drive media outlets to report news in a way that aligns with these preferences (North-Central FGD, 2022). For the South-West FGD (2022), "when there is a crisis, everyone wants the drama aspect of it. The journalists are trained to dramatise even though, with social responsibility".

Apart from biased reporting of conflicts, discussants also saw the present reporting of conflicts in Nigeria as being episodic. Episodic news reporting refers to a style of journalism that focuses on reporting specific events or incidents in a concise and standalone manner. In this approach, each news story is treated as a separate episode, providing details about a particular occurrence without necessarily delving into broader context or background information. Episodic reporting often emphasizes the "who," "what," "when," and "where" aspects of a story, presenting the facts of a specific event without extensive analysis or exploration of underlying causes or implications. This style is commonly seen in breaking news coverage, where the primary goal is quickly conveying essential information about a recent event to the audience.

Complaining about the episodic style of reporting, the South-East FGD (2022) reporters should be looking at stories more from the human-interest angle also, as well as the public interest and survival of the nation. The North-West FGD (2022) describes this style of reporting as a kind of descriptive rather than analytical, which means that they are ignoring the root causes because we know that conflicts do not just happen like that. There must be some cause- so journalists always try to concentrate on what happened or what is happening while ignoring what are the sources and other variables that could be avoided with a view for people to understand the root, and this is what should be done to avert it. This is one of the deficiencies that we face in peace journalism, particularly in this part of the world- Nigeria. The South-West FGD (2022) states, "We have this episodic reporting: 12 killed in Zamfara, 100 killed in Sokoto, 51 killed in Maiduguri, and that is the end until another killing happens".

The FGDs also criticized the mainstream media for linking crimes to specific ethnic or religious groups rather than focusing on the individual actions of the perpetrators. This practice, known as ethnic profiling, can contribute to tensions and escalate conflicts by perpetuating stereotypes. The North Central FGD (2022) observes that the inability of reporters to differentiate

between the crime and the ethnic group or religious group of the criminal is a problem. For the South-South FGD (2022), there is stigmatization that media professionals have attributed to reporting conflict. They cited the conflicts in the northern region concerning farmers and herders, “some Fulani have already been tagged by reporters as bandits. The media have already portrayed to the society that these people are terrorists”. Among the North-West discussants, the worst method of reporting conflicts is the way and manner in which the media are actually promoting this kind of coinage.

When there is an incidence involving a particular group of people, they give it a coinage- Hausa terrorists, Muslim fundamentalists, particularly the media operators from the southern part of this country. This is an element of being subjective, an element of framing, and this method would certainly not promote peace (North-West FGD, 2022).

In one word, discussants describe the reporting style as ethnic profiling. There are three major areas that are sensitive in reporting- political, religious and ethnic. So, this ethnic profiling impacts all the other two. Ethnic profiling, as mentioned, is the worst form of media reportage that promotes issues of conflict.

Also, the present reporting style of conflicts in Nigeria is described as not being in-depth and bereft of investigative journalism. The South-South FGD (2022) admonishes journalists to go into in-depth reporting where they will document, have facts and create advocacy. For other discussants, it is total negligence on the side of reporters not to investigate the root causes but only report killings. The North-West FGD (2022), in particular, states, “The current method of reporting conflict is not helping to resolve these conflicts, but it is rather escalating them. One of the issues is investigative journalism. As reporters, they need to dig deeply and ascertain the root causes of these conflicts and be able to report such conflicts within the context of what is happening in society”. The South-West FGD (2022) submissions corroborate the submissions of other FGDs that the current ways of reporting conflict in Nigeria promote violence. The current reporting is promoting violence rather than promoting peace. What we have seen so far when it comes to reportage of conflict bothers the following: Name calling, pejorative adjectives, tribalism, religious bigotry and, at times, sensationalism.

2. The current method of reporting conflict by the Nigerian Media has contributed more to escalating conflicts than de-escalating. Reasons are

The current way the media in Nigeria report conflicts is problematic, propelling more conflicts. The language is inflammable and pejorative. Discussants held that the way news is framed and the language used to influence public perceptions, using inflammatory language contributes to a more hostile atmosphere, and providing news without proper historical or cultural context contributes to misunderstandings and oversimplifications. This lack of nuance perpetuated stereotypes and contributed to the escalation of conflicts. Continuous coverage of conflict events without highlighting positive developments or potential solutions created a skewed perception of a conflict, leading to a pessimistic outlook and perpetuating a cycle of fear and hostility. It is the considered view of discussants that news outlets prioritized sensational or dramatic stories to attract viewership or readership. This led to the exaggeration or distortion of facts, emphasizing conflict and violence to create a more compelling narrative. Sensationalism heightens emotions and contributes to a perception of a more intense conflict.

However, certain factors inadvertently contributed to the nature of reporting that led to the escalation of conflicts:

Lack of proper training: South-South FGD (2022) says from the angle of training and exposure, there is quackery. There are theoretical aspects expected of a journalist before they are allowed to practice, but there are no enforcements. People who call themselves journalists are far from people who should practice the profession. Today, we have bloggers everywhere, everyone can just float a blog anywhere, and there is no conventional media house without a social media handle. People just wake up, and whatever they see, irrespective of how it affects society, they don't bother; their concern is to break the news. In a similar way, the North-West FGD (2022) expresses that the idea for training is that when you go into a series of training, it will promote professionalism. If there is professionalism in journalism practice, the journalists and the media organizations will certainly be socially responsible in reporting whatever issue that comes to a media organization, taking cognizance of national unity. So, if there is training, it will promote professionalism and professionalism would encourage journalism practice in such a way that it will certainly be done in compliance with the codes of ethics.

The FGDs submitted that there is no sense of professionalism among journalists because they are not trained. Training and retraining keep journalists abreast with new practices. The South-East FGD notes that most of the reporters read English, some Sociology, and psychology. Knowing how to speak English and write well does not make you a journalist. Such a person will not know what balance is, and how to interpret an event so that society will know the impact of what they are reporting. The South-West FGD says the truth is that many journalists have not been trained. If the journalists have not taken any course in journalism or mass Communication, you cannot expect them to write in such a way to bring about cohesion rather than destruction.

Censorship: Media censorship refers to the control or suppression of the information and content disseminated through various forms of media, such as print, broadcast, online platforms, and social media. Governments, organizations, or individuals may engage in censorship for various reasons, often with the aim of influencing public opinion, maintaining social order, or protecting national security. South-East FGD pointed out that in a government-owned media, it will be difficult for you to have stories that are not in tandem with the expectations of management. Partisanship was the focus of the North-West FGD when they agreed that political affiliation influences reporters to a great extent. For the South-West FGD, the reportage today is capable of promoting violence in the sense that if you look at the reportorial activities of some media organizations, you see that they are embedded in politics. Most of our media owners or some of them are politicians. So, they determine how you should report.

Too much emphasis on conflict. The South-West FGD, in particular, affirmed that “Yes, conflict is a news value, and it is born out of consequence. The consequence is also a news value-magnitude and all that. So, the higher the conflict, the higher the news value. And if you play down the conflict, nobody will buy your paper that day. They will rush and buy the ones that play up. So, that has been the way journalism is practised and some of the time; we lay emphasis on the conflict because we want to know how many lives are involved. Because life is sacrosanct, nobody can create life.

3. How the current methods of reporting conflict either help build peace or promote more violence in Nigeria

Promoting peace. Discussants upheld peace journalism as a method for ensuring peacebuilding. It is an approach to reporting news that aims to promote understanding, dialogue, and non-violent conflict resolution. It seeks to counterbalance the often sensational and conflict-oriented nature of traditional journalism by providing a more nuanced and in-depth analysis of conflicts. Peace journalism encourages a shift in the way conflicts are reported, emphasizing solutions and constructive approaches. The South-South FGD coined it as “P.P.E.N which is Peace Promoting Entertainment News method”. It means you should report those things that promote peace and leave out those things that do not promote peace. Similarly North-West FGD says news reports should be more peacebuilding oriented. The media should not wait until conflicts happen before searching for peace but they should always broker this peace even before it happens.

Conflict-sensitive reporting: By adopting conflict-sensitive reporting practices, journalists aim to contribute to peacebuilding efforts, promote dialogue, and foster a better understanding of complex issues, while minimizing the potential for negative consequences associated with media coverage of conflicts. The South-South FGD posited that the media should try as much as possible to balance their reportage with national security. Whatever thing they do, they should think of the effect or impact that it is going to have on the larger society. Again, the South-East FGD concurs that there should be sensitivity on the part of the reporter. The primary goal in conflict-sensitive journalism is to report in order to ensure a peaceful resolution of conflict. For instance, “a conflict-sensitive reporter should know that if you have parties to a conflict, the parties should be given opportunities to express their views; the conflict-sensitive reporter should also be interested in finding out the origins of the causes of a particular conflict and educate the masses on all these things”.

Unbiased reporting: Discussants agreed that journalists should prioritize accuracy in their reporting and present a fair and balanced view of the conflict. Providing context and background information helps audiences better understand the complexities involved. In the South-South FGD, attention was given to the fact that as trained journalists, reporters are supposed to ensure they bring down the tension and that the situation is under control as security agents and government personalities are there on the ground. Since part of the worst issues, we have had in reporting conflicts in this country is basically biased reporting and promotion of hate speech, the South-West FGD says the way of reporting conflict that will bring about peace is news balance. In journalism, it takes a knowledgeable reporter to do that. The way out now is to balance news stories.

In-depth, interpretative reporting: Part of what journalists are supposed to do is not just to report issues on the surface level but to unearth certain things that are not on the surface (South-East FGD). So, there is a need for a paradigm shift, sourcing for information and interpreting that information in a manner that does not give credence to terrorist activities. Doing this, the North-West FGD say journalists should be interpretative and analytical in the presentation of news and information. The South-West FGD pointedly says,

“All these episodic reporting where reporters do not get to the core of the problem would not help. There is also a need to emphasize early warning signals. You do not even wait until the crisis comes to the surface before you begin to warn.

Thus, reinvigorating of investigative reporting and inculcating conflict sensitive know how into journalism training, will help in avoiding bias and escalating crisis. This approach will also help to identify the areas of error which need urgent attention. It is only through investigative reporting that we can achieve that. We must enter into the cultural context of the audience - that is the people in the conflict in order to understand what really is the issue.

Using the lexicon or language of peace: Journalists are admonished to be careful with their choice of words to avoid inflaming tensions or promoting a particular agenda. The South-South FGD says, “The way we use our words will determine whether it will douse it or escalate it. So, journalists should be educated in the best way to make use of words, to avoid inflammatory words; they should use words that will calm nerves rather than infuriate people”. Effective use of the language of peace according to the South-West FGD requires training of reporters in the use of language. “Training will include peace journalism and broadening their reportage. It is when ministers visit IDPs that you hear their voices; those victims are hardly interviewed. You also have to do intelligence work, like asking about what the causes are. It is better to nip a conflict at the beginning rather than when it has escalated”.

4. The kind of training required of journalists assigned the responsibility of reporting conflict in Nigeria.

The dominant themes from the FGDs revolve around the deficiency in conflict analysis training, the advocacy for peace education, and practical solutions such as specialized education, short courses, and ethical considerations. The discussion also touched on broader challenges in the education system and the importance of disseminating findings for the benefit of journalism education.

Conflict analysis. The South-East FGD submitted that providing context is essential to help audiences grasp the underlying causes and historical background of the conflict. This can contribute to a more nuanced understanding and discourage simplistic or one-sided views. To achieve this, the North-West FGD says

Incorporation of these courses, like conflict reporting information, is very fundamental as far as journalism reporting is concerned. At the same time, there is a need for courses that relate to attitudinal change because that is also needed.

The incorporation of such courses on peace journalism will help a long way because, even though several theories we may put into our students' heads, it will be quite challenging. Training institutions should also mainstream the concept of conflict-sensitive journalism and conflict-sensitive reporting into the curriculum. There are many training manuals on this. Discussants enjoined journalists to avail themselves of such materials.

Peace journalism: Discussants in the South-West FGD say journalists should be sensitive to the peaceful existence of the various groups that make up the country so that in an attempt to report the fact, they should not do something that will add more fire to the existing problems or conflicts in the country. It is in the enlightened self-interest to have peace in our society. A journalist, a publisher, and a writer need a peaceful environment to carry out their trade. So, if they do not use their medium to promote peace, both the medium and society will be consumed.

Cultural Education: the import of discussions in the FGDs was that understanding how cultural nuances impact the reporting of conflicts and peacebuilding efforts is essential. Highlighting this viewpoint, the South-West FGD buttressed the fact that when one knows the knowledge of each of these ethnicities, one will be able to know the pronunciation being used for their words, and gender, and by so doing, it will lessen the problem of issues that journalists are confronted with. Therefore, training on the culture of the different people in the area where the journalist is reporting was recommended.

Journalism education. For efficient service delivery, training in journalism was recommended by the FGDs. The South-East FGD, in particular, disagreed with the idea that anyone who is a graduate automatically becomes a journalist. you need to be trained properly to become a professional and know what you are doing. Most people working in the media do not have mass communication backgrounds. For people to become journalists, they must go into proper training. The South-West FGD, however, called on departments of Mass Communication to broaden their teachings on investigative reporting and conflict-sensitive reporting, and owners of media houses should take time to train staff members. NUJ, as a body, should organize seminars, and conferences for practitioners in the country so that, in the end, we will have a country to be proud of.

5. what should be the general role of the media in reporting conflict and conflict transformation in Nigeria

Some general roles of the media in reporting conflict and conflict transformation that emanated from the FGDs conducted across the six regions of the country are as follows

Solution-oriented. The South-South FGD feels that “It is the place of the journalist to stand between the larger society and those they are reporting for. It hinges on that journalist to make suggestions to advocate for peace”. For the South-East FGD, a reporter should promote the “humility frame”, “the peace fame”, and “the hope” frame. These frames will better highlight conflict in manners that do not suggest that the society is in a war situation. The South-West FGD says, “The media should be nation builders, building the nation. Promoting cohesion, balance, and peace would be our mission”.

National interest-centered. Talking of how journalism can be focused on promoting national interest, discussants in the FGDs believed that journalists would help build national interest. However, the Southeast FGD maintains that

the problem is that most of the journalists don’t even know what national interest is. They don’t even know Nigeria has a foreign interest. They don’t even understand the fact that national security has a synergy with national identity.

That is why the North-West FGD say the training efforts should concentrate more on patriotism which is a major problem. Although some of how journalists report violence carelessly are sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious, it is related to our low level of patriotism. If we are patriotic, if we are well trained if we are well cultured in patriotism, most of the ways and manner in which journalists are reporting this will be better. So, journalists should be trained in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Peace-making and mediation. The position of the South-East FGD is “When we talk about conflict reporting and look very closely at the work of a reporter and the media. The media is expected to provide a platform for those conflicting parties to express their feelings and their views. Hence, the South-West FGD explains that the role of the media as far as peace and conflict resolution is concerned, should be peace makers, always looking for the way forward for the betterment of the nation and of the people.

Discussion of Findings

Peace workers and journalism academics have critiqued the current methods of reporting conflict in Nigerian news media, identifying several problematic issues. These include biased reporting on social media, ethnic profiling, misrepresentation of facts, media sensationalism, bias,

propaganda, the desire for relevance, preference for negative news, and a lack of professionalism. These factors collectively contribute to challenges in reporting conflicts and terrorism in Nigeria.

Participants highlight biased reporting as a major concern, where narratives are shaped based on personal biases, such as the religious or ethnic affiliations of reporters and news sources. The current reporting methods are seen as problematic, either fostering peace or promoting more violence in Nigeria. The language is often inflammatory and pejorative, influencing public perceptions and creating a more hostile atmosphere. The participants highlight the significant role of the choice of words and tone in shaping public perception of conflicts. They suggest using positive, less inciting, and conciliatory language to present conflicts in a way that can de-escalate tension. Discussants argue that framing news without proper historical or cultural context leads to misunderstandings and oversimplifications, perpetuating stereotypes and escalating conflicts.

The continuous coverage of conflict events without highlighting positive developments or potential solutions is criticised for creating a skewed perception, fostering a pessimistic outlook, and perpetuating a cycle of fear and hostility. News outlets prioritising sensational or dramatic stories to attract viewership or readership is also identified as a contributing factor. This emphasis on sensationalism can lead to exaggerating or distorting facts, emphasising conflict and violence to create a more compelling narrative. Scholars point out factors such as media ownership, political interference, and ethnocentrism as compromising the objectivity of reporting, perpetuating stereotypes and hindering efforts to promote peace and reconciliation.

Insights from peace workers engaged in conflict resolution and community-building initiatives emphasise the negative impact of media on ethnic relations, intercultural relations, and conflict resolution proposals. The media is seen as exacerbating these issues by heightening negative impressions. There is a call for more responsible and nuanced reporting that considers the broader context and potential consequences, rather than prioritising sensationalism and biased narratives.

The most effective ways to report conflicts in Nigeria can lower hostilities, encourage amicable settlements, and strengthen national security. Speakers defended peace journalism as a means of guaranteeing peacebuilding. It is a method of covering news to advance communication, understanding, and peaceful settlement of disputes. By offering a more complex and in-depth examination of conflicts, it aims to balance out traditional journalism's tendency toward sensationalism and conflict focus. Peace journalism promotes a change in the way that conflicts are covered, with more of an emphasis on practical solutions. Research by Yusuf (2018) and Ibeanu (2015) emphasize how crucial objective reporting is to building confidence between parties in conflict. They emphasise how important it is for journalists to mediate disputes rather than escalate them. The idea of conflict sensitivity is introduced, suggesting that media should consider the impact of information on the escalation or de-escalation of conflict. Participants propose that reporters gauge their information's potential harm or benefit before disseminating it. The discussion explores the idea of specialisation within mass communication programs, with suggestions for double majors or minors in areas such as conflict analysis.

The preparation needed for journalists covering conflict in Nigeria is a key focus. Insights gathered from the FGDs highlight insufficient training in conflict analysis, emphasising the need for peace education. Proposed remedies include specialized education, short courses, and a strong emphasis on ethical considerations. The conversation also delved into wider issues within the

education system and underscored the significance of sharing discoveries to enhance journalism education.

Reporting on conflict and its resolution should be the media's primary responsibility in Nigeria. The following are some general roles that the media played in reporting on conflict and conflict transformation due to the focus group discussions held in each of the six areas of the nation.

Solution-focused: "It is the place of the journalist to stand between the larger society and those they are reporting for," according to the South-South FGD. It is up to that journalist to offer recommendations for promoting peace. A reporter should support the "humility frame," "the peace fame," and "the hope" frames for the South-East FGD. These frames will better highlight conflict without giving the impression that society is at war.

The general role of the media should be in reporting conflict and conflict transformation in Nigeria. Some general roles of the media in reporting conflict and conflict transformation emanated from the FGDs conducted across the country's six regions.

Solution-oriented: The South-South FGD feels that "It is the place of the journalist to stand between the larger society and those they are reporting for. It hinges on that journalist to make suggestions to advocate for peace". For the South-East FGD, a reporter should promote the "humility frame", "the peace fame", and "the hope" frame. These frames will better highlight conflict in manners that do not suggest that the society is in a war situation. The South-West FGD says, "The media should be nation builders, building the nation. Promoting cohesion, balance, and peace would be our mission".

Speaking on how media may be directed toward advancing national interest, panellists in the FGDs thought journalists would contribute to developing national interest. According to academics like Allan and Zelizer (2004), news story framing greatly impacts how the public perceives a story and can either make tensions during a dispute worse or better. As gatekeepers of information, journalists craft narratives that have the power to exacerbate or de-escalate disputes (Entman, 2012). An alternative paradigm to traditional war reporting is emerging: peace journalism. Academics such as Lynch and Galtung (2010) support the transition from sensationalism and reporting focusing primarily on violence to more constructive and solutions-oriented. According to Lynch (2008), peace journalism strongly emphasises providing a comprehensive picture of conflicts, giving voice to underrepresented groups, and looking into potential solutions.

Conclusion

The current way the media in Nigeria report conflicts is problematic, propelling more conflicts. The language is inflammable and pejorative. Discussants held that the way news is framed and the language used to influence public perceptions, using inflammatory language contributes to a more hostile atmosphere, and providing news without proper historical or cultural context contributes to misunderstandings and oversimplifications. This lack of nuance perpetuated stereotypes and contributed to the escalation of conflicts. Continuous coverage of conflict events without highlighting positive developments or potential solutions created a skewed perception of a conflict, leading to a pessimistic outlook and perpetuating a cycle of fear and hostility. It is the considered view of discussants that news outlets prioritized sensational or dramatic stories to attract viewership or readership. This led to exaggerating or distorting facts, emphasising conflict

and violence to create a more compelling narrative. Sensationalism heightens emotions and contributes to a perception of a more intense conflict.

The perpetuation of conflict in Nigeria is a function of the media's current reporting methods. Instead of de-escalating conflicts, the media is contributing to the escalation through biased reporting, use of language of violence, profiling of groups and social media reporting.

Training in journalism, conflict analysis, and peace journalism can help salvage the poor reporting methods currently being experienced in Nigeria. In summary, the thematic analysis reveals a consensus among participants about the urgent need to enhance journalism education by integrating conflict analysis, peace education, and ethical considerations into the curriculum. The discussion also touched on broader educational issues and potential solutions to address the gaps identified. These will pave the way for the media to play the constitutional role in conflict transformation and building in Nigeria. There is a suggestion to omit specific community names when reporting conflicts to avoid associating criminal actions with particular tribes or religions. The focus is on preventing the stigmatisation of communities based on conflict-related incidents.

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Funding: The study is funded by Tertiary Education Tax Fund (TETFund) National Research Fund

The role of China's Belt and Road initiative on the stability of Afghanistan and its impact on Iran

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Abstract

The Belt and Road Initiative, which has become China's most important foreign policy project since 2013, has two parts: the Land Belt and the Maritime Silk Road. This super project covers different regions from Central Asia and Caucasus to West Asia. In the meantime, Afghanistan is one of the most important countries in the Southwest Asia region, which is of strategic importance in this plan. The main goal of this research is to investigate the importance of China's Belt and Road ²super project on the stability of Afghanistan and its impact on Iran. The main question is what is the role of China's Belt and Road initiative on the stability of Afghanistan and what are its most important effects on Iran? This research has studied this issue with qualitative method and library and internet sources. The results show that this initiative can be effective in the political and economic stability of Afghanistan due to China's extensive and stable relations with Afghanistan, China's investment in this country and the security interactions established between Beijing and the Islamic Emirate of the Taliban. The most important effects of this issue on Iran include the effective governance of the Afghan government on the eastern borders, the increase in the return of Afghan immigrants from Iran, the increase in the level of Afghanistan's cooperation with Pakistan and Iran, and the replacement of China's economy-oriented foreign policy with the American influence-based security policy.

Keywords: Belt and Road Initiative, stability, foreign policy, China, Afghanistan, Iran

Introduction

The relations between Afghanistan and China go back to the 1960s and the two countries have continued their relations due to their neighborhood. Afghanistan, as a country that is located at the intersection of West Asia and Central Asia from a geopolitical and geostrategic point of view, has an important position in China's foreign policy. This initiative, which includes the land, sea and northern routes, is the most important economic and trade plan that has been prioritized in China's foreign policy since 2013 and in parallel with the unprecedented and long economic growth in the last two decades (Dkhar and et al, 2021: 171). Various investments from China have been made in the form of this plan in various regions including South and West Asia, Central Asia, Caspian, South and Eastern Europe.

Along with Pakistan, Afghanistan is one of the main countries in the Belt and Road Initiative. It seems that Afghanistan's role in this plan has political, economic, corridor and security aspects. Afghanistan plays an important role in China's access to Iran and Central Asia in cooperation with Pakistan, which is the most important country in the Belt and Road Initiative. On the other hand, Afghanistan plays an essential role in the security of the implementation of this initiative due to the instability problem that it has been facing in the last two decades after the US attacks on this country. Accordingly, after the developments of 2021, which led to the collapse of the national government of this country, it has been trying to improve relations with the Islamic Emirates of the Taliban as the new rulers of this country, while involving Afghanistan, in order to ensure the security of this initiative. stability and in some works attention has been paid to "China's Belt and Road initiative and its impact on stability in Afghanistan" and its role in Afghanistan's stability. By examining the role of Afghanistan in China's grand strategy, Liagat (2023) has evaluated China's active participation in Afghanistan due to Afghanistan's strategic position at the crossroads of Central and South Asia along with its abundant natural resources. Hashemzahi and Atesh Dast, (2020), examined China's objectives in passing the Belt and Road Initiative through Afghanistan. Warij Kazemi, (2020), while studying Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor, which is adjacent to China, has studied its role in China's One Belt One Road initiative. Hong, (2018), has analyzed the role of Afghanistan in China's Belt and Road Initiative and China's policy on Afghanistan in the geopolitical context of Central Asia. Hong (2013) has discussed the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan and the growth of China's interests in this country, especially in terms of expanding its economic and strategic influence to Central Asia, the Middle East and beyond.

As can be seen, in the conducted researches, Afghanistan's role in the Belt and Road Initiative has been mostly discussed. However, due to the formation of new relations between the two countries, the strengthening of this country's role in the connection between West Asia and Central Asia, and especially China's various investment projects, can affect the stabilization of Afghanistan. Therefore, the main issue in this article is the review of China's Belt and Road initiative and its impact on stability in Afghanistan. In the following, after designing the theoretical framework, the

Belt and Road Initiative in China's foreign policy is explained, and in the following, China's interests in strengthening relations with Afghanistan in the form of this initiative, its role in the political and economic stability of this country and its effects on Iran are examined. Takes

Theoretical Framework

Conceptually, convergence is the closeness of people towards a certain point which is usually made as their common goal. Divergence is the process during which political units and governments have moved away from each other and as a result of it The grounds for crisis and war are created. In divergence, there is separation and separation of governments from each other and moving away from common goals and moving towards specific goals (Hafeznia and Faraji, 2013). Convergence and divergence in international relations exist in different regional and international dimensions. This process is defined at the regional level as a process based on which separate national units, with regard to a new center, direct their loyalties, activities and expectations to it. In fact, convergence at this level is a process in which a kind of collective decision-making develops (Kolaei, 1379: 10-11). Convergence in these conditions implies and requires multilateral efforts to realize all levels of convergence and cooperation in multilateral dimensions in formal or informal ways for collective management and conflict resolution (Dehghani Firouzabadi, 2008: 433)

Cantori and Spiegel consider the international system to include several sub-regional systems. Both of them draw the arenas of international politics and divide it into three arenas: global, regional and national. They distinguish three types of systems: dominant, subordinate and internal. The dominant system exists in the world arena and includes the most powerful countries. The functional system includes mutual relations within the region. The internal system also includes the country and its organizations. Based on this, the region is the area of the world whose constituent units are geographically adjacent to each other and their foreign policy is related to each other. Some variables have been considered in drawing the function system.

The limits of all functional systems are determined according to the criteria of geography. Within the boundaries of the system, there is interaction between geographical, political and social nations. The conflict or cooperation factor of geography and social and historical boundaries helps to draw the boundaries of the subordinate system. Foreign powers also play an important role in describing and drawing the subordinate system. The subordinate system consists of one or more countries that are close to each other and there is interaction between them (Qassemi, 2010: 85-86). Cantori and Spiegel divide the functional system into three central, peripheral and intervening parts:

a) The focal part of the system, which includes the governments located in the center of the system, which are geographically located in the heart of the spatial system of the regional system and are the main focus of international and regional politics. because regional values and regional characteristics are prominent in it; In other words, it forms the origin of regional values and characteristics, so that it differentiates this region from the neighboring regions and beyond.

b) The peripheral part of the system includes the countries that are located around the center of the system but do not have geographical contact with it. The geographical distance along with other variables makes these countries stand out from the core and are placed in a discrete ring around

the core. The interaction of these countries with each other is less than their interaction with the core countries. Peripheral countries do not have structural and functional homogeneity among themselves, and for this reason, they lack cohesion and continuity.

c) The intervening part, which includes the governments outside the region that intervene in the region; because the interests of big governments are not limited to their national borders; They interfere in other areas based on their security and economic considerations. The type of intervention of big governments may be active or passive. Active intervention causes serious conflict in regional issues, and passive intervention includes the sale of military equipment, the use of military bases, joint military exercises, economic assistance, and cultural and educational cooperation (Ramazani and Mehrabi, 2019: 24).

The intervening power and the controlling part are usually composed of the main powers of the international system, and they are the link of the subordinate and international system. Intervening powers try in the following seven ways in the policies of the subordinate system of the company and in maintaining the system order, which are: 1- Multilateral arrangements and institutions, 2- Bilateral arrangements such as mutual security agreement, 3- Military intervention in order to maintain or restore the status quo. former status quo, 4- subversion, 5- using tools such as the United Nations to interfere in regional affairs, 6- cultural and advertising activities, 7- trade and economic investment (Qassimi, 2018).

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The Belt and Road Initiative in China's Foreign Policy

Since the 1950s, China's foreign policy has been guided by a strategy of survival and inward focus for decades. Since the 1980s, China has pursued its foreign relations based on the production of wealth and the promotion of its position by understanding the domestic and international realities. Now China is the second largest economy in the world and the largest trading country in the world. In this regard, the Belt and Road Initiative has been the main priority of China's foreign policy since 2013. This plan was proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping. The important dimensions of this plan include political communication, road connection from the Pacific to the Baltic Sea, and the formation of a transportation network that connects to East, West, and South Asia, trade facilitation; It is financial circulation and exchanges.

This plan was introduced with the aim of applying friendly policies towards neighbors in the framework of win-win game for all countries of the region and the world. The route of this road passes through the strategic center of Eurasia, through states with abundant energy and mineral reserves and a high population base (Amir Ahmadian and Salehi Doulatatabad, 2015: 16).

Welcoming this plan, Xi also presented the Maritime Silk Road initiative in October 2013. These two plans are known as "One Belt and One Road". The sea route of this road starts from China's Fujian province and reaches the Strait of Malaga by passing through Guangzhou, Beihai and Haigo on the way to the South China Sea. The continuation of this road on the sea route, passing through Kuala Lumpur, Calcutta and Nairobi in Kenya, stretches to the Horn of Africa and passing through the Red Sea, the Mediterranean and the shores of Athens, finally ends at the port of Venice and the end of the land silk road (Arghwani Pirsalami, 2014: 85).

The Belt and Road Plan includes more than 60% of the world's population, 39% of the geographical area and about 40% of the world's gross product. This plan shows China's will to move towards extroversion and play a more active role. Over the past decade, China has promoted and supported this initiative through every possible avenue. In May 2017, Beijing held the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation under the chairmanship of Xi Jinping and with the participation of representatives of about 100 countries. So far, China has arranged cooperation agreements on this plan with more than 70 countries and international organizations and has arranged hundreds of projects in most areas of West Asia, the South China Sea, India and Pakistan, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Jamshidi and Khatami, 2019: 2). This initiative symbolizes China's transformation from a regional power to a global power. Therefore, this plan can be considered as the basis for the production of China's power inside and the display of power beyond the borders (Shariatinia, 2015: 3).

China's interests in Afghanistan in the form of the Belt and Road Initiative

As stated in Kantori and Spiegel's theory, China as an intervening actor has its own interests in Afghanistan's subordinate system. Afghanistan is bordered by Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the north, Pakistan in the south and east, Iran in the west, and China in the northeast. Afghanistan's common border with these neighbors is about 5514 km, of which 40 km is the common border with China's Xinjiang states. China and Afghanistan signed a friendship and non-aggression treaty in 1960, drawing Cold War-era relations centered on economic interaction. Since then, China's economic interests in Afghanistan have remained constant. The two countries ratified the 1960 treaty in 2006 based on the principles of good neighborliness, in which China involved Afghanistan and its neighbors to support stability in the region. To ensure its security and economic interests in Afghanistan, since the possibility of reducing the US military presence in 2014 and the possibility of a security vacuum in Kabul, China considered this country as its priority in the western borders. In the same year, China hosted talks between Afghan government officials, representatives of the Islamic Emirate of the Taliban and Pakistan (Sharan and Watkins, 2021).

China was the largest business investor in Afghanistan during the occupation of Afghanistan in 2001-2020. In 2007, a Chinese company acquired copper mining rights worth nearly 3 billion dollars in the Aynak field. In 2011, Afghanistan signed a 25-year contract with China's state-owned oil company CNPC, which undertook the drilling and construction of refining facilities in the northern provinces of Faryab and Saripol. Afghanistan and China signed a memorandum of understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative in 2016. The Deputy Ambassador of China emphasized that "the Belt and Road Initiative is useful for the reconstruction and economic development of Afghanistan and the integration of Afghanistan in regional development."

The air corridor that connects Kabul and the Chinese city of Urumqi was the first project that was carried out in the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. In the continuation of the first railway connecting the two countries within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, the first direct freight train passed from Jiangsu Province (China) to the border city of Haraytan in Afghanistan. In 2017, following the visit of Afghan officials to China in the framework of the Belt and Road Forum, Afghanistan officially joined the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank, which plays a major role in financing the projects of this initiative in different countries. China has also supported Afghanistan's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Counter-Terrorism Association of Member States (Dkhar and et al, 2021: 169).

After the Taliban came to power in August 2021 and took control of Afghanistan, China was one of the few countries that maintained its diplomatic office in this country and then established relations with the Taliban government. It seems that both sides are trying to achieve mutual goals through these developing relations. On the one hand, the Taliban is trying to get out of the livelihood and economic crisis by handing over economic and commercial projects to Beijing, especially in the shadow of its non-recognition by the international community. On the other hand, China, along with economic interests, is also looking at using America's vacant position in Afghanistan and consequently strengthening its presence in the region.

China's use of Afghanistan's position in this project is due to several main reasons. A big advantage for Afghanistan is the integration into the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Since Afghanistan is a landlocked country, Pakistan is the shortest route for Afghanistan to access open waters. Therefore, the inclusion of Afghanistan in this corridor guarantees an easier and more direct access to the Chinese market through its connection with Gwadar port. Afghanistan's agreement to join this corridor

The tripartite meeting in Beijing with the participation of the foreign ministers of China, Afghanistan and Pakistan was announced in Somber 2017. This Pakistani corridor is the most important part of the Belt and Road Initiative in South Asia, and China has so far allocated about 54 billion dollars to build and equip highways, new railway projects from the north to Gwadar port with the aim of transporting goods and energy from West Asia to West China. Is. This corridor opens China's way to the Indian Sea, and with Afghanistan joining it, a branch of this corridor will be extended to Central Asia through Afghanistan. China's participation and prioritization of CPEC projects can align the economic goals of Afghanistan and Pakistan and strengthen strategic goals for China's future regional goals (Dkhar and et al, 2021 and Hashemzahi and Atash Dast, 2019: 255-255). The inclusion of Afghanistan in the Belt and Road Initiative is also effective in reducing the time and cost of transit to China. For example, Beijing has launched the Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan railway line, and Afghanistan provides several other trade routes as a land route to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. In this regard, after the withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan at the end of 2021, Chinese-led financial institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank have a more active role in Afghanistan. What is more, the reduction of the financial support of Western-backed institutions has given China the space to expand its influence (Sharan and Watkins, 2022).

The Belt and Road Initiative for China also represents a victory in the competition with India in the Indo-Aram region. India competes with China and since 2003, investment in Chabahar port and India-Iran-Afghanistan tripartite cooperation have been on the agenda. India's main goals are connecting to the North-South Corridor, countering Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan and accessing Central Asian markets. But the US sanctions against Iran have led to a decrease in foreign investment and a decrease in India's budget in this project. This is in a situation where China, using this issue and investing in Afghanistan and Iran's Chabahar port, is trying to use this area as a complement to Pakistan's Gwadar port.

An important part of China's sphere of influence in Afghanistan and this country's efforts to expand its influence is in competition with America. Competition with the United States plays an important role in determining China's security goals in both domestic and foreign spheres (Sazmand and Arghwani Pirsalami, 2016: 51). To neutralize China's Belt and Road Initiative, the US proposed the New Silk Road Initiative, which aims to connect Central Asia to India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. This initiative was introduced in 2011 during Hillary Clinton's State Department. The TAPI pipeline was a major part of this American strategy, through which Turkmenistan's gas was connected to India through Afghanistan and Pakistan. The US State Department has also created a coalition called C5 + 1 with the membership of five Central Asian countries and the United States to solve various regional challenges with the aim of creating regional integration and countering China's economic plans (Jurencyk, 2022).

The role of the Belt and Road initiative in the political and economic stability of Afghanistan

It seems that Afghanistan's view of China, including during the new rulers of this country, is to take advantage of China's capacities as an emerging economic superpower and to stabilize the country's political structure by dealing with economic problems. Traditional neutral face

China in Afghanistan's public opinion, the position of business partnership and the expansion of political cooperation with Kabul in recent years, the lack of history of any border dispute or territorial claim between the two countries in the contemporary era, respect for Afghanistan's sovereignty, the decisive political weight in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. And the increasing influence in the region due to extensive economic relations and the road belt initiative super project is one of the features that have shaped the positive view of Kabul towards Beijing (Qazal, 2019: 3).

The role of the Belt and Road Initiative in the stability of Afghanistan can be explained from two political and economic perspectives. In the political field, the statements of the Chinese men's government in recent years show that they want to establish stability in Afghanistan. After the withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan, Beijing has maintained friendly relations with all the main parties involved in the country and has shown itself as a key player in the negotiations with the new regime. China expects that the Taliban, while fulfilling their responsibility towards the country and nation of Afghanistan and confronting the terrorist forces, will open the political space for the people to play the role of the Afghan political mainstream. During the joint meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization in 2022, Xi Jinping emphasized that all member countries should join hands to maintain peace and

stability in Afghanistan. The President of China invited the members of Shanghai to make full use of platforms such as the SCO-Afghanistan contact group and facilitate the smooth transition of power in this country (China Briefing, 2023).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China has emphasized in its various statements about Afghanistan to make "every effort to support the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan". In addition, China has always wanted to form an inclusive and modern government in Afghanistan. In this regard, Chinese Defense Minister Li Shangfu emphasized Beijing's support for stability in Afghanistan in 2023 and stated that China will continue to work to restore stability in the country without interfering in its internal affairs. The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has also asked China to take practical steps to improve the situation in Afghanistan and to continue its policy for stability and security in Afghanistan.

In the economic field, the Belt and Road Initiative is the most important foreign investment plan in Afghanistan. So far, China has provided more than 49 million dollars in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan (Binesh, 2023). Afghanistan is also trying to use the capacities of China's plan to restore its historical position. Joining this plan can solve part of Afghanistan's problems, which does not have proper roads, railways, and airways, and lacks access to the sea. Afghanistan is implementing a 10-year national development plan from 2015 to 2024, so combining Afghanistan's national development plan with China's plan can realize an important part of this plan (Hashemzahi and Ateshdast, 2019: 254).

Another important factor in Afghanistan's economic stability is China's investment in Afghanistan. At the beginning of the Taliban coming to power, the Chinese authorities, in cooperation with the Taliban and the Afghanistan Mines and Trade Processing and Trading Company, proposed an investment of 350 million dollars in various construction, health and energy sectors of this country (Siasat daily, 2022). Taliban at the beginning of 2023 signed a contract to extract oil from the Amu Darya basin with Xinjiang Central Asia Oil and Gas Company, one of the subsidiaries of China National Oil Company. The duration of this contract is 25 years. The purpose of this contract is to create about 3,000 job opportunities for Afghans and to increase the capacity of oil extraction from Kashgari mine from 1.4 thousand barrels to 7.1 thousand barrels. Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesman of the Taliban, announced in this regard, "This contract will include an investment of 150 million dollars in the first year in Afghanistan and 540 million dollars in the next three years with a daily oil extraction rate of 1000 to 20000 tons" (Kumar and Noori, 2023).

China is the most important investor in Afghanistan's mining sector, including lithium mines. Afghanistan's unexploited mineral resources are estimated at 1-3 trillion dollars. According to 2019 surveys, it was found that the country's reserves include 2.3 billion tons of iron ore, 30 million tons of copper and 1.4 million tons of rare earth materials. Also, this country has significant reserves of lithium, one of the most precious mineral metals, and after Bolivia, it is the second largest reserve in the world in this regard (Blumenthal and et al, 2022). In April 2023, the Chinese Gochin company officials expressed their desire to invest 10 billion dollars in Afghanistan's lithium reserves. This investment will create 120 thousand direct jobs and one million indirect jobs in Afghanistan (O'Donnell, 2023). In total, more than 20 companies have been activated in Afghanistan since the Taliban came to power. Abdulsalam Akhundzadeh, the spokesman of the

Taliban Ministry of Intelligence, said about China's investment: "The Chinese have invested in mining, services at airports, industrial parks, and renovation of customs, which total two billion dollars. (Tolonews, 2023).

China's economic investment in Afghanistan and the creation of development infrastructure also has a digital dimension, implemented by Chinese technology giants ZTE and Huawei. Afghanistan hopes to become a major trade and transit center for submarine and intercontinental communications using Chinese technology. In this context, the Belt and Road Cable Project is an area of cooperation between China and Afghanistan. By investing in the development and expansion of fiber optic networks, China's advantage for Internet users in Afghanistan and neighboring countries will increase (Dkhar and et al, 2021).

Finally, stability in Afghanistan's security is also necessary for both sides. For years, China has been facing the terrorist group "East Turkestan Movement" on its western borders, which is related to the Taliban group. One of China's demands from the Taliban is to try to influence the said group. On the other hand, Afghanistan is also facing Pakistan's role in this country. During his 2014 visit to China, the former president of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, called for a direct trade connection between Afghanistan and China through the Wakhan Corridor on the border with China. The implementation of this plan in the new government of this country can connect the Xinjiang region of China to Afghanistan through Wakhan Badakhshan (Hashemzahi and Atashdast, 2019: 254). Therefore, Afghanistan hopes that the close relations between China and Pakistan, and especially the coming to power of the Taliban, which has long-standing friendly relations with Pakistan, will reduce the destructive role of Islamabad in this country.

The impact of the stability of Afghanistan due to the Belt and Road Initiative on Iran

Afghanistan is one of the two eastern neighbouring countries of Iran, where stability and security have always been emphasized by Iran. Iran and Afghanistan have a common border of about 815 kilometers, and Iran has followed the developments of the collapse of the national government and the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of the Taliban with sensitivity. On the other hand, Iran's foreign policy orientations in Afghanistan have always been affected by the US military presence in the country, which continued until 2020. In fact, Iran considers the American military presence in Afghanistan as a threat to its national security on the one hand, and also considers it to be in opposition to Iran's increasing role in the region to secure its national interests (Fatemini Nejad and Alavi, 1402: 252).

Iran evaluates China's role in Afghanistan constructively in the conditions of America's withdrawal from this country. The two countries signed a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement in 2020. During Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Beijing in February 2023, the Chinese President appreciated Iran's important role in hosting more than 4.5 million Afghan refugees, and the two sides agreed to provide humanitarian and economic assistance to the Afghan people and increase development cooperation in Afghanistan. continue The two sides agreed that a peaceful, prosperous, interconnected and stable Afghanistan is essential for regional prosperity and progress (Presidential Institution Information Base, 11/27/1401).

Stability in Afghanistan, especially due to China's Belt and Road Initiative, has various effects on Iran at domestic, regional and international levels. During the last two decades and after the US attack on Afghanistan in 2001, Iran has suffered many security problems in the eastern borders with Afghanistan, especially due to the presence of numerous terrorist and extremist groups in this region, especially in the tribal areas. China's Belt and Road initiative will reduce Iran's security burden on the country's eastern borders by influencing economic stability in Afghanistan and making the country's governance more effective. On the other hand, the various projects of the Belt and Road subcategory in Afghanistan, by creating employment in this country, can reduce the field of migration from Afghanistan to Iran and also encourage Afghan immigrants living in Iran to leave for their country.

In the regional area, the Belt and Road project, by creating political and economic stability in Afghanistan, can reduce security threats on Iran's borders, especially on Afghanistan's borders with Pakistan in tribal areas, by providing opportunities for cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan is China's strategic partner in the maritime and land corridor of the Belt and Road Initiative, and with Afghanistan located on the path of this corridor, China acts as a mediator between Kabul and Islamabad. On the other hand, by connecting Afghanistan to the aforementioned initiative and adding the free zone and Chabahar port to this complex, China has easier access to West Asia through Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran. This action helps Iran to overcome the US sanctions. At the macro international level, the presence of China as a world power on the border with Iran is different from the military presence of the United States. China's foreign policy in the form of the Belt and Road Initiative has an economic, commercial and investment nature. However, during the past two decades, America followed the policy of influence in the peripheral areas of Afghanistan, including Iran.

Analysis and conclusion

China is one of the most important actors in the current international system, which is trying to expand its economic power in different places by active presence in different regions. For this purpose, the Belt and Road Initiative has been prioritized in foreign policy since 2013. This initiative includes various projects in Central Asia, Southwest Asia and Europe. Meanwhile, Afghanistan, which is located in the middle of Southwest Asia and Central Asia, has significant importance in China's foreign policy. During the last two decades, Afghanistan is facing increasing instability in the political, security and economic fields, and in this way, the Belt and Road Initiative has various capacities to stabilize Afghanistan. Afghanistan's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative is a complement to the China-Pakistan corridor. This country's role in this initiative gives China a significant advantage over India, and China hopes that by investing as much as possible in this country, it will be able to distance Afghanistan from India and bring it closer to itself. The new government of Afghanistan under the rule of the Taliban has provided China with a reliable partner in a region of Souq al-Jishi, especially in the conditions of the withdrawal of the United States and NATO. The most important issue of Afghanistan is the role of this initiative in stabilizing the political, security and economic situation of Afghanistan.

In the political sphere, Afghanistan sees China as a neutral actor that recognizes the country's borders and does not interfere in its internal affairs. In the new era, China is also the most important

supporter of the changing political situation in Afghanistan. China's investment in Afghanistan under the Belt and Road Initiative in the sectors of transportation, construction, health, energy, technology and mines plays an important role in stabilizing the country's economy and is supported by the Taliban government officials. In addition to helping the development of different parts of Afghanistan, these investments also provide the opportunity to create thousands of jobs for the people. China's extensive cooperation with Pakistan, which is Beijing's first economic partner in the region, is highly effective in the stability of Afghanistan's security situation and can lead to the improvement of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations.

At the same time, stability in Afghanistan, which has been facing an instability crisis for at least the last two decades, has immediate effects on the country's neighbouring regions and countries. Stability in Afghanistan, on the one hand, through the efficient and effective governance of this country's government, ensures greater security of Iran's borders. During the last two decades, Iran has accommodated the largest wave of Afghan immigration, and in this sense, it is increasing the stabilization of the economic and social situation of this country, especially through the Belt and Road initiative, which facilitates the return of Afghans to their homeland. In external dimensions, it is also important to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan and continue the Belt and Road Initiative due to the increase in cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan and the increase in China's participation in this region and the replacement of the United States for Iran.

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