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Geopolitical Analysis of the Entry of Finland and Sweden to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

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Russia's invasion of Ukraine has significantly altered the pattern of alliances and geopolitical balances on the European continent to such an extent that countries like Finland and Sweden that have traditionally remained neutral are now applying to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). These two countries fear that Russia, which is currently trying to reposition itself, could try in the near future to invade these two Nordic countries to prevent the West (European Union, United Kingdom, and United States) from increasing its military presence and its military force in the Scandinavian peninsula and in the Baltic Sea. The enlargement that the European Union (EU) has carried out since the 1990s, and that has also meant the expansion of NATO, has been viewed with great concern by the government of Vladimir Putin, who considers that the United States and the European Union did not fulfill their commitment to former Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev to respect the sphere of influence of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Within the framework of this geopolitical confrontation, Helsinki and Stockholm do not want to run the risk of being invaded by the Russian army, which is why they seek to take advantage of the principle of collective security that NATO membership would grant them.

Keywords: Geopolitical alliances and balances, West vs. Russia, Finland, Sweden, NATO expansion, areas of influence, collective security, national security

NATO Creation

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization emerged in 1949 through the Washington Treaty in which 10 countries on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean agreed to defend each other in the event of an armed aggression against one of them. The signatory countries of that treaty were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the United States, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. The birth of NATO was framed in the era called "Cold War" that was characterized by the ideological confrontation between the blocks of socialist and capitalist countries led by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United States of America (USA) respectively. With the creation of NATO, the Western bloc tried to protect its areas of influence and prevent the countries that comprised them from passing into the sphere of domination of their rival.

As regards the treaty, it is a short document consisting of a brief preamble and 14 articles. The preamble establishes very clearly that the countries that make up the organization share the principles of democracy,

individual liberties and are guided by the rule of law, likewise that they are determined to unite their efforts for the collective defense and conservation of the peace and security (The North Atlantic Treaty).

Of the articles that make up said instrument, 5 and 10 stand out.

Article 5 says:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them, which takes place in Europe or in North America, shall be considered as an attack directed against all of them, and accordingly agree that if such an attack occurs, each of them, in the right of individual or collective legitimate defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will help the Party or Parties attacked, subsequently adopting, individually and in agreement with the other Parties, the measures that deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore security in the North Atlantic area. Any armed attack of this nature and all measures adopted as a consequence will be immediately brought to the attention of the Security Council. (The North Atlantic Treaty)

Regarding article 10, it says the following:

The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite to join any European State that is in a position to promote the development of the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area. Any State that is thus invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing the corresponding instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. This Government will inform each of the Parties that it will have the deposit of said instrument of accession. (The North Atlantic Treaty)

As can be seen, the central point of the fifth article claims the right of individual and collective legitimate defense contained in article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and constitutes the binding element and central objective of said treaty. With regard to the tenth article, the substantive part means that the States that make up NATO can invite any country in the North Atlantic area to join. In this sense, this pair of articles constitutes the columns of this important document that has allowed the strengthening of the organization and the growth of the countries that make it up.

Creation and End of the Warsaw Pact

At the end of the 40s of the last century (XX), the emergence of NATO was seen as a serious threat by the socialist bloc for this reason, and in order to counteract its presence, the USSR promoted the Friendship Treaty, Collaboration and Mutual Assistance, better known as the “Warsaw Pact” signed in that Polish city and made up of “Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania, as well as China as an observer. Yugoslavia, for its part, despite also being a communist country, did not enter due to its disagreements with the Soviet leader, Iósif Stalin” (Montes, 2021). This treaty was signed six years after that of NATO, that is, in 1955.

The objective of said treaty was to neutralize the threat posed by the Western military alliance and foster what has been called a “balance of power” taking into consideration that the sum of the armies that comprised it could deter NATO from an attack. against him. Through this Pact, Moscow increased its military power, not to the level of its Western counterpart, but enough to increase its response and negotiation capacity.

OTAN vs Pacto de Varsovia

Miembros hasta 1991



Figure 1. NATO vs Warsaw Pact (Montes, 2021).

The socialist military alliance came to an end in 1991, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dismemberment of the USSR. The structural crisis that that country faced at the time and the military spending implied by both its own Army and the support of the Warsaw Pact precipitated the debacle of both.

Fall of the Socialist World, Expansion of the EU, and Enlargement of NATO

After the fall of the “iron curtain”, the nascent Russia continued to see NATO as a threat, so in the midst of negotiations between Moscow and governments of Western powers to delimit the new areas of influence, Moscow asked for firm guarantees that the Western military alliance not expand into Eastern Europe, something to which the United States and European countries committed themselves but only in word, because they never signed a written agreement to accept that commitment.

Faced with the evident weakness of Russia in the 1990s and early 2000s, the European Union (EU), the economic-commercial arm of the West, seized the opportunity and began its expansion towards Eastern Europe to wrest from Moscow a good part of the countries that once belonged to the zone of influence of the USSR and transfer them, in economic-financial, commercial, and monetary terms, to the sphere of domination of the European Union. The former West Germany, leader and driving force of the EU, with the support of France and the consent of Washington and London, promotes the expansion of the European alliance at a dizzying pace in such a way that between 1993 and 2007, in just 13 years, 10 countries of the former zone of influence of the USSR manage to cover the three stages, association signature, adhesion signature, and membership signature to enter the European Union as full members.

Table 1

European movement. Chronology of the European Construction.

country	Signature accession	Signature membership
Bulgaria	14-XII-1995	1-I-2007
Slovakia	27-VI-1995	1-III-2004
Slovenia	10-VI-1 996	1-III-2004
Estonia	24-XI-1995	1-III-2004
Hungary	31-III-1994	1-III-2004
Latvia	13-X-1995	1-III-2004
Lithuania	8-XII-1995	1-III-2004
Poland	5-IV-1994	1-III-2004
Czech Republic	17-I-1996	1-III-2004
Romania	22-IV-1995	1-I-2007
Turkey	14-IV-1987	CANDIDATE
Ukraine	5-IX-2022	?

Note. Recovered <http://www.movimientoeuropeo.org/cronologia-ue/> Table of own elaboration.

In this context and simultaneously, NATO, the armed wing of the West, began in 1999, after the reunification of Germany, its fourth stage of expansion to grant membership to three countries, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland.

Table 2

NATO Enlargement.

February 18, 1952	Greece Turkey	First
May 9, 1955	Western Germany	Second
May 30, 1982	Spain	Third
October 3, 1990	German Reunification	
March 12, 1999	Czech Republic Hungary Poland	Fourth
29 March 2004	Bulgaria Estonia Latvia Lithuania Romania Slovakia Slovenia	Fifth
April 1, 2009	Albanian Croatia	Sixth
June 5, 2017	Montenegro	Seventh

Source: Wikipedia. Recovered https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ampliacci%C3%B3n_de_la_OTAN (Table of own elaboration).

As can be seen in the table above, in 2004 NATO concluded its fifth stage of expansion incorporating seven countries, three of them former Soviet republics, we refer to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania also called Baltic republics, two of them, Estonia and Latvia adjoining Russia and Lithuania adjoining the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad.



Figure 2. World Map Project. Baltic countries on map. Recovered. <https://proyectomamundi.com/europa/paises-balticos-en-mapas/>.



Figure 3. Gil Lobo, Abel (2018). NATO in Europe. Members and dates of accession. The World Order. Open Embassy Foundation. Recovered <https://www.embajadaabierta.org/post/70-aniversario-de-la-otan>.

All of the above was considered by Russia as a real affront and as a sign that the geopolitical struggle between that country and the West had not ended.

In the year 2000, Vladimir Putin won the presidency of his country and as a former member of the KGB and a wide connoisseur of the *mudus pensandi* and *modus operandi* of the former USSR, one of his main objectives was to reposition Russia and try to return part of his greatness it possessed before the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Russian president is a pragmatic individual, autocratic and well versed in geopolitics. He served twice as prime minister, in the periods 1999-2000 and 2008-2012, he has also been the president from 2000 to 2008 and from 2012 to date (2023) for a total of 18 years as head of the Executive Power with prospects of remaining until 2036, by virtue of the reforms made by the legislators of his party to the Russian Magna Carta.

Conflict Russia-Ukraine

Within the framework of the Russian repositioning and the Ukrainian conflict that occurred in 2014, known as “Euromaidan”, the so-called second cold war restarted. Euromaidan was a popular revolt in Ukraine, caused mainly by the refusal of the then pro-Russian president Victor Yanukovych to sign an association agreement with the EU, the protests escalated to the point that Yanukovych was ousted and fled to Russia. His place was taken by the pro-European Petro Poroshenko who continued the process of rapprochement with Germany and the European Union.

This situation was interpreted by Russia as the departure of Ukraine from its sphere of influence and the imminent loss of the Crimean peninsula, a point of enormous geostrategic importance because the naval military

base known as the “Black Sea Fleet” is located there. The Russian navy ships that are there have access to the Mediterranean Sea through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits, which allows maritime connection with the Tartus naval base, which is located on the western coast of Syria, this last partner country, friend, and ally of Russia.

Under the pretext of protecting the Russian-speaking community located in Crimea, a territory with strong ethnic, cultural, and historical ties to their country, the government of Vladimir Putin carried out an express referendum that concluded with the independence of Crimea and its immediate annexation to Russia which allowed it to maintain a military presence in the Black Sea and, of course, the important military naval base located in Sevastopol. It should be noted that Ukraine, the United States, the European Union, and more than 100 countries do not recognize the annexation of Crimea to Russia, considering it contrary to International Law and a serious violation of Ukrainian sovereignty.

The aforementioned rekindled the geopolitical struggle between the United States-European Union duo against Russia, which worsened with the latter’s invasion of Ukrainian territory on February 24, 2022, in which there are rebel groups that accept and support the Russian presence. The goal of the invasion was and still is to rescue Ukraine from the zone of influence of the West. We believe that the so-called “special military operation” contemplated three scenarios, the first was the advance and seizure of all Ukrainian territory, the second was that Russian troops arrive in Kiev and establish a pro-Russian government, and the third is to appropriate the region of the Donbas and the entire eastern part of Ukraine in order to establish a corridor that could connect Russia with the Crimean peninsula by land, even until it seized the southern region of Ukraine and closed the outlet to the Black Sea.

In relation to the above, it must be recognized that Putin said several times that the expansion of the EU and particularly of NATO towards the Russian borders in Eastern Europe represented a danger to the national security of his country and that if Ukraine, which received an invitation to join NATO since 2014, agreed to join that military alliance and refused to take a neutral stance (still called Finlandization at the time), the Putin government would take whatever steps it deemed appropriate.

In this context, it is logical to think that the conflict will continue indefinitely because the West is providing economic and military support to Ukraine, thereby seeking to corner and bogging down the Russian army in the Donbas area, gradually undermining it morally and militarily and, above all, the Russian government allocates large amounts of money to pay for the military offensive while the United States and the EU maintain and increase the economic sanctions whose purpose is to suffocate the Russian economy or at least weaken it and force Putin to negotiate the end of the war despite said sanctions have not achieved their goal and, consequently, have not succeeded in getting the Russian president to change his position on Ukraine. To date, the Ukrainian army continues to fight against the Russian armed forces to drive them out of a part of the southern coastal area of their country, the region called Donbas, which includes the territories of Lugansk and Donetsk, and other regions of the East, which are of enormous economic-industrial importance for Ukraine.

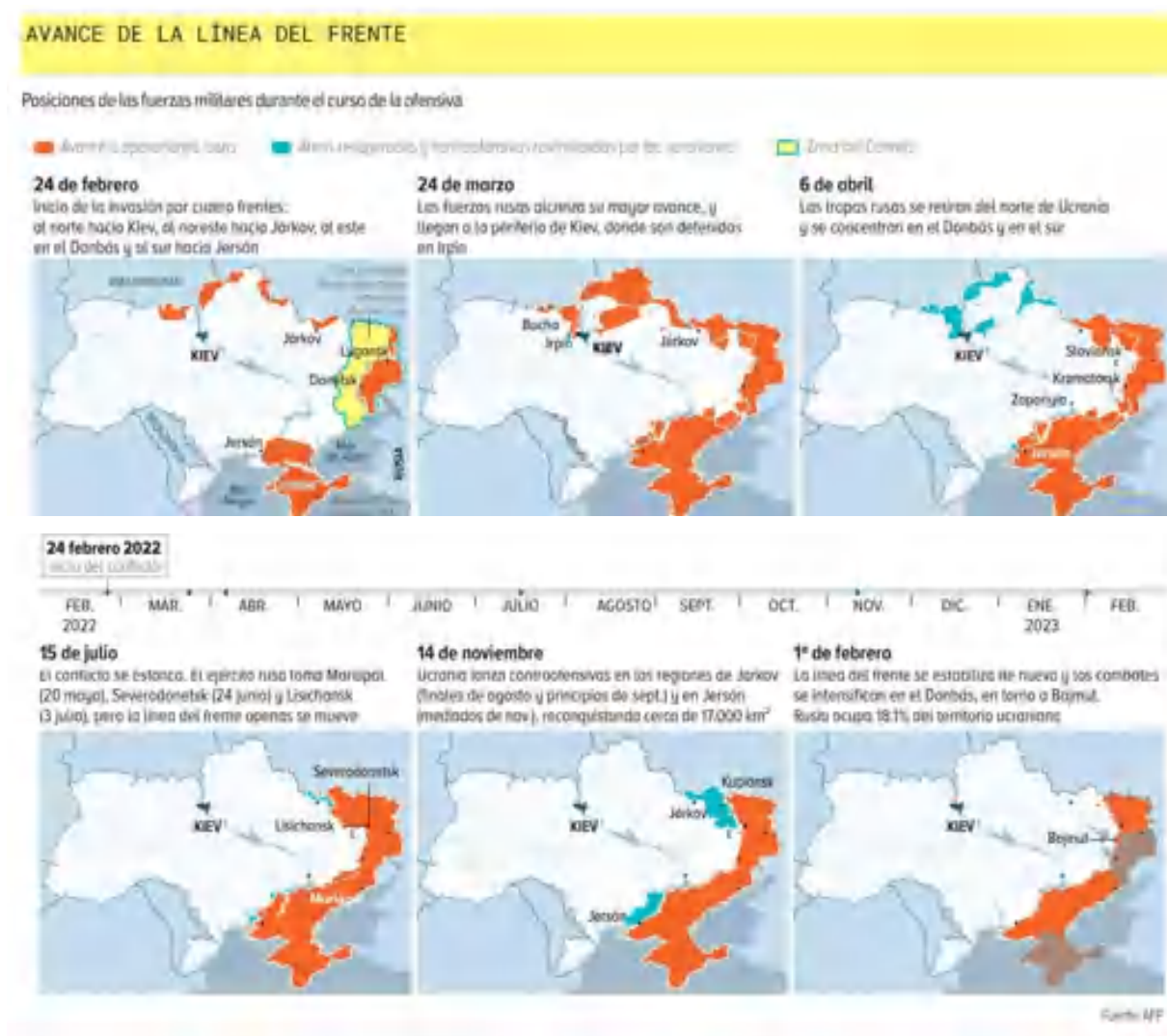


Figure 4. Advance on the front line. Positions of the military forces during the course of the offensive. Source: Mondragón (2023). Recovered <https://www.excelsior.com.mx/global/hay-que-apoyar-a-ucrania-la-guerra-no-acabara-manana-embajador-de-polonia-en-mexico/1572159>.

Historical Background of Finland-Russia Relations

In a way Finland was a creation of Russia because at the beginning of the 19th century this country was the eastern flank of the Kingdom of Sweden. However, the Russians feared that at some point the Swedish army might attack their then capital Saint Petersburg, which was a few miles away. For this reason, the Russian Empire invaded and conquered the territory that is now Finland and created the Grand Duchy of Finland, which was established in what is known in geopolitical terms as a “buffer state” or “mattress state”, a strip of territory wide enough to avoid being the victim of aggression from a rival power as the Kingdom of Sweden was then.

For almost a century Finland enjoyed a good share of autonomy, however, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the Russian Empire attempted a process of Russification, but after almost 100 years of autonomy, the Finnish population had generated an esprit de corps and a feeling of nationalism that prevented the St. Petersburg government from achieving its goal. The internal divisions in Russia did not help its

political elite to establish a well-defined and long-term project of Russification either, especially when the Russian Revolution was approaching in the second decade of the 20th century.

The advent of the First World War, but above all the collapse of the Russian Empire by the Bolshevik Revolution, allowed the Grand Duchy of Finland to proclaim its independence and the Republic of Finland to emerge in 1917 and in 1920 it entered the League of Nations.

For just over 20 years Finland managed to consolidate itself as a State, however, at the end of the 1930s and before the advent of World War II, Russia demanded that Finland cede part of its territory to supposedly protect the city of Leningrad, formerly St. Petersburg, a request that was rejected by Helsinki for this reason, Russia decided to invade it. At that time there were two additional reasons for attacking Finland, the first was to try to recapture what was once the Grand Duchy of Finland and establish the Finnish Democratic Republic and second, to expand its presence in the northern Baltic Sea which would have allowed to increase the Russian maritime fleet in that area.



Figure 5. Loss of Finnish territories at the end of the war with the Soviet Union. Source: journal21.ch/stepmap.de Journalistischer Mehrwert. 2015. Recovered <https://www.journal21.ch/artikel/ende-des-sowjetisch-finnischen-krieges>.

In November 1939 Russia attacked Finland in the so-called “Winter War” thinking that it was going to be a quick and relatively simple battle due to the smallness of its army and the scarce military equipment, however, the surprise was great because the resistance that the Finnish army showed during the first two months was significant, forcing Moscow to redouble its efforts, substantially increasing its military strength. Given the

intensity of the fighting and the losses on both sides at the beginning of March 1940, both parties reached an agreement known as the Treaty of Moscow (March 12, 1940), “Finland had to cede Finnish Karelia” (Laurelhillcementery.blog, 2022); “The eastern half from Salla municipality...the strategically important Fisher Peninsula in the north and the Hanko peninsula in southern Finland [where] the Soviets were able to operate a naval base for 30 years” (Journal21.ch, Journalistischer Mehrwert, 2015); “Accepting the armistice cost Finland the 11% of its territory” (Laurelhillcementery.blog, 2022).

Moscow’s triumph in the Winter War left a taste of defeat due to the little territorial gain and its high cost in terms of dead and wounded soldiers and the loss of military equipment, but above all due to the failed strategy against an army small and apparently weak. The “winter war” was closely followed by Adolf Hitler who, seeing the ineffectiveness of the Russian army, later planned the “Red Beard” operation to attack Russia.

The Winter War generated strong anti-Russian sentiment among the Finnish population and a sense of insecurity over potential future military aggression from Moscow. For this reason and as revenge, Finland discreetly supported Germany in its invasion of Russia, which was called the “Continuation War”, but later and seeing the imminent defeat of Hitler, it adopted a position of neutrality so as not to provoke a violent response by part of Moscow. After the Second World War, Finland distanced itself from Russia and, like its neighbor Sweden, they decided not to get involved in international political issues that could generate friction and lead to conflicts.

Finland’s Application for NATO Membership

In the midst of the Russo-Ukrainian war and heightened tensions between Moscow and the West, in May 2022 the President of Finland Sauli Niinisto and the Prime Minister of that country Sanna Marin requested to join NATO (MSN.com, 2022). Finland, since the end of World War II, had remained non-aligned, militarily and politically neutral so as not to provoke Russia. It is evident that the Finnish historical resentments, the wars between Finland and Russia, and the invasion of the Putin government in Ukraine made her change her position, joining NATO seemed to her the best option to safeguard her territorial integrity, without caring about the reaction of Russia.

In January 2023, within the framework of the World Economic Forum in Davos, the Finnish Prime Minister stated that “For Finnish citizens, security is the priority”, and that her country would support Ukraine “for as long as necessary”. Be it one or 15 years, since the message from democratic countries must be that Russia “cannot win this war”. A victory for Moscow would imply “the possibility of Russia invading another neighbor”, such as Finland. On that same occasion, the prime minister added that “this perspective is what made her country abandon military neutrality to apply for NATO membership.” (Noticias Yahoo, 2023).

A poll conducted in Finland by Yle, the Finnish public radio, in the April-May 2022 period showed that 72% of its citizens were in favor of joining NATO. In February of that same year, the intention to vote in favor was 53% and just one month later, in March, it had already risen to 62%. In that same informative note, it was pointed out that the opinion of the Finnish parliamentarians was in the same direction, even the president of the chamber, Matti Vanhanen, pointed out that “joining NATO is not a decision that goes against anyone. If we join the NATO my response to Russia would be: You caused this, look in the mirror.” (Antena 3 Noticias, 2022).

It should be noted that Finland shares a border of “1,340 kilometers, the longest border with Russia in the European Union (EU) and the second in Europe (after Ukraine)” (Agencia EFE, Finlandia, 2022) which makes it difficult for the army of that country to safeguard such a wide extension of territory and, on the other hand,

facilitate a possible Russian military incursion. For now, and at the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, many Russian citizens decided to leave their country and go to neighboring states such as Finland, for this reason the government, with the support of its parliament, decided “to build a fences and other types of barriers on the border to increase national security” which will imply a cost of “several hundred million euros” taking into consideration that said fence will be “several meters high and [...] video surveillance cameras in the border sections considered to be of greater risk.” (Agencia EFE, Finlandia, 2022).



Figure 6. Finland has the longest border with Russia in the European Union and the second longest in Europe after Ukraine. Source: Agencia EFE (2022). Recovered <https://www.altonivel.com.mx/actualidad/internacional/finlandia-aprueba-muro-fronterizo-para-frenar-llegada-de-rusos/>.

For its part, the Kremlin has repeatedly warned Helsinki that its entry into the Atlantic Alliance will have serious consequences, which is why the Finnish government fears that Russia could orchestrate a migratory crisis similar to the one it had on the border between Poland and Belarus in end of 2021. (Agencia EFE, Finlandia, 2022)

Because Finland’s probable entry into NATO represents a threat to Russia, the Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov as well as the Foreign Ministry expressed their deep concern in May 2022 and pointed out that in view of the Helsinki decision, Moscow “will see forced to take retaliatory measures, both of a military-technical nature and of another type, to prevent threats to its national security from arising” (Gómez, 2022). As can be seen, the threatening tone of the Russian government was evident in the face of the potential change in the geopolitical balance because the NATO would approach the northern border of Russia and for the strengthening of the Atlantic Alliance by adding the Finnish army to the military force of the armed wing of the West.

Russia’s response to the measures adopted by Finland also occurred in the energy field because the Russian state company Gazprom announced, in May 2022, that it would cut off the gas supply to that country for not meeting Moscow’s demand to pay in rubles the purchases of that hydrocarbon. For its part, the Finnish gas company Gasum responded to Moscow that if it suspended its supply it would go to international courts; however, the possibility of not having Russian gas was not a problem for Finland because this country, although it bought 2,200 from Russia million cubic meters a year, that amount only represented “5% of all the energy consumed by the Nordic country” (Agencia EFE, Gazprom, 2022), even Finland is a net exporter of gas to the countries of the Nordic region.

Another threat that Moscow carried out was the suspension of electrical energy, thus, in May 2022, the Russian company ROA Nordic, in charge of supplying 10% of the total that Finland consumes (AFP, 2023) suspended the supply in its entirety, however, Helsinki already knew that this was going to happen and already had a plan to replace the electricity coming from Russia.

Regarding the military aspect, Finland had already had joint training with NATO, such as the one carried out by the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF), which was carried out with a Finnish tank brigade, British tanks and troops, Americans, Estonians, and Latvians. In this regard, the Ministry of Defense of the United Kingdom indicated that the objective was “to deter Russian aggression in Scandinavia and the Baltic states” (Gardner, 2022).

In reality, the joint military exercises between Finland and Sweden with NATO are not new, they have been carried out since the mid-90s of the last century (MSN.com, OTAN, 2022) and coincide with the entry of both into the EU which took place on January 1, 1995, which demonstrates the close link that exists in belonging to the European alliance and the North Atlantic military alliance

Historical Background of Sweden-Russia Relations

In the 17th century Sweden consolidated itself as a regional power of its time, it faced different battles that allowed it to extend its domains until it became an empire that even allowed it to conquer territories in continental Europe, countries that we now know as Poland and Lithuania. At the beginning of the 18th century, Sweden had its first great confrontation with Russia, from which it emerged as the broad winner, however, the then King Charles XII decided not to persecute and annihilate the Russians and decided first to overthrow the Polish King Augustus II, an objective that he did achieve. But that gave the Russian army time to reorganize and rearm.

When it was decided to invade Russia, the latter's military forces were well prepared and armed and faced the Swedes with strength, strategy, and determination, which led them to victory. From this moment begins the debacle of the Swedish empire that failed to recover from defeat. In 1719 the same Carlos XII tried to expand his domain to its western side and faced Norway, but he did not achieve his mission. In those years, King Charles XII died, which left his government and army without leadership, which caused Sweden to cede several previously conquered territories in 1721 and caused it to lose presence and begin the debacle of the Swedish Empire. No longer rivaled, Russia emerged as an empire and established itself as the dominant nation of Eastern Europe.

Throughout the 18th century, Sweden gradually and systematically lost the last territory it controlled until Russia, fearing a potential revival of Sweden, invaded that country, and seized a large part of its territory to convert it into the Grand Duchy of Finland, a semi-autonomous region of the Imperial Russia, which, as we said earlier, became a buffer state, a kind of shield to prevent any expansionist attempt by Sweden, which at that time was still a weak nation that did not represent any threat.

During World War II, Germany approached Sweden to supply it with some essential minerals for the production of war equipment and was even subject to a maritime blockade that isolated it from Europe, for this reason and for fear of being invaded, Stockholm decided to collaborate with Hitler's government; even some volunteers from that country participated in Operation Barbarossa with which Germany invaded Russia. This situation occurred for two reasons, firstly because of Swedish resentment against Russia and secondly because of Sweden's fear of being invaded by the Axis powers. At the end of the war, Sweden moved away economically

and politically from Germany and became closer to the West, especially European powers and the United States, maintaining a foreign policy of neutrality.

The fall of the socialist world and the dismemberment of the USSR was the propitious occasion to request its entry into the European Union and in 2022 and before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, seeking its membership in NATO. Although Sweden is not bordered by Russia, it does not want to run the risk of being a victim of future expansionist attempts by the government of Vladimir Putin, in addition, and due to historical, cultural, geographical, national security, and geopolitical reasons, Stockholm and Helsinki have been acting jointly, which is a sign of the closeness, solidarity, common vision, and esprit de corps that exists between them.

Sweden's Application for NATO Membership

In May 2022, Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde stated that Sweden would take Finland's assessments of NATO membership into account, as her country was also considering joining the military alliance and even noted that "Finland is Sweden's closest partner in security and defense" (CNN, 2022).

From a military perspective, the inclusion of the Finnish and Swedish armies in NATO would substantially improve the Alliance's defensive capacity, particularly in northern Europe, a region in which the Russian army outnumbers it in quantitative terms (Gardner, 2022). From a political point of view, the entry of the two Nordic countries would strengthen the union of the old Continent and the United States in terms of mutual defense, in this way a clear and direct message is being sent to Vladimir Putin that practically all of Europe stands in solidarity and rejects the invasion carried out in Ukraine.

It is not surprising that Sweden is acting in tandem with Finland if we take into account that at the end of the 14th century this country, together with Sweden and Norway, which formed the Kalmar Union that lasted until the third decade of the 16th century. After this date, Sweden grew and strengthened until it became an empire that rivaled that of Russia. During World War II Sweden remained officially neutral, however, it collaborated with Nazi Germany for fear of being attacked, however, and almost at the end, it helped the allied powers. At the end of the war and having suffered no damage to its infrastructure, Sweden experienced significant industrial growth, but it was also a beneficiary of the Marshall Plan, which further boosted its economic development.

During the cold war period and in terms of its foreign policy, Sweden, like Finland, maintained a position of neutrality to avoid friction with Russia, however the Swedish government established strong and close ties with the United States and with the European powers. Thus, and after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Swedish government saw the opportunity to distance itself from Russia and joined the European Union, although it did not adopt the euro as its currency.

Sweden's accession to the EU occurred in the context of the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, the strengthening of the integration model in a good part of the capitalist countries and the replacement of GATT by the World Trade Organization, which generated, temporarily, a unipolar world led by the United States and, as a corollary, a strengthening of NATO although at that time Sweden did not request its membership because it saw Russia as very weakened and did not consider it a danger to its national security.

Already located at the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century and in the era known as the Second Cold War, characterized again by the sharpening of the geopolitical confrontation between Russia and the United States, Sweden, like Finland, does not want to be victims of the attempt to repositioning of Moscow so that, faced

with the potential threat to their territorial integrity and sovereignty, they choose to join the armed wing of the West, that is, NATO.

Formalization of the Entry of Finland and Sweden to NATO

On May 12, 2022, the Finnish government announced its intention to join NATO, backed by the fact that 76% (Antena 3 Noticias, 2022) of its citizens support such a decision. In those days, Sweden was also analyzing the possibility of joining the Atlantic Alliance, even its Prime Minister, Magdalena Anderson, exclaimed: “What is best for our security?” (Alcantud, 2022). This declaration preceded the start of the parliamentary debates in both countries to present their formal request for admission to the NATO summit in Madrid that took place in June 2022. On that occasion, Spain was the host of the summit in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of joining the Atlantic Alliance.

Since 2017, the year Montenegro joined, no other formal entry application had been registered. In 2008 there was a first rapprochement of Ukraine to NATO under the presidency of Viktor Yushchenko, however his departure from the presidency completely suspended those first talks. In 2020 Volodimir Zelensky unveiled his “National Security Strategy” in which he expressed his interest in joining NATO, which set off alarm bells in Moscow and was one of the reasons why Putin decided to invade Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

The start of hostilities between Russia and Ukraine was the trigger for Finland and Sweden to decide to join NATO like this, and in the aforementioned summit that took place between June 28 and 30, 2022, qualified by the Department of Security National of Spain as “historical” the applications from the two Nordic countries were entered. At said summit, the strategic concept was updated by virtue of the fact that “the Euro-Atlantic area is not at peace. We cannot rule out an attack against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the allies” and it was further emphasized in the terms of “deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and collective security” likewise and in the final communique. Emphasis was made that “no one should doubt our strength and determination to defend every inch of Allied territory, preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Allies and prevail against any aggressor” obviously making reference to Russia but without neglecting China (Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de España, 2022).

The document “Results of the NATO Summit in Madrid” states that the Atlantic Alliance will have 32 member states, but stresses that “of the 27 countries that are part of the European Union, 23 will in turn be members of the Alliance Atlántica: some figures that reveal the importance of cooperation in security matters between the two organizations” (Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de España, 2022) which shows once again that belonging to the EU, in most cases, precedes joining NATO.

In this context and shortly before Finland and Sweden presented their formal request to join the Atlantic Alliance at the Madrid Summit, the Turkish government had become the main obstacle, the president of that country Recep Tayip Erdogan said that Turkey did not give in and described Sweden as a “hotbed of terrorist organizations” for having offered asylum to Kurdish opponents of his government, he also said that his country was suffering from the sanctions imposed by Sweden and criticized the governments of Finland and Sweden for having suspended sales of armament.

For a new member to join NATO, the approval of the Executive and Legislative branches of the 30 members that make up the military bloc is required. Once the requests are formally accepted, the petitioners have the right to attend the sessions of the North Atlantic Council as “official guests”, but still without being able to invoke the principle of collective defense established in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

Within the framework of the Madrid Summit, an alternating meeting was held, chaired by Jens Stoltenberg and attended by the Turkish President Recep Tayip Erdogan and the Prime Ministers of Finland and Sweden, Sauli Niinistö and Magdalena Anderson, respectively, in which an agreement was reached, agreement in which the two Nordic countries pledged to support Turkey in defense of its national security, in modifying its internal legislation to take action against members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party present in its territory and considered by Ankara as an organization terrorist attack and the signing of an extradition agreement with the Turkish government. Likewise, it was agreed that Helsinki and Stockholm would lift the ban on selling arms to Turkey (EFE, 2022).



Figure 7. Maps of Sweden (2023). Source: <https://maps-sweden.com/maps-sweden-regions/gotland-sweden-map>.

For its part, the US government, and as a gesture of attention to Ankara, began negotiations with the Erdogan government in order to lift sanctions for the purchase of S-400 air defense systems from Moscow as well as the probable sale of forty F-16 planes and military equipment to improve the capabilities of that country's army (Europa Press, 2022). In this way Ankara lifted the veto for the formal acceptance of the applications of Finland and Sweden.

Regardless of the application for NATO membership, Finland and Sweden have been preparing for a possible armed conflict against Russia for several years. General Timo Kivinen, head of the Finnish armed forces, said in June 2022 that his country could count, in the event of war, with 280,000 soldiers and 870,000 reservists. This country is also in a process of modernizing its army and among its plans is the purchase of 2,000 drones and high-altitude air defense equipment. It has also signed a contract with the American company Lockheed Martin for the acquisition of 65 fighter planes F-35. He also intends to buy four warships from the United States (Kauranen, 2023).

Shortly before the Madrid Summit and as a sign of its closeness to NATO, the North Atlantic alliance carried out its annual military exercises called BALTOPS (Baltic operations) in which the two Nordic countries actively participated in order to defend themselves against a hypothetical foreign invasion that would begin on the island of Gotland, belonging to Sweden. This island territory is located in the heart of the Baltic Sea, 60 miles from Swedish territory and 100 miles from the north coast of Latvia, which is why it is considered a strategic point and in the event of a conflict with Russia, it would most likely be the first target from Moscow. The military

maneuvers that took place in June 2022 included the participation of 7,000 soldiers and 45 warships from 14 NATO affiliated countries. Throughout history, the island of Gotland has been the object of several military incursions, the last one being carried out precisely by Russia in 1808. Due to the dismemberment of the USSR, Sweden demilitarized that island in 2005, however, and due to the annexation of Crimea to Russia, the Swedish government re-established a military regiment in 2014 as a deterrent action against a possible Russian military incursion (Brooks, 2022).

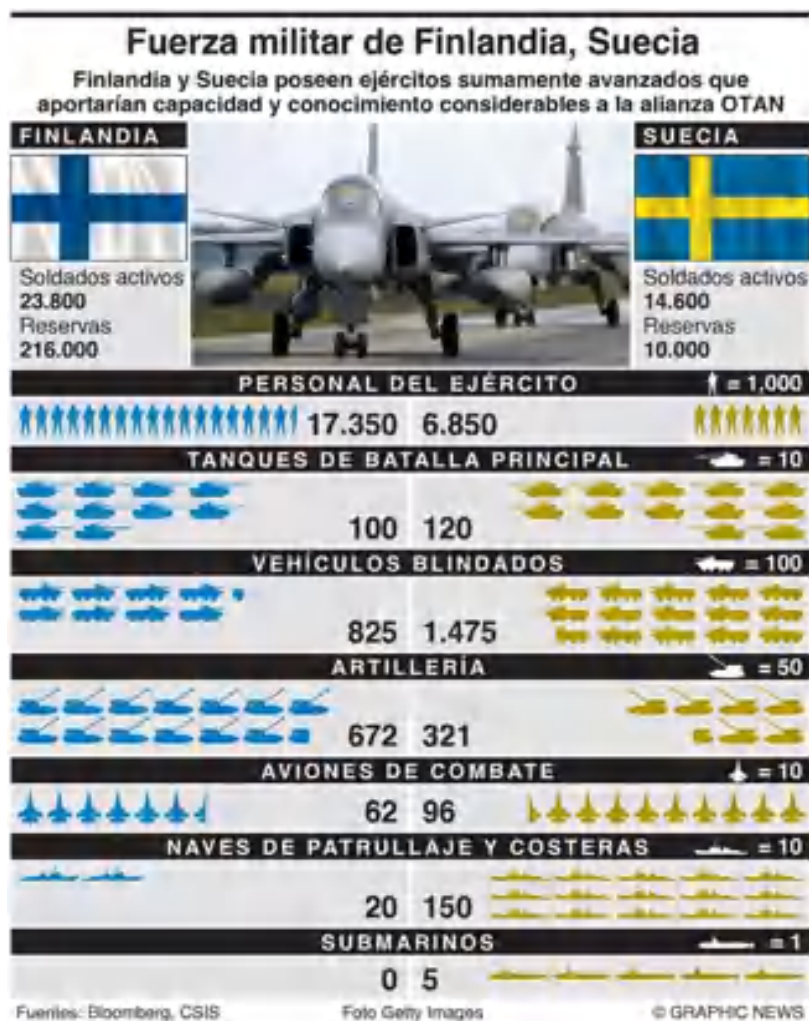


Figure 8. Finnish and Swedish military forces. Source: Bloomberg, CSIS (2022). <https://www.jornada.com.mx/notas/2022/05/16/mundo/suecia-pide-entrar-a-la-otan-habra-respuesta-dice-putin/>, *La Jornada*: https://www.jornada.com.mx/ultimashst19/2022/05/16/suecia-pide-entrar-a-la-otan-habra-respuesta-dice-putin-482.html/suecia-2013-finlandia-otan.jpg-6328.html/image_preview?bc=2022-05-16T09:07:50-05:00.

Vladimir Putin's government has always viewed the BALTOPS operations with distrust and fear, and as a response, it also carried out military exercises with the intention that his country be prepared for a probable NATO military incursion into its territory, however, this scenario is unlikely.

However, regardless of the result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it is very likely that the two Nordic countries will enter the North Atlantic bloc in the short or medium term and with it practically all the coasts of the Baltic Sea, with the exception of the port city of San Petersburg and the enclave of Kaliningrad, whose

coastlines are small, will remain under the control of NATO affiliated countries whose military strength will be substantially increased and will greatly exceed its counterpart, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (heir to the Warsaw Pact) led by Russia and which is made up of five former Soviet republics that are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. For this reason, and on several occasions, Moscow has said that the entry of Finland and Sweden into NATO will have serious consequences.

One of those fulfilled threats was the deployment in the Baltic Sea, in February 2023, of ships equipped with nuclear weapons and submarines belonging to the Northern Fleet (Colás, 2023). It should be noted that Vladimir Putin has repeatedly stated that if his country saw his existence threatened, it would resort to nuclear weapons, statements that are part of his intimidation speech and his nuclear doctrine.

Turkey, the Main Obstacle to the Entry of Finland and Sweden Into NATO

Despite the fact that, as we pointed out above, Finland, Sweden, and Turkey signed an agreement within the framework of the Madrid Summit in which they promised to take action against militants of the Kurdistan Workers' Party settled in their territory, extradite dissidents considered by Ankara as terrorists and lift the veto on arms exports to Turkey, the president of that country Recep Tayip Erdogan said in November 2022 that his country would not give its final acceptance to the entry of the two Nordic states into NATO until July 2023, after the Turkish general elections to be held in June of that year, however that may not be true.

On that same occasion Erdogan also pointed out that neither Finland nor Sweden had complied with the Madrid agreements because he still saw demonstrations against his government in both countries. On the other hand, the Turkish president said that he had given the Swedish government a list of 73 Kurdish opponents requested in extradition, but until November 2022 Stockholm had only sent a single person to Turkey for fraud (Colchen, 2022).

It should be noted that virtually all European countries are reluctant to extradite dissidents, suspected terrorists, or suspected criminals to Turkey because there are no guarantees of fair and legal trials because the Legislative and Judicial branches lack independence and only they obey instructions from the Executive branch, which is characterized by not respecting freedom of expression, human rights, or democracy.

Apart from Turkey, Hungary has shown reluctance to accept the two Nordic countries in NATO, although it has done so less vehemently in this regard. It should be noted that the Hungarian government led by Viktor Orbán has been characterized as nationalist, conservative, and eurosceptic and he has even shown sympathy for the policies adopted by Vladimir Putin, he has received criticism from state and non-state actors for his authoritarian and anti-democratic attitudes, as well as for attacks on the media that do not sympathize with his political project. Regarding the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Hungarian president has stated that he will not send lethal weapons to Kiev and that sanctions against Moscow should even be reduced. These statements have made several political leaders of the old continent uncomfortable and have isolated him from the European Union, and especially from neighboring countries such as Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. President Orbán has expressed his solidarity with the times that the Turkish government manages and indicated that its ratification of the entry of Sweden and Finland into NATO could take until June or even until Turkey approves the accession.

The position adopted by Viktor Orbán is actually a message to the United States and the European Union not to submit, to show defiance, and to take advantage of the opportunity to show the nationalist inclination of their foreign policy. With this attitude, he also intends to look good in front of the Turkish government in order

to later obtain some favor from Erdogan. Internally, Orbán intends to ingratiate himself with his supporters and maintain or increase his popularity and, of course, obtain electoral profitability.

At the beginning of March 2023, a delegation of four Hungarian deputies belonging to the ruling Fidesz party traveled to Helsinki and Stockholm to learn more about the motives of the two Nordic countries for joining the Atlantic Alliance and to clarify some criticisms of both governments about certain authoritarian and anti-democratic biases of the Orbán government, however, Finnish congressmen, in the voice of the vice-president of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Finnish Parliament, Erkki Tuomioja, were angered by such an attitude and pointed out that “Finland has nothing to negotiate and has nothing explain to the Hungarian delegation”. It should be noted that the economic-commercial and political relationship of the two Nordic countries with Hungary is minimal, so there is no reason for the Orbán government to condition or want to obtain any advantage or type of benefit from grant ratification (Nagy, 2023).

It is necessary to point out that once Turkey grants its ratification, Hungary will do the same, the Budapest government would have no arguments to continue objecting to the entry of the two Nordic countries, in addition to the fact that it could not maintain its refusal because it lacks the specific weight, in political and geopolitical terms that Ankara has, if the opposite occurs, it would face strong and severe pressure from the European Union.

To further complicate the situation, in January 2023, an incident was recorded in Stockholm, near the Turkish embassy, which President Erdogan took advantage of to increase his rejection of Sweden’s entry into NATO. Rasmus Paludan, a far-right Swedish politician, burned the Koran. The Turkish president criticized this fact and demanded an explanation from the Swedish government, which replied that it could not do anything against Paludan because it would mean violating freedom of expression. Erdogan considered the burning of the holy book of Muslims a grievance and a lack of respect for the beliefs of the Islamic community. There were even several demonstrations against Sweden in various Muslim countries. The foregoing led to the cancellation of the visit of Pal Jonson, Swedish Defense Minister to Ankara, which meant the interruption of the approaches between the two governments to obtain Turkey’s consent for Sweden’s accession without there being a date to resume the talks.

Finland, which had been acting in conjunction with Sweden and which promised not to join NATO if Stockholm did not, would be reflecting on whether to wait for communication between Turkey and Sweden to be restored or act independently.

In this context, in October 2022, in the framework of the first meeting of the European Political Community, a forum attended by 44 leaders of the European Union and some other non-EU leaders, President Erdogan said that “his government is willing to do ‘everything possible’ to facilitate Finland’s entry into the Atlantic Alliance because it does not give shelter and support to people it considers terrorists” (La información Mundo, 2022), unlike what I had seen in the Swedish case, however, to date, nor the Turkish parliament has not ratified the entry of Finland nor has Helsinki broken the alliance with Stockholm in its objective of achieving joint membership in NATO.

In response to the position of Turkish President Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary General, declared at the beginning of February 2023 that Sweden and Finland must enter the Atlantic Alliance “together”, adding that together they applied for membership, together we invite them, and together must achieve membership (Infobae, 2023).

The Earthquake in Turkey and the Aid Provided by NATO, Finland, and Sweden

On February 6, 2023, a disastrous earthquake struck Turkey and Syria, leaving a trail of death and destruction of enormous proportions. As regards Turkey, the death toll exceeded 52,000 and material damage exceeded 100,000 million dollars according to World Bank calculations (DW, 2023). This telluric movement also had collateral effects and paused the negotiations between the two Nordic countries with Ankara.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Atlantic Alliance, Helsinki, and Stockholm were among the first to provide assistance to the Turkish government in dealing with the disaster. The day after the earthquake, NATO, Finland, and Sweden sent 1,400 rescuers to try to get as many people out of the rubble and the Swedish presidency decided, on February 6, 2023, “to activate the integrated political response to crises (IPCR) to coordinate EU support measures in response to the earthquake in Turkey and Syria, in close collaboration with the European Commission” (Padinger, 2023) the Council of the EU said in a statement. Perhaps this could serve for later, when Turkey has recovered from the effects of the earthquake, resume talks with Helsinki and Stockholm in a more constructive way so that your parliament grants the ratification of these two countries to join NATO.

The truth is that up to now Erdogan has made a political handling of the requests from Finland and Sweden seeking electoral profitability in the face of the elections that should be held in May 2023. In his public discourse he has always criticized the protests of the dissidents that they are in Sweden and he has magnified them to show an image of a president committed to the defense of the sovereignty and national security of Turkey and thereby increase his level of approval within his country and incidentally throw a smokescreen over the serious problems that afflict your country. The earthquake that occurred in a part of Turkey gave him the ideal pretext to indefinitely postpone talks with Finland and Sweden to grant them their NATO membership and try to obtain some kind of benefit to strengthen his regime. The Turkish president, who has been in power for 21 years, intends to perpetuate himself in the presidential chair and continue leading an authoritarian and repressive government that does not respect freedom of expression, democracy, or human rights.

The attitude assumed by Erdogan has several purposes, such as increasing the approval of his compatriots inside his country and abroad selling dearly his acceptance for the entry of the two Nordic countries into the North Atlantic military bloc, but also to highlight the importance geopolitics that your country has on various issues such as immigration and using it as a bargaining chip to obtain economic and political benefits from its European neighbors. Erdogan knows perfectly well that 30 votes are needed for Finland and Sweden to join NATO and that if he postpones their acceptance indefinitely, it also goes well with Moscow, which will be the main loser due to the enlargement and rapprochement of its borders by the Atlantic Alliance that it will surely strengthen and increase the number of military bases in the Scandinavian peninsula and, of course, the military force in the Baltic Sea area.

With Erdogan’s attitude, Vladimir Putin buys time to at least try to dominate and later appropriate the eastern side of Ukraine and once that objective is achieved, perhaps try to sign an armistice with Kiev to realign his army and increase his presence in the north of Ukraine. Russia, right on the border with Finland, which, as we pointed out before, is very long.

As can be seen, Erdogan plays a decisive role in this matter, he has outlined his political and geopolitical objectives well and, for some time, he will have the upper hand by subjecting his decisions to the European Union, to the Anglo-Saxon duo (United States and United Kingdom), to Finland and Sweden, and to Russia.

Conclusions

Since its emergence, NATO was seen as a serious threat by the socialist bloc for this reason, and in order to counteract its presence, the USSR promoted the Treaty of Friendship, Collaboration and Mutual Assistance, better known as the Warsaw Pact. The objective of said treaty was to neutralize the threat posed by the Western military alliance and foster what has been called a “balance of power” taking into consideration that the sum of the armies that comprised it could deter NATO from an attack against him.

After the collapse of the socialist block, the nascent Russia continued to see NATO as a threat, which is why Moscow began negotiations with governments of Western powers to establish a gentlemen’s agreement so that it would not expand and reach its borders.

Faced with the obvious weakness of Russia in the 1990s and early 2000s, the European Union, as well as NATO, seized the opportunity and began their expansion into Eastern Europe to wrest from Moscow a good part of the countries that once belonged to the zone of influence of the USSR and transfer them, in economic-financial, commercial, monetary, and military terms, to the sphere of domination of the West, the above was considered by Russia as a true affront.

The aforementioned rekindled the geopolitical struggle between the United States-European Union triffecta, Great Britain against Russia, which worsened with the latter’s invasion of Ukrainian territory on February 24, 2022.

Finland, since the end of World War II, had remained non-aligned, militarily and politically neutral (this way of conducting foreign policy was called “Finnishization”) so as not to provoke Moscow. It is evident that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine made it change its position; joining NATO seemed to it the best option to safeguard its territorial integrity. Finland’s probable entry into NATO represents a threat to Russia, which is why the Kremlin made its deep concern known in May 2022 and pointed out that, given the Helsinki decision, Moscow would take all kinds of retaliatory measures to prevent its national security from being threatened.

Within the framework of the Second Cold War and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Sweden, like Finland, does not want to be a victim of Moscow’s attempt to reposition itself, so, faced with the potential threat to its territorial integrity and sovereignty, it opts to join to NATO. The application for membership was formalized at the Summit of the Atlantic Alliance in Madrid in June 2022.

In this context and shortly before Finland and Sweden submitted their formal application to join NATO, the Turkish government had become the main obstacle, the president of that country Recep Tayip Erdogan said that Turkey would not give in and described Sweden as a stronghold of terrorist organizations for having granted asylum to Kurdish opponents of his government, he also said that his country was suffering from the sanctions imposed by Sweden and criticized the governments of Finland and Sweden for having suspended arms sales to him.

However, regardless of the result of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, it is very likely that Finland and Sweden will enter the North Atlantic block in the short or medium term and with it practically all the coasts of the Baltic Sea, with the exception of the port city of Saint Petersburg. and the enclave of Kaliningrad, will come under the control of NATO affiliated countries whose military strength will be substantially increased and will greatly exceed its counterpart, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (heir to the Warsaw Pact) led by Russia.

Despite the fact that, as we pointed out lines above, Finland, Sweden, and Turkey signed an agreement within the framework of the Madrid Summit in which they promised to take action against militants of the

Kurdistan Workers' Party settled in their territory, extradite dissidents considered by Ankara as terrorists and lifting the ban on arms exports to Turkey, the president of that country Recep Tayip Erdogan said at the end of 2022 that his country would not give its final acceptance of the entry of the two Nordic states into NATO until July of 2023.

Once the Erdogan government grants its ratification, Hungary, which has supported Ankara's refusal to accept the entry of the two Nordic countries, since it does not have the same specific weight in political and geopolitical terms as Turkey, will have no other option to grant its approval unless it seeks to anger the EU and face some range of sanctions

Finland, which had been acting in conjunction with Sweden and which promised not to join NATO if Stockholm did not, would be reflecting on whether to wait for communication between Turkey and Sweden to be restored or act independently.

Erdogan knows perfectly well that 30 votes are needed for Finland and Sweden to join NATO and that if he indefinitely postpones their acceptance, it will be good for Moscow, which, if the expansion of the North Atlantic military bloc is consummated, will be the main loser. The Turkish president plays a decisive role in this matter, he has outlined his political and geopolitical objectives well and, for some time, he will have the upper hand by subordinating the European Union, the Anglo-Saxon duo (United States and United Kingdom) to Finland Sweden and Russia to their decisions.

Finally, it should be noted that, within the framework of the Second Cold War, the transformation of the scheme of alliances and geopolitical balances in Eastern Europe continues its march and that the danger of an escalation of the conflict between world and regional powers remains latent.

Epilogue

Political pressure from the United States and European powers finally made Turkish President Recep Tayip Erdogan ask his country's Legislative Branch to ratify Finland's entry into NATO, which occurred on April 4, 2023, with which the Nordic country becomes the 31st member of the world's largest military alliance. The foregoing, as we point out throughout the article, has many meanings, including that Russia verifies that its invasion of Ukraine was perceived as a threat to Finland's national security and that, consequently, Helsinki abandoned its historic position of neutrality. Due to the above, NATO gains one more member, increases its geographical coverage, and expands and strengthens its military power. For its part, Russia, which has always opposed NATO expansion considering it a threat to its security and its natural area of influence, will try to increase its military infrastructure in the border area with Finland and will radicalize its discourse and actions against West. Sweden, for its part, will have to continue negotiating with the Turkish government to grant it its endorsement to join the North Atlantic military alliance, but without haste because it does not face the imminent danger of an armed aggression by Moscow and is also surrounded by States that do belong to NATO such as Norway, Finland, the Baltic countries, Poland, Germany, and Denmark.

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An Analysis of the Current State of Civil Society Participation in Ensuring the National Security of Mongolia

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In this article, the researchers tried to evaluate the contribution of civil society to Mongolian democracy and the problems faced by civil society. In addition, the article aimed to determine the unique national criteria of Mongolian democracy and the need to create an organization to monitor the process of democracy. The process of identifying important documents and ideals for the development of Mongolian civil society today is still in its early stages. It can be said that the approval of the democratic constitution and the first free and fair parliamentary elections as a country that has newly and restored democracy became another impetus for the creation of a new type of citizen organization. It is characterized by trying to study the changes that have occurred since this historical period at the intersection of political science and security studies. One of the most important issues today is to find out how many non-governmental and civil society organizations exist in Mongolia today, which are Western-oriented, focused on specific issues, have their own position and opinion, are specialized, and are capable of influencing government policy. On the other hand, in this article, we emphasize whether non-governmental and civil society organizations, which aim to hold the government accountable, and carry out influence and control activities, are fully developed.

Keywords: national security, civil society, democracy, Mongolia, defense and political science, reforms and changes in the society

Introductory Notes

In this article, when clarifying the characteristics of Mongolian civil society institutions, first of all, the preamble of the new democratic Constitution of 1992 states that “... it will be our mission to comprehensively develop a humane and civil democratic society in our country” and clearly sets the main characteristics of a comprehensively developed society in Mongolia such as highlighted.

From the point of view of modern political science, the concepts of “humane”, “civil”, and “democratic society” mean putting people at the center of society and citizens at the core of government policy, and putting citizens’ interests, and will above everything else. Since then, Mongolian philosophers, political and legal researchers, economists, and scientists have been trying to explain and study the ideals of the Constitution from the theoretical and practical aspects.

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The concept of civil society is not a new concept in our country (Institute of Philosophy, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 2014, p. 5). Thanks to the democratic revolution, this idea was studied in Mongolia from the 1990s, and then it was able to be strengthened in the new Constitution. In the Constitution of 1921, the “Oath Agreement between the People’s Government and the Bogd Khan” states that the state will be strong, religion will spread, peace will be at home, glory will be abroad, and the people will be happy; Striving for orderly and harmonious society by strengthening the foundations of new rules in the 1924 Constitution; In the 1940 Constitution, further progress in social order; In the 1960 Constitution, socialism will be fully established and a communist society will be established in the future; Establishing a democratic socialist society in the 1990 Constitution Amendment Act; In the Constitution of 1992, the ideal of the Mongolian state is expressed as the main goal of comprehensively developing a humane civil democratic society.

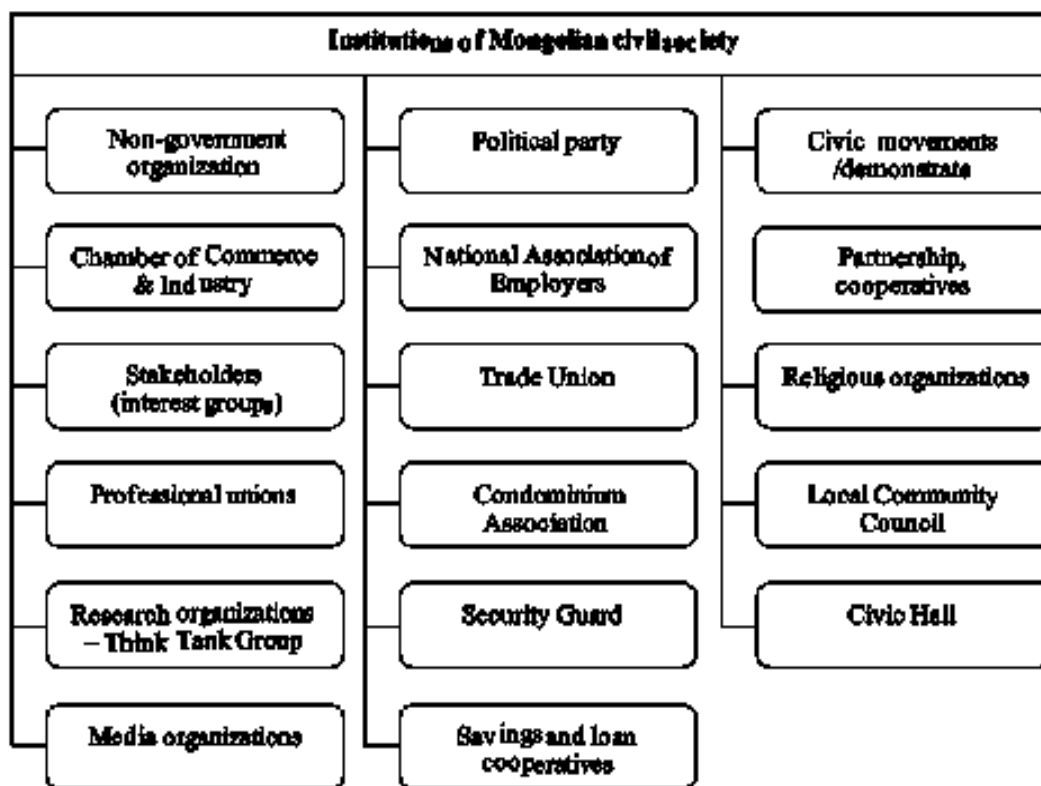


Figure 1. Institutional structure of Mongolian civil society.

Defining the Research Background

According to researchers, Mongolia belongs to the group of countries where the development of civil society is at the beginning stage (Institute of Philosophy, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 2008, p. 281). 78 leading organizations from various branches of Mongolian civil society participated in the round table discussion organized by the Secretariat of the 2003 International Conference of Civil Society in Mongolia. During the in-depth interviews conducted as part of the research, the contributions of civil society to Mongolian democracy and the challenges faced by civil society were assessed, and the unique national criteria of Mongolian democracy and the need to create an organization to monitor the progress of democracy were determined. In this way, the work of identifying important documents and ideals for the development of Mongolian civil society has begun.

As a result, according to the ideas included in the final document of the 5th international conference of new and restored democracies and the 2003 international conference of civil society, the Mongolian government undertook to develop the criteria for democratic governance.

At the same time, the Secretariat of the International Civil Society Conference for Democracy has decided to evaluate the current state of civil society in Mongolia using the CIVICUS Civil Society Index methodology. The reason for mentioning all this is that it is important to review the current picture and structure of Mongolian civil society organizations.

In the history of Mongolia, civil society has developed in the following way, according to researchers and experts. It is: (a) Movement of the entire people led by feudal lords and princes with the aim of overthrowing Manchurian oppression; (b) Quasi-governmental mass organization aimed at transforming the Mongolian people into “Homo Socialisticus”; (c) There were various types, such as universal movements for democracy and small organizations working on specific issues, voluntary, right-wing, etc.

However, modern researchers believe that Mongolia’s civil society began to develop after the democratic transition of 1989-1990. Before 1990, there were various public organizations such as women’s, elders’, and youth organizations, trade unions, and the Red Cross under People’s Democratic Party. These public organizations closely followed the official ideology and were responsible for helping the party and the state to meet the social, cultural, political, and economic goals of building a socialist society. They had a top-down organizational structure, were in control of party and state power, and had a significant impact on society. The main thing was that their funding came from the party-state, or from membership taxes deducted directly from their salaries. Therefore, it is clearly shown that these organizations were dependent on the party-state, not on a voluntary basis, but on a coercive basis. However, these public organizations have played a role in the development of civil society. It is natural to mention here that it has made an important contribution to the creation of the capacity of citizens by organizing citizens, interacting in the public sphere, collecting and distributing information, even if it is ideological, and interacting with the modern state. As a result of this capacity and its dissemination, many citizen’s initiative movements and organizations were formed during the transition.

The reforms and changes in the global socialist world, the perestroika in the northern neighborhood, the process of dismissing the Political Bureau of the People’s Democratic Party, the drafting of a democratic Constitution, and the first movement in 1990, which called on the public to form a new government through general elections, were actually a voluntary creation of citizens. It was the beginning of the initiative. Here, the organization called the Mongolian Democratic Union became the beginning of changes in the political life of Mongolia, i.e. the birth of a multi-party system, and made a historical contribution to the reshaping of the social psychology of civil, voluntary, and creative initiatives.

Historically, the important role of this process was in the beginning to reform socialism in its framework, and eventually it became important to introduce the values of democratic society, such as transparency, accountability, human rights, and equality. Consequently, his main importance was in introducing the people to terms and concepts such as multi-party system, establishment of the government as a result of fair elections, respect for the law, and freedom from the pressure of any authority, free economy, and market. As a result, the first step towards creating a political environment for citizens’ coalitions and independent activities has been laid.

The approval of the democratic Constitution and the first free and fair parliamentary elections became another impetus for the creation of a new type of citizen organization. Such a new type is a non-governmental organization that has a Western character, focuses on certain issues, has its own place, is specialized, and aims

to influence government policy and hold the government accountable, and carries out influence and monitoring activities. At the same time, public organizations inherited from socialism tried to review their mission and duties, their relationship with the People's Democratic Party and the state, and redefine them in the new situation. Development of non-governmental organizations established in the 1990s by donor organizations, such as the Asia Fund of the United States, the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation of Germany, the United States International Agency for International Development, the United Nations Development Program, the United States of America, and the Australian Agency for International Development, international organizations such as the World Women's Fund were financially, technically, and ideologically supported. It is believed that this kind of support to non-governmental organizations had an important influence on the adoption of the law on non-governmental organizations in 1997. However, from the late 1990s, this support began to focus more on the social and economic functions of non-governmental organizations, or the role of distributing services, instead of focusing on the political meaning of democracy, or the role of influence, and control of non-governmental organizations. In this regard, it can be seen from the "Mutual Understanding between Non-Governmental Organizations and the Government" material.

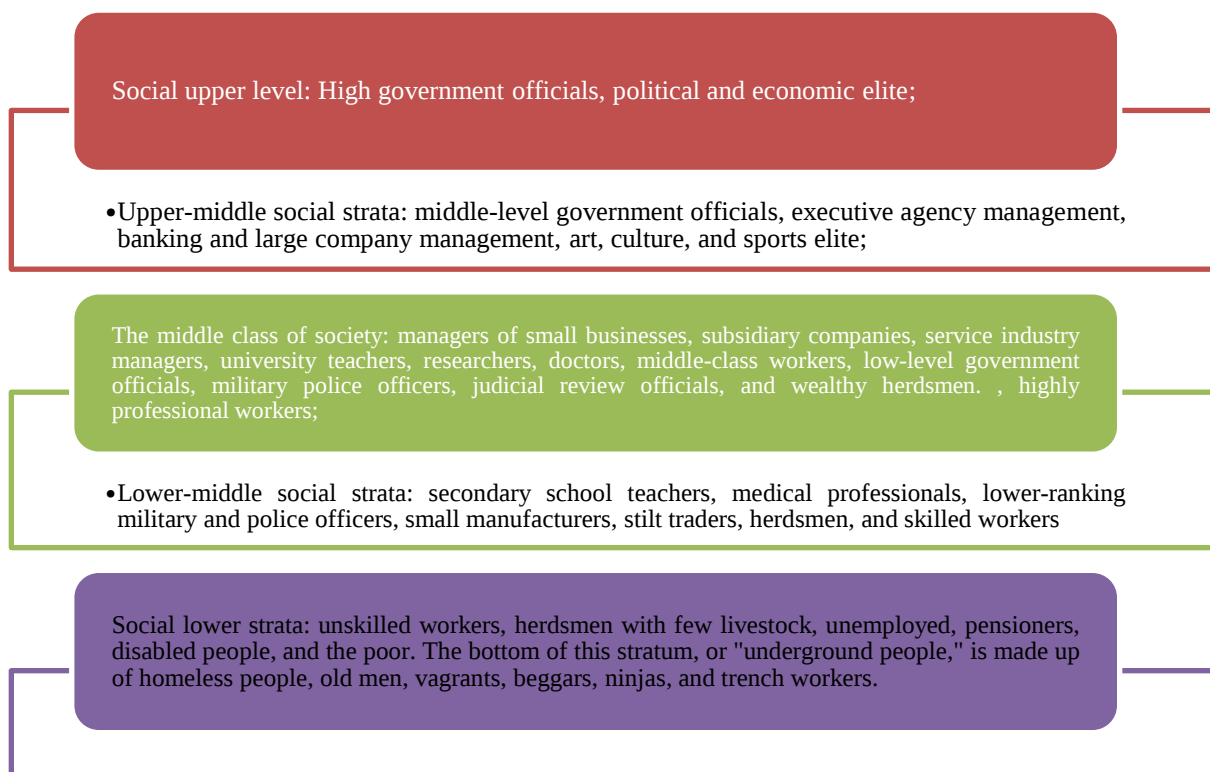


Figure 2. Stratification of modern civil society.

Until the end of the 1990s, the independent and voluntary organizations and activities of citizens were expressed by the term "non-governmental organizations", emphasizing their independence from the government in the sense of their general and common duties to develop democracy and spread pluralism. With the help of donors who supported the development of non-governmental organizations in order to strengthen democracy, this term was created in the early 1990s, replacing the term "public organization" that was used during socialism. The restructuring process of the 1990s marked the beginning of a dual transition to liberal democracy and a

market economy. Due to the political, economic, spiritual, and social changes that have taken place in the Mongolian society, the society we live in today has entered into differentiation (social separation), increased mobility, traditional classes and strata are disintegrating and disappearing, along with completely new groups and marginal strata. Thus, based on the opinion of some researchers who have studied the modern social stratification of Mongolia, it can be formulated as follows (Munkhbat, 2012, pp. 74-75).

In light of the above, it is important that the middle class has the right conditions to fulfill its role. Thus, civil society is directly related to the middle class, which is the basis of the social structure of society. In addition, it fulfills the role of stabilization in the national security system by forming parties, other public organizations and movements participating in socio-political life.

The middle class of Mongolia is someone who has an average daily income of 2-10 USD, lives in an apartment, a comfortable apartment or a private shack, has the ability and desire to send his child to university or college, has a car for personal use, and has savings for children and family. In addition, livestock farmers have 50-100 heads per person, have higher, special professional, or general education, and actively participate in social, political, and humanitarian activities.

Objectives of Its Research

In our research, we aimed to analyze the current state of civil society participation in national security. In this context, an “expert survey and analysis” was conducted among about 40 high-level experts. The purpose of the analysis is to find out how civil society can participate in ensuring Mongolia’s national security. In addition, it was important to clarify the basic conditions affecting national security, and then to determine the content and functions of civil society participation. The results of the research and analysis are presented as follows. In the expert survey that we initiated, firstly, the experts involved in the survey determined their work and research areas. Secondly, the experts clarified the process of ensuring national security through civil society participation and how it is connected with its direction. In this way, the following scene was observed, and a certain conclusion was made. It can be seen in detail in the image below (Figure 3).

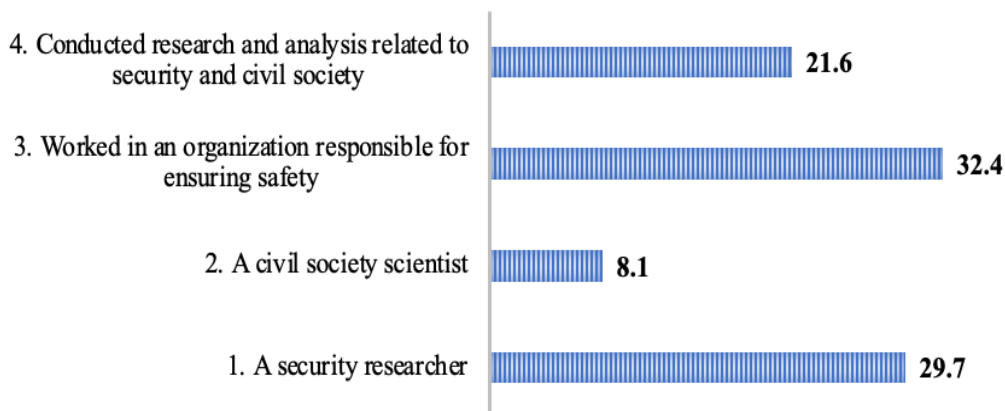


Figure 3. How experts’ work and research areas are connected to security and civil society areas.

83.7 percent of the experts surveyed were security researchers, while 8.1 percent were researchers and experts conducting civil society policies, activities, and external evaluation. As shown in the figure above, 29.7 percent of all experts were specialized in security, and 21.6 percent were conducting research and analysis related to security and civil society. Then, 32.4 percent were attended by representatives of organizations with security

functions. In that analysis, opinions, conclusions, and opinions about the current situation that are in line with the purpose of this study were freely shared, which made the analysis more effective. In the future, the analysis of the current situation will indicate the importance of the background information.

The probability of the truth of the assessment results obtained from expert research on the participation of civil society in ensuring security is characterized by using statistical methods. The degree of belief of the expert's research results in the evaluation of the following two areas, which may be the most important representative of the problems evaluated by the research, is thought out.

The following indicators were evaluated by the experts involved in the study of how the following roles of civil society organizations are implemented in ensuring Mongolia's national security. When it comes to:

1. Warn of the sources of social threats and threats;
2. Prevention of crisis situations, and conflicts;
3. To protect the constitutional rights, freedoms, and legal interests of citizens and organizations, and to shape public opinion about them;
4. To organize public control over the implementation of state policies and activities and their decisions to ensure national security;
5. Mobilizing the public to support civil society organizations and members in fulfilling the duties of the security forces, and developing citizens' self-consciousness;
6. To create an atmosphere of peace and harmony in society, to fight the phenomena that hinder it;
7. To raise the culture of citizens' political activity and rights;
8. Not to use state and administrative rights for the benefit of a narrow political group or group;
9. Fostering political pluralism;
10. To support the activation of public participation in the policies and activities of civil self-government organizations;
11. Improvement of the control of public organizations in the process of organizing and conducting elections.

In this way, the implementation of the role of civil society organizations to ensure security with a high level of reliability and agreement of expert evaluations has been weak and poor. This creates a problem in the direction of improving the development of civil society in Mongolia, and increasing its role and participation.

Therefore, within the framework of this expert study, the authors have tried to make a detailed analysis of the development of civil society, roles, influence, and participation. Thus, I tried to clarify how the current activities of Mongolian civil society affect the following types of security.

According to the calculations, although the expert's assessment of the impact of Mongolian civil society activities on the types of security is moderate, it is closer to 1 or 0.6, which is considered to be a sufficient evaluation degree. It has also been found that the consistency of the expert's opinion is good, which improves the degree of belief.



The experts who participated in the survey about the role of civil society in ensuring national security gave the following interesting answers. Specifically, the experts were asked, “In your opinion, what is the role of civil society in ensuring national security?”. When asked, the majority of them (91.9 percent) answered that they are “very responsible” or “It is a big responsibility”, 2.7 percent were “moderately responsible”, and 5.4 percent were “don’t know”. Analyzing this, it was observed that for the experts who answered “don’t know”, it is not clear what exactly the role of civil society participation in ensuring security will be. It was observed from the analysis of the data collected by the interview method that this answer was reached because it was doubtful how positive results would be achieved through this participation in ensuring national security. However, for the experts who answered “moderately responsible”, the analysis proves that they try to use civil society’s participation in government policy and some activities, but its real manifestations are not observed. Then, when the experts answered that it is “very responsible”, they emphasized the importance of adopting and localizing this system, which is formed at the level of the whole society, in the basic, economic, social, political, and spiritual relations of the existing society. In accordance with this, it leads us to believe that the features of today’s civil society can positively affect the fundamental characteristics of the national security system in reality.

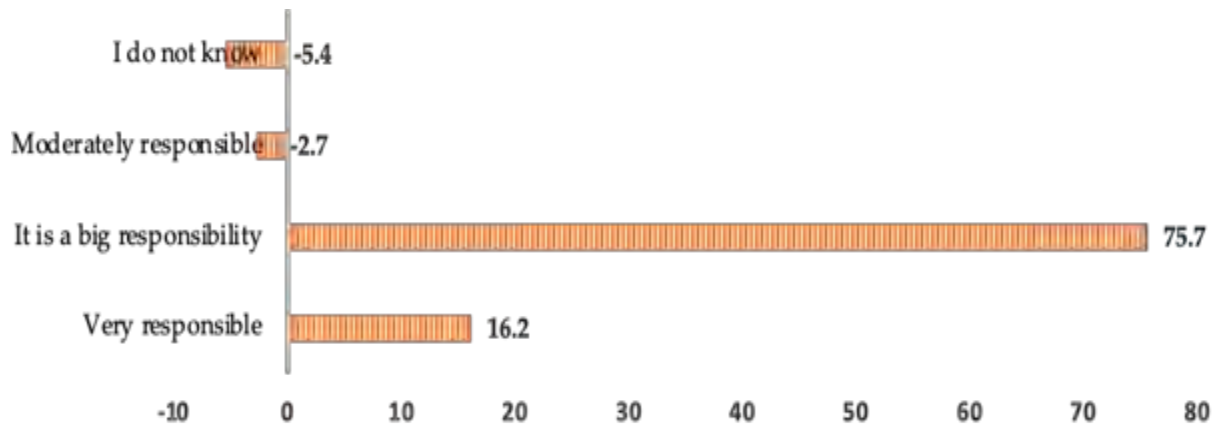


Figure 4. Expert assessment of the role of civil society in ensuring national security.

In order to clarify the above-mentioned features, the experts were asked, “Which of the following duties of civil society organizations in ensuring security is considered the most important in your opinion?”, three roles of civil society considered to be the most important were clarified by question. Out of this, 70.3 percent of the experts said that “organizing public control over the implementation of state policies and activities and their decisions to ensure national security”; 40.5 percent believed in “protecting the constitutional rights, freedoms, and legitimate interests of citizens and organizations, and shaping public opinion about them.” Also, 24.3 percent said to improve “citizen’s political activism and rights culture” and 18.9 percent said to support “stimulating public participation in the policies and activities of civil self-government organizations.”

According to this, the national security system indicates that it is a subject that can be provided together with the mature system of civil society in forming the basis of the macro-society that is localized and self-sufficient (Figure 5). Moreover, in addition to the general role of civil society mentioned above, one of its most important roles was shown to be the formation of players involved in the national security system.



Figure 5. In your opinion, which of the following roles of civil society organizations is considered the most important in ensuring security?

One of the important issues we sought to address in our research was the issue of participation, or the extent to which civil society organizations are involved in ensuring national security. Within the framework of this goal, it is believed that the socialization of individuals takes place within the framework of civil society, including political and legal branches. At this level, it should be emphasized that how an individual's spiritual orientation and his basic values are formed, and how the role-related participation is achieved and to what extent. Based on the analysis, the participation of civil society organizations in ensuring national security was evaluated in the following way, on a scale of 1-10. 51.3 percent of analysts said that civil society organizations should have a "large" participation in ensuring national security. On the other hand, 48.6 percent said that there should be a "moderate" participation, and 0.1 percent said "no" participation at all.

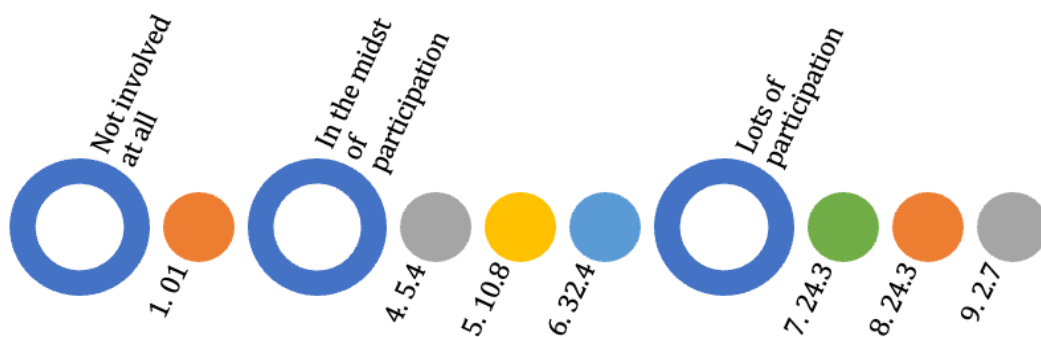


Figure 6. Expert assessment of the extent to which civil society organizations are involved in ensuring national security.

It is wrong to assume that only the intelligence plays a major role in the formation of the stakeholders, including the national security system. It can be considered that the foundation of the transparency and transparency of the nation is directly related to the existence of the civil society, which is the basic foundation for the voice of the citizen to reach all levels of the population. If it is considered that the participation of civil society organizations is necessary to ensure national security, it should be clarified what kind of participation is the most important thing. From this point of view, the experts' questionnaire was analyzed as follows. Specifically, 59.7 percent of experts believe that civil society participation has a positive effect on ensuring national security, and 18.9 percent believe that it is likely to have a negative effect. In fact, the participation of civil society means that the government, the private sector, and civil society organizations come closer together, reach different groups of society, and provide important opportunities for solving socially important goals and problems.

By classifying the above positive and negative effects, we have analyzed the evaluations obtained from the experts who participated in the research in order to clarify how the activities of civil society affect the development and security of Mongolia. According to the analysis, the majority of experts, 66.7 percent, believed that civil society activities had a “positive and negative” impact on Mongolia’s development and security, while 22.2 percent believed that it had a “negative” impact (Figure 6). From this, it can be seen that the participation of civil society in ensuring national security is likely to be negatively affected due to specific reasons (Figure 7). According to the analysis, the development and security of the country may be adversely affected by the activities of civil society in some ways. Analysts point out that there may be the following reasons for this evaluation. For example, the basis for providing NAO is the citizen of the country, and it is very sad that the citizen forgets the goal of contributing to policies and activities in this area by working voluntarily, in professional associations, and civil organizations. Furthermore, the analysis linked it to the fact that foreigners become pawns by imitating, influencing, and harassing the opinions and actions of extreme foreigners. Furthermore, any party, political force, group, or coalition that affects the state structure and tries to “represent” the members of the society to control everything, to motivate and to use force, should be avoided as much as possible. On the one hand, there is a need for civil society organizations to take the lead in raising awareness and participation of citizens.

Understanding civil society as a human-centered society and elucidating the possibility of increasing citizens' participation in society through it is on the one hand a challenge facing us, and on the other hand, it is a pattern to determine its nature. Therefore, the role and participation of civil society in a democratic society is not only theoretical, but also practical. It is intended to analyze the impact of this problem on ensuring national security.



Figure 7. Experts' assessment of the impact of civil society activities on the development and security of Mongolia.

The following characteristics of civil society in Mongolia, such as the legal framework guaranteeing the right and freedom of association of citizens (54.3 percent), and the right to free publication and free expression of opinion (51.3 percent), indicate that it is relatively well developed. However, the right to freely publish and express opinions (51.3 percent); In order to speed up the process of supporting civil society organizations by business and charitable organizations, the tax and other forms of incentive policies implemented by the government (48.6 percent) were poorly formed. Furthermore, experts believe that the maturity of the society in many forms of property (45.1 percent) is moderately mature. Based on the average rating of the most common social phenomenon, 18.8 percent of the experts rated it as “good”, 33.3 percent rated it as “medium”, and 42.4 percent rated it as “bad”. From this, it can be seen that the characteristics shown below are generally underdeveloped.

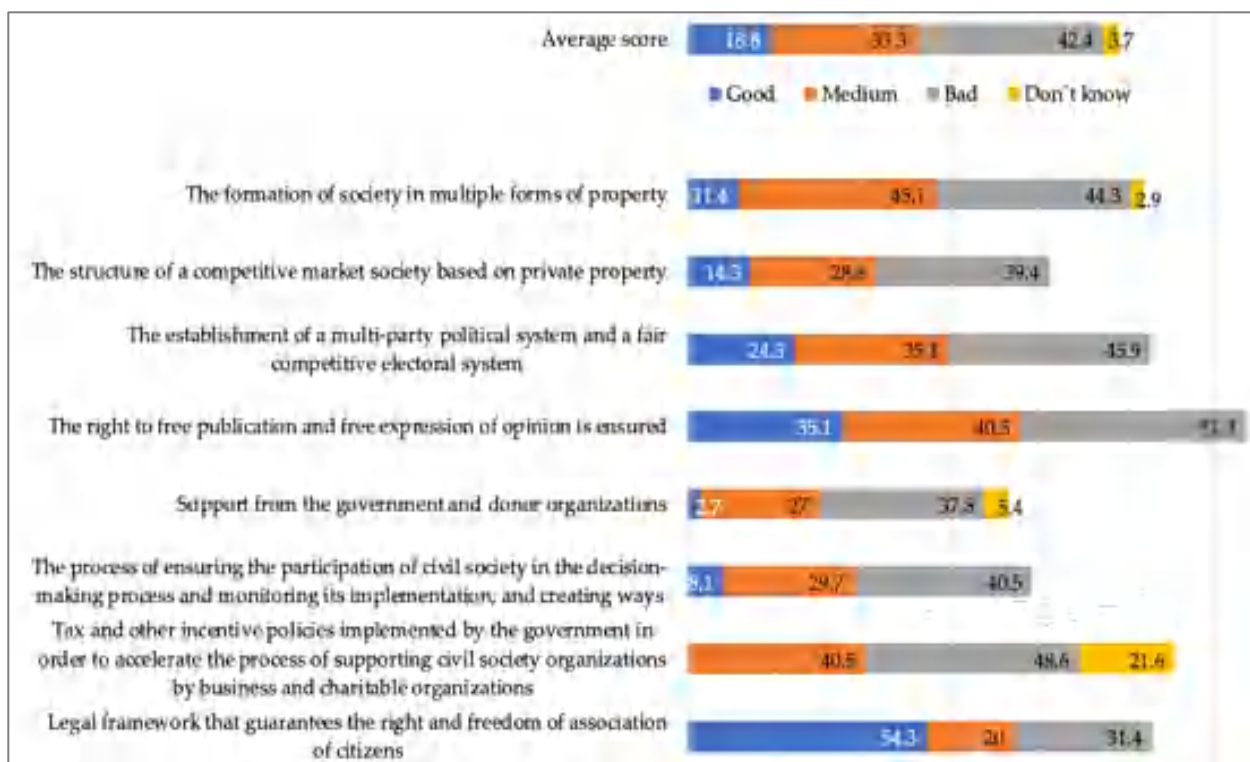


Figure 8. Experts' assessment of the maturity of the following characteristics of civil society in Mongolia.

Results and Its Discussion

Due to the characteristics of the common characteristics of modern society, there is a great evolution and change in security. Specifically, as society develops and moves forward, there will be fundamental changes in the security system, and new types of threats and threats will emerge. As a result, humanity is subject to a completely different form of fear and anxiety, inventing new types of weapons, and new factors of social development require a new approach to the study of security theory and practice.

On the other hand, experts assessed how the role of civil society organizations in ensuring Mongolia's national security is implemented. In this way, it was clearly observed that the role of civil society organizations in ensuring security has been created. Specifically, it is necessary to pay special attention to stopping the use of state and governance rights for the sake of narrow political or group interests (73 percent), supporting and

mobilizing members to fulfill their duties as security forces, and developing citizen's conscience (69.4 percent). It is important to create social stability and a peaceful atmosphere, fight against any phenomenon that hinders it (67.6 percent), and organize public control over the activities of organizations responsible for national security and the implementation of their decisions (67.5 percent) which is considered a duty.

Furthermore, to protect the constitutional rights, freedoms, and legitimate interests of citizens and organizations, it leads to believe that the role of influencing and shaping public opinion (54 percent) is poorly or weakly implemented. Calculating the average assessment of the experts, 55.7 percent of them believed that the implementation of the main role of CSOs in ensuring the national security of Mongolia was poorly or weakly implemented, 35.1 percent said that it was implemented moderately, and 9.6 percent said that it was well implemented. According to this, it is defined by social justice, legal regime, socio-economic well-being of citizens, democratic pluralism, and national and ethnic affiliation. In addition, it should be emphasized that there is already a need to develop and implement tools for public safety in accordance with the goals and concepts of national security.

Civil society monitors government activities through various channels and acts as a balancing mechanism between society and the state. It is of great importance for ensuring national security. This is because civil society is one of the unofficial levers of the “check and balance” system that limits the state’s desire to dominate social life. Through the analysis, it clarified how the demographic, socio-economic, political, and social psychological and moral indicators of the current social life of Mongolia affect the provision of national security. (Note: When calculating this indicator, the results were evaluated by calculating the “positive” and “negative” values from 1 to 5. The one that has the least influence on the evaluation is ranked by 1 point, and the one that has the most influence is ranked by 5 points).

From the above picture, it is shown that the demographic parameters in the current social life of Mongolia, including the population life expectancy, have a negative impact on national security. To clarify, the life expectancy of the population is 95.1 percent, the sex ratio of the population is 94 percent, the birth and growth rate of the population is 79.5 percent, the death rate of the population is 93.3 percent, and the health of the population is 75.3 percent.

Table 1

How the Following Phenomena in Mongolian Social Life Affect National Security (Demographic Indicators)

Demographic indicators	Positive					Average	Negative					Average
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	
1. Life expectancy of the population		12.5	56.3	25	6.3	95.1	-16.7	-33.3	-50			-66.7
2. Population sex ratio		7.4	44.4	40.7	7.4	94.0	-5.3	-31.6	-52.6	-10.5		-92.1
3. Population birth and growth	3.1	6.3	43.8	25	21.9	79.5	-23.1	-46.2	-30.8			-79.6
4. Population mortality and decline	6.7	6.7	73.3	13.3		93.3	-3.2	-25.8	-58.1	-9.7	-3.2	-48.4
5. Health of the population	9.5	28.6	38.1	4.8	19	75.3	-24	-40	-20	-16		-70.7
						87.4						-71.5

Table 2

That Indicates How It Affects National Security in the Social Life of Mongolia

Socio-economic indicators		Positive					Negative				
1	Population differentiation and the difference between the rich and the poor	15.4	38.5	30.8	7.7	7.7	-11.8	-26.5	-14.7	-47.1	
2	Population income level and poverty	38.5	23.1	23.1	15.4		-8.6	-2.9	-28.6	-40	-20
3	Employment of the population	12.5	31.3	12.5	6.3	37.5	-10.3	-10.3	-20.7	-37.9	-20.7

However, it was observed from the analysis that the indicator that is considered to have a positive effect on the above process is 2 times less than the indicator that has a negative effect (Table 2). So, in terms of socio-economic indicators, the following phenomena in the current social life of Mongolia—population differentiation, the difference between the rich and the poor (93.9 percent), the income level and poverty of the population (88.6 percent), and the employment status of the population (70.1 percent), national experts have assessed that those phenomena have a negative impact on security. The results of the analysis show that the phenomenon that has a positive effect on the situation is less than 50 percent, which means that there is a need to take significant socio-economic steps and activities without delay (Table 2).

The political process is one of the most important parameters that have been challenged to ensure civil society and national security. An important phenomenon of the political process is the election, which includes participating in election campaigns and polls, organizing protest actions with specific demands, and shaping public opinion with the help of independent mass media and communication tools. It is necessary to consider the activity in relation to it. An important part of this, which is the activity of political movements, the activities of non-governmental organizations, the attitude and direction of government policy and its implementation, was analyzed and evaluated by experts as follows. In this way, it was revealed that the activity of the political movement is caused by excessive politicization and personal interest (92.4 percent), and the activity is activated in a certain cycle when someone's interests are violated.

On the other hand, non-regular activities of NGOs (90 percent), the implementation of government policies, attitudes, and personal interests of politicians have become the main problems. Most importantly, the analysis showed that political challenges (90.8 percent) caused by conflicts between political parties have a negative impact on the social life of Mongolia today, especially on the political process (Table 3).

Table 3

How Political Phenomena and Processes Affect the National Security in the Social Life of Mongolia

Political phenomena and processes		Positive					Negative				
1	The activism of the political movement	14.3	28.6	33.3	14.3	9.5	-8.3	-16.7	-37.5	-16.7	-20.8
2	Activities of non-governmental organizations	8.3	29.2	25	25	12.5	-17.4	-8.7	-43.5	-17.4	-13
3	State policy approach, direction and implementation	3.8	15.4	38.5	30.8	11.5	-9.5	-23.8	-38.1	-28.6	

Civil society, by carrying out tactics of common cooperation, dialogue, and consensus consultation, is related to the psychological and moral nature of society. In reality, a harmonious relationship should be formed

between the leading social subject and the individual, the state and the civil society. In the end, a social dimension that at first seems incommensurable, a dimension that is equally valued in a developed civil society, is found. It helps to strengthen the national security system.

It is not only the responsibility of the civil society towards its own society to not encourage the arbitrary behavior of the authorities and the denial of individual rights in the social morality, but also by stabilizing that order, it will contribute to the strengthening of national security. From the picture below, the indicators that negatively affect the social life of Mongolia in terms of social psychological indicators are general (Figure 10). To clarify these, it can be seen from the responses of the experts that there is a high percentage of people's trust in the future (92 percent), social despair and tolerance (88.6 percent), extremism among citizens (89.4 percent), and hidden social resistance and dissatisfaction (88.6 percent).

Table 4

Social Psychological Indicators Affecting the National Security in the Social Life of Mongolia

Social psychological indicators		Positive					Negative				
1	People's confidence in the future	5	30	45	10	10	-14.8	-3.7	-48.1	-22.2	-11.1
2	Social desperation and tolerance	28.6	7.1	50		14.3	-18.2	-6.1	-33.3	-27.3	-15.2
3	Extremist attitudes among citizens	6.7	33.3	46.7		13.3	-18.8	-28.1	-31.3	-9.4	-12.5
4	Hidden social resistance and resentment	21.4	28.6	35.7		14.3	-15.2	-24.2	-30.3	-12.1	-18.2

In a word, the moral requirements and legal responsibilities of all participants in the social “triad”—state, individual, and civil society—are not only essential to the life of the society as a whole, but also characterized by the fact that it incorporates the characteristics of the system called national civilization. This is also shown by the assessment given by experts. For example, according to the experts' survey, the value orientation of citizens today (90 percent), the moral status of citizens (91.1 percent), the culture of citizens in social networks and electronic environment (89.9 percent), and the attitude of citizens towards society and government (91.1 percent) are very weak. It can be seen from the analysis (Table 4).

Table 5

Indicators of Morality and Ideology in the State of Influence on National Security in Mongolian Social Life

Indicators of morality and ideology indicators		Positive					Negative				
1	Values orientation of citizens	20.8	12.5	37.5	16.7	12.5	-13	-34.8	-8.7	-21.7	-21.7
2	Moral status of citizens	16.7	22.2	38.9	11.1	11.1	-6.9	-37.9	-20.7	-20.7	-13.8
3	People's social and electronic environment culture	20	33.3	33.3	13.3		-9.4	-28.1	-28.1	-18.8	-15.6
4	Citizens' attitude towards society and government	5.6	11.1	61.1	11.1	11.1	-10.3	-24.1	-20.7	-24.1	-20.7

The above-mentioned phenomena in Mongolia's current social life have been analyzed as negatively affecting national security. As a result, it should be emphasized that clarifying the obstacles to the development

of Mongolian civil society was one of the important goals of the analysis. It is hypothesized as follows (Table 5) that injustice in society (10.8 percent) is the biggest obstacle to the development of the country's civil society.

Conclusions

Although this situation seems to account for a small percentage, the following 20 phenomena are ranked as the most common when ranking the priority challenges and obstacles that are detailed in their nature. Among these, the most highly rated problems are following others who do not have ideology and morals (5.4 percent), arrogance of “freedom” without conscience and culture (5.4 percent), lack of understanding of the government's role in not learning about culture (5.4 percent). In addition, the analysis revealed that the most common problems are the subjective one-sidedness of NGOs and CSOs (5.4 percent) and the non-implementation of laws (5.4 percent).

As the institutions of civil society develop, the state will gradually be freed from roles that are not appropriate for it. This is due to the fact that in the process of administrative reforms, fulfilling the role of the current institution of civil society by discovering such a role has become a free discussion of the public. In this regard, it is important to highlight the regulatory role of civil society. In this context, when analyzing how the current activities of Mongolian civil society affect security, it can be seen from the figure below that it has both positive and negative effects.

For example, political security (54.1 percent), information security (48.6 percent), and internal security (45.7 percent) received the highest ratings from experts. Based on the average assessment, 41.6 percent of the respondents believed that the current activities of Mongolian civil society had both positive and negative effects on national security, and 25.1 percent considered that they had a negative effect (Figure 9).

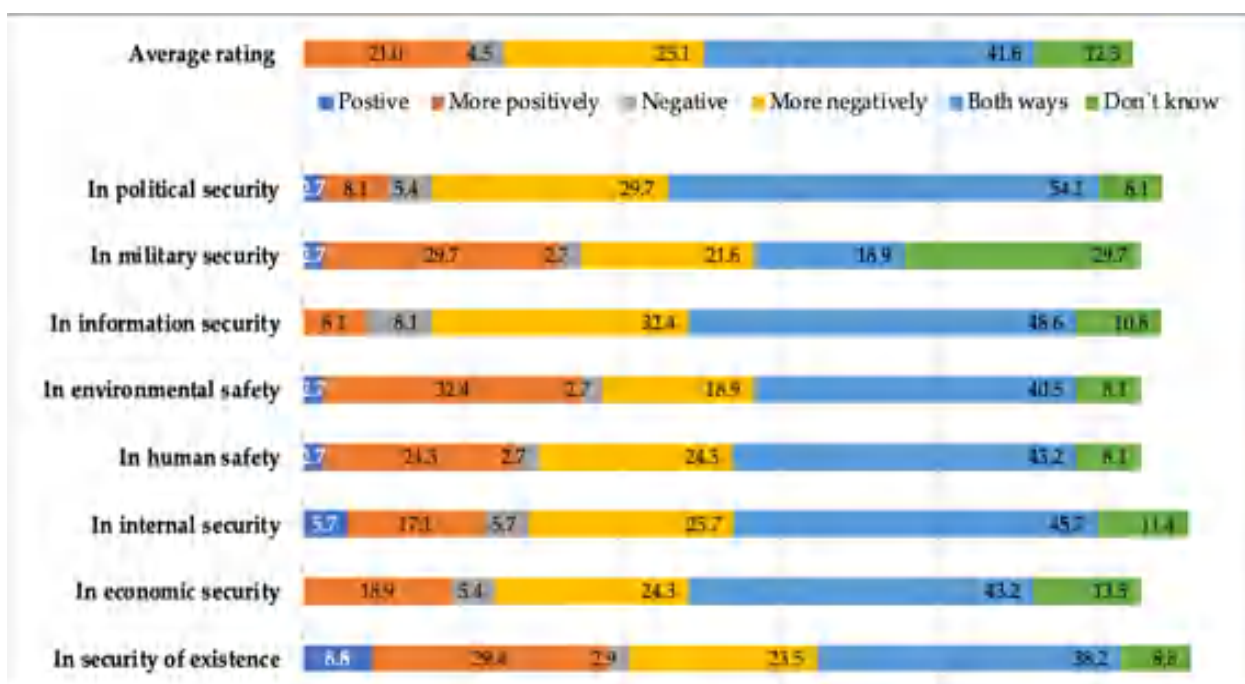


Figure 9. Experts' assessment of how the current activities of Mongolian civil society affect national security.

Civil society implements social initiatives from the masses or from “below” in practice, and thus provides its own adjustment process. Civil society thus complements the vertical relations of governance established by the state with horizontal social networks based on the principle of its adjustment. Mechanisms of public self-management (such as local governments, parties, public organizations) should be established and developed based on the civil society base.

Both the state and civil society are the subjects of public policy, so they do not become part of it, nor are they, its resources. However, it may sometimes be the opposite of the state considering civil society as its public policy resource. In practice, the first version is often used. From this point of view, the provision of national security is undoubtedly the most important aspect of public policy. In it, civil society acts as a support kit and resource for the national security system. To clarify this, experts rated the cooperation between civil society and government organizations as medium (33.1%) and poor (37.9%), and the conditions for the development of civil society are related to the nature of official (public) political policy in the security sector. This policy is related to the fact that the development of civil society is considered to be a threat to political security and is negatively affecting it.

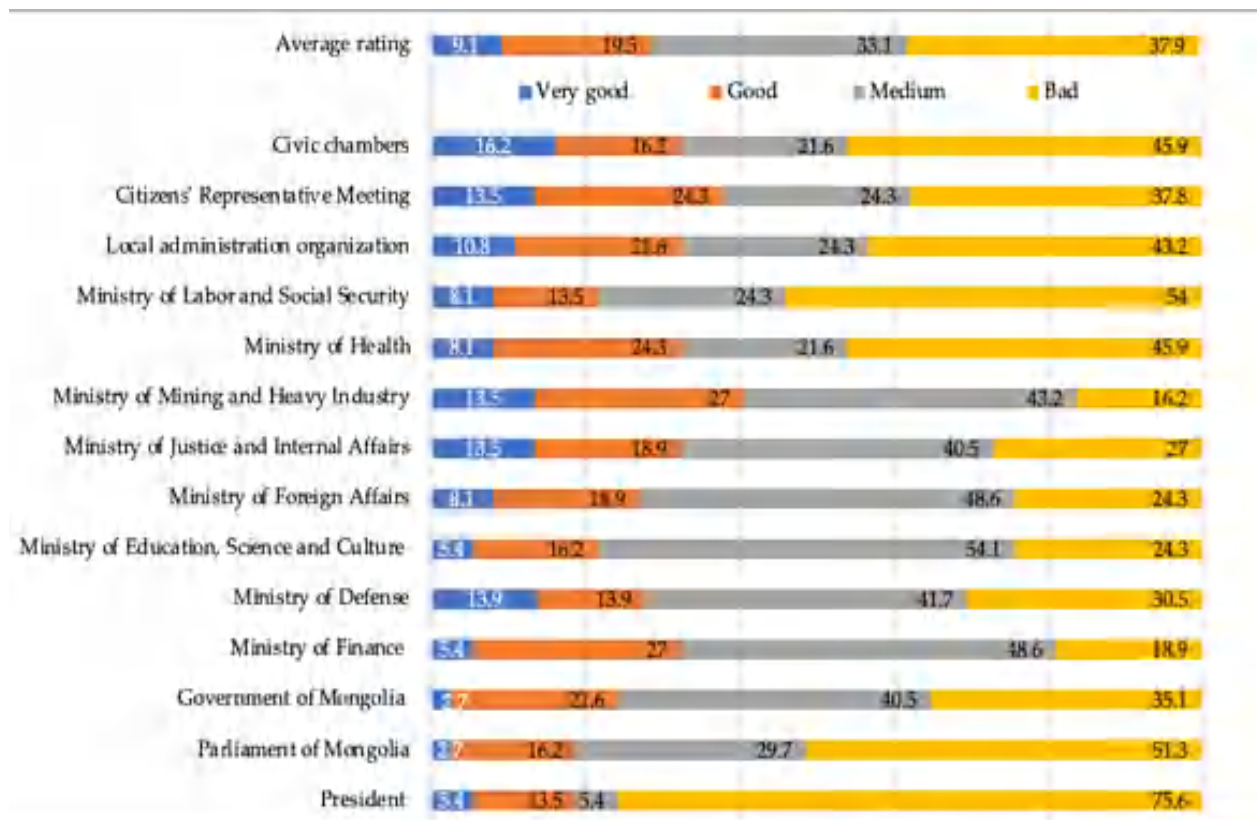


Figure 10. Experts' assessment of post-governmental organization cooperation with civil society.

It is important to consider civil society as an independent institution of security equal to the state, and not as a competitor to the state, but rather as a partner in the process of ensuring national security as the security of individuals, society, and the state. In fact, the security sector belongs to the prerogative of the state. It is recognized not only on a political and practical level but also on a theoretical level. The notion of security is also very limited as follows.

The conditions for the development of civil society are directly related to the nature of the official (public) political policy in the security sector. The analysis shows that this policy can have a negative effect on the development of civil society, considering it a threat to state security.

According to the analysis, the influence of Mongolian civil society organizations on national security, as shown in the figure above, indicates that most of the actions, policies, and activities of civil society organizations have had both positive and negative effects on the security process. Among them, the activities of the main civil society organizations should be highlighted. Media organizations (59.5%), trade unions (48.6%), and local councils (47.2%) were considered to be both positive and negative.

In addition, the negative influence of research and analysis organizations (54.1%) and political parties (58.3%) was evaluated the highest. To clarify the reason for this, the internal democracy, internal contradictions, and struggles of political parties have a negative impact on security. This is because important national privacy issues are being leaked through social networks and social media. In fact, without the unity and collective action of the people, a democratic society cannot be strengthened or established.

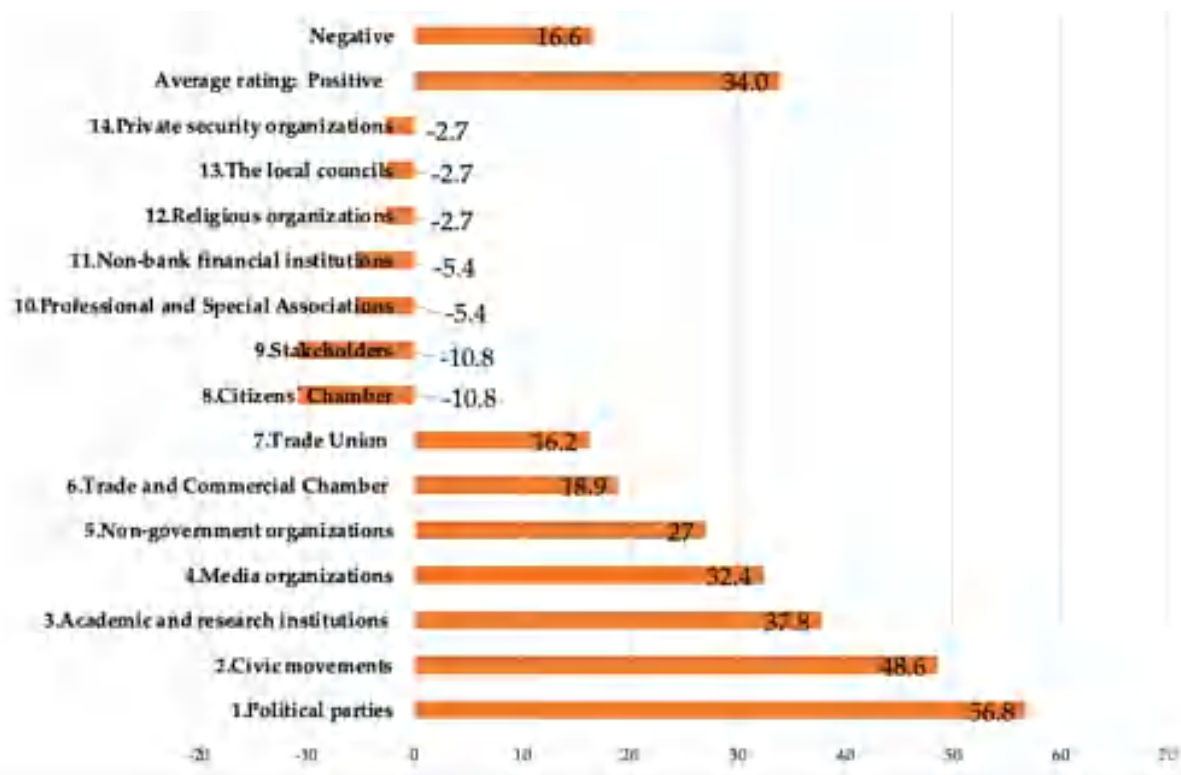


Figure 11. Experts' assessment of the role of the following civil society organizations in Mongolia in ensuring national security.

The government cannot carry out reforms without seeing the real reasons for the good life of the people, and cannot present them to them. Because the people want it and demand it, they will change it. Perhaps, some individual can stand against it alone, and the struggle is valid.

Based on this, the most common risks affecting society were classified into seven parts: political, economic, social, scientific-technological, demographic, environmental, legal and judicial process risks. If we calculate the average rating of all of them, the following interesting picture is observed. Therefore, the author analyzed the theoretical content of the concept of ways to increase the participation of civil society in ensuring national security,

based on the results of the research carried out by experts in his monotheistic work. By summarizing the results of the assessment of civil society's risk phenomena process in national security (by the main social framework), the following results were observed.

Table 6

Assessment of Civil Society Risk Phenomena and Its Processes in National Security

No.	Process assessment of civil society risk phenomena in national security	Average rating percentage
1	Political risk phenomena and processes	13.7
2	Economic risk phenomena and processes	14.0
3	Social risk phenomena and processes	12.6
4	Risk phenomena and processes in science and technology	13.2
5	Demographic risk phenomena and processes	12.3
6	Legal and litigation risks	12.5
7	Environmental risk phenomena and processes	11.6

Based on the above average assessment, the risk of such an effect is classified according to the phenomenon and process of its risk, and the following picture is obtained. If you elaborate on this, the picture below shows that the experts evaluated the political risk phenomenon and process as having the most common influence on the current social phenomenon and process in Mongolia.

Analyzing the evaluation of experts, 35.1 percent of them pointed out that there is already a need to take and implement practical actions aimed at the situation. As a result of this, it was pointed out that the problem that hinders the formation of civil society in Mongolia today is that the problem of creating a free space of information is becoming limited day by day.

Specifically, it was tried to calculate the average evaluation of spiritual causes in the development of Mongolian civil society today. In this way, the majority of the experts gave an average rating of 31.7% to the popular issue, which is two percentage points higher than the "bad" rating, which indicates the level of intellectual culture and moral education of the experts. Because we would like to note here that we are faced with the need and requirement based on the current state of affairs and real feelings to amend the freedom of information law that is in force in the country up to now. But in the political sphere, it is intended to clarify the conditions required for the development of civil society as follows (Figure 12).

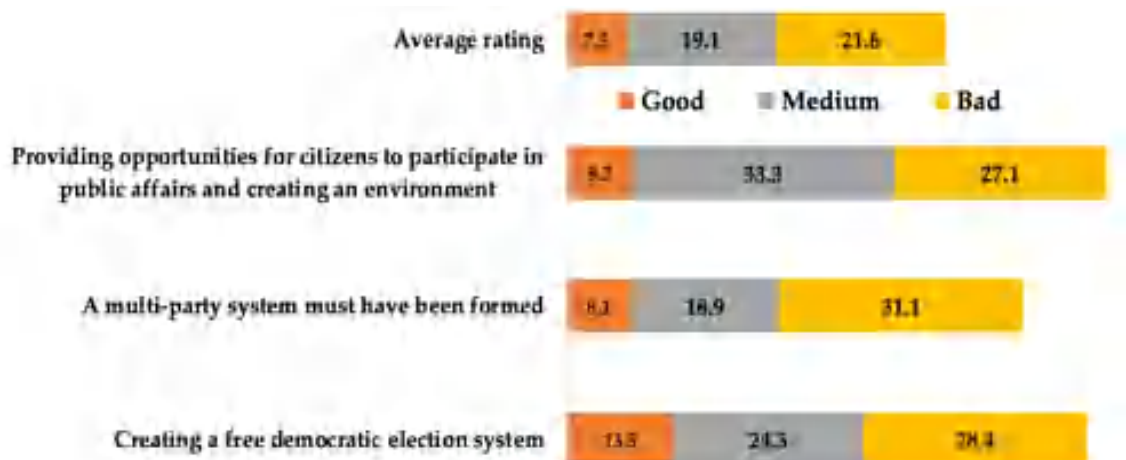


Figure 12. Experts' assessment of how the post-political environment was formed during the development of civil society in Mongolia.

According to this, during the development of the civil society, the environment of the political sphere is not very favorable. This is evident from the following analysis. For example, 21.6 percent of experts rated the development of civil society in the political sphere as “bad”. To clarify this, the process has become a phenomenon of social crisis in the world in modern times. One of the manifestations of this is the state crisis, which is one of the risks to ensure national security due to globalization. The crisis is manifested not only in civil disobedience and political desperation, but also describes the modern political situation as a “competing system between political elites and desperate voters”. The situation can sometimes be removed from politics, but it can lead to the risk of a protest movement for power by anti-democratic radical (hardline) forces who want to gain the right to be elected for themselves. Such protest actions (movements, intrigues) may appear as an expression of the position of a certain part of the civil society or group, but it may lead to risks that may have some negative consequences for the national security of the state.

Therefore, civil society can form the basis of safe and sustainable development as an effective tool of the “check and balance” system of political governance, which strives to achieve absolute dominance. At the same time, in order to ensure national security, there is a need for the development of civil society technology that can ensure the safe and sustainable development of the state, society, and individuals by working together with the government to influence the governance structure in a real and practical manner and solve problems with creative social initiatives. In order to put the demands into practice, it is essential to increase the participation of civil society in ensuring the security of the country, and to take specific measures to implement them.

Finally, one of the important issues that the article aims to clarify is to analyze how civil society participation is ensured in specific Mongolian social processes. In doing so, the above-mentioned features were clarified through a structured and unstructured questionnaire-survey method involving about 40 high-level experts in the field of increasing the participation of civil society in ensuring national security. Thus, it is worth noting that the following picture was observed when calculating the average of the experts’ evaluations.

It can be shown that civil society participation in the following specific phenomena and processes of Mongolian society is at a medium level. It was revealed that the reason for the level being so low is the following. Specifically, the experts pointed out that the participation of civil society in the protection of human rights and freedoms was not at a good enough level (62.2 percent), which leads to the conclusion that the actual participation of civil society is not enough. Also, 54.1 percent of the experts involved in the study are “moderately” involved in the civil society’s participation in any activity to fight infectious diseases and infections, as well as protecting the population’s gene pool (51.4 percent). This is an indication that the level of civil society participation in specific activities of the Mongolian society is “medium”.

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Framing Education-Civicness-Social Contract Nexus in Africa?

The Case of South Sudan

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This article attempts to position education not only in the peacebuilding debate but also in the larger good governance debate about what makes a resilient social contract. We subscribe in this paper to a theoretical perspective that attributes the driver of civil wars to governance deficit that is manifested in absence of resilient social contract in terms of sustained agreement between citizens and state. We then ask the key question of whether and how education is linked to a resilient social contract. We found a wealth of evidence linking education and peacebuilding, and education and civicness, but a gap exists in the literature about the link between education and social contract. On the basis of a thorough review of theory and research on education, civicness, and social contract, we develop a theoretical framework to conceptually frame the nexus between education, civicness, resilient social contract, and sustainable peace. This framework is founded on the theory of state formation. Applying this framework to the case of South Sudan, we found that education through civicness makes students become key political stakeholders and more likely nurture a resilient social contract, which in turn sustains peace. The very low level of educated population in South Sudan might have contributed, among other factors, to limited demand for good governance that contributes to governance deficit, which perpetuates poor state-society relations, ineffective and exclusive institutions, and erosion of social cohesion, and interpersonal trust, factors central to resilient social contract.

Keywords: Education, civicness, social contract, peace, conflict, South Sudan

Introduction

The occurrence of civil wars in Africa is persistent and rising. In 2018, there were about 21 civil wars, the highest number since 1946 (Rustad & Bakkin, 2019). Also, the nature and dynamics of civil conflicts have been changing, becoming complex and interwoven with other security threats and megatrends. While inter-state violent conflicts are on decline or even vanishing, most violent conflicts in Africa are largely within states.

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Civil wars and violent conflicts have become the dominant threats to lives and livelihoods, and the main drivers of increased vulnerability, food insecurity, and recent resurgence of famines in Africa. For example, the overall economic cost of violent conflict in the Horn of Africa was estimated to be 18.29 percent of economic growth rate per capita from 1990 to 2010 and lost between USD \$4,757.24 and \$8,777.96 in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita between 1990 and 2007 (Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), 2011, p. 98). At the same time, autocratic regimes and misrule in Africa are increasingly confronted by peaceful civilian protest movements and popular uprisings.

In the case of South Sudan, which slid into civil war in 2013 and in less than three years of its independence in 2011, there has been massive forceful displacement inside and in neighboring countries, with the majority of the population experiencing severe food insecurity or even famine. It is estimated about 400,000 people died as a result of civil war between December 2013 and April 2018: half of the dead were killed in fighting and other half died from disease, hunger, and other causes exacerbated by violent conflict (Checchi et al, 2018). Since the eruption of civil war in 2013, some studies have found about 41 percent of people surveyed in South Sudan showed prevalence of post-trauma disorder that are comparable to the prevalence in countries that experienced genocide such as Cambodia and Rwanda (UNDP, 2015). The costs are enormous: if this civil war persists, its economic cost could be as high as US\$ 158 billion to South Sudan, could respectively rise to nearly USD \$57 billion and nearly USD 30 billion to regional neighbours, and the international community in terms of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance (Brekenridge, 2015).

This trend of persistent civil war and its concomitant immense costs necessitates a better understanding of its drivers and effective mechanisms for addressing its brute causes. The search for a better understanding of civil war will continue to pose a challenge not only in terms of conceptualisation and theorization of its root causes, but also in terms of appropriate policy intervention to prevent its occurrence. The belief that violent conflict is a product of greed or grievance or ethnicity is being questioned. There is growing evidence that shows the causes of violent conflict are more about absence or rescindment of agreements or social contracts as a foundation of state formation (Murshed, 2009; Kuol, 2020a).

There is an unsettled debate over whether education reduces violent conflict. Some studies have recognised the centrality of education, particularly secondary education, in preventing relapse into violent conflict (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004), other studies challenged this generalisation and argued instead that the exclusive system of education and education inequality may contribute to and perpetuate violent conflict (Novelli et al, 2016). Generally, the critical peacebuilding literature has been criticised for not bringing education to the central debate of peacebuilding, while “liberal peace” literature has been criticised for avoiding discussion of the need for the kind of social transformation that education may bring (Daoust, 2018). Although violence is generally viewed as a problem rather than a solution, some scholars see the political utility and threat of violence as a solution to political problems and a major instrument of social and political change or a moral problem that can be addressed through education (Ginsberg, 2013). In the case of South Sudan, it has been shown in this paper the presence of an inverse relation between investment in education and the occurrence of violent conflicts with more investment in education reduces violent conflicts.

In both liberal and critical peacebuilding literatures, education is considered as a mere service to be delivered rather than a complex institution that involves political processes of power relations, and shapes access to resources (Mkandawire, 2004, p. 11). Daoust (2018) brings education into the peacebuilding debate, but there is

limited research on the impact of education on state-society relations and social cohesion. There is also dearth of research on the impact of civicness in forging a durable social contract. This study looks at the link between education and social contract through the lens of civicness and within the framework of state formation.

This paper presents education as the demand side of good governance, and hypothesises that education may strengthen state-society relations and social cohesion through civicness. The main finding of this study is that education cherishes civicness through which students become key political stakeholders and are more likely to nurture a resilient social contract, which in turn contributes to sustainable peace. The paper is organised into four sections: first, this introductory section; second, a theoretical framework on the “education-civicness-social contract nexus”; third, a South Sudan case study which applies this framework; and fourth, the conclusion which captures thought-provoking and key ideas that strengthen the education-civicness-social contract nexus.

Theoretical Framework: Education-Civicness-Social Contract Nexus

The study uses three concepts; namely education, civicness, and resilient social contract, as pillars for understanding not only their links but also how they reinforce each other in eroding space for violence and expanding space for sustainable peace.

Education

Although education is generally defined as a process of development, this study subscribes to the definition that views *education* as a complex public service that involves political processes, influences power relations, and shapes access to resources (Daoust, 2018, p. 12). This definition reconceptualises education as a set of complex political choices, rather than a depoliticised public service. It is not simply a “service” but it “serves” to govern as well (Dupuy, 2008, p. 158). This definition situates education not on the debate of good governance and state-society relations, but also in the critical peacebuilding scholarship (Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW), 2011).

Civicness

There is lack of commonly agreed definition of civicness as well as ways of measuring it (Asserilli, 2016). Campbell (2006) provides dimensions of civic, political, and social engagements, while Kaldor (2019) provides broad definition of “civicness” as a logic of public authority that is based on consent. Asserilli (2016) uses the classification of dimensions of civic and social engagement provided by Campbell (2006) to measure civicness and its link to education. These dimensions include practices that sustain integrity, trust, civility, inclusion, dialogue, and non-violence. Evers (2010, p. 1) defines civicness as relationship between state and citizens in terms of quality of institutions, organisations, and procedures to stimulate, reproduce, and cultivate civility. The dimensions of civicness such as voter turnout, political engagement, interest in politics, political knowledge, institutional trust, civic engagement, interpersonal trust, and tolerance adopted by Asserilli (2016) are used in this study to assess the association between “civicness” and social contract. The antonym of “civicness” is “passivity”, that is generally defined as a lack of active participation and engagement (Biringi, 2015, p. 18).

Resilient Social Contract

The concept of “national social contract” is defined as a dynamic agreement between state and society, including different groups in society, on how to live together, how power is exercised, and how resources are distributed (McCandless, 2018, p. 48). In relation to the concept of social contract is the concept of “sustaining peace” that is defined as a thoroughly endogenous process to institute national policies to address the root causes

of conflict, forge inclusive national ownership, and lay the foundations for sustainable peace (IPI, 2017, p. 4). It is argued that sustainable peace can only be achieved through inclusive and responsive resilient social contract, while recurrent violent conflict is perpetuated by non-inclusive and non-responsive social contract (McCandless, 2020). This concept of resilient social contract provides a way to assess the inclusivity of peace agreements or other political settlements such as constitution-making and civicness-consent-based deliberative processes that have roots in human values and relations. The concept of “resilient social contract” stands out to be the appropriate framework with which to assess the education-civicness-resilient social contract nexus, particularly in conflict affected and fragile states. This concept has been conceptually revitalised and framed as a methodology that can be used to investigate what drives a resilient national social contract in fragile environment (see Figure 1).

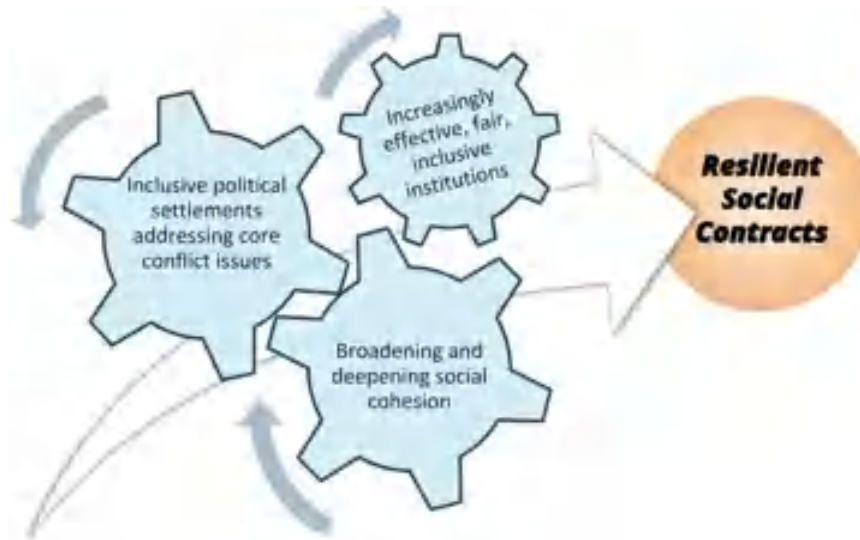


Figure 1. Three drivers of resilient social contracts.

Source: Adopted from McCandless (2018, p. 13).

It is postulated by McCandless (2018, pp. 14-17) that resilient social contract is the outcome of three drivers:

Driver 1: Political settlements and social contract-making mechanisms are increasingly inclusive and responsive to core conflict issues. It reflects how power and resources are distributed between different institutions and at different levels of government to address the core conflict issues. It captures the relations between state and citizens, and how states, societies, groups, and citizens live together, and how conflicting interests are addressed. It provides the foundation for sound constitution and the supremacy of rule of law and mechanisms for checks and balances;

Driver 2: Institutions (formal, customary, and informal) are increasingly effective and inclusive and have broadly shared outcomes that meet societal expectations and enhance state legitimacy. It provides mechanisms for how power is exercised and managed by institutions (formal, customary, and informal) at different levels of government. Drivers 1 and 2 reinforce each other and provide mechanisms for forging a functioning resilience social contract; and

Driver 3: Social cohesion is broadening and deepening, with formal and informal ties and interactions binding society horizontally and vertically. It is the concomitant outcome of Drivers 1 and 2 in strengthening and nurturing social capital and building bridges and links between and within societies, groups, and individuals.

The three drivers complement and reinforce each other, with Drivers 1 and 2 focusing on engineering sustainable vertical social contract, while Driver 3 strengthens and nurtures horizontal social contract.

The concept of resilient social contract is grounded on the theory of state formation, the process of state creation. On the basis of European experience, Tilly (1990), the best-known theorist in the area of state formation, argues that “war made the state and the state made war”. This popular aphorism has been criticized as Eurocentric and irrelevant to non-European contexts (Hui, 2017). It has also been challenged for focusing on the creation of state capacity rather than the creation of state (Spruyt, 2017). Contrary to European experience, it is argued that state formation in Africa is primarily explained not as a result of war, but as a result of decolonization that led to the proliferation of many weak states that lack effectiveness and legitimacy (Robinson, 2002). This generalisation is unhelpful and may mask the variation in the processes of state formation in Africa as decolonisation came through both armed struggle and peaceful means. Although there are competing theories for state formation, the voluntary theory for state formation is the foundation of much of social contract philosophical tradition (Service, 1978, pp. 21-23). Most African states came into being as a result of diverse communities voluntarily coming together to form their state based on shared rational interest.

This framework of resilient social contract is used for assessing the association between education-civiness-social contract-sustainable peace as shown in Figure 2 with arrows indicating impact. Education can serve as a vehicle for democratic education by developing skills (civic and political) and enhancing cognitive capacity. These skills and cognitive resources may in turn affect the level of education as well as being employed in social, civic, and political activities; the main dimensions of civiness. It is hypothesised in this framework that civiness, through political, civic, and social activities, nurtures resilient social contract, which in turn has positive impacts on sustaining peace.

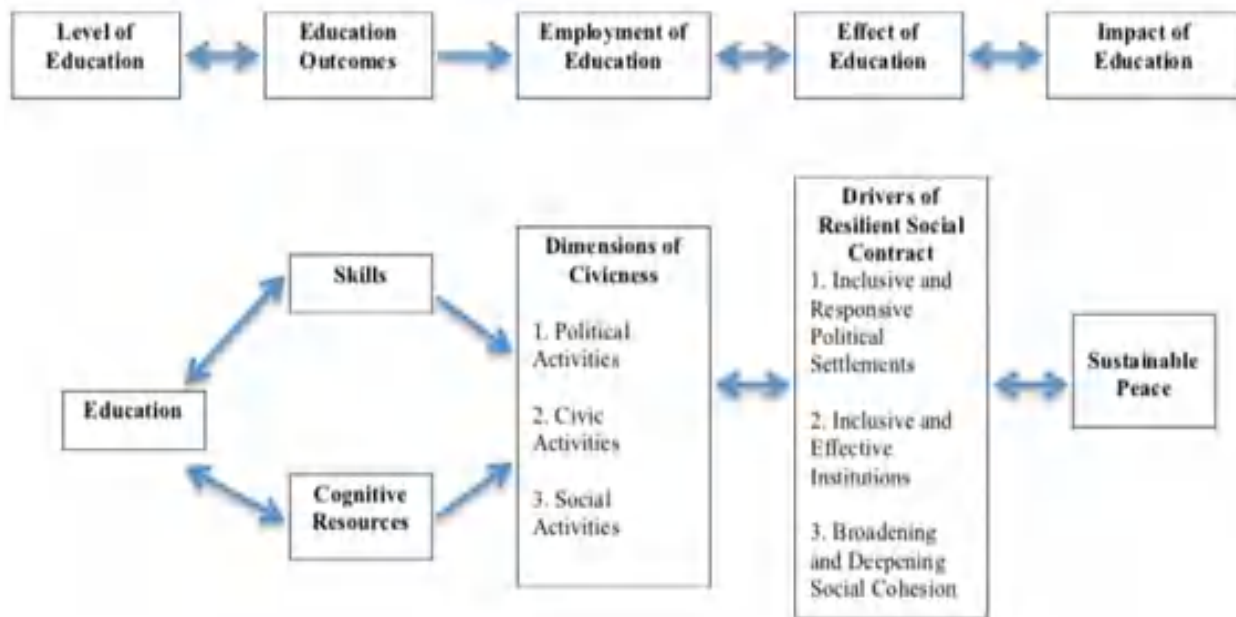


Figure 2. Education-civiness-social contract-sustainable peace nexus.

Education is likely to result in outcomes such as social and emotional skills in terms of critical thinking, collaboration, task performance, open-mindedness, and engaging with others (OECD, 2019), as well as cognitive

skills in terms of general intelligence such as reasoning, understanding, problem-solving, and divergent thinking (Carlsson, Dahl, Ockert, & Rooth, 2015). While the level of education is positively associated with more skills and cognitive resources, it is difficult to establish whether such a relationship is causal, as cognitive ability could affect education and vice-versa (Carlsson et al., 2015, p. 533). These skills and cognitive resources are more likely to be employed in political, civic, and social activities (Asserilli, 2016) and further explain education-cognition relations (Parisi et al., 2012).

Education-Civiness Link

As there is a consensus about the positive role played by education in economic growth through the accumulation of human capital, there is also a growing recognition of the strong link between education and civiness. There is a wealth of evidence that shows a positive correlation between education and various dimensions of civiness (Putnam, 2000). Dee (2004) and Milligan, Morette, and Oreopoulos (2003) provide evidence of the causal relationship between education and civic and social engagement but without explaining whether the education is attributed to credential effects in terms of earnings/social status or the content of education (Campbell, 2006, p. 37). Campbell (2006) finds not only a strong link between the core dimensions of engagement (voter turnout, civic engagement, political engagement, interpersonal trust, tolerance, interest in politics, political knowledge, and institutional trust) with education but also a positive impact of high level of education on all dimensions of engagement—except political engagement.

Campbell (2006, p. 103) attributes the weak link between education and political engagement to the fact that rising levels of education would maintain the social structure that allows people at the top echelon of social hierarchy to participate in zero-sum activities. Asserilli (2016) adopts the eight dimensions of engagement suggested by Campbell (2006) as dimensions of civiness and provides evidence of a high and significant association between civiness in terms of political, civic, and social activities and absolute level of education, while relative education has stronger and significant associations with political dimensions of civiness (Asserilli, 2016).

Civiness-Resilient Social Contract Link

Despite the well-established link between education and civiness through skills and cognitive resources, there is dearth of studies on the link between education and civiness on the one hand, and social contract on the other hand. Evers (2003) establishes association between social capital; an element of Driver 3 of social contract and civiness. The link between civiness and resilient social contract can be established through the manifestation of civiness in terms of its core dimensions suggested by Asserilli (2016) and Campbell (2006) and the three drivers of resilient social contract as summarised in Table 1. Civiness can accelerate inclusive political settlements (Driver 1) through voting, political engagement, and active citizenship, as well as strengthening effective and inclusive institutions (Driver 2) through promoting trust in and improving quality of institutions and hastening social cohesion (Driver 3) by cultivating civility and improving trust and tolerance. On the other hand, the resilient social contract may positively affect civiness through the constitutional and legislation making process, inclusive institutions, and social cohesion.

Despite the utility of social contract framework to assess the link between civiness and social contract, it focuses on the supply side of good governance in terms of behaviour of ruling elites rather than the demand side for good governance in terms of behaviour and attitudes of citizens “civiness” and individuals’ “civility”. This supply-side approach to state legitimacy—improving state-society relations and increasing democratic participation through the provision of services such as education—has been questioned as such approaches see

citizens as passive recipients of services (Daoust, 2008, p. 11, 23). The introduction of “civicness” as a link between provision of education and resilient social contract fits civicness/civility into a supply-demand governance model.

Table 1

Link Between Civicness and Resilient Social Contract

Drivers of resilient social contract	Elements of drivers of resilient social contract	Dimensions of civicness
Driver 1	• Inclusive and responsive political settlements including constitution-making process. • Inclusive and responsive social contract-making mechanisms.	• Voter turnout. • Political engagement. • Interest in politics. • Political knowledge. • Active citizenship
Driver 2	• Effective and inclusive institutions (formal, customary, and informal) with broadly shared outcomes that meet societal expectations and ensure state legitimacy.	• Quality of institutions, organisations, and procedures. • Institutional trust.
Driver 3	• Broadening and deepening social cohesion with formal and informal ties and interactions binding society horizontally and vertically.	• Cultivated civility in terms of the virtues and manners of individuals. • Interpersonal trust. • Tolerance. • Civic engagement

Resilient Social Contract-Sustainable Peace Link

Generally, the role of education in conflict situations is inconclusive and contradictory: with some scholars emphasizing the positive role played by education in reducing the causes of conflict (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004), and others highlighting the negative role played by education in conflict situations (Breidlid, 2010). Despite this inconclusive role that education plays in the causation of violent conflict, the review of the empirical and quantitative literature on the relationship between education and violent conflict shows that education is not a threat and has a pacifying effect (Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW), 2011). Generally, the effect of education on sustainable peace is largely through civicness that strengthens, sustains, and accelerates the drivers of resilient social contract as a pathway to sustainable peace. There is growing evidence that shows the strong link between resilient social contract and sustainable peace (Kuol, 2020b; McCandless, 2020). Also, sustainable peace will have a positive impact on resilient social contract through institution of public policies that address the root causes of violent conflict.

Methodology and Data Sources

This study collected secondary and primary data during the period of December 2019-January 2020 in relation to three study groups: (i) secondary school students (final year, mixed church school), (ii) undergraduate students (final year, University of Juba), and (iii) post-graduate master students (final year, Institute of Peace, Development and Security Studies at University of Juba). In addressing the core research question of the role of education in forging resilient social contract, the following two main research approaches were used to collect the necessary data.

Deskwork

The first phase of the study was a thorough review of literature to concretely identify the gaps and to situate this study in the scholarly context. Literature related to education, civicness, social contract, and sustainable peace

has been analysed in terms of association within the overarching theory of state formation. Besides literature review, the study collected and assessed the relevant secondary data for addressing the research question. Secondary data from the Ministry of Education and conflict incidents from Novelli et al. (2016) were analysed to establish the association between education and conflict. The findings from other studies (Kuol, 2020b; Biringi, 2015; UNDP, 2015; SSCSF, 2018; IRI, 2013) were used for comparison.

Interviews

The study conducted 191 interviews with students. Fifty-seven percent of interviewees were male and forty-three percent were female. Sixteen percent were at secondary school level, thirty-five percent at undergraduate, and forty-nine percent at postgraduate. The students were randomly selected based on their availability and willingness either to voluntarily fill the questionnaire or be interviewed. Thirty-eight percent of interviewees were from Equatoria region, thirty-six percent from Upper Nile region, and twenty-six percent from Bahr el Ghazal region; three regions that were once administrative units and which have become increasingly socio-political entities (particularly the Equatoria region) (Kuol, 2020b). These interviews were guided by a simple and short questionnaire that was self-administered by undergraduate and postgraduate interviewees: interviewers administered the questionnaire with secondary school students. The questionnaire attempted to capture the perceptions of students in relation to some of the dimensions of civicness that are connected to the drivers of resilient social contract as presented in Table 1; particularly their association with the state and interaction with other ethnic groups. The Software Package for Social Science (SPSS) and Excel were used for the analysis of primary data, which provided cross-tabulation, simple descriptive statistics, and graphic presentation of the findings.

Focus Group Discussions

On the basis of the deskwork, an appropriate checklist was developed to guide the focus group discussion to generate primary data for the analysis and triangulation of primary data generated from the individual interviews. The study conducted seven focus group discussions (eight students in each discussion group) with each level of education having two separate discussion groups (female and male) and one mixed discussion group. The students who participated in these discussion groups were randomly selected from the students who were interviewed or filled the questionnaire.

Ethics, Risk, and Safety

Conducting research in South Sudan's difficult political environment posed risks to interviewers and interviewees, as well as diluted the quality of primary data. In order to address some of the ethical concerns the research might raise, the questionnaire was carefully designed to minimize the exposure of interviewers and interviewees to physical or psychological harm. In conducting interviews, we obtained the verbal informed consent of the interviewees and undertook to respect their anonymity and confidentiality. In the case of undergraduate and postgraduate students, having interviewees fill the questionnaire by themselves minimized the exposure to risks. In avoiding such a risk for secondary school students, the administrations of various schools were informed and one of the teachers was trained to conduct focus group discussions and interviews with students.

Caveats

Since the study aims at finding a link between education, civicness, and social contract, the findings of this study may not claim to have established the causal relationship but have shed light of how education has the

potential of fostering civicness that shapes the resilient social contract. One glaring omission in this study is that the focus has been on the level of education rather than the content and system of education. Some studies found strong links between the content of education and conflict within the broader political economy dynamics (Novelli et al., 2016). One of the limitations of this study is that the sample of people interviewed is extremely low and it gathered information only from educated citizens from secondary school and above and with no information from those who did not attend school. The information from non-educated citizens would have provided good data for the comparison between the perspectives of those educated and those who did not attend school. This gap is in a limited way addressed by using data from the general public perception surveys (UNDP, 2015; SSCSF, 2018; IRI, 2013) and other researches (Kuol, 2020b; Bringi, 2015). Despite these limitations, the findings of this study may provide trends and may not be taken as generalised conclusions.

Education-Civicness-Social Contract Nexus: The Findings

South Sudan provides a good case for testing the education-civicness-social contract nexus. Before its independence in 2011, it experienced two civil wars as a region of Sudan (1955-1972, 1983-2005). Although the birth of South Sudan came with great hope, it unfortunately slid into its first civil war in 2013, within less than three years of its hard-won independence and a second war began in 2016, after the collapse of a peace agreement. Many scholars have attributed the eruption of civil war to type and quality of governance (De Waal, 2014; Rolandsen, 2015; Frahm, 2015; Kalpakian, 2017; Johnson, 2016; Wassara, 2018). Recently some scholars ascribed the brute cause of the violent conflict in South Sudan to the failure of the ruling elites to forge a resilient social contract that sustains peace, builds inclusive institutions, and nurtures social cohesion (Kuol, 2020b).

Trajectory of Limited Education Access and Conflict Trends

The history of education in South Sudan has largely been shaped by the trajectory of recurrent violent conflicts and misrule since 1955, which left South Sudanese as the most uneducated population in the world (Sommers, 2005). At its independence on 9 July 2011, South Sudan had the worst indicators for education in the world, with second-to-bottom in the world ranking for net enrolment in primary education, and bottom for enrolment in secondary education and illiteracy rate (UNESCO, 2011).

The genesis of this catastrophic education situation in South Sudan can be traced back to the British colonial period when education in southern Sudan was intentionally underdeveloped to maintain the perceived “purity” of the Southern Sudanese and resulted in the rise of isolated “islands” of education in southern Sudan (Sommers, 2005, p. 16). During the British colonial administration (1898-1956), education in southern Sudan was naively left for Christian missionaries who focused on evangelisation with exceedingly low investment in education (Collins, 1984). By 1945, there were 388 bush schools with teacher-student ratio of 1:300 in 1944, 57 elementary vernacular schools, and four intermediate schools. The first secondary school was founded in 1948 (Gravey-Williams & Mills, 1976).

This neglect of education in southern Sudan during the British colonial administration was followed by the post-independence period (1956-1972) that saw the nationalisation of schools, the closure of Christian missionary schools, and the “Arabisation” and “Islamisation” of Southerners through formal education (Sommers, 2005, p. 61). With the eruption of the first civil war that commenced with the military mutiny by Southerners in southern Sudan garrison town of Torit in 1955, the meagre education facilities came to a standstill (Ahmed et al., 1988) with over 90 percent of the population of Southern Sudan never attending school (Save the Children UK et al.,

2002). A leading Sudanese historian attributes the underlying cause of the eruption of the first civil war to the nationalisation of mission schools in Southern Sudan in 1957 and fateful Islamic and Arabisation education policy launched by the post-independence northern Sudanese ruling elites (Beshir, 1969, p. 187). With the high level of uneducated people in the population, students from the few schools in Southern Sudan made them centres for resistance to the misrule of the post-independence northern ruling elites in Khartoum (Poggo, 2009, pp. 96-98).

During the brief 10-year period of peace after the signing of the Addis Ababa Peace Accord (1972-1983), southern Sudan witnessed a considerable increase in access to education with 650 primary schools and 25 secondary schools by 1983 (Sommer, 2005, p. 62). Despite this increase in access to education in Southern Sudan in absolute terms, the relative indicators for education in terms of net primary school enrolment and teacher-student ratio were far lower than those in northern Sudan (Deng, 2003). Besides this apparent inequality in access to education, the northern ruling elites once again tried to forge a unified Sudanese identity around the Arab-Islamic paradigm, with education as a tool to implement this policy (Deng, 2003, p. 5). This inequality in access to education and the Arab-Islamic hegemony pursued by the northern ruling elites was a factor contributing to the second civil war in Sudan (Yongo-Bure, 1983).

Dr. John Garang, the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) that heralded the armed struggle against the ruling elites in Khartoum, argued that under such conditions of inequality in access to education and the Arab-Islamic hegemony policy, the marginal cost of rebellion in Southern Sudan became very small, zero, or negative, that is, it pays to rebel in Southern Sudan (Garang, 1987, p. 21). This argument by Dr. Garang is consistent with that of Ginsberg (2013) and the findings of Novelli et al. (2016) that non-inclusivity and inequality in the provision of education can contribute to violent conflict. Although many education facilities were destroyed during the 21 years of the second civil war (1983-2005), access to education through humanitarian assistance paradoxically increased during prolonged civil war compared to the pre-war period before the eruption of the second civil war in 1983 (Deng, 2003).

The transitional period of six years (2005-2011) after the conclusion of the 2005 Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) witnessed considerable improvement in access to education. However, since its independence in 2011 and before the eruption of first civil war in 2013, access to education in South Sudan deteriorated with gross enrolment rate in primary and secondary schools declining from 72 percent and 6.2 percent in 2009 to 62 percent and 5.1 percent in 2013 respectively (MoEST, 2015). In comparison to other countries, South Sudan had in 2013 the lowest level of education access in terms of net enrolment rate; particularly in secondary education (1.9) compared to the world average (66) and in relation to fragile and conflict-affected countries (36.9) as shown in Figure 3. These statistics make the population of South Sudan, as rightly mentioned by Sommers (2005), the most uneducated in the world.

Besides this decline in access to education, there was apparent inequality in access to education within Southern Sudan with states having the lowest provision of educational resources and the lowest percentage of students in upper primary school having the highest occurrence of conflict events since 2011 (UNICEF, 2015). The correlation between access, investment, and outcome in education and the occurrence of conflict is summarised in Figure 4. The lower investment in education in terms of high student-teacher ratio and student-class ratio is positively associated with occurrence of conflict, while investment in education facilities in terms of drinking water access and access to latrines is negatively associated with conflict. Interestingly, the education outcome in terms of students in upper primary school is negatively related to the occurrence of conflict. These

findings show, at least in the case of South Sudan, more investment in education is likely to reduce violent conflicts.

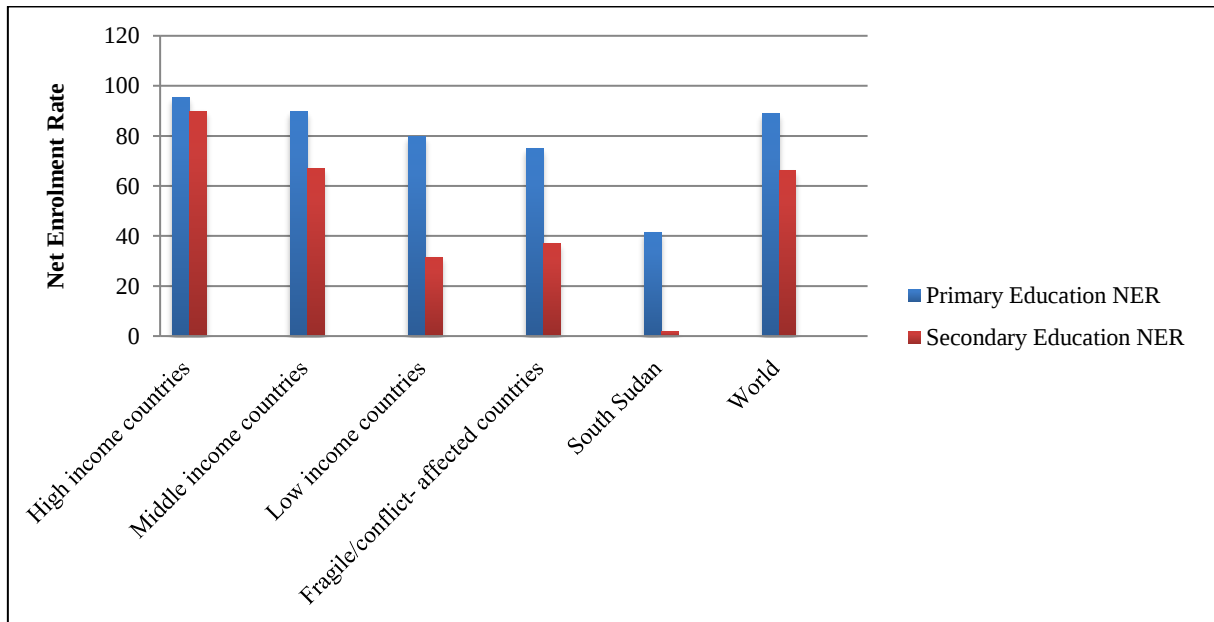


Figure 3. International comparison of education access in 2013.

Source: Based on statistics of MoEST (2015).

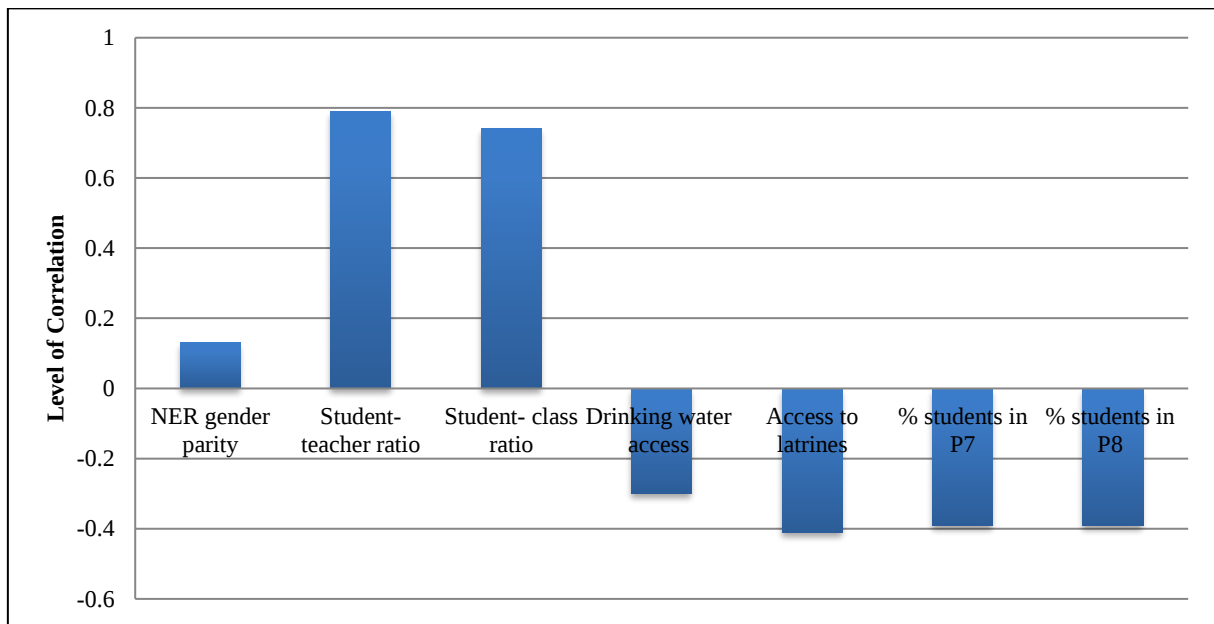


Figure 4. Link between conflict and education in Southern Sudan, 2011-2014.

Source: Calculated from the data from Novelli et al. (2016, p. 38).

Civicsness and Political Settlements (Driver 1)

The existence of the link between civicsness and political settlements (Driver 1) can be assessed through the manifestation of civicsness in terms of *political knowledge*, *interest in politics*, and *political engagement* as presented in Table 1.

Political Knowledge: It is captured by the level of awareness of citizens about political institutions and processes (Campbell, 2006, p. 31). It has been established that the quality and the quantity of participation of citizens in a democratic system is largely improved by knowledge of citizens about politics (Milner, 2002). However, education and knowledge are not substitutes for one another as there are conspicuous differences between them (Zaller, 1992). The students at three levels of education were asked about their knowledge of different aspects of politics such as drivers of conflict, peace agreements, and the constitution. The overwhelming majority of students (82 percent) attributed the primary cause of conflict to “power struggle”. This power struggle is reflected in political rivalry within the SPLM, the ruling political party, that resulted not only in the eruption of the first civil war in 2013 but also renewed violent conflict in 2016 after the conclusion of 2015 peace agreement (Kuol, 2020b).

One student in a focus group discussion stated that

those in power do not care about the people under them—even they do not consult the local people once in power and yet there are some educated people in communities that should be consulted in anything that concerns communities, so power is a major problem in my view.¹

Interestingly, during the focus group discussions, one student attributed the root causes of violence to lack of respect for the rule of law and constitution by stating that

nobody including the government is respecting the constitution of South Sudan; the government in particular does things which are totally unconstitutional. I think South Sudan has the best constitution in East Africa; but the problem is respecting the laws; all conflicts in South Sudan are caused by lack of respecting the constitution, take for example 2013 and 2016; those were purely lack of respect for the constitution.²

Indeed, the genesis of the civil war in 2013 was linked to attempts to resist the democratisation of the constitution of the SPLM, and to the enactment of the 2011 South Sudan transitional constitution through a process that undermined checks and balances and gave excessive powers to the president. The second civil war in 2016 was caused, among other factors, by the creation of more states contrary to the provisions of the transitional constitution and the 2015 peace agreement (Kuol, 2020b, p. 69).

Rather than subscribing to the simplistic attribution of the cause of conflict in South Sudan to ethnicity, only five percent of students consider tribal competition as the reason for the violent conflict. This shows not only a high level of awareness but also an impressive level of reasoning, critical thinking, and understanding among students. Interestingly, students are almost three times most likely to attribute the causes of violent conflict to lack of education than to tribal competition.

Interestingly, when students were asked why people joined the various armed groups, almost half (49 percent) of respondents identified “access to power” as the main reason with “poverty” (10 percent) considered the least important reason, followed by “ignorance” (15 percent) and “fear” (23 percent). These answers are striking as they confirmed that political factors rather than economic factors are the main reasons attracting people to join armed groups. With the eruption of the first civil war in 2013, the parties to the conflict resorted to ethnicity as an effective political means of sustaining war by mobilising youth to protect their communities.

When students were asked about their knowledge of the peace agreement, the overwhelming majority (96 percent) had information about the peace agreement. Secondary students seemed to be more knowledgeable than

¹ Focus group discussion conducted on 6 January 2020.

² Focus group discussion conducted on 7 January 2020.

students at other levels, with no student knowing nothing about the peace agreement (see Figure 6). The level of knowledge among students about the peace agreement is slightly higher than that of the general public (SSCSF, 2018, p. 8).

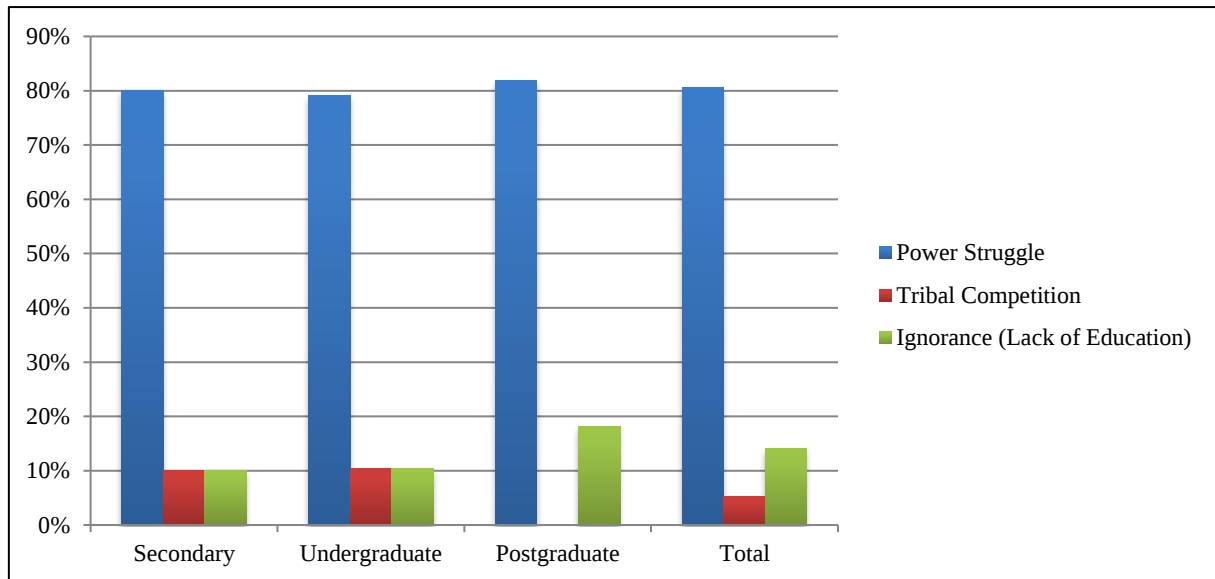


Figure 5. The reasons for violent conflict in South Sudan.

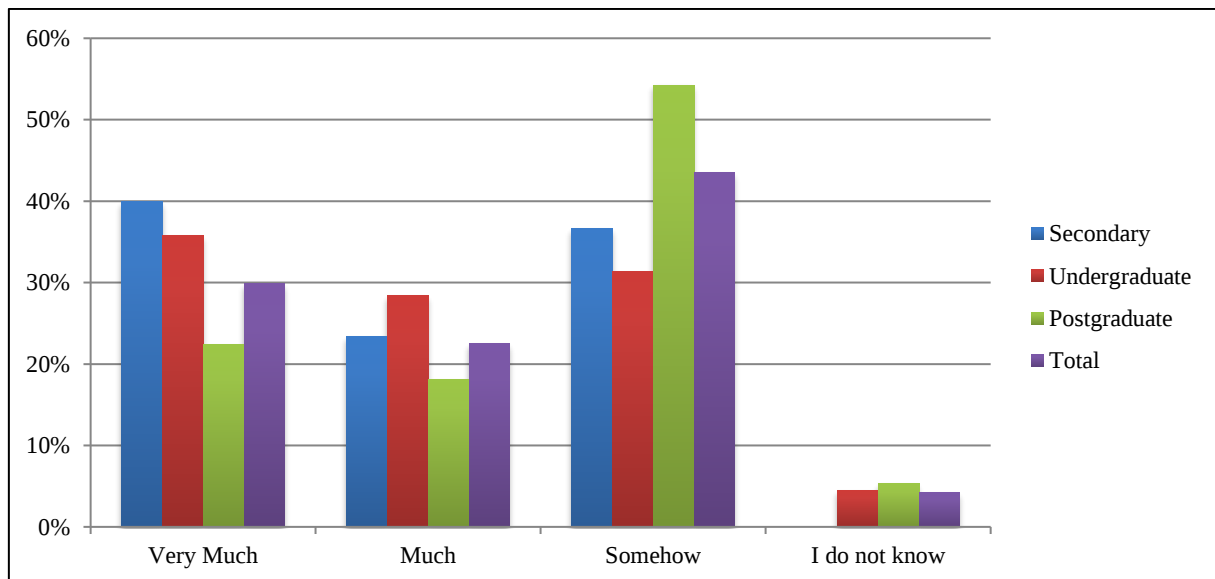


Figure 6. The level of knowledge about the peace agreement.

Despite their knowledge about the peace agreement, the respondents were divided as to whether the full implementation of this agreement would address the root causes of conflict in South Sudan, with 50 percent feeling positive and 37 percent feeling negatively about the peace agreement. Compared to some studies that showed about 17 percent of South Sudanese do not see that the current peace agreement will bring a lasting peace (SSCSF, 2018), more than one third (37 percent) of students do not see hope in the current peace agreement; particularly and surprisingly among secondary school students (57 percent).

The short experience of South Sudan with peace agreements shows that such agreements are dishonoured. The peace agreement signed in August 2015 did not become effective until the formation of the government of national unity towards the end of April 2016: violent conflict erupted less than four months later, in July 2016. The conflict happened because parties to the peace agreement, particularly the incumbent government, failed to respect the provisions of the agreement. The implementation of the second peace agreement signed in September 2018 was delayed until the transitional government of national unity was formed in March 2020, as parties differed on the number of states and allocation of state governors. Despite the formation of a transitional government, many provisions of the 2018 peace agreement, such as the formation of the national legislature, have not been implemented; and the ceasefire agreement was not respected in most states. As expressed by students, the 2018 peace agreement is unable to silence guns and may reach the same fate of the 2015 peace agreement.

One student lamented that

many times people make agreements and those agreements are never followed by anybody, even the agreement that led to separation from Sudan was not fully implemented I think and that is why we continue to have many problems in South Sudan. The government even does not respect any agreement so it will be hard for other parties to respect what they agreed; I feel we should give the responsibility of following the implementation of any agreement to independent body like the USA.³

When students were asked whether they have seen the 2011 constitution, about two-thirds (65 percent) saw the constitution, while about 80 percent of secondary students saw the constitution. This is exceptionally high compared to only 3 percent of respondents who saw the constitution in another public survey (IRI, 2013, p. 47). Interestingly, an overwhelming majority of students (78 percent) are aware that an act of the government in relation to constitution can be challenged in a court of law. This indicates that the secondary school curriculum includes constitution as part of civic education. However, their level of knowledge about the constitution increases with the level of education (see Figure 7).

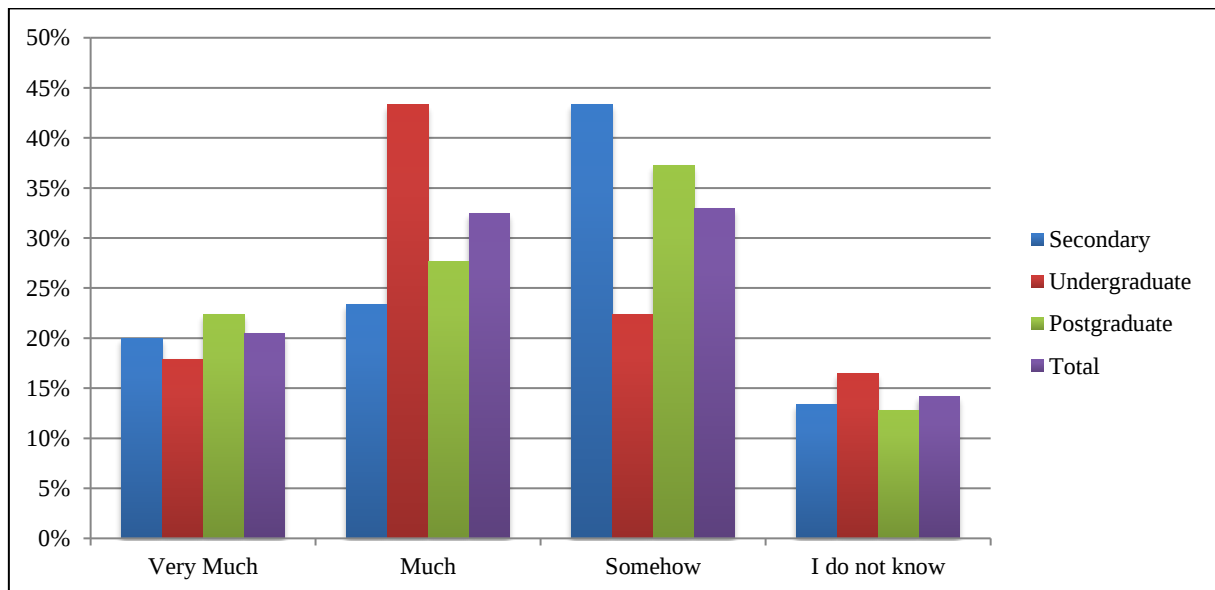


Figure 7. The level of knowledge about the national constitution.

³ Focus group discussion conducted on 7 January 2020.

Political interest and engagement. These are activities aimed at influencing public policy and whether education may contribute to making such engagement cooperative rather than a competitive zero-sum political engagement. In assessing their interest in politics, students were asked whether the government is respecting the constitution. The overwhelming majority of students (81 percent) said “no”, particularly among undergraduate students (91 percent). This high interest of students in politics may be attributed to the content of the curriculum and importantly to the initiative of the government to establish a student’s parliament. Interestingly, about 60 percent of the students know the name of their representatives in parliament but only 24 percent of them had met their representatives. Having one-quarter of students meeting their representatives in parliament shows their keen interest in politics. As such, this may not reflect the reality of South Sudan as a majority of the rural population, including students, are detached from their politicians in Juba.

In assessing their activities or intentions to influence the public policies, students were asked what they would do if the parties to the peace agreement failed to implement the agreement. Interestingly, three-quarters of students (76 percent) would prefer peaceful actions such as peaceful demonstrations rather than violent actions such as armed struggle (14 percent) (see Figure 8). Also, male students are twice more likely (18 percent) to resort to violent actions than female students (9 percent). Also, students would prefer peaceful actions if the government violates the constitution. These findings suggest that more education in South Sudan is likely to reduce armed conflict with a possibility of creating opportunities for more peaceful actions as effective means for correcting the behaviour of government.

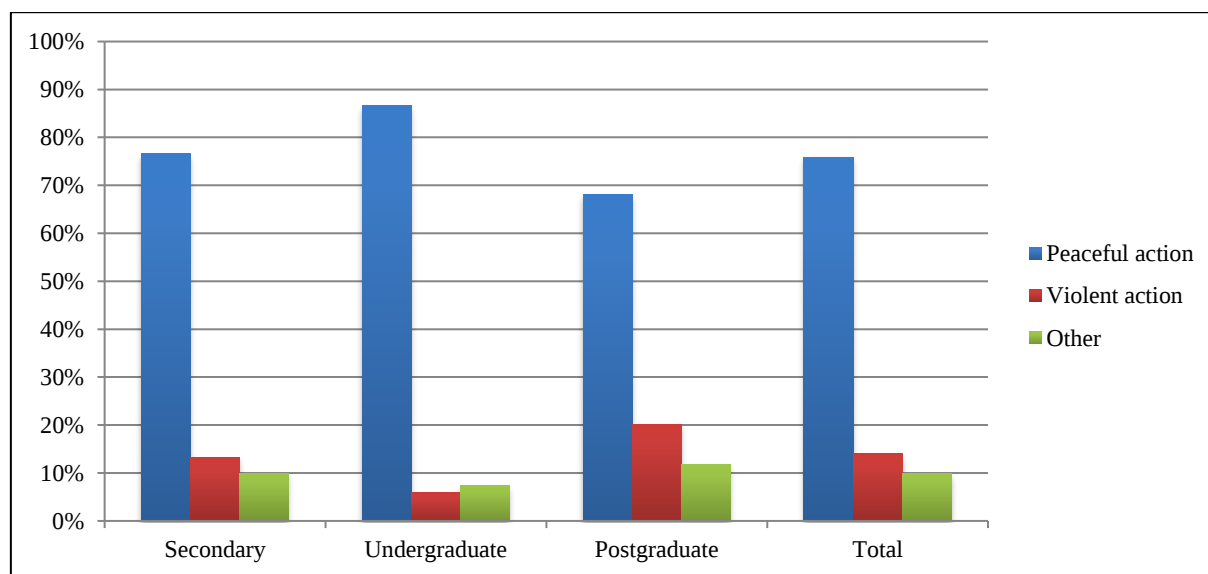


Figure 8. Failure to implement peace agreement and possible actions.

Students from Equatoria are more likely to opt for peaceful actions (81 percent) than students from Upper Nile (79 percent) and Bahr el Ghazal (65 percent). Interestingly, students from Upper Nile (21 percent) are more likely to resort to violent actions, nearly double than students from Bahr el Ghazal (12 percent), and about triple than students from Equatoria (8 percent) (see Figure 9). This might reflect cultural variation as sedentary peasantry livelihood in Equatoria region is relatively more peaceful than the agro-pastoralist livelihood in Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal region that is characterised by persistent conflict over natural resources such as water and pastures.

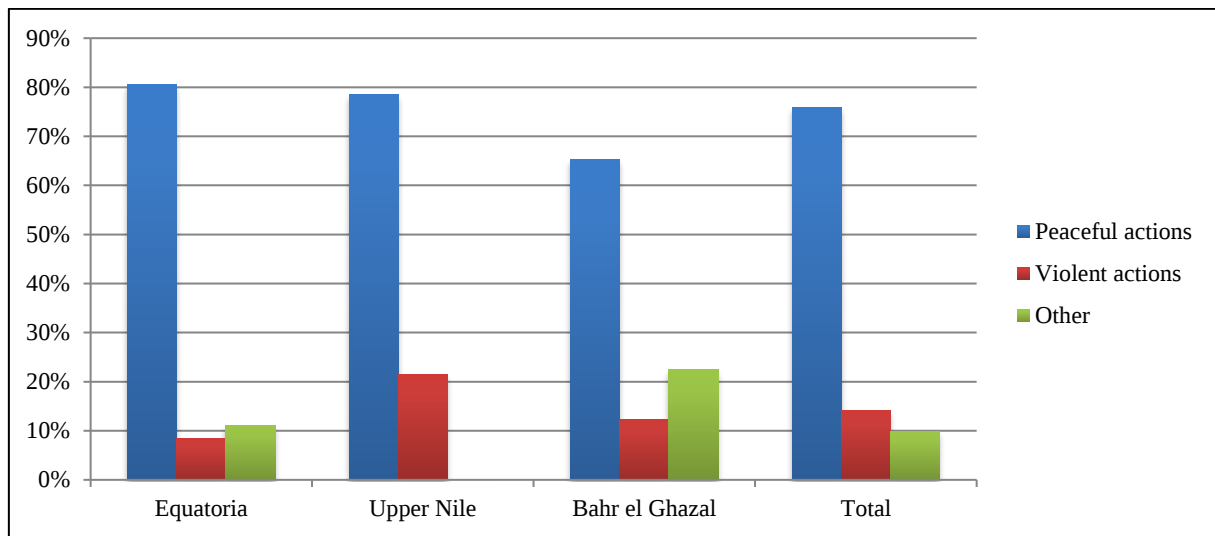


Figure 9. Failure to implement the peace agreement and regional actions.

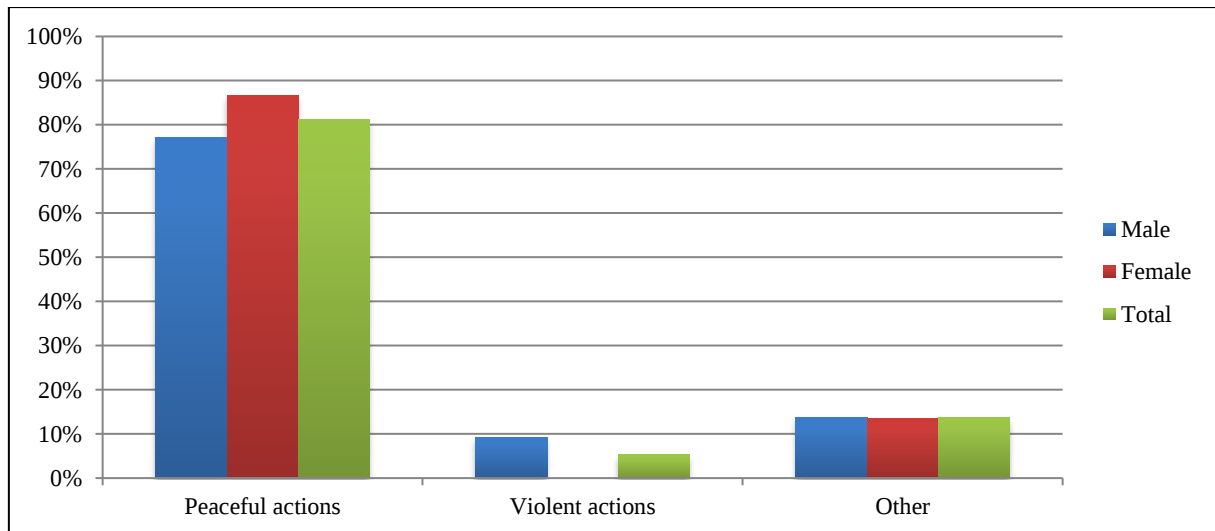


Figure 10. Failure to respect and abide by the constitution and possible actions.

The students were asked about the actions they would take to make the government abide and respect the national constitution. An overwhelming majority (81 percent) would prefer peaceful actions and only 5 percent would opt for violent actions; particularly secondary and postgraduate students (7 percent). Interestingly and not surprisingly, the female students much less likely to prefer violent actions (0 percent) than male students (9 percent) (see Figure 10) largely because of the way girls are socialized during the early informal education.

Civicness and Institutions (Driver 2)

Institutions play important role in affecting how the powers which are provided for in political settlements and in the constitution are exercised and managed to address the core conflict issues and nurture resilient social contract. Trust in institutions and their legitimacy are necessary conditions for a healthy and stable democracy (Campbell, 2006, p. 30) and there is a wealth of evidence that shows a close link between trust in government and its institutions and stable democracy (Inglehary, 1997, p. 174). Exiting the vicious cycle of violence and fragility requires restoration of confidence and trust in government and its institutions as a prerequisite for

transforming those institutions to make them capable of delivering citizen security, justice, and jobs (World Bank, 2011, p. 12). It is argued in the case of South Sudan that trust and confidence in the government and its institutions can be nurtured through inclusive coalitions of state and non-state actors and the establishment of rule-based and accountable foundation for the new state (Knopf, 2013). The impact of civicness on institutions can be assessed through the level of trust in government and its institutions, legitimacy, and feeling of affiliation with government.

Trust in government and its institutions. When students were asked about their level of trust in government and its institutions, about two-thirds (67 percent) of students trust the government and its institutions, with 28 percent not trusting at all the government and its institutions, particularly secondary school students (33 percent). However, students from Equatoria (36 percent) are more likely not to trust government and its institutions than students from Bahr el Ghazal (22 percent) and students from Upper Nile (23 percent).

When students were asked about the level of inclusivity in government and its institutions, the majority of students (56 percent) did not consider government and its institutions to be inclusive and representative and only 24 percent viewed the government as inclusive and representative. Interestingly, students from Bahr el Ghazal region are more than twice less likely (27 percent) to see the government and its institutions as inclusive and representative than students from Upper Nile (63 percent) and Equatoria (69 percent) (see Figure 11). When students were asked about the quality of their representation in government and parliament, the overwhelming majority (78 percent) of students were not satisfied with the quality of their representation in the government and parliament.

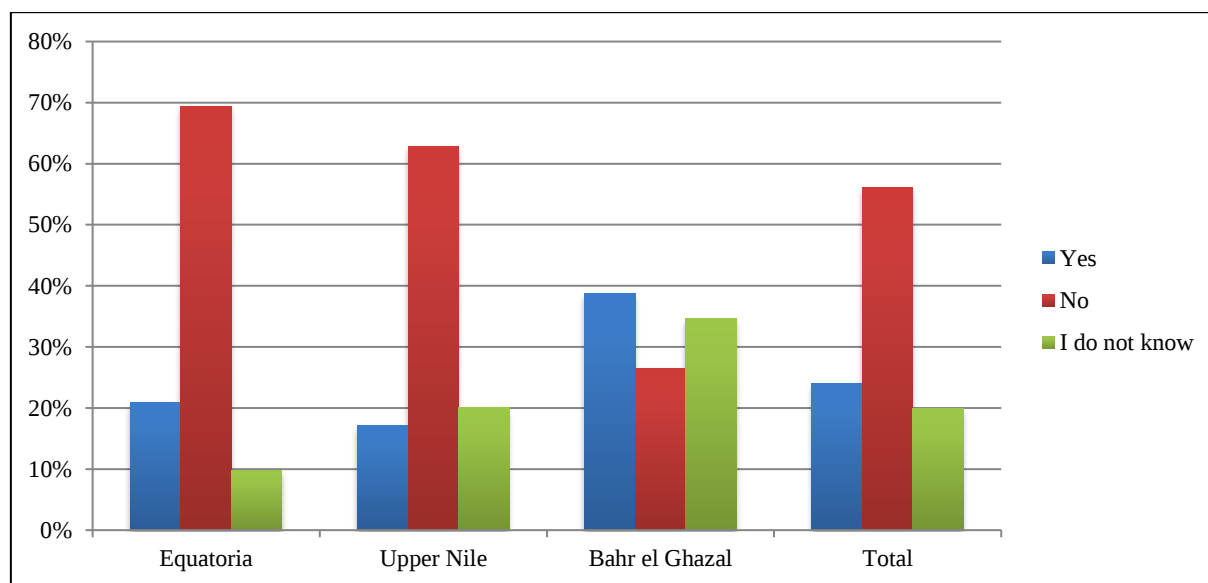


Figure 11. The level of inclusivity and representation in government and its institutions.

These findings reflect the fact that representation in government (cabinet, parliament, and public institutions such as security sector) is not based on merit or through elections but rather by power-sharing agreements that reward those who have participated in civil wars and are predominately from Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile regions (Kuol, 2020b, p. 67). One student eloquently described the lack of inclusivity in public institutions by stating that

please note that inclusivity is still far in South Sudan. I mean in all our institutions we have people who are educated but no job just because they belong to minority ethnic groups so can we talk of inclusive institution, and that is why even

in public offices people still talk in their mother tongues even in an official meeting, then that tells you that our institutions are still not inclusive.⁴

Legitimacy and affiliation with government. The legitimacy of government and its institutions can indirectly be assessed through citizens' feeling of affiliation with the state relative to their feeling of affiliation to other institutions such as sub-national levels of government or community groups. Students were asked about their feelings of affiliation with the state before and after independence. Almost half of students (49 percent) affiliate with the state and about one-fifth (19 percent) affiliate with their ethnic groups. However, the feelings of affiliation with the state declined considerably after independence (61 percent to 49 percent), while their affiliation with their ethnic groups increased significantly after independence (7 percent to 19 percent) (see Figure 12). Although students did not attribute conflict to ethnicity, the use of ethnicity by the ruling elites as basis for accessing power made many students affiliate more to their ethnic groups. One student described his feelings of affiliation to South Sudan by saying that

some of us feel now more associated with our tribes, even if we are all South Sudanese; before independence of South Sudan in 2011 most of us were in the same camp... we always talked about South Sudan as our home that means we were feeling South Sudanese.⁵

Female students (50 percent) are more likely to affiliate with the state of South Sudan than male students (48 percent). Also, students from Equatoria (36 percent) are more likely to affiliate with their regions than other students, while students from Upper Nile (23 percent) are more likely to associate with their ethnic groups than other students. This finding is consistent with previous findings as students from Equatoria region feel less represented and marginalised in the new state of South Sudan. Despite the shrinking sense of affiliation with the state, almost about half of the students (49 percent) still affiliate themselves with the state.

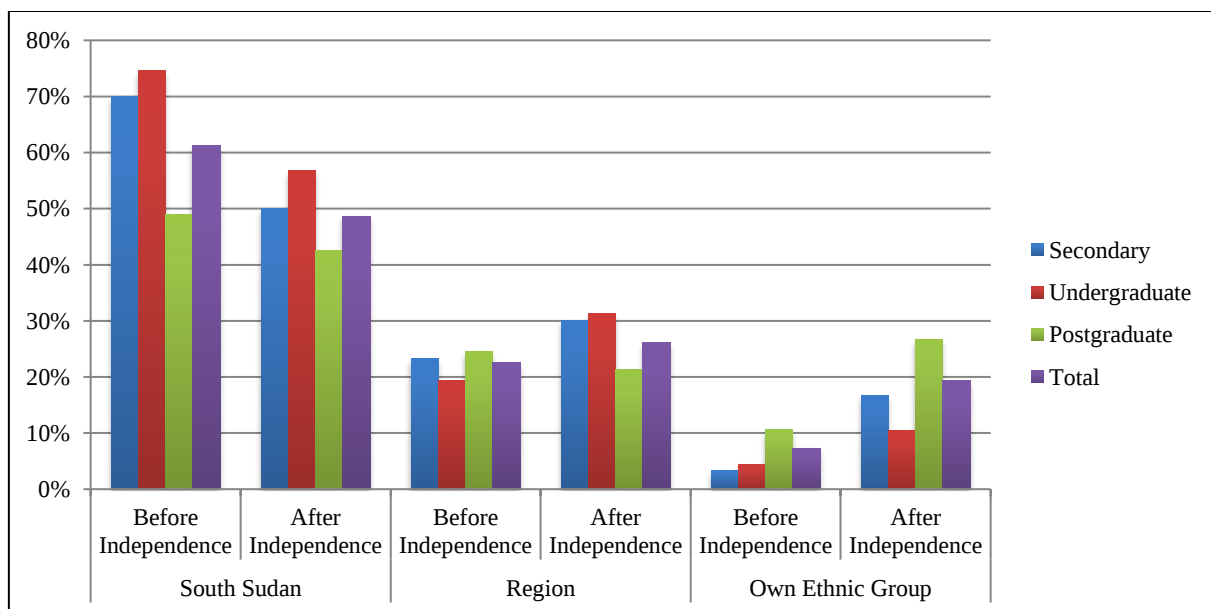


Figure 12. Students feeling of affiliation with state before and after independence.

⁴ Focus group discussion conducted on 7 January 2020.

⁵ Focus group discussion conducted on 11 December 2019.

Civicism and Social Cohesion (Driver 3)

Social cohesion is the outcome of how power is distributed through political settlements (Driver 1) and how power is exercised through institutions (Driver 2). The way civicism in terms of political, civic, and social activities enhances and nurtures social cohesion and can be assessed in terms of the level of interpersonal trust, tolerance and civility, inter-ethnic interactions, forging national unity and national identity, and feelings about the future. Also the existing social cohesion may also strengthen civicism.

Interpersonal trust. Trust is a key element of social capital and it serves as “lubricant” for social cohesion and reciprocity (Campbell, 2006; Kuol, 2020b). Building trust among various stakeholders is a necessary precondition for any attempt to transform institutions to deliver security, justice, and jobs to citizens (World Bank, 2011). While it is difficult to measure levels of trust, students were asked to gauge their level of trust of other people in comparison to the period before the independence of South Sudan in 2011. The overwhelming majority (65 percent) of students trust less other ethnic groups, while only 15 percent of students trust more other ethnic groups after the independence. This shows again the politics of ethnic patronage adopted by the ruling elites after the independence eroded trust between different ethnic groups. However, this loss of trust was particularly more evident among secondary and undergraduate students (73 percent) than among postgraduate students (57 percent), while the growing of trust of other ethnic groups is more prevalent among postgraduate (15 percent) and undergraduate (16 percent) than secondary (13 percent). This finding indirectly suggests that more education is likely to nurture trust among different ethnic groups (see Figure 13).

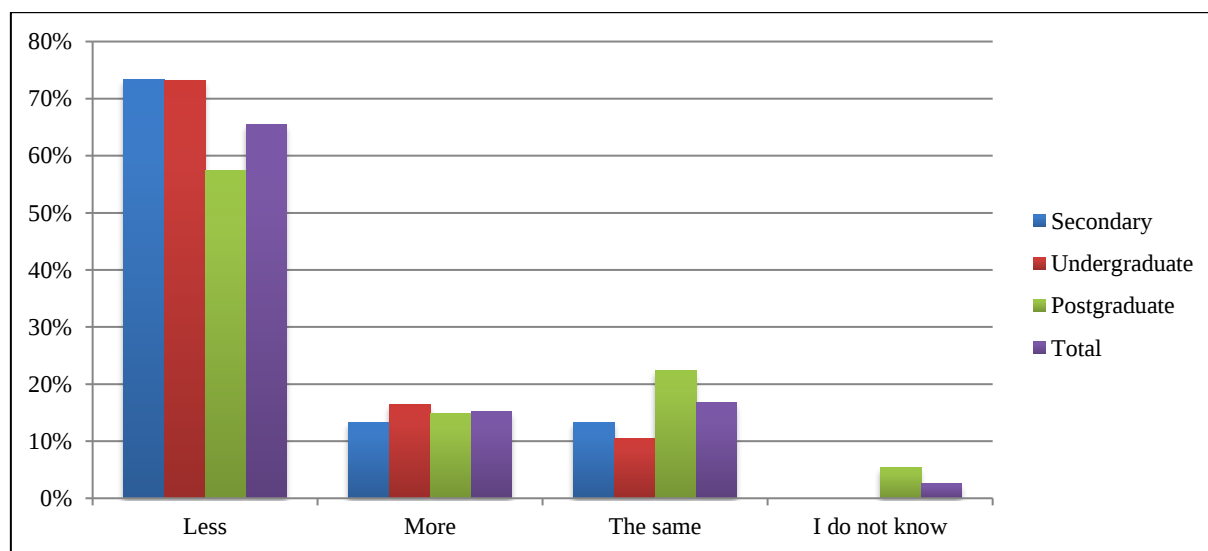


Figure 13. Level of interpersonal trust compared before independence in 2011.

Level of interaction with other people. The level of interaction between and among people is an important “emollient” for social cohesion and social capital. Despite weakening interpersonal trust, South Sudanese have formal and informal relations, ties, and interactions that hold them together across different divides (Kuol, 2020b, p. 78).

Students were asked about their daily interaction with other students not from their ethnic groups and an overwhelming majority (78 percent) of students confirmed their inter-ethnic interaction with other students very often, particularly among female students (84 percent) compared to male student (73 percent) (see Figure 14).

Students from Bahr el Ghazal (88 percent) are more likely to interact with students from other ethnic groups than students from Upper Nile (78 percent) and Equatoria (71 percent) with students from Upper Nile (13 percent) more likely not to meet students from other ethnic groups compared to Bahr el Ghazal (0 percent) and Equatoria (1 percent). One student appreciates his daily interaction with others by stating that

I daily meet and interact with people who are not from my ethnic group, especially in school we are free always with any group; we eat together and even at home I normally play with people who are not from my ethnic group; as youth we have no problem with any ethnic group in South Sudan.⁶

When students were asked about their level of inter-ethnic interaction outside educational institutions, about 60 percent of students confirmed that they did engage in inter-ethnic interaction. Secondary students reported less interaction, and were more likely not to interact at all with others ethnic groups (27 percent). Interestingly, female students (66 percent) are more likely to interact very often with people from other ethnic groups outside educational institutions than male students (55 percent). This shows that educational institutions provide conducive social environments for inter-ethnic interactions that nurture social cohesion by building social bridges, links, and ties.

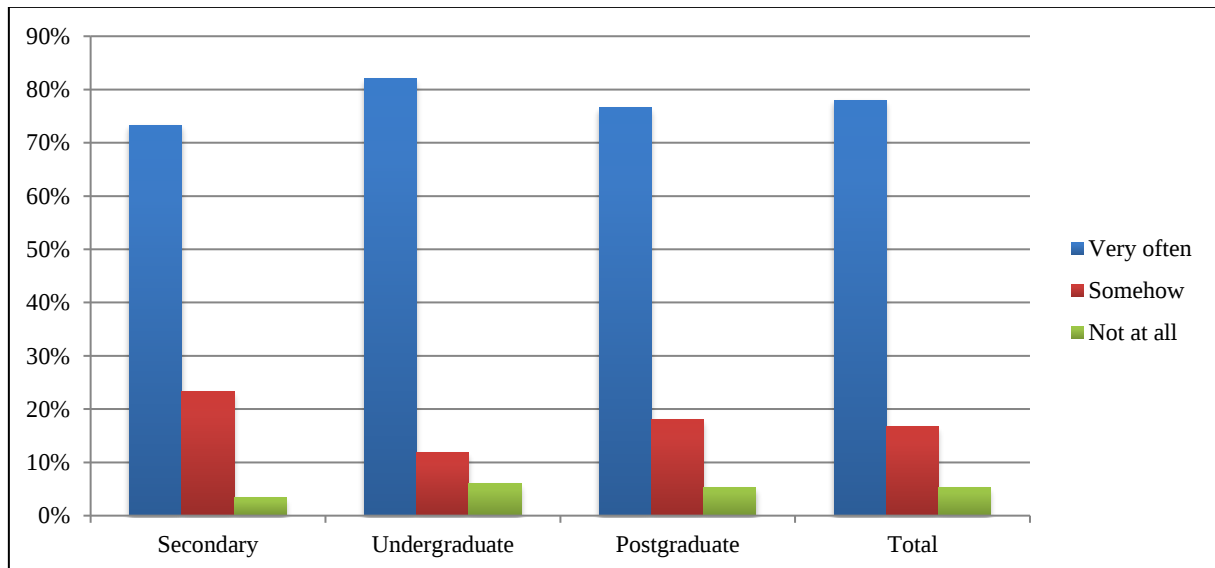


Figure 14. The level of inter-ethnic interactions in education institutions.

There is a strong link between inter-ethnic interactions and interpersonal trust by reducing fear, anxiety, and stereotypes (Kuol, 2020b, p. 79). In assessing this link, students were asked whether such inter-ethnic interactions improve interpersonal trust. About 62 percent of students confirmed the added value of inter-ethnic interactions in building interpersonal trust, particularly among undergraduate students (72 percent) and female students (66 percent) compared to male students (60 percent) (see Figure 15). This finding confirms further that education matters in providing a trusted platform for building interpersonal trust and nurturing social cohesion.

⁶ Focus group discussion conducted on 11 December 2019.

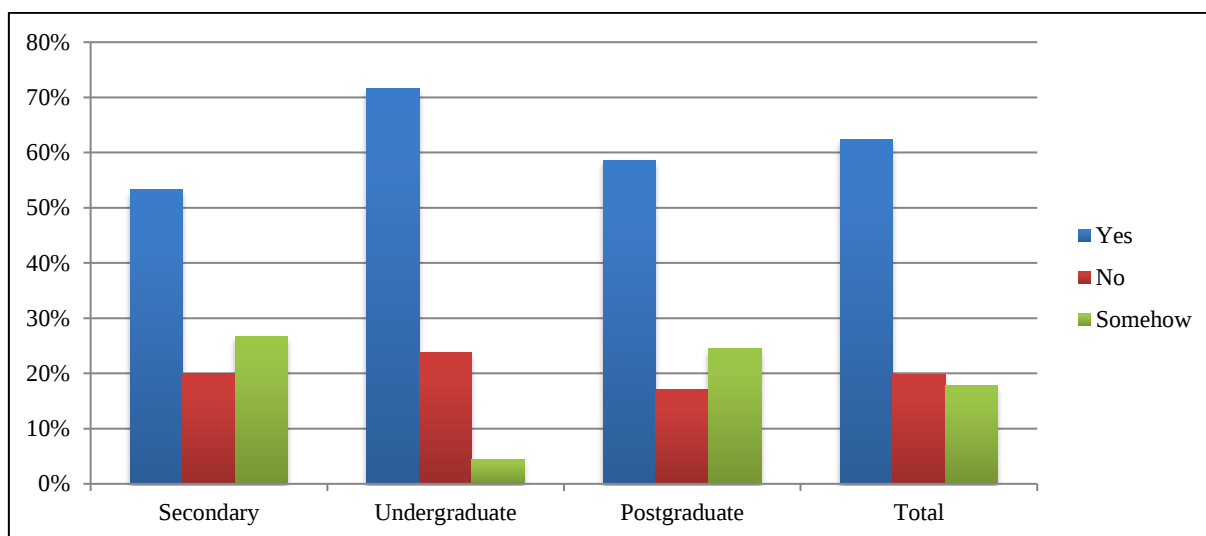


Figure 15. Link between inter-ethnic interactions and interpersonal trust.

Forging national unity and national identity. There are some symbols and elements that may provide the basis for building national unity and a common national identity. The people of South Sudan do have some commonalities, shared values, and ties that provide a solid foundation for forging national unity and national identity (Kuol, 2020b, p. 78). Students were asked about the elements and symbols that would make them feel more South Sudanese. 46 percent of students considered the national flag and national anthem as key symbols for forging national identity. Among secondary students, the flag and anthem were particularly important: 63 percent saw them as key symbols. Other things that made students feel more South Sudanese were shared history (24 percent), education system (10 percent), quality of leadership (7 percent), inter-marriages (6 percent), and sports (5 percent) (see Figure 16). Interestingly, female students are likely to attach more importance than male students to the role of leadership (15 percent), education system (13 percent), and inter-marriages in forging national unity and national identity. These findings are relevant in the design and development of curriculums, extracurricular activities, and syllabi.

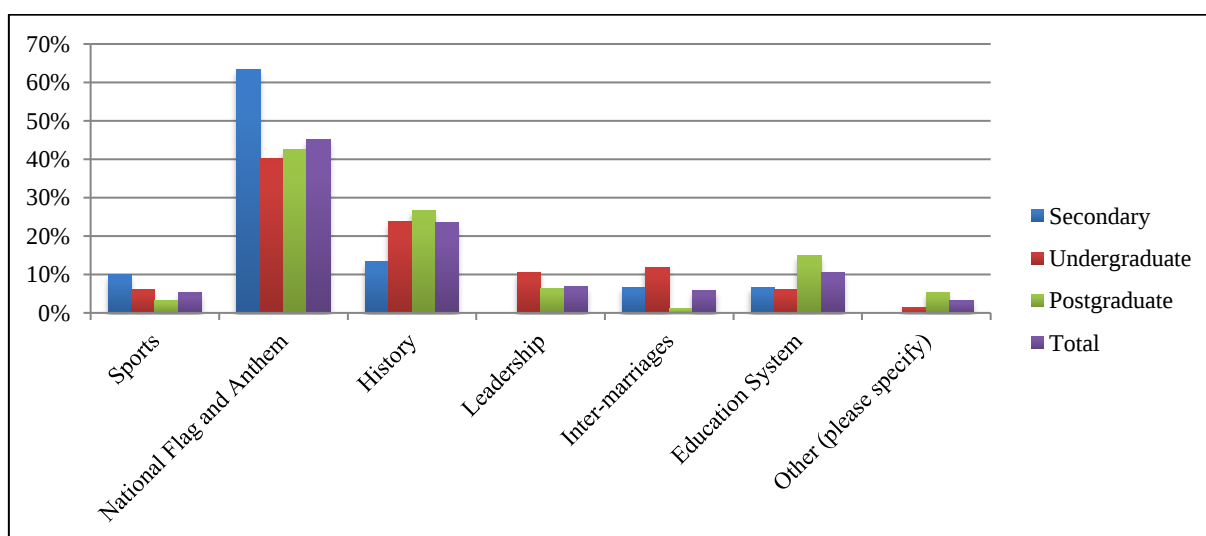


Figure 16. Elements and symbols for national unity and national identity.

Visioning the future. Education plays a critical role in shaping how students see the future of the nation. Students were asked how they see the future of South Sudan. The majority of students (59 percent) saw a good future for South Sudan; particularly among secondary students (67 percent) (see Figure 17), students from Equatoria (68 percent), and male students (62 percent). However, female students were more pessimistic about the future of South Sudan than male students. This optimism about the future of South Sudan is stronger than the results from other public surveys (IRI, 2013, p. 6). These results show that education does play a positive role in creating optimism and seeing a better future for South Sudan; despite its current challenges.

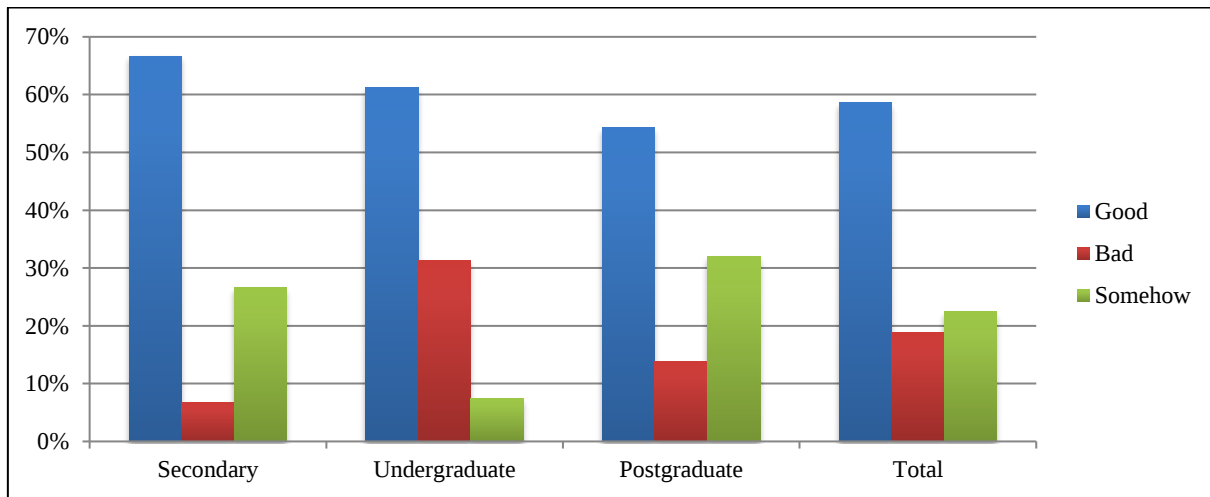


Figure 17. The future of South Sudan.

Conclusions

One of the purposes of this paper is to provide a theoretical framework to conceptually frame the link between education, civicness, and social contract, as a gap exists in the literature of peacebuilding. The empirical findings from this study may not be conclusive, however they have helped in explaining the nexus between education, civicness, and social contract, which in turn contributes to sustainable peace. As there is growing evidence that shows the influence of education on “civicness” through skills and cognitive resources, it is argued in this paper that education influences the resilient national social contract through promoting values associated with civicness, which in turn provides a basis for sustainable peace. Unlike other studies on peacebuilding and civil wars that suggest the direct link between education and peacebuilding, the theoretical framework provided in this paper and its empirical findings suggest that education contributes to peacebuilding through civicness and resilient social contract.

The main finding of this study is that education through its impact on civicness as presented in Figure 2 plays a critical role in nurturing or lubricating the core drivers of resilient social contract. In other words, the study finds that education through civicness makes students become key political stakeholders and more likely to foster a resilient social contract, which in turn contributes to sustaining peace. Although this study did not assess the content and quality of education at different levels, its findings suggest that students are likely to develop civic values and engagements that contribute to driving resilient social contract and sustainable peace.

As South Sudan is home to one of the lowest levels of educated population in the world, this might have contributed among other factors to limited demand for good governance and a general governance deficit that

perpetuates poor relations between state-citizens, untrusted, ineffective, and exclusive institutions, and the erosion of social cohesion and interpersonal trust. The findings from this study suggest that more schooling in South Sudan is likely to nurture, through civicness, a resilient social contract, sustainable peace as well as increasing demand not only for good governance but also schools might become centres for political change and resistance to any misrule through peaceful means.

The findings of this study may have the following implications for the way education is perceived, planned, managed, and delivered:

Female Education

The preliminary findings show that female students are less likely to engage in zero-sum competitive violent actions and are a powerful force, not only for win-win peaceful actions, but also in nurturing inter-ethnic interactions and interpersonal trust. The curricula and pedagogical methods in various educational institutions may need to be designed to reflect the role of women in peace and trust-building by providing stories and examples from various communities.

Civic Education

The curricula of various educational institutions should reflect civic education in a syllabus that spurs social, civic, and political engagement among students, such as teaching of constitutions and political settlement, tools, and skills for interpreting political issues, and methods for their effective participation in the governance of educational institutions (Campbell, 2006). Student parliaments have been effective ways of making students interested and engaged in political issues. Other efforts to promote open discussion of social and political issues such as student debates are important elements of civic education.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Although sports dominate such activities, there is a need to promote traditional sports and traditional cultural dances that bring together male and female students. In some countries, students are encouraged to engage in charitable volunteering connected to their classroom work (Campbell, 2006, p. 60).

Views of Students

The context matters in planning, managing, and delivering education. The findings from this study show regional variations in the level of influence of education on civicness and social contract. Although the national curricula for primary and secondary schools reflect such regional variations, the process of drafting such curricula is often less informed by the views of students. There is a need for inclusive and students-centred process for drafting national curricula, planning, managing, and delivering education in South Sudan.

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