



Ethno-Religious Conflict and Economic Change



ISSN 2373-6615 (Print); ISSN 2373-6631 (Online)

**Relationship between Ethno-Religious Conflict and Economic Growth:
Analysis of the Scholarly Literature**

Frances Bernard Kominkiewicz

Department of Social Work and Gerontology, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN

Abstract

This research reports on the analysis of scholarly research that focuses on the relationship between ethno-religious conflict and economic growth. The paper informs conference participants, educators, business leaders, and community members about the scholarly literature and research procedure used in assessing the relationship between ethno-religious conflict and economic growth. The method used in this research was an assessment of scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles that focused on ethno-religious conflict and economic growth. Research literature was chosen from the scholarly, online databases and all articles had to meet the requirement of being peer-reviewed. Each of the articles was assessed according to the data and/or variables that included conflict, economic impact, method used in the analysis of the relationship between ethno-religious conflict and the economy, and theoretical model. As economic growth is vital to economic planning and policy development, the analysis of the scholarly literature is germane to this process. Conflicts and expenses for these conflicts affect economic growth in the developing world, and are studied in various countries and circumstances, including Chinese immigrant communities, China-Pakistan, Pakistan, India and Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Israel, Osh conflicts, NATO, migration, ethnicity and civil war, and war and the stock market. This paper presents a format for assessment of scholarly journal articles regarding the relationship between ethno-religious conflict and economic growth information about the direction of the relationship. Additionally, it provides a model for evaluation of the correlation of ethno-religious conflict or violence and economic growth. Four sections highlight particular countries for purposes of this research.

Keywords: ethno-religious conflict, economic growth, analysis of scholarly literature

Introduction

The importance of studying the relationship between ethno-religious conflict and economic growth is undisputed. Having this knowledge is vital in working with populations to affect peacebuilding. Conflict is seen as “a shaping force in the global economy” (Ghadar, 2006, p. 15). Ethnic or religious conflicts are considered to be the important attributes of internal conflicts of the developing countries but are too complicated to be studied as religious or ethnic conflicts (Kim, 2009). The effect on economic growth is important to assess in going forward with peacebuilding. The impact of conflict on the physical capital and production, and the economic cost of the actual fighting, can be the initial focus followed by any changes in the economic environment caused by the conflict that can affect the economic impact of conflict on a country’s development (Schein, 2017). Assessment of these factors is of greater importance in determining the effect on the economy than if the country won or lost the conflict (Schein, 2017). It is not always accurate that winning a conflict can result in positive changes in the economic environment, and losing a conflict results in negative effects on the economic environment (Schein, 2017). A conflict can be won, but if the conflict caused negative effects on the economic environment, the economy may be harmed (Schein, 2017). Losing a conflict can lead to improvement in the economic environment, and therefore the country’s development is assisted by the conflict (Schein, 2017).

Numerous groups who see themselves as members of a common culture, whether that be religious or ethnic, may be involved in conflict to continue that self-government (Stewart, 2002). The economic effect is reflected in the statement that conflict and war affect population distribution (Warsame & Wilhelmsson, 2019). A major refugee crisis in countries with easily broken economies such as Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Djibouti was caused by civil war in Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Syria (Karam & Zaki, 2016).

Methodology

In order to assess the effect of ethno-religious conflict on economic growth, an analysis of existing scholarly literature was initiated that focused upon this terminology. Articles were located that addressed variables such as terrorism, war on terror, and conflict in specific countries associated with ethnic and religious conflict, and only those scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles that addressed the relationship of ethnic and/or religious conflict with economic growth were included in the research literature analysis.

Studying the economic effects of ethno-religious factors can be an overwhelming task given that there is much literature addressing issues in this area. Reviewing the great amount of research on a topic is difficult for researchers studying the literature (Bellefontaine & Lee, 2014; Glass, 1977; Light & Smith, 1971). This analysis was therefore designed to address the research question of the relationship of ethnic and/or religious conflict with economic growth through identified variables. Research that was reviewed included various approaches, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative).

Use of Online Research Databases

The online research databases available in the author’s academic library were used in the

search to locate related scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles. When conducting the literature search, the limiter of “Scholarly (Peer-Reviewed) Journals” was used. Due to the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary aspects of ethno-religious conflict and economic growth, many and varied online databases were searched. The online databases that were searched included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Academic Search Ultimate
- America: History and Life with Full Text
- American Antiquarian Society (AAS) Historical Periodicals Collection: Series 1
- American Antiquarian Society (AAS) Historical Periodicals Collection: Series 2
- American Antiquarian Society (AAS) Historical Periodicals Collection: Series 3
- American Antiquarian Society (AAS) Historical Periodicals Collection: Series 4
- American Antiquarian Society (AAS) Historical Periodicals Collection: Series 5
- Art Abstracts (H.W. Wilson)
- Atla Religion Database with AtlaSerials
- Biography Reference Bank (H.W. Wilson)
- Biography Reference Center
- Biological Abstracts
- Biomedical Reference Collection: Basic
- Business Source Complete
- CINAHL with Full Text
- Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials
- Cochrane Clinical Answers
- Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- Cochrane Methodology Register
- Communication & Mass Media Complete
- EBSCO Management Collection
- Entrepreneurial Studies Source
- ERIC
- Essay and General Literature Index (H.W. Wilson)
- Film & Television Literature Index with Full Text
- Fonte Acadêmica
- Fuente Académica Premier
- Gender Studies Database
- GreenFILE
- Health Business FullTEXT
- Health Source - Consumer Edition
- Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition
- History Reference Center
- Humanities Full Text (H.W. Wilson)
- International Bibliography of Theatre & Dance with Full Text
- Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts
- Literary Reference Center Plus
- MagillOnLiterature Plus
- MAS Ultra - School Edition

- MasterFILE Premier
- MEDLINE with Full Text
- Middle Search Plus
- Military & Government Collection
- MLA Directory of Periodicals
- MLA International Bibliography
- Philosopher's Index
- Primary Search
- Professional Development Collection
- PsycARTICLES
- PsycINFO
- Readers' Guide Full Text Select (H.W. Wilson)
- Referencia Latina
- Regional Business News
- Small Business Reference Center
- Social Sciences Full Text (H.W. Wilson)
- Social Work Abstracts
- SocINDEX with Full Text
- TOPICsearch
- Vente et Gestion

Definition of Variables

The economic impact of ethno-religious conflict calls for definitions of the variables addressed in this research literature review. As Ghadar (2006) relates, "The definition of conflict itself is changing as the occurrence of conventional international conflicts continues to decline while incidences of civil war and terrorism increase" (p. 15). The search terms are defined by the variables, and therefore the definition of the search terms is important to the literature review. In reviewing the literature, a common definition of "ethno-religious conflict" and "economic growth" could not be located *per se* with that exact wording, but various terms were used that may denote the same or similar meaning. The search terms that were primarily used in locating the literature included "ethnic", "ethno", "religious", "religion", "economic", "economy", and "conflict". These were combined in various permutations with other search terms as Boolean search terms in the databases.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary Online, "ethno-" is defined as the following with "obsolete", "archaic", and "rare" classifications removed for purposes of this research: "Used in words relating to the study of peoples or cultures, prefixed to (a) combining forms (as *ethnography n.*, *ethnology n.*, etc.), and (b) nouns (as *ethnobotany n.*, *ethnopsychology n.*, etc.), or derivatives of these" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019e). "Ethnic" is defined in these descriptions, again eliminating classifications not in general use, "as a noun: originally and chiefly *Ancient Greek History*. A word that denotes nationality or place of origin"; and "originally *U.S.* A member of a group or subgroup regarded as ultimately of common descent, or having a common national or cultural tradition; *esp.* a member of an ethnic minority." As an adjective, "ethnic" is defined as "originally *Ancient Greek History*. Of a word: that denotes nationality or place of origin"; and "Originally: of or relating to peoples with regard to their (actual or perceived)

common descent. Now usually: of or relating to national or cultural origin or tradition”; “Designating or relating to relations between the different population groups of a country or region, esp. where there is hostility or conflict; that occurs or exists between such groups, inter-ethnic”; “Of a population group: regarded as having a common descent, or a common national or cultural tradition”; “Designating or relating to art, music, dress, or other elements of culture characteristic of a particular (esp. non-Western) national or cultural group or tradition; modelled on or incorporating elements of these. Hence: (*colloquial*) foreign, exotic”; Designating or relating to a population subgroup (within a dominant national or cultural group) regarded as having a common descent or national or cultural tradition. In the United States sometimes *spec.* designating members of non-black minority groups. Now often considered *offensive*”; “Designating origin or national identity by birth or descent rather than by present nationality” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019d).

Research regarding how the variable, “religion”, is involved in violent conflict is questionable for four reasons (Feliu & Grasa, 2013). The first issue is that there are difficulties in choosing between theories that try to explain violent conflicts (Feliu & Grasa, 2013). In the second issue, difficulties originate from various definitional boundaries regarding violence and conflict (Feliu & Grasa, 2013). Until the 1990s, war and international violent conflict were primarily in the subject area of international relations and security and strategic studies even though intra-state violent conflicts greatly increased after the 1960s (Feliu & Grasa, 2013). The third issue relates to the changing structures regarding the global concern of violence in the world and the shifting nature of present armed conflicts (Feliu & Grasa, 2013). The last issue refers to the need to differentiate between causation types since violent conflict consists of many different and connected parts, is changing, and is a product of many factors (Cederman & Gleditsch, 2009; Dixon, 2009; Duyvesteyn, 2000; Feliu & Grasa, 2013; Themnér & Wallensteen, 2012).

The term “religious” is defined as an adjective in these words with classifications not in general use removed: “Of a person or group of people: bound by vows of religion; belonging to a monastic order, esp. in the Roman Catholic Church”; “Of a thing, a place, etc.: belonging to or connected with a monastic order; monastic”; “Chiefly of a person: devoted to religion; exhibiting the spiritual or practical effects of religion, following the requirements of a religion; pious, godly, devout”; “Of, relating to, or concerned with religion” and “Scrupulous, exact, strict, conscientious. In defining “religious” as a noun, the following general use classifications are included: “People bound by monastic vows or devoted to a religious life, esp. in the Roman Catholic Church” and “A person bound by religious vows or devoted to a religious life, esp. in the Roman Catholic Church” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019g).

“Religion” is defined, with general use classifications included, as “A state of life bound by religious vows; the condition of belonging to a religious order; “Action or conduct indicating belief in, obedience to, and reverence for a god, gods, or similar superhuman power; the performance of religious rites or observances” when combined with “Belief in or acknowledgement of some superhuman power or powers (esp. a god or gods) which is typically manifested in obedience, reverence, and worship; such a belief as part of a system defining a code of living, esp. as a means of achieving spiritual or material improvement”; and “A particular system of faith and worship” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019f). The latter definition was applied in this literature search.

The search terms, “economy” and “economic” were used in searching the databases. The term, “economy”, maintains eleven (11) definitions in the Oxford English Dictionary (2019c).

The relevant definition for application to this analysis is as follows: “The organization or condition of a community or nation with respect to economic factors, esp. the production and consumption of goods and services and the supply of money (now frequently with *the*); (also) a particular economic system” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). Regarding the term, “economic”, the following definition was used in the search for relevant articles: “Of, relating to, or concerned with the science of economics or with the economy in general” and “relating to the development and regulation of the material resources of a community or state” (English Oxford Dictionary, 2019b).

The terms, “economic change”, referring to small quantitative changes within an economy, and “economy change”, denoting a major change of any type/kind to a totally different economy, were also considered as search terms in the research (Cottey, 2018, p. 215). By applying these terms, contributions are included that are not usually factored into the economy (Cottey, 2018).

Considered in this research through the application of search terms were the direct and indirect economic costs of the conflict. Direct costs are costs that can be instantly applied to the conflict and include harm to human beings, care and resettlement of displaced individuals, destruction of and damage to physical resources, and higher military and internal security costs (Mutlu, 2011). Indirect costs refer to the consequences of the conflict such as the loss of human capital due to death or injury, lost income resulting from forgone investment, capital flight, emigration of skilled labor, and loss of possible foreign investment and tourist revenues (Mutlu, 2011). Individuals involved in the conflict can also suffer losses resulting from psychological stress and trauma as well as interruption of education (Mutlu, 2011). This is observed in the Hamber and Gallagher (2014) study that found that young men in Northern Ireland came forward with social and mental health issues, and that the number reporting self-harm, experiencing suicidal thoughts, engaging in risk taking behavior or suicide attempts was “alarming” (p. 52). According to the participants, these reported behaviors resulted from “depression, stress, anxiety, addiction, perceived worthlessness, low self-esteem, lack of life prospects, feeling neglected, hopelessness, despair and threat and fear of paramilitary attacks” (Hamber & Gallagher, 2014, p. 52).

“Conflict” is defined as “an encounter with arms; a fight, battle”; “a prolonged struggle”; fighting, contending with arms, martial strife”; “a mental or spiritual struggle within a man”; “the clashing or variance of opposed principles, statements, arguments, etc.”; “the opposition, in an individual, of incompatible wishes or needs of approximately equal strength; also, the distressing emotional state resulting from such opposition”; and “dashing together, collision, or violent mutual impact of physical bodies” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019a). “War” and “terrorism” were also used as search terms with the aforementioned search terms.

Grey literature was not used in the literature review. Full-text articles as well as articles that were not full-text, but meeting the definitions of the relevant variables, were reviewed. Interlibrary loan was utilized to order scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles that were not full-text in the scholarly online databases.

Nigeria and Cameroon

Crisis in Africa, according to Mamdani, are illustrations of the crisis of the post-colonial state (2001). Colonialism disassembled unity among Africans and replaced it with ethnic and national boundaries (Olasupo, Ijeoma, & Oladeji, 2017). The ethnic group that rules the state rules much more, and therefore the post-independence state collapsed due to inter-ethnic and

intra-ethnic conflicts (Olasupo et al., 2017).

Religion was a significant characteristic in many conflicts in Nigeria since its independence in 1960 (Onapajo, 2017). Prior to the Boko Haram conflict, studies found that Nigeria was one of the African countries with an extremely high amount of religious conflicts (Onapajo, 2017). Many businesses were closed in Nigeria due to religious unrest and most were looted or destroyed with their owners either killed or displaced (Anwuluorah, 2016). Since most international and multi-national businesses were moving to other locations where safety is not an issue, workers became unemployed and families were affected (Anwuluorah, 2016). Foyou, Ngwafu, Santoyo, and Ortiz (2018) discuss the economic impact of terrorism on Nigeria and Cameroon. The authors describe how the incursions of Boko Haram across the borders into Northern Cameroon have “contributed to a depletion of the fragile economic base that sustained the three northern regions of Cameroon [the North, the Far North, and Adamawa] and threatened the security of helpless populations in this region” (Foyou et al, 2018, p. 73). After the Boko Haram insurgency crossed into Northern Cameroon and sections of Chad and Niger, Cameroon eventually aided Nigeria (Foyou et al., 2018). Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria, which has led to the death of thousands of people including Muslims and Christians, and the destruction of property, infrastructure and developmental projects, threatens “national security, causes humanitarian disaster, psychological trauma, disruption of school activities, unemployment, and an increase in poverty, resulting in a weak economy” (Ugorji, 2017, p. 165).

Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria

The Iran-Iraq War lasted from 1980 to 1988 with an economic total cost to both countries of \$1.097 trillion, read as 1 trillion and 97 billion dollars (Mofrid, 1990). By invading Iran, “Saddam Hussein sought to settle scores with his neighbor for the perceived inequities of the Algiers Agreement, which he had negotiated with the Shah of Iran in 1975, and for Ayatollah Khomeini’s support for Islamic opposition groups opposed to the Iraqi government” (Parasiliti, 2003, p. 152).

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) was empowered by conflict and instability and became an independent entity (Esfandiary & Tabatabai, 2015). ISIS seized control of areas beyond Syria, advanced in Iraq and Lebanon, and in violent conflict, massacred civilians (Esfandiary & Tabatabai, 2015). There were reports of “mass executions and rapes of Shi’is, Christians, and other ethnic and religious minorities” by ISIS (Esfandiary & Tabatabai, 2015. p. 1). It was further seen that ISIS had an agenda that went beyond a separatist agenda, and this was different than other terrorist groups in Iran’s area (Esfandiary & Tabatabai, 2015). Many variables in addition to security measures affect urban growth of a city, and these include the type of security measures, economic and population growths, and the likelihood of a threat (Falah, 2017).

After Iran, Iraq has the largest Shi’i world population that comprises close to 60-75% of the Iraqis, and it is important to Iran’s religious strategy (Esfandiary & Tabatabai, 2015). The volume of trade between Iraq and Iran was \$13 billion (Esfandiary & Tabatabai, 2015). The growth of trade between Iran and Iraq came through a strengthening of relationships between the leaders of the two countries, the Kurds, and the smaller Shi’i clans (Esfandiary & Tabatabai, 2015).

Most Kurds reside in territory contained in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria referred to as Kurdistan (Brathwaite, 2014). The Ottoman, British, Soviet, and French imperial powers controlled this area until the end of WWII (Brathwaite, 2014). Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria

attempted to repress Kurdish minorities through various policies that resulted in different responses from the Kurds (Brathwaite, 2014). Syria's Kurdish population did not rebel from 1961 until the PKK uprising in 1984 and no conflict spread from Iraq to Syria (Brathwaite, 2014). Syrian Kurds joined their co-ethnics in their conflict against Iraq and Turkey instead of initiating conflict against Syria (Brathwaite, 2014).

The region of Iraqi Kurdistan (KRI) has experienced much economic change in the last decade, including the growing number of returnees since 2013, a year that saw economic growth in Iraqi Kurdistan (Savasta, 2019). Affecting migration patterns in Kurdistan since the mid-1980s are displacement during the Anfal campaign in 1988, return migration between 1991 and 2003, and urbanization after the Iraqi regime fall in 2003 (Eklund, Persson, & Pilesjö, 2016). More winter cropland was classified as active during the reconstruction period compared to the post-Anfal period demonstrating that some land abandoned after the Anfal campaign was reclaimed during the reconstruction period (Eklund et al., 2016). An increase in agriculture could not occur after trade sanctions during this time which may explain the extension of winter cropland (Eklund et al., 2016). Some previously uncultivated areas became winter croplands and there was an increase in recorded winter cropland ten years after the reconstruction period ended and the Iraqi regime fell (Eklund et al., 2016). With the conflict between the Islamic State (IS) and the Kurdish and Iraqi governments, the disturbances during 2014 demonstrate that this area continues to be affected by conflicts (Eklund et al., 2016).

The Kurdish conflict in Turkey has historical roots in the Ottoman Empire (Uluğ & Cohrs, 2017). Ethnic and religious leaders should be included in understanding this Kurdish conflict (Uluğ & Cohrs, 2017). The Kurds' perspectives on the conflict in Turkey and an understanding of ethnically Turkish people together and additional ethnicities in Turkey is important to understanding conflict in this society (Uluğ & Cohrs, 2016). Kurdish insurgency in Turkey's competitive elections is reflected in 1950 (Tezcur, 2015). An increase in violent and nonviolent Kurdish movement in Turkey is found in the post-1980 period when the PKK (Partiya Karkerê'n Kurdistan), an insurgent Kurdish group, began guerilla warfare in 1984 (Tezcur, 2015). The fighting continued to cause deaths after three decades post-initiation of the insurgency (Tezcur, 2015).

The Kurdish conflict in Turkey is seen as a "representative case for ethno-nationalist civil wars" by explaining the link between ethno-nationalist civil wars and environmental destruction as civil wars are likely to be isolated and allow government to implement its plan to destroy the insurgency (Gurses, 2012, p.268). The estimated economic cost that Turkey incurred in the conflict with the Kurdish separatists since 1984 and until the end of 2005 totaled \$88.1 billion in direct and indirect costs (Mutlu, 2011). Direct costs are instantly attributable to the conflict while indirect costs are the consequences such as human capital loss due to death or injury of individuals, migration, capital flight and abandoned investments (Mutlu, 2011).

Israel

Israel today is a country divided by religion and education (Cochran, 2017). There has been close to continuous conflict between Jews and Arabs in Israel starting in the twentieth century and continuing through the beginning of the twenty-first century (Schein, 2017). The British conquered the land from the Ottomans in World War I and the territory became a major supply center for British forces in WWII (Schein, 2017). Reinforced under the British mandate and Israeli

government, Israel has provided separate but unequal resources and limited access to government and religious education from 1920 to present (Cochran, 2017).

A study by Schein (2017) found that there is not a single conclusive effect of the wars on the economy of Israel. WWI, WWII, and the Six-Day War were beneficial to the economy of Israel, but the “Arab revolt” of 1936–1939, the civil war in 1947–1948, the first Arab-Israeli war for the Arab residents of Mandatory Palestine, and the two intifadas had negative effects on the economy” (Schein, 2017, p. 662). The economic effects of the war in 1956 and the first and second Lebanon wars were “limitedly either positive or negative” (Schein, 2017, p. 662). Since long-term differences in the economic environment from the first Arab-Israeli War for the Jewish residents of Mandatory Palestine and the Yom Kippur War and the short-term differences in the economic environment from the War of Attrition cannot be determined, the economic effects cannot be resolved (Schein, 2017).

Schein (2017) discusses two concepts in calculating the economic effects of war: (1) the most crucial factor in this calculation is the change in the economic environment from the war and (2) that internal or civil wars result in more damage to economic growth compared to losses to physical capital from wars since the economy stops during internal or civil wars. WWI is an example of the change in economic environment from the war (Schein, 2017). Although WWI destroyed agricultural capital in Israel, the change in the economic environment due to WWI generated economic growth after the war, and therefore WWI had a positive influence on the economic growth in Israel (Schein, 2017). The second concept is that internal or civil wars, exemplified by the two intifadas and the ‘Arab Revolt’, in which losses resulted from the economy not functioning for an extended period, caused more harm to economic growth than losses to physical capital from wars (Schein, 2017).

The concepts regarding the long-and short-term economic effects of war can be applied in the study conducted by Ellenberg et al. (2017) regarding major sources of costs of war such as hospital expenditures, mental health services to alleviate acute stress reactions, and ambulatory follow-up. The study was an 18-month follow-up of the Israeli civilian population after the 2014 war in Gaza during which time the researchers analyzed the medical costs associated with rocket attacks and examined the demographics of victims who filed claims for disability. The majority of the costs during the first year were related to hospitalization and assistance for stress relief (Ellenberg et al., 2017). Ambulatory and rehabilitation costs increased during the second year (Ellenberg et al., 2017). Such financial effects on the economic environment did not occur only in the first year but continued to grow during the long-term.

Afghanistan

From the military coup of the communist People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan in 1978 and the Soviet invasion in 1979, Afghans have experienced thirty years of violence, civil war, repression, and ethnic cleansing (Callen, Isaqzadeh, Long, & Sprenger, 2014). Internal conflict continues to negatively affect Afghanistan’s economic development which has decreased important private investment (Huelin, 2017). Diverse religious and ethnic factors exist in Afghanistan with thirteen ethnic tribes holding different beliefs competing for economic control (Dixon, Kerr, & Mangahas, 2014).

Affecting the economic situation in Afghanistan is feudalism as it is in conflict with Afghan economic progress (Dixon, Kerr, & Mangahas, 2014). Afghanistan serves as the source of

87% of the world's illegal opium and heroin since denouncing the Taliban in 2001 (Dixon et al., 2014). With approximately 80% of the Afghan population involved in agriculture, Afghanistan is considered a primarily agrarian economy (Dixon et al., 2014). Afghanistan has few markets, with opium being the largest (Dixon et al., 2014).

In Afghanistan, a war-torn country that has natural resources that could assist Afghanistan in becoming less aid-dependent, investors and communities are dealing with conflict-insensitive policies from government and investors (del Castillo, 2014). Foreign direct investment (FDI) in minerals and agricultural plantations, and government policies to support these investments, have caused conflicts with the displaced communities (del Castillo, 2014).

It is estimated by the Costs of War project at the Watson Institute for International Studies that U.S. spending from 2001 to 2011 through invasions of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan totaled \$3.2 to \$4 trillion which was three times the official estimate (Masco, 2013). These costs included the actual wars, medical costs for veterans, the formal defense budget, State Department aid projects, and Homeland Security (Masco, 2013). The authors document that close to 10,000 U.S. military personnel and contractors have been killed and 675,000 disability claims submitted to Veteran Affairs by September 2011 (Masco, 2013). Civilian casualties in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are estimated at least at 137,000, with over 3.2 million refugees from Iraq who are now displaced throughout the region (Masco, 2013). The Cost of Wars project also studied many other costs including the environmental costs and opportunity costs (Masco, 2013).

Discussion and Conclusion

Ethno-religious conflict appears to affect countries, individuals, and groups in direct and indirect economic ways. Those costs can be traced to direct costs, as seen in articles reviewed in this study, as well as indirectly, as exemplified by a study that focused in the three southern provinces of Thailand – Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat (Ford, Jampaklay, & Chamrathirong, 2018). In this study that included 2,053 Muslim young adults aged 18-24 years of age, the participants reported low levels of psychiatric symptoms although a small percentage reported a “large high enough number to be of concern” (Ford et al., 2018, p. 1). More psychiatric symptoms and lower levels of happiness were found in the participants who desired to migrate for employment to another area (Ford et al., 2018). Many participants described concerns about the violence in their everyday lives and reported many obstacles in pursuing education, including drug use, the economic cost of the education, and the threat of violence (Ford, et al., 2018). In particular, male participants expressed concerns regarding suspicion of their involvement in the violence and drug use (Ford et al., 2018). The plan to migrate or to settle in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat was related to the restricted employment and the threat of violence (Ford et al., 2018). It was found that although most of the young people move forward with their lives and many demonstrate habituation to the violence, the economic depression resulting from the violence and the threat of violence frequently impacted their daily living (Ford et al., 2018). The economic indirect costs could not as easily be calculated in the literature.

Many other areas of the economic effects of ethno-religious conflict require further research, including research that focused on calculating correlations regarding ethno-religious conflicts and the effects on the economy, additional and specific countries and regions, and the length of conflict and its effect economically. As Collier (1999) related, “Peace also reverses the compositional changes caused by prolonged civil war. An implication is that after the end of long

wars the war-vulnerable activities experience very rapid growth: the generalised peace dividend is augmented by compositional change” (p. 182). For peacebuilding efforts, continued research in this area is of great importance.

Recommendations for Further Research: Interdisciplinary Approaches in Peacebuilding

Additionally, if further research is called for in peacebuilding efforts as discussed previously regarding ethno-religious conflict, what methodology, processes, and theoretical approaches assist in that research? The importance of interdisciplinary collaboration cannot be neglected in peacebuilding as various disciplines including, but not limited to, social work, sociology, economics, international relations, religious studies, gender studies, history, anthropology, communication studies, and political science, come to the peacebuilding process with a variety of techniques and approaches, particularly theoretical approaches.

Demonstrating the ability to teach conflict resolution and peacebuilding in order to build racial, social, environmental, and economic justice is integral to the undergraduate and graduate social work education curriculum. Many disciplines are involved in teaching conflict resolution, and the collaboration of those disciplines can strengthen the peacebuilding process. Content analysis research was not located through a thorough search of peer-reviewed literature that addressed teaching conflict resolution from an inter-professional perspective, including multidisciplinary, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity perspectives, perspectives which contribute to the depth, breadth, and richness of conflict resolution and peacebuilding approaches.

Adopted by the social work profession, the ecosystems perspective developed from systems theory and provided the conceptual framework for the growth of the generalist approach in social work practice (Suppes & Wells, 2018). The generalist approach focuses on multiple levels, or systems, of intervention, including individual, family, group, organization, and community. In the area of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, state, national, and global are added as levels of intervention although these levels are often operationalized as organization and community levels. In *Diagram 1* below, state, national, and global are operationalized as separate levels (systems) of intervention. This conceptualization allows various disciplines with knowledge and skills in peacebuilding and conflict resolution to collaboratively intervene at specific levels, resulting in each discipline providing their strengths to the peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes. As outlined in *Diagram 1*, an interdisciplinary approach not only allows for, but encourages, all disciplines to participate in the peacebuilding and conflict resolution process particularly in working with a variety of disciplines as in ethno-religious conflict.

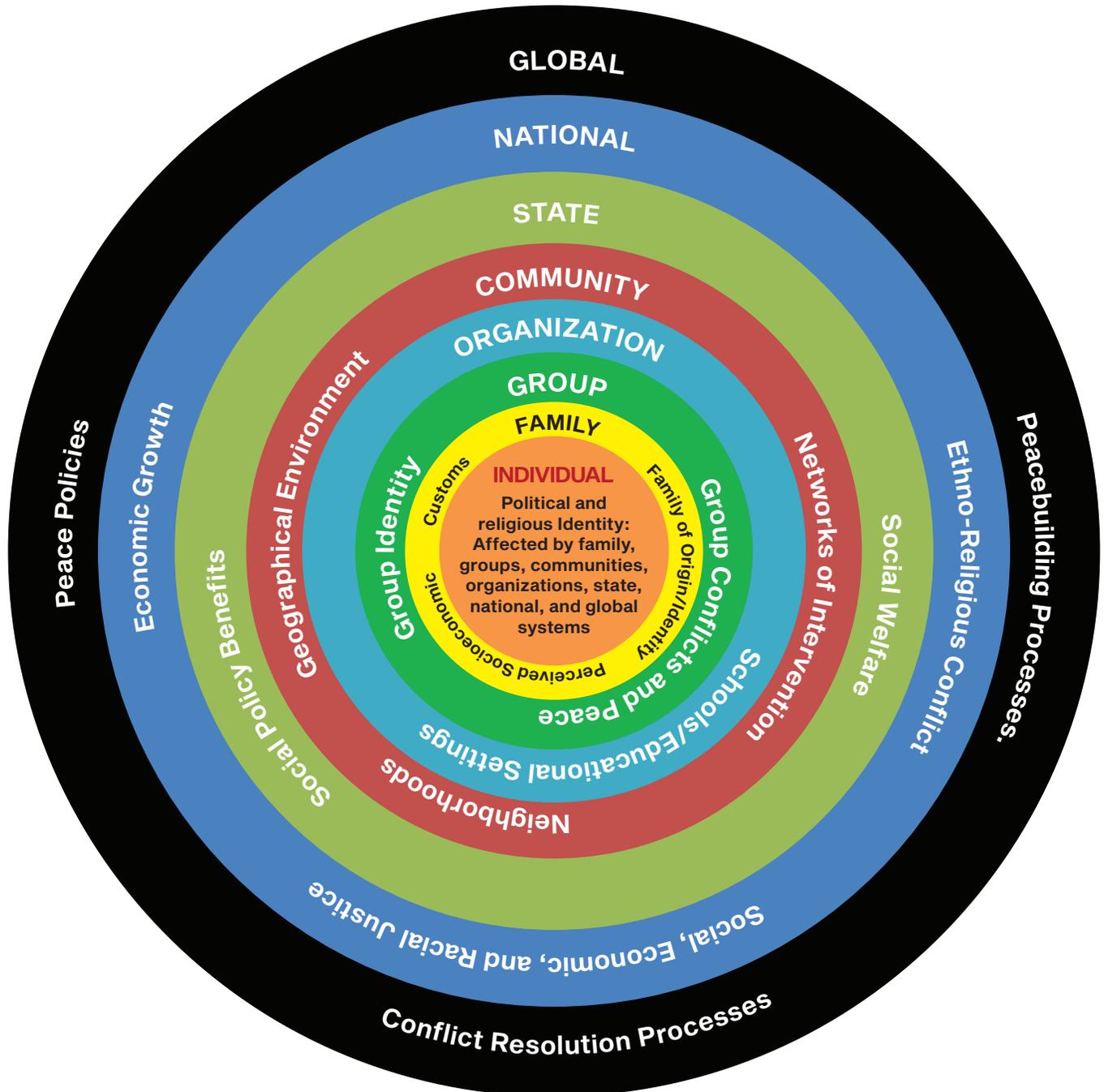


Diagram 1:

A further analysis of academic conflict resolution and peacebuilding course descriptions and teaching methods in social work and other disciplines is recommended as best practices for peacebuilding can be more deeply described and vetted for peacebuilding activities. Variables studied include contributions and foci of disciplines teaching conflict resolution courses and students' engagement in global conflict resolution. The social work discipline, for example, focuses on social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in conflict resolution as stated in the Council on Social Work Education 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards for Baccalaureate and Master's Programs (p. 9, Council on Social Work Education, 2022):

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- a) advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- b) engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

The content analysis, conducted through a random sample of conflict resolution courses through university and college programs in the United States and globally, found that although courses teach the concepts of conflict resolution, courses often are not given these titles in the social work discipline and in other disciplines. Research further found great variability in the number of disciplines involved in conflict resolution, the focus of those disciplines in conflict resolution, the location of conflict resolution courses and programs within the university or college, and the number and types of conflict resolution courses and concentrations. Research located very diverse, vigorous, and collaborative inter-professional approaches and practices to conflict resolution with opportunities for further research and discussion both in the United States and globally (Conrad, Reyes, & Stewart, 2022; Dyson, del Mar Fariña, Gurrola, & Cross-Denny, 2020; Friedman, 2019; Hatiboğlu, Özateş Gelmez, & Öngen, 2019; Onken, Franks, Lewis, & Han, 2021).

The social work profession as peacebuilding and conflict resolution practitioners would apply the ecosystems theory in their processes. For example, the various tactics rebels used which are not violent in nature (Ryckman, 2020; Cunningham, Dahl, & Frugé 2017) have been researched (Cunningham & Doyle, 2021). Peacebuilding practitioners as well as scholars have given attention

to rebel governance (Cunningham & Loyle, 2021). Cunningham and Loyle (2021) found that research regarding rebel groups has focused on the behaviors and activities demonstrated by rebels that are not in the category of making war, including building local institutions and providing social services (Mampilly, 2011; Arjona, 2016a; Arjona, Kasfir, & Mampilly, 2015). Adding to the knowledge gained from these studies, research has focused on examining trends that involve these governance behaviors in multiple nations (Cunningham & Loyle, 2021; Huang, 2016; Heger & Jung, 2017; Stewart, 2018). However, studies of rebel governance often examine governance issues mainly as a portion of conflict settlement processes or may only focus on violent tactics (Cunningham & Loyle, 2021). The application of the ecosystems approach would be useful in applying interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes.

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