Articles

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Athens Journal of Social Sciences
Editorial and Reviewers' Board

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The current issue is the second of the eighth volume of the *Athens Journal of Social Sciences* (AJSS), **published by the Social Sciences Division of ATINER.**

Gregory T. Papanikos
President
ATINER

Athens Institute for Education and Research

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15th Annual International Conference on Psychology
24-27 May 2021, Athens, Greece

The Psychology Unit of ATINER organizes its **15th Annual International Conference on Psychology, 25-28 May 2021, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of Social Sciences. The aim of the conference is to bring together scholars and students of psychology and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2021/FORM-PSY.doc).

Important Dates

- Abstract Submission: **12 April 2021**
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- Submission of Paper: **27 April 2021**

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- Greek Night Entertainment (This is the official dinner of the conference)
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- Social Dinner
- Mycenae Visit
- Exploration of the Aegean Islands
- Delphi Visit
- Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

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Conference Fees
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Athens Institute for Education and Research
A World Association of Academics and Researchers

15th Annual International Conference on Sociology
3-6 May 2021, Athens, Greece

The Sociology Unit of ATINER is organizing its **15th Annual International Conference on Sociology, 3-6 May 2021, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of Social Sciences. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers from all areas of Sociology, Social Work and other related fields. Theoretical and empirical research papers will be considered. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2021/FORM-SOC.doc).

Important Dates
- Abstract Submission: : **22 March 2021**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **5 April 2021**

Academic Member Responsible for the Conference
- **Dr. Domenico Maddaloni,** Head, Sociology Research Unit, ATINER & Associate Professor, University of Salerno, Italy.
- **Dr. Yorgo Pasadeos,** Director Social Sciences Division, ATINER & Professor Emeritus, University of Alabama USA.
- **Dr. Sharon Claire Bolton**, Head, Management Research Unit, ATINER & Professor, The Management School, University of Stirling, Scotland.

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Personal, Social, Environmental: Future Orientation and Attitudes Mediate the Associations between Locus of Control and Pro-environmental Behavior

By Yocheved Yorkovsky[*] & Leehu Zysberg[†]

This study tested a model in which pro-environmental attitudes mediate the association between personality traits (locus of control and future orientation) and pro-environmental behavior. Two hundred and thirty participants completed measures of the above concepts and provided information about demographic variables known to be associated with pro-environmental behavior. Path analysis supported a double mediation model in which future orientation and pro-environmental attitudes (in this order) mediate the association between locus of control and behavior. Of the demographic variables, only age was directly associated with behavior. The results are discussed in light of the theory and previous findings.

Keywords: *future orientation, locus of control, mediation model, personality, pro-environmental behavior.*

Introduction

Fears for the future of our planet rise with accumulating evidence of environmental and ecological hazards (e.g., Masson-Delmotte, Intergovern-mental Panel on Climate Change et al. 2018). Heated debates develop around the importance and validity of the environmental plea for action (Nunez 2019). Against this backdrop, it becomes more and more important to examine factors that differentiate individuals in how they perceive, appraise, and act upon the issue of caring for our environment. In an era when facts and figures are more available than ever but more controversial and difficult to process, it is key that we understand underlying resources, predispositions, and individual-level variables that may account for how individuals (and groups) relate to these data and translate them (if at all) into action (or lack of it).

One of the most prominent theoretical frameworks that account for factors associated with behavior and behavior modification is the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA; Madden et al. 1992). This theory provides an insight into individual level processes, pertaining to personality pre-dispositions, attitudes and cognitive perceptions, and how they shape behavior. This classic framework offers a basic understanding of how attitudes; representing individuals' emotional, cognitive and behavioral reactions to an object, behavioral beliefs; a concept representing individuals' motives for behavior, and peoples' evaluation of the outcomes of their intentions, elicit behavior. We therefore use this model as our overarching

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theoretical umbrella associating individual level factors and pro-environmental behavior.

Existing research, stretching back to the 1970s, has addressed the question of which, and to what extent, personality traits, attitudes, perceptions and other individual level characteristics are associated with pro-environmental perceptions and actions (e.g., Arbuthnot 1977). While existing research identifies anecdotal factors associated with pro-environmental behavior (PEB), a theory supported comprehensive model that identifies factors and processes associated with PEB is still lacking. This study attempts a step in this direction by identifying individual factors associated with pro-environmental attitudes which in turn associate with PEB. We thus offer a process model of PEB.

Literature Review

Attempts to identify personality profiles associated with pro-environmental attitudes have shown inconsistent results (briefly reviewed later in this paper). More interesting perhaps is the search for individual-level elements and concepts that may account for the extent to which individuals commit to pro-environmental behavior. Of special interest is identifying those personal-level concepts that are not just given but that are also at least somewhat amenable to change, thus pointing out potential paths for future interventions and education programs. This study, thus, proposes and tests a multitiered model of personal factors and the routes by which they may be associated with pro-environmental behavior (PEB).

Existing studies of personality and PEB focus on specific personality traits such as extraversion, sincerity (Pettus and Giles 1987), higher self-esteem, emotional connection to nature, and prosocial predisposition (Markowitz Goldberg Ashton and Lee, 2012). Numerous models and individual traits have been studied, and most have shown sporadic and often inconsistent evidence of links with PEB patterns. What concept is most relevant in accounting for such behavior? Examining the essence of PEB may present a potential answer: this behavior often involves accepting certain levels of frustration or inconvenience for the sake of future benefit (Kaiser and Byrka 2011). Consideration of future consequences of behavior emerges as key to understanding such behaviors, since it affords individuals the choice between immediate satisfaction and acting to gain benefit in the far future (e.g., Deci and Ryan 2004, Strathman et al. 1994). Studies have identified the concept of future orientation (FO) as the individual predisposition to bring future outcomes into current considerations of one's actions (Seginer 2009). Although studies have already established associations between FO and a broad range of behaviors (e.g., saving money, avoiding risky behaviors), only recently has evidence been published linking FO with pro-environmental perceptions and attitudes; however, the evidence was somewhat inconclusive for actual behavior (Carmi 2013).

Another personality-related concept that holds promise in this direction is that of locus of control (LOC; see Ajzen 2002). This concept relates to the

tendency of individuals to attribute control to either themselves or external sources (luck, God, fate, etc.) and the extent to which they feel they can control and navigate events in their lives. The concept emerged about three decades ago as a pivotal factor in accounting for behavior-change interventions, and in facilitating goal-oriented behavior (e.g., Ajzen and Madden 1986).

Both LOC and FO emerge as promising personality-related concepts in the context of PEB patterns; yet, to better formulate the shift from internal, individual predispositions to actual behavior, we need to address another missing link: PEAs.

Attitude is a concept representing the individual's tendency to react emotionally and cognitively and to develop a certain behavioral default toward a given object or idea (Ajzen and Fishbein 2005). In many contexts, attitudes are considered a potential for behavior toward a certain target object, person, or concept. In other words, many believe that understanding attitudes is pivotal to understanding behavior and modifying attitudes, and may often result in behavior modification (Fazio 1986).

Based on the above ideas, and using the framework of TRA, we propose a chain of associations leading from personality characteristics to actual behavior in the field of environmental conservation (Figure 1): characteristics representing a sense of control over oneself and one's environment, alongside the tendency to postpone immediate gratification for the benefit of future outcomes, shape positive attitudes toward environmental issues, and thus lead to PEB. We therefore present and test a model in which LOC and FO are associated with PEBs via the mediation of PEAs. We do so while controlling for demographic and background factors associated in the literature with PEAs: gender, age, religion and religiosity, and education level (Markowitz et al. 2012).

Figure 1. *The Study Model*
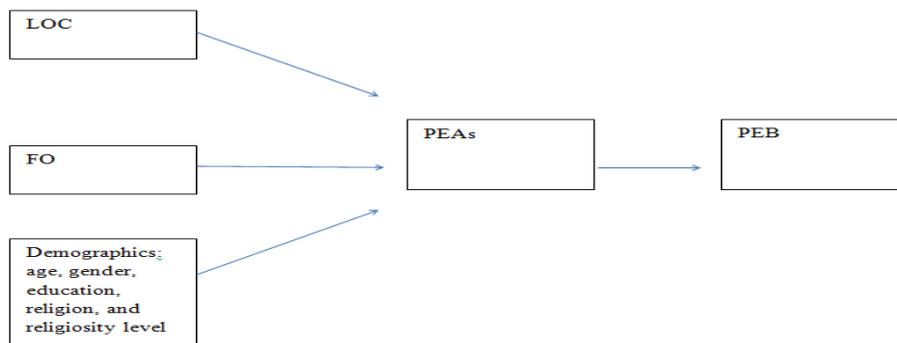
LOC = locus of control; FO = future orientation; PEAs = pro-environmental attitudes; PEB = pro-environmental behavior.

We hereby briefly review the classic literature on each of the model's components, from the final outcomes backwards to follow the proposed process:

Pro-environmental Behavior

PEB was defined as behavior that seeks to minimize the negative impact of one's actions on the natural world (e.g., minimizing resource and energy consumption, using nontoxic substances, reducing waste production; Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002). Significant environmental behaviors were defined as those undertaken to change the environment (Stern 2000). PEA can be viewed in the context of change: a change in one's own lifestyle, in one's school, in one's local community, or in global society in a manner that allows better conservation of resources and a smaller environmental footprint (Jensen 2002). Three factors in self-reported behaviors and behavioral intentions were revealed: consumer behavior (e.g., buying organic products, avoiding purchases from companies that harm the environment), environmental citizenship (e.g., voting, writing to government officials), and policy support, expressed as a willingness to sacrifice economically to protect the environment (e.g., by paying higher taxes or prices; Stern 2000). Courtenay-Hall and Rogers (2002) distinguished between direct environmental actions, such as recycling, driving less, and buying organic food, and indirect environmental actions, such as donating money, political activism, educational outreach, and environmental writing. This suggests that PEB varies not only in its nature but also in its magnitude: Finger (1994) noted three levels of PEA: standard environmental behavior (doing at least one of the following: recycling, using public transportation, etc., and trying to learn more about the environment), limited activism (doing the above plus at least one of the following: voting for candidates who are committed to the environment, trying to inform others, signing petitions in favor of environmental protection, and engaging locally to protect the environment), and protest behavior (doing the above plus at least one of the following: sometimes engaging at a local level, opposing projects that destroy the environment, and participating in public demonstrations for the environment).

Pro-environmental Attitudes

Environmental attitude (EA) is defined as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating the natural environment with some degree of favor or disfavor (Milfont 2007). The traditional model of EA structure has three components: cognitive, affective, and behavioral (Cottrell 2003). The relationship between these components is complex and not necessarily linear. Newer approaches conceptualize attitudes as evaluative tendencies that can both be inferred from and have an influence on beliefs, affect, and behavior. These theories claim that cognition, affect, and behavior are the bases from which the general evaluative summary of a psychological object is derived, instead of being constituents of attitudes (Albarracín et al. 2005, Fabrigar et al. 2005, Milfont and Duckitt 2010).

Many researchers believe that understanding attitudes is pivotal to understanding behavior, and that modifying attitudes may often result in behavior modification (Fazio 1986). EA is a crucial construct in environmental psychology,

a focus of most of that discipline's publications, and considered by most researchers to be a pivotal multidimensional construct in understanding environmental behavior and associated processes (Milfont and Duckitt 2010): it is widely believed that EA is an important predictor of PEB intention, which then accounts for actual PEB (Qian et al. 2019).

The main importance attributed to attitudes in general and to EAs in particular is their assumed associations with actual behavior. However, many individuals fail to translate their PEA into PEB. This inconsistency is widely called the "environmental attitude–behavior gap" (Redondo and Puelles 2017). Rajecki (1982) suggested that one of the reasons for this gap may be the method of measurement. He claimed that in order to find a high correlation between attitude and behavior, researchers must measure the attitude toward a particular behavior. More-narrowly targeted attitude measurements lead to higher correlations (Lehmann 1999). Ajzen and Fishbein (2005) claimed that attitudes do not determine behavior directly; rather, they influence behavioral intentions, which in turn shape behavior.

Future Orientation

FO is the individual predisposition to bring future outcomes into current considerations of one's actions (Seginer 2009). It can be defined in a social-cultural context as the degree to which individuals (or societies) engage in future-oriented behavior such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck 1961). In personal psychological contexts, FO reflects the tendency of people to plan for and achieve future goals and to consider the long-term consequences of their behavior (Strathman et al. 1994, Zimbardo and Boyd 1999). It is a human trait that enables individuals to anticipate, make plans, organize future options, and choose an action that promises a significant but future reward, even if it involves paying a price now (Gjesme 1983)**.**

A few studies showed that future-oriented individuals tend to care about the environment and are more likely to act pro-environmentally (Levy et al. 2018). For example, future-oriented individuals engage more in water-conservation practices (Corral-Verdugo et al. 2006), prefer commuting by public transportation (Joireman et al. 2004), and decrease their greenhouse gas emissions through mitigation behaviors (Corral-Verdugo et al. 2017). However, the current evidence is far from conclusive: other findings showed that highly future-oriented students did not express stronger PEAs, and that their willingness to sacrifice for the sake of the environment was significantly lower. They adopted PEBs only if doing so was to their personal benefit (Carmi 2013)**.**

A meta-analysis study showed that the associations between time perspective (a concept often used for FO) and PEBs were higher than those for PEAs (Milfont et al. 2012). The findings indicate that FO or time perspective seems to play an important role in influencing individuals' attitudes and behaviors toward the environment. Thus, consideration of future consequences can be a significant predictor of PEBs and PEAs (Bruderer Enzler 2015).

Locus of Control

The concept emerged about three decades ago as a pivotal factor in accounting for behavior-change interventions, and in facilitating goal-oriented behavior (e.g., Ajzen and Madden 1986). In the environmental behavior context, internal LOC represents the belief of individuals that they can bring about environmental changes through their personal behavior and that their actions with respect to the environment are therefore worthwhile. They typically perceive themselves as having control over their future and believe that outcomes are related to their actions (Cleveland et al. 2005). On the other hand, individuals who attribute change to external factors (e.g., not to personal behavior—external LOC) feel that their actions are insignificant, and that change can only be brought about by others (Hungerford and Volk 1990, Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002, McCarty and Shrum 2001).

People with an internal LOC are more likely to exhibit PEAs and PEBs (Bamberg and Möser 2007, Hines et al. 1987). For example, internal LOC is related positively to values related to the natural environment (Pe'er et al. 2007), to the importance that individuals attach to recycling (McCarty and Shrum 2001), and to consumers' willingness to pay for environmentally friendly products (Trivedi et al. 2015).

The relationship between LOC and PEB is not yet clear, even though it seems that internal LOC is a predictor of PEB (Allen and Ferrand 1999, Bamberg and Möser 2007, Cleveland et al. 2005). The relationship is probably not direct, and other variables, such as sympathy, may mediate it (Allen and Ferrand 1999).

Demographics

Studies point out a few demographic variables that are associated with the tendency to care more about the environment and adopt more positive attitudes in this venue. Two variables seem to emerge from the literature: Studies have suggested women tend to show higher environmental concern than men (Zelezny et al. 2000), and that people with higher levels of education show more positive attitudes toward environmental values (Felonneu and Becker 2008). These were therefore included in our model.

Summary and Rationale

There is agreement in the behavioral literature in general and on PEB in particular that attitudes play a pivotal role in shaping such behaviors. What shapes the relevant attitudes in such settings and regarding such subjects continues to be debated. We chose to focus on three types of predictors associated with PEAs: demographics—often mentioned in the literature as antecedents of PEA, especially gender and education level. We added religiosity and religion as potential demographic determinants of such attitudes, as these may be associated with individuals' perceptions of where the responsibility lies and who controls the fate of our natural resources. FO is a relatively recent addition to the concepts that are the focus of attention in environmental research. It may be of added value in our

attempts to understand the dynamics behind attitude formation and change in the environmental context because it reflects the propensity of individuals to consider future events and the outcomes of their activities—an issue at the heart of the PEB conflict: am I willing to sacrifice my comfort now for the benefit of future generations? Finally, the veteran concept of LOC reflects the variance in the extent to which individuals feel that they can exert some control over their environment and their own world. Logic suggests that internal LOC is associated with more positive attitudes toward the environment and potential PEB.

We therefore posit that PEAs mediate the associations between demographics, FO, and LOC and PEB. Figure 1 summarizes the proposed model guiding this study.

Method

Sample and Settings

Two hundred thirty participants agreed to take "a survey of perceptions and attitudes about the world around us." They were recruited through various online social forums in Israel. Of the participants, 79% were women and 21% were men. Their mean age was 34.91 years ($SD = 10.97$). The majority were Jews (89%), followed by Muslims (3.86%) and Christians (2.29%). The remaining 4.85% either identified as nondenominational or refused to answer. The greatest share of the sample had a bachelor's degree or equivalent (39%), followed by a masters' degree (29%), and about 30% who had a secondary school education. Two percent refused to report their education. While closely reflecting the ethnic makeup of Israeli society the sample was showed marked gender (more women than men) and education (more individuals with higher education than the general population) biases.

As noted in the literature review – these biases are typically associated with positive attitudes toward the environment – and as such would be expected to restrict the range of variable distribution in our sample. This means that chances are that any effect found in our sample may actually be an under-representation of the same effect in the population.

Measures

We used online self-report questionnaires; all are validated measures of the variables in our model.

Pro-environmental Behavior
Reported PEB was documented using 20 items about environment-related activities, with responses on a 5-point, Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*almost always*). The 20 items were constructed from six categories: resource-conserving actions with personal benefit (e.g.: "I recycle used bottles"), environmentally responsible consumerism (e.g.: "I purchase environmentally friendly products where poissible"), nature-related leisure activities (e.g.: "I take

hikes in nature often"), recycling (e.g.: "I recycle used packaging materials"), citizenship ("I pick up discarded bottles or wrappings I find on the street and throw them in the garbage bin"), and environmental activism (e.g.: "I am an active member of a 'green organization'") (Yavetz et al. 2011). The original authors reported an internal reliability of .80.

Pro-environmental Attitudes

PEAs were measured using a questionnaire developed by Yavetz et al. (2011), with an overall reliability coefficient of .86. Responses to the 24-item Likert-type scale questionnaire range from 1 (*highly agree*) to 5 (*highly opposed*). It includes five categories: the importance of the natural environment (e.g.: "It is man's right to take advantage of natural resources available to them" – reverse item), resource management policy (e.g.: "The government must encourage the application of alternative clean energy sources"), legislation and enforcement as a resource management tool (e.g.:"Factories that damage the environment must be heavily fined"), a sense of ability to influence environmental issues (e.g.: "even if I conserve resources and use recyclable products it is nothing in comparison to what's happening in the world" – reversed item), and the importance of environmental education (e.g.: "every college studnt should be required to take a course on environmental issues").

Future Orientation

FO was assessed using the Future Motivation subscale (Beal 2011), a 19-item questionnaire yielding a single total score that offers a brief and reliable measure of the concept. The measure showed good reliability coefficients ranging from .75 to .80.

Locus of Control

LOC was assessed using the Locus of Control instrument, a simplified version of the Rotter questionnaire presented by Pettijohn (2004). The 20-item questionnaire contains statements with which respondents can either agree or disagree. The sum of the scored choices yields a single score representing internal LOC. The measure was chosen for its user-friendly structure compared with Rotter's original measure. The shorter scale showed high correlation with Rotter's original measure and acceptable reliability indices (Pettijoh et al. 2005). In our study it showed adequate reliability (.66).

Demographics

Participants were asked to report their age, gender, level of education, religious affiliation (a correlate of ethnicity in Israel), and religiosity level.

Procedure

After approval of the study by the authors' IRB, a call for participation was issued in online social media forums, with a link to the questionnaires that also included a brief informed-consent form. Data were gathered in a way that

did not require individuals to expose their identity and thus were anonymized throughout the process.

Data Analysis

Preliminary descriptive statistics were calculated using IBM SPSS 24.0. The model-testing path analysis was conducted using ISM AMOS 19.0, which includes a test for direct and indirect effects.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Preliminary Analyses

Before testing the proposed model, we examined the descriptive statistics and preliminary associations between the main variables in the model. Table 1 summarizes these analyses.

The results suggest reasonable-to-good reliability coefficients for the questionnaire-based scores. The distribution showed no ceiling or floor effect, and standard deviations were noted. The preliminary examination of the associations between the study variables did not necessarily support the proposed model: attitudes and behavior showed a positive correlation, and religiosity was negatively associated with environmental attitudes and behavior. LOC and FO also correlated with each other, as expected, but the expected correlations between FO, LOC, and environmental attitudes and behavior did not emerge in this preliminary analysis.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations among the Study Variable (N = 230)*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender	—						
2. Age	.11	—					
3. Religiosity	.08	−.09	—				
4. LOC	.04	.08	−.05	—			
5. FO	−.05	−.03	.00	.30**	—		
6. PEB^	.03	.32**	−.23**	.05	−.09	—	
7. PEAs^	.08	.29**	−.21**	−.04	−.10	.52*	—
Mean	F = 79%	34.91	1.49	14.96	3.67	2.84	1.66
SD	M = 21%	10.97	.75	2.18	.49	.89	.61
Reliability Cronbach's alpha	—	—	—	.66	.74	.72	.84

Note. ^ Scales are reversed (lower grades indicate higher endorsement of attitudes or behavior). LOC = locus of control; FO = future orientation; PEB = pro-environmental behavior; PEAs = pro-environmental attitudes.
*p < .05; **p < .01.

Model Testing

Path analysis was used to examine the model, and to test for the direct and indirect effects it suggested. This method allowed us to test a full, complex model without the danger of capitalization on chance (Wootton 1994). The analysis results are summarized in Figure 2 and Table 2. Whereas the original model was not supported by the data at the required level, a slightly modified model did show excellent fit with the data and is presented in the figure.

Figure 2. *The Empirical Model*
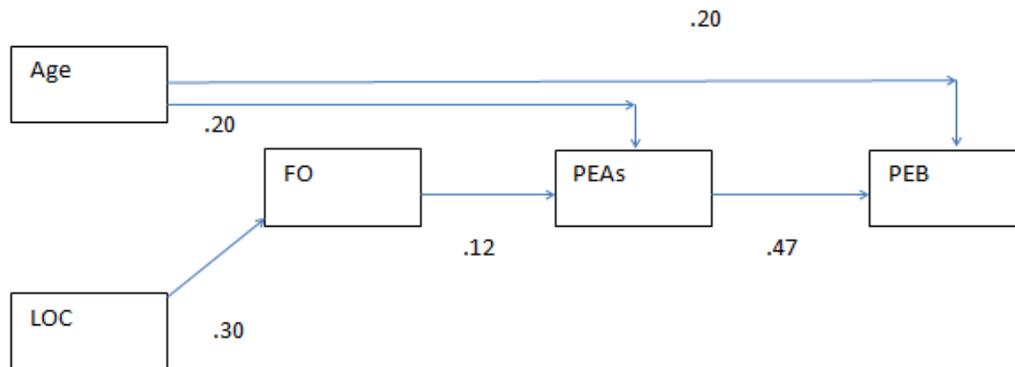
All marked path coefficients are significant at $p < .04$ or better. Nonsignificant paths and variables, as well as error terms, were omitted from the figure for ease of presentation
LOC = locus of control; FO = future orientation; PEAs = pro-environmental attitudes; PEB = pro-environmental behavior. Goodness-of-fit indices: Chi-square = 1.88 (df = 4) $p > .75$; CFI = .99; NFI = .98; RMSEA = .01.

Table 2. *Summary of Indirect Effects*

Variable	LOC	FO	Age	PEA
FO	.00	.00	.00	.00
PEA	.03	.00	.00	.00
PEB	.02	.47	.12	.00

Note. LOC = locus of control; FO = future orientation; PEB = pro-environmental behavior; PEAs = pro-environmental attitudes.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

The empirical model offers a surprise. Beyond revealing indirect associations between LOC, FO, and the outcome variables (which were not demonstrated through simple correlations), it provided some interesting insights into the nature of the associations found. The most surprising result is that LOC and FO were found to work at different levels, with LOC preceding the effect of FO in the chain of indirect effects. Second, most of the demographic variables, including religiosity (which showed some interesting association patterns at the simple-correlations stage), did not enter the empirical model, with the exception of age—which was positively associated with both PEA and PEB. Overall, the model

supported the idea that both personality-driven variables and attitudes mediate the association between individual predispositions and PEB.

The potential implications of this model for theory, future research, and potential interventions are discussed next.

Conclusion

Understanding the antecedents of PEB grows increasingly important in both the educational and the general public contexts. Although many agree that environmental issues pose a pressing threat and challenge to the world's population (Volcovici 2019), relatively few express commitment to PEAs, and even fewer adopt a pro-environmental way or life—or, in the terms discussed here, show high levels of PEB. What may account for this gap? In this study we aimed to learn more about the implications of personal characteristics for PEAs and PEB and to reveal those that may play a significant role in the relationship between the two concepts. The model we presented and tested here suggests that certain demographics and personality aspects may play a role in the adopting of PEAs—and, as a result, in PEB. From the existing literature on PEAs we identified demographics such as age, gender, education level, and even religiosity, and from the literature on personality we identified both FO and LOC as potential factors associated with PEA. To our best knowledge, unlike in the present study, previous research did not examine LOC and FO simultaneously. Our empirical model focused on a narrower scope of concepts and variables: whereas for the demographic variables, only age was positively associated with both PEA and PEB, for the personality factors we found a serial mediation effect, which is slightly different from what we expected: FO and PEAs both serially mediated the association between LOC and PEB. This may mean that LOC allows for higher levels of FO, and that this in turn leads to the formation of more positive environmental attitudes. Those attitudes are eventually associated with PEB.

Although these results were not predicted by the original model, they make sense and fit the existing literature on LOC and FO (see, e.g., Ahlin and Antunes 2015, Stratham et al. 1994). However, this is the first time, to the best of our knowledge, that they have been applied in such a manner in the context of accounting for PEAs and PEBs.

The role of personality traits and patterns in environmental behavior has been explored for a few decades (e.g. Arbuthnot 1977); however, the findings accumulated thus far were mainly anecdotal and did not necessarily form a coherent model of how personality may be associated with PEB. Thus, for example, Harland et al. (2007) found that both environmental and personality-related cues may trigger PEB, but they did not offer a comprehensive model. Additional research looked for typical personality profiles that are associated with PEB (Markowitz et al. 2012). A relatively recent line of research has attempted to conceptualize the path leading from personality predispositions to PEB. Such studies have suggested that values and attitudes may play a

mediating role in the association between personality-level variables and PEB (Bamberg and Möser 2007, Hirsh 2010, Vredin Johansson Heldt and Johaet al. 2006). Our study, then, joins this line of investigation, proposing a model in which personality traits at different levels (LOC and FO) work hierarchically to shape attitudinal factors that may in turn shape behavior.

From the demographic characteristics studied, only age was associated positively with both PEAs and PEB. Previous studies were inconclusive about this relationship. Some studies indicated that younger people are more likely to demonstrate concern for the environment (Fransson and Gärling 1999, Van Liere and Dunlap 1980) and PEB (Johnson et al. 2004, Newman and Fernandes 2016); others found no relationship and yet others (Shen and Saijo 2008) reported a negative relationship (i.e., older persons are more engaged in PEB).

Understanding the personal variables that may account for individuals' PEB is vital to enabling optimal educational intervention and education programs in the future, to improve the PEB of the world population. From our findings it emerges that designing a structured environmental educational program that will induce and empower students' LOC and FO regarding the environment may help increase their PEAs and PEB.

Study Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

When considering the study results, the reader may do well to consider the study limitations. First, participants were sampled from a specific country (Israel) whose environmental legislation and culture may differ from those of other samples (however, studies conducted with Israeli samples do not show significant deviations from well-recorded results patterns; for examples, see Carmi 2013, Laor et al. 2018). The sample also showed gender and education biases, but as those typically serve to restrict the range of variance in our measures (see literature review and sample section for more details), we may actually expect the findings in our sample to be even more powerful in the target population. Second, the use of self-report measures, however prevalent and acceptable, might introduce biases recorded in the literature (Donaldson and Grant-Vallone 2002). Finally, the effects found in the study, although statistically significant and potentially theoretically important, are still of mild magnitude and should be considered with care.

Future studies may wish to use actual behavior outcomes as a criterion; use broader, preferably international samples to test the model explored here; and explore whether it indeed applies to diverse settings and target populations.

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Local Resilience Forums in England

By Peter Jones[*] & Daphne Comfort[†]

The concept of resilience, loosely defined as the ability to withstand or to bounce back from adversity and disruption, is attracting increasing attention within the social sciences. Within the policy arena, local and community based resilience strategies are playing an important part in responses to the challenge of unpredictable and disruptive events. This short exploratory paper looks to add to the literature on community resilience by exploring the work of the Local Resilience Forums in England. The Local Resilience Forums are multi-agency partnerships made up of a range of agencies including the police authority, local authorities, the fire and rescue services, the National Health Service and the Environment Agency, that serve communities defined by the boundaries of police areas. The paper outlines definitions of resilience and of community resilience, provides an exploratory review of the characteristics and workings of the Local Resilience Forums and offers some concluding reflections on the employment of the concept at the community level and by the LRF's.

Keywords: *Resilience, Local Resilience Forum, Police Authority, Measurement, Governance, England.*

Introduction

Within the social sciences there has been growing interest in the concept of resilience. Andres and Round (2015), for example, identified 'the increasing engagement within the social sciences with notions of resilience' and suggested that the concept 'is becoming influential in state policy.' In exploring 'the governmentalisation of resilience', Welsh (2014) suggested that 'the most obvious adoption of a resilience approach is seen in ways of governing emergency, particularly its national security and emergency response plans where responsibility for preparedness, response and recovery lies in localities, reserving for central government an authoritative, coordinating and facilitating role.' That said, Welsh (2014) also argued that such 'resilience approaches operate on the normative assumption that communities can and should self-organise to deal with uncertainty, that uncertainty is a given, not something with a political dimension, and the role of government is limited to enabling, shaping and supporting, but specifically not to direct or fund those processes.' However, Kapucu and Sadiq (2016) suggested 'there is limited understanding on ways to promote community resilience at the local level.' With these thoughts in mind this, exploratory paper looks to add to the literature on community resilience by exploring the work of the Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) in England. The LRF's are multi-agency partnerships made up of a range of agencies including the police authority, local authorities, the fire and

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rescue services, the National Health Service and the Environment Agency, that serve communities defined by the boundaries of police areas in England. The paper outlines definitions of resilience and of community resilience, provides an exploratory review of the characteristics and workings of the Local Resilience Forums and offers some concluding reflections on the employment of the concept at the community level and by the LRF's.

Resilience and Community Resilience

Weichselgartner and Kelman (2015) simply defined the concept of resilience as 'the capacity to cope with change and uncertainty' but several origins and meanings are claimed for resilience. Sharifi and Yamagata (2014), for example. suggested that 'despite the abundance of research on resilience there is still no single, universally accepted definition for it.' Hassler and Kohler (2014) claimed that 'resilience, as a design principle, was an implicit part of construction knowledge before the nineteenth century' and Sharifi and Yamagata (2014) suggested that 'the concept of resilience has traditionally been used in physics and psychology.' Davoudi et al. (2012) acknowledged that 'resilience was first used by physical scientists' and argued that in the 1960's 'resilience entered the field of ecology.' MacKinnon and Derickson (2013) suggested that 'the concept of resilience has migrated from the natural and physical sciences to the social sciences and public policy, as the identification of global threats such as economic crises, climate change and international terrorism, has focused attention on the responsive capacities of places and social systems.' That said, Olsson et al. (2015) have argued that resilience 'is problematic in social science and for understanding society.'

In simple terms, community resilience might typically be defined as 'a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from, adverse situations' (Rand 2018). However, Patel et al. (2017) argued that 'community resilience remains an amorphous concept that is understood and applied differently by different research groups.' Patel et al. (2017) also suggested that 'consensus as to what community resilience is, how it should be defined and what its core characteristics are does not appear to have been reached, with mixed definitions appearing in the scientific literature, policies and practice.' Nevertheless, Wahl (2017) argued 'the community resilience building meme has reached the mainstream agenda.'

Within the UK, two definitions provide an illustration of how local community resilience has been operationalised. The UK's Cabinet Office (2011), for example, defined community resilience as 'communities and individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that complements the response of the emergency services.' For the Dorset Local Resilience Forum (2019) community resilience 'is about empowering individuals, businesses and community groups to: take collective action to both increase their own resilience and that of others; come together to identify and support vulnerable

individuals'; and 'take responsibility for the promotion of individual and business resilience.'

Local Resilience Forums in England

The formation of LRFs is a requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and some 38 LRF's have been established and serve communities geographically defined by the boundaries of Police Areas within England. The LRF's are multiagency partnerships embracing both Category 1 Responders, that are at the core of most emergencies, and Category 2 Responders, that cooperate and share, information with Category 1 Responders, to inform multi-agency planning frameworks.

The major Category 1 Responders are the police authority, the fire and rescue service, the ambulance service, local authorities, National Health Service Trusts, the Environment Agency, and in coastal areas, the maritime authorities. Category 2 providers include the Health and Safety Executive, public utilities companies, transport operators, Highways England and often a range of voluntary groups such as the Red Cross, the Samaritans and the Council for Voluntary Services. The LRF is seen as a 'strategic group' which 'should attract a sufficiently senior level of representation' with the 'local authority representative' being the 'chief executive or deputy chief executive' and 'the police representative' being 'the area chief constable or deputy chief constable' (Cabinet Office 2013).

The 'purpose of the LRF process is to ensure effective delivery of those duties under the Act (i.e. the Civil Contingencies Act 2004) that need to be developed in a multi-agency environment and individually as a Category 1 Responder' (Cabinet Office 2013). More specifically, the Cabinet Office (2013) reported that 'the LRF process should deliver

- The compilation of an agreed risk profile for the area, through a Community Risk Register
- A systematic, planned and co-ordinated approach to encourage Category 1 Responders, to address all aspects of policy in relation to: risk; planning for emergencies; planning for business continuity management; publishing information about risk assessments and plans; arrangements to warn and inform the public; and other aspects of civil protection duty including the promotion of business continuity management by local authorities
- Support for the preparation by some or all of its members of multi-agency plans and other documents, including protocols and agreements and the coordination of multi-agency exercises and other training events.'

The Cabinet Office (2013) emphasised that *'in order to meet these objectives the LRF needs to operate effectively as a collective body, managing a programme of work and exercising leadership to establish, test and review necessary plans and strategies.'*

Method of Enquiry

While GOV. UK (2019) has provided a reference document on 'The Role of Local Resilience Forums', which is designed to serve as a 'single reference document that will support Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) by providing a checklist of issues and outcomes that will assist in self assessment, peer review and improvement', the individual LRFs in England provide limited public information on their programmes of work. More specifically, the LRFs are not public bodies and therefore the Freedom of Information Act does not apply to information that they hold. That said, on the one hand the majority of the LRFs provide a short thumbnail sketch of their role and function and provide answers to basic question such as 'What to do in an emergency' and 'How to prepare for an emergency', as well as outline information on the 'Community Risk Register' and 'Weather Advice.' On the other hand, although the Cabinet Office (2013) recommended that 'the LRF will need to engage in deliberate evaluation through meaningful review of functions, procedures and performance in meeting its responsibilities or delivering against its own programme of work and performance outputs', few of the LRC's published any formal information on their constitution, on the economic, social and environmental characteristics of their jurisdiction or on the evaluation of their activities and progress.

With this in mind, the authors harnessed the limited publicly available information to illustrate the characteristics and workings of the LRC's with cameo case studies of the constitution of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRC (2017), the characteristics of the area under the jurisdiction of the Lancashire LRC (2019), the recent annual reports of the County Durham and Darlington LRC (2017) and the South Yorkshire LRC (2018) and a series of interviews conducted across 17 LRFs by Jacobs (2017) on climate change. The authors are aware of the limitations of their approach, not least that it focuses on a small number of LRCs and that it relies exclusively on secondary information. However, they believe that in a field where publicly available information is very limited, their approach offers some insights into the issues the LRCs face, the roles and responsibilities they have adopted and the activities they are undertaking in looking to discharge these roles and responsibilities, that are appropriate for an exploratory study.

Characteristics and Workings of LRCs

The constitution of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRC's includes information on a number of issues including the enabling legislation; and information on; the membership, structure, strategic goals and operational groups within the LRC; management processes; security vetting policy; information sharing agreement; and the information publication scheme. The strategic goal is 'to establish and maintain effective multi-agency arrangements to respond to major incidents and emergencies, to minimise the impact of those incidents on the public, property and environment of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and to satisfy fully the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act' (Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRC 2017). Further, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRC

(2017) emphasised that 'the LRF represents the strategic level of decision making and is responsible for directing and overseeing the emergency planning policies. Its overall purpose is to ensure there is an appropriate level of preparedness to enable an effective multi-agency response to major incidents which may have a significant impact on the communities of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.'

In looking to address management processes, the constitution of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRF (2017) stressed that its organisational resources must be used in an effective and an efficient manner and that it was thus necessary to prioritise the order in which tasks are addressed and this prioritisation was underpinned by a comprehensive risk assessment process. Here, a Risk Advisory Group, within the LRF, is responsible for the production of the Community Risk Register, which identifies and quantifies hazards, and specifies the arrangements to mitigate and control risks. The Risk Advisory Group also has responsibility for advising the LRF on how to manage risks and, where necessary, for the creation of new plans and for procedures for maintaining and testing existing plans. At the same time, the Resilience Working Group occupies a central position in the LRF management structure in that it formulates the draft business plan, which includes objectives for a number of sub-groups within the LRC, for approval by the LRF, monitors progress against these objectives and reports to the LRF.

Security and the conditions surrounding the sharing of information are major issues for the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRF. At a general level, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRF (2017) 'undertakes to adopt the principles of the government security classifications for the marking, transmission, storage, and deletion of documentation.' These principles (GOV. UK 2018) cover the 'secure, timely and efficient sharing of information' and look to ensure that 'everyone who works with government (including staff, contractors and service providers) has a duty of confidentiality and a responsibility to safeguard any Her Majesty's Government information or data that they access, irrespective of whether it is marked or not.' More specifically the constitution covers personal security controls, the purpose and basis of information sharing and the exchange of information, data quality, retention and disposal and access and security.

A brief pen picture offers an insight into how one LRF, the Lancashire Resilience Forum, sees the characteristics of the area under its jurisdiction. The County of Lancashire covers some 3,000 square kilometres, including 123 kilometres of coastline, and has a population of 1.45 million people, and a legacy of industrial heritage. While Lancashire has several urban settlements including Preston, Lancaster, Blackburn, Burnley, Blackpool and Skelmersdale, the county also has sparsely populated coastal, estuarine, agricultural and moorland areas. The major west coast railway and motorway routes run through the entire length of the county and there are ports at Heysham and Fleetwood. The county also houses two nuclear facilities and some of the UK's initial shale fracking sites, which have generated several minor earthquakes, and there are wind power generation facilities and offshore oil fields.

Lancashire LRF (2019) which describes itself as 'a group of organisations that work together to prepare and respond to emergencies in Lancashire' has its

administrative base at Lancashire Constabulary's Headquarters in Preston. When an incident occurs, all members of the LRF work together to achieve common objectives, namely: to 'prevent the situation from getting worse; save lives; relieve suffering; protect property; recover to normality as soon as possible'; and 'facilitate criminal investigation and judicial processes as necessary.' Lancashire LRF report identifying the following top risks: flu-type pandemics, flooding, terrorist attacks, industrial incidents, loss of essential services, heatwave and storms and gales. In the light of these risks, a variety of impacts and consequences have been identified including the disruption of transport networks, the displacement of people from home or work who may require safe places to shelter, pollution and contamination, large numbers of deaths and/or injuries, disruption to public services and the loss of electricity, gas and water supplies and telephone services.

The LRF maintains a dedicated pandemic plan and in the event of a pandemic responders work together to assess the impact on Lancashire and to support the health authorities and social care system to promote good infection control measures. In a similar vein, the LRF has a group which develops and oversees dedicated flood plans. In the event of a flooding it will alert people to the risk of flooding; assist with managing the evacuation or rescue of people who are at risk; clear drains and roads: put in place safe routes: and after a flood the LRF leads the clear up and recovery operation. The probability of terrorist incidents within Lancashire is perceived to be small, but terrorism is nonetheless a very real threat and while the police force leads all planning in relation to counter terrorism, the LRF works with them to help reduce the risk by supporting the National Counter Terrorism Strategy. The LRF has a dedicated group which looks at hazardous material risks and there is a dedicated plan for each site that is governed by health and safety regulations. Agencies work closely with site operators to test and practice these plans regularly.

In turning to evaluation and reporting, the 2016-2017 Annual Report published by the County Durham and Darlington LRF (2017), looked to provide 'a summary of achievements' and to highlight 'some of the forthcoming challenges.' More specifically, the LRF reported that 'progress against the Business Plan Priorities was excellent with 28 of the Key Deliverables achieved (i.e. 93%), one not achieved and one partially achieved.' The report provided details of the achievements of each of the LRF subgroups, which included the preparation of community resilience plans; developing plans for managing cyber-attacks; looking to maximise the input of the voluntary sector to achieve more efficient responses and successful recovery; and ensuring that lessons learned in live incidents and training exercises are embedded within operational practice. The LRF also reported that it had been involved in cross-border work in the North East of England, which included work on resilient telecommunications, risk management, and business continuity.

The South Yorkshire LRF (2018) Annual Report 2017-2018 outlined the range of activities it had undertaken, with the focus being on ensuring that South Yorkshire was better prepared to respond to and recover from emergencies. More specifically the report provided details of the work of a number of groups within

the LRF. The Business Management Group, for example, supports the LRF's strategic objectives and during 2017-2018 led a self-assessment exercise, which led to the development of an action plan designed to enhance the planned response for future emergencies. Following a large-scale exercise to test the tactical response to a terrorism scenario at Meadowhall Regional Shopping Centre in early 2017, the Business Management Group undertook a strategic review exercise to test the LRF's collaborative strategic decision-making capabilities. The LRF's Human Aspects Group, which looks to ensure that appropriate humanitarian arrangements are in place to meet immediate, medium- and long-term needs in the event of an emergency, has collected information to enable it to consider its approach to modern day slavery and a major terrorist attack. This group also worked with the neighbouring Humberside LRF on the new East Coast Tidal Inundation Plan. During 2017-2018 the LRF's Business Continuity Group reported on the business continuity impact of power outages and on identifying and raising awareness of business continuity issues that might affect a range of organisations in South Yorkshire.

-More generally, a series of interviews with members drawn from 17 LRF's across England, conducted in 2017 by Jacobs, as part work for the UK Parliament's Committee for Climate Change: Adaptation Sub Committee, arguably provides some more critical insights into one aspect of the work of the LRF's. While the majority of the interviewees reported that their LRF had sufficient capability to respond to past weather events, many of them suggested there were limiting factors in their ability to respond and that 'they would struggle with larger or more prolonged events' (Jacobs 2017). More generally, some 41% of the interviewees 'expressed concern about the ability to sustain a prolonged response or recovery, primarily due to perceived reductions in staff numbers and other resources' (Jacobs 2017). While some 30% of interviewees 'expressed concerns that budget cuts experienced across the agencies have the potential to undermine the emergency response systems', some thought 'staff are now better at coordinating and responding to events and are able to make better use of the resources available' (Jacobs 2017). Some interviewees indicated that the utility companies did not prioritise engagement efforts with LRFs, and there was a general feeling of the 'need to develop stronger connections between LRFs and other stakeholders (both public and private) so that there is a meaningful exchange of information and engagement' (Jacobs 2017).

Discussion

Within England, the Local Resilience Forums play an important role in responding to a range of disruptive events, including floods, pandemics, terrorist attacks, industrial incidents and loss of essential services. However, the very limited information available in the public realm on the activities of individual LRC's or on their responses to either individual incidents, or types of incident, seriously hampers any attempt to provide a comprehensive exploratory review of

the general working of the LRCs. and the cameo case studies presented above simply provide some preliminary insights into the activities of the LRCs.

That said, the LRF's do monitor their performance closely and evaluate their responses to specific incidents, and procedures are subject to regular review but outcome of this review process remains confidential to the LRF. This lack of public reporting of the workings of the LRFs is perhaps appropriate, in that security is seen to be paramount. All individuals attending LRF or LRF groups meetings, during an emergency or an exercise, or in receipt of LRF documentation, are expected to have the appropriate level of security clearance for their role, as well as knowledge about the procedures for handling security marked documents. LRF's also have strict protocols governing the sharing of information amongst the responders.

Drawing on the concept of resilience in giving title to the LRF's raises four wider sets of issues, namely: definition; measurement; scale; and governance and political discourse, which merit reflection and discussion. Firstly, there are problems of definition in that, as outlined earlier, resilience has a range of meanings and has been used in a variety of contexts, and as such it can be seen to mean all things to all people and therefore to have little genuine meaning. Davoudi et al. (2012) argued that 'it is not quite clear what resilience means, beyond the simple assumption that it is good to be resilient', and posed the question 'is resilience in danger of becoming just another buzzword?' While Weichselgartner and Kelman (2015) acknowledged that 'the 'elasticity' of the term' and 'the 'flexibility' of the concept' help to explain its popularity, they argued that 'there is an inherent danger that the term becomes an empty signifier that can easily be filled with any meaning to justify any specific goal.' In many ways the LRF's employ the term resilience to describe their work in returning communities and physical infrastructures to their previous state following local emergencies. At same time, while terrorism is a constant threat, the major focus of LRF activity, to date, has been on the impact of natural events, such as floods or pandemics, more so than human events, such as cyberattacks. As such the LRF's collective definition of resilience, and more particularly of community resilience, is relatively narrow and might be seen to be more concerned with how resilience is organised and managed for, communities rather than by, those communities.

Secondly, measuring resilience is a thorny issue and Tanner et al. (2017) argued that 'where the interpretation and definition of resilience is ambiguous, then naturally measurement becomes contested and a major challenge' and that 'the choice of resilience indicators will depend, to some extent, on the system, subsystem or target group that is of interest.' Sharifi (2016) claimed that 'measuring community resilience is recognized as an essential step toward reducing disaster risk and being better prepared to withstand and adapt to a broad array of natural and human disasters.' More specifically in the case of natural disasters in the US, Cutter et al. (2008) argued 'the identification of standards and metrics for measuring disaster resilience is one of the challenges faced by local, state and federal agencies.'

However, the measurement process faces a number of conceptual and methodological challenges. Conceptually, different definitions of resilience do not

make measurement an easy task and given that resilience is generally seen as being time and place specific, then it is difficult to establish generic measures which facilitate comparisons over time and space. Methodologically, the collection of reliable and meaningful data, particularly in environments and communities, which have suffered shocks, crises and threats, may prove difficult and here organisations and researchers may resort to using available and/or surrogate data rather than looking to collect original data in the field. While the LRF's monitor their responses to disruptive events within communities, the issues of the measurement of the resilience of local communities to such events and the publication of measurement indicators has, to date, received no public attention but may provide a fruitful field of future research endeavour.

Thirdly, there are issues about scale. The disruptive and unpredictable events within communities occur at a range of spatial and temporal scales. The spatial scale refers to the extent of the area affected by a disruptive event while the temporal scale refers to the duration or time length of such an event. The LRF's seem ideally suited to disruptive events and emergencies that occur at a local level, for example, a river bursting its banks and flooding the surrounding residential area or a fire or explosion at a chemical factory which releases toxic fumes into the local atmosphere. Where such events have an impact at a more regional scale, a LRF will work closely with neighbouring LRFs to respond at an appropriate level. However, climate change, often seen to be responsible for a number of disruptive events, including flooding and heatwaves and potentially an increasing prevalence of water borne disease with attendant public health implications, is essentially a global process and here the LRF's can have little or no impact. At the same time, time scale is also important in that the duration of disruptive events may vary considerably and while the impact of a flood or an industrial incident may be temporary, the impact of climate change on the natural environment may be both long term and irreversible.

Finally, there are issues about governance and political discourse, not least in the light of Meerow and Newell's (2016), belief that the 'underlying politics of resilience have been ignored.' In looking to illustrate 'the penetration of resilience discourses and governance' within the UK, Welsh (2014), drew attention to the role of the LRF's in seeking to 'co-ordinate and embed resilience to natural or manmade disaster in all areas of the UK.' For Welsh (2014), 'resilience discourses make a break with the modernism of the risk society by introducing novelty, adaptability, unpredictability, transformation, vulnerability and systems into a governmental discourse that now makes the governance of uncertainty and unpredictability a hallmark of rule.' Further Welsh (2014) looked to 'highlight the potential depoliticising and post-political nature of the resilience discourse as it is mobilised in government structures' and argued that the 'resilience discourse can become defined by a set of consensual socio-scientific knowledges that reduce the political to the policing of change.'

More generally, some critics have argued that popular conceptions of resilience privilege the capitalist mode of production. Amsler (2019) for example, argued that mainstream thinking, learning and policy effectively help societies to 'become resilient within harmful environments that are conceived as inevitable'

rather than to 'generate possibilities for fundamentally other ways of organizing life.' This reinforces Amsler's (2009) earlier invitation 'to explore the complex processes through which competing visions of just futures are produced, resisted and realized.' More generally, Martin and Sunley (2014) argued that 'the concept of resilience is easily captured by neoliberal ideology, to prioritise the status quo, and the importance of self-reliance, flexibility and the role of self -correcting market adjustments.' Arguably more pointedly, MacKinnon and Derickson (2013) concluded 'resilience thinking has become implicated within the hegemonic modes of thought that support global capitalism.'

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Critical International Relations Theories and the Study of Arab Uprisings: A Critique

By Ahmed M. Abozaid[*]

This study articulates that most of the critical theorists are still strikingly neglecting the study of the Arab Uprising(s) adequately. After almost a decade of the eruption of the so-called Arab Uprisings, the study claims that the volume of scholarly engaging of dominate Western International Relations (IR) theories with such unprecedented events is still substantially unpretentious. Likewise, and most importantly, the study also indicates that most of these theories, including the critical theory of IR (both Frankfurt and Habermasian versions), have discussed, engaged, analysed, and interpreted the Arab Spring (a term usually perceived to be orientalist, troubling, totally inappropriate and passive phenomenon) indicate a strong and durable egoistic Western perspective that emphasis on the preservation of the status quo and ensure the interests of Western and neoliberal elites, and the robustness of counter-revolutionary regimes. On the other hand, the writings and scholarships that reflexively engaged and represent the authentic Arab views, interests, and prospects were clearly demonstrating a strong and durable scarce, if not entirely missing.

Keywords: *International Relations, Critical Theory, Postcolonial, Arab Uprising(s), Middle East, Revolutions.*

Introduction

This study tries to elucidate why the hard-core realist security considerations (interests, survival, and regime stability) prevailed over democratization, development, and emancipation attempts in the region, despite the fact that positivist theories of foreign policy are not taking resistance and social movements into account. Neorealism, for instance, ignores the effects of nonmaterial elements, i.e. norms, values, emancipation claims, political identities, the aspirations of the Arab peoples, socioeconomic changes, the failure of economic policies, and the political will to establish the rule of law and social media networks.

Alternatively, and in contrast with the general wisdom that dominates the field of Middle Eastern studies, by emphasising these elements, and others, the study argues that Critical Theory (CT) and its applications in the field of International Relations (IR) could provide a wider, more comprehensive and accurate explanation not only to the foreign policy of revolutionary and non-revolutionary countries but also of the construction and formulation of domestic policy and how it determines foreign policy of the Arab Uprisings, and vice-versa.

Now, and after almost a decade of the outbreak of the so-called Arab Uprisings, the study claims that the volume of scholarly engaging of dominant Western International Relations (IR) theories with such unprecedented events is

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still substantially unpretentious. Likewise, and most importantly, the study also indicates that most of these theories, including the critical theory of IR (both Frankfurt and Habermasian versions), have discussed, engaged, analysed, and interpreted the Arab Spring, a term usually perceived to be orientalist, troubling, totally inappropriate and passive phenomenon as Rami Khouri pointed out (Khouri 2011) indicate a strong and durable egoistic Western perspective that emphasis on the preservation of the status quo and ensure the interests of Western and neoliberal elites, and the robustness of counter-revolutionary regimes. On the other hand, the writings and scholarships that reflexively engaged and represent the authentic Arab views, interests, and prospects were clearly demonstrating a strong and durable scarce, if not entirely missing.

This paper substantially engages with the scholarly literature of the different IR theories that have been produced during the last ten days regarding the Arab Uprisings, with particular emphasis on the critical theory applications in the field of international relations (the Frankfurt School and the Habermasian project), in order to reveal and detect the fallacies, deficiencies, disconnection from reality (and even contestation) of these theories, and likewise pointed at what went wrong with the once was perceived as a promising alternative theoretical approach to the positivist and problem-solving theories. But first, it will outline the fundamental arguments and propositions of the main research agenda of the critical theory in the field of IR.

The Critical School of International Relations: An Overview

Critical Theory defined as the theoretical tendency that aiming at "further the self-understanding of groups committed to transforming society" (Steans et al., 2010: 106). Where it mainly originated in the early writings of Enlightenment philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Hegel and their theories on dialectics and consciousness, while the modern version of the school emerged in the late 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s in Frankfurt, Germany. The Frankfurt school was a reaction to the positivist theories seen to support the authoritarian European regimes of the first half of the twentieth century. The research agenda of the first generation of Frankfurt School theorists concentrated on a negative critique of the metaphysical, ideological, and social origins of authoritarianism. In addition, it relied on aesthetic and cultural critiques to understand the pervasive tendencies and/or influences of authoritarianism and conformism in capitalist societies (Adorno and Horkheimer 1972, Roach 2013: 172) in order to produce an emancipatory project in social science (and later in the field of International Relations) that seeks to prevent the re-emergence of such authoritarian social systems.

Essentially, the core elements of Critical Theory are, 1) scepticism of existing traditions and all absolute claims; 2) an interdisciplinary perspective; 3) a focus on emancipation arising from changing historical circumstances; 4) a concentration on how to respond to new challenges confronting humanity; 5) an exploration of the underlying assumptions and purposes of competing theories and existing forms

of practice; and 6) a refusal to identify freedom with any set of institutions or fixed system of thought (Bronner 2011: 1-2). Consequently, Critical Theory "involves understandings of the social world that attempt to stand outside prevailing structures, processes, ideologies and orthodoxies while recognizing that all conceptualizations within the ambit of sociality derive from particular social/ historical conditions" (Booth 2008: 78).

From an ontological perspective, most of the critical theorists indicate that the subjects of knowledge are not given (as the positivists believe) rather formulate and constituted prior to perception or analysis of varying (and divergent) ideals, forces, and interests. Likewise, epistemologically they also claim that the objects of knowledge are intimately linked to theoretical practice and associated with the construction of political reality. For instance, Robert Cox and others believe that the so-called scientism and objectivity tendencies in IR, and in humanities in general, has inhibited any reflection on the moral and normative aspects of international relations. Consequently, the primary task of the first generation of the CTIR was to expose and to develop a critique of the underlying assumptions that constituted the basis of mainstream theoretical and empirical inquiry in the field, which usually was referring to the dominant realist-neorealist orthodoxy that looks at the existing international system as given and immutable, reified, and naturalized structure (Cox 2001: 46, George 1989, Yalvaç 2015).

In the field of IR, the critical school had been defined as a post-Marxist theory, "continues to evolve beyond the paradigm of production to a commitment to dialogic communities that are deeply sensitive about all forms of inclusion and exclusion-domestic, transnational and international" (Linklater 2001: 25). Others defined it as a broad group of different approaches and are in a radical position vis-a-vis mainstream international relations theory (Yalvaç 2015, Devetak et al. 2013). In fact, there are two branches of the Critical school: Critical International Relations (CIR) and the Critical Theory of International Relations (CTIR) according to Stephen Roach (Roach 2013, Samhat and Payne 2004). The former is also known as the "Frankfurt School of International Relations" as it adopts the ideas, concepts, and assumptions of the Frankfurt School, while the latter tries to overcome the shortcomings of the Frankfurt school's negative dialectics in terms of the origins of social authoritarianism by adopting many concepts and assumptions from liberalism and institutionalism in order to understand how and when the institutions work and how (and when) their processes create or prevent authoritarianism (Roach 2013: 174). This direction emerged in the late 1960s, as Jürgen Habermas sought to improve the Frankfurt school by claiming that a negative dialectic of authoritarianism was not enough and did not add further knowledge which could help us understand society more accurately. Instead of a "negative" dialectic, Habermas suggests what he called a "progressive" dialectic, which focuses on the aspects of communicative reason and social actions that expand our understanding and empower the emancipatory project through democratic procedures that can mediate between the facts and norms of law (Habermas 1979, Linklater, 1998).

Other studies differentiate between two different forms of critical theory, can be broadly characterized as those that apply the insights of critical theory to the

field of international relations; and those that aspire to develop a critical theory of international relations. Critical theory in the latter sense is "grand theory" seeking to provide a comprehensive account of the emancipatory potentials of the present era (Shapcott 2008: 335). In other words, the term critical theory in lower case letters is usually to refer to post-positivist theories such as feminism, historical sociology, post-structuralism, and post-colonialism, which are united in their critique of the mainstream, and particularly, of Neo-Realism. Critical Theory with capital letters (CT) refers more directly to the critical theory originating from the Frankfurt School and mainly particularly from the works of Jürgen Habermas (Yalvaç 2015).

In any case, this paper will refer to the term critical (with C and c) synonymously since it believes that in spite the occasional sometimes intricate differences between the two branches, "all critical theories are united in their critique of the main research agenda and the positivist orientations in international relations questioning, above all, the idea of value-free theoretical and social inquiry" (Yalvaç 2015) on one hand. Moreover, the ultimate goal of varied critical theory projects is to provide a social theory of world politics that broadening the traditional scope of IR, and freeing it from the limited state-centric models obsessions of positivist theories like neorealism, which mean criticising the overvaluation of the material dimension and the role that the forces of production, in favour of re-emphasis on the role that ideas, values, and ideologies in construction and maintenance of social and political structures on the other hand (Devetak 1995, Linklater 1996). One of the problems with the critical school, especially the CTIR version, is that when it tries to explain the behaviours of non-Western countries, it presumes, like neoliberalism and constructivism, that all countries/societies are civilized, peaceful, and progressive in an Enlightenment sense. This Eurocentric perspective constraint CTIR and ignores the role and effects of structural or material power variables which make emancipation goals unattractive or undesirable options. In turn, the critical school prejudicially accuses other countries that do not seek these goals of being "unprogressive". Such criticisms – and others – will be discussed in detail later, with emphasis on the study of the Arab Uprisings and the study of revolution and change in international politics outside the Western hemisphere in particular.

Regarding the matter of emancipation, one of the main differences between the CIR and the CTIR is that the latter is trying to enforce the emancipatory project within the current system by focusing on the possibilities of the deliberative and communicative discourse power mechanisms. In contrast, the CIR theory is attempting to establish and implement the emancipatory project by changing the system itself (Anievas, 2005). Thus, and for several reasons that shall be mentioned in detail later, this study relies on the concepts, assumptions, ideas, and explanations of the Frankfurt Critical International Relations rather than the Habermasian critical theory of IR. In the post-revolutionary Arab World, the study argues that the Habermasian emancipatory project cannot be implemented for several reasons; 1) the authoritarian nature of the social system itself; 2) the long record of failed reform-from-within attempts; and 3) the growing power of anti-emancipation forces.

In the following section, this study will outline the essential arguments and philosophical background of the main strands of the critical theory applications in the field of IR, the Frankfurt school (or the Neo-Gramscians project), and the normative project (the Habermasian project), by concentrate on the works of Robert Cox and Andrew Linklater in particular.

Frankfurt School

In essence, Critical International Relations (CIR) theory is not just an academic approach but also an emancipatory project, where it not only emphasises on the social explanation but also on politically motivated actions that committed to the formation of a more equal and just world by concentrates on the sociological features and dynamics of capitalism.

In the late 1930s, the Frankfurt School emerged as a response on the rise of Fascism and Nazism systems of power, the Frankfurt critical school theorists were concerned with what Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno called "the dark side of modernity" and pursued to understand the dilemma of why mankind, instead of entering into a truly human condition is sinking into a new kind of barbarism (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972: xi). Interestingly enough, on different parallel contexts such as the Arab Uprisings, the CIR could provide a comprehensive understanding of emerging of new terrorist groups such as *Daesh* or the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the new global wave of populism and ultra-right-wing movements, and how to deal with it. For instance, comparing the knowledge productions of the orthodox-positivist international relations and terrorism studies with the critical terrorism studies (CTS).

On the one hand, Traditional Terrorism Studies (TTS) is not a self-reflexive project that does question the social context of the activity of theorizing nor the social conditions with which it deals. For such traditional theories like the TTS, and IR in general, "knowledge is always constituted in reflection of interests" (Ashley 1981: 207). On the contrary, the TTS remarkably emphasis on how to combat such terrorist groups and to develop counterstrategies, which in return create more of such groups since it remarkably relies on the excessive use of violence. In other words, as a positivist theory, the TTS conceives social problems (such as terrorism) as technical problems that require technical solutions (Jackson *et* al. 2009) while on the other hand, the CTS emphasis on the immanent critiques of the social life to provide insight into existing social contradictions that present more dialectical and reflexive insights on the origins and the motives that created such barbarian movements.

Furthermore, CIR theorists were one of the foremost philosophers that pointed at the dialectic and origin link between knowledge and power. The field of IR, according to Richard Devetak, was (and still) traditionally omission the considerations about the relationship between knowledge and values; e.g., the state of knowledge, the justification of truth claims -the applied methodology, scope, and extent of the research (Devetak 1995). For Horkheimer and the first generation of Frankfurt School, knowledge was always (1) associated with State; (2) tend to

reify existing power relations, and (3) changes that occur would be subject to state interests, thus, the most important forces for the transformation of social reality in order to expand human emancipation were social forces, not the explanation of an independent logic to be revealed (Silva 2005). Therefore, most of the critical theorists stress the necessity that scientific knowledge must be impartial, neutral, non-normative and pure. In the view of critical theory, most of the terms we use to identify entities and relationships have ontological meanings, and since theory (and researcher/s) is not separated from the world and the phenomenon they studied, these meanings are not the result of discoveries or revelations but presuppose the action of the researcher/s. Accordingly, ontological concepts in IR such as the nation-state, violence, governments, terrorism, etc., could refer to different meanings and not necessarily reflect identical things. In other words, contending theories produce contested concepts. Likewise, for a second-generation of CIR theory such as Robert Cox, since the theory is the way the mind works to understand the confronted reality, it is crucial to emphasise that every theory should not be dissociated from a concrete historical context(s) and being aware of how the experience of facts is perceived and organized to be understood (Cox 1995, Silva 2005).

Neo-Gramscians Project

Evidentially, thanks to Antonio Gramsci in the first place these philosophical themes entered the discipline of International Relations. In a parallel with the first generation of the Frankfurt School who were occupied with identified the influence of culture, bureaucracy, the nature of authoritarianism, the question of reason and rationality, and epistemological discussions to explain the failure modernity and the spread of socialism, Gramsci sought to elucidate the influence of hegemony and the superstructure/s on this phenomenon (Gramsci 2011, Cox 1983).

In fact, Gramsci has a crucial influence over critical theorists such as Robert Cox, Stephen Gill, Kees Van Der Pijl and Henk Overbeekc (or what is knowing as the Amsterdam School of Global Political Economy) and others. Those scholars and others have adopted and developed Gramsci's idea of hegemony and present it to IR field in order to understand global power structures and dynamics of domination through the paradigm of production, where economic patterns involved in the production of goods and the social and political relationships they entail (Cox 1983, 1987). Robert Cox for example, who considers the leading critical theorists in the field of IR, claims that power is understood in the context of a set of globalised relations of production demanding the transformation of the nation-state, and depends on the combination of material variable and ideas for acquiring legitimacy (Cox and Jacobsen 1974). Further, he emphasised the notion to look at global politics as a collective construction which evolving through the complex interplay of state, sub-state and trans-state forces in economic, cultural and ideological spheres (Ferreira 2015).

In fact, Cox has sought to understand world orders as historical structures composed of three categories of forces: material capacities, ideas, and institutions

(or ideational forces). The material capacities, firstly, concern the economic sphere of social structure, as well as including the technological and organizational potential. Consequently, they indicate not only how any society reproduces itself on its material basis but also how this reproduction is planned and anticipated (Cox 1987, Silva 2005). The second force is the institutional capabilities which consider a fundamental variable. In the Coxian project – as in Habermas' project – Institutions play a crucial role in stabilizing and perpetuating particular order on the one hand. It also tends to reinforce the well-established power relations by cultivating compatible collective images on the other hand, not only because it reflects a specific combination of ideas and material power but also, they transcend the original order and influence the development of new ideas and material capacities (Cox 1995, Silva 2005).

The third force is the ideas (or the ideational forces). Cox believes that the state exists in the first place in the world system because of ideas, and since these ideas 'In being so shared, these ideas constitute the social world of these same individuals.' (Cox 1987: 395), either because of providing intersubjective understandings, or/and contain particular views of what in society is good, just, legitimate, natural, and so on (Cox 1981: 137-138). Likewise, ideas are the container of competing images of social order held by different groups. Ideas also are durable and historical, come and go, albeit slowly (Cox 1981: 139-140). As a result, Cox stresses the significance of what he called the concept of *"the production of ideas"* as well as the production of goods, and called to apply equally both concepts, since ideas have material reality (Cox 2002: 31-32).

Ideas (i.e., revolutions, resistance, and opposition, etc.,) consider one of the most crucial forces of change in international relations. Cox brilliantly noticed that since 'structures are made by collective human action and transformable by collective human action' (Cox 1987: 395). As Anthony Leysens stated:

> *"The transformation of structures is possible because there is a shared intersubjective understanding between individuals, which extends to abstract concepts such as the state. The state exists because 'In being so shared, these ideas constitute the social world of these same individuals.' Therefore, although, humans are mostly 'born into' existing structures, the latter are not immutable, but have been created and can therefore be changed"* (Leysens 2008: 149).

In other words, Cox indicates that one of the major sources of structural change of world structure is the disjuncture between the two forms of ideational phenomena, ideas (or the intersubjective notions of which they are constitutive come into conflict with ideological perspective) and institutions (the fora in which agents act politically) to seek different outcomes from institutional processes (Cox 1981: 138). Interestingly, however, Cox did not discuss the notion of divergences between material and ideational forces, and how it affects the possibilities of change in the world order.

For Robert Cox, and Neo-Gramscians perspective of IR theory in general, the most important aspect in developing a critical theory of IR is to understand state and hegemony, in which it could afford a non-deterministic yet structurally grounded explanation of change in international relations (Cox 1981, 1983, 1986,

Joseph 2008, Germain and Kenny 1998: 5). In contrast to the deterministic and ahistorical mainstream IR theories that look at a concept such as the states and its relation to the society as a whole different and separated realm and ignoring the internal relation between the two, Neo-Gramscians see the separation of the public from the private, or the state from civil society, is a structural aspect of the capitalist mode of production. In other words, the state is not perceived only in its Weberian-institutional aspect but also in a Hegelian prospect. Where the state not only provide services or grantee the rule of law, but also produce violence, in which the ruling elite could employ to justify and maintain control and to justify power, as well as manufacturing the consent for its domination in terms of its relations with other social forces in society. By doing that, the ruling elites influence the functioning of the state in a way that facilities understanding how does the class nature of the state from the way the state maintains and supports the conditions necessary for the reproduction of the capitalist relations of production (Gramsci 1971: 261 quoted in Yalvaç 2015).

While realists stated that hegemony is usually globally exercised by the state and its institutions/agencies (domestically) and for the sake of subjection and repressive, Gramsci, on the other hand, believed that hegemony exercised by social forces that control the state, not only through forceful or coercive methods that aim to subject the public but also through producing consent. Gramsci understood that the moral, political and cultural values of the dominant group are dissipated through civil society institutions, obtaining the status of shared intersubjective meanings, hence the notion of consent helps in the proliferation of dominant ideologies to the extent they become common sense (Gramsci 2011).

The Neo-Gramscians understanding of hegemony variates from the deterministic mainstream IR theories. While Neo-realists define hegemony as the concentration of material power in one dominant state in the international system, or the strongest state in a specific region, the Neo- Gramscians, on the other hand, sought to broaden this understanding as a result of the Gramscian broader concept of power, by claiming that the concept of hegemony presents itself as a productive discussion (Silva 2005). Hence, Neo-Gramscians define hegemony in terms of social relations of production and the way dominant social classes organize their domination. Thus, hegemony is conceived not only in terms of force but also as a combination of coercion and consent to the legitimacy of existing institutions with respect to the reproduction of the existing social relations of production, and to opens up multiple possibilities for the reinterpretation of international reality (Cox 1986, Joseph 2008, Yalvaç 2015).

While Gramsci discussed systems of hegemony and domination within the border of domestic societies that were based on his experiences of the Italian society in the 1920s, Robert Cox was more interested in revealing systems of domination in both domestic and international systems, and drilling the social basis of hegemony and its inherent points or moments of contradiction (such as the Arab Spring moment of 2011 and aftermath), where hegemony not only depend on force or the ability to project it but also on the consent and the will of system members, actors, and participants acceptance (Germain and Kenny 1998: 6, Cox 1986). In Cox's view, world hegemonies are based on the universalization of the

state-society complexes of a hegemonic state, where hegemony at the international level links the dominant mode of production within the world economy with "subordinate modes of production" thus connecting "the social classes of different countries" (Cox and Sinclair 1996: 137). Or as he put it in his seminal and widely-quoted article of 1981: "based on a coherent conjunction or fit between a configuration of material power, the prevalent collective image of world order (including certain norms) and a set of institutions which administer the order with a certain semblance of universality" (Cox 1981: 139*).*

Overall, Gramsci's notion of hegemony (on the domestic level) has indeed perceived a significant influence in the development of a theoretical understanding of world orders as well as the dynamics of transformation and continuity processes on the international domain (Cox, 1995b; Silva, 2005).

The starting point of Robert Cox critical project is based on the Gramscian-based idea of hegemony, where the dominate states throughout history, fundamentally by relying on coercive capacities as well as their widespread consent, had successfully created and shaped world orders in a suitable way that serves and achieves their best interests (Cox 1995). In order to analyse world orders away from the state-centric model of neo-realism and neoliberalism, Robert Cox developed a new approach, which he called "world structures approach". According to this approach, in international system there are three modes of production or sphere of activity: (a) organization of production, more particularly with regard to the social forces engendered by the production process; (b) forms of states, which are derived from the study of different state/society complexes; and (c) world orders, that is, the particular configurations of forces. According to Faruk Yalvaç the dialectical relations between these levels of activity are irreducible and dialectically related and concretized in each of the elements of the historical structures (i.e., social forces, forms of states and world orders). These elements also constitute different types of historical structures, and each of these structures, in turn, is affected by a configuration between dominant ideas, institutions, and material capabilities (Yalvaç 2015).

In sum, Critical International Relations (CIR) theory (Frankfurt School) is concerned with how the existing order arose and its possibilities for transformation, to clarify the diversity of possible alternatives, and exploring the potential for structural change and building strategies for transformation, mainly by questioning the nature, dynamics and relations of social and political institutions, seeking to understand how they arose and may be transformed. In other words, it is essential to know the context in which it is generated and used. As well as, it is equally imperative to know whether the aim of knowledge itself has become an instrument to furthering the interests of the dominant states that reflect the interests of their hegemonic classes, and to maintain or change the existing social order (Silva 2005). Clearly, that was the purpose that pushes Cox to states his widely quoted phrases which investigates and interrogates the way knowledge has been conditioned by the social, political, and historical context. Cox outstandingly claimed that "theories are for someone and for some purpose" and that "there is no such thing as a theory, divorced from a standpoint in time and space. When any theory so represents itself, it is the more important to examine it

as ideology, and to lay bare its concealed perspective" (Cox 1981: 139, Cox 1986: 207).

For Cox, while problem-solving theories are preoccupied with maintaining social power relationships, the reproduction of the existing system, serve the existing social arrangements and support the interests of the hegemonic social forces, and attempting to ensure that "existing relationships and institutions work smoothly", the critical theory, on the other hand, is a self-reflexive, criticizes the existing system of domination, and identifies processes and forces that will create an alternative world order (Cox 1981: 129–130). In other words, while the problem-solving theory accepts the world as a given, and points to the correction of dysfunctions or specific problems that emerge within the existing orders and structures of domination, where the overall goal the theory is to enhance the prevailing relationships and institutions of social and political domination, the knowledge that critical theory pursues and produced on the other hand is not neutral; rather it is politically and ethically committed to the purposes of social and political transformation.

The Habermasian Project

The other leading philosopher that constituted the origins of the critical school of IR is Jürgen Habermas. As one of the pioneers of the second generation of Frankfurt school scholars, the main outstanding political cause for Habermas philosophical project is exploring the future of democracy (Habermas 2001, 2012). In the field of IR, since his seminal work The Future of Human Nature (Habermas 2001), the Habermasian critical project in IR was explicitly built on a binary framework. One side interprets the normative and legal evolution of world society and assessing the possibilities for further moral development in the global arena, while the other side (the so-called the systems-diagnostic) analyse in functionalist terms the transformations of economic and political subsystems in the age of globalisation (Schmid 2018). The systems-diagnostic side consists of three core points:

1. The Structural transformation of the world economic system' that has begun in the 1990s, and knew as globalisation, which characterised by the intensification of worldwide economic and communication flows and the dismantling of trade barriers (Habermas 2001: 51).
2. The fragmentation and the dangerous imbalance between the global scale of the operation of the market economy and the territorially bound political-administrative subsystem, which prohibited and restraint the states and governments' abilities to intervene in the economy, levy taxes and secure the provision of social goods, and ultimately risks destabilising the entire social system (Habermas 2001: 52, Habermas 2009: 92).
3. The transformation aspect where the political and administrative functions that have historically been attached to the nation-state have to be 'transferred … to larger political entities (or reconstituting itself at a

supranational level) which could manage to keep pace with a transnational economy' (Habermas 2001: 52, Habermas 2012, Schmid 2018).

Accordingly, Habermas has inspired several IR critical theorists such as Andrew Linklater, Thomas Risse, Mark Hoffman, Kathryn Sikkink, Richard Devetak and others with his thesis on the paradigm of communicative action, which consists of the patterns of rationality involved in human communication and the ethical principles they entail (Linklater 1998, Risse 2000, Hoffman 1991, 1987, Sikkink 2008). Linklater for instance, who considers–like Cox–the leading scholar in this research programme, seeks to reveal all sorts of hegemonic interests feeding the world order as a first step to overcome global systems of exclusion and inequality (Hutchings 2001).

Several critical theorists believe that at this stage within the field of IR there is only one contributor to the so-called critical project in IR, and that is Andrews Linklater, who stands largely unrivalled in developing the Frankfurt School project of a "critical theory of society" (Shapcott 2008: 340). Since his early works on international political theory, Linklater's works were dominated by the concern with identifying the different stages of development of the freedom of human subjects in the area of their international relations. Later On, his works progressively shift away from philosophical and normative questions and towards a greater engagement with sociological inquiry (Linklater 1980, 1982, 1998, 2011, Schmid 2018).

Linklater's project aims to reconstruct global and local political communities has adopted the Habermasian ideals, methods, and mechanisms such as open dialogue and non-coercive communication, whereby all affected actors by political decisions put forward their claims and justify them based on rational and universally accepted principles of validity (Linklater 1998, Ferreira 2015). Besides Linklater, several scholars of the English School also adopted Habermas ideas. Generally speaking, the English School emphasises of the essentiality of normative aspects such as communication and convergence between actors and examines the ways in which systems transform into societies, with more "civilized" rule-governed interactions between states (Bull 1977). Moreover, this *loose* branch of critical theory of IR is more inclined toward normative reflection and prescription, and usually identified with the idea of an international society of states who not only coexist but recognize each other's right to coexist and develop rules of behaviour based on this recognition (Jackson 2000, Shapcott 2004).

The genuine contribution of the Linklater project in IR is that in his works, he transformed dissatisfactions with the ideal-normative theorising that seeks to complement the speculative history of moral development on the one hand, and his criticising of Habermasian project that decorporealised and excessively rationalistic normative theory on the other hand. Instead of that and relied on [the English School] sociological investigations of real-world processes of change in international society (Devetak et al. 2013: 489, Schmid 2018). Further, and in order to enhance the ties that bind communities together, Linklater also emphasis on the essentiality of extending the obligations (to protect) toward what he called 'the strangers', by do not allow concept such as citizenship and other related set of

practices to restrict permitting the enjoyment of universal rights inside a community (freedom of conscience, movement, association, etc), by dividing global community into outsiders (immigrants/refugees) and insiders (citizens/natives). The need to protect vulnerable minorities could be achieved through the so-called 'universal concept of citizenship', which could be refashioned through open dialogue among those affected by global system, either reducing the degree of harm, and/or by granting them particular rights to avoid or mitigate the effects of discrimination and forms of violence (such as sexual violence and terrorism), forced migration, climate change and resource depletion (Linklater 1998, 2000, Ferreira 2015).

In addition, Linklater claims that the emotional aversion to pain, suffering, and the aspiration to see them minimised may represent a stronger moral foundation for a universalising project (Linklater 2007: 144–146). He seeks to draws the orientation towards analysing long-term trends in the collective development of '[s]ocial controls on violence and constraints on impulsive behaviour' (Linklater 2004: 9–11, Linklater 2010: 158), and explores how far different international systems have thought harm to individuals a moral problem for the world as a whole (Linklater 2002: 320, Linklater 2011). In the Problem of Harm in World Politics, Linklater's critical project of IR has constituted a new research agenda more circumscribed terms of the sociology of global morals with an emancipatory intent (Linklater 2011, Schmid 2018).

For many, one of the main criticisms to the heavily normative essence of Habermasian-Linklaterian critical approach, which based on communicative action, discourse ethics, and analysis of the relation between knowledge and human interests, is that in spite of it demonstrates very productive in understanding and evolving alternative critical positions within international relations, the forceless 'force of the better argument' is still insufficient (and even incompetent) in achieving universal human emancipation (Anievas 2010: 154, Yalvaç 2015).

IR Theories and the Study of Arab Uprising(s)

IR theories continue to neglect the causes and consequences of revolutions despite their importance vice-a-versa state behaviour (unit level) and the international structure (system level). Traditionally, revolutions cause radical changes and intersect with fundamental issues in international politics, such as war, the balance of power, security, stability, cooperation, identity, and even emancipation. Nevertheless, major theories of International Relations (i.e., realism, neoliberalism, constructivism, and critical school) still give little attention to the study of such revolutions (Walt 1997, Halliday 1999, Goldstone, 1997, Roach 2013).

For instance, what drives and determine states' foreign policy in a post-revolution period? Is it national interests, security considerations, emancipatory trends, or all of the above? The neorealist school argues that due to the fears of revolution, the spread of instability, and the rise of extremist groups, non-revolutionary countries always try to contain the revolution within their borders,

either by balancing against it (allies) or confronting (Walt, 1997). Furthermore, other studies (Goldstone 2011) show that there is an additional, "friendly" strategy employed by these countries designed to attempt to assist the revolutionary regimes to overcome social and economic crises. These strategies are employed in order to contain the conflict as much as possible and prevent its escalation.

Positivist theories of foreign policy are not taking resistance and social movements into account. Neorealism, for instance, ignores the effects of nonmaterial elements, i.e. norms, values, emancipation claims, political identities, the aspirations of the Arab peoples, socioeconomic changes, the failure of economic policies, and the political will to establish the Rule of Law and social media networks. By emphasizing these elements and others, the critical theory provides a wider, more comprehensive and accurate explanation, not only to the foreign policy of revolutionary and non-revolutionary countries but also of the construction and formulation of domestic policy and how it determines foreign policy, and vice-versa.

Neorealist theory, for example, argues that, because of the fear caused by the expansion of revolutions and the subsequent instability, non-revolutionary countries often try to contain revolutions beyond their borders, either by balancing against it or bandwagon. However, different studies show that other non-revolutionary countries have employed different strategies aimed at assisting states undergoing a revolution by overcoming their social and economic struggles. Ultimately, the vicissitudes that have occurred as a result of the Arab Uprisings cannot be disentangled from the wider context of the global political economy and globalization (Talani 2014).

This study tries to elucidate why positivist and traditional research agenda of hard-core neorealist and neoliberal approaches, which profoundly focusing on security considerations (interests, survival, and regime stability) on one hand, and on the prospects of democratization, liberalisation and the possibilities of regional functional integration, on the other hand, had prevailed over the post-positivist emancipatory agenda of critical theory of IR in the MENA region, in contrast with the general wisdom that dominates the field of Middle Eastern studies in the West (Keck 2012). The starting point is to mark the difference between revolutions that succeed in removing the political regime and replacing it with a new one, and those that fail to replace it. In the former, the differences between the pre and post-revolution periods become clear. While in the latter, these differences are unclear and cloudy. It becomes difficult (if not impossible) to observe or show the differences between the situational conditions before and after the revolution. Under these conditions, realists start to re-examine outmoded philosophical questions, and engage in outdated debates over topics such as why did the revolution occur? Or what is the revolution?

Despite the current backlash to the popular Intifada that occurred in the Middle East at the end of 2010 and the beginning of 2011, no one can deny that the Arab Uprising was an attempt to deconstruct authoritarian structures in the Middle East through an emancipatory project of the Arab citizens that ultimately did not succeed. By emancipation, I mean what Ken Booth defined as "the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from those physical and human constraints

which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do" (Booth 1991: 319). When Arab citizens rebel against their authoritarian regimes, in addition to foreign (regional and international) supremacy and intervention in their internal affairs, these regimes and powers consider these revolutions as a threat to their security and interests. In order to protect and preserve their interests and security, they seek to spoil, foil, and vanquish these revolutions through many tools and means, i.e., foreign aid, military intervention, political manipulation, and economic sanctions. In sum, since 2011 there have been two conflicting tendencies in the Middle East, the cult and resurgence of the authoritarian state and the emancipatory movements of the people.

For many reasons, these emancipatory attempts were never completed. These "incomplete revolutions" failed to achieve people's goals and hopes. The main reason behind this failure was the traditional and reactionary authoritarian regimes, either within the revolutionary countries or neighbouring regimes. The domestic regimes, or the so-called "counter-revolution forces", deterred the people from being ruled by civil and democratic governments and fair and just institutions that respect their rights enhance their freedoms. The other major reason behind the failure of the Arab Uprisings was the status-quo conservative regimes and monarchies, especially the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, who prevented the revolutionary countries from being free, independent, and sovereign. These monarchies considered these popular uprisings as a threat to the region that threatened their security, stability, prosperity and even survival. For example, as a result of the Arab Uprising, GCC countries are facing a new kind of threat that is considered the most dangerous since the fall of Saddam's regime in 2003. In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, the popular intifada reached Bahrain and Oman in the middle of 2011, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) rose violently in Syria and Iraq, and the regional landscape became more chaotic and violent. These challenges forced GCC countries to focus their foreign policy orientations and approach in dealing with regional crises and conflict.

Theoretically speaking, instead of trying to contain or prevent the spread of the revolutions, as neorealism argues, these countries in fact acted in contradiction to this expectation. They intervened deeply in the affected countries in order to stave-off the revolutionary fervour, buttress their decaying institutions, and delay the attempt to reconstruct society and emancipate the population from the authoritarian regimes that have monopolized power since the creation of the modern Arab states following World War II. While neorealism has ignored the effects of non-material elements, i.e. norms, values, emancipation claims, political identities, the aspirations of the Arab peoples, socio-economic changes, the failure of economic policies, the political will to establish the rule of law, and social media networks, critical theory's emphasis on these elements (and others) provide a wider, more comprehensive, and accurate explanation. These explanations elucidate not only the foreign policy of the GCC countries towards countries like Egypt, but it also can answer the questions of why emancipatory attempts fail, and how small states act in the international system—all questions which neorealism cannot answer.

While, theories such as Neoliberalism and Constructivism, argue that the growing impact of interdependence, globalization, the spread of democratic, liberal ideas and human rights, shared collective norms, values, and identities among Arab societies drive countries to concentrate on improving living standards, expanding freedom and democratization. In addition, these forces drive them to enhance cooperation as opposed to mere self- interests through the mobilization of national resources for defence objectives (Moravcsik, 2008).

Critical School and the Arab Uprising(s)

The first sign to evaluate whether critical theory had successes or not is to measure to what extent its presence and engagement in the ongoing mainstream debates within a certain field or research pool are significant. In the field of IR, one prominent study concludes that "various forms of 'critical theory' . . . constitute the main theoretical alternatives within the discipline" (Rengger and Thirkell-White 2007: 4–5). Rengger and Thirkell-White observed that several elements of a critical theory of various sorts had considerably lodged within the ivory tower of the robust, analytical and still heavily 'scientific' American academic cycles (op, cit: 9).

Another sign is to what extent a theory reflects, relate and committed to the topic/s it investigates and examines. For the Arab Uprisings, the core issue was and still the seek for freedom and emancipation. The massive number of ordinary peoples in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain in 2011 to Sudan, Algeria, Lebanon in 2019, and marched to the streets and public squares not to claim or demand security, stability or R2P as positivist approaches claim, instead they yelled for freedom and emancipate from fear, needs, and exclusion. In this regards, critical theory incorporates a wide range of approaches, which emphasise on the idea of emancipation that defines in the term of freeing people from the modern state and economic system and anticipate how the world could be reordered and transformed, and not only explaining it, as Marx stated. In fact, bringing the critical theory (as an emancipatory-seeking theory) back into the field of IR, Ashley and Walker argued, will enable those who were "exiled" or "excluded" from international relations to start speaking their own language (Ashley and Walker 1990: 259). For example, in the field of security studies, comparing orthodox security studies with Critical security studies (CST), while the former is immune to moral progress, seeking mainly to find a solution to the urgent '*global*' security concerns, especially those that address the system of nation-states, and aim at maintaining the status quo, the latter, on the other hand, presents a challenge to the mainstream of international relations by undermining claims that the strategic realm is a realm apart. The CST is seeking to engage traditional thinking about the meaning and practices of security with the aim of addressing the emancipation of "those who are made insecure by the prevailing order" (Wyn Jones 1999: 118, 2001, Fierke 2007, Shapcott 2008: 334-335).

In fact, Critical school does not neglect or underestimate the significance of security challenges and other forms of violent challenges to face nation-states and

people. On the contrary, and instead of the problem-solving style of analysis, it concentrates on the genesis and the structural origins, measures, methods and modes, discourses and practices that are created and establish these threats and challenges in the first place. In other words, it seeks to understand threats, not to explain it. For critical school, it is not enough to understand and trace the origins of harm and displacement in the world; but to use that understanding to reach fairer security arrangements that do not neglect oppressed claims to basic rights (Ferreira 2015). Therefore, no wonders that the main critical projects in IR (Coxian and Linklaterian) and other critical theorists as well are united in their political inquiry with an explicit emancipatory purpose. They aim at uncovering the potential for a fairer system of global relations, which resulting from already existing principles, practices and communities that expands human rights and prevents harm to strangers (ibid.).

In contrast, the positivist theories (i.e. realism and liberalism) concentrate on material structures in explaining and interpreting international relations and foreign policies. They concentrate on power (realism) and interest (liberalism) and take as inevitable the anarchic character of international structures and the formulation process of the nation-state (as the main actor). As such, the chance to adjust or modify this order is quite limited. On the contrary, Critical theory sees international and foreign policy as a historical phenomenon, shaped by social forces and intersubjective social structures such as norms, values, ideas, images, language, discourse and common meaning (Cox 1986, Linklater 1990, Weber 2001, Abadi 2008).

For instance, Robert Cox explained the historical structures of hegemony through three constitutive levels: state forms, social forces, and world orders. These levels are a result of the struggle between rival structures, and notably, diverse historical contexts produced specific configuration of social forces, states, and their interrelationship that will resonate as a particular world order (Silva 2005). While the initial level (state forms) covers the state/society complexes, it is crucial to pointed at the fact that the divergence of state' forms and structures that specific societies develop are derivation of the particular configuration of material capacities, ideas, and institutions that is specific to a complex state/society (Cox 1987, 1995). The second level contains the organization of production which reflects or expressed the observed transformations in the genesis, strengthening, or decline of specific social forces. For instance, in the prevailing form of the capitalist system, the social forces associated with the real economy as opposed to financial markets have been weakened in favour of strengthening private investors and corporations (op, cit; Silva 2005). The third level is the world orders that constitute the forces that determine the way states interact. Convincingly, Cox argues that the correlations between these levels are not unilineal but reciprocity. For instance, he believes that State forms affect the development of social forces by the types of domination they exert by enhancing the interests of one class at the expense of another. Likewise, he claims that transnational social forces have influenced states through the world structure, as evidenced by the reflections of nineteenth-century expansive capitalism, or the proliferation of globalisation since the second half of the twentieth century on the development of state structures in

the centre and the periphery, and from the North into the Global South (Cox 1995, Silva 2005).

According to this perspective, the Arab Uprisings, one can argues that Cox was correct when he perceptively refereed to how the struggles and resistance against hegemonic 'global' structures will emerge within national societies in the first place since the historical bloc of working classes are still nationally organized, and could accumulate and expand to the transnational territories, as a result of the economic and social globalisation which lead to the internationalisation of production that led to the formation of a new class of transnational labour. By civil society, Gramsci meant "the network of institutions and practices of society that enjoy the relative autonomy of the state, through which groups and individuals are organized, represented and expressed" (Silva 2005). This network of institutions represents the essence of what he called '*historical bloc*' which refer to the relations between the material base (infrastructure) and the political-ideological practices that support a certain order. Accordingly, the change arises when the civil society challenges the hegemonic structure, then the possibilities for transformation arise from the notion of counter-hegemony at the heart of civil society starts to challenge the ruling elites and prevailing order, which comprises in search of or formulating alternative historical block (Murphy 1990: 25-46, Murphy 1994, Gramsci 2011, Cox 1987).

Critical school criticises the deliberate separation between facts and values that realism emphasises, arguing that realism neglects the social genesis and contents of these facts. This means that realism is not interested in the question of whether the theory should contribute to liberating people from oppression and deprivation, while suppressing meaningful engagement with the open-ended possibilities of social and political change. Despite the fact that a majority of scholars and students of international relations and foreign policy tend to employ mainstream positivist theories to explain and explore the nature and behaviours of foreign policy, these theories suffer from many shortcomings and misconceptions when dealing with topics like revolution, revolutionary foreign policy, and the actions of third world countries. This means that IR scholars must to not only reconsider the nature of the state itself, but also re-examine and interrogate the motivations of how these states act in the first place (Mastanduno et al. 1989, Keohane 1969, Elman 1995, Hinnebusch 2015, Bayat 2010, 2017). Several studies have suggested that positivist theories (such as classical and structural realism) are not appropriate approaches to study the Global South's foreign policies and post-revolutionary external behaviours. The reason is due to the fact that these theories lack the appropriate knowledge to explain the behaviours of other non-Western countries, which do not share their history, culture, and values, and neglect several essential variables that construct and formulate state behaviour in the Global South (Smith 2002, Elman 1995).

Realism (classical and structural) largely focuses on analysing the behaviours and actions of great "Western" powers and gives little attention to small "non-Western", developing states, such as the Middle Eastern countries. Moreover, realism is a static theory. It assumes that all units (states) in IR (nation-states in particular) are essentially identical and act in an identical manner for the sake of

their self-interest (Waltz, 1979: 54). According to this view, states are seeking to achieve the same objectives and adopt the same policies to do so. Realism wrongly claims that all political entities are "*power-oriented*" actors who solely pursue selfish, materialistic interests. Thus, it neglects the influence of non-material structures and sources of power, such as ideology, identity, religion, revolutions, etc., and underestimates their independence and contribution in shaping a nation-state's external behaviours. Furthermore, realism is a unilateral, inevitable, and closed-ended theoretical framework. As a "traditional" theory, in Horkheimer's definition, realism relies on an instrumental, rational-choice approach and a forceful separation between facts and values, based on a pre-given and unexamined definition of social reality (Horkheimer 1992). By neglecting topics like revolution, emancipation, global citizenship (cosmopolitan) governance and social movements, realism has not engaged with the open-ended possibilities of social and political change and emancipation projects that aim to liberate humanity from any kind of hegemony, oppression, and deprivation.

Critical International Relations Theories and Arab Uprising(s)

In international affairs, certain historical juncture moments as the end of the Cold War and the onset of the 'unipolar moment' represented a new window of opportunity for a new normative tendency in IR theory (Beardsworth 2011, Calhoun 2002: 887). According to David Schmid, the fall of the Soviet Union combined with the apparent waning of national borders and traditional power politics, and the unstoppable global economic restructuring and expanding worldwide communications, of a victorious liberal-democratic order and an emerging regime of human rights protection, that very realm of international politics that had long appeared blocked, impervious to change and devoid of emancipatory possibilities suddenly looked to be open for new normative theorisations (Schmid, 2018). Likewise, this study argues that the juncture moment such the Arab Spring, despite the underestimation claims of its effects and impact on world politics (Katz 2014, Onar 2015, Lynch and Ryan 2017, Bush 2017, Valbjørn 2017) could open a new possibilities and inspirations to the critical theory of international relations, particularly if we look at the popular intifadas of the Arab People as an integral segment of a larger anti-capitalism, neoliberalism, and anti-hegemony global reach resistance movements(Abul-Magd 2013).

In this case, and after almost a decade of the Arab Spring, critical IR scholars should analyse and understand it as being a chain of global resistance movements that start to take place since the early 2000s with U.S. invasion of Iraq 2003 and the global scale opposition and demonstrations against the war, Colour Revolutions in former Soviet countries 2003-2006, the economic and financial crisis of 2008; the green movement in Iran of 2009; the ongoing Democratic-led protesting in several Latin American countries since 2018; the movement of 'occupying wall street' of 2011; Catalonian-Spanish protests of 2011, Fresh protests of 2018; global climate change rallies that started in 2019, and the Arab Spring 2.0 of 2019, Hong Kung protests of 2014 and 2019, and other forms of

micro-level and micro-narrative of resistance against the global and local systems of power and dominations (e.g., women's rights movements, students protests, anti-elections protests, and environmental protests). In sum, the Arab Spring, using Cox words, reflects a manifestation of the so-called global civil society revolution against systems of global domination (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. *GDELT Project Map of Global Protests 1979-2015*

Source: Mapping global protests redux. Available at https://bit.ly/2YqN7mV [accessed on December 30, 2019].

The previous map contradicts and opposes all positivist theses, whether the neorealist arguments on the stability of the international '*unipolar*' order (Brooks and Wohlforth 2002, 2008, Wohlforth 1999, Krauthammer 1990/91, 2002/3, Ikenberry 2001, Ikenberry et al. 2011). As well as the neoliberal institutionalist and constructivist arguments on the proliferation and the stability of democratic societies, and the correlation between liberal-modern norms and stability and prosperity on the (Huntington 1991, Fukuyama 1992, Pinker 2018, 2011). In contrast to these false arguments, for decades the global system has vulcanising and fuelling resistance and rejections movements against the neoliberal and imperialist order of domination.

Regarding the Arab Uprising, according to Rafael Bustos (Bustos 2017: 53):

"while neo-realists tend not to focus on the Arab Spring itself but rather on the possible threats that derive from it (an increase in Jihadism, nuclear proliferation, etc.) and their consequences for alliances and US interests, critical theorists reverse the analysis and locate it in the economic causes and implications of armed interventions (e.g. neoliberalism, distribution of markets, the military leverage of US hegemony) as well as the social processes of vigilance and control that are associated with the "security obsession" (e.g. census elaboration, detention centres, massive espionage, "biopolitics", etc.)".

Although the Arab Uprising broke out ten years ago, the CIR did not appropriately engage or address it. Until now (2019), there have been few studies that tried to explain and investigate the causes, consequences, and outcomes of the

Arab Uprising, although the roots of these Intifadas could find their genesis in the early writings of Frankfurt school scholars from the 1940s and the 1950s. The CIR can provide more rigour and lucid understanding to the Arab Uprising, either by focusing on the socio-political dynamics of authoritarianism, Neo-Gramscians studies on the role of hegemony and the power structure within the global political economy order, and the role of social forces (such as ideas, ideologies, institutions and material capabilities) in determining frames for individual and collective action. Likewise, the motivations and the reasons behind the outbreaks of the Arab Uprisings could be traced through the writings of Habermas and Linklater, for instance, on the discursive power of democratic norms, values, and promoting the global rule of law through dialogue and deliberation that enhances people's participation in political institutions that boost democratization, human rights, equality, and justice (Cox 1983, 1986, Linklater 1990, Habermas 1996, Gill 2003, Roach 2013).

For instance, with regard to the Egyptian coup d'état, disturbances in Syria and Libya, the riots in Persian Gulf countries and intervention in Yemen, Libya and Syria for critical theorists (neo-Marxists and neo-Gramscians in particular) represent a proof of a hypocritical US/EU discourse that does not hide market greed, and the crisis of transnational financial and capital classes. On the other hand, it reflects the profound crisis of the Arab nation-states. Critical scholars such as Eric Hobsbawm, Tariq Ali, Samir Amin, Hamid Dabashi, Gilbert Achcar, Noam Chomsky, Kees Van der Pijl and others (Amin 2016, Chomsky 2012, Dabashi 2012, Achcar 2016, 2013, Van der Pijl 2011) and others argued that the way in which the US tolerated the crushing of the riots at the hands of the Gulf security forces (in Bahrain and Yemen), with Saudi Arabia and the UAE at the head, and in Egypt, Syria, Sudan by the military juntas, reveals the double standards of the leading capitalist power (Bustos 2017: 51). For example, in 2013 Tariq Ali wrote: 'If the Arab uprisings began as indigenous revolts against corrupt police states and social deprivation, they were rapidly internationalised as western powers and regional neighbours entered the fray' (Ali 2013: 64).

Moreover, others believe that the Arab Uprisings does not represent any fundamental change on the global scale, and substantially has not varied the North-South relationships. Furthermore, Ali argues that comparing with Latin America revolutions in the earlier decade (2000s), the upheavals in several Arab countries have not produced true revolutions that have replaced elites or that have been capable of slowing neo-liberalism and breaking with their foreign partners, mainly because of the US, EU, and their allies' actions in the region (Ali 2013, Amin, 2011, 2016). Such claims led other critics to argue that critical theorists tend to extol and amplify the role of external actors to the point of becoming, in some cases, close to conspiracy theories (Bustos 2017: 53). Misleadingly, critical theorists – according to these criticisms – were wrong to look at the autonomy and decision-making will of internal actors in quite a limited way, unless they produce revolutions, and underscore the importance of transnational economic, financial, and military factors, and their interaction as determinants of international policy (Ali 2013, Van der Pijl 2013).

In general, the critical studies of the Arab Uprisings (especially the CIRT and the Habermasian-based studies) could be summarized in four main categories. According to Stephan Roach, in order to explain the Arab Uprising from the view of CIR, some critical theorists suggested focussing on four political and social dynamics of these uprisings (Roach 2013: 181). These dynamics are the political identity and consciousness of the Arab peoples, the failure of neoliberal policies, the political will to instantiate the rule of law, and the role of social media.

Political Identity

The Arab Uprising was a crucial moment in the revival of a collective Arab political identity after decades of political hibernation. For CIR scholars, identity has provided a common framework for the solidarity that dictators had sought to suppress (Roach 2013: 181). The latest Arab Uprising movement was not identical to the movements of pan-Arabism of the 1950s and 60s, in fact, it was the opposite. In the 1950s and 1960s, leaders like Nasser, Saddam Hussein, and Assad employed collective identity and sentiments to achieve *false* regional unity and national independence from colonial and imperial powers through domestic mobilization and development, as well as nonalignment and external solidarity with other third world countries.

While the pan-Arabism moment of collective identity completely overlooked the demands of democratization, the rule of law, and human rights, the current wave was genuinely about democracy, freedom and human rights. In other words, the post-independence moment of collective identity was directed against external enemies, such as imperialist and capitalist powers, while the Arab Uprising was directed towards the local enemies (the authoritarian regimes and their pawns). Likewise, while the pan-Arabism moment was for the interests of the ruling regimes/elites, the Arab Uprising moment, on the other hand, was an action by the people against internal dictators, and sought to achieve public goods and objectives such as establishing a new democratic regime, enhancing the rule of law, and respecting human rights (Roach, 2013, Gause 2011), either through revolution or as Foucault was insisting incite to "cut-off the king's head" (Foucault 1980: 121).

In this context, pan-Arabism was a liberation attempt that was not seeking to free Arab citizens from domestic authoritarian structures. In contrast, the Arab Uprising is considered an emancipatory attempt that tried (in Richard Ashley's words) to secure people's freedom from all kinds of constraints, relations of domination, and conditions of distorted communication and understanding that deny humans the capacity to make their future through full will and consciousness (Ashley 1981: 227).

The Failure of Neoliberal Policies

Any attempt to understand and explain the Arab Uprising and post-revolution policies of the Middle East must address the failure of neoliberal policies. Neoliberalist assumptions about the relationship between the liberalization of political and economic regimes on one hand, and democratization and stability on the other proved misleading. Even with the enormous amount of economic aid, political support, and military assistance from Western powers (especially from the United States, European Union, and the GCC countries) to these regimes, they failed to liberate and achieve stability and democratization. The reasons behind this ineffectiveness revolve around several economic and socio-political factors. On the economic level, these were primarily the massive levels of corruption, the continuation of the deficit in the balance of payments, the deterioration of developmental conditions, and the lack of strong industrial productivity. On the socio-political level, we see the systematic violation of basic human rights and the spread of torture, the blocking of the political sphere and the unwillingness of the growing number of super-wealthy elites to support the authoritarian regime (Gause 2001: 86, Roach 2013, Goldstone 2011).

During the last five decades, and particularly after the setback of the pan-Arab ideology and defeat in the Six-Day War of 1967 with Israel, the authoritarian Arab regimes began exchanging political freedom for economic liberalization. The majority of these regimes abandoned socialist ideologies and adopted restricted versions of capitalism and a liberalized economic system without fully democratizing their political systems. These regimes adopted rotten models such as "sovereign democracy", "managed democracy", "Islamic constitutionalism", and "adaptive authoritarianism" and other hybrid regimes (Rutherford 2008, Zakaria 2007).

For many critical theorists, especially neo-Gramscians, the failure to materialise the alliance between these authoritarian regimes and the wealthy elites was not an isolated or insignificant event (Roach 2013: 181). For them, this was more than a clash-of-interests between the two blocs. It was a reflection of the changing norms, values, power dynamics, and the nature of social forces in Arab societies. Neo-Gramscians such as Achcar, Van der Pijl, Gill and others argue that the real reason behind the failure of establishing such an alliance was due to the inability of the regimes to enhance and legitimize elite control, especially in the economic field. This was compounded by the rising historic bloc of unemployed, marginalized workers and students who united to counteract elite control (Roach 2013: 181).

Eventually, these attempts failed for many reasons. Firstly, due to the absence of political freedom, which prevented the process of systemic liberalization from succeeding in the long term. Like their predecessors, the second generation of Arab dictators were also anti-democratic leaders. There was no effective oversight and the rule of law was restricted, which led to a marked increase in grievances, the violation of the social contract, and a fundamental overstating of the Arab states (Ayubi 1995, Owen 2012). Secondly, these regimes still drowned in rampant corruption. In most Arab countries, the reforms were unable to fight and

confront organized crime and the deeply corrupted elites (Roach 2013). Thirdly, both the people and economic elites viewed these liberalization attempts unfavourably. The absence of social considerations in economic policies neglected people's demands, and this inability to satisfy their basic needs drove them to rebel. Moreover, these policies were biased and intransigent, which makes the poverty rates in several Arab Uprising countries (i.e., Yemen, Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan and others) really going up (UNDP 2000, 2010, 2015, 2019). The growing super-wealthy elites were unwilling to support the authoritarian regime, which prevented the materialisation of the economic alliance between the new wealthy elite and the ruling bloc (Gause 2001: 86, Roach 2013).

The Political Will

Since the creation of the modern Arab states in the late 1940s and beginning of the 1950s, these countries have gained their independence from Western Imperial powers; however, the Arab people never gained their autonomy from the authoritarian regimes, both externally and internally. The Arab people continuously suffered from a lack of freedom and low standards of living. Indeed, much of what is known as "the Arab Uprising countries" including Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Tunisia, were at the bottom of the U.N. Human Development Index, World Bank development indicators and Freedom House reports. Due to the non-democratic political system, corrupt economic system, and the over-stated nature of these Arab countries over the last three decades, the citizens of these countries rose-up against their governments in order to emancipate themselves from fear, poverty, torture, and dependency. The massive numbers of protestors that marched in the streets and public squares were seeking freedom, integrity, justice, and equality (Ismail 2012, Kandil 2012).

Many Western countries believed that, in spite of the people's desires for democratization and the rule of law, the authoritarian regimes represented the best opportunity to liberalize the Arab regimes, enhance stability, and protect Western interests in the region (Roach 2013). However, the historical experience shows that the strategy of authoritarian stability proves to be short-lived and incapable of guaranteeing or sustaining stability and security in the region (Gause 2011):

Firstly, historical records show that Western powers cannot buy stability by selling out other peoples' freedom in the long run. After three decades of supporting Mubarak's regime, the United States failed to prevent the outbreak of the revolution, not only in Egypt but in other allied countries across the region as well. These revolutions proved that this kind of realpolitik policy was based on unrealistic assumptions (Keck 2012).

Secondly, the assumption that supporting unpopular authoritarian could serve the interests of the Western powers proved to be false. Therefore, authoritarian allies had become a strategic burden, as their domestic policies sowed the seeds of future upheaval and promoted hostility towards these Western powers and their interests in the region (Gause 2011, Katzenstein and Keohane 2006).

Third, the assumption that Arab and Muslim culture is incompatible with democracy, or that there is Arab exceptionalism towards democracy and liberalism

also proved to be inaccurate. The Arab Uprising moment showed that Arab societies are no different from others who seek freedom and democracy. The claim that the durability and the robustness of authoritarianism in the Arab world made the region miss the previous waves of democratization was a myth. Most of the Arab citizens in countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, Libya, Bahrain, and elsewhere rebelled against these authoritarian regimes, demanding freedom, justice, and equality (Bellin 2012).

The critical assumption on the discursive power of people's inclination to instantiate the rule of law, democratic norms, values and promotion of the global rule of law through dialogue and deliberation was more appropriate and relevant in explaining the Arab Uprising. It also refutes the myth of pre-given and unexamined (realist and liberal) conceptions of the social reality about the Arab World, such as the authoritarian-stability-nexus and Arab exceptionalism (Habermas 1996, Linklater 1990, Horkheimer 1992, Diamond 2010, El Hamalawy 2011, Wittes 2008).

Much Ado about Nothing: Critiquing 'Critical' Theory in IR Study of Arab Uprisings

After almost four decades of its emergence, the critical theory of IR has achieved several goals that contribute to pushing the debate in the field forward. According to Andrew Linklater (Linklater 1996, 1998), the main achievements of the critical theory of IR can be summarized as follows:

1) The critical theory still adheres to the challenges posed to epistemological positivism (rationalism), since they still believed that knowledge does not arise from the neutral engagement of the subject with objective reality; on the contrary, it reflects pre-existing social purposes and interests.
2) Challenging the positions that current social structures are unchanging. Critical theory, in contrast, supports the notion claimed that structural inequities of power and wealth are in principle changeable. Furthermore, it stresses the notion of emancipation, where the possibility of transforming these social orders and ending the fundamental forms of social exclusion could be achieved despite the epistemological position that defends a much more contemplative position.
3) Despite admitting the undeniable contribution and the influence of Marx and Marxists on critical school, it tries to overcome the inherent weaknesses of Marxism that stress the notion that class struggle is the fundamental form of social exclusion. Instead, it sees and perceived the modes of production as the fundamental determinant of the conflict in society and throughout history.
4) In the face of several forms of global (and local) exclusion, the so-called International Critical Theory (ICT) rejects and challenges the unjustified forms of exclusion. Alternatively, it calls to judge social arrangements by

their ability to embrace open dialogues with everyone and to envision new forms of a more inclusive political community.

Other scholars indicate that the main achievement of the critical theory in the field of IR (CIR in particular) since its emergence in the 1980s was exposing the deep relation between the mainstream approaches of IR theory (specifically neorealism, rational-choice, and neoliberal institutionalism) and the dominant interests they served in world politics: i.e., the maintenance of bipolar system and the manifestation of American preponderance, possessive individualism, and world capitalism (Brincat 2018). Likewise, CIR, and CTIR later on, sought to expose the consequential shortcomings of the predominant traditional theoretical theories by continuously challenging and questioning the fundamental postulates of the extremely-positivist field (Silva 2005). For instance, Jim George inducted that one of the clear achievements of the CIRT is that its direct ontological and epistemological criticism of positivism, rationalism and structuralism made it possible to rethink IR by enabling a broader thinking space, and enable the efforts that seek to develop alternative conceptions of the international that are sensitive to history and to the sociological understanding of the international (George 1989, Yalvaç 2015). Nevertheless, both of critical theory of IR and the critical IR theory are still suffer from several deficiencies and fallacies, which the study will articulate and highlight in the following section.

Notably, after years of expansion, the intellectual space that and the Frankfurt School-inspired theorists have traditionally occupied is declining in prominence and losing vitality (Schmid 2018, Dunne et al. 2013). According to Schmid, after occupied a significant space within the scholarly debates during the 1980s and 1990s, critical theory (either Neo-Gramscians and Habermasian projects) appears today decidedly out of fashion, increasingly fragmented, lacking in practical relevance and operating within very specific orientations and with theoretical, rather than more generalist, political interests in focus (Kurki 2012: 130–137). In particular, a quick cross-referencing of the leading critical database, platforms, journals, and recent critical books since 2010 shows that there are very few applications for such theoretical ideas on the case study of the Arab Uprisings (or other global south cases. Sadly, one study noticed that between 2011 to 2016, critical IR journals (e.g., journal International Political Sociology, Millennium, International Studies, and Alternatives journal), has shown little direct interest in the Arab Spring, but considerable interest in issues that cross the problematic of uprisings, interventions and conflicts in the MENA region (Bustos 2017: 52). Interestingly though, even those studies that address the Arab Spring were noticeably was away from interrogating or/and investigating the genesis of causes and topics that created the Arab Spring intifadas in the first place, and how to resist the resurgence of resilient authoritarianism and counter-revolutionary forces that crucially seeks to aborting the emancipation project that the Arab Uprising was hoping for.

For a large extent, these studies assimilate with neorealism and neoliberalism studies, in which positivist researches had focused on the outcomes, consequences, and repercussions of the Arab Spring on issues such as security policies,

immigration, R2P, resistance to the Israeli occupation, and in general to the processes of neoliberal globalisation (Bustos 2017: 52). Therefore, and as several scholars pointed out, due to its heavy emphasis on the external critique and the 'dysfunctional side effects' of capitalism and intrusions on other subsystems, critical theory (especially the Habermasian version) has become oscillates between the empty radicalism of its procedural utopia and the practical resignation demanded by its social and political analysis (Scheuerman 2006: 94, Schmid 2018). Not only that, the positivists themselves intensely criticised the so-called emancipatory-based critical theory. After more than twenty-five years, several numbers of these objections are still valid and consistently present. For instance, the neoliberal institutionalists accused critical theory of being preoccupied with agenda-setting and meta-theoretical reflection but unwilling or unable to produce substantive work in international relations. Moreover, the so-called "reflectivist" paradigms lacked a coherent research agenda that could structure their contribution to the discipline, and by implication provide real knowledge (Keohane 1998). On the other hand, several Neorealist scholars claimed that critical international relations theory had failed to deliver much in the way of empirical research (Mearsheimer 1995, Price and Reus-Smit 1998).

In this section, the study indicates the most chronical critiques and prolonged objections on the critical projects in the field of IR, with a concentration on the case of Arab Uprisings. By interrogating the Neo-Gramscians and Habermasian projects of IR, the study identified four main deficiencies. The cognitive (ontological and epistemological) fallacy, the Eurocentric-Capitalism fallacy, Modernity-enlightenment foundations fallacy, and the fallacy of the monologic (not dialogical) nature of Habermasian-Linklaterian normative and communicative turns in IR.

The Cognitive Fallacy

There are several criticisms of the Coxian critical project, one of these criticisms is being cognitively insignificant. For instance, and from a Marxist perspective, Benno Teschke claim that Robert Cox did not add new to the critical school of IR since numbers of his constitutive concepts (such as structures of accumulation) are not originated or developed by Cox himself, rather adopted it form Marx's modes of production. Also, Teschke claims that despite his assertion on questioning the origins of knowledge about international relations, Cox did not completely follow his own suggestions when investigating the development of capitalism in a pre-constituted state system. Cox did not question the conditions and circumstances of the formation of capitalism structures, especially outside Europe, which restrains him from fully understand the main dynamics of several modes of non-European capitalism system (Teschke 2008: 173–175). Moreover, John Hobson indicated that Cox's project also considers inherently Eurocentric (Hobson 2007). By failing to explain the geographical expansion of capitalism from the West to the East, makes his approach a prisoner of European modernity and historical experiences, which puts Cox project among other (positivists and post-post-positivist) IR research programmes that suffers from the triple fallacies

of ahistoricism, chronofetishism and tempocentrism (Hobson 2002: 6-15, Hobson et al. 2010: 3361-3363).

Likewise, the main problem with Habermas' theory of communicative action and its applications in the field of IR, is that it is an attempt to combine practical and emancipatory interests. In the end, it fails to accomplish neither of these two goals. This failure reflects both ontological and epistemological fallacy, despite the fact that Habermas himself proposes that knowledge is related to the idea of interests (Habermas 1992). By interests, Habermas pointed at two different types: the technical/practical interests that seek to understand and control the environment, and the emancipatory interests that seek change, not to understanding other subjects (Habermas 2001). Therefore, claiming that a certain theory is seeking to combine both interests under one umbrella is just preposterous and spurious since they are ontologically and epistemologically contradicting.

In addition, from a postcolonial perspective, besides the former criticism and when it comes to the case of the Arab Uprisings, Linklater's (and the Habermasian project in general) project suffers from additional genuine deficiencies and fallacies. For instance, Linklater starts his model from different epistemological (if not ontological) backgrounds. While he assumes and stresses the democratic and civic culture nature of the Western Liberal societies, as essential components of what he called a universal political community based on dialogue and communicative activity. In contrast, when comparing with the Arab society, which constitutes different social, economic and political bases. The Arab world is tribal, patriarch, authoritarian system of power. Away from the orientalist, exceptionalism and positivist perspectives on the Arab World and the Islamic Middle East in general, this region is structurally diverse from Western values and norms. It has different types of communicative and verbal civic communication that not necessarily contradict or reverse the Western-Liberal norms that Linklater exclusively depends on in his project. Such ontological and *epistemological* prejudices make his project reductionist and do not represent other cultures' values and norms that universal projects should be (Said 1994, Fierke and Jabri 2019, Acharya 2018, Acharya and Buzan 2019).

The Eurocentric-Capitalist Fallacy

Not only critical international relations theory which had been accused of being Eurocentric, but since the early Frankfurt school sociological works were, According to Brincat, "problematically confined to the examination of Euro and state-centric possibilities for emancipation" (Brincat 2012: 219). In fact, and despite all efforts of the so-called anticolonial, universal, pluralistic and global conversation projects, several leading critical scholars like John Hobson and others, believe that the explanations and illumination of critical school are still suffering from a Eurocentric bias which purports and needed to leave behind (Hobson 2012, 2011, Yalvaç 2015). Further, to overcome this shortcoming, critical school need to rethought and attempts to develop a true global more open, post-Western international relations, and institute different kind of universalism and cosmopolitanism that is based on inclusive perspective that concentrates on

empowering the oppressed (Global South) rather than the powerful and rich North (Jabri 2013, Fierke and Jabri 2019).

Likewise, the Habermasian project suffers from the same fallacy. While this critical direction emphasises on its profound cosmopolitan and universal trendies in order to differentiate itself from the dominant Western IR theories, one of the main 'common' criticism to it is being Eurocentric, where most of its concepts, ideas, and norms (especially notions of emancipation, dialogue, communicative actions, etc) are genuinely originate and a product of European modernity and enlightenment, culturally specific, reflecting only the values of the European enlightenment. According to this skeptical perspective, such deficiencies would establish a problematic universalism that threatens to assimilate and legislate out of existence all significant differences (Hopgood 2000, Inayatullah and Blaney 2004, Fierke and Jabari 2019).

Furthermore, and while many critical theorists believe that the so-called Habermasian-Linklaterian critical project which involves building a global community that institutionalizes respect for the harm principle and grants all human beings the right to express their concerns and fears about injury, vulnerability, and suffering" (Linklater and Suganami 2006: 277), represents a close than ever to the universal model (Shapcott, 2008: 339-340). Critics disagree with such claims, and counter arguing that paradoxically while it claimed to be universal, in essence this project is built on modern and enlighten European ideas and notions such as human rights, institutions and international law. In addition, while this project tries to identify avenues for greater inclusion in international and global decision-making, it did not articulate how to overcome the structural inequality of power between the democratic (North) and Global South, which considers the fundamental restriction that prevents the remedying of 'varieties of avoidable human suffering' characterizing current global relationships (Shapcott 2008: 340-341).

The Modernity-Enlightenment Fallacy

One of the main critics of the Linklater's communicative-based model is that it neglected the concept of the uneven, multilinear, and interactive nature of social development, which failed his model to specifically address the "material prerequisites" (e.g., the substantive levels of political, economic, racial, and gender equality) for "the force of the better argument" to be effective in a dialogic community and "detaches" emancipatory practices from the "material and social" relations of capitalism (Allison 2010: 154). By ignoring such concepts, it is not possible to imagine a dialogue, but takes the form of an uneven and combined development and reflects the Eurocentric bias in Linklater's model (Rosenberg 2006, Yalvaç 2015). According to Alexander Anievas, Linklater's model is "merely states a Euro-centric 'inside-out' bias by attributing the West's development of higher levels of rationalization and morality to its unique ability to learn and borrow from other cultures" (Anievas 2010: 153). Indeed, such criticism makes Linklater's project seems to be 'uncritical political project' or even difficult

to distinguish from other positivist IR analyses such as neoliberalism and constructivism (op, cit: 155, Yalvaç 2015).

Like Habermas, Andrews Linklater starts his project based on a genuine faith in the so-called 'democratic peace' condition that had been established in the Western hemisphere since the end of the Second World War. In the so-called 'Long Peace' order, there are no conflict or military confrontations between the Western powers, who deeply rely on non-coercion means and methods of interaction 'only' with each other and their 'democratic' non-Western allies. Linklater was entirely silent about the conflictual characteristics of several Global South regions such as the Middle East. Likewise, the role of Western powers in sustaining and fuelling these conflicts for decades, and how such intervention has diminished and aborted the possibilities of creating a perpetual condition of dialogue and peace in the region. Instead, Linklater, like others, blame the so-called non-democratic values and norms, and how these communities contradicting the Western norms and that Arabs maybe need to abandon such values and notions that consider the main obstacle that prevents the creation of the so-called dialogical global community. Such chronofetishism and tempocentrism view (to use Hobson's words that refers to a form of ahistoricism in which the present is thought to be explainable by looking only at present causal variables) which claim that European notions and norms such as democracy and dialogue stand as a constant structural condition, which makes the international sphere appears as a continuous, almost static realm, appears Linklater not only of being 'uncritical' but also 'neoliberal', 'neoconservative' if not even 'orientalist' (Hobson 2002, Hobden and Hobson 2010).

According to Hobson, such chronofetishist perspectives, which based on the assumption that the present can adequately be explained only by examining the present, which inherently indicates either bracketing or ignoring the past, create three illusions. First, the reification illusion, where the present is effectively "sealed off" from the past, making it appear as a static, self-constituting, autonomous, and reified entity, thereby obscuring its historical socio-temporal context. Second, the naturalization illusion, where the present is effectively naturalized on the basis that it emerged "spontaneously," thereby obscuring the historical processes of social power, identity/social exclusion, and the norms that constitute the present. Finally, the immutability illusion, where the present is eternalized because it is deemed to be natural and resistant to structural change, thereby obscuring the processes that reconstitute the present as an immanent order of change (Hobson 2002: 6).

The Monologic Nature Fallacy

The Habermasian-Linklaterian model of communicative actions and global political community that based on dialogue and intersubjective understanding between societies on the ground of the so-called widely accepted universal norms and values, suffers from several shortcomings. For instance, Yalvaç pointed at Linklater's model neglects the significant powers differential in the international society which makes negotiation and consensus difficult to achieve. Also,

Linklater's model is noticeably ambiguous and abstract when it comes to what he meant by the type of political activities that required for the sake of the formation of a universal communication community (Yalvaç 2015). Moreover, it is also not clear whether "the discourse ethic" is "always the best, or only, means for achieving transformation, or emancipation in general" (Eckersley 2008: 353).

Linklater ignored the role and the impact of uneven development conditions between the West and the rest of the world, which creates what I called 'the monologic' model of global communicative actions, where the Western democratic societies initiating and conducting dialogue within and among themselves, and not with others. In other words, the so-called Habermasian communicative action in global politics is a conversation with the self, to the mirror, not with others. In fact, the communicative and normative critical project deliberately (despite the Marxist background of both Habermas and Linklater) did not take into consideration the effects of socio-political and socioeconomic underdeveloped conditions in the Arab World and the rest of Global South. Likewise, it overlooked the long historical experience (and still ongoing) of state repression, violence, systematic exclusion, human rights violations, crushing civil society organizations, blocking of public space, and the elimination of any foreseen possibilities of dialogue and non-coercive verbal interactions.

Generally speaking, political repression and uneven economic development reflect not only the main elements that crushed the civic culture that embrace dialogue and democratic communities to emerge in the Arab World and other regions in the Global South, as the Welfare and democratic culture did in the post-1945 Europe and the West in general, but also it makes the dialogue between the North and the Global South is semi-impossible since Linklater and other scholars did not acknowledge and recognize other non-Western cultures and norms, as well as the structural conditions which were not present in such models. Overall, this is deeply ahistorical perspective, where the so-called 'universal' for Linklater and Habermas become only the West (or democratic societies), and the so-called the history of global ideas only reflect and represent the history of Western modernity and enlightenment notions, like the other positivist scholars he criticises them and their projects (Hobson 2002: 3-41).

Instead of calling for changing the international structures of inequality and injustice that inhibit sincere and genuine global conversation and dialogue, Habermas supports the calls of revision approaches that aim to 'fix' these structures. By arguing that, Habermas not only misunderstands the fundamental crisis of the global society and dysfunctional global order, he also misdiagnosed and misidentifying the reasons that aborting the attempts of establishing a successful global/universal dialogue project which Linklater had heralding it.

For example, in order to deal with the problem of democratic deficit of supranational institutions, which is not been filled by some form of transnational democratic process (Habermas 2015: 52) or been able to replace it with another radical alternatives, due to the persisting weakness of cosmopolitan solidarity that makes it difficult for the conventional model of democratic sovereignty based on a collective, self-legislative body to be 'scaled-up' beyond the national or regional level (Fine and Smith, 2003: 473–475; Schmid, 2018). Habermas called to replace

the existing dysfunction global system with what he called a more nuanced and realistic model of a 'decentred world society as a multilevel system' that builds on and reforms existing global institutions (Habermas 2006: 135–136, Schmid 2018). However, paradoxically, misdiagnosing the real crisis of the current dysfunctional global system mislead Habermas to foolishly indicate that the alternative world society is nothing but the same unfit and deteriorated European Union. Habermas believes that despite the existential crisis of the EU (not only because of the Brexit, but since the financial crisis of 2008) it still constitutes the suitable example of politics following the lead of the market in constructing supranational political agencies (Habermas 1998: 123), where the 'democratic' and institutional bodies will play a veritable 'civilising role' that of providing a 'test' of the 'will and capability of citizens, of political elites and the mass media' (Habermas 2012: 11-12). Moreover, Habermas claims that the existence of the EU represents 'a point of departure for the development of a transnational network of regimes that together could pursue a world domestic policy, even in the absence of a world government' (Habermas 2003: 96 Schmid 2018). With the completion of the Brexit deal, the consistently rising of ultra-right-wing parties inside Europe and cross the Atlantic on the one hand, and the increasing power, both domestically and internationally, of fascist and hyper-nationalist regimes in countries like India, Russia and China, The Habermasian bet on undermined Europe to save the world is just another mirage, if not nightmare.

Conclusion

In order to understand the current wave of democratization in the Arab World – regardless of the setbacks that have occurred - the study indicates that scholars should be moving away from the positivist (state-centric) perspectives that define international relations and foreign policy in terms of the pursuit of achieving "national" interests, which is defined in terms of power by sovereign states, and towards a more critical approach that places human-beings at the centre of analysis. A critical or emancipation-based perspective, in turn, claims that international relations should become a tool to achieve people's ends in ending fear, oppression and expanding freedom and justice beyond sovereign territories. Interestingly, this is done not only by the state but through other non-state actors, such as individuals, social movements, and civil society organizations. The emancipation of international politics and foreign policy projects aim to create and establish a "people-centric model" that does not recognize the separation between the internal and external sphere of the state's actions. According to Ole Waever, the territorially defined borders do not apply to foreign policy in today's world, or emancipatory foreign policy in particular (Waever, 1994). For countries like Germany, 'emancipation' refers to" a new sense of self-esteem, independence, and follow[s] enlightened self-interest" (Forsberg 2005). For China, emancipation is considered an anti-hegemonic attitude (Yilmaz 2016), and for other countries such as Egypt and the Arab Uprising countries, the claims of emancipation during the first wave of the Uprising of 2011 meant both of these understandings, including

seeking independence, countering hegemony and restoring national self-esteem. Therefore, and since emancipation meant freeing of people from physical and human constraints (e.g., war, poverty, oppression, and other material and normative constraints) which prevent them from carrying out what they would freely choose to do, it also means that scholars should first concentrate on individual human beings, not the state, and secondly on the achieving of people's ends and not those of the state.

Interestingly, critical theory is not the only approach that emphasis the notion of emancipation and freedom. Liberalism is also built on similar ideas. However, while critical theory shares some traditions and practices of freedom and equality with liberalism school, its boundaries and prospects are wider than the liberalism. In other words, while Liberalism is largely seeking to achieve individual freedom, critical theory is seeking for human emancipation. Furthermore, and in spite the fact that liberalism (and neoliberal institutionalism in particular) has a purported interest in bringing about change, its presuppositions are also having a purported interest in bringing about change (Keohane 1988). In other words, the neoliberal change is limited within the system, and not addressed to questioning the world state system itself, which means justifying the Western domination of non-European societies and keeping the order. Subsequently, it likewise displays a system-maintenance bias, which means that type of change is profoundly not radical or structural. Hence, this change, as Shapcott stated, become "more predictable but still not subject to critical reasoning" (Shapcott 2008: 332-333, Teschke 2014: 28, Hobson 2007).

On the contrary to such an adaptive-functionalist perspective, which in essence reflects and represents a latent proclaim to preserve and sustain the status quo of inequality and exclusion, critical school propositions call for change the global system itself. For instance, in contrast with Neo-liberal institutionalists, Cox persuasively argued that global hegemonic class is disseminating and consolidates its ideology through different international organizations and bodies (e.g., the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, G8, and United Nations) that expand and manifesting its domination by drafting global norms, controlling global structures of accumulation, division of labour, and the internationalization of production that enforcing the structural unequal development and complex dependency between the North and the Global South (or the core and periphery in other words). In turn, this leads to empowering transnational forces (e.g., MNCs and TNCs) that accelerates and catalysing the formation of a nascent global civil society that also exert pressure on peripheries states to adopt the accumulation strategies of the hegemonic state/s. In the final analysis, these weak states become what Cox called "transmission belts" between the hegemon block/s and their domestic societies. Which could result to the resurgence of resistance and creating new forces for anti-hegemonic struggles against such structures, or becoming a part of the hegemonies world system such as the 19th century Pax Britannica and the 20th and 21st centuries of Pax Americana (Cox 1989, Van der Pijl 1984, Gill and Law 1988; Gill 1993, Yalvaç 2015).

Despite the fact that Arab Uprising(s) without a question was a genuine emancipatory attempt, in a Linklaterian view. Andrew Linklater defines

emancipation as "powers of self-determination and the ability of initiate actions" (Linklater 1990: 135), while Richard Ashley defines it as: "[A]n interest in securing freedom from unacknowledged constraints, relations of domination, and conditions of distorted communication and understanding that deny humans the capacity to make their future through full will and consciousness" (Ashley, 1981: 227). Another scholar defines it as: "autonomy, freedom of action, security and freedom of individuals and nations from domineering and repressive structures and elimination of restrictive social grounds and contexts which are conducive to injustice, and redefinition and reconfiguration of justice and equality in the international system" (Abadi 2008). According to these definitions, it is clear that emancipation is considered a revolutionary-revisionist concept that requires not only changing the domestic and internal structures of oppression, but also changing the international structures of power. This is due to the fact that norms and values, and the hegemonic and oppressive structures they create, are the main sources of injustice, inequality, and authoritarianism in the world.

Consequently, critical theory projects in the field of IR traditionally – in principles – is consider the closest theoretical approach to address the Arab Uprising(s), due to the fact that it has been perceived to be an instrument of the powerless to advance more equitable types of global relations, by illuminating and highlighting possibilities of liberation and emancipation. Nevertheless, its presence in the mainstream debates and spaces is still marginalised. Therefore, and in order to push its research agenda further to occupied wider space, the study suggests that the proponents of the critical theory of IR should re-evaluate the Eurocentric and Enlightenment-based-Modernity foundations which cause several cognitive fallacies, as the study demonstrated. Moreover, some critical theorists also need to abandon their dogmatic, anti-academicism, and cognitive supremacist claims, and become less demagogic, sophistry, elitists, and isolationists, and become more inclusive and open to the contributions of Southern voices.

In fact, such deficiencies (and others) have been transcended, penetrated and proliferate in most of the critical studies, in which it led to making critical theory being marginalised and unwelcome within academia and among the young generations of IR scholars, outside the isolated micro archipelagic European academic elitist cycles. Finally, the necessity of departing its ivory tower and transform its theoretical claims and statements into practical projects and more related to the *realworld* (not the *lifeworld*), which will allow them not only to engage but also joining the masses in their struggle and fighting for emancipation. By doing that, the critical theory of IR will be able to change not only the field of IR but the real-world outcomes as well.

To sum up, since the aim of critical theory is "to understand how these (realistic) socially created constraints upon the freedom of human subjects (emancipation) could be reduced and, where possible, eliminated" (Linklater 1990: 1), and by focusing on Critical IR studies of foreign policy, revolution, and the correlations between a failed revolution and the inability to achieve human emancipation, this study tried to explore the main reasons behind the failure of emancipatory projects in non-Western societies, by showing and explaining how anti-progressive countries used and employed emancipation as an instrument to

prevent it. These counter-revolutionary and anti-emancipatory policies and projects have been drafted, supported, and designed by problem-solving theories. These theories must be tamed and challenged. In the end, the previous analysis expectantly highlighted the theoretical and practical potentialities diverse critical theories of IR enjoy, which could accelerate the realizing of these objectives, only if critical theorists overcome the fallacies and deficiencies the study has indicated and specified.

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Indigenous Women Social Entrepreneurship; Poverty Alleviation Tool Used by Development NGOs in Ghana

By Seth Amofah[*]

This research paper examines the role of Non-Government Organizations (NGO) in the use of indigenous women social entrepreneurship as a means of reducing poverty in Northern Ghana. The study focused on an Estonian NGO working in significantly poor-rural districts of Northern Ghana. The study employed case study design where face to face semi-structures interviews were used to gather data from local women entrepreneurs, NGO staff and local government officials. A sample of twenty-one (21) respondents was gathered purposefully to achieve the aim of the study. The study found out that, most poor communities in Northern Ghana are endowed with resources needed for production. What are however lacked are managerial training, financial and technical support as well as market access. Development NGOs connect indigenous resources such as raw materials, human capital and social capital together through provision of equipment and skills training to produce internationally certified products for both local and international market. The study found out that producing local products for international market increases the rate of poverty alleviation since many local people get involved and the financial returns is higher than producing for the local market. The study also identified the creation of new macro-micro international relations between the NGO's home country and the indigenous communities.

Keywords: *Indigenous Social entrepreneurship, Women, Poverty alleviation, Development NGOs, Northern Ghana.*

Introduction

This paper explores the contribution of non-government organizations (NGO) through indigenous social enterprises in local communities to reduce poverty in Northern Ghana. The case study of rural communities with indigenous enterprises with significant support from an Estonian NGO have been investigated and the results have been discussed in this paper. Social entrepreneurship has proven to be one of the best ways to solve long existing and difficult problems (Kostetska and Berezyak 2014, Ribeiro-Sorino and Mas-Verdu 2015, United Nations Development Project 2006). The African Development Bank also admits that for sub-Sahara Africa to achieve and maintain sustainable development, entrepreneurship needs to be accorded critical attention (AfDB 2016, Philips and Knowles 2012).

The subject of indigenous entrepreneurship in Ghana has been part of literature since the late 1960s. Researchers such as Poly Hill (1970), Roger Genoud (1969) and Keith Hart (1973) have written about the socio-economic

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influence of entrepreneurship in Ghana. The relationship between poverty in indigenous communities and the role of entrepreneurship has however received less attention in literature over the years. People in communities that could be classified as indigenous have experienced acute poverty, low literacy rate and less quality if not non-existent health care (Peredo et al. 2004, Briggs 2009). Most rural communities in Northern Ghana could be counted as indigenous if Foley's (2003) definition is used. According to Foley (2003), an indigenous person is someone who is the original or foremost owner of resources within its geographical area due to the fact that they come from the area and have accepted values of the people over many generations without much external meddling or adulteration. Most communities in northern Ghana are still dwelled by people whose forefathers started the settlements. Their housing, languages or dialects, food, occupations and other cultural values are still kept the same way over the years.

Northern Ghana has consistently been the poorest part of the country over the years, though the incidence of poverty in the south has been reducing steadily. Between 1991/1992 and 2005/2006, poverty rate fell from 52% to 28.5% (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS] 2007). This has however shown a continuous trend of income inequality between rural-urban and north-south. GSS (2014:14), Cooke et al (2016) estimate that more than half (52.7%) of the national population counted among the extreme poor category are in the northern regions. In its recent report, the Ghana Living Standards Survey [GLSS] 7 (GSS, 2018) placed the poverty population of north at 50.2%. Poverty is very high whereas education and literacy rate are low as compared to the national average. Rural areas share significant majority of the northern poor. Rural population in the north alone accounts for about 41% of the total poverty incidence in the entire country (GSS 2014). This confirms Peredo et al. (2004) assertion on the relationship between indigenous communities and poverty.

Many indigenes of the north, especially in the rural areas find it convenient to travel to southern cities and towns in pursuit of labourer and other menial jobs rather than to stay in their homes and suffer from poverty. A typical example is found in Hart (1973) study of Frafra people who migrated from the Upper East region of the north to the national capital in the south to seek better jobs. The findings of that study, though almost half a century ago, is still relevant today because the pace of north-south migration is still dominant due to the unchanging poverty situation. This draws research attention to the use of the resources of the north for the betterment of the indigenes. Northern Ghana is endowed with natural resources and dedicated citizens. It is therefore mind boggling why poverty situation in the area is so dominant and almost chronic.

The study area for this paper, the Nabdam District in the Upper East Region of Ghana, is a 100% rural municipality. Rural district or municipality means that all towns and communities within the district have a population less than five thousand inhabitants and lack major infrastructure such as motorable roads, portable water, electricity, good schools and health centers. The main occupation of residence in the study area are crop farming, animal rearing, shear butter extraction, production of handicraft like straw baskets and leather bags as well as petty trading. The petty trading is done either in small makeshift shops in front of

housing near main roads or on market days which rotate every three days in two main towns, Kongo and Nangodi. Trading items are usually from small scale farms, local handmade products and some products imported from the south. The district authority therefore receives less taxes from the villages because the people are engaged in less profitable economic activities. This results in a cycle of poorly funded local authority who provide less social support. This consequently creates poor government with citizens drenched in poverty. In bridging the funding gap of the district government, reliance on grants and donation form over 80% of the assembly's budget (Nabdam District Assembly 2016: 15).

To reduce prevalence of poverty, majority of NGOs and aid organizations settle in the regions of the north (Adjei Osei-Wusu et al. 2012). The programs launched by these organizations include agricultural practice improvements, vocational training, non-formal and formal education supplements and micro-finance schemes. This study focuses on development activities of an Estonian NGO, MTÜ Mondo [NGO Mondo], which engages in economic empowerment of local women in entrepreneurship in the Nabdam District. Mondo is the largest and oldest Estonian NGO. It is the largest because it is the only NGO in Estonia with more operational countries, and projects and it is the oldest because it is the only active Estonian NGO that has been in existence since 2007 and still counting. Mondo's development cooperation focuses on education and economic empowerment of women and disabled people. Mondo works in countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Afganistan, Burma, Jordan, Ukraine, Estonia and Ghana.

In order to reduce poverty in the northern regions of Ghana and to ensure sustainable development, the use of local resources could not be overlooked. Various studies in poverty reduction in Ghana have concentrated less on the contribution of indigenous businesses ran by local women with the support of development NGOs. This paper therefore researches how NGOs support could be used to reduce poverty situation in Northern Ghana through improving indigenous women entrepreneurship. This research is timely because it falls within current study trend in the field across Africa. For instance, Gichuki et al (2014) and Eyben et al (2008) have acknowledged that most developing countries have had an astronomical increase of women engaging in entrepreneurship. If entrepreneurship is a panacea for poverty alleviation in the developing world (United Nation Development Project 2006) and women are increasing in the number of entrepreneurs in developing countries like Ghana, then this study seeks to examine the role of NGOs in strengthening indigenous women entrepreneurship in Northern Ghana and how it helps to reduce poverty in communities.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section defines the main theoretical themes of the study. The study builds its framework from social innovation theory, the relationship between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship as well as the topic of women in entrepreneurship. These theories have been used because of the relationship between social innovation and social entrepreneurship theories which set to effect

changes in society. The section sets the ground for the empirical analysis and discussion.

Social Innovation Theory

Social innovation theory has been defined differently by various theorist and academicians. Davies and Simon (2013) define the concept of social innovation as a newly evolved idea that creates products, services or systems and procedures that is used to satisfy social need and at the same time, bridge social relations and collaborations in the process. On similar grounds, Conrad (2015) has defined social innovation as a process of collaborative action which involves co-creation and co-production among stakeholders such as community members and institutions to tackle unsolved social problems. This is in line with Lessa et al. (2016) explanation that social innovation is the creation of products that aspire to meet and satisfy necessities of society through societal creativity. The authors point out the factor of societal needs and satisfaction through collaboration. Social innovation is therefore the use of multiple approaches to mitigate societal challenges and ensure satisfaction at the end. Therefore, social innovation would have no value if it does not result in impacting on society. The impact should be an improvement on existing solutions, if any, for the same or similar social challenge (Gilwald 2002). For its application in everyday life, Davies and Simon (2013) through the TEPSIE research program have claimed that the theory could be applied in product development, social entrepreneurship and new models of local economic development.

The theory could be well understood when it is evaluated in different frameworks. Tardif and Harrison (2005) and Loogma et al (2012) frameworks for social impact analysis have been examined to form a theoretical framework for this study. To start with, Tardif and Harrison (2005) CRISES framework provides five dimensions of social innovation. These are transformation, innovation, innovative character, actors and process. Transformative trait in the framework combines micro and macro factors to influence any initiative. Reducing poverty requires creative actors to respond with innovative strategies that will result in greater impact than previously implemented projects. The actor dimension is the people involved in the social innovations. Besides, this dimension also focuses on the collective learning process that evolves among the actors. Tardif and Harrison believe that starting and keeping an innovation on its wheel is a process that includes the dynamic, complication and vague relationships between actors and institutions.

Loogma, Tafel-Viia, and Ümarik (2012) on the other hand, also analyse social innovation through intersected characteristics: triggers, goals, mechanism, implications and social gain. Triggers are the social need of the innovation, in this case, the need to nurture indigenous enterprises to fight poverty (the "why should there be an action?") Secondly, the goals mean the result that society wants to achieve ("what is the expected result of the action?") Thirdly, the mechanism of social change is the strategy or the process that leads to social innovations; ("what

should be done at which time in order to achieve the expected outcomes?") Fourthly, the social implications looks into how the specific action will affect the societal outlook. Finally, the social gain or social benefit is considered as the impact of social innovations and its sustainability among society. Key features for social innovation have been compared in Table 1 below.

Table 1. *Social Innovation Frameworks*

Tardif and Harrison (2005)	Loogma, Tafel-Viia, & Ümarik (2013)
Transformation (the context/the cause)	Triggers (the need to change)
Innovative Character (the novel action)	Goals (the purpose)
Innovation (the scale)	Implications (the outcome)
The Actor (the people involve)	Social Gain (the impact)
Process (the coordination and the restriction)	Mechanism (the process)

Source: Adopted from Tardif and Harrison (2005) and Loogma et al (2013).

The social innovation framework from both authors have many things in common. From Table 1 above, credence has been placed on factors that call for the commencement of the innovation. In most cases, the need arise from persistent social problem that affect many people. Both frameworks also acknowledge the process of effecting the change. The process must be traceable and repeatable in order to fit into the framework. Therefore, social innovation from an indigenous entrepreneurship approach with an idea of reducing poverty at the end must have a process that goes beyond the everyday local way of doing the same thing. There is the need for record keeping and other mechanisms that will make an activity demonstrable to or implemented by other community members. The distinction between the two frameworks is that, Tardif and Harrison (2005) emphasize more on innovative players who are in the whole process whereas Loogma et al (2013) focus on the general benefit of the innovative process for the society.

Social entrepreneurship as a vehicle for poverty alleviation could take pieces from each of the frameworks discussed above. This study takes a holistic approach in bringing innovative indigenous ideas and resources together with development actors (NGO) to produce a bigger social impact (poverty reduction). This paper has adopted triggers, goals, actors, mechanisms, implications and social gain as its main framework based on existing theoretical frameworks.

Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has become a constant factor in many social change discourse in social science research. However, the definition of entrepreneurship has become fluid. The definition dates back to Schumpter (1934) who described entrepreneurs as people who use innovation to improve market changes by the introduction of new improved goods and opening new markets. The same definition could be applied to the activity itself, entrepreneurship. Kao and Stevenson (1985) have defined entrepreneurship as the attempt to create value through harnessing available business opportunities. Opportunity recognition and

bearing the risk in order to receive certain type of rewards are the reasons to run entrepreneurship.

Introducing 'social' before 'entrepreneurship' muddies the understanding of the definition. Mair and Marti (2005) have argued that social entrepreneurship is often phenomenon-driven. Researchers (Dees 1998, Brinckerhoff 2009, Zahra et al. 2008, Thompson et al. 2000, Abu-Saifan 2012) have highlighted key traits of social entrepreneurship. One of the elements is taking reasonable risk on behalf of a bigger population (Brinckerhoff, 2009). Zahra et al. (2008) hammer on opportunity-taking characteristics whereas Dees (1998) emphasizes on traits such as creating social value, serving larger societal good through innovation and being accountable to a bigger community.

There are common yet differences in the definitions of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. In analysing the definitions of both entrepreneurship and the one prefixed with social, common characteristic include innovations, dedication, opportunity-taking, commitment and initiative taking. These features run for all sort of entrepreneurship driven activities. However, if the main aim of the entrepreneurship is focused on making more social impact (Loogma et al. 2012), then there should be social value creation, accountability, social alertness, change agents, community engagement and the vision to see better future.

For the purpose of this study, Abu-Saifan's (2012) definition somehow best describes the kind of social entrepreneurship that goes on in Northern Ghana. Abu-Saifan defines social entrepreneurship as "a mission driven by individual[s] who use[s] a set of entrepreneurial behaviours to deliver a social value to the less privileged, through an entrepreneurially oriented entity that is self-sufficient or sustainable". The main features of this definition are the driving forces of the activities, work with entrepreneurial minded organization and sense of independence to attain the expected social gain.

Women in Indigenous Entrepreneurship in Africa

Entrepreneurship has become an attractive research field across Africa over the last two decades. Dzisi (2008) studied women in entrepreneurship in southern Ghana. Bekele and Worku (2008) investigated the survival and viability of Ethiopian women in micro, small and medium enterprises. Briggs (2009) researched factors affecting indigenous entrepreneurship in Uganda over a six year period. Gichuki et al (2014) have also examined the performance of women owned businesses and their access to credit from village savings and credit associations in Kenya. In another example from Zimbabwe, Maphosa (1998) has researched the sociology of indigenous entrepreneurship in that country.

Entrepreneurship could be divided into two components; the enterprise and the entrepreneur (Mohanty 2006). In the views of Mohanty, the enterprise is an object and the entrepreneur is the one who nurtures the enterprise by adding value to already existing resources for societal use with a vison for growth, committing to the cause of change and mobilizing resources to effect the change. For indigenous entrepreneurship to succeed, Briggs (2008) advocates that it should in itself be able to serve as a role model and mentor for other prospective enterprises

and also become a reinventing wheel for strengthening income generating products for reviving economic conditions of local communities. Briggs (2008) further raises a point that for the direct effect of indigenous entrepreneurship, there must be the existence of specific factors such as political environment, economic situation, socio-cultural elements, environment, legal systems and technology. The role of these factors could be cemented by the long term capacity building programs of entrepreneurs, recognition from government agencies, ease at accessing credit from lending institutions, and partnering with development agencies.

Placing indigenous entrepreneurship in theoretical perspective, Hills (1970) has defined indigenous enterprises as those *"with such economic activities as the production of /../ cash crops, subsistence farming, cattle raising, fishing /.../, internal trading, transportation /./ indigenous and credit-granting systems…"* (p. 3). The role of women in most of these indigenous businesses in Ghana and other West African countries are significant. The socio-cultural structure of most West African countries place women in the core of businesses though they have to hide behind their men to execute them. In agricultural production, even though women may not own their own land due to culture and customary constraints, they are mostly the visible people in the cultivation, harvesting and marketing of the produce. Therefore, Hills' indigenous economic terminology for West Africa cannot be complete without discussing the role of women in the entire process.

The role of women in growing family and local businesses have been very significant in many Ghanaian cultures. Adom and Asare-Yeboa (2016) evaluated the human capital readiness of women in entrepreneurship in Ghana. They concluded that most female entrepreneurs have less education and are also lower on the social structure in the indigenous socio-political system. These female entrepreneurs however accumulate educational qualities in the practice they find themselves. Their research discovered that, most of these social entrepreneurs use 'try and error' from everyday transactions and activities to gain experience in their work. Dzisi (2008) found same in her study of indigenous women in southern Ghana. In a study of the Nabdam District of Northern Ghana for example, Anambane and Adom (2018) discovered that the role of cultural practices on women in social entrepreneurship is special in the viability of the enterprise. The general conclusion is that entrepreneurship has become the reserve of non-educated women in rural communities across Africa (Bekele and Worku 2008; Dzisi 2008; Anambele and Adom 2018). The educational levels therefore influence which kind of activity the practitioners engage in. There is higher tendency for less educated women to invest their time and resources in locally sourced businesses because they will not have much challenges adapting. Most indigenous businesses end up producing the same and similar products like other household in the same community.

The theory of social innovation is diagnosed and implemented in order to fix significant social problems. Anambane and Adom (2018) have reiterated the contribution of women entrepreneurship to their societies, whether educated or not. Bekele and Worku (2008) admit that women businesses also serve as means of livelihood for majority of impoverished rural and urban dwellers who attract

little support. They assert that, notwithstanding their challenges, indigenous women entrepreneurs are more profitable to their families. Therefore, if there are more women engaged in social businesses, then there is higher chances of causing social change.

The effect made by indigenous women entrepreneurs are challenged by many factors. In their research of businesses owned and ran by women in Ethiopia, Bekele and Worku (2008) found out that women entrepreneurs are 2.3 times likely to fail as compared to their male counterparts. Some of the causes of the challenges remarked by researches are lack of technical knowhow and lack of business management training. In a similar study of challenges facing indigenous entrepreneurship in Uganda, Briggs (2009) claimed that over 70% of indigenous entrepreneurs acknowledge business skills and experience as constraint after access to funding. In this sense, most indigenous entrepreneurs have gone beyond attributing their failures and challenges only to financial and material factors. Human development and business knowledge have consistently been seen as deficiency to social entrepreneurship. Among other locally sourced support, the support of external bodies would be required in diverse ways to ensure growth and subsequent sustainability. The contribution of international development organizations which NGOs form a bigger size, could be used to boost indigenous social initiatives. Hill (1970) propagated that since western economic systems do not exist in developing countries especially in rural areas, he recommends export of management skills from the developed world to engage themselves in development interventions in entrepreneurship. Therefore, this study looks into NGO Mondo's response to this call in reducing poverty through social entrepreneurship initiatives started and operated by local women.

Methodology

The study focuses on NGO involvement in indigenous women businesses that are driven at reducing poverty and improving quality of life. Nabdam District is one of the local authorities in the Upper east region with a dependency ratio of 91% and illiteracy rate more than 65% (Nabdam District Assembly, 2016). Respondents in the study were purposefully sampled from locals living and working on projects directly connected to NGO interventions in the district. The social entrepreneurs were local shea butter makers and basket weavers who receive diverse forms of support from NGO Mondo. The heads of the local institutions related to poverty reduction and social welfare of the people were also involved in this study. Finally, staff and management members of the NGO being investigated were also interviewed for their input into the research.

The study used qualitative case study design. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews (Cresswell 2009) conducted with women entrepreneurs in the Nabdam District from June to July 2018 and staff of NGO Mondo in Tallinn, Estonia in September 2018. In all, twenty-one (21) respondents participated in the study. The selected participants were included in the study because they had all been part of the poverty alleviation activities of NGO Mondo either as support

beneficiaries, collaborators or the NGO's workers assigned to the Ghana operations. They were deemed as reliable and competent source of data for the study.

According to Saldaña (2009), data collection and analysis are not exclusive of each other. Therefore, the time between when data is collected through an interview and when it is analysed stand blurred. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed; afterwards, there was thorough read through for coding purposes and also to identify mistakes to ensure validity of the data. All the gathered data were coded based on Charmaz's (2006) constructivist grounded theory principles. During the analysis process, similar responses were grouped into themes and common themes merged together. The codes were intended to identify themes associated with the research through open coding. New themes that came up were sub-coded under the main questions and were finally grouped for easy referencing and cross referencing analysis in relation to the main questions and objectives by using key words. The themes were interpreted using hermeneutic approach (Newman 2014). Hermeneutics permit interpretation of text into details without losing its relevance.

Findings

Running Indigenous Businesses in Northern Ghana and its Challenges

The study identified major challenges of doing locally driven economic ventures in the study area. One major challenge identified was the sizes of the businesses. All the women entrepreneurs who participated in the study acknowledge that though they were all into one sort of business or another, their businesses were very small in size and in terms of working capital. The majority of them were only working with resources they could assemble from their homes, farms or from their families. Women who sold on the market usually sold produce from the farms or items they had produced from materials collected from their farms such as shear nuts, fire wood, vegetables, straw, livestock and poultry.

The small sized enterprises were as the results of less or no working capital. Access to funds from financial institutions and credit union is almost nil in the Nabdam District. Unlike Ethiopia where Bekele and Worku (2008) found out that access to finance was largely against women, in the Nabdam District, women and men are both disadvantaged. The entire Nadbam District had no bank nor savings and loans institution that could provide credit facility. In this case, if any of the local people wanted credit facility to expand and grow their businesses then they would have to travel to other districts for same. Even if anyone tried this option, they would not be able to meet the collateral or security guarantee needed for such a loan. Therefore, farmers remain within small scale as their family size could and climatic conditions would permit since they cannot afford fertilizers and other farm inputs. Local shear butter extractors also relied only on nuts they could collect from their farms or backyards for processing. Since most households produce the same kind of products, there is always less raw material for each

producer. This results in less production per head and less income after sales. This creates a cycle of household poverty across the district.

Furthermore, quality of products and access to market were repetitive challenge faced by women entrepreneurs. Most people in the district are less educated. They only apply the knowledge acquired from their parents at home in producing or trading in the products. The traditional way of production is an advantageous value for the products but lack of modernized skills to improve its quality make it attract less price or market value. Also, the rural nature of the district makes it less accessible to potential business partners from other parts of the country. The few buyers who make it to local markets pay less for the products. Women in this study bemoaned the difficulty to sell products below its production cost considering intensive labor power invested in it. They are however left with limited options to sell to the buyers or send it to the regional capital, Bolgatanga market about 25 kilometer away with anticipation of getting better prices. The latter option comes with extra cost for transportation, and selling at higher prices is not guaranteed.

Interviews with women entrepreneurs and local government and institutional heads produced a consistent trace of distress in doing any kind of business in most part of the study area. Human and natural resources are available in bountiful folds. There is however a wider absence of coordinated development plans or initiatives to overturn the poverty spell in the communities. Institutions are trapped in limited options and people are blocked by low education and financial strength. This has resorted in duplication of substandard household businesses that yield close to nothing for family support.

What NGOs do better with Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs?

In order to ascertain the real impact of international development NGOs' participation in indigenous women social entrepreneurship as a vehicle to reduce poverty in northern Ghana, the study inquired about the work done by NGO Mondo in particular in the study area. The NGO's management members and participants in the Nabdam District were interviewed about what have been done to improve the poverty prevalence in the district through indigenous entrepreneurship. Mondo's activities with local women entrepreneurs in Nabdam District focuses on shear butter extractors and basket weavers.

Respondents from Mondo provided time series data of different skilled people they had sent from Estonia to Ghana to support in training local women in modernizing their businesses since 2013. One group of personnel sent were designers who trained the basket weavers in how to blend different colours to make attractive baskets which are different from the traditional raw straw coloured baskets produced within the area. The NGO also supported the shear butter makers to join a professional shear butter makers association, "Shear Network". This group provided professional training workshops for the women over a period of time. These trainings and skill transfers were set to make the indigenous women entrepreneur groups outstanding in their work in order for them to be competitive on the market. The initial training is also to enable the women to teach new

entrants into the group. The interviews together with field observations revealed that the NGO has provided funding support for the entrepreneurs' training workshops and production equipment. Mondo officials made it clear that they have created a social enterprise unit in their Tallinn Office where they market products produced by people they support around their operational countries. Then send the proceeds back to the same communities to expand their operations. Therefore, the NGO provides European market access for the indigenous entrepreneurs. In order for the products to meet international standards, the NGO supported the shear butter producers to get quality certification from Ghana's Food and Drugs Authority. With this certificate, women working with Mondo are able to market their shear butter anywhere in the world.

The impact of the NGO seems appreciated quickly by the participating entrepreneurs.

> "…we now have one hundred women working here at the shear butter shed. Most of us are widows. [….] You see quick improvement in the life of any woman who joins to work with us here […….] We gain the respect of the community all of a sudden […] and our children can proudly go back to school" (42 year old member of the shear butter extractors association in Kongo).

Respondents acknowledge the role of the NGO in creating bigger teams (actors) by encouraging individual women to come together to form a group in order to produce more products. The shear butter makers were a group of one hundred women and the basket weavers were thirty-six. These women rely on the social capital and the financial benefit to improve their lives. Community members begin to consider the poor women engaged in the social business as the new middle class and address them as such. It was visible through the research that most of the participants valued the social recognition as important as the financial benefits they got from it. This was profound when some of them spoke about meeting with the Estonian Prime Minister in November 2017 in Accra, the national capital. A participant had the following to say:

> "When they (Mondo) told us we were going to Accra to meet the Estonian Prime Minister, I didn't believe. I have never met the President of Ghana so how can I meet the one from another country. I didn't believe until I was on the plane and when we finally met him in Accra. That was my first time on an airplane and my first time of going to Accra. [..] We gave him a specially made basket and the shear butter people gave him some of the shear butter […]. We spoke about our business here in the village and the work Mondo has been doing with us to him. [……] He assured to support us more" (58 year old basket weaver).

Indigenous women entrepreneurs through the support of the NGO had broken the barriers of remaining in a remote village to meeting the premier of a country due to working relationship they had built with an organization from that country (Estonia). The assurances made by the Prime Minister could be an affirmation of satisfaction of the project done by the women, hence, his government's willingness to continue to provide funding to Mondo to continue its international development activities. For the women, the subject of poverty goes beyond the use of United

Nations 2 US Dollar per day benchmark (Gordon, 2005). Inclusion and social recognition is a major part of noticing poverty. Women entrepreneurs supported by Mondo have obtain the recognition, hence could be said to be fighting poverty in that regard.

Discussions

Abundant Indigenous Resources without Structures for Innovation

Analyzing data from the field revealed a clear phenomenon of untapped resources that has led to a severe poverty situation in most parts of Northern Ghana. Most women in the area have recognized the triggers (Loogma et al. 2012), the first step to social innovation. The women are quick to find the need to take action in building the fortunes of their homes, especially, when most of them are widowed and the entire household responsibilities fall on them. The cause to effect transformation through the use of local entrepreneurship arises from this need. There is however a disjoint in the remainder of the innovation process towards achieving social impact at the end. In the frameworks of social innovations and social entrepreneurship, the end results should be a solution, or at least, a partial solution to a social problem. There is no effective social good if the process is not well organized. The kind of entrepreneurship practiced by women of Nabdam falls into the one described by Hall (1970). In his conclusion, Hall made a strong case that, starting an indigenous enterprise is not enough to cause change. It requires some sort of modernization which would not necessarily change the indigenousness but lead to bigger impact in development.

Indigenous women entrepreneurs have abundant natural raw materials within their localities. They also have the people, the labour, for production. These two factors of production alone have not been able to make significant changes for many years. Anytime entrepreneurship focuses only on raw materials without adding much value to the production process, they get less profit. This is what has been the case of indigenous women entrepreneurs of Northern Ghana. The study found out that sociological factors such as networks, role models and teams that will push indigenous women entrepreneurs of the north are nonexistent. This therefore reduces their innovation to achieve more, take risk and to be more creative.

Furthermore, the results showed a broken implementation plan to reduce poverty. State institutions and organizations lack proper support plan for indigenes who want to work with local resources. The people themselves are not skilled and resourced enough to create incubators or attract credit from financial institutions. Therefore, the study realized that without an external intervention as proposed by Hall (1970) or a pragmatic approach from the local entrepreneurs themselves, the end results of the whole process which is the impact of reducing poverty, will be difficult to achieve. This study supports the former, involvement of external bodies like NGOs since indigenous people and the local government have failed to make

impact over the years. This however will take away the self-sufficiency factor of Abu-Saifan's (2012) definition of social entrepreneurship.

NGOs Support as binding Agent for Local Entrepreneurship Growth

The success or otherwise of an indigenous entrepreneurial venture largely depends on the traits of the entrepreneurs and existing environmental conditions (Briggs 2008). What was obviously lacking for local entrepreneurs being it handicraft makers, cosmetics producers or shop keepers, was business management skills. The groups of women entrepreneurs have shown limited or non-exiting business management characteristics. This could be attributed to the educational system and cultural structure. Most girls and for that matter women, in the north have little or no education. Therefore, their entrepreneurial skills hinge on passed-on traditions. The characteristics of social entrepreneurs (Abu-Saifan 2012) are blurred by the informal nature of the Ghanaian society (Hart 1973) and higher illiteracy rate. Moreover, the cultural system of the north that places women below the social ladder, sometimes even below their male children, makes it difficult for them to have the confidence in themselves.

What NGO Mondo has been successful at has been to support indigenous women businesses to form teams to make them competitive, identify innovative opportunities to add value to their products, expand their market networks, acquire business management skills, and to acquire social and institutional recognition. The NGO has tried in the process not to take the lead role but to follow the local women. Mondo has followed the same triggers that made the women begin their respective businesses in the first place. The main objective has been to improve their lives and that of their children. This study has identified that the NGO has used different measures to push the women to do more. For instance, though Mondo is not the entrepreneur in this study, they prompt the women to chase social value creation as proposed by Abu-Saifan (2012). Also, the NGO has used its international experience and influence to broaden the meaning of leadership for the women. Traditionally, women are supposed to wait for their men before they take any move. Through the growth of their entrepreneurship skills, however, they have become recognized opinion and mission leaders themselves. They have influenced the trajectories and hierarchies of their families.

Furthermore, selling certified products to international organizations for the international market means that there is more income coming as compared to selling in local markets. This has made most of the women entrepreneurs strong and financially independent as compared to other women entrepreneurs within the district who are not part of the NGO supported groups. The study revealed evidence of school aged children of the participants' ability to go to school now as compared to few years earlier, when the children would also have to help in working to support the family. This is an affirmation of the theory that, when women entrepreneurship are successful, improves the lives of households (Bekele and Worku 2008, Dzisi 2008, Anambane and Adom 2018).

Win-Win for International Cooperation

The study has revealed a bigger bond that could exist between countries that do not have official bilateral cooperation. The Republic of Estonia where NGO Mondo comes from and the Republic of Ghana where the support is given, do not have official bilateral relations at government levels. However, there is a new relationship drawn from the development support provided by the Estonian organization to the Ghana villages. There is a win-win outcome derived from the cooperation. From the Estonian side, their NGO's support for a small group of women in rural parts of Ghana is setting a stage for them to be well recognized in a region the country is less known. That is a marketing for the country, Estonia. The study revealed how the Estonian Prime Minister made a stop in Ghana just to meet the members of the group Mondo works with. This proves how significant the government of Estonia sees the contribution of the relatively small NGO from its country in reducing impoverishment far away from home. The NGO-indigenous entrepreneurs relationship has created a Macro (state level)-Micro (local community level) relationship.

Again, majority of products produced by the local enterprises supported through the development support are sold to the Estonian Market. This provides Estonia the opportunity to get the supply of those exotic products without much competition. This makes average Estonians who patronize the products in Estonia enjoy a bit of Ghanaian culture since the products, shear butter and straw baskets are part of the special indigenous heritage of the villages where they are hand-made.

For the people of Northern Ghana where indigenous businesses have been given external production support, there are various 'wins'. First of all, the support received by the women has enabled the defeat of the definition of poverty on the mere basis of consuming 2 US Dollar per day (Gordon 2002). There is a sense of recognition for the local women whose products are sold on the international market in Europe. Most of them admitted that they may never travel out of the country but to have their products sold on a foreign land is enough for them. It is an acceptance of the globalization as a trending discourse in international relations. These are mostly uneducated widows who were originally only concerned about fending for their children. Suddenly, they have realized that their local products are making significant penetration on the European market. In this sense, Bekele and Worku (2008) assertion that globalization comes not only with threats but also opportunities for small enterprises is affirmed. In the same vain, NGOs can fast tract the globalization of indigenous businesses as Zahra et al (2008) wants it to be. There is however a potential for NGOs to use such platforms to pass western ideas onto indigenous people which later take away the sanctity of their cultures. This issue has been discussed in another paper.

Conclusion

This paper has presented an approach to reducing poverty through international NGO supported indigenous social entrepreneurship. The study has shown how little support from development organizations towards building local brands could improve multiple lives and at the same time foster development cooperation even as a 'second level' diplomatic arrangement between an organization from a country and the people of another. The study has also affirmed the use of face-to-face interview data collection as a workable data collection tool in NGO supported-indigenous social entrepreneurship poverty alleviation research.

Analysis of the study revealed significantly positive relationship between; skills and material support from development NGOs in strengthening women indigenously run businesses and poverty alleviation. The interpretation of this finding is that to accelerate poverty reduction in chronically impoverished societies, there is the need to apply some social innovation. This innovation could be far reaching if different actors with converging social goals work together through indigenous social entrepreneurship activities. Extrapolating these findings, as many women are empowered to improve their local craft and business for a wider market, the level of poverty and impoverishment reduces exponentially. Poverty reduction activities of NGOs make greater impact when local trades are the focus in the process. Women who get trained to improve their indigenous trades for larger market are able to pass on the knowledge to others within the community. They then come together to produce quality products for larger markets. The price per item produced in this process is higher than if it had been done in the known local way. The higher selling prices for larger and sometimes international markets means that women entrepreneurs get more profit and hence are able to provide more basic needs for themselves and their families. This is the strategy used in reducing poverty in communities in which NGO Mondo has been working. Immediate priority should therefore be placed on improving the skills and understanding of indigenous entrepreneurs on how to produce the same local product with emphasis on quality in order to attract higher sales price and obtain more profit which will transform into disposable household income.

This empirical study focused only on a small sample from a relatively small district in a wide geographical area of Northern Ghana. Therefore, the study results may be particularly applicable to the study district and probably, neighboring districts that receive support from other NGOs in building their local products. It is however not out of order to mention that considering the commonalities such as culture, economic factors and raw materials of the entire northern part of Ghana, the study could be applicable and duplicable in the entire northern Ghana. Further research will assist in providing broader understanding of the working relationship between international NGOs and indigenous women social entrepreneurs and how it influences poverty reduction efforts. Efforts of local institutions responsible for development and poverty reduction could also be paralleled against the strategies of NGOs in developing local businesses to be profitable and to accelerate poverty reduction.

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