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Investigating the Association between the Use of Touchscreen Devices and Children's English Vocabulary Acquisition in KSA

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Abstract Children are growing up in a technological world. Thus, many children can use touchscreen devices without any difficulties. The researcher tested whether the use of touchscreen devices is associated with children's English vocabulary acquisition. Forty parents of KSA children aged 4 -7 years completed a "touchscreen devices use" questionnaire. Forty children participated in a vocabulary test. The results show that 70% of children watching YouTube, 26.6% playing games, and 3.3% using educational apps. The researcher's analyses revealed that time spent using touchscreen devices is positively associated with children's English vocabulary acquisition scores. Children who spent much of their time on touchscreen devices passed the vocabulary test. 33% of children passed the vocabulary test, while 66% did not pass the test due to the insufficient time. Thus, the finding of the study suggested that touchscreen devices use influenced English vocabulary acquisition in this sample.

Keywords Children, English Vocabulary, Touchscreen Devices, Language Acquisition

1. Introduction

In a world where technology is so rapid, it is natural to find a child who perfectly uses smartphones, iPods, iPads, and tablets. Children have no difficulty in using touchscreens devices or pressing the buttons of these modern technologies. Technology has become an integral part of everyday life of any child. This raises many questions and divergent views about the positive and negative effects of technology on children. The researchers try to turn technology's negatives into advantages that help them in raising and educating the child.

There is a variety of online activities, including watching videos, playing games, and listening to baby songs, that most children under nine years old like to do with touchscreen devices. The variety of apps with different languages increases the ability of children to develop their native language or acquire a second language. Children's exposure to touchscreen devices and their effect on language is not clear-cut. Most studies discussed the association between touchscreen devices and children's vocabulary size of the first language (Taylor, Monaghan, & Westermann, 2017). The researchers found a negative relationship between the use of touchscreens and vocabulary acquisition. The large number of vocabulary in children aged 6 -24 months was due to reading stories by parents. On the other hand, some studies suggested a positive relationship between touchscreen devices exposure and vocabulary size of the second language in children aged 6 -7 years (Aghlara & Tamjid, 2011).

Researchers understand the importance of technologies including touchscreen devices on children's language. Studies in language learning have demonstrated that children aged two and older can learn vocabulary from a video, unlike infants and toddlers (Holloway, Green & Livingstone, 2013). Thus, it is important for researchers to study the relationship between the use of technology and language development of children.

In Saudi Arabia, children's ownership of touchscreen devices including iPods, iPads, tablets, and smartphones have been increasing. Note that among Arabic countries survey in 2013, Saudi Arabia has the highest smartphone ownership rate regardless of age (Lynch, 2014). Thus, the current study aims to investigate the association between the use of touchscreen devices, and children's English vocabulary acquisition in Saudi Arabia.

2. Literature Review

The flexibility and multiple-uses of screen media including television and touchscreen devices for children inspired researchers to study the effects of screen media exposure on children's language development. A large and growing body of literature has investigated the association between screen media including television, touchscreen devices, and children's vocabulary development. Much of the current literature on screen media and language development pays particular attention to children's vocabulary size of their first language. However, there are few studies discussed the relationship between screen media exposure and second language development.

Traditionally, it has been argued that the impact of watching television on children's first language development is not clear-cut. A longitudinal study investigated the relationship between natural exposure to "Sesame Street" an educational program, and preschoolers' vocabulary acquisition for children aged 3 to 7. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) was given to each child at the beginning and at the end of the 2-year period during "Sesame Street" viewing at home. The study found a positive effect of "Sesame Street" viewing on children's vocabulary from ages 3 to 5, but from ages 5 to 7, the benefits of "sesame street" viewing declined (Rice, Huston, Truglio, & Wright, 1990). The study suggested a positive association between exposure to television and children's vocabulary size.

Previous studies have reported a negative relationship between baby's DVDs and children's vocabulary development. Children were exposed to such media, understood 6-8 words at 8-16 months, unlike reading stories. (Zimmerman et al, 2007 cited in Taylor, Monaghan, & Westermann, 2017). Another study has indicated a negative relationship between TV exposure at 6-24 months and language development at the age of 3 years (Schmidt, Rich, -Shiman, Okan, & Taveras, 2009 cited in Taylor, Monaghan, & Westermann, 2017).

The serious discussion of the effects of touchscreen devices on children's language development emerged when smartphones have been on the market since 1993 (Sarwar, 2013). A recent study of Taylor, Monaghan, & Westermann (2017) in which they investigated the association between children's media exposure; television, touchscreen devices, reading stories and the development of their language at 6-36 months in the UK. The results of the study demonstrated that children's media exposure under the age of 3 years is high, but it does not

affect positively their language development. Whereas reading with children has a positive impact on their vocabulary development.

Other studies have discussed the relationship between using touchscreen devices and the second language acquisition. Although most of the studies have been conducted in the west, an Iranian study discussed the relationship between digital games and English vocabulary learning. In 2011, Aghlara and Tamjid investigated the effect of using a digital computer game on English vocabulary learning of Iranian children. The participants in the experimental group were not aware that they were engaged in learning a vocabulary of the second language. Whereas children in the control group were aware of the learning process. The results of the study indicated that children aged 6 to 7 in the experimental group were more motivated to learn English vocabulary, and they were more successful in learning new words, unlike the control group. The study suggests that children can learn new vocabulary when they are naturally exposed to games using touchscreen devices.

The majority of studies on children's media exposure and its effect on language development have been conducted in the west (Taylor, Monaghan, & Westermann, 2017). In Saudi Arabia, it is difficult to find such studies that investigate the relationship between touchscreen devices and children's second language development. Recently, the use of touchscreen devices by children increases largely among Saudi children. In 2013, a survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews with 1,001 pairs of children and parents living in different cities in Saudi Arabia. 87% of children in Saudi Arabia own a mobile phone. 71% of all children with a mobile phone own a smartphone. Moreover, 54% of all children surveyed use a tablet beside their smartphones (Lynch, 2014). Thus, it is important for a researcher to consider the effects that touchscreen devices have, if any, on children's language acquisition. The purpose of the present study was to consider whether the use of touchscreen devices is associated with children's acquisition of English vocabulary at 4 to 7 years in Saudi Arabia or not.

2.1. Hypothesis

Touchscreen devices will be positively associated with children's English vocabulary acquisition in KSA due to the variety of apps using English, which facilitates English vocabulary acquisition.

2.2. Research Questions

To achieve the goals of the present study, the following research question will be investigated:

1. What is the effect of using touchscreen devices on Children's English vocabulary acquisition in KSA?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

A total of 40 participants from KSA completed an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed to measure children's touchscreen devices use, the language of the Apps that are

regularly used by children, and the common English words that children have learned from touchscreen devices. 40 Children aged between 4 to 7 participated in a vocabulary test. These Children did not learn the English language whether in their school or in their homes by parents.

3.2. Procedure

The data were collected via an online questionnaire within a week, which was designed by “Google Survey”. The questionnaire of “children’s touchscreen devices use” was distributed online via WhatsApp group with children’s parents. A vocabulary test was given to 21 children in preschools and to 19 children in first-grade elementary school. The vocabulary test was designed by PowerPoint included pictures that represented each word.

3.3. Materials

3.3.1. Touchscreen Devices Use Questionnaire

“The touchscreen devices use” questionnaire included two subsections. The first subsection contained questions about parents’ education and their English language proficiency. The second subsection included questions about children and their ownership of touchscreen devices. It also investigated the time that children spent using touchscreen devices, and the common applications that children usually used.

3.3.2. English Vocabulary Test

“The English vocabulary test” used in this study was designed by the researcher in order to confirm whether children acquire English vocabulary while using touchscreen devices or not. During preliminary stage of listing words, the researcher watched baby’s video on YouTube to determine the most frequent English words. The researcher also observed two children aged 4-5 who spent more than 10 hours a day watching YouTube on their iPads. The researcher classified the most common English words that children could acquire at the age of 4 to 7 years into five different categories: basic colors (red, green, blue, yellow, pink), fruits (orange, banana, apple), family relationships (father, mother, brother, sister, boy, girl), equipment of library and furniture (book, pen, table, chair, door), and verbs (help, go, sleep, open, close, game). The researcher examined the two children using the list of vocabulary before approving the test for the sample in order to increase the reliability of the test.

4. Results

4.1. Parent and Child

The majority of parents answering the questionnaire were Saudi and educated to secondary level or higher. In addition, their English language proficiency was very limited and they didn’t use English at home. All children in the study lived with the parents answering the questionnaire. Children were aged 4 – 7 years (Gender: Male = 6, Female = 24). Children were from primary school (first grade) and kindergarten. 10 children were eliminated because their parents did not answer the questionnaire.

4.2. Touchscreen Devices Use

The majority of children have access to touchscreen devices. 53.3% of children used their own devices, 40% used their parent's devices, and only 6.7% did not use touchscreen devices. Most children aged 6 -7 ($m = 0.2$) did not have touchscreen devices, they used the devices of their parents. On the other hand, most children aged 4 – 6 ($m = 0.3$) had their own touchscreen devices. On a typical day, 43.3% of the children spent 1 to 2 hours a day using their touchscreen devices. 33% of children used their devices from 3 to 4 hours a day, and 3.3% of children spent all day with their touchscreen devices. 3.3% of children spent more than 20 hours a day, and 3.3% on their leisure time. Only 13.3% of children spent one hour a day. Parents reported a number of activities that their children do when using touchscreen devices including (70%) watching YouTube, (26.6%) playing games and (3.3%) using educational apps (Table 1). Parents also reported about the language of the apps that their children use. 56% of children were used to watch YouTube, games, and educational apps in both Arabic and English languages. 40% of children exposed only to the Arabic language, and 3.3% exposed only to the English language.

Table 1. Percentages of the applications that children used provided by the parents, the mean scores of the vocabulary test, and a number of children who passed the test

The activities (Apps)	Participants	Vocabulary test scores (mean)	Participants passed the test
YouTube	70%	13	8
Playing game	26.6%	8.5	2
Using educational apps	3.3%	10	0

4.3. Language Development

30 of children participated in the vocabulary test, which was divided into five categories including basic colors, fruits, equipment of library and furniture, family relations, and some verbs. The vocabulary test included 25 words; children were given total scores for the number of words that the child comprehends. Only 10 children out of 30 got 15 scores and higher, 9 children got from 10-14, and 11 children got from 0-9. The researcher considers the percentage of passing the test is 60%. Thus, 33% of children ($m = 6.5$) passed the vocabulary test, while 66% ($m = 5.5$) did not pass the test.

However, the majority of children comprehended the vocabulary of basic colors, fruits, and family relations categories, unlike equipment of library and furniture, and some verbs. 70% of children acquired the terms of basic colors, 73% of fruits, 43% of family relations, 6.6% of furniture, and 13.3% of some verbs. The researcher considered that the use of touchscreen devices enriches Saudi children's English vocabulary.

5. Discussion

Today, children's life is surrounded by technological devices. The results of the research indicate that among the sample educated family in KSA, a high proportion of children aged 4 -7 years use touchscreen devices (53.3%). In the present sample, children aged 4 – 7 spent more time engaged with touchscreen devices. Overall, most children use touchscreen devices including iPads, iPods, smartphones, and tablets in the present study due to the interesting

content and the varieties of apps. This finding is inconsistent with prior work by Taylor, Monaghan, & Westermann who found that fewer children use mobile touchscreen devices due to either the appropriateness of the content or the difficulty of mobile touchscreen devices systems.

The majority of children in the present study watched YouTube more than any other apps (70%). This finding is consistent with the previous work which suggested that “Children who were high viewers to video on TV in the age range of 4 to 5 performed better on the PPVT at age 5 than those who were not” (Rice, Huston, & Truglio, 1990). In the present study children who spent more time watching YouTube got high scores ($m = 13$) whereas children who watched other apps such as game ($m = 8.5$) or educational apps ($m = 10$) got low scores.

Children in the present study comprehended the basic colors such as red, yellow, blue, green, and pink. These colors are presented for children in many videos on YouTube more than any other colors for scientific reasons. This view is supported by Pitchford and Mullen in 2002, who found that children aged between 4 to 7 acquired these basic colors before other colors such as brown and grey. Thus, there is a relationship between watching YouTube on touchscreen devices and children’s English vocabulary size in the study.

Importantly, “touchscreen devices use” was associated with Saudi children’s acquisition of English vocabulary. This relationship depended on the time that Saudi children spent using touchscreen devices. The more time children spent on touchscreen devices the more English vocabulary they acquired. This finding is supported by Taylor, Monaghan, & Westermann in 2017. They found that although many children used touchscreen devices, their language did not develop due to the insufficient amount of exposure which was less than 20 min a day. Therefore, the amount of exposure to touchscreen devices is one of an important factor that effects on children’s English vocabulary acquisition. This relationship also depended on the language of the content that children watched. According to the present study, children who are exposed to English video comprehended more vocabulary than others. For example, some of these children took a long time thinking about the meaning of father and mother...etc, but when the researcher sang the famous song on YouTube “family fingers”, the child immediately would point the correct words.

The majority of children in this study were using touchscreen devices, future work should start to consider the role of the apps on children’s second language acquisition. The researcher also suggests that for future work it would be necessary to investigate the association between these devices and pronunciation of children. Most children in the present study, even if they did not understand these English words, they pronounce the words as similar as native speakers do. This research will inspire future researchers to work more in this field.

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the present study was designed to determine the effect of using touchscreen devices on children’s English vocabulary acquisition aged 4 – 7 years in Saudi Arabia. The results of this investigation show that children in this sample spent more time using touchscreen devices, which affected positively their acquisition of English vocabulary. Thus, the present study has a value in the field of language acquisition researches. In addition, this study provides an insight into the importance of touchscreen devices for acquiring the second language.

However, the sample size of the present study was relatively small. Thus, for future researches, it would be better to examine a large sample to make the results more accurate. In addition, doing some longitudinal studies on this issue will enrich the results of the present study.

Unfortunately, the current study did not include male participants aged 6 – 7 due to access limitations to their schools. Therefore, the findings supported the hypothesis of the researcher that “touchscreen devices use” affects positively on children’s English vocabulary.

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An Exploratory Study on Saudi Arabian Consumers' Behavior Towards Green Packaging

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ABSTRACT

Packaging is an unconditional necessity in the modern world. Our contemporary society places many demands upon packaging relative to issues such as safety, convenience, efficiency, identification, and marketing. Increasingly people are becoming “modern consumers” around the world, packaging materials and methods, as well as thought processes, will also need to change in order to minimize the harmful impact of packaging on the planet. The environmental impacts of product packaging and its waste are an issue of growing importance and concern worldwide. All companies use various quantities of materials and other resources to package their products to survive distribution and other harmful elements. The paper analyzes the perception of the Saudi consumer regarding the role of green packaging in the formation of sustainable behavior. The main objectives of the paper are: to assess consumer preferences for the types of green packaging, knowing the reasons for purchasing green packaging products, and the role of the information about green packaging in promoting sustainable environment. Packaging preferences of the consumers include paper, glass and cardboard and wood. The effects of packaging and how packaging is harmful for the environment has also been discussed. The paper also explores the importance of Green Packaging and how it is beneficial in making the environment sustainable.

Keywords: Green Packaging, sustainable behavior, environmental, packaging materials and methods, thought processes and cardboard.

INTRODUCTION

Green Packaging specializes in environmentally friendly packaging solutions that protect your product and the environment. All of the products are recycled or recyclable, and offer green alternatives to conventional corrosion inhibiting packaging.

Green packaging is a relatively new addition to the environmental considerations for packaging. It requires more analysis to look at the package design, choice of materials,

processing and life cycle. This is not just the vague “green movement” that many businesses and companies have been trying to include over the past years. Companies implementing these eco-friendly actions are reducing their carbon footprint, using more recycled materials, reusing more package components, etc. The variety of a package is a communication mechanism between businesses and end users and it is a way of attracting consumer’s attention [Draskovic, Temperley, Pavicic, 2009]. It often encourages suppliers, contract packagers, and distributors to do likewise. It also helps consumers to use the product and, lastly, packaging facilitates recycling and decrease environmental damage [Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, 2011]. Disposed packaging material is one of the leading causes of soil pollution. Vast landfills are required to accommodate the millions of tons of packaging material disposed every year. Eco packaging promises to change all this. [Carlson, 2009] considers that eco-packaging must be safe and healthy for the individual and the community throughout its life cycle, be market-efficient and cost-effective; be obtained, produced, transported, and recycled via sources of renewable energy, as well as maximizing the use of renewable or recyclable materials; utilize clean production technologies and best practices; can be designed to optimize the materials and energy used, and can be effectively recovered and reused in numerous production cycles. The most prevalent concerns in the packaging industry are: usage of natural resources and high level of energy consumption, usage of non-recyclable packaging material, half-empty and double-skin / over packed packages which leads to wasteful use of resources and unnecessary waste and litter [Peattie, 2005]. There are various types of green strategies businesses can incorporate. The most common of them are [Peattie, 2005]:

1. **Removal strategy** – to remove all unnecessary layers from the package, minimizing extra waste;
2. **Reduction strategy** – to reduce the resources used for packaging material through larger unit sizes, refilled packages, reduced thickness of the package, switching to more environmentally friendly material, improving the resource efficiency of packaging process;
3. **Reuse strategy** – to offer reusable containers such as glass bottles, containers with refilling function, sturdy reusable shopping bags, etc.;
4. **Recycling strategy** – to recycle the waste, formed during production;
5. **Biodegradability strategy** – using biodegradable materials, including biodegradable plastic.

2. Sustainable Consumer Behavior towards Green Packaging

Packaging has changed radically lately, especially as a result of unlimited consumer access to information [Sandu, 2014]. [Shamdasami et al., 1993] defined green product as the product that will not pollute the earth or deplete natural resources, and can be recycled or conserved. It is a product that has more environment friendly content or packaging in reducing the environmental impact [Elkington and Makower, 1988; Wasik, 1996]. [Krause, 1993], in his research found that consumers were becoming more concerned about their everyday habits and the impact on the environment.

The growth of green marketing and green consumer is “perhaps the biggest opportunity for organizations the industrial world has ever seen” [Cairncross, 1992]. Consumers who are aware

of and interested in environmental issues are called green consumers [Soonthonsmai, 2007]. These green consumers usually organized petitions, boycotted manufacturers and retailers and actively promote the preservation of the planet [Fergus, 1991]. [Ottman, 1992] reported that consumers accepted green products when their primary need for performance, quality, convenience, and affordability were met, and when they understood how a green product could help to solve environmental problems. A green consumer can be identified to be one who avoids any product which may cause damage to any living organism, cause deterioration of the environment during process of manufacturing or during process of usage, consume a large amount of nonrenewable energy, involves unethical testing on animals or human subjects [Elkington, 1994]. There have been a number of various factors which are influential in promoting green consumers to purchase products in green packaging. Extensive research over the years identify that heightened awareness of green issues; increased level of information availability on environmental sustenance; green advertising by corporations; increased concern for the environment; increase in popularity of green products by social and environmental charities as some factors. This overwhelming increase in the overall environmental consciousness among different consumer profile there have been efforts undertaken by firms to "go green" by presenting the concept of corporate environmentalism [Banerjee, 2003; Hay and Lichter 2000]. Today green development are identified as opportunities by business firms as opportunities to improve their marketing niche rather than just actions which need to be carried out.

2.1 Green Consumer Attitude and Behaviour

According to [Schultz and Zelezny, 2000], "attitudes of environmental concern are rooted in a person's concept of self and the degree to which an individual perceives him or herself to be an integral part of the natural environment". In conclusion, attitude represents what consumers like and dislike [Blackwell et al., 2006] and consumers' product purchasing decisions are often based on their environmental attitudes [Ireland, 1993; Schwepker and Cornwell, 1991]. Green packaging depends on the consumer's attitude towards the environment. If there is no strong demand for such a shift in consumer attitude, businesses will not put in the extra effort to move towards introducing green products and services. The quality of the environment depends critically on the level of knowledge, attitudes, values and practices of consumers [Mansaray and Abijoye, 1998]. Consumers' perceived level of self-involvement towards the protection of the environment may prevent them from engaging in environmentally friendly activities such as recycling [Wiener and Sukhdial, 1990]. According to [Tanner and Kast, 2003], green food purchases strongly facilitated by positive attitude of consumers towards environmental protection. The extent to which people feel obliged to recycle is related to conservation-related product attributes [Ebreo et al., 1999]. These investigations suggested that environmentally friendly behavior may be related to moral thinking of the consumers. Consumers feel morally obligated to protect the environment and to save the limited natural resources on the earth. However, [Tanner and Kast, 2003] found that consumers' green food purchases were not significantly related to moral thinking.

There is a general belief among researchers and environmental activists that through purchasing environmentally friendly products or green products, products with recyclable

packaging or properly disposing of non-biodegradable garbage, consumers can contribute significantly to improve the quality of the environment [Abdul-Muhmim, 2007].

2.2. Price Perception and Knowledge

Consumers' reaction towards the price of the sustainable products is really sensitive. However, the real fact is that green products are not extraordinarily expensive, but conventional products are extremely cheap [Thogersen, J.; Olander, 2001]. Even if the perceived costs exceed the perceived benefits, the consumer will not act to conserve the environment even if they are sympathetic towards environment [Radulescu, 2012].

Attitudes are the most consistent explanatory factor in predicting consumers' willingness to pay for green products [Chyong et al., 2006]. This means that price is not the main factor in preventing consumers from purchasing green products if they are pro-environment.

In Ottman's opinion, four universal green consumer's needs can be identified: the need for information, the need for control, the need to make a difference, and the need to remain current. If a sustainable product satisfies these needs, then the consumer will be more eager to buy the product in green packaging [Ottman, 1993].

[Nordin and Selke, 2010] appreciate that consumers' perceptions are influenced by a lack of consumer knowledge about the concept of sustainability, terminology gaps and an inconsistent attitude towards green packaging.

2.3 Demographic Characteristics

[Straughan and Roberts, 1999] segmented college students based upon ecologically conscious consumer behavior and stated that the younger individuals were likely to be more sensitive to environmental issues. The results of their study indicated that the demographic variables such as age and sex were significantly correlated with ecologically conscious consumer behavior when considered individually; and that income lacks significance. Green purchase intention correlates positively with every age and income except for education [Soonthonsmai, 2001]. Many studies have shown significant differences between men and women in environmental attitudes [Brown and Harris, 1992; Tikka et al., 2000] with men having more negative attitudes towards the environment compared to women [Eagly, 1987; Tikka et al., 2000]. Women were more likely to buy green product because they believe the product was better for the environment [Mainieri et al., 1997].

3. Methodology and Data Collection

A convenience sampling technique was used for this study. The survey was done in the city of Hail, in KSA. The quantitative research was conducted on a sample of 180 respondents and yielded 160 valid questionnaires to determine the familiarity of the Saudi Arabian consumer regarding the role of green packaging in the formation of sustainable behavior. The research, through its major objectives, identifying consumer preferences for green packaging, knowing the reasons for buying/not buying the products in green packaging and the role of information for the consumer, helps determine the major factors influencing the Saudi Arabian consumer's perception of ecological packaging.

The sample structure was (see Table 1).

Table 1. The sample structure.

Demographic Characteristics	Share in the Sample	Results
Gender	Male	73
	Female	87
Age Group	18-24	16
	25- 34	41
	35-44	50
	45-54	36
	55-64	17
	Above 65	0
Residence	Urban	114
	Rural	44
Monthly Income*	1000SR-3000SR	29
	4000-SR-6000SR	47
	7000SR-9000SR	43
	10000SR-12000SR	34
	Above 13000SR	7

** Starting 1 January 2019, the minimum gross wage in the economy is 1000 SR, equivalent to 237.51417 euros.*

4. Research Findings

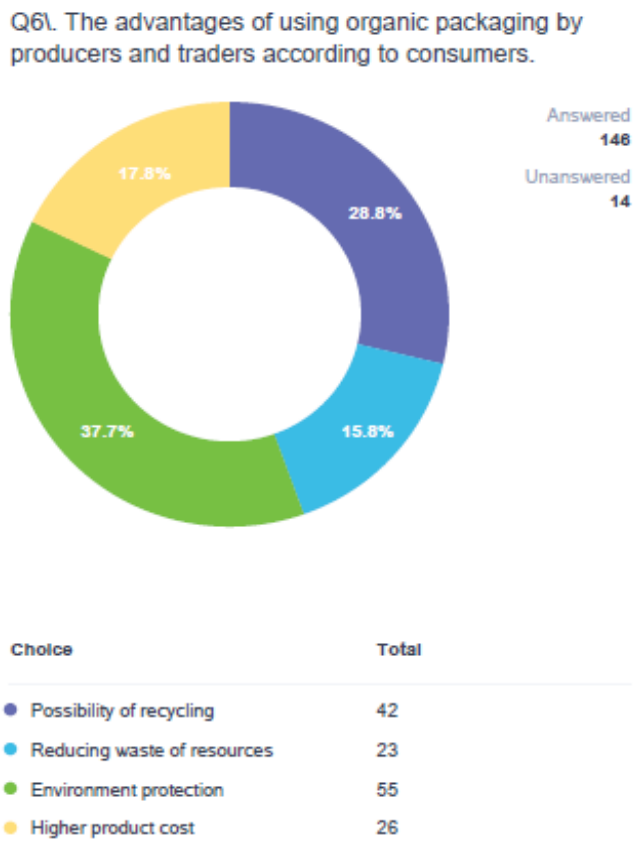


Figure1. Advantages of using organic products

According to the survey result 37.7% of the respondents are very much agreeable that green packaging contributes to environmental protection. This is very much required for making the world sustainable.

Q8\ The reasons why consumers are willing to pay more for green packaging?

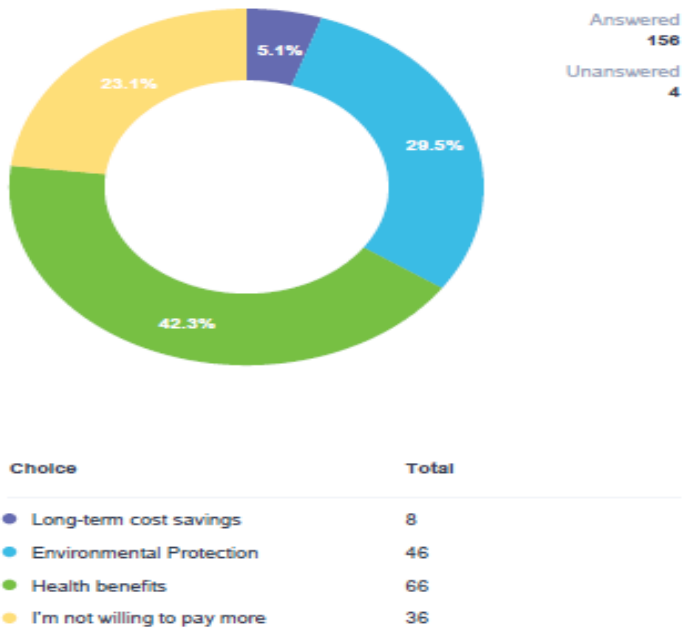


Figure 2. Reasons for paying more for Green Packaging.

According to survey results of (Figure 2) majority of the respondents are willing to pay even more price for the products packed in organic packages. The Saudi Arabian consumer is aware of the impact of packaging used on the overall health of the individuals.

Q 11\.. Who should be responsible for informing consumers about the green packaging?

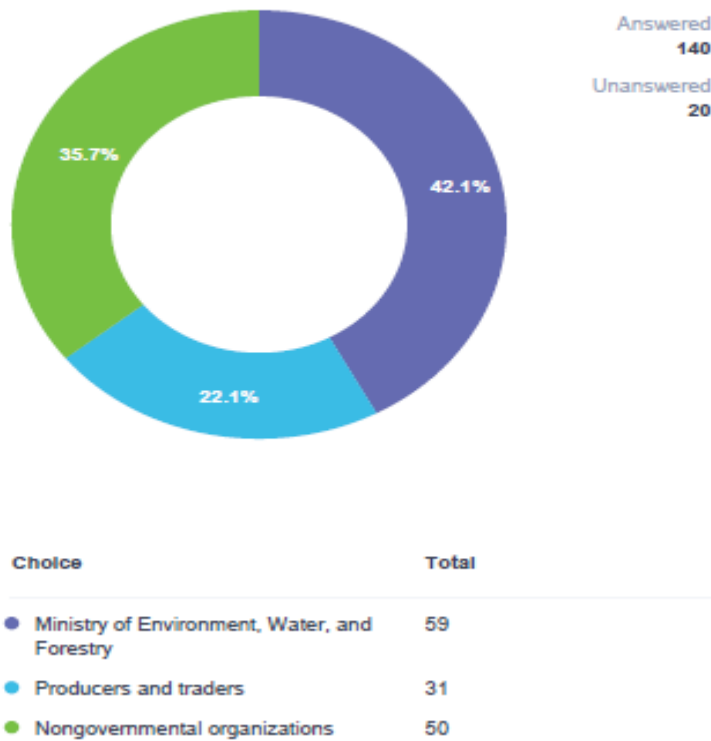


Figure 3. Responsibility for informing consumers about Green Packaging.

Analyzing the research results, 59% of the respondents mentioned that the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests, is responsible and to a lesser extent, they considered the responsibility of nonprofit organizations.

Q12\ How would you rate your level of awareness about Green packaging?

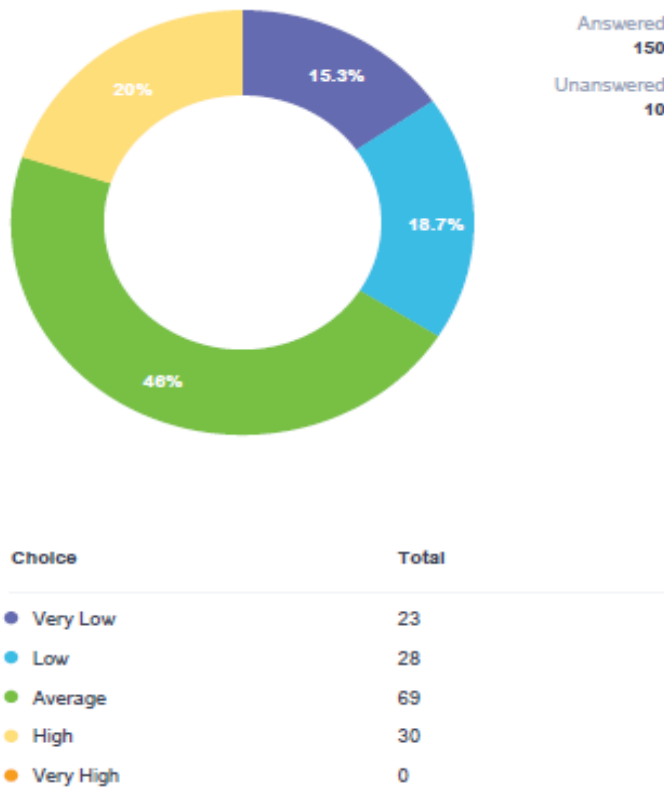


Figure 4. Level of awareness about Green Packaging

The average level of awareness on environmental packaging and its benefits to the consumer is an important factor preventing the consumer from adopting a sustainable behavior. According to the research results, 69% of the respondents said they have average level of awareness about ecological packaging.

Q13\ Would you like to express your willingness to recommend green packaging to friends and relatives?

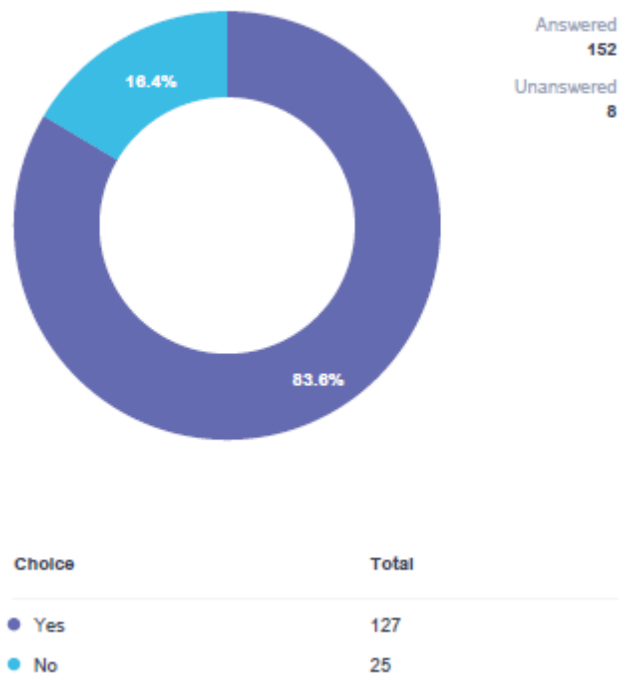


Figure 5. Willingness to recommend Green Packaging

According to this survey result of (Figure 5) majority of the respondents are very much willing to recommend green packaging among their relatives and friends. This shows that now consumers are getting more aware of organic packaging.

5. Table 1. Overall Findings of the Survey

Questions in Our Survey	Measurement	Results
Do you prefer to buy products in ecological packaging?	Yes	128
	No	25
What is your source of information?	Directly from the product label.	25
	From the information campaigns of producers and merchants	22
	From the internet	72
	Other sources	24
What is your preferred eco-packaging?	Paper	41
	Cardboard	16
	Biodegradable Plastic	61

	Wood	15
What is your purchase frequency of products in green packaging?	Daily Weekly 3-4 times a month Occasionally Never	5 31 50 53 9
Your reasons to prefer green packaging.	Can be recycled/reused To protect environment Green packaging is trendy Other	28 64 29 26
The advantages of using organic packaging by producers and traders according to consumers.	Possibility of recycling Reducing waste of resources Environment protection Higher production cost	42 24 55 26
The disadvantages of using eco-packaging for consumers.	Products packaged in organic packaging are more expensive. Requires more storage space. There are no disadvantages Difficulty to purchase.	33 15 37 59
The reasons why consumers are willing to pay more for green packaging?	Long-term cost saving Environmental protection Health Benefits I'm not willing to pay more	8 46 66 37
The reasons why consumers are not willing to pay more for ecological packaging?	Low Budget Lack of information Green reservations	25 83 29
Do you have sufficient information about the benefits of green packaging?	Yes No	117 31
Who should be responsible for informing consumers about the green packaging?	Ministry of Environment, Water and Forestry Producers and traders Nongovernmental organizations	59 30 51
How would you rate your level of awareness about Green packaging?	Very low Low Average High Very high	23 28 69 30 0
Would you like to express	Yes	127

your willingness to recommend green packaging to friends and relatives?	No	25
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6. Conclusions

To conclude this study has many managerial implications as it notifies decision makers and marketing managers about the factors that influence a consumer's sustainable behavior. Research results have shown there are three main motivational factors—possibility of recycling and environment protection and health benefits as well to some extent—which would influence the decision of the consumers to buy organic packaging. The high costs of eco-packaging, green reservations and average level of awareness about the advantages of their use is considered as reasons for not purchasing them.

Therefore, managers need to know what benefits and constraints are perceived by consumers in purchasing green packaging products in order to develop strategies for changing consumer attitudes and behavior towards sustainability. In order to change the attitude and behavior of the Saudi Arabian Consumer consumer, organizations must follow the following directions:

_ Informing the population about the effects of ecological packaging on environmental through communication campaigns [Grunert, Hieke, Wills, 2014] that sensitize consumers and encourage eco-friendly consumption habits;

_ Product information based on labeling schemes (“eco-labeling”) to help consumers by providing details on the environmental performance of products and packaging and to make them buy environmentally-friendly products [Radulescu, 2011].

The information consumers expect to find and would inspire their trust in recycling the packaging refers to the economical use of source materials in the manufacturing of the packaging, as well as the health and safety of the consumer [Jerzyk, 2016].

[Sharma, 2011] says that companies can act in their green communication campaigns in three directions: at the beginning of educational communication, the emphasis must be put on the content, then focus on environmental concern, after which the emphasis is on the fact that firms modified production procedures to promote a green lifestyle, and ultimately communication indicates the image of an environmentally responsible firm.

7. Limitations and Future Research

This study has certain limitation. The study was descriptive and sampling was done only from Hail city only and thus is not representative of entire population of Saudi Arabia. Further research is needed that covers the other cities of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Also, majority of the respondents are female, which is not representative of the entire population.

Furthermore, the study on the social values should also be included in the future research to compare its impact with personal norms on the consumers' behavior and attitude towards green products. As the current research is restricted to the investigation on the green product packaging only, future study should focus on the consumers' attitude and perception towards green label, and green values or green service on a specific type of green product in the market. Finally, future research should also consider the areas of green purchase intention and green buying commitment.

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**PATIENTS' LANGUAGE DEFICIENCY: A CAUSE OF
MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS' DILEMMA**

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the patients' language deficiency to determine whether it is a cause of medical practitioners' dilemma and how the action is taking place in maintaining the good patient-medical practitioner relationship. Therefore, the individual's ability to speak and comprehend English language plays essential role in this study. This is a descriptive research design utilizing survey questionnaire. The population was composed of fifty-one private medical practitioners. Descriptive statistics using frequency distribution, percentage, mean, standard deviation, averaging and descriptive ratings based on 5-point scale were utilized. On the extent of experienced dilemma due to patients' language deficiency, the five indicators obtained a mean of 3.43 interpreted as moderate extent. In this situation, language deficiency is the most obvious barrier in communicating the prescription to the concern. In the light of the foregoing finding and conclusion, the following were recommended: Language deficiency should be given utmost consideration in order to attain smooth delivery of medical services and harmonious relationship between the patients and medical practitioners. Because communication is more than a cognitive process, research suggests that education must highlight its significant role of improving the capacity of individuals and communities by bridging the gap between language deficiency and language proficiency.

Keywords: medical practitioners, a cause of dilemma, patients' language deficiency, medical services

Introduction

Most physicians and all involved in medical services want to deliver appropriate care. However, there are reasons that caused this decision complicated for them and conditions in which the decision made them to feel discomfort. There are many aspects thought to be significant about

the patients that include their maturity, societal background, social group and educational attainment, but the most sensitive factor is the patients' communication problem because of its effect on prescribing decision. The concerns on maintaining the connection between medical practitioner and patient and the variety of approaches, insights and practices that he/she applies in giving prescription rely on how they can make their patients understand. In order to effect appreciable change in prescribing, clinical/medical terms must first be understood and tackled (Fuchs, 2011).

Not only in prescribing where skillful communication is required, but also critical when a medical practitioner has to bring terrible news such as an incurable analysis or diagnosis, undergoing painkilling care, recognizing the breakdown or insufficient access of offered therapy, or clearing up side effects that are irremediable. How a medical practitioner communicates these diagnoses to his/her patient while preserving the patient's hope is his/her most challenging task. As the medical practitioner gives dreadful information in a direct and truthful approach, he/she must ensure that patient can gently accept it. It can only happen when communication is facilitated appropriately (Monden, Kimberley R. PhD., Gentry, Lonnie MTh. and Cox, Thomas R. PsyD., 2016).

Deficiency in language has been considered a barrier to this clinical communication resulted to frequent patient dissatisfaction. Therefore, the quality of medical care depends on the interaction of the patient and the medical practitioner. While it is true that achieving patients' satisfaction in the delivery of medical care must be the medical practitioners utmost concern, it is also important to determine their problem concerning patients' language deficiency to have a full grasp on how they put forth a solution to such problem. The patient's ability to speak and comprehend the language being used plays essential role in this study to make known the factual depiction of its effects on medical practitioner-patient communication and to help in finding out whether it can play a significant part to the success in today's educational scheme (Horber, Dot, Langenau, Erik E. and Kachur, Elizabeth, 2014).

Literature Review

Medical patients with language deficiency demonstrate attitudes that obstruct effectual medical care. These manners characteristically stir up unconstructive feelings in caregivers, and this aversive reaction leads to the label of such patients as "difficult." For instance, if the patient cannot express clearly what he/she wants/feels a medical practitioner will become irritated so he/she avoids to get in touch with the patient, or even refuses to give medication (Jacobs, Elizabeth, Chen, Alice HM., Karliner, Leah S., Gupta, Niels Agger and Mutha, Sunita, 2006). In this case, the recipients' difficulty of understanding the intended meaning of the communication is considered as the cause of failure.

The purpose of medical practitioner is to obtain/give aid for disease in a manner that no added injury is made to the patient, particularly in his/her susceptible condition. The patient should be supported to return back to a situation of individual fairness, free from reliance by bringing back the patient's self-determination. The therapeutic connection goes into a calculus of morals in which the value for the

right to accuracy of the patient is evaluated against weakening the restoration of power by the truth (Del Vento, Agustin, Bavelas, Janet, Healing, Sara, MacLean, Grant and Kirk, Peter, 2009). Nevertheless, it is imperative to keep in mind at this time that "truth will always prevail" that is why it should be appropriately expressed in a language accepted and understood by the medical practitioner and patient.

Based from the study of Carrasquillo, Orav, Brennan and Burstin (2000) concerning the effect of communication problems on patients' approval about hospital service department, fifteen percent of the patients were reported non-speakers of English. Based from the overall rating of patients' approval, only fifty two percent of non-English-speaking patients were satisfied as compared with seventy one percent of English speakers. Among non-English speakers, fourteen declared that they would not like to be confined in the same emergency department if they had another problem requiring hospital care. In multivariate analysis, it found out that non-English speakers were significantly less likely to be satisfied and significantly less willing to return to the same emergency department and were significantly more likely to report overall problems with care. Strategies to improve satisfaction among this group of patients may include appropriate use of professional interpreters and increasing the language concordance between patients and providers.

Also, Bartlett, Blais, Tamblyn, Clermont and MacGibbon (2008) pointed out in their study that language deficiency had tremendously affect communication resulted to the decrease in the delivery of quality care. Through their randomly selected 20 general hospitals in the province of Quebec, it was interpreted that patients with communication problems appeared to be at highest risk for preventable adverse events. An adverse event is an unintended injury or complication caused by delivery of clinical care rather than by the patient's condition. The occurrence of adverse events had been well documented; however, identifying modifiable risk factors that contribute to the occurrence of preventable adverse events is critical. Studies of preventable adverse events have focused on many factors, but researchers had evaluated the role of patient characteristics. Patients' communication problems are estimated to affect 5%–10% of the general population in their study. In addition, patients with communication problems are already at increased risk for depression and the presence of one or more additional diseases co-occurring with a primary disease.

Another study disclosed that in the hospital, a bad translation can destroy a life. Translating from one language to another is a tricky business, and when it comes to interpreting between a doctor and patient, the stakes are even higher. It happened to a patient who was taken to a South Florida hospital. The family apparently used a Spanish word which means that you take in something in your body like food, drug or whatever thing that has made you ill."The members of the family had in mind that their son had eaten something that probably have led his signs. However the interpreter decoded their Spanish as "intoxicated." "So the doctor instantly completed an analysis of drug overdose. Several days later, the health panel pointed out that patient's sickness was really bleeding in his brain. But by then he'd experienced permanent impairment. A person affected by paralysis of all four limbs was the guy dreadful condition (Vencil, 2014).

Research Context

The search strived for providing much-needed information with respect to the patients' personal profile, the extent of the situations' effects on medical practitioners' dilemma, problems encountered associated

with patients' language deficiency in maintaining medical practitioner-patient relationship, perceived effects of the problems in delivering medical services and the solutions provided by the medical practitioners in addressing the dilemma despite patients' language deficiency. In attaining these, questionnaire was utilized and further supported or explained by interview.

This research was limited only to the level of medical practitioners' dilemma due to patients' language deficiency. This group of people could give better insights with respect to this matter. Thus, the population of the study was confined to the purposely selected private medical practitioners who are working within the scope of the researcher's knowhow and are known by some of the researcher's contemporaries/friends so gathering and retrieval of data were made easy. Furthermore, most of the medical practitioners' patients are expatriates; it is expected that different languages are being used in dealing with them. How did the respondents overcome the dilemma despite language deficiency was one of the concerns of this study.

Methods

Descriptive method will be utilized in carrying out this research. Description, recording, analysis and interpretation of phenomena, those already exist; will be involved in this procedure (Van Dalen, 2004). It is also a process of investigation involving collection of data in order to find answers to the questions concerning the recent status of the subject of the study. The strong point of descriptive study lies in describing the status of observable facts as well as identifying relationship between and among the variables since it is not simply a customary fact finding activity (Fraenkel, 2003).

Findings

Extent of experienced dilemma due to patients' language deficiency. Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation and description taken from the responses of fifty-one (51) private medical practitioners (with 3, 2 and 1 as minimum ratings and 5 and 3 as maximum) on their perception about the extent of experienced dilemma due to patients' language deficiency.

The respondents pointed out the standard deviation of the following: delivering diagnosis .904, giving prescription .816, declaring breakdown or insufficient access on offered therapy .775, clearing up side effects .730 and immediate reminders .568. The findings revealed that immediate reminders (indicator 5) obtained a set of data values closer to the mean. However, clearing up side effects (indicator 4) and declaring breakdown or insufficient access on offered therapy (indicator 3) attained a lesser dispersion of a set of values from the mean while delivering diagnosis (indicator 2) garnered a greater dispersion of a set of data values from the mean. The results proved that; the smaller the computed standard deviation, the lesser the quantified amount of variation of a set of data values or the closer that set of data values to the

mean; while the larger the computed standard deviation, the greater the measured dispersion of a set of data values. Combining the five indicators revealed an overall standard deviation of .759.

Table 1: Extent of Experienced Dilemma due to Patients' Language Deficiency as Perceived by the Respondents

Indicator	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
1.Giving Prescription	51	2	5	3.88	.816	Great Extent
2.Delivering Diagnosis	51	2	5	3.94	.904	Great Extent
2.Declaring Breakdown or Insufficient Access on Offered Therapy	51	2	5	3.14	.775	Moderate Extent
3.Clearing Up Side Effects	51	3	5	4.45	.730	Great Extent
4. Others, please specify (Immediate Reminders)	51	1	3	1.73	.568	Lesser Extent
Overall				3.43	.759	Moderate Extent

The results of respondents' ratings on the extent of experienced dilemma due to patients' language deficiency are presented in their computed mean. Obviously, clearing up side effects 4.45, delivering diagnosis 3.94 and giving prescriptions 3.88 were all perceived as great extent. On the other hand, moderate extent was the descriptive rating derived from 3.14 for declaring breakdown or insufficient access on offered therapy and lesser extent from 1.73 for immediate reminders. The overall result taken from the five indicators obtained a mean of 3.43 interpreted as moderate extent.

Medical Practitioners usually provide prescription to cure a diagnosed disease/illness. In this situation, language deficiency is the most obvious barrier in communicating the prescription to the concern. If a person perceives things differently, then, it is a big problem in clinical communication (Medical Prescription, 2018).

In delivering diagnosis, a threat is expected when it is connected with language deficiency—an obstacle to effective communication - because the cited situation hinders the correctness of exchanging messages of the people concerned (World Health Organization, 2012). On the other hand, Medical practitioner's declaration of failure or lack of available treatment can be

devastating to the patient, but it can be open-mindedly accepted by the concern if the information is well-channeled (Pheage, 2016).

Most of all, in giving Healthcare services (where the dangers are generally elevated and situations are more vague and difficult) nearly every medical practitioner who communicates with patients has to converse information on possibility and apply particular approaches that can help out to cure this paucity and develop patients' thoughtful acceptance of risks (Paling, 2003).

Range of the problems met associated with patients' language deficiency. Table 2 presents the problems encountered associated with patients' language deficiency. The level of each problem was rated based on the given 5-point scale such as: all of the time, often, sometimes, rarely and never.

The analysis of the data was known through the mean score obtained from the medical practitioners' responses on the encountered problems. The outcomes were presented according to each acquired rank in chronological order. The following were: patients' reluctance in dealing with the medical practitioners (3.94; 1st), awkwardness (3.75; 2nd), patients' hesitation in abiding medical practitioners' instructions (3.14; 3rd), lack of attention to each other's expression of concern (1.98; 4th), time, compassion and understanding are inappropriately dispensed (1.94; 5th), exhibit uncaring attitudes that's why intended actions/responses are not given right away (1.88; 6th), other unpleasant approach (1.73; 7th), immediately request for replacement to match each other's interest (1.41; 8th), intimidation (1.33; 9th), tendency to become doubtful (1.25; 10th) and coarseness is evident (1.14; 11th).

Some problems (1 and 10) were frequently and rarely (3, 4, 5 and 11) experienced, while problem no. 2 was sometimes met due to patients' language deficiency. However, there are problems that never happened such as: 6, 7, 8 and 9.

A great deal of patient disappointment and numerous grievances are caused by the failure in maintaining medical practitioner-patient attachment brought by the difficulty in understanding what the medical practitioner intends to happen. In some cases, several medical practitioners have a tendency to overrate their skill in communication that they neglect patients desire to be heard and understood in order to at least lessen their sufferings (Fong Ha, 2010). The present study concerns on the capability of the respondents in understanding their clients despite language deficiency in order to maintain medical practitioner-patient trust to avoid frustrating result.

Table 2: Range of the Problems Met Associated with Patients' Language Deficiency

On Patient-Medical Practitioner Relationship

Indicator	Mean	Rank	Description
Problem 1	3.94	1st	Often

Problem 2	3.14	3rd	Sometimes
Problem 3	1.94	5th	Rarely
Problem 4	1.88	6th	Rarely
Problem 5	1.98	4th	Rarely
Problem 6	1.41	8th	Never
Problem 7	1.25	10th	Never
Problem 8	1.14	11th	Never
Problem 9	1.33	9th	Never
Problem 10	3.75	2nd	Often
Problem 11	1.73	7th	Rarely

Perceived effects of the problems met in delivering medical services. Table 3 shows the mean, standard deviation and description taken from the fifty-one (51) respondents on their perceived effects of the problems met in delivering medical services.

Table 3: Perceived Effects of the Problems Met in Delivering Medical Services

Indicator	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Problem 1	51	2	5	3.55	.879	More Serious
Problem 2	51	2	4	3.16	.612	Moderately Serious
Problem 3	51	1	3	1.63	.599	Less Serious
Problem 4	51	1	2	1.37	.488	Not a Problem
Problem 5	51	1	4	2.51	.834	Moderately Serious
Problem 6	51	3	5	3.63	.720	More Serious
Problem 7	51	1	2	1.27	.451	Not a Problem
Problem 8	51	1	4	2.82	.865	Moderately Serious
Problem 9	51	1	3	1.55	.783	Less Serious

Problem 10	51	1	3	1.35	.594	Not a Problem
Problem 11	51	1	3	1.43	.539	Not a Problem
Overall				2.21	.260	Less Serious

On findings concerning the effects of the problems met in delivering medical services (with 3, 2 and 1 as minimum ratings and 5, 4, 3 and 2 as maximum), the respondents revealed the standard deviation of the following: the intended meaning of whatever forms of communication is distorted, as a result; medical practitioners' prescriptions fail to reach its desired purpose .451, medical practitioners' response to an urgent situation is interrupted .488, others (delay of services) .539, fail to exercise their respective role in the fulfillment of medical/health services .594, medical/health routines are disrupted .599, appropriate medical/health behaviors are not easy to promote .612, impending problems are hard to relate .720, fail to comply on medical practitioners' instructions .783, misinterpretation of the given medical/health instructions is experienced .834, lessen the patients' ability to cooperate .865 and good guidance and assistance are difficult to provide .879. The findings revealed that indicator 7 (the intended meaning of whatever forms of communication is distorted, as a result; medical practitioners' prescriptions fail to reach its desired purpose) obtained a set of data values closer to the mean. However, indicator 4 (medical practitioners' response to an urgent situation is interrupted) attained a lesser dispersion of a set of values from the mean while indicators 1 (good guidance and assistance are difficult to provide) and 8 (lessen the patients' ability to cooperate) both garnered a greater dispersion of a set of data values from the mean. The results proved that; the smaller the computed standard deviation, the lesser the quantified amount of variation of a set of data values or the closer that set of data values to the mean; while the larger the computed standard deviation, the greater the measured dispersion of a set of data values. Combining the eleven indicators revealed an overall standard deviation of .260.

The outcomes of respondents' ratings on the perceived effects of the problems met in delivering medical services are shown in their computed mean. Evidently, indicators 1 (good guidance and assistance are difficult to provide - 3.55) and 6 (impending problems are hard to relate - 3.63) correspondingly perceived as more serious. Whereas indicators 5 (misinterpretation of the given medical/health instructions is experienced – 2.51), 8 (lessen the patients' ability to cooperate – 2.82) and 2 (appropriate medical/health behaviors are not easy to promote – 3.16) obtained moderately serious descriptive rating. However, less serious was the descriptive rating derived from 1.55 for indicator 9 (fail to comply on medical practitioners' instructions) and from 1.63 for indicator 3 (medical/health routines are disrupted); while not a problem from 1.27 for indicator 7 (the intended meaning of whatever forms of communication is distorted, as a result; medical practitioners' prescriptions fail to reach its desired purpose), from 1.35 for indicator 10 (fail to exercise their respective role in the fulfillment of medical/health services) from 1.37 for indicator 4 (medical practitioners' response to an urgent situation is interrupted) and from 1.43 for indicator 11 (others-delay of services). The overall result taken from the eleven indicators obtained a mean of 2.21 interpreted as less serious.

There are situations that medical practitioners successfully dealt with; however there are also cases where they failed in attaining the main goal in communication and in achieving interpersonal

relationship skills the facility to collect facts in order to provide precise diagnosis, give suitable advice, confer curative information, and create thoughtful interaction with patients (Institute for Healthcare Communication, 2011).

Effectiveness of remediation applied in addressing the dilemma despite patients' language deficiency. Table 4 shows the mean, standard deviation and description taken from the fifty-one (51) respondents (with 4, 3, 2 and 1 as minimum ratings and 5, 4 and 2 as maximum) on their perception about the effectiveness of remediation applied in addressing the dilemma despite patients' language deficiency.

Table 4: Effectiveness of Remediation Applied in Addressing the Dilemma Despite Patients' Language Deficiency

Indicator	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Remediation 1	51	4	5	4.69	.469	Very Much Effective
Remediation 2	51	2	5	3.20	.530	Moderately Effective
Remediation 3	51	1	5	2.84	.809	Moderately Effective
Remediation 4	51	1	4	2.86	.825	Moderately Effective
Remediation 5	51	1	5	2.69	1.122	Moderately Effective
Remediation 6	51	3	5	3.75	.796	More Effective
Remediation 7	51	3	5	4.53	.644	Very Much Effective
Remediation 8	51	3	5	3.78	.757	More Effective
Remediation 9	51	1	4	2.24	.619	Less Effective
Remediation 10	51	1	4	2.18	.713	Less Effective
Remediation 11	51	1	2	1.35	.483	Not at All
Overall				3.10	.245	Moderately Effective

On obtained data relating to the effectiveness of remediation applied in addressing the dilemma despite patients' language deficiency, the respondents depicted the standard deviation of the

following: ask a relative/friend to interpret the information in their own language .469, others (beneficial assistance) .483, ask a coworker who speaks the same language with the patient to translate the prescription .530, capture a conversation in which the content focuses on the risks to the patients to avoid untoward incident .619, medical practitioners must know when they are most likely to arise and what their specific nature is to prepare the solutions ahead .644, a certain department is assigned to mitigate the problem of obtaining conversations on patients' concern .713, medical practitioners undergo language training programs .757, medical practitioners are likely to have mastered more than two languages excluding English .796, provide a prescription that is already translated to a desired language .809, secure list of contacts to rapidly disseminate information concerning patient's condition .825 and ensure that accurate interpreter is always available 1.122. The findings revealed that indicator 1 (ask a relative/friend to interpret the information in their own language.) obtained a set of data values closer to the mean; while, indicator 11 (others-beneficial assistance) attained a lesser dispersion of a set of values from the mean. On the other hand, indicator 5 (ensure that accurate interpreter is always available) garnered a greater dispersion of a set of data values from the mean. The results proved that; the smaller the computed standard deviation, the lesser the quantified amount of variation of a set of data values or the closer that set of data values to the mean; while the larger the computed standard deviation, the greater the measured dispersion of a set of data values. Combining the eleven indicators revealed an overall standard deviation of .245.

The outcomes of respondents' ratings on the effectiveness of remediation applied in addressing the dilemma despite patients' language deficiency are shown in their computed mean. Evidently, indicators 1 (ask a relative/friend to interpret the information in their own language-4.69) and 7 (medical practitioners must know when they are most likely to arise and what their specific nature is to prepare the solutions ahead-4.53) perceived as very much effective, whereas; not at all effective was the descriptive rating derived from 1.35 for indicator 11 (others-beneficial assistance). In relation to indicators 8 (medical practitioners undergo language training programs-3.78) and 6 (medical practitioners are likely to have mastered more than two languages excluding English -3.75) were equally perceived as more effective; whereas, moderately effective was the descriptive rating derived from 3.20 for indicator 2 (ask a coworker who speaks the same language with the patient to translate the prescription), from 2.86 for indicator 4 (secure list of contacts to rapidly disseminate information concerning patient's condition), from 2.84 for indicator 3 (provide a prescription that is already translated to a desired language) and from 2.69 for indicator 5 (ensure that accurate interpreter is always available). Unlike indicators 9 (capture a conversation in which the content focuses on the risks to the patients to avoid untoward incident -2.24) and 10 (a certain department is assigned to mitigate the problem of obtaining conversations on patients' concern.-2.18) in which less effective was respectively attained. The overall result taken from the eleven indicators obtained a mean of 3.10 interpreted as moderately effective.

In this situation, medical practitioners are aware that patients' satisfaction is being judged as a main pointer of their wide-ranging proficiency. Medical practitioners help regulate patients' emotions, facilitate comprehension of medical information, and allow for better identification of patients' needs, perceptions, and expectations. Patients' agreement with the medical practitioners about the nature of the treatment and need for follow-up is strongly associated with their recovery (Bowen, 2015).

Conclusions

In view of the findings presented, the following conclusions are drawn:

Extent of experienced dilemma due to patients' language deficiency. The results proved that; the smaller the computed standard deviation, the lesser the quantified amount of variation of a set of data values or the closer that set of data values to the mean; while the larger the computed standard deviation, the greater the measured dispersion of a set of data values. Combining the five indicators revealed an overall standard deviation of .759.

Range of the problems met associated with patients' language deficiency. Some problems (1 and 10) were frequently and rarely (3, 4, 5 and 11) experienced, while problem no. 2 was sometimes met due to patients' language deficiency. However, there are problems that never happened such as: 6, 7, 8 and 9.

A great deal of patient disappointment and numerous grievances are caused by the failure in maintaining medical practitioner-patient attachment brought by the difficulty in understanding what the medical practitioner intends to happen. In some cases, several medical practitioners have a tendency to overrate their skill in communication that they neglect patients desire to be heard and understood in order to at least lessen their sufferings.

Perceived effects of the problems met in delivering medical services. The overall result taken from the eleven indicators obtained a mean of 2.21 interpreted as less serious.

There are situations that medical practitioners successfully dealt with; however there are also cases where they failed in attaining the main goal in communication and in achieving interpersonal relationship skills the facility to collect facts in order to provide precise diagnosis, give suitable advice, confer curative information, and create thoughtful interaction with patients.

Effectiveness of remediation applied in addressing the dilemma despite patients' language deficiency. The overall result taken from the eleven indicators obtained a mean of 3.10 interpreted as moderately effective. In this situation, medical practitioners are aware that patients' satisfaction is being judged as a main pointer of their wide-ranging proficiency. Medical practitioners help regulate patients' emotions, facilitate comprehension of medical information, and allow for better identification of patients' needs, perceptions, and expectations. Patients' agreement with the medical practitioners about the nature of the treatment and need for follow-up is strongly associated with their recovery.

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Correlation of Reading Comprehension and Writing Ability of Grade 7 Students of Emilia Ambalada Poblete National High School: A Basis for Intervention

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Abstract

Reading and writing are two skills that are oftentimes inseparable from each other. In fact, these two skills are part of our everyday lives. This led the researchers to conduct the study “Correlation of Reading Comprehension and Writing Ability of Grade 7 Students of Emilia Ambalada Poblete National High School: A Basis for Intervention”. The researchers aimed to know the correlation between reading and writing through assessing the students’ reading and writing proficiency using a Multiple Choice Test for their reading proficiency and an Essay Type Test for their writing ability. In this study, the researchers adopted and modified the reading text from www.ereadingworksheets.com. Through this standardized test that the researchers adopted and modified, they were able to determine the reading and writing proficiency of the students which became the basis of an appropriate intervention. The data gathered revealed that there is a significant relationship between students’ reading comprehension and writing skills. Furthermore, the result showed that majority of the respondents’ reading and writing proficiency are below and not appropriate for their grade level; thus, the need for an intervention.

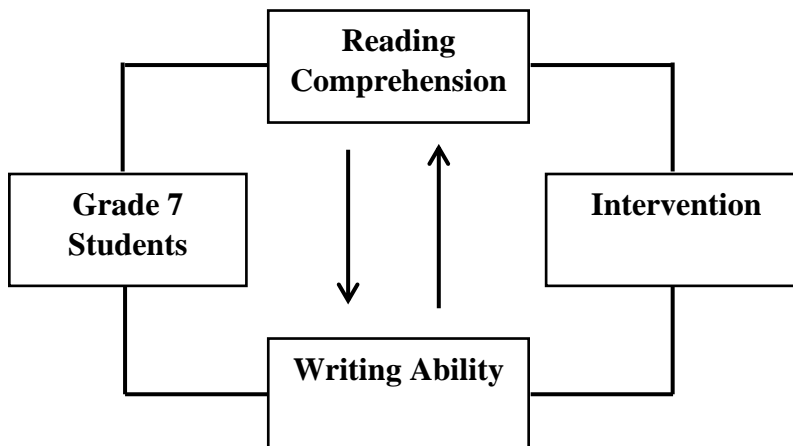
Keywords: writing ability, reading comprehension, intervention, correlation

Introduction

In our everyday life, reading and writing are always part of it. Whether we are at home or at school, these two cognitive activities are really inseparable. When we are at home, reading could be the first thing that we usually do, we could even guess that the very first thing that everyone (not just millennial) do upon waking up is to check messages from smart phones or e-mails on personal computers or any gadget, thus, it is reading. After reading all of those text messages or e-mails, one tends to compose immediately a message to reply, thus, it is writing. At school, reading and writing are inseparable skills. There would be a lot of reading materials and writing activities that students face regardless what their grade levels are.

Thus, the inquiry on the relationship of these two skills. Is there significant relationship between reading and writing? Is it safe to conclude that when one is good in reading, he or she could be good in writing also?

This study worked within this paradigm:



This study aimed to show the relationship between reading Skills and writing Skills of students through the use of Multiple Choice and Essay Type Examination with the goal of proposing an intervention if the need arises. Furthermore, it wanted to answer its main research question, viz. How is Reading Comprehension related to Writing Ability of the Students?

Specifically, the following questions were answered:

1. What is the demographic profile of the students in terms of:
 - (a) Age
 - (b) Gender

2. What is the result of the Standardized Examination that was implemented to the students?
 - (a) Reading Comprehension Test
 - (b) Writing Test
3. How is Reading Comprehension related to Writing Ability of the students?
4. What appropriate intervention could be applied?

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The coverage of this study was determining the correlation between reading comprehension and writing ability of students through assessing their proficiency on the two skills. Reading comprehension and writing ability of the students were assessed through the use of a Standardized Test consisting of multiple choice and essay type Test. Also, this focused on Grade 7 students of Emilia Ambalada Poblete National High School, Cavite, Philippines.

Methods

This study used comparative method. The research respondents were Grade 7 students of Emillia Amabalada National High School. Two sections from this grade level composed of 127 students in total were chosen conveniently depending on their availability.

Instrumentation

Two instruments were used in this study. First, an adopted and modified standardized examination from www.ereadingworksheets.com that is consist multiple choice test assessing the following skills: identifying text structure, determining the author's purpose, distinguishing facts from opinion, interpreting main ideas, and comprehending text. Second, an essay part examination based on the same reading selection was done. A modified rubric for checking of the essay part was used.

Statistical Technique

The scores were statistically analysed. To determine the relationship between reading and writing, the Formula for Frequency and Percentage was used.

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum D^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Results and Discussion

Problem 1. What is the demographic profile of the students in terms of?

a. Age (Figure 1.1)

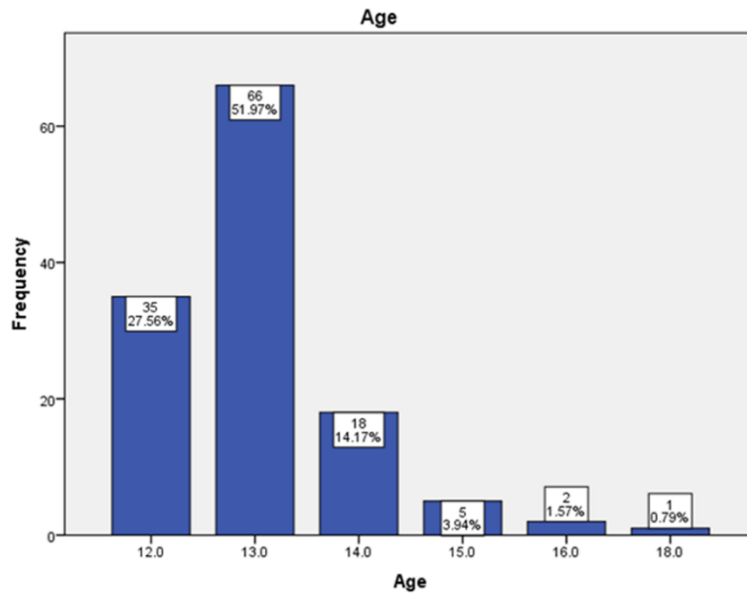


Figure 1.1 Frequency distribution of Age of the respondents

Figure 1.1 depicts the frequency distribution of age of the respondents. It portrays that there are 66 (51.97%) 13 years old; 35 (27.56%) 12 years old; 18 (14.17%) 14 years old; 5 (3.94%) 15 years old; 2 (1.57%) 16 years old; and 1 (0.79%) 18 years old.

b. Gender (Figure 1.2)

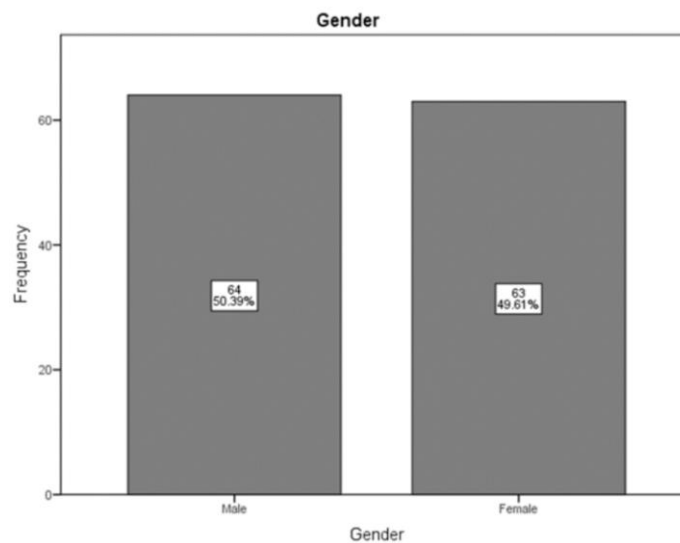


Figure 1.1 Frequency distribution of Age of the respondents

Figure 1.2 depicts the frequency distribution of gender of the respondents. It portrays that there are 64 (50.39 %) male; and 63 (49.81%) female.

Problem 2. What is the result of the Standardized Examination that was implemented to the students?

Frequency and Percentage of passed and failed remarks in reading, writing, and combined score.

Variable	Pass		Fail	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Reading	26	20.5	101	79.5
Writing	31	24.4	96	75.6
Combined Score	29	22.8	98	72.2

The above table shows the frequency and percentage of passed and failed remarks in reading, writing, and combined score. The results depict that there are 101 (79.5%) in reading, 96 (75.6%) in writing, and 98 (72.2%) in combined scores who got a failing mark. In terms of the passing mark, there are 26 (20.5%) in reading, 31 (24.4%) in writing, and 29 (22.8%) in combined scores.

Problem 3. How is Reading Comprehension related with the Writing Ability of the Students?

Relationship between Reading and Writing

Variables	Reading		
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Remarks
Writing	.379	.000	Reject H_0

N= 127

The above table shows the relationship between reading and writing. The result shows that there is a good direct significant relationship ($r = .379$, $p = 0.01$). This means that when reading score increases, writing scores also increase and vice versa. This led to the rejection of null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between reading and writing score.

Conclusions

Based on the research findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. There is a good direct significant relationship between reading and writing. When reading score increases, writing scores also increase. When reading score decreases, writing score decreases also.
2. Some students who chose not to answer the second part of the standardized test, i.e. writing. This resulted to a failing mark.
3. An intervention program should be done because the students failed the standardized test for their grade level.

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1. This study focused only on comparing the reading and writing skills of Grade 7 students. For further study, future researchers may consider other grade levels.
2. This study focused on the relationship of reading and writing. Another study may be done using the other macro skills.

Reflections on Social Work Practice in Saudi Hospitals

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Reflective thinking has become an influential concept in social work since the publication of Schon's work *The Reflective Practitioner* in 1983 and Kolb's work on *Experimental Learning* in 1984. Subsequently, there has been a wealth of books and articles on reflection in social work **education**, but also in social work **practice**.

In this paper, I wish to report one incident – chosen among many others – early in my medical social work career, which caused me to reflect on that situation and the process by which it unfolded. This incident will serve **the aim** of this paper, which is to illustrate a point which may be taken for granted in contemporary social work in western developed countries - the value of reflection on practice. However, this will be examined in a different cultural context. At the time, reflective thinking was not widely adopted among social workers in my own country, Saudi Arabia, as a basis for promoting better outcomes.

After some initial background and clarification of terms, I will report, therefore, on one incident and reflect on what I learned from that experience. From this will follow my overall

assessment of the value of reflective thinking in all social work, as an exploration of personal and theoretical knowledge.

Key terms: reflection, culture, social work practice

Background:

Rather than attempt to produce yet another definition of reflection, to add to the many which have been recorded in a host of publications in a range of fields, I would like to share my understanding of what a **reflective** practitioner in medical social work **does**. Reflective practitioners

- Think things through
- They question their own professional guidelines
- They recognise ethical dilemmas and conflicts
- They accept responsibility and blame
- They try to understand how clients are experiencing the world (1)

It is useful to contrast these points with what **defensive** practitioners do:

- They fulfil the duties and responsibilities defined for them by the agency and the law
- They avoid blame
- They follow agency values in their work, which they maintain separate from their personal values

However, simply as food for thought, I include one popular definition of reflection in social work practice:

‘Reflection is an important human activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull over & evaluate it. It is this working with experience that is important in learning’.

(2)

However, this definition does not limit reflection in social work simply to self-observation.

Certainly, what might be called ‘**informal** reflection’ involves a questioning of our own practice and assumptions. This process may combine usefully with ‘**formal** reflection’, in which the social worker draws on research and theory and on previous experience, as a guide to present practice (3). Therefore, an important aspect of reflection is questioning the main tenets of theory that govern social work practice. It involves challenging our own biases but, more than that, the assumptions and biases common to the professional environment in which we work. It involves a special kind of interaction with clients or patients and with colleagues. This interaction will generate knowledge which influences our development and outlook as social work practitioners, rather than provide easy generalisations to fit a multitude of situations and events (4).

A final element which is relevant to the situation which I will recount is that reflection on practice includes the capacity to identify the impact of society and culture on events and outcomes (5). This will become apparent in my account of an experience early in my career as a medical social worker.

A significant incident

I will be describing my experience in the department of social service in a hospital situated in the northern region of Saudi Arabia. The department consists of a group of social workers with a sense of teamwork co-operating with the rest of the hospital medical staff. My role, as a member of the social work team at the hospital, was simply to help patients to

recover as quickly as possible. One patient who required help was a Sultan. When Sultan lost his driving job he became a non-earning father, except for a little money he used to earn from casual irregular work. With the patient's earnings being on such a low level, he could not cover either his or his family's needs. The Sultans fell into rent arrears and as such they were under threat of eviction by the Landlord. The patient remains determined to provide for his children's needs, in particular to continue going to school and study. He appears to love his children deeply, and as such he has always done his best to provide for them.

In summer 2000 Sultan was brought by his neighbours to the Saudi North Area Hospital, and he was admitted to casualty, where the patient's health condition was diagnosed as nervous anxiety. It was decided he should be kept in hospital to receive care and treatment. The social Health Service was informed and I was requested by the head of the department to assess the patient's case and find out whether there was any help available from the social medical services.

Prior to my first appointment with Sultan, I had access to his medical file, and I met a neighbour who had brought him to hospital. I also visited the mosque near to Sultan's home address, where Sultan had attended regularly. The Imam of the mosque was helpful, telling me Sultan was a strong believer. I discovered that Sultan had suffered a lot throughout his life but did his best to provide his family with a dignified standard of living.

Sultan came to my office, on time for his appointment, located within the hospital wards. He seemed nervous and worried, perhaps because Saudi society has misdirected views towards a mentally disturbed person. Furthermore, KSA society misunderstands the purpose of a patient seen by a specialist social worker, tending to focus on whether the patient has financial problems. Most Saudi citizens are ashamed of being described as poor. Pride is conserved by concealing problems and denying the need for assistance due to the risk of being shamed and named because of such help (6).

Religious belief is the strongest pillar in Saudi society, therefore I kept reminding Sultan that the provider is Allah, and that as such Allah committed himself to provide for humanity regardless. Accordingly, there is no need for Sultan to worry about being poor. I asked him why all of this devastation and concerns about his children? I said we were here in the medical social service to help him and that we would find him a suitable source of income. I then added that our aim was to assist him to overcome the current problems.

The second time I met with Sultan was two weeks after he left the hospital. This time the meeting was held at his home address providing some insight to Sultan's family life. I discovered at this point that Sultan suffered financial pressure due to commitment towards his family. In my subsequent report, I surveyed his childhood and its associated problems. For example, his parents paid little attention to his education, being more interested in him looking after the camels. Prior to this session I had contacted a number of sources that may contribute in relation to his financial problems, such as the "friend's of patients association" and an organisation of wealthy people who have expressed their wish to help those in need.

During the session I showed Sultan the reports I had prepared. This triggered off some painful childhood memories and the regrets that he had not been able to pursue his education. I then assured him that there were some promises from voluntary organisations to ease his hardship. I had also received one positive response from a company owner offering to secure

Sultan with an opportunity of employment.

Soon after I commenced finding means of help for Sultan, I transferred his file to an alternative social worker. This colleague had arrived for the purpose of training. Separation from the helper should be gradual and planned and I did the file transfer with the belief that this case was close to being resolved. I was aware that Sultan's progress might be hindered as a result of this transfer. For this reason I informed him of the transfer steps, telling him about the new social worker who was about to take over from me during the next session. I also promised Sultan that I would deal with his file again if any need for help arose.

Reflections

This incident described is chosen because it is neither remarkable nor unusual – on the contrary, it will seem familiar to many practitioners of social work in at least some aspects. At an early stage, without being conscious of it, I was operating on what Kahneman (7) calls 'System 1'. My actions were System 1 actions. This is to say that my thinking operated automatically and quickly, with that lack of control which makes possible immediate responses to quick impressions. This is the mode of thinking which reflective practice – System 2 - clearly aims to counter. Perhaps, as Kahneman and Trelfa (8) suggest, the problem often lies in the nature of our practice when – as is frequently the case – immediate answers are required. Looking back on this incident, I think that my reactions were 'System 1' reactions, while later 'System 2' kicked in occasionally when System 1 did not have a solution to a problem. Although System 1 and System 2 should be thought of as interacting systems, rather than sequential stages, I find the terminology useful in emphasising that they are connected, and that one does not replace the other.

One problem with System 1 thinking is that we are accustomed to see things as we expect them to be, based on our training and experiences which – more or less unquestioned – shape our way of dealing with situations. Thus, in the case of Sultan, my reactions were System 1 in the initial stages when Sultan appeared moody, sceptical and even antagonistic towards the intervention of a social worker. Of course, I was forced to confront this clash of perceptions between the patient and my own role through some of that informal reflection – self-questioning – that I referred to in the Background to this discussion. The problem was one of establishing effective and competent engagement between Sultan and myself in order to help him cope with his situation.

System 2 - that is, reflective, thinking - was necessary in order for me to decide how to build mutual trust. Not only the medical social worker in Saudi Arabia is aware of the stigma attached to mental health problems. The patient is also keenly aware of it, having 'been on the receiving end' for a longer or shorter period of time. Through formal reflection – based on a study of models of reflective practice – I learned to understand the need to identify key issues which arose from our conversations, and even key words used by Sultan. The identification of what was important from Sultan's perspective informed my conversations with the medical staff responsible for his treatment, the Imam and neighbours who would support him on his release from hospital, and the voluntary organisations and individuals who would help him in practical ways, such as finding work.

Sultan's family background and lack of education as a child, and his sense of pride,

dignity and self-worth as a provider for his family were all linked to Saudi economic realities. They were also linked to social and cultural reactions to those mental health problems which resulted from his failure to live up to his self-expectations in his specific, individual situation. Dealing with this situation in order to help Sultan to overcome his difficulties could not be achieved by reliance on a set of established procedures – a dehumanising technical rationality (9). I learned not to fear the assumption of personal responsibility for my decisions, which were taken on the basis of that mixture of System 1 and System 2 thinking and acting, in order to provide the best outcome for the patient that I could.

My experience raises the question in my mind of what in fact happens when knowledge is integrated into practice or how knowledge is generated from practice (10). This exploration of reflective practice is beyond the scope of this paper, but I am certain that when it takes place, then that is what we really mean by reflective practice in action.

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MATH ANXIETY, ITS DEVELOPMENT AND ELIMINATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses research on relation between teaching methodology and math anxiety. To understand why people have math anxiety, students' thinking processes and their prior learning experiences were observed. This led to compare teaching and learning mathematics in the US with teaching and learning mathematics in Armenia. Through a multistage approach a method of teaching mathematics was devised that eliminates math anxiety.

KEYWORDS

Causes of math anxiety, education, mathematics education, eliminating anxiety, new trends and experiences, student learning assessment, teaching strategies, learning by rote, memorization, learning by understanding.

1. INTRODUCTION

To understand why people have math anxiety, I have observed my introductory math students' thinking processes, and I have identified gaps in their knowledge. I have also identified the reasons of those gaps. I have compared teaching and learning mathematics in the US with my experience of teaching and learning mathematics in Armenia. In Armenia in learning mathematics emphasis is on understanding, and almost no memorization. From what I gather from my students they are trained to learn mathematics through rote and memorization. I have tried to adopt the teaching methodologies used in Armenia here in the US successfully. Based on my research and experience I devised a method to eliminate math anxiety.

2. MATH ANXIETY

The existence of math anxiety among my students made me become interested in exploring its reasons.

In order to address the problem, we need to understand what math anxiety is.

Math anxiety defined by Mark H. Ashcraft is "a feeling of tension, apprehension, or fear that interferes with math performance." [1] Hembree's meta-analysis determined that math anxiety is related to poor math performance on math achievement tests and that math anxiety is related to negative attitudes concerning math. Math anxiety is directly connected with math avoidance. [3]

Next, we need to find out what causes math anxiety, how serious the problem is, and what its consequences are. [4, 5] For this purpose, I surveyed my students. Their responses showed that math anxiety is a serious problem. 55% of my students admitted that they unnecessarily suffered from math anxiety, and only 36% do like math. [5]

The seriousness of the problem made many scholars to research the psychological side of math anxiety. [2] It is obvious that the fear to perform poorly in mathematics creates math anxiety. Why are people so afraid of mathematics? What is the reason of performing poorly in math?

3. RESEARCH TO ADDRESS MATH ANXIETY

My research interest is in exploring the relation between teaching methodology and math anxiety. This research led me to a multistage approach.

For the first stage, I devised strategies to address my students' math anxiety by providing extra tools to improve student learning, such as refresher workshops, peer-tutoring, and use of computer based tutorial and course management systems, which were an additional help to with memorizing the correct set of steps. [5] My research showed considerable improvement in student learning. However, I discovered that knowledge so gained was not long lasting.

Analysis of results showed that the outcome from a refresher workshops were reviewing of fundamental concepts refreshed students' knowledge and brought back what was forgotten. Peer tutoring sessions were usually one hour a week, which were helpful to fill up the knowledge gaps students had. The computer based tutorial and course management systems were an extra help to with memorizing the correct set of steps.

The second stage of my research was devoted to looking into my students' prior learning experiences of the diverse student population, typical for New York City. Despite their differences, I find one common root cause for "fear of math" among students, by and large, to be the improper, confusing explanations they have been given for basic concepts. Because the fundamental concepts are not clear to students, they learn those concepts by rote and memorization, without understanding. Further on, students continue learning mathematics by rote and memorization, not through understanding and reasoning.

In the third stage, I researched the essential causes and processes of development of math anxiety.

The fourth stage is to explore what helps to overcome math anxiety, and to succeed in learning mathematics.[5] Exploring the interrelation between mathematical logic and history of math education,[6, 9] led me to devise a methodology of teaching mathematics, to eliminate math anxiety. This methodology addresses the below mentioned processes of development of math anxiety.

4. WHAT CAUSES MATH ANXIETY?

Math anxiety develops as a consequence of learning mathematics by rote and memorization without understanding. Below is described the process of its development.

1. Repeating the same over and over without understanding (learning by rote) becomes annoying because the process is not enjoyable, and there is no brain stimulation.
2. It is usually easier to memorize what is familiar. For example, one can learn a poem by heart in a spoken by the person language because she/he understands what the poem is about. That is, the poem makes sense for the person. To memorize poems in a language that the person does not know is hard or impossible. Similarly, it is challenging to memorize if students do not make sense of math topics, and very soon students' brains refuse to memorize mathematics they do not understand.
3. From #1 and #2, we conclude that the process of learning by rote and memorization is challenging. Learning mathematics becomes more difficult as topics get more advanced.
4. Math textbooks provide steps for solving particular problems, often without any explanation. Consequently, students do not connect the steps with the problem, and does not try to understand the steps, the logic behind the calculations they perform. Students solve word problems by matching the problem with examples from the textbook, and perform the same operations from the example using the numbers from the problem that should be solved. The only necessary skill would be to define which of the given values to use for each calculation. Students often do that without examining the solution. Because these steps are applicable only for this particular problem, the slightest variation of the problem confuses students. Of course, none of the textbooks contain solutions of all possible word problems. Therefore, matching real-life problems with examples can be difficult or impossible. This makes solving word problems challenging. That is, students do not learn to apply mathematics in solving real-life problems.[7]
5. From #4, we conclude that students do not apply the topics covered in math class in their lives and business. That is why students do not see any need of learning mathematics.
6. Mathematics becomes something unnecessary, and students lose interest in mathematics, and do not want to spend time studying mathematics.

7. Students spend a lot of time on “learning” math which in their opinion is unnecessary, useless, boring and challenging. Plus, after putting a considerable amount of time and effort, students make little to no progress in their math class that is required. Students study math with constant fear of failing the class. The result is that students develop math anxiety.

Let us discuss how to eliminate the above-mentioned causes of math anxiety through teaching mathematics.

4.1. Addressing #1 – Learning by Rote

Generally speaking, people are equipped, naturally, with critical-thinking capabilities and are more likely to accept new information when it is presented logically, in an orderly, precise, and clear manner. I try to present complex information in a simple manner as opposed to teaching dry and sophisticated theories leaving the students with a bitter taste and with an antipathy toward mathematics. I try to provide students with a clear, logical development of the topic, and I focus on material and activities that provide motivation for learning and scientific discoveries.

Devising strategies that address the negative effects of learning by rote led me to observe student-learning processes in order to compare learning by rote with learning through understanding. My results show that learning by rote may be effective only for short time memorization, that is, until the completion of a test, or, at best, until the completion of the course. Therefore, I concentrated on devising teaching methodologies that would foster understanding, and would minimize learning by rote and memorization. These strategies are well received by students and improved student learning.

4.2. Addressing #2 – Brain Refuses to Memorize Mathematics Students do not Understand

I observe the week loops in student learning, and I address them in my teaching by emphasizing their importance, and discussing the common mistakes students do. My methodology allows students to strengthen their analytical thinking and reasoning skills without making them spend long hours on repetitious practice. In other words, students learn through understanding not by rote and memorization.

By applying newly acquired knowledge to problem solving, students retain this knowledge and expand their set of skills. Examples and analogies make the often-abstract concepts more concrete. While solving exercises, I employ my own devised “n+” method, which is going a bit beyond the current level of their knowledge. This method creates the required challenge and the desired impetus in the students to think and to push their brains one notch further, thus, simultaneously using their acquired knowledge and to trigger thinking.

Because students understand the topic, very little memorization is required in learning mathematics.

4.3. Addressing #3 – Challenges of Learning by Rote and Memorization

Once students discover the strength of their logic, simply put, it makes them feel good about themselves, and they become their own best teacher. Here is where learning by rote and memorization stops and learning by understanding begins. I consistently stimulate thinking.

The process of learning, among other things, is based on bridging and building relationships between brand new information and existing knowledge. I encourage student participation by eliciting their input while presenting the new material and by asking pointed questions that force the students to consider the implications of the material in the context of other issues. I employ in-class exercises in order to give the students the opportunity to apply the acquired knowledge and to reinforce the material through its active

use. I believe in activity-centered teaching methods, which focus on students' exploration and discovery first, and abstraction and precision later.

Understanding of the topic eases learning process. Students learn mathematics spending less time, and there is very little to memorize.

4.4. Addressing #4 – Steps Provide in Textbooks for Solving Word Problems

Rather than teaching math via a dry set of rules and steps, or by rote, I encourage thinking and learning through understanding. If something is clearly understood, it will stay forever. 'Steps' have a tendency to be forgotten, or confused. I carefully explain the "why" and "let us think why," and I make sure everyone understands it.

I have also observed various groups solving problems from the textbook using the steps, provided in the textbook. Although they were asked to solve the problem in collaboration, each student would invariably solve the problem alone by just following the steps. Then I devise a special problem for the group. Invariably, the group becomes active. After discussions, and trial and error, the group comes up with the correct solution. Then usually one or two students explain to the group how they solved the problem. This is the moment of discovery.[9]

Employing my "n+" method creates the required challenge and triggers thinking.

Another net effect is better learning experience. From my observation and from students' testimonials, I conclude that they learn more from this method of problem solving where they put to use their own innate, natural capability to use logic and reasoning.

4.5. Addressing #5 – Using Mathematics in Life and Business

My methodology appeared to be successful in helping students to learn mathematics through understanding. The net effect is that students, after fully understanding the topic, successfully apply the gained knowledge in solving decision-making and word problems. Knowledge gained through understanding is long lasting that students can apply in their lives and careers.

4.6. Addressing #6 – Students' Interest in Mathematics

My research showed that teaching through understanding is the only effective way of teaching mathematics. As a math logician, it is obvious for me that teaching mathematics using my methodology develops my students' analytical thinking skills.[8] Plus, I have detected considerable progress in learning mathematics. Another consequence was that after students start understanding mathematics, they start being interested in it, and even enjoy learning mathematics.

4.7. Addressing #7 – Learning Mathematics that is Unnecessary, Useless, Boring and Challenging

"I hated math, but now I love it."

"Math is fun."

"You make it sound so simple."

"I didn't know that there is so much math in music."

“I couldn’t ever imagine that I can understand and learn math.”

These are just a few comments made by my students. These student testimonials illustrate the effectiveness of my methodology of teaching mathematics. The methodology helps students to overcome their math anxiety. After learning mathematics through understanding, students enjoy learning it and start liking mathematics. Students learn to apply mathematics in their lives and career. Mathematics stops being unnecessary, useless, boring and challenging.

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Narratives from the Baro River: Traditional approaches to land conflicts within and between the Nuer and Anywaa in Gambella Region Ethiopia and its implication for peace

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Abstract

Gambella is a region which conflicts are, to say the least, complex. For the past decades the region has constantly faced conflicts and mass inter-group violence between the ethnic lines, fostering a legacy of iteration limbo, which is being constantly refueled by several interconnected issues. Understanding the conflict dynamics in Gambella requires a diachronic approach that considers various factors, pivoting around ethnicity, transnational migration, cross-border linkages with Sudan, resource conflicts with competing claims over land as well as identity politics and relations to the Ethiopian state.

The thesis aims to focus on the conflicts that rise due to land; in which different conflict resolution techniques along with a traditional method of resolving the conflict locally will be treated in the research. In addition, the thesis also aims to provide a recommendation through analyzing the proposed theories and traditional conflict resolution techniques.

In addition, the goal of the research is to investigate traditional conflict approaches in the case of Anywaa-Nuer relations, which are the two dominant ethnic groups in the region and to understand the potential and limits of the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms from an actor's perspective. Although these are (necessarily) framed in the language of conflict theory, however these serves the further contextual understanding and the expansion of the theoretical foundations.

Keywords: indigenous conflict resolution; Gambella; inter-ethnic disputes; Nuer; Anywaa

1. Introduction

Most researchers have reached agreement on the fact, that conflicts are inevitable, difficult to avoid, and an essential struggle for development (Lederach, 2014; Lederach 2014: 9; Sommer 2005: 1; Coe et al. 2013: 111). Conflicts over land and access to resources are not only as old as humankind but occur everywhere around the world (Wehrmann 2017: 12). The facts are glaring: all but three of the more than thirty intra-state conflicts between 1990 and 2009 can be attributed back to land issues and are leaving with their long durations tens of thousands lives in battle and many more in war-similar conditions (ELI & UNEP 2013: 1; Small Arms Survey 2013: 116). With land not only being an economic good, but also the very basis of security and survival for many people, and aggregated by current challenges of climate change, high population growth and mass migration, land is becoming an even more explosive seed of violence (Small Arms Survey 2013: 103; Wehrmann 2017: 2).

In the effect of violent conflicts, an important question and obstacle is, therefore, the management and resolution of the disputes to arrive at peace. Yet, still too little is known on how to adequately address conflicts and the, produced opinions and strategies vary greatly. As such,

various and notably state-centric and western-deposited mechanisms and international frameworks in the aspiration for peace can be found (Gartner & Melin 2009: 56).

However, in the context of most violent conflicts, it is argued that more attention must be placed on non-state and traditional forms of conflict resolution. The assumption is, that these often indigenous and contextual situated procedures have prolonged for centuries and have effectively managed disputes, thus being of tremendous value building sustaining peaceful societies today. Nevertheless, we mostly do not know about these kinds of procedures or worry about them, with western thinking becoming so overwhelmingly predominant (Boege 2006: 3; Coe et al. 2013: 11). This is however imprudent, as:

“One way to understand cycles of violence and protracted conflicts is to visualize them as a broken narrative. A people’s story is marginalized or, worse, destroyed by the dominant cultures, and by the act, meaning, identity, and a place in history are lost. This is the deeper challenge of peacebuilding: How to reconstitute, or re-story, the narrative and thereby restore people’s place in history” (Lederach 2005: 146).

It requires a rethinking. Thus, in the study at hand, an attempt will be made to design answers to these challenges. In addition to the investigation of the content itself, the work will, in particular, focus on the Nuer and Anywaa ethnic groups in the Gambella Region, in the southwest of Ethiopia, and their underlying narratives, histories and people in the context of grievances for land conflicts. As the introductory quotations by the elders already indicate, these are not only culturally distinctive, but the protracted vulnerability and violence of inter-ethnic disputes in the region amplify the need for a deeper consideration of these mechanisms with regard to peacebuilding.

With the help of a narrative analysis, the traditional conflict mechanisms of Nuer and Anywaa – understood as subjective, knowledge-based, speaking, silent and above all powerful constructions – are to be investigated and analyzed. Between concreteness and construction, the aim is to make the contextual situation under consideration visible in its deeper historical, social and political interrelationships.

1.1 Purpose and research questions

By employing a descriptive case study of Gambella and considering the aforementioned background, this dissertation is defined by the following research questions:

What kind of conflict resolution mechanisms are traditionally used within and between Nuer and Anywaa to solve land conflicts and what do the narratives reveal about implications for peacebuilding in the region?

The goal of the research is therefore to investigate traditional conflict approaches in the case of Anywaa-Nuer relations, and to understand the potential and limits of the mechanisms for peacebuilding from an actor's perspective. The following objectives generated and focused this research:

- (1) To investigate the traditional approaches of conflict resolution within and between two different ethnic groups in the context of land.
- (2) To analyse which advantages and challenges surround the implementation of traditional conflict mechanism for peace in the case.
- (3) To discuss causal relations between traditional conflict resolution instruments and its implications for peacebuilding in the context of Anywaa-Nuer relations.

Thereby, I argue that for the communities to overcome their conflict legacies and to arrive at a peaceful future, traditional resolution ideas need to employ a comprehensive approach, which grasps underlying social patterns, emancipatory settings and is embedded with governmental cooperation.

1.2 Relevance and Structure

Even though conflict can be described as “*an inherent feature of human existence*” (Bercovitch et al. 2009: 4) the systematic study of conflict resolutions in their traditional conception and processing has been largely ignored by academic scholars. Despite their empirical success, traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution are substantively under-mined by conventional and western deposited intervention strategies (Boege 2006: 3).

The research that *does* focus on traditional backgrounds of conflict resolutions in Africa, or, in Ethiopia, is oftentimes rather judicial. Attention is typically put on the institutionalization and legal recognition, but the description and assessment of these mechanisms are omitted (Endalew 2014; Tsegai 2017). Even the small branch of literature that is dedicated to investigate the indigenous and traditional ways of conflict resolution is largely neglecting the case of Gambella. Contributions are instead often placed in other regions of Ethiopia, like the distinct and culturally diverse societies in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) (among others: McPeak & Little 2017; Bisrat 2018) or describe the role of the *Gadaa* systemⁱ from the Oromo people (Desalegn et al. 2005). At best, literature referring to Gambella is sorely

describing its conflict complexity (among others: Medhane 2007) or within a cultural anthropology perspective, its people (Evans-Pritchard 1940; Kurimoto 1992). Monika Sommer (2006) comes closest to providing some sort of reappraisal of the traditional sphere of conflict resolution in Gambella. However, this work rather described the procedures of the different ethnic groups as detached and independent from another, without emphasis on land conflict as a root cause and leaves causal assessments to peacebuilding as open questions for further research. Thus, this dissertation draws its motivation and justification on the following observed research gaps:

- (1) Reflecting on the root causes of the conflicts within contestation of land and land resources and their specific grievances
- (2) Broadening the knowledge of traditional instruments of conflict management, by describing procedures between and within different ethnic groups and thereby specifying the Nuer-Anywaa relations from an actor's perspective
- (3) Assessing traditional conflict resolution within the case and linking it to the concept of peacebuilding

Ultimately, the knowledge about procedures of traditional conflict resolution is of great societal relevance. Following the comprehensive Land Governance Assessment by the World Bank 2016, around half of the land disputes are resolved through local, informal dispute resolution before reaching formal judicial systems. It was therefore strongly recommended that these structures need to be strengthened (Zerfu 2016: 115 and 118). This goes hand in hand with the recommendation given by participants in a trainingⁱⁱ held by Babette Wehrmann, - a well-known consultant and mediator for land conflicts, in which clear training and guidelines for elders were expressed.

This study, therefore, seeks to detach the traditional instruments of conflict resolution from their silence, and place them, instead, at the centre of the investigation. It is anticipated that this research will help guide decision- and policymakers in their work by considering and acknowledging TCR in related policy. Further, with the newly endorsed Proclamation 1113/2019 Civil Society Organizations enjoy now the freedom to operate in advocacy and human rights work and thus can use this study to support the drafting of engagement on conflict resolution.

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the second chapter provides an overview of the Gambella region and its conflict dynamics. The third chapter

outlines the theoretical framework and reviews traditional dispute resolution approaches in the context of land and towards peacebuilding. The fourth chapter presents

the methodological proceedings of this study by justifying the use of a descriptive case study and the chosen case, the data collection techniques in the field, and the implementation of a narrative construction as analysis. The fifth chapter investigates the traditional instruments of conflict resolution in the context of land within and between two different ethnic groups, carves out advantages and challenges of the approach towards peace, and discusses its implications for peacebuilding. The sixth chapter provides a critical reflection of the research, while the final chapter concludes by summarizing the findings and reconsidering the research question.

2. Background

This chapter aims to present the case of Gambella and its ethnic conflict dynamics. Based on a conflict analysis on primary material, it will provide an overview of the region and its conflicts, its root causes, and the subsequent conflict resolution landscape in the context of land disputes within and between the Nuer and Anywaa.

2.1 Gambella and the ethnic groups

Located in the southwestern corner of Ethiopia, where the northern plateau drops abruptly from heights over 2000m to a flat plain at 500m, lies the Gambella National Regional State (GNRS). Being the second smallest region (after Harar) in size, and bordering towards the North, West and South with the war-prone Republic of South Sudan, this physical setting partly explains its socio-economic marginality and strategic sensitivity (Dereje 2005: 203). Although the region is endowed with a rich diversity of natural spaces and an abundant and well-distributed surface water system with enormous agricultural potential, Gambella is described as chronically food insecure (Azeb et al. 2019: 2).



Figure 2: Zones, woredas and rivers in Gambella Region (Wondwosen 2017: 15)

Following the latest census from 2007, is the region experiencing a high population growth with over 306.000 people, the vast majority (2/3) of which, are living in peripheral areas. The population is culturally diverse, however comprising of two major ethnic groups: the Nuer (46 %) and the Anywaaⁱⁱⁱ (21%). Further, by the government defined indigenous people of Gambella are the Majangir (4 %), the Opo and the Komo (0,07 %) (FDRE Population Census Commission 2008: 19). Dereje Feyissa remarks that even though the indigenous group share linguistic roots and engage in various forms of economic and social exchanges, they nevertheless form distinct ethnic communities. Ethnic boundaries are reproduced by the segmentation and settlement in different ethnic-based districts (Amharic: *woreda*) and are also marked by differences in the form of subsistence strategies used (Dereje 2005: 203f.).

The Anywaa, as sedentary communities, are predominantly cultivators with a strong sense of territoriality and ownership of land, as well as ethnic identity and purity (Markakis 2011: 78f.). The pioneer anthropologist Evans-Pritchard describes the Anywaa as “*strongly attached to their sites where their ancestors lived and often have tenaciously occupied them in the face of extermination*” (1940: 37). Therefore, are the Anywaa today cultivating maize and sorghum as well as fruits and vegetables on the riverbanks and claim around 70 % of the land size of the region (Dereje 2005: 204).

The Nuer, who at the beginning of the 20th century moved from Sudan to Gambella, are mainly practising transhumant pastoralism. Even though the Nuer are known for their devotion to cattle breeding and their belief in the high status the animal has among them, as an object of prestige and backbone of the economy, - they are steadily changing into agro-pastoralism to meet their daily dietary needs (Markakis 2011: 80). The Nuer are living in two districts of the region, covering only 24% of the region's landmass. Nevertheless, they constitute nearly half of the total population (Dereje 2005: 204), thus, resulting in movements that involve migrating with their cattle from permanent dry season camps to the wet rangelands at river channels, which are often inhabited by Anywaa. At the banks of the Baro River in Itang special woreda,^{iv} this is constantly causing clashes and conflicts within and between the ethnic groups. The problem is being exacerbated by the steady influx of Nuer from what is now South Sudan (Medhane: 2007: 6).

2.2 Conflict dynamics in Gambella

Gambella is a region in which conflicts are, to say the least, complex. For the past decades, the region has constantly faced conflicts and mass violence within and between the ethnic lines, fostering a legacy of iteration limbo, which is being continuously refuelled by several interconnected issues (Jeffrey 2019: 59; Lie & Borchgrevink 2012: 137; Medhane 2007: 1). Understanding the conflict dynamics in Gambella requires a diachronic approach that considers various factors, pivoting around ethnicity, transnational migration, cross-border linkages with Sudan, resource conflicts with competing claims over land as well as identity politics and relations to the Ethiopian central state (Lie & Borchgrevink 2012: 137).

The historical root^v of Gambella's vulnerability and the Anywaa-Nuer conflicts can be traced back to the already mentioned eastward expansion of the Nuer group with the trespassing cattle onto Anywaa farmland along the riverbanks. With the increasing and more aggressive land revenue of the Nuer, Anywaa were forced to abandon their land or use violence to stop the advancing. In the early stages, around the beginning of 1900, the Anywaa were able to defend themselves with the accessibility to firearms from the Ethiopian highlanders^{vi} (Kong 2006). However, encouraged by the military Derg regime^{vii} and its close relations to the Sudan People's Liberation Army, many Nuer had gained local ascendancy and were placed in important positions in the regional government (Medhane 2007: 10f.). Nonetheless, this power and control of the Nuer has then changed rather quickly with the collapse of the Derg government in 1991, resulting in an exodus of many Nuer clans and the immediate claim by the Anywaa that Gambella is and was always Anywaa land, in which Nuer are not allowed, including in the

regional politics (ibid.; Kong 2006). Bulged from the oppressed previous years and the loss of land and resources, the Anywaa targeted attacks on Nuer and settler communities to reverse territory and held a monopoly of power. It did not take long for the Nuer to challenge the Anywaa and their repressive monopoly of power. Years of high tensions, wrath and brutal retaliations followed. Both sides bemoaned lost people and destroyed villages. In June 1994 violent clashes between the two groups erupted in Itang woreda, heavily claiming many lives and dismantling the government rule and order. Throughout the conflicts, the region has experienced several bloody peaks, with one in 2002 claiming more than a hundred people killed and leaving several thousand displaced (Medhane 2007: 21). The region became known for its insecurity, mass violence, brutal banditry involving amputating and mutilating of bodies, and indiscriminate imprisonment for political opponents without trial. Despite the long-lasting violence and brutality, no estimation or numbers of those killed over the last three decades since the fall of the Derg exists (ibid.; Markakis 2011: 342).

The conflict has been characterized by changing violence patterns committed by and against ethnic groups, leading to overlapping victim-perpetrator categories (Duthie 2017: 18). However, the Nuer and Anywaa were not alone in committing atrocities against the other ethnic rivals, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) was involved in similar crimes (Human Rights Watch 2005: 1; Markakis 2011: 344). For example, the lethal attack on five highlanders by Anywaa was followed by a destructive retaliation strike in Anywaa districts of Gambella town lead by ENDF soldiers in December 2003. While the government sets the number of casualties at sixty-five, local sources and human rights organizations estimate the number of rising the 400 benchmarks (Markakis 2011: 344f.; Human Rights Watch 2005: 1). Some western media convicts the atrocity in December as “*ethnic cleansing*” (McGill 2004).

The root causes between the rival relations and violent conflicts between the Nuer and Anywaa can be found in the clashing livelihoods and the conflicting claims for land and territory. The conflict’s meaning, dimension and intensity have been transformed by the Ethiopian political transformations in early 1990. The introduction of the federalism based on tribal identity and land entitlement has refuelled the tensions massively. With the direct reflection of control over lands and districts (*woredas*) into political representation in the regional council and budget allocations, land received an increased political significance and market value. What has started as singular disputes between families on trespassing cattle on agricultural land has transformed

into comprehensive ethnic clashes over power structures and resources. Access to land is still today a point of controversy but needs to be understood with consideration of various factors and historical trajectories (Dereje 2005: 2015; Medhane 2007: 12f.; Lie & Borchgrevink 2012: 137). While there are no official statistics on the amounts of conflicts over land in Gambella today, a regional government official estimates in a carried out interview the number to be above two to three incidents (often lethal) per year^{viii} (Rep. Regional Government No.2, August 2019). Wehrmann, claims the number of people killed in communal conflicts over land or land-related resources in Gambella from the Anywaa and Dinka^{ix} tribe is thirty-five (2017: 48 referring to Small Arms

Survey 2013: 123). The current aggravating factors^x are above all the large-scale expropriation of land by foreign investors and the ceaseless increase of refugees from South Sudan resulting in higher pressure on land and resources (Yonas 2014: 235f.; Lie & Borchgrevink 2012: 151). Current estimates amount to over 420.000 refugees in 2018, and the Oakland Institute yields the land offered and given to investors to 256.000 ha, which would mean over 42% of the total land surface of the region (UNHCR 2018; The Oakland Institute 2011: 20).

Peace negotiations and interventions to resolve the protracted conflict situation and its hardened fronts have been largely neglected by the Ethiopian central government. At most, engagement by federal authorities focus on temporary reconciliation between the parties rather than focusing on the root causes. Military approaches are therefore part of the common intervention. Efforts in bringing the perpetrators from the Anywaa massacre to justice have remained unsuccessful with almost none being arrested or prosecuted (Medhane 2017: 19). Lie and Borchgrevink describe the engagement of international actors as rather perfunctory, largely focusing on the refugee situation on the ground and omitting the Nuer-Anywaa relations (2012: 152f.). The United Nations even temporary pulled out its personnel from Gambella, after the massacre in December 2003 due to security concerns and almost all international NGOs and foreign government agencies followed (Human Rights Watch 2005: 55). However, something worth noting here is the enactment of the Charities and Society Proclamation 621/2009, which severely restricted the activities of CSOs and NGOs working in areas of human rights and advocacy-related activities (Townsend 2019)^{xi}. Left with a vacuum of missing peacebuilding and responses, as comprehensive as the contextual situation, are traditional systems with ethnically deposited procedures found as partly only grievances institutions (Sommer 2005: 16). However, the

presented gap in knowledge about the traditional instruments in Gambella justifies the following analysis.

3. Theoretical framework

This dissertation mainly draws on the theoretical concepts of traditional conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This chapter aims to present these concepts within a comprehensive literature review to provide the necessary framework for the subsequent narrative analysis. It outlines the developments of traditional approaches to conflicts and presents interpretations of limits and strengths.

3.1 Conflict resolution theory and traditional approaches in the context of land

As humans are a highly social species, social relationships are of critical importance. Despite the importance of these social relationships, conflicts seem to be difficult for humans to avoid (Bercovitch et al. 2009: 4). Particularly conflicts over land are as old as humankind and frequently occur everywhere. Babette Wehrmann defines them as the following:

“A land conflict can be defined as a social fact in which at least two parties are involved and whose origins are differences in interest regarding a given piece of land – possibly aggravated by differences in the social position of the parties. Land conflicts imply different interest over one or several property rights to land: the right to use the land, to manage the land, to generate an income from the land, to exclude others from the land, to transfer it and the rights to compensation for it. A land conflict, therefore, can be understood as a misuse, restriction or dispute over property rights to land” (Wehrmann 2017: 24).

As diverse as the causes of land conflicts are, the available methods of conflict resolution are numerous and varied. A plethora of different theories and models linked to the concept of conflict resolution can be found. The discourse is influenced by different understandings on the ways to manage conflicts: whether resolutions should be generated by peaceful means or should be forced upon the conflicting parties. However, most scholars and practitioner agree on the objective to prefer tranquil methods (Wehrmann 2017: 74-91; Dixit 2004: 1-3; Deutsch 2014: 14).

The most common and comprehensive guideline in the peaceful prevention and solution of land disputes are the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) presented by the Food and Agriculture Organization. The unprecedented guideline, which has been endorsed by most

countries worldwide (among them Ethiopia), calls for a broad range of grievance mechanisms, judicial as well as non-judicial, and underlines the standards of impartiality, competence, affordability, effectiveness and accessibility (CFS and FAO 2012:3).

Due to the evolving legal frameworks as well as conflict dynamics all over the world, conflict resolution theory has expanded greatly since the early 20th century (Bercovitch et al. 2009: 4). This has been accompanied in recent years by a slightly growing attention on more alternative and traditional conflict mechanisms, which aim to accommodate the need and objective of peacebuilding (Ajanaw & Hone 2018: 2-3; Zartman 2000: 15).

Given, the ways in which conflicts are dealt with are intrinsically connected to habit and choice, older and stronger rooted models of conflict resolution than international frameworks and modern theories can be found (Ramsbotham et al. 2011: 17). Categorized under traditional conflict approaches are all its processes and decisions resolved through the norms and values of the society, rather than through formal systems of the government apparatus or modern interventions of international theory. Although there are as many different practices of TCR^{xii} as there are different societies, the approach usually includes forms of informal, customary and religious mechanisms (Wehrmann 2017: 77; Tsegai 2017: 37). Also referred to as indigenous conflict resolution, these are subject to assumptions of lasting hundreds and perhaps thousands of years and yielding insights and approaches that can “*be of practical value in the present*” (Coe et al. 2013: 111 referring to Zartman 2000). Thus, these systems have evolved within society and are not imported as an external product. They are context and community-specific and not universally applicable. This also marks one major difference to other systems or modern approaches to conflict resolution, which pursue general and universal usability (Boege 2006:6).

And indeed, researchers find in Ethiopia various traditional mechanisms, which have been practised for centuries and which stand out to be the most commonly used instrument in conflict resolution (Ajanaw & Hone 2018: 2; Endalew 2014: 127). As described in the previous chapters, these traditional mechanisms are, particularly in Gambella, - which is marked by only temporary reconciliation coming from the government and perfunctory international engagement, often the only accessible grievance system. Adding the insufficient infrastructure of Gambella^{xiii}, with widespread illiteracy and lack of access to formal court procedures (Sommer 2015: 14). These indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms are thereby deeply rooted in the cultural norms and values of the different ethnic groups and became an intrinsic part of indigenous lives (Ajanaw &

Hone 2018: 2; Endalew 2014: 137). Described as “*social capital*”, the approaches are known for the success in conflict resolution and their notion of restoring peace (Ajanaw & Hone 2018: 5).

In the context of Ethiopia, the use of customary dispute resolution^{xiv} is particularly present (among other: Tsegaye & Junker 2018: 46; Ajanaw & Hone 2018: 15; Alula & Getachew 2008: 1). Following Babette Wehrmann, a customary conflict resolution fits very well in contexts where it is needed to “*represent[s] home, bind together past, present and future and constitute their spiritual base*” (2017: 82; quotation modified by Author). The approach centres around a binding third party decision from the elders and the focus on the re-establishment of harmony, cohesiveness, and unity within the community by spiritual measures. Elders^{xv} are thereby known for their key role in conflict resolution. They represent the traditional leaders of the community and assume various tasks in managing conflicts due to their symbolic authority in enforcing decisions and transferring of resources as compensation (Alula & Getachew 2008: 86; Hagmann 2007: 31).

Traditional or customary dispute resolution obtains its strengths, by its high legitimacy within the community. “*Moreover, experiences in different regions in Ethiopia show that people, even after passing through procedures and penalties in the formal criminal court, tend to use the customary dispute resolution mechanisms for reconciliation and in order to control acts of revenge*” (Endalew 2014: 126). Instead of imposing western approaches onwards the community -which are often framed in an individual concept to the conflict, the focus is around comprehensive inclusion and participation of the entire community. Thus, guaranteeing more sustainable results through process-orientation (Boege 2006: 13f). Further, the approach features the line of restorative justice, which creates harmony through compensation of loss. Consequently, the priority is not the punishment of offences (like in western notions of conflict resolution), but restitution and spiritual healing (Boege 2006: 7). The latter particularly focused on the re-integration of both victims and perpetrators and contributes consequently to an overarching aspect of peacebuilding (ibid.: 15). Finally, compared to other mechanisms of conflict resolution, it is very accessible due to its low cost in practice and fits in situations of state fragility and failure with an absence of modern state-based institutions and control mechanisms (ibid.: 11; Wehrmann 2017: 82).

Despite the continuous references and evidence of success in the use of traditional dispute resolution, the concept has come under increased criticism. By its process-oriented nature, it tends to take a long time and fits only for micro-level land conflicts within relatively small

communities. Its applicability is restricted to a specific context and community and is unable to address comprehensive dispute situations or to pick up the youth with more modernized concepts. Further, the preservative character of the traditional approaches, which centres around the “*good old*”, leaves out modernizing influences from within or from outside of the community (Boege 2006: 17). Volker Boege argues moreover, that traditional approaches do “*not necessarily put an end to violence in the long term [...] recourse to violence – violent self-help – is a ‘normal’ option*” (2006: 15).

Additionally, these systems are open to abuse with, for example, misconduct commenced by elders or chiefs for personal advantages (ibid.: 17). And, societal equality with women, young people, and strangers, as well as democracy-promoting-structures in compliance with international standards, are often overlooked (Wehrmann 2017: 83). Alongside, is also the underlying understanding of justice to be named, which does not threat perpetrators according to the rule of law (Boege 2006: 16). Besides that, even though not so much a weakness of the approach itself, -is the method perpetuated by traditions of oral history, thus they are largely undocumented and not systematically organized^{xvi} (Tsegaye & Junker 2018: 47). Consequently, little is known on the specific and contextual instruments of TCR and its implication towards peacebuilding. As it has been outlined, a gap of knowledge is especially present for the case of Anywaa-Nuer relations in Gambella and lacks operationalization that assesses its contextual strengths and weaknesses for peace in the region.

3.2 Traditional conflict resolution and links to peace

Alongside the constant proliferation of conflict theory with an emphasis on traditional systems, a recurrent link to peace can also be detected. Both theoretical and practical, it provides normative foundations as catalytic role in repairing relations and restoring peace and harmony (Tsegai 2017: 37; Zartmann 2000: 15). In other words, discussions on traditional methods of conflict resolution are strongly interlinked with and by the architecture of peace (Coe et al. 2013: 115).

Peace can thereby be defined as a “*political condition that ensures justice and social stability through formal and informal institutions, practices and norms*”. Scholars broadly differentiate conditions of “*negative peace*” as the absence of violence, and “*positive peace*” as a comprehensive understanding that aims to positively change underlying conflict dynamics (Miller 2005: 55f.). Johan Galtung, widely recognized as the principal founder of Peace and

Conflict Studies, defines three approaches to peace, with peacekeeping as “*the dissociative approach*” of separating the conflicting parties, peacemaking as the “*conflict resolution approach*” by a third party, and lastly peacebuilding as the “*associative approach*” that identifies structures that “*remove causes of wars and offers alternatives*” (Galtung 1976: 282-298).

As they are aiming for restoration of harmony, traditional approaches are perceived as a welcomed addition in the pursuit of peace. While modern management is following a punitive system of justice, traditional systems are implying a reintegration of both the perpetrator and the victims to restore the order of the community and can, therefore, yield more sustainable outputs. Not only does TCM focus on the negotiation and material reconstruction, but it also focuses on psycho-social and spiritual dimensions. With non-verbal communication and spiritual healing, the traditional approach links to peacebuilding also on an emotional account. Elders, healers, priests and other spiritual authorities are performing the important mental rehabilitation of people, who were traumatized by the violent conflicts. Successful examples which link traditional approaches to the termination of violence and sustainable peacebuilding can be found for example in Somaliland or Bougainville in Papua New Guinea (Boege 2006: 6 and 11). Whether similar positive implications exist in the case of the protracted Nuer-Anywaa relation has not been described by scholars or practitioner. The following analysis is therefore based on this imminent gap.

4. Methodology

This chapter describes the dissertation’s methodological approach by justifying the use of a descriptive case study design and the chosen case, the data collection techniques in the field and the implementation of a narrative construction as the analytical tool.

4.1 Research design and case study selection

Descriptive case study

This paper uses a descriptive case study research approach, which is understood as the intensive study “*to capture the diversity of a subject*” (Gerring 2017: 49) and allows for an in-depth understanding of complex issues in “*real-life situations*” (Zainal 2007: 4). As a robust research method, it is widely used in social science and anthropology and is especially suitable for assessing community-based issues. A descriptive study design is chosen to investigate the individual case with the goal of descriptive understanding (ibid.: 3).

The descriptive case study has several strengths, making it a valuable methodological support in this context. First, as it can potentially achieve an all-encompassing understanding and description of lesser-known and investigated phenomena. Given the neglected context of Anywaa-Nuer conflict mediation, this offers a direct methodological entry point. By being fundamentally inductive it will allow in a bottom-up approach to let the facts “*speak for themselves*” (Levy 2009: 3). Second, it comprises strong procedures for the use of qualitative methods including the intended narrative analysis (Zainal 2007: 3). Third, the case study, besides its sole holistic description, allows for causal statements. This makes the approach suitable to propose causal hypotheses, in this case, on the relations between traditional conflict resolution instruments and its advantages and challenges for peacebuilding.

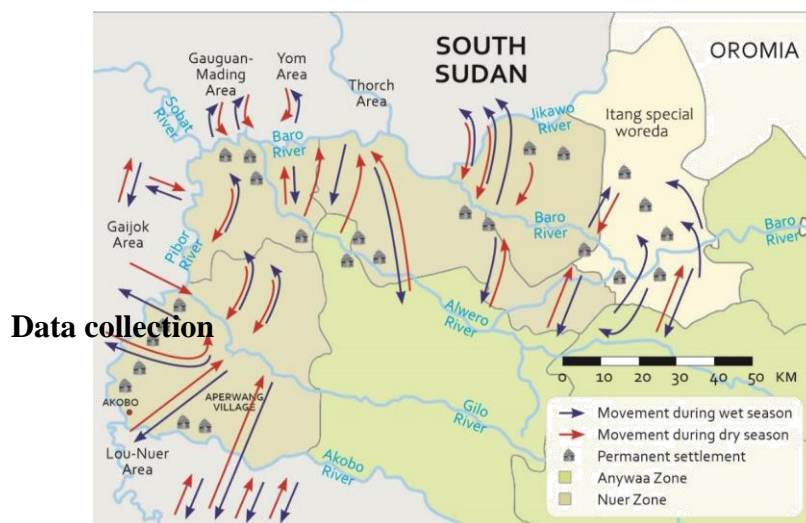
Despite these preferences, the approach is mostly criticized for being “*less ambitious*”, due to its missing organization around hypothesis or theory (Gerring 2017: 51). While a major focus on theory-testing or hypothesis-building might have expanded the scope of the topic, it would have probably also caused problems of causal inference. Given the less probed and highly sensitive research topic, a merely comprehensive investigation seems to be a reasonable choice. Connected is also the exclusion to push such a sensitive and explosive subject into theoretical conventions, which are mostly deposited in western and foreign settings. Additionally, is the question of generalization an evident limitation in the approach of case studies. Whilst, a far-reaching, cross-case research would have increased the representativeness and generalization (ibid: 51; Zainal 2007: 12), this paper mainly aims to understand and explore the individual landscape of traditional conflict mechanism in the specific context, and not apply the knowledge to other cases.

Case study selection

To preclude a possible “*case selection bias*”, the primary selection was the relevance to the research objectives of the study (George & Bennet 2005: 83). While considering various cases for this dissertation, attention was paid to choosing one which would allow and needed an investigative approach. This is the case for Gambella, whose Anywaa-Nuer conflict has been long underrepresented in the academic literature in comparison to other cases, and its traditional conflict resolution landscape has been nearly completely neglected. Practical considerations like

pre-existing background knowledge and the established resourceful contacts in the region through a prior work experience have influenced the selection as well^{xvii}.

The case study is limited to the conflict resolution mechanisms within and between the Nuer and Anywaa because they stand for the largest population group in Gambella, and the frequency and strengths of the violence amplify the need for attention in this regard (Sommer 2006: 8; Dereje 2005: 212). Given that land and the entitlements to it, are the root causes to the conflict's complexity in the ethnic relations, this research will set the focus here. While conflicts of this kind arise overall in the GNRS they have been described as significant on the lands surrounding the river banks of the Baro River in Itang woreda due to the prior described transhumant movements of the Nuer with their cattle (Medhane 2007: 6 and figure 3). Itang special woreda is also the only district in Gambella which accommodates both ethnic groups with no single ethnic claimant (Dereje 2005: 214, citing the 1994 housing and population census).



To understand the traditional conflict resolution techniques and their asset implication for peace in the case, I have used both primary sources collected through in-depth interviews and supporting secondary sources.

Desk study with literature review

Unlike the Anywaa-Nuer narratives on TCR, the conflicts itself and the complexity in Gambella have already been documented quite well in the academic literature. For this research, I consider qualitative data to be suitable and engaged in an extensive literature search for the background of the study. Combinations of keywords including ‘*Gambella*’; ‘*land conflicts*’; ‘*conflict resolution/mediation*’; ‘*traditional/indigenous conflict management*’; ‘*conflict theory*’; ‘*peacebuilding*’; ‘*Nuer*’ and ‘*Anywaa*’ have been searched in the online library database of the Stockholm University. The internet search was accompanied by online and offline materials I accessed through the libraries of the Addis Ababa University with its Institute for Peace and Security Studies and the library of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa.

Besides the desk study of content related literature, the study applied a narrative analysis of the collected material and thus reviewed a substantial amount of literature in that field.

In-depth interviews

Since “*qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences*” (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 1) it has been used as the appropriate method to serve the research purpose. In this study, the interviews have been conducted to carve out the narratives on TCR and to add to the understanding of its strengths and weaknesses for peacebuilding in Gambella. While several interviews have been conducted with concerned persons, experts and representatives from the government; the interviews with the elders, who play a crucial role in the process of conflict resolution, have been given priority in the study (Wehrmann 2017: 78; Hagmann 2007: 1). A total of fourteen interviews were undertaken with the following group of persons^{xviii}:

Table 1: List of interviewed persons

NO.	INTERVIEWED PERSONS	PLACE OF QUANTITY INTERVIEW
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1	Elders from the ethnic groups		Itang & Gambella
	-Elders belonging to the Nuer	4	
	-Elders belonging to the Anywaa	3	
2	A representative from the local church in Gambella town	1	Addis Ababa
3	Representatives from a local NGO	2	Gambella & Addis Ababa
4	A representative from the woreda government	1	Itang
5	Representatives from the regional government	2	Gambella Town
6	Experts (independent consultant)	1	Addis Ababa

The aim was to plan and coordinate the fieldwork in Gambella and Itang, as well as the interviews, as much as possible. Due to the lack of infrastructure on-site, this was only possible to a limited extent and therefore a slightly larger time window was chosen for the field research. Also, the stay had to be adapted to safety concerns, which in turn made the planning more difficult. In the end, it was possible to conduct the research in the middle of August 2019^{xix}, which was not only due to the present security on site but also due to the current rainy season an ideal time window. The approaching of the elders of the ethnic groups was facilitated by and with the already established working contacts, which also enabled a translation from the local languages.

A semi-structured narrative interview design has been chosen to gather the information for the following three reasons. First, given the research purpose to construct narratives within an exploratory framing the approach seems well fit, since it “*center on the stories the subject tells, on the plots and structures of their accounts*” (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 153). Second, the semi-structured interview guide offers the needed flexibility. During the interviews this allowed for a responsive personal conversation with the possibility to change the emphasis of the interview when for example indisposition or ignorance of the interviewed person was noticed. Third, it enabled the focus of the study and covered the topics of interest (ibid: 124). The interview guidelines were adapted to the specific groups of people, however, they surrounded the common themes of storytelling, tales and narratives, to understand the complexity of conflict resolution from an actor’s perspective. This approach has been chosen not only for the

underlying narrative analysis, but also since it creates a comfortable atmosphere for the elders, which are known for their passion for telling stories. Interviewees were consequently often very lively and enthusiast about telling their stories, thus the interviews can be better described as a sharing experience and traditional teaching, then a plain interview situation to gather information.

The implementation of focus-groups discussion had been considered. Due to the above-mentioned planning challenges and therefore time constraints, this approach had to be discarded. Besides missing enough funds to organize these discussions and to pay per-diems and reimbursement of travel cost, the possible sparking and aggravation of conflicts between participants was an incalculable and unacceptable risk.

All interviews have been conducted face-to-face and lasted between short twenty minutes meetings with government officials to over two hours of in-depth interviews with elders. With given informed consent^{xx} some interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed afterwards. However, it has been sincerely communicated, that it is possible to refuse the audio recording and to stay anonymous, given the sensitivity of the research topic. Rough notes were immediately transcribed to capture non-verbal communication such as gestures, facial expressions or pauses. The notes also served to reconstruct the progression of the interviews and interactions between participant and researcher. The interviews were carried out in an encouraging and confidential setting and have been accompanied by a respected and known person for the interviewees (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015: 154.). A translator and a research assistant were used during the interviews to guarantee a preferable error-free communication and to grant the interviewed persons the usage of their mother tongue. This often resulted in a quite lengthy translation from the local language of Nuer or Anywaa into Amharic, and then into English. However, misunderstanding of content or wording has been eluded as far as possible by follow-up and clarification questions (ibid.: 161). To further set a comfortable interview atmosphere, a briefing about myself and the research objective followed by a de-briefing was given, as well as the constant possibility to ask questions was given to the interviewed persons (ibid.: 154).

Ethical consideration and reflexivity

As research has been used as a tool in the colonization of indigenous peoples and their territories, this study needed to be embedded in respectable ethical considerations (Smith Tuhiwai 1999: 68). Especially in Gambella, which have been integrated into the federal state rather loosely, one must recognize a great disregard and suspicion towards strangers and outsiders (Medhane 2007:

5; Yonas 2014: 113). Accordingly, ethnic precautions and measures have been considered as much as possible.

Besides consulting Kvale and Brinkmann's (2015: 91-102) ethical guidelines, it has become apparent that consent for the participation in the interviews had to be cautiously taken, when respondents have no idea what the data collected are used for (Engwicht et al 2019: 10). For example, elders have asked whether participation would improve their living conditions and articulated policy suggestions. It has been tried to solve this by repeatedly explaining the intention of the research and pointing out the possibilities of influence in detail. For this reason and simply because of the sensitivity of the data, it was finally decided to render personal and personally identifiable data anonymous^{xxi} .

Another important step was to continuously reflect on my own position as a researcher during the interviews, whilst remaining as impartial as possible, and therefore abstaining from making normative comments or expressions if possible. Since co-producing cannot be avoided completely, I took precautionary measure that would allow the interviewees' narratives to flourish as much as possible, while constructing regularly follow-up and probing questions (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015: 161).

As an interviewer, I was under the impression that most of the interviewees felt comfortable during the interview and felt – at least to an extent – that they could speak rather freely. However, it became apparent that this comfort and sociability was not the case in interview settings where representatives from the local government had been present. For instances, interviewees have expressed their indisposition through very short answers, offsets of the asked question, and a general tangible discomfort. From then on, further interviews have been carried out with support by respected and trusted persons from a local NGO, which knew the interviewees personally.

4.3 Data analysis techniques

As mentioned above, this case study is intended as a narrative analysis to determine and expand the knowledge of traditional conflict resolution. Narrative analysis can be defined as “*a genre of analytic frames whereby researchers interpret stories that are told within the context of research and/or shared in everyday life*” (Sahlstein Parcell & Baker 2017: 1069).

A narrative analysis allows social researchers to explore how people story their lives and to understand the complexity of personal and social relations (Esin et al. 2014: 2). To narrate is to increase understanding while explaining and analysing events and human agency (Tamura 2011: 150). Given the investigative character of this study, it fits well that narrative analysis provides an insight into the human realm from an actor's perspective (Shenhav 2006: 248; Freeman 2015: 22). Further, by establishing the case of the power of narrative approaches to conflict analysis and management, Sarah Federman concludes: "*Narrative analysis provides a means to locate individual and communal meaning in their discourse and to pinpoint conflicts in their world views that threaten their identity and agency*" (2016: 154).

In contrast to discourse analysis, which is placed around the structural and linguistic basis underlying written or spoken statements, narratives are better capable of capturing the structure, content and function of the stories people tell. Yet, narratives can be considered an overarching form of discourse (Willig 2014: 2-3). Given the chosen case study "*there is no more appropriate vehicle for studying human lives than through narrative inquiry*" (Freeman 2015: 21-22).

However, the use of narratives is by no means uncontroversial, since "*the world is not given to us in the form of well-made stories*" (Tamura 2011: 153). To narrate is to choose and therefore consequently subjective. Even though it has been tried to be as impartial and objective as possible, this study does not claim to give a completely objective account (Shenhav 2006: 249). Therefore, constant reflection accompanied the research process, and in the analysing process, a coding sequence is contributed to mark positioning. Therefore, a constructionist approach of narrative analysis was chosen, which focuses, on the co-construction of a story between speaker and listener and takes "*into account the broader social construction of that story within interpersonal, social and cultural relations*" (Esin et al. 2013: 3). Or expressed by Catherine Kohler Rissman (2015: 233) as "*entering the hall of mirrors*", that will be picked up in the reflection of this dissertation (chapter 6).

Furthermore, the choice of narratives as analytic technique, which draws originally from the linguistic field, might be questionable given the extensive translation needed for the data sets. However, by considering translation as another layer of the construction of stories it has been

realized that new meanings of certain terms emerged which expanded the narratives^{xxii}. Nevertheless, for this study a thematic view of narrative analysis was chosen, (besides the constructionist approach), which emphasizes “*on the content of the text, ‘what’ is said more than ‘how’ it is said, the ‘told’ rather than the ‘telling’*” (Riessman 2005: 2). Moreover, as narratives are subjective to the one who owns the story and therefore construct reality from a viewpoint, narratives are often criticized of not being able to reproduce a complete reality (Shenhav 2006: 248-50). Within the collected narratives, there might thus be statements serving a specific cause (e.g. to blame other ethnic groups or rivals), which blurry the line between self-constructed events and true reality. Even though this problem could not be completely avoided, the chosen constructionist approach to narrate focused on the “*interplay between interpersonal, social and cultural relations, rather than analysing them as a representation of reality, or as a representation with a single meaning*” (Esin et al. 2013: 16). Further, experience in the field has enabled me to critically reflect upon the contents and evaluate possible biases within the narratives of the collected data and to balance those against each other.

The analysis itself proceeded in several steps. Initially, an overall grounded approach to the data was used, which means coding qualitative data in terms of emergent categories (Glaser

& Strauss 1967: 36). Consecutively, all the data was structured according to themes that seemed relevant to approach the research question^{xxiii}. This meant sometimes going back

and forth to the data and reflecting it with other emerging coding perspectives. Ultimately the data was reflected in four main coding themes, which included first the plot of the actual conflict management, second narratives that move around social constructions and third references around the advantages and disadvantages of the conflict management and its implications around the concept of peace as well as fourth, ways in which the narratives have been shaped.

Since concepts of narratives usually build up around a timeline, comprising a story and a plot with the unfolding of events (Shenhav 2006: 246-7), a first step of the analysis involved coding of the data in chronological order. Branched in an analysis of resolution instruments within and between the groups, the inquiry was structured around ways of initiating conflict resolution, the process itself, and the sealing and ceremony to a conflict. Second, to understand the complexity of personal and social relations within conflict management, a further coding sequence around narratives of social construction was incorporated. Thereby, the data was reviewed for narratives of social situations and relations to the own and other ethnic groups. The usage of certain phrases, stories and emotional descriptions of respondents have been analysed to reproduce the

social relations of the case. Following, was the data structured around the strengths and weaknesses of TCR and its implications for peacebuilding. In the process, concepts and interpretations of the interviewees to the identified themes were collected and discussed in comparison to theories from the previous literature review (Chapter 3). To this point the coding touched upon the research question of this dissertation, however, it does not cover the interaction between researcher and participant. That is why, a fourth coding theme was introduced which captures how the narratives were unfolded in the interview and what was, going on between story-teller and listener/researcher. This coding, therefore, serves as a reflection under the previously described “*entering the hall of mirrors*” (Rissman 2015: 233).

5. Analysis of results

Inadequately addressed seats of war along the ethnic line and root causes that are fueled by long-standing grievances kept Gambella in a state of latent conflict with a high risk of violence re-escalation (Dereje 2005: 2015; Medhane 2007: 12f.; Lie & Borchgrevink 2012: 137). Since hardly any conflict management or peacebuilding have been implemented as comprehensively as the contextual situation demands, the country is left with traditional approaches for reconciliation (Sommer 2015: 16).

5.1 Traditional approaches to land conflicts within and between ethnic groups

The following chapter investigates the traditional approaches to conflicts within the case of Gambella and the ethnic groups of Nuer and Anywaa in a narrative analysis. Due to the immanent limitations, this subchapter tries to map TCR from an actor’s position and explores the complexity of personal and social relations surrounding it. Thereby, the analysis is mainly based on narratives from the conducted interviews with the elders and focuses on accounts of land-related conflicts. These are often connected with violence and the interviewees gave almost exclusively examples in which land encroachment ended in lethal fights or village wars.

The following narrative analysis is therefore based on the fundamental question: *How is traditional conflict resolution carried out within and between groups and what underlying social relationships can be found?* A summary of the findings is presented in Table 2.

5.1.1 Conflict resolution within Anywaa

The traditional approaches for managing conflicts among the Anywaa are closely related to their leadership system. They have two types of leaders: an elder or village leader called *kwaaro* and the hereditary head or king called *nyieye*. According to common tales, all *nyieye* descend from a forefather called Ony-ya, '*the one who comes from the river*', who has the power to change into different animals or objects. In stories of him, he is usually pictured with a necklace of cowrie shells (told by Akwai Gora in Laird 1998: 9-17). The two systems of rulership play a crucial role in all affairs of the social life of Anywaa and their approaches to conflict resolution. An Anywaa elder explains in the interview, that the *nyieye* is more powerful and is serving for cases which are between two different far located *kebeles*^{xxiv}

In a first step when a conflict arises, the elders, often accompanied by their sons, investigate the case and inquire the conflicting parties. They listen to all their testimonies and identify who to blame. When it comes to land conflicts and the claim of use, I was told that the

elders just know which land belongs to whom and can identify the culprit quite easily. Often the perpetrator themselves confess and ask for conflict resolution by the elders as well as refuge from retaliation. In general, the elders say that “the people will know, and the people don't lie. They will tell the truth” (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). Nevertheless, in other

*cases, for example in complex village wars or when nobody in the village wants to say who killed the person, the elders consult the *mundee*, who has the power of the spirit. The *mundee* possesses a tiger or cheetah skin and he will place and interrogate the villagers on*

that skin. “If they lie on the tiger skin, they will die. That's why they will confess. The tiger skin has a spiritual power” (ibid.).

In cases of conflicting *kebeles*, often a third *kebele* is involved in the process:

*“I know one river and the people who live there use to fish (referring to Itang woreda). However, people from another *kebele* came and took fish [...]. Before this escalated to become a war the elders from the *kebele* come together and discuss the problem. They will meet in a third *kebele*, the neutral place to discuss [...]. After they identify the killer the*

elders will take the killer to the third kebele, which will shelter him until the process is resolved and the compensation is made. He and his whole family will hide there” (ibid.).

In the negotiation phase, the elders will define the compensation. The compensation varies greatly depending on the nature of the conflict, for example, if it was a planned and motivated encroachment and murder. The interviewees mentioned that these days the

amount is steadily increasing and usually includes the presentation of multiple *demuy*^{xxv}, - which are very valuable necklaces of beads, or cows as well as money. If murder is involved,

compensation payments of up to 100.000 ETB (about 3.200 USD) are common. Usually (and if possible) the amount is expected to be paid by the killer’s family, but often the whole extended family and neighbourhood contribute. Nevertheless, lengthy and partial repayments or indebtedness are not unusual (Anywaa Elder No. 1, August 2019). Besides material payment, marriage is also considered in the negotiation as one form of payment, due to the common dowry paid for girls and women from the groom’s side. However, marriage is not an option for planned murder or village wars.

“The killer’s family have to give a daughter to be married to the victim’s family. They solve the conflict in a way that the conflicting parties will become family through marriage. They are related by blood and no blood will be spilt anymore” (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019).

After the negotiation and the remuneration, or at least a part of it, to show a willingness to negotiate and for peace, a spiritual ceremony will be performed.

“The elders and the munde from the village will come and bring a spear. First, the victims’ family will blunt and bent the spear tip with a stone and then the killer’s family will do the same on the other side to promise no revenge. No bloodshed anymore. [...] They have to say out loud in the ceremony in front of the munde: if I will revenge, I will die. Munde is the one who has the spiritual power and he will put a curse on the spear (ibid.).

The procedure is followed by a ritual slaughtering (by a throat slit) and eating of a cow with both families or clans present. Accordingly:

“The victim’s family is the one, which will slaughter the cow. The meaning behind is that the victim’s family will in that sense spill blood and make a promise to not revenge the killer’s family” (ibid.).

When the victim’s family refuse to slaughter or eat the cow, they do not accept the negotiation and peace. Vengeance will follow. *“After the retaliation it is equal. After that, it is done. Blood for blood”* (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). However, it has been said that this does not happen so often (Anywaa Elder No.2, August 2019).

The spiritual ceremony serves to seal the conflict and remind that retribution is bad and destructive and will be fined. During the ceremony, the elders will say:

“Children, killing somebody is bad and you will die younger. If you don’t kill anybody you will live a whole life, you will have grey hair on your head and a grey beard [...]. It is good when you die with red teeth. Come on child, become as old as us. Don’t die young” (ibid.).

This is based on the belief of the Anywaa that retaliation will be fined with death. Thereby, the belief is that every person that will revenge will be hunted by the spirit of the spear and will die from its curse. The elders assure that the Anywaa are afraid of the spirit and respect the decision of the elders.

“The curse will only affect that one individual. But if the family members will say that this person did good things the bad spirit will also spread to them. If they say out loud that he did bad stuff, they will be free” (ibid.).

5.1.2 Conflict resolution within Nuer

Among the Nuer, the initiation of the process of reconciliation is being undertaken by the elders of the village. The elders are called *kor moon* with *kor* meaning fighting or conflict (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019). The *kor moon* is responsible to decide and handle conflicts, but they do not assume political authority for other matters in the village. Rather Nuer organize themselves in an egalitarian society, in which women are excluded from negotiation and are at best indirectly

represented by their husbands, fathers or brothers (Nuer Elder No.1, August 2019). Nevertheless, the *kor moon* is a central figure in the conflict management and acts as a neutral mediator with spiritual power (Rep. local Church, August 2019).

In the first step, the elder discusses the issue and visit the conflicting parties. The parties are never individuals and rather concern the whole family or clan. When the families agree to the intervention of the elders, they will define compensation. This procedure is called *chut*, which means compensation, and this varies depending on the conflict at hand (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019). If land was occupied it is expected to be returned to the rightful owner, and if it was burned in the time of occupation compensation in the form of cattle needs to be paid. With Nuer being transhuman pastoralists, payments are almost exclusively settled with cattle (Rep. local Church, August 2019). In cases where murder was involved, compensation payments of up to 100 cows or ox are common these days and are similar when a woman was among the casualties (Nuer Elder No. 2 & 4, August 2019).

After the *chut*, a ceremony is followed with a sacrificial slaughtering of an ox or bull, by which sustainable peace is restored between the parties. The ceremony is open to the public and usually the whole village participates.

“If Nuer and Nuer fight and there is a conflict [...] the elders will sit together under a tree and will bring an ox or bull and they will curse the head of the ox from the evening till the sunrise, throughout the whole night. They will talk and talk and talk the whole night the curse upon the ox. When they complete the talking, they will kill the ox” (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

The cursing and killing of the ox serve symbolically for the cleaning of the slayer from his iniquity and a blood curse. It is believed that the slayer and his family and cattle are tied by that blood curse to the victim and will die, if not cleaned from the curse. By identifying with the animal in an invocation the slayer will project himself into the victim and will be at the same time redeemed from the lethal blood curse (ibid. and similar in Sommer 2005: 7-8). The animal will be slain by the elders with a powerful and respected spear, called *awio*, one of the Gods^{xxvi}.

With the sharp side of the spear, the ox is killed, and the other side of the spear will be blunted and bent to symbolize peace by the elders.

“The spear is taken away to a safe place after the killing [...] They will keep it in a small extra hut on two chairs. Nobody enters the hut until the person, who is authorized to see it, will take it out [...]. It is a very heavy spear to carry because a lot of spirits is on it. [...] It will be wrapped with the left intestines of the animal. [...] The spear will eat the gut. The spear has its own power. The spear will also drink milk when people give him food and drinks. This is the spiritual way” (ibid.).

To prevent retaliation, a curse is symbolically pronounced during the ceremony linked to the sacrifice of the ox, for everybody present.

“After the slaughtering of the ox, they (the elders) will take the head of the ox and remove all the hair from it. The head hair of the ox. The elders will then say to the children if anyone will start another conflict, this person will not have a family. He will not have any parents or siblings. Even he will not have a wife or any children. He will be all alone, and his family will die. The hair of the ox means traditionally the grow of people and when they will remove that it will be smooth, and nothing can grow there anymore. He will not have any family. This a thing why people are getting afraid. If there is no hair, they symbolize it as being empty” (ibid.).

The ceremonial sacrifice is followed by a joint feast. According to narratives by a Representative of the local Church (August 2019) this will be accompanied by songs and dances. The parties compose their own praises, for example, that they have successfully defended their lands against enemies. Since the Nuer respect and understand the ceremonial sacrifice of the ox, they will not eat that specific cow from the ceremony. They will eat another “peaceful” cow. Thereby, the elders will divide the cow into two halves and the pieces are divided between the two conflicting parties (ibid.; Elder No.3, August 2019).

“Based on our ancestors we will come together and curse the ox. Then we will kill the ox and throw away the whole body of the ox into the water. [...] We will not eat it, because it is cursed. That is between the Nuer clans. We will not even go back to the cursed place of the river where the ox is disposed” (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

The spiritual ceremony serves to seal conflicts and prevents further acts of revenge. Thereby stories are told to the children to teach them respect for the sacrifice of the ox and the associated curse. It will be said that if somebody turns back to the conflict “*the blood of*

the ox will be upon him” (ibid.). A story, which is often told in this context, symbolizes the power of the curse. It goes as follows: a village is trying to escape the curse of the ox, they wander through Gambella and settle themselves in safety in Lare^{xxvii}. They build a whole new village and become famous for their growth and development. But after years and generations, the curse of the ox found them and extinguished them one by one (Rep. local Church, August 2019; story shortened by Author).

Further, it has been told that the powerful spear *awio* is also able to prevent conflicts. The elders will perform a spiritual spell on the spear and the ox and kill it in the ceremony. After that, the person that feared harm will be safe. This kind of peace prevention has for example been used to keep away the Murle^{xxviii} from South Sudan.

Table: *Traditional approaches to conflicts within and between Nuer and Anywaa*

INITIATION AND RESPONSIBILITY	Management of conflicts by nyieye (king) or kwaaro (elder)	Management of conflicts by kor moon (elder)	Management of conflicts by elders from both ethnic groups support from government
PROCESS AND CEREMONY	Elders inquire about the conflicting parties and find a culprit Elders will define the compensation (demuy, cows or money) Spear tip will be blunted and bent by conflicting parties and <i>mundee</i> will perform a spell on the spear for retaliation Ritual slaughtering (by victim’s family) and eating of the cow by all parties	Elders ask conflicting parties to intervene and define compensation (cattle) Elders will curse an ox and slaughter it in a sacrificial ceremony (cleaning of the slayer) Powerful spear will be blunted and bent to symbolize peace Invocation of a curse for retaliation (removing the hair of the ox) Joint feast of a “peaceful” cow with singing and dancing	Elders from both ethnic come together and discuss the problem Elders will agree on a compensation payment (cattle) Both elders will perform the typical ceremony independently from the other tribe Joint feast of the cursed cattle (changed pattern by the Nuer)
SEALING AND PREVENTION	During the ceremony, elders urge for peace and no retaliation	During the ceremony, elders urge for peace and no retaliation	During ceremony elders from both sides urge for peace and no

	Spirit of spear will hunt and deadly curse the people who revenge	Curse connected to the ox will erase the family of the Retaliator The spear can prevent	retaliation Nevertheless, inter-ethnic conflicts often wind up in a recurrent limbo of retaliation
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5.1.3 Conflict resolution between Nuer and Anywaa

The information available related to the procedures in the advent of inter-ethnic conflicts are rare. I was told that a formal tradition of peace-making with other tribes does not exist. Rather, the procedures are made available when conflicts arise and depend on the initiation of the leaders and elders. Similarly, to conflict management in internal disputes the elders from both conflicting ethnic tribes are therefore responsible for reconciliation.

Nevertheless, the local government is often mentioned as another actor in the negotiations, especially in cross-ethnic conflicts. Accordingly, most elders report that the government act as a neutral and silent mediator between the parties and supports the process by facilitating, for example through providing premises or transport. Often elders are also paid a small per diem when the conflict is solved. In general, they positively plot the government's presence, as they act from "*within the people*" and ensure the safety of the killer and the family from retaliation (among others: Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

Thereby, the suspected person is placed into the local prison until the compensation is paid.

After that, the person will be released^{xxix}, since the "*justice is paid*" (ibid.).

Nevertheless, some of the elders also incriminate the dangers of political involvement. An elder from the Anywaa tribe expresses:

"But nowadays somebody from the kebele government will assist. Thereby they will perform the same process and will slaughter the cow themselves, just to show that peace is made, even though it is not accepted from the community side. But if the victim's family doesn't feel this is right, they will save the compensation and will retaliate afterwards and give the compensation back. This happens more often if the government is involved. Maybe the representative from the government is from another tribe. The person must report back and will claim everything is in peace now" (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019).

In the first step, the elders from both ethnic groups come together and discuss the problem. Like with conflicts within the groups, they stress the importance of re-establishing peace and try to identify the causes and find a guilty party (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019). Thereby, an Anywaa elder notes that "*the Nuer do not lie, as well*" (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). The elders agree on compensation for the crime committed. During the interviews it has not been mentioned that the compensation is higher in inter-ethnic conflicts. It is often agreed on cattle as compensation.

“We will never accept the demuy^{xxx} from the Anywaa. That only works between Anywaa and Anywaa. If a Nuer is killed by an Anywaa, the Nuer will compensate with cattle. The Anywaa like to get cattle” (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

After the payment of the compensation, a ceremony follows. Both elders perform their own specific rituals. There is no exact combination of the two customs to be found and rather the elders of the tribes carry out their specific traditions independently of the others. Therefore, are the Anywaa describing their ritual blunting of the tip of the spear and the imposition of a spell on the spear by the *mundee*, followed by the slaughtering of a cow by a throat cut for a joint feast (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). Simultaneously, the Nuer delineate their own traditional approach, in which cross-ethnic conflicts are mediated by their sacrificial ceremony of slaughtering a cursed ox with the powerful spear. That ox is then disposed of, since it is cursed (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019). The conflict will be after that sealed with a joint feast. Similar as within conflicts of homogenous groups, will the elders urge for peace and non-retaliation (ibid.). However, it has become clear during the interviews that successful and sustainable conflict management between the two groups is not easy to achieve and peace agreement are often broken (ibid.; Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). This can be best illustrated by the explanation of the Anywaa practice of *chirawia*^{xxxi}:

“Let me tell you a story. This chirawia happened. There was one old lady without a child. She doesn’t have a boy or a girl. She is alone. The elders give her one cow with a younger calf, the one who makes milk. The elders give the cow so that she can drink the milk. Her calf disappeared and somebody from the other kebele stole it. A Nuer. This happened in Itang Kir kebele on the night. The people from the village knew who took it [...] The elders from both villages got together and the old lady’s elders explained the situation [...] They that they must bring back the calf. The elders from the thief side said yes. They send a representative to get back the calf, but when he went, they (village people) said he cannot take the cow. On the next day, the elders talked again and promised to give back the calf [...] but they didn’t handed it over [...] On the third time this happened the elders called all the people to a meeting [...] The elders then say chirawia: ‘my friends we told them to bring back the calf, but they didn’t listen. They didn’t return the cow. chirawia. After all this process we will not hold the case anymore. We will drop out. We will not be responsible anymore. You can do whatever you want. The negotiation failed. We are done’. The Nuer understand Anywaa. That’s why the Anywaa elders just say the word chirawia, which literally gives the allowance to kill” (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019).

Additionally, the interviewees openly confessed that a revoking of the peace deal often originates from their own community. They describe, notably, the “youngsters” and the “*youth that consumes chat and drinks alcohol*” as vengeful and easily to turn for retaliation (ibid.; Rep. local Church, August 2019).

Closely linked are the specific differences, which are deeply rooted in the social structure of the respective group to be stated, that contain high potential of re-escalating violence. For example, the Nuer describe that they were profoundly confused when they saw that the Anywaa brought back the disposed carcass of the ox and began to eat it. After all, the animal has been cursed by the elders, which was understood as disregard for tradition and disrespect for the sacrifice of the ox. However, this tradition has since been changed by the Nuer, in their quest for peace in inter-group disputes. A narrative of a Nuer elder can be read as the following:

“Based on our ancestors when a conflict happens inside Nuer clans we come together and talk and through away the whole body of the ox. Back then accordingly we didn’t eat anything from that ox. But when there is a conflict between Nuer and Anywaa, the Anywaa took back the cursed ox from the river and eat it. They all came together and ate [...] If the Anywaa likes to take back the ox and eat it, let’s eat together to avoid future conflicts. After that, the Nuer also started eating together with the Anywaa the ox, even though they cursed it before” (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

Nevertheless, he continues by saying:

“The people who will get back to the conflict are the Anywaa tomorrow and the curse of the ox will go to them. Not Nuer [...] We need to eat it together because we are not the people who will get back to the conflict tomorrow. Those people who will eat it will start war later. The Anywaa are the ones which are accepting the eating of the ox, but at the same time will come back to the conflict [...] Nuer respects the curse and don’t go back to the conflict but Anywaa will start the conflict again” (ibid.).

Similarly, the Anywaa judge. For instances: *“The government decided to give the Nuer land and then the conflict started. They gave 11 villages within 4 kebeles. But the Nuer want more. The Nuer started fighting against the Anywaa. They want more”* (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2017). In Monika Sommer’s study you can also find the following fitting statement from a responding *kwaaro* (village leader):

“At the time when we practised our traditional procedures to solve our problems we did not have such big problems as we face now – this is not natural – they try to wipe us out from the surface of the earth” (Sommer 2005: 9, citing Akwar Ochala, October 2005).

Hence, not only the differences and the specific meanings of the traditional processes explain the instability of the relationship between Nuer and Anywaa, but also, in particular, the social component within conflicts. The conversations with the elders illustrate the interwoven social impacts of profound mistrust and the established pattern of mutual recrimination. Finally, the strategic dilemma can be brought back to the discussion on land and their notion of property as basis of identity: when the Anywaa say *“this land belongs to us”* and *“we will not forget that the Nuer took our land”* (ibid.; Rep. local Church, August 2019), the Nuer reply *“there is enough land [...] this land belongs to all of us”* (ibid.; Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

5.2 Strengths and weaknesses of traditional conflict approaches towards peace

As the theoretical framework has outlined, traditional conflict resolution suffers from a lack of written record and has not been adequately addressed by scholarly research. The following analysis aims at a critical assessment of both the potential and limits of the traditional conflict approaches towards peace within the case study. It is not intended as such to compare the traditional practices to conventional conflict resolution but to understand and discuss them using a grounded approach. Although these will be necessarily prepared within the western language of traditional conflict research, this serves more the contextual understanding and expansion of the theoretical foundations. Thereby the analysis will be based on the following question: *What kind of strengths and weaknesses towards peace can be derived from the narratives and how do these expand our knowledge on the nexus between traditional conflict approaches and peacebuilding?*

It is written in the tradition of giving account to the narratives of the elders and assessments of interviewees within the government and independent organizations while linking and adding to the theoretical framework of conflict theory (Chapter 3).

Weaknesses of traditional approaches to conflicts

The narrative analysis has shown that traditional conflict approaches are not free of weaknesses and problematics. Thereby the case of Gambella shows that traditional conflict resolution is

aggravated by six major challenges, which on the one hand confirm and on the other hand extend the theory formulated above.

First, as the narrative analysis has illustrated, traditional approaches do not necessarily put an end to violence. That conflicts in Gambella are inevitably connected with violence becomes soon apparent by the fact that all interviewees, when asked about traditional mechanisms of conflicts, jumped directly into narratives of homicide and village wars. The reuse of violence and retaliation is considered as an integral part or possibility in the process. This is made clear by the Anywaa description of “*blood for blood*” or the narrative of *chirawia* (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). Similarly, the Nuer rationalize, that harmony can often only be achieved “*after fighting, after days without control and after one group has been defeated*” (Rep. local Church, August 2019). Thus, the stated theory with a “*recourse to violence*” (Boege 2006: 15) corresponds with the told practice in Gambella and thereby in particular in inter-ethnic disputes (Nuer Elder No.4; Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). Thus, it seems to be difficult to arrive at the concept of peace with traditional approaches, which are formulated with the requirement of an absence of violence (Miller 2005: 55f.).

Second, overarching participation and inclusion of the community in the traditional procedures remain unaddressed. This is exemplified by the fact that the procedures do not allow the presence of women during the process, and that the attendance and the right to have a say in the matter is restricted for the conflicting parties (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019). Problematic is particularly the swapping of women between conflicting parties as gift or compensation (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). Thus, the authoritarian and gerontocratic ruling stands in contradiction with universal (or western) standards of human rights and democracy (Wehrmann 2017: 83).

Third, the limited sphere of applicability of traditional approaches hinders an overarching conflict transformation and peacebuilding in the region (Boege 2006: 15). The elder-led decisions enjoy respect only within a given community, and the procedures are confined to this context. Thus, traditional approaches are unable to guarantee sustainable solutions for conflicts between two different groups. When asked about the potential of traditional conflict instruments for disputes between Nuer and Anywaa the elders openly share their exasperation and confirm the applicability only within a small ‘we’-framing, that excludes the other ethnic group (among others: Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). The limited applicability is particularly exemplified by the fact that a combined or adapted procedure in case of inter-ethnic clashes is absent and has

never been provided by the elders. A representative of a local NGO confirms that the traditional methods work well for managing disputes within communities and their recurrences, but inter-conflict management is likely doomed for failure (Rep. local NGO No.2, November 2019).

Fourth, the restricted potential of indigenous procedures is further worsened by the detaching of some members of the community. Boege describes this point as the gearing “*towards the preservation of the ‘good old’ order*” (2006: 15). Thereby, young men and women challenge the values and relations of the traditional order and turn to other world views. For instance, the elders describe the youth and youngsters as unteachable and vengeful, with every breach of peace emanating from them. Thus, the youth complicates the traditional concepts and ultimately the successful implementation of peace (Rep. local Church; Anywaa Elder No.1, August 2019). On the other hand, in dialogues conducted with an NGO, young people often complain that elders pull through linearly the traditional practices without adapting or development of them (Rep. local NGO No.2, November 2019). Nevertheless, all interview partners, elders as well as experts and NGO representatives, construct the predominant tie into traditional customs to the extent that they assess the procedures as valid and legit for the community. Hence, it would be short-sighted to simply conclude in the case of Gambella that traditional structures have been eroded.

Fifthly, traditional instruments of conflict resolution are often accused of being open to abuse. Theory often states that decisions by traditional authorities might be biased or abused for the gain of personal advantages (Boege 2006: 17). In the case study, this accusation can be confirmed in part. An independent expert in land governance with a long stay in Gambella, confirms that often the village people think that the elders work for the government. Their decisions are thus influenced by political power games and the paid per diem (August 2019). Further, a representative of a local NGO reports that often also the elders are involved themselves in retaliation. In conducted community dialogues and trauma healing sessions, the elders often use the word retaliation (while the youth does not) and thus make a sustainable peace process more difficult. It is often said, for example, that: “*Anywaa, do not forget*”. Which refers to the atrocity against Anywaa communities in

Gambella town in December 2003 (Rep. local NGO No.2, November 2019). Nonetheless, the personal communications and the field study in Gambella evidence that the elders in general endeavour to achieve harmony and peace. The elders, thus, described in the interviews their

stories and the conflict process as if it is taking place at that very moment. In that way they fall into their role in a lively and authentic way:

“When the war comes, people will leave the land, houses will burn, and people will be killed and then also the hunger will come. It happened. Let us not wait to prevent that [...] What we shall do is that we should forget about the previous situation. Let us come and make a new arrangement. Let us forgive one another and let us forget” (Rep. local Church, August 2019).

Sixth, the case study reveals that the underlying social constructions and root causes of the conflicts are only inferiorly considered in the traditional processes. This is particularly interesting because this point is not sufficiently picked up by the theoretical thinking mentioned above. Even though traditional conflict procedures are presented in theory as people-centred and context-sensitive, the actual underlying social patterns and root causes of the conflict between the two groups are not sufficiently addressed. This is particularly surprising, however, as both the social patterns and the main causes of the conflicts are openly communicated. The presented narratives of the elders reflect on the social net of relations between the ethnic groups. In it, the dilemma of the Nuer as a *claimant* and *colonizer* and the Anywaa as a *nationalistic* and *vengeful defender* are repeatedly depicted. And, the real problem between the two as a violent discourse around the concepts of homeland and settlers and the political power behind it, becomes apparent (Expert; Rep. of local NGO No.1, August 2019). The following statement hits this very well:

“If you (Anywaa) did not leave the word `ours`, we will not accept that. These make the conflict. It is the position of us, Nuer, that if the Anywaa does not leave the word that Gambella is `ours` and they will say Gambella is for all, we will not accept that. And this is what makes the conflict worsen because Anywaa will not accept as well [...] This makes the conflict nowadays not so much about land anymore, but it is politically motivated” (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

It clearly shows that traditional practices are overstrained in this respect. Although the consulted people are aware of the problem, up to now there has been a lack of intensive integration of social discourse and transformation in the traditional procedures that emphasize both ethnic groups. This is particularly interesting since it can be argued that this point is essential for peacebuilding. After the concept of “*positive peace*” that aims to change underlying conflict dynamics, a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of social pattern seems to be a vital tenet to ensure sustainable peace (Miller 2005: 55f.). This point will be the subject of the discussion in the following subchapter.

Strengths of traditional approaches to conflicts

To the presented weaknesses of traditional approaches to conflicts, the case study matches five major strengths in pursuit of peace. The specific consideration of Gambella underpins the strengths, which the general theory already established and consolidates the potential of these approaches.

First, as the theory has pointed out, traditional approaches fit well in situations of state fragility (Boege 2006: 11). This point can be observed, as Gambella can be described as a region suffering from complex conflict dynamics, with interconnected issues and pivoting around weak identity politics and relations with the Ethiopian central state. Thus, quests for stability and peace are arising from the local grassroots to the state level, and notably, conflict solutions performed by traditional elders within homogenous ethnic groups resolute in “*islands of peace*” (ibid.). Various examples of peace agreements have been named by the elders during the interviews and for example, the consultation of another third, neutral *kebele* from the Anywaa exemplifies the state-independent potential and efficiency of the approaches (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019).

Second, it has become obvious during the research process that traditional approaches are credited with high legitimacy by the community. This legitimacy rest within the leaders of the group and the elder’s decisions are respected as well as the imposed curse and consequences dreaded by the local people. The elders openly acknowledge that “*if the elders are the ones who do the process, there will be peace*”, while at the same time making clear that a resolution based on a state-centred approach will not be supported by the local community (ibid.).

Accordingly, a regional government official conceded that the government cannot handle the problem without the elders (August 2019). Given that interventions from the Ethiopian central government focus at most on a temporary reconciliation between the hardened fronts, the non-state-centric approaches are of utmost importance for the local communities and are perceived as a trusted institution. One independent expert denounces the government’s frequent intervention with special troops, which intervene militarily to secure a “*negative peace*”. These short-sighted operations are not subject to any legal basis and are only regulated by the top government officials on the regional level. Thus, soldiers are selected according to ethnic affiliation of the respective leadership and position themselves accordingly in the missions. This ultimately leads to a further intensification of the conflict problematic (August 2019).

Third, comparing to other forms of conflict management and diplomacy, traditional approaches are characterized by their process-orientation (Boege 2006: 12). The process itself is more important, than the plain solution and comprise an ongoing and often time-consuming negotiation. During the interviews the elders have mentioned as such, and described the process often as very comprehensive, particularly in *kebele*-overarching struggles:

“In that case, both kebeles lost the same number of persons, peace is not made. The elders still have to find who to blame. The wrong village has to pay the compensation. In these

village wars, the individuals must be compensated even though they lost somebody as well. Every lost person has to be compensated even though the number of casualties from both sides is the same. The elders still work there.” (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019).

Thus, the process-oriented character is a clear strength of traditional approaches and the framing in a long-term perspective can be argued to be important for positive outcomes.

Fourth, traditional approaches provide in contrast to conventional practices a complex approach surrounded by inclusion and participation. Thus, a solution is characterized by a consensus (Boege 2006: 13). Accordingly, in the narratives of the case, a process of integration can be found. For instance, the peace ceremonies in both Nuer and Anywaa culture are attended by the whole community. The warring sides also take part in the traditional procedures for example in blunting the spear tip, as well as the right of the victim’s family to “*take blood*” in the form of slaughtering the cow in the ceremony of the Anywaa (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019). These activities are very important in the process and can be highly functional to establish harmony in quarrelling relations. However, as has been pointed out in the subsequent challenges an overarching and gender-sensible integration is lacking in the describes approaches. Lastly, the spiritual and psycho-social dimension is to be highlighted as a clear strength of traditional approaches. Thereby, the reconciliation and spiritual healing considers the emotional component of conflicts and thus expands potential implications for peace (Boege 2006: 15). To this end, reconciliation of the disputants is addressed by the elders and implemented within the traditional customs. Both ethnic groups reintegrate the perpetrators and the victim’s family back into the community. In the spiritual ceremony of the Nuer, for example, the murderer is cleaned from sins by projecting into the oxen to be slaughtered and loading all evil onto it (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019). Nevertheless, the detailed examination of the Nuer-Anywaa relations showed that this social-psychological component only includes the warring parties. Although the extended family and communities are not excluded from the ceremony itself, a lack of further processing of the social patterns can be examined, which already been recognized as a weakness in the previous sub-section.

5.3 Discussion

The narrative analysis has revealed that traditional approaches to land conflicts are deeply rooted in the social structures of the respective ethnic group. Briefly summarized, they sketch around a discussion of the elders of the problem with a consensus-focus decision. Subsequently, a compensation payment will be negotiated, and the conflict will be sealed with a sacrificial animal slaughtering and spear blunting. However, reviewing the findings in two different ethnic groups, differences in the practice of these traditions can be found with only superficially similar symbolism. To this end, it can be stated that the traditional approaches function well within conflicts of ethnic-homogenous parties while falling short in inter-ethnic disputes.

Treating the narratives as an analytical tool allowed for a context-specific assessment of the traditional approach and the identification of issues and challenges within the pursue of peacebuilding in the region. Alongside already mentioned advantages and disadvantages by other authors, the case study provides a systematical examination of the approach towards peacebuilding efforts. The immersion in the human realm with articulated narratives makes the conflict roots visible, sheds light on the intertwined social patterns of the approaches and their challenges on the way to a comprehensive peace. The ethnically and socially determined realities impede central peace establishment and the different understanding of land entitlement and carried ideologies vis-à-vis the other ethnic group continue to cause re-escalation of violence.

In the following section, I argue that it is paramount to systematically embed comprehensive and associative approaches within traditional customs to arrive at sustainable and positive peace. Moreover, I will emphasize three measures to guide peacebuilding within Nuer-Anywaa relations in the region.

First, as outlined in the preceding critical analysis, traditional approaches lack the integration of comprehensive social patterns and root causes that expand the victim-perpetrator towards a consideration of inter-ethnic problematics and relations. What is needed is thus a system of dealing with inter-ethnic disputes that meets the parties just where they stand. This requires a form of mediation that gives room to openly discussing and understanding the relation of the conflicting parties and to develop communication structures, which links them together in a cooperative manner. The focus is on adding comprehensive social relevant components into the traditional approach that look beyond the perpetrator-victim relation. Thus, traditional customs would not (only) react under “*peacemaking*” on an ad hoc basis but will commit towards the

deeper-lying factors in the relations of the parties. More particularly, structures must be found that break the prevailing social fabric which inflame the discourse on land. After all, state ownership of the land is an instrument of control and political power, and thus the current conflicts are soaked in political motivations. Therefore, such a structure must also face the debate on the concept and conflict-potential of the ethnic federalism^{xxxii}

Second, this structure will only be efficient if the initiative comes from the bottom up. Since traditional practices are surrounded by local actors are dealing about them and at the same time are carried by them, they should be as well be a place of origin. The main idea emerging is that of the local agency being central in the formation of conflict management, rather than just the subject of its decision. This point stems from the presented narratives and can be linked to recent debates surrounding the “*local turn*” in peacebuilding (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015: 825). Similarly, in his pioneering work, Lederach argues, that “*the greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture*” (1997: 94). However, it seems important to not only anchor the normative aspiration in general efforts to peace but also to link them particularly into traditional forms. The frequent description and introduced strengths of traditional forms as inclusive and participatory are reflected in the case study a premature fallacy. Thus, it needs to be recalled that not only the elders and the warring parties should have reserved an active role in the process, but also the overall affected communities. This implies the participation of women and the integration of the youth. Considering the before-mentioned narratives describing the youth as “*unteachable*” and “*vengeful*” and the elders as “*linear*” and “*rigid*”, traditional approaches will have to find a way to adapt and develop in this regard.

Third, even with all the emphasis on local-born and social-relevant approaches should not be forgotten, that the traditional approaches should be based within and in coordination with government structures. To this end, it is argued for closer cooperation between traditional institutions and government structures. Seeing traditional approaches as a pure alternative might thus cause more problems and it is doubtful that they can mortise peacebuilding alone. This is also argued by an independent expert in a personal conversation, who does not consider a “*pushing*” sorely towards traditional settings and elders as an effective measure (August 2019). While this argument is not intended to undermine the integrity of the traditional procedures, it

argues, that the local and regional government must find a way to invest in peacebuilding, which goes beyond military interventions and the facilitation of elders with transport and per diems. What is needed are creative measures that aim for confidence and trust-building along the ethnic lines, which also include a levy of state authority.

Coming back to the research gaps outlined in the introduction, this dissertation has revealed the conceptualized procedures of indigenous conflict instruments within the case and allowed for a proposed reflection of its strength and weaknesses. It has further shown that the analysis of land conflicts is essential, as those constitute the root causes of the violence. The case has exemplified how the construct of peace percolated traditional ways of solving conflicts, however as Monika Sommer considers, it is “*difficult to predict to which extent enforcing and strengthening traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution could contribute to sustainable peace in the region*” (2005: 16). Nevertheless, I support the claim that a more creative approach will have the potential and comprehensiveness, the contextual situation needs (ibid.: 18).

Hence, I argue that traditional conflict approaches should be embraced in an associative notion, that can be contextualized by adding components of root causes and underlying social pattern, emancipatory settings and governmental cooperation. Therefore, I consider peacebuilding ideals in the region to only have a chance to be realistic if they are operationalized and guided by those principles. To this end, a creative refurbishment of traditional conflict approaches with social, local and governmental accounts can provide a start. While acknowledging that these complex aspirations for traditional conflict approaches make it difficult to implement, it should not be simply dismissed, because of its comprehensive needs. Rather it is exactly the comprehensiveness which should be understood as a starting point for new ideas and not as a problem. To say it with Lederach’s words, we should: “*Develop a capacity to make complexity a friend, not a foe*” (2014: 46). Finally, it is exactly the presented immersion in the landscape of traditional conflict approaches in Gambella, that allows the conclusion that traditional instruments, despite inevitable flaws, will do more good than harm. Acknowledging that without the traditional institutions the consequences of those people confronted with violence every day will be devastating. This alone presents a starting point and opens an opportunity for development. The newly endorsed CSO proclamation makes now the right time for this endeavor.

6. Critical Reflection

The following paragraphs critically reflect upon the thesis’ limitations and contributions. After having outlined relevant literature and situated my own research within the scholarly debate on tradition conflict approaches and peacebuilding, the main subject was to investigate the

contextual procedures within and between the ethnic groups of Nuer and Anywaa (*objective 1*). The narrative study further illustrated hitherto un-analyzed contextual strength and weaknesses of the approaches to address peace in the region (*objective 2*). While the analysis supports the claim made in theory, that traditional models to conflicts can be interlinked with the construction of peace, a more associative approach is needed to address peacebuilding in a comprehensive manner (*objective 3*). Furthermore, more research is needed regarding how to integrate this approach to the situation in Gambella.

While the dissertation has achieved its objectives, there have been certain methodological challenges that need to be reflected. The difficulty in planning the field study and time constraints did not allow for a particularly large data set. The collected data provided an adequate account, however, more and especially numerous personal communications would have potentially strengthened the accuracy of the sourced information. Thus, not only further interviews with local people and people who have been experiencing TCR as well as several interview appointments with the interview partner are desirable for further research projects.

Moreover, even though the aim was to detach the traditional instruments of conflict resolution from their silence and, instead, place them at the centre of the investigation, - it could not have been avoided that the narratives were co-constructed in the interviews and analysis. It became clear how difficult it is to reconstruct them in a non-judgmental way, particularly in not taking a stand on ethnic rivalries. Nevertheless, it seems equally important to reproduce these, to create a realistic picture of the reality on site. In this respect, the research process was accompanied by an inner-dilemma between the drawing and understanding of the contextual situation and the imperative to impede the fracturing of the social wounds or the preheating of hatred. The recognition and reflection of this served as a start to meet the challenge.

At the same time, I discovered that also the story-tellers and interview partners position and construct themselves and their realities in the interviews. For example, the elders incorporated me in their stories to vulgarize the processes. However, while analysing the data, it brings to mind, that this could perhaps also consciously or unintentionally been used to cast me as a partner in their struggle against the other ethnic group.

Despite these limitations and methodological challenges, the analysis has proven to be fruitful. Not only have the narratives, revealed the context-specific traditional approaches to conflicts, which are interesting in its own right; but they also offered contributions to assess its strength and weaknesses for peace in the case. To this end, the interview partners were able to become visible as active agents and through the personal conversations contribute to the debate on sustainable peacebuilding. How openly and intuitive the interview talked about the topic and let me participate in their knowledge is something that inspired me throughout the research process. It shows how paramount comprehensive peace and stability is for those people affected on-site, and at the same time, it raises hope that an implementation arising from them, will be possible. Thus, it can be carved out what is needed to arrive at comprehensive peace in the region. What is proposed here is a creative refurbishment of the traditional approaches with an associative notion. Understanding thereby that the complexity of this endeavour needs to be viewed as a starting point for development, rather as a challenge in itself. However, how to practically implement this approach with its normative aspirations for peacebuilding to the situation in Gambella needs more research efforts.

Moreover, one has to challenge and reflect upon the hereby used understanding and language of conflict theory and peace. Since the situated strength and weaknesses have been embedded in a conceptual framework, which has been originated by western thinking the understanding of peace, deserves further consideration. It can be assumed, that there is a local understanding of peace, that cannot be grasped with the framework used here. This seems to be an important discourse of principal theory, which gives room for further research.

7. Conclusion

Enhanced negotiations with heightened prospects of reconciliations to reinstall harmony on the one side, and an apparent inconsistency with a deep-rooted conflict on the other side, characterize the immersion into the traditional resolution landscape within the case of Nuer-Anywaa relations. Grown out of the intention to remove the indigenous approaches from their historical and imperialist academic silence – and to place them instead *speaking* at the centre of the investigation, taking them seriously in their active role in peacebuilding– extends the narrative analysis the saying and silence ultimately far beyond.

Coming back to the overarching research question, the narrative lens allowed for an investigation of the traditional approaches within and between the two major ethnic groups in Gambella. It has

been shown how deeply the specific approaches, but also the origin of the conflicts are interwoven with social patterns, emerge from them and yet do not sufficiently reveal them. By employing the narratives as an analytical tool, the horizon for understanding and assessing traditional mechanisms for peace was broadened. As such the case study of Gambella has revealed that not only do the approaches lack the comprehensive integration of social dimensions beyond the victim-perpetrator consideration in their procedures, but notably inter-ethnic consolidations need to be embedded in a dimension-encompassing associative notion. Although traditional resolution systems have something to contribute towards arriving at peace, the lasting structural violence between the ethnic lines cannot, and as this study argues, should not, be approached by them only. What is needed instead is a comprehensive change on all societal levels that is guided by effective and legitimated traditions.

Ultimately, this paper argues that traditional conflict resolution should be considered within a comprehensive approach with an addition of components concerning root causes and underlying social patterns, emancipatory settings, and governmental cooperation. This led to the conclusion that traditional ideas need to be viewed as valuable resources to understanding realities and envision new visions to peace. Treating them as such, enables researchers to move away from the dominant paradigm as a starting point for addressing conflicts, and enables the emergence of new approaches, that adjust the contextual implications. To be an effective element for peacebuilding the approach needs to consequently be better understood in its practical applications. This study did not provide a blueprint on how to arrive there but rather demonstrated that threatening and appreciating traditional ideas allows for an accentuated language to grasp the contextual situation with its deeper historical, social and political interrelationships.

Thus, traditional approaches, even though they overlap with peacebuilding and development, need to be theorized and practised comprehensively. To say it with Lederach's words:

"The narrowness of resolution approaches may solve problems but miss the greater potential for constructive change" (2014: 59).

As the case study of Gambella has revealed, it is a matter of priority and urgency to address the legacies of conflicts, and the present political refurbishment in overall Ethiopia makes it the right time for this endeavor.

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9. Appendix

9.1. Interview guide

1) Introduction

- Have you been born here (Itang or Gambella) or since when are you leaving in Gambella?
- What kind of ethnic group do you belong to?
- At the beginning can you shortly state your personal background and your involvement in land-related topics?
- In your daily life, how often are you exposed to land use conflicts?

2) Case of Gambella – Itang

- According to your experience what are current problems in the Itang woreda?
- What kind of land conflicts are most common?
- How is the land conflict situation at the moment in Itang?
- How has the situation evolved over time?

3) Nuer and Anywaa land use conflict resolution mechanisms

- What kind of conflict resolution bodies and institutions are mostly used in Itang woreda and especially from the Nuer and Anywaa community?
- What kind of customary resolution mechanism is involved in Itang?
- Can you describe how land conflicts in Nuer/Anywaa community are solved traditionally?

Initiation:

- Who is initiating the mediation of land conflicts?
- Where does the mediation take place?

Process:

- How are the land conflicts solved traditionally?
- What kind of procedures are followed?
- What kind of compensation is usually used?

Ceremony:

- How is the conflict sealed?
- What is the traditional meaning of the ceremony and instruments in use?
- What happens if the peace deal is broken afterwards?

Development and other issues:

- How did the mediation change over time?
- Is there an increase or decrease in using tradition mediation systems?
- Is there a different process of solving land conflicts when women are involved?

Stories and Narratives:

- Do you have any example of a land conflict and how it was solved or not?
 - How are the traditional mediation instruments being told and distributed?
- Do you know any story which is connected to the topic and which is being told (to children)?

**How is this mechanism different when Anywaa and Nuer are clashing over land?
(Interethnic disputes)**

Initiation:

- Who is initiating the mediation of land conflicts?
- Where does the mediation take place?

Process:

- How are the land conflicts solved traditionally?

- What kind of procedures are followed?
- What kind of compensation is usually used?

Ceremony:

- How is the conflict sealed?
- What is the traditional meaning of the ceremony and instruments in use?
- What happens if the peace deal is broken afterwards?

Development and other issues:

- How did the mediation change over time?
- How did traditional instruments influence each other?
- Is there an increase or decrease in using tradition mediation systems?
- Is there a different process of solving land conflicts when women are involved?

Stories and Narratives:

- Do you have any example of a land conflict and how it was solved or not?
- How are the traditional mediation instruments being told and distributed?
- Do you know any story which is connected to the topic and which is being told (to children)?

5.) Discussion / Reflection

- What do you think are advantages of solving land conflicts in this way?
- What are the disadvantages?
- What kind of problem are these traditional systems facing at the moment?

6.) Further questions for the government

Case of Gambella/Itang

- How do you assess the current situation in Gambella/Itang?
- What did you think are the root course of the current conflicts in Itang?
- Did the conflicts change and developed over time?
- Do you know if there are any numbers on the conflicts and casualties?

Traditional conflict resolution and peacebuilding

- What do you know about traditional conflict procedures?
- How did the conflict resolution change over time?
- What kind of underlying peace (and justice) understanding does the government have?
- How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses of the traditional approaches for conflicts?
- What do you think is needed to improve the situation?

Role of government

- How is the government involved in the conflict resolution?
- How is the cooperation between the government and elders? Is there a former communication procedure about conflicts and resolutions?
- What do you think needs to change for sustainable peace and what role does the government need (should or should not) to play?

7.) Further questions for NGO representatives and experts

Case of Gambella/Itang

- How do you assess the current situation in Gambella/Itang?
- What did you think are the root cause of the current conflicts in Itang?
- Did the conflicts change and developed over time?
- Do you know if there are any numbers on the conflicts and casualties?

Traditional conflict resolution and peacebuilding

- What do you know about traditional conflict procedures?
- How did the conflict resolution change over time?
- What kind of underlying peace (and justice) understanding do you and your esteemed organization have?
- How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses of the traditional approaches for conflicts?
- What do you think is needed to improve the situation?
- How do you assess the involvement of the government within the traditional procedures?

Role of the organization (NGO/CSO)

- How are you and your organization involved in the conflict resolution?
- How is the cooperation between you and the elders?

9.2. Selection of photographs



Figure 4: Settlement of Anywaa in Itang (picture taken by Author and colleagues, March 2019, property of giz)

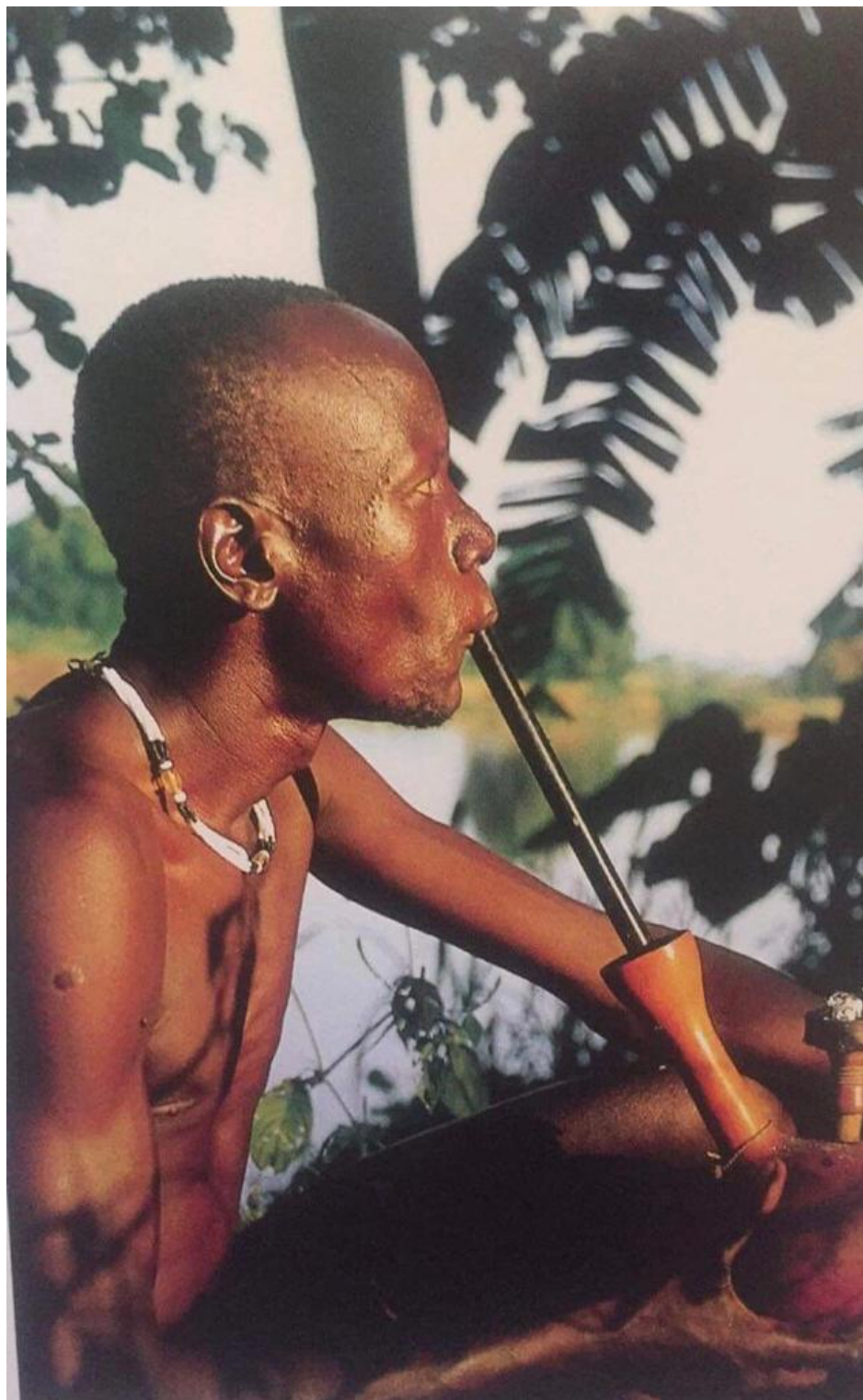


Figure 5: An Anywaa man with demuy enjoying his pipe (Gozábez & Cebrián 2004: 146)

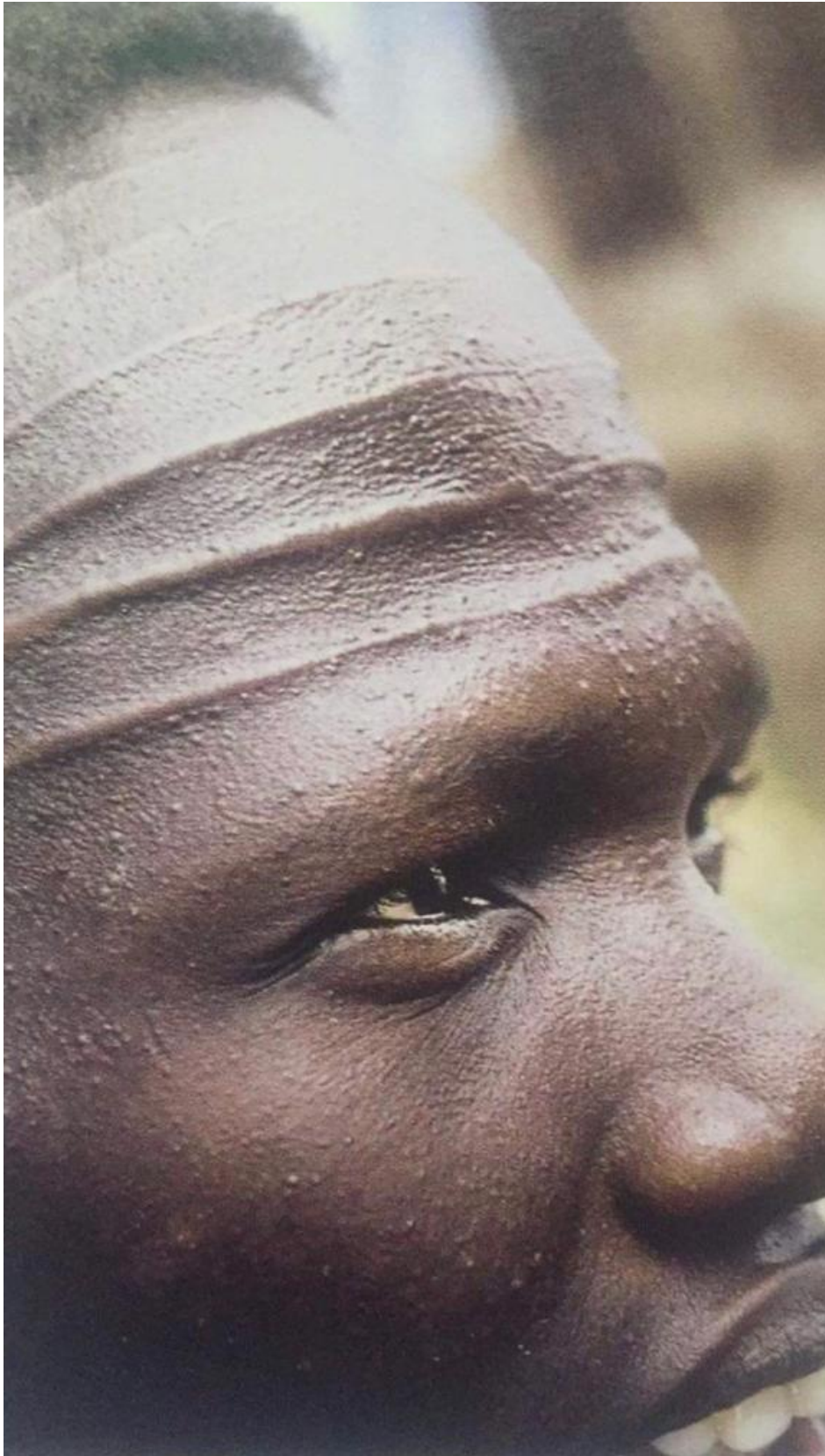


Figure 6: A Nuer man with distinctive linear scars on the forehead (Gozábez & Cebrián 2004: 152)



Figure 7: Movement of nomadic tribes from Senegal in Itang (picture taken by Author and colleagues, March 2019, property of GIZ)



Figure 8: Cattle herds of pastoralist from Senegal in Itang (picture taken by Author and colleagues, March 2019, property of GIZ)

ⁱ The *Gadaa* system is a holistic system of governance of the Oromo people to keep peace and stability within the local community. In the system man take, depending on their age a specific role in society. Individuals in the age range of 40-48 (called Luba) are considered as elders and are entitled to deal with conflicts (Desalegn et al, 2005: 29-11).

ⁱⁱ The training (Title: Understanding, Preventing and Solving Land Conflicts) was given on behalf of GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit GmbH) in Addis Abeba from the 7th - 10th of May 2019. Training participants comprised mainly of officials from various levels of the government and representatives from civil society.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sometimes also referred as Anuak or Anywak; this dissertation is following the description of the ethnographic researcher Kurimoto (1992), which comes closest to the way the Anywaa call themselves.

^{iv} A *woreda* is considered a special *woreda* because of its administrative sub-division (not part of any Zone), which is similar to an autonomous area (Yilmaz & Venugopal 2008: 3).

^v Even though Gambella can be described further in its historical roots from its revenue through Menelik II for flourish trade relations with Sudan and Egypt over the river channels as commercial enclave. As well as its time under Italian invasion. For this dissertation with the focus on land conflicts between Nuer and Anywaa, the early developments under the current EPRDF government have been described. For an extensive historic processing see Markakis (2011).

^{vi} The Ethiopian highlanders are a heterogenic group formation from Tigrayans, Oromo and Amhara throughout Ethiopia, which due to their economic dominance and close relation to the Ethiopian state are often described as "*the significant others*" in Gambella (Dereje 2005: 205). This differentiation of people is partly visible in Gambella, since the indigenous people ascending from the Nilotic tribe have compared to the highlanders significantly darker skin and grace themselves with distinctive scarifications on their faces (Gozábez & Cebrián 2004: 149). For a portray please consider appendix 9.1 figure 5 & 6.

^{vii} The Derg regime was a communist military regime ruling Ethiopia from 1974 to 1987. The regime carried out significant land reforms under the slogan "*Land to the Tiller*" which however pushed land titles into state ownership (Ambaye 2012: 1). Further, profound villagization and resettlement programs were executed, which resulted in vehement resistance, since they were carried out without prior consent and participation of the people (Wondwosen 2017: 39).

^{viii} However, this number includes just the reports which are handed in to the city administration, other institutions receive reports as well. There is no one single institutions to report grievances or an effective exchange of information between the institutions.

^{ix} The Dinka are an ethnic group native in South Sudan, which enter as refugees Gambella. Even though, the Dinka and Nuer share many similarities in terms of language and livelihood, they also intersect through historically conflicting relationships in both Ethiopia and Sudan (Lie & Borchgrevink 2012: 141).

^x Moreover, the situation is being intensified by the influx of various pastoralist trips from other countries. During a fieldtrip in March 2019 I met numbers of large herds of cattle from nomads originally from Senegal in the north of Itang special *woreda*.

They reside in the country for several months and use land and water (without comprehensive legal regulation or compensation). Please consider appendix 9.1 figure 7 & 8.

xi Recently, this constrained proclamation has been replaced with a new emended version (No. 1113/2019). The new proclamation is allowing for a self-regulation of CSOs and is granting also foreign and foreign-funded CSOs to engage in advocacy and human rights work (Townsend 2019.).

xii The term traditional conflict resolution is hereby understood as the process of resolving dispute or disagreement. It aims to restore peace and harmony between the conflicting parties. The term can and will be used interchangeable in this study with the term of dispute resolution (Tsegai 2017: 37).

xiii However, the use of traditional systems is not restricted to rural and peripheral regions of Ethiopia. Many people residing in the cities prefer these systems in contrast to legal appearances, due to the high mistrust in the government's juridically apparatus (Tsegaye & Junker 2018: 49).

xiv Customary dispute resolutions are hereby understood as one form of traditional conflict resolution and not as a single approach apart from that (Tsegaye & Junker 2018: 49).

xv The concept of elders in Ethiopia is understood as a social category, rather than a biological category (age).

xvi Though traditional systems and customary approaches play a significant role in Ethiopia, they are not properly recognized by law (Tsegaye & Junker 2018: 47; Ajanaw & Hone 2018: 15).

xvii While land conflicts can be further differentiated in various types (Wehrmann 2017: 34f.), this study is under-standing land conflicts with a wider interpretation and integrates land related disputes over the water resources of the Baro River.

xviii Most interviewees were men, since in Gambella usually older male members of the community take the role of elders. Similar, men fill higher positions in government offices and organizations. However, in the interviews of the elders, -facilitated by the government, also two (older) women participated.

xix The rainy season in Gambella is quite a calm period of the year since it's not harvest or sowing season, and thus most people are at home or gathered in the villages.

xx Informed consent from the elders has been collected orally, since forms might appear intimidating and are useless for analphabets.

xxi Interviewees from the government, local experts and representatives from NGOs have expressed their wish to stay anonymous in the interview from the beginning.

xxii For an example, please consider the discussion on the meaning of "*chirawia*" on page 34.

xxiii For the data analysis, the software 'f4analyse' was used. An overview of the coding system with sub-codes can be found in appendix 9.3.

xxiv Smallest administrative unit in Ethiopia, similar to a ward or neighborhood (Yilmaz & Vengopal 2008: 3).

xxv Due to the scarcity of *demuy*, compensation in the form of money is getting more common (Anywaa Elder No.1, August 2019).

xxvi However, this spear is only used for big conflicts, where murder is involved. There is only one spear for a lot of conflicts (Nuer Elder No 4, August 2019).

xxvii Nuer woreda, bordering Itang to the east.

xxviii The Murle tribe from South Sudan are known for their culture of raiding cattle and children from neighboring Gambella. According to UNICEF Ethiopia (2016) in the last decades hundreds of children have been kidnapped by the Murle and carted to South Sudan alongside thousands of cattle (from both Nuer and Anywaa).

xxix The release of the perpetrator was confirmed by many elders, but the regional government denies this practice.

xxx The Nuer have a similar necklace, a big white one, called *Duong*. It is only used for decoration purposes for example for a wedding. It is not used for compensation (Nuer Elder No.4, August 2019).

xxxi According to Dereje Feyissa, *chirawia* can be translated as "*lifting up the hands*". Accordingly, he describes it as code word for: "*an Anywaa who has affinal ties with a Nuer (to) withdraws his protection as a host and allows other non-related (anonymous) Anywaa to kill his Nuer 'guest'*". The local political practice is used for a takeover of land with underground violence (2005: 210f.).

When shared the explanation of *chirawia* from the literature, the interviewed elder was offended and explains the meaning again as failure of negotiation, but not as practice of killing "*cold-blooded*" (Anywaa Elder No.3, August 2019).

xxxii For an interesting account, please refer to Abbink (2006).

