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**THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS IN CONFLICT
MANAGEMENT IN BURKINA FASO**

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The Role of International Organizations in Conflict Management in Burkina Faso

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Abstract

Purpose: The study sought to analyze the role of international organizations in conflict management in Burkina Faso

Materials and Methods: The study adopted a desktop methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

Findings: The results show that international organizations are important actors in conflict management. They are responsible for mediating disputes, preventing armed conflicts and promoting peacebuilding efforts. These organizations have played a key role in providing technical and financial support to the Government of Burkina Faso as well as in facilitating dialogue and cooperation between international actors, the government, and civil society in Burkina Faso.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practices and Policies: The power theory and Constructivism theory may be used to anchor future studies in the conflict management sector. The study results will also benefit other stakeholders such as the policy makers as well as researchers and scholars from different parts of the world. The top management of conflict management sector in the country will also use the study findings to improve peace building performance in all their activities and programs. The study recommends that the adoption of effective conflict management policies in the international organizations will help to improve efficiency in their major operations and activities.

Keywords: *International Organizations, Conflict Management, Burkina Faso.*

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INTRODUCTION.

Conflict management is a complex process that involves a variety of actors, including international organizations. International organizations are entities established by states to promote global cooperation. These organizations are responsible for helping to reduce or prevent conflicts, and for facilitating peacebuilding efforts. International organizations are created to promote cooperation between states and other actors. They are often established by treaties and have a variety of responsibilities, including the maintenance of international peace and security the resolution of disputes and the promotion of economic development (Olsson, 2013). International organizations are also responsible for developing and enforcing international law and for providing humanitarian assistance. The United Nations (UN) is responsible for mediating disputes and preventing armed conflicts. It also works to promote human rights and to protect civilians in times of conflict. The UN also provides humanitarian assistance and works to promote peacebuilding efforts, such as disarmament and demobilization. Other international organizations such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the European Union (EU), are also involved in conflict management. The ICC is responsible for prosecuting individuals accused of war crimes, while the EU is responsible for mediating disputes and promoting economic development in conflict-affected areas (Lundgren, 2016). Other important international organizations in this field include the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union (AU), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the EU. The OSCE is responsible for promoting peace and security in Europe.

The AU is responsible for promoting peace and security in Africa. It is also responsible for monitoring human rights and promoting economic development in conflict-affected areas (Van Hecke, 2021). The OAS is responsible for promoting peace and security in the Americas. It is also responsible for monitoring human rights and promoting economic development in conflict-affected areas. The EU is responsible for promoting peace and security in Europe. International organizations use a variety of approaches to conflict management. These approaches include mediation, negotiation, and arbitration. International organizations also use a variety of other approaches to conflict management, such as economic sanctions, peacekeeping operations, and disarmament and demobilization. Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in West Africa. The country has a population of around 19.2 million and is predominantly rural with 90% of the population living in rural areas. Despite its recent period of political stability, Burkina Faso has experienced a number of civil conflicts and coups since gaining independence in 1960. The country has also experienced a number of armed conflicts, particularly over the past decade, as well as growing insecurity due to the presence of armed groups and terrorism (Ugbudian, 2021). The country has experienced a number of civil conflicts and coups since gaining independence in 1960, including the overthrow of President Thomas Sankara in 1987 and the subsequent rule of President Blaise Compaoré until 2014.

The 2014 revolution which ousted Compaoré was followed by democratic elections in 2015, resulting in the election of President Roch Marc Christian Kabore. However, this period of political stability has been accompanied by the emergence of armed groups and terrorism, particularly in the north and east of the country. The security situation in Burkina Faso has deteriorated

significantly over the past decade with a growing presence of armed groups and terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (Akale,2018) These groups have been responsible for a number of attacks on security forces, civilians, and government institutions, resulting in significant displacement of population, economic disruption, and a deterioration of the country's security situation. In addition to these security challenges, Burkina Faso is also facing significant economic and social challenges. The country has a high poverty rate, with around 40% of the population living below the poverty line. Furthermore, Burkina Faso is also facing a number of environmental challenges, including desertification and land degradation, which are leading to increased food insecurity particularly in rural areas. The role of international organizations in conflict management in Burkina Faso is multifaceted. (Korbéogo, 2020). Such organizations have a key role to play in addressing the security, economic and social challenges facing the country, and in promoting peace and stability in the region. In Burkina Faso, these changes come at a time of increasing instability, with unprecedented humanitarian and security crises and diminishing trust in the government. Recognizing the growing risks, the UN, the Burkinabe government, and their partners began recalibrating their efforts in the country in 2018 by developing new strategies and tools to address these multidimensional challenges.

This ongoing recalibration, together with the changes resulting from the UN development system reforms, make this an opportune moment to assess the implementation of the secretary-general's recommendations on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Burkina Faso. Implementation can be assessed across the four shifts called for by the secretary-general. In terms of operational and policy coherence, the UN development system reform has given the resident coordinator's office more authority and capacity to lead the country team's efforts on sustaining peace and ensure that new strategy and planning documents align with government efforts (D'Ostie-Racinea,2021). The rollout of five integrated hubs has also helped tailor these strategies to subnational contexts. However, greater interagency coordination is required beyond the leadership level, and the resident coordinator's office needs to be fully staffed for its efforts to be sustainable. In terms of leadership, the resident coordinator's office shows the potential to collaborate closely with the government while holding it accountable for human rights violations and to adopt an expanded role in coordinating the humanitarian response (Lara, 2020). In terms of partnerships, the country team benefits from a strong relationship with the government that is focused on national and subnational development strategies while finding opportunities to support civil society.

The UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel played a particularly important role in coordinating efforts between regional organizations and the UN system. Finally, in terms of international support, the rapid increase in engagement by the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund provided the UN country team with much-needed political and financial support, although the coordination of financing and programming among the growing number of regional development initiatives remains a challenge (Welz, 2022). Continued support for the resident coordinator's office in Burkina Faso is necessary to ensure that the UN's sustaining peace efforts in the country are part of a holistic approach to the crisis, together with local, national, and regional partners. In February 2019, the special representative of the secretary-general (SRSG) of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mohamed Ibn Chambas, was dispatched to

assess the implementation of the peacebuilding framework in the country. He recommended significant changes, including strengthening the resident coordinator's office (RCO), assessing the UN country team's (UNCT) capacity to respond to the growing humanitarian and security crises and scaling up UN engagement on the priority areas identified by the national government (Olukayode,2022). This assessment led the UN to transform its approach to sustaining peace in Burkina Faso.

It increased funding and staffing for the RCO, created decentralized field offices, escalated the humanitarian response, and supported the development of new planning frameworks. This allowed the UN to shift toward a more tailored and integrated approach that jointly addresses the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding dimensions of the crisis and that includes steps to prevent escalation. The growing engagement of both the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on Burkina Faso since 2017 reflects their potential to provide financial and political support, respectively. The PBF is the primary financial instrument for providing rapid support to sustaining peace efforts. It provides funding to all stakeholders, including the UNCT, national governments, regional organizations, and CSOs (Odoboo, 2017). Beyond international support to Burkina Faso, the rising profile of the Sahel has encouraged increased engagement from development partners at the regional level through donor conferences and intergovernmental mechanisms for coordinating funding. The two most prominent are the Sahel Alliance and the G5 Sahel's Priority Investment Programmes (PIP). The Sahel Alliance is the primary non-UN mechanism for coordinating among development partners in the region, with a focus on addressing the root causes of insecurity and fragility.

Statement of the Problem

International organizations have played a vital role in conflict management in Burkina Faso. The country is part of a range of IOs, including the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). These organizations have been involved in a range of initiatives to address the conflict in Burkina Faso. The African Union has been actively involved in conflict management in Burkina Faso. It has provided support to the government in addressing security challenges, including through the deployment of a regional standby force. The UN has also played an important role in conflict management in Burkina Faso. It has been involved in a range of initiatives, including the deployment of peacekeepers and the provision of humanitarian assistance. The UN has established a number of mechanisms to promote peace and stability, such as the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the UN Office for West Africa. ECOWAS has also been involved in conflict management in Burkina Faso. It has provided assistance to the government in addressing security challenges and has been involved in the development of a regional security strategy. ECOWAS has also provided humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict. Despite the involvement of international organizations in conflict management in Burkina Faso, there are still a number of challenges and problems. Firstly, there is a lack of coordination between the different IOs, which has hindered the effectiveness of their interventions. This has resulted in a lack of consistency and clarity in the objectives and strategies of the different organizations. Secondly, there is a lack of resources and capacity, which has limited the effectiveness of the interventions. Thirdly, there is a lack of political will from the government

to address the conflict, which has hindered progress in resolving the conflict. Finally, there is a lack of accountability and transparency in the actions of the IOs which has made it difficult to assess their effectiveness. This paper sought to study why international organizations are facing challenges in peace building in Burkina Faso.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study will benefit from the power theory which was proposed by Yasuma Takada (1970) and constructivism theory by Jean Piaget (1964).

Power Theory

The Power Theory of international organizations in conflict management is based on the belief that international organizations act as agents of the most powerful states. This theory proposes that the most powerful states are the ones that have the greatest capacity to shape the decisions and policies of international organizations (Akagi, 2015). In terms of international organizations in conflict management, this could mean that those with the greatest power will be the ones to set the agenda, decide the terms of engagement, and ultimately control the outcome of the dispute. This theory is based on the idea that the most powerful states can use international organizations as a tool to further their own interests and agendas, rather than for the benefit of all states involved in the dispute.

Constructivism Theory

The Constructivism Theory of international organizations in conflict management is based on the belief that international organizations are shaped by the norms, values, and beliefs of their members. This theory proposes that international organizations are not just agents of powerful states, but are instead shaped by the collective beliefs and values of their members (Fosnot, 2013). This means that the decisions and policies adopted by international organizations in conflict management will be influenced by the collective beliefs and values of their members. In terms of conflict management, this theory suggests that international organizations can play a role in helping to shape the norms, values and beliefs of their members, which in turn can help to shape the outcomes of conflicts.

Empirical Review

Emmanuel (2022) developed a model for estimating the economic and social costs of Noma and to provide estimates by applying this model to the specific contexts of two countries in the “Noma belt”, namely Burkina Faso and Niger. Three main approaches were used. The documentary approach made it possible to estimate the direct costs of Noma by analyzing the database of a non-governmental organization operating in this field and present in both countries. Results showed that direct costs of care and management of Noma survivors amount to approximately USD 30 million per year in Burkina Faso, compared to approximately USD 31 million in Niger. They mainly include costs for medical treatment, surgery, hospital stays, physiological care, psychological care, social assistance, schooling, vocational training and care abroad.

Nyabicha (2022) examined the conflict trends in the Somalia and explore the various debates on humanitarian interventions and examining the humanitarian missions that on stability in Somalia.

Historical research design was adopted to explore the escalation of conflict in Somalia despite humanitarian intervention. Primary and secondary sources were utilized in analyzing the information. Primary sources included data from questionnaires and key informant interviews. The findings indicated that after the collapse of the state in 1991, the dynamics of the conflict changed and conflict trends had been evolving. The study findings from the humanitarian intervention doctrine agreed with majority of other scholar's findings that there has been use of force by foreign states with an aim of saving civilians from a violent conflict, without the consent of the affected state just like Somalia.

Kangdim (2021) examined the role played by international organizations in conflict management, focusing specifically on the African Union (AU). It used qualitative research techniques. The study's findings revealed that despite the AU's role in proffering solutions to African problems, the organization still faces several challenges regarding its quest to address these problems. These challenges include limited funding, over-reliance on external funding, and the inability of the institution to take ownership of most of the peacebuilding initiatives, manage diversities, and implement policies that prevent conflicts in the region.

Lena (2021) examined conditions that influenced EU by stakeholders of a humanitarian non-governmental organization (NGO) in Burkina Faso striving to base its health care program on solid evidence. It used 36 qualitative semi-structured interviews and a single case study design to document stakeholders' (n = 26) perception of EU conditions. Results demonstrated that EU was facilitated by intended users with proactive attitudes, research experience, and willingness to participate in program evaluations.

Lucky (2021) examined the African led intervention in the Burkina Faso conflict. Data were from journals, newspapers, and books, analyzed qualitatively using a historical approach revealed that the degenerating of the conflict forced the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a sub-regional organization which Burkina Faso is a member to initiate a mediatory role to restore peace and order in the country. The AU-ECOWAS intervention was backed by the United Nations and other global institutions in bringing peace to the country. The mandate of the AU-ECOWAS mediating team was to restore democratic and civilian or constitutional rule in the country.

Ian (2020) examined the reasons why non-governmental organizations are taking a central role in conflict transformation in the contemporary society, the nature of conflicts and finally the challenges it faces. This paper adopted descriptive approach using an interview schedule drawing its respondents from NGOs, government officials and victims of conflicts in Uasin-Gishu County, rift-valley region of Kenya which has experienced conflicts overtime. The research found that; NGO's role is significant because it seeks to find the root cause of conflict, the nature of conflicts ranges from politically triggered, inter-clan to ethnic conflict, the NGOs challenges are; inadequate financial resources, non-committal by warring parties to conflict resolution, the state and finally the complexity and longevity of protracted conflicts.

Eva (2018) analyzed the bridge the gap between the literature on international organizations (IO) and the field of crisis management (CM) by focusing on two themes We do this based on two

dimensions inspired by the CM literature. The results showed that the perceived time pressure affected IO autonomy in so far as higher time pressure that rendered IO autonomy stronger, whereas with regard to the institutional framework no stringent pattern could be seen.

Heidi (2017) identified the sources that affect whether or not IO elites will contribute knowledge to an IO's institutional memory in crisis management. The study employed a survey experiment in the field on 120 NATO elites who decide on and plan operations. Findings indicated that when the United States introduces knowledge of a strategic error, NATO elites are significantly less likely to share it. This deterrent effect on knowledge-sharing illustrates an unexpected way in which the US influences international crisis management.

Ousseni (2016) identified the most frequent, severe and important causes of schedule delays affecting public constructions projects in Burkina Faso to enhance the managerial capability of project managers. This research was conducted by questionnaire survey to solicit the causes of schedule delays from 140 Burkinabe experts (clients, contractors, and consultants). Results showed that the top five most important delay factors were ranked as follows: financial capability of the contractor, financial difficulties of the owner, equipment availability of the contractor, slow payments for completed work, and poor subcontractor performance by the contractor.

Mpaka (2015) examined on how to manage genocide in Africa, drawing lessons from Rwanda for Darfur. The study used secondary data sources, which were collected through books, journal, articles and periodicals and internet. The study revealed a number of players, including, United Nations, African Union, Civil Society, Governments, Non-governmental organizations, private individuals and state actors. The study concluded that Darfur may not have been in conflict now, had the international community learnt lessons from Rwanda and put systems in place to prevent further conflicts after Rwanda - the past experience in Rwanda would have been the best teacher to inform the best way forward with regard to the current situation in Darfur.

Wamalwa (2014) interrogated factors that enabled the Kenya-led Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Process to successfully mediate between the Government of Sudan (GOS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). The research methodology for the study entailed both primary and secondary data collection whereby sampling procedure undertook purposive and snowball techniques. Research findings for this study showed that skills, impartially and knowledge of mediators contributed to the success of the Kenya-led IGAD process. It also emerged in our findings for this study that the unfolding political events in the Greater Horn of Africa region enabled the Kenya-led IGAD process to succeed in the mediation process between SPLA/M and the GOS.

Alunga (2014) investigated the IGAD sub-regional Organization role in management of the South Sudan conflict. To effectively achieve this objective, the study relied on documents review analysis of secondary data. The study concluded that IGAD's mediation role in the Sudan conflict arose out of security interest of the member states and, IGAD effect as a regional organization enhanced the resolution of the Sudan conflict. The study showed that the support given to IGAD by international actors by the United Nations and Major Western countries, including the US, gave the organization a moral standing with the two belligerents.

Mwamba (2013) analyzed remote management as a viable option for principled, effective and accountable humanitarian aid delivery in conflict affected environments. The study employed the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies using key informant interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires. The study findings confirmed both the positive and negative hypothesis, thus 'increased use of remote management both increases and reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid'.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a desktop methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library

RESULTS

The results were grouped into various research gap categories namely as conceptual, methodological and geographical gap.

Conceptual Gaps

Studies by Emmanuel and Nyambicha (2022), Kangdim, Lena and Lucky (2021), Ian (2020), Eva (2018), Heidi (2017), Oussen (2016), Mpaka (2015), Wamalwa and Alunga (2014) and Mwamba (2013) had conceptual framework gap in addition, all the mentioned studies did not establish the challenges of international organization in conflict managements. The studies did not outline the challenges in a clear manner. Therefore, the current study seeks to address these conceptual gaps

Geographical Gap

Studies by Nyambicha (2022), Kangdim, Ian (2020), Eva (2018), Heidi (2017), Mpaka (2015), Wamalwa and Alunga (2014) and Mwamba (2013) had geographical gap because they were not conducted in Burkina Faso This implies that the results may be inapplicable in Burkina Faso since the social economic environment of Burkina Faso and other countries differ. The current study seeks to address this gap.

Methodological Gap

A methodological gap presents itself in this study, Mwamba (2013) analyzed remote management as a viable option for principled, effective and accountable humanitarian aid delivery in conflict affected environments. The study employed the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies using key informant interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires to analyze data while our study will use a desk study literature review methodology.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The role of international organizations in conflict management in Burkina Faso is of paramount importance. In terms of security, international organizations have played a key role in supporting

the Government of Burkina Faso in its efforts to counter terrorism and maintain security in the country. Such organizations have provided technical and financial support to the government, including support for the training and equipping of security forces and the establishment of a counter-terrorism center. International organizations have also played a key role in providing economic and social support to Burkina Faso. Such organizations have provided financial and technical support for the development of the country's infrastructure and for the implementation of economic and social policies. Finally, international organizations have also played an important role in facilitating dialogue and cooperation between international actors, the government, and civil society in Burkina Faso. Such organizations have facilitated the establishment of regional and international networks and forums as well as the establishment of mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation between the government and civil society. While international organizations have been successful in providing technical and financial support for the government and civil society, their efforts to counter terrorism and maintain security in the country have been less successful. Furthermore, their efforts to promote economic and social development in the country have also had mixed results.

Recommendations

Conflict in Burkina Faso is often connected to ethnic divisions, which are further exacerbated by the fact that the country is landlocked and surrounded by other countries. International organizations help facilitate dialogue and understanding between different ethnic groups as well as between Burkina Faso and its neighboring countries. This is done by providing funding for projects that promote regional cooperation and by encouraging dialogue between different stakeholders. Conflict in Burkina Faso has caused a number of humanitarian crises, including displacement, food insecurity, and access to basic services. International organizations help to address these needs by providing humanitarian aid and assistance to those in need. This can include providing food, water, shelter, and medical care as well as helping to rebuild infrastructure. Additionally, international organizations can help to protect vulnerable populations such as women and children, who are often the most affected by conflict.

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