

Efforts Towards Conflicts Mediation: How UN Policy and Geopolitics Can Influence the Processes

Théophile Bindeouè Nassè^{1,2,3}

1. University of Business and Integrated Development Studies, Ghana
2. Thomas Sankara University, Burkina Faso
3. Saint Thomas d'Aquin University, Burkina Faso

Abstract:

This article aims to raise the effects of governance and ignorance in conflicts generation worldwide. The approach here is qualitative and based on a constructivist design. This conceptual research is grounded on a documentary analysis and some observations of conflictual situations in different contexts. The results show that governance when mixed with ignorance could have some negative effects such as conflictual situations. Thus, it is suggested that good governance and appropriate knowledge about both reactive diplomacy and preventive diplomacy could help towards conflicts mediation through a good leadership. This paper has an original value in revealing the link between bad governance and conflicts and by providing the implementation of some mechanisms that could help solve conflictual situations.

Keywords: Conflicts, Mediation, United Nations, Policy, Geopolitics, Processes

INTRODUCTION

From the world wars to nowadays, there are some efforts from international institutions towards the resolution of conflicts worldwide. However, the United Nations Organisation (UN) is doing its best to bring peace, even if it has always failed to bring a good mediation in some conflict (Panizza, 2011). Upreti (2004) has demonstrated that the inappropriate use of resources by governing authorities could be a source of conflictual situations. In addition, Martynoga and Sielenzak (2018) have shown that mediation is the best process for solving conflict situation, while Naji, and Jawan (2013) preconise a deep knowledge of the geopolitics of the Islam world as a perfect guide for building peace in some inter-state conflicts. Until nowadays, there are few investigations about the efforts that are vital for conflicts mediation. However, there are some factors that influence the processes towards such mediations at a point that there are some tremendous challenges to take into account. Governance often reveals its limits by being a trigger of conflictual situations. Thus, the United Nations (UN) is regarded as the organisation that could make the difference by bring hope in steering these conflictual situations into peaceful and sustainable resolutions. An interrogation may arise from this perspective: What are the effects of UN policy efforts on conflicts mediation?

The main objective of this paper is to assess the influence of the UN policy efforts on conflicts mediation worldwide.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict

The concept of conflict has been well-defined by some researchers in several contexts. Etymologically, the concept of conflict is originated from the Latin word 'conflictus' which means an opposition between some entities that have different feelings (Sicard & Rognon, 2015). In the

western context, for Pruitt and Rubin (1986) the construct of conflicts refers to some behaviors that are discordant or contradictory whereas Ross (1993) views conflict as a divergence in perceptions. Goodhand and Hume (2009) have defined conflict as a disagreement resulting from individuals or groups that differ in behavior, beliefs, and values or in needs. The concept of conflict as approached by Goodhand and Hume is limited by the fact that it does not involve the violent aspect of conflict, but it rather shows conflict to be a mere disagreement. In the African context, the concept of conflict has been approached differently by numerous authors. First of all, in Burkina Faso, the concept of conflict has been defined in a religious environment by Nassè et al., (2016) as a misunderstanding between individuals and groups as a response to a given misbehavior that affect a given religious community or group. The concept of conflict as approached by Nassè et al., depicts the social violence aspect of conflict and that is why recommendations have drawn the attention of political authorities and managers to help prevent these conflicts. Second, in Ghana, the concept of conflict has been defined by different authors. For Sulemana (2009) the concept of conflict refers to a disagreement or an antagonism between individuals or different groups of people that is associated with violence. For Awedoba (2009) and for Awedoba (2011) conflict is viewed as a relationship between two or more parties centered on differences, disagreement and some issues of common interest or concern, divergence, incompatibilities. For Awedoba conflicts exist because of the contact between human being in term of politics, culture, and economic concerns. Mahama and Longi (2013) show that conflict is an unavoidable phenomenon that bears disagreements or differences which can result into aggressive clashes. Dery and Diedong (2014) relatively understand conflicts as a domestic violence that involves both adult men and women who are victims of physical, mental, emotional and sexual aggression. For Marfo et al. (2018) the construct of conflict is approached as a disagreement between interreligious individuals, communities or groups centered on needs such as space and different views about the wearing of religious veil. Sabogu, Nassè and Osumanu (2020) define conflict as a form of difference over some selfish interests, or individual greediness, and characterized by aggressive actions or violence. These conflicts are sometimes expressed in a form of social violence against the manufacturers or the sellers of the non-desired products. Conflicts are observable under in a form of products boycotting or products rejection by consumers. Moreover, in the Asian context, particularly in India, Poulouse and Srinivasa (2009) have demonstrated that conflict refers to a high-risk behavior that involves two or more individuals and thus, it is associated with violence or aggressive behavior.

Mediation

Hörner, Morelli, and Squintani (2015) mediation refers to a set of designed mechanism towards a conflict resolution despite facing obstacles or inoperative constraints. For Martynoga, and Sielenzak (2018) conflict mediation refers to a diplomatic way of solving conflicts which is less stressful and where the different belligerents decide the agreement conditions. For the present research mediation is understood to be a process where a third party is required to provide some sustainable solutions to a conflict when the parties to a conflict are not able to resolve their differences by themselves. Thus, steering a conflict to a peaceful and sustainable resolution can be often challenging as it requires some diplomatic skills from the third party.

Link between Governance and Conflict

Governance and conflicts are linked in that some political policies, that are not well thought often lead to both a disaster in the long term. It is evidence that some governments worldwide often fail to construct sustainable policies, programs and projects. Latto (2002) recognises the link between governance and conflicts specifically in a context where there is poverty, inequality and

a lack of transparency in the governance process. Upreti (2004) also emphasizes the link between governance and conflicts by demonstrating that the wild and uncontrolled exploitation of resources is a source of conflictual situations in Nepal.

Social Class Theory

Social class theorists like Karl Marx and Max Weber perceive society as a stratified system of interrelationships that define individuals, their rights, and responsibilities in relation to the position they occupy in the social stratum of that society. Consequently, questions of rights and freedom of choices are determined by the privileges imposed by one social class (Marx, 1886; Shapiro, 1960; Goldstone, 2019; Nassè, Musah, Carbonell, & Marfo, 2021). In reality, the institution of the private property state with the emergence of entrepreneurial capitalism and free market systems has led to a natural imposition of economic class realism that regulates individual taste, purchasing power, purchasing decisions and choices. Rational choice theory requires a vertical relationship between one's social class and the quality and quantity of goods the individual purchases and consumes.

INFLUENCE OF UN POLICY ON CONFLICTS MEDIATION

First of all, in conflicts mediation there are always some different challenges which are linked to the need of some nations to be leaders (Naji and Jawan, 2013; Panizza, 2011). Thus, the UN has always been perceived as an organisation which is a tool of the western countries, with United States of America playing an important leading role. The implication of such powers in conflicts mediation may sometimes turn the mediation towards the interests of USA and its geopolitical allies and avoiding a win win mediation. For instance, a typical case is the war between Israel and Palestine. Secondly, there are also some challenges linked to the apparition of new superpowers (Huntington, 1999) that are challenging the US position of leadership which affects the mediation of conflicts (Russia, China, North Korea). A typical example can be found in the context of the Syrian crisis where US and Russia are challenging each other in the mediations. Moreover, one challenge that is an issue is the time in mediation (Panizza, 2011, p.114). Conflict mediation often takes a very long time in finding the right solution what may lead to the failure of the mediations; and to the enhancement of the crises. The crisis in Lybia is a perfect illustration that time plays a key role in mediations. The mismanagement of time in that crisis lead to the death of Ghadafi and to the expansion of terrorism from Northern Africa to West Africa. Finally, according to the modernization theory the developed countries always want the least developed countries to follow their trends or to adopt their ideas; but according to the dialectical modernization theory (Rudolph & Rudolph, 1967) some ideas from western world may often obstruct progress in other contexts. This is why conflicts mediation should also take into account the cultural aspect in term of cultural differences. For example, the islamic world always has its own cultural aspects and the fact of not taking that contextual analysis into account may lead to the failure of mediation in some islamic conflicts (Nadji & Jawan, 2013).

The challenges are such that one fundamental emergency is to find some possible solutions for an efficient mediation of conflicts. First of all, one solution for an efficient mediation of conflicts is that the third party should always look for a win win situation for the different parties in conflict. As an illustration the conflict in 1985 between Burkina Faso and Mali is solved by a win win mediation that provided a sustainable resolution. Secondly, the conflicts mediation should not be done by the use of some armed forces. It should be done through the use of diplomacy and a clear dialog between the different parties. There is also a need that the third party should be an entity

which is likely related to the UN security council members that has an efficient cooperation ability (Panizza, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Conflicts mediation and resolution is a headic and challenging issue worldwide. The present seeks to understand issues and controversies in conflicts mediation through a review of literature and then to make some proposition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Nowadays, there is no doubt that an international institution such as UN is becoming weak in conflict mediation. Conflict mediation might require diplomatic mediation with particular emphasis in taking the right and strategic actions quickly to provide some sustainable solutions before the conflictual situations reach their pic. In addition, to reactive diplomacy, it is preconised to put some preventive diplomatic mechanism to help identify conflictual situations earlier in order to help in conflict prevention.

FUTURE RESEARCH

It is useful to look at the relationship between governance and conflicts in the West African context.

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