PEACEBUILDING AS AN EXTENSIVE MECHANISM: MODERATE APPROACH IN THE POST-CONFLICT SITUATION

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Abstract

This study is a review of the peacebuilding (PB) literature available in the international arena, and how PB has become one of the extensive mechanisms adopted in post-conflict situations. Accordingly, both traditional approach and moderate (comprehensive/extensive) approach toward peacebuilding are reviewed in this paper as either approach may be adopted by the international governments, international organizations and national governments. Anyway, according to the existing literature the traditional approach towards peacebuilding has been criticized by scholars in the recent past. The study is a qualitative analysis based on text analysis. Studies reveal that the traditional approach followed in peacebuilding or liberal peace has had limited success and sometimes failed in a number of countries in post-conflict situations. Latest mechanism emphasizes the importance of institution building using a moderate approach, which is a less ambitious version of the comprehensive approach to the peacebuilding process, in countries recovering from conflict.

Introduction

In terms of a formal definition, peacebuilding is "more described than defined" (Pugh, 2001, as cited in Holt, 2011, p.19) and the only agreement on the subject is that it is not clearly defined. Purpose of the peacebuilding is to foster peace in a post-conflict situation (Holt, 2011, p.19). Studies treat peacebuilding as an important concept despite the fact that "it refers to a confusing and overlapping mix of goals, activities, timelines, and contexts" (Llamazares, 2005, pp.03-04). Even within the United Nations (UN) structure many donor governments are still confused about the term peacebuilding and its prioritization of components and assessments. In the recent past numerous assessments have been done to understand the broader achievements and miscarriages of peace-building in former conflict areas. Definitions of peacebuilding tend to go from the general to the specific; ranging from a normative approach to conflict resolution

encompassing every possible endeavour that may bring about sustainable peace to more program-driven definitions that identify an achievable set of objectives, supposed to make peace more kindly. In these proliferating definitions of peacebuilding some trends have emerged on various theoretical propositions about peace itself. These include political theories emphasizing the importance of institutions in providing an infrastructure for peace, economic theories based on a developmental approach and a belief in the importance of financial security for peace, and religious theories that are more people-centred, building on people's capacity to reconcile and forgive. The broadest definitions come from theorists working on conflict resolution and peace research (Holt, 2011, p.19).

In this backdrop, this research aims to define the concept of peacebuilding by studying the traditional approach and analysing how it has moved towards a moderate approach in the recent past through a review of the existing literature. This study is a qualitative analysis based on text analysis. The data collection has been done by conducting a literature survey in which the author reviewed all available literature on the subject of post-conflict peacebuilding, and further poring over current discourses dealing with the concept. Further, materials were also collected from books, previously conducted research and reports, journals, government publications, media articles and other relevant documents. This exercise helps to refine the research question and objective as well as to find critics of the traditional approach and find out more about the moderate approach. The research has been designed and carried out by using a critical and interpretative approach, originating from critical theory and constructivism. A critical and interpretative approach is one in which the researcher is deemed part of the research process, so that he endeavours to uncover meaning and gain an understanding of the context of the research (Hessler, 1992; Ticehurs & Veal, 2000; Dooley, 2001).

The term 'peacebuilding' first appeared in a book authored by the functionalist David Mitrany in 1966. Anyway, the basic idea of peacebuilding originated from Johan Galtung (1975, 1996), when he introduced two different concepts of peace: negative peace and positive peace to emphasize the difference between narrow and broad peacebuilding (Llamazares, 2005, p.4). He described the mere absence of violence as negative peace. On the contrary, positive peace is a "stable social equilibrium" in which the development of new disagreements or disputes is not likely to escalate into violence and war.

Stephen Ryan defines peacebuilding by contrasting it with peacekeeping and peacemaking: "So whereas peacekeeping is about building barriers between warriors, peacebuilding tries to build bridges between the ordinary people, and peacemaking is concerned with elites; peacebuilding mainly directs its attention at grass-roots work. Its objective is to transform conflict from the bottom-up" (1995, p.129). Ryan argues that peacebuilding can be achieved through "Economic development, the build-up of mutual trust, the existence of super ordinate goals, and education for mutual understanding; reconciliation and forgiveness can be powerful weapons in the armoury of any peacebuilder, particularly if the various strategies can be combined" (1995, p. 129).

Lederach defines it as follows: "… peacebuilding is understood as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates and sustains the full array of processes, approaches and stages needed to transform conflict into more sustainable and peaceful relationships" (1997, p.20). Like Ryan, Lederach emphasizes the transformation and cultivation of relations between the leading elites and the ordinary people.

These definitions are not prescriptive, and they do not determine the exact nature of peace that is to be built, nor do they describe how it should be undertaken. In every case they describe a process of transformation by advocating the importance of structural change. Ryan and Lederach make specific reference to the importance of following a 'bottom-up' approach, and the importance of peaceful relations and reconciliation.

In contrast, the definition of the donors and humanitarian actors are driven more by their agendas. The term peacebuilding entered the international vocabulary in 1992 when former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined it as an "Agenda for Peace as a post-conflict act to identify and support structures that would tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict." Since then peacebuilding has turned out to be a catch-all phrase, encompassing numerous (and at the same time ambiguous) viewpoints and programs (Call, 2004, p.02; Keating & Andy, 2004, p.xxxv). In his statement Ghali (1992, pp.824-825) proposed that, "After civil strife is over, measures to be taken might include disarming of the previously warring parties and restoring order, confiscating and possibly destroying the weapons, repatriating refugees, providing advisory and training support for security personnel, monitoring elections, advancing efforts to protect human rights, reforming or strengthening governmental

institutions and promoting processes of political participation." 'An Agenda for Peace' inspired important new thoughts and policy developments both inside and outside the UN system.

Following another growth stage, the literature on peacebuilding highlighted that the 1995 Supplement to An Agenda for Peace, made a clear distinction between conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The supplement further added, Demilitarization, the control of small arms, institutional reform, improved police and judicial systems, the monitoring of human rights, electoral reform and social and economic development can be as valuable in preventing conflict as in healing the wounds after conflict has occurred (UN, 1995).

Ghali's contribution elaborates that, Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping ought to be linked to peacebuilding so as to provide a seamless and comprehensive strategy for dealing with violent conflicts (Keating & Andy, 2004, p. xxxv). Peacebuilding should be differentiated from peacemaking and peacekeeping. Peacemaking is the "Diplomatic effort to end the violence between the conflicting parties, move them towards nonviolent dialogue, so as to eventually reach a peace agreement" (Maiese, 2003). Peacekeeping is a "Third-party

intervention (often, but not always by deploying military forces) to assist parties in transitioning from violent conflict to peace by separating the fighting parties and keeping them apart" (Maiese, 2003).

These continuous contributions have provided much support to democratic governance and institution building in post-conflict countries and thus have become a central component of the UN's efforts at building sustainable peace in those countries, grounded in the conviction that peace, development and democracy are inextricably interlinked. Building sustainable peace in a post-conflict society is a long and fragile process fraught with risks. Until a viable and sustainable political and institutional solution is found, the risk is high that the process can be undermined, peace imperilled and democracy eroded. The new challenges of the post-Cold War era have forced the UN to renew itself, question its basic assumptions and engage in what UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has called a 'quiet revolution' of good governance (UN, 1999). This was captured in his 1999 Report: "As the 'age of democratization' has entered a new phase, the Organization has shifted its electoral assistance strategy to encompass a broader understanding of post-conflict peacebuilding. Elections that have in the past served predominantly as an exit strategy are now seen as providing an opportunity

for institution building and the introduction of programs of good governance" (Santiso, 2001, p.4). The peacebuilding concept was further advanced in the Brahimi Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations in 2000. In addition to enhancing the effectiveness of peace missions through clear and realistic mandates, the Report also emphasized the roles of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction in the attempt to secure durable post-conflict frameworks (Dzinesa, 2005, p.08).

In February 2001, the UN Security Council issued a statement recognizing that "Peacebuilding is aimed at preventing the outbreak, recurrence or continuation of armed conflict and therefore encompasses a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programs and mechanisms." The proclamation goes on to articulate that "Short and long-term actions tailored to the particular needs of societies that are sliding into conflict or emerging from it" are absolutely essential, and that these measures must focus on Fostering institutions in areas such as sustainable development, eradication of poverty and inequalities, transparent and accountable governance, the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence (UNSC, 2002; Lambourne & Herro, 2008, p. 278).

In the meantime, some other developments have occurred in the UN literature, which have elaborated on the duties devolving around the peacebuilding processes. Lambourne and Herro (2008, p.277) have suggested that those involved should "Explore the developing peacebuilding theories and ideas about best practices that have been boosted by the UN Peace Building Council (PBC)" that was created in late 2005. The goals of the PBC are to emphasize "The significance of integrated strategies to support sustainable development, the need to marshal resources to address both the immediate crisis and the long-term recovery efforts, and the coordination of all relevant actors both within and outside the UN. A useful framework has thus been created for coordinating activities as that would contribute to a holistic and sustainable peacebuilding process." The PBC also helps to consolidate the lessons learned, thereby improving the peacebuilding practice. This improves the chances for achieving better accountability, integration, coordination and sustainability of international peacebuilding efforts. A record of UN capability in peacebuilding issued in September 2006 subsequently categorized these and other peacebuilding activities into four sectors: "security and public

order; justice and reconciliation; governance and participation; and socio-economic well-being" (Lambourne & Herro, 2008, pp.277-282).

Criticism of International Peacebuilding Mechanism

Despite all that, the UN literature has been criticized by some scholars in the recent past. In Ronald Paris's critical analysis of the UN 'peacebuilding mission', he describes the aim of those involved as "To prevent violence from reigniting after the initial termination of hostilities" (Paris, 1997, p.54 quoted in Holt, 2011, p.22). The termination of hostilities and peacebuilding are therefore two distinct phases. In Miall et al.'s exploration of 'post-settlement peacebuilding' and UN standard operating procedures, they define peacebuilding as "...underpin(ning) the work of peacemaking and peacekeeping by addressing structural issues and long-term relationships between the warring parties" (Holt, 2011, p.22; Ramsbotham, Miall & Woodhouse, 2011). Again they view peacebuilding as a post-conflict activity. In 1995, the supplement published by the UN stressed that peacebuilding is not necessarily a 'post-conflict' activity and that it can be present during any phase of the peace process. The UN's approach to peacebuilding raises an issue regarding the timing of peacebuilding initiatives (Holt, 2011, p.22).

During the 1990s the World Bank (WB) on its own developed a mechanism to support post-conflict countries through programs that dealt with various economic and development aspects. Recently, the WB extended its support for democratic governance and/ or institution building to countries that were in a post-war situation. WB president Zoellick (2011) said that "If we are to break the cycle of violence and lessen the stresses that drive them, countries must develop more legitimate, accountable and capable national institutions that can provide security, livelihood and justice for citizens. It is the same as the UN approach of institution building to increase state capacity to serve citizens in the post-conflict society.

The European Union (EU) is one of the leading entities that support countries that find themselves in a post-war situation. In 2005 the EU redesigned its development assistance programs to promote democratic governance and institution building in the conflict affected countries to help bring to an end the violence and unrest prevailing there. The EU publication titled "Working for Peace, Security and Stability - 2005" recognizes that the threat to European security is unlikely to come from invasion by an outside state, but from

terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, regional conflict in neighbouring countries, failure of state or organized crime. Therefore, it announced:

The best protection for our security is a world of well-governed democratic states. Propagating good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the international order... Trade and development policies can be powerful tools for promoting reform (EU, 2005).

Although the EU does not refer to peacebuilding in this document it does talk of 'Building peace through development in Africa.'

Existing literature shows that many humanitarian organizations have embraced the idea of peacebuilding as a way of implementing humanitarian assistance in support of peace. CARE International, Oxfam, World Vision, Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) and a surfeit of local NGOs are implementing what they describe as peacebuilding programs. Again, the definition of peacebuilding may vary, depending on the organization's capacity to usher in peace, and upon

its objectives, projects, and orientation.

Within this varied literature and definitions emerge two dominant ways of understanding peacebuilding. At the macro level we see the importance of structural change, or the creation of structures within a society necessary for the peaceful management of conflict. At the micro or grassroots level, recovery and development programs are recognized as having the power to unite warring groups, and transform antagonistic relationships into cooperative ones. Galtung, Ryan, Lederach, Call, Keating, Andy, Lambourne, Herro and Holt all emphasize the importance of structural change, with Ryan and Lederach espousing the potential of a peacebuilding project to unite opposing groups, and the importance of adopting a grassroots approach.

Overall, peacebuilding as a process is a very subjective approach to peace, whereby the peace builder, be it the UN, the World bank, or an NGO, identifies what it believes to be the root cause of a conflict, which may be structural inequality, cultural prejudice, prevalence of violence, poverty, or most likely a combination of all of these things; and then, based on its capacity attempts to implement programs that will address and resolve these problems. Holt elaborates on Oliver Richmond's

argument that there should be a "peacebuilding consensus." Holt (2011, p. 25) claims that, "This type of consensus has emerged among institutions and bodies of the West such as the EU, UN, International Financial Institutions (IFSs) and NGOs that were involved in international peace operations; that peace can be established through the institutions of democracy and liberal economics or liberal peace." Some scholars criticize the idea of liberal peace or the traditional approach to peacebuilding. For example, Ronald Paris (1997, p.56) criticizes the traditional approach of peacebuilding that involves transplanting Western models of social, political, and economic organization into war-devastated poorer states in order to control civil conflict: in other words, attempting reconciliation through political and economic liberalization. This paradigm however, has not been a particularly effective model for establishing stable peace in previously war-torn countries.

Moderate Approach to Peacebuilding

The traditional approach to peacebuilding or liberal peace has had limited success and sometimes failed in a number of post-conflict countries. Call and Cousens (2008, p.3) argue that "Recent years have seen greater rigor in discussion and scholarship about peacebuilding,

especially as several waves of international peace operations have allowed close observation of the long-term pattern of success and failure." Call and Cousens' (2008, pp.6-8) attempt to define the 'success' of peacebuilding efforts in terms of both recurrence of war and quality of post-war governance, has shown a mixed record of outcomes. It is what they call a Moderate stand of peacebuilding. In a major study, Doyle and Sambanis assess peacebuilding outcomes over both 2-year and 5-year time frames. They found that more than half of the 121 civil wars that ended between 1994 and 1999 resulted in "failed" peacebuilding, depending on how one measures "success" (absence of large-scale violence) and degree of political openness (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006, as cited in Call & Cousens, 2008, pp.6-8). Meanwhile, some other studies express the view that around 30% of all terminated armed conflicts relapsed into violence within five years in the former war-torn societies (Mack & Nielsen, 2008; Shurke & Samset, 2007, as cited in Hoglund & Orjuela, 2011, p.20).

Call and Cousens (2008, pp.7-8) pay special attention to the moderate standard that challenges the traditional meaning of 'success,' according to which peacebuilding is viewed as the non-recurrence of war and excellence of post-war

governance. It also offers ample proof of positive results. "This moderate standard is pragmatically and normatively appealing, though it is important to acknowledge that it too, is imperfect, difficult to quantify, and leaves important issues about governance comparatively under-examined." For instance, "we know that the process of democratization is itself destabilizing and that this destabilization can contribute to the onset of war, and we know that while democracies do not go to war often with each other, they do go to war with non-democracies fairly frequently" (Snyder, 2000; Mansfield & Snyder, 2001). It is very essential to conduct both theoretical and empirical examinations to ensure the success of the moderate idea in the peacebuilding process. In the meantime, Sullivan, Shkolnikov and Nadgrodkiedics (2007) have referred to the moderate idea as a comprehensive approach.

Anyhow, the moderate idea is imprisoned by the policy making community that is working on peacebuilding. Initial conversation with the UN Peacebuilding Council points to the fact that it accepts moderate approaches, even though these are regarded as being "quite different conceptions of what peacebuilding is about in the first place." No matter what standard is approved and applied, peacebuilding is a multifaceted undertaking and as such is vulnerable to setback, more so as its complexity increases when supplementary ambitious indicators are included.

Greater attention to the moderate approach has been encouraged among those involved in post-war institution building and other democratic governance processes of the sustainable peacebuilding programs conducted by the UN. "The traditional approach to post-conflict recovery has been to focus on providing humanitarian relief and rehabilitation assistance from the outset, leaving the complex process of institution-building for a later stage" (UN, 2011).

"However, as the Secretary-General (Ban Ki-moon) underlined in his 2009 report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, it is usually too late to start developing institutional capacities when peacebuilding efforts are already at the exit strategy phase. Although threats to peace are greatest in the immediate post-conflict period, that time also offers the greatest opportunity to strengthen the national capacities needed to see peacebuilding efforts through. The building of accountable, legitimate and resilient institutions should therefore be a strategic objective from the early stages of the process. The international community should offer its support to post-conflict countries

to help them achieve functional and effective governance."

Meanwhile, Ivan Barbalic (2011), Ambassador and UN Permanent Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina argues in support of the moderate idea of peacebuilding at the UN Security Council by stating that, "Institution building is an important part of a comprehensive (moderate) approach to the peacebuilding process in countries recovering from conflict" and that it does so by preventing the renewal of violence on the road to sustainable reconstruction or development. Further, Barbalic emphasizes, "Armed conflict not only causes the loss of human life and physical damage; it also has serious effects on Government institutions. It tears the social fabric, deepens ethnic divisions and conflict among communities, and results in deaths and displacement among the population, thus destroying the basis for the functioning of institutions. Such a lack of capacity greatly hinders a society's ability to restore and maintain peace. This may be one of the main reasons why the majority of post-conflict countries experience a return to conflict within 10 years in spite of all the efforts to promote peace. Consequently, an increasing emphasis has been placed on the crucial role of institutional development in preventing the renewal of conflict. Those concerned with peacebuilding have come to

recognize the importance of coordinated rapid action to support post-conflict Governments in building core State capacities. If properly executed, such action can help restore security, legitimacy, accountability and effectiveness, thus delivering peace dividends that will enhance trust in national leadership."

Conclusion

Above review of academic aspects and peacebuilders' perspectives show that they mostly adopt the traditional approach to post-conflict peacebuilding, which encompasses the full range of non-military intervention undertaken by the international community to assist post-conflict countries to achieve sustainable peace and socioeconomic development. But the traditional approach faces several criticisms due to failure of the process of peacebuilding. Thus, the present study endeavours to identify the reasons for this failure by using the recent post-war moderate peacebuilding approach as a research tool. This new approach intends to establish accountable, transparent, resilient institutions in the immediate aftermath of conflicts to ensure inclusive participation of all stakeholders in the affected areas/ states. These institutions would be established through inclusive policies. Such policies will make it possible to implement structural changes in the state's governance

system. According to the literature and arguments presented, support for international peacebuilding is very essential to establish proper institutions in the aftermath of any conflict/ war. This will increase the trust that plural societies place on the state. Initiatives could be introduced, especially in the political domain, to ensure a more inclusive approach and in a way that addresses the grievances of all ethnic groups. In order to realize this and establish sustainable peace, the present study recommends to the international community that we all need to switch to the moderate approach. This move can avoid the waste of a lot of money and a re-escalation of violence in the former conflict ridden/ war-torn countries.

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