

RESEARCH NOTE

Imposed Settlements and Intrastate Conflict Recurrence

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In the modern era, interstate conflict has seen a dramatic decrease in occurrence in the international arena. The decline in interstate conflict is due, in part, to the rise of international organizations and the resulting increase in the economic and diplomatic cost of invading another state's sovereign territory. Most conflict in the post-Cold War period has occurred within the boundaries of states' territory between non-state actors and the central government of the state. The shift in global conflict from interstate to intrastate has led to the development of "new war" literature that focuses on the theoretical implications of this surge in civil war worldwide. One of the most significant questions regarding intrastate conflict is what factors within a state contribute to conflict recurrence after the original conflict has been settled. In this analysis, I examine how ethnic division between belligerents affects intrastate conflict recurrence when controlling for the outcome of the conflict.

Hypothesis and Theory

Quackenbush and Venteicher's (2008) work on conflict outcome and recurrence concludes that "settlement is an important factor in explaining recurrent conflict, and that imposed settlements are the most stable" ("Settlements, Outcomes and the Recurrence of Conflict"). Using this theory as a basis for my analysis, I hypothesized that Intrastate conflicts in which belligerents were divided along ethnic lines would see more incidents of recurrence when the original conflict was ended with a negotiated settlement.

Sample

In my analysis, the sample consists of all intrastate wars between 1946-2005 identified in Joakim Kreutz's (2010) replication data set that displayed an initial settlement to hostilities (Victory/Negotiated Settlement).

Variables

- **Independent Variable:** Conflict Recurrence (recur). A nominal variable indicating if a conflict has recurred after the original conflict has come to a conclusion;
- **Dependent Variable:** Ethnic Division along conflict lines (ethnic). A nominal variable indicating if belligerents in a conflict were divided along ethnic lines;
- **Control Variable:** Outcome (Outcome). A nominal variable indicating if the conflict's outcome resulted in a victory for one side, or if the conflict was ended by a negotiated settlement (either a peace treaty or a ceasefire).

Methods and Results

To quantitatively analyze the relationship between my independent and dependent variables, I used the Chi-Square, Cramer's V and Lambda tests of statistical significance.

Table 1: Type of Conflict (Ethnic v. Non-Ethnic) and Conflict Recurrence

	Non-Ethnic Conflict	Ethnic Conflict	Chi-Square	Sig (2-Sided)	Lambda	Cramer's V
No Recurrence of Conflict	55.0%	40.7%	5.847	.016	.129	.143
Recurrence of Conflict	45.0%	59.3%				

First, I examined the relationship between the independent and dependent variables without controlling for outcome and found that I was able to reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between ethnic division and conflict recurrence. Lambda's value of .129 suggests that there is a moderately strong relationship between ethnic division and conflict recurrence. This can be interpreted as ethnic division within a conflict as being a significant predictor of whether or not a conflict will recur in the future if the ethnic tension is not resolved in the post-conflict peacemaking process.

Table 2: Type of Conflict (Ethnic v. Non-Ethnic) and Conflict Recurrence, Controlling for Type of Resolution (Victory v. Negotiated Settlement)

		Non-Ethnic Conflict	Ethnic Conflict	Chi-Square	Sig (2-Sided)	Lambda	Cramer's V
Victory	No Recurrence of Conflict	61.8%	50.0%	1.183	.277	.000	.107
	Recurrence of Conflict	38.2%	50%				
Negotiated Settlement	No Recurrence of Conflict	57.9%	50%	.344	.558	.000	.111
	Recurrence of Conflict	42.1%	50%				

When controlling for the outcome of the conflict, I was not able to reject the null hypothesis. Testing the relationship between recurrence and outcome yielded a similar result, leading me to conclude that in this data there is no relationship between the type of outcome and conflict recurrence. Graphing this relationship (not shown) illustrates further that there is little to no effect that outcome has on conflict recurrence. The implications of these results are that the outcome of an intrastate conflict in this data set is not indicative of whether the war will recur in the future.

Conclusion

My hypothesis was not supported by the data, as the outcome of a conflict had little to no effect on conflict recurrence. The relationship between ethnic division and conflict recurrence, however, did show statistical significance. I conclude in regards to the statistical tests that I conducted that there is a significant relationship between ethnic division and conflict recurrence in a society. In regards to my original research question, unresolved ethnic tension in the post-conflict peacemaking period following a civil war makes it more likely the conflict will reignite. Policy-makers should focus on peacemaking infrastructure involving reconciliation and resolution of ethnic tension as a primary goal in the peacemaking process.

Works Cited

Kreutz, Joakim. 2010. "How and when armed conflicts end: Introducing the UCDP conflict termination dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 47 (2): 243-250. Replication Dataset (accessed April, 2015): <https://www.prio.org/JPR/Datasets/>.

Quackenbush, Stephen L., and Jerome F. Venteicher. 2008. "Settlements, Outcomes, and the Recurrence of Conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 45(6): 723-42.

