

Preventing Conflict Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence with Early Warning Analysis

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Paper outline

1. Growth of SVAC large n studies aimed at prevention and prediction (i.e. Butler et al 2007; Cohen 2013)
2. Large N studies of SVAC are instrumental not critical; problem solving not prevention
3. Part of the solution - understand and explain gender oppression and inequality (large n studies need to 'talk' to small n studies)

Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict & WPS

- Sexual violence in armed conflict (SVAC) significant recognition by UNSC crime that constitutes a threat to international peace and security
- Embedded with 1325 Resolution (2000) and, especially, 1820 (2008).
- Women peace and security agenda recognises gendered experience of conflict and insecurity

SVAC Large n studies – a lack of theory

- Growth in analysing SVAC as a ‘tool’ of warfare (disaggregated from other gendered phenomena)
- Growth of large-n studies of SVAC - statistical analysis of 5 or more conflicts by defn of key variables NOT in-depth case studies.
- Large n studies not informed by feminist IR interest in warfare (or warring social orders) as a reflection of gendered power relations
- Nor engaged with continuum sexual and gender-based violence in so-called ‘peacetime’ and on the homefront – these are not prevention studies

Large n studies – instrumental not critical

- Majority of these studies claim ‘large n’ objectivist knowledge
- Result is these studies reify the conditions of possibility for SVAC rather than explain them
- Problems of reductionist large-n – single data sources, poor operationalisation of factors/variables, one type of conflict, one type of SV – shining the torch where the light is on!

Large n studies – instrumental not critical

- Concern - most large-n studies are systematically biased against gender analysis & eliminate one of the most powerful forms of **explanation**
- Poor operationalisation of societal/structural gendered oppression & inequality e.g. fertility and education status/ratio
- Poor operationalisation & failure to gender disaggregate in other structural variables e.g. sex ratios of perpetrators, location of insurgents near camps, phases of conflict, location of civil/cross border conflict (proximity of civilian pop)

Part of the solution

- Endogeneity – variables can't be nicely separated
 - they are all contain gender dimensions
- Surprisingly large disconnect between large-N studies and reference to volume of fieldwork done in small-N studies
- These large n need to 'talk' to small n studies
- Prevention requires understanding SV(AC) prior to onset of conflict; appreciating human rights abuses and gender inequality of women and minority groups

Thank you

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