

IMPLICATIONS OF SECESSION ON REGIONAL STABILITY AND NATION-  
BUILDING OF SECEDED STATES: THE CASE STUDY OF SOUTH SUDAN

by

Martin Wang

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## APPROVAL

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by

Martin Wang

19-1563

In accordance with Daystar University policies, this thesis is presented in partial  
requirement for the Master of Arts in Diplomacy, Development, and International  
Security

Date:

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Muema Wambua, PhD,  
1<sup>st</sup> Supervisor

---

Sylvia Wakene, MA,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Supervisor

---

Sylvia Wakene, MA,  
HoD, Peace and International Studies Department

---

Patrick Musembi, PhD,  
Dean, School of Arts and Humanities

## DECLARATION

IMPLICATIONS OF SECESSION ON REGIONAL STABILITY AND NATION-  
BUILDING OF SECEDED STATES: THE CASE STUDY OF SOUTH SUDAN

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other university or institution for academic credit.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Martin Wang  
19-1563

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| AU      | African Union                                     |
| CPA     | Comprehensive Peace Agreement                     |
| EPLF    | Eritrea People Liberation Front                   |
| EPRDF   | Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front |
| GOSS    | Government of South Sudan                         |
| IGAD    | Inter-Governmental Authority on Development       |
| INGO    | International Non-governmental Organization       |
| LRA     | Lord's Resistance Army                            |
| NGO     | Non-Governmental Organization                     |
| NRA     | National Resistance Army                          |
| NRM     | National Resistance Movement                      |
| OAU     | Organization of the African Unity                 |
| SAF     | Sudan Armed Forces                                |
| SNM     | Somali Nation Movement                            |
| SPLA-IO | Sudan People Liberation Army- In Opposition       |
| SPLA    | Sudan People Liberation Army                      |
| SPLM    | Sudan People Liberation Movement                  |
| SPLM/A  | Sudan People Liberation Movement/Army             |
| SSDF    | South Sudan Democratic Forces                     |
| SSP     | South Sudanese Pound                              |
| TGONU   | Transitional Government of National Unity         |
| TPLF    | Tigrayan People Liberation Front                  |

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| TROIKA | Norway, United Kingdom and United States |
| UN     | United Nations                           |
| UNGA   | United Nations General Assembly          |
| UPDF   | Uganda People Defense Force              |
| WWII   | Second World War                         |

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implications of secession on regional stability and nation-building of seceded states, with reference to South Sudan. South Sudan gained her independence in 2011 after decades of protracted conflicts but plunged into yet another civil conflict that derailed all the quests for prosperity and development. The objectives for this study were to examine the role played by regional states in the secession process of South Sudan, evaluate the effects of secession of South Sudan on regional stability, and to analyze the social, economic, and political challenges of nation-building in South Sudan. The study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative research tools for collection of data. Primary data was extracted through interviews. Secondary data was obtained from review and analysis of journals, books, papers, peace agreements and other available literature on the implications of secession, regional stability, and conflict resolution. The study found out that the secession of South Sudan had multiple effects on the regional states, resulting to a web of insecurities in the East African region, threatening stability of the region as whole. Further, the independence of South Sudan did not ultimately resolve the political, economic, and social grievances that the southerners had against the successive Khartoum regimes. Nation-building in the new independent state is marred by several challenges. The study recommends that, although secession terminates continued series of conflicts, it should only be considered if both parties to the secession have the capabilities to ensure the delivery of statehood responsibilities to their citizens and neighboring communities. future studies need to explore the relationship between religion and ethnicity, and their implications on security in post-secession states, in the case of South Sudan.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this research and give special thanks to Elizabeth Saltonstall for her generosity and her continued support throughout the entire program.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### Introduction

The end of the Second World War (WWII) and the quest for decolonization as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations (UN) led to a revolution in the international system, more significantly, the emergence of new independent states. The idea of decolonization granted territories the right to self-determination, and to secede. The pursuit of the right to secede and the emergence of secessionist groups attracted regional political instabilities. Despite the conflict between and amongst states, and regional instability occasioned by secession, there has however been less attention paid to how well seceded new states fared at self-governance and in nation-building. As a result of failed states or ‘fragile states’ emanating from successful secession, questions arise on the sustainability of secession in nation building and regional stability.

This research investigated the viability of secessionism in creating a stable self-determining state, and the subsequent penalties on the regional political dynamics with reference to the case of South Sudan. The research investigated the implications of secessions on the regional politics and conflicts. Three key concerns raised in this study are first, does secession trigger contagious insistence to secede in a region? Aggrieved political entities often recourse to secede with the endeavor to forfend perceived social, political, and economic injustices that are perpetuated against them. However, the concern is second, do the secessions essentially allay these conflicts and do they address the perceived injustices? Third, what are the implications of secession on regional stability besides the stability of the seceding and the mother state? This chapter thus details the background of the study,

the research problem, research objectives, and research questions besides highlighting the rationale, significance, and assumptions of the study.

### Background to the Study

According to Pavkovic and Radan (2007, p. 5), secession is “the creation of a new state by the withdrawal of a territory and its population where that territory was previously part of an existing state”. In the post-cold war period, movements and organizations have sprouted in different regions of the world with the aim of seeking secession when they perceive a systematic political, economic, or social marginalization in the mother territory. Secessionist movements and seceded states today continue to be at the center of international relations debates and are important political events.

On the African continent, secessionist movements continue to sprout while the old ones do not relent their efforts. While attending a ceremony in Asmara for the independence of Eritrea in 1993, Salim Salim, the then Secretary General of the Organization of African Union (OAU), was reported to honor a sort of commitment on behalf of the body he presided. As it is well known, the OAU had solemnly sanctioned the principle of inviolability of the boundaries inherited from colonialists. The Charter of the OAU stipulated that “...all Member States pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence” (OAU, 1963). Salim, at the ceremony, acknowledged the independence of Eritrea, and predicted the independence of the Southern provinces of Sudan.

Salim’s prophecy was fulfilled in 2011 when the southern region of Sudan successfully seceded. A lot of questions still linger around Salim’s utterances. South Sudan and Eritrea

are the only two states in the African geo-political landscape to be granted independence through secession. Interestingly, despite the successful secessions in Eritrea and South Sudan, these countries today rank among the least developed and unstable in the region. Further, such successful efforts have created an enormous instability in the regions they have occurred (Conell, 2005).

While some secessionist movements succeeded, majority have failed in their bids. This raises the question of the necessity of secession. Should secession be permitted or under what conditions can secession be allowed? Ekeke and Lubisi (2020) noted that the legitimacy of secession must be based upon definite and substantial grievances, not merely that the minority groups are different ethnically from the rest of the parent political community.

Initially, the right to self-determination and secession was first recognized at the end of the WWII and in the context of decolonization in the 1960s. During this time, there was the tendency of state secession in pursuit of the 1960 UN Decolonization and Declaration of Granting Independence to colonial territories. As a result, approximately a hundred new states emerged with the end of decolonization period in the early nineties (Andrew, 1994). This period witnessed the secession of Yugoslavia in 1991, and Czechoslovakia in 1993 from the former USSR. Eritrea, in the Horn of Africa, seceded from Ethiopia in 1994 after three decades of protracted wars (Munene, 2015).

In the case of South Sudan, the Southern provinces had been exploited for the resources of their land, gold, minerals, and slaves. Southern provinces in Sudan had been discriminated in terms of language, religion, and access to power after the settlement of the Muslim state



under Ishmail Al-Azahari regime in 1956. The colonial masters concentrated so much power within a close circle of the Arabs ethnic majority. Southern Sudan, as a result, has never had proper, adequate, and modern infrastructure essential for the proper governance of the region. This multi-sectoral seclusion of the Southerners became a rallying motive for the first call for self-determination among the southerners in 1955 when a group of Southerners soldiers mutinied against the government. This trajectory saw massive loss of lives and property, and perilous protracted wars that continue to ravage the new state until today. Roughly two million people died as result of the Sudan civil war, as well as famine, and disease caused by the conflict (Seymour, 2003).

The conflict began in 1962 pitting a rebel group in the southern provinces of the Sudan called Anya-Nya, against the then Khartoum regime. This conflict was short-lived and ended with the signing of the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement. The second war broke out when the Khartoum Nimeiri-led regime imposed Islamic Sharia law and canceled the autonomy of the southern provinces of the Sudan in 1983.

#### Statement of the Problem

Although there exist several secession bids in most regions in the world today, there is evidence in literature which demonstrates that the seceded states tend to be politically unstable, and states emerging from secession do not fare well at self-governance. Therefore, the study is necessitated by this understanding. The study provides a clear understanding of implications of secession, and how they can be overcome by different secessionist movements in different regions of the world. While there are studies that have extensively examined nation-building in South Sudan, for instance Jok (2011), Omeje (2010), Ylönen (2013, 2016), and Omeje and Minde (2014), this research examined

implications of secession on regional stability and nation-building of seceded states which is the research gap under investigation in the case of South Sudan.

Despite earning its independence in 2011, South Sudan political situation is still unstable just as it was under Khartoum regime. A decade since South Sudan earned her statehood as the world's youngest country and the Africa's 54th state, economic crises, extreme underdevelopment, marginalization of minority sections, tribal leadership and militarized politics, human rights abuses, and violence are still rampant. The President Salva Kiir's regime maintains the same status quo and tactics they were fighting against, in the Sudan but this time, with more entrenched perpetual violence directed against its own population. As a new country, many issues about South Sudan are not new to the people; humanitarian crises, corruption, insecurity, and political instability- these are issues the people had experienced in the Sudan. The young country is still clinch-hold in the same old socio-political and economic traps.

### Purpose of the Study

This research assessed and analyzed the implication of secession for Africa, considering the case of South Sudan's secession. It explained the dire consequences of secessionism in Africa, as a basis for self-determination. The study evaluated the socio-political and economic situation of South Sudan after secession in 2011 in the context of the conflict experienced in the country in the period from 2013 to 2020.

### Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to examine the implication of secession on regional stability and nation-building of seceded states in the case of South Sudan.

The specific objectives were as follows:

1. To examine the role played by regional states in the secession process of South Sudan.
2. To evaluate the effects of the secession of South Sudan on regional stability.
3. To analyze the social, economic, and political challenges of nation-building in South Sudan.

### Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. What role did the regional states play in the secession of South Sudan?
2. What is the implication of South Sudan secession in the regional conflicts and stability?
3. What are the social, political, and economic challenges of nation-building in South Sudan?

### Justification for the Study

Secessionist conflicts have occurred in different parts of the world, and more prominently on the Africa continent since the dawn of independence in the 1906s. The initials cause of most of these secession calls are linked to the issues of governance. However, even after granting of their independence, successful secessionist movements such as the Eritrea People Liberation Front (EPLF) in Eritrea and Sudan People Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in South Sudan failed to achieve a proper claim to statehood, still struggle with issues of governance, and are often bound to fall into the category of ‘fragile states’ or failed states. The study set out to provide insights into the implications of secession on both

the seceding entity and the neighboring states. South Sudan faces the greatest nation building challenges in Africa today and therefore offers a robust testing ground for the concept of secession.

### Significance of the Study

The findings of this study inform research on secession and its implications on regional peace and security. The findings on South Sudan shall act as guidance to the international community, AU and IGAD in undertaking necessary adjustments or total overhaul of the secession process. Secessionist parties across Africa, but more specifically on the Horn of Africa, shall also deduce helpful experience which they can use in their quest for independence. The study will serve as blueprint to running a self-determining state. The findings of the study generate debates and conversations that highlight issues of post-secession that will guide the future relations of the people and those entrusted with the role of governance in South Sudan. The study not only highlight the challenges of forming a state and a nation but also offers recommendations on how these challenges can be overcome. The findings of the research further present an understanding of why post-secessionist state plunge into series of protracted wars, that often drives them to verge of collapse.

### Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of the study were: The success of South Sudan secession can be attributed to two factors: external involvement and comparative advantage of the secessionist group, the SPLM/A.

1. Regional states and the ramification of the regional politics played a decisive role in the success of the South Sudan's secession.
2. The recognition of new states is determined by politics and interests, hence the politics of external recognition lied at the center of South Sudan's secession process.
3. Unaddressed grievances led to the adoption of nationalists' ideologies and the formation of the SPLM-IO to advance the group's interests in South Sudan.

### Scope of Study

The research focused on nation-building in South Sudan and assessed the viability of secessionism and its implications on regional stability. The study analyzed the southern belligerent rebellions against the successive Khartoum regimes, mainly the SPLM/A. The SPLM/A was formed in 1983 as a response to the imposition of the radical Islamic laws in the country with no regard to the diverse religions that existed. Therefore, the study covers the period right at the formation of the liberation struggle up until the intra-SPLM/A civil war in the new independent state.

South Sudan faces the greatest nation building challenges in Africa today and therefore offers a robust testing ground for the concept of secession. The country still struggles with corruption, insecurity, political instability, and marginalization issues that they fought against under the Khartoum regime. The target population for the study included government institutions and ministries in South Sudan, think tanks and experts on secession.

### Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The researcher anticipated one major limitation in the process of conducting this study. This was with respect to the confidentiality of the data collection. Extraction of information from the political elites, former warlords and veterans in a militarized country was difficult. Respondents from different factions of the conflict was afraid of being spied on, and therefore the request to record the interviews was be denied by some individuals. For former warlords and veterans, questioning the necessity of the secession that they sacrificed their lives for, was considered unpatriotic. However, this did not compromise the quality of information obtained. To overcome the situation, the researcher got an official authorization from Daystar University approving the study as part of the requirements for the fulfillment of an award of a master's program. This gave assurance to the respondents that the information they provided will be handled with utmost discretion and it will be strictly utilized only for academic purposes. In situations where permission to tap the interview was denied, the researcher took notes during the interview.

Another major limitation was regarding the effects of the Corona Virus pandemic. The researcher found out that several government institutions, ministries, and think tanks in South Sudan had set up policies, guidelines and regulations in order to curb the spread of the COVID-19. These guidelines and regulations slightly limited the data collection process, especially through interviews. However, to overcome the challenge, the researcher complied with the institutions' requirements, and issued out questionnaires in google forms to the respondents.

### Definition of Terms

**Secession:** The term “secede” originates from the Latin words of ‘se’ meaning ‘apart’ and ‘cedere’ meaning ‘to go’. John R Wood (1981) built a comprehensive theoretical framework for secession as a social and political phenomenon. Wood defined secession as “an instance of political disintegration wherein political actors in one or more subsystems withdraw their loyalties, expectations, and political activities from a jurisdictional centre and focus them on centre of their own” (Wood, 1981, p.111). From John Wood’s statement it is clearly that secession inherently contains nationalism as a core principle. In this research, secession will refer to the eventual separation and independence of South Sudan from the Sudan following protracted civil wars in the quest for self-determination.

**Self-Determination:** Toft defined self-determination as the “notion that ethnic groups have the right to determine their own fate, either by opting for a degree of autonomy within the borders of an undivided state, or by seceding” (Toft, 2012, p. 584). This requires ethnic comradeship and consciousness within a particular group. This ethnic consciousness might lead to the appearance of some kind of imaginary identity, and if so, the group acts in unity in order to defend its existence, interests and integrity, when under threat. (Comaroff and Stern, 1993). In this research, self-determination has been used to refer to the right of the Southerners to decide their future through their eventual secession from the Sudan.

**Nation-Building:** Nation building is an indigenous process as it seeks to unite a given group by forging a collective identity to legitimize power within a given territory. When nation-building is well executed and successful, it creates a cultural construct of the nation containing a certain set of values, assumptions, and structure (Utz, 2005). In this research, nation-building refers to the quest to establish and build a one cohesive nation of South

Sudan that appreciates the identities and interests of the different ethnic communities which have different aspirations that may constrain its unity.

State-Building: According to Flockerzie (1991) state-building refers to the establishment, re-establishment, and transformation of national structure in a territory that is able to deliver public goods. The prosperity of state-building lies in the establishment of sovereign capabilities. In this research, state-building refers to the establishment of structures that would lead to effective functioning of the state of South Sudan.

### Summary

Chapter one outlined the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, purpose, and the research questions. The chapter has also identified the significance, rationale, and assumptions, as well as scope and limitations of the study. The second chapter will present a review of literature related to the research problem.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

The goal of this research is to investigate the implications of secession on the regional stability and nation-building of post-secession states in the case of South Sudan. This chapter reviews literature on secession the application of secession under international law, South Sudan's secession process, and the implications of secession on regional stability.

#### Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored on the theories of secession and self-determination. In a review, Pavikovic and Radan (2011) categorized theories on secession into three distinct groups: normative, explanatory and legal. First, explanatory theories of secession attempt to explain the causes of secession. Explanatory theorists identify social, political, and economic factors as the causes of secession. Second, normative theories are concerned with the ethical and moral justifications of secession. Third, legal theories consider the rights to self-determination as opposed to legal frameworks on the preservation of the territorial integrity of states. Although theoretically relevant, normative, and legal approaches to secession limit the analysis of the phenomena to the level of ideas. A useful theory of secession must transcend the realm of ideas and engage germane structural factors such as the social, political, and economic context in which secessions or attempts at secession take place. As stated by Keller (2007, p. 3), "only in this way theories can provide the roadmap for understanding and even resolving intrastate conflicts that revolve around demands by certain groups to separate". This research integrates explanatory theories of secessions because they engage relevant structural factors such as the social, political, and economic

context in which secessions or attempts at secession take place. Wood's (1980) comparative analytical model on secession is representative of this set of theories viewing secession as a dynamic process occurring in successive stages. The analytical model begins with the understanding that secessions do not occur in the vacuum. Demography, geography, and history play a decisive role in separatist endeavors. The desire to create a new independent and sovereign political entity presupposes the existence of a population group united by primordial identities or other aggregative elements. The population may inhabit a particular territory and glued together by a sense of marginalization and frustration within an existing state.

Unaddressed grievances lead to the adoption of nationalist ideologies and the formation of secessionist organizations to advance the group's interests. Failure of the central government to suppress the secessionists through coercive means including assimilation; or accommodation through constitutional and political reforms, often leads to the development of all-out wars where the strategic and tactical advantage of the belligerents and external involvement are two factors that can influence decisively on the outcome. Finally, a process of secession is only complete and successful once the secessionists control a territory, and their movement becomes a legitimate government.

### General Literature Review

Although there is no international consensus on the definition of the term secession, various definitions share the common assumption that "secession is synonymous with moving apart or withdrawing" (Anderson, 2013, p. 345). Different scholars have offered different definitions of the term. Crawford (1979, p. 247) for instance defined secession as "the creation of a state by the use or threat of force and without the consent of the former

sovereign”. Bartkus (1999, p.3) acknowledged that the term implies “the formal withdrawal from an established, internationally recognized state by a constituent unit to create a new state”. Kohen (2006) further defined it as “the creation of a new independent state entity through the separation of part of the territory and population of an existing state” (Kohen, 2006, p. 1).

Although all the above definitions converged on the idea of creating a new state out of an existing one, there exist some differences between them. In his account, Anderson (2013, p. 344) defined secession to include all cases of state formation because of decolonization. In his view, former colonial territories in the African and the Asian continents should be considered secession cases.

Secession is a process whose ultimate outcome is independence. In this regard, Kohen (2006, p. 14) observed that, “secession is not an instant fact. It always implies a complex series of claims and decisions, negotiations and/or struggle, which may – or may not – lead to the creation of a new state.” Premdas (2013, p. 4) also reasoning along the same lines, argues that “as a social process, secession may be conceived analytically as constituted of steps and stages, cumulative and precipitating causes, periodically displaying patterns of accommodation and intransigence.”

Secession is tightly linked to recognition, and according to Wood (1980, p. 133), “a successful secession is not complete until it has become institutionalized in a new government, legitimate at home and recognized abroad.” Pavikovic and Radan (2007, p. 10) weighed on this argument by noting that once a secessionist movement breaks away from the mother territory, the independence and legitimacy of its government is only

complete upon recognition by other states in the international system. The most important political dimension of secession is that a state is only considered a state if it is considered as such by the outside world (Sterio, 2009, p. 8). In this regard, Dugard and Raic (2006, p. 94) argued that “recognition has provided the imprimatur of statehood to seceding entities for over two hundred years.”

The exercise of self-determination by one group mechanically necessitates the denial of the same right to another (Mullerson, 1994). Its practice places international relations in a hypercritical position as it attempts to strike a delicate balance between sovereignty and the right to self-determination. State sovereignty is a fundamental norm of international system, and on the other hand, the exercise of state secession violates territorial integrity in the most fundamental way. The rejection of it, further, implies denial of self-determination to the people.

### Secession and Political Stability

A review of studies on secession demonstrate that what has been examined in the past does not include political secession with stability. Instead, these areas have been studied separately. Under each thematic area, theorists compete to provide an explanation for the phenomenon. However, none of these works made attempts to provide a comprehensive explanation for the combination of the two phenomena. Undeniably, these explanations laid foundation for this research.

As for political stability of seceded states, Goldsmith (1987), Ake (1975), and Gates et al. (2006), on the one hand, concluded that the stability of the seceded state is pegged on the political institutions that are instituted in the new territory. Lattimer (2005), on the other

hand, ascertained comparative constitutional law as a means of predicting stability in new territories. Perhaps the closest effort to bridge the gap between political stability and secession is offered by Robert K. Schaeffer in his book, *The Politics of Partition* (1990). Schaeffer examined the cases of partition in Ireland, India, China, Vietnam, Korea, and Palestine. Schaeffer concluded that these states plunged into ferocious intractable conflicts straightaway after gaining independence. The conflicts continue to elude these states up to date. As a result of these partitions, the world plunged into intractable regional wars, leading to internecine division among the superpower states. Schaeffer precisely mentioned partition as not only an immediate failure but also as becoming an enduring problem. In furtherance, “Violence is used to advance partition, which is seen as a solution to violence. But partition, in turn, produces new conditions that lead to violence and war, where partition can again be advanced as a solution” (Schaeffer 1990, p. 252).

#### Secession in Africa

Since the end of colonialism, Africa experienced several secessionist movements. This can be attributed to the effects of the 1884-5 Berlin conference that literally stitched together different territories on the African continent, with no regard to the ethnic, political, social, cultural, religious, or geographical differences that existed on the continent.

Although South Sudan and Eritrea are the only countries to be granted their independence and gained recognition in the post-colonial Africa, there have been a lot of failed secession bids on the continent (Tull, 2011, p. 1). For instance, Somaliland has been a *de facto* autonomous state since 1991. Although Somaliland has not gained recognition from the international community yet, it has a working political system, a police force, working government institutions and its own currency (Philips, 2013, p. 25).

Despite the sacrosanctity of the colonial borders in line with the OAU Charter/AU Constitutive Act, the African continent today is still at crossroads on the issues of self-determination and secession. The continent is still stranded on whether to preserve the colonial territorial borders or to grant the right to self-determination and independence to the people (Bereketeab, 2012). These two principles are contradicting, and the granting of one, automatically means a denial of the other. Moreover, the preservation of the inherited territorial borders has plunged the continent into protracted bloody conflicts while the observance of the right to self-determination has not spared the continent from such conflicts. Although many believe the maintenance of the state territorial integrity lies at the epicenter of the rampant conflicts in Africa, it is neither true that the right to self-determination would alleviate such conflicts. The presumption of dismantling colonial borders and giving primacy to the right of independence to bring peace, and security seems to be just a mere illusion. This is axiomatic from the seceded states of South Sudan and Eritrea. Despite the gaining of their independence, they have not had the strongest claims to statehood, nor have they witnessed a sense of peace and security. Utmost, the regional countries became entangled in their conflicts, further threatening the security of the regions in which these secessions occurred, and at large, the African continent.

### Empirical Literature Review

#### Consequences of Secession on the Stability of the East and Horn of Africa Region

At independence, Africa's founding administrators purposely retained the borders left by colonial powers in efforts to avoid inter-tribal and territorial conflicts. As for the East African region, the International Crisis Group (2010) in a report precisely described the

region as a region that had history of proxy wars, cross-border entanglements, border disputes, regional meddling, resource competition and competing ideologies.

The East and Horn of Africa region is characterized by perilous conflicts and disasters. This has since made security structures urgent and challenging at equal measures than in other regions of Africa (Khadiagala, 2008). The region hosts Africa's oldest and smallest countries, Ethiopia, and Djibouti, respectively. It is also a home to the world's and Africa's youngest country, South Sudan. The region also links North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. Because of this difference, religion and race are frequently interwoven in the regional conflicts. Ethnicity has also been mobilized for political ends. Furthermore, due to its strategic location, conflicts in the region have also attracted international intervention (Woodward, 2003). In addition, conflicts in the region have occurred at every level, within states, between states and among proxies.

Most of the conflicts witnessed in the region in the 1990's challenged the basis of statehood existence. This applies to the protracted inter-states conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Sudan and South Sudan which saw emergence of newer states from the conflicts. Somalia essentially almost followed in the same vein. The historical context of this region reveals that the use of brute force to achieve political ends was the norm and democratic accountability was also largely absent. Violence has been used to achieve political ends such as regime change. In Uganda, for instance, regime change has been executed through coup d'état. Uganda suffered successive coups between 1966 and 1985 (Rwengabo, 2012). The political grievances have often attracted insurrections. Unjust distribution of resource and biased representation in the government were predominantly the root causes of the perilous internal conflicts in the region (Healy, 2008).

During the 1980s, many countries in the region were at war, either internal or external. For example, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Uganda were all going through intractable internal civil wars. The governments also habitually sought to destabilize one another (Mesfin, 2015, p. 7). Ethiopia supported rebel movements in Sudan, and in retaliation, Somalia and Sudan backed indigenous rebel groups in Ethiopia (Mesfin, 2015). The harsh historical experiences ranged through the countries.

In Sudan, Omar Hassan Bashir toppled president's Sadiq Al-Mahdi government and seized power in 1989, went ahead and formed an Islamist government. In Ethiopia, Mengistu's regime was toppled in 1991 by two rebels who then fragmented the country into two: Meles Zenawi and Issayas Afwerki. Meles Zenawi went on to establish a federal system of governance in Ethiopia. He further supported Issayas Afwerki for the separation of Eritrea. In the neighboring Somalia, Siad Barre was ousted by armed forces in 1991, ushering in a state collapse and instability. In Uganda, President Museveni got into a lock-head civil war with the famous Lord Resistance Army's warlord, Joseph Konyi. A conflict that saw some of the worst atrocities perpetuated against humanity in the region. In 2007, Kenya exploded after the general elections, which led to the outbreak of the 2007 violence that also saw loss of lives. However, these seemingly 'wars of conquests' put into perspective the characteristic trait of all the African countries, that were at war or just emerged from wars of liberation struggles. As noted by De Waal (2002), in his book, *Demilitarizing the Mind*, there are likelihood that these countries could plunge into another. This also couple with the fact that the immediate successors of the imperialist, the continent liberators, were former warlords.



Further, the secession struggle in Sudan created an enormous tension between and among the neighboring countries such as the mother territory, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The neighboring states have interchangeably work with, and against each other in the process of secession. All of them, at one time, supported the rebels in the southern provinces of the Sudan.

#### Sudan People Liberation Movement/Army and the Regional Politics

The SPLM/A received a huge support from the immediate neighboring countries in the region. To the south of the country, Uganda had just witnessed yet another coup that saw Yoweri Museveni, Garang's longtime friend, as the country's president in 1986, and by virtue of this friendship, Uganda extended its support to the SPLM/A. Uganda had also for a longtime accused the Bashir's regime of supporting Ugandan rebel groups such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and the Nile West Bank Liberation Front, and as a retaliation, it supported the SPLM/A (Katete, 2010). To the west of Sudan, Ethiopia is another significant player in the regional politics. Mengistu's regime in Ethiopia was the first government to accord military support such as military bases, training, and recruitment to the SPLM/A. This was a cause or effect of Khartoum's support for the Ethiopian ethnic rebel groups such as the Eritrea People Liberation Front (EPLF), Tigrinya People Liberation Front (TPLF), Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) as well as rebel groups in the Ogaden region at the Somalia-Ethiopia border (Marchal, 2010). These retaliatory events created tensions in the Horn of Africa, until there occurred regime changes in both countries in 1989 and 1991, and both countries stopped supporting each other's rebels. Relations between the two countries flourished. However, not for so long. Tensions escalated in 1995 over Sudan's involvement in an assassination plot aimed at of

the Egypt's president, Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa. This was believed to be Bashir's propagation of his Islamist policies. With this event, the SPLM/A was allowed back into Ethiopia (Marchal, 2010).

Al-Bashir's continued spreading the Islamist ideologies beyond the region. Bashir supported the Islamist movement in Algeria as well as Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. With this Islamic narrative, Bashir became a close ally to Al-Qaeda's Osama Bin Laden, and hosted him in Sudan in the early in 1990s. This attracted the attention of the US in the region. The US intervened by listing the Sudan as terrorists sponsoring state, and further militarily backed Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda in the containment of Sudan (Marchal, 2010).

Al-Bashir's Islamist agenda also impacted on Sudan's relations with its Arab neighbors such as Libya and Egypt. Col. Gaddafi, until the fall of president Jaffar Nimeiri in Sudan, viewed the SPLM/A as a liberation movement. Libya then provided support to the movement. However, when Sadiq Al-Mahdi took power following an uprising that toppled Nimeiri's regime, it became amiable towards Gaddafi, and Libya switched sides to support the Khartoum regime until its fall in 1989. Egypt's and Sudan's relations are marked by historic tensions, majorly stemming for the assassination attempt of Egypt president, Hosni Mubarak. However, Egypt had twofold interest in the Sudan: the containment of Bashir's Islamist agenda and the Nile waters. The creation of a new independent state along the Nile basin would complicate the sharing of water issues among the Nile basin countries. This influenced Cairo to support Khartoum (Marchal, 2010).

### The Dead Aid in Peace and Nation Building in South Sudan

One of the major challenges that donors face in post-conflict countries is the transition from humanitarian interventions during armed conflicts to funding economic reconstruction of post-conflict societies. Donors are forced to shift from humanitarian aid to development aid. However, the question remains, how effective are the aids? South Sudan's history has always attracted readily available humanitarian aid from the international community, and the political and military elites in the country have perfected playing the 'fragile state' card to incorporate flow of external resources to their aid. There are evidently rich consequences of humanitarian aid on the economic growth and development, especially on the third world countries as argued by van der Walt (2009). In his analysis of the issues of diversity, unity and nation building in the independent South Sudan, Jok (2011) argued that development and nation building in South Sudan was externally driven right from the inception of southern rebellions in the Sudan. Jok believes that, at the time, the international community paid much attention to state building of South Sudan and ignored the local population and nation building.

With a good number of its civilian population in the refugee camps in the neighboring countries, limited government institutions in place, South Sudan gained her independence way before the completion of the state formation processes. During the liberation struggle, the economy was predominantly dominated by subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry. All the other sectors of the economy remained informal. The country had no organized tax system, losing billions to informal and unauthorized individuals. The entire government heavily depended on oil sector for survival (Wirsing & Stoll, 2012). Instead of solving some of these problems, the international community, despite its good

intentions, made some serious lapses in its intervention, especially through the foreign aids and donations.

Despite significant aid from the international community, post-conflict countries such as South Sudan still experience critical challenges emanating from poor economy, deteriorating state capacity and national institutions sustained during conflicts (Pritchett et al., 2012). Just like many post-conflict countries, South Sudan needed support to ensure service delivery to the people, however, this needed to be done alongside building government capacity for self-sufficiency. The excessive aid that South Sudan received from the international community paralyzed the local institutions resulting to fragility of the state. The heavy dependence on foreign aid has undermined and destroyed South Sudan capacity building by removing the need for self-sufficiency.

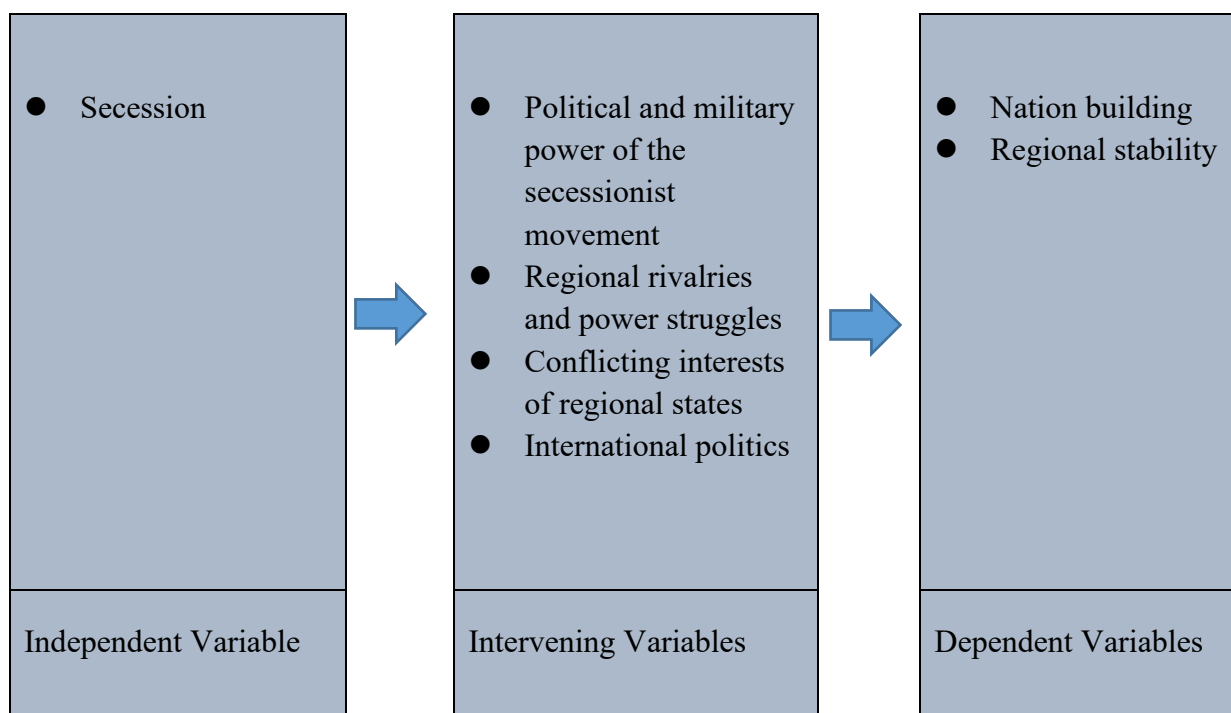
In the late 1990s, the SPLM/A was the major recipient of donations from the US government in the Sudan as well as receiving donations and aids from other countries. Several projects were channeled to the movement with the aim of strengthening its capacity, and the need to establish and strengthen local institutions. At the onset of the rebellion, several donors and aid groups were responsible for running clinics and hospitals in southern provinces of the Sudan as well as in the neighboring country of Kenya for treating South Sudanese who were either sick or wounded from the conflict. The UN and relief agencies fed the people and kept the schools running. Throughout the course of the liberation struggle, donors spent huge budgets to develop the country's infrastructure while the SPLA was predominantly engaged in winning the war. However, almost a decade later, the new independent South Sudan is still much dependent on this foreign aid. The president has on several occasions alluded to this fact. In an interview, Kiir lamented that "We still

depend on others. Our liberty today is incomplete. We must be more than liberated. We have to be independent economically” (Reuters, 2012).

### Conceptual Framework

The main objective of the study is examining the implication of secession on regional stability and nation-building of seceded states. The independent variable in this study is secession as it informs the thematic areas of nation-building and regional stability, as illustrated in figure 2.1. Nation-building and regional stability are the dependent variables. The intervening variables identified are regional stability, nation building, state building, power and military power of the secessionist movement, regional rivalries and power struggles, and conflicting interests of regional states.

According to Wood, the main ideology that secessionists share is that they all subscribe to a form of nationalism in which they convince themselves and supporters that the group’s interests will be best served in a new state. The SPLM/A as liberation movement received a lot of grassroots support from the inhabitants of the southern provinces who believed that the success of the movement would guarantee their social, political, and economic freedom. The Southerners forged a collective identity to fight a common enemy, the Arabs. Additionally, in line with Wood’s Comparative Analytical model, South Sudan’s secession took place in a series of successive rebellions-necessitated by the successive oppressive Khartoum regimes. The SPLM/A gained international favor and sympathy because of the Khartoum’s regimes marginalization and oppression of the people of the south.



*Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework*  
Source: Author (2021)

### Discussion

This chapter has argued that failure of secession in South Sudan can be attributed to its internal political dynamics and international community. The implicit factors such as civil war legacies, internal divisions, weak institutions, externally driven national development and nation building, have resulted in an enormous effect on the stability of South Sudan. The decades of internal civil wars have militarized the South Sudan territories, culminating into series of grievances and animosity. The international community is to be blamed for having supported a state-building project with no regards to the underlying factors in the country such as ethnic fragmentation, and the political division that existed at the time of gaining independence. Finding solutions to these factors would establish foundation for nation building among South Sudan population.

### Summary

The chapter has explored the history and dynamics of secessionist movements on the African continent. In reference to the South Sudan secession, much of the literature has revolved around state building of the new Sudan that was essentially driven by international actors, who are also preoccupied with their own national interests. This chapter outlined the failure of the international community in nation building in South Sudan, as well as the internal political dynamics of the ruling party, SPLM, and its failure to deliver to the people of South Sudan.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was applied to conduct the study. It describes the research design, target population, sources of data, data collection tools, sampling procedures and data analysis methods. The chapter also identifies the ethical considerations of the study.

#### Research Design

Research is basically the plan, outline or scheme that is being used to bring forth answers to research problem by the researcher in a systematic manner. In explaining research design, Peters (1998) underscored that a good theory outlines variables, and clear measurements to aid the study reach the goal to “Maximize experimental variance, minimize error variance, and control extraneous variance” (p. 33).

This research adopted a descriptive survey design. The design ensures presentation of elaborate information about a given social system or issue. It is also suitable for studies that employ questionnaires and interview schedules. There are three approaches that are applied when carrying out descriptive research: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approaches. The study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection through interviews and questionnaires.

#### Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2010) defined population as the whole group of individuals, events, or objects with similar discernible characteristics. The target population for this



study included government institutions in South Sudan, government ministries in particular the ministry of defense and veteran affairs, ministry of foreign affairs and international cooperation, ministry of East African affairs and the members of the legislative assembly. The target population also involved experts, think tanks, and academicians on secession, regional politics, and conflict resolution such as the civil society.

### Sample Size

Mugenda and Mugenda (2010) defined a sample as a representation of the whole population. The selected sample is assumed to accurately represent the population to qualify for generalization (Greener, 2008). A sample represents the same variables or characteristics as the whole population. For this study, the sample was purposively picked from the identified South Sudan government institutions, four ministries; ministry of Foreign Affairs and International cooperation, ministry of defense and veteran affairs, ministry of East Africa Affairs, legislative assembly, think tanks, civil society, and academicians on the area of study. The researcher sampled based on the feasibility of the study in terms of financial resources and research timelines.

### Sampling Techniques

Mugenda and Mugenda (2010) underscored that an adequate sampling percentage for a descriptive study range between 10-30%. The study employed purposive sampling method to select the samples for the study. In purposive sampling, the researcher selects participants by grouping the target population based on their similarities. Therefore, a sample of individuals were selected from the South Sudan government institutions and four ministries, think tanks, experts and academicians. The study particularly targets senior members of parliament, military, and members of the civil society for key informant

interviews. These group of individuals were informative and well conversant with the history of the SPLA/M's struggle and the secession process as well as the dynamics of the regional politics. Their responses were projected to enrich in-depth analysis and discussion. The respondents were contacted via phone and emails to book appointment for interviews. In total, this study carried out thirty (30) key informant interviews and fifty-five (55) questionnaires.

The number of interviewees was derived according to the table of recommendations as argued by Kuzel (1992). He recommended six to eight interviewees for a homogeneous sample. This study purposively selected 30 senior members of the civil society and the government officials, members of parliament, as well as representatives of political parties.

#### Data Collection Instruments

The study employed both primary and the secondary method of data collection. The secondary data was gathered through desk review retrieved from analysis and review of journals, books, papers and other available literature on secession and regional politics, and peace agreements. The study also reviewed empirical evidence from other secessionist movements that have either failed or succeeded in their bid for independence from the mother territory. The study gathered primary data using interview schedules and the use of survey questionnaires.

#### Data Collection Procedures

The primary data for this study was gathered through use of questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was structured with both open and close-ended questions. Open-ended questions gave the respondents an opportunity to elaborate and gave a brief factual answer

on their responses (Bailey, 1994). Open-ended questions are used for complex questions that requires detailed discussions. Close-ended questions, on the other, require simple answers of 'yes' or 'no' responses. The questions are generally self-contained. The use of both open and close-ended questionnaires ensures collection of adequate data on the implications of South Sudan secession by giving the respondents, where necessary, the chance to elaborate, detailed and specific accounts on the implications of secession in the Eastern and Horn of Africa region. The questionnaires were issued out, and interviews conducted with the South Sudan government institutions, government ministries, experts, think tanks, and academicians in secession and conflict resolution. Secondary data was retrieved from books, journals, and institutional reports explaining the South Sudan secession, as well as peace agreements signed towards resolving the South Sudan conflicts experienced in 2013 and 2016.

### Pretesting

Varkevisser, Brownlee, Pathmanathan and Brownlee (2003) noted that the essence of pretesting is serve trial purposes to identify potential problems in the study. The pretesting of the questionnaire helps to assess the clarity and ease of use of instrument. The questionnaires were pretested on ten respondents to help determine whether the questionnaires are well structured, precise, clear and presents similar meaning to all respondents for validity and reliability. An individual respondent was picked from the four South Sudan government ministries, and representatives from the civil society. The researcher then discussed the process with the respondents and noted their feedback.

### Reliability and Validity

Lee (1999) underscored that reliability guarantees consistence in measurements of concepts, using an identical measurement procedure, and replicability of the findings. Reliability is achieved through coordinated documented meetings and analysis sharing (Creswell, 2014). The researcher ensured that adequate briefing and post-briefing after distribution and collection of the questionnaires with the research assistant. Baumgarten (2010) defined validity as a way of ensuring quality measurements attest expected causalities and allow generalization. Validity is achieved through triangulation; examination of different sources (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the researcher exploits different sources such as interview responses, questionnaires responses and other written materials.

### Data Analysis

The data collected in the field is meaningless unless it is analyzed in a way to provide answers to the research's questions and problems (Bailey, 2007). After collection of data, all the questionnaires were adequately checked for reliability and verification. The study adopted a descriptive statistics approach which summarized data and describe samples. The collected data through questionnaires are presented using charts and graphs for quantitative data while narrative summary was used to analyze qualitative data collected from interviews. Qualitative data from the interviews was condensed through use of content and narrative analysis. Direct quotations were used to illustrate findings that emerged across the interview process. Themes were derived from constant comparison and evaluation of transcripts.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations refer to precautions that should be taken to protect the interests of the research subjects and the researcher. It is a form of agreement that the researchers enter into with their respondents. The researcher sought the consent of the participants. Moreover, the study ensured observance of privacy and confidentiality by concealing the names of the respondents in the questionnaire and interview transcripts. The analysis done was not based on the individual respondent but a combined response of all the respondents. The researcher disclosed to the respondents that the study was purely meant to satisfy an academic requirement and not for any other reason. The data collected was analyzed and used for the purpose of the study only.

### Summary

This chapter discusses the research methodology that the study adopted. The areas discussed include the research design, study population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis plan, and ethical considerations. The study employed random sampling method. This technique enables the researcher to select participants by sub-dividing the population into subgroups called strata based on mutually exclusive criteria. Data collected from the questionnaires was coded and keyed into the SPSS software in order to come up with descriptive statistics which is used to inform the analysis, interpretation, and discussion.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analysis of data and presents the findings of the study. The primary data collection for the study began in May 2021 and lasted till June 2021. The researcher used Google forms to administer questionnaires to the respondents which were then distributed through emails. This is because of the geographical spread of the respondents as well as a containment measures of the COVID-19 pandemic. This chapter laid down the empirical findings based on the research objectives and research questions for the study. Statistical pie charts are derived from the data, which are then used to report on the research findings. Percentage comparisons are used to compare the nature of relationships within the data, which helped the researcher to draw conclusions from the findings. A discussion on the findings and results is provided at the end of each section. In addition, responses from the key informant in-depth interviews are also analyzed according to the themes generated in line with the research objectives.

#### Analysis and Interpretation

##### Response Rate

The study targeted a total of 85 respondents. A total of 55 respondents were interviewed through administration of questionnaires. All questionnaires that were distributed through Google forms were dully filled and all the in-depth interviews were successfully conducted physically. This placed the response rate for the study at 100%. In addition, a total of thirty (30) in-depth interviews were conducted with senior government officials, military personnel, representatives of different political parties, and civil society members. The

interviews were conducted between May 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. All interviews were conducted physically. Through purposive sampling, the study targeted senior government officials, military personnel, members of the academia, and members of the civil society. Purposive sampling was necessary for this study as it particularly targeted individuals with clear understanding of the SPLM/A secession process. Given the sensitivity of the issues of security in the country, random sampling proved risky. The researcher sent interview appointments requests to the target individuals through emails, phone calls, and social media platforms. The interview questions ranged from issues of nation-building in South Sudan, and the role of the SPLM/A in South Sudan's fragility as well as the effects of South Sudan's secession on regional peace, security, and stability, among other themes, as indicated in Appendix C.

*Table 4.1: Response Rate*

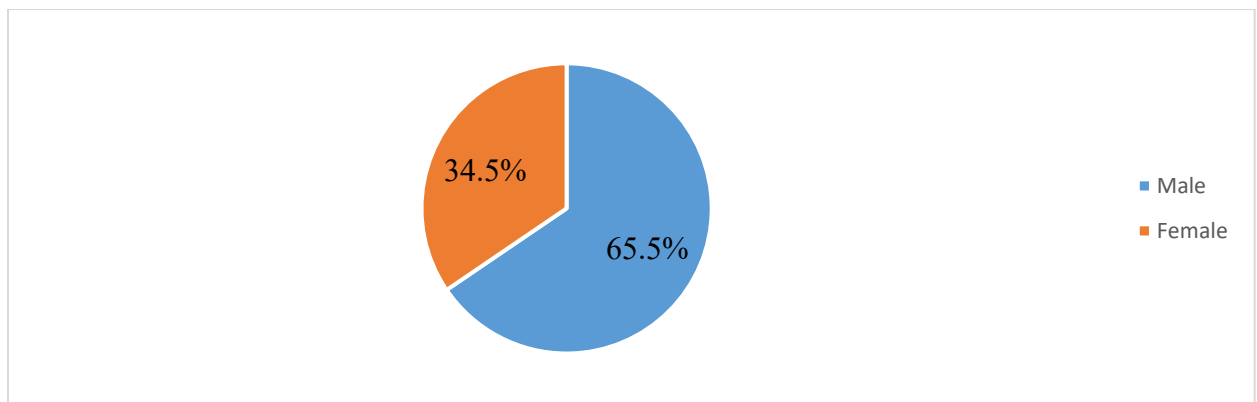
| Data collection Instrument  | Target sample size | Actual sample size | Response rate(percent) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Questionnaires              | 55                 | 55                 | 100                    |
| In-depth Interview          | 30                 | 30                 | 100                    |
| Total number of respondents | 85                 | 85                 | 100                    |

## Demographic Description of the Respondents

### Gender of the Respondents

Figure 4.1 shows that male respondents constituted 65.5% of the total responses while the females accounted for the remaining 34.5%. As a country that has just emerged from long civil wars, South Sudan's education sector has been severely damaged. According to UNESCO (2020), South Sudan is the least country in Sub-Saharan Africa, with the lowest literacy rate at 27%, and approximately 2.8 million of out-of-school children. Ponnice (2019) underscored that, "South Sudan has the lowest literacy rate in the world: 27% of the

adult population can read and write” (p.1). Out of the literate population, the women represent the lowest portion, as noted by Care International (2018) that; “Education rates are low with 27% of the adult population literate: 40% of men over 15 years compared to 16% of women over 15 years. UNICEF estimates that 70% of children aged 6-17 years have never set foot in school”. With high illiteracy levels, coupling with cultural practices where the girl child is confined to the kitchen and childbearing, the women are hugely disadvantaged when it comes to representation in the academic, political, and military spaces.

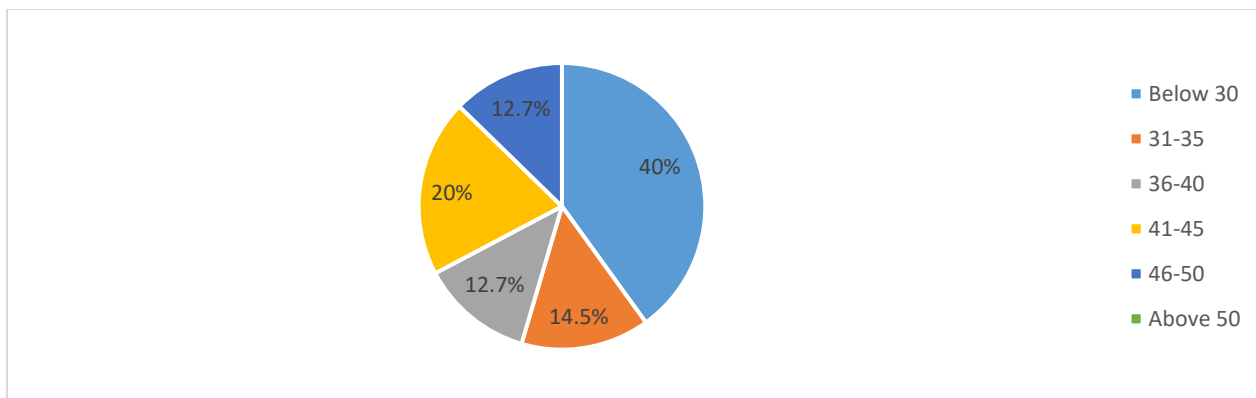


*Figure 4.1: Respondents by Gender*

#### Age of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the age of the respondents and the findings are as summarized in Figure 4.2.



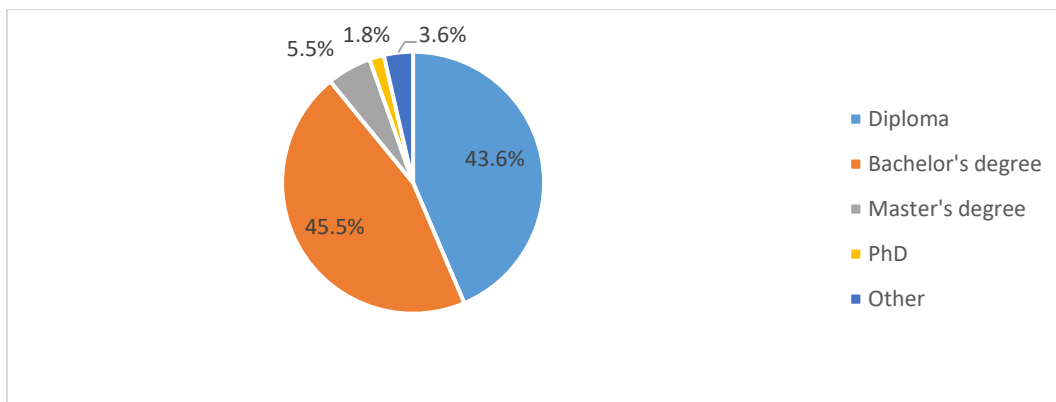


*Figure 4.2: Respondents by Age*

The findings show that most of the respondents were aged below 30 years. Ages between 41-45 years averaged at 20% while those aged between 31 and 40 accounted for 27.2%. Respondents between 46-50 ages constituted 12.7% of the total respondents as illustrated in Figure 4.2.

#### Educational Level

Majority of the respondents had formal education, as presented in Figure 4.3



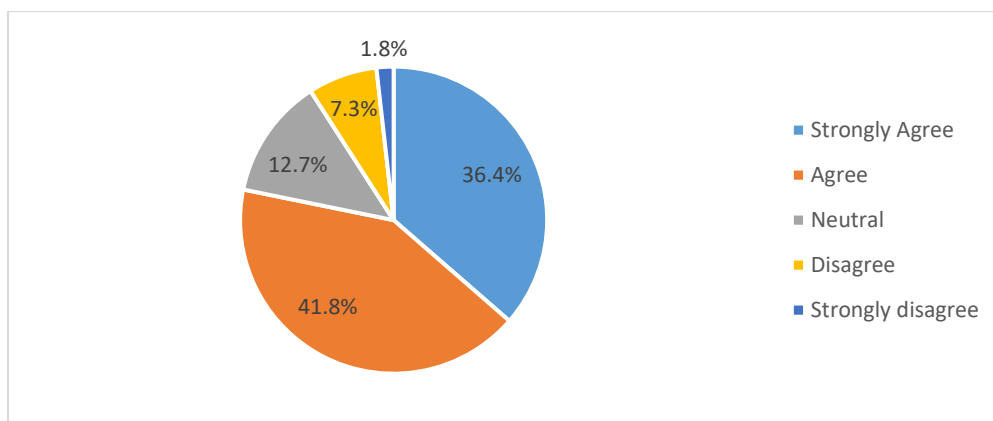
*Figure 4.3: Respondents by Education*

. Those who had obtained their bachelor's degree accounted for 45.5% followed by respondents that had diploma qualifications at 43.6%. Respondents who had master's degrees and PhD accounted for 10.9%. The study targeted senior government officials, military commanders and elites, and members of the civil society. This group of respondents have an in-depth understanding of the SPLM/A struggle and the secession process, as most of them were either part of the army or political wings of the SPLM/A or have been involved in one way or another in the peace processes. Majority (40%) of this category are educated in the neighboring countries of Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and beyond because of being displaced from their homes during the liberation war. This explains why majority (40%) of the respondents indicated that they had at least obtained their bachelor's degree.

### Effects of Secession on Regional Stability

#### Secession and Ethnic Conflicts

The findings of the study indicated that secession does not essentially resolve ethnic conflicts. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.4.



*Figure 4.4: Secession and Ethnic Conflicts*

Majority of the respondents (41.8%) agree that secession is rarely the ultimate panacea to ethnic conflicts. While 12.7% of the respondents were neutral on the provision of this statement, 36.4 % of the respondents strongly agreed that secession does not mean an end to ethnic conflicts that existed in a particular territory. From the findings, 7.3 % of the respondents disagreed with 36.4% strongly disagreeing on whether secession resolves ethnic conflicts.

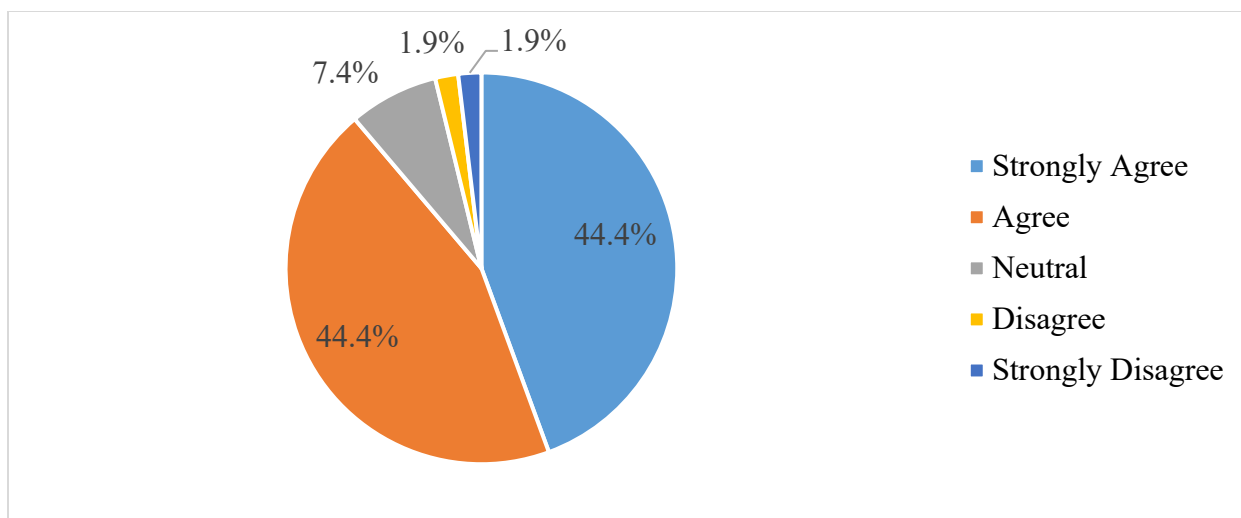
Saideman (1997, p. 2) supported these findings by presenting an argument that ethnic divisions in a country affects the adoption of policies towards secessionists calls in other countries. According to Saideman, ethnic identity shapes the domestic politics and foreign policies, in that, individuals will readily support those whom they share ethnic ties. Saideman stated that secessionist crises are ethnic conflict and supporters frequently align themselves to either side of the crisis depending on their ethnic ties. This in turn creates a complex web of ethnic enmity. Collier and Hoeffler (2002), on the other hand, observed that what we today refer to as ‘ethnic’ conflicts are merely fueled by ‘greed’ and not ethnic grievances. They argue that although ‘ethnic’ aspect of every conflict is given much attention, it is just a rallying motivation to garner support and legitimacy. Collier and Hoeffler postulated that secessionist political communities invent themselves when part of the population perceives secession to be economically advantageous (p. 3). Crafty secessionist leaders often manipulate ethnic identity by creating ethnic hatred to create and reshape ethnic groups.

As mentioned in the first chapter, the major splits that the SPLM/A experienced over its liberation struggle period, predominantly results from ethnic disunity, and the wars that ensued were fought along tribal lines. The long history of division within the SPLA/M,

most notably the rebel factions in 1991, 1992, 1993 led by Riek Machar, William Nyuon Bany and Kuanyin Bol respectively have played an enormous role in the failure of nation building in the new state of South Sudan. Accordingly, the different militias and factions that results from the splits are driven by tribal sentiments and hatreds. The 1991 SPLM/A split pitted the Dinka against the Nuer. In which, the Nuer ‘white army’ (Nuer militias) together with various military units under different tribal commands marched to the town of Bor (Garang’s hometown), killing hundreds of civilians who were predominantly of the Dinka ethnic group. Although the SPLM/A did succeed in winning the independence war, it has systemically failed to solve the tribal hatred that had developed during the liberation struggle in South Sudan. It has resulted in more complex ethnic divisions, enmity, and tribal revenge killing as was at play in the 2013-2020 conflict. The immediate cause of the civil war was the killing of Nuer in the SPLA commands and among the Nuer civilian population of Juba in December 2013 by a Dinka component of the Presidential Guard. This was followed by a systematically organized house to house search for Nuer ethnics in the capital, and in cities controlled by the Dinka, mainly by a tribal unit, the ‘mathiang anyoor’ (Boswell, 2019). Although the successful secession of southern Sudan ended the conflicts between ethnic Christians and Muslims in the Sudan, it created more ethnic conflicts in the independent South Sudan.

#### Conflicting Interests of Regional States and Stability of the Post-secession State

The study also sought to understand the conflicting interests of regional states and stability of the post-secession state. The findings are as illustrated in Figure 4.5.



*Figure 4.5: Conflicting Interests of Regional States & Stability of Post-secession State*

The findings showed that 44.4% of the respondents agreed while 44.4% strongly agreed that conflicting interests of regional states in a secession process lengthen the secession bid. The respondent also argued that regional states compromise the stability of the post-secession state.

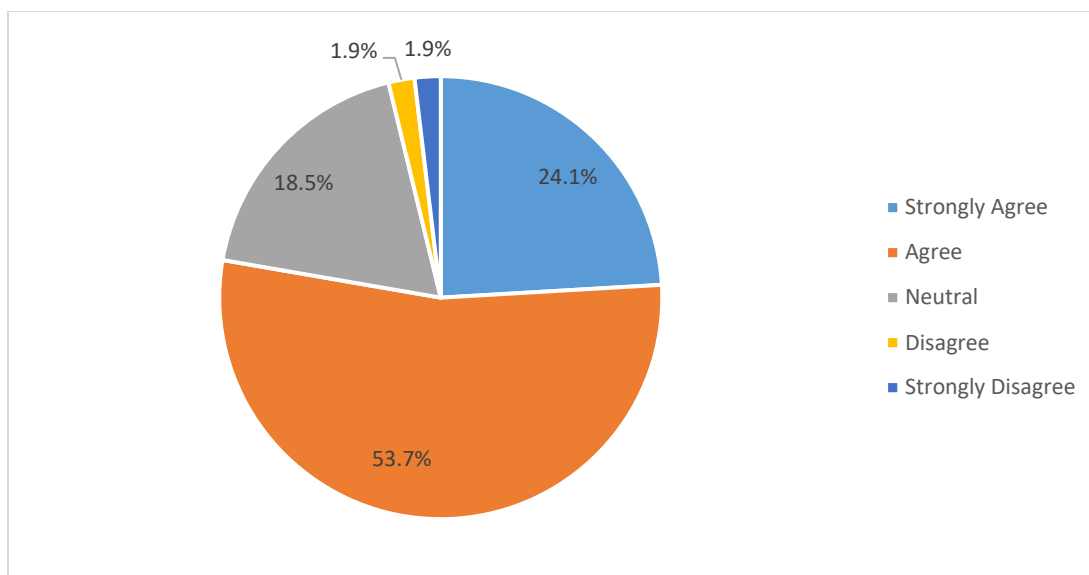
The regional context in which South Sudan secession occurred until today played an integral role in the recent political and military turn-moil in the country. Adar (2000) argued that conflicts in the region have not only been internationalized but they often have led to ‘conflict triangulation’ (p. 40). This is to say that regional states developed friendships and enmity during the SPLM/A secession struggle, some which persist until today. Additionally, in a report, Mesfin (2015, p. 1) argued that South Sudan “has become an arena where powerful neighbors maneuver for regional influence. Mesfin argued that geopolitics played an integral role in the current conflict in the country. The report cites Uganda’s and Sudan’s interests in the country as an elongation of the pre-independence rivalries that existed between the two countries (p. 2). At the time, Bashir’s and Museveni’s

governments supported each other's rebels as retaliatory measures. This history continues to manifest itself and causes instability in South Sudan. Butt (2017) believed that a state born in a 'bad' neighborhood is more likely to inherit the proxy wars and rivalries from the regional friends and enemies. The type of neighborhood in which a new independent state is birthed shapes the state's view of the world. A state that lives in a volatile region is constantly prepared militarily and keep on guard. "The bottom line is that states consider future war to be unlikely only under relatively narrow set of conditions, and rarity of those conditions explains why most separatist movements result in coercive state responses" (p. 31).

A round table report by the Institute of Security Studies (ISS), prior to the secession of South Sudan, noted that there existed afoot territorial disputes in the Eastern Africa region such as the Ilemi triangle that is claimed by Kenya, Ethiopia, and Sudan as well as Gambella region of Ethiopia. The report emphasized that although South Sudan may manage to keep its peace and stability after the referendum, it was likely that it would emerge a weak state and ungoverned entity that would pose a serious threat to the regional stability. The report further notes that South Sudan borders are not clearly demarcated and as such the discovery of oil deposits in the peripheries of these borders may aggravate hostilities and dispute in the region (p. 8).

#### Ripple Effect of Secession on Political Stability

The study also examined the ripple effect of secession on political stability and the findings are as summarized in Figure 4.6.



*Figure 4.6: Ripple Effect of Secession on Political Stability*

From the findings showed in Figure 4.6, it is evident that a majority (53.7%) of the respondents agree that secession in one territory had a ripple effect on the political stability of the neighboring countries. This is supported by 24.1% who strongly agreed.

Nelson (2016) noted that secessions tend to destabilize, not only the home state but also the neighboring states in that “there is relationship between proximity and interest because the closer a state is to a conflict, the more likely it is to suffer from its destabilizing effects”. (p. 31). As such regional states tend to monitor developments in the territories around them and try to influence the course of those developments. They also have interests that must be translated into actions. It is nearly impossible to restrain from nearby conflicts. Moreover, conflicts emerge when the interests of these states clash in the conflict ushering in political instability in that region. The states then engage in cold wars, and sometimes border conflicts, or at worse, a full-scale war. Hawi (2014) noted that the problem in southern Sudan had created tensions between Sudan and the neighboring countries such as

Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea in that “Each state has its own security concerns, economic interests, ideological preferences and external links that shape its policies towards Sudan. Most of them were in favor of an independent South; they saw economic opportunity in the oil wealth of the new state that can be utilized for their benefit” (p. 45).

The regional states had played a significant role in the independence war, and even charting the secession itself as argued by respondent KII007, a member of the civil society that:

*The SPLM/A got influence to secede from Sudan from the east Africa community in 1983.*

Their support came in form of military, financial and diplomatic support to the SPLM/A in the course of the liberation movements. IGAD-led negotiations that gave birth to the 2005 CPA were primarily conducted and supported by countries such as Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. All these countries provided spaces and avenues for such discussions and negotiations. As the diplomatic hubs of East Africa, Addis Ababa, and Nairobi host nearly every major regional and multilateral organization. IGAD-led mediation for South Sudan took place in Addis Ababa and Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. For 2001 to 2005, the CPA peace talks for Sudan took place in Nairobi, Naivasha, and Machakos, Kenya.

These states, however, suffered several both positive and negative effects emanating from the secession struggle taking in the region. Participant KII006 a member of the civil society acknowledged the support of neighboring countries who hosted southern provinces refugees for decades during the civil wars. He stated as follows:

*There are several countries that have contributed to the secession of South Sudan in terms of support militarily, accommodating South Sudanese, giving humanitarian support. These countries are still receiving influx of refugees even after gaining independence. Now Kenya wants to close the*



*Kakuma refugee camp. This comes as a fatigue of hosting refugees for decades.*

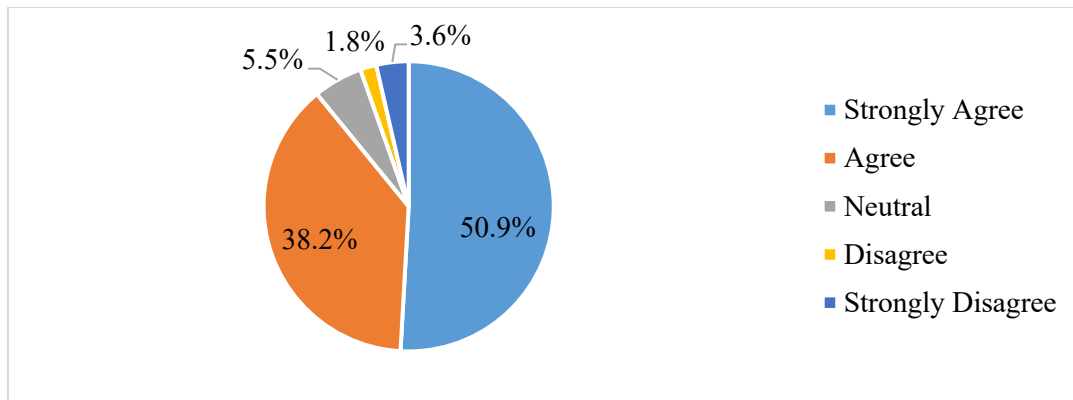
Neighboring countries of Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia have been hosting refugees fleeing the civil wars in the Sudan for decades. Overtime, social, political, and economic burdens bedeviled these countries. A professor of international relations underscored that the independence of South Sudan relieved these countries of the burden of hosting the war refugees. The professor, Participant KII003 asserted that:

*It (independence) has relieved them of the burden of taking care of refugees. It has also reduced the tension that used to exist between the host community and the refugees. It has also improved relations between the neighboring countries. South Sudan became a country that is hosting nationals of the neighboring countries.*

The secession process of South Sudan hugely affected the regional political dynamics. The regional context in which South Sudan secession occurred until today played an integral role in the recent political and military turmoil in the country. Adar (2000) argued that conflicts in the region have not only been internationalized but they often have led to ‘conflict triangulation’ (p. 40). This is to say that regional states developed friendships and enmity during the SPLM/A secession struggle, some which persist until today. Competing neighboring states’ interests in the secession process often led to rivalries and proxy wars being fought in the region, particularly, intense rivalries grew between Uganda and Sudan as they supported each other’s rebels.

#### South Sudan on Nation-building and State-building Processes

The study also examined South Sudan on nation-building and state-building. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.7.



*Figure 4.7: South Sudan on Nation-building and State-building*

In the data examined, 38.2% and 50.9% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that South Sudan secession focused more on state-building, than on nation-building.

Political instability and conflicts in South Sudan manifest itself in different forms; politics of changing allegiances and sequential changes within the government, deeply rooted inter-tribal clashes and enmities, and the subsequent redistribution of resources among the local actors, mainly the Dinka and the Nuer. Research by International Development Research Center (2013) alluded to the problem of nation building in South Sudan that “In the absence of well-established research institutions in South Sudan, most of the state-building and governance research is donor and NGO driven, yet it is this research that is shaping key development priorities of the country” (p. 7).

Mamdani (2016) and Young (2015) outlined the role played by external actors in causing the civil war and the collapse of state institutions in South Sudan, as well as the ability of external actors to bring about stability. South Sudan did not obtain its independence following a military victory by the SPLA or based on the SPLM’s demonstrable ability to

govern. Rather, South Sudan was created as a direct result of pressure that emerged based on the US' security interests (Mamdani, 2016).

Independence of South Sudan was not attained based on the SPLM/A's ability to achieve a military victory or to demonstrate an empirical capacity to govern its territory. The SPLM/A was instead the beneficiary of an unanticipated change in the international situation following the attacks on 9/11. The US was prompted by Sudan's support for global Jihadist groups to empower the SPLM/A based on a policy under Bill Clinton designed to effectuate regime change in Khartoum and then by George W. Bush to separate the southern territory from the north. After a prolonged military stalemate, the southern rebels leveraged the US' support to defeat Khartoum diplomatically. To avoid giving birth to a failed state, the US gave billions in humanitarian assistance and security assistance to the SPLM/A, knowing well that most of it was being funneled into the rebel group's networks.

The SPLM/A was not prepared to assume the responsibilities of governance in an independent state as argued by one of the respondents, a general in the SPLA.

Participant KII001 stated that:

*There are two events that emerged: the death of Dr. John Garang and power struggles within the SPLM/A. These two events made us not to be ready by then.*

South Sudan consequently emerged as a state marked by internecine conflict, institutional fragmentation, and underdevelopment. South Sudan has enjoyed international recognition as a state since 2011, but the SPLM/A-led government continues to face enormous deficits of empirical statehood and internal legitimacy. Responding to the question on whether

South Sudan was prepared for the independence, Participant KII002, a political party representative noted that:

*It was kind of premature but then it was what the people wanted. To gain sovereignty is for the people, and to govern is always for the people. Majority always wins. There is never the right time to gain sovereignty. We are facing challenges right now, but we were bound to face these challenges now or later. Eventually, we will know how to govern ourselves in the long run.*

The fact that South Sudan was deeply lacking in the empirical qualities of statehood did not prevent the international community from recognizing its independence in 2011, a decision that reflected the geostrategic calculus of the powers behind the 2005 CPA. Participant KII002 further underscored that:

*Although the focus of the movement was to fight for an independent state, which they got, the idea of building a nation based on people with competency skills and experience that should have been developed, was not given priority. People concentrated on fighting the war of independence under the guise of 'New Sudan'.*

From the findings in the interviews, the challenges facing nation-building process in South Sudan can be chiefly attributed to the lack of strong independent institutions, unprofessional military, and poor governance. The weakness of the state's formal institutions and the durability of patron-client governance has hugely contributed to South Sudan's fragility. South Sudan is a country where nearly all government revenues come from oil, foreign aid, and external loans; it is the prototypical example of a resource curse state. A report by UNDP (2017) noted that, "South Sudan is the most oil-dependent country in the world. Oil exports account for almost the whole of the country's export revenues, contributing 95% of government revenues, and around 60% of its GDP. Given its over-

dependence on oil, slight changes in oil production, prices and demand can quickly translate into massive economic shocks for the country” (p. 3). Participant KII001, a senior military commander in the SPLA, during the interviews, noted that the major issue facing nation-building in South Sudan is lack of proper institutions. He mentioned as below:

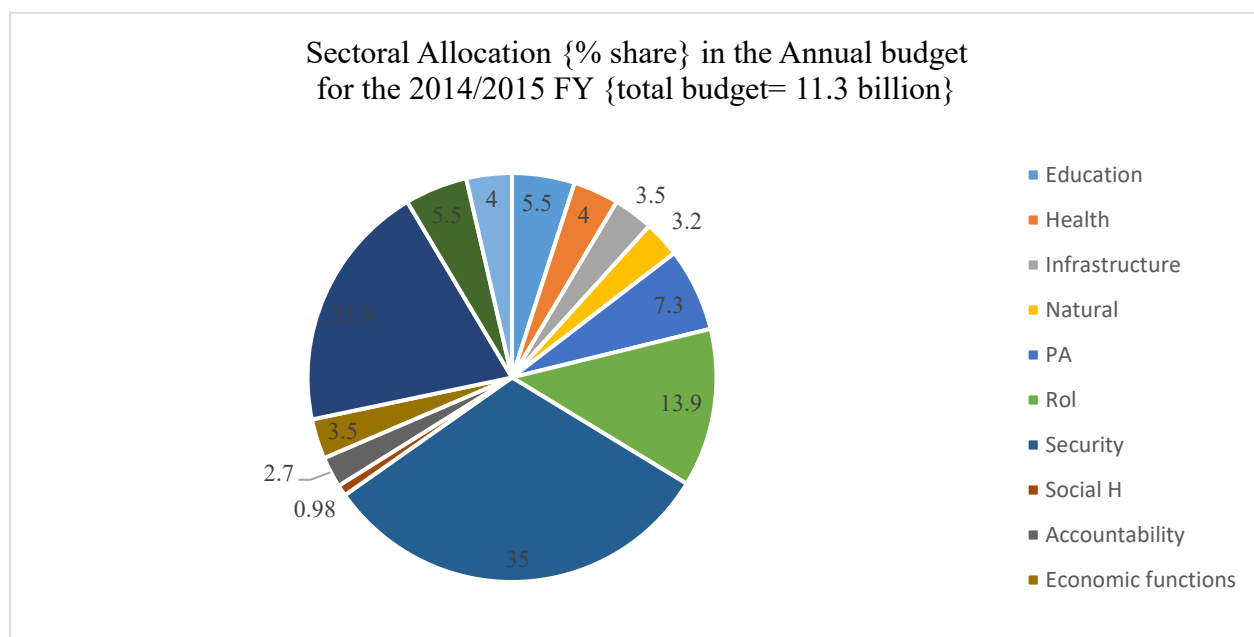
*It is only lack of strong institutions, and you know institutionalism is a good democratic system that can prevent ethnic violence, injustice, equality, and name it. If we have strong institutions, we can invent policies that can lead us to nation building.*

The ongoing crisis in South Sudan can be explained by legacies of economic and institutional underdevelopment. Kon (2015) noted that, “since its independence, South Sudan embraced ethnic rule, supported by the military thereby weakening establishment of the rule of law and order as well as peace and security” (p.1). Kon argued that the military system does not grant the opportunity to establish strong and credible institutions in the country. This argument is reiterated by participant KII009, a member of parliament who asserted that:

*We don't have strong financial institutions- you can use financial institutions to transfer money so unnecessarily. Our place became a place where you can clean dirty money from outside.*

The military system of governance has undermined any chance for civilian rule. Kon (2015) argued that instead of delivering services to the people, for instance, for the 2013/2014 fiscal year, the government spent 42% (\$555 million) of the national budget on military procurement (p. 1). Although the South Sudan government is cutting down on the expenditure on the military in the recent years, the military systems of governance in

country have undermined the concepts of civil society, multiparty democracy, and freedom of speech and movement due to lack of a permanent constitutional stipulations that safeguard this value. The military is still allocated a huge chunk of the national budget as illustrated in Figure 4.8



*Figure 4.8: South Sudan National Budgets 2014/2015 FY.*

Twijnstra (2014) noted that at the onset of the formation of South Sudan government in 2005, government procurement circulated within a close circle of those with close ties with ruling military and political elites. Despite the military acquiring the biggest expenditure in the national budget, some commanders earned double salaries for no work done. “Big man” syndrome dominated the public sector as corruption escalated. A respondent noted that, “The former liberators are trying to pay themselves back for the hardships they endured during the struggle at the expense of nation-building” (KII004, research interview, June 7, 2021)

Issues of rampant tribalism, lack of prioritization of developmental agenda, corruption, and nepotism in both public and private sectors in the country were also mentioned in the key informant interviews. Participant KII007 a member of the civil society outlined that insecurity and nepotism are derailing developments in the country. He stated as follows:

*I look at the lack of unity among South Sudanese really hindering nation building because people have different ideologies and people are not united. It makes it hard for any developmental agenda to be pushed forward. Another thing is nepotism that is going on. You will find that in the job market it is only relatives of the big people who are getting opportunities.*

SPLM/A, and the armed groups strive to increase their military power, to enhance the security of their respective communities and to gain access to state resources by negotiating patron-client bargains. This has only resulted in a security dilemma in the country, with many weapons in the hands of civilians, causing insecurity in the whole country. This system of military patronage is employed by Kiir to maintain stability and consolidate his power, but also necessitates massive amounts of spending within the security sector, leaving little for development.

Participant KII003, a professor of International Relations and Political Science argued that the failure of the SPLM/A in governance is because of unwillingness of the leadership to chart proper governance strategies. He stated that:

*The main issue is the lack of political will among the political leaders to shoulder the responsibility of running the country and mobilizing the people to utilize the available resources under their disposal.*

In addition, tribalism has kicked in, in the already chaotic military and political system. In a further discussion, Participant KII002, a representative of a political party stressed on

disunity and tribalism among South Sudanese as the major problem facing nation building in the young country by arguing that:

*The divisions within South Sudan are causing the intra-wars. I would not say we have an existing outside enemy. We are our own enemy.*

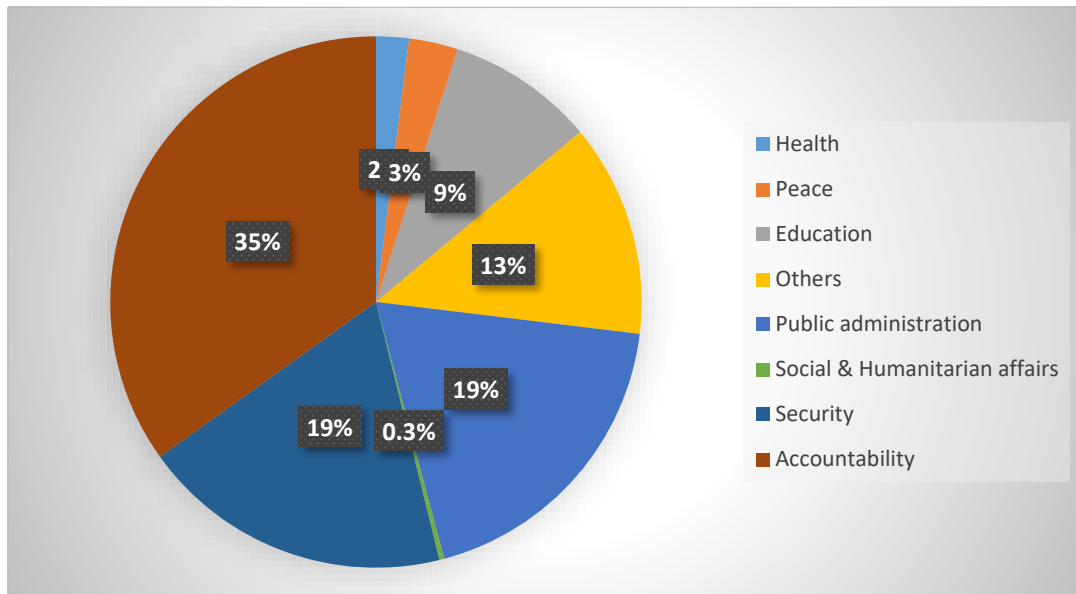
Frahm (2014) pinpointed that nation building efforts in South Sudan have not only failed, but they are also likely to remain so in the future. Frahm, however, believes that an evolution in telecommunication, adopting a national curriculum and encouraging rapid urbanization would create a conducive environment for cohesion (p. 289). Stressing the aspect of nation building in South Sudan, Frahm underscores that a vital component for unity is a genuine process of national reconciliation.

#### South Sudan Institutions and Fragility of the State

A huge portion of the respondents (87%) agreed that South Sudan's embryonic institutions developed into instruments of patronage as they resulted in a bloated and dysfunctional civil and military service that resulted in high salaries that take up a huge chunk of the national budget.

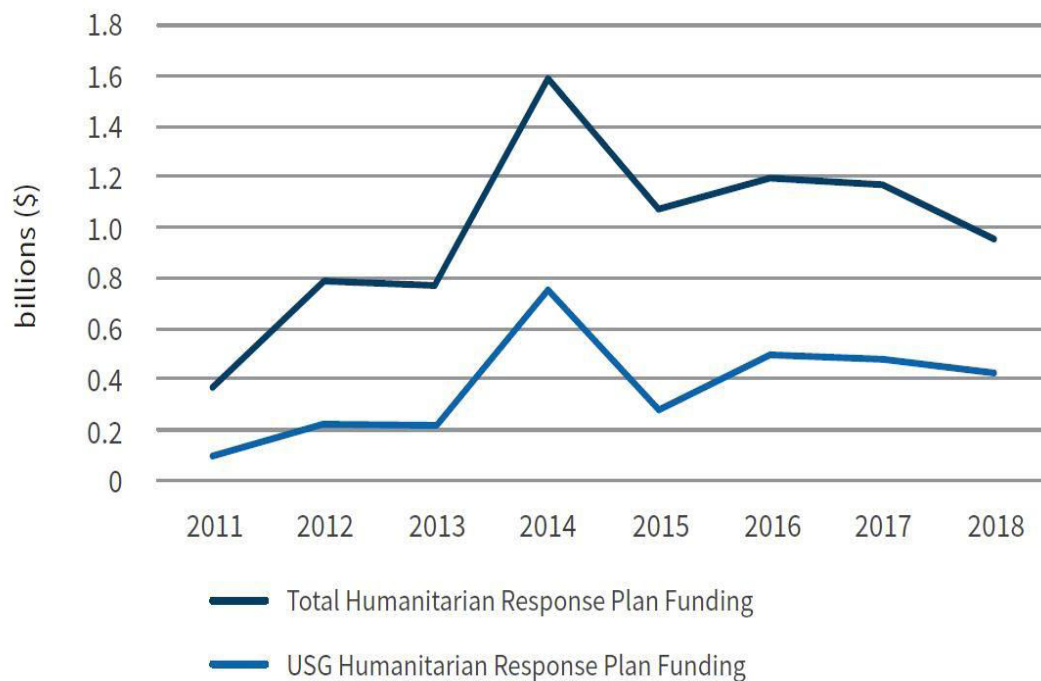
A report released by UNICEF (2019) underscored that South Sudan relies heavily on Official Development Assistance (ODA) to deliver basic social services, which amounted to nearly seven times the size of the national budget in 2017/2018 (USD \$2.2 billion), and it is not channeled through national systems. In the successive national budgets, the government has failed to give greater priorities to basic social services. Social sector investments remained significantly below international benchmark as illustrated in Figure 4.9.





*Figure 4.9: South Sudan Allocations by Sector*

The United States and the international community have channeled humanitarian support and funds to the new independent state of South Sudan for decades. “The aid helped and continues to help millions: in 2017 alone, more than 5 million people received food assistance, almost 3 million people received emergency health kits, and nearly one million children and pregnant and lactating women were treated for malnutrition.” (Yayboke, 2018, p. 1). Moreover, support has been consistent to the government of South Sudan from various international agencies. The aids are either a response to humanitarian crises in the country, or as a precautionary measure for an eminent humanitarian disaster. As illustrated in Figure 4.10, the humanitarian response funding spiked at the wake of the 2013 civil war in the country.



*Figure 4.10: South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan Funding*

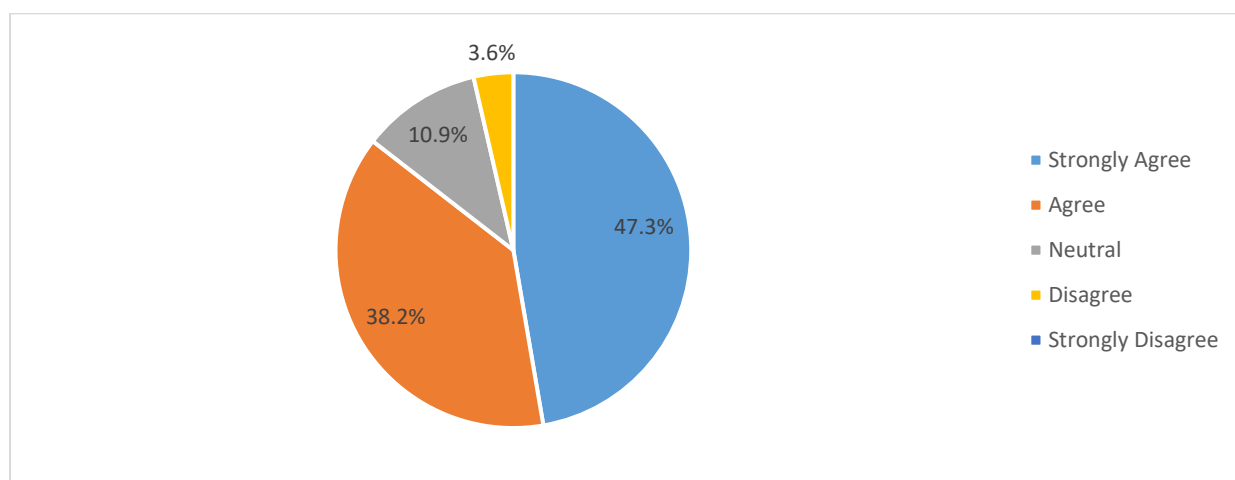
The international community facilitated the break-up of Sudan because it was generally perceived by most western governments as a rogue state that sponsored state terror. Hence, in the eyes of the sympathizers of the SPLM/A, all other issues were secondary to sovereignty. Francis (2015) noted that “For the political elites, the issue of timing and sequencing of post-war peace-building was hardly on their agenda” (p. 11). Francis concludes that the failure of the political elites and international community in South Sudan created a conducive environment for the implosion of the new state and descent into war.

Larson et al. (2013) argued that a major goals for international organizations and donor agencies operating in South Sudan was to begin to fill the GoSS ‘capacity gap’. However, the objectives of the capacity-building enterprise in South Sudan were never clearly articulated. There was a capacity gap, and no governance or political institutions existed.

“In the context of Southern Sudan’s interim period, rather than attempt to create, reform, and perfect all the institutions that donor countries deemed to be necessary for a ‘modern’ nation-state, reforms should have been limited to the most urgent institutions that would have contributed to unlocking a ‘virtuous cycle of confidence-building and institutional transformation’ in the semi-autonomous region” (p. 8). The government of South Sudan did not initiate any major developmental projects either before or after independence.

### SPLA Violence Against the Civilian Population

The study also examined the SPLA violence against the civilian population and the findings are as shown in Figure 4.11.



*Figure 4.11: SPLA Violence Against Civilian Population*

The findings showed that, a significant portion (47.3%) of the respondents strongly agree that the SPLA remains the enforcer of the law and order as well as the instigator of violence against the civilian population. 40% of the respondents further allude to this statement while 10.9% at least remain neutral as shown in Figure 4.11.

There was never a good relationship between the SPLM/A and the citizens. The people were seen as means rather than the purpose of the struggle. Far from living in harmony with its people, the SPLA, over the course of the struggle inflicted atrocities against civilian population. Piraud (2021) argued that experiences of slavery laid foundation for the SPLA's predatory practices over the cause of its liberation struggle. Over time, SPLA has been violent towards civilians in areas under its control. Piraud (2021) argued that "the very mode of production through which the SPLA elite accumulated wealth was rooted in the Sudanese history of slavery." (p. 3). A report by Small Arms Survey (2019) indicated that, "currently, troops' abuse of civilians often appears to be treated as 'indiscipline' only when it does not serve political or military purpose (p. 12).

In furtherance, Kuol (2019) further supported the postulation that the militarization of politics, and politicization of the military in South Sudan has created a situation in which it sounds an insult to be called a civilian. Kuol (2019) quoted the words of Deng Athuai of the South Sudan Civil Society Network who noted that, "The SPLM/A loots the country when it unites and kills the people when it splits" (p. 21). He argued that the SPLM/A has been disastrous to the civilian population in South Sudan. "Psychologically, SPLA is a symbol of trauma and genocide" (p. 120).

Human Rights Watch (2014) mentioned that "Government and SPLM/A-In Opposition forces have, together with allied forces, since December 2013, committed extraordinary acts of cruelty that amount to war crimes and in some cases potential crimes against humanity. These forces have pillaged and destroyed civilian property including homes, humanitarian infrastructure like the cars and offices of aid agencies, and medical facilities, including key hospitals. Both sides have ruthlessly targeted places of refuge, including

churches, hospitals, and UN bases” (p. 1). The report acknowledges that unaddressed trauma and anger carried over from Sudan’s long civil war that pitted Southern ethnic groups against each other drove the SPLA’s violence against civilians.

Right from its inception, the SPLA has had no respect for the civilian population. The basic induction into the military life then, during the liberation struggle was an abject ruthlessness on the civil population and in the villages when looting or demanding for food supplies, raiding villages for new recruits. Referring to the late Maj. General Peter Gatdet, Rands (2010, p. 15) averred that “His (Gatdet) men are known for being more unruly and ill-disciplined than the average SPLA soldiers. As a former proxy force opposing the SPLA in Unity State and the oilfield areas, Gadet and his men were known for their ruthlessness.” As a country that just emerged from an intractable liberation war, and plunged into another civil war, political instability was expected. This is a defining feature in most post-independent African countries. The immediate successors of the colonists on the African continent held a tight grip onto power by ruling with an iron fist. They knew too well the interference of military in politics often manifests itself through *coup d’etat*. This would explain the paranoia in the militarized leadership of the country. The leadership is constantly on a standby to strike, not an external threat but internal one. And in this, the civilians are not spared.

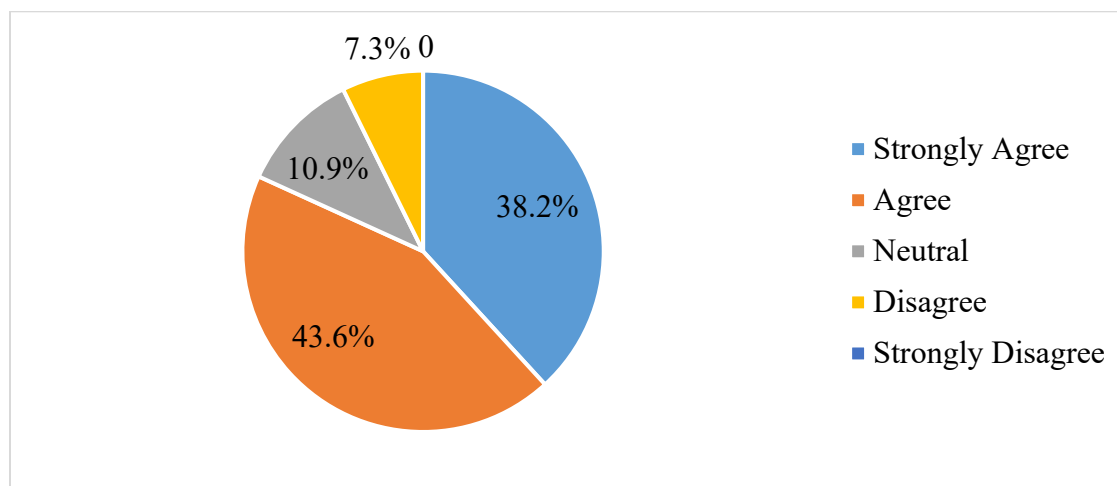
The problem of unaccountability stems from the nature of SPLA regular soldiers and militias that South Sudan inherited as the national soldiers (the SSDF). The rudimentary to joining the liberation army then was being able to ‘aim and shoot’. Shoot an enemy of the liberation at sight. This instinct is still intrinsic in the SSDF who essentially former guerilla militants are.

Killings of civilians are further propagated by the general acceptance of non-liability of the top-ranking officials. No one has the fright of being held responsible for their action because of their status, or relationship/connections with high profile officials. This was demonstrated when an alleged son of the president, famously known as Col. Marine, in company of his bodyguards, opened fire on civilians over land disputes in the town of Shirkat, in the outskirts of Juba (Africa News, 2020). This incident resulted in five deaths and scores injured, and with Col. Marine succumbing to head injuries meted on him by the villagers. The Sherikat shooting and many others, exposes the rot in the political and military leadership of the country. Rands attributes the indiscipline and unprofessionalism of the SPLM to the high level of illiteracy and corruption in the army in that “Most SPLA soldiers are poorly equipped, some without serviceable or spare uniforms or boots, and without common load-carrying equipment. Up to 90 per cent of the ranks are illiterate, as are at least 70 per cent of the officers; in addition, most units lack effective daily routines” (Rands, 2010, p. 25).

At the onset of the 2013-2020 civil war, the forces on both sides committed atrocities against civilians. Besides, the ethnic cleansing that was executed in a house-to-house search, soldiers also targeted aid workers in the areas they controlled. One of these heinous acts was the Terrain Hotel attack in which 12 SPLA soldiers broke into the hotel, looted properties, raped the aid workers and killing a Nuer journalist who was in company of the aid workers. Although the perpetrators of this incident were later brought to book, these incidences serve to expose the rot in the military.

From the findings of the study, majority of the respondents acknowledged that the military is hugely responsible for the skirmishes that have bedeviled the country. A portion (43.6%)

of the respondents agree that the major parallel problem within the SPLM/A stems from the splits that took place in the 1990's, and from which it never completely recovered. While 38.2% of respondents further strongly agree with the statement, a less significant number (7.3%) disagree with the provision that the SPLM/A is responsible for the problems that the country is facing today.



*Figure 4.12: SPLM/A as a Source of Instability in South Sudan*

Moro et al. (2017) in a report noted that the 1991 SPLA split, and the subsequent internal power struggles laid the foundation for its brutality against civilians. The report indicates that with this split, soldiers targeted civilians based on their ethnic identity (p. 13). “Nuer fighters, led by Riek Machar massacred Dinka civilians in Garang’s home area of Greater Bor in Jonglei. In retaliation, Dinka fighters attacked Nuer areas and massacred civilians” (p. 13). The country’s leadership has continued with war mentality within the army and its preoccupation with countering northern aggression. The leaders have often excused civilian deaths as something that happens in war.

During the 2013-2020 civil war, it is reported that Salva Kiir's personal unit, whether in the uniform of the Presidential Guard (president's personal army formed in the guise of 'presidential guards') or in uniforms of other units including the police, went through largely Nuer neighborhoods and carried out both indiscriminate killings and targeted murders of specific Nuer generals, politicians and individuals. At the wake of renewed violence in 2016, Preliminary UN investigations revealed that government security forces carried out looting, rapes, and killings in villages in and out of Juba. The report cites an incident in which government soldiers reportedly arrested 8 Nuer civilians and frog-marched them to a nearby hotel. Four of them were shot dead. Later, the soldiers broke into another hotel and killed a Nuer journalist. (UN Human Rights, 2016). Both sides of the war committed widespread violations in the areas of operation in that "the fighting also resulted in widespread sexual violence, including rape and gang rape by soldiers in uniform and men in plain clothes. Nuer, Dinka, and women from three equatorial states were all targeted, along with foreign nationals. Many victims were minors" the report adds.

A report released by All Survivors Foundation (2018), after interviewing survivors of the violence, revealed heinous acts committed in different regions of the country. According to the report, while withdrawing, the SPLM-IO forces abducted three humanitarian workers. In the area, civilians were subjected to arbitrary killings, assault, and gruesome acts of sexual violence, in addition to the destruction and looting of their property. The report narrates that in one case, a witness, had told the Commission "How she watched as SPLA soldiers castrated her husband and forced her to hold his bloody testicles in one hand as she shielded their new-born child with her other hand. She then watched three SPLA soldiers rape her 70-year-old mother and coerce her twelve-year-old son into having sex



with his grandmother. After raping the grandmother, the SPLA soldiers shot and killed her. The woman's husband and one-month old baby subsequently died during their flight to Ethiopia" (All Survivors Foundation, 2018, p. 2). In a separate incident, the report outlined the narration of another witness. "One witness (Witness 333) recounted returning from seeking shelter in the bush to find that his mother had been blinded by SPLA soldiers who gouged her eyes out with spears as she unsuccessfully tried to defend her 17-year-old daughter from being raped by fourteen soldiers. Seventeen SPLA soldiers then raped the man's blind mother, while his father was found beheaded with his castrated [circumcised] penis stuffed in his mouth" (p. 2).

A commission of inquiry led by the AU found out evidence of torture, rapes, mutilation and forced cannibalism during the civil war. "Some witnesses in the capital, Juba, told commission members that they had seen people forced to drink the blood and eat the flesh of people who had just been killed" (BBC News, 2015). AU's Commission of Inquiry found out extreme cases of brutality against civilian population and soldiers committed during the war that "The investigations reflect that the violations documented were committed in a systematic manner and in most cases with extreme brutality. In this context the Commission found cases of sexual and gender-based violence committed by both parties against women. It also documented extreme cruelty exercised through mutilation of bodies, burning of bodies, draining human blood from people who had just been killed and forcing others from one ethnic community to drink the blood or eat burnt human flesh" (Africa Union, 2015, p. 112).

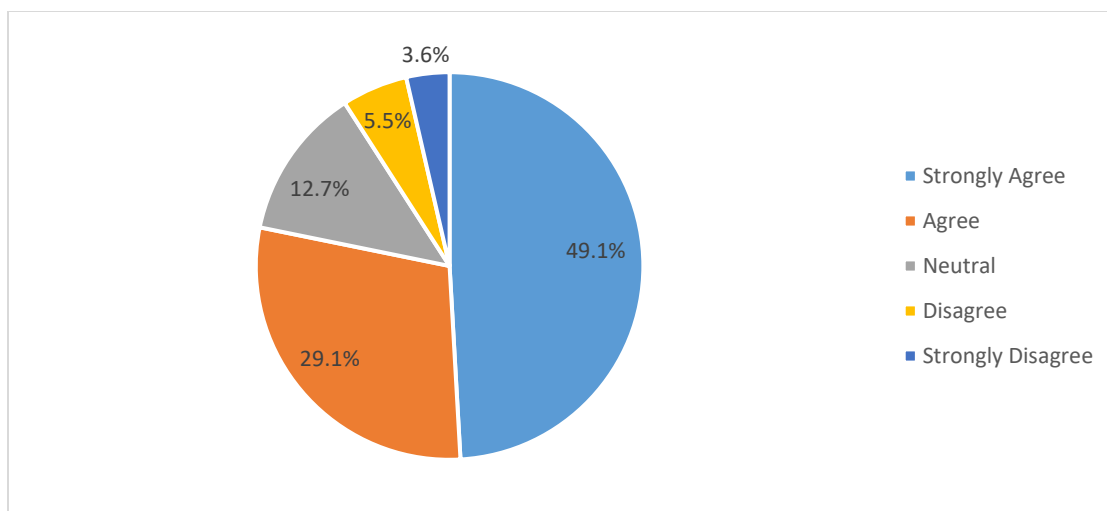
The report revealed crimes against humanity committed by both sides of the war. The atrocities expose the level of unprofessionalism in the SPLM/A. The army receded to their

tribal cocoons, and specifically targeted to humiliate, and traumatize for generations a particular ethnic group. The report outlined that, “the stories and reports of the human toll of the violence and brutality have been heart-wrenching: reports of people being burnt in places of worship and hospitals, mass burials, women of all ages raped; both elderly and young, women described how they were brutally gang raped, and left unconscious and bleeding, people were not simply shot, they were subjected, for instance, to beatings before being compelled to jump into a lit fire” (p. 118).

Rolandsen (2014) underscored that the rapid escalation and spread of violence in Juba neighborhoods during the 2013 conflict was because of a “bloated, fragmented and ill-disciplined army” (p. 165). Rolandsen further argued that the SPLA faces a great challenge of low levels of discipline and unprofessional conducts in the army. The national army is constituted by different SPLM factions, mostly, tribal militias recruited during the guerrilla struggle.

#### Humanitarian Aid and Development in South Sudan

There are rich consequences of humanitarian aid on the economic growth and development of developing countries. The respondents were asked on the effects of aid on South Sudan’s economy and development, and the findings are as shown in Figure 4.13

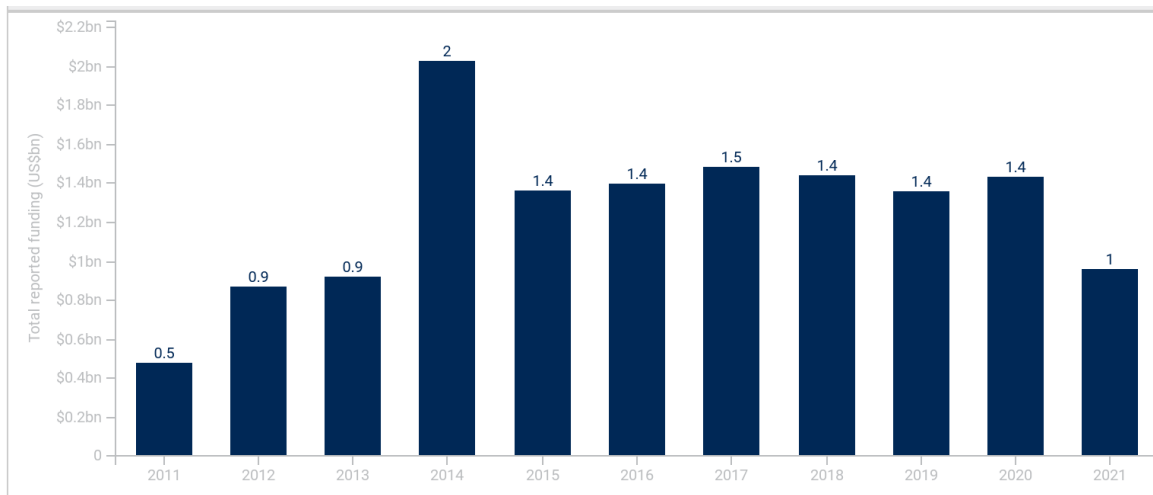


*Figure 4.13: Humanitarian Aid and Development in South Sudan*

The findings showed that, an overwhelming number of the respondents (49.1%) strongly agreed and 29.1% agreed that the excessive aid that South Sudan received from the international community has paralyzed the local institutions resulting in the fragility of the state.

A report by the AU Commission for Inquiry established that the 2013-2020 conflict in South Sudan is attributed to the failure of the government of South Sudan to have in place a well-functioning and independent institutions that would guide and bring to account different government organs in the country. According to the report, “it is widely accepted, as the Commission does, that the crisis in South Sudan is primarily attributable to the inability of relevant institutions to mediate and manage conflicts, which split out into the army, and subsequently the general population” (Africa Union, 2015, p. 39). The report noted that “the fact that South Sudan is a relatively ‘new state’ and has been engaged in the process of building institutions for the last eight or so years has a bearing on the strength

of institutions” (p. 39). The sustainability of the South Sudan’s economy has been heavily dependent on foreign aid to run different sectors of its economy as shown in figure 4.14.



*Figure 4.14: Trends in Reported Funding to South Sudan for the Period 2011-2021*

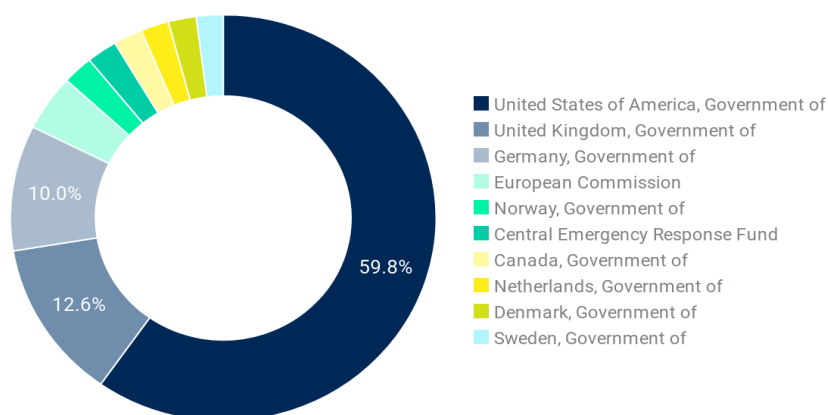
The funding of GOSS dates to the liberation period in which the SPLM/A received a lot of aids from the international community in terms military, political and financial support during the secession process. While the SPLM/A was particularly focused on fighting and winning the independence war, basic services in the areas that they controlled, and largely in southern provinces regions, were run by international organizations and aid agencies. Although this support was necessary, at the time, to the civilian population in a conflict-stricken region with massive displacements, hunger, and lack of shelters, it later proved ineffective as the SPLM/A grew too fond of the support, and failed to mobilize local resources, or establishing strong institutions in the new independent state. As Dambisa Moyo refers to the foreign aids channeled to the African continent as dead aid, it can be argued that the support that the SPLM/A received was effective during the ‘bush’ era but now proved inefficient and toxic to the new independent South Sudan.

Since the initiation of the foreign aid initiatives in Africa, there is no single case in which a country was able to effectively harness these aids to develop its economy. Ironically, in most cases, the aids turned out toxic and a burden to the growth of the recipient countries' economies. Van der Walt (2009) cited figures showing the exponential growth in poverty in an area of burgeoning aid. For example, 10 percent of Africans were living in poverty in the 1970s compared to 70 percent now. Similarly, today, South Sudan is one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world. A report released by World Bank (2017) underscored that "South Sudan has become one of the poorest countries in the world with more than 4 out of 5 people living under the international poverty line in 2016" (p. xiv). The report attributes the poverty levels in the country to combined shocks of conflict and macroeconomic crisis.

Indeed, aid in Africa has created a vicious cycle of addiction. Aid fosters dependency which nurtures corruption leading to a need for more Aid. Every African leader's visit to the West is on how they want to receive their next bunch of aids. In addition, it has compromised the non-interference policy on the African political space. Donors often have strings attached to their aids that range from political and economic interests. The aids have sponsored regime change in Africa, and they have equally maintained regimes (Bermeo, 2011).

Kaler and Parkins (2015) stated that South Sudan is highly dependent on support from international organizations for delivery of basic services. They note that, "as an indication of INGO's power, at the time of our visit, the country had been divided into geographic zones corresponding to major INGOs, which would take on responsibility for basic social welfare in each zone" (p. 403). Kaler and Parkins (2015) further argued that the government

is too comfortable with letting INGOs and international partners take on the task of delivering services to the population. A report commissioned by a consortium of UK-based International Non-Governmental Organizations indicate that South Sudan has a long history of humanitarian intervention which has always been availed by a wide range of local, national, and international actors (p. 6). The report noted that the legacy of humanitarian intervention in the country has influence the attitude of South Sudanese today. Dependency has eliminated the need to establish institutions for self-sufficiency (p. 9). Figure 4.14 shows countries that channeled funding to South Sudan for the period 2011-2021.



*Figure 4.15: Foreign Aid funding to South Sudan by Source*

Hemmer and Grinstead (2015) stated that the government of South Sudan exploits the external support and delivering of services such that state structures remain to serve a prime goal of maintaining a “war budget” with huge spending on the army salaries and security sector. This results in limited or no funds at all for development (p. 7).

The SPLM/A has historically been sustained by its military sponsors, Mengistu

Hailemariam in Ethiopia and then the US during the north-south war, and now China and Uganda. The state's heavy reliance on exogenous sources of finance, including foreign aid, debt, commodities, and a wide range of illicit activities, has led to the externalization of economic management and political accountability. Foreign sponsorship and intervention have, to some extent, relieved South Sudan's leaders of the need to develop effective or legitimate administrative structures to sustain their power. These structural conditions within the international states system, combined with the legacies of economic and institutional underdevelopment in South Sudan, explain why the young country is stuck in dependency trap, economic crises and unending civil wars.

Responding to a statement that the massive political and financial support that the SPLM/A received from the international community right at the inception of the liberation struggle somehow denied them the opportunity to invest and mobilize local resources for self-sufficiency, Participant KII002 argued that:

*I do understand they received a lot of international community support, especially from the US, TROIKA and other countries that supported them for their cause at the time. The SPLM/A has grown too independent on aid. We are still depending on humanitarian assistance. We have oil revenues that can sustain every South Sudanese, working or not. This is also an impact from the bush mentality.*

In support, De Simone believes that, at the time, the SPLM/A outlined every aspect of its operation in attempts to secure more foreign aids. The aid goes directly to the SPLM/A's coffers.

De Simone (2018) attempted to outline the SPLM/A's interactions with external resource providers in the 1990's and late 2000's by referring to Jean-Francois Bayart's concept of

extraversion. De Simone argues that the SPLM/A, throughout the liberation struggle, used trickery and appropriation when dealing with material assets delivery. De Simone further notes that the SPLM/A often uses humanitarian concerns to attract support. However, the support is channeled to the movement's structures. De Simone (2018) noted that the SPLM/A employed appropriations, trickery, coercion, intimidation, and rejection to construct a stable relationship with western governments and international organizations. De Simone notes that the SPLM reformed and adopted favorable policies that would ensure steady flow of foreign resources (p. 400).

State-building initiatives in South Sudan aimed at upgrading the capacities of state institutions to fulfill state responsibilities, such as provision of security and rule of law, have yielded limited results, as the SPLM/A shifted from foreign aid support to over-dependence on oil as argued by participant KII002 who underscored that:

*Basically, over dependence on oil and external assistance made them not to diversify the economy. They thought the oil revenues and external assistance were enough to enable them develop the country.*

Participant KII010, a member of the civil society acknowledges the massive support that the SPLM/A received from the international community.

*If you go to reports and you get how much South Sudan got after the signing of the CPA- a lot of money has been injected but due to lack of clear priorities and programmes, it has affected the country and made them loose friends from outside. There are so many reports of corruption.*

Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), one of the key international organizations with prominent presence in southern Sudan, played a major role in providing direct humanitarian aid to all war-affected parts of southern Sudan, even though Sudan's



government made serious efforts to manage the provision of aid for its own benefit. In enabling more NGOs to operate in Sudan, OLS functioned as a sort of indirect provider of public services to noncombatants (De Simone, 2018). It also had a stabilizing effect on southern Sudanese society during the conflict. This denied the SPLM/A an opportunity to outline initiatives for self-sufficiency.

In an interview, a member of the civil society underscored that the aid that the SPLM/A received, not only made them lazy, but it also promoted impunity and corruption in that; “There are so many African countries that are receiving support like we do, but the problem is that they don’t invest. They invest in their own families. They don’t invest countrywide. The more they receive, the more they sleep” (KII008, research interview, June 6, 2021). De Waal (2014) concurred with this statement and argues that that over the years, SPLA officers became oriented towards an apparently unending supply of international humanitarian aid, which could be stolen with impunity. notes that “Looting food aid was elevated to military strategy in the 1990s, when the contending factions of the SPLA staged hunger camps to attract humanitarian relief, which was then stolen” (p. 352).

#### Comparison of the SPLM/A, EPLF and SNM Capabilities

Although similar liberation movements fought and successfully gained their territorial independence in the same region, the SPLM/A and EPLF, today, govern their territories in totally different political and economic paradigms. Their militaristic traits have been carried over to the new independent states. The success of liberation movements that have seized power in different countries is pegged on their abilities to implement their revolutionary political ideologies, often concocted prior to taking control of the state. Implementation of revolutionary ideologies in Eritrea and South Sudan is questionable.

Participant KII006 argued that the SPLM/A had failed to implement its revolutionary ideologies as they spent years resolving their differences; power wrangles and competition on who should be the leader. He mentioned that:

*South Sudan could not make some progress, and it is because of the fact that the SPLM/A as a political party and originally a liberation movement, did not sit and organize their vision, philosophy of the movement.*

The post-independence experiences of Eritrea and South Sudan have likely reinforced the international community's predilection for the status quo. Although, in cases of military victory, processes of autonomous recovery can produce a stable political order and strong state, it is unlikely to be a benevolent one. Eritrean self-determination was the outcome of a struggle lasting three decades against the central government in Addis Ababa and internally by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) to consolidate its power by eliminating the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF). In 1991, the EPLF, fighting in parallel with the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), achieved a military victory against the Derg regime. The incoming TPLF-led coalition in Ethiopia allowed Eritrea to secede peacefully and, in a referendum, the Eritrean people voted overwhelmingly to establish an independent state. After independence in 1993, the EPLF established a cohesive and organized state. Eritrea and Ethiopia then waged a deadly war from 1998 to 2000 over economic and territorial disputes. Thereafter, the negative qualities of such an all-encompassing movement came to the fore, as the country descended into a "totalitarian mini-state." Afwerki's government isolated itself internationally in its efforts to destabilize the region and became increasingly repressive at home (Leenco, 2003).

The difference in political and economic situations in Eritrea and South Sudan reflects the fact that, unlike the EPLF, the SPLA never achieved a military victory and the SPLM did not possess the material to form a de facto state. While the excesses of the ideological, militarist and isolationist approach to the liberation struggle have been heightened in the post-independence period, the EPLF nonetheless succeeded in establishing a de facto (Hutton, 2014). Southern Sudan was not a unified political entity that could easily be transformed into a viable state. The SPLM/A has never been the only politico-security force in the south, as legitimacy is spread amongst numerous breakaway factions, militias, and traditional leaders. The SPLM/A was not prepared to assume the responsibilities of governance in an independent state. South Sudan consequently emerged as a state marked by internecine conflict, institutional fragmentation, and underdevelopment (Young, 2003).

Participant KII007 added that:

*In most African countries, after liberation, they will struggle with a lot of issues such as power wrangles. This takes us back to lack of comprehensive programs for the country to move forward. If you look at many countries, after liberation, the transition is experienced with a lot of challenges.*

As Ole Frahm has detailed, South Sudan's only partially demarcated territory plays a role in shaping personal and group identities. Since 2011, the SPLM/A has been unable to extend its authority and realize a monopoly of force throughout what is nominally its state territory.

Although Somaliland is not recognized by the international community, it is arguably doing better in comparison to South Sudan. In Somaliland, the Somali National Movement's (SNM) ability to achieve a military victory, combined with the relative lack of foreign assistance, natural resources, external mediation, and international recognition, are factors

that have arguably been constitutive of its project of state formation. Forced to depend on its citizens and the diaspora population, leaders in Somaliland harnessed their wartime experience to devise a system that combines the traditional clan-based institutions with the more modern structures of a Western democratic state. The success of bottom-up state-building in Somaliland is often attributed to the reliance on institutional practices that are rooted in traditional Somali concepts of consultative, consensual, and deliberative form of governance (Richards, 2015). This model cannot, however, simply be transposed to other contexts and South Sudan is at a structural disadvantage owing to, for example, the presence of oil. In addition, ethnic heterogeneity, differences in political demography and colonial legacies of institutional underdevelopment undermine the applicability of the Somaliland's model in South Sudan.

### Summary of Key Findings

South Sudan as an independent nascent sovereign state did not come by accident or as a surprise. The event of independence was a result of decades of relentless struggle by the marginalized people of South Sudan. The study has found out that South Sudan emerged as an independent country before the completion of the state formation processes. Many of its people still lived outside the state; politics had not been sufficiently emancipated from the person, and by extension the ethnic community from which hailed the person, exercising authority. The major problem facing nation-building in South Sudan is attributed to the former liberator, and the ruling party, SPLM/A. The study argued that the SPLM had not woken up to the reality that it was the ruling party and that had to stamp its vision on every policy statement on social, economic, and political processes in South Sudan. The system of governance in the country is characterized by patronage structures,

elite competition, and lack of rules, procedures, and institutions. The international community and development aid agencies in South Sudan have been enthusiastic adopters of the state and nation-building agenda.

The study found out that the regional states played significant roles in the secession process of South Sudan by availing political support, diplomatic roles, financial and military aids, providing avenues for negotiations, and mobilizing the international community to the course of the SPLM/A liberation struggle. In effect, the regional states have had to host refugees fleeing the war in the Sudan. Overtime, the regional states have had their interests clash over the negotiations processes resulting to series of rivalries that threatened regional

### Summary

This chapter presented data from respondents and laid down the main findings of the study as guided by the research questions and objectives. Data has been analyzed and presented according to the questionnaires and KIIs. The analyzed data forms the basis on which the following chapter will be presented, providing discussions, drawing conclusions and recommendations including areas for further research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to establish the implications of secession on regional stability and nation-building of the seceded states with reference to the case of South Sudan. The study was undertaken and guided by three main objectives: first, to examine the role played by regional states in the secession process of South Sudan; second, to evaluate the effects of the secession of South Sudan on regional stability, and third, to analyze the social, economic, and political challenges of nation-building in South Sudan. This chapter presents a discussion, conclusion, and recommendations from the study's findings. Also presented in this chapter are implications of the study as well as suggested areas of further research.

#### Discussions of Key Findings

##### The Role Played by Regional States in the Secession Process of South Sudan

The study established that South Sudan's secession process was majorly aided by the regional states as well as the international community. The undeniable role of the neighboring countries is seen in the massive political, financial, and military support that the SPLM/A has been receiving from countries like Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, right from the beginning of the liberation struggle.

From the findings, the internationalization of South Sudan's secession process has come along with myriad of regional actors with diverse interests. Majority (90%) of the respondents did agree that the success of South Sudan's secession was aided and affected by the intervention from the international community and the immediate support from the

regional states. Shehadi (2008) argued that the international community is always on standby to manage claims to self-determination and conflicts that emerge from these calls. Self-determination imposes direct implications on international security. Therefore, the international community is obliged to intervene early in such conflicts in order to curb their spread. The idea of self-determination itself faces a critical backlash as it attempts to strike a delicate balance between different principles in international relations, sovereignty, international peace and security, territorial integrity, and peaceful resolution of conflicts. The actors in international system thus resort to preventive diplomacy which also proves difficult as it is direct violation of the principle of non-interference. States often prefer to end calls to self-determination to their own advantage without international intervention. Shehadi noted that, “Furthermore, international intervention may, in some cases, inadvertently encourage escalation of the conflict. The parties involved may be encouraged to take extreme positions in the hope of gathering international support, and outside parties might be encouraged to interfere in the dispute to promote their own interests” (p. 49).

Ylonen (2013) averred that the signing of the CPA in 2005 was a culmination of longstanding trials by external actors to bring peace to Sudan. The CPA was primarily endorsed by external actors in the interests of Sudan. Ylonen noted that IGAD’s negotiation strategies focused solely on the major protagonists-ignoring the local actors and the populations, and as such the signing of the CPA did not quell the deeply rooted inter-ethnic clashes in different parts of South Sudan. Ylonen (2013) posited that the peace process in the Sudan was driven by western powers and multilateral bodies who only focused on building state institutions to prevent a relapse to war. The strategy of state building sidelined the aspect of nation building in the process- which is a long-term process aimed

at nation cohesion. Nation building and bringing together the highly heterogeneous population sector of which harbored deep grievances against the SPLA was neglected.

#### The Effects of the Secession of South Sudan on Regional Stability

The study sought to establish the effects of South Sudan's secession on the neighboring countries and regional stability. From the findings majority (96.6%) of the respondents did agree that the secession did have both positive and negative effects on the neighboring countries. Participant KII002 a government official underscored that:

*At the time, we were being lured in to quickly joining the East African Community, and a lot of neighbors were moving in, working in South Sudan.*

The successful secession did not only boost trade in the region but also relieved the neighboring countries of the burden of hosting refugees. Participant KII004 pointed out the issues of border conflicts and Nile politics that the new independent South Sudan found itself at the center of it. He stated that:

*Due to the secession, there have been a lot of challenges especially, the neighboring countries trying to maneuver into South Sudan. There is a piece of land being encroached by Uganda. The border conflicts are hard to manage by South Sudan as it is still recovering from the 21-years war.*

In addition, respondents mentioned issues of refugee crises in the neighboring countries as a prime effect of the secession of South Sudan. During the liberation struggle, many South Sudanese were displaced from the home, and forced to flee to the neighboring countries of Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia. The migration and settlement of these refugees also created some hostilities and conflicts with the host communities in those countries. However, as a positive effect, some respondents mentioned economic interests that have been achieved



by the neighboring countries because of the successful secession of South Sudan. These include closer cooperation among the East African community countries, employment opportunities, and increased trade within the region.

Politically, however, Adar (2000) argued that conflicts in the region have not only been internationalized but they often have led to ‘conflict triangulation’ (p. 40). Adar acknowledged that the secession of South Sudan had attracted many states and non-state actors with interlocking interests (p. 61). The secession struggle created an enormous tension between and among the neighboring countries. The regional states have interchangeably worked with, and against each other in process of secession. For instance, Uganda’s support for the southern rebels, the SPLM/A, pitted the government of Sudan and Uganda in an almost a full-scale war. Minale (2014), on the other hand, believed that the current political turmoil in South Sudan, if not properly dealt with in due time, has the potential to sprang into a Democratic Republic of Congo-like regional crisis. Minale argued that regional states such as Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Eritrea have very important security and military interventions in South Sudan. The conflict attracted direct support and military interventions from neighboring countries trading accusations during the secession struggles.

#### The Social, Economic and Political Challenges of Nation-building in South Sudan

The study sought to analyze the social, political, and economic challenges of nation building in South Sudan. Accordingly, in the findings, majority (100%) of the respondents cited issues such as rampant corruption in public and private sectors, and tribalism in government institutions. A senior military officer noted that the problems bedeviling South

Sudan is because of inexistence of strong institutions in the country in that, “It is only lack of strong institutions, and you know institutionalism is a good democratic system that can prevent ethnic violence, injustice, equality, and name it. And if we have strong institutions, we can prevent other things that can lead us to nation building” (KII001, research interview, June 24, 2021). The lack of meritocracy has hindered maximum exploitation of the youth, technocrats, the diaspora population, and hence the government institutions remained under-served courtesy of the SPLM/A old comrades that seem to focus on rewarding themselves for the hardships endured during the liberation struggle. Participant KII004 particularly mentioned the lack of national interests in the army itself in that:

*The SPLM/A, immediately after getting their independence, deviated from their ambitions. It became self-enriching process where you must reward yourself. Consequently, this comes at the expense of nation building.*

Throughout the interview, Participant KII004 made it clear that the SPLM/A is exploiting the civilian population in that:

*They are really depriving people of opportunities and resources. Most of their ideologies were not having national interests. There was a lot of personal interests, and then divisions came in.*

Poverty and high illiteracy rate in the country has been mentioned by majority (86%) of the respondents as a contributing factor in which tribalism and corruption has thrived upon.

During the interviews, Participant KII009 a member of the civil society, mentioned that:

*Also building of schools and strengthening education system- at least you will have a literate population, and when you have that you can engage in a negotiation. Once someone is educated, they won't accept to be used. They will have opinions.*

Kuol and Logan (2019), on the low levels and nature of human and technocratic capacity in South Sudan, argued that South Sudan suffers low national literacy levels, and as such South Sudan and its partners resorted to employing non-nationals in the private sector, non-governmental organization, and international aid projects. Kuol and Logan (2019) further supported this assertion by noting that, “Weak capacity also manifest itself in low staff qualifications, which undermines service delivery effectiveness”. (p. 233).

Scholars such as Zambakari (2012) argued that the problems facing South Sudan today can all be attributed to a single factor, political violence. Whereas South Sudan became independent in 2011, it yet struggles to contain the problem of violence and the proliferation of armed groups. Political violence, especially inter-communal violence, and the proliferation of armed groups, presents South Sudan with a daunting challenge and poses existential threats to nation building in the new state. Zambakari attributed the political violence to the regional rivalries in manifested in the country. “The Border States were at the front of the liberation war in South Sudan. As a result, the Sudanese and South Sudanese societies were militarized and politicized as different governments over time in Sudan armed various militias to fight in the South against the SPLA” (p. 11).

Ylonen (2013) pointed the problems facing South Sudan to the failure of the international community in establishing proper nation building models and programs for the country. Ylonen argues that the international community model of attempting to bring peace in South Sudan through exclusively development of national institutions and structures, neglected and failed to promote inclusive nation building. It ignored a significant actor in peace, the local actors (p. 14). In addition, Ylonen mentioned that “Too heavy focus on building through the creation of state institutions in the short term, but without ensuring

their legitimacy that can be achieved through effective nation-building, may be insufficient in establishing state authority particularly in highly fragmented and polarized post-conflict societies” (p. 18).

Responding to the question on whether southern Sudan government or the SPLM/A was prepared to run an independent state at the time, majority (78%) of the respondents did agree that at the inception of the liberation struggle, the SPLM/A did function like an authentic government; well-structured, clear-visioned, and disciplined. However, with the emergence of leadership wrangles that created divisions within the SPLM/A, and up until the sudden demise of Dr. John Garang, the movement had lost its focus. Majority argued that the sudden change of leadership made the SPLM/A unfit to run the country as it heavily depended on and exploited foreign aids.

De Waal (2014) argued that over the years, SPLA officers became oriented towards an apparently unending supply of international humanitarian aid, which could be stolen with impunity. De Waal notes that “Looting food aid was elevated to military strategy in the 1990s, when the contending factions of the SPLA staged hunger camps to attract humanitarian relief, which was then stolen” (p. 352). De Simone (2018) further acknowledged that the international community played a prominent role in peace-making and peacebuilding. The “aid rush” to South Sudan meant that South Sudan became not only an El Dorado for imperialist countries, especially China and the US but also a profitable haven for shady contractors. The elite in the SPLM/A took advantage of these international interests and solicited support for their own gains. De Simone underscores that “Donors were at least partially aware of these forms of trickery and appropriation. Nevertheless, the SPLM/A's donor-friendly rhetoric made them turn a blind eye to the movement's actual

practices, its poor human rights records, its diversion of relief aid, and even its scarce commitment to ensuring protection to humanitarian workers on the ground” (p. 402).

One of the interviewee respondents mentioned that “the military still has bush mentality” (KII003, research interview, June 23, 2021). It is argued that while the SPLA/SSPDF is a national army, in practice, it gives the impression of a militia as it is constituted of different rebel and militia factions that fought alongside and against the SPLM/A during the liberation struggle. In their operations, the soldiers are loyal to individual commanders, and are guided by tribal sentiments. Participant KII003 outlined that:

*The meddling of the military in running the affairs of the country has contributed very much to weakening the political system particularly the public sector because some of the military officers found themselves running government institutions while still retaining their positions in the military, and those military officers have not been given orientation and training.*

The army generals that are counted in their hundreds further fuel the inter-tribal and intra-tribal conflicts in different regions of the country by supplying weapons and ammunition to their communities. The military and political system in the country labels high ranking political and military elites as the ‘protectors’ and mouthpiece of their communities. The failure of the military in the country can be traced to the poor command structure of within the SPLA/SSPDF and a combination of nepotism, corruption, and tribalism in the recruitment process. Further, the military and political parties are intertwined-an aspect that has fanned political violence in the country.

## Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was investigating the implications of secession on regional stability and nation building of the seceded states in the case of South Sudan. The research concludes that secession has adverse effects on the regional political dynamics, and nation building of the seceded states. The study findings have revealed that the regional states became well-knit in the SPLM/A's independence; from fighting alongside SPLM/A comrades to providing military and financial support to the movement. The regional countries were inseparable from the secession process. However, as established in the study, the conflicting interests of these states in the secession process led to bitter rivalries among them, some of which, threatened the regional stability.

Nearly all the regional states in the Eastern Africa region have to some extent felt social, political and economic impacts of the South Sudan's secession in their own territories. The influx of refugees into the camps in Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, and Ethiopia, as established in the findings of this study, has resulted in both positive and negative implications in these countries. Not only have the regional states found themselves entangled in the conflict itself, but they also all had to deal with the huge burden of hosting refugees for decades. This responsibility came with its sets of challenges such as cross-border conflicts, crimes and conflicts between the refugees and host communities.

South Sudan is grappling with challenges, many of which are expected and common to countries emerging from conflict, yet some are very peculiar to the country because of its historical context. Nevertheless, the independence of South Sudan has not translated into peace and stability for the state. On the African continent, the viability of secession on

creating a stable self-governing state and regional stability is once again put into test, after the successful secession of Eritrea.

### Recommendations

Key recommendations based on the findings of this study are as follows:

First, although secession may terminate continued series of intra-state conflicts, it should only be considered effective if both parties to the secession have the capabilities to ensure the delivery of statehood responsibilities to their citizens and neighboring states.

Second, after the signing of the CPA, the SPLM/A leaders were faced with the duty of implementing the provisions of the agreement at a time when formal political and administrative structures in South Sudan were either weak or non-existent. The government in South Sudan needs to give priority to the establishment and strengthening of independent institutions that would ensure service delivery to the civilians. The current system prioritizes military apparatus.

Third, the signing of the of peace agreements (CPA, 2015 Addis Ababa Agreement and the 2018 peace agreement) triggered the immediate return of hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people and refugees to their former homes, placing an additional burden on the already stretched resources of recipient communities. The state of South Sudan needs to provide food subsidies while providing lessons for its people to become independent and learn about cultivation as they build infrastructures that will facilitate the implementation of becoming independent.

### Recommendations for Further Research

Secession is a complex phenomenon. This study at the outset focused on addressing a specific dimension of the phenomenon: the implications of secession on regional stability and nation-building of the seceded states, by analyzing the case of South Sudan. In line with the above, future studies need to explore the relationship between religion and ethnicity, and their implications on security in post-secession states, in the case of South Sudan. There are a lot of unanswered questions on the interplay between ethnicity and religion, and how they contribute to secession and stability in post-secession states. Secession has not resulted to socio-political stability in South Sudan. Therefore, was statehood the right option? What measures are used to determine whether a secession was successful or not? What are the alternatives to secession?



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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Researcher's letter of Introduction to respondents

Dear respondent/s,

My name is Martin Wang, a master's degree student at Daystar University, Nairobi campus, and currently conducting a study entitled 'The implications of secession on regional stability and nation-building of seceded states: A case study of South Sudan'. One of the requirements for the final draft is the content validation of instrument/questionnaires. I kindly request you to participate in my research study. The information you will provide will be treated with extreme confidentiality and it will be strictly utilized only for academic purposes. Your participation is highly valued.

Regards,

Martin Wang



## Appendix B: Questionnaire for Respondents

I am a student from the Department of Peace and International studies at Daystar University writing a master's degree on the topic of implications of secession on regional stability and nation building of seceded states: A case study of South Sudan. This study seeks to assess the implications of secession on regional stability and nation-building of seceded states. Be assured that the information you will provide will be treated with extreme confidentiality and will only be used for academic purposes.

Kindly, do you agree to participate in the research? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please tick the most suitable response or fill in the blanks for explanations

### Part I: Demographic

1. Sex:            Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age:            Below 30            ☐

31-35            ☐

36-40            ☐

41-45            ☐

46-50            ☐

Above 50            ☐

### 3. Level of education

Diploma            ☐

Bachelor's degree ☐

Master's degree ☐

PhD ☐

Other (*specify*) ☐

## Part II: Effects of secession on regional stability

Please tick the most suitable response

|   | Statement   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Secession is rarely the ultimate panacea to ethnic conflicts. In most cases, it results to new forms of violence in the seceded states.                                 |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2 | A secessionist movement is more likely to secede if it receives military, political and financial support from the regional states.                                     |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3 | The conflicting interests of regional states in a secession process not only lengthen the secession bid, but also compromise the stability of the post secession state. |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4 | Secession in one territory has a ripple effect on political stability of the neighboring countries  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 5 | Secession forms web-like conflict patterns in the regions in which they have occurred.  |                |       |         |          |                   |

## Part III: Implications of secession on South Sudan nation building

Please tick the most suitable response

|   | Statement   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | South Sudan secession focused much more on state-building, and less on nation-building.   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2 | The fragile state of South Sudan can be attributed to the type of institutions and structures of governance that it inherited from the mother territory.  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3 | The government of South Sudan inherited a fragmented region which compromised its governance capabilities.  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4 | The South Sudan's embryonic institutions developed into instruments of patronage as they resulted in bloated and dysfunctional civil and military services that resulted in high salaries that takes a huge chunk of the national budget. |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 5 | The political and military organization of a secessionist movement determines the level of stability that it will achieve in the post-independence state.   |                |       |         |          |                   |

Part IV: The role of the SPLM/A and its international partners in South Sudan nation building

Please tick the most suitable response

|   | Statement  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | The SPLA until today remains the enforcer of law and order as well as the instigator of violence against the civilian population.  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2 | The major parallel problem within the SPLM/SPLA stems from the splits that took place 1990s, and in which it never completely recovered from.  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3 | There are evidently rich consequences of humanitarian aid on the economic growth and development of developing countries. The excessive aid that South Sudan received from the international community paralyzed the local institutions resulting to fragility of the state. |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4 | The independence of South Sudan came to existence because of international diplomacy, and the secession process was externally driven, and less dependent on the local support.  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 5 | The historical divisions within the SPLM/A have played an enormous role in the recent 2013-2020 conflict in the country.   |                |       |         |          |                   |

### Appendix C: Interview Guide

I want to thank you for finding the time to be part of this interview. My name is Martin Wang. I would like to talk to you about your views on the implications of South Sudan's secession on its nation-building and regional stability. The interview should take less than an hour. I will be taking notes during the session, but I can't possibly write fast enough to capture all your comments, so I will also be taping the session for comprehensive analysis, if that's okay with you. Please be assured that all your responses will be kept confidential and only utilized for the purposes of this study. This means your identity as the respondent will be concealed.

Kindly, do you have any questions about what I have just explained? Do you agree to participate in the discussion? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Questions:

1. What would you say is the biggest challenge facing nation-building today in South Sudan?
2. In your view, what are some of the effects of South Sudan's secession on the regional states? Do you have any particular significant events that you may cite?
3. It is axiomatic that South Sudan today struggles with a lot of challenges that include hyper-inflation, poverty, inter-tribal conflicts et cetera. It is also struggling to transition from rebel-like structures of governance who are used to issuing commands and instructions to a government that is supposedly held accountable for its civilian population. How do you respond to this statement?

4. Do you think South Sudan suffers from chronic shortage of human and technocratic capacity?
5. South Sudan gained her independence way before the completion of the state formation process. What do you think of this statement?
6. Do you think the massive political and financial support that the SPLM/A received from the international community right at the inception of the liberation struggle somehow denied them the opportunity to invest and mobilize the local resources to strengthen its capacity for self-sufficiency?
7. The meddling of the military in the political affairs of the country is partly responsible for the skirmishes that are taking place in different regions of the country today. What is your view on this statement?
8. Other possible solutions to nation-building in South Sudan could include engaging in national based negotiations, creating an all-inclusive government, and enhance the capacities of security. What do you think of this statement?
9. Since the mid-1980s, liberation movements have seized power in Uganda, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia. The success of liberation movements that seized power in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda in the East and Horn of Africa, was pegged on their abilities to implement their revolutionary political ideologies, often concocted prior to taking control of the state. Do you think the SPLM/A followed this suit?
10. Is there anything more you would like to add?

## Appendix D: Introduction Letter from Daystar University



Tuesday, March 30, 2021

The Director General  
National Commission for Science,  
Technology and Innovation  
P.O. Box 30623 – 00100  
NAIROBI – KENYA



Dear Sir/ Madam

RE: MARTIN WANG (19-1563)

The above named is a MA student in the Department of Peace and International Studies at Daystar University. He has successfully defended his thesis proposal entitled **“IMPLICATIONS OF SECESSION ON REGIONAL STABILITY AND NATION-BUILDING OF SECEDED STATES: THE CASE STUDY OF SOUTH SUDAN.”** I would be grateful if you could grant him a research license to enable him undertake his field research.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs. Sylvia Wakene Muriuki  
HoD, Department of Peace and International Studies



## Appendix E: Ethical Clearance



Daystar University Ethics Review Board

**Note to the reviewer:** *Please type in your assessment of the proposal*

**Proposal topic:** Implications of Secession on Regional Stability and Nation-Building of Seceded States: The Case Study of South Sudan

**Student Name and no:** Martin Wang (19-1563)

**Date Received:** 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

**A. Scientific design and conduct of the study.**

- i. The problem statement needs to be seen early enough in the proposal. This gives a motivation to the reader.
- ii. In the objectives, let us have one that deliberately aims at coming up with a model that seceded states can follow to avoid the challenges identified.
- iii. The design is okay. In determining the sample size there is some work that needs to be done. It's unclear how the sample size is arrived at.
- iv. The questions in the questionnaire need to be disaggregated so that an answer is identified to a unique question.

**B. Recruitment of research participants.**

Elaborate on how you will target to get senior people. These are the participants who have the understanding of how the issue can be fixed.

**C. Care and protection of research participants.**

Most is spelt out but there is need to organize the information well. See my comment on the proposal.

1 | Page 2



Daystar University Ethics Review Board

**D. Overall verdict<sup>1</sup> :**

Revise, to the satisfaction of the Supervisors and then proceed to the next stage.

**E. Reviewed Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021



8<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

Department of Research and Graduate Studies,  
Daystar University,  
Valley Road Campus.  
P.O. BOX 44400-00100

Subject: Interview Confirmation

Reference to the above-mentioned subject, this is to confirm that your student, **Martin Wang**, admission number; **19-1563**, conducted a research interview in our organization on the topic: **Implications of secession on regional stability and nation building of seceded states. A case study of South Sudan**. The interview was conducted on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 in our offices located in Tongpiny, Juba, South Sudan between Martin Wang and our Executive Director, Mr. Elijah Luke (undersigned).



Executive Director,  
Africa Child Care Nation (ACCN).  
info@accnsouthsudan.org.

## Appendix F: Map of South Sudan and the Eastern Africa Region



## Appendix G: Plagiarism Report

| Martin Wang Thesis - 2nd Nov. 2021 |   |              |                |
|------------------------------------|---|--------------|----------------|
| ORIGINALITY REPORT                 |   |              |                |
| 13%                                | 11%   | 3%           | 4%             |
| SIMILARITY INDEX                   | INTERNET SOURCES  | PUBLICATIONS | STUDENT PAPERS |
| PRIMARY SOURCES                    |   |              |                |
| 1                                  | <a href="http://www.seer.ufrgs.br">www.seer.ufrgs.br</a><br>Internet Source   | 1%           |                |
| 2                                  | <a href="http://pdfs.semanticscholar.org">pdfs.semanticscholar.org</a><br>Internet Source   | 1%           |                |
| 3                                  | <a href="http://ke.boell.org">ke.boell.org</a><br>Internet Source   | 1%           |                |
| 4                                  | Submitted to Daystar University<br>Student Paper  | <1%          |                |
| 5                                  | <a href="http://rc.library.uta.edu">rc.library.uta.edu</a><br>Internet Source   | <1%          |                |
| 6                                  | Alex Cyril Ekeke, Nombulelo Lubisi. "Secession in Africa: An African Union dilemma", African Security Review, 2020<br>Publication | <1%          |                |
| 7                                  | <a href="http://www.ccoportal.org">www.ccoportal.org</a><br>Internet Source   | <1%          |                |
| 8                                  | <a href="http://www.ispionline.it">www.ispionline.it</a><br>Internet Source   | <1%          |                |
|                                    | <a href="http://ecommons.usask.ca">ecommons.usask.ca</a>  |              |                |