2017

The Effects that War Has on Children and Child Soldiers

Breanna V. Kingsley

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The Effects that War Has on Children and Child Soldiers

Abstract
The focus of this research is to help explain the effects that war has on children and child soldiers. The effects being researched include those of psychological, physical, emotional, economical, and educational effects. The type of war being analyzed in this research is civil war with case studies of countries such as the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Somalia, South Sudan, and the Iraqi war. These cases are among the most violent, oppressive, cases involving children and/or child soldiers. The ultimate goal of this research is to discover and better understand what these children experience and how that will affect them and continue to affect them as they grow older. The way this research paper is organized as such that is consistent with the table of contents ending with a list of references.

Degree Type
Open Access Senior Honors Thesis

Department
Political Science

Keywords
Civil War, Psychological, Education, Economical, Health

Subject Categories
Political Science

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THE EFFECTS THAT WAR HAS ON CHILDREN AND CHILD SOLDIERS

By

Breanna V. Kingsley

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the

Eastern Michigan University

Honors College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation

with Honors in Political Science

Approved at Ypsilanti, Michigan, on this date April 6, 2017
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The focus of this research is to help explain the effects that war has on children and child soldiers. The effects being researched include those of psychological, physical, emotional, economical, and educational effects. The type of war being analyzed in this research is civil war with case studies of countries such as the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Somalia, South Sudan, and the Iraqi war. These cases are among the most violent, oppressive, cases involving children and/or child soldiers. The ultimate goal of this research is to discover and better understand what these children experience and how that will affect them and continue to affect them as they grow older. The way this research paper is organized as such that is consistent with the table of contents ending with a list of references.

Introduction

It is known that children are among the most vulnerable populations when exposed to conflict (along with women), however what occurs even after the war has ended will continue to have lasting effects on these children. It is near impossible for children to be able to leave a conflict – risen area due to their lack of mobility and lack of education. Children who live in poverty-struck areas are also among the most vulnerable and more likely to be taken and converted into child soldiers. It is the unfortunate truth that children are often used as political tools in order for the opposition to gain control and power in an area. Mazower finds that the effects of war can be lasting, however the actual impact of the war is “conditioned by the way in which they [children] interpret and understand their suffering”. This suggests that although children who have lived through civil wars have experienced traumatic events, if they do not necessarily understand what had happened and they cannot connect the war with suffering, they in turn may grow up
“normal” and enjoy life without long-term psychological effects (Mazower, 1996).

Appendix I shows areas where child soldiers have existed or may continue to exist from UNICEF; there are other countries that have violations against children still happening however this could mean other forms such as child labor, etc.

If children are involved in a war, the complications suffered infringe deeply on the child’s development physically, mentally, and emotionally. Not only have the number of wars increased in years passed, but the severity has increased alarmingly. Militarization has taken control of conflicts making it extremely difficult for women and children to escape; if they are caught while attempting to flee the consequences are grave. Wars have become more involved with civilians as well causing schools and hospitals to be targets of destruction. It is apparent that children may be killed while simply playing outside with friends or killed during the night by raids and such. While living in war zones these children need to be alert at all times of their surroundings or they may be killed, captured, or injured. It is possible to help curve these effects by intervention from Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO’s), Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO’s), emergency medical assistance, or other individual government assistance. However all three of these possibly entities are limited in their ability to a) respond and b) actually take due to the implications of crossing borders into war zones (Plunkett, 1996).
The Correlates of War Project provide some definitions and distinctions on types of war and how they can be categorized. First, it is important to note the difference between International wars and civil wars; international wars are divided into two subcategories known as inter-state and extra-systemic wars (Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman, [2010]). Inter-state wars can be defined as “those in which a territorial state that qualifies as a member of the interstate system is engaged in a war with another system member”; this means involvement from another state (Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman, [2010]). Extra-systemic wars can be defined as “those in which the interstate system member engaged in a war with a political entity that was not a system member”; this could mean an entity that is not a recognized state (Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman, [2010]). To turn to civil wars, or Intra-State wars, they can be defined as “any armed conflict that involved; (1) military action internal to the metropole of the state system member; (2) the active participation of the national government; (3) effective resistance by both sides; and (4) a total of at least 1,000 battle-deaths during each year of the war” (Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman, [2010]).

The article by Albertyn provides information based on the continent of Africa and due to the high number of conflicts the continent as a whole has seen, it provides us with narrowly tailored ideas about the effects that war can have on children (as well as child soldiers). So far this article also provides statistics on these children with an “estimated

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1 Metropole is “the core of the system member itself” (Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman, [2010]).
international total of 2 million children already killed in battle, 6 million left disabled, 12 million homeless, 1 million orphaned or separated from their families and 10 million children suffering from psychological trauma as a result of their exposure to armed conflict”. These numbers are not small and they represent the fear that these children have to live through, knowing they could be killed or separated from their parents/families for life. The conflicts in Africa have left certain regions unstable and unable to recover in turn leading to more conflicts to arise. Many of these conflicts often began due to poor economics, negative gross domestic product growth, as well as the lack of basic social needs among the populations. The children involved in these conflicts may also experience poverty and hunger, abduction (leading to forced child soldiers), as well as health complications. In the year of 2001, the continent of Africa was estimated to have anywhere from 120,000 – 200,000 child soldiers ranging from 5-16 years of age and the abductors use scare tactics to invoke fear into the children so that they will comply with orders. (Appendix 11 provides the locations of child soldiers in Africa, as of 2014, from the UN report on children in armed conflict – all areas highlighted have or have had child soldiers in armed conflicts).

Child soldiers are first trained to spy and perform carries of weapons, and later forced to kill. While trained these children are exposed to abuse and violence again in order to invoke the fear to obey their leaders. Child soldiers may also be forced to take pain killers and drink alcohol to enhance their ability to fight or disable a landmine. Young girls can be abducted, but are not forced into combat but rather forced into prostitution which increases the chances of HIV/AIDS as well as other infections. All of this becomes normal to these children who are exposed to these situations and they see no
harm in what is being done. The United Nations has attempted to ban the use of children under the age of 18 in military conflicts, however unfortunately children as young as 5 years old may be exploited. As a repercussion of these conflicts the issue of growing Internally Displaced Persons (IDP’s) and refugees has become greatly increased; the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees has defined refugees as “someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence” and an IDP as “a person who has been forced to flee his or her home for the same reason as a refugee, but remains in his or her own country and has not crossed an international border” (unfortunately IDP’s are not protected under international law like refugees are).

A child’s health is compromised during conflicts causing mortality, infections, war-related injuries, malnutrition, and psychological effects. Children may be killed in action or die from illness and/or starvation. Many can experience infections such as cholera, measles, meningitis, HIV/AIDS, or malaria. War-related injuries may include those from bullets or shrapnel, burns, malformed limbs, or possible amputation. In Africa, landmines account for more than 12,000 deaths each year and even after the war has ended landmines may still be found to cause the death toll to continue to rise. During conflict access to food becomes scarce due to the militarization of the economy leading to malnutrition in children (and women especially) which leads to malnutrition and ultimately death. The psychological impacts on children can range from anxiety, PTSD, depression, insomnia, irritability, sleeping disorders, nightmares, aggression, and the inability to concentrate. The psychological effects end up being lasting and continue way after the war has ended; additional treatment is also needed long after the war is over (Albertyn, 2003).
In the article written by Moynagh, she notes the importance of the correlation between human rights and the idea of the child soldier, and restoring the rights of the child that were previously taken away. She provides an insight to the humanitarian aspect of the side of the child soldier that may otherwise be overlooked. It is difficult to differentiate between the “child” and the “soldier”; many people may look at a child soldier and not think that their human rights were abolished (Moynagh, 2011). Child soldiers are seen as the epitome of violence, without the need for humanitarian intervention and without viewing the child as a victim, but rather the perpetrator (Moynagh, 2011). Children are protected under international law, under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Criminal Court (ICC) forbids the use of children under 18 in the military. So it is important to note that these children are being stripped of their rights under international law; their rights to be children, and not be forced in labor (military or sexual) (Moynagh, 2011). Some children join groups voluntarily, however after conflict it is very difficult to reintegrate them back into civilian life. These children may feel safer holding a rifle than they do staying at home, which can cause them to find a party to the conflict and join (Moynagh, 2011). Moynagh also states that “The child soldier, in other words, is a figure for a crisis in human futurity”, meaning that the idea of the child soldier in and of itself is the figure of the crisis of humanity’s future endeavors. There are two different ways of looking at these children: (1) the child as a soldier and (2) the child as a human (Moynagh, 2011).
Theory with Hypothesis

My theory is essentially that children and child soldiers who live in war zones of internal conflicts will have lasting effects emotionally, physically, and psychologically even after the conflict has ended. The conflict can also cause a stunt of development (again physically and mentally) in the child as well as the inability to grow economically due to the effects from the conflict. My hypothesis is that civil wars are directly correlated with long-term effects on children and child soldiers. I also think that when there is a lack of government, meaning almost no functioning government, the effects will intensify. The experiences that children leave with after the war is over will continue to haunt them and cause them pain. Although some may determine it is up to the child to have a “normal” life, I think a child may be unable to know what a “normal” life is in the first place thus leading them to do what they know and what they have learned from their childhood; fight, kill, starve, and fend for themselves – even if they may have lived a “normal” life before the war began (especially if they are separated from their families). War has too many implications and is a very difficult thing for children to understand, thus leaving long-term effects on these children.

Research Design

The research conducted is based on a case study approach due to the inability to access further resources. With more resources this research could have been conducted through thorough interviews with children of who were previously child soldiers or other research done in the countries being studied. If I were able to travel to these countries I

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2 In this context “normal” is defined as “living free of excessive discomfort”.

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could get in depth research with a hands-on experience, however since that is not a possibility case studies are the best way to conduct this research. Crowe et al. explain the case study approach as research “used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context”. Case studies can be useful when you need a real in-depth analysis of an event (Crowe et al., 2011). This research approach provides a naturalistic insight on a specific issue with a collective overview of multiple cases to offer a comparison (Crowe et al., 2011).

Case Study: The Syrian Arab Republic

My first case study is the civil war that has been going since circa 2011 in the Syrian Arab Republic. There are many parties to this war including the Bashar al-Assad regime, the Free Syrian Army (opposition to the Assad regime), the Islamic State and the Nusrah front (jihadist groups), the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (from the area of Turkey where the Kurdish population resides), with assistance to the Syrian Government from Russia as well (Sary, 2015). The war began after the eruption of the movement known as the “Arab Spring” in 2011 and has been going on since. 13.5 million people are in need of humanitarian aid, there are 4.8 million refugees, and 6.1 million are Internally Displaced Persons – half of which are children (World Vision, 2016). Most refugees have fled to neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq for example and 10% have made it to Europe (World Vision, 2016). As the crisis continues the death toll has been rising as well with now more than 400,000 killed since the start of the war in 2011 (World Vision, 2016). Many schools have been destroyed or occupied by displaced families, which has caused a halt in education for the Syrian children (Omer, 2015). Books, transportation, and tuition costs are hardly affordable for many Syrian families as
well; many children were forced out of school to help provide for their families (Omer, 2015). The refugee crisis in Syria has been one of the worst and conditions in the refugee camps are not very comfortable (Omer, 2015). It is extremely difficult for Syrian families to often even afford rent or food; putting a pressure on children to be able to help (Omer, 2015).

The United Nations has reported roughly 362 cases of children used and/or recruited as child soldiers in the war as of April, 2016 (“Syrian Arab Republic Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.”, 2016). Out of the 362 cases, 274 cases were recruited from ISIL/ISIS, 62 cases were from the Free Syrian Army, 11 cases were from Liwa’ al Tawhid, 5 cases were from popular committees, 4 cases were from the Kurdish People’s Protection Units, 3 cases were from Ahrar al-Sham, 2 cases were from the Nusrah front, and 1 case was from the Army of Islam (“Syrian Arab Republic Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.”, 2016) – these are only of the reported cases, there are many cases that have gone unreported. Over half of the children involved were under the age of 15 with children as young as 7 and possibly held captive, bribed to join, or tortured “Syrian Arab Republic Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.”, 2016). Groups such as ISIL/ISIS, government forces including the National Defence Forces and the Shabbiha militia have been reported to commit acts of sexual violence and/or commit rape of children (“Syrian Arab Republic Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.”, 2016). As the war continues Syrian children can act out aggressively and become violent due to the hostilities they have witnessed (Thompson,
In Syria, there is hardly any available access to health care services and as of 2015; over 1,000,000 children are living under siege or in areas that are very difficult to get to (Devakumar, 2015). Children in Syria can experience higher rates of trauma after the war is over and over 2,000,000 million are said to be malnourished (as of 2013) (Devakumar, 2015). The delay of education of the children in Syria is “likely to delay post-conflict recovery” and can cost more than 5% of the country’s GDP (Devakumar, 2015). If you turn to Appendix III, you can see a map of Syria that shows the locations of the different groups inside borders (derived from Political Geography Now, August of 2014).

The Syrian war may be categorized as a civil war, following the typology by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has (national) government participation, (3) resistance on both sides, and (4) 400,000+ deaths; thus it may be classified as a civil war.

**Case Study: Sri Lanka**

The Sri Lankan civil war began in 1983 with growing tensions between the Buddhist Sinhalese (82% of population) and the Hindu Tamil (9% of population) (Sri Lanka: Conflict Profile, 2013). The war ended in 2009, however ethnic tensions remain between the groups currently (Sri Lanka: Conflict Profile, 2013). The main parties to the conflict were the government, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), the People’s Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), and the Janathā Vimukthi Peramuṇa (JVP) – a Marxist/Nationalist political party (Sri Lanka: Conflict Profile, 2013).
Conflict Profile, 2013). Peace talks and ceasefires were attempted but never succeeded until May of 2009 after the LTTE was defeated (Sri Lanka: Conflict Profile, 2013). Children were often recruited by the LTTE and other government opposition groups; if they escaped they were eventually captured and/or interrogated (“Child Soldiers Global Report 2001 – Sri Lanka.”, 2001). The captured children are interrogated by the government for acts of terrorism and under the Prevention of Terrorism Act children 16-18 can be charged (“Child Soldiers Global Report 2001 – Sri Lanka.”, 2001). The youngest reported age of the use of child soldiers is 9 years old and 75% of the LTTE fighters were children (“Child Soldiers Global Report 2001 – Sri Lanka.”, 2001).

Children are often recruited for wars for two main reasons, (1) Recruitment and maintaining of these children is cost effective and (2) Coaching children to become child soldiers is an easy task (Balasuriya, 2013). These children “eat less, wear less, and are paid less” and children are “highly vulnerable to manipulation” (Balasuriya, 2013). The use of children in military action can come in many forms; child soldiers, spies/messengers/suicide bombers, or human shields/propaganda (Balasuriya, 2013). The major child soldier recruitment group during the Sri Lanka Civil War was the LTTE with fighters killed in action being 40% children (Balasuriya, 2013). The LTTE trained these children to be fearless of death, be aggressive, vengeful, all to gain “Suthanthiram” or independence (Balasuriya, 2013). The thoughts put inside these children’s minds were they must sacrifice their life for independence through promoting heroism (Balasuriya, 2013). Child soldiers were placed into rigorous training programs lasting months and “brainwashing” children by showing them war paraphernalia (Balasuriya, 2013). The LTTE continuously neglected international efforts to end child soldiering while
continuing to violate human rights (Balasuriya, 2013). However, the defeat of the LTTE led to the ultimate halt of the recruitment of child soldiers (Balasuriya, 2013). After the war some children were able to seek rehabilitation and protection, whereas others were not leading them to develop disorders such as PTSD and depression (Balasuriya, 2013).

The Sri Lankan war may be categorized as a civil war, following the typology by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has (national) government participation, (3) resistance on both sides, and (4) 80,000+ deaths; thus it may be classified as a civil war.

Case Study: Somalia

Somalia is located in the horn of Africa next to Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia; during the period of 1991-2000 there was no functioning government in Somalia and with the overthrow of the regime of Siad Barre in 1991, this led to the formation of war, creating warlords and opposition groups that took over the country ("Somalia Country Profile", 2017). The parties to the Somali Civil War included: the Somali National Movement (SNM), the United Somali Congress (USC), Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA), with divisions between the northern “Republic of Somaliland” and the “Puntland State of Somalia” (Healy and Bradbury, 2015). Since the start of the Somali Civil War, numbers of recruited child soldiers have been steadily increasing, as well as other opposition groups. It was reported by the Secretary-General that since 2014, there were 903 documented cases of the recruitment of child soldiers, “with 60 per cent of the cases (555) attributed to Al-Shabaab”… “The Somali National Army also recruited a high number of children (218), who were used for various tasks, such as manning checkpoints.
Recruitment was also attributed to clan militias (68), Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama’a (40) and Galmudug forces (17)” (“Somalia Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.”, 2015). With more than 60% of Somali children living in poverty, 40% malnourished, and the country in a state of violence, the children of Somalia are at the most at-risk of being recruited as child soldiers (“Children of Somalia”, 2011). The current humanitarian crisis in Somalia has led to the increase of child soldiers due to a lack of resources, motivation, and obedience (“Children of Somalia”, 2011). If you look at Appendix IV, UNICEF has provided a graph on the amount of aid needed in Somalia, as of 2012 in US dollars. Most of the assistance needed is nutrition, and child protection is a major requirement as well.

The Somali war may be categorized as a civil war, following the typology by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has (national) government participation, (3) resistance on both sides, and (4) 500,000+ deaths; thus it may be classified as a civil war.

Case Study: South Sudan

South Sudan gained its independence from the Republic of Sudan in 2011; soon after, violence erupted (“Global Conflict Tracker.”, 2017). December 2013 war began due to violence between guard soldiers of the president, causing ethnic tensions (“Global Conflict Tracker.”, 2017). The quarrel between Salva Kiir (president and part of the Danka ethnic group) and Riek Machar (vice president and part of the Nuer ethnic group) divided the two largest ethnic groups of South Sudan (“Global Conflict Tracker.”, 2017). Since the eruption of violence, the two ethnic groups have committed rape and sexual
violence, recruited child soldiers (Sudan People’s Liberation Movement – a reform party), and even destroyed property (“Global Conflict Tracker.”, 2017). The violence has caused the largest food crisis the worst in the world (as stated by the UN Security Council), over 50,000 people have died in a matter of 4 years, and there are over 1.6 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (“Global Conflict Tracker.”, 2017). South Sudan has the third largest refugee crisis, right after Syria and Afghanistan (“Global Conflict Tracker.”, 2017). Many people have fled to other countries in Africa such as Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya because of the humanitarian crisis present in South Sudan (“Global Conflict Tracker.”, 2017). Appendix V shows the divide amongst the ethnic groups in South Sudan, as provided by Stratfor (2013).

Commanders in the South Sudanese conflict have purposely used children in war in contrast to South Sudan’s laws (“South Sudan: Terrifying Lives of Child Soldiers.”, 2016). It is estimated by UNICEF that roughly 15,000-16,000 children have been used in conflict since the start of the war in 2013 (“South Sudan: Terrifying Lives of Child Soldiers.”, 2016). If children refused to join the group, then they were beaten or tortured (“South Sudan: Terrifying Lives of Child Soldiers.”, 2016). Although so many children have been forced into soldiering, no commander has ever faced any sort of charges or punishment of human rights violations (“South Sudan: Terrifying Lives of Child Soldiers.”, 2016). South Sudan created the 2008 Child Act, stating children under the ages of 18 cannot be used as parties to a conflict, and the invading of schools for military purposes has put a halt on children’s education (“South Sudan: Terrifying Lives of Child Soldiers.”, 2016). Due to the ethnic-based violence in South Sudan, it is likely that these
child soldiers will experience long-term effects ("South Sudan: Terrifying Lives of Child Soldiers.", 2016).

The Sudanese war may be categorized as a civil war, following the typology by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has (national) government participation, (3) resistance on both sides, and (4) 10,000+ deaths; thus it may be classified as a civil war.

**Case Study: The Democratic Republic of the Congo**

The Democratic Republic of the Congo – formerly known as Zaire (from now on referred to as the DRC) has had a long history of war and violence, with the first civil war outbreak in 1994, followed by the second civil war outbreak in 1998 which have both since led to the violence in the DRC as of today (Young, 2017). Due to the vast amounts of resources such as diamonds, tin, and copper, the DRC has become a battleground for resources ("Child Soldiers in DRC.", 2017). The inherent violence in the DRC has led to more than 5.5 million people dead, malnutrition, diseases such as malaria, and mass rape (Young, 2017). The first civil war erupted after the Rwandan genocide due to the mass inflow of refugees to the DRC; this caused much instability (Young, 2017). The second civil war occurred due to the Congolese forces pushing Rwandans out of the DRC, causing an overthrow of the government by the Ugandan and Rwandan forces (Young, 2017). The war "formally" ended in 2003, although conflict still remains in the DRC (Young, 2017). The wars have seen multiple opposition parties and alliances, many of which have been involved in the recruitment of child soldiers. The conflicts have also

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3 Officially ended
caused ethnic tensions, disruption of humanitarian aid, exploitation of women and children, and immense corruption of the DRC government (Young, 2017). Appendix VI is a map of the DRC during the times of the Second civil war including some of the groups involved and where they were located/what areas of the DRC they controlled during 2001-2003, derived from Thompsell’s article “The Second Congo War: Its Origins and Initial Stages.”, 2017.

Since the times of the civil wars to now children have been forced into child soldiering by the many groups involved (“Child Soldiers in DRC.”, 2017). One out of ten children are thought to be child soldiers in the DRC that is approximately 30,000 child soldiers (“Child Soldiers in DRC.”, 2017). Roughly 15-30% of all new recruits are children (or under 18 years of age), and females are frequently used as sexual slaves by the commanders (“Child Soldiers in DRC.”, 2017). It is not uncommon that many of these children did not return to their families after the wars either because their families were killed or because their families did not welcome them back (“Child Soldiers in DRC.”, 2017). Children were recruited from refugee camps in Rwanda and child soldiers exist(ed) in the DRC provinces of Equateur, Ituri, Katanga, North and South Kivu, and Maniema (Child Soldiers International, 2008). Child recruitment practiced by the previous Congolese army halted in 2003, however this did not end child recruitment altogether and many other parties to the conflict continued their recruitment (Child Soldiers International, 2008). There were many efforts to demobilize child soldiers, however many children escaped or were forcibly re-recruited (Child Soldiers International, 2008). Child soldiers were also “arrested, detained, and tried in military courts for military offences and other crimes allegedly committed while they were in
armed forces or groups” (Child Soldiers International, 2008). Since 2003, of these military trials it is estimated that 12 children were sentenced to death and many were detained (Child Soldiers International, 2008).

It is not uncommon that children of the DRC enlist into the armies on a voluntary basis to receive a monetary salary of about $100 US dollars per month (Kim, 2006). Estimates of child soldier deaths in the DRC are difficult to pinpoint, however they currently remain in the thousands (Kim, 2006). Many child soldiers have undergone the DDR process, or disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration back into society (Kim, 2006). The hardest part for child soldiers is the reintegration process due to their experiences as soldiers – the killings, maiming, rapes, etc. (Kim, 2006). Females are the most vulnerable during the reintegration process because they are often seen only as “wives” or “child carriers”; they may also be deemed unfit for marriage because they may have HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases (Kim, 2006).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo war may be categorized as a civil war, following the typology by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has (national) government participation, (3) resistance on both sides, and (4) 5,800,000+ deaths; thus it may be classified as a civil war.

Case Study: Iraq

The Iraqi war began after the al-Qaida linked group the Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL) took over the city of Fallujah and later took over neighborhoods in the province of al-Anbar (Pike, 2016). As violence escalated the Islamic State took over Mosul and neared

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4 Pregnant or able to carry children
within 55 miles of Baghdad causing nearly 200,000 people to flee Iraq (Pike, 2016).

Many Iraqi government supporting militias have been the ones reported to have been recruiting child soldiers, however there are other groups as well. ("Iraq: Militias Recruiting Children.", 2016). Aside from government forces, opposition forces such as ISIS have also been recruiting and deploying child soldiers – which I also discussed in my case study of the Syrian Arab Republic (refer to pages 8-9) ("Iraq: Militias Recruiting Children.", 2016). There are few parties to this conflict, including Kurdish forces (of the Kurdistan region of Turkey), ISIS/ISIL, and Iraqi government forces – Appendix VII is a map of the locations of the different parties derived from Rizten’s article, “Iraq war map: Who controls what” (2017). Some children are captured and forced into military service, and some volunteer themselves ("Iraq: Militias Recruiting Children.", 2016). ISIS has used the term “cubs of the Islamic State” to refer to the children recruited – which is done often through brainwashing due to the lack of knowledge and development children have (Vinogard et al., 2014). It is believed that ISIS has its own form of education (known has the principles of jihad), grooming children to be soldiers and kill without feeling anything (Vinogard et al., 2014). Once the children enter into the training camps they undergo a complete transformation and upon completion of camp the “cubs” are then chosen and sent to fight (Vinogard et al., 2014). There is an ISIS training camp/recruitment area in the Iraqi city of Mosul, where children as young as 12 have been seen in action (Vinogard et al., 2014). Ultimately, the fight in Iraq is the Iraqi forces attempting to gain back control of the land that is now occupied by either ISIS or the Kurdish population.

\[\text{5} \quad \text{Name given to children in ISIS training camps before they are sent out to combat}\]
The Iraqi war may be categorized as a civil war, following the typology by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has (national) government participation, (3) resistance on both sides, and (4) 75,000+ deaths; thus it may be classified as a civil war.

**Case Study: Afghanistan**

Afghanistan is a country that unfortunately has dealt with conflict since the Soviet Union invasion in 1979, then the overthrow of the government in 1989, leading to an internal conflict of the Afghan population (Child Soldiers International, 2001). The Taliban was formed in 1994 and is a conservative Sunni Pushtun group that practices Sharia law, and that took control of Kabul and now has control of roughly 90% of the territory of Afghanistan in autonomous zones (Child Soldiers International, 2001). There are also other groups occupying Afghanistan such as the Haqqani network, Hezb-i-Islami and Jamat Sunat al-Dawa Salafia (Stowe, “Afghanistan”). The Taliban chose to “step forward” to “cleanse Afghanistan of the violence, murder, and lawlessness” (Liakhovsky, 2000). Those fighting against the Taliban include the groups of the “Northern Alliance” or the “United Front” and it supports the principles of the government (Child Soldiers International, 2001). Appendix VIII is a map of the different ethnicities in Afghanistan (circa the Afghan civil war), with the Pushtun ethnicity again being mainly Taliban occupied area, derived from Chellaney’s article “Afghanistan’s Partition Might Be Unpreventable” from 2013.

Throughout the 20+ year conflict children have been heavily involved on both sides of the war. Since 1979 after the invasion by the Soviet Union, children were forced
to join in opposition forces to push the USSR out of Afghanistan and soon after they were forced to join the many Afghan factions that exist(ed) (Child Soldiers International, 2001). Compulsory recruitment is a heavy factor in the militarization of the Taliban with children joining the ranks at a steady and alarming rate (Child Soldiers International, 2001). In 2015 alone, the recruitment and use of children in combat grew double the number of 2014 in Afghanistan (Stowe, “Afghanistan”). It is not uncommon for children to be detained for their “alleged association with terrorist groups6” by the Afghan government (Stowe, “Afghanistan”).

The humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan does no help the well-being of the country; millions are living in refuge or are internally displaced and 40% of the population lives in areas with no access to health care (Stowe, “Afghanistan”). 40% of children in Afghanistan have no access to any kind of education, and over half of the schools available have no building due to the militarization of schools by parties to the conflict (Stowe, “Afghanistan”). Sexual violence among women and children is immense and conditions continue to worsen with 70-80% of all marriages of girls being forced marriages and 57% can be classified as “child marriages”7 (Stowe, “Afghanistan”).

The Afghanistan war may be categorized as a civil war, following the typology by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has (national) government participation, (3) resistance on both sides, and (4) 400,000+ deaths; thus it may be classified as a civil war.

6 Terrorist Groups — non-state actors with compromising interests of the home country
7 Any marriage under 16 years old — United Nations Development Fund for Women

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Case Study: Colombia

Colombia is a country that has seen the effects of war for many years. The larger issue for Colombia is the fact that the government is unable to take control over areas of the nation which are under control by opposition forces. The current conflict dates back to the mid-1960s, although conflict can date back to the country's independence of 1810 ("Colombia: Conflict Profile.", 2009). After the assassination of the leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán Ayala (1948), conflict between Liberals and Conservatives skyrocketed, causing an era known as "La Violencia" (1948-1958). La Violencia eventually ended through a formal agreement between sides, however tensions continued to grow after the Cuban Revolution of 1959 and many guerrilla groups were formed (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the National Liberation Army (ELN)) ("Colombia: Conflict Profile.", 2009). Aside from guerrilla groups, groups known as "paramilitary" groups were formed (such as United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia [AUC]) to protect drug lords, businessmen, etc. from being captured by the guerrilla forces ("Colombia: Conflict Profile.", 2009). There have been many attempts at peace, but because Colombia has many mountainous regions many countryside areas still lack government. Appendix VIII is a map of the different locations of the groups involved in the Colombian war (derived from the People's March).

The guerrilla group FARC announced they will no longer recruit children under the ages of 17; however the recruitment of children (in all aspects) has been a long problem in the Colombian civil war (Florey, 2015). It has been reported by the

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8 Translates to "The Violence" in English
9 Paramilitary - pseudo military; not involved with country's military but organized and operates like a formal military
Colombian Ministry of Defence that 70% of the recruited children are males, and 30% are females; a majority of those children recruited came from homes that had domestic violence or other forms of violence (Florey, 2015). Often these children who are already exposed to violence seek other opportunities or a new “purpose” in life so they will voluntarily join these groups. However, a lot of children are still forced into the recruitment process (Florey, 2015).

The Colombian war can definitely be categorized as a civil war under the typological method by Sarkees, Meredith Reid and Frank Wayman (2010). It is (1) internal, (2) has the participation of the (national) government, (3) there is resistance on both sides, and (4) there are 220,000+ deaths from this war; thus it classifies as a civil war.

Conclusion

Often it is difficult to understand why children may become child soldiers; it could be for food, purpose, safety, or the little monetary salary they receive. However, it seems as though it is also difficult to differentiate the child soldier and the child as a human being. Child soldiers have their human rights taken away, and although they may partake voluntarily, they are still protected under international law. Civil wars are amongst the most brutal and long-lasting; the worst effect(s) come during and after the conflict has ended. The humanitarian crises that these conflicts cause are detrimental to the populations of a country, causing starvation, disease, injury, mental illness, and a never-forgetful image of the violence. The case studies in this research provided much insight into how exactly these wars infringe upon a population. It seems as though in
countries such as Colombia, Afghanistan, and Somalia, which have all had/have periods of no functioning government, the conflict is more destructive and causes a larger humanitarian crisis. More children may feel pressured to both comply and join groups or are forced because there is a lack of an existing government to intervene. It is difficult to have a functioning government in the first place when there are either one or more opposition groups invading the country and essentially overthrowing the government. The effects that the wars have on children are immense and can haunt children for the rest of their lives. It is extremely difficult for child soldiers to go through the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process (DDR) due to their experiences in combat; they are prevented from being able to live a "normal" life as a child, with their basic human rights.

I found that many civil wars often begin either due to ethnic tensions or sparks of conflict in neighboring countries. Ethnic tensions rise at a steady rate until eventually conflict breaks out and war is started. Conflicts in neighboring countries may intensify clashes and can cause conflict in the home country (such as the Arab Spring for example). All in all, my findings have supported my theory and hypotheses, however if I was able to do in-depth research in my countries of interest I would have been able to gather much more concise and detailed data. Is it possible to achieve global peace? I think so. However, it must start with containment of civil wars and internal conflicts due to their destructive capabilities.

To conclude, you may find a map of the peace index of the world in Appendix X, derived from the Institute for Economics & Peace (2016). The map includes the rankings of all countries from 1-163 (although 193 are recognized states under the UN), with 1
being the most peaceful to 163 being the least peaceful. The different colors indicate different levels of peace; red is the least amount of peace, and green is the most amount of peace. Appendix XI is a graph of the death tolls, refugees, and IDPs caused by the civil wars. The DRC has the largest death toll, and Syria has the most IDPs and refugees. Is there global peace in the near future?
APPENDIX I

CHILD SOLDIERS RECRUITMENT RISK

• VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN ONGOING
• SITUATION OF CONCERN

SOURCE: UNICEF
APPENDIX II

African countries where children were used in armed conflict (2014)

Source: 2015 UN report on children in armed conflict
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APPENDIX IV

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN NEEDS FOR 2012 (in US dollars)

- Nutrition: $141,989,000
- Health: $25,942,000
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: $21,436,000
- Child Protection: $12,475,000
- Education: $20,392,000
- Cash programme: $60,381,000
- Shelter: $4,785,000
- Cluster coordination: $1,734,000
- TOTAL: $289,134,000
APPENDIX V

SOUTH SUDAN'S MAIN ETHNIC GROUPS

- Dinka (11%)
- Nuer (5%)
- Azande (3%)
- Barl (3%)
- Shiluk/Anwak (3%)

Map showing the distribution of ethnic groups in South Sudan with color-coded regions.
APPENDIX VII

Iraq: Who controls what

Source: Institute for the Study of War, LiveUAMap
Updated: March 19, 2017
APPENDIX VIII

The ethnic breakdown of Afghanistan...

SOURCE: Lokal Profil / Creative Commons
APPENDIX VIII

Source: BBC online and AP
APPENDIX XI
References


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