

THE IMPACT OF IDENTITY ON THE SUCCESS OF PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS:
THE PAKISTANI PERSPECTIVE



Name: Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri

Registration No: 362256

Supervisor: Dr. Humaira Shafi

Program/Batch/Year: MS-PCS Fall-21

Department: Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Center for International Peace, and
Stability (CIPS), NUST

Year of Submission: 2023

DECLARATION

I, Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri, Registration No. 362256, a student of batch MS PCS-Fall 21, hereby declare that the thesis titled “The Impact of Identity on the Success of Peacekeeping Missions: The Pakistani Perspective?” has been submitted by me in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Peace and Conflict Studies and this thesis presents research carried out at the Center for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) H-12 Campus, Islamabad and aims to encourage discussion and comments. The observation and viewpoints expressed are the sole responsibility of the author. It does not necessarily represent the positions of CIPS, NUST, or its faculty.

Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri – 362256

Thesis Supervisor Signature: _____

Department: CIPS, NUST

Year of Submission: 2023

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

I, Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri, Registration no. 362256, hereby declare that the ideas and opinions presented in this research work are solely and completely my own. Where ideas and opinions from others have been taken, due references to the correct sources have been given. I understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled, and the degree revoked.

ABSTRACT

Modern peacekeepers face a host of challenges in the areas in which they are deployed, including often dealing with a non-cooperative host-population. However, if the peacekeepers and the host-population shared an identity characteristic (race, religion, language) would this translate to enhanced cooperation and more successful peacekeeping; this thesis aims to uncover this phenomenon and whether a link exists between identity and peacekeeping, including whether the UN should deploy troops based on this common identity criteria. Since the research was qualitative in nature, data was primarily collected through interviews and focus group discussions with veteran and undertraining peacekeepers. Social identity theory was used to conceptualize the identity dilemmas that peacekeepers would face in the field. After an extensive thematic analysis of the interviews, the thesis yielded the following results: a) A positive link exists between a shared identity (amongst peacekeepers and civilians) and success in peacekeeping missions b) Impartiality and timely provision of humanitarian assistance builds good reputation of a contingent and can enhance ‘local acceptance’ for the mission c) While peacekeepers should not be deployed based on identity, language training before deployment can vastly increase communication and cooperation with the local people as well as endorse impartiality. Hence, while the UN does not need to amend its deployment policies, language and cultural awareness training are crucial to improving success in peacekeeping missions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, and the Highest; without His blessings, this study would not have reached completion.

I would like to acknowledge everyone who helped make this thesis possible. First and foremost, my supervisor Dr. Humaira Shafi, for her consistent advice and support during the writing up of this thesis. Her patience and constant feedback have been inspirational and without her encouragement to fully explore every aspect of this study, the thesis would not have reached its final polished stage. I also want to express gratitude to the faculty of the Department of Peacekeeping, CIPS, NUST for helping arrange the required interviews with the Peacekeepers. Finally, I wish to convey my thanks to all the Peacekeepers who trusted me with their invaluable on-ground experience to complete this study.

DEDICATION

The dedication of this thesis belongs to several people: My parents, Waqas and Jawairia, for always being a source of strength, support, and encouragement; without their unwavering belief in my abilities, I would not have come this far in my academic journey. My siblings, particularly my older brother Wehaaj, whose own thesis journey was a constant source of motivation for my own. My dear husband, Omar, for always supporting and assisting me, and encouraging me to push my limits to achieve the most in my master's journey.

However, I would like to dedicate my work, first and foremost, to my beloved late Father-in-law, Ahsan Basir Sheikh, who served as a UN Consultant in more than 45 countries for almost 4 decades. This work is dedicated to him in recognition of his services to the United Nations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
CHAPTER-1: INTRODUCTION	1
RESEARCH PROPOSAL.....	1
Introduction:	1
Problem Statement:	2
Assumption:	3
Research Objectives:	4
Research Questions:	4
Literature Review:	4
Conceptual Framework:	8
Methodology:	9
Significance of the study:	11
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	13
CHAPTER-2: METHODOLOGY	23
Research Design:	23
Research Methods:	24
<i>Focus-Groups</i>	24
<i>Interviews</i>	25
Data Sampling:	26
Data Analysis:	26
Research Limitations:	27
Data Storage:	28
Ethical Clearance:	28
CHAPTER-3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	29
‘Identity’ as a Concept:.....	29
Social Identity Theory:	29
CHAPTER-4: FINDINGS.....	32
Introduction:	32
Results:	33

<i>Principles of Peacekeeping</i>	33
<i>Peacekeeping Identity, Training, and Professionalism</i>	37
<i>Obstacles in Peacekeeping Missions</i>	41
<i>UN Peacekeeping Troop Deployment</i>	43
<i>Identity and its Impact on Peacekeeping</i>	45
Discussion:	47
Limitations:	51
Recommendations:	51
Conclusion:	52
REFERENCES	54
APPENDICES	57
Appendix A:	57
<i>Focus Group Transcript 1</i>	57
<i>Focus Group Transcript 2</i>	73
<i>Interview Transcript 1</i>	84
<i>Interview Transcript 2</i>	95
<i>Interview Transcript 3</i>	107
<i>Interview Transcript 4</i>	120
<i>Interview Transcript 5</i>	132
Appendix B:	143
<i>Gatekeeper Consent Form</i>	143
<i>Consent for Participation in Research</i>	144
<i>Information Sheet</i>	146
Appendix C:	147
<i>Focus-group Questions</i>	147
<i>Interview Questions</i>	148

CHAPTER-1: INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Introduction:

‘Establishing international peace and security’ is a statement synonymous with the United Nations (UN). Particularly, it refers to the organization’s most challenging undertaking – Peacekeeping. It is a unique concept that involves the deployment of multinational troops in a war-torn country to provide it ‘security and stability’. It is a joint international venture and is symbolic of the global community’s promise to uphold human rights and protect humanity at all costs. While this symbolism paints an idyllic picture of what peacekeeping stands for, in reality, this enterprise is far more technical.

Since many countries contribute troops for such missions, the UN, with the consent of all parties involved, is responsible to coordinate and manage deployment of contingents from volunteer countries, comprising soldiers from a variety of cultures, religions, and nations. This deployment process, however, does not consider the impact that psychosocial similarities between the deployed peacekeepers and the population of the host country may have on the success of the mission. This raises the question whether such similarity in identity factor, if considered for troops deployment, can prove to be the missing link in peacekeeping success? Or would the consideration of psychosocial factors in mandate composition subsequently have a negative impact on the performance of peacekeeping missions?

Given the fact that UN failures receive a lot more media attention than successes, peacekeeping missions are largely under-appreciated for their efforts in bringing an end to a conflict or rebuilding a society that is emerging from one. In some cases, peacekeepers act in ways contrary to acceptable standards, tarnishing the reputation of the United Nations. Consequently, prejudice exists against UN peacekeepers in a lot of war-torn countries as the host population does not always trust the deployed troops and thus does not cooperate with them.

The key factor here appears to be how peacekeepers perceive their role; how much they can empathize with the host population; and how well that empathy can translate into cooperation and communication with the host population. Intuitively, this empathy and sense

of solidarity should be amplified if the UN peacekeepers and host country's population share common identity factors such as race, religion, or language. Therefore, it would be prudent to analyze whether UN peacekeepers who share a common identity with the host population be more likely to empathize with them? Or would these factors, particularly when considered in missions that deal with ethno-religious conflicts, lead to complications in the mission? This research aims to answer the questions raised above and recommend the way forward.

The research document consists of four chapters. The first chapter introduces the topic of the thesis with a research proposal and a thorough review of literature. The second chapter outlines methodology by discussing in detail the applied research design and methods. This includes data sampling and analysis as well as how the data will be stored. This chapter also briefly touches upon limitations of this research due to the research methodology. The third chapter defines the conceptual framework where "Identity" is discussed as a concept along with relevance of social identity theory to this research. The fourth chapter of the thesis presents final findings, which include results and its analysis, leading to recommendations for future research.

Problem Statement:

The research aims to analyze how racial, religious, or language-based identity factors can impact the way Peacekeepers of different countries, with varied ethnic backgrounds, behave with one another and with the common host population in a Peacekeeping mission. Identity, or a sense of belonging, strongly dictates how an individual behaves, particularly in a multicultural environment. For Peacekeepers, it often involves being in a country where customs and society largely differ from their native environment. While this identity factor may be beneficial to peacekeeping missions, there is also a possibility that it has a negative consequence. This is of a major concern especially if the Peacekeepers approach their mission with an identity bias, particularly in ethnoreligious conflicts where they feel more supportive of one of the warring sides. Biased behavior on the part of peacekeepers would stand in as a stark deviation to the most significant of the three basic tenants of United Nations Peacekeeping: Impartiality. Counterintuitively, a certain level of identity bias may be what peacekeeping needs to become more effective. However, any such consideration will require an amendment to the UN's basic Peacekeeping principles, which is another conundrum in itself. In any case, this research aims to uncover how these psychosocial

factors play out in peacekeeping missions and what impact they have on troop deployment and subsequently, the UN Peacekeeping Policy.

So far, the existing literature measures peacekeeping success in terms of the strength, size, duration, and deployment time of the missions. Peacekeeping failures and successes are attributed to political or logistical factors. The rationale behind States providing troops to missions is attributed to their foreign policy alignments with other States or the pursuit of their own interests. How and why troops from certain countries are selected to be deployed on missions is left largely undiscussed or is alluded to in vague terms. While most academic research has focused on the effectiveness of peacekeeping from an objective point of view, this research aims to analyze it from a social science viewpoint by focusing on the psychosocial aspect of identity. Studying peacekeeping missions from this perspective is important since these missions are meant to provide aid and relief to the victims of a violent conflict. If this research finds that kinship with the host population based on a common identity promotes more effective and public-spirited peacekeeping, it will assist officials in Member States and the UN to amend requisite policies to achieve better success ratio.

This dissertation will be a phenomenological study with qualitative approach, which aims to understand the impact of identity on peacekeeping based upon hands-on experience of Peacekeepers. It will probe this link objectively and make deductions on facts gathered from interviews and group discussions with Peacekeepers as well as information collected from UN policies, research articles and books.

Assumption:

The strength of relationship based upon common identity between Peacekeepers and the host population can impact the success of peacekeeping missions. Thus, identity needs to be considered as an essential factor whilst deploying troops for UN Peacekeeping Operations. The main aim is to uncover whether any positive or negative link exists between identity and successful peacekeeping and determine how the consideration of that link could transform UN peacekeeping missions.

Research Objectives:

- To prove whether an observable link exists between successful mission completion and a shared identity between UN deployed forces and the host country.
- To uncover whether a host population is more likely to cooperate with UN peacekeepers if they share a common identity with them.
- To recommend whether the UN leadership should consider psychosocial factors when deploying troops for peacekeeping missions.

Research Questions:

1. Does any observable link exist between success in a UN peacekeeping mission and a shared identity (language, race, religion, geoeconomics) between UN deployed forces and the host country?
2. Will commonality of psychosocial factor(s) (language, race, religion, gender, geoeconomics) lead to more cooperation by the host populace with the UN peacekeepers or would it cause more distrust against them, particularly in ethno-religious cases?
3. Should the UN Leadership consider these psychosocial factors (language, race, religion, gender, geoeconomics) when deploying troops for peacekeeping missions?

Literature Review:

Identity is a fluid concept and is consistently under debate in sociology. Some researchers theorize that identity provides individuals with security through group membership. One such theory is “social identity theory where the founders see the group membership as the driving force for identity formation” (Huseyin Cinoglu 2012). Therefore, an individual’s social and personal identity derives itself from the group dynamics to which they belong. The importance of identity and the way it influences group dynamics, particularly in modern conflict settings, cannot be ignored. Some researchers agree to the fact that “...identity can help explain political action...” (Fearon 1999). Therefore, in the case of UN peacekeeping, identity and other psychosocial factors need to be considered to understand its impact on the success of peace operations.

Le Roy and Malcorra in *the New Partnership Agenda: Charting a new horizon for UN peacekeeping*, discuss how the UN formulates peacekeeping missions. The research also offers analysis as well as recommendations to stimulate discussions in the UN on how to

make peacekeeping more effective. Of particular interest to this study, the discussion paper points out that, “In the past, the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping has been hampered by ineffective communication, often exacerbated by a limited understanding of local culture, the diversity of views in the population, and divisions along ethnic, gender and other lines” (le Roy and Malcorra 2009). The authors then make a case for peacekeepers to be more effective communicators with the local population. This recommendation by the authors is in line with current study’s contention i.e., identity plays an impactful role in peacekeeping success.

Interestingly, how the literature views success of peacekeeping missions also vary. For example, Whalan analyzes effectiveness and legitimacy of peace operations from a ‘local lens’. She highlights how peace operations form a part of both international and domestic governance, marking the shift of focus from an international evaluation of actors and dilemmas in peacekeeping operations to a local level of analysis on the successes and failures of UN peace operations. She emphasizes the significance of local involvement and cooperation in making peace operations successful (Whalan 2013). This lens of analysis encourages the assertion of this research that UN peacekeeping troop deployment must consider local/host-country dynamics. For a peacekeeping mission to be successful, obtaining the consent of the host country is also extremely essential. Gorur and Sebastian agree to this notion and highlight those obstacles that a mission may face if a host-country’s consent for a mission is not obtained in full. To conceptualize this concept, their Report offers a simple framework for understanding the state of the host-country’s consent. In the context of U.N. peacekeeping, the Report defines ‘Consent’ as comprising of three elements: 1) Acquiescence to the presence of the mission; 2) Acceptance of the mission’s mandate; and 3) Commitment to the political process that the mission is intended to support (if there is one in place)” (Sebastián and Gorur 2018). This concept is an essential principle of peacekeeping and is considered necessary for a successful peacekeeping mission.

Some researchers have even explored how diversity in the composition of a UN peacekeeping mission affects the protection of civilians. For this, Bove and Ruggeri used fractionalization and polarization indices to determine how diversity impacted protection of civilians for missions in Africa between 1991-2008. The result was encouraging, displaying a decrease in violence against civilians in missions with increased diversity

(Bove and Ruggeri 2016). The research directly considered the impact of identity on the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations and revealed valuable quantitative data to highlight importance of diversity in troop deployment. In addition to the literature on effectiveness of peacekeeping missions, some researchers argue that peacekeeping has evolved overtime to become a form of military diplomacy since peacekeepers now take an active part in trying to resolve the conflict between warring parties (Najimdeen 2020). Since this research aims to examine impact of psychosocial similarities on the success of peacekeeping missions, it is prudent to understand how this new role as military diplomats can also be expanded if identity is considered as a factor during UN troop deployment.

Academic work has also been undertaken on other aspects of peacekeeping. For instance, in her book *The United Nations, Intra-state Peacekeeping and Normative changes*, Eşre Aksu highlights the need for understanding the role that UN peacekeeping operations play in conflict resolution, reinforcing the requirement to view this task from a normative angle. Furthermore, she discusses ‘the normative significance of peacekeeping environments’ (Aksu 2003) pointing out the need to understand the objectives, functions, and authority of peacekeeping missions. Here, the rationale underpinning state contributions to peacekeeping and their objectives is also discussed, which is an essential foundational aspect of this dissertation as well.

In order to understand how the UN deploys troops for peacekeeping missions, it is also necessary to comprehend why states contribute troops in the first place. Bellamy and Williams argue that political, economic, security, institutional, and normative rationales encourage states to contribute to UN peacekeeping. They also assert that states try to prove themselves as ‘good Samaritans’ by contributing troops (Bellamy and Williams 2012). Meanwhile, Ward and Dorussen suggest that countries are more likely to contribute peacekeepers to missions where other countries with similar foreign policy preferences are sending troops (Ward and Dorussen 2016).

In his study, Yamin explores how Government of Pakistan’s decision-making gets affected when it plans to contribute troops for UNPKO. He argues that “foreign policy motivations in most cases dominate the Pakistani state’s decision to send its soldiers abroad” (Yamin 2017). In another study, Pakistan’s overwhelming contribution to peacekeeping is attributed to it having recognize early on “... the value and importance of peacekeeping

missions” since the United Nations Military Observer Groups in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) were sent to both countries in 1949 after their first war on Kashmir, just a couple of years after independence. This Group is also one of the longest running missions of the UN (Kiani 2004).

A 2010 study focused on understanding the rationale for troop contributions by African states, exploring various incentives that guide these states to take part in peacekeeping operations. This exhaustive quantitative analysis of 47 sub-Saharan African states between 1989-2001 revealed that poorer regimes, with lower state legitimacy and political repression, were more likely to engage in regional peacekeeping activities (Victor 2010).

The UN understands that effective troops deployment and constant self-analysis is key to improving the success of its missions. In this regard, the Brahimi report of year 2000, presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by the Chairman of the Panel on UNPKO, gives fact-based and practical recommendations for quicker deployment of UN troops (Soldier, civilians, and police). It suggests that the mission leadership must be chosen keeping in mind “a fair geographic and gender distribution and with input from Member States” (“Brahimi Report” 2000). This highlights that the UN does recognize that identity-based characteristics must be included in the troop deployment process; however, the report neither mentions the word ‘identity’ nor does it further expand this argument into discussions/recommendations beyond ‘mission leadership’.

Interestingly, many past UN missions serve as good examples to study the impact of identity factor. As is discussed in the fifth chapter of the book, *Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts*; it reviews the factors that resulted in the failure of UN Operations in Somalia II (UNOSOM II), a UN peacekeeping mission sent to the ethnic conflict in Somalia. The author uses extensive quantitative analysis in this book to understand interventions in ethnic conflicts (Nalbandov 2009). Analysis by Myriam and Brule on the same case terms UNOSOM II as a mission of limited successes, providing insightful analysis on how the mission was formed, what was its purpose and what were the reasons behind its failure. The Study also focuses on the command-and-control structure within the mission and the impact that it had on the success of the mission (Myriam and Brule 2017). Similarly, *The Oxford handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations* discusses in detail the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) as it highlights the limitations

and achievements of that mission. It includes a discussion on the massive human rights violations in Srebrenica and the reasons for the colossal failure of the mission (Tardy 2015). Objective review of this peacekeeping operation is essential to understand whether factors such as identity have any role in the outcome of missions. Adding to the available literature on this research's topic, Metselaar in his thesis examines warning signs that decisionmakers in the Netherlands might have missed before the Bosnian-Serb attack on Srebrenica. It provides an analysis of the reaction of decisionmakers to these warning signals and provides an inside look into how one of the biggest tragedies unfolded in the presence of peacekeeping forces (Metselaar 1997). Other relevant peacekeeping missions include the United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). With regards to this mission, Lijn argues that deployment of UNAMID was not at the 'ripe moment'. Lijn discusses the obstacles that the mission inevitably faced in achieving its mandate, including a coordination problem with the African Union. The author also highlights that neighboring African countries were more willing to engage in the peacekeeping mission as compared to other troop contributing states around the world and the countries in the Security council. The author then provides lessons and offers recommendations for both the Sudanese missions and particularly mentions the need to be more sensitive to "where who is deployed." (van der Lijn n.d.) Given that the conflicts in Sudan were fractionalized along identity lines, this recommendation clearly refers to the consideration of identity factor during deployment of peacekeeping troops. In another research, Viryasova provides effective indicators to measure the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations in her thesis. One of the cases that she investigates is of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), assessing the effectiveness of the mission based on the host country's consent and willingness to cooperate; the active engagement of major powers; and a clear, appropriate, and achievable mandate amongst other aspects elaborated in the dissertation (Viryasova 2020).

Conceptual Framework:

Identity is a much-debated concept. While some consider it to be a biological fact – an unchangeable reality, others argue that it is a fluid concept that changes according to the environment or situation in which the individuals find themselves. Identity has been defined as "...the social position that the self not only possesses but also internalizes. Put differently, for each of the social statuses that the self has, it also has an identity attached to it"(Huseyin Cinoglu, 2012). Therefore, identity is directly linked to the socialization of human beings and how individuals perceive themselves as well as how society recognizes them.

Furthermore, identity can be understood as “(a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or (a) and (b) at once)” (Fearon 1999). Hence, identity is very much psychological and very much social, in essence, psychosocial. Groups and communities based on a particular identity provide a sense of social security and belonging to individuals. People feel responsible for those who belong to their group. These social dynamics, for the large part, inform how individuals interact with each other, particularly in multicultural settings. When the same argument is extended to UN Peacekeepers, there is a great probability that Peacekeepers, being in a completely foreign environment to their own, will feel a natural kinship with the people they are sent to protect, particularly if those people share a common identity characteristic with the Peacekeepers. These characteristics can be religion (which largely influences social norms and practices); race (a sense of shared heritage or common ancestry); gender (understanding the needs and issues faced by people of the same gender); or language (a common source of communication that unites people across nations based on a similar culture). If peacekeeping missions are sent keeping in mind this natural kinship that Peacekeepers will feel towards people of the same identity group (despite being told to be impartial), perhaps peacekeeping missions may become more successful in attaining their mandates as Peacekeepers with similar identity factor(s) as that of the resident population, will want people of ‘their’ group to be safe, secure, and at peace.

To further understand how identity influences peacekeeping in conflict zones, the framework of this research is built upon Social Identity theory. This theory focuses on identity in group dynamics, with some academic literature already focused on Peacekeepers. The thesis expands this literature by discussing Social Identity theory, in terms of the Peacekeepers interaction with the host population.

Methodology:

This is a qualitative study based on phenomenological research. It aims to understand how identity influences the relationship between UN peacekeepers and the host-country population, thereby focusing on human experience. The outcome of this research is not based on any preconceived notions; instead, it is based on the analysis of personal (lived) experience of the main subjects of the research, which are the UN peacekeepers.

The primary data in this research has been collected through interviews and group discussions with Officers being trained for Peacekeeping missions as well as with veteran peacekeepers having real-life experience of UN peacekeeping missions in various countries. Field data provided by the Peacekeeping Training department of the Center for International Peace and Stability (National University of Sciences and Technology) has been used as a primary source to guide the thesis. The sample size for both veteran peacekeepers and ‘to-be-deployed’ peacekeepers is small but equal in quantity. Interviews have been conducted with ‘to-be-deployed’ Peacekeepers from Pakistani nationality as well as foreign nationalities. This is with the objective to prevent any major bias from misdirecting the research. Input from peacekeepers of different national and socio-cultural backgrounds is considered a necessity to understand the ‘race’ and ‘religion’ aspects of identity in this research. Both genders have been interviewed, as part of the research focuses on the ‘gender’ aspect of identity and what role it can play in the success of peacekeeping missions. Interviews from ‘to-be-deployed’ peacekeeper consists of questions pertaining to whether a shared identity with the host population will impact their decisions in the host country and their determination to successfully complete their mission mandate. The sample size for the veteran peacekeepers is similarly small. It does not include foreign Officers as the interviews with veterans are aimed at understanding their first-hand experience with the host populations. This is to draw conclusions on the role that ‘shared identity’ plays on-ground in a peacekeeping mission and whether the veterans believe that the UN should consider such factors while forming mission mandates.

The secondary data has been collected from analysis of the current Troop Selection Policy and Peacekeeping Selection Standards of the United Nations as well as from UN reports and recommendations on how to improve peacekeeping missions. These have been analyzed to understand how the UN forms mission mandates and determine where room and flexibility for change and improvement in this policy exists. This is supplemented with data from research articles and books relevant to the subject of the thesis. It allows to consolidate what research has already been conducted in this domain and whether it has managed to gauge or highlight the ‘psychosocial’ angle in peacekeeping in order to enhance success in such operations by the UN.

Significance of the study:

At present, there is no direct research which exists on the impact that psychosocial based approach has on the success of UN peacekeeping Operations. The proposed research will serve to fill this gap in the literature. The study will look at peacekeeping from a psychosocial angle and help inform UN policymakers on whether it must be factored into troop deployment in peacekeeping operations. As an intangible addition to the research on peacekeeping, this study will encourage readers to begin looking at peacekeeping from a more humanistic, social, and psychological lens; from the viewpoint of those who are deployed to sustain peace and those who await the help from the peacekeepers. In the end, this research will attempt to conceptually broaden how peacekeeping success and peacekeeping missions are viewed; bringing researchers and policymakers a step closer to understanding how to resolve conflicts in a more effective manner – one that peacekeepers can strive for, and the effected population can hope for.

ORGANISATION OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter-1: Introduction

- Research Proposal
- Literature Review

Chapter-2: Methodology

- Research Design
- Research Methods
- Data Sampling
- Data Analysis
- Research limitations
- Data storage
- Ethical clearance

Chapter-3: Conceptual Framework

- “Identity” as a concept
- Social Identity Theory

Chapter-4: Findings

- Introduction
- Results
- Discussions
- Limitations
- Recommendations
- Conclusions

LITERATURE REVIEW

As the world grappled with destruction left in the wake of World War II, the United Nations (UN) emerged as a promise of lasting peace and a symbol of unity amongst the estranged nations of the world. To enforce its primary mandate of ‘maintaining international peace and stability’, peacekeeping missions turned out to be the most common United Nations response to violence and war. However, just as conflicts became more complex, UN peacekeeping evolved to meet the growing challenges. What started as merely observation missions have now transformed into full-fledged field operations where troops are expected not only to keep the peace but facilitate it, whilst ensuring the protection of civilians. This has had a wide-ranging impact on modern peacekeeping missions, the principal effect being that peacekeepers must now come into constant and direct contact with the warring parties and the population. Hence, for such missions to be successful it is necessary that interactions between peacekeepers and the people are positive; where civilians trust the uniformed peacekeepers that are sent to help them, and the peacekeepers are able to communicate effectively with and respond sympathetically towards the civilians. Hence, in peacekeeping missions, the religion, language, race i.e., the identity of the peacekeepers as well as the civilians can either hamper or facilitate the mission’s success. However, before the research delves into the intricacies of such an assumption, it is necessary to elucidate what identity is and how it can be understood in this context.

Identity can be defined as “...a social category, a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes” (Fearon, 1999, p.2). It defines the nature of interaction between an individual and a group as well as how an individual views himself and the group with which he associates. To many social scientists, identity is a fluid concept. Cinoglu and Arikan (2012) agree when they say that it is “...not a set, concrete entity” but “very flexible” and as something that “can change according to its environment, context, and expectations from the counterpart, whether it may be the society, a group, or other identities just like itself” (Cinoglu and Arikan, 2012, p.1116). Therefore, an individual’s social and personal identity derives itself from the environment and group dynamics to which it is exposed to. Identity is strongly influenced by one’s surroundings as well as the state of one’s mind. How an individual perceives his identity and recognizes his place in a specific group

defines how the individual behaves. Hence, identity can be considered as something having psychosocial attributes. Vizzotto (2013) defines psychosocial characteristics as those pertaining to the psychological development of an individual, relative to his socio-cultural environment (Vizzotto et al., 2013). Identity as a psychosocial factor can help define individual and group relationships in multiple environments. These may include conflict or post-conflict scenarios, environments containing violence/war or situations emerging from violence/war. In most modern conflicts, there are multiple groups and actors involved, often including the UN Peacekeeping force itself.

Peacekeepers work in a unique environment and such situations warrant academic exploration from a distinct angle. Social Identity theory provides an avenue for such research. According to this theory, “people categorise themselves and others into in-group and out-group members; these social categorisation processes can have an impact on intergroup attitudes and behaviours” (McKeown, Cavdar, and Taylor 2020, Pg. 191). Application of this theory to peacekeeping operations is not a new phenomenon in the literature and its importance to this research topic is also clearly discussed. McKeown, Cavdar and Taylor (2020) point out that “Understanding the general processes by which aspects of social identity have relevance to combat-trained soldiers who are charged with fulfilling peacekeeping tasks and resolving identity tensions and cognitive dilemmas...”. They further explain that such tensions/dilemmas that emerge from the peacekeeping mission context are “increasingly critical to ensuring accomplishment of mission objectives” (McKeown, Cavdar, and Taylor 2020, Pg. 32). Therefore, it is extremely essential to understand Social Identity Theory and explore how identity factor impacts peacekeeping.

Predictably, UN Peacekeepers tread a very difficult path as they must keep the warring parties from engaging in violent clashes and protect civilians that may get caught in such clashes. Progressively, peacekeepers must also ‘build’ peace in their Area of Responsibility (AOR) to ‘keep’ that peace, making their work all the more necessary for global peace and stability. Hence, the UN can be envisaged to play an integral role in global governance. Aksu (2003) conveys that the United Nation’s role in governance can be understood as the result of the complex interplay between interests and norms in the global arena (Aksu, 2003). While it is undoubtedly a state’s interests that define the kind of role UN plays in peacekeeping; yet it cannot be ignored that the UN has its own standing principles.

The three principles that guide conduct of peacekeeping operations by the UN are: Impartiality, Non-use of force and Host-state consent. As Tsagourias (2006) eloquently states, “Peacekeeping is based on the trinity of consent, neutrality/impartiality, use of force in self-defense” (Tsagourias, 2006, p.1).

Impartiality, in particular, is considered a cornerstone of peacekeeping by the UN. As soldiers are sent to keep the peace, they are not expected to side with any party in the conflict while carrying out their mandates. But as Peter (2015) argues, “...not only are UN peacekeeping operations mandated ‘to side with the government’ against interests of other parties; these missions are also staffed by personnel from parties that have vested interests” (Peter, 2015, p.359). He maintains that modern peacekeeping missions are mandated to help the governments of host-states reacquire control over their territory, especially in cases where non-state groups are on the other side of the conflict. In an attempt to prevent them from obtaining political legitimacy, these groups are largely ignored in the peacebuilding process and usually the personnel of such UN peacekeeping missions are from states that have political interests in the conflict (Peter, 2015). In such scenarios, “It thus is not entirely clear whether troops participating in these missions are deployed to uphold the peacekeeping mandate or to protect immediate interests of the states contributing them” (Peter, 2015, p.359). Since it is doubtful whether the peacekeepers are protecting the UN mandate or their state’s interests, their impartiality can be labeled as “suspect” (Peter, 2015, p.359) or ambiguous. Evidently, regional states are becoming increasingly likelier to participate in regional peacekeeping operations, simply because the conflict impacts their security and political interests (Peter, 2015). African peacekeeping ventures into other African countries are riddled with the same suspicion. Since the Cold-war, peacekeeping contributions from African countries on their home continent have substantially risen. To understand the impetus behind this increase, an exhaustive quantitative analysis of 47 sub-Saharan African states between 1989-2001 revealed that while poorer regimes with lower state legitimacy are more likely to engage in regional peacekeeping, repressive regimes are likely to participate in more different peacekeeping missions, specifically to divert international attention away from the ongoing regime’s repressiveness (Victor, 2010). Therefore, this clearly points to the fact that most African countries are motivated by self-interest to engage in peacekeeping, as is typical with states contributing troops to missions in their own region.

Furthermore, studies suggest that there is a significant mismatch between doctrine and practice with regards to peacekeeping principles. One analysis argues that trying to be an impartial actor in a peace process while seeking to disarm one of the parties is paradoxical to the role the mission plays (Peter, 2015). This disparity between practice and doctrine resonates with the findings of a report by The High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), which admitted that two contrasting schools of thought exist with regards to the peacekeeping principles: one claims that they “should be upheld” while the other argues that they are “outmoded and require adjustment” (Sebastián & Gorur, 2018, p.14). What this establishes is the ongoing debate in UN scholarly circles that these principles desperately need to be upgraded or rewritten to ensure they do not become an impediment to successful UN Peacekeeping operations. In fact, modern peacekeeping practice reveals the need to upgrade these principles and focus on enhancing communication, cooperation, and sympathy with the local population. As the case of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) demonstrates, such considerations, if given priority, can prevent horrendous tragedies from occurring such as those that transpired in Bosnia. As Bakare (2020) points out, soldiers from the Netherlands still face the regret of such a tragedy:

Their mandate as UN peacekeeping force was to keep and maintain peace amongst the warring parties in Bosnia, but the action of the Dutch soldiers underpinned their complicity in the Srebrenica genocide. Since 1995, the memory of wearing the Dutch military badge and allowing the Bosnian Serbs led by Ratko Mladic to slaughter Muslim men and boys will remain an undeletable stigma for the Dutch military (Bakare, 2020, p.20).

Like impartiality, host-state consent is also critical for the success of peacekeeping missions. Host-state consent is political, granted by its government as an official permission for the presence of peacekeeping force. Gorur and Sebastian (2018) conceptualize this in their report by offering a framework for host-state consent by naming three specific elements: acquiescence to the presence of the mission, acceptance of the mission’s mandate, and commitment to the political process that the mission is intended to support (Sebastián and Gorur, 2018). Another study also highlights the importance of obtaining host-state consent by arguing that the UN missions in Rwanda, Bosnia and Somalia were ‘strained politically and financially’ because “the UN was compelled to act and intervene on humanitarian grounds, without the clear consent of the parties involved in the conflict” which increased the threat

level “faced by the peacekeepers and added new dimensions to their roles and responsibilities...” (Kiani, 2004, p.48). Therefore, a host-state’s consent can mean the difference between mission success and mission failure. It is quite evident that if the parties on-ground, particularly the host-government, are not cooperative with the peacekeeping mission, it cannot be successful.

Concurrently, the consent of local populace for peacekeeping missions is just as significant as host-state consent. While local consent itself is not a peacekeeping principle, recent studies have highlighted the need to consider it. For example, Whalan, (2013) analyzes peace operations’ effectiveness and legitimacy from the local lens. She discusses the need to look at the effectiveness of UN peace operations through a local level of analysis and emphasizes local cooperation and involvement in making peace operations successful (Whalan, 2013). In essence, for peacekeeping operations to be effective, the local dynamics (culture, language, religion) of the host-country must be given due consideration. What this implies is that mission formulation must reflect an understanding of local needs and culture; one that the deployed peacekeepers are able to recognize and act in accordance with the situation to avoid any miscommunication or mishap stemming from a lack of awareness of local complexities. Le Roy and Malcorra (2009) agree when they point out that, “In the past, the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping has been hampered by ineffective communication, often exacerbated by a limited understanding of local culture, the diversity of views in the population, and divisions along ethnic, gender and other lines” (le Roy & Malcorra, 2009, p.15). Consequently, they recommend that peacekeepers should communicate more effectively with the local population. Lack of on-ground knowledge among troops is often a key issue, even amongst troops from highly diverse and developed nations. For example, amongst the issues faced by peacekeepers in the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), one was the fact that the behavior of American troops lacked any awareness of local cultures and languages and displayed an absence of insight on how these societies functioned (Leone & Reno, 2001). Another study acknowledges the dangers of this approach when it argues that peacekeeping efforts may be hampered by the indifference of peacekeepers towards local culture (Tsagourias, 2006). Similarly, in a virtual conference organized by the International Peace Institute (2021) on the renewal of the mandate for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), many participants stated the need for “Refocusing on sustainable

engagement with communities” which could essentially help in generating popular support for the UN mission (International Peace Institute, 2021). Hence, even in recent discussions, it is now an established fact that good communication with the host population and a deep cultural awareness on the part of the peacekeepers is a prerequisite for the success of peacekeeping missions.

For this reason, many researchers argue that a diverse cadre of troops, spanning all nationalities, cultures, religions, and ethnicities, be deployed for peacekeeping. The importance of diversity in deployment has been underscored in the Brahimi Report (2000). This review of existing UN peacekeeping policies, conducted at the request of the UN Secretary-General at the time, proposed that for effective and rapid deployment of professional peacekeeping forces led by capable commanders, the Secretary-General with consultation of Member States make a comprehensive list of possible commanders and heads for missions based on a diverse geographic and equal gender distribution (Brahimi Report, 2000, p.17). In addition to this, Bove and Ruggeri (2016) explored how diversity in the composition of UN peacekeeping operations impacted the protection of civilians. The authors used fractionalization and polarization indices to determine how diversity impacted protection of civilians in missions in Africa between 1991-2008, with the result showing a decrease in violence against civilians in missions with increased diversity (Bove and Ruggeri, 2016). Similarly, they state that “Peacekeepers from different nationalities have their own hidden cultural approaches and competencies in intercultural communication and in the management of multicultural contexts” (Bove and Ruggeri, 2016, p.686). Hence, the writers suggest that the deployment of a diverse mix of troops, who have the capability of working effectively within a multicultural environment, may have a significant impact on the success of the mission (Bove and Ruggeri, 2016). It is more likely that peacekeepers who share commonalities with the local population in terms of language, religion or race engage more effectively with the local population as compared to peacekeepers who do not share any such similarity.

However, some researchers reason that diversity and identity may complicate the mission dynamics further. Particularly in case of an ethnoreligious conflict, having the wrong mix of troops could end up aggravating it, making the peacekeeping mission an extremely difficult proposition. Many of the war-torn countries are culturally diverse where cultural fragmentation in the local population adds to the complications faced by peacekeepers in

forming a trust-based professional relationship with the local people (Bove and Ruggeri 2016). This aspect came to the fore in the case of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Viryasova (2020) argue that "... the existence of ethnic component reduced the effectiveness of UNOCI and obscured its success in terms of widespread human rights abuses, conflict-related casualties, internally displaced persons and refugees" (Viryasova, 2020, p.60). In conflicts where ethnicity is already a cause for violence and discontent, sending a diverse blend of peacekeepers might make the situation more volatile and the mission drastically ineffective, as seen in the case mentioned above. The Somalian conflict is another example; for understanding how this played out in the Somalian case, "it is necessary to immerse deep into domestic Somalian inter-clan environment, interaction between sub-clans, popular support these clans enjoyed and the structure of the Somalian nation, which were in the heart of the conflict..." (Nalbandov, 2009, p.106). Additionally, there were a number of mistakes at the administrative level of the mission. For example, the United States encouraged the UN to name a Turkish General as the Commander of the mission but at the same time ensured a command structure in which the US armed forces reported to the Deputy-commander, who was an American. This effectively meant a dual chain of command for the mission (Myriam and Brule, 2017), which implied that a command-and-control disparity existed amongst the troops along identity lines. Another peacekeeping case where the diversity aspect needs to be highlighted is the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). As per research by Van der Lijn (2013), coordination issues between the United Nations and the African Union were unavoidable. The author recommended that such missions should be more sensitive about where which troops were deployed (Van der Lijn, 2013). Given that the conflict in Darfur was fractionalized along identity lines, this recommendation clearly pointed out importance of considering identity of the troops when they were being deployed, especially since many African countries, who were a part of the mission, had vested interests.

The discussion above signifies the need to ascertain a criterion that must be introduced for assigning or allocating troops to peacekeeping missions for their most effective outcome. Peacekeeping has significantly evolved, with modern missions requiring peacekeepers to have positive connections with all sides of the conflict as well as the local civilian population. Bakare (2020) refers to this form of peacekeeping as 'military diplomacy' given that peacekeepers now take an active part in trying to resolve the

conflict between the warring parties. Additionally, through this form of peacekeeping, “contributing countries can ascertain whether or not its contribution is a success or failure or if it has accrued prestige or scorn from the concerned country” (Bakare, 2020, p.20). The relationship between peacekeepers and the host country is a complex one, something that contributing countries fully realize. It is in the best interest of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) that a peacekeeping operation, to which they have contributed, ends successfully.

To achieve this objective, effective pre-mission peacekeeping training is essential. Agha quotes General Assembly Resolution A/RES/49/37 (1995), which highlights that “Peacekeeping training is regarded as strategic investment that enables UN military, police and civilian staff to effectively implement increasingly multifaceted mandates.” (Agha 2023, Pg. 132-133) This investment can mean the difference between success and failure in a mission. This is the reason why many developing countries including Pakistan lay a strong emphasis on the training of their peacekeeping troops.

Furthermore, it comes as no surprise that garnering national prestige and improving one’s international image are cited as major reasons by countries to contribute towards peacekeeping missions. However, various political, economic, security, institutional, and normative rationales are also the motivations why States contribute to UN peacekeeping efforts. Peacekeeping contributions also depend heavily on State policies and their relevance to the case being discussed (Bellamy and Williams, 2012). Even so, humanitarian concerns are quantitatively proven to impact state contribution tendencies to the UN missions. Bove and Elia (2011) conduct a quantitative analysis of the motivations behind troop contributions. They test the suggestion that present humanitarian principles at the international system level encourage the extent of humanitarian military intervention by countries and conclude that the higher the humanitarian implications of a conflict, the higher the likelihood of contributions to a UN mission (Bove and Elia, 2011).

Meanwhile, Ward and Dorussen claim that ‘Policy complementarities’ are a neglected motivation for state contributions to peacekeeping (Ward and Dorussen 2016). This essentially means that countries with like-minded or similar foreign policy preferences are more likely to participate in peacekeeping missions together. In essence, it is peacekeeping alongside allies with ‘Shared objectives’ that encourages states to support peacekeeping operations with like-minded states (Ward and Dorussen, 2016). Foreign policy significantly

guides contributions to peacekeeping missions. In a study, Yamin (2017) explored what foreign policy motivations encouraged Pakistani decision-makers to contribute troops to peacekeeping and other foreign deployments, and concluded that national interests, public opinion, security concerns and international recognition were the key factors (Yamin, 2017). Ironically, some researchers are of the view that peacekeeping is being ‘subcontracted’ to third-world or developing countries while rich or developed nations bear the financial responsibility (Kiani 2004). While it is true that developing nations contribute more troops for the financial benefits to be attained, it is a point to be noted that troops from developing countries sent for peacekeeping in developing countries are more likely to understand local economic and social problems. This implies that these troops would better understand the underlying causes of the conflict than troops from rich and developed countries, which would facilitate their new role as ‘military diplomats’ and improve the chances of the mission’s success.

From defining the core concept of identity to understanding what factors lead to countries contributing troops to missions, one thing is glaringly clear: Modern, successful missions require a deeper level of understanding and cooperation between the locals (civilians and warring parties alike) and the peacekeepers. Perhaps situations where peacekeepers share commonalities with the host-state population might yield positive results. If peacekeepers can better understand the social and economic complexities of the societies in which the peacekeepers are deployed then it can greatly facilitate their new role as military diplomats, and enhanced role as peacebuilders.

Identity, though a concept familiar to studies pertaining to the causes of conflicts, is just as remote to studies concerning their end. While schools of thought exist claiming that diversity in peacekeeping would aggravate conflicts, they do not deny that identity does have as much an impact on the post-conflict, peacebuilding environment as it does in the pre-conflict one. Here, it is important to note that at the very core of all conflicts is society itself; one that is defined by the psychological association of its members to the values that define it. How the involvement of outside actors influences individuals and as a group, the society in conflict is based very much on the analysis of the psychological factors that impact it i.e., psychosocial factors. Identity, though a broad concept and generally limited to the causes of conflicts, might be the missing link to unlocking their solutions. However, what the above literature essentially emphasizes is that the impact of identity on

peacekeeping missions (the middle ground between pre-conflict and post-conflict phases) warrants academic exploration. There is an undeniable methodological gap in the literature, as most of the research done on this topic has been quantitative, based on survey data or graphs. This research on the other hand aims to approach this topic qualitatively, focused on the real-life experiences of peacekeepers obtained via interviews and focus-group discussions. It aims to understand peacekeeping operations through the minds of those most closely involved in their success (peacekeepers). Peacekeeping is the symbol of the UN's continuous struggle for international peace and stability, hence searching for ways to improve the outcomes of this noble cause are equally crucial for the peaceful future of our world.

CHAPTER-2: METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

The research is aimed to understand whether a causal relationship exists between the psychosocial factors (such as identity) and the success of UN peacekeeping missions. This causal relationship has remained unexplored and is deemed necessary for deeper research to develop a better understanding of how peacekeeping missions could be made more efficient and closely linked to the needs of the host populations. Primarily, this research is based on the interplay of the discipline of Sociology with Peace and Conflict studies, which is why it has been conducted using a qualitative research framework. Amongst the various research methods that fall under a qualitative methodology, phenomenological research is the one where human experience is studied from the actor's viewpoint (Knaack 1984). In this research, the human experience under investigation is 'peacekeeping' and the actors, for whom perspective is needed as a guide into this phenomenon, are the United Nations peacekeepers. This form of research will not only assist in understanding how identity impacts the phenomenon of peacekeeping; but, through the lived experience of its actors (peacekeepers), assist in providing plausible suggestions to enhance the success of UNPKO.

The primary data for the research has been collected through two main sources: a) Focus-group discussions with undertraining peacekeepers, who were being trained for deployment on peacekeeping missions; and b) Through interviews with veteran peacekeepers, who have 'on-the-ground' knowledge of peacekeeping missions. The secondary data has been gathered from the current Troop Deployment Policy and Peacekeeping Selection Standards of the United Nations as well as UN reports and recommendations on how to improve peacekeeping missions. Analysis of this data was considered necessary to understand how UN forms mission mandates and determine where room for improvement in the Policy existed. This has also been supplemented with adequate academic literature on peacekeeping, which encompasses a variety of relevant themes such as impartiality, host-state consent/local consent, diversity in troop selection for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs), training of United Nations peacekeepers, impact of identity on ethnoreligious cases, and factors that motivate troop contributions to UNPKOs.

The criteria used to select the data for the research has been based on relevance to the topic, its reliability and validity as well as the scope of its replicability. Samples for the data collection have been carefully chosen based on the needs of the research but with a focus on diversity to account for all the possible perspectives that could be obtained from the target population. The context for this research is based on how peacekeepers perceived psychosocial similarities with the people of the host-state and whether that played a role in encouraging them to be more sympathetic to the needs and the issues of the host-population. The researcher of this study has played an active role in collecting the data by personally conducting interviews and focus-group discussions as well as obtaining gatekeeper consent from the Department of Peacekeeping, Center for International Peace, and Stability (CIPS), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad. All of the above could not have been possible to arrange without full assistance and support from the Gatekeeper.

Research Methods:

Focus-Groups

Focus-group discussions are a research method that brings together a group of people, who are chosen based on predefined demographic traits, with questions that aim to investigate a particular topic (George 2022).

This is the method that was employed by the researcher. Focus-group discussions were held with ‘to-be-deployed’ peacekeepers. These sessions were recorded and conducted in-person within CIPS premises between December 2022 and January 2023. There were two focus-group discussions in total, with six participants in one and five in the other. These focus-group sessions were only held with ‘to-be-deployed’ peacekeepers to understand whether or not identity-based similarities would affect their behavior towards the host-population and how they perceived their role as peacekeepers in a scenario where identity similarities or differences with the host-population were glaringly obvious. The participants for these discussions were chosen based on demographic and gender-based characteristics and the discussion groups were distributed as follows:

- To-be-deployed Male Peacekeepers of Pakistani and Foreign nationality.
- To-be-deployed Female Pakistani Peacekeepers only.

This distribution was done to ensure equitable representation of both genders in the sample as both genders have different roles in peacekeeping and different ways of displaying empathy towards others. Demographic diversity was included to ensure that the results of the study were not biased because of the perspectives of people of one particular socio-cultural background. These focus-group discussions were conducted in a semi-structured interviews format, consisting of some questions prepared beforehand by the researcher and some follow-up discussions. Semi-structured interviews have a mix of fixed as well as open-ended questions and they encourage engaging and relaxed question/answer sessions (Adams 2015). Therefore, this interview structure was followed so that the researcher could ask some fixed questions that directly dealt with the subject matter of the research while retaining some flexibility to ask other follow-up questions to the responses of the participants for any clarification or elaboration. The focus-groups lasted for a total of 30-45 minutes each during which the researcher was the chief moderator, involved in both asking questions and managing the recording equipment. The questions asked during the focus-group sessions focused on how the ‘to-be deployed’ peacekeepers perceived their identity, whether that identity would instill in them a sense of brotherhood and sympathy for a host-population of similar psychosocial characteristics, and if they believed that the UN should consider these factors while selecting where to deploy which troops in peacekeeping missions.

Interviews

In-person interviews were conducted with ‘veteran’ peacekeepers between December 2022 and January 2023. The participants for this phase of research were chosen based on their history and experience of having served as active personnel in UN peacekeeping missions. Their experience and the findings gleaned from them were what made this study a phenomenological research. Interviews were an essential tool to develop an understanding on whether identity had a visible effect on peacekeeping missions.

A total of five people were interviewed. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format to allow the researcher some flexibility with additional questions. They lasted almost 30 minutes each and were recorded to be transcribed and thematically analyzed. In addition to relevant follow-up questions, the original questions asked from the participants centered around whether identity played a role in the on-ground realities of a peacekeeping mission, did they feel this role to be positive or negative, and if the role of

identity was found to be positive, what was their opinion on whether the UN should amend its troop deployment procedures to accommodate these psychosocial factors.

Data Sampling:

‘Purposive’ and ‘Snowball’ data sampling methods were used in this research. Purposive sampling could be defined as a sampling method in which respondents were chosen for their usefulness to the study and was a way of picking cases which employed limited research resources effectively (Campbell et al. 2020). This method was applied as the study required participants who were preparing to be deployed on a peacekeeping mission. Hence, the target population for the sample was already defined as per requirement, which was to have peacekeepers of varying nationality, representing both genders and who had yet to serve in a mission.

For the interviews, Snowball sampling was used. This was a kind of convenience sampling method where participants recommended other participants from among their acquaintances until data saturation occurred (Naderifar et al., 2017). Snowball sampling was employed here so that participants with adequate on-ground knowledge about peacekeeping could be approached. It was expected that the participants would not only be willing to give in-depth interviews to the researcher but also be prepared to recommend future participants.

In both cases, the sampling technique that was used was Homogenous sampling. In Homogenous sampling, a group of participants (generally for focus-groups) was chosen based on similar traits or characteristic such as life experiences, careers, or a similar culture (Nikolopoulou 2022). For the purposes of this study, the participants chosen for both the focus-groups and the interviews shared peacekeeping as a common experience. This sampling technique was chosen because focus-groups and interviews with peacekeepers of different characteristics (gender, nationality, and experience) adequately enclosed the needs of the study and helped highlight common experience that they shared as peacekeepers, which was extremely important for this research.

Data Analysis:

The data was evaluated using thematic analysis. The interviews and focus-group discussions were transcribed and added to the appendices of the research. Notes were made on the initial impression of the data, which helped in coding the data as well as in

understanding what the data revealed and how it co-related to the original research questions. The codes highlighted patterns in the data, which assisted in finalizing the main themes of this study. This was a significant reason why thematic analysis was used as a data analysis technique so that the data could easily be translated into themes that could be reflected in the research findings section.

The data from the transcribed interviews and focus groups have been used as evidence to support arguments in the Findings section of the paper. Since all interviews and focus-groups have been kept anonymous, coded names have been used when using direct quotations from the transcripts; they are denoted as follows:

- Peacekeepers from the first focus-group: MPK-1, MPK-2, MPK-3, MPK-4, MPK-5, MPK-6
- Peacekeepers from the second focus-group: FPK-1, FPK-2, FPK-3, FPK-4, FPK-5
- Interviews: IP-1, IP-2, IP-3, IP-4, IP-5

Research Limitations:

Some of the biases that this research may have been exposed to due to the methods employed are:

- **The Hawthorne Effect:** Since participants were being closely observed during focus-group discussions, there was a chance they behaved differently. However, to mitigate the possibility of this bias, the chief moderator tried to relax the atmosphere by sharing a few personal anecdotes. This was to ‘break the ice’ and make participants more comfortable with the environment and the researcher, thereby increasing the likelihood of them behaving normally.
- **Social Desirability Bias:** A significant aspect of the research was based on the participants’ opinions and views about identity and how it impacted peacekeeping. There was a possibility that answers by the participants were influenced by a Social Desirability Bias, especially in the focus-group discussions. Due to this bias, participants may have responded with answers they thought were more socially acceptable than their actual views. To counter this bias, the researcher assured participants at the beginning of discussions that their responses would be kept anonymous throughout the research, with pseudonyms used in place of their actual names. The researcher also worded the questions carefully using “Would a

peacekeeper...” instead of “Would you...” to make the questions less direct and make the participants feel more at ease while answering the questions.

- **Recall Bias:** The interviews with veteran peacekeepers relied on self-reporting and recalling past incidences or experiences. There was a possibility that the study was affected by Recall Bias whereby the participant was unable to recall the past correctly. This meant that certain useful recollections to the research were missed completely. To mitigate this bias, the researcher interviewed two peacekeeping personnel each, who had served in the same mission, and cross-checked their responses to ensure validity of the data obtained.
- **Small Sample Size:** Another limitation of this research was the small sample size. Notwithstanding the challenge of availability of valid research samples and resources, in uniform or retired, commonality of thought and opinions indicated a firm trend and mindset in the UN peacekeeping community. Nevertheless, the small sample size was also helpful in reaching theoretical conclusions, which were deemed useful avenues for further research on this particular topic.

Data Storage:

The data obtained from the research was stored in a password-protected google drive folder, which was kept updated as the research progressed. The data shall be made available to researchers from the Department of PCS, Center for International Peace, and Stability, NUST upon request.

Ethical Clearance:

Gatekeeper consent from the Head of the Department of Peacekeeping, CIPS was obtained prior to approaching participants for the research. Participation was voluntary. The participants were presented with an information sheet detailing the purpose of the research as well as an informed consent form, which they signed prior to participating in the study.

CHAPTER-3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

'Identity' as a Concept:

Identity is as much a concept as it is a construct. It is linked to culture and society, memory and emotion, the mind, and the self. Identity helps explain how societies function, therefore, making it a topic of extreme interest to sociological scientists. One such scientist described identity as a combination of two linked aspects: social and personal, which can refer simultaneously to “social categories” and to “sources of an individual’s self-respect or dignity” (Fearon, 1999, p.2) This means that identity has an impact on both perceptions about the self and the perceptions about others – it is as social as it is personal.

Social Identity Theory:

British social psychologist Henri Tajfel developed the Social Identity Theory in the 1970s to explain how individuals conceptualized their identities, particularly as part of group dynamics (Ellemers 2022). This theory attempted to explain how group membership changed the way individuals viewed themselves in social situations and as a result of group membership how that impacted what they perceived about others and their own behavior (Ellemers, 2022).

According to this theory, humans tend to categorize other human beings into in-groups and out-groups, which permit individuals “to draw on mental constructs that set expectations and guide behavior as they navigate their social interactions” (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011, p.274). In essence, the in-groups serve the individual’s need for assimilation and the out-group fulfills the need for distinctiveness (Franke, 1999). This is because inter-group comparisons make the individual believe in the superiority of their own group. For sociologists, this adequately explains how inter-group conflicts work. The ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ mentality puts groups of people, who identify themselves as similar, against one another. This leads to conflicts and wars.

Conflicts all over the globe, especially intra-state wars in African countries and those that are frozen in time such as over Cyprus, are not strangers to the presence of peacekeeping forces. Peacekeepers serve a unique role. While they are primarily soldiers trained for armed combat to defend their country, as peacekeepers, they must build and keep peace. These troops are mandated to avoid engaging in the use of force (unless

extremely necessary) and protect civilian population, who belong to religions, languages, and nationalities other than their own. The main cause of concern here is that during their initial training as members of their national armies, new recruits are isolated from the society and they end up quite unsurprisingly adopting a ‘soldier’ frame of reference (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011). This context gets challenged when they are faced with a less ‘soldier-like’ role as peacekeepers in a foreign country. This change in soldier’s professional identity, as well as the consequent required changes in behavior, combined with the challenge to interact with often violent local people, puts these soldiers-turned-peacekeepers in a psychological dilemma rooted in identity.

Given the challenge that identity factor poses to parties in a conflict zone (such as peacekeepers), Social Identity Theory is considered extremely important in the evolving academic exploration of conflicts (Cuhadar and Dayton 2011). In fact, applying psychosociological theories to literature related to peacekeeping isn’t a new venture. Woodhouse (1998) used psychological concepts as a basis to analyze peacekeeping and improve conflict resolution practices, admitting that “peacekeeping on the ground is an essentially psychological process requiring great sensitivity to local perceptions and culture”(p.160). Hence, even at a relatively early stage of the growth of peacekeeping literature, a lot of significance has been attached to viewing peacekeeping from a psychosocial angle and highlighting the risks posed by the convergence in conflict zones of various cultures and nationalities.

Franke (1999) further encourages such research when he applies Social Identity Theory to identity tensions during peacekeeping. He argues that in any given situation, individuals tend to “derive their self-conceptions from a network of "central life interests" comprising their identities, beliefs, values, and attitudes”. He has used Social Identity Theory as a basis to form a dynamic model of identity, discovering that identity, values, behavior, and attitudes affect each other. Franke further expands the theory to include situational variations that cause certain identities to become stronger and more salient whilst also providing a conceptual framework to recognize identity tensions and resolve them. In a further study of Year 2003, Franke recommends “cognitive preparation” that teaches soldiers to invoke positive identity images for aligning with peacekeeping mission objectives. This will go a long way in motivating soldiers to “negotiate a new military identity reflecting both combat

and non-combat roles”, implying that this approach may help soldiers deal more effectively with identity dilemmas in the field (p.47).

In view of the previous application of this Theory to identity dilemmas in peacekeeping, the current research hypothesizes that such psychological predicaments in the field do have an impact on the behavior and perceptions of the peacekeepers towards the local people and vice versa. Here, the role of language in improving communication between the peacekeepers and the local population, as well as its impact on the formulation and salience of certain language-based identities, will be important. Given that certain identities are more salient in certain contexts, it is more likely that when peacekeepers use the local language to communicate with the local population, they will be more comfortable interacting with the peacekeepers. This will help the peacekeepers and local communities to develop a common identity frame to engage with one another as compared to other identity frames such as religion or ethnicity, which have the potential to complicate identity tensions further due to ideological differences.

Hence, proponents of the Social Identity Theory, in context of the impact of identity on peacekeeping missions, must consider language as an important tool to resolve identity dilemmas in the field. The peacekeeping Soldiers, like all human beings, have certain identity frames with which they view other human communities. This does not stop when they are on a UN mission, trying their best to be impartial while providing humanitarian aid to those displaced by the conflict or when negotiating peace with those who are fighting in that conflict. There will inevitably be situations where the peacekeepers face identity-related dilemmas in the field and for that reason, the locals feel a trust deficit with the peacekeepers. Here, language can play an effective role in bridging the gap between the peacekeepers and locals, providing a fix-all solution to identity dilemmas during peacekeeping operations.

CHAPTER-4: FINDINGS

Introduction:

Peacekeeping is a difficult enterprise; one that is more synonymous with failure than with success. It is often underappreciated for its efforts in promoting international peace and stability. Peacekeeping operations involve constant interaction of various actors; the primary ones being the peacekeepers and the local population. Peacekeepers often face prejudice and hostility from the local population, which prevents smooth functioning of peacekeeping operations. Cooperation between these two actors becomes a key factor for a successful mission. With the peacekeepers and the locals representing their own pools of identities, it becomes critical to understand whether psychosocial factors (like identity) can influence this cooperation between the host-population and the peacekeepers and whether this can impact the chances of mission success. At the same time, it is important to investigate if the identity factor should be used to re-evaluate United Nations' troop deployment policies.

The literature review demonstrates that mainly quantitative research has been applied to understand how diversity in troop deployment impacts peacekeeping missions. Most academic studies have focused on the principles of peacekeeping; in particular, impartiality and host-state consent. The literature also includes studies on the impact of psychology over peacekeeping operations, which comes significantly close to the purpose of this study i.e., to understand how psychosocial factors such as identity impact peacekeeping missions. Adding a different angle to the extensive quantitative research already present on this subject, this Research employs a qualitative methodology to gather data. Five semi-structured interviews and two focus-group discussions have been conducted with veteran and in-training peacekeepers, respectively, in order to obtain first-hand information regarding peacekeeping missions. This section of the dissertation presents results based on the thematic analysis of the interviews and focus-group discussion transcripts, corresponding discussions, recommendations, and conclusions of the research.

Results:

A detailed thematic analysis of the gathered data (interviews and focus group discussions) has yielded the following results:

Principles of Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping, being a joint international effort at promoting peace and stability, is guided by three core principles: Impartiality, Consent of the belligerent parties and Non-use of force. The interviews and focus-group discussions with the veteran and in-training peacekeepers respectively, highlighted two of these Principles as significant to the current research: Consent of belligerent parties (both local and host-state) and Impartiality.

Local Consent and Response to UN Peacekeeping

While peacekeeping operations are widely discussed in literature, academic analyses pertaining to their local angle are few in quantity. This is especially true with regards to research on local actor behavior, which remains under-theorized (Whalan 2013). For this reason, understanding how local dynamics play out in a peacekeeping mission is significant; in particular, local ownership of a peacekeeping mission is important. Both the veteran and the in-training peacekeepers mentioned local acceptance numerous times and admitted that local consent is important for peacekeeping missions. They also highlighted that past behavior of peacekeepers in a mission influences the way locals perceive a peacekeeping operation and how they respond to the peacekeepers.

For the execution of peacekeeping mission mandate, obtaining and maintaining consent is very much dependent on the behavior of the peacekeeping operations (Tsagourias 2006). Battling misconceptions and false stereotypes, to develop and promote a better understanding of what the mission stands for, encourages a healthy understanding between locals and peacekeepers, especially with regularly changing contingents. One officer, who had not only served in a mission in West Africa but had also visited multiple missions, revealed that the locals were used to peacekeeping contingents changing every few months, therefore they had “adopted” themselves to the different cultures or identities to which the peacekeepers belonged. Vice versa, the peacekeepers had “...a very good gelling up with the local inhabitants.” (IP-1, Appendix-A, Transcript 1). Therefore, locals of countries who are already exposed to frequently changing peacekeeping contingents, do not get affected by diversity in cultures and identities of the peacekeepers as the locals are already used to it. Certainly, the

impression by the locals is based on their experiences with peacekeeping missions; if the experience has been good, then the locals have not been hostile towards the peacekeepers.

Another interesting aspect is the perception of local population on performance of peacekeeping operations. Many veteran peacekeepers pointed out that locals would only get upset when the mission did not fulfill its mandated tasks or was unable to provide humanitarian assistance that it was supposed to deliver. This goes in line with what Tsagourias (2006) says about obtaining support at the root level, “If the PKO is responsive to the needs of the local population, addresses their concerns, provides security and humanitarian assistance and protects them from threats in an efficient and impartial manner, this may guarantee support...” and may end up effecting “...the attitude of the parties.”(Tsagourias 2006)

The in-training peacekeepers were of the view that perceptions of local population regarding peacekeepers were affected by the geopolitical environment surrounding their conflict. This often made the affected (local) people believe that the UN wasn't doing enough, even though on-ground, the peacekeepers would be trying to help. A veteran peacekeeper admitted that local pulse about peacekeepers was generated the moment they were deployed at the area of operation, and he believed that this first impression was important for the success of peacekeeping mission.

For another veteran peacekeeper, who worked as a military observer, local pulse or consent impacted the success of peacekeeping missions. For him, the ‘race’ of peacekeepers vis a vis the local population was also an important factor. While sharing his experience, he remarked that although their contingent, being Asian and brown, had generally cordial relations with the local officials and populace, “...there were some instances in which UN vehicles (carrying white passengers) were attacked...” (IP-5, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 5) simply because of local hatred towards their race. The veteran peacekeeper was of the view that while ‘race’ and ‘color’ influenced local perceptions and behavior, this was never given due attention; therefore, the identity factor was not highlighted despite the fact that it existed. For him, addressing this factor had a great potential to serve as a bridge to reduce biases of the locals and enhance mission success.

Few amongst the in-training peacekeepers were of a different view. They believed that local consent was an integral part of UN's peacekeeping troops deployment process. They argued that prior consent for deploying troops was always taken by the UN from all involved parties (including those representing locals) and therefore 'local consent' may not be a factor requiring special attention. From this research's viewpoint, although local consent may be imbedded in the Peacekeeping missions, the 'local acceptance' of population towards the peacekeepers and towards the mission in general, remained critical to motivate both sides for cooperation to keep and build peace.

Host-state Consent and Peacekeeping

Belligerent party consent is an important peacekeeping principle. As discussed above, "prior to the deployment of ...the peacekeepers, the consent of the belligerent party is obtained by the United Nations" (IP-2, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-2). Bakare also points out that a peacekeeping mission's mandate is directly dependent on the consent of all involved parties, particularly the state actor (Bakare 2020). Hence, host-state consent is equally significant, especially with regards to troops of specific countries. There can be situations where a host-government has ongoing political issues with a particular country that is contributing troops for the UN mission. As per analysis of a veteran peacekeeper, the requirement of host government's consent ensures political issues between states are resolved at the government level and they do not hinder peacekeeping operations. After having host-state consent for deployment of troops, what makes a difference to the success of the mission on-ground is the professionalism of the soldiers. However, a veteran peacekeeper admits that vested interests on part of certain deployed states, particularly the deployment of African troops into African nations, is increasingly becoming an issue for peacekeeping operations (IP-1, Appendix-A, Transcript 1). For this reason, many regional states are often barred from peacekeeping missions in their geographic proximity. This is because "excluding regional actors with interest in the conflict outcome not only has to do with obtaining consent, but also with making sure that UN peacekeeping is not used as a political tool". Therefore, this "policy is intended to protect the credibility of operations..." (Peter 2015).

While the national identities of deployed peacekeepers can affect the process of obtaining host-state consent for a peacekeeping mission, one of the veteran peacekeepers also pointed out that consent could be obtained gradually, and the United Nations is mindful of where it sends which troops. He argued that countries will not give consent where they mistrust the

peacekeepers' true objectives, and even if they do give consent, it is not permanent and can be revoked at any moment (IP-1, Appendix-A, Transcript 1). This is where the impartiality of the deployed troops becomes equally important to the mission.

Impartiality

Impartiality is extremely important to successful peacekeeping missions and is something which both the in-training and veteran peacekeepers highlighted. A veteran peacekeeper proposed that host governments must conduct peace treaties with all the parties to the conflict before the peacekeeping mission as this consent ensures that peacekeepers remain impartial. In his view, without the agreement "...the peacekeeping mission cannot be impartial, ... because it [will appear to be] playing side of the host government against the rebels" (IP-1, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-1). Sebastián and Gorur (2018) conferred something similar when they argued that mandates, which are openly working to strengthen the authority of the state, contest the mission's impartiality and damage its legitimacy in front of the other parties in the conflict (Sebastián and Gorur 2018). Surprisingly, according to the peacekeepers that were interviewed, host-state consent depends on how impartial the peacekeepers were; if the government believed that peacekeepers were partial then consent could be withdrawn. The in-training peacekeepers were of the view that impartiality was a must in peacekeeping operations as they felt that it is a duty assigned to them. For the peacekeepers, impartiality was important because by being impartial they reflected their humanitarian approach to the peacekeeping operations; in essence, showed their devotion to helping humanity not just people they shared an identity with. Also, as per "the Capstone Doctrine, UN peacekeeping missions must implement their mandates without favor or prejudice to any party" (Peter 2015).

The in-training peacekeepers suggested that deployment of troops on the basis of identity would affect impartiality, which will negatively impact the mission success. However, a veteran peacekeeper who served in Bosnia, was of the view that sharing a common identity does allow local people to become more comfortable with the deployed peacekeepers, yet it could be manipulated to show weak impartiality on the part of the peacekeepers, which would then pose a challenge to the mission (IP-3, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-3). The peacekeeper recounted an incident where a Muslim civilian asked a Muslim peacekeeper for assistance and the peacekeeper, following his duty, gave the required supplies. However, this was misconstrued by the mission administration as evidence of partiality in conduct. Despite

the fact that the peacekeeper had only followed the mandate. Such an occurrence naturally caused other civilians to doubt the impartiality of the peacekeepers, which then posed a challenge for the mission. Therefore, the consideration of ‘identity aspect’ in troops deployment does pose challenges to impartiality, which is considered as a cornerstone of successful peacekeeping by the UN peacekeepers.

Humanity

Interaction with peacekeepers brought another important aspect to notice, which was more related to the belief of peacekeepers themselves. When asked what common identity would be preferable for a peacekeeping mission deployment, two in-training peacekeepers belonging to different nationalities responded that their preferred mission deployment would be the one where protection of human rights was the main goal. A veteran peacekeeper agreed that the most important thing in a mission area was humanitarian assistance. Another peacekeeper who served in Cyprus as recently as 2020 said that even beyond being Muslim, seeing the Turkish Cypriot community suffering, seeing humanity suffering was extremely difficult (IP-4, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-4). A peacekeeper who had served in Bosnia also agreed; he believed that while it was natural to feel an inclination towards people of a shared identity, it was humanity that came first. In his view, if a local came to ask for help, the peacekeeper would solve the trouble first and ask for their identity later (IP-3, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-3). Yamin (2017) conducted a survey where “...none of the veteran Pakistani peacekeepers cited pay as the top motivation. The uppermost choices were sense of duty, loyalty to the country and serving humanity.” (Yamin 2017). Other veteran peacekeepers who were interviewed, also highlighted the fact that impartiality was important for peacekeeping missions and to maintain their impartiality they must all view the locals as humans first, the rest categorization according to identity was immaterial. As one of the peacekeepers remarked, “we are there to respect...humanity, we are there to protect ...humanity. So long as we are doing the same, I think we are performing our job.” (Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-2). Therefore, as per the experience of the interviewed peacekeepers and the perceptions of others, humanity comes before identity which ensures impartiality of a peacekeeping mission.

Peacekeeping Identity, Training, and Professionalism

Both veteran and in-training peacekeepers agreed that pre-deployment training was essential for peacekeepers. A veteran peacekeeper argued that, more than identity, the success

of the mission depended on how well the soldiers were trained and prepared for a mission. Agha (2023) recounts General Assembly Resolution A/RES/49/37 (1995), which stated that “Peacekeeping training is regarded as strategic investment that enables UN military, police and civilian staff to effectively implement increasingly multifaceted mandates.” (Agha 2023, Pg. 132-33) Therefore, both peacekeepers and the United Nations understand how necessary peacekeeping training was for successful missions.

Professional and properly trained peacekeepers were more likely to find solutions to problems in the mission area, which were acceptable to all parties. One of the veteran peacekeepers suggested that to ensure peace in a mission area, peacekeepers must look for win-win solutions to the problems with the locals, which was why professional competence was a key for mission success. An example of this professionalism exhibited by peacekeepers was quoted by a veteran peacekeeper, who had worked in Cyprus. She revealed that the Greek and Turkish Cypriots were very accepting of each other while working in the mission and displayed a very professional attitude towards one another and other peacekeepers as well (IP-4, Appendix-A, Transcript-4).

Another veteran peacekeeper opined that appropriate training was mandatory before countries could deploy troops for peacekeeping; this included awareness training of two weeks conducted after the peacekeepers reached the mission area. Building on this, a veteran peacekeeper suggested that instead of sending peacekeepers belonging to the same identity, the troops must be given detailed cultural and religious training so that they were respectful towards locals of different religions and cultures. Some in-training peacekeepers were of the view that cultural awareness training was not necessary because peacekeepers were just going for their job and if the United Nations were to introduce detailed cultural training, then the cost would be extremely high. One of the veteran peacekeepers highlighted the importance of improving peacekeeping training and believed that it would promote professionalism among peacekeepers. Agha (2023) suggested that “the latest policy along with already acquired lessons must be shared fully with member countries so that these can be incorporated in pre-induction training of individuals and contingents” (Agha 2023, Pg. 139). He was of the view that member countries could provide valuable input with their own knowledge gained from returning contingents (Agha 2023, Pg.139). In his opinion, this would prove vital for peacekeeping training policies worldwide since peacekeepers represent a culturally and

professionally diverse background; their training and education as well as knowledge of equipment etc. also differ vastly (Agha 2023, Pg. 130-31).

Veteran peacekeepers also felt that different countries practiced different training regimes, which posed a challenge to unified working in the mission area. Therefore, they proposed that uniform training segments of multiple contingents needed to be conducted together. One veteran peacekeeper even recommended that it was possible to mitigate the tendency of political interests in peacekeeping through international standard pre-training, strictly focusing on UN impartiality and neutrality as well as proper cultural awareness. The in-training peacekeepers suggested that training courses like those at the Center for International Peace and Stability should be conducted in other troop contributing countries too.

The Role of Language in Peacekeeping

Language plays an important role in successful peacekeeping – this is a statement that received support from most of the interviewed peacekeepers. The peacekeepers, especially those who had already served, admitted that language courses before deployment were essential. Likewise, a group of in-training peacekeepers agreed that language was extremely important in overcoming communication barriers. In their opinion, although the UN provided interpreters, the local people would be more comfortable communicating problems directly rather than through an interpreter. One in-training peacekeeper expressed his preference to be deployed in an area where they shared the language, so they could communicate better and help the locals. Bakare (2020) had also argued that “...for some practical and cogent reasons, elements of diplomacy which require negotiations and mediation and understanding of the language of the conflicting parties” required a seasoned diplomat “whose linguistic proficiency will play an instrumental role” (Bakare 2020) in achieving diplomatic goals for a UN mission.

Other group of in-training peacekeepers were of the view that if they were deployed based on language then the warring parties or locals may view them with mistrust, which may damage their impartiality. Furthermore, in their view, entire contingents could not be deployed based on language alone “like Congo is French speaking so you can't send the entire force full of French soldiers” (Appendix-A, Focus Group Transcript-2). This is understandable as UN requires contingents from different countries to support varying aspects of peacekeeping missions. The in-training peacekeepers were also doubtful of how

proficient peacekeepers would be in a language whose courses were given two weeks prior to deployment. A veteran peacekeeper argued that while it was true that sharing a common language with the locals would make peacekeeping simpler, in some cases the language may have a dialect difference, which would make communication even more complicated.

However, another veteran peacekeeper believed that sharing a common language with the locals or language courses before deployment would positively impact the mission. A peacekeeper who had served in Cyprus highlighted that “local language impacts a lot (of) emotions” and though words can be translated, emotions cannot (IP-4, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-4). Hence local language learning would have a positive effect on the missions. She was also of the view that the language aspect of identity did impact the success of a peacekeeping mission because if the peacekeepers spoke a neutral language like English, then the parties won’t know how concerned or involved the peacekeepers were in the peace process. However, if peacekeepers spoke languages of local parties, then they could directly communicate their concerns, which will truly endorse impartiality. While language was raised by the interviewed peacekeepers as definitely a factor that affects peacekeeping operations, the gender of peacekeepers was highlighted as being just as crucial.

Gender and Peacekeeping

Gender adds a different perspective and attitude to peacekeeping. A group of in-training female peacekeepers were interviewed, who believed that they could understand things and connect with the victims of conflict better than their male colleagues. In their view, local women would feel more comfortable sharing their problems with a female peacekeeper, who would be able to comprehend their trauma in a better way and help them through it. Female peacekeepers also revealed that the UN aimed to increase its gender quota from 15% to 30% by 2030 (Appendix-A, Focus Group-2 Transcript).

The United Nations started sending Female Engagement Teams (FETs) because they realized that female victims would be more comfortable talking about their issues with female peacekeepers and that female peacekeepers would be more empathetic towards the local female community. This was evident from the fact that the UN was open to amend its deployment policies and improve probability of peacekeeping operation’s success. The veteran and in-training peacekeepers highlighted that Pakistan was the first country to send a Female Engagement Team (FET) and the first to achieve the UN gender quota in

peacekeeping deployments. These FETs could provide a treasure trove of information on how a gender-balanced (gender also being an identity) peacekeeping mission could positively influence a conflict-ridden society and increase chances of an operation's success.

Obstacles in Peacekeeping Missions

Most of the interviewed peacekeepers, both in-training and veteran, admitted that United Nations peacekeeping missions do not have many success stories, which negatively affects the UN's image. This is why one veteran peacekeeper was of the view that while peacekeepers could and should help as much as possible, it would not change things for the country in which they were deployed. Therefore, they should focus on fulfilling the requirements of their deployment and then return to their home country. The same veteran peacekeeper also affirmed that states with vested interests and other agendas do send their peacekeeping troops to war-torn countries; and this was an issue that could not be mitigated as there were huge financial benefits attached to the peacekeeping missions.

Some veteran peacekeepers were also of the view that first-world countries deploy peacekeeping missions in selected countries to build access to their natural resources. Assuming that to be true, it means that hidden objective of peacekeeping thus becomes a strategy to acquire resources and deny prosperity to the local population. Therefore, the very purpose of peacekeeping fails, and the presence of peacekeepers paradoxically decreases the chances of building peace.

One of the veteran peacekeepers pointed out another important obstacle. He asserted that peacekeeping troops in modern multidimensional missions were not adequately trained for public dealing and needed to learn how to negotiate with the locals and warring parties. He explained that sometimes the lowest tiers in militant organizations caused problems by not adhering to the mutually agreed rules and procedures. Handling such situations requires prudence and intelligent dealing, which demand proper knowledge and scenario-based training of Officers as well as their soldiers.

Tackling Mistrust of Peacekeepers

Problematic compositions of peacekeeping contingents have emphasized the need to tackle another key obstacle to peacekeeping missions: local mistrust of deployed peacekeepers. It often happens that a deployed contingent from a country suspected of

intervening in the internal affairs of the host country faces a lot of backlash and public mistrust due to their alleged political interference. A veteran peacekeeper stressed that this mistrust has such a damaging effect on the mission that it leads to a drawdown of troops. For example, participation of Chadian soldiers in the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) had been a highly contested issue due to Chad's alleged backing of the Muslim rebel group Seleka. This was the group was responsible for the overthrow of the CAR government at the time (Peter 2015). Likewise, the UN-supported African Union mission in Somalia composed of troops from regional nations such as Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. This mix of troops proved to be problematic, as Kenyan peacekeepers benefited from the local charcoal trade and Ethiopian troops, who were already infamous for invading Somalia, faced local unpopularity (Peter 2015). Such examples prove that national identity is often a key factor behind local mistrust of peacekeepers and concur with the veteran peacekeeper's view that this can damage a peacekeeping operation.

Therefore, in order to resolve this conundrum, the UN needs to be careful about the composition of its missions. Trust in the peacekeepers' intentions is important to ensure 'local acceptance' of the mission. According to the in-training peacekeepers, local trust depends upon preconceived notions about a particular identity and on the image building and previous reputation of a country's contingent. Consequently, the professionalism of the deployed soldiers as well as the reputation of a country add to the chances of a peacekeeping mission's success.

Geo-economic Rivalries and Peacekeeping

Veteran peacekeepers pointed out the dichotomy between first world and third-world representation arguing that the first-world countries were usually the ones in the position of authority for a peacekeeping mission. They posited that while the first world controlled administrative roles in the mission headquarters, it was the third world countries that actually contributed troops to the missions. In essence, the first world countries had outsourced peacekeeping to the third world. Since these major powers controlled these organizations, and if it was not in their interest, there would not be any positive change in how the organizations were run; interests of major powers mattered more than the change.

According to one veteran peacekeeper, the first world uses the influence of its financial contributions to the United Nations. This allows them to dictate terms of peacekeeping even

though ironically, in most cases, it is the consequence of their colonial past that these peacekeeping mission countries are in chaos and conflict.

The in-training peacekeepers were of a similar view as they believed that local acceptance would not be there for troops from countries with which the locals share a colonial past, and such missions would therefore be ineffective. However, an in-training peacekeeper did point out that countries like America do realize the need for cultural awareness and include that in their daily training for their troops.

One of the veterans highlighted another interesting aspect. According to him, background of peacekeeping troops mattered, “If they come from the relatively (developing/underdeveloped) nation, they understand the different miseries. Probably the troops have witnessed; the officers have witnessed, and all those who are there... have witnessed” (IP-2, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 2). He was of the view that peacekeepers from underdeveloped/developing countries would better understand the issues and problems faced by the locals in the underdeveloped countries where they were deployed. A peacekeeper, who had been posted in Cyprus, admitted that difference in economic situation between the North and South did bring out sympathy for the sufferings in the North.

UN Peacekeeping Troop Deployment

A veteran peacekeeper revealed that when the United Nations announces a peacekeeping mission, the countries that are willing to contribute with troops or funds respond immediately. The in-training peacekeepers added that state interests determine the level of contribution for a mission. According to Bellamy and Williams (2012), countries may also contribute troops for normative reasons such as to enhance their image as “global good Samaritans” (Bellamy and Williams 2012). They also affirmed that as soldiers they would go wherever duty called them regardless of any preference for the identity factor.

Another veteran peacekeeper expressed that the UN did take identity into account, particularly in ethno-religious cases; however, mostly troops were deployed based on availability and willingness of countries to contribute. Both, in-training and veteran peacekeepers highlighted that a peacekeeping mission should include multiple contingents with a good blend of different countries. They were of the view that diversity in deployments inculcates respect for diversity among peacekeepers themselves. According to the in-training

peacekeepers, diversity already exists in the headquarter staff of a peacekeeping mission and that the United Nations should stick to sending in multiple contingents. A veteran peacekeeper pointed out that while serving in Cyprus, they witnessed a good blend of countries and professional militaries working together, which was beneficial for the overall mission. The honor of carrying the UN badge overshadowed any nationality or identity-related issues as all peacekeepers behaved professionally. One in-training peacekeeper was of the view that neutral parties or a blend of countries in peacekeeping contingents was also necessary to avoid identity being used as a tool to prolong conflicts to serve the interests of contributing states.

On the other hand, Bove and Ruggeri (2016) were of the view that while diversity in contingents may improve effectiveness, it could also be a potential source of friction. They opined that a wide mix of peacekeepers could be difficult to turn into a cohesive team given the differences in their cultural, linguistic, and legal backgrounds (Bove and Ruggeri 2016). One veteran peacekeeper suggested that the deployment of multiple contingents did not always translate to harmonious cooperation as peacekeepers from certain countries tended to avoid each other. This was because different countries had different cultures, languages, norms etc. and those could be sources of miscommunication and misunderstanding between them. For example, the participation of female officers in the US Army during Operation Desert Storm caused contention between Saudi Arabia and the United States due to their opposing views on the role of women. (Bove and Ruggeri 2016). Therefore, it was evident that the UN should be mindful of political, normative and cultural sensitivities when sending multiple contingents to avoid problems arising amongst its deployed peacekeepers. Another veteran peacekeeper concurred that these issues did exist in multiple contingents but usually peacekeepers were smart enough not to cause problems. One peacekeeper suggested that it was important for troops in multiple contingents to interact harmoniously because they had to work together in the mission area, and it would make their peacekeeping more effective. One veteran peacekeeper argued that the professional competency of the troops mattered more than neutrality or diversity of deployed contingents.

A veteran peacekeeper suggested that the UN should regardless send out fact-finding teams before deploying missions to “interact with various stakeholders of that country to get the pulse...[and]... mindset of locals; only then they can formulate a dedicated contingent belonging to specific countries only” (IP-5, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-5). He also

proposed that for more effective peacekeeping UN should deploy peacekeepers belonging to the same region of the country in suffering.

Significant academic work has been done on this topic and the conclusion has been accurately summarized by Peter, “UN peace operations have seen an increasing deployment of regional actors” (Peter 2015). Even though there has been reluctance to deploy contingents belonging to regional states given that they might be used as political instruments in the conflict by their government; however, Peter believes that this prohibition is slowly changing as “UN operations increasingly rely on regional contributions”. It is because “regional states are interested in conflicts that affect their security and political interests; therefore, they are willing to contribute to high-risk situations.” (Peter 2015). Here, it becomes important to understand that while political interests and professionalism of the peacekeepers do play a role in the success of the mission, to what extent is identity also a prevalent factor, and how does it impact peacekeeping.

Identity and its Impact on Peacekeeping

Some of the interviewed peacekeepers were of the view that the impact of identity varied on area-to-area basis. The in-training peacekeepers argued that identity as a deployment criterion may serve to increase the chances of a conflict getting prolonged and may also lead to the development of a bias on the part of the peacekeepers. However, most of the veteran peacekeepers, those with real-life experience in the field, were of the view that a peacekeeper sharing a similar identity helped the mission because it made peacekeepers more approachable.

IP-1 opined that “Nigeria...Rwanda, Central and South African countries... were better than other countries which were not from the same region” because they knew the cultures, traditions, and tribes (IP-1, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript-1). As per his experience, a peacekeeping contingent from a similar region and culture was beneficial for a mission because, these contingents were more cohesive and well-coordinated (IP-1, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 1).

However, IP-2 believed that duty mattered more than identity as impartiality was enshrined in the principles of peacekeeping and the peacekeepers were “...there to respect the humanity [and] protect the humanity” (IP-2, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 2).

IP-3, who had served in Bosnia, admitted that a similar identity did promote the feeling amongst the people that they could expect sympathy from the peacekeepers and share their problems more freely with them. He stated, “They (the civilian population) would come up to you expecting a sympathetic view. They would share their things with you...and yes, we would understand it in a much better fashion...the problems of the people of our faith” (IP-3, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 3). Furthermore, in the mission administration, and especially in the command, discrimination on identity aspect was there. As IP-3 put it, “Yes, it is there, but it is not pronounced” (IP-3, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 3). Whether a peacekeeper was white or brown, it mattered a lot on the treatment of the UN in peacekeeping missions. Talking about an incident where Pakistani troops suffered losses because a European contingent refused to go due to non-provision of proper equipment, IP-3 recounted that “The Americans were in the thick of the operation, the Italians had refused to go. So, we had that precedence that when they can refuse then we should also refuse unless we are given those vehicles...” (IP-3, Appendix-A, Interview transcript 3). However, the Pakistanis did not refuse, they still stepped in to help, which led to loss of precious lives. This incident demonstrated that identity was a factor of manipulation in missions, particularly at the administrative level. However, the same veteran peacekeeper also posited that the aspect of identity would not serve as an obstacle to peacekeeping missions making it less effective. Other veteran peacekeepers were of the view that identity did not remain an issue because the mission objectives were more important, and they trumped any identity-based biasedness.

In some cases, peacekeeping mission effectiveness was dependent on the type and atmosphere of conflicts, for example: Cyprus, where identity was not an issue for the mission despite clear identity lines in the conflict. IP-4, who served very recently in Cyprus related that she “...never had any bad experience in that case...” despite the fact that “...identity [was] a part of the peacekeeping mission between [those] two countries, entirely opposite in religion to each other...” (IP-4, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 4). The professionalism of the peacekeepers and the fact that the conflict was inactive ensured that identity did not become an impediment.

IP-5 is a veteran peacekeeper, who was responsible for conducting surveys to get the local perception about the peacekeeping mission. He pointed out that racial difference was required to be addressed as the Africans generally had issues with the whites and no problems with the

Asians. He observed that the locals "...had some hatred against the white. When I observed critically, I was of the opinion they had soft corner for Asian because mostly Asian[s] were Muslim[s]" (IP-5, Appendix-A, Interview Transcript 5). Therefore, he believed that racial differences should at least be addressed to improve the chances of a peacekeeping mission's success.

Discussion:

The main question that this research aims to explore is whether the bond of a common identity, shared between peacekeepers and the host population, can impact the success of peacekeeping missions. Answer to this question will determine if identity factor needs to be considered as an essential element while deploying troops for UN peacekeeping operations. The objective was to uncover any positive or negative link that existed between identity and successful peacekeeping and determine how the consideration of such a link could transform UN peace operations.

The thematic analysis of the data gained from the interviews revealed that most in-training peacekeepers, who were yet to get on-ground experience of peacekeeping, believed humanity and impartiality to be the leading factors for the success of peacekeeping missions. For them, duty to the mission ensured both aspects of humanity and impartiality were adequately addressed thereby achieving mission objectives. For them, identity did not have any impact on the peacekeeping missions.

On the other hand, most veteran peacekeepers argued that identity did not seem to have a negative impact on peacekeeping when the peacekeepers were actively interacting with the host population, as they were clear about their mission objectives and their duty to be impartial. They also revealed that it was very natural for peacekeepers, who share an identity with the locals, to show sympathy towards them. Similarly, the locals also felt more comfortable with peacekeepers that belonged to a similar identity to them. Even in the case of multiple deployed contingents, troops from countries belonging to a similar cultural, religious background or same region tended to work well together. However, veteran peacekeepers highlighted that identity (race in particular) was also used as a manipulation tool by UN mission administration. In their view, it often caused problems when countries that had political issues with each other were deployed in the same mission area. Therefore, an observable link existed between identity and success in peacekeeping missions.

The impact of identity on peacekeeping is a double-edged sword. While it positively impacts peacekeeping in the sense that locals are able to connect with peacekeepers, it can also negatively impact a mission where it is misused by the mission administration, or where contingents from countries that have problems with each other, are working in the same mission area.

On the issue of the host-population's likelihood of cooperation with peacekeepers, who share a common identity, and the potential negative impact of psychosocial factors, particularly in ethnoreligious cases, the veteran peacekeepers were divided. One side claimed that the host population's cooperation with peacekeepers depends entirely on the delivery of humanitarian assistance while the other side argued that sharing a common identity with the locals did lead to a more cooperative host-population. Mistrust of peacekeepers was only caused when the impartiality of the peacekeepers or the image and reputation of the deployed country's troops was not good. Both the in-training and veteran peacekeepers believed that the United Nations was cognizant of ethno-religious sensitivities while sending in troops and in cases of old inactive conflicts like the one in Cyprus, the professional atmosphere and attitude of the troops prevented any such problems.

On the question of whether the UN should consider these psychosocial factors when deploying troops for peacekeeping missions, most of the interviewed veteran and in-training peacekeepers agreed that identity should not be a deployment criterion for peacekeeping missions. However, cultural and language training as well as a uniform training regime for all troop contributing countries could significantly improve the chances of success of a peacekeeping mission.

The results demonstrate a variety of aspects that are crucial to the relationship between identity and peacekeeping. The first relates to two principles of peacekeeping: Consent of belligerent parties and Impartiality. Without the consent of the belligerent or warring parties, one cannot expect that the peacekeeping mission can survive on-ground as it often needs the logistical support of the host-state and a positive response from local parties, including warring factions. Therefore, host-state consent and local consent or acceptance matter a lot to peacekeeping missions. Belligerent party consent is obtained by the UN prior to a peacekeeping mission, this means that the host-state consents to peacekeeping forces

consisting of various countries being deployed, and the warring parties also sign an agreement, allowing the peacekeeping forces to operate. This endorses the impartiality of the peacekeepers because they are deployed with an agreement from all sides, not just the government. Therefore, the interviewed peacekeepers were of the view that 'local consent' to peacekeeping is something which is already obtained.

'Local acceptance' was also highlighted as significant for the mission success. Here, there were two different viewpoints: a) a similar identity was not needed to encourage local acceptance because the locals would be satisfied as long as the peacekeepers gave out the humanitarian assistance expected from them; b) a similar identity or shared identity helped in encouraging local acceptance. 'Local acceptance' rather than 'Local Consent' being the key to a cooperative relationship between peacekeepers and locals was completely unexpected.

Another surprising revelation from the researched data was the fact that the image and reputation of a country and the professionalism of its soldiers was one of the key factors that determine local perceptions about a specific contingent or the peacekeeping mission. Identity was not the key factor here because it was not the nationality of the soldiers that made them acceptable to the locals but the professionalism of soldiers from a specific nationality that makes the locals perceive them positively. Here, a point of concern to peacekeeping was also noted. The fact that some peacekeepers came from countries that had political interests in the conflict meant that these peacekeepers were there to uphold state interests rather than the mandate of the mission. However, the interviewed peacekeepers revealed that if the host-state suspected the peacekeepers then they will not give consent to the mission until the political issues were resolved. This adds to the current literature on host-state/local consent by confirming that there were already good UN procedures in place to ensure proper consent was obtained at the state and local level so that it does not become an impediment to the peacekeeping mission. This research has shown that local acceptance is far more necessary to a mission.

Impartiality, being another important aspect that links peacekeeping and identity, was mentioned several times by those who were interviewed for this research. Completely at variance to what the literature had suggested, impartiality must not be upgraded or removed as a peacekeeping principle; however, it was essential to a peacekeeping mission even more when discussed with regards to identity. The interviewed peacekeepers were of the view that

being impartial displayed their humanitarian approach to the locals and that impartiality was extremely important for the credibility of the peacekeepers and the success of the mission. It prevented any negative impact of the identity issue because peacekeepers knew that their country's credibility and the host-state's consent along with the trust of the locals all depended on their impartiality. This was why almost all the interviewed peacekeepers stressed that while in service, they tried their best to protect and serve humanity.

Coming to troops deployment on the basis of identity, it was not surprising that all interviewed peacekeepers rejected the idea that the United Nations should consider it. In fact, some even pointed out that in certain ethno-religious cases, the United Nations was careful about sending troops from ethno-religious backgrounds that could have made the situation more volatile. The peacekeepers believed that impartiality and humanity would be compromised and that would damage the mission's mandate. Therefore, instead of focusing on simply the identity criteria, many suggested that troops from different countries be given cultural awareness training and language courses to help them better adjust with the host-population.

This training needs to be uniform for all troop contributing countries. Some segments of the training must be conducted with the presence of a variety of nations so that troops were also able to learn to interact and work well with each other.

Inter-contingent cooperation was a surprising aspect to the identity and peacekeeping discussion. It endorsed the current literature that diversity in troop contingents made them more likely to be successful in their mission and brought more detail to the issues that often existed in mission administration and headquarters. Veteran peacekeepers believed racial issues persisted, particularly when one notes the rarity that one sees an African or Asian person in UN mission administration. This ongoing tussle between the first and third world countries was very much prevalent in UN peacekeeping missions because countries from the first world used their financial contributions to control every aspect of the mission while the troops on ground were from third-world countries. In this regard, veteran peacekeepers admitted that their sympathy and understanding towards the problems faced by those in the developing or under-developed countries, in which they were deployed was heightened by the fact that they were from developing countries themselves. Here, it was the geo-economic

identity rather than a social one that formed a frame with which peacekeepers identified with the local population.

Overall, the identity aspect was not proved to have a negative impact on the relationship between peacekeepers and the local population. While it encouraged the local population to be more cooperative towards the peacekeepers and be more communicative with them, the peacekeepers themselves only felt instances of sympathy but were mostly professional due to the principle of impartiality. The only aspect of identity that the veteran peacekeepers admitted would enhance peacekeeping success was language because teaching peacekeepers to converse in the same language as the host-population would go miles in overcoming communication barriers.

The importance of sending in female engagement teams was also highlighted. Overall, more than identity, the professionalism of the troops and their upholding of the UN principle of impartiality was considered the most necessary to good and cordial relations with the locals, with identity serving merely as an asset in the arsenal to a successful peacekeeping operation.

Limitations:

Despite the best efforts to conduct interviews with as many peacekeepers as possible, generalizability was limited. The research demonstrated a diverse sample size including various nationalities, both genders and different peacekeeping experiences. This ensured that the data was not biased and was obtained from a wealth of perspectives. At the same time, to add to the overall validity of the research, field-reporting of local populations that interacted with peacekeepers would also have been beneficial. However, peacekeepers from similar missions and time frames were interviewed so that the validity and reliability of the research was preserved.

Recommendations:

As the above research demonstrates, the bond of a similar identity shared between the host-population and peacekeepers has mostly a positive impact on the success of peacekeeping missions, however this does not mean identity should be used as a criterion for troop deployment. Avenues for further research include:

- A study with a larger sample size so that the results are generalizable.

- More qualitative theory-based research on inter-contingent dynamics to understand what role identity plays within the UN peacekeeping system.
- The role of identity in facilitating peace processes and peacebuilding under the UN umbrella to establish whether identity can serve to build peace and not just cause war.
- An academic analysis of how UN peacekeeping training can be made uniform across the globe while inculcating cultural sensitivity and professionalism amongst all troops.
- The role language can play in enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping.

Conclusion:

Conclusively, what this research revealed the most was that while identity did impact perceptions of both the peacekeepers and locals, it had far more potential to be a source of good for the mission rather than harm. Language was highlighted as crucial for positive interactions with the locals. In addition to this, cultural awareness courses and a globally integrated training regime for peacekeepers was also deemed essential for the success of peacekeeping missions as both these things prepared peacekeepers for their mission and its specific requirements. Ultimately, it came down to the professionalism of the peacekeeping troops, their commitment to upholding the principles of peacekeeping and their sense of duty in fulfilling the mission objectives. The locals will be more comfortable with troops despite their diverse identities if the troops provide the required humanitarian assistance, are reputed to be professional and do not compromise on their impartiality. Impartiality is in fact the most important peacekeeping principle, particularly because it ensures that bias and prejudice do not affect the behavior of peacekeepers in a mission area which helps in fueling local acceptance for the mission and its objectives.

Despite religion being a core cause of conflict in many parts of the world, religious differences do not create conflict between peacekeepers and locals. In fact, the United Nations was very much cognizant of ethnoreligious sensitivities while deploying peacekeepers. In terms of deployment, the current policy of multiple contingents from a diverse set of countries was the best way to ensure a balance of identities in the mission area. Diversity in deployed contingents has already been quantitatively proven in the literature to be more beneficial to missions. The only problems that occur in diverse contingents were administrative. The fact that decision-making power often rests in the hands of people from

the first world or to put it bluntly, white people, is symbolic of the racial and geo-economic segregation at the UN administrative level. The irony was that the problems that most conflict-ridden countries were now facing were caused by people from the first world and now they use the power accorded to them by their financial contributions to peacekeeping missions to control how missions are conducted. This fuels resentment in the locals and contingents from third-world countries towards Europeans and first-world contingents.

Therefore, it would be more accurate to state that identity being a multi-faceted concept also has a multi-faceted impact on peacekeeping. The link between peacekeeping and identity is an overall positive one. It is this positivity that research needs to focus on so that peacekeepers in the field can increase their chances of successfully carrying out the mission mandate.

REFERENCES

- Adams, William C. 2015. "Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews." *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Fourth Edition*, October, 492–505.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119171386.CH19>.
- Agha, Azam. 2023. "Efficacy of Lessons Learnt and Best Practices in United Nations Training." In *International Peacekeeping: Perspectives From Pakistan*, edited by Tughral Yamin, 129–39. Islamabad: IPS Press.
- Aksu, Esre. 2003. *The United Nations, Intra-State Peacekeeping and Normative Changes*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Bellamy, Alex J., and Paul D. Williams. 2012. "Broadening the Base of United Nations Troop-and Police-Contributing Countries: Why States Contribute United Nations Peacekeepers." <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep09650.6.pdf>.
- Bove, Vincenzo, and Leandro Elia. 2011. "Supplying Peace: Participation in and Troop Contribution to Peacekeeping Missions." *Source: Journal of Peace Research* 48 (6): 699–714. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343311418265>.
- Bove, Vincenzo, and Andrea Ruggeri. 2016. "Kinds of Blue: Diversity in UN Peacekeeping Missions and Civilian Protection." *British Journal of Political Science* 46 (3): 681–700. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123415000034>.
- "Brahimi Report." 2000.
- Campbell, Steve, Melanie Greenwood, Sarah Prior, Toniele Shearer, Kerrie Walkem, Sarah Young, Danielle Bywaters, and Kim Walker. 2020. "Purposive Sampling: Complex or Simple? Research Case Examples." *Journal of Research in Nursing: JRN* 25 (8): 652. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>.
- Cuhadar, Esra, and Bruce Dayton. 2011. "The Social Psychology of Identity and Inter-Group Conflict: From Theory to Practice." *Perspectives* 12 (3): 274–76. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44218664>.
- Ellemers, Naomi. 2022. "Social Identity Theory." Britannica. 2022. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/social-identity-theory>.
- Fearon, James D. 1999. "WHAT IS IDENTITY (AS WE NOW USE THE WORD)?"
- Franke, Volker C. 1999. "Resolving Identity Tensions: The Case of the Peacekeeper." *Journal of Conflict Studies* 19 (2): 124–43.
- Franke, Volker C. 2003. "The Social Identity of Peacekeeping." In *The Psychology of the Peacekeeper: Lessons from the Field*, edited by Thomas W. Britt and Amy B. Adler, 31–47.
- George, Tegan. 2022. "What Is a Focus Group." December 7, 2022. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/focus-group/>.

- Huseyin Cinoglu, Ph.D. n.d. "Self, Identity and Identity Formation: From the Perspectives of Three Major Theories." Accessed September 7, 2022.
https://www.academia.edu/11683897/Self_identity_and_identity_formation_From_the_perspectives_of_three_major_theories.
- International Peace Institute. 2021. "Prioritizing and Sequencing of Security Council Mandates: The Case of MINUCA." In.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep37750.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A0882091e8127267169f949ad8bb554bd&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&origin=.
- Kiani, Maria. 2004. "PAKISTAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO UN PEACEKEEPING." Vol. 24.
- Knaack, Phyllis. 1984. "Phenomenological Research." *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 6 (1): 107–14.
https://doi.org/10.1177/019394598400600108/ASSET/019394598400600108.FP.PNG_V03.
- Leone, Sierra, and William Reno. 2001. "The Failure of Peacekeeping In." *Source: Current History* 100 (646): 219–25.
- McKeown, Shelley, Duygu Cavdar, and Laura K. Taylor. 2020. "Youth Identity, Peace and Conflict: Insights from Conflict and Diverse Settings."
<http://www.springer.com/series/7298>.
- Nalbandov, Robert. 2009. *Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited
- Naderifar, Mahin, Hamideh Goli, and Fereshteh Ghaljaie. 2017. "Snowball Sampling: A Purposeful Method of Sampling in Qualitative Research." *Strides in Development of Medical Education* 14 (3). <https://doi.org/10.5812/SDME.67670>.
- Najimdeen, Bakare. 2020. "UN Peacekeeping Operations and Successful Military Diplomacy: A Case Study of Pakistan." *NUST Journal of International Peace and Stability*, January. <https://doi.org/10.37540/NJIPS.V3I1.37>.
- Nikolopoulou, Kassiani. 2022. "What Is Purposive Sampling?" August 11, 2022.
<https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/purposive-sampling/>.
- Peter, Mateja. 2015. "Between Doctrine and Practice: The UN Peacekeeping Dilemma" 21 (3): 351–70. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24526252>.
- Roy, Alain le, and Susana Malcorra. 2009. "A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping." New York: United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support.
- Sebastián, Sofía, and Aditi Gorur. 2018. "How Missions Navigate Relationships with Governments."
- Tsagourias, Nicholas. 2006. "Consent, Neutrality/Impartiality and the Use of Force in Peacekeeping: Their Constitutional Dimension." *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 11 (3): 465–82.

[https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/26294450.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Aa1ffa3b90bbc17b1c9a2561eb6c1b36f&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&origin=.](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/26294450.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Aa1ffa3b90bbc17b1c9a2561eb6c1b36f&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&origin=)

- Victor, Jonah. 2010. "African Peacekeeping in Africa: Warlord Politics, Defense Economics, and State Legitimacy on JSTOR." *Journal of Peace Research* 47 (2): 217–29.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/25654557#metadata_info_tab_contents.
- Viryasova, Natalia. 2020. "Assessing the Effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council: Case of Operations in the African Countries," September.
<https://dspace.cuni.cz/handle/20.500.11956/120807>.
- Vizzotto, Adriana Dias Barbosa, Alexandra Martini de Oliveira, Helio Elkis, Quirino Cordeiro, and Patrícia Cardoso Buchain. 2013. "Psychosocial Characteristics." *Encyclopedia of Behavioral Medicine*, 1578–80. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1005-9_918.
- Ward, Hugh, and Han Dorussen. 2016. "Standing alongside Your Friends: Network Centrality and Providing Troops to UN Peacekeeping Operations."
<Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.1177/0022343316628814> 53 (3): 392–408.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343316628814>.
- Whalan, Jeni. 2013. *How Peace Operations Work: Power, Legitimacy and Effectiveness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Woodhouse, Tom. 1998. "Peacekeeping and the Psychology of Conflict Resolution." In *The Psychology of Peacekeeping*, edited by Harvey J. Langholtz.
https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=3GtkEVDft_oC&oi=fnd&pg=PA153&dq=social+identity+theory+and+peacekeeping&ots=n4MOV6adjj&sig=U9ZuNEjmxWKf3WXp8_miLqwvLgo#v=onepage&q=social%20identity%20theory%20and%20peacekeeping&f=false.
- Yamin, Article Tughral, and Tughral Yamin. 2017. "Pakistan's Foreign Policy Motivations in Sending Troops Abroad." *NUST Journal of International Peace & Stability*. Vol. I.

APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Focus Group Transcript 1

Interviewer

Have any of you gone on a Peace Keeping Mission before?

Peacekeeper 1

No, not me no.

Interviewer

None of you have gone on Peacekeeping missions before.

Interviewer

This is the first one.

Peacekeeper 2

First time peacekeeping operation.

Interviewer

OK, that's good. So that's nice because I wanted to know what your perspective would be about how basically, how people would perceive you or because we all have our own version of how we identify ourselves as Muslims as human beings. as you know, people who speak a particular language, people who belong to particular race or culture. So, my first question to you, all of you is, do you think a peacekeeper would be more likely to interact in an engaging manner with, you know, a sense of sympathy or brotherhood with civilians with whom they share a common aspect of identity with, and why? So, any of you can answer.

Peacekeeper 1

I think it depends on the culture and the nature of the society. Some, some of them maybe they can receive they can deal with the United Nation troops or soldiers, but some of them have aggressive for that because of the previous events, previous incidents, previous actions happened in their country and the I think it depends on the culture of the society.

Interviewer

Okay. Would you like to add anything.

Peacekeeper 3

Just I want to add something that before we go to these kinds of missions we have some culture courses, culture, awareness courses.

Interviewer

Okay

Peacekeeper 3

So, in these courses you have to know what these people do, how to think, how to react, what's their religion, what their customary law so it's. I think it's very important for every peacekeeper or every person who goes for peacekeeping operation to attend this kind of course and the majority of actual peacekeeping operation we have in Africa. And in Africa, for example in Southern Africa because I know a little bit the situation, it's Christian, the majority of population are Christian but the majority of people who are deployed there are Muslims from Pakistan, from Tunisia. from Morocco, from Egypt. It's very interesting, and it's very important. To know how to adapt in their culture with their religion, it's our it, I think. For me, it's the first challenge to be accepted by the population or not be accepted.

Interviewer

I, I think that that's very important as well, because that's one of the reasons why I'm doing this because, you know, you can't really. You mean yes, you are impartial. Yes, you are neutral, but you can't really ignore that when you are in that setting. When you see this different culture, they speak different languages. They have different cultural values, so you really can't. You know you can't ignore. Would anyone else would like to add anything or should I just move on to the next question?

Peacekeeper 4

I believe that this religio-ethnic identity should not be selection criteria, especially in case of the conflicts while sending. If we talk about our national forces, may it be any country. I guess religion is not a major consideration while you are selecting, you need to have respect for those every sort of religions and the ethnic identities by recruiting them and once you have selected them for the protection of a country, let's say in case of a national identity. So then, while sending them on UN mission, which already they have respect, and which considers diversity as a main tool. If we will start selecting on this basis of religious and ethnic identity for a particular country, then it will also compromise their respect for diversity as well. And maybe that impartiality, impartiality may comes into controversy as well, so it should not be a consideration, especially because they were defending a country or some other country as a neutral party. The religion and I guess ethnicity do not have a major party. These are the I guess institutional values which will play a major role in that if those institutional values of a particular country. They are strong enough they have respect for the other religion if they are inculcated over the period of time, it will not have any effect while going to either of the country of either of these fact or religious identity.

Interviewer

So, the cultural awareness courses that you mentioned you think they are very important in this, in inculcating these values and instilling it in the peacekeepers, especially and is-- are language courses are part of these cultural awareness courses.

Peacekeeper 2

Yes, they are like, they call it-- Let's say I'm if I'm going to African country. They have this course which is run in our university in Pakistan that they teach that language which is used over there. So that is very important because if you don't know the language which is used by them, they don't understand what they're saying because majority of the people might not be doing English. So, we need to understand it, but kind of local language they are using. And yes, obviously it is it has been taught over here.

Peacekeeper 3

Not only language, sometimes they teach other jokes, proverbs, something which it's real life in their in their country.

Interviewer

To help you connect with them.

Peacekeeper 3

Because yeah, because I give you an example in Tunisia, our second language is French and in central. Africa, their first language is French, so normally we have no difficulty to speak the but the dialect the, How to speak French, is so totally different it may...

Interviewer

Yeah, yeah.

Peacekeeper 3

It may be mean something like water. It may be referred to another something that I don't know, so that's real. That's the real life of peacekeepers.

Peacekeeper 4

Moreover, ma'am, I would like to add they provide apart from the specific language courses they provide civil liaison officers as well there, even if we don't have that capacity or like battalion is deployed on five different locations. They may not have 5 qualified officers in that language at all five places. So, they may have few people from the local community who may act as a translator while we go and visit those areas the same, we do in our cases once we go to FATA or Baluchistan. So those units going there, they might not be having individ--
- More individuals from Baluchi language or Pashtun so they are given few individuals from that particular cast or that particular language so that they don't have those issues while

interacting with them. So, language will play obviously an important role. Otherwise, if you misinterpret what they are trying to say, the requirements and the mandate will may not be able to be fulfilled.

Interviewer

Of course, no. This is, I think, this is why I asked about language, because I feel like that's the most important thing when it comes to communication. And of course, English is not, you know, we say it's the international language. It is not. You know in these areas where people don't have-- you don't know any of the language. It's very important to communicate with them. So, my next question would be what do you think about the warring parties? How would peacekeepers interact with them if they shared a common aspect of identity with them? Because you know how in a certain conflict you have the civilians and then you have the warring parties. People who are fighting with each other. So how do you think the peacekeepers would interact with them if they for example, share a particular aspect of identity with them like a shared religion or, you know, language, race. How do you think that interaction would work?

Peacekeeper 3

I think the first principle of peacekeeping mission is impartiality. Here I joined what he said. I don't know, Why I tell your name because when (Laughs)

Interviewer

That's fine, I told you. I know that's fine.

Peacekeeper 3

When you are in missions, you are human, you are peacekeeper, you are human. There's no religion for you, that's they are victims, and they are civilians.

Peacekeeper 3

They are perpetrators or they are authorities of host country or something that we you do with other of your with your environment, the religion. For you, for good peacekeeper, of course because I think there are bad peacekeeper out there someone who don't believe in this kind of principle, but for the good peacekeepers he should look to civilian to human to victims without regarding his religion---

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper 3

His culture is, even color or other kind of discrimination.

Interviewer

OK, thank you, thank you.

Peacekeeper 2

And take the lead from this thing is that the ultimate purpose of the peacekeeper is to serve the humanity It has nothing, nothing to do with the religion. Whether whoever he or she is the ultimate purpose is to serve humanity, to help the humanity and to take out that sorrow from that humanity that is the ultimate purpose of this peacekeeping.

Interviewer

To console them, basically the victims.

Peacekeeper 3

I give you; I just gave you the example of southern Africa the minority are Muslims, and the majority are Christians. And as I know personally, the victims are almost between Muslims. Persons who have no rights to religion, practice, or other kind of things. But it's not created is when we talk about military operation. It can be a criteria for intelligence or for other preventive actions because we know the groups who are mostly victims, that's good for our intelligence and our background military background. But when we, we enter around. We have, we are asked for intervention. There is no religion part or no cultural discrimination. They are victims. They are victims.

Peacekeeper 4

Just, Ma'am, I would like to add on the religion, or the particular tribal identity may not be a deciding factor, it may vary on basis to basis like we can give the example in FATA or wherever. It is it is a Muslim fighting maybe in a Muslim, or Christian maybe fighting against a Christian, Pashtun fighting against the Pashtun so that cannot, we cannot say that it may be the deciding factor that Muslim going in Muslim dominated area will be able to better negotiate with those Muslim warring factions. It may not be. It may vary on area to area basis if you may have soft corners for particular tribal identity or maybe particular religion, maybe, but it cannot be a deciding factor, we can say religion, or the tribal identity will play a deciding role in better performing your duties.

Peacekeeper 5

On the contrary, I think it's going to be difficult if you have one side. You know. If just like the example, you gave, if you have the peacekeepers, who are of one side, you know of the conflict, it will be more difficult for him to intervene in the conflict. So, it's better to have a neutral party yes.

Peacekeeper 4

This is what we

Peacekeeper 5

yeah, because wherever he stands, the other party will just think that he's trying to take sides.

Interviewer

Yeah, exactly that was going to be my actually next question that you know this you talked about the you know person having soft corners because it is natural. It is part of our psychology that you know we tend to side with people we are more similar with. So how to mitigate that and how to ensure that you know even the civilians they don't mistrust us, you know, the peacekeepers. They don't mistrust them and then they don't mistrust the. And then you know the warring factions. They don't mistrust the peacekeepers because peacekeepers are there to actually facilitate the peace process. So how do you guys think that would work like how? How to mitigate that risk of you know, mistrust and you know the this. This soft corner issues.

Peacekeeper 1

I think the reputation of the United Nation has (inaudible) all of the peacekeepers wearing blue helmet or blue cap, or something cover. So, if the reputation of the United Nations soldiers is good all around the world, it will be good or in in in special society. But if one makes anything wrong, it will be make the reputation of all the United nation bad so the disciplines. The disciplines and regions punishments or make an action for the non-disciplined soldiers or guys that will be very important.

Interviewer

So basically, it's like it all comes down to how well the United Nations itself, you know, trains the peacekeepers and how well how much the peacekeepers themselves feel like the, you know, the honor of carrying the blue helmet or the blue badge, and that you know themselves that they value the uniform itself. So, I think that's the main take away here that you know. The this is how to mitigate that particular, just that you know peacekeepers must feel a sense of attachment to the United Nations itself.

Peacekeeper 3

I'm not---

Peacekeeper 4

I would like to add on the question mark which often arises on the impartiality or the effectiveness of the peacekeepers, is it has more to do with the geopolitics that people and the local perception is not in the favor of UN once they see the overall geopolitics happening, not in their favor. Whereas on ground realities we are trying, or we are telling them that we are trying to help them help them so.

Peacekeeper 4

Maybe the geopolitics has much to do with that? The this in mitigating this factor and prove ourselves as impartial while on ground as well. So maybe the shift in the policy and the geopolitics towards those suffering countries may be financially helping them going out of the way and making sincere efforts in that regard will be, will go a long way.

Peacekeeper 5

Also think the United Nations needs to be careful in terms of distribution of humanitarian aids. United Nation needs to go the extra mile to make sure there is no element of impressionability of discrimination in terms of aid. You know when you have two warring factions if you are giving 20 parts of this, please give your other faction 20 parts.

Interviewer

No biasedness, basically

Peacekeeper 3

I think there is two sides to one coin. Yes, we represent the United Nations. We have the badge of United Nations We have the sign of United Nations, but also, we represent our country we put up.

Interviewer

country

Peacekeeper 3

the clothes of our country, we put the flag of our country. in every peacekeeping operation and sometimes that what I heard of its participants, they say ah, these countries are good with us. They help us they speak with us. They are more helpful, but the other groups are. They are very serious. They cannot negotiate. They cannot give me. Give us some water if we need. So, you represent yes, the United nation, but the other face of the going to represent your country. That's why geopolitical is necessary. Because when people there they like, for example, Tunisia, even in if you are in a bad situation or in the street situation they come with you, they help you. If you are some problems logistic problem or you have some bad boy spoilers who will try to enter in your camp. They are your first your first risk. You and your first person will help you.

Peacekeeper 4

Moreover ma'am, just to add on to the question which was earlier asked with regards to that particular contingent of a particular country of a particular religion being sent to a particular place, like you can say Islamic, Muslim but they like. They will, they fear will, be that they will, they will become party to that conflict as well. That their particular country is being sent

time and again in that particular area, so whatever they will try to negotiate once they will be moved out of that area again, there is a chance that. In whatever way they have engaged themselves in controlling that situation, they may escalate once they will be moved so the neutral country, or like the prevalent, I guess the precedence which is going on it should be like from any of the country or a mix blend of all different countries.

Peacekeeper 5

That's the.

Peacekeeper 4

Operating there, it will have a check on those individuals and contingent from different countries. Apart from checking that they will not part, that particular country will not become party to the crime as well or the to the conflict even.

Interviewer

And that makes a lot more sense.

Peacekeeper 6

In addition to that is the one country, one contingent, and there are two three countries contributing to different places so that the people the way they are dealing with the people. So, it is. It might be different so because that is not, I mean not come partially to thing, but the way with the civilian handling means that some country, the troops they have very good relationship between these people. And it might be not some other country, but we have to achieve one goal as a United nation peacekeeper.

Interviewer

That's exactly what I was about to ask that you know you both of you talked about different contingents interacting, so of course you know there are people. There might be peacekeepers from countries that you don't like, or we know Pakistan does not particularly get along with, or Tunisia does not get along, Nepal or Sri Lanka or so. So how like, or how does that work? So how do the contingents then ensure that they are working in a United Way? You know, ignoring these differences? And you know to ensure they are providing the facilities that the victims need, the civilians need.

Peacekeeper 4

Yes ma'am, it will create a sort of healthy environment. This diversity. Indian being part of Pakistani contingent or Bangladeshi being part of that, they will try to prove their mettle because at some point they are trying to prove their worth that they are worthy of being sent here. So that legacy and that the competition or being more effective but that will remain there. I guess instead of any rivalry between them there so.

Peacekeeper 5

Yeah, I. Think, I think. Currently I'm not very sure of the United Nations have a reporting system. Monitoring and reporting system. I don't know if that needs to be reviewed or improved such that even the local populace can report the United Nations peacekeepers. If possible, they could also provide them with direct links to United Nation offices. So, if their actions are perceived negative, you know actions from the peacekeepers and individual peacekeepers too. Can also report if he feels, you know he's not being carried along because of issues between states. You know, Nigeria Yeah, and maybe Pakistan has issues and so. You know want to you know act on those issues and treat my Pakistan you know partner unfairly or treat the people unfairly, so I think the reporting system could be improved upon.

Peacekeeper 3

For your information, but the peacekeeping mission, yes, there are TCC troops contributing countries from all our countries. But there is also at the HQ, HQ staff...at the HQ staff. You can find all these country, represented in this HQ, so they work together.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper 3

That's the complementarity of our of our country contribution at the HQ staff you found.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper 3

Tunisia, you found Pakistani, you found Nigeria, you found all of these contributing country you found at the staff manager.

Peacekeeper 1

And if we can talk about that training courses like which CIPS making, I think this course are very important to the participants because it has many officers from many countries and these courses.

Peacekeeper 6

OK.

Peacekeeper 1

I think it's holding in other countries like Jordan and any other country, it will be helpful and make them understand the United Nations regulations, agencies what they have, what they don't have to do, and something like this.

Interviewer

So, the United Nations needs to work more on, you guys believe you know these training courses, these awareness courses they are more important to ensure, and they need to be diverse. The courses themselves need to have diversity. OK, so another I feel like, question that is very important for the study and I think to understand this thing is that do you believe that peacekeeping in a country similar socioeconomic conditions as your own makes you better suited to be sent there on a mission as compared to someone who isn't of the same socioeconomic background. Now the reason why I'm asking this is because I came across this literature and they, you know, they were talking about how American troops where you know very it is, it was in an African country. I don't remember which one, but they were they were very, you know, insensitive to the sufferings of the people, to the what the people were going through they didn't really understand it because didn't have that level of cultural awareness, and because they were from a first world country and then you know it was a third world country, so they didn't really, you know, they didn't really understand the suffering of the people on that level, so do you believe this particular difference, this first world versus third world difference is important or that you know it somehow affects the peacekeeping, or you know, the success of peacekeeping?

Peacekeeper 3

I don't know what kind of country you talked about, but as my knowledge, for I don't defend the USA, but as I know the United States is the one of the first countries who integrate cultural awareness in their training, daily training and they have shown that the that book.

Peacekeeper 3

We have Return of experience from its, their war in Iraq.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper 3

And they give in this book how cultural awareness affect the tactical and strategical objective of the United States. If you want, I can share with you this this this book, and they discovered that some tactical issues of some technical procedure affect the strategic, the strategic objective of the United States. Because it is not respecting the culture awareness of this of this country, Muslim countries. So, I don't know what you talk about country, but I think for United States it takes many training courses in the' in the context of culture awareness, they are.

Peacekeeper 3

They are very development in this in this context.

Peacekeeper 4

I would like to add on that the countries from the first world. It is my point that they may not be able to be more effective and the argument to that is these, especially these African countries where most of the United Nation missions are being run and they have been colony to these, especially first world countries.

Interviewer

Yeah exactly

Peacekeeper 4

So once the local acceptance will not be there because they have, it has a historical perspective as people at the back of their mind from their ancestors. They have caught this thing that they have been the sufferers of all this colonial system as well and by the hands of these, these especially the first world countries. So, the local acceptance will not be there in case of particularly those countries who once local acceptance will not be there, or it may be propagated so the chances of the success they may decrease to some extent.

Peacekeeper 3

For your information, these countries do not contribute as peacekeeper. Now they contribute as staff manager at HQ.

Interviewer

Financial yeah.

Peacekeeper 3

You can find something. Some of these countries, but not peacekeepers. And the other thing they are there in the in this region with bilateral agreements with the country. Example of France. They are all it was in Mali which and bilateral agreement between the government of France and the government of, is not under the United Nation's work. There is bilateral cooperation agreement.

Peacekeeper 6

It means that between those areas, since you talked about Mali, apart from the Peacekeepers whose contributed country separately operated that it is mentioned by the. I mean is that France and other first world countries. So according to the bilateral agreement of that government and that country so it is not limited to, I mean that the peacekeepers, but they're also operating, so we I think UN doesn't monitoring of those, they are separately, I don't know.

Interviewer

But no, I understand because I think I saw a video on this or like a documentary last year on you know how French forces were operating in Mali? They're, I think, counterterrorism they're working on.

Peacekeeper 3

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer

So that was between the government of France and Mali, and that doesn't come under the United Nations.

Peacekeeper 3

Think that that agreement was finished, and France forces go back to you know.

Interviewer

Yeah, yeah it was something like that exactly. So, another thing that you talked about local acceptance. That's another thing that I'm trying to focus on. You know how the three principles of peacekeeping are impartiality, host-state consent and then non-use of force. So in regard to host state consent, do you think that, given how the how the nature conflict has evolved, now, in the modern world, more intra state conflicts, and then you know there are places in a particular country where the government does not extend full control. But you know they still send peacekeepers, so do you think that the UN should start considering local consent as equally as important as host state consent like that the local people, the people in the area where the peacekeepers are being sent. They are more accept you know they are more accepting towards presence of peacekeepers in the area. Do you think that is?

Peacekeeper 3

Who represents his local persons who represent them?

Interviewer

I think the heads of whatever the warring parties because you know in case of Africa there are specific tribes or.

Peacekeeper 5

In those places they are being controlled by rebel leaders, while they are being controlled by the warring factions in those places.

Peacekeeper 3

I give you the also the example of southern Africa because I know more much than other. When the peacekeeping cooperation began in southern Africa in 2014, why in 2014? Because there is political agreement between the government and all leaders of armed groups. 14 armed groups are concerned with the government to build a political peace and to invent the

United Nation operation to work in this area so that exists in the policy of the United nation. It can be found there without the consent of the majority. Let's have the majority of leaders because it now that it can be rescue for its forces, even the contributing country, for example. So, Tunisia, when we are invited, for example, to participate in peacekeeping mission. And, you know, in X country It's not definitely. We accept. We look at this country. If there is rescue. If there are some armed groups who are not concerned with the United nation with the expectation of peacekeepers so we can refuse if there is a level high level of risk we can refuse to participate.

Interviewer

OK you can.

Interviewer

I did not-

Peacekeeper 3

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer

I did not realize because I thought that, you know, once the troop contributing countries they volunteer for a mission, then you know their troops have to go so. I did not know that.

Peacekeeper 3

You know you can refuse at any moment.

Interviewer

OK, well that's

Peacekeeper 3

If now we, are we are participated, for example in southern Africa. Tomorrow we, our leaders, political leaders say no, we should retire. We go back at any moment.

Interviewer

Because that's, I think, the whole point of troops contributing. You know that that you know that the countries that voluntarily, yeah, contributing troops So would you think that you should you think that United Nations should include identity as a criterion on which to you know, deploy troops where they deployed troops? In particular, you know, and do you think that would have a positive or negative effect if the United Nations were to do that, like on the peacekeeping missions?

Peacekeeper 4

I guess I would like to add that if the identity will be included as a criterion for sending the troops of a particular country to some particular area or a particular country, then what will

happen? Or there are more chances that there are chances that that conflict may prolong. Because at some stage that country is financially being benefited as well so that troops country in that particular troop country contributing.

Peacekeeper 3

OK.

Peacekeeper 4

They would prefer to prolong that conflict. Due to some sort of financial assistance which they are getting from the United nation, and because they are the ones who are doing everything so. They would like to prolong that there are chances they would like to. So, it is. I guess mandatory that the countries neutral countries we can say or a blend of different countries. They need to be sent so that they there are very less chances of happening. This sort of situation.

Interviewer

So, I think.

Peacekeeper 3

It's I agree, but there is some examples. You are, I think there are affect negative the United Nation's image in the world. For example, the United Nation operation in Congo that exists since 1960 and now we are 2022. How many years? 60 years or more than 60 years what you're doing there? 60 years until now, there is no peace.

Interviewer

Yeah, good point.

Peacekeeper 3

There is no peace building. There is no permanent peace in this country, so. For some person they think that peacekeeping it's not the correct solution or the how can say the perfect solution for this country? Maybe there is other solution can be taken. What's your goal?

Interviewer

I think it's.

Peacekeeper 3

After 60 years? What's? What's the problem?

Interviewer

And I guess this, this should just be left.

Peacekeeper 6

Missions actually, they peacekeeping mission, so they are doing actually the most you know, violent situation. And day by day, gradually they need to solve this questionnaire. Maintain that the country is normal. Yeah, but it would not be. So yeah, yeah.

Peacekeeper 3

It can be more.

Interviewer

Yeah, I guess no. I think that in such situations, where the missions have been far too prolonged, I feel like you know the mission should just leave, you know, keep providing humanitarian aid, but just leave them to solve their own issues. But I guess in that particular case it would also become worse. It's possible that you know presence of peacekeeping forces is making. Situation better we don't see it. It's only after they leave... So, my last question to all of you, it's a little personal so you know again, no pressure on answering if you don't feel comfortable and it is that would it be preferable for you personally to be sent to a peacekeeping in a country where you share some aspect of identity with the people where you are being sent? So, you know, would it be preferable to you and if yes, what aspect of identity like religion, language, race, history, culture?

Peacekeeper 5

Human rights safe.

Peacekeeper 1

I think it has to. Be, if I understand your question. It has to be. The target or the goal is human rights or protection civilian.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper 1

It will be the first target or goal for the, for me or for anyone. Have to go by this unit.

Interviewer

That's a good answer.

Peacekeeper 5

Yeah, I think for me it's I would like to be sent to a country that understands my language so I can help them as much as I can.

Peacekeeper 4

Same goes for me, preferably to a country where the language barrier may not be, but the other identity. I don't think so. That should, in my opinion, come in my perspective that.

Peacekeeper 6

I should go to a Muslim or.

Peacekeeper 4

Or a Christian that should not be. However, language consideration can be there. That the same language I would preferably because there it will be easier for me to discharge my duties effectively.

Peacekeeper 5

Yeah, but there is a close to that if you have.

Peacekeeper 4

That is the only.

Peacekeeper 5

If the issue between the warring parties is of different languages And I belong to and I share the same language with one of the parties, there. Of course, I would like to have the neutral language. To both parties.

Interviewer

That's also a very fair point, so thank you all so much. This is very.

Peacekeeper 3

Thank you.

Interviewer

You know useful for me. Thank you so much.

Focus Group Transcript 2

Interviewer

First of all, my first question is, have any of you served in a peacekeeping mission until now? Or not? All of you, none of you have gone, okay. So, what do you guys think? Do you think a Peacekeeper would be more likely to interact in an engaging manner, you know, with sympathy, with sense of brotherhood, with love, with civilians with whom common aspect of identity they share like you know, same religion, shared color, same culture, same Language, do you think they would be more likely to be more sympathetic to these people? Anyone of you can answer?

Peacekeeper 1

I mean, you are saying that being peacekeeper, we are not belong to their religion and their situation so we will be able to interact with them in a better manner as compared with other people who belong to that religion that. I think yes, we are. And I think the Peacekeeper are doing their way such manner because the basic concept of peacekeeping and UN is to maintain the peace and security. And we being human, have the humanity and the humanitarian factor in everybody...I think ladies are more into it because we have more intuitions and a societal and the society that we are going from in that society the absorption and like we see things in more detail so i think we can feel their pain as compared to a male peacekeeper and as compared to other peacekeeper over there. Those that are there are already looking at these things so maybe it might be a routine matter for them but for us, such a lady with whom such an incident has happened for the first time, we will listen to her more closely and understand it and maybe we might end up say something so that that other society accepts it and takes some action.

Peacekeeper 2

It's I don't think we need any commonality with regards to religion or culture, because if you share, Same culture, same language, it will create a hindrance or biasedness towards any of the (inaudible) So we should be neutral and unbiased.

Interviewer

You guys don't think there is any impact like of course your identity is something unchangeable like if you are a Muslim you can't change that you are a Muslim, for example if you go to a Muslim country and you interact with Muslim civilians, don't you think there will be like, do you think you would be more likely to, would you say you would have more of a corner in your heart

Interviewer

or would you be the same with all regardless just like you are saying You know humanity.

Peacekeeper 1

I think-

Peacekeeper 3

On a Peacekeeping mission I think we should be same with all religion because we have this is duty assigned to us to being impartial

Interviewer

I think that's OK. So other than that, what do you think about the warring parties? Because you know they're always: on one side we have the civilians, on the other side we have the warring parties that are the belligerent parties that are fighting amongst themselves so what about them? Do you think, because in some cases it has happened like this that civilians say no, we can't trust these peacekeepers because they share a religion, or they share a language, or they share because in some cases like in the African countries they send their forces so like they share tribal affiliations with the other side so they are like We can't trust them. So, do you think even in such cases this is a negligible factor? That we can ignore this this identity thing.

Peacekeeper 4

I think it's all depended upon the religion which we are having and on which they trust more. If they are Muslim, then they may be and the rival entity over there is also Muslim then maybe they will not trust us. as being a Muslim and it will be affected, it may be hindered in our in performing duties also.

Peacekeeper 1

I think it's going to depend on image building of your country like maybe they think Pakistani that these are Pakistani nationals and how they are acting and the other countries how they are acting so if you look in your own society you will see that from one place you are getting aid or support, why we consider Chinese our brother because we think the Chinese will support us in every manner. Why don't we think America is our brother? Okay fine we look at Saudia because of religious ties with them but I think that is the image building of a country that is present in certain that is a helpful element. Because the groups that are fighting there, if they accept it or not? Because they already know from a country's professional record that they are impartial because you see, mission or peacekeeping. Many countries from a long time like since the 1960s I think we are the part of the from 1960, but

there are also many African countries there and i think there are such things that but i think that image building of the country will factor on this That people accept us and listen to us.

Peacekeeper 2

And the militant groups they are part of the social group of the population they are not part of this so, like we can socially identify actually.

Peacekeeper 5

In my point of view, in this there is the more someone; Pakistani troops are not being selected based on their religion, custom or anything else they are being selected because of their professionalism. Like if we have been selected, it is because we have been serving. In military since like 8-9 years i think it's been for everyone and in this there is this factor that basically what we have to do once we go there; not get a bad name for UN and we have to build the image of our country okay? so the UN is there the locals there they're very much aware of it that the UN is there for their protection okay so one odd incident might happen that they share the same religion with the militant group, so we will not trust you or anything else but in most of the cases Pakistani troops have built their image and ensured protection of civilians Because of impartiality and all those things like this pre-training of ours and because of all those things I think that things there are a bit more settled.

Interviewer

Other than that, she was talking about, because you said that the gender aspect.

Interviewer

So, I think that's also very important to highlight because. I think Pakistan is the only UN country which is meeting the gender quota right?

Peacekeeper 1

No, there are other countries, Pakistan is the first country. The female engagement teams.

Peacekeeper 5

Nepal, Bangladesh and.

Peacekeeper 1

Bangladesh has more But I think. They are not the. They have FETs and officers; this we don't know exactly.

Peacekeeper 1

I mean we don't have any idea on this so we cannot comment on that. But what we have learned from this

Peacekeeper 2

Pakistan is the first country that in 2018 deployed the first FET.

Peacekeeper 2

Deployed first FET there meaning female engagement team. First time Pakistan sent there the best part of contingent.

Interviewer

So, do you think because as females? Because mostly, we see in these situations, wartime situations, the ones that take the most brunt are females, mothers, daughters, girls, children, exactly, they are the biggest victims of it, so do you think as females, as you guys, like your gender it allows you to engage more effectively than male peacekeepers? Because and you mentioned this also, because obviously when more victims will be females. Of course, the things you guys can understand it's possible the male peacekeepers can't understand them.

Peacekeeper 2

That's one of the reasons the UN has started sending FETs because they would be more empathetic, the female would be more comfortable while discussing their problems with us. Even this and you can see.

Interviewer

More approachable

Peacekeeper 4

The lady and victimized population. That is why it's better if females are over there and listen to their issues and problems because it is that something which is approachable is also convenient probably UN is so emphasizing on contribution of ladies in UN missions.

Peacekeeper 1

Now first the Secretary General kept it at 15% now it is going up to the 30% contribution of female peacekeeper in UN in 2038 uh 2030 so I think acceptance exists that's how you are going over there and secondly just like all the Ma'ams are saying for example, Allah forbid it occurs in our society we are more preferable to go to the females because you can't tell to a male what you can tell to a female. Even if she isn't your sister, whoever she is but acceptance is there and then motherly nature is in girls since young age, I think everyone feels like that once they see a child. So, I think acceptance exists.

Peacekeeper 5

I think they feel secure in our presence.

Interviewer

Then I think emotionally, because in the presence of male peacekeepers- yes physically also but also because I feel like while they can feel physically secure in the presence of male

peacekeepers but emotionally you can't share things, like with female peacekeepers they can feel physically secure and build an emotional connection with them.

Peacekeeper 5

But they have gone through throughout their conflict and after that some of peacekeepers were also involved in immoral activities over there. That's why maybe they feel more secure in presence of female peacekeepers.

Peacekeeper 4

And secondly, I think there's a gender hesitation as well from both sides. What I can imagine, the male peacekeeper I think I think he may be hesitant listen the issues or the problems of female sufferers and maybe it may be over there the victimized one. She may be hesitant to tell her issues and problems to the male peacekeeper as compared to the female peacekeepers so I think these factors make it more good and...

Interviewer

Important, especially in areas where there are more female victims. there at least gender, troops should be sent gender wise so that they can help out i think that's important. So also, language because you know like there is culture/ religion then we have language, because it also feels like a big barrier because you know, you need to communicate with the population. So how important do you guys feel it is for peacekeepers to share a language with the local population?

Peacekeeper 2

It is.

Peacekeeper 5

It is important is very important.

Peacekeeper 1

I think we have been given the interpreter over there. Yes, interpreter is there, but yes, it is an important aspect. When the language is same you can easily explain what you are saying and communicate easily Obviously by the presence of some third party.

Peacekeeper 4

Third person, maybe the comfort level may not be the same, just communicating your problem to this person one person. So obviously they should be at the same language. It is better language.

Interviewer

So, you guys think that the UN should focus more on language courses than interpreters.

Peacekeeper 1

I think its desirable, it should be like this so that it is easy in understanding.

Interviewer

And I think it also bothers people that there is a third person in the middle of the conversation and that direct thing in communication can be misinterpreted. Yes, exactly.

Peacekeeper 5

If you are a beginner of some language, then. This is also a problem.

Interviewer

That you are interpreting incorrectly

Peacekeeper 5

You cannot.

Peacekeeper 4

You cannot communicate in better. Way and obviously one body cannot understand these, trusting the interpreter all in.

Peacekeeper 5

All whatever saying.

Peacekeeper 1

And then if interpreter manipulate the things what will they do so this is this is thing that should be.

Peacekeeper 4

Obviously, there are elements. Obviously, there may be, but the trust issue is always like the old-

Peacekeeper 1

Again, I think maybe they'll learn a few languages we don't go over there we have, don't have the feedback. Maybe that Lady is over there. They know some languages word, English word because English is the medium all over all over the world, they may not know Urdu, they may only know a few words.

Peacekeeper 5

Maybe they are.

Peacekeeper 1

Able to go explain to them in small bits and pieces maybe that is their level but when we go in the field then we understand the situation but it's a good point that to overcome the barrier when UN is selecting but it is again not possible, that all of them, like Congo is French speaking so you can't send the entire force full of French soldiers You need the contingent from.

Peacekeeper 5

The different world.

Peacekeeper 2

In the local community People community, I think. They understand and speak a little bit of English. And OK, UN can train us for three weeks for language in two weeks? What would be the proficiency of that language and that would not be the ideal, so I think language is fine, but something is better than nothing. But it's like gesture and actions.

Interviewer

They're also a language and I think that every human being. You understand with symbols or as long as you're willing to make the peacekeepers and the people both are willing to make that effort.

Peacekeeper 2

I'm sure.

Interviewer

And another thing that occurred to me was that you talked about the fact that entire French contingent can't be sent that makes no sense, so what do you guys think on the basis of identity should the UN select troops considering all this or send an impartial party or multiple contingents from different countries to ensure-

Peacekeeper 1

Basically, I think multiple contingent, i think there are multiple contingents.

Peacekeeper 2

I think in the headquarter in CAR is with one country and the under-command units are with another country like with different countries even in in Congo we I think they're different each country, there will be a Pakistani contingent and a Bangladeshi contingent so it's a mix and match.

Peacekeeper 5

It's about each country is willing to contribute and also about the interest of states and countries.

Peacekeeper 5

Pakistan needs something from UN.

Peacekeeper 5

Pakistan is contributing more in terms of troops and equipment and things like that. France is not willing to send their this big contingent to Congo for them.

Peacekeeper 4

exactly

Interviewer

That's what I'm asking.

Peacekeeper 2

Be able to-

Interviewer

Theoretically, do you guys think Of course UN doesn't do this now but basically this is what my thesis is trying to you know, explore. Do you think this is what the UN should be doing, or it would be beneficial for them to be sending contingents on the basis of identity?

Peacekeeper 1

They're not sending it on the basis of identity.

Interviewer

Yeah, yeah, I know. Exactly so theoretically speaking, do you think they should do that's what I'm asking like would it have a positive effect?

Peacekeeper 4

There is a both process when you follow one time or one concept, because maybe people will be more comfortable seeing their identity and similarity, between the contingent and the sufferers, there will feel more comfortable, but there may be cons as well. The negative aspect of being the partial will be more partial to these people. They will be partial to those people. So, what I think. It's both causing for both cases while identifying selecting selected lot for these things.

Peacekeeper 1

So that's my I think they shouldn't choose on basis of identity.

Interviewer

Do you think? The present system is fine. Yeah, contingent wise.

Peacekeeper 5

Otherwise, peacekeeping will be very difficult if they.

Peacekeeper 1

It won't be peacekeeping.

Peacekeeper 5

Will not be definitely they will not be impartial.

Interviewer

not be impartial If we talk about Congo.

Peacekeeper 4

I, we know nothing about Congo If I be as a part of a contingent are being sent to Afghanistan maybe we have our own interests and we collect our own news or if we take the example of India how can we work for peace there; we will be partial towards our country.

Interviewer

How about we put it opposite, not sending peacekeepers where there are political interests of those countries but then again countries might not contribute because many African countries do this actually (inaudible) Let's look at geoeconomics conditions because Pakistan is a third world country. Most countries with peacekeeping, are third world countries. Do you think that as people from the third world country, you are better equipped to understand the problems of the people of a third world country as compared to the first world country female contingent that is there?

Peacekeeper 1

First world countries also send their troops but yes, I agree. As I told you before, they are able to understand and look into the things more clearly than but you have US troops, Jordan is not a third world country, Jordanian army is there, Bangladesh, South Asian armies are there but again mix and match you can't say that if third world goes only it will understand or first world goes and might be first world army be helpful like

Interviewer

in peace building and government institutions good point.

Peacekeeper 1

I think that is their first, there must be from Pakistan as well but at the strategic level in first hierarchy there are developed countries.

Interviewer

I think that makes sense to because the policy making will increase because they have government systems. So, my final question to all of you would be, would you prefer to be sent on the basis of your identity, preferable or not, on the basis of an identity? And would you prefer to have you share an aspect of identity with the population?

Peacekeeper 4

For us, it is preferable for us.

Peacekeeper 2

Since we as a part of the Pakistan army wherever they'll send us

Interviewer

Everyone can have a different opinion, that's fine.

Peacekeeper 5

I think it's part of our duty and duty comes first when you are waiting in.

Peacekeeper 5

Otherwise, if we are. If we are any civilian organization then we will prefer to go to Saudi Arabia and it's Islamic country and we will be more comfortable over there because when we go to UN countries, they are vulnerable to females, we feel unsafe over there if but it's part of routine over there.

Interviewer

Another thing I wanted to ask about the female engagement team, Of course I know the operational aspect so how much you in operational aspect are.

Peacekeeper 5

We are with community.

Peacekeeper 1

Society. different UN days, celebrating them and encouraging people.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper 1

That is a basic.

Interviewer

So basically, exporting your culture, but at the same time and then promoting UN as well.

Peacekeeper 1

Security aspect is being looked after by the male, we go and interact with the community (inaudible) arrange games for them and Present rewards for them, so they know that these people came.

Peacekeeper 1

Then again there is a new concept of patrolling that we get to do there, then we go and see if any woman or child that has any issues so we have the channels to reporting them. UN does the induction on that basis.

Interviewer

So, another thing I wanted to ask of course you can't know all the cultural nuances in a country for example I think in Nepal they are not allowed to, point, to like point, that's considered disrespectful. Do you think UN should inculcate cultural awareness courses such as this?

Peacekeeper 3

We are not going to reside in local community and we being the mature ladies, we know that.

Interviewer

You can have an-

Peacekeeper 3

Dos and don'ts we know.

Peacekeeper 1

I think there is a deployment training over there, as do I think those are the focused on this more here it is pre-deployment training.

Interviewer

OK

Peacekeeper 1

It might be that is related to the culture and better those people who come from there can tell us This service, and with this maturity everybody knows.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper 3

But we don't have to adapt their culture.

We have respect their, their customs...

And but we, this is all duty there now, we have to do our job and have to come back, and we don't have to hurt anyone over there. This is the main purpose for that matter to learn all of their culture from the scratch. I think that would be in another. The training cost a lot like.

Interviewer

But you know from cultural awareness you know what you shouldn't like. I was reading about a mission i think Sierra Leone in which the US troops like they were behaving culturally insensitively, and people had an issue with that like the local population had an issue with that even though like there to help the local...

Peacekeeper 1

They give awareness. I think a little bit, but again those who have gone can better tell.

Peacekeeper 1

We do share our notes with our seniors and seniors seminar on...

Interview Transcript 1

Interviewer

Thank you so much first of all sir. My first question is: how many peacekeeping missions have you served in and in which ones?

Peacekeeper

I have served in one peacekeeping mission which was in Liberia, West Africa. This was in 2004 and 2005 thereafter, I have visited 1 peacekeeping mission. I have visited few peacekeeping missions. I have visited a peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone, and I have also visited our peacekeeping mission, which is in Central African Republic, which was in 2019.

Interviewer

OK sir OK. That's good, and in what capacity, like what did you serve as?

Peacekeeper

Peacekeeping mission in Liberia. I was a deputy sector commander of the entire country of the Pakistani contingent and I was observer in Sierra Leone and in Central African Republic I just went, as a person from Pakistan to see the peacekeeping mission as part of our CIPS peacekeeping training department.

Interviewer

Sir, you had a lot of interaction with the people there as well as the contingents and with the local population as well.

Peacekeeper

Yes, I had a lot of interaction with the peacekeepers appointment holders like the SRSG or who is head of Mission, also force commanders, sector commanders. The persons dealing with Mission Support, Director of mission support, and definitely a party from the local troops. Not from Pakistan, but beyond that like from Bangladesh or Nigeria or some other countries like Rwanda, we have been going and meeting them on drum.

Interviewer

OK Sir, so during your time as a peacekeeper, did you feel more sympathetic or inclined to help people who shared an aspect of identity with you such as race, religion, language or were these factors like negligible? Like did you feel like there were people there even particularly among locals that share with you the religion or the race or the language, so did you feel like?

Peacekeeper

The principle of peacekeeping is impartiality, so we have to abide by that principle of impartiality. And impartially means because you're not supposed to get involved in any sectarian, religious, ethnic, or cultural or create differences. So as an impartial person, any human being with which had human rights, fundamental human rights, who can come across they may be from any religion, from any caste, from any color. He was a human being for us, so we never categorized anybody or segmented anybody while carrying out our peacekeeping duties in the mission area, because that is what the principles are for. Peacekeeping and then what everybody has to stand by. That so we had the different community people. Definitely it was the persons which were requiring a lot of support and help in a form of medical treatment in a form of education in a form of create creating some shelters. Some houses for them or making paths tracks or roads for to their places of habitat or wherever they were living. So, the religion, the color, the caste/creed are there, but as a peacekeeper we don't get involved in that.

Interviewer

So, sir, what about from the peoples were like did you feel that the people you were interacting with the civilians did they have any sort of issue with, you know peacekeepers being of certain country? Were they comfortable with everyone or did peacekeeping actually helped improve their image of people from certain countries because...

Peacekeeper

The local inhabitants or the beneficiaries of assistance what we call them are knowing every peacekeeper from the country. They come from their own traditions, customs they have, so they adopt themselves accordingly. That is what the beauty is because the peacekeepers they are, it is evolving and evolving. Every peacekeeper change after six months to one year. The entire contingent or the entire personalities. So, the local inhabitants, which are which are there living in and around the peacekeeping missions, their compounds, their installations, their setups. They have adopted themselves with the with the locals. So, it is a very good gelling up with the with the local inhabitants. As vis a vis that and at times they, for example, from the Pakistani perspective they knew that we are not religiously allowed to do certain things which they know very well so that their approach was not to get us involved in that vis a vis a person which used to maybe have hard drinks also or go for other issues because it was.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

Part of their religion or not banned from their religion point of view. So, the local inhabitants or the beneficiary is adopted very well to there. So, I think there's hardly any difference. Yes, the only difference where the locals or the person which you are serving will get perturbed is when you are not able to protect or execute your mandated tasks, which is like protection of civilian human rights monitoring, improving their livelihood. Whatever it mandated task is or targeting their daily needs like provision of war, safe drinking water, giving them proper medicines. In case it is allowed medical camps rebuilding their education institutions for that matter. So that is where this division or difference between a peacekeeping mission be it from any country vis a vis the local inhabitants come in.

Interviewer

So basically, or for both sides, it just matters. that the peacekeepers are impartial. And you know. They fulfill their mandates, people happy.

Peacekeeper

Yes, because you are with up the impartiality goes with the consent, the moment you are partial you are taking side because they are Muslims or Christians, or they are from your tribe, or they are closer to you so the consent can be withdrawn by the host government. So, impartiality is having a so very direct linkages with the consent. And the peacekeepers have to be impartial or neutral for that matter.

Interviewer

Definitely sir with regards to impartiality and host-state consent. My question is that since you've worked in Africa and maybe you've seen contingents from African countries coming into, you know African countries to peace keep. So, you know in many cases they, African countries are, you know, accused of having political interests in the peacekeeping mission, so what do you think about that? So, in that case, how would like...how does one mitigate that that you know that point that you know the maybe the peacekeepers are not impartial and I'm talking about Africans.

Peacekeeper

There are two or three issues in that. One is that the consent of the country will be taken whenever the peacekeepers are coming from any country. Like, for example, a mission in South Sudan when it was being when it was started in 2014 was probably. There are certain conditionalities that peacekeepers from those countries will not be part of a peacekeeping mission that they never gave the consent, or that so those countries were debarred as part of that engagement, which that host government had with the UN. So first is that thing when the consent is there and the country, the host country agrees to peacekeepers from Africa, for

example, rather, we have got six missions in Africa, as of now. If the peacekeepers of the country have given a consent that yes, the country is from African countries, can participate in the peacekeeping mission so that that differences are resolved at that level at the government level, because the consent is there. Now the only thing which is which makes a difference between the countries from Africa, executing or conducting peacekeeping is the professionalism. Many of the countries like Rwanda, Ethiopia, Cameroon Gabon, although they are a very good army, recognized army, professional army but not as mature as other armies of the world from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan. So, when professionalism comes in and their approach to a task is different from approach to our task from a South Asian countries and that approach of African country is not that accomplished or negated, so there the discontent or the understanding between the host government and that local African country is there but nowadays some of the host country countries are also accusing the neighboring countries of going into the political dilemma, that's the big challenge for the UN, because on the one hand they have given the consent that those countries can participate in peacekeeping mission.

Interviewer

And then?

Peacekeeper

But now they may find that those peacekeepers from that x country are also participating in the political or tribal affinity or political culture. Where there are lot of them mistrust going on between the host government and those countries which the UN has to resolve and. It is the host government which can refuse a country that we don't require a country from that place of Africa. So, it has to be drawn. It is it has to be drawn by leave. Recently it happened in many countries of Ethiopian contingents. That they were not very professional. This is what has been said and there was some mistrust because of which they had to be drawn back. draw down started.

Interviewer

So, I think that the UN needs to focus on like when countries are giving host state consent for other countries to participate in a peacekeeping mandate in their country, resolve the political differences between them and then ensure that the contingent goes in.

Peacekeeper

Yeah, that trust because you are, if you are having the legitimacy and credibility, that mistrust has to be resolved. Otherwise, the peacekeepers will never be credible, and they will never have the...

Interviewer

The people will not respond.

Peacekeeper

The local ownership, one of the principles of peacekeeping is local ownership and acting ownership, so that will not be there. So, UN has to play its part whenever that mistrust is there to resolve the to a political dialogue. And in case the host country is still insistent of not getting the peacekeepers. (inaudible) been taken like I told you. In South Sudan, they had that conditionalities that those countries will not participate in any peacekeeping mission in South Sudan, and the UN agreed to that so that consent authority is remains with the host government, and this consent is not permanent.

Interviewer

This state host state-

Peacekeeper

This can, during initial consent was given, but during the passage of time when there are certain evidence of those persons of those African countries getting involved in the political anarchy or political mistrust. The consent can always be withdrawn of those countries.

Interviewer

Sir, you talked about local ownership as well and it's very interesting because it's one of the things I'm focusing on is how important local consent is in sending Peacekeeping missions?

Peacekeeper

The local consent is actually it is the host government, the government which is in power which gives the consent.

Interviewer

In some areas, the host state government does not have actual authority like it is part of the state, but you know there are rebel factions, or rebel have taken those; non-state actors or the warring parties control that area.

Peacekeeper

But when the host state gives you the consent to the UN as a part of an agreement which is set of the host agreement so far, we call it before that, the host government has to undertake a peace treaty with all the armed factions, militant factions, of the host government that consent has a peace treaty document attached. Till that time there is no peace treaty which the host government has done with the militant organizations which are within that country. The Peacekeepers mission is not executed because if in case there is no peace agreement between the rebels or the militant organizations and the host government and the host government

terms cause the peacekeeping mission to be deployed. Then the peacekeeping mission cannot be impartial, because then it will be partial because it is playing the side of the host government against the rebels. So maybe the rebels are right, and the host government is prejudiced and is involved in killing of civilians.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

Involving in human rights violation. So, the rebels have to give the consent. Now the question is that this militant organization, which we just called are not organized to the consent by the leader, is there by a militant organization, but the consent down the ladder is not there, so there are technical challenges which the peacekeepers have are being trained to face that maybe that armed boy, armed soldiers, child or girl or woman is not adhering to whatever the commander says regarding not establishing a check post, not attacking the civilians not attacking the woman and they're doing it because it is not a very organized entity. They are rebels. They don't have a, they don't have a pay structure, they just need spaces attachment and they can shift from A organization to B organization on their own. So those challenges, the consent definitely is at the state government level, along with the militant commander level, but down the chain at the lower tier of a militant organizations or rebel organizations. The mistrust is always there. They will be having challenges. The peacekeepers were always faced with challenges by coming across a person which are not abiding by the agreement which are establishing provoking civil civilians in attacking peacekeepers. Establishing a check post not we're not letting the peacekeepers pass through certain areas, so the peacekeepers are told to negotiate, mediate, train to negotiate, mediate liaison, with every tier. That is why in a multidimensional peacekeeping mission, it is a political dialogue, which is the major important role which everybody every peacekeeper is supposed to play so that he can execute.

Interviewer

As military diplomats.

Peacekeeper

Whatever is there, but these challenges of a lower tier, not adhering to the peace agreements or not adhering to the norms, we will always be. There has been there and will remain there.

Interviewer

So how much do you think a shared identity with the host population impacts a peacekeeping mission? Do the chances for success increase or does it have no effect? Meaning if you know

a contingent is present in an area where more majority even the warring parties, all the civilians are Muslim, and the contingent is from a Muslim country. Do you think it increases the chances for that peacekeeping mission to successfully carry out its mandate?

Peacekeeper

Yeah, it definitely because lot of resistance and you have and the problem of the of the peacekeepers are that they are not trained for public dealing. The military persons, the armed forces of different countries are never trained for the public dealing. It is the civilians job, design civilian job, like a liaison or like an integrated investigator or a person who can have this power so this challenge will always be remained because you are trained to use force as for self-defense that from mandated task, although you are given the strength of a political dialogue for mediation for negotiations. But then the second challenge is that as of now there are about 125 countries which are participating in peacekeeping operations every country has a different training regime. They just they. They just come for one year. So, a country from Africa, a country from South Asia, Southeast Asia, maybe South America have a different concept of training and different modalities of approaching the same problem. So, this different training regime. Which each country has its own as per the training standards also plays its part in at least at times it is good in executing work, at times it is not good in executing work because at time use of force is different from every by every country of a of a similar situation.

Interviewer

Do you think cultural awareness courses should be then applied in all training? Across the world, countries should in all the UN should ensure that countries that contribute to this should be part of that. That you know requirement that you know these people have been trained in cultural awareness of the country they're being sent into, and language courses you know for better-

Peacekeeper

Communication, yeah, I think that is. That's it, right. We do have in-mission training segment of, in-mission training, which is country specific training we do call it. But the problem again is that in a UN it is a multi-dimension where you have different army of the world in a same sector performing the same duties. But that interaction between the armies is not there because every country is training its own soldiers. For peacekeeping so before deployment, interaction between different armies of the world, for cultural awareness, local ownership, knowing the traditions, customs, or the consent part of it is never there, so the approach is different. So, one of the reasons is that different armies of the world which are the troops

contributing country in a bigger manner. They should have some coordination before being deployed that there are some, in some places they are there and then they carry out this interaction and cultural awareness. Maybe the host country gets more involved, in a in a setup, maybe the UN can have a have a place like in in Uganda, Antibe they have got regional training center where the armies can land and the host government persons can come brief them about the culture about the traditions, the challenges, threats and then then execute the work.

Peacekeeper

So, this is possible.

Interviewer

And I think it's very important as well because you know, again, because. Language you know especially language because in that way they can communicate better with warring parties and civilians. And you know and culture so that they accidentally offend anyone.

Peacekeeper

Yeah, I think you're right, because definitely most of the missions nowadays are in francophone countries like Mali, CAR, and Congo, so the challenges of the person which are speaking English or Arabic are always there. So, understanding of the culture through the language is also very important, so.

Interviewer

And then this would positively impact the peacekeeping mission.

Peacekeeper

Well, definitely.

Interviewer

So, sir in the mission that you have served in, the mission that Sir, did you see identity at play in any form? When peacekeepers and host population were interacting, like did you see any you know you have an example of you know when having a similar or different identity was either beneficial or not?

Peacekeeper

I couldn't get you.

Interviewer

Like say for example you saw local people and peacekeepers interacting who had similar aspects of identity like similar language and cultural values or something like that. So, was that in any way you know help the mission or not?

Peacekeeper

Helped the mission, the countries from Africa, which are carrying out peacekeeping mission in in in Africa, under Chapter 8 or Chapter 7 for that matter.

Peacekeeper

Like Nigeria, like other countries, Rwanda for that matter nowadays or Egyptians North African countries not Egyptians but basically African countries, Central and South African countries. They were better than other countries which were not from the same region because they knew the culture. They knew the tradition; they knew the tribes. They knew the local norms so that they were they used to be understandable, or they used to be more approachable vis a vis the persons which were not from that culture, not from that creed. Not knowing the tradition. So, they had to change themselves in adopting that. But the countries which were having the similarity in in traditional cultures were definitely better in executing their mandatory task.

Interviewer

So, and in in case of intercontingent, meaning that you know because in some cases like you said multiple contingents from multiple countries are posted in the same place, so did like you know the fact gave. For example, if Pakistan and Bangladesh were posted, the fact that both countries were Muslim or shared same geographical area, in any way make their cooperation stronger or?

Peacekeeper

They, the countries from South Asia like India, Pakistan and Nepal, Bangladesh. They are the largest troops contributing country. So definitely and because it is impartial, you don't have any issues with the only thing is peacekeeping. So, because we had a similar culture, similar relations. Same professionalism. Especially when we talk about India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. So, it was a better, good cohesion, good coordination and at times we some good arrangements which happened if we are our neighboring contingent or the contingent within the same vicinity in the same area of responsibility. So that definitely was beneficial for all, for all the troops.

Interviewer

For the, and Sir, my final question is how this coming from a country with different geo-economic realities meaning first world versus third world impact how peacekeepers behave in a mission? You know, because you know, because we come from a third world country, we can better understand problems in a third world country as compared to, you must have seen peacekeepers, so, I'm sure America or other first world countries come, does the fact that you

know they come from countries with different geo-economic realities impact how peacekeepers behave?

Peacekeeper

The irony of the faith is that most of the developed country, which is the biggest donors of the peacekeeping like USA, France, Spain, Mexico, China, even Japan are not the major contributors. The major contributors are the developing countries, underdeveloped countries and developed countries, as if you take South Asia are among the four among the five to four are from South Asia. Then their certain countries like Africa, like Egypt, like Rwanda or to some extent Ethiopia. So those are the biggest beneficiaries, so the developed countries are not having that defined contingents like infantry battalions or they have their representation is merely staff officers or military observers or some token in civilian representation so that that thing is there always there. And definitely, there's always a divide between those developed countries offices because they become more authoritative at times. They are betting better in technical know-how better in artificial intelligence because of their own upbringing or they feel because of the colonial power, like the French, like Belgium, like the Britishers that they have the scent of a bit of semblance of a bit above others because of those reasons. So definitely but as of ground reality most of the developed countries don't have any contingents. They are token representation which are there in the different appointment like the SRSG, deputy SRSG, or in the civilian sector they have the representation not as a part of sort of infantry battalions or aviation unit or a medical hospital that is not there.

Interviewer

That's a good thing. You know it's a good thing. Mostly it's third world people interacting with third world people.

Peacekeeper

Yeah, it is. It is good thing, but it is a bad thing because in a minute they're the biggest donors. The donors which are giving the money are not involved directly, they're outsourcing peacekeeping to the developing countries and the problem again, with the Africa is that it is a resource rich country, so there's always your question mark that these developed countries are also targeting through the peacekeepers by the underdeveloped countries and developing countries.

Interviewer

So, they're not investing.

Peacekeeper

Saving their own interest by outsourcing peacekeeping. Those developed countries where wherever the benefit, beneficiaries of all the all-natural resources are the world countries, so that is always the question mark and Africa especially.

Interviewer

Yes, Sir, so your overall take on this we know how identity relates to peacekeeping. You know, from the discussion, you must have understood the points I'm trying to get at. So, what's your overall take on it? That is, it like, is it something that the UN needs to consider, or you know, like at least focus on at least a bit you think?

Peacekeeper

Yeah UN. The first is the major purpose, as well as maintaining international peace and security, so it has to undertake peacekeeping Now the donors are the peacekeeping works on donations, or the country give the donation. That is why we're going take, execute, peacekeeping missions. Otherwise, they will always not be financed. There's no special budget for peacekeeping in UN dedicated for every country has to contribute. So, you, peacekeeping has to be relevant to control the conflict. Peacekeeping has its own successes like in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cote D Ivoire the peacekeeping operations remain for almost 14-15 years, but it got deducted. It is, is remained as democratic stable government which is till today and peacekeeping has its own reverses. Like in Congo, CAR, Mali for that matter that there is no stability in spite of the so many years of peacekeeping going on so it's quite a challenge for the world definitely. But definitely I think as a percentage of time the peacekeeping missions which were once 25 to 48 on the reduced to only 12 and out of those 12 only four or five are traditional peace keeping missions like observer group in India, Pakistan, and Arab, Israel. So, they are traditional. Active are about 6-7 peace keeping missions, so I think they are refocusing on getting involved in peacekeeping missions. How much they can get involved and what is at stake by the host government or by the peacekeepers.

Interviewer

Thank you so much.

Interview Transcript 2

Interviewer

Sir, my first question to you is how many peacekeeping missions have you served in and which ones?

Peacekeeper

So, the first time I, you know visited, was in in 1997 in eastern Slovenia and the when- the where the war you know that was going on and the senior most appointment that I held was in Liberia in 2004 or 2005 and I was deputy sector commander, there sector commander is equivalent to is a kind of a brigade commander. You know, so, so, I, we had under our sector the two-infantry battalion, Pakistani infantry battalions and the two engineers companies, the logistic components. And there were two more Namibian armies battalions also, which was just serving at that time we were holding critically important area where in fact the battle had gone in, between the belligerent you know, the groups and organizations.

Interviewer

OK Sir, so during your time as a peacekeeper, did you feel more sympathetic or inclined to help people who shared an aspect of identity with you? Like you know your religion, language, culture or does this not matter as a peacekeeper?

Peacekeeper

You know, I mean, we have in fact strong proponent of, you know, I mean throwing the idea of respect for diversity, United Nation, you know, mandate itself also dictates that while we people are, you know, doing their job and performing our duties in the mission area. It must be in line with the, with the enshrined principles of peacekeeping and the principles of peacekeeping.

Interviewer

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeper

Other than the concept one, the most important is the impartiality. So, while doing our job, our inclination towards the religion, inclusion to the color, creed, you know any other kind, or you know regional aspects and so and so forth that is simply immaterial. We are there to respect the humanity. We are there to protect the humanity so long as we are doing the same, I think we are performing our job and the day we look the other way then; we are asking for a trouble.

Interviewer

Yes, yeah, so. So, what do you think for the people? Do you think the people respond more positively to the you know, the local population or the warring parties? They respond more positively to peacekeepers who are, who share a certain aspect of identity with them?

Peacekeeper

We were lucky in this regard that when we landed there, the people were generally inclined towards us, they were looking towards us for the reason that they had suffered a lot. The DDR, that's a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process. You know that that was my mission was assigned that responsibility also. So, when DDR was going on lot many other mission patterns was also involved, and we were also in a way, you know, assisting the OSHA people, the DDR people, the UNHCR people, the UNICEF people. So, it's a kind of a hand and glove approach, you know, while we were, you know, integrating our operating at the mission area. So, people were more inclined towards that, their youth to look towards us. But frankly speaking among the communities or the IDPs who have been, you know, displaced from their from there you know, houses and home. Already very poor people, you know, and that too displaced from their homes. It was a catch 22 situation. To whom should we assist? How many people should we assist? What do they need more? Do we have something to offer them or otherwise? So, whatever we could do? Within our capacity we did and whatever we could do in in raising the issue to the appropriate, through appropriate chain of command to the to the appropriate organization. We did that so that in in whatever capacity we can alleviate the suffering of the of the Community, we do that.

Interviewer

So, for both sides it's a focus on you know the provision of humanitarian help. So, identity it is not factored into that. And so, my next question is, in particular, in the particular missions in which you have served, did you see identity at play in any form when peacekeepers and hosting population were interacting like did you see that you know they were, you know, certain groups of people responded better to certain people from certain countries. For example, you know people speak a language and they will respond; responding better to people who spoke a certain language or had certain similar cultural values?

Peacekeeper

I mean, yeah, yeah, the response, berifted people is always, you know, contingent upon the upon the response of the peacekeeper. The, I mean this is something this equation is something very natural. You know, if I'm caring if I am concerned if I am taking care of those people. If I am, you know, trying to establish, a kind of security, you know, environment around their camps around there, around their houses. You know if I show my

presence there and we make an effort that militants should lay off their, the buffer zone. We are ensuring their respect from the bridge rent parties with regards to the buffer zone and all that. Whatever we are doing. If this positive impact is instantly felt by the population at large, but frankly speaking as a military alone, can't you know, bring peace and the idea, peace has to be commensurate with the assistance being provided to the people within the humanitarian domain. Humanitarian, then the protection of the civilian you provide them with the food, provide them with the shelter, provide you with the health care, provide them with the schooling, providing with the social you know. I mean there, I mean, you know aspects, those your benefit in that area also is easier said than done in an environment where everything has been burned where everything virtually looted destroyed is very, very difficult task. For I would say everyone, I mean we the peacekeepers are generally held responsible for anything and everything that goes on in the mission area. On the contrary, it is the United Nations responsibility.

Interviewer

exactly

Peacekeeper

It is our responsibility of all collective United Nations will, if that will be obviously forthcoming, funds are forthcoming. The funds are being put on ground I mean without while observing that transparency and accountability procedure, people will quickly recover. And if the funds are, you know, being you know they are there with put away and the funds are not being appropriately, you know, utilize their use. Then we are asking for a trouble and what happened is all those who are you who were stranded are stranded as a peacekeeper in the area. They say it is their responsibility, On the contrary, our responsibility. The military people responsibility is purely and purely the physical protection. Humanitarian protection is all about our complete societal makeup you know So that that is in fact 90% of the complete thing in the mission area. So, keep this factor in mind though, finger pointing is done, but those who are pointing the finger, they must be must never be oblivious of the fact that more important is the humanitarian assistance in the mission area.

Interviewer

So, you talked about, you know how there's funding and you know you talked about how it's the responsibility, United Nations collectively building on that. Another one of my important questions is how do you think Geoeconomics plays into this? Because you know some peacekeepers, they come from third. We- most come from Third World country. This third world countries that contribute most of the troops and then there are some appointments held

by the troops from First World Countries, so do you think there's a difference in behavior because of course the people from Third World countries will better understand the problems of the third world countries they are going into. You know they're helping the people, but people from these developed nations they might not understand it and they might have this degree of insensitivity towards the sufferings of the population. So, what is your thoughts on that?

Peacekeeper

Yes, agree with you that the third world countries you know that the system that that is prevailing within the United Nations the developed nations is generally, they are, they shy away from deploying their own troops because first they understand what, what, all by the way, who created all this fuss in a whole of the Africa?

Interviewer

The developed nations, they developed because they.

Peacekeeper

They they're quite clever. In this regard, when did they understand that they it? It is, it is the mess they have, they have themselves created. How can they really justify before those people now standing that look? We are here to assist you. So, what do they do is that they still hold, frankly speaking. Because in the United Nation, whatever funds are allocated for the peacekeeping missions it's division amongst the all countries who are members of the United nation as per the you know as per the respective countries you know I mean financial condition, so once they pay as per their financial condition, they then they try to dictate their terms within UN also, so they find those places and staff and the and the UN mission headquarters. You know on certain important slots where you could keep a pulse about the mission area, however the people who are who are deployed on the ground facing the people they come from the Third World country because they can't provide financial assistance. They say all right, we are there with our troops, who they are the military. So, I quite agree with you on this account. If they come from the relatively developed, underdeveloped nation, they understand the different miseries. Probably the troops have witnessed, the officers have witnessed, and all those who are there, those who have witnessed. So, it's a kind of a, you know, I would say collaborated or integrated mechanism. You know through which we operate in the mission area.

Interviewer

Yes, Sir, and Sir, what about different contingents interacting with each other? No, because there are many missions where contingents from different countries are working together. So,

what do you think about that? Do you think that contingents from countries that share identification factors like race, religion, language, culture, even geographical proximity? Like in case of Pakistan. Bangladesh do you think they interact better with each other and work better with each other as compared to countries that you know don't share any such similarity.

Peacekeeper

They ought to interact you know that way, because if they do not, you know, integrate their efforts in the mission area then we are asking for a for the gaps we are asking for the holes which needs to be plugged by the leadership at the mission area, people come from diverse culture, diverse tradition, different religion, different you know, colors, creed, different habits, and all. That is why United Nation peacekeeping training is so important. You know, in training is a comprehensive syllabi that have been crafted, they designed by the Department of United Nation, integrated during Service Department. Now this department has devised these syllabi depending upon the typical needs of the mission area what needs to be told to the potential peacekeepers before they are deployed in the mission area so that that something which is in which comes in terms of the mandated task which comes in terms of the legal framework, the conduct and discipline aspects. And the mission partner, they're functioning their way. I mean our responsibility towards protection of civilian our responsibility towards child protection. You know, number of other aspects which needs to be to be, I would say. Made part of this complete training and that is. That is what which is? Actually, being in the mission area in in in ensuring a professional approach amongst the participants that that they are trained in ensuring an integrated efforts in working towards the collaboration.

Interviewer

Yes, Sir.

Peacekeeper

Coordination ensuring flexibility at the mission level to all fundamental. I would say aspects they are being taken care of.

Interviewer

So do you think while selecting troops, the UN should consider this aspect of it? identity and when you know, ensure that countries are contributing troops. They train their peacekeepers, all of them in cultural awareness courses with language courses. Do you think that's necessary?

Peacekeeper

That that that that is mandatory as per the United Nations Security Council the resolution now none of the country shall deploy their troops without having, you know, giving them the appropriate training.

Interviewer

should do that?

Peacekeeper

OK. So that is that is something mandatory.

Interviewer

That, but most countries they do not follow this because.

Peacekeeper

No, it's not like that. All those countries who are who are sending their troops who are sending their staff officers who are standing their military observers and who are standing their enablers, the so-called they say they are supposed to be to be to be doing this courses and mind you. Once an individual has been at the individual level, one that that the contingent training is done, it needs to be done because the respective states, respective countries have to give certified to certify that their troops are professionally trained #1. The staff officers and enablers who has to be to who has to be individually deployed in the mission area they are they also they are, they also undergo training. They do the online courses of different departments. Also, like UNICEF department like UNHCR There are people like UN women people. So, these those short courses but they are there to raise their awareness on those important issues, #2 that once they land in the mission area initial two weeks, they have their way again go through that training.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

What kind of training I mean is needed and that mission area so real on job kind of a training that is also insured.

Interviewer

So that is OK. So already UN is making efforts towards this.

Peacekeeper

Yeah, yeah, this is. It's a it's a kind of a you know, multi-tiered efforts that that that that is going on is not that one-way traffic that that is there.

Interviewer

Yeah, is.

Peacekeeper

Other countries are also obliged. They train, they stay at the staff officers also and once they reach the mission area in between, they do the online courses. Having reached the mission area, they do. The two weeks course with them.

Interviewer

Also, yeah, so Sir, how important do you think is local consent in peacekeeping, because you know, in many peacekeeping missions, because host-state they give consent. But then in many peacekeeping missions, what happens is in the actual area there are warring parties that control that area. So how important do you think local consent you know with the warring parties and with the civilians is beneficial to the? How important is that?

Peacekeeper

Local consent is exceptionally important. Because when once those warring factions they are, you know, you know, doing their own nefarious activities. After all, one has to see that who is the next sufferer- Not sufferer or the public at large, the people, the community at large, so unless we unless we develop a better understanding at the United nation with them, with those militant groups achieve their consent or job will be very difficult one.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

So, so that is why United Nations leading principle is the consent of the belligerent party. So, you, when you when, whenever a mission has to deploy under even Chapter 7 even then United Nation exhaust all efforts. That prior to the deployment of the potential peacekeepers or the peacekeepers, the consent of the belligerent party is obtained so that that is very important.

Interviewer

They so they left the.

Peacekeeper

Mission can deploy even without the consent, and those exceptional circumstances. When, when the community are dying in a large number, when there is no writ of the state left there and the people are suffering.

Interviewer

They need extreme humanitarian help.

Peacekeeper

There is an extreme level at that point in time. UN can directly intervene under Chapter 7. Also, there's nothing no hold bar on that, however human beauty of the human view working of the human as they look for an amicable political settlement of the issue. Political settlement of the within which the military becomes an instrument of dealing with the things where our little incision needs to be done. They do it, but bulk case through the medicated environments you know, through interaction, through negotiation, through mediation, through persuasion through even funding. You know those groups so that they are in a position to stand on their feet, lay off from the militancy and. So, on and. So forth.

Interviewer

So, so do you think? How do you think the UN should consider identity as a factor when selecting which contingents to send in which countries? For example, you know like. For example, if it's an ethno-religious war that they are sending the troops into. Do you think you should avoid sending in contingents that are of that particular ethnicity or religion that could make that situation more volatile?

Peacekeeper

That aspect is also viewed at the United Nations level. You know when, when the. When the integrated strategic framework which they call when the process within under integrated strategic framework is set into motion by the Secretary general, that is the time he views this aspect as well. There are those countries initially, like for example, South African, you know. South Sudanese you know people they objected to the deployment of deployment in the in their mission area from any other Muslim country. Then gradually the consent was achieved by the by the by the Secretary General, so they are mindful of this fact that they which country. What kind of troops they do they need from where the troops will come? Another aspect is their operational readiness of troops.

Interviewer

Yes, of course.

Peacekeeper

Also, in certain circumstances certain country is unable to, you know, provide the troops you know if they're unable to, so what to do so they, the troop, the countries who can ready-made I mean you know availability of their troops, so they send their troops can be deployed. So, there are a number of other factors. One that they have to achieve balance within the region. Also, you know the troops coming from African region troops coming from Far East Group coming from the Southeast, South Asia troops coming from maybe from the from the Middle East. Also, all those countries who have already put across their paid for sending their troops.

That list is already with the Secretary General's Office of Military Affairs, Under Secretary General that the office so that that office you know deals with these aspects, but they do. They are cognizant of this fact with which you are highlighting, and they do, they do take this aspect that what ratio/proportion may be assigned to different countries, yeah.

Interviewer

Okay. So, so do you think in that regard would it be better to send and, either would, what would be better, neutral force like a force of multiple ethnicities or country? You know a multi-country contingent would be better or neutral because you know you don't know what, you know how can you know it's a neutral country? You think, what is your take on that?

Peacekeeper

Both have their pluses and minuses.

Interviewer

Minuses.

Peacekeeper

You know, actually, ideally speaking that I mean like. For example, if I am going, I will be very comfortable with my Pakistani troops. You know I should be given maybe 3 infantry battalion, the general components and all that so I know them culturally very well. I know the degree of, you know, training. I know their professional competency. I even know their weaknesses. So, for me it will be much easier to operate in the mission area, but I, as I say, human look for a political and within politics. You know, every strata, every individual; PDM counts, Imran counts, and all other parties, whether they succeeded in their objective or not. Then also you know so that is, that is what you go to ensure you know and UN actually ensures that that on one hand they have.

Interviewer

Funding yeah.

Peacekeeper

You know this this comparison which you're highlighting, and the second compulsion is that. Other countries, their, their desire is also required to be best, but you and is mindful of the fact with regards to the professional competency of the soldiers because incompetent soldiers deployed on ground staff and observers deployed.

Interviewer

They have political interests, yeah.

Peacekeeper

You can. They will be an apology. I tell you my recall our days. Then now Namibian army is no more deployed. You know when the Namibian army was deployed our 2 battalion was under command. My sector had quarter not a week would pass. A coffin would be flowing back to their country. Why? Because 85% were suffering from HIV and AIDS. what to talk of their other competencies. OK. Because that that that country had recovered from the war and they had, you know all ex-militants they were allowed to enter the army. So once one thing you are no more in the army, you're fighting a jungle war, then there are no ethics. You know, no, no morality left.

Interviewer

So professional competence is very.

Peacekeeper

Very important coming to that.

Interviewer

Do you think that an individual, an individual peacekeepers motivations are affected when they are interacting with like, the population of warring parties of similar identity, meaning that would individual peacekeeper be more motivated to help people or be more motivated to, you know, make sure the mission is a success if they share a particular aspect of their identity. The population they are sent to.

Peacekeeper

It depends upon their training, you know the degree of preparation, the kind of sensitization that has been done.

Interviewer

Okay

Peacekeeper

Of those, those people before they move like just give you a small example, I gave you the example of AIDS. You know. Now when our troops. They are. They are medically tested before they sent abroad and once, they come back they're again medically tested. Individual found suffering from HIV and HIV/Aids will be shown the door. So, if that one threat is on the on the on the law side is there #2, we call the HIV and AIDS people? And the come and sensitize them, even in the mission area, the HIV and AIDS people come and take their classes, sensitize them, and educate them. So, it's very important you know that they are not only the professionally, but they are also educationally, they are ethically, they are morally, and they are lawfully sensitized.

Interviewer

and prepared to provide humanitarian aid because that's their main purpose.

Peacekeeper

That's prepared for otherwise. There ought to be, and if within the mission area mind, you within the mission area you've got to exercise a continuous check upon your under command, you know. After all, they're all human being you know, and they are likely to, you know, commit mistakes. That is why they say the Army peoples law is very ruthless. You call you generally call it, but I tell you if that law is not ruthless. Application has to be ruthless. I'm telling you laws application because when the law is in black and white like this, if the law is black and white everybody has red, everybody has been made to understand in the language. He can understand why he is again committing and any violation there is committing a violation he should have it. Otherwise, everybody else would start doing it and army, without the application of law is I'm telling, I'm telling you it. It is a kind of a mob rowdy mob which will become uncontrollable.

Interviewer

That's why there is a strict guideline.

Peacekeeper

yes

Interviewer

Final question is that Overall, do you think this as this identity, aspect of identity has an impact on peacekeeping missions? Like do you think it does have a positive or negative like what's your overall take on it?

Peacekeeper

aspect of identity, in what regard which?

Interviewer

Sir in this regard of you know of troops being of a certain religion or be troops being of a certain race with and their interaction with people of similar or dissimilar in in the.

Peacekeeper

You know what happens is that the moment you are deployed in any of the mission area. The pulse is instantly generated with regards to the performance of the individuals who were deployed for how and in, do you know I mean two soldiers standing: one standing slouchy, you know keeping in case weapon, you know weapon on the, on the ground he is, he is walking around in, in, in, in a in a casual manner. People will instantly form an opinion that they lack some kind of a training and lacks some kind of a dignity in in himself. So, what I what I mean to say that it is measured by the Community and the people on the ground.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

The one that they should be professionally competent, but then that competency must be demonstrated by their on-ground performance. And on ground performance we also, we do understand it's not their exclusive individual performance. It is a win situation they have to look for whether other human partners with substantive component with the support component with the NGOs, with the INGOs, with the volunteers, with the local governments you know there are 10s of you know stakeholders and plates. So, this integrated approach at the mission headquarter is ultimately a force multiplier. Ultimately, source of success I have never vouched, and I have what I have experienced while serving in the mission area that you all must always look for a win situation, win, win. For all don't try to add feather to your cap, you know and inadvertently trying to take you know law or the responsibility of other people in your hand.

Interviewer

For all parties.

Peacekeeper

Why should you do, let the other people, to work, educate them, guide them, sensitize them, request them, and whatever way, so that they could come for the system. So that is how it should actually function.

Interviewer

Thank you so much, Sir.

Peacekeeper

You are most welcome.

Interview Transcript 3

Interviewer

My first question is, how many peacekeeping missions have you served in and which ones?

Peacekeeper

So, I have served in two missions. The first mission was in Bosnia in 94-95, where I was part of the military contingent, and we were deployed in in in an area which was in the border of the Muslims. And in the. And in the Croats, it was the area of Christians, you might have heard the name of the Tuzla. Tuzla was very close, and we could, we could hear the news that came in the papers that Christians would bomb the Muslim places from the tops virtually we have seen it happen, the second mission was I was so this was in the field. The second mission was in in Sudan in 2007 to 9. So, I was in the field headquarter, so I was dealing with the mostly, the human resource element and I was one of their master trainers, also of the United Nations Observers that come or the staff officers that come...Not much, but interaction was there with all the, because there used to be a central brief every morning, we used to attend that and then we used to visit the contingents also. So, there was that then in 94 I did a, a peacekeeping, United nations peacekeeping course from infantry school in Quetta, which is now here, so there were only two schools at that time, there was one in Pakistan and one in probably Norway or Sweden. That is now in NUST, it has been shifted there, so that's also a, actually a world-recognized facility, because ours was the first course, we didn't have foreigners in our course. The foreigners started coming after our course.

Interviewer

Yes, I had the opportunity to meet them.

Peacekeeper

Yes

Interviewer

They are in our department. During your time as a peacekeeper, did you feel more sympathetic or inclined to help people who shared an aspect of identity with you or were such factors negligible?

Peacekeeper

Look, first of all, is the humanity If there's a, if it's a man or woman or children are in trouble, so I would, I would see their religion color, caste and creed later and the trouble first. But everything but if everything is equal so yes by nature, you are inclined to the people of your color, to the people of your faith, to the people of your ethnicity, if it, if it goes to that, it is

but natural is, it is there's nothing special in this. But if you, if you start. If you see a man, if you see the people in trouble, you will not stop and you would not stop and start asking what is. If you cannot see that color, you don't start asking their faith or something of this sort.

Interviewer

So, what about the people? Do you think they were more comfortable with peacekeepers? That you know shared some aspect of what they were able to communicate more effectively with them.

Peacekeeper

Yes, for sure for sure, and the people of the faith they were more comfortable. They would come up to you expecting a sympathetic view. They would share their things with you, hoping and yes, we would understand it in a much better fashion and the problems of the people of our faith. So, it does, it does help greatly, and people who are in trouble in the area where you are serving for sure they are more comfortable. They are more peaceful; they are more open to listen to you once. If you have the, if you have the faith.

Interviewer

And what about language? Because I asked some of the peacekeepers who are going to be deployed and they said that you know language is also important. You know sharing the same language, at least having language courses to help you communicate.

Peacekeeper

In the case of language, the UN provides you the interpreters. The UN provides with the interpreters, but for sure there's no doubt in this. If you speak the language, you more than half of your job is done, but if you do not speak the language, you have the interpreter their people understand it's not possible that you speak actually, even if you learn a language here. There are slangs of the. Of that country which you cannot understand, just to give you an example Arabic, I'm coming from an Arabic country of late. The Arabic they teach you here is of very little value is of very little value to what goes there.

Interviewer

You're right.

Peacekeeper

Yes, it does.

Interviewer

Yeah, because dialects are different.

Peacekeeper

A lot likes for example. In Saudi Arabia, tomorrow is called 'baachar', in Iraq it's called "Buqra" So there's no compatibility.

Interviewer

Different dialect.

Peacekeeper:

In Saudi Arab, they say "kaifa haal."

Peacekeeper

in Sudan the same is called "tamam", in Iraq it is called "Shonaq", So all have the same meaning. "How are you?". So, there is no compatibility so for example like I say that Urdu; Punjabi is the slang version of Urdu There is no compatibility so when people would come to us the Iraqis would in a minute tell you these are Saudis, these are Moroccans So there is So much of. Difference so language I think obviously the advantage of language so obviously. There's no argument. There's no denying fact but it's not possible It's not possible for the language thing, so what would happen was when we would go there, what I had done for every mission was that I would have a card of key words on it. Keywords like counting from 1-10 or 20/30 and other things like who, what, when, where, why, things like that I would develop them and I did this in Bosnia and in Iraq but in Iraq I had a dedicated interpreter so I didn't have to rely on this as much, but in Sudan I had to use this because there you are at your own and when you go to the market.

Interviewer

In the particular mission in which you served, did you see identity at play in any form, when peacekeepers and host population, either warring parties or civilians, when they were interacting?

Peacekeeper

Come again.

Interviewer

In the mission in which you served; did you see? You know the people the host population or the warring parties were interacting with the peacekeepers? Did you see this identity aspect? That we are talking about at play

Peacekeeper

For sure for. Sure, for sure. Like Bosnian was a Muslim mission. In Sudan, a Pakistani was the SRSG who is the special representative of the secretary general Mr. Agha Jahangir Khan, Jahangir Qazi he was a career diplomat Yes, it is. There, but it is not pronounced. It is. Nobody, especially Europeans will not pronounce it Let's be very clear that these the, the,

the, the, the, the Christians. The other faiths, they're smart to act, we are like this that we would do something outrightly, so this is not a let's be very clear. This is not a very smart way of doing it. But what I would say bad luck. It was in a bewilderment, if you have ever gone to Kashmir and if you go on a car, for two hours at a time no car will come So it was that sort of story. There was a lot of snow, it was actually an area like Kashmir, with mountains on one side and a pit on the other. There was a lot of snow, and our cars were moving like a train. So, what happened was it took a turn, and we weren't hiding and actually there was no place to hide, but in the hearts of hearts now I look back. I was a young man This is not a smart way of smart way of doing and getting caught and then getting flagged in all the conferences. Pakistan and the Muslim contingents are helping the...

Interviewer

Impartiality

Peacekeeper

Muslim impressions. Let me tell you when you go in the individual capacity. The three of us are a team two people must at least sit in the car together, there can be three as well, one would be interpreter And I would not say. It is planned, organized, but all of a sudden. Your vehicle will be stopped, and they will take away everything you have and then you find out that they have kept things in the cars, that they are taking then what happens, if you are wearing a watch the formula for that is the United Nations says that before you enter the mission area, you will declare everything costly. You have which includes your sunglasses. For example, if you go to smaller things then watches obviously, and you declare the value, and nobody bothers. The watch was \$100, but you declare that it was \$800, you say that was its cost in our country, no one will come into your country and ask This is another smart way of doing it They actually you get rid of your old things, or you get rid of the things and the price you get is much more than more than this.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

Ultimately, your question was, it reaches the hands of those guys who are actually waiting or looking for it. So, at that time I was communicating with New York, it was a small thing which came into my mind There were either two or four Germans, two for sure, maybe four. They went from the mission with the weapon with the bulletproof with the helmet. OK. We are writing them a letter and nobody's bothered so my boss he was an Egyptian, now he was

Egyptian so the faith comes in here, so I said Sir if this was a Muslim country then this would have become a foreign policy problem for us by now.

Interviewer

Okay

Peacekeeper

he was like just leave it. Then there was another party, they were also 2 or 3 maybe. You talked about faith now if this was a white-colored person or a Christian then I would never have spoken to him about this, I would not have been able to talk about this with him Then there was another one he had to give, If I'm not wrong, 4-5000 dollars...

so, there were actually it was actually a facility you used, like actually somebody you stayed in a hotel and you just. I would not say. Run away that you just check out without the paying and you come and go to Khartoum, and you come back from there and write a letter for the \$10,000 nobody's bothered and again the Europeans come So these problems and this faith thing, these expressions, and the way they are that's separate but it's a manifestation. The people whom in whose area you operate, they for sure are very comfortable in expressing the problems to you and you also understand this sensitive well, when I was in Bosnia, but the way of the army is Post comes later and they make the Masjid first. So, there was a village it was called Warish, the khateeb used to come and pray with us and there were a lot of problems there with the IDs and stuff. The restrictions were that You cannot enter any place and these places of faith thing would become a big issue.

Interviewer

The issue there was of faith right.

Peacekeeper

Exactly. If this was a Christian post, would he come? Look at the bigger angle, if you look at the map of the world, the area in which the English had us deployed it was irrelevant If we did anything or nothing, if you look at, you must have heard these big names Tuzla, Sarajevo was the capital It was all filled by the Europeans so nobody knows actually what is, so they manipulate. these things at every level.

Interviewer

And you think that because this case of Bosnia and Serbia was such that it was ethnically and religiously charged conflict. Do you think in such cases, this identity aspect can actually make peacekeeping efforts less effective? It could hamper it. Just like you were saying right now that you guys were posted in an area where there were a lot of Christians and you guys

were Muslims Do you think it? You know it, it created some sort of obstacle. In successful peacekeeping.

Peacekeeper

It will not. It will not because you see when there are two Warring factions, Muslims, and Christians. So, you have to have a force which has which represents both the countries and keep this thing in mind that the force composition. your top guy who has been selected the SRSG He has been selected by the. Explicit consent whether that concept, whether that consent was obtained on a gunpoint, or. Not that's a separate thing but they were selected based on a science. Actually, SRSG is not only nationality if all of us are Pakistani, and someone says this madam will come so he has to agree to that also. So, the first thing is the country. The second thing is the person who is coming. He or she must also be acceptable, their tone as for example we were in Sudan, our SRSG was Pakistani, and our force commander was Indian.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

I remember one day we came early in the morning there was a Sikh he was sitting there extremely worried so I asked him what happened, he said Sir what can I say, they told us yesterday that go for your mission, we went for the mission, and there was a lady again American They actually did not want that to happen. What did they do? They busied them with the cost of the mission, tell us the Cost benefit analysis, what is the operation cost and what we will achieve. The Indians worked the whole night on the calculations now this guy was a pilot So when a pilot flies a mission, they are not worried, that what is the cost of the plane or the fuel, what is the per hour flying of the plane.

Interviewer

That's not their job.

Peacekeeper

They worry about achieving the mission and the training for their mission and the targets and so when the Sikh came.

Peacekeeper

He was very smart, he said tell the madam, if she wants the mission completed the tell us otherwise, we are not trained for this We are here for mission accomplishment we are not here for the mission's cost benefit analysis. So, the junior officers were disappointed that we spent the whole night working and this general came and ruined our hard work.

Interviewer

Since you specifically pointed this out so I'm going to ask, there are also such cases where you are part of a contingent where people of multiple nationalities are working together, like you just told me that you were Pakistanis and your commander was an Indian, so in such cases does it also create a problem, or You are able to effectively work together.

Peacekeeper

You see, I'll tell you two things on the face of it, they have agreed, and you have done. It depends on the personality. If you get a stupid guy like this, then it becomes very difficult. And if he isn't so stupid, he is a top man. For example, like me I'm a brigadier or a colonel or the CO of the unit He is a general. I cannot stop him not. To come. Then I'll try left and right to resolve the situation, so this guy doesn't come but he is wise by himself. So, he will not come but this happens in every country, not just Indians. Some like to take advantage of the fact that Oh I have some Pakistanis or Indians under my command So let me show my, exercise my power and authority. Let me also tell you with this also, when so many of our people died in Somalia, you must have seen that American film "Black Hawk Down" Yes that was also on UN missions. The problem with that was that Americans went as usual, they did not tell anybody Once they were stuck up, they called for the help. They called the Italians first. Italians said until you give us hard skin vehicles we won't go. We won't go in soft-skin vehicles, it is, firing was going on. Then they asked the Pakistanis and probably there was another European country also, they also said the same. Anyhow, we went there and 10 people of ours were martyred and their bodies were dragged behind cars. Americans projected themselves in that movie "Black Hawk down". Now what I'm telling you is, in that peacekeeping course we were taught this as a case study but fortunately by the same officer who was there Who was actually part of who was actually may not be actually that close in the operation, but.

Interviewer

okay

Peacekeeper

For sure he was he was there so, for sure these problems exist They exist.

Interviewer

Yes, these issues exist and because There is this tussle that we discussed before between First world and Third world countries. So do you think the fact that most majority peacekeeping peacekeepers that go from third World countries and those peacekeepers go into third world countries and must understand the problems of those third world countries and the problems

of the people as compared to those that come from America or Europe or the first world those peacekeepers probably won't be sensitized do you think that's also.

Peacekeeper

There are a few things in that, first of all, Europe has a lot of Conscription. They don't have standing armies like us. When I was in Iraq, I was talking to some Brigadiers, and I thought why are they talking like this and then I found out that they are conscriptees. Their army has made them a Brigadier I don't know under what criteria, but he doesn't know anything. Now I've seen European contingents in Bosnia obviously there were not many In Sudan there was none. Western Africa was all a French colony. There, you must've heard about Mali, not the UN mission but another African mission which they ruined and pulled out from So in a nutshell, if you look at the world map, where are all the missions, they are in Africa. East Africa speaks English West Africa speaks French. Now the contingents we have in West Africa, it is not compulsory on them to know French but if you say you want to, like apply To be in a Position they would say. Do you know how to speak French? so this how also they control?

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

So, this is one way of controlling that if you want someone to come, they should be able to speak B2 grade, which is that they should be able to speak relatively fluently, so then you can bring You are much better than him. But he has given you a technical knockout because he has required for you to know both English and French So this is how they directly indirectly control the.

Interviewer

that which troops are posted were.

Peacekeeper

No, not the troops, but the people who are the decision makers. The troops went, we went there, we have a lot of troops in West Africa. The person who has to give the order, this is how he is short-listed So if he is a French, either he is looking for a Job or if he is French speaking then he must've done some language course in France. One-point leads to another Germany, France, Spain say learn our language, then Your education is free.

Interviewer

This is exactly how it is.

Peacekeeper

We don't have people in Germany, France, and Spain and these are the three major languages. If you learn these languages then you can go to Switzerland as well, meaning in all of Europe, only London is English-speaking all rest are non-English speaking. So, these are all their tactics.

Interviewer

So, this is how they control everything. From top to bottom the command structure of the mission; how it works and where who is posted.

Peacekeeper

If you wish to go to a new to New York, it is very difficult for you to reach there via third world countries. You can go there from areas which are life-threatening but they never. This is racism is a lot Its not expressed, but we are brown, neither white nor black, but you will never find a brown You will have to be 10-12 times at times 20 times better than from a white guy to be in this system. The UN is a very big bureaucracy at every tier. In UN missions Over the period of years there has been no success So people from these third world countries, they go there to spend time and come back. I used to say this to my officers that there is no need to die here because it's not our country We are not here to die for Bosnia. We are not here to die for Sudanese. Or I had that experience of having gone through that course. What did we earn? 9-10 people of ours would not have died if we had also refused to go. We also had the precedence. Is our life not as important as the Whites. The Americans were in the thick of the operation, the Italians had refused to go. So, we had that precedence that when they can refuse then we should also refuse unless we are given those vehicles, but our people didn't think that. Therefore, since I was the senior-most there, I would say that you don't need to show it, but You should be very clear that we are not here to die for Sudan. We are here to spend the time. Have good relations with people. Then just pass on and obviously the UN pays you well also.

Interviewer

I think what you said just now was very crucial like you are saying that you are not here to die for them, you don't need to show it but you're not here to die for them, So I wanted to ask you despite the fact that you are Muslim or something like that, it has nothing to do with that sympathy or brotherhood feeling?

Peacekeeper

The benefit is, is that if you are in the area and if you're a young officer then you don't have that big of an area. First thing is that stay rest assured the area that you have is an insignificant area... the fact of the matter is the area you are in; you can help the people You

would set the goals you would get the community; the community would do this, and they would ask the community That what are your problems. Put in some money, call Pakistan and ask people to sponsor things So there the delivery happens of the work but if you say your overall Sudan has been affected then it won't be. The area where you are, you notice there are a lot of Female patients but there are no female doctors. If there are doctors, then there are no female nurses. Then you tell Pakistan that this is the issue here, if we want to; Americans have this terminology "winning hearts and minds" So if you want to do that then Obviously then you can micromanage that female doctors or nurses of which specialty are required And just to tell you, they sent a rescue plane on lee rotation with 5,6,8,10 whatever doctors you can send. They stay there for a good 10-15 days or for a month then they come back. Because in our culture female officers have their own problems You can't divorce them from these problems like you can European female officers. So, you have to look at that as well Just to tell you, the only female contingent is deployed by Pakistan.

So, the first female contingent, all female contingent was deployed by Pakistan.

Interviewer

So as a crux of this entire discussion, do you think the UN should change or amend or improve its troop selection policies? Because I know that Troops Contributing countries volunteer and all but if this thing is considered and then UN starts placing the troops accordingly, do you think that it would have a positive or Negative effect, or the UN does not need to consider this?

Peacekeeper

Look, the first question would be What is existing policy? Rationality or impartiality or whatever point comes to your mind which is already there and I'm telling you again and again that America, Europe because these international bodies, they are governed by them, you cannot beat them at this. They ruin everything through the manifestation of the policies. Look at IMF what is the IMF color single agenda point to bridge the current budget deficit single agenda. You look at their policies there is no fault. But has IMF been able to? To fix one country in the world until today. IMF does not need to fix America IMF does not need to fix Europe. IMF needs to fix us, meaning this part of the world or Africa or a country in the Middle East. So, you can't beat them.

Peacekeeper

Let me tell you something, we had Indian officers with us, and we have to fight them one day probably, so I'm very clear on this that The Indian Muslim is Indian. The army should get out from this mindset that if we are facing a regiment which has Muslims, although such don't

exist, they are sprinkled They will have a soft- No sir. One is religion and one is nationality. So, the nationality is-

Interviewer

Now the final two points which I would like to discuss with you are, generally it happens more in Africa that African countries contribute troops to peacekeeping missions. But they do that out of state interests and their peacekeepers who go there know that they are not there to uphold the mandate, but to uphold state interests So I wanted to ask you, how do you think? Do you think this prevails and the fact how can UN mitigate it?

Peacekeeper

Well, you're right that this happens but you can't mitigate this Over the period of years, those guys also have these instructions from the government to just pass the time. So, they are not there. The individuals get paid. Pakistan makes lot of money from every soldier and let me tell you if the soldier is being given \$1000 So probably the army is taking more than 1000 so the basic question that you asked It is for sure there. Number two: over the period of years, it has become common thinking that nothing will come of it. Because most of those people who are Africans, they are militias They are not the trained soldiers like us, and I used to say to everyone that in Africa or even in Iraq, even though I had the diplomatic car there. Now you have lived in a first world country where there is a system for everything, but I had told everyone that do whatever they ask you to do. Because that person standing at a check post He's wearing a very nice fancy uniform, but he's not a trained soldier that knows that before firing he has to follow certain protocols. He's a militia he will directly fire. So, I said do whatever they say, don't argue with them. They ask you to get out from the car, get out. They ask you to turn on the car lights, do that. The basic reason for that is not that they disrespect you, but the basic reason is that they are not trained and similar is the case of the Africans because Africa does not have a standing army If Armies are there then poverty exists. An army is formed through money and training, so they put in many militias. This is why these African nations are not that effective. They don't have the same education or experience that we do and top of the line for everyone Its a straightforward thing. I've already told you that If I'm if I'm in a Muslim area, I will do my best, by even calling somebody here that please send us money or supplies so we come and distribute this. But if I go in an area Which is mostly non-Muslims. Then it's like okay the UN has given us the supplies, distribute them but don't need to do much end state is that over the period of years, the United Nations has picked up on this that nothing is going to happen, just go there Every individual will get some money, if not lots of Money the government will get lot of money, lot of money and. And there you go.

Then there is this policy that, take a car or a helicopter for an example Whichever is more familiar. We enter a helicopter we say its cost is \$5,000,000. No one will ask when that helicopter is used and comes back, its cost gets depreciated and if it gets crashed there you get complete \$5 million.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

When we were in Bosnia, there is this thing called BTR, It it's a tank, but it's on wheels. It had 36 plugs; I Vividly remember 36 plugs.

Interviewer

Oh my God.

Peacekeeper

We were there for a logistical conference and the dollar rate was \$30, and I vividly remember that one plug was also for \$30. Now the plug was of \$1, and we had shown the UN that the plug was of \$3 Russian captain. said captain, you know how much we have bided for this? So, I said 5-6 dollars he said, 36 dollars.

Interviewer

Oh wow.

Peacekeeper

It's simple. It's your thing. Say it costs this much in your own country. You are an agreed party in the warring factions. So, they play big. They quoted 36 times the original price. Imagine if they are changing the price of a small plug worth \$1, then the BTR...

Interviewer

So, my final question is that; there is a sir in my department he said that when the UN thinks about a mission mandate and about sending troops somewhere then they say that the country should bid, that the higher a country bids they get to send their troops. Does it really happen like this? What I can't understand is how does the UN decide because at a time so many peacekeeping missions are going on so how does the UN decide that troops of which countries go where? The sir said that the countries then bid on that.

Peacekeeper

So, what happens in this bidding is that when you are in the UN, you are the boss. So, you want you send the offer to, let's say 10 countries and out of 10 countries, now they all have political sensitivities, they are all aligned for example, the Foreign Office, or in our country, the army says no we won't send our troops here, so then we don't go So that is this bidding, it

is not in terms of finances. Because the UN has to finance the whole mission. Now see what these big countries do, like Americans they have to give a budget, so they say okay give them cars, so what happened, they sold all the things They didn't give money. So, what happens then, the cost of that car is \$60 million. They say the loss is 100 billion dollars. That is what they do there also.

Peacekeeper

So, what these big countries do, they sell their things They are doing business with this also So this part of those measures that I told you before also that on the key positions, they will place the Americans They will not have another guy. But they see if the American they are appointing is white, Brown, or black or male or female. So, everyone has their own Optics.

Interview Transcript 4

Interviewer

So, my first question is how many peacekeeping missions have you served in and which ones?

Peacekeeper

I've served in one peacekeeping mission, and I actually went in 2020 January, and it was a peacekeeping mission in Cyprus, so I was placed as military Public Information Officer and, in the headquarters, and headquarters is in Nicosia that is the capital of South Cyprus. Basically, it's a dispute between north and South Cyprus and the peacekeeping mission, it's there for to keep the peace between North and South, so there's no active conflict going on, there is no armed group as such. However, because of the reason and the involvement of Turkey and Greece in North and South, so that's the basic purpose of the peacekeeping mission just to keep the stalemate actually and keep them moving towards peacekeeping and if they could enact and could form a single state that. So, I was placed in Cyprus January 2020 and in January 2020. Till January, February 2021. For a year I remained there in Nicosia as a military public information officer then.

Peacekeeper

So basically, it's right next to it Nicosia, the capital of South Cyprus, actually South Cyprus is The Cyprus, the North is the disputed one and not internationally recognized, the South that is EU as well. So, it's an EU member country as well so for that reason the headquarters, the UN headquarters of the peacekeeping mission has been placed in the Capital Nicosia, because the part of the buffer zone is there and that is where the force headquarters is as well, because since we did not have, being a staff officer, we never had accommodation in the buffer zone. So, we were living in South Cyprus in the apartments there where the other staff officers were living.

Interviewer

So, like your job as a public relations officer, did you like interact with a lot of like local people, of course?

Peacekeeper

As a public Military public information officer, they call it MPIO so basically it is a part of PIO that is the public information office. which is in every force headquarter in all the missions abroad of peacekeeping and the basic purpose is that the spokesperson of the public information office. He is actually responsible to interact with the concerned parties of the

Conflict, or maybe not of the conflict of the opposing Parties and with the with the force headquarter as well. And in that case, the military public Information Officer acts as a bridge because spoke person is always the international employee.

Peacekeeper

The international staff, well that's usually a civilian, and once he has to interact with the military of any of the sides, if he has to interact with the military of the peacekeeping mission as well, then the military public Information officer plays the role.

Peacekeeper

Secondly, like you said about interaction over there, it's with the North and with the South as well with forces of the North and forces of the South as well.

Interviewer

I see.

Peacekeeper

There are meetings where you have to be present as well, then thirdly and importantly there are the visits because obviously people do come, journalists come and visit, foreign dignitaries come and visit as well. so, the foreign dignitaries or journalists who come want to visit the conflict area. Or maybe the concerned parties as well, or to hold conferences. You also mediate and you play a part in that to coordinate and organize those events. so basically, that's the role

Interviewer

So, in the case of Cyprus Where is the northern side is, I guess Muslim and then the southern side. They're mostly orthodox Christian.

Peacekeeper

Yes, they are actually Orthodox Christians, and they are mostly Greeks, and they are known as Greek Cypriots and those in the North they are Turkish Cypriots

Interviewer

So, because in this there are like very clear identity line is drawn and then. You know, being sent from Muslim countries, and particularly one of those Muslim countries that has a very close relationship with Turkey so did you feel like this identity impacted the way you interacted with them or other peacekeepers from Pakistan interacting with both sides?

Peacekeeper

Interestingly, and to my surprise, no, because of the reason I carried the same idea as well, once I was going and I was studying where I'm going and once, I was actually attached with NUST for the peacekeeping training and all that.

Interviewer

Is that?

Peacekeeper

So, during that time, you know, you present your country presentation. You present your conflict area presentation as well, so in that as well. Once I studied the conflict because I never had such an exposure to this conflict, and I haven't studied that so even at that time I was a little apprehensive as well that you know the North being Turkish Cypriots the Muslims and South being very orthodox Christians and Greek Cypriots and then the force headquarters and all the interactions and official presence is in the South of peacekeeping mission. Like how would it go about and? But once I landed, there's a it's, it's an entirely different world as you said that you've already interviewed so many peacekeepers, so you must be knowing more than me, if international or International Space that they carry and the kind of atmosphere that is there in the peacekeeping mission. It is it. In terms international because you Really don't feel like that. Yes, your national identity is there with you and you're wearing the flag as well on your shoulder but still once you interact and you get into the peacekeeping mission because of the reason I think they identify themselves so much with the mission and with the objectives of the mission. They're part of they let go their own national identity as well to some of part that they're wearing. The blue beret as well So in this thing the international atmosphere is so cohesive that national identities they really don't matter. much so it was very easy for me to interact with the Cypriots with the Turkish Cypriots, and what to say only them with the other foreign visitors as well who were coming and visiting as well, because obviously very apparently you look like a Muslim.

Peacekeeper

And very apparently you wearing a Pakistan flag as well and everyone knows it's Muslim country. So, I never had any bad experience in that case where because identity being a part of the peacekeeping mission between these two countries, entirely opposite in religion to each other and one of them siding with me, never. I never felt that kind of awkwardness or from any of the mission part or my colleagues.

Interviewer

So even so even the people like locally, do you think there is an acceptance of even Muslims coming in and being part of that peacekeeping mission, you know on side of the Greek Cypriots It's normal and they're accepting towards and you-

Peacekeeper

Don't have a problem, it's very normal because of the reason that the mission itself, it's a very small mission. It's like 980 people total compared to. Yes, it's one of the smallest, the smallest. So, it is like 980 or 62 that they have. They get total staff that they have of 960 or 80. It includes international staff and military troops as well and interestingly it includes national staff as well. Now the peacekeeping mission's national staff includes Greek and Turkish Cypriots both because it is the requirement of the peacekeeping mission so obviously they employ both Greek and Turkish Cypriots because the atmosphere is like that already the Turkish Cypriots are working and the Greek Cypriots are working and there is a requirement for them and they work professionally and you have to be aligned with the mission, and the reason that everyone has the same identity is the peacekeeping mission is the identity with which they are working

Interviewer

So do you think given that of course it's not recognized internationally, and you know, as a Muslim you tend to feel a lot like the sense of sympathy and brotherhood. That's it. So, did you ever feel you know you found yourself or other peacekeepers from Muslim countries, leaning towards the northern side more or anything, but they were just like again like you were saying that they were wearing the UN badge?

Peacekeeper

Of the Muslim countries that are in the Cyprus peacekeeping mission, there are only Bosnia and Pakistan.

Peacekeeper

Yes, that's it. So, it's only Serbians there or us There is no other Muslim countries troops contributing countries, of the troops contributing countries, the majority 12 or 13 troops contributing countries. Majority are European countries, Austrians and Hungarians, and Latin Americans which include Argentinians and Brazilians.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

So, because of this the atmosphere which is already I think this of the few missions because mostly in African missions there are no European troops.

Interviewer

Exactly, yeah.

Peacekeeper

But here there are European Troops. As you know, Austrians and Hungarians they are very orthodox militaries with rich history it dates back to hundreds and hundreds of years their history.

Interviewer

And they are also actually very More religious because Hungary is one of those orthodox Christian countries. They had lots of religious wars as-

Peacekeeper

Well, exactly or other than that, other than being religious, they are already very Orthodox militaries with their rich history, and they are already traditional country in their maybe National identity as well. Then as the Austro-Hungarian Empire the history that they carry as well. The troops that were there they were obviously of Austria and Hungary as well and like I said there was a blend like Latin Americans, Argentinians, and Brazilians and so that makes 6 countries. Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka. So, these countries were there. So, since it's such a good blend, then you have the international staff.

and the international staff already has a lot of experience gained from different missions internationally. and the national staff have this tier of experience, so they have on ground experience or maybe ingress in the society and obviously it helps.

Interviewer

OK.

Peacekeeper

So that translations, like you said interacting with locals So if I have to go to north for a visit so I would prefer and I used to prefer taking one of the Turkish Cypriot employees with me. So that they can talk in the language the Turkish language because in the South it would be Greek but, in the North, it would be Turkish, so there we would take them with us. Just like this, our interpreter would be from the South, part of the national staff or local staff so he would have to interpret the Greek language for us and because of this I think you would get connected. So, the sympathy part does not remain Because of the reason that employees are also going with you then you're too much stick to the mission and its Objectives, so it never happened.

Interviewer

So, it's very much and it's. Very professional undertaking

Peacekeeper

Indeed

Interviewer

What do you think about the different geo-economic realities? We were talking about How this is one of those missions where a lot of European countries, so of course European soldiers come from first-world geo economic situation? We come from Third World. So, in a country if you're sent to a country, where there is like because I don't know about Cyprus like, is it first world or third world?

Peacekeeper

As I said that. the South is a recognized EU country, so yeah, so obviously it's very developed.

Peacekeeper

And it's such a drastic change that Once you are going towards the north, I'll let you complete your question. And then I'll answer so.

Interviewer

My question is. You're from a third world country. You go to the north. and it might not be as developed and then South it's developed So do you think that as someone from a third world country, you would be more likely to understand the struggles of people towards the north. As compared to Europeans who might go, and you know and because having same- in cases of Africa what happens is that Like they are underdeveloped so like

Peacekeeper

They are war-torn countries.

Interviewer

Exactly. So, I feel like in the context of that as well, that you know, I believe that in my mind that perhaps peacekeepers from first world countries Be that sensitive to the problems of those people who are in underdeveloped countries. Do you think that has any impact on the peacekeeping mission, or on the objectives or the success of the mission?

Peacekeeper

Actually, it does in this one you know I would. Slightly agree with. the fact that there since there is a huge gap or comparison, contrast is the right word; of the north and South so Obviously it glaringly impacts and if you connect the game with being a Muslim, yes it does. It does OK. Since we're in the buffer zone and we're like between South and North, and we have a lot of interaction with the South and exposure with the North as well So once you cross from the South side ways to the northern part, so there is a drastic change and it's a big contrast Because it's completely not recognized country no international flights can come there Only flights from Turkey can come there. Now you think that a Country is internationally locked kind of country so what would be its economic condition. It doesn't

look like a war-torn country you know No, but because the reason is Turkey is quite much supportive to the northern part, but it is in big contrast with the South. The South is like completely developed EU country with EU standards and once you cross into the North completely not recognized country.

Peacekeeper

No international flights are there. You can't even go to Turkey from there. So, if we have to go to Turkey, we have to take a flight from South and that is the airport in the South That's where the peacekeepers come from, and they go from there So the North does have an airport but it only connects to Turkey So if they. Have to go anywhere abroad, so then the students or anyone who's coming to the North They have to come through Turkey, so it is only Turkey that is the main bridge between the international world and international community and the northern part. Yes, here as a Peacekeeper, and yes as a Muslim as well. I can't let go the identity once I used to cross. Yes, I do feel I always felt that Yes, this is something you know. It used to impact me as a.

Interviewer

Person makes you feel sad. Upset for them. Like you know. They are going through this.

Peacekeeper

-and it seemed like such a big contrast between just one island. Very one small island and its South part where it is so developed. So, what to say like Muslim?

Peacekeeper

Just as a community as well, the Turkish Cypriots are really, really suffering. So yes, maybe it's like for their own political reasons that they are what's happening is happening, so we can't really get into the political stuff, but. Yes, to see the humanity suffering it's touching it's really touching.

Interviewer

So, do you think like because you said, you know, you see this? That You see them suffering. If you do, you think that Europeans because you know they come from developed nations And of course you know most European countries have a very good relationship with Greece They you think they had a different attitude towards this or they were just like you know again.

Peacekeeper

I wouldn't say different attitude but as I said, like in peacekeeping missions there is a very professional approach, and you are very bound and again and again. I'm using the word "the mission's objective" You know 3-4 objectives as you're studying the charter as well and what

kind of mission it is whether it is peacekeeping or peace building. So, it was since it is entirely peacekeeping mission. It doesn't have an active conflict role. Its only role is to maintain the stalemate or status quo and yes to create an environment in which the politicians of North and South sit together. So, I think we were too much really into that into the peacekeeping mission here. They're so preoccupied with that fact, that the political leaders of north or South. they should like move towards a settlement of the dispute. that is between them which is not actually arms or an active military dispute. I don't think Europeans ever had a bias or prejudice. which hampers them that they don't feel sympathetic with North or with South as well, so I don't really think so.

Interviewer

So, what about language? Because, you know language I feel like is a very important thing for communication. So, do you think the UN should like give language courses? Or, you know, encourage language or cultural awareness courses amongst the peacekeepers they are sending.

Peacekeeper

Very important, very important. In this case I would 100% agree I suffered a lot because of the reason that Greek was actually Greek to me, and that was the language that-

Interviewer

(laughs)

Peacekeeper

-Was being spoken. In the in the South, literally Greek. It was literally Greek to me, and it was. It was very difficult for me to interact, and their English skills were not that good either So English being an international language. or UN language. Well, they weren't that good in English as well.

Peacekeeper

Same goes for the Turkish Cypriots Because of their conflict, they are so stick to the Turkish language. so that was not very conversant for us when we interact so for me, language was a big barrier, and that's earlier I said as well. Usually, journalists would come from USA or UK, and I have to take them in the northern part or in the southern part. I always had to have a interpreter.

Interviewer

So, do you think it makes a difference in the way the locals interact with both North and South? like, you know? Someone would if there's someone there knows the language can understand it, does it change their behavior towards that person.

Peacekeeper

Definitely. Local language impacts a lot emotions and everything you cannot translate the emotions. so, they Are so ingress and interwoven in the language so the emotions of the Greek language I won't be able to translate that into English. Or even the interpreter won't be able to, if I want to connect with the locals The jokes, the proverbs, exactly Even the tone, the accents, everything They are all so interwoven in any language's emotions so you can't really give that human touch that you want to give even from the interpreter Yes maybe if I would have been given a chance. If I would have had a short summer camp course, or certificate course of Greece or what to say even Turkish. as well As well, so that would have really helped that that could play a big role, a big role language is a big tool that connect the peacekeepers with locals. So, imagine that the Interpreter bridge is removed, you can directly converse and connect so the interaction won't be an issue, then you have to connect also, for that Language is the tool or the bridge which connect.

Interviewer

So that could be a major positive impact, It could be, It could be.

Interviewer

So, like, do you think these aspects of identity do you think they have an impact on successful peacekeeping mission or not, or just or any one of these factors of.

Peacekeeper

Identity have a impact on success. It does have I think language does have and this is why I think the role of interpreters in peacekeeping missions is very strong because they are also given a lot of importance and usually, they are also very professional They are locals and national staff, but they are professionals. So, this is why they are given a lot of importance, like I said Because you really don't only need the words to be translated, when you are interacting with a concerned party, you want them to know how concerned you are Because you are an international force. Yeah, so you aren't even sided with one of the parties you have to connect with both of them. You have to show that you are impartial so that impartiality should obviously be translated from your language, So the interpreter has a strong role in that.

Interviewer

So, do you think that, because this impartiality aspect is something I'm also recently because, you know, I looked at lot of literature a lot of people are like that you know the UN should, not only in terms of impartiality only, but also for host state consent, get local consent for peacekeeping missions So my next question is, do you think the it's better peacekeepers are

sent from neutral countries, or multiple contingents like it happens now, should be sent on the basis of identity, meaning you know, should impartiality be existent in the mission or....

Peacekeeper

UN being such a professional organization and the big Spectrum of peacekeeping mission, I think for the impartiality variable, language and national identity and religion cannot remain because impartiality is a very mega level so it won't happen that if I'm a Muslim and I'm wearing the blue beret so I would feel connected only with the Muslim Part of the conflict. No, not really because they train you so well towards impartiality, neutrality concept. It never comes in between never but I think there is one thing like you said that if they are sent from countries that can connect with some of the conflict parties then there the important thing, I agree is language That is important because it won't finish impartiality but also endorse it because of the reason that once I am conversing in English so they don't know which party I am with. When they listen in their language and being a UN when I tell them something or being a UN peacekeeper, so that would reflect my impartiality more in the language, and it would directly reach them.

Interviewer

That's a very good point because especially not only one language but four.

Peacekeeper

Yes, exactly when I speak to Turkish Cypriots in Turkish and Greek Cypriots in Greek so I think it would reflect my impartiality more than partiality rather than siding with one of the groups. English may be a neutral language Yes, it is, but yeah. You cannot connect with both of them. So, they can have doubts in their mind that she is speaking English, but which side do her emotions support, so when you are speaking to both groups in their language So obviously they would clearly know that they are not siding with anyone So they are really impartial, so that's my take

Interviewer

That's a very good thing you know I've asked this question from So many people and this is the most different response, most different OK, so do you think selecting troops based on identity is harmful or beneficial in conflicts with ethno-religious fault lines because in the case of Cyprus it's both religion and nationality. So do you think that if they send a good blend of troops from both types of identity. So, do you think that would be beneficial to it or not? I think a blend?

Peacekeeper

That has to be beneficial. Rather than like keeping him to view that, maybe. The concerned parties blend with the troop contributing countries. They should have an ethno-religious connection. Like I saw in Cyprus, so it was a good blend. We had like Western Europeans. We had Latin Americans and then we have a South Asian country as well. So, there was such a good blend of countries around and then Middle Eastern countries where we had Jordanians as well there, so they were again Muslims.

Interviewer

So, and everybody was OK with that.

Peacekeeper

Yes, everyone was OK with that. Everyone was so professional in that because over there again, as I said after you're wearing the flag on the shoulder, but you know on the head you're wearing a blue beret Like everyone wearing a blue beret and it translates into you this thing that you are the blue helmets, the blue berets, It does not let your national identity or your national background come and hamper in your professional activities. Not really so because you.

Interviewer

But you know you carry that honor. My final question is that if UN were to reform its troops selection policies or troop deployment policies What do you think would be a good? Do you think they should change as they keep identity in view or not or you know just keep? It the way it is right now and add a few things.

Peacekeeper

I think rather than keeping the identity, they can have subtle changes in the peacekeeping trainings so. That could be done and that should be more country specific and more trainings so that the troops that are coming there have more know how than they usually do with the nature of the conflict with the parties to the conflict with the languages that are being spoken and with the culture. And yes, to some extent with the religion as well. Not that they should belong to the religion, but they should have a know-how of. The religion as well. So obviously tolerance, respect of any religion whether it was Orthodox Christianity or Muslim or Islam in the north that where I was part of the once, I started it so I know where to go, how to behave if I'm going to. a Church for some reason, for some professional reason I should know the norms that I need. To follow being a Muslim again goes for the same for the Christian as for the Christian peacekeeper that they should be if they're going to a mosque and if they have to for certain professional duty that they have to perform...So at least they know the basic respect that they have to give, so I think more than reforms in troops

contributing countries identification. More than that, there should be reform. I would say a little more detailed training of the peacekeepers, who are coming to Cyprus and the specific missions that they are going to.

Interviewer

I know I said it was the last question but another one crossed my mind. Political interests and also because even in some cases countries like Africa, it's fairly common. You know, African countries send peacekeeping missions to other African countries, and then they too are actually there because of their States and thus you know. So, like you know they have political interests in the conflicts. So, do you think there's a way the UN can mitigate that through the training? Right? Or it's not possible?

Peacekeeper

I think that is possible. I think at the training stage or the pre training of the peacekeepers. It can be done at that time because as a staff officer I got the peacekeeping training We get the training as a staff officer. Now the contingents that you are talking about, full-fledged countries and hundreds Of people are coming They should have detailed training; they should know at least first the standards international standards of the peacekeeping course that they are part of. What are its own standards Because they are such strongly neutral and impartial standards of the UN and even if they are just followed, so I think that political affiliation of theirs would be erased and secondly, very importantly, other than human standards, then second tier, should we know how of the locals, of the local communities and the conflict that you have been part of. That should be there in the in the training that is being given to them.

Interviewer

Thank you so much.

Peacekeeper

You're welcome.

Interview Transcript 5

Interviewer

So, my first question to you is how many Peacekeeping missions have you served in and in which ones?

Peacekeeper

All right, I have worked in only one peacekeeping mission.

Peacekeeper

That was in 2004, 2005. And I was deployed at Sierra Leone. And I visited Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea. Ivory coast on different assignments. And I think I spent there about 1 1/2 years in totality.

Interviewer

So, what, in what capacity did you work as like? What was your job on in the mission?

Peacekeeper

All my initial job was that I was deployed there as a military observer and subsequently I was flying United Nations helicopter. as well. And then I spent some time in the headquarter. Also, in Sierra Leone. And I was working in the Air Operations Center. To coordinate various missions of the day.

Interviewer

OK so during your time as a Peacekeeper, did you feel more sympathetic or inclined to help people who shared an aspect of identity with you such as race, religion, language or were these factors negligible?

Peacekeeper

Well, with regard to Africa, we all know that that Africa is still far backward, and the peacekeeping deployment was there basically to control the law-and-order situation. And I observed that the peacekeepers were, generally. They were very sympathetic with the local. However, there was some agitation within the locals because they had different groups. Those who were working against the government, and in fact there was no writ of the government. So, the group of people they were against, the deployment of United Nations there. And whenever the peacekeeping forces are deployed to a particular country, they have various phases to work on. The initial phase is always that they go for disarmament. And followed by a peacekeeping operation. However, within peacekeeping operation there was multiple peace enforcement operations as well. To restore the law-and-order situation. Within the country of Sierra Leone. However, the agitation between the locals and the peacekeeper

was linked with the economics of that country. In fact, United Nation peacekeeper they came and in the initial stage of their operation they got hold of all the diamond mines. Gold mine. They got controlled on palm oil because these were the main resources of that country. And probably the conflict between various groups and the government was linked with the economics as well. And other aspects which are social and economic, and you know writ of the government was challenged there. This is how what I observed. With respect to our operation in Sierra Leone. I'll talk about the aviation operation. Aviation operation was revolving around multiple surveys. They wanted to get pulse of rural areas. Settled areas. Metropolitan areas that what is the mindset of local? With respect to UN peacekeeping operation. That should be.

Interviewer

OK, so because you did that to get the pulse of the with the population towards the peacekeeping mission and the peacekeepers So then my next question would be the how important? How important do you think it is for the UN to obtain local consent when sending in a peacekeeping mission like the local acceptance? How important is that to the success of the peacekeeping mission.

Peacekeeper

Well, this is very important segment. You know, whenever peacekeepers are deployed to a particular country, it has various indicators, and these indicators has already discussed that number one is the law-and-order situation. #2 is the collapse of their economy #3 that they are unable to enforce the writ of the government and #4 is. And at time government they themselves request for peacekeeping operation in their country. When we talk of United Nations, it's a combination of multiple nations working under one umbrella. Now when whenever peacekeepers are deployed, they belong to different countries, different races, different nations and absorbing to a particular group of people. In Africa. Number one aspect is that. We have a complexion difference. They are black, Asian were wheatish and other European country. They were white so the contrast difference was visible and definitely the black nation. They do not appreciate the whites. And whites, they do not appreciate the. Whereas we Asians, we were neutral. You know we had comparatively a cordial relation with the locals as well with local officials with local people, and we had no problem. But there were some instances in which. Some UN vehicle was attacked by the locals and that. The occupant of that vehicle were Generally white. So, these are the indicators in which you know upcoming race going to another race and working there and enforcing some law-and-order situation over there. Is it? It become exceedingly difficult, exceedingly difficult.

Interviewer

So, identity does pose a challenge.

Peacekeeper

And then there are the yes and local there are of the opinion that whosoever has joined here as a peacekeeper, he may not have that sympathy. Being from a different race. Although you know we were just performing our duties, we had no enmity with anybody for that matter, but still that agitation that Pulse was there. The racial difference that was there and it was self-explanatory. It wasn't written anywhere in UN deployment procedures.

Interviewer

racial difference and.

Peacekeeper

This aspect is never addressed.

Interviewer

The identity aspect this difference.

Peacekeeper

Yeah, the identity aspects are never highlighted.

Interviewer

So, do you think it should be that the UN should address it somehow? Ensure that you know this does not become an impediment or an obstacle to a successful peacekeeping mission.

Peacekeeper

Yes, you have a point. I am of the opinion that if a UN peacekeeping operation is being conducted in the continent of Africa. so preferably. Military people joining from African countries. They are to be employed to that particular country within that continent, so that this racial difference is not there. Probably it will have few positive aspects and few negative aspects as well. Positivity would be that they will be able to communicate the UN policies UN. The rules regulations peacekeeping objective. In a befitting manner, in a very, very communicative way, On the contrary, probably they may not be able to enforce stringently the policies of the UN to the locals, being from the same race, but I am of the opinion. That the settlement of Peacekeeper? Country within Africa. Would be much easier than a person coming all the way from different continents.

Interviewer

But what about because there have been few cases where African countries have been sent to peacekeeping African countries. But you know, it's because that their governments have political interests in that conflict. So how to mitigate that? Because as you said, it is important

you know to manage this racial thing with this. There by sending African troops into African countries. How to mitigate that?

Peacekeeper

Yes, I am of the opinion that the. Peacekeeping operations will always be conducting there where there is a dichotomy between the government officials and the politicians. And once the. Peacekeeping operation has been launched in that particular country. Then I think that government has no say anymore. Peacekeepers, they come, they take over all law-and-order situation. All main department. They continue to work, but the technical and the operation control is taken over by the United Nations, particularly the civil armed forces. The military forces and other department dealing with the economics of that country's banks. And government treasuries State Bank. And the revenue generating factories or revenue generating areas. Who I think once UN peacekeeping operation is launched, and UN forces are deployed. Particular country they have to negotiate and mitigate between the UN authorities. To resolve the issue. In Sierra Leone, the United Nations, they continued for four years. And 4th year, the negotiation between the government, the different groups and the United Nations. They were settled and a contingent of. More than. 8000 troops Was asked to develop their drawdown and they were thinning out. Process commences. And by the time I was leaving Sierra Leone. The UN peacekeepers were less than 3800. OK. So that cycle shows that United Nation peacekeeper They came. They did their job, and they rehabilitated the government and the department. And they drew their own objectives. As I have already mentioned that they were controlling the diamond mines, they were controlling the gold mines. They were controlling all revenue generating departments. I really do not know. What all they attained from there? But drawdown indicators were that probably the settled down. Process has commenced and government UN and different groups. They were on the same. Page only then the drawdown was withdrawal of forces was ordered.

Interviewer

OK, OK, so because you've touched briefly on geoeconomics as well, so I want to further that by asking that how do you think that you know, do you think that because most peacekeeping countries are third world countries, the troops are from third World? Countries and they go to serve in these other third world countries. Do you think they are better equipped to understand the problems of third world countries as compared to the first world peacekeeping troops that come? You know to serve in the headquarters in UN over there in the mission or just to serve in the mission. Do you think that more likely to understand the problems of the population? As compared to those first world troops.

Peacekeeper

In fact. Whenever there is an economic collapse, I observed that United Nation mission had different tentacles. They came and they were looking after the health through UNHCR, there was a US aid program routing through United Nations. There was a rehabilitation program. Triggered by UN themselves. Then there was a system of donations from neighboring countries. To rehabilitate the locals. And I am of the opinion that United Nations deployment was able to integrate. In almost all the aspects. Which requires rehabilitation of that nation with respect to Third World. You're right that whenever the UN forces will be deployed, they are 99.9% in all third world country where law and order situation is beyond the control of the government. They have no economy. Well, I observed that in the initial stages of the Operation, UN was deploying the Russians to rural areas. United Nations were constructing their roads, their communication infrastructure. They had multiple ferries destroyed. Those were refurbished and they were made serviceable for the transport of people, livelihoods and so many other things. So the initial the impact of the UN operation was very positive. But subsequently, when they observed that they are controlling our national assets. Then the agitation started. Probably it is national, and this UN have different departments to interact. With the locals. And they continue to get the pulse and continue to modify their operation. With respect to the desired dividends, if you ask from me. I did not observe desired dividend for which UN. As an organization they established. Their peacekeeping operations. With whatever vision and objective and they come, probably those were not attained more not more than 50%, because it's very difficult to control a third world country and you then you continue there for a long time. UN operations are. Short lived. They do their job, and they just go away now with respect to if you carry out different analysis in different countries where UN peacekeeping operations were. Launched the time, UN forces were pulled out. Now we need to see that where they are standing now. Sierra Leone is same. Liberia is same. Ivory coast will same. Guinea is same. And my question is that if UN is so inclined about humanity about the rehabilitation of a third world country, what is happening in Indian occupied Kashmir? While UN peacekeeping forces are not opting to join there, they say that it is a bilateral issue between India and Kashmir and Pakistan. So, this is what it is.

Interviewer

So, but do you think that like because we've talked a lot about between peacekeepers and population, how the identity aspect plays? What about inter contingent, you know? Coordination and cooperation. Because you mentioned India and Pakistan and it's interesting in many countries. India and Pakistani peacekeepers are serving together in the contingent

same areas and stuff. So, what do you? How do you think identity plays an aspect? It does it like promote cooperation between them cause enmity between them. Should the UN avoid sending countries of you know troop contributing countries or who have Issues with each other into similar contingents.

Peacekeeper

Yes, you have a point. In fact, when you brought. Military forces of various countries and in those countries their adversaries to each other. Yes, there is a problem in the execution of the mission while working under the umbrella of UN. When I was there, there was a contingent belonging to Bangladesh. There were so many Indians there. There were so many Pakistanis there. There were Indian generals retired, working there in their administration on very high fi appointment. Likewise, we had Britishers. We had Ukrainians. We had Nigerians we had Zambians. We had. Few people from Australia in the air operations. Yes, there was a problem. To work together in UN because Indian they used to avoid us. We used to avoid Indians. The Bengali they used to avoid both Indians and Pakistanis.

Interviewer

and Pakistanis

Peacekeeper

It's become difficult at times that when I was doing as a military observer, we were residing in a house I had a Bengali officer. We had one Indian officer. We had one Nigerian officer. I was Pakistani and there was another officer who was from Ukrainian army. Although we had no problem because our domains were different, our rooms were different. We used to dine separately, but I think it's a big challenge for you and. Although they claim that everyone working under the umbrella of UN the UN peacekeeper, the dress is identical, but mindset cannot be identical. Because bringing uniformity in the mindset. Is not probably UN priority. And probably UN cannot do that. The UN has to be very, very careful. In selecting the armed forces to a particular country. They should not have. Any geographical disputes ideology, ideological differences, particularly in India and Pakistan. India and Indian occupied Kashmir senior scenario or for that matter you are bringing a contingent from a Palestine simultaneously from Israel as well. Israelis no.

Interviewer

No, they don't, because that's what I was thinking that you know, and can one imagine a situation where Pakistanis and Israelis have to are in the same contingent How can they work together when Pakistan does not even recognize Israel.

Peacekeeper

It's not possible. It's exceedingly difficult, and probably UN is also mindful of it. They in fact what happens is that UN peacekeeping operations are very difficult to conduct. Because you have to ask for a military contingent. To be launched to a third world country where there is a law-and-order situation, people are against each other. People are against the government. It's very difficult. And UN is all is always of the opinion that UN peacekeeping forces deployment is 1 big passage for that country that we are here, that probably after UN deployment they will be looked after better.

Interviewer

Yes, they put them in false hope.

Peacekeeper

And it happens that say the UN spend a lot of money for the rehabilitation, because when I was in Africa, they used to dine once in 24 hours. There was no ration for them. There was no food. There was no health. No transport. No fuel. I think the hospital was established by Jordanians. There was a Jordanian hospital, all doctors from they were from Jordan, and they were doing their job and in Africa they are very serious diseases. Like Lassa fever and they have different varieties. Variants of malaria, which is fatal, AIDS cancer? This is what I think UN Has a big challenge always. To integrate people for. Single mission, single objective it's very difficult. It's very, very difficult. Then there were various NGOs. They were working. They were from mostly, they were from Europe, Germany, and USA Their integration with local was their primary job. Do a lot of kidnapping lot of assault. And so many others immoral act. This had been happening over there, but nevertheless UN productivity. I am of the opinion was there for 40 to 50%. But UN cannot ensure 100% rehabilitation of any country where the peacekeeping operation. Is being launched. You cannot. This is my own individual perception.

Interviewer

It's not possible and even based on their track record, it's the most they do is they settle the society after conflict, but they can't really improve its economic or social or political situation.

Peacekeeper

It's not possible.

Interviewer

They can't. That's up to the people and their government.

Peacekeeper

OK, you have talked about the track record. Track record is very laborious. Very unpredictable, no credibility. Track record. I think its productivity is not more than 20%. And what all UN claims? They have not been able to manifest with that efficacy. Whatever they write in their documents, whatever they present to the peacekeepers, whatever they present to that particular country. I think its productivity is impaired. Everywhere and still, I think UN has not played any pivotal role. to a decision level which is of strategic level. Which is of geopolitical level, which is of Geo strategical level, no. I don't think so. They go, they interact, they do their job little bit. And they have their own aims and objectives. And the time they are done. They pull out their forces.

Interviewer

So, to improve the UN's productivity, improve its track record, so to speak. Do you think you know considering this identity aspect while you know deploying troops to certain peacekeeping operations and making up contingents? Is that a good way is to improve that you know, to improve the chances of success of the mission? Or should the UN just keep sending in multiple contingents from multiple countries or neutral countries?

Peacekeeper

Well, I'm of the opinion that as we have already talked about it. Military forces within that continent. If you are in Africa, they should be preferably 60-70% Africans. Working there. And 20 to 30% they have their own hierarchy, and the overall control is normally with the Americans and Britishers and Canadians and Australians. I haven't seen any black, African, national on any authoritative assignment in the headquarter of United Nations.

Interviewer

That's a big question.

Peacekeeper

Yeah now. I am of the opinion that. Local military forces coming from neighboring country. Will be able to work better. You know, gathering people all over the globe. Those who have social moral lifestyle differences, complexion differences, color differences, lifestyle differences, and you claim that they are working under one umbrella and one umbrella contingent force is dealing with the local population. Where you have variety of tribes, variety of group of people. And lot of settlers in Africa as well. They are there. I observed lot of businessmen. Coming from different countries. Particularly Jordan from India. There were a lot of Indians working there. In the local departments, so I think that the identity feature is one of the important segments. Which is to be addressed by the UN. And it will inhale a better economic reward to the peacekeepers. They are coming from the neighboring

countries. They are well paid. And they will be able to deliver in much earlier time frame as compared to the alien coming from a different continent. Continent joining there. Who has a language barrier? Who has? Multiple issues you know, to settle down and it takes about two to three months to settle down to learn their basic ethics. It takes a lot of time when you are going to unfold your work. Probably the that time with the wastage, wastage of time, wastage of money. And generally, they the peacekeeper, they go for a year or so. So out of 12 months his deployment 2 to three months are there to settle down and last one to two months is to pull out He has to come back to his native country. So, I think it's a.

Interviewer

Good idea, so building on that, how important would you see would be the role of language and cultural awareness courses before deployment to peacekeeping missions that building on what you said about language barriers and you know, settling down learning the culture.

Peacekeeper

Sorry, say again.

Interviewer

How important would you think? With the role of language and cultural awareness courses before the pre the pre in the pre deployment training like should the UN you know apply this across the board and make it a requirement for all countries that are contributing troops that they. you know conduct this kind of language and cultural awareness training.

Peacekeeper

Yes, I'm of the opinion that UN must revive this policy. And these barriers till the time these barriers are reduced to the minimum only then UN message can be conveyed to the locals and local messages can be conveyed to the UN which is the decisive factor to make out to formulate a strategy for the peacekeepers. How the peacekeeping mission will be enforced or unfolded? I think it will augment their sustainability in that particular country. There would be less instances of sabotage, kidnapping, etcetera, so I am of the opinion that UN must carry out a demographic study of that particular country. For couple of months Send their fact-finding teams to interact with various stakeholders of that country to get the pulse that what is the mindset of locals. Only then they can formulate a dedicated contingent belonging to specific countries only. To be launched in that particular country. For the peacekeeping activities, which will definitely reduce lot of barriers. Before commencement of the actual operation.

Interviewer

So, my final question to you is that do you think this identity aspect is somehow influences motivations of peacekeepers or the way peacekeepers behave? And there for example, you know as a Muslim, as the Muslim peacekeeper, one would go to a Muslim country. So, would there be more willing to help more? You know, likely to engage with the people as compared to someone who's not a Muslim. Do you think that this impact would do peacekeepers because, you know of the impartiality concept, that there is in for peacekeeping? Do you think because of that? It doesn't matter.

Peacekeeper

Yeah, you're right. I agree with you. If you are sending peacekeepers to a Muslim country, at least they should be Muslims. So that the initial hatred is reduced. You know Muslim interacting with non-Muslim non-Muslim Muslim ordering a Muslim. You know the implementation of rules and regulation, or UN policies would be exceedingly difficult. If there is a contrast religion difference. It should not be there. You know when you are offering prayers together. You can communicate so many things together simultaneously. But if you are an alien for that local citizen. He is not understanding even your language. There was a language. Different with respect to Accent in Sierra Leone, they have different accent of language because of the British colonials at time. Now I am of the opinion if actually UN is serious. To settle some host country in a classical way. They should address #1. Is the religion. #2 is the color. #3 is their lifestyle and #4 is there the way of life. I would say it should be. It should commensurate with them. So that there is not a contrast difference between local and the peacekeepers. Only then the peace will be ensured. Otherwise, you know Asian is reluctant to talk to a black person. I do not know he is going to attack on me, he going to misbehave with me. You know at one stage. UN traffic police people they were employed within the main town of Sierra Leone to control the traffic on that particular day There were various fights between the local and the peacekeepers. There were various accidents. There were various violations. They said we don't. We don't obey you; we don't honor your word. It's our country. Our roads. We are going to drive as per our own roads. Please don't try to control us. In next 72 hours, all those traffic guys were withdrawn by the UN headquarter that please come back.

Interviewer

Because the people did not accept them, So what about in ethno religious cases? Because you know, in some conflicts, some of the warring parties are of opposing religion or ethnicity. So, if we send in one religion or one ethnicity, then It could become problematic. Then the, then those warring parties could say we don't trust the peacekeepers. So, in that case.

Peacekeeper

Yes, the stage can come, you know. Our Deen-ai Islam has different ethics to lead your life. Christianity, different Jews are totally different. I am of the opinion that in order to augment the credibility of peacekeeper. The uniformity in the religion is the prerequisite. Which would be offered from the same religion

Interviewer

OK, yeah.

Peacekeeper

Yes, it will enhance the productivity of UN peacekeepers. Then I have already said. You should be from the same race. Although I observed that in Africa, they used to respect the law to the Asians. And they had some hatred against the white. When I observed critically. I was of the opinion they had soft corner for Asian because mostly Asian were Muslim. That was the reason. They used to invite us. To a club. Generally, we used to regret. But whenever they have called us to a particular place to their residence. We have visited them. We found them. We enjoyed their hospitality, and they were Muslims, and they were leading a very neat and clean life, and they invited us just because of the reason that we. Were also Muslims. So, we dine together. We enjoyed food together. We voted in UN I have seen that since people are joining all over the globe. You cannot dine in a restaurant. In a standard way, the waiter will come will ask you are you Muslim? What do you want? He'll give you a menu card. Which is prepared for the Muslims. Oh wow. Will give you the menu card and ask what you want to eat. Will we used to ask them is it halal? Yes, it is halal. All right? This is our choice. And on the contrary, they had different menu cards. For different people. You see that the businessman who's working there. He has multiple issues. Because people are joining from multiple races, multiple religion, multiple lifestyles. Hats off to you and how they address all these things. People come, they work and go back.

Interviewer

Yes, thank you so much.

Peacekeeper

Thank you.

Appendix B:

Gatekeeper Consent Form

To the Head of Department,
Department of Peacekeeping,
Center for International Peace and Stability, NUST, Islamabad

Respected Sir,

My name is Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri and I'm currently working on a research topic titled "The Missing Link: The impact of identity on the success of peacekeeping missions" for my Master Thesis at the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS), which is in the Center for International Peace and Stability, NUST. As approved by the PCS Department, this thesis will employ qualitative research methods to assess the link between psychosocial similarities such as identity and success in peacekeeping missions. It aims to explore how identity-based similarities between peacekeepers and the host-state population can affect a peacekeeping mission and, if the impact is positive, whether the United Nations should consider amending its troop selection policy.

I'm writing to ask your permission to be allowed access to the current course of Pakistani and foreign peacekeepers in-training at your department, as well as department faculty to conduct focus-group discussions and interviews. They should take 30-45 minutes each and can be conducted at any date and time that you deem appropriate. I would be extremely grateful if your department arranged a suitable date and time and gave me permission to conduct these discussions.

I would like to assure you that all answers and results from the research will be kept strictly confidential and the results will be reported in a thesis available to be shared with all participants upon completion and as per their requirement.

Sincerely,

Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri

Contact Information: jawaiza.jabeen@gmail.com

Consent for Participation in Research

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri from National University of Sciences and Technology. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about peacekeeping success and its link to identity. I will be one of approximately 24 people being interviewed for this research.

My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty. If I decline to participate or withdraw from the study, no one on my campus will be told.

I understand that most interviewees will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

Participation involves being interviewed by researchers from NUST. The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview. An audio tape of the interview and subsequent dialogue will be made. If I don't want to be taped, I will not be able to participate in the study.

I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

I understand that the data will be stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality. There will be no one present during the interviews except the researchers and the participants and access to the transcripts and data will be restricted to the researcher, their supervisor, and the participants (should they request access to it).

I have read and understood the information sheet provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I have been given a copy of this consent form.

My Signature

Date

My Printed Name

Signature of the Investigator

For further information, please contact:

Jawaiza Jabeen Sulehri

jawaiza.jabeen@gmail.com

Information Sheet

- Peacekeeping has significantly evolved in the post-World War II era from small observation missions to complete peacebuilding operations with troop presence on the ground ensuring protection of civilians and facilitating the peace process.
- This means that peacekeepers must now come into constant and direct contact with all parties in the conflict, in particular with civilians. For the mission to be a success, these interactions need to be based on mutual trust, sympathy, and effective communication.
- If peacekeepers and the host-population share a common aspect of identity (race, religion, language etc.), meaning peacekeepers from Muslim countries are sent to Muslim countries and peacekeepers who speak Arabic are sent to Arabic-speaking countries; will this have an impact on the success of the peacekeeping mission or not. This study aims to investigate this concept.
- The United Nations selects and sends troops based on the consent of the host-state and the voluntary contribution of the Troop-contributing countries. The UN does, however, control which troops to send in which peacekeeping mission as there are many active missions worldwide at the moment. As a criterion of sending the troops, would identity be useful or detrimental, and how would it affect ethnoreligious cases. Therefore, this research will explore the need for a re-evaluation of troop selection policy as well.
- Finally, this study uses the word ‘psychosocial’ to describe identity. Psychosocial refers to any factor which has to do with the mind and the social conditions surrounding the individual.

Appendix C:

Focus-group Questions

1. Have any of you served in a peacekeeping mission before in any capacity?
-If yes: where, when, for how long and in which capacity?
2. Do you think a peacekeeper would be more likely to interact in an engaging manner (with sympathy/ sense of brotherhood) with civilians with whom they share a common aspect of identity and why?
3. What about with warring parties? How would peacekeepers interact with them if they shared a common aspect of identity with them?
4. Imagine that a group of peacekeepers like yourselves are sent for peacekeeping in a conflict that is being fought on ethno-religious fault lines. One of the warring parties shares a common religion with them while they share nothing in common with the other party. Given that one of the three pillars of peacekeeping is impartiality, do you believe the peacekeepers would be truly impartial and neutral in their engagement with both parties?
-Would the warring parties and the civilians see these similarities as a reason to mistrust the peacekeepers?
5. If the United Nations were to include identity as a criterion through which they decided to select and deploy troops to peacekeeping missions, what kind of effect on the peacekeeping mission do you think it would have?
6. Do you believe that peacekeeping in a country of similar geoeconomic conditions as your own makes you better suited to be sent there on a mission as compared to someone who isn't of the same geoeconomic background? Why?
7. Would it be preferable to be sent for peacekeeping in a country where you share an aspect of identity?
-If yes, which aspect of identity and why would it be more preferable?

Additional Questions

Interview Questions

1. How many peacekeeping missions have you served in, and in which ones?
-In what capacity did you serve and for how long?
2. During your time as a peacekeeper, did you feel more sympathetic or inclined to help people who shared an aspect of identity with you (such as race, religion, language etc.) or were such factors negligible to you?
3. How much do you think a shared identity with the host-population impacts a peacekeeping mission? Do chances for success increase or does it have no effect at all?
4. In the particular mission in which you served, did you see identity at play in any form when peacekeepers and the host-state population (warring parties and civilians alike) were interacting?
5. How does coming from a country with different geoeconomic realities (first world vs. third world) impact how peacekeepers behave in a mission?
-Example?
6. In your opinion, does a similar identity make you more likely to have a sense of sympathy and brotherhood with the host population?
-Do you believe this has an impact on the peacekeeper’s motivations while serving?
7. Do you believe the United Nations should reform its troop selection procedures to include identity as a factor that decides where troops are sent on peacekeeping missions?
8. Would selecting troops based on identity be harmful or beneficial in conflicts with ethnoreligious fault lines?
9. In your perspective and given the above discussion, should the United Nations reform its principles of impartiality and host-state consent to allow for greater flexibility in troop selection?
-For example: Host-state consent could be replaced by local consent as not all the places where the government of a host-state sends a peacekeeping force are under its control.

Additional Questions

