Darfurians in the Diaspora: Perceptions of the Conflict in Darfur, Sudan's Past and the Future of Darfur Under International Response

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**Background**

**Sudan’s Past and Present:**
There is limited comparative research that compares Darfur to the past civil wars in Sudan including the perceptions of the Sudanese. A major focus of this research is looking at Darfur from Alex de Waal’s center-periphery hypothesis in Sudan (2007).

**Center-Periphery Hypothesis:**
This hypothesis describes the exploitation of resources from Sudan’s peripheries to the center and results in the displacement of poor people. This study assesses the ways in which the center-periphery hypothesis applies to Darfur from the perspectives of Sudanese/Darfurians in diaspora.

**International Response:**
International response (UN Peace Keeping, foreign aid organizations and NGO) to Darfur genocide is failure as it stands. To gain a holistic understanding of how this failure affects local populations, this study assesses perceptions of international response to the Darfur genocide from the perspectives of Sudanese in diaspora.

A comprehensive analysis of current literature on Darfur paired with a survey (N=200) of Sudanese in diaspora reveals the nature of the Darfur conflict at the height of international presence. Survey results contain proposed solutions for existing problems and ideas for the future in the Darfur region offered by Darfurians.

The survey results contribute to the current literature on Darfur and Sudanese Studies. Reflecting the voices of Darfurians in diaspora, the goal of this research is to investigate the past and present conflicts in the Darfur region of Sudan in order to predict the future of Darfur under its current circumstances.

**Methodology**

- **Qualitative & Quantitative Approach**
- Literature review from scholarly journal articles
- Analysis of UNAMID reports to the UN regarding contemporary situation in Darfur and the outcomes of UNAMIDs efforts
- **Survey/Questionnaire that used IRB approval protocol**
- Survey responses were collected from 26 Sudanese refugees in the United States through online survey monkey.
- Additional 6 on-paper survey responses were collected from Sudanese in Spokane, Washington area.
- A total of 32 survey responses from Sudanese in diaspora were analyzed
- **Important texts include:**
  - The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil wars Old Wars and New Wars (Johnson)
  - Darfur: A New History of Long War (Flint)
  - The War in Darfur: Reclaiming Sudanese History (Hastup)
  - UNAMID: Same mission since 2007 (W.B.C, 2016)
  - The number of displaced people in Darfur as of 2018 (UNOCHA, 2019)
  - Muller & Bashar, 2017 (Fig. 4).
  - Army in Darfur "like summer" (Muller & Bashar, 2017) (Fig. 4).
  - UNAMID budget is just like cloud in summer (Muller & Bashar, 2017) (Fig. 4).
  - Sudan is responsible for the conflict in Darfur. Arming Janjaweed (Arab militias in Darfur) and genocidal counter-insurgency, killing over 300,000 and displacing over 3 million people (Fig. 1).
  - Genocide in Darfur has little to do with environment. “Ethnic rivalry and environmental degradation were perhaps necessary but were not sufficient causes of conflict in Darfur” (Hagan, 2009) (Fig. 2).
  - Darfur is being forgotten by the international community (60% strongly agree, 30% agree = 90% of the Survey respondents believe Darfur is being forgotten) (Fig. 3).
  - Will the international community solve the Darfur problem? 76% believe the current international presence in Darfur will unlikely to solve the Darfur conflict. “UNAMID is just like cloud in summer” (Muller & Bashar, 2017) (Fig. 4).
  - As of October 2018, 3.1 million displaced Darfurians are in need of aid and security (Fig. 5).
  - Failure to include all parties in conflict let uncertainty and more violence as well as failures in Darfur (Fig. 7).

**Survey Results**

- Survey results from 26 respondents in a survey version of questionnaire.
- Survey question 5: In your opinion, who is responsible for the civil wars in Sudan including North-South?
- Survey question 20: Do you think the people in Darfur are being forgotten by the international community?

**Objectives**

- To analyze the causes of conflict in Darfur and explore proposed solutions for existing problems and ideas for the future in the Darfur region from the perspective of displaced Darfurians.
- To explore the correlation between the conflict in Darfur and the previous North-South conflict from the perspectives of displaced Darfurians.
- To investigate the status of international response to the Darfur conflict and how international response is perceived by displaced Darfurians.

**Conclusion**

This study is the first to include the perceptions of Darfurians in diaspora to analyze the causes of the conflict in Darfur, its correlation to other civil wars in Sudan, and the quality of international response. Selected responses from the survey results show the following:

- Govs. of Sudan is responsible for the conflict in Darfur. Arming Janjaweed (Arab militias in Darfur) and genocidal counter-insurgency, killing over 300,000 and displacing over 3 million people (Fig. 1).
- The genocide in Darfur has little to do with environment. “Ethnic rivalry and environmental degradation were perhaps necessary but were not sufficient causes of conflict in Darfur” (Hagan, 2009) (Fig. 2).
- Darfur is being forgotten by the international community (60% strongly agree, 30% agree = 90% of the Survey respondents believe Darfur is being forgotten) (Fig. 3).
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- Failure to include all parties in conflict let uncertainty and more violence as well as failures in Darfur (Fig. 7).

**References**

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