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# SCOTTISH JOURNAL OF ARTS, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

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VOLUME 25, ISSUE II  
April 2015

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# *Internet Use and Youth Connecting Safely in Cyberspace in Ghana*

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## **Abstract**

The advent of the Internet has provided young people a unique medium of communication and a new platform for social interaction. The attractive and interactive nature of the internet draws scores of young people to experience the cyber world. The new media is significantly changing the learning experiences of young people and has some ethical implications. Despite the significant space that the internet is gaining in the lived experiences of youth the world over, in Ghana there is a dearth in scholarly work on how youth<sup>1</sup> are connecting to the Internet and the ethical questions involved. The study is a review of literature in the area of youth and the Internet. My argument is that in Ghana the seeming overly focused on business-related aspects of the Internet tends to overlook a focus on the development of ethical ideals among youth in the Internet age. It concludes that media education of youth is important in Ghana. The exposure of youth to all kinds of information in the Internet is risky. Therefore, there is the need to incorporate into existing ICT policies mandatory network-based filtering schemes requirements for all Internet Service Providers in Ghana.

**Keywords:** Internet, Youth, Media Education, Ethical Implications, ICT Policies

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<sup>1</sup>In this study, youth or young people are being used interchangeably to refer to children, teens and young adults.

## Introduction

The use of information and Communication Technology (ICT) is transforming and accelerating the growth of many nations of the world in all aspects of life: political, economic, social and educational. The internet has become so important to development that when a nation and its people do not make an efficient and effective use of such modern means of communication, that nation is going to lag behind in development. Technological advances in the last two decades have made life tremendously simple that it is sometimes difficult to decipher how people will live without the comfort of current technology. The Internet has become one of the key means of social communication in the last decade. Today, despite the digital divide between the developed and developing countries and between urban and rural areas, generally children begin accessing the Internet at an early age. This leads to discourses on how to think about the relationship between the Internet and the development of ethical ideals among youth.

In Ghana, the use of internet is becoming very popular, especially among youth. The youth have embraced web-based programmes such as Facebook, hi5, Youtube, Whatsapp, among others. The opportunities created by the Internet in terms of access to data and information have among others shortened the time that it takes students to submit assignments, undertake research and respond to queries from their lecturers (Guan Shu-Sha & Subrahmanyam, 2009). According to World Internet Statistics as at 31st December, 2013 in Ghana, four million three hundred and seventy-eight thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight (4,378,878,757) people, constituting 17% of the population use the internet. (World Internet Statistics, 2013). Low cost internet access is now available at internet cafés in most parts of Accra and its neighbourhoods. The regional capitals of Ghana which include Wa, the capital of Upper West have a growing number of internet cafés and community internet centres (Brafii & Arthur, 2011).

Young people's use of the Internet has the potential to influence and shape their self-realisation and their appreciation of moral dimensions of social interaction. Consequently, the question is: Can young people can meaningfully benefit from such virtual personal and/or social interactions if they are ill-equipped with media education knowledge and skills? Discourses about morality and media and the principle of common good are equally vital in the context of how youth use the Internet, and how the Internet possibly influences them.

Scholarly research on youth and Internet is summarised along four major lines of investigation: (1) some research have focused on the vulnerability of young people with a focus on safety and protection (Wartella, 2000; Livingston, 2007; YPMA, 2010). Notably, within this subfield there is attention on parental mediation and attention. (2) Others have focused on the lived experiences of young people and their opportunities for creativity and connection (Jenkins, 2006; Buckingham, 2000). A third approach indicates an interest in the role of the Internet in development communication (White 2009; Borzekowski et al. 2005; Guardian Professional, 2014; Tapscott, 1998 & Mefalopulos, 2008). This current paper falls into the first approach and tries to extend the literature therein with arguments about the ethical and policy dimensions with particular reference to the case of Ghana. Despite this delineation, the paper would attempt to build a bridge between the first and third approach. The sections of the paper comprise, first and foremost a discussion on youth and the Internet literature; Ghana and internet-related crime, morality and ethics in relation to communication, media education and conclusion

## Youth and Internet Literature

The internet is being positively used by the youth, especially in the developed world. In Ghana it can be stated that the teaching of Information and Communication Technologies in basic schools is a pivotal factor, which encourages young people to learn more about the Internet. This development is good since it affords youth opportunities to employ internet-based resources to facilitate the search of knowledge and useful skills for personal development. With interactive platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram and twitter, whose diffusion is facilitated by influx of smart phones onto the market, socialization of youth on these platforms have become more exciting and fraught with some hidden dangers. Even though some of these platforms sometimes contain information that may be inappropriate for minors, parents and guardians hardly monitor their wards and the pages they subscribe to as well the people they follow in these virtual communities.

Research conducted in some countries on ICT and youth have examined vulnerability of young people with a focus on safety and protection (Wartella, 2000; Livingston, 2007). Data specifically on children's media use (Hendriyani, Hollander, d'Haenenes, Beentjes, 2014: 325) show reactions to the very close relationship between children and media that can be placed on a continuum between two extremes: one is the 'vulnerable child' and the other is the 'empowered child.' Supporters of the vulnerable child paradigm consider 'children as passive and innocent creatures, who need to be protected from all evil that comes to them, particularly from media' (Valkenburg, 2004: 7; Pasquier, 2001). The supporters of the empowerment of children believe that children are sophisticated, streetwise, somehow naturally competent, and critical (Buckingham, 2000 & 2003). The supporters of the empowered child model usually belong to the media industry, including commercial and marketing circles, and more intent on promoting the view that children are perfectly able to make informed choices regarding media use. Whilst agreeing and disagreeing at the same time with internet and its harmful effects on personal relationship, Bargh and McKenna in their report (2014; see also Subrahmanyam, 2001) on "Internet and Social Life" noted:

*"No one today disputes that the Internet is likely to have a significant impact on social life; but there remains substantial disagreement as to the nature and value of this impact. Several scholars have contended that Internet communication is an impoverished and sterile form of social exchange compared to traditional face-to-face interactions, and will therefore produce negative outcomes (loneliness and depression) for its users as well as weaken neighbourhood and community ties. Media reporting of the effects of internet use over the years has consistently emphasized this negative view to the point that, as a result, a substantial minority of (mainly older) adults refuse to use the Internet at all. Others believe that the Internet affords a new and different avenue of social interaction that enables groups and relationships to form that otherwise would not be able to, thereby increasing and enhancing social connectivity."*

The Harvard's University Berkman's Centre for Internet and Society observes that the digital divide between developed and developing countries is narrowing, and while this brings many new opportunities and resources into the lives of young people, it also exposes new groups with less digital literacy to a range of cyber threats. In Ghana, it seems young people are not careful of the kind of information they share with people on-line and on social media platforms. According to experts in Information Security Management, the putting of too much information on these platforms could lead to impersonation or identity theft by fraudsters

(Akese, 2015:13). As a result, parental mediation and attention is vital in guiding youth to safely surf the Internet. In the literature (See [http://youthandmedia.org/wiki/child\\_online\\_safety\\_in\\_the\\_developing\\_world](http://youthandmedia.org/wiki/child_online_safety_in_the_developing_world)) there seems to be three main approaches to protecting children online: technological measures, parental supervision, and digital literacy education:

**i) Technological measures**

This category includes any kind of hardware- or software-based tool used to make the browsing experience more secure, such as content filtering, virtual sandboxes, and age/identity verification software. With these methods, it is important to consider issues like scope creep, over- and under-blocking of content, reliability of ID verification, and cost.

**ii) Parental/Adult supervision**

Much of the literature and existing curriculum for online safety education focuses on the importance of parental involvement, advising parents and guardians how to protect their children. It is considered that Internet access points for children in the developing world are much more likely to be in a school or Internet café instead of the home, where parents are less likely present.

**iii) Self-protection**

The third approach centers on educating children about how they can take steps to protect themselves online. Most existing digital literacy curricula aimed at children are not sufficiently comprehensive. However, this approach is promising because it helps reduce the reliance on a third party for protection, and can be adaptable from one country to the next based on individualized situations and needs.

It is impractical for parents to be physically present to advise their wards at the Internet access points in the major towns and cities in Ghana. Despite this challenge, it has emerged that technological measures could reasonably contribute in minimizing possible threats of unfettered access of youth to all kinds of information. The operation of internet cafés has become a quite a lucrative business venture across Africa. According to White (2009: 229-230) although the Internet may not be a major contributor to the increasing economic productivity in Africa – at least not yet – it is opening up new public spheres, especially among young Africans. Newspapers and other forms of print media are relatively restricted for many Africans. But the Internet offers almost unlimited space for projecting one's opinion and entering into debate especially regarding policy, especially for the millions of young Africans who have gone overseas because of economic hardships or political repression. The Internet is also a source of homeland music, films and many other forms of cultural expression. The influence of the Internet on the health seeking behaviour of young persons in Ghana is documented in a study by Borzekowski et al. (2005): "Online Access by Adolescents in Accra: Ghanaian Teens' Use of the Internet for Health Information." The internet is gradually changing the sources from which young people seek and obtain information and new ideas in response to their personal, family, social, health, educational needs and interests. Arguably, such uses of the Internet are relevant to development communication.

Notwithstanding the positive aspects of the use of the Internet, ICT policies in Ghana ought to incorporate specific recommendations on the kinds of hardware- or software-based tools that can be used to make the browsing experience more secure. Another issue that has emerged in the approaches aimed at protecting children online is the finding that the most existing digital literacy curricula aimed at children are not sufficiently comprehensive. This may be true for most countries in the developed world. In Ghana, however, Media Literacy

Programmes (termed in this study as Media Education) are even non-existent in the curricula of basic and second cycles of schools.

Though the burgeoning ICT-related businesses including internet café operations in Ghana is laudable, threats that youth are exposed to through access to all kinds information have moral implications on their development. Yet there are no clear National Communication Policy directives on who is qualified to use the Internet at various Internet Cafés, and how such directives could be implemented and monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. Maximising use of internet by youth necessarily involve creating awareness about some negative uses of the Internet and its implications in compromising benefits that can engender holistic education of a person. Holistic education tries to develop the whole child. Its inherent objective is to develop a balanced and harmonious personality that is equipped to respond to the moral and demands placed upon it (Posse & Melgosa, 2009: 147).

### **Internet Use and Incidence of Cyber Crime**

ICT has introduced a new way of life, especially among youth in Africa. It has created a fertile avenue for business transactions in many countries the world-over. The freedom to use ICT resources in pursuit of one's legitimate goals is good. However, what has become a major cause of concern is the wrongful use of ICT facilities by anti-social people, especially to cause harm to peace-loving and law-abiding citizens (Diedong, 2008). In situations where there are indications of ICT facilities being used by some members of society to show disrespect for the privacy of other persons as well as to create a sense of insecurity in society, there is something basically wrong as regards people's appreciation of the fundamental values of life. In a global village, the approach adopted in the use of ICT facilities ought to be guided by fundamental principles such as the preservation of nature and life, the need to foster a sense of human solidarity/community, and, above all, the need to promote the dignity of the human person. These values are universals.

In Ghana, for example, according to the Statistics and Information Technology Unit of the Ghana Police Service, there is an increase in ICT-related fraud. During the first quarter of 2007, a total of about 4,445 cases were reported as against 2,675 in 2006. The commonest kinds of wrongful use of the ICT facilities in Ghana include: dating fraud, 419 syndrome, and Credit Card/ATM fraud. The internet has also brought sex tourism into the country (Myjoyonline, 2013). The Daily Graphic reported that some five Nigerians were arrested for their alleged involvement in internet fraud (Owusu, 2007). According to the report, the foreigners scanned letterheads of organisations, signatures and legal documents which appeared authentic enough to enable them to defraud unsuspecting foreigners who wanted to conduct business in Ghana. The most prevalent cyber crime in Ghana is the credit card fraud. The scammers buy or steal credit card and verification numbers from hotel employees and cashiers in super markets, either in the country or from abroad. This situation has dented the reputation of the country, leading to the blacklisting of Ghana purchasing items from commercial sites in the United States and Europe (Aning, Kwarkye & Pokoo, 2013; see also Warner, 2011).

How widespread the incidence of cyber crime has become in Ghana is confirmed in a recent study (Fordjour et al., 2014: 36-43). Aning et. al. had (2009:7) highlighted some negative uses of internet such as the viewing of pornographic website by Ghanaian youth at Internet Cafés. The study found out that youth as young as 10 years will be found in Lapaz, Fadama, New Town and Nima watching pornography in Cafés. They stay at these Cafés for as long as eight hours. Again, some youngsters engage in internet fraud better known as "Sakawa" or "Yahooze." They chat on the Internet and give their would-be victims fake names

and addresses. They familiarize themselves with their victims, tell lies about themselves and eventually get their victims to send them money. They also get access to their credit card numbers. This is their trump card to financial heaven.

Similarly, Fordjour et. al. study (2014) portrayed some negative uses of the Internet among some young people in the Wa Municipality of Ghana. Out of a sample of sixty young persons, twenty-eight respondents were of the view that internet usage has had negative effects on the moral dimension of their lives whereas twenty-seven think internet cannot affect the moral dimensions of their lives, five others were indifferent.

The respondents indicated that they sometimes visit certain sites, which according to them could corrupt their morals but they could not put a stop to it because they are addicted. They confessed internet has degraded their moral standards as they are sometimes forced to share nude pictures with their internet friends, whom they do not even know. They at times disguise as females when they are practically males, in order to attract foreign male friends whom they enter into relationships with, with the hope of getting the opportunity to travel abroad. In the process the perpetrators are not aware they are exposing themselves to moral decadence. Some younger respondents claim it has enhanced their lying skills as they have to find reasons to give to their parents in order to leave the house or secure money for browsing. Others also indicated that they are not able to save since they use any little money they get for browsing. Fordjour et al. (2014) noted that internet usage without caution or guidance could gradually corrupt the moral character of youth.

### **Moral Questions and the Act of Communication in a Digital Age**

In Africa efforts aimed at building a new ICT-oriented society need to incorporate into that vision an ethical dimension which ultimately would lead to the integral development of the human person. The act of communication – ‘the communicational deed’ to use the language of Habermas – raises moral as well as technical questions. The choice between information either as a means or end in itself boils down to a choice between human beings as means and ends – bearing in mind that as Kant points out, to consider individuals as means is to rule out any morals from the deed or intention. Morals, therefore, lie at the very root of information and communication; and conversely, information and communication lie at the very heart of morals (Encabo, 1995).

Much as it is not profitable and would be technologically unwise on the part of countries and Ghana in particular to remain aloof in the midst of the increasing knowledge-based economy facilitated by Information and Communication Technologies, it is worth noting that African countries can give meaning to their membership in the information and knowledge-based society if they are willing and committed to consciously building and nurturing a new Africa around these new technologies without necessarily losing sight of fundamental values which are grounded in a communitarian ethical stance where “community as a fundamental human good, advocates a life of mutual consideration and aid and of interdependence, a life in which one shares the fate of the other – bearing one another up – a life which provides a viable framework for the fulfilment of the individual’s nature or potentials” (Gyekye, 1992: 120).

We live in a global village in which the common good is defined as “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and easily. The whole human race is, consequently, involved with regard to the resulting rights and obligations. Every group must take into account the needs and legitimate aspirations of every other group, and still more, of the human family as a whole” (The Church in the Modern World, No. 26; cited in Ayaga, 2000: 16). The collective and the

global good is a whole network of social conditions, which enable human individuals and groups “to flourish and live a fully and genuinely human life;” all people should have access and no one should be excluded from its enjoyment. All are responsible for all, collectively, at the level of society or nation, and not only as individuals (ibid). The principle of common good ought to be cherished amidst the proliferation of ICT products in which this principle is gradually being perverted and substituted by individualistic interests; whereby the internet is being increasingly experienced by some youth as a mere playground for entertainment, hedonistic lifestyles and indulgence in immoral practices.

### **Relevance of Media Education in a Changing and Dynamic Media Environment**

Given the emergence of such immoral and questionable uses of the Internet by some young people, the need for parents and guardian to inculcate in young people a sense of appreciation of values such as honesty, decency, integrity and respect by their parents is more critical now than ever before. In Srampickal’s paper (2009: 1-17): “Understanding ethics, morality, communication ethics and media ethics,” the first in a proposed five-stage growth in what can ensure a sense of media/communication ethics is - a sense of values developed from good family training from childhood. Though the grounds for young people’s interaction has widened far beyond family environs, it is important that the variety and multiplicity of relationships that are established in on-line interactions are guided by correct norms and standards of conduct. Implicitly, only a morally autonomous person is capable of determining whether or not to follow a moral rule or a norm in the course of communicating with others. According to Gielen (1991:34) the morally autonomous person may be defined as a person who takes an independent and self-legislative stance toward moral decision-making. A person at this level looks at moral considerations from a universalist point of view, and gives priority to universalisable moral ideals. Such a person is filled with a sense of respect for all persons, and prioritises moral values over other values.

Therefore, ethical standards are needed as one of the essential dimensions for appropriate cyber communication because the conception of how we are interdependent in a society and how an unethical act is not only an offense directly to the person who needs a service or who is being defrauded, but weakens the whole society and comes back to me also. The message of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI for the 47th World Communications Day (2013), recognized the development of digital social networks which are helping to create a new “agora,” an open public square which people share ideas, information and opinions, and in which new relationships and forms of community come into being. However, people ought to be authentic in how they interact with one another in cyber space. Pope Benedict noted:

*These spaces when engaged in wise and balanced way help to foster forms of dialogue and debate which, if conducted respectfully and with concern for privacy, responsibility and truthfulness, can reinforce the bonds of unity between individuals and effectively promote the harmony of human family. The exchange of information can become true communication, links ripens into friendships, and connections facilitate communion. If the networks are called to realize this great potential, the people involved in them must make an effort to be authentic since, it is not only ideas and information that are shared, but ultimately our very selves.*

The observation that children would find ways to use the Internet with or without their parents’ permission is quite apt, given the ubiquitous nature of ICT facilities (Andoh, 2014:44). Therefore, there is the need for parents and other stakeholders to allow and guide children in the use of ICT in order to prevent them from going astray. Some individuals and

Civil Society Organisations such as J-initiative have called for the regulation of the activities of cyber cafés in Ghana because some of them believe the proliferation of these centres have exposed children to explicit materials and lead them into social vices (Regional News, 2014). Such calls are not out of place, rather they point out the urgent need for finding ways and means of ensuring a more appropriate and responsible use of the Internet by young people.

Media education/media literacy can play a functional role in helping users of the media to be circumspect and more responsible in the use of the media, especially the internet. Socially, the need for media education is further underscored by the growing realization of the importance and influence of mass media in Ghanaian life, especially in urban areas and parental inability to help their children use the Internet with discrimination. The basis, scope and vision of media education is that if people, particularly youth are educated and have a taste for quality media, they will get quality media. The positive power of the media can be harnessed for the good of people and the nation provided people are well educated on how meaningfully they can interact with the media.

Given the absence and/or ad hoc and disjointed manner communication policies are designed and implemented in Africa (Boafo, 1986), it is not surprising that in such policy documents there are no well defined strategic and pragmatic measures aimed at protecting young people who may be exposed to the risks involved in the use of the Internet. In Akpan-Obeng's book (2009): "Information and Communication Technologies in Nigeria, the author credits the ICT policy and especially the Nigerian Communication Commission for a policy that stimulated the investment of many billions of dollars to set up a national ICT infrastructure. The ICT policy emphasized on the economic and entrepreneurial aspects and remained silent on ethical dimensions involved in the use of ICT. Ghana and other African countries can learn a lot from the recommendations of the Organisation of Economic, Cooperation and Development (OECD) Council's Report on risks faced by children and policies to protect them (OECD, 2012). In Ghana, there is an apparent absence of media education in the curricula of schools. The need take actions to ensure children use the Internet safely as many of them encounter it for the first time, would demand effective media education for all users of media including parents. This calls for advocacy by experts in education and mass media for its inclusion in the school system and in adult education. The importance of media education cannot be over-emphasized in view of the strong interest of youth in new media and its influence in shaping the intellectual and moral dimensions of their lives.

### **Conclusion**

The benefits derived from the use of the internet should not only be measured in how it has raised or is raising the standard of living of people materially, but more importantly ethical dimensions ought to be considered in any form of benefit analysis. However, the reality is that ICT-related policies are silent on the ethical dimension of the Internet.

There is a glaring divide between urban areas and the hinterlands, leading to differences in access to information and ICT resources. In the Wa Municipality of Ghana, availability of ICT facilities is quite limited (GSS, 2010) as compared to major cities such as Accra and Kumasi. Despite the limitations, some youth in the Wa Municipality have begun to use the Internet to engage in some questionable practices in quite similar ways as their counterparts in major towns and cities in Ghana. There is need for in-depth research on youth internet use patterns and changing media experience in Ghana and its implications for their integral development.

There are substantial indications from the ICT policies of African countries such as Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, Mozambique, Mauritius, Nigeria, The Gambia, and Zimbabwe which are in accord with the proponents of ICT, who take an optimistic view and highlight the positive effects of the internet and other forms of ICT to create new economic, social, and political opportunities to “leapfrog” development in Africa. The afore-mentioned countries have sub-sector strategies on e-commerce, e-government and e-learning. However, if the gains expected from the applications of ICT in African societies are to become more beneficial and meaningful to people, especially young people, there is the need to incorporate the following key points into existing ICT policies:

- Mandatory filtering schemes. Countries which require mandatory network-based filtering from Internet Service Providers include Korea, Italy and Turkey, where illegal content is filtered according to the national laws. The Turkish Law No. 5651 (2007) regulates the responsibility and the obligations of content, hosting and access providers, including operators of public Internet access points. For instance, cyber cafés are required to use filtering products approved by the Internet Regulations Department. In Ghana, the National Communication Authority could set up a similar unit.
- Ghana can profit from a policy that institutes media education/media literacy in her school system and in adult education. This involves, first and foremost, having media education slotted into the syllabus of all the thirty-eight teacher training colleges in the country. Such a move is crucial as it constitutes a fundamental step in training a core group of teachers who will graduate with the relevant knowledge and skills in media education in readiness to apply their knowledge at various levels of education in Ghana.

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*Learning the complex phenomenon. A practitioner's view of the learning themes that can impact students' learning in the classroom.*

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Valerie McGrath

**Abstract**

The issue of learning in the classroom is something that we as practitioners need to comprehend. There are a number of themes that could be investigated in relation to learning in higher education such as teaching methods, teaching characteristics or behaviour, the students' stance towards learning and cultural differences. These themes are connected and have an impact on how students learning in higher education. Merriman, Caffarella, & Baumgartner (2007, p.277) identified a plethora of theories that focus on the learning process. These theories aim to explain the purpose of learning, how learners view learning and the practitioners' role in the learning process. Theories in the area of behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism provide an insight into how our learners actually learn. However, there is also the issue of the threshold concept and the troublesome knowledge which higher educational students have to deal with on an ongoing basis. (Meyer, 2006 p.6)

### **Teaching methods**

The method of teaching that we as practitioners adopt may have a profound impact on the learning experience of our learners. There may be a tendency for practitioners to promote an environment where learning is seen to be more active than passive. (Rodgers, 1999, p. 77) The learning environment also plays a significant part in the learning process. Darkenwald and Valentine (1986) as cited in O’Fathaigh (1997, p.2) identified a number of elements that affected the students perception of the classroom environment. These included teacher support, task orientation, student influence and involvement. For some students being allowed to participate in the learning process is important to their learning. In fact Brookfield (1995) was of the opinion that students may resent the lecturer/teacher if a style of teaching is adopted that prevents them from participating in discussions in lectures. (Brookfield, 1995)

The question then that we need to ask ourselves do we reflect upon the method of teaching that we adopt in the classroom? Do practitioners think about the impact of adopting rote approach or a more facilitatory approach in relation into the students learning? However, if there is a tendency to adopt a rote learning approach, is it fair that we as teacher see students as being dependent on the teacher for knowledge? (Knolwes, Elwood, Holton & Swanson, (1998, p.63) Therefore the presumption is that if practitioners adopt a more a more facilitatory approach that it will benefit the student as well as the institution.

Marshall and Rowland (1998) as cited in Moon (2005, p.6) viewed critical thinking as enabling a person to present a situation where a person is giving the opportunity to ‘argue, persuade, debate and negotiate’.

Sometimes there is a tendency to adopt a particular teaching method out of habit. As Wood and Neal (2007, p. 843) state habits that are learned tend to be repeated. Some of the habits may be positive or negative. Can habits be unlearned? In the case of negative habits there may be little or no motivation on the part of the teacher to change their habit of not providing a structured lesson. Menyhart (2008, p.120) has stated that the amount of effort that a teacher/lecturer puts into their delivery on content is dependent on how motivated they are. The reason that these teachers are not motivated may be due to the fact that their intrinsic motivational levels are low. They no longer enjoy teaching or they no longer want to challenge themselves. Armstrong (n.d.) stated that students are very much aware when a teacher is engaged or disengaged. If a teacher is disengaged this may explain why teachers/lecturers use the banking method of teaching as opposed to differentiated learning. Freire’s view (1978) of the banking concept as cited in Nelson, Lewy, Ricardo, Dovydaitis, Hunter, Mitchell, Loe, & Kugel, (2010, p.301) was that it left the student in a vulnerable situation. The student did not have the power to question or to engage actively in the material that was being delivered. This behaviour is very much under the control of the teacher and in some cases the institution and it may affect the performance of the student overall. The question that we need to ask here is how can one motivate an unmotivated practitioner?

### **Teaching characteristics/behaviour**

Hattie (2003, p.3) was of the opinion that the teacher can have a positive impact on the student and can challenge students to meet their goals. However, teachers can also have a negative impact on student, for example, they can have an impact on students’ self-esteem. Is it the lack of experience or expertise in a particular situation that leads us as teachers/lecturers to behave in a certain fashion? If the student was in the presence of a novice, that novice may not have the experience to understand what was happening in the classroom in relation to how their students are learning or how they are coping with newly acquired information. (Meyer, 2004, p.2004) Meyer (ibid) was of the opinion that expert teachers in the classroom were able

to use their intuition and they automatically know how to behaviour and how to positively interact with students in different situations.

Feigenbaum and McCorduck (2000) as cited in Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005, p.780) stated that experts have the ability to developed a set of 'working rules of thumb that combined with book knowledge makes them expert practitioners'. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (ibid) were also of the opinion that in order to become an expert, practitioners are required to undertake a certain amount of reflection on their teaching. Schon (1987) as cited in Boud (2001, p.11) stated that as practitioners we can learn from our teaching experiences if we take the time to reflect. Indeed, Fiddler and Marienau (2008, p.76) stated that practitioners can use reflection as a way to conduct an inquiry into their teaching experiences. However, the question that needs to be asked is that when we reflect on our teaching experiences does it actually lead us to change or adapt our current teaching behaviour? Articles written by Fiddler and Marienau (2008) and Boud (2011) suggests that we are more aware of our behaviour; however there is a lack of conclusive literature to prove that our behaviour actually changes once we have reflected on our actions. Maybe our behaviour does not change due to the habits that we have formed prevent us from changing/adapting how we currently behave in the classroom?

The behaviour of our practitioners can have both a positive and negative impact on student learning. While the practitioners are responsible for their behaviour, it is also up the management within the institute to promote positive behavioural practices across the institute. However, this can be very hard to control as there may be a large number of staff both full-time and part-time and to ensure consistency in terms of behaviour can be very difficult.

### **Student stance towards learning**

Students can display a positive stances towards learning. For example, if a student is passionate and has an interest in a subject it 'enhances the person's learning outcomes. Are all students motivated to learn? According to Ahl (2006, p.8) there is the belief that all students have an intrinsic need to learn. However, there may be barriers that lead to practitioners' perception that the student is not motivated. These include factors such as availability of time and interest in the subject matter. Tough (1979) as cited in Knowles et al (1998) found that 'motivation is frequently blocked by barriers such as negative self concept and time constraints'.

Are students open to learning from experiences within the classroom? Peer reviewing can have a significant impact on students learning in the classroom. As Nulty (2011, p. 497) states peer viewing enables the student to assess other students work, make judgements on that work which are based on a set of criteria. To a certain extent there as well there was self-assessment also occurring here which may benefit the student in the future. While students have a responsibility to be motivated and passionate in relation to heir learning, our students' stance towards learning could be further improved by ensuring that practitioners and management within the institute ensure that there is a passion for learning and that this is encouraged both in the classroom and across the institute.

### **Cultural differences**

Moving from a university in one country to another can be a traumatic experience for a student. However, when a move occurs there is an expectation to a certain extent that their will be cultural differences in terms of how learning is viewed. Stone (2006, p. 347) was of the opinion that we should be 'accepting of different ways of thinking'. However, to a certain extent students may be of the frame of mind that there is a McDonaldisation of teaching. For example, students in their home university may be used to large classes with little interaction

from their lecturer. However, when they study in some of the Irish higher education institutes, students may be in smaller classes where they are expected to interact with the lecturer and fellow students. Students may not have thought about how modules are delivered and assessed and there is the presumption that it will be somewhat similar to what they are used to. (Forest & Altbach, 2006).

The question that needs to be asked is, should universities who are trying to attract foreign students to their campus, provide information to students on how modules are delivered and assessed prior to the student entering the university? Or is it fair to expect the student to adjust to a new system in a very short period of time? Maybe more studies should be on conducted with students who have travelled from different universities to see how if they successfully adjusted to different teaching and assessment methods in another university.

### **Themes connecting to professional practice**

All of the above learning themes have an impact on my professional practice. For some institutions, the institute prides itself in being 'student/learner focused'. For this be a reality teaching methods and being attentive of the behaviour of practitioners is important. As practitioners we may over time form a habit and use one particular methods of teaching. A teaching method that is quite effective in the classroom today may not be as effective in the future. How can we break the habit of using a 'safe' teaching method and adopt a method that may be more innovative and learning more effective for our students? There is also the issue of motivation. How can we stay motivated? When we are new and fresh to teaching a module or even teaching itself we may have highly levels of intrinsic motivation. However, if we are tasked with teaching the same module year after year, the issue that I have is how to stay motivated. Menyhart (2008, p.129) has stated that for teachers to be motivated intrinsically they should enjoy their subject area. I am conscious of the fact that if I do not appear motivated how can I expect my students to be motivated to learn and participate in the class?

The importance of passion should never be overlooked from both the student and the lecturer perspective. If a student displays a passion or an interest in a module then the student should be encouraged to develop that passion or interest. Sometimes our students need someone to take an interest in them and push them to achieve their goals. They have the interest and the passion while sometimes they are missing the self-belief. This is where teacher behaviour may play a significant part. However, the problem that needs to be overcome is that the teaching workload does not leave a lecturer with free time spend with students who are passionate however, lack the self-belief. This may be something that the institutes could address however, the question is do they really care enough to build in time into a lecturer's timetables to deal with those type of students?

In most institutes there is a drive towards encouraging international students to come to the college for a semester, a year or to complete a full degree. However, as practitioners do we stop and think about how these students learn in their own home universities? Is there a vast difference in terms of how modules are assessed and delivered? There is the presumption on behalf of management and in some cases colleagues that these students will 'learn to cope' over time.

To a certain extent the institution may also have a significant part to play on how our students learn. We as practitioners may have good intentions and strategies in our minds on how we want our students to learn however, if these are not supported by management within the institution then the student may never experience what we intended them to experience in our classroom.

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# *Liberal Criticism of Erdogan's Turkey*

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Ozan Örmeci

**Summary:** Turkey's most successful politician in terms of election results, President of the Republic Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan is also a very controversial figure both within Turkey and outside. The article seeks to analyze Turkish transformation during Erdogan's era.

**Keywords:** Turkish Republic, Turkish Politics, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

## Introduction

No surprise took place in Turkish Presidential election last year. Ruling Justice and Development Party's candidate Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has become the 12th - but the first one elected directly by popular vote- President of the Republic in the first round of elections. Before the elections, according to latest polls Erdogan was expected to get around 57 % of the votes, but he got only 52 %, which could be considered only a small victory for him. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the candidate supported by the pro-European social democratic Republican People's Party (RPP) and secular Turkish nationalist Nationalist Action Party (NAP) as well 10 other small parties, got 39 % of the total votes. Results show that it would not be easy for President Erdogan to transform the country into a Presidential or semi-Presidential system which he sees something urgently needed and inevitable for the country. In addition, there might be serious problems within the JDP without Erdogan's charismatic and authoritarian leadership as he stepped up into Presidential Palace. Now that he is in the new Presidential Palace as the most successful Turkish politician ever in terms of electoral performance, it might be a good time to criticize Mr. "Invincible" Recep Tayyip Erdogan's deeds during his tenure in the office as Prime Minister between 2003 and 2014.

## Recep Tayyip Erdogan: From zero to hero

Turkey's once imprisoned newly elected pro-Islamic President of the Republic Recep Tayyip Erdogan (61), is without any doubt one of the most interesting and powerful leaders of 21<sup>st</sup> century. Erdogan has been ruling a "torn country" like Turkey since 2003 and has been constantly increasing his powers over the system by eliminating all mechanisms of checks and balances. The success of Erdogan is caused by many different reasons including the weakness of opposition parties in Turkey, his chance to take over after a huge economic crisis in 2001 with a successful economic program prepared by Kemal Dervis, his Islamist identity allowing him to create a special tie between ordinary Anatolian people and his close relationships with international Islamist "green" capital that allows Turkey to live comfortably enough even at a time when some European economies are heading toward disaster. However, Erdogan's well-known authoritarian tendencies, as well as his uncontrolled and imperious behaviors and speeches, make many people both in his own country and outside to get afraid from the future of Turkey. In this piece, I will try to make a liberal criticism of Erdogan's Turkey by focusing first on some basic principles of classical liberalism and then Erdogan's controversial policies and speeches.

## Classical Liberalism: What was it about?

Liberalism is an ideology historically born out of the conflict between newly arising bourgeois class and aristocratic landowners in Europe as the ideology defended by the flourishing bourgeois class, consisted of traders and businessmen that want to increase their power and protect their wealth from the "political absolutism" represented by the king and the state.<sup>2</sup> Liberalism, thus, focuses first and foremost on basic liberties such as right to live, right to have property etc. and seeks to promote individual liberties maximum as possible by trying to guarantee equality of opportunity within a tolerant society. The hallmark of liberalism is the promotion of individual liberty, but liberals in fact disagree over what exactly liberty is and how to best promote it. Liberalism considers human beings as rational, self-interested and competitive by nature. Their primary rejection is about the "ascribed status" designed by the landed classes during the Medieval Ages. Liberals think that a free-market system would allow

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<sup>2</sup> Summarized from here; Ball, Terence & Dagger, Richard. 2011. *Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal* (8/E), Pearson, Chapter 3.

everyone the best chance to develop themselves and reach their true potential. Their second important rejection is about the “religious conformity” proposed by the Catholic Church and allows religious people to have authority over other people thus spoiling liberal market order.

Thomas Hobbes’ famous work *Leviathan* could be considered as the earliest theoretical work about liberalism, since Hobbes considered human beings as rational and self-interested although his look toward human nature is very pessimistic in its essence. John Locke is naturally considered as the leading theoretician of classical liberalism, because Locke tried to formulate a theory based on social contract about the necessity of a liberal state that will allow everyone to enjoy their natural rights given by the nature or God. Locke thought that individuals are naturally equal and free with natural rights to life, liberty and property. Thus, the state’s only mission is to protect this environment where free life and economics could take place in security. Later American revolutionaries and some of French revolutionaries used Locke’s theories to constitute the basis of their new society models. John Stuart Mill, in his work *On Liberty*, by using utilitarian principles contributed a lot to the development of liberalism especially in terms of freedom of thought and freedom of conscience. Mill also created a “harm principle”, a simple theory about where freedom starts and where it ends when it violates other people’s freedoms. Scottish economist Adam Smith is also one of the leading theoreticians of economic liberalism since in his work *The Wealth of Nations*, he advocated free-market economics and thought that an “invisible hand” in the market system direct the private interests of individuals toward the common interest of society. Liberals also believe in the separation of powers since they believe that as it was stated by Lord Acton, “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely”. Liberals see the state as the “necessary evil” and that is why, they want to make the state as small as possible especially in the field of economics.

### **Liberal Criticism of Erdogan’s Turkey**

Justice and Development Party (JDP – AK Parti) was established in 2001 in Bilkent Hotel, with the ideology of struggling against 3 “y”s in Turkey: *yolsuzluk* (corruption), *yasaklar* (restrictions) and *yoksulluk* (poverty). The party used a libertarian civilian language and took the support of liberal and social democratic segments of the country as well as business circles. JDP showed a good performance against the elimination of so-called the “deep state” in Turkey and began to establish a new order not based on military guardianship or tutelage, but rather on civilian supremacy. However, starting from 2007 and now it is much more apparent, Erdogan has been systematically showing symptoms of authoritarianism and in a sense establishing a new statist system where elites are centered not within the military this time, but in other state institutions, namely the MIT (Turkish National Intelligence Agency). Everyone will remember that Erdogan ordered a private law for MIT Undersecretary Hakan Fidan in order to prevent his arrestation, a clear violation of principle of generality in modern legal systems.<sup>3</sup> While defeating the aristocratic landed class in the country (the military in Turkish case), Erdogan created a new kingdom instead of a liberal state. Moreover, Erdogan brought a new “ascribed status” model (a new vassalage system) to Turkey, where people from different sects of Islam (Alevi), non-Muslims, non-believers and people from other political

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<sup>3</sup> Fidan recently resigned from his duty in order to become a deputy candidate from the ruling JDP. Main opposition party, RPP’s leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu claims that “Fidan knows all dirty doings of JDP” and that is why Erdogan ordered a private law for him in the past. See; “CHP leader claims MIT head Fidan knows all dirty doings of AK Party”, *Today’s Zaman*, Date of Accession: 13.02.2015 from [http://www.todayszaman.com/national\\_chp-leader-claims-mit-head-fidan-knows-all-dirty-doings-of-ak-party\\_372384.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/national_chp-leader-claims-mit-head-fidan-knows-all-dirty-doings-of-ak-party_372384.html).

parties have no chance to rise in the bureaucracy. Erdogan, instead of following Locke, started to follow Hobbes' principles and turned out to be a modern "Leviathan" who has the supreme and uncontrolled power over the system. Erdogan seemed very uninterested in property rights, when he ordered an astronomical fine against media tycoon Aydın Dogan, because of his moderately critical broadcasting policy against the government.<sup>4</sup>

During Erdogan's time, privatizations are made not in accordance with free-market principles, but rather with political motivations. Erdogan, again against liberal principles, established a social system where "religious conformity" is equally stronger as non-democratic theocratic countries like Islamic Republic of Iran and people are subjected to state's oppression because of their lack of praying, drinking or smoking habits and active sexual lives. Erdogan, in his speeches, always advised people to get marry at early ages and have at least three children, get rid of drinking and smoking habits and follow moral and religious rules. By doing this, Erdogan somehow created an atmosphere of fear, where non-conformist social or political behaviors, as well as different political views, have become much more difficult to be expressed in the country. In Erdogan's Turkey, women murders are increased by 1400 %<sup>5</sup> and Erdogan even tried to ban abortion<sup>6</sup>, but later stepped back after huge reactions shown by the women rights activists. Erdogan's government, without taking any consent from people or from the parliament, also makes so-called "peace talks" with Abdullah Ocalan, the imprisoned leader of PKK, a Marxist-Leninist internationally recognized terrorist organization that led to the death of 35.000 people in Turkey, which is a clear violation of rule of law.

Erdogan's government which started as a utopia, in fact has been turning into a dystopia, a modern version of George Orwell's 1984 novel, where all oppositional movements are watched closely by the state as if they are terrorist movements. It is very hard to explain with liberal principles, why a government that already holds peace talks with an internationally recognized terrorist organization like PKK, is so obsessed with the terrorist nature of all oppositional political and social movements in the country? Erdogan's Turkey is also convicted about freedom of thought, because the country is now one of the leading countries in terms of number of jailed journalists.<sup>7</sup> Turkey was already corrupt before, but now since the ruling power is uncontested, the country is heading towards worse as Lord Acton foresaw long years ago.

### **Competitive Authoritarianism?**

"Competitive authoritarianism" is a relatively new concept in Comparative Politics created by Professor Steven Levitsky from Harvard University. Levitsky, together with Lucan Way, wrote the book *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War* in 2010 and also published an article called "Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of

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<sup>4</sup> After the Treasury imposed a controversial tax fine of half-billion-dollars, Aydın Dogan said that Erdogan seeks to create "calm and silent Turkey". See; "Aydın Dogan says PM seeks to create 'calm and silent Turkey'", *Hürriyet Daily News*, Date of Accession: 13.02.2015 from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/specialreport/11065056.asp>.

<sup>5</sup> "Kadın Cinayeti Sayısı Son 7 Yılda % 1400 Artmıştır", *Türk Üniversiteli Kadınlar Derneği*, Date of Accession: 12.02.2015 from <http://www.tukd.org.tr/basinhaber07.asp>.

<sup>6</sup> "Erdogan's Call to Ban Abortion in Turkey Will Only Increase Deaths", *International Business Times*, Date of Accession: 12.02.2015 from <http://www.ibtimes.com/Erdogans-call-ban-abortion-turkey-will-only-increase-deaths-705711>.

<sup>7</sup> "Number of jailed journalists sets global record", *Committee to Protect Journalists*, Date of Accession: 12.02.2015 from <http://cpj.org/reports/2012/12/imprisoned-journalists-world-record.php>.

Competitive Authoritarianism”<sup>8</sup>. By the term “competitive authoritarianism”, Levitsky and Way basically refer to hybrid political regimes that were emerged after the Cold War, combining democratic rules with authoritarian style of governance.<sup>9</sup>

Although in the academic world these regimes are often pointed out as transitional governments, real political experiences show that they can be long-lived and in fact very successful. Electoral success of Vladimir Putin of Russian Federation, Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey or Viktor Orbán from Hungary are some of the recent examples of competitive authoritarian model.<sup>10</sup> Although Levitsky and Way generally point out African countries in the 1990s to conceptualize this model, in fact similar regimes can emerge in very different contexts and geographies including South America, Balkans, Caucasus or Asia. According to Levitsky and Way, in competitive authoritarian regimes, “formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the principal means of obtaining and exercising political authority”.<sup>11</sup> Levitsky and Way claim that competitive authoritarianism must be distinguished from real democracies since they do not completely fulfill the 4 basic conditions of democracy;

- 1-) Executives and legislatures are chosen through elections that are open, free, and fair,
- 2-) Virtually all adults possess the right to vote,
- 3-) Political rights and civil liberties, including freedom to criticize the government without reprisal, are broadly protected,
- 4-) Elected authorities possess real authority to govern, in that they are not subject to the tutelary control of military or clerical leaders.<sup>12</sup>

In competitive authoritarian regimes, violations of these criteria are widespread and serious enough to create an unfair game between the government and the opposition. In Russia and Turkey for instance, the freedom to criticize the government without reprisal is not completely met. It is a fact that competitive authoritarian regimes are not completely authoritarian regimes since they provide basic liberties to their citizens and implement democratic procedures for legitimacy. However, in the implementation of democratic procedures, there are serious frauds and the politicization of the state and bureaucracy create an unfair competition between the government and the opposition. For instance, a recent report published by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) shows that, the funding of the Presidential campaign of Prime Minister Erdogan in Turkey lacks transparency and the oppositional candidates are given much less chance to express themselves in state-owned tv channels.<sup>13</sup> As in the case of Turkey, competitive authoritarian regimes especially focus on 4 key arenas to keep the status quo;

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<sup>8</sup> Levitsky, Steven & Way, Lucan A. (2002), “Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism”, *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 13, Number 2, April 2002. Retrieved from [http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/levitsky/files/SL\\_elections.pdf](http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/levitsky/files/SL_elections.pdf) on 12.02.2015.

<sup>9</sup> Levitsky, Steven & Way, Lucan A. (2002), “Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism”, p. 51.

<sup>10</sup> Listen Fareed Zakaria’s comments on Putinism and authoritarian regimes based on electoralism; <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2014/08/04/will-putinism-triumph/>.

<sup>11</sup> Levitsky, Steven & Way, Lucan A. (2002), “Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism”, p. 52.

<sup>12</sup> Levitsky, Steven & Way, Lucan A. (2002), “Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism”, p. 53.

<sup>13</sup> “OSCE slams use of public funds for Turkish PM Erdogan’s presidential campaign”, *Hürriyet Daily News*, Date of Accession: 13.02.2015 from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/osce-slams-use-of-public-funds-for-turkish-pm-erdogans-presidential-campaign.aspx?pageID=238&nID=69880&NewsCatID=338>.

- 1-) the electoral arena,
- 2-) the legislature,
- 3-) the judiciary,
- 4-) the media.<sup>14</sup>

In short, competitive authoritarian regimes are a new kind of transitional regimes in which the system reaches out perfection in terms of keeping the President in his or her post by different mechanisms such as the control over the media, politicization of state bureaucracy and electoral fraud. It is also highly questionable that this transitional stage will be transitional since these governments increase their legitimacy and support when they perform good in terms of economic growth, thanks to the neo-liberal free-market economic model whose primary concern is profit, but not democracy. Thus, Turkish version of competitive authoritarianism (Erdogan regime) seems not temporary but permanent unless the country economically begins to stagnate. Maybe Erdogan's regime will not take the form of a single-party regime like China, but he will probably try to establish a dominant-party system in which he will secure electoral victories for his party in the coming elections.

### **Conclusion**

Finally, as far as I am concerned, democrats around the world should pray and hope for the survival of multi-party democratic regime in Turkey, since starting from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938), the country is like a role-model for the Islamic world about secularism, women rights and democracy. But the decision will be mostly a decision of Erdogan, since Turkey's strong allies (USA) and important economic partners (Russian Federation) seems supportive at least not critical of Erdogan's one-man rule.

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<sup>14</sup> Levitsky, Steven & Way, Lucan A. (2002), "Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism", p. 54.

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# *Pronoun Error Patterns In Nigerian Speakers with Features of Asd and Sli*

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## **Abstract**

Pronoun errors have been reported in speakers with ASD and SLI. For SLI, this remains controversial. The present study examines pronoun errors in Nigerian speakers with features of ASD and a match with SLI. The Hypothesis avers that participants with FASD would employ significantly more pronoun errors than those with SLI. Participating were 20 male and 10 female English speaking, urban Nigerians, matched for MLU, sex and socio-economic status. They ranged from 2 to 29 years old. Each interacted with the experimenter over a standard set of toys. Pronoun omissions and reversals were collated. Error patterns were comparable for both groups. Omissions were more prevalent than reversals. Reversals were most frequent on the 3rd person singular pronouns. First person reversals were few. This homogeneity in pronoun error patterns suggests a common etiology possibly supporting an argument for ASDLI and SLI co-morbidity. Conclusions are tempered by the small sample size.

**Key words-** ASD, SLI, pronoun, errors, reversals, omissions, Nigeria.

## Introduction

The Theory of mind refers to the ability to appreciate that the perspective of another may differ from our own. It is purported to be impaired in persons suffering from an autism spectrum disorder (Korkmaz, 2011). The boundaries between the perception of self and other appear sometimes to be blurred in people with ASD. This is adeptly illustrated by a study of the use of sign language by hearing impaired children with and without ASD. Palm reversal errors were observed by children in the ASD condition alone. The authors attributed this to a self-other mapping deficit in people with ASD (Shield & Meier, 2012). Amongst verbal speakers with ASD, pronoun errors have been widely reported suggesting some confusion in alluding to self and other. The reversal of particularly 1st and 2nd person pronouns by ASD speakers has become a salient feature involved in the diagnosis of ASD (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Brehme, 2014). Cheng (2012) compared pronoun use in children with ASD and a matched group of typically developing (TD) children. The results adduced significantly more pronoun reversals by children in the ASD condition than by the TD children. Research by Geutjes, (2014) reported delays in the acquisition of both personal and reflexive pronouns by children with ASD when compared with their TD peers. A longitudinal study tracked pronoun use by two precocious speakers. One of these was TD while the other had been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, a form of high functioning ASD. The findings reported numerous pronoun reversals by both children at certain stages of their development. These however differed in quality. Errors by the TD speaker were semantic in nature while the child with Asperger's syndrome made errors which indicated difficulties with perspective-taking (Evans & Demuth, 2012). In another comparison of pronoun use in children with ASD and TD children Hobson et al., (2010) concluded that no differences occurred between groups in their employment of personal pronouns. They averred however that children with ASD were less likely to use the 3rd person singular *he* than were TD children.

Pronoun errors have also been suggested in speakers with structural language impairments (SLI). Stavrakaki & Heather, (2010) reported syntactic errors in the use of the object pronoun by Greek speaking children diagnosed with SLI. Moore emphasized mixed reviews about the competence of pronoun use by children with SLI. In a series of studies, her data indicated that when matched for MLU, children in the SLI condition produced a similar number of errors as did TD children (1995; 2001). McGregor & Leonard, (1994) also examined pronoun errors in speakers with SLI and TD children matched for MLU. They reported a comparable number of omissions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular *you* and the 3<sup>rd</sup> singular *he* by both groups.

The present study is the second of a series examining the nature of pronoun use by Nigerians with features of an autism spectrum disorder (FASD) matched for MLU with speakers diagnosed with SLI. The initial report reviewed pronoun distribution by speakers from both conditions. It adduced remarkable similarities in the frequency of pronoun use by the two groups (Nwanze, 2015). The current report focuses on pronoun error patterns by the two groups, taking into account both pronoun omissions and reversals. This research continues to contribute data toward a controversy regarding SLI co-morbidity within a sub-group of ASD speakers who demonstrate syntactic language deficits (Verhoeven, et al., 2012; McGregor, et al., 2012 & Sukenik & Friedmann, 2013). It is hypothesized that speakers with FASD would express significantly more errors than would their counterparts with SLI, particularly when pertaining to pronoun reversals.

## Method

### Participants

There were 30 participants (PP) in this study. The majority were children. The age range was 2 to 29 years old. There were 20 males and 10 females. All the PP were from urban Nigerian homes and spoke English as their primary language. They were selected from the speech therapy clinic of the Lagos university teaching hospital Lagos, Nigeria. Fifteen speakers with features of ASD and 15 with SLI were matched for MLU-m, sex, volume of speech and socio-economic status. In all the PPs, connected discourse was emerging as reflected by an MLU-m in excess of one morpheme. For each dyad the number of utterances analyzed was held constant. Prior to their clinic attendant, each had undergone an audiological evaluation, confirming normal hearing in all PP.

### Materials

1. A doll's house with a boy and girl doll.
2. A toy car with a slot in doll.
3. A toy plate, cup, cutlery and a water bottle, plastic food: - apple, banana, orange, bread, biscuit, chicken, egg, ice-cream, tomato, corn on the cob, a milk bottle and a juice packet.
4. A toy train, boat, bus and aeroplane.
5. Shape sorter.
6. Stacking disc and/or a set of graduated cups.
7. A set of 22 pictures each depicting a boy or girl performing one of the following actions: - sitting, standing, walking, eating, drinking, crying, sleeping, running, waving, hopping, singing, talking, jumping, swimming, swinging, clapping, dancing, climbing, bending, kneeling, brushing (teeth), washing (hands).

## Procedure

### Selection of FASD group

The DSM-IV checklists were completed for each child referred for speech therapy who exhibited a behaviour disorder. The DSM-IV stipulates that for a diagnosis of ASD, a minimum of 4 characteristics from the checklist be evident: two from category A and one each from Category's B and C. (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). The children selected for this study met the DSM-IV criteria for a diagnosis of ASD. A parent interview followed from which only children whose motor developmental milestones were attained within normal limits were enrolled.

### Selection of SLI group

For the purpose of this study, the term structural language impairment referred to children whose expressive language was syntactically impaired. This was interfaced with an otherwise average profile of abilities. Children whose parents reported delays, limited to speech alone were recruited for the study. A parent interview selected children with normal development in the areas of self-help skills (e.g. toilet training, feeding, and dressing) and no delays in the acquisition of early motor developmental milestones i.e. cited delayed speech as their only concern.

### **Socio-Economic Status**

The children were matched for their father's educational level and occupation (or that of the primary bread winner) and locale. Within the Lagos metropolis, locale effectively distinguishes between the various economic strata of society.

### **Obtaining speech sample**

This was obtained in 3 ways during a 2 hour session with the assessor. Each child was evaluated individually in a clinical setting. A parent was present. The authenticity of the speech sample obtained was validated by the parent.

1. The investigator chatted informally with each child, asking them for biographical information pertaining to their name, age, gender, sibling's names, school, class and friends. Personal information pertaining to daily activities was also obtained i.e. who bathed you/took you to school? What did you bath with/do at school? When, where, why did you bath/ go to school? Each response was transcribed.
2. A set of toys were given to the child. The investigators' comments ran as follows, as they handed over the items: - take/look at this or *what are you/is the doll doing?* The toys were presented in separate batches as listed above.
3. A set of 22 action cards were presented one at a time to each child. The question asked was what is the boy/girl doing here?

### **Computing MLU-m**

The MLU in morphemes was computed for each child as instructed by Brown (1973).

### **Extraction of pronouns**

Each utterance was examined for the appropriate use of the following pronouns: - I, me, my, you, your, he, she, his, her, it, we, us, they, their and them. These were then categorized into 6 clusters as follows: - personal pronouns I, me, my; 2nd person singular you, your; 3rd person singular he and she; 3rd person possessive his, her; 3rd person object it and the collective pronouns us, we, they, their and them.

### **Recording pronoun errors**

- A. Omissions: - Once a sentence began with an auxiliary e.g. *is sitting or ....wants to \_\_\_*. It was recorded as a pronoun omission. In addition the absence of a possessive pronoun between the verb and object was also counted. E.g. *he is brushing teeth*.
- B. Reversals: - Once an incorrect pronoun referent was substituted for the correct pronoun, it was recorded as a reversal. Examples include referring to a boy as *she* or utilizing a possessive pronoun depicting the wrong gender. On occasion, the wrong collective pronoun was expressed e.g. *them are going home*.

### **Volume of speech (VS)**

This was measured in utterance units. A UU was defined as a segment of speech unbroken by a pause of 1 second or longer. The number of UUs made by each child was computed. The UUs were held constant by pegging the UU analysis of each pair to the number of UUs utilized by the child with the lower volume of speech in that dyad.

### **Statistical analysis**

All the data for this study was analyzed non-parametrically. The Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Ranks Test was employed to test the significance of difference between the two groups. The Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient was employed to evaluate associations.

## Results

With a mean age of 7.8 years old, the group with FASD were significantly older than children with the SLI condition who had an average age of 5 years old ( $z$  score = -2.14;  $p < .03$ ). Their MLUs were equivalent at 3.54 and 3.55 morphemes for the FASD and SLI groups respectively. Pp in the FASD condition employed an average of 23 pronouns each and children with SLI 35. This difference was statistically insignificant.

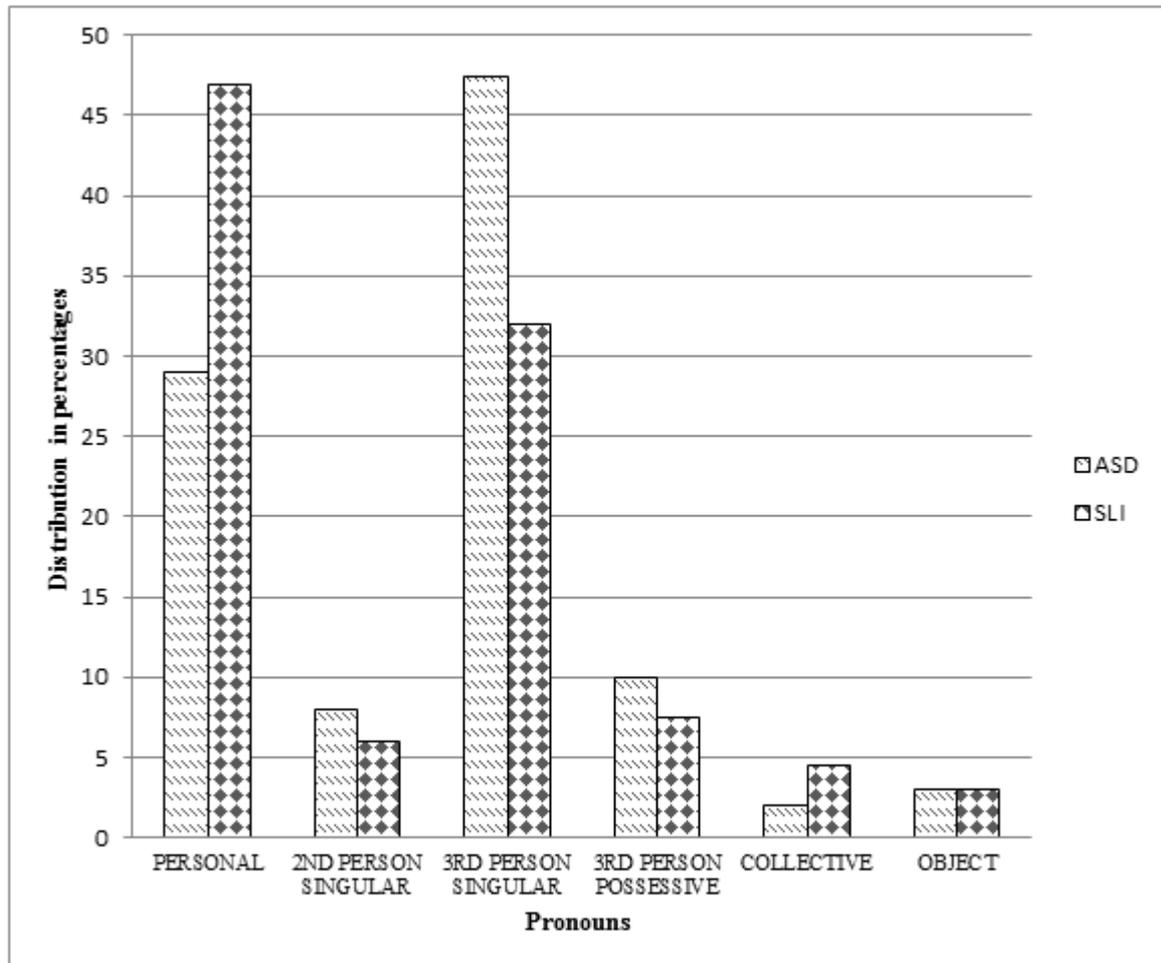


Figure 1. Percentage of pronouns falling into each category.

The Pps pronoun distribution is illustrated in fig 1.

The 1st person singular and 3rd person singular categories predominated in both groups. Most sparsely utilized were the collective and object pronouns. Although children in the SLI group employed a significantly higher number of collective pronouns than did speakers with FASD ( $z$  score = -2.167;  $p < .05$ ). This was the only pronoun category which had a significantly different distribution for speakers with ASD and SLI. MLU was positively correlated with the total number of pronouns used in both groups. For the FASD condition  $r_s = .6$ ;  $p < .05$  and in the SLI group  $r_s = .67$ ;  $p < .01$ . In speakers with SLI alone, MLU was also positively correlated with the frequency of use of personal pronouns ( $r_s = .54$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and with the number of 3rd person singular pronouns employed ( $r_s = .69$ ;  $p < .01$ ). MLU did not vary significantly with pronouns from any of the six categories in speakers with FASD.

**Table 1: Mean number of Pronoun omissions**

<b>PRON. OMISSIONS</b>	<b>ASD</b>	<b>SLI</b>
	-	-
	X	X
Personal pronoun	2.1	1.06
2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular	0.3	0
3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular	7.5	8.26
3 <sup>rd</sup> person possessive	0.73	0.6
Collective	0.66	0.66
Object	1	0.6

On average, speakers with FASD omitted 12 pronouns while Pp in the SLI condition omitted 11. The omissions were omitted across the 6 pronoun categories as displayed above. No significant difference was obtained in the number of omissions made by each group. The numbers of omissions made did not vary with age or MLU in either of the two groups. Children with SLI made significantly more errors of omission than they did reversals (z score= 3.3; p<.01).

The distribution of pronoun reversals made under the 6 categories is shown in table 2

**Table 2: Mean number of Pronoun reversals**

<b>PRON. REVERSALS</b>	<b>ASD</b>	<b>SLI</b>
	-	-
	X	X
Personal pronoun	0.6	0.1
2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular	0.4	0
3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular	4.6	1.13
3 <sup>rd</sup> person possessive	1.13	0.6
Collective	0	0.5
Object	0.06	0.06

The mean number of reversals made by Pp with FASD was 6.8 and 2.5 for speakers with SLI. More reversals were made by people in the FASD condition than by children with SLI. This difference however did not reach significance, because only 4 Pp were responsible for a high number of reversals recorded in the FASD group. The largest proportion of pronoun reversals for both groups occurred in the 3rd person singular category. No reversals were indicated with collective pronouns in the FASD condition. Speakers with SLI did not reverse the 2nd person singular. The pattern of pronoun errors did not vary with age in any of the groups. The number of reversals made was however positively correlated with MLU in both groups. For speakers with FASD  $r_s = .53$ ;  $P < .05$  and  $r_s = .62$ ;  $p < .05$  for the Pp with SLI. Speakers with a higher MLU from the FASD condition made more 3rd person singular and possessive pronoun reversals than did their lower MLU counterparts ( $r_s = .5$ ;  $p < .05$  and  $r_s = .59$ ;

$p < .05$ ) respectively. Please note that MLU was not significantly correlated to the frequency of production of the pronouns in these two categories. This relationship differs in the SLI condition in which the higher MLU speakers did produce significantly more 3rd person singular pronouns than did their lower counterparts ( $r_s = .69$ ;  $p < .01$ ). MLU also varied positively with pronoun reversal from the 3rd person singular category for Pp with SLI ( $r_s = .58$ ;  $p < .05$ ). For Pp in the FASD condition, 59% of pronoun reversal from the 3rd singular category were the employment of she for he. There was only 27% utilization of he for she.

## Discussion

The frequency of personal and 2nd person pronoun reversals by speakers with ASD has been well documented as reviewed by Brehme, (2014). Its proliferation has even necessitated its inclusion as a hallmark of the ASD diagnosis on the DSM V (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). A review of spontaneous utterances made by children with ASD and their TD peers adduced more reversals particularly on the 1st person singular category by children from the ASD condition than by the TD group (Cheng, 2012). The expected results of this study were therefore that personal pronoun reversals in the FASD condition would predominate and significantly exceed those made by speakers with SLI. This was however not the case. The current findings appear to be somewhat atypical. Although personal pronouns were the 2nd highest pronoun category produced correctly by speakers with FASD (88), just 4 out of the 15 participants reversed personal pronouns. Collectively, they reversed a total of only nine. Hence, references to self appeared not to be a major challenge for this sample of FASD speakers. Allusions to the 2nd person were made sparsely by those in the FASD group. This was also the case however for speakers with SLI. The highest number of pronouns appropriately produced and also reversed by speakers with FASD fell into the 3rd person singular category. These speakers reversed approximately a third of the pronouns within this category.

The numbers were not significantly higher than reversals made in that category by speakers with SLI. He was most commonly reversed. A study by Hobson et al., (2010) did not focus on the reversals of he in a sample of children with ASD. They did however indicate that these children were significantly less likely to employ the pronoun he where appropriate than were their TD counterparts. Reflecting a similar trend, the number of he omissions in the study were double that of the she omissions in the FASD group. He and she omissions were more evenly distributed within the speech of the SLI sample, although he omissions predominated. Moore, (2001) also recorded more errors by children with SLI on the 3rd person singular pronouns than with other pronoun types. The author however located more errors on the use of she than for he. Much has been made of pronoun reversals by ASD speakers. The present sample of FASD sufferers however actually tended to omit pronouns with a slightly higher frequency than they reversed them. It is possible that when unsure of the appropriate pronoun to apply to a comment, they simply left it off. There is a probable developmental component to general pronoun production by the speakers with FASD. This is reflected by a moderate correlation between MLU and the frequency of pronoun production ( $r_s = .6$ ). That relationship was stronger for speakers with SLI ( $r_s = .7$ ). Geutjes (2014) did suggest a delay in the acquisition of some pronoun types by children with ASD. This is apparent in the FASD group who were over 2 years older than their MLU match with SLI. Pronoun analysis within the six categories reviewed in the current study did not adduce a relationship between syntactic complexity as measured by MLU and the frequency of production of pronouns within any of the six categories. Such relationships did exist between MLU and some of those pronoun categories for the speakers with SLI.

Perovic, et al., (2013) have suggested that maturation alone is not enough to explain the pronoun difficulties encountered by speakers with ASD, implying possible underlying cognitive and pragmatic difficulties.

The hypothesis that the speakers with FASD would produce more errors than an MLU equivalent match with SLI was not upheld. Pronoun production and errors were actually quite similar for both the FASD and SLI sub-groups. Both sets of speakers expressed a higher number of personal and 3rd person singular pronouns than they employed the other 4 types. Only the collective pronouns were utilized with a significantly higher frequency by speakers with SLI than those with FASD. For the two groups of speakers, errors of omission superseded reversal errors. This phenomenon reached statistical significance for the SLI sample alone. Like their FASD match, most of the errors made by the speakers with SLI were from the 3rd person singular category. He pronoun errors were more prevalent than she errors in the two samples. This homogeneity in pronoun error patterns suggests a common etiology possibly supporting an argument for ASDLI and SLI co-morbidity. Far reaching conclusions are however tempered by the small sample size in this study.

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# *Risk perceptions of marginalized communities to flood hazards, case study of Cape Town, South Africa*

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## **Abstract**

This paper showcases flood risk perceptions of Philippi, an informal settlement in Cape Town. The central tenet is that expert decision-making based on an understanding of community perceptions is critical for translating risk management into effective risk practices in marginalised communities. Questionnaire surveys with AGA and multiple choice questions were issued in a convenient sample. Data was computer analysed using the chi square test. Word associations were scored, weighted by independent judges, then content analysed and categorised into domains. The Results showed that the community considered flooding to be a serious problem, but socioeconomic issues outweighed the threat of flooding.

**Key words** Risk perception, floods, marginalisation, governance.

## 1. Introduction

Perceived risk to natural disasters such as floods is a phenomenon not given adequate attention in the developing world, often with disastrous consequences. This is probably because risk perception holds a central position in the broader political agenda (Sjöberg, 2000; 1999) with regards to decisions, policies, communications, and the resultant behaviours critical for the management of the risk (Plapp, 2001). This is especially real in the developing world where risk management to natural hazards has to compete with ailments such as rapid population growth (Poswa & Levy, 2006), substandard housing and badly managed settlements with, not only inadequate resources, but also hosts many deprived populations under aggressive circumstances (Armitage, 2011; Peattie & Aldrete-Haas, 1981). Such is the situation in some communities in South Africa. According to the South African census of 2011, 13, 6% of households out of a population of 51 million, live in informal dwellings (Statistics South Africa, 2012) often referred to as informal settlements. In Cape Town, a city of 3.4 million, 22,4% of the population is estimated to live in informal settlements under conditions of critical poverty with income levels too low to be accommodated in private housing systems (City of Cape Town, 2008). Housing is often substandard at less than 20m<sup>2</sup> per shack, with densities exceeding 200 units per hectares in some areas, and mainly made of plastic, cardboard and asbestos, materials which are highly unsuitable for the harsh winters of the most southern part of the African continent (Armitage et al., 2010). In the Cape Flats, most of these settlements are located in low lying flat areas characterized by high water tables and poor drainage and as a consequence, are prone to annual flooding during the winter rainfall season (Ziervogel & Smit, 2009). Between the years 2004 and 2009, each year five to seven per cent (5-7%) of informal settlement residents were displaced in the July/August winter period. The worst flooding event to be recorded displaced an estimated 44 000 informal settlement households in 2001, which is approximately 13% of the total number of households in the area (Ziervogel & Smit, 2009).

Efforts at flood risk management and risk communication in Cape Town have been documented to be unsuccessful. Armitage et al. (2010) documents an in situ case study of the upgrade of Kosovo, an informal settlement in Cape Town, which failed to be lucrative. Despite being retrofitted with relatively sophisticated urban sewer and flood drainage systems declared scientifically sound and adequate, ethnographic and observational data exposed social barriers as having resulted in the derailment of the project. In addition to addressing the technical requirements of flood risk management problems, the resulting conclusion was that social aspects such as community dispositions and perceptions also needed to be included in the project design. This greatly emasculates the current flood risk governance, which takes the technocratic approach in tackling flood risk issues. Furthermore, discounting the results of the project, the technocratic approach is often condemned, because it normally requires huge injections of capital (Motoyoshi, 2006). Another case study is that done among residents of the Graveyard Pond, which lies in the Philippi informal settlement. This particular area has been designated as a water catchment pond and because of this, the city implemented risk communication strategies that advocated against further encroachment into the area. GIS imagery from the city of Cape Town captured in 2007 (figure 1.1a) depicted the centre of the pond to be uninhabited and free from human dwellings (Musungu et al, 2012).

Fig. 1.1a: Graveyard pond in 2007



Source: Musungu et al., 2012

b. Graveyard pond 2009



Source: Musungu et al., 2012

However, by the year 2009, corresponding imagery (figure 1.1b) showed the area to be densely populated, with an increasing number of shacks having been constructed in the area, including the centre (which is potentially the wettest part) of the pond.

Armitage et al. (2010) claims this lack of success to be due to a lack of community involvement into risk management strategies. They further extrapolate that existing flood risk management does not encourage the sourcing of information from the plagued societies, while Musungu et al. (2012) agrees that, the involvement of the target population is paramount in appraising risk and identifying dynamics that may magnify the risk. Therefore, deciding about risks is not a task for experts alone, but rather the exposed community's risk perception should be used as a fundamental base upon which decisions are made. This study investigates the perceptions of the residents of a marginalized community typical of a South African informal settlement so that the dwelling owners can be included in the decision making towards minimisation of flood risk.

## **2. Risk Perception**

In a study carried out in Sweden during 1994, Sjöberg and Drottz-Sjöberg compare the risk perception of the lay, versus that of the experts with regards to nuclear power and nuclear waste (Sjöberg, 1999). They found drastic differences between the risk perceptions of the lay and that of the experts. It is claimed very few experts judged the risk to be “larger than very small”, while about two thirds (65%) of the public did so. It is generally believed by researchers that creating an equilibrium between probabilistic scientific judgments and indications of social values, ethics and concerns, is one of the most difficult questions that face governments, policy makers and risk management institutions and local authorities today (Pidgeon, 1998; Bickerstaff et al., 2006). This is especially true considering that the social sciences bring forth a relatively new dimension of hazard risk aspects and characteristics that are purely qualitative in nature (Plapp, 2001). Such qualities have been embedded in the different approaches that have been employed to study risk, risk analysis and risk behaviour (Taylor-Gooby-Zinn, 2006). For instance, Johnson and Busemeyer (2010) argue that heuristics and biases are arithmetical in description; they encompass identified restrictions of human cognitive behaviour. For example, in the availability heuristic, people are known to estimate frequency and probability of rare and uncertain events by the ease with which they come to mind such that rare, but significant events are often overestimated (Taylor-Gooby, 2004; Taylor-Gooby & Zinn, 2005) while, in the psychometric paradigm, aspects such as controllability, familiarity, voluntariness and severity of consequence are introduced (Taylor-Gooby-Zinn, 2006; Boholm, 1998). On the other hand, the social constructionist approach to this phenomenon includes theories such as affect (Zajonc, 1980; Shafir et al., 1993 & Sjöberg, 2006), theory of trust (Twyman et al., 2008) and cultural theories (Oltedal et al., 2004; Tansey & O'Riordan, 1999). Other social scientists such as Ho et al. (2008) proved that in Taiwan, risk perception is influenced by disaster and victim characteristics, such as gender and past experiences. The extent to which each theory contributes to the overall risk perception, and the extent to which such theories should be utilised as policy and management guides remains arguable. Sjöberg (2000) argues that heuristics and biases account for a minor portion of risk perception, while the psychometric paradigm accounts for 20% and the cultural theory only 5-10% of perceived risk. These claims are hard to attest. Fischhoff, Watson & Hope states that, “at the same time, although expert judgement is said to be ‘objective’, and by objective we mean it can explain rocket science to the eleventh power, risk requires exercising judgement, and although it is expert judgment, it is human judgment nonetheless, the only difference

between the two being the degree to which they acknowledge the role of judgment” (Fischhoff et al., 1984).

The most plausible conclusion is therefore, although the mentioned judgements may not incorporate complex quantities and probabilities, they can aid a greater depth of understanding. Grothmann and Reusswig (2006) made an attempt to explain the variance in precautionary action against flood damages taken by residents in the flood prone areas of Germany using a qualitative psychological model (Protection Motivation Theory) and the more objective quantitative socioeconomic model. The results generated highlighted socio-psychological factors as having a greater explanatory power in flood risk when compared to the objective model.

However, the question still remains: should the risk perceptions of the lay person be included in risk management, decision making, resource allocation and policy making or should the decisions be left to the experts? Okrent (1998), Bickerstaff et al. (2006) and Pidgeon, (1998) document some of the arguments for and against this notion. Some of the arguments against the inclusion of lay perceptions include issues of bias and noise, including the misconception that managing risk merely entails managing public perception. However, Sjöberg (1999) argues that, there is perfectly good knowledge which is not scientific, which needs to be incorporated into decision-making and recommends a case-by-case judgement of any hazard profile. Because different hazards can have highly varied qualitative profiles, judgements should also be context related. Indeed, Snyder, (2004) used human behavioural ecology life history theory to conclude that in situations of high environmental risk and uncertainty, such as poverty, marginalization and inequality, the risk averse components of individuals become most prominent. Thus, vulnerability reduction programs that increase the resilience of communities need to factor in risk perceptions of the lay to strengthen design strategies. The best program is one that incorporates both the individual and collective perceptions of risk.

### **3. Study Area**

The study was conducted in Philippi, an informal settlement in Cape Town, South Africa. It is located 34°1'S 18°33'E in the Cape Metropolitan area, the exact boundaries are not known (Anderson et al., 2009). Philippi was chosen because it is one of the largest informal settlements in the area and has been designated by the local authority as being within a ‘high’ flood risk zone. To the west, this expansive low-lying area is limited by rising ground that slopes towards the mountainous Cape Peninsula. On the east are the mountainous regions of the Boland. The climate is Mediterranean, driven by the position of the southern African subcontinent in relation to the low pressure westerly waves that move from west to east between 40° and 50° south (Midgely et al., 2005). Thus, low-pressure cold fronts and orographic rain from the two mountainous zones bring rainfall to the Western Cape. For some areas, this combination has had disastrous consequences in the past, and coupled with a high water table, a Mediterranean type climate and surrounding mountainous areas, floods are inevitable, especially in the months of July and August. Because of the geology of the area, the Cape flats were designated as unproductive land and became industrial zones and urban sprawl areas. The history and development of the area runs as far back as the 1800s in sync with apartheid policies, which were influential in two main ways. Firstly, it prioritised development that emphasized unequal social and spatial integration at both the local and national level with the advent of policies such as the Land Act 1913 (Miraftab, 2007). Secondly, the lifting of the apartheid policies themselves in 1994 led to a drastic change in terms of demographics and settlement, and economic opportunities arose for the marginalized people, leading to a rapid

influx of people into the areas that were prohibited during the apartheid era. Thus, the overall development of the area was always marred by social injustices and political instability. The city of Cape Town divides Philippi into five wards. Today about 90% of the 205 000 people living in Philippi (City of Cape Town, 2013) are black people, mostly of the isiXhosa tribe (Barry & Rüther, 2005). The total area of Philippi is claimed to be 13.16 km<sup>2</sup> (City of Cape Town, 2001), making it one of Cape Town's biggest and most populated informal settlements with a density of 15.594/km<sup>2</sup>. Almost 30% of the total population falls within the 0 to 14 age group, while the remaining 70% is between 15 and 64. The aged population (65+) is almost non-existent at a mere one per cent (1%). Because at least half the population lives in substandard housing characterised by either stand-alone shacks or shacks in back yards, only 68% have access to piped water, of which some of these have no water inside the dwelling, but inside the yard. The rest of the population have to be content with fetching water outside the yard, some of which include distances greater than 200m. The use of bucket latrines is still prominent in the area with 13% of the households still resorting to this method. Although electricity is the major source of power in the broader area, only half the population of Philippi has access to electricity. In terms of adult population educational background, almost four per cent (4%) are estimated to have obtained a tertiary level status, while only 50% have had some secondary education.

Because of the relatively low educational level of people living in this area, the labour force mainly consists of manual labour occupations, crafts and related trade workers, service workers as well as shop and market side workers (City of Cape Town, 2001). Less than two per cent (2%) of the total population are estimated to be employed in professional occupations. The unemployment rate stands at 37% with 20% of the population having zero income (City of Cape Town, 2013). The rest of the population have low incomes levels with a little over half the population (55%) earning below R3200, barely enough to sustain a healthy living. In terms of tenure, 26% of the total population live rent free while 24% are tenants and less than half (45%) claim that they own the houses they live in.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1 Research design and sampling**

The case study methodology was employed. Measuring risk perceptions was part of a full study that aimed at describing and explaining the influence of flood risk communication efforts on the inhabitants of informal settlements of Cape Town and how this impacts on behaviours and perceptions towards floods. A Purposive sampling was used to select the case study population. This needed to be a flood prone informal settlement ranked to be of a 'high risk' priority in terms of flooding according to the City of Cape Town. The non-probability convenient sampling technique was also used to select respondents. Convenient sampling points were determined by spheres of influence of service centres in the case study area. Three sampling points were chosen: Shoprite shopping mall, Browns farm library, and Philippi train station. An attempt was made to select respondents that were as representative as possible of the population structure. Sampling at the library targeted respondents of a school going age group, mainly because of literacy issues and also to showcase the level of flood risk knowledge in school curricula. Respondents between Grade 8 to grade 12 were chosen. Introducing flood risk education in school curricula is one of the proactive measures employed by the City of Cape Town. The area of the train station was sampled to aim for the economically active population. Rail transport is the major form of transport in informal settlements and as such, residents of Philippi use trains to travel to and from work. Shoprite shopping mall is the largest and most central shopping centre in Philippi and attracts residents from all over the area. These

people were thus at leisure. Furthermore it also catered for the economically inactive residents since the survey was conducted during the day on a working week day, when the working population is supposedly at work. This was important for the purposes of this study, as the unemployed population is as mentioned before, high at approximately 37%.

#### **4.2 Data collection and analysis**

The survey procedure and questionnaire data collection technique were used to collect data from the public. The questionnaire employed a combination of questions, including the AGA (Associative Group Analysis) technique (although modified to include conscious and unconscious words by allowing a longer time to complete), as well as structured, open-ended and likert type questions. The AGA technique was chosen because it allows the measurement of psychological dispositions and therefore, perceptions without the bias of the respondent knowing the actual measurement that is being explored (Szalay, 1992). Respondents were asked to write down word associations in response to a particular stimulus word or theme. The fieldwork preparation started in the middle of September and began with seeking ethical approval because the research was part of a study that measured psychological dispositions. Furthermore consent forms were attached to all the questionnaires for signature or initials. Places of residence were also a requirement to delimit respondents that fell outside of the research area. Research assistants were recruited and assisted with the interviews and data processing. Two basic requirements applied, namely all the assistants had to be fluent in Xhosa the local language, and some of them needed to reside in Philippi. The research assistants went through a two-day training program (20-21 September) on the background of the study as well as on how to reduce sampling errors such as bias. A pilot study was done to pre-test the data collection instrument. The population of the case study area determined the number of questionnaires distributed. For a 10-point confidence interval and 95% confidence level, a sample of 96 respondents was needed. The universal of the 2001 census data of 110 000 was used to determine this figure because the 2011 census data was embargoed at this time and therefore, unavailable. To cater for possible sampling errors, 120 questionnaires were distributed. The survey was conducted early October 2012 towards the end of the rain season and while flooding experience was still fresh in the minds of the respondents. Data collection was done over two full days (1st and 2nd October). The questionnaire had 22 questions but only four of the questions will be used for the purposes of this paper to determine the respondents' flood risk perceptions. On average, each questionnaire utilized 30 minutes to complete. To ensure reliability, the level of trustworthiness and credibility of the data was enhanced by repetition and reframing in cases where the exact wording was not important for the data needed from the respondent. Important questions such as the respondent's flooding experience often had to be reframed. Multiple-choice questions had dichotomous variables. All the data collected was coded and entered manually into Microsoft Excel spread sheet. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. Word association questions were firstly scored and weighted based on frequency of occurrence and stability of responses. Independent judges were used for content analysis utilising semantic designations and attributions to code and categorise the data into domains. The total scores for all the responses per given domain were then calculated to get the dominance score. The higher the dominance score, the more meaningful the domain was for the population. This generated sufficient descriptive statistics on perception.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Demographics profile of the sample population

Out of the 120 people sampled, 115 questionnaires were considered. The rest of the questionnaires were discarded because the respondents were non-residents of the specific informal settlement. The majority of the population, 94.78% associate themselves with the Black African origins. Females constitute a little more than half of the respondents at 53.9%. In terms of age, 37% were below 20; 44% were between 21 and 30 while the 31 to 40 age group constituted 24%. Ten per cent (10%) of the sample had no formal education, with a little more than half (56%) having reached matric level. Despite the high number of matriculates, only eight per cent (8%) had a post matric qualification in terms of diploma or certificate. An estimated 44% of the respondents were unemployed with an additional 15% being self-employed. The salary per month fell under the zero (0) to R2000 bracket for 87% of the respondents, with a mere six per cent (6%) being between the R2001 to R4000 bracket. In terms of home ownership, 28% were estimated to own the houses they live in, while 36% were tenants. Almost 40% of the respondents live in shacks and 35% live in government subsidised RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) houses.

### 5.2 Past flooding experiences

Respondents were asked to answer yes or no to past flooding experiences and to whether they have previously considered relocating due to flood risk. A hypothesis was postulated that past flooding experiences and the decision to relocate were independent of each other. Thus, it became essential to measure whether there was any association between past flooding experiences and the decision to relocate to areas of a lower risk priority. The chi-square test for association between flooding and relocation indicated that the null hypothesis can be rejected ( $p=0.001$ ) and the alternative hypothesis that there is an association between flooding experiences and the decision to relocate be accepted.

At  $N=112$ , 39% (44) claimed to have experienced flooding while a little more than half (61%) have not experienced flooding before. Out of the 39% that have experienced flooding, 66% of the respondents have considered relocating to a flood free zone, while the remaining 34% have not considered relocation at all. Hence, more than half of the people that have experienced flooding have considered moving to another area. Seventy-four per cent (74%) of the respondents with no prior flooding experience have not considered the option of relocating. Clearly past flooding experienced has an important influence in the decision to relocate to a safer area.

The relationship between past flooding experiences and the perception of the respondents towards its seriousness was also tested. According to the chi-square test for association between flooding and perception of seriousness, the null hypothesis is rejected ( $p=0.001$ ) and the alternative hypothesis that there is an association between flooding experiences and the perception of seriousness is accepted. Out of the 39% that have experienced flooding, the majority of the respondents, (82%) considered floods to be a serious problem. At the same time, more than half the people that have not experienced flooding, 55% considered flooding to be a minor issue. Therefore, there is a tendency for people that have experienced flooding in the past to perceive this experience as serious, while those that have not experienced flooding in the past regard floods as insignificant.

#### **5.4 General risk**

As a direct measure of perceptions of general risk, respondents were given an AGA question with the theme 'risk', and asked to write down the first word that comes to mind in relation to the theme. Independent judges classified the responses into 4 domains containing definitions, applications, consequences and causes. A total of 367 associations were given which indicates an average of 3 responses per person. Most notable responses, fell within the application category at 218 (68%) whereby respondents simply applied the theme to what they considered to be risky situations in their lives. Also a sizeable amount of responses, 97 out of 367 (26%) were associated with consequences of risky behaviour, while the remaining 48 (13%) of the responses were associated with causes of risk.

However, most relevant to the objective was to find out how many responses were flood related compared to other risk applications. The most prominent applications or associations to the word 'risk' fell within the crime, theft, drugs and accidents categories. These associations are more vivid for the respondents than other categories such as natural disasters. Four categories of natural disasters featured in the associations including floods, weather conditions, fires and heavy rains. Floods and natural disasters however come secondary when compared to issues such as drugs, theft, crime and accidents. At this point it is to be noted that the survey was done at the end of the flooding season.

#### **5.3.2 Priorities**

Respondents were given a selection of prominent issues facing their community and asked to select the issues they preferred the government to solve first. Each respondent was given a total of two selections, a first priority and a second priority. Approximately half the respondents (51%) prefer that the government solve employment issues compared to other priorities, followed by housing and flooding at 22% and 19% respectively. Thus, in the face of all the socio-economic problems that plague informal settlements, flooding takes the back seat. Even as a second option, only 5% of the respondents consider flooding to be high priority.

#### **5.3.3 Area of preference in terms of flooding**

Respondents were asked to choose between living in two areas, the first area with minor flooding every year and minimum damage to property compared to a second area with a substantial flood once every 10 years, but with substantial damage to property. The results obtained showed that about two thirds of the respondents (65%) of the respondents preferred to live in areas designated to have minor flooding every year while one third (35%) preferred one major flooding experience every decade. From this it is clear that minor flooding every year does not seem to be a major concern for two thirds of the respondents in this flood prone area.

### **6. Conclusions and Discussion**

Given the fact that more than half (61%) the respondents in Philippi indicated that they experienced flooding in the past, it is not surprising that most of the residents perceive flooding to be a serious problem. Those that have actually experienced flooding have shown a greater tendency to consider the option of relocating than those that have no prior flooding experience. Relocation is one of the strategies recommended by the city of Cape Town to reduce vulnerability to flooding. Literature has shown that this strategy has failed, and we conclude this to be not only because of a shortage of land or a flawed relocation process, but also because it is a reasonable assumption that a person living in a substandard home, either unemployed or with limited income can ill afford the cost of relocation, especially to a standard accommodation. It is therefore a question of cost.

With regards to general risk, residents of informal settlements such as Philippi are more concerned about other risky situations such as drugs, crime, and theft and gangster activities as compared to natural hazards like floods. This points towards high crime rates in the area, which are perceived to be more potent than the fear of being flooded. A possible explanation could be that flooding is an annual event which varies in terms of magnitude, making it either a less salient event or simply much more tolerable. For instance Motoyoshi (2006) concluded that:

- People perceive floods to be periodic and not random.
- People believe if a major flood occurs this year, no major flood will occur for a long time to come.
- People believe when structures such as dams or drains are built, flooding is averted.

Such judgmental heuristics need to be factored into decisions about flood risk management.

Given the option, most residents of Philippi perceive problems such as employment and housing to be of greater priority compared to flooding issues. Thus, although flooding is regarded as a serious problem in the area, it is considered to be less debilitating compared to other issues that plague marginalised communities. Residents would be prone to only consider the investment of resources into adopting flood mitigation measures if there are leftover resources from solving what they perceive to be principal issues such as crime and employment. It can therefore be argued that, although past flooding experiences might play a significant role in people's perception to flooding, the socio-economic status is the determining factor in the adaptation of flood risk management strategies by the community.

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*Considering The Rapprochement Of  
Liberalism And Realism In Contemporary  
International Relations – Some  
Conclusions in the Context of the Russia's  
Foreign Policy*

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**Abstract**

This article refers to explanatory potentials of realism and liberalism after the end of the cold war. It indicates that the fall of the USSR was a defeat of structural realism but not of the whole realist paradigm. Besides, even liberalism has encountered some serious anomalies in the post-cold war world, to include the foreign policy of Russia. The article argues that realism and liberalism should consider a broader dialogue. Both paradigms share similar views on the explanatory character of theories and both emphasize the links between theories and practice. Both are still able to present valuable analyses of some aspects of contemporary international affairs although both should abandon their ambitions to propose a general theory of international relations. The article does not expect a synthesis of realism and liberalism yet it emphasizes that the rapprochement between them would help both paradigms to better understand contemporary international relations.

**Keywords:** realism, liberalism, theory, international relations, Russia

## **Introduction**

The fall of the USSR has considerably deteriorated the image of realism as a theoretical approach to international relations. This defeat, however, concerned mainly the structural theory of Kenneth Waltz and its static analysis of international affairs. Other theories of realism were better prepared to explain the end of the cold war. Nevertheless, the realist paradigm faced serious critique. It contributed to realism's return to a more dynamic understanding of power present in the concepts of classical realists, to include the political thought of Hans J. Morgenthau. The new, post cold-war neoclassical realism is a good example of such more dynamic realist theory able to more adequately analyse contemporary international affairs.

The fall of the bipolar order marked a symbolic victory of liberalism and the liberal paradigm in international relations. The evolution of international affairs after the end of the cold war, however, has soon illustrated that even the "victorious" liberalism would face some serious explanatory problems. One of them is the Russia's foreign policy that contradicts the liberal logic of international cooperation. The recent Russian aggression in Crimea confirms the analytical problems of liberalism and reveals the adequacy of some previous realist explanations. The dynamic and complex character of today's international relations illustrates at the same time that it is difficult to indicate purely realist or purely liberal aspects of contemporary international processes. Both paradigms face new explanatory challenges and both are still able to offer some valuable explanations of some aspects of contemporary international relations yet both should abandon their previous ideas to develop a grand overall theory of international affairs.

Thus, facing the complexity of today's world a dialogue between realism and liberalism seems to be much better option than the previous cold war intellectual divisions between them. Despite some ontological and methodological differences both paradigms share similar epistemology and emphasize a clear linkage between theories and practice of international relations. Both refer to similar problems and both will be able to analyse only some aspect of contemporary international affairs.

The aim of this article is not to indicate which paradigm, realist or liberal, is more adequate to analyse today's world. Both may offer some valuable insights. The author does not expect any new spectacular theory as a synthesis of both as well. Yet the article claims that the rapprochement between realism and liberalism is a better option to understand the new international reality than the previous divisions between them. They are more and more artificial. Realism may serve today as a supplementary perspective for the cases better analysed by the liberal paradigm while liberalism would give a supplementary explanations for the cases where realism plays a leading explanatory role. It seems that the problems of the Russian foreign policy, as indicated in the article, may serve as a good example in this regard. It would be extremely difficult to understand the foreign policy of Russia without a reference to realist concepts. Yet it would be difficult as well to analyse it without a broader context defined by liberalism.

## **Realism and the fall of the bipolar order**

The realist paradigm, as John A. Vasquez indicates, had been dominated by Hans J. Morgenthau and classical realism for almost two decades (Vasquez, 1999, pp. 13, 38, 69). At the beginning of the 1970s, however, international relations faced more serious processes of economic interdependence as well as political détente in the relations between the East and the West. All those factors contributed to popularity of liberal theories as well as growing interest in global economic issues, including global inequalities. Realism came back to theoretical

debates in international relations at the end of the 1970s yet it was thanks to structural theory developed by Kenneth Waltz.

Nevertheless, structural realism focused on the level of the international system and ignored the domestic variables at the level of states (Waltz, 1979, 99; Freyberg-Inan, 2004, p. 73). This attitude significantly influenced its ability to track dynamic changes on the international scene at the end of the 1980s, and together with the crisis of the USSR. Structural realism was unable to identify internal determinants behind the Gorbachev's perestroika and a broad catalogue of political, social and economic factors contributing to the final collapse of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, structural realists claimed that the bipolar order would last long and stable and the collapse of this system was hardly possible without a global and decisive conflict (Smith, 1999, pp. 106-107; Freyberg-Inan, 2004, pp. 74-75).

As a result, the fall of the USSR was a serious defeat of structural realism. To be sure neither theory of international relations was able to properly track all aspects of dynamic processes accompanying the collapse of the Soviet Union (Gaddis, 1992/93, pp. 5-6). Yet John A. Vasquez is right when he underlines that the defeat is clear especially in the case of structural realism – the theory that emphasized the stability of the bipolar order (Vasquez, 1999, pp. 322, 329-331). Besides, the defeat of structural realism has contributed to a considerable decline in the prestige of the whole realist paradigm and the questions about realism's ability to analyse post-cold war international relations. Many critics claim that realist focus on the struggle for power and national interests becomes obsolete in the world of growing social and economic interdependence. Many doubt in realism's ability to follow more globalized international relations as well as its adequacy and further intellectual attractiveness (Vasquez, 1999, pp. 317-319; Bell, 2008, p. 2).

Nonetheless, the practice of international relations after the fall of the bipolar order has shortly illustrated that this criticism is exaggerated and at least partially unfounded. First, the critique of realism focused on its structural stream, the problems of which with the static vision of international relations were known before the collapse of the USSR. This criticism was justified by the domination of structural realism in the realist paradigm at the end of the 1980s yet it ignored possible explanations offered by other streams of realism – to include the theories of hegemonic rivalry. Besides, a recent revival of Hans Morgenthau's thought, as a source of inspiration for a new generation of neoclassical realists, may propose some valuable and more dynamic explanation of international relations far from the static and narrow concepts of structural realism (Wohlforth, 1994/95, pp. 92-94).

Second, Kenneth Waltz's theory was wrong ignoring domestic political variables (Lebow, 1994, pp. 263-264) yet some of its conclusions about the systemic determinants of the state's foreign policy remain valid in contemporary international relations. The collapse of the Soviet Union has considerably changed the international environment yet it has not denied the fundamentals of realist perception of international relations, to include the logic of power present in politics or self help policy (Waltz, 2000, pp. 5-6; Freyberg-Inan, 2004, pp. 74-75). Besides, the international anarchy has not been replaced by any form of hierarchic world order.

As a result, this article agrees with the William C. Wohlforth conclusion that the fall of the bipolar order has certainly not strengthened the realist paradigm yet the defeat of realism has not been as deep as other paradigms claim (Wohlforth, 1994/95, pp. 125-126). Nevertheless, it is crucial for realists to reconsider the role of structural realism after the end of the cold war. It does not mean that structural theory of Kenneth Waltz has completely lost its significance but it seems that it should not be a basis for further theories in the realist paradigm. Facing the dynamism of contemporary international affairs new realist theories

should depart from the static picture offered by structural realism and return to more dynamic concepts of power and politics present in the tradition of realist thinking about politics (to include and re-interpret some concepts of Hans J. Morgenthau). The new neoclassical stream of realism becomes an interesting approach in this regard as it respects the structural determinants but considers much broader catalogue of variables (to include the domestic political ones) that may affect the final shape of the state's foreign policy. Thanks to this openness and flexibility it seems better prepared to track the dynamic evolution of contemporary international relations (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman, 2009, pp. 4-5, 13).

### **The Russian foreign policy and the problems of liberal paradigm in the post cold-war world**

The fall of the bipolar order has contributed to a growing popularity of liberalism. Emphasizing the prospects of cooperation, democracy and economic development liberal paradigm emerged after the end of the cold war as much more attractive theoretical approach than realism (Burchill, 2005, pp. 55-56). Nevertheless, the post-cold war world has soon complicated and it becomes difficult even for liberalism to find proper answers to some dynamic questions of contemporary international affairs.

Indeed, the bloody war in Yugoslavia just a few months after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Rwanda massacre a few years later illustrated that also the "victorious" liberal paradigm would have some problems with the proper analysis of post-cold war international relations. For the last 25 years the international community has faced both regular interstate wars, genocide, and quite new forms of asymmetrical or hybrid wars. The process of democratization, strongly emphasized by liberals, has been successful in some countries of Latin America and East-Central Europe yet others, as the example of the post-Soviet area illustrates, remain democratic mainly in declarations. Similarly, the next waves of international economic crises reveal that interdependence and globalization, other processes underlined by liberals, do not mean equal opportunities for all countries. It seems that possible benefits that accompany globalization concentrate in the hands of a limited number of states but the risk of economic turbulences reaches all members of the international community, including those less powerful in economic terms. Finally, even the history of the post-cold war European integration illustrates that the liberal rhetoric of cooperation has always been accompanied by the game of contradict national interests inside the European Union.

All those examples illustrate a growing gap between the liberal claims and more complex character of contemporary international relations. It weakens the explanatory ability of liberalism and contributes to a new wave of interest in realism, to include the return to classical realists. Morgenthau sounds quite convincingly in this regard when he indicates that liberalism tends to transform its beliefs into a series of dogmas – absolute truths that should not be criticized even if international experience contradicts the liberal claims (Morgenthau, 1947, pp. 64-66).

The Russian Federation and its foreign policy has become one of the main anomalies for liberal paradigm and post-cold war liberal explanations. To be sure the foreign policy of Russia makes some problems also for realists as it is closer to the tradition of (sometimes brutal) Realpolitik than to the picture of moderated and constrained realism proposed by Morgenthau (Morgenthau, 1948, pp. 169-170). Nevertheless, the example of Russia's foreign policy seems to be a serious explanatory challenge for contemporary liberalism.

The Russian Federation has never accepted the liberal identity and liberal rules of international relations. Moscow has not followed Western mechanisms of international (and regional) cooperation as well as the liberal logic of civil rights and standards. It has returned to

the centralization of power present in the Russian political traditions for centuries (Oliker, Crane, Schwartz and Yusupov, 2009, pp. 9-16). The liberal claims about the peaceful and stabilizing role of normative regimes and international institutions have been replaced in the case of Russia by the absolute priority of its national interests. Hence, for example, Moscow's instrumental use of its membership in the UN Security Council or disrespect for non-governmental organizations and their role in contemporary international relations (RFE/RL, 2009; Oldberg, 2011, p. 54). One would notice that the emphasis on national interests and the tendency of instrumental use of international organizations is typical for all great powers, including those of the liberal world. Yet it seems that the Western powers are much more constrained by democratic mechanisms of their foreign and domestic policy, including the mechanism of the civic control. In the case of Russia these mechanisms are much weaker or do not exist at all (Russett, 2010, pp. 102-103).

Russia recognizes the potential of economic globalization in the contemporary world. Moscow, however, is aware of the relative weakness of its economy as well as its dependence on the export of natural resources (mainly oil and gas). As a consequence, Russia has usually been reluctant to the mechanisms of global and European economic cooperation as well as liberalization of its own market (Nies, 2011, pp. 273-274). Kremlin understands that Russia does not belong to the group of the states that benefit from globalization but the risks of global economic processes may easily reach the uncompetitive Russian economy.

The specific feature of the Russian foreign policy, that contradicts the assumptions of the liberal paradigm, is the Russia's policy towards the countries of the former USSR (to exclude the Baltic States). The post-Soviet area has been at the centre of the Russian strategic interests and the principal aim of Moscow is to keep the Russian control over the economic and political processes there. Russian Federation uses different (and often brutal) forms of political and economic pressure to this end – the measures that hardly correspond to the liberal values (Skak, 2011, pp. 139-140, 143-149; Oldberg, 2011, p. 51). Besides, the Russia's conflicts with Georgia and Ukraine have been an illustration of Kremlin's readiness to use military force to carry out its interests as well as a confirmation that the imperial rhetoric of Moscow may transform itself into real political actions.

The recent Russian aggression in Crimea proves both the Kremlin readiness to use military force as the instrument to pursue its political aims as well as Russia's disrespect for any liberal mechanisms of international relations that stand in contradiction with the Russian interests. It is a clear challenge for liberal paradigm and its interpretations of the post-cold war world. Russian aggression in Crimea seems to be a clear violation of international law and international norms. Moscow has tried to refer to the right of nations to self-determination and the case of Kosovo but Russia has ignored some other fundamental norms, to include the right of any state to preserve its territorial integrity. Besides, the international community has not reported any previous serious violations of minority rights in Ukraine that could provoke (as it was in the case of Kosovo) international reactions. As a result, Kremlin's arguments about the violation of the rights of ethnic Russian living in Crimea were much more political and propagandist in their character than legal. Furthermore, annexing a part of the territory of Ukraine Moscow violated all definitions of aggression developed on the international forum, to include the resolution No. 3314 (XXIX) passed in December 1974 by the General Assembly of the United Nations – even if the aggression has had its specific form of “unknown” Russian-speaking soldiers (hiding their Russian emblems) supporting the Russian-speaking separatists (Salem et al, 2014).

The most important for liberals, however, is that the Russian aggression in Crimea confirms some previous realist theses, to include those about the significance of national interests in international politics or political and potentially instrumental character of international law. It seems that Morgenthau's claims that international law too often serves as a curtain masking great powers' political aims and is susceptible to conflicting national interests become valid even in today's liberal world (Morgenthau, 1948, pp. 217-219). In fact, the Russia's foreign policy recalls that even today national interests may easily prevail over the community interests. The international law has been used by Moscow instrumentally and served as a pretext and excuse for its own foreign policy aims. Russia has not changed its actions in Crimea even in the face of the Western sanctions and the explanation of this policy is certainly realist and not liberal. It seems that facing a threat of its "serious geopolitical defeat", together with the Ukrainian political turn towards the West, Russia has reacted brutally, accepting (most apparently) the risk of diplomatic and economic losses. No international law and no normative regimes prevented Kremlin from the annexation of Crimea and this sounds like an offensive realist (or rather a brutal Realpolitik) thinking and certainly not like a liberal logic of international relations.

Besides, the European reactions to the recent conflict in Ukraine confirm the gap between the liberal rhetoric of the European Union and the national interests of its member states. The initial assertive response of the Union has lost its determination when confronted with the game of national interests inside the EU and first of all particular interests of its members in their relations with Russia (Waterfield and Freeman, 2014). The Russian aggression in Crimea illustrates the constrained ability of the European Union to a common and coordinated external action and, in a more general sense, limited effectiveness of the Western liberal democracies to react to any powerful international actor that breaks the liberal rules. It is again a return to some realist claims that liberal powers usually slowly mobilize to defend their values (Morgenthau, 1947, pp. 64-66; Weber, 2010, pp. 126-127).

As a consequence, the case of Crimea, and the Russian foreign policy in general, confirms some serious explanatory problems of the liberal paradigm in contemporary international relations. The Russian foreign activity is one of the most important examples indicating the declarative character of some of liberal slogans and the gap between liberal rhetoric and the practice of international relations. This gap weakens the explanatory ability of liberalism. It is certainly not the crisis similar to that of realism after the fall of the bipolar order yet the problems of the liberal paradigm are clear and it is difficult to ignore them. The foreign policy of Russia has at the same confirmed the validity of some realist theses in contemporary international relations, despite the recent domination of liberalism.

### **The dialogue between liberalism and realism in contemporary international relations – challenges and possible benefits**

The fall of the bipolar order contributed to the serious decline in the prestige of realism while the recent foreign policy of Russia illustrates the growing explanatory problems of liberalism. The challenges for both paradigms, however, seem to be much broader as the level of complexity of contemporary international affairs highly exceeds that during the cold war realist-liberal debate. Besides, both paradigms function today in a new reality of theorizing about international affairs that emerges after the end of the cold war.

In fact, discussing the condition of contemporary international relations one may indicate growing problems with cohesion of this science as well as disputes in its frames about the proliferation of theories and the scope of problems to be studied. Some scholars prefer a return to the political core of the science. Others, however, postulate wider openness for new

problems, to include the gender studies, ecology, social inequalities or human rights (Smith, 2010, pp. 2, 6-8; Waever, 2010, pp. 298-299, 302-303). Similarly, scholars differ in their opinions on the proliferation of theories developed in the discipline in the recent years (and especially on the role of post-positivist positions). Some of them favour this multiplicity and point out that it will help to reflect dynamic processes of contemporary international affairs (Smith, 2010, pp. 7-8). Others, however, indicate that this abundance makes any discussion about more cohesive international relations hardly possible and, as Ole Waever notes, it is difficult to talk about a serious (inter-paradigmatic) debate in contemporary international relations (Waever, 2010, pp. 313-315).

Nevertheless, some scholars in both liberal and realist paradigms tend to accept the idea of closer dialogue between those two camps (Waever, 2010, p. 310). Theories developed in the frame of liberalism and realism may differ in their ontological and methodological assumptions yet both paradigms share similar epistemology as well as fundamental assumptions about the explanatory character of theories. They emphasize the close links between the theories and the practice in international relations. Besides, both paradigms indicate the predictive functions of theories that should be able to formulate some guidelines for politicians as well as to identify consequences of political decisions (Buzan, 1996, pp. 48-50; MacMillan, 2007, pp. 21-24).

Realism and liberalism face the same challenges of more dynamic and complex character of today's international relations as well as the question to what extent the discipline should absorb the new areas of interests. In the case of liberalism, however, the answer would not be a serious problem. Liberal paradigm has always shared a dynamic concept of international relations and still takes into account expanding catalogue of factors determining international cooperation. Yet even realism, if consider the new neoclassical stream that comes back to the more flexible understanding of power present in the political thought of Hans J. Morgenthau, would have much less problems with the acceptance of the new research problems than the previous structural realism of Kenneth Waltz (Taliaferro et al., 2009, p. 4; Williams, 2005, pp. 109-111). The linkage between theories and practice of international affairs would serve as a mechanism preventing liberals and realists from exaggerated emphasis on problems that remain secondary for real political processes and decisions.

Nevertheless, the effective dialogue between realism and liberalism would require a departure of both paradigms from their previous ambitions to formulate a grand theory referring to all aspects of international affairs. Facing the dynamism of the world at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is difficult to talk about a single general theory of international relations and Stephen M. Walt rightly indicates that „No single approach can capture all the complexity of contemporary world politics” (Walt, 1998, p. 30). It does not mean, however, that realism and liberalism lose their explanatory potentials and intellectual attractiveness with regard to some important aspects of contemporary international affairs. Despite difficulties, both paradigms may still offer some interesting explanations to some specific problems of the contemporary world and Jack Donnelly sounds quite convincingly when he underlines that:

*“Realism and its competitors, and different realist theories as well, are <<tuned>> to account for different dimensions of international relations. As should be clear from our discussion so far, realist theories are especially well suited to explain certain recurrent forms of international conflict. Liberal internationalist theories, for example, are directed more to explaining certain opportunities for and patterns of cooperation” (Donnelly, 2000, p. 77).*

Indeed, realism and liberalism may offer some valuable explanations of some aspects of contemporary international relations yet the overall analyses proposed by both become less and less complete and comprehensive. It seems that the previous cold war competition between realism and idealism is a bit artificial today and contemporary international relations are too dynamic and too complex to create further lines of division between them (Glaser, 2003, pp. 407-411). Furthermore, the explanations offered by both paradigms with regard to many dynamic processes today will interweave and it would be difficult to search for purely realist or purely liberal interpretations. The problems in contemporary international relations evolve and the adequate analysis of this evolution will reach for interpretations proposed by both realism and liberalism. The overlap of the areas of interest of both paradigms becomes inevitable and both will increasingly refer to similar problems and processes. In certain practical cases liberal explanations may prevail supplemented by some elements of realist analysis. In others, realists may play a leading explanatory role with some inputs from liberals. Thus, looking for the new dividing lines between liberalism and realism seems to be a much worse strategy than the dialogue between them and the rapprochement of liberalism and realism may be in the interest of both paradigms. Besides, together with the new neoclassical stream of realism, which departs from the narrow and static perspective of structural realism, this rapprochement may be easier and potentially more effective.

Nonetheless, this thesis (even if inspiring) may be controversial and reaching beyond the lines considered so far as the borders of realism neoclassical realism will certainly face criticism. Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik's claims that neoclassical realism may further "dilute" the realist paradigm and "blur" the line between realism and liberalism is a good example in this regard (Legro and Moravcsik, 1999, p. 50). Legro and Moravcsik may be right when they underline some difficulties with the precise identification of assumptions distinctive for the whole realist paradigm. Yet, as Tim Dunne and Brian C. Schmidt indicate, each paradigm in international relations remains a dynamic process of exchange of opinions among different theories developed in the paradigm's frames (Dunne and Schmidt, 2001, p. 148). Besides, realism has never been fully cohesive and two main theories dominating the realist approach (classical realism of Hans J. Morgenthau and structural theory of Kenneth Waltz) shared only some general assumptions about power, national interests and international anarchy. Neoclassical realism, if believe the scholars of this stream, aims to overcome these problems and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Steven E. Lobell and Norrin M. Ripsman declare in this regard that „Proponents of neoclassical realism draw upon the rigor and theoretical insights of the neorealism (or structural realism) of Kenneth N. Waltz, Robert Gilpin, and others without sacrificing the practical insights about foreign policy and the complexity of statecraft found in the classical realism of Hans J. Morgenthau, Henry Kissinger, Arnold Wolfers, and others” (Taliaferro et al, 2009, p. 4). This is a chance for a more flexible realist analysis able to keep a closer dialogue with liberalism yet not losing the fundamental realist assumptions.

As a result, accepting the dialogue with liberalism, the new generation of (neoclassical) realists would not deny the globalization of problems in contemporary international relations or the stabilizing role of international institutions. They would accept the significance of domestic political regimes and other internal determinants in the process of foreign policy making. They would, however, warn liberals against exaggerated believe in the power of international cooperation and the mirages of the harmony of interests. Realists would recall the presence of power and the potential of conflict that accompany any political activity. Jack Donnelly is right in this regard when he underlines that “(...) realism's principal purpose is to warn against moralism, progressivism, and similar <<optimistic>> orientations. It emphasizes

what is unlikely or difficult in international relations, rather than what is worth striving for” (Donnelly, 2000, p. 194).

Accepting this dialogue liberalism would, for its part, emphasize that the realist focus on the struggle for power alone does not explain dynamic and complex problems of contemporary international relations. Liberals would also indicate the role of democracy as a political regime able to significantly tame the struggle for power as well as a broad catalogue of factors (social, economic or cultural) that could help to limit the presence of power in politics. The context of democratic regime seems crucial in this respect and Robert Kaufman indicates that even in the case of the dynamic understanding of power present in Hans J. Morgenthau’s political thought „Morgenthau commits a serious error not only in denying the autonomous force of ideology in international politics, but also in depreciating the effect of regime type on the content of foreign Policy” (Kaufman, 2006, p. 31). Contemporary neoclassical realists will most probably not repeat this mistake.

Discussing the dialogue between realism and liberalism the author of this article does not expect a full explanatory consensus of both paradigms. The synthesis of realism and liberalism is still more an idea than a real hope for a new theory of international relations consuming both perspectives. This article, however, argues that rapprochement of realism and liberalism is advisable and beneficial for both approaches. The dialogue between realists and liberals, in which both sides may offer their explanations to some aspects of contemporary international affairs, would help the scholars in both camps to better understand the nuances of contemporary international relations.

In fact, the example of the Russian foreign policy after the end of the cold war or the crisis of the integration processes in Europe clearly illustrate the specific interconnection of realist and liberal explanations in contemporary international relations. Both confirms that that the leading explanatory character of one of those paradigms does not exclude a usefulness of some supplementary insights proposed by the second paradigm. In the case of the integration in Europe the liberal paradigm would be the leading one yet the input proposed by realism, especially the realist analysis of the game of national interests inside the EU, will offer interesting supplementary explanations. Similarly realism will remain a leading explanatory perspective for the analysis of the Russian foreign policy yet this perspective cannot ignore some supplementary liberal remarks indicating the growing vulnerability of Russia to the global economic processes or the structural weakness of the Russian economy. Besides, both realism and liberalism cannot ignore the domestic determinants behind the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, to include the game of different interest groups in the frame of the Kremlin elite.

It is possible that some offensive realists or radical liberal theorists will reject this point of view. Some of them may entrench on their positions claiming that no other perspective deserves attention (Waever, 2010, pp. 298-299). Such an attitude, however, would be a deep anachronism in contemporary international relations. Even offensive realists cannot ignore the dynamic character of contemporary power as well as complex and multivariable environment in which the struggle for power takes place. Similarly radical liberals cannot ignore the game of national interests behind the international institutions and regimes.

## **Conclusion**

The collapse of the USSR confirmed the previous problems of structural realism and considerably declined the prestige of the whole realist paradigm. Yet the defeat of realism

has not been as serious as its opponents claim. Besides, coming back to the more dynamic concept of power (present in the theories of classical realists) the new neoclassical realism may offer some valuable explanations of contemporary international affairs.

The fall of the bipolar order increased the popularity and prestige of liberalism. Nevertheless the evolution of international relations after the end of the cold war has soon indicated some explanatory problems also for liberals. The foreign policy of the Russian Federation becomes one of most serious anomalies for the liberal paradigm and the Russian aggression in Crimea confirms Kremlin's disrespect for liberal values and principles. Indeed, the example of the foreign policy of Russia, but also the difficulties of the European Union with the cohesive response to this policy, reveal some serious explanatory problems of liberalism. They confirm at the same time the adequacy of some previous realist explanations.

The article does not decide which of those paradigms better reflects contemporary international relations. It indicates that in the complex and dynamic post-cold war reality both paradigms may be useful in explaining some aspects of today's international affairs. Yet their previous ambitions to create the grand general theory of international relations are unlikely to succeed and should be abandoned.

Both realism and liberalism meet some serious explanatory problems and both face the crisis of international relations as the science, to include the disputes about what kind of new problems international relations should absorb. Nevertheless, both liberalism and realism share similar points of view on the explanatory character of theories and both emphasize clear links between the theories and the practice of international relations. This common attitude to the analysis of the contemporary world opens the possibility of their closer dialogue. In fact the rapprochement between realism and liberalism may be useful for both paradigms (despite some voices to the contrary) to better understand contemporary international affairs. The problems considered by liberalism and realism interweave and the previous divisions between both paradigms become artificial. The case of Russia illustrates that the analysis of its foreign policy will certainly reach for both liberal and realist explanations.

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