



**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CONSTRAINTS OF UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING
OPERATIONS IN ABYEI: SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN**

By

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Peace and Governance in partial fulfilment for
the requirements for the Master of Science in International Relations

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9 December 2022

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all former and current United Nations peacekeepers, be they military, UNPOL or civilian personnel who have labored and continue to do so for the attainment of peace and security in the world.

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The success of this work is as a result of different people who contributed in their own special ways. Firstly, I thank my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for His sufficient grace in doing this dissertation for giving me grace, health, knowledge, wisdom and divine connections during the entire period of my study.

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Last and special, I acknowledge and appreciate the love and support from my wife and children. God bless you.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------------|---|
| ABC | Abyei Boundary Commission |
| AHoM/FC | Acting Head of Mission and Force Commander |
| APS | Abyei Police Service |
| AU | African Union |
| CPA | Comprehensive Peace Agreement |
| CPC | Community Protection Committee |
| DFC | Deputy Force Commander |
| FC | Force Commander |
| JCPC | Joint Community Protection Committee |
| JPC | Joint Protection Committee |
| Milob | Military Observer |
| OCHA | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| PCA | Permanent Court of Arbitration |
| PoC | Protection of Civilians |
| ROE | Rules of engagement |
| SAF | Sudan Armed Forces |
| SO | Staff Officer [of the Military] |
| SPLM/A | Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDPO | United Nations Department of Peace Operations |
| UNPKO | United Nations Peacekeeping Operation |
| UNPOL | United Nations Police |

UNSC United Nations Security Council

UNISFA United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

ABSTRACT

Concerned by the absence of peace in Abyei, yet in the presence of the United Nations peacekeepers for almost a decade, the researcher conducted this study with the aim to assess the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei with a view to improve its efficacy. To achieve the research objectives, data were collected from documents such as UN reports and UN Security Council Resolutions, and key informants drawn from the former and current UNISFA peacekeepers as well as from the conflicting parties at national and local levels, selected using purposive and snowball sampling methods. Data collected from sources through face to face and online interviews, and questionnaires, was thematically coded, presented using verbatim quotes, discussed in relation to reviewed literature, and analysed through the lenses of neo-liberalism theory. The data showed a barrage of constraints that affected the efficacy of UNPKO in Abyei. There were both merits and demerits of using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (Ethiopia) in Abyei peacekeeping operations. However, the demerits outweighed the merits hence the conclusion that the deployment of Ethiopian troops in Abyei was only effective in stabilizing the conflict but not in the full attainment of the peace and security. The impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors, the JCPC and the CPC/JPC, in peacebuilding activities was hampered by numerous constraints. The UN peacekeepers were not so effective in the PoC as exemplified by attacks on civilians. The constraints noted were interlinked, and they need to be addressed if UNISFA has to gain its respect as a peacekeeping entity. Temporary measures that can be taken to mitigate the effects of the noted constraints includes the deployment of a multinational troops in Abyei and the deployment of the Formed Police Units as a matter of urgency. AU should facilitate the attainment of the final political status for Abyei by the national actors, for without it, most of the constraints will be hard to address, though their effects can be minimized by temporary measures. In light of the argument proffered in this dissertation, the researcher suggested that further study be done in assessing the constraints hindering the realization of the final political status of Abyei. Lastly, it is prudent to note that even though UNISFA was not so effective in preserving peace and security in Abyei, there remained no other substitute for its services, hence the need to address the constraints in haste and improve its peacekeeping efficacy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| DECLARATION FORM..... | ii |
| APPROVAL FORM..... | iii |
| RELEASE FORM..... | iv |
| DEDICATION..... | v |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... | vi |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS..... | vii |
| ABSTRACT..... | ix |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS..... | x |
| CHAPTER ONE..... | 1 |
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Background of the Study..... | 1 |
| 1.2 Aim of Study..... | 5 |
| 1.3 Statement of the Problem..... | 5 |
| 1.4 Research Objectives..... | 6 |
| 1.5 Research Questions..... | 6 |
| 1.6 Assumptions..... | 7 |
| 1.7 Significance of the Study..... | 7 |
| 1.8 Delimitations of the Study..... | 8 |
| 1.9 Limitations of the Study..... | 8 |
| 1.10 Definition of Key Words..... | 9 |
| 1.11 Dissertation Outline..... | 9 |
| CHAPTER TWO..... | 11 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK..... | 11 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 11 |
| 2.2 Theoretical Framework: Neo-Liberalism Theory..... | 11 |
| 2.2.1 Liberalism Theory..... | 12 |
| 2.2.2 Neo-Liberalism Theory..... | 14 |
| 2.3 Constraints of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO)..... | 16 |
| 2.4 The constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (TCC) in peacekeeping operations..... | 18 |
| 2.4.1 Deployment logistical challenges..... | 19 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----|
| 2.4.2 | Command and Control Issues | 21 |
| 2.4.3 | Poor leadership..... | 21 |
| 2.4.4 | Inability to deal with peace spoilers..... | 22 |
| 2.4.5 | Cultural and language barriers | 23 |
| 2.4.6 | Poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment..... | 23 |
| 2.4.7 | Internal Politics with or against the police..... | 24 |
| 2.4.8 | Misconduct, human rights violation and abuse of military forces | 24 |
| 2.4.9 | Complex tasks/mandates..... | 25 |
| 2.4.10 | Lack of Peace to keep | 25 |
| 2.4.11 | Deployment of neighbours..... | 26 |
| 2.5 | Constraints affecting the impact of UNISFA’s partnership with local actors in Abyei’s peace building processes..... | 26 |
| 2.6 | Constraints of the UN peacekeepers in the protection of civilians | 30 |
| 2.6.1 | Inability to cover all areas..... | 32 |
| 2.6.2 | Capacity/ability to protect by the peacekeepers..... | 33 |
| 2.6.3 | Rules of Engagement | 33 |
| 2.6.4 | Weak or lack of political support from the national actors | 34 |
| 2.7 | Chapter Summary | 36 |
| CHAPTER 3 | | 37 |
| RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY | | 37 |
| 3.1 | Introduction..... | 37 |
| 3.2 | Research Philosophical Paradigm – Constructivism..... | 37 |
| 3.3 | Research Approach – Qualitative | 39 |
| 3.4 | Research Design – Case Study..... | 41 |
| 3.5 | Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques..... | 42 |
| 3.5.1 | Population | 42 |
| 3.5.2 | Sample..... | 43 |
| 3.5.3 | Sampling Techniques..... | 43 |
| 3.5.4 | Sampling Frame | 45 |
| 3.6 | Data Collection Tools | 45 |
| 3.6.1 | Primary Sources | 45 |
| 3.6.2 | Secondary Sources | 48 |
| 3.7 | Data Presentation and Analysis..... | 48 |

| | | |
|--|--|----|
| 3.8 | Validity and Reliability | 49 |
| 3.8.1 | Validity | 50 |
| 3.8.2 | Reliability | 51 |
| 3.9 | Ethical Considerations | 52 |
| 3.9.1 | The do-no harm principle..... | 52 |
| 3.9.2 | The Confidentiality Principle..... | 53 |
| 3.9.3 | The Consent Principle..... | 53 |
| 3.10 | Chapter Summary | 53 |
| CHAPTER FOUR..... | | 54 |
| DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS | | 54 |
| 4.1 | Introduction..... | 54 |
| 4.2 | Demographic profile of respondents..... | 54 |
| 4.2.1 | Gender distribution | 54 |
| 4.2.2 | Interview and Questionnaire Responses | 55 |
| 4.3 | The constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (TCC) in peacekeeping operations. | 56 |
| 4.3.1 | Poor leadership..... | 58 |
| 4.3.2 | Complex mandates and complex conflicts..... | 59 |
| 4.3.3 | Communication Barrier..... | 61 |
| 4.3.4 | Poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment..... | 62 |
| 4.3.5 | Internal politics | 64 |
| 4.3.6 | Misconduct, human rights violation and abuse of military forces | 65 |
| 4.3.7 | Deployment of neighbours/Interests of Ethiopia | 66 |
| 4.3.8 | <i>Inherent weaknesses of a deployed TCC</i> | 68 |
| 4.4 | Constraints affecting the impact of UN Partnership with Local Actors in Peacebuilding..... | 69 |
| 4.4.1 | Budgetary Constraints..... | 70 |
| 4.4.2 | Lack of expertise, experience and professionalism of UNISFA Staff | 71 |
| 4.4.3 | Biasness..... | 72 |
| 4.4.4 | Lack of continuity | 73 |
| 4.4.5 | Segregation of small tribes, women and youth civic groups..... | 74 |
| 4.4.6 | Weak or lack of political will power by local actors (JCPC, Traditional Leaders) | 75 |
| 4.4.7 | National Actors interferences and limitations..... | 77 |
| 4.4.8 | CPC/JPC constraints | 78 |

| | | |
|--|--|-----|
| 4.4.9 | Cultural barrier..... | 80 |
| 4.5 | The constraints of the UN Peacekeepers in the Protection of Civilians..... | 80 |
| 4.5.1 | Inability to cover all areas..... | 81 |
| 4.5.2 | Capacity/ability to protect by the peacekeepers..... | 83 |
| 4.5.3 | Lack of POC camps..... | 84 |
| 4.5.4 | Security of UN peacekeepers..... | 85 |
| 4.5.5 | Weak or lack of political support from the national actors..... | 85 |
| 4.5.6 | UNMAS – Mine action..... | 87 |
| 4.6 | Chapter Summary..... | 87 |
| CHAPTER 5..... | | 88 |
| SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH..... | | 88 |
| 5.1 | Introduction..... | 88 |
| 5.2 | Summary..... | 88 |
| 5.3 | Conclusions..... | 91 |
| 5.4 | Recommendations..... | 92 |
| 5.5 | Areas of further study..... | 94 |
| 5.6 | Chapter Summary..... | 94 |
| References..... | | 95 |
| APPENDIX: A..... | | 102 |
| APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE..... | | 103 |
| APPENDIX: C..... | | 105 |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Abyei is an oil rich but contested area between Sudan and South Sudan, which has two major seasons, the dry/hot season from October to March and the wet/rainy season from April – September (Lino, 2020). The Abyei conflict is unique as it consists of two conflict levels, namely the local conflict, involving the Misseriya pastoralists from Sudan who move into Ngok Dinka Abyei area to access water and pastures during the dry season; and the national conflict, between the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan (then the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army) premised on national politics and economic resources (Blanchfield et. Al., 2019). Hence, it was labelled by Johnson (2011) as the Sudan's Kashmir, a territory claimed by nations and aptly described as Sudan's West Bank, where a local population was being progressively dislodged and displaced by government backed settlements.

Having been transferred by Administrative Act in 1905 by colonial authority to Western Kordofan, Abyei fought the two South-North wars from 1955 to 1972 and the Africa's longest civil war from 1983 to 2005, in which thousands were displaced and two million people died (Kelly, 2010) & (Lino, 2020). The Ngok Dinka were supported by Southern Liberation Movements who were fighting for the independence of the southern part of the then greater Sudan, whereas the Misseriya were supported by the government of Sudan (Johnson, 2011).

The consistent attempts by the Ngok Dinka for Abyei to join Southern Sudan have always been resisted by the government of Sudan (Kelly, 2010). For example, the referendum provided for in

the 1972 Addis Ababa peace agreement was not conducted (Lino, 2020). The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) created the road map for the independence of South Sudan and, therefore, the creations of a national border in the Abyei region (Blanchfield et. al., 2019). People in Abyei were to be given the opportunity to vote in a referendum concurrently with the people of Southern Sudan at the end of the interim period of the CPA in 2011, on whether the region would be part of Southern Sudan or not, but such opportunity was never given (Johnson, 2011). The failure to conduct the Abyei referendum was over how to interpret clauses in the Abyei Protocol on Residency and eligibility to vote in the referendum (Lino, 2020).

The Abyei Boundary Commission (ABC) which was established by the CPA to define the Abyei area, had its July 2005 report rejected by the Government of Sudan and the Misseriya on the basis that the Commission had exceeded its mandate (Blanchfield et. al.,2019). The Abyei case was then taken to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), which redefined Abyei in focus to Ngok Dinka, who had to choose their status through a referendum. However, the implementation of the PCA ruling was hindered by the 31st Brigade of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and armed Misseriya militia men. Intervention efforts by the US and the African Union (AU) also failed to bring sustaining peace in Abyei (Johnson, 2011).

The fighting in Abyei drew the attention of the UN which was created by nation states to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, and the UN Security Council (UNSC) which has the mandate to maintain international peace and security (Charter of the UN, 1945), which

established the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) through its Resolution 1990 of 27 June 2011, on the eve of South Sudan's independence in June 2011. UNISFA, a multidimensional peacekeeping, had a mandate originally focused on the protection of civilians, demilitarization of Abyei and strengthening of the capacities of the envisaged Abyei Police Service (APS). However, the mandate was expanded in late 2011 to support broader border security arrangements between the two countries, including a Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM), which the CPA signatories agreed to establish to monitor the full Sudan-South Sudan border. UNISFA's deployment to Abyei defused a violent standoff between the two countries militaries, but tensions remained high (Blanchfield, et. al., 2019).

UNISFA's establishment came after Sudan and SPLM reached an agreement in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to demilitarize Abyei and let Ethiopian troops monitor the area. Ever since 2011 to 2022, the Ethiopian contingent had the sole responsibility to implement the mandate, with other nation states supplying unarmed Military Observers (Milobs) and Staff Officers (SOs) (Blanchfield, et. al., 2019). However, during the lifetime of UNISFA, sporadic and intermittent armed attacks and exchange of fire has been witnessed in Abyei. Notably, there has been 36 UNISFA fatalities since 2011, and conflict dominated by armed attacks resulting in death and injury and cattle rustling among others, have remained part of Abyei life (Kelly, 2010).

Meanwhile, UNPKO commenced in 1948 with authorized deployments in Israel/Arab conflict as well as the Pakistan/India conflict in 1949 (Shucksmith & White, 2015), and evolved from the traditional to multidimensional over the years. Traditional peacekeeping was necessarily limited to maintaining cease-fires and stabilizing situations on the ground by the military, so that efforts

could be made at the political level to resolve the conflict by peaceful means. However, with the end of the Cold War and the changing conflict dynamics from inter to intra state conflicts, the multidimensional peacekeeping operations were adopted to be deployed in the dangerous aftermath of a violent internal conflict and employed a mix of military, police and civilians' capabilities to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence and support the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreements (UNDPO, 2008). In this regard, UNISFA as a multidimensional peacekeeping entity, was mandated to support the implementation of the CPA between Sudan and then SPLM/A in 2005 (UNISFA, 2011). Whereas, among other things, the CPA's thrust was focused on the realization of the final status of Abyei and the achievement of sustainable peace (CPA, 2005). Moreso, in contrast to traditional peacekeeping operations, multidimensional peacekeeping operations usually play a direct role in political efforts to resolve the conflict and are then mandated by the UNSC to provide good offices or promote national political dialogue and reconciliation (UNDPO, 2008).

UNISFA mandate was initially for just six months, yet more than a decade down the line, the UNSC has continued to renew the mandate in Abyei. Lots of money was budgeted for, armed attacks remained the order of the day, most households were left fatherless, peacekeepers have lost their lives and some left with permanent injuries. It is therefore on this backdrop that this research seeks answers as to why peace has been absent in an area where the peacekeepers have been present, through an assessment of UNISFA's constraints. Moreso, the researcher intends to use institutional liberalism theory in assessing the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei.

1.2 Aim of Study

The aim of this study was to assess the constraints of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) in Abyei with a view to improve its efficacy.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The absence of peace in Abyei, yet in the presence of a UNPKO, violated the purpose of the UN of maintaining international peace and security; challenged the credibility of the UNSC which has the mandate to establish UNPKO; and posed serious questions to the efficacy of UNISFA, the implementer of the mandate. As at February 2022, with around 63 474 troops, 2 069 staff officers, 7 297 UNPOLs and 1022 experts in the mission, engaged in at least 12 peacekeeping missions, peace and security has been absent in many parts of world inclusive of Abyei. Such peacekeeping missions cost the UN around US\$ 6,38 billion every year, with Abyei requiring a budget of \$260.4 million per year (Report of the SG, 2022). According to Blanchfield, et. Al., (2019), there have been 36 UNISFA fatalities since 2011, translating to both blood and treasurer investments into UNPKO by member states. As cited by Global Center (2022), Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and Abyei Administration, reported that inter-communal clashes erupted on 10 February 2022 in the Anet settlement, killing 20 people and displacing 70,000. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that violence has further intensified since 5 March 2022, with at least 36 people killed and an estimated 50,000 displaced following clashes in Agok town, Abyei. The consequences of the conflict are more grave to the Abyei people, especially women and children, due to loss of innocent civilian lives, lack of government and absence of sound institutions such as the police, medical facilities, prison and correctional services and the judicial. Furthermore, the lack of proper schools due to the conflict

in Abyei has resulted in early child marriages, lack of employment opportunities and drug abuse. Therefore, peacekeeping is an expensive exercise in money, time and casualties, and it requires clinical execution to prevent both financial and human loss. It is against this backdrop that the need to conduct research that will help in identifying and assessing the UNPKO constraints hindering the achievement of peace in Abyei. Though there is evidence of study on the constraints of the UNPKO, for instance the thesis by Kapelet (2012), the journal by Allee (2009) and reports by Coning (2016); the case of Abyei has not been particularly tackled. Craze (2011) once made a research on Abyei only covering the conflict dynamics, but not the constraints that impacted the efficacy of UNPKO in Abyei. Hence, this case study focused on Abyei to identify constraints that contributed to prolonged period of UNISFA yet without sustaining peace.

1.4 Research Objectives

- To examine the constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (Ethiopia) in Abyei peacekeeping operations.
- To assess the constraints affecting the impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors in Abyei's peacebuilding processes.
- To explore the constraints of the UN peacekeepers in the protection of civilians in Abyei.

1.5 Research Questions

- What were the constraints that affected the peacekeeping operations by UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (Ethiopia) in Abyei?

- What were the constraints which affected the impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors in Abyei's peacebuilding processes?
- Which constraints hindered the UN peacekeepers efforts in the protection of civilians in Abyei?

1.6 Assumptions

The researcher made the following assumptions: -

- The usage of UN peacekeepers from only one TCC is not effective in attaining peace and security in Abyei as it is prone to a barrage of constraints.
- The impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors in Abyei's peacebuilding process is not effective because of the massive interference by the national actors, Sudan and South Sudan.
- UN peacekeepers efforts in the protection of civilians in Abyei are not effective due to a plethora of constraints.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study is significant as it will contribute to the available body of knowledge for scholars as far as the constraints of UNPKO are concerned. The research findings will assist the UN in the formulation and improvement of effective policies and strategies that will increase the efficacy of UNKPO. The study is also significant as it will provide much needed body of knowledge to improve the cooperation at both national and local levels, that will result in realization of the final status for Abyei and achievement of sustainable peace. Investigating constraints of peace operations is not a new research activity, however, there are still many open questions, as the

case of Abyei has not been tackled and results from other investigations cannot be generalized to Abyei due to the uniqueness of its conflict situation.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

Besides the fact that there are twelve UNPKOs in the world, the study was delimited to the constraints of the UNPKO in Abyei only. Collection of data was delimited to the former and current UN peacekeepers and the national and local actors in the conflict as they had first-hand information to answer the research questions. The analysis of the study was within the confines of institutional liberalism theory as the theoretical framework of the research, since the UN was established on the basis of liberalism framework.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Firstly, the study largely focused on the UNPKO in Abyei. It may well turn out that the results of Abyei may not be generalized to all other UNPKOs due to diversities in mandates, geopolitical framework and the uniqueness of multiple levels of conflict in Abyei. Secondly, given the nature of the research, some participants might have intentionally omitted, over exaggerated or downplayed certain issues, affecting the accuracy of the study. While this was a problem that arises with any social science research, the researcher relied on documents collected to substantiate the accuracy of data collected from the key informants. Due to the high cost and bureaucratic difficulties to cover the gap between the researcher in Zimbabwe and the study area of Abyei, the research could not access some participants who had no access to phones for online interviews, and some who were not willing to have an online interview. In these cases, the

researcher used an assistant researcher in Abyei to do face to face interviews with such participants.

1.10 Definition of Key Words

Mandate – That which spells out the specific tasks that a UNPKO will be required to perform (UNPKO, 2008)

Demilitarization – is the dismantling or demobilization of a military and the eventual destruction of military equipment, destruction of weapons and explosives, and the incineration and destruction of chemical and biological weapons (Almond, 1985)

Protection of Civilians (POC) – is a responsibility which includes all parts of a peacekeeping mission, civilian, military and police functions. In many cases, peacekeeping missions are authorized to use all necessary means, up to and including the use of deadly force, to prevent or respond to threats of physical violence against civilians, within capabilities and areas of operations, and without prejudice to the responsibility of the host government (UNDPO, 2020).

Peacebuilding – refers to the action to solidify peace and avoid relapse into conflict (PSO, 2010).

1.11 Dissertation Outline

Chapter 1 – **INTRODUCTION** – shall give the outline of the research background, purpose of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the dissertation, research questions, assumptions, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations, definition of key terms and the dissertation outline.

Chapter 2 – **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK** – shall explore neo-liberalism theory which informs the construction of institutions such as the UN which seeks to maintain peace and security. The Chapter shall also focus on the relevant literature regarding to UNPKOs in general and Abyei conflict in particular, with deliberate bias on the constraints of UNPKO, which is the study area.

Chapter 3 – **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY** – shall give an overview of the methodology of the study. It shall therefore examine the research philosophy, approach, design, sampling procedures, data collection tools, data analysis and some ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 – **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS** – shall analyse the findings of the study in relation to trends and constraints of UNPKO in Abyei, centered on research objectives.

Chapter 5 – **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH** – shall conclude the dissertation by discussing the implications of themes that emerged from the study, addressing the research question and making some assessments emanating from the study. It shall also identify some areas for further research study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter commenced with the discussion of neo-liberalism theory which forms the theoretical framework guiding the research. The second segment of the chapter reviews the literature concerning the constraints of the UNPKO guided by the research objectives. The literature by Akpan and Olisah (2019), Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019), Wondemagegnehu (2020) and Sarwar (2007), among others, guided the discussion on the subject matter. The lack of literature on the constraints of UNPKO specifically for Abyei makes this study a worthwhile adventure that will add to the existing scientific knowledge in the study area.

2.2 Theoretical Framework: Neo-Liberalism Theory

This study adopted the neo-liberalism theory, which is also known as ‘Institutional liberalism’ theory as the theoretical framework. In doing this, the researcher realized that the institution of the UN and its peacekeeping operations, were founded on the basic principles of neo-liberalism which emphasized on the role international institutions play in facilitating cooperation for nation states that leads to stability and peace. Therefore, in using ‘neo-liberalism,’ the researcher was able to measure the extent to which the constraints impacted on the efficacy of UN which played a role in facilitating cooperation between the governments of Sudan and South Sudan at national level and the Misseriya and the Ngok Dinka communities at local level.

2.2.1 Liberalism Theory

Since neo-liberalism theory believes in some of the basics of liberalism (Thorsen & Lie, 2006), it is therefore prudent to first describe 'liberalism.' Liberalism is a school of thought within international relations theories which revolves around three interrelated principles; namely, rejection of power politics as the only possible outcome on international relations (Hayhurst, Sundstrom & Waldman, 2018); mutual benefits and international cooperation (Rose, 2019); and the role of international organizations and non-governmental actors in shaping state preferences and policy choices (Börzel & Zürn, 2021). Whereas, McGlinchey, et al., (2017) described liberalism as an international relations theory that promotes democracy, individual rights, free enterprise and civil liberties; and believes that cooperation between states is feasible and sustainable. Thorsen & Lie, (2006) added that such cooperation can reduce conflict. In this regard, the researcher has sought to assess the constraints that the institution of the UN faced in facilitating conflict reduction cooperation between national and local actors in Abyei.

Moreso, liberalism emphasizes on the security of the individual, human rights and the universality of those rights, freedom from authority, right to be treated equally under the protection of the law and the duty to respect and treat others as ethical subjects as well as freedom for social actions (McGlinchey, et al., 2017). The main concern of liberalism is to construct institutions that protect individual freedoms by limiting and checking political power. Viewing the Abyei conflict from these liberalism theory lenses, the researcher was keen to check the limitations of the UN in protecting individual rights and freedoms, especially that of the civilians.

The fathers of liberalism include but not limited to John Locke (1632-1704) who emphasized on the rule of law; Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) who believed that republics would establish perpetual peace; and Jeremy Bentham (1748-1852) who added that liberal states respect the international law. From the perspective of these fathers, the researcher sought to check for evidence that would either corroborate or refute their beliefs.

Liberalism has an optimistic view of human nature where it argues that human beings are essentially good and are not evil as portrayed by realism. Hence, Burchill (2005) argues that human beings can be perfect and cooperative rather than conflictual; and can put an end to war. On this back drop, the study sought to discover how realistic were these assumptions in Abyei, and to check the influence and contribution of human nature to the constraints faced by UN peacekeepers in the fulfillment of their mandate. In addition, through disarmament and reduction of the arms race, idealists believe that tensions among states can be reduced, and war eradicated to achieve peace (Jerves, 2018). Since the UN is an idealist based institution, the study also measured how UNISFA fared in their mandated task to demilitarize Abyei.

Rules and norms are pivotal to bring morality in politics, as such liberalism favours the use of soft power rather than hard power in solving disputes as opposed to hard power believed by the realists (McGlinchey et al., 2017). It was therefore in this context that the study checked to see if soft power brought the intended results in Abyei's conflict. Furthermore, liberalism asserted that nation states can be made to cooperate with each other especially in economic terms, resulting in 'inter-dependency' (McGlinchey et al., 2017). For that reason, the study investigated the extent to which the economic interdependency between Khartoum and Juba impacted on the constraints of the UNPKO; and how it influenced security and peace situation in Abyei.

Lastly, hegemonic stability theory, which also falls under the precepts of liberalism theory, believed that stability and relative peace can be achieved in the international system through a hegemony like the US (Keohane, 2005). In addition, Joseph Nye as cited by Baldwin (2013) averred that the US has used its political, military and economic power to maintain peace and stability in the international system. The researcher therefore investigated the efforts by the US to maintain peace as a world hegemony through its influence in the UNPKO, and how such efforts interlinked with the constraints thereof.

2.2.2 Neo-Liberalism Theory

Besides the fact that institutional liberalism theory believes in the above basic assumptions of liberalism theory, what makes it 'neo', is the emphasis that it gives on the role which international institutions play in facilitating cooperation as alluded to by the writings of neo-liberals like Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (Börzel & Zürn, 2021). The institutions referring to formal organisations such as the UN and; the set of rules which governs the behavior of state and non-state actors and in this study, rules such as the international law (Burchill,2005). Neo-liberalism seeks to replicate domestic models of liberal democracy at the international level, (Nye, 1988). The study therefore, utilized neo-liberalism to measure the role played by UN in fostering cooperation between the national and local actors in Abyei conflict, and the results of such cooperation, vis-à-vis the objectives of the study and the constraints thereof.

Neo-liberalism also believes that international cooperation could be sustained through repeated interaction, transparency and monitoring; and that nation states can cooperate in institutions (Börzel & Zürn, 2021). The study centered on the extent to which this assumption worked in

Abyei, by checking the level of cooperation of Sudan and South Sudan, as well as the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, within the purview of the UN and how such cooperation impacted on the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei.

Whereas, neo-realists argues that states were concerned with the relative – gain (who will gain more), neo-liberalists argues that states are concerned with absolute gain, (what will gain me the most) (Thorsen & Lie, 2006). The researcher sought to investigate whether relative or absolute gains were behind the failure of the two nations to reach the final political status of Abyei. The claim by neo-liberalism that nation states should uphold the rule of law and respect the rights of their people, was also used to check the level of subscription to these tenets by Sudan and South Sudan with a bias towards how their behavior had an impact to the constraints of the UNPKO in Abyei. Unlike classical realism, neo-liberalism accepts realism’s assertion of anarchy in the international relations; however, it believes that anarchy is just a vacuum that can be filled by international institutions like the UN (Nye, 1988). The study therefore stretched far and wide to check the extent to which institutional cooperation mitigated against the perceived anarchy.

Lastly, democratic peace theory which has roots in Kant’s writing as cited by Beruashvili (2022), is a variant of liberalism theory, which elucidated that democracies rarely go to war with each other, because they respected human rights, the rule of law, accommodation of views and reconciliation. Nevertheless, Kant’s democratic peace theory has since been revised by neo-liberals like Keohane and Nye (2001), who have seen that democracies do in fact fight wars but not with other democracies because of capitalist ties. Democracies are economically dependent and therefore are more likely to resolve issues diplomatically. This debate prompted the

researcher to enquire whether Sudan and South Sudan falls under democratic nations and to probe their contribution to the constraints of the UNPKO in Abyei.

2.3 Constraints of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO)

A constraint is anything that prevents a system from achieving a higher performance relative to its goal (Blackstone, 2010). Nelson (1988), defined constraints as limitations or restrictions. Therefore, anything that prevents UNISFA from accomplishing mandated goal in Abyei, be it a limitation, restriction, problem or challenge, within or without the UN, qualifies to be a constraint as far as this study is concerned. Umerez & Mossio (2013) rings the alarm bell when they asserted that constraints are always asymmetric, and may give rise to new phenomena. Hence, the need to assess UNPKO constraints with a view to prevent the rise of the new phenomena, improve the UNPKO efficacy and proffer sound recommendation to overcome them.

The available literature from Shankata (2016), Akpan & Olisah (2019), Lundgren et al., (2021), Sarwar (2007), Forti & Gowan (2020) and Mellon (2021), indicated that there is a barrage of constraints of UNPKO that can derail peace efforts in the world. As pointed by Shankata (2016), the UNPKO constraints include inadequate resources for operations, lack of logistical and political will from member states, poor leadership, risks of attacks, government restrictions, lack of peace to keep and absence of negotiated peace agreements. Akpan & Olisah (2019) pointed to overambitious and at times ambiguous mandates from the UNSC, as well as culture and language issues as part of the constraints. Whereas, Lundgren et al., (2021), added local dynamics and Sarwar (2007), added the unwillingness of the member states who are well trained

and equipped logistically to be sent for UNPKOs, as well as charges of sexual exploitation by UN peacekeepers.

In grouping the constraints, Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) categorized them as political, military and humanitarian constraints. Political constraints involving the consent of the host country, political stability of the post conflict situation, political will of the host country, and logistical support from the UN office. Military constraints involving military personnel issues, inclusive of the UN police (UNPOL). Lastly, humanitarian constraints referring to issues hindering the successful provision of humanitarian assistance such as aid relief, facilitating the return of refugees and displaced people to their home places.

Though there are similarities in UNPKO constraints across missions, however, as alluded to by Shankata (2016) that each peace support mission has its own unique situation, it therefore follows that the manner in which these constraints are assessed differs. This view was substantiated by Druckman et al., (1997) who opined that the result from one study from a specific peacekeeping mission cannot be easily generalized and replicated to all other missions. Moreso, the list of UNPKO constraints is huge, it becomes highly difficult to assess all of them in this study. It is against this backdrop, that the researcher was meticulous in selecting the thematic areas that cover the hypothesized constraints of concern in Abyei. Moreso, the available literature does not provide satisfying answers of the research questions of this study. While the importance of studying the constraints is undisputed, its determinants remain poorly understood and the results of this study will go a long way in adding to the existing body of knowledge in these thematic areas.

2.4 The constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (TCC) in peacekeeping operations.

Military personnel and their conduct in peacekeeping operations, influence the destiny of the operations (Sarjoon & Yusoff, 2019). Military tasks include patrols, demilitarization, protecting the buffer zone and protecting civilians among other tasks (Kjeksrud, 2019). The mandated tasks for UNISFA troops were inclusive of demilitarization of Abyei, protection of civilians and ensuring security of Abyei (UNSCR 1990, 2011).

According to UNDPKO (2003), the trend within the UN system has been to deploy multinational contingents in the same mission with due consideration of political, geographical representation, historical and cultural ties of a potential TCC. For instance, UNAMID had contingents from Rwanda, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Egypt, Nigeria, Indonesia and Tanzania (Neethling, 2009). But, the case was not the same for Abyei, as only troops from Ethiopia were deployed as armed contingents, with other nations supplying unarmed Milobs and SOs only (Nagar, 2022). This was however done with the concurrence of the national level actors, Sudan and South Sudan according to the agreed Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area. The reviewed literature could not measure the assumption made by the researcher that the usage of UN peacekeepers from only one TCC is not effective in attaining peace and security in Abyei as it is prone to a barrage of constraints.

The study by Akpan & Olisah (2019), discovered some notable constraints that affect the efficacy of the military in their contribution towards the achievement of the mandated tasks in a UNPKO. These constraints included, deployment logistical challenges, command and control

issues, poor leadership, inability to deal with peace spoilers, cultural and language barriers, poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment. Whereas, UNISFA troops might not be spared on the above constraints, however with the same constraints and others, the fact that UNISFA has operated with UN peacekeepers from only one TCC has not been covered by the available literature, providing a gap that needs scholarly and research attention.

2.4.1 Deployment logistical challenges

The UN lacks a standing army hence it relies on contribution of troops by TCCs, a scenario resulting in a barrage of deployment logistical constraints (Sarjoon & Yusoff, 2019). Sarwar (2007), Akpan & Olisah (2019), Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) and Lundgren et al. (2021), all agreed on the deployment logistical constraints that includes failure to deploy within reasonable time after the authorization of a mission mandate by the UNSC, unwillingness to contribute troops by the well trained and well equipped developed nations; and the willingness to contribute by developing nations which lacks the resources and expert training needed for the achievement of the mandates.

Sarwar (2007) averred that peacekeeping has become much more challenging as it demanded more specialized capacities like army engineers, logisticians, and heavy lift aircraft, which underdeveloped but willing TCCs lacked. For instance, as cited by Akpan & Olisah (2019), the troops from developing nations that operated in Sudan had little to no self-sufficiency in both equipment and material supplies.

Lundgren et al. (2021) suggested that once a peacekeeping operation was established by the UNSC, every day that passes before troops are fully deployed, weighed on the prospects of its success; citing the cases of Cambodia, Sierra Leone, and Chad, where the delayed arrival of UN peacekeepers undermined, and derailed, the peace process. The research results by Lundgren et al. (2021) on the determinants for rapid and flawless deployment of troops in the authorized mission area identified key three contributor-level findings. Firstly, TCCs where UN reimbursements were larger relative to military expenditure per soldier deployed more rapidly. Secondly, countries exposed to refugee flows from the mission country deployed sooner than countries that do not experience such externalities. Thirdly, parliamentary controls over foreign deployments reduced the speed of deployment, especially in full democracies. The researcher assessed the determinates of the deployment in general and deployment speed in particular by Ethiopia in Abyei and connected constraints.

Meanwhile, incentives and capabilities of the TCCs were also identified as determinants of deployment speed in UN peacekeeping (Lundgren et al., 2021). The higher the incentives, the quicker the TCCs deployed. As a remedy, Sarwar (2007) opined that the capabilities were there but concentrated in western developed countries that have well established armies and were logistically equipped. He went on to suggest that the UN should work out an action plan that makes it incumbent on the western nations to voluntarily contribute their capacity and equipment to UN missions in any part of the world. Williams (2015) supported the same notion stating that the US military expertise in the form of medical, engineering, logistics, and aviation, as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance units would be instrumental in increasing the skill and knowledge base of units on the ground.

This study therefore assessed whether Ethiopia, as a developing nation, suffered lack of resources necessary for the achievement of the mandate, since the researcher was of the assumption that some of the equipment in short supply might not have been essential for the overall efficacy of a UNPKO.

2.4.2 Command and Control Issues

The UNPKO usually consists of a multinational force with contingent troops drawn from different countries with diversified military training and doctrine. The differences, as opined by Akpan & Olisah (2019), manifest in the operation field and impact negatively on the command and control of troops in the mission, thereby becoming a constraint to the efficacy of the military in particular and the mission in general. Sarwar (2007), only identified command and control issues as part of peacekeeping challenges, without further elaboration for its determinates, which this study sought to do. For the past decade, all the UN contingents in Abyei came from Ethiopia, but the staff officers from other countries would at times be called to give instructions to and receive reports from the Ethiopian troops. Such interactions demanded research to identify and assess connected constraints.

2.4.3 Poor leadership

Poor leadership, as opined by Akpan & Olisah (2019) and supported by Sarwar (2007), manifests in the misappropriation of the allowances of troops serving under the UN mandate by their commanding officers, dealing a major blow to the morale of the military, hence becoming a constraint of the military efforts. The same sentiments were echoed by Akwara et al. (2021) who went on to recommend that the UN should pay allowances directly to the soldiers' bank accounts

instead of their home country governments, a recommendation that this study sought to measure for its feasibility in Abyei, that is if the same constraint is identified.

2.4.4 Inability to deal with peace spoilers

The Rwanda genocide of 1994 in which approximately 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu people were killed whilst the UN peacekeepers were present in Rwanda, exemplified the inability by the UNPKO to deal with peace-spoilers in certain circumstances (Akpan & Olisah, 2019). Similarly, as cited by Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019), when Bosnian Muslim town of Srebrenica fell to a siege by Serb militias, 8,000 Muslims were killed under the eyes of the UN peacekeeping contingent deployed therein. In search for an answer on this inability, Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) claimed that the constraint was that the peacekeepers were not combat forces and were merely deployed to monitor previously agreed cease-fires and truces. Hence, they could not stop the genocides or human rights violations; yet they had to work among well-established peace spoilers such as rebel armed groups.

In the case of Abyei, armed men from both the Misseriya and the Ngok Dinka have been spoiling peace through sporadic and periodic armed attacks yet the UNISFA troops have been in Abyei for the past decade (Ocha, 2022). This, according to Sarjoon & Yusoff's (2019) view, clearly indicated the limit of UN peacekeeping mandate to control violence or human rights violations during operations. If then the UN peacekeepers could not prevent such atrocities, how then will the UN fulfill its mandate to maintain international peace and security? This research therefore assessed such constraints to come up with possible recommendations.

2.4.5 Cultural and language barriers

Cultural and language differences became an obstruction to UNPKO. Akpan & Olisah (2019), cited as an example, that UN troops who failed to understand the prevalent language and culture in Sudan, leading to operational delays and other bottlenecks. As a remedy, Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) stated that UN troops received cultural education, such as beliefs and customs of the Muslims. However, Williams (2015) argues that though the cultural education was necessary, it was not sufficient to rectify the constraint. In the case of Abyei, though Gebrekidan (2021) stated that the Misseriya were mostly Muslims and the Ngok Dinka mostly Christians, however, the researcher could not locate any literature of cultural and language barriers in UNPKO in Abyei. Hence, this study searched for such information to add to the existing body of knowledge.

2.4.6 Poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment

African countries have been identified as the platform of poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment due to limited development contributed by conflicts and other factors (Akpan & Olisah, 2019). With these issues confronting states in the continent, Akpan & Olisah (2019) further claimed that peacekeepers find it extremely difficult to patrol and provide security for those in the hinterland, hence the constraint to fully implement the mandate. In DRC, Liberia, Sudan-Darfur, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, Chad and Central African Republic, there were scanty motor-able roads, few functioning court systems, prisons or municipal governments while under conflict (Sarjoon & Yusoff, 2019). The lack of these basic governance infrastructures impeded UNPKO in these countries and extended the duration of the conflict unnecessarily (Akpan & Olisah, 2019). With the absence of literature that has studied this feature in Abyei, this study endeavored to contribute in filling the gap.

2.4.7 Internal Politics with or against the police

A unique constraint of politics with and against the UN police was pointed by Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019), but was not brought to the fore by other scholars such as Akpan & Olisah (2019) and Akwara et al. (2021). Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) was of the view that most TCCs were slow to accept and implement the practical measures required to match the political and rhetorical favour that increases the establishment of UNPOLs in a mission. This therefore becomes a novel area lacking information. Meanwhile, available literature, such as the UNISFA's UNSCR 2469 (2019) mandate, showed the increase of the UNPOL establishment from 345 to 640 to strengthen the capacity of Community Protection Committees (CPCs) and the Joint Protection Committee (JPC), in the absence of the Abyei Police Service (APS). The researcher enquired on how the military dealt with the change in UNPOL established strength to see if their response was a constraint to the efficacy of the mission.

2.4.8 Misconduct, human rights violation and abuse of military forces

Misconduct, human rights violation and abuse of military forces were also issues which challenged the UNPKO, as exemplified by the case of Cambodia in which UN troops abused the local population and were running prostitution business (Sarjoon & Yusoff, 2019). Sarwar (2007) added that Namibian peacekeepers were accused of sexual exploitation and abuse by using administrative building premises and surrounding bush to indulge in sex acts with girls between the aged of 12-17; with the uniformed UN peacekeepers openly visiting brothels in marked UN vehicles in Liberia and allegations of sexual abuse of minors by UN peacekeeping troops in Burundi. UN has come up with control and management measures against military misconduct and violations, inclusive of internal investigations and screening of candidates for

UN mission duties among others (Lowe, et al., 2010). This study therefore assessed the efficacy of such measures, taking into consideration the fact of only one TCC in Abyei, that is expected to investigate itself against the inherent need to protect its own image and integrity.

2.4.9 Complex tasks/mandates

Peacekeepers in Africa are routinely mandated to carry out complex, multifaceted and difficult tasks in highly volatile environments (Williams, 2015). For example, the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSMA), was mandated to implement twenty-seven priority tasks ranging from PoC from threat of physical violence to seizing illicit weapons and promoting the rapid extensions of state authority. However, Akpan & Olisah, (2019) did not list this aspect as a peacekeeping challenge; rather, chose to emphasize on the inability of UNPKO to fulfill the mandated tasks. Both agree on the failure of UNPKO, however, they disagree as to the determinant of such failure, one pointing to the mandate itself and the other to the mandate implementer. With more than ten years of presence in Abyei of the UN peacekeepers and yet without sustainable peace, the researcher sought to identify the cause of such failure and assessed the constraint, whether it was either the mandate or the mandate implementer, or both.

2.4.10 Lack of Peace to keep

Furthermore, Williams (2015) and Akpan & Olisah (2019), both agreed that most peacekeepers in Africa work in active war zones where there is no peace to keep. A trend reflected in the now regular deployment of special forces in several theaters of conflict, notably Mali, DRC and Somalia; resulting in the killing of UN peacekeeping troops who were unable to disarm the

combatants or impose peace. This study perused if there was peace to keep when UNISFA was authorized to deploy in Abyei.

2.4.11 Deployment of neighbours

An unwritten principle of UN was highlighted by Wondemagegnehu (2018), that UNPKO should seek to avoid deployment of troops or police from neighbouring countries in order to mitigate the risks associated with these countries' national interests in the host countries, such as the difficulty to maintain the principle of impartiality in their conduct. Regardless of this unwritten principle, UN deployed troops from Ethiopia, which is a neighbour to both Sudan and South Sudan. The research results of Wondemagegnehu (2018) on the pros and cons of such development were two sided. The first was against the deployment of neighbours due to above stated reasons, and the second was in support of the deployment of neighbours, citing that troops from neighbouring countries operated in familiar terrains and they increasingly proved to be more committed to take more risk including heavy casualties. Further, these troops were often strategically deployed and positioned to prevent the spillover effects of the conflict to their home country, thereby serving their own key national interest considerations. This leaves a knowledge gap in the case of Abyei, hence the researchers thrust was on examining and assessing the efficacy of using a neighbouring country as the only TCC in Abyei peacekeeping operations.

2.5 Constraints affecting the impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors in Abyei's peace building processes

Driven by the concept of, "finding local solutions for local problems," as averred by Mellon (2021); the report by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on peacebuilding and

sustaining peace emphasized participation of local actors in peace processes, such as civil society actors, including women and youth-led organizations (Hellmüller, 2018). Synchronously, the UNSCR (2069), requested UNISFA to engage with the local communities on peacebuilding initiatives. This led to shifting the long-term focus of the UN from crisis response to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, with a view to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development (United Nations Peacebuilding, 2020).

Sustaining peace, the main goal of peacebuilding activities in UN missions, emphasizes on the importance of local actors in addressing the root causes of conflicts, with UN acting in a supporting role (Forti & Gowan, 2020). In this regard, UNISFA was expected to engage with the Misseriya and the Ngok Dinka communities for conflict prevention and mitigation, and establishment of the rule of law, which are the two key peacebuilding goals that reflect on the efficacy of a UNPKO.

Whilst the researcher has not found literature focusing specifically on the impact of UN/local actors' partnerships in peacebuilding processes in Abyei, however, Lino (2020) carried a study on the outcomes of local mediations in Abyei between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya. The local mediation was initiated in 2015 by Chief Nyuon Pagot, and facilitated by Concordis, international NGO, resulting in Noong Peace Agreement (NPA) signed between the Chiefs of the parties in February 2016. The NPA established the Joint Community Peace Committee (JCPC) comprised of 10 Ngok Dinka and 10 Misseriya people, which contributed to the reduction in

number of killings and incidences of violent conflict. Such local efforts managed to accomplish conflict mitigation and yet fell short of conflict prevention and establishment of the rule of law in Abyei.

Regardless of the UN having the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) as stated by Forti & Gowan (2020), budgetary constraints were pointed by Mellon (2021) as detrimental to the efficacy of UN/local partnership mechanisms. This was caused by some donors who only funded UN programs that supported their own national interests (Forti & Gowan, 2020). This study sought to check if UN partnership with the CPC/JPC suffered the same fate and to what extent.

Literature by Kool (2016) showed that lack of expertise within the UNPKO was a constraint towards the efficacy of UN/Local partnership in peacebuilding, citing the lack of a Civil Society Focal Person in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the UNHQ, as an example. However, Forti & Gowan (2020) argued that though it was a constraint but there was progress in deployment of expert staff.

Lack of trust by local communities of the UNPKO was cited as another constraint by Kool (2016), without elaborating the causal and correlation factors. Mellon (2021) added that there was need for a deeper understanding of the local context so as to maintain the trust levels high for the efficiency of the UNPKO. Meanwhile, the short term focus and deployment of security forces to reduce immediate threats versus the long term focus and relations based approach by civil actors was a mismatch constraining the quest for sustainable peace as pointed by Kool (2016). Whereas, Forti & Gowan (2020) were mum on this regard, the mismatch was a direct

contradiction of broad range intervention of supporting community based intervention written by Mellon (2020). In the absence of literature on this aspect in Abyei, the study investigated if the same mismatch manifested itself therein.

Whereas, Mellon (2021) emphasized on the promotion of inclusivity and participation in peacebuilding of all, inclusive of women and the youth; Forti & Gowan (2020) highlighted that UNPKO struggled to identify credible and legitimate partners and to include all. Yet, as stated by Kool (2016) women organisations in Liberia helped UNMIL in the DDR processes. The researcher sought to measure the extent to which UNISFA was accommodative of all civil society actors in Abyei.

Both, Forti & Gowan (2020) and Mellon (2021) agreed that lack of political will and inexperienced local negotiators were constraints that affected UNPKO quest for sustaining peace. However, they differed on causal factors. Forti & Gowan (2020) believed that it was caused by lack of education prone in conflict zones, yet Mellon (2021) opined that when locals see that the UN was not supporting their own mechanisms, they would lack the political will to cooperate with the UNPKO. Hence, the suggestion by Kool (2016) that the UNPKO should have a deeper understanding of local context through respectful coherent and flexibility. The researcher sought to measure the political will of local actors in Abyei and checked their contribution towards sustaining peace.

As cited by Lino (2020), the major weakness of the local peace agreement was that it relied on external support from national and international bodies to be meaningful and also focused on the

day to day conflict dynamics and community needs such as livelihood, security, and economic activities; yet lacking the ability to tackle issues of power which possessed great influence to peace outcomes. This would make it easier for detrimental interference into the community based peacebuilding processes by national and international actors. The researcher checked if such interferences were present in Abyei.

As regards to the rule of law, the researcher failed to locate literature that measured and assessed constraints in relation to JCPC functions and UNPOL monitored CPC/JPCs operations. However, Forti & Gowan (2020) opined that in other missions, UN deployed UNPOL units to focus on forensic investigations; counterterrorism and serious organised crimes; and gender based violence crimes. The researcher was left with a keen interest to check if such efforts were done in Abyei and how they contributed to the impact of UN/local partnerships.

In the end, it is prudent to note that UN/local partnerships remain largely undiscussed in the international community as alluded to by Kool (2016). Those who have attempted to do so like Forti & Gowan (2020) and Mellon (2021), have not included Abyei in their case studies and examples. Hence, some of their remedies to constraints observed might not apply to Abyei case, making this study a worthwhile academic adventure.

2.6 Constraints of the UN peacekeepers in the protection of civilians

More than 387,000 civilians were killed and 38 million displaced by war in the Middle-East since 2001 (Watson Institute, 2021:1). The Darfur conflict in Sudan resulted in the death of over 300,000 people and displacement of millions of civilians from the region (Tarus, 2010:76).

Around 800,000 were killed in Rwanda genocide on 1994 (Shaw, 2012:1); and more than 200,000 civilians were killed in Srebrenica (Mijić, 2021:3). The Office of the UN high Commissioner for Human Rights (2022:1) recorded 7,964 civilian's casualties in the Ukraine crisis as at 17 May 2022: 3,778 killed and 4,186 injured. As recently as May 2022, Ocha (2022:1) reported that intercommunal tensions increased in the Abyei, allegedly driven by longstanding territorial disputes, inter-tribal tensions, and revenge seeking resulting in 36 civilians being killed and more than 50,000 displaced, which is almost 20% of the total Abyei population which stood at 240,000 as at February 2022. Civilians have increasingly become the victims of armed conflict and in response, the UNSC has made the PoC a focus of modern peacekeeping (Fjelde et al., 2019).

In this regard, UNDPKO (2008) described the three stages of the PoC in UNPKO. The first being the support given to governments to uphold their primacy civilian protection responsibilities through advice, technical and logistical support and capacity building. Secondly, through political good offices and mediation, take a preventive approach to protect civilians. And, as a last resort, many peacekeepers are authorized to act under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN to physically protect civilians. Williams (2020), added that more than 95% of peacekeepers today are mandated to protect civilians, including protecting children and protecting against conflict-related sexual violence. The PoC is often the yardstick by which the international community, and those the UN endeavour to protect, judge the worthiness of peacekeepers and the effectiveness of peacekeeping (UNDPO, 2020).

On the backdrop of the UN aim on the PoC, the civilian casualties recorded in the midst of ongoing UNPKOs, are enough proof to note the existence of constraints on this mandate. According to Ruggeri, Dorussen & Gizelis (2018), these constraints include rules of engagement, authority to act, capacity to protect by the peacekeepers, inability to cover all areas and weak or lack of political support from the local and national actors. It therefore follows that there are constraints in the PoC that demanded assessment in order to achieve sustainable peace.

2.6.1 Inability to cover all areas

Inability to cover all areas by the UNPKO may be a result of limited human resources, limited accommodation and infrastructure, scarcity of vehicles and helicopters; and poor roads which are difficulty to maneuver (Akpan & Olisah, 2019) & (Shankata, 2016). The limitation of peacekeepers was at times caused by the refusal to issue Visas to some of the troops and experts by the host nation (Shankata, 2016). However, Fjelde et al. (2019) argues that even with a sizeable peacekeeping force, large areas with grave security concerns often remained outside the reach of international forces. For example, UNAMID in Darfur, was criticized for its limited presence beyond headquarters and inability to patrol the vast region, challenging the mission's ability for the PoC. Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) labelled such failures to protect civilians as ineffectiveness of the mission which have a devastating effect on peace operations. The researcher sought to bring to the fore whether UNPKO in Abyei possessed the ability to be in all the areas under the UNISFA mandate.

2.6.2 Capacity/ability to protect by the peacekeepers

The ability of a UNPKO to protect the civilian is influenced by the mandate demands, the will of the troops, rules of engagement and the military capacities of the troops (Sarjoun & Yusoff, 2019) & (Akpan & Olisah, 2019). Meanwhile, Fjelde et al., (2019) suggested that the UNPKO were regarded as more effective on PoC from attacks by armed groups; however, felling short as far as attacks from the government were concerned.

Bellamy & Williams (2012), opined that the ability to protect civilians by a UNPKO is also hinged on the level of military capacities, claiming that troops from developing countries which the UN heavily relied upon, had limited military capacities. Substantiating this position, Akpan & Olisah (2019) stated that Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Senegal provided most of the uniformed personnel in at least seven UN peacekeeping operations in Africa, and yet all of them were regarded as developing countries, with limited military capacities to protect the civilians. Ethiopia, as a developing nation, was assessed in this study to check their capacity to protect civilians.

2.6.3 Rules of Engagement

The rules of engagement (ROE) were designed for maximum PoC and the final success of the mission; however, in high risk situation and other rare cases they provoke a deep sense of vulnerability, thus making them a constraint towards the achievement of the mandate (Martinez, 2021). Whereas, Akpan & Olisah (2019), clarified that ROE became a constraint because nearly all theatres of conflict in Africa were characterised or engaged in non-conventional or asymmetric warfare. As such, it becomes difficult for UN peacekeepers to achieve results

especially that their ROE are not as clearly defined as that of a fighting force. Faix (2010), suggested that ROE should primarily make it possible to achieve the objectives of an operation, thus the PoC among others; and to protect the deployed forces. With the changing context of the use of force, it is becoming an even greater challenge to develop, implement and use ROE in a manner that appropriately reflects current developments.

Meanwhile, constraints associated with the ROE includes but not limited to failure to follow the ROE by the military either through lack of training or deliberate refusal; ROE which are not sufficiently robust and appropriate; and when the enemy forces take advantage of knowing the limits and constraints encompassed in ROE to the UNPKO (Cooper, 2019). For instance, enemies of peace in Afghanistan were seen multiple times by US soldiers, fleeing the area with women and children as human shields fully knowing that they will not be fired at due to the ROE demands. A concrete example of inappropriate ROE was provided by the deployment of UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia in which the deployed peacekeeping forces were not allowed to use force in situations when they were under temporary blockade or even when they were taken hostage, exposing the civilians to risk (Rowe, 2019). Literature has not done justice to assess the ROE in Abyei and this researcher sought therefore fill to the existing knowledge gap.

2.6.4 Weak or lack of political support from the national actors

It is a UN stance for UNPKO to create partnerships with partners as alluded to by Blanchfield et al. (2019), affirming that at the heart of peacebuilding are emotional partnerships with host government. Sarwar (2007), echoes the same thing stating that partnerships with national actors

were indispensable for the success of UNPKO. But, the engagement with national actors is being hampered by either complete ejection of the UNPKO as what happened in Eritrea, Chad, Burundi and Sudan, or the case of DRC and South Sudan in which the governments complained bitterly about the peacekeepers but allowed them to stay (Williams, 2015). This scenario will therefore have a huge bearing to the PoC by the UNPKOs. Hence, the research sought to assess constraints imposed by weak/lack of political support from Sudan and South Sudan.

Meanwhile, the conclusion made by Chingono's (2017) thesis that the UN peacekeeping doctrine conceals the fact that it is primarily designed to advance the self-interests of the big powers at the expense of the weak states in conflict situations, was measured to check if it was not a determinant in the case that Sudan and South Sudan failed to offer political support to UNISFA.

In the end, it is of paramount importance to note that Abyei has restricted access to outsiders and is not safe for anyone not staying within the UN protected places, hence most scholars and research institutes neglected Abyei in their studies. For example, the IPI research on UNPOL effectiveness was conducted in Mali, CAR, DRC, and South Sudan, yet neglecting Abyei. Those who dared to research on Abyei, like Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019), had to do without primary data and only used secondary data which has its own weaknesses that includes biases of the authors. Taking note of the special circumstances in Abyei, not all research results done so far can be easily generalized and replicated for the case of UNISFA. This is in sync with Gachoki's (2017) assertion that the uniqueness of the Congo conflict made it impossible for its research findings to represent other UNPKO around the world. Whereas, Gebresilassie (2012) thesis pointed to Abyei as a future flashpoint of conflict between Sudan and South Sudan but not to the constraints of the UNPKO. Thesis by Engel (2021) explored how governance is provided in Abyei under

circumstances of social and political conflict, and not the constraints in mandate implementation. Making Abyei case a worthwhile research adventure.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed Neo-Liberalism theory, which formed the theoretical framework that would guide the research. The chapter went on to review the literature concerning the constraints of the UNPKO in relation to research objectives. The review showed that constraints of UNPKO have been a subject of research, however, the assessment of such constraints and corresponding results cannot be generalized and replicated from one mission to another. Hence, making the assessment of the UNPKO in Abyei a worthwhile academic adventure that will add to the existing scientific body of knowledge in the study area.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research employed constructivism philosophical paradigm, used the qualitative methodology and was guided by the case study design to achieve the research objectives as covered in this chapter. Key informant interviews, semi structured questionnaires, and documents used to collect data were discussed. Explanations of the population, sample size, purposive and snowball sampling techniques, were given in this chapter. Reliability and validity, crucial apparatus for quality measurement of research findings and ethical considerations of the study were explained at the end of this chapter.

3.2 Research Philosophical Paradigm – Constructivism

This study was informed by constructivism philosophical paradigm which is grounded on the assertion that, in the act of knowing, it is the human mind that actively gives meaning and order to that reality to which it is responding to (Jonassen, 1991). People construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). The researcher selected constructivism firstly because it is typically associated with qualitative methods which are mostly subjective in nature as opined by Sarma (2015) and secondly, it is best suited to interpret the experiences of a human mind in relation to the conflict in Abyei. The UN peacekeepers, the Misseriya and the Ngok Dinka might have different experiences and interpretations of the constraints of the UNPKO in Abyei, hence

constructivism philosophical paradigm guided the researcher to understand the impact of such constraints as the parties experienced them.

According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology, are the four sets of philosophies that shape the view and study of social phenomena by social science researchers. Out of the three major philosophical perspectives, namely objective, subjective and mixed, as opined by Bahari (2010), constructivism favours the subjective view. As regards to ontology, which seeks to answer the question of reality, constructivism believes in the multitude of truths and many relative realities (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). It therefore follows that the reality of research results of similar studies in other missions could not be generalized to the case study of Abyei which had its own reality that demanded for a separate study.

Epistemologically, constructivism believes that knowledge is within people and can be obtained through their experiences and perceptions (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). According to Schwandt (1994), constructivism emphasizes that social actions must be studied through interpretive means based upon an understanding of the meaning and purpose that individuals attach to their personal actions. The researcher had to dig deep and wide into the experiences and perceptions of the participants to gather data about the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei in order to achieve the objectives of the research. With reference to human nature, constructivism, believes that man initiates own actions voluntarily (Schwandt, 1994). In assessing the constraints of the UNPKO in Abyei, the researcher was guided by fact that man is completely autonomous and free-willed.

Lastly, in terms of gathering knowledge, constructivism emphasizes experiential, thus looking at the live aspects of a particular construct – that is, how the phenomenon is expected to the time that it occurs, rather than what is thought about this experience or the meaning ascribed to it subsequently (Anderson, 2010). In this regard, the researcher searched how the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities experienced the effects of the UNPKO constraints in Abyei; how they viewed them; what they believed to be the causal and correlation factors and what remedial action they each proposed.

3.3 Research Approach – Qualitative

Research method refers to the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena (Timonen et al., 2018). Tran (2016), identified three main types of research approach namely quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. The researcher selected qualitative method as it goes in line with constructivism philosophical paradigm discussed above and because it involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of data that is not easily reduced to numbers. Qualitative research methodology as opined by Creswell (1999), is centrally concerned with understanding phenomena rather than measuring it, which is in line with the aim of this study which seeks to understand the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei, and not necessarily measuring them.

Qualitative research methodology emphasized on quality and not quantity, thus, observing the world in its natural setting and interpreting situations to understand the meanings that people make from day to day life (Golafshani, 2003). Moreso, as averred by (Marshall & Rossman (2014), qualitative research is a field of inquiry that crosscuts disciplines and subject matters,

which involves an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reason that govern human behavior. In this regard, the aim of the study is not focused on numbers but words; and seeks to explain the constraints of UNPKO as they were observed and interpreted by the UN peacekeepers, the two governments and the two local communities in Abyei. The researcher took advantage of the strength of qualitative research methods that includes; its ability to examine the phenomenon in detail and in depth; its flexibility to change direction as information emerges; its capacity to discover complexities about the research that might be missed by quantitative research method and its reliability to extract powerful and compelling data based on human experiences (Anderson, 2010).

The researcher was aware of limitations of qualitative research method that are not limited to criticism for being biased, small scale, anecdotal, lacking rigor, missing scientific strictness with a poor explanation of the techniques adopted, lack of transparency in the investigative procedures and the findings being simply a collection of personal opinions subject to scholar's biasness; huge volume of data that makes analysis and interpretation time consuming (Sarma, 2015). However, as suggested by Anderson (2010), that when it is carried out properly it is unbiased, in-depth, valid, reliable, credible and rigorous. In this respect, deliberate effort was exhibited by the researcher in order to maintain the standardized characteristics of scientific methods that includes replicability, precision, parsimony and falsifiability as alluded to by Golafshani (2003).

3.4 Research Design – Case Study

Research design is the specific procedure involved in the research process, involving data collection, data analysis, and report writing (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Among a list of different types of qualitative research designs, that includes narrative biography and ethnography, the researcher settled for a case study due to its relevance to studies that seek to understand complex processes including the ‘why and how’ questions as alluded to by Bhattacharjee (2012). Thus this research sought not only to identify and describe the UNPKO constraints in Abyei, but strived to find answers as to the causal factors of such constraints to proffer sound remedies. Bhattacharjee (2012), warned that seeking explanations for observed events requires strong theoretical and interpretation skills, along with intuition, insights and personal experience. As such, the researcher read deep and wide to polish his interpretive skills and had a better insight and intuition of the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei.

Silverman & Marvasti (2008) added that since qualitative researchers are primarily interested in the meaning subjects give to their life experiences, they have to use some form of a case study to immerse themselves in the activities of a group of people in order to obtain an intimate familiarity with their social worlds and to look for patterns in the research participants lives, words and actions in the context of the case as a whole. According to Creswell (2017), a case study involves an exploration of a bounded system – bound by time, context, place or a single or multiple case, over a period of time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. The study employed a case study design to identify and assess the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei for period extending from June 2011 up to February 2022. As

suggested by Creswell (2017), the researcher used casual discussions, key informant interviews and document analysis to understand the determinants of such constraints.

Also, researcher took advantage of case study's strengths that allows the study of a case within real life situation; in-depth understanding of a phenomenon; collection of information in one period of time from multiple sources; choice of purposive sampling and variety of data collection instruments (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). These strengths allowed the researcher to explain why the constraints were present in the UNPKO in Abyei and how they came into being as well as how they can be solved. With the same strengths, the researcher sourced for information from UN peacekeepers, national and local actors in the Abyei conflict within a limited time and to present credible findings. Since case studies allows for the testing of theories, drawing of pictures, experiments and interpretation of the phenomena as opined by Maxwell (2008), researcher tested the neo-liberalism theory and drew a picture of UNPKO constraints in Abyei.

3.5 Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

3.5.1 Population

A population refers to all people or items (unit of analysis) with the characteristics that one wishes to study (Smith, 2000). Whereas, the unit of analysis may be a person, group, organisation, country, object, or any other entity that one wishes to draw scientific inferences about. The population of this study was composed of the current and former UNISFA peacekeepers drawn from the military, police and civilian personnel, as well as the conflict parties at national and local levels namely, Sudan and South Sudan officials, as well as the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, respectively. This population was selected because

their behaviors contributed to the existence of UNPKO constraints in Abyei and they had primary data which was key to the authenticity of the study.

3.5.2 Sample

According to Saunders et al. (2005), a sample is a group of participants selected from a large population which is then put under study. The sample for this study was 35 participants derived as follows; former and current UN peacekeepers (Soldiers 10, Police 11, Civilians 8), Government of Sudan (2), Government of South Sudan (1), Misseriya community members (1), Ngok Dinka community members (2). In determining the size, the researcher was guided by Anderson (2010) who stated that a sample must be large enough to allow for an accurate and in-depth studying of participants.

The researcher faced challenges in creating and building trust as many participants were not comfortable in sharing information online and to a stranger. Language barrier with the Misseriya community who speak Arabic and the Ethiopian peacekeepers who speak Amharic was another limitation. Nevertheless, the researcher gained the trust by some professionals by emphasizing confidentiality and secrecy aspects as well as snowball technique. The researcher searched for key informants who were conversant with the English language from the Misseriya and Ethiopian communities, to counter the language barrier.

3.5.3 Sampling Techniques

Social science research is generally about inferring patterns of behaviors within specific populations because a researcher cannot study entire populations because of feasibility and cost

constraints (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Hence, the need for sampling, which Creswell (2017) defined as a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about the target population. However, Bhattacharjee (2012) emphasized the extreme importance to choose a sample that is truly representative of the population so that the inferences derived from the sample can be generalized back to the population of interest. In this regard, the researcher selected a sample that was truly representative of the population.

The following are the sampling tools used in this study: -

a) Purposive, Non-probability Sampling Technique

The study employed a purposive, non-probability sampling technique, which entails that a researcher chooses a case according to pre-determined reasons. Saunders et al. (2005) further clarified that the non-probability sampling method is a purposive sampling that is applied to specifically pick information-rich cases based on their matched criteria to the one's prerequisite to answering the study questions being asked. However, the researcher did not only use purposive sampling technique due to its limitation that the researcher cannot easily identify such key informants owing to distance constraints between the researcher and the study field. And, to supplement that limitation, the researcher also used snowball sampling technique.

b) Snowball Technique

Snowball sampling is a referral system in which the researcher starts by identifying a few respondents that match the criteria for inclusion in the study, and then ask them to recommend others they know who also meet the selection criteria (Bhattacharjee, 2012). For instance, the researcher purposively selected key informant participants in Zimbabwe who have been to Abye on peacekeeping operations, be they military, police or civilians, and then requested them to

recommend others from other nations and currently engaged in peacekeeping duties in Abyei. Although this method hardly leads to representative samples, it was the only way the researcher could trust to reach hard-to reach populations.

3.5.4 Sampling Frame

Meanwhile, using both purposive and snowball sampling techniques, the researcher completed a sampling frame, which is a list of contact information of an accessible section of the target population from where a sample was drawn (Saunders et al., 2005).

3.6 Data Collection Tools

Data collection refers to the process by which the researcher collect the information needed to answer the research problem and the researcher has to decide; which data to collect; how to collect the data; who will collect the data and when to collect that data (Johnson & Turner, 2003).

3.6.1 Primary Sources

Primary sources are original sources from which the researcher can directly collect data that have not been previously collected (Saunders et al., 2005). In this study, the researcher used key informant interviews and unstructured questionnaires to collect primary data from the UN peacekeepers and the conflict parties, both at national and local levels.

a) Unstructured Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a set of questions either unstructured or structured, intended to capture responses from participants in a standardized manner (Johnson &

Turner, 2003). Unstructured questions ask participants to provide a response in their own words, while structured questions ask participants to select an answer from a given set of choices. The researcher therefore favoured unstructured questionnaires which asked questions in line with the thematic areas, and allowing participants to respond in their own words.

As an advantage, questionnaires removed anxiety from participants in that the participants were given time to fill in the questionnaires anonymously and independently hence this helped to prevent submission of false data (Rowley, 2012). Since, questions should be designed such that participants are able to read, understand, and respond to them in a meaningful way, questionnaires were not appropriate or practical for certain demographic groups such as the illiterate, especially from the local Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities; and the Ethiopian Peacekeepers. Other notable disadvantages of questionnaire include low response rate, high refusal rate, time consuming for participants, costly and more labour intensive than other methods (Rowley, 2012).

According to Tran (2016), questionnaire offers no room for probing and clarifying ambiguous questions. However, to counter this, the researcher drafted questionnaires that were specific, short, clear, in simple language; and avoided irritating words, ambiguity and monotonous statements. The researcher distributed 35 questionnaires through WhatsApp and Email to 35 participants comprising current and former UN peacekeepers around the globe, and the local Abyei communities, the Misseriya and the Ngok Dinka. The participants were given at most two weeks to complete and return the completed questionnaires. Some responded positively and

some did not, however, those who responded made a sizeable number to authenticate the research results.

b) Key informant Interviews

An interview refers to a process where a researcher will be asking the interviewee a series of questions (Tran, 2016). However, unlike a questionnaire, the interview script may contain special instructions for the interviewer that are not seen by participants, and may include space for the interviewer to record personal observations and comments (Rowley, 2012). Of the different types of interviews as stated by Smith (2000), the researcher used face to face with participants domiciled in Zimbabwe and online audio interviews, with participants outside Zimbabwe. Whilst, King et al., (2018) categorized interviews as structured, semi-structured and key informant interviews. The researcher classified the interviews conducted as key informant, since all of the participants were experts in their own rights with knowledge in the area of study.

The researcher took advantage of the strength of interviews to clarify on issues raised by the participant by asking probing and follow-up questions (Smith, 2000). However, interviews are time consuming, resource intensive, prone to artificial biases on the responses of the participants and some may feel uncomfortable in allowing a stranger in their homes. The researcher guarded against such weaknesses and biases to come up with research results that are reliable and valid.

The researcher kept the online interviews short, an average of 30 minutes. The researcher called during the convenient time for the participant; for example, either early in the morning or after

working hours, in ensuring flexibility. Meanwhile, all the online interviews did not consent to recording of the conversation due to issues of security and protocol.

c) Interview Guide

An interview guide was utilized as a tool and instrument to acquire quality information from key informants and to ensure that questions are clear and not long winded, making the interview session shorter. According to Morris (2015), an interview guide is fundamental to the conducting of a semi-structured interview as it assists researchers to remain focused on the important themes in the course of deciding questions to ask and not to ask.

3.6.2 Secondary Sources

Secondary data is the data that has already been collected and is readily available from other sources (Saunders et al., 2009). The researcher used previous research studies, news media, and publications by government and international bodies, especially UN reports to gather secondary data. Though secondary data sources can be easily accessible using the internet, however, there is no guarantee of quality data as some documents are just thrown on the internet without going through the necessary quality checks. Thus the researcher relied much on published reports from reputable organisations such as OCHA and the UN to ensure credibility of the study.

3.7 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research refers to the systematic searching and arranging of the interview transcripts, observation notes, or other non-textual materials to increase the understanding of the phenomena (Johnson & Turner, 2003). The process of analysing qualitative

data predominantly involves coding of data, thereby making sense of huge amounts of data by reducing the volume of raw information, identifying significant patterns, drawing meanings and building a logical chain of evidence. As suggested by Neuman (1997), the researcher utilized the research objectives to guide the data analysis process with the aim to present results that are accurate, well clarified and comprehensive.

This study interpreted meanings from the text data using content analysis which focuses on revealing facts through descriptions from textual data (Silverman, 2011). Raw data from interviews, questionnaires and secondary data on the constraints of UNPKO in Abyei was coded and analysed using content analysis in extracting themes within texts.

Whereas, Johnson & Turner (2003) stated that data can be presented through charts, diagrams, tables and verbatim quotes, the researcher used the latter to present data in this study. The rationale for selecting the verbatim quotations was that they represented the emerging themes of the study, they are used as evidence; as explanation; as illustration; and to deepen understanding; give participants a voice, and enhance readability.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Examining the data for reliability and validity assess both the objectivity and credibility of the research, hence being crucial apparatus for quality measurement. Validity relates to honesty and genuineness of the research data, while reliability relates to the reproducibility and stability of the data (Anderson, 2010). The challenge with qualitative study from the school of thought of Golafshani (2003), is that it seeks to understand a phenomenon by interpreting data implanted in

emotion and non-numeric. So, the concepts of reliability and validity are viewed differently by qualitative scholars who strongly deliberate these conceptions defined in quantitative terms as inadequate. In other words, validity and reliability cannot be well-suited to measure the quality of qualitative research as in quantitative research. Therefore, the question of replicability in the results and findings does not worry qualitative research, but precision, credibility and transferability offer the lenses of evaluating the findings of qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003).

3.8.1 Validity

The validity of research findings refers to the extent to which the findings are an accurate representation of the phenomena they are intended to represent (Anderson, 2010). Cooper & Schindler (2003) stipulated that what is measured should be the same as what is purported to be measured. Data collection instruments are said to be valid if they give a true picture of what is being measured and whether it is the same phenomena that intended to measure. The researcher ensured the validity of questionnaires by asking questions that addressed the research objectives. The researcher substantiated validity of research findings using triangulation, use of contradictory evidence, and constant comparison.

Patton (2002) views triangulation as the process of using two or more methods to study the same phenomenon or as a method of gathering data from multiple sources. Triangulation helped the researcher not only to collect more inclusive relevant evidence but also to cross-check their consistency and to augment the robustness of the findings. The researcher gathered data from participants from different nationals, such as former peacekeepers from Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Brazil and Ghana as well as from nationals from Sudan and South Sudan.

As suggested by Anderson (2010), contradictory evidence, often known as deviant cases, was sought out, examined and accounted for in the analysis to ensure that the bias of the researcher does not interfere with or alter his perception of the data and any insights offered. Lastly, to substantiate validation, the researcher used constant comparison, thus comparing collected data with previous data. Anderson (2010) further opined that constant comparison will enable the researcher to treat the data as a whole rather than fragmenting it and to identify emerging or unanticipated themes within the research project.

Meanwhile, the risk of validity in qualitative research is biasness expressed through participant biasness and researcher's biasness which are the prior assumptions of the researcher and physical presence of the researcher on the field of the study (Johnson & Turner, 2003). The researcher adopted the concept of honesty and consistency through the triangulation of data to control biasness (Golafshani, 2003).

3.8.2 Reliability

The reliability of a study refers to the reproducibility of the findings or whether the result is replicable (Golafshani, 2003). As Anderson (2010) writes, reliability implies that repeated observations of the same phenomena should yield similar results, and different observers following the same research methodology should arrive at the same conclusions. In other terms, reliability is a function of consistency, accuracy and precision. The researcher ensured reliability by making detailed field notes.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethics, relates to questions about how we formulate and clarify our research topics, design our research questions and gain access, collect, process, store and analyse data, as well as write research findings in a moral and responsible way in terms of being methodologically sound and morally defensible to all those who are involved (Saunders et al., 2005). Whereas, according to Israel & Hay (2006), there are three objectives in research ethics namely; to protect human participants, to ensure that research is conducted in a way that serves interests of men and to examine specific research activities for their ethical soundness. Research ethical guidelines as asserted by King et al. (2018), demands that research participants must voluntarily consent to research participation; research aims should contribute to the good of society; research must avoid unnecessary physical and mental suffering; and human subjects must be allowed to discontinue their participation at any time.

This research was guided by the key principles of research ethics namely; the do-no harm principle; the confidentiality principle; and the consent principle (Smith, 2000). Observing these principles were vital in protecting the researcher from any liability that would otherwise at any level of the study, and ensured sincere participation of the participants in the study.

3.9.1 The do-no harm principle

The researcher ensured that the research prevented exposure of the participants from being harmed or further victimization by ensuring that the participants were fully aware of what they were expected to do. The participants were advised not to give self-incriminating information and were treated with dignity and respect as suggested by Smith (2000).

3.9.2 The Confidentiality Principle

The researcher strived to maintain anonymity and confidentiality of participants, by not disclosing their names and identities in data collection, analysis and reporting of research findings as advised by Arifin (2018). The researcher kept all questionnaires and interview notes locked in a safe place with limited access to obtained data. The participants were advised not to identify themselves on the questionnaires.

3.9.3 The Consent Principle

The researcher made sure that permission was granted freely and voluntarily, participants understood what was being asked of them and the people involved were able to consent. The participants were comfortable in giving verbal consent to participate in the study as well as to the use of the data gathered. And though the researcher informed the participants that they may withdraw from the study at any point of data collection, as advised by Arifin, (2018), there was no participant who took that route.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter described the constructivism philosophical paradigm, the qualitative methodology and the case study design, used in this research. Primary data collection tools such as key informant interviews and semi structured questionnaires; and documents were also discussion subjects in this chapter. The researcher described the population and sample size, and explained purposive and snowball sampling techniques used in the study. Reliability and validity in qualitative research were deliberated on, with ethics to be considered in the study being highlighted as the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the data obtained from the research through interviews, questionnaires and documents. The researcher commenced this chapter with demographic profile of participants and moved on to data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. The findings were drawn based on the research questions. Coding of data, content analysis, evaluated literature and theoretical framework guiding this study, were used for the analysis and discussion of the findings.

4.2 Demographic profile of respondents.

4.2.1 Gender distribution

The gender distribution of participants that were involved in the research was 77% men and 23% females, reflecting that male participants responded positively as compared to female participants. However, this does not mean that women were non-active in the peace and security issues but were generally reluctant to participate in this particular study. Furthermore, snowballing technique used to gather informants seemed to favour connecting the next informant of the same gender, thus gender selection was not deliberate rather it was a result of the networking tool of research used in this study.

4.2.2 Interview and Questionnaire Responses

| | INTERVIEWS | | | QUESTIONNAIRE | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| | Target Responses | Actual Responses | Response % | Questionnaire Distributed | Questionnaire Returned | Response % |
| Military | 10 | 6 | 60% | 5 | 4 | 80% |
| UNPOL | 10 | 7 | 70% | 5 | 4 | 80% |
| Civilian | 10 | 6 | 60% | 5 | 2 | 40% |
| Sudanese | 2 | 1 | 50% | 5 | 1 | 20% |
| South Sudanese | 2 | 1 | 50% | 5 | - | - |
| Misseriya | 2 | 1 | 50% | 5 | - | - |
| Ngok Dinka | 2 | 1 | 50% | 5 | 1 | 20% |
| Total | 38 | 23 | 61% | 35 | 12 | 34% |

The researcher requested for interviews or completion of questionnaires from former and current UN peacekeepers drawn from the military, police and civilian personnel inclusive of civilians working with UN Agencies and Contractors. The table above shows that the researcher got data mostly from the UNPOL, followed by the Military; and lastly the civilians, who were hesitant to participate in the research. The researcher also requested for interviews and completion of questioners from a group composed of participants from Sudan and South Sudanese at national level; and Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, at local level. The above chart reflects that the researcher got data mostly from similar number of participants when putting the Sudanese and the Misseriya on one side and the South Sudanese and the Ngok Dinka on another side. Quite a number of participants were reluctant to participate in the study due to protocol and security issues. Again the sensitivity to the scope of the study warrant much boldness on the side

of the participant to share information some of it very sensitive, this could explain why the response rate of the key informants was 80%.

4.3 The constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (TCC) in peacekeeping operations.

Divergent views were raised by participants regarding the constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one TCC (Ethiopia) in Abyei, where some believed that it was effective and some did not. In support of its efficacy, an Ethiopian former peacekeeper, claimed that, “*Ethiopian peacekeepers did a splendid job to secure peace and security though their efforts were not really appreciated by the local communities.*” Added as examples by supporting participants, was that UNISFA facilitated the co-existence and co-trading of the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka at the Amiet Market, something that was unheard of in the past, and provided an environment for population increase, a proof that local communities had trust in the protection offered by the Ethiopian - UN peacekeepers. Such co-existence dovetails with the neo-liberalism emphasis on the role which international institutions play in facilitating cooperation among nation states.

However, the majority of participants substantiated the assumption made by the researcher, that it was not effective as it was hindered by a barrage of constraints, citing the absence of peace and security as evidenced by intra and inter conflicts and internal displacement of the local people, on the backdrop of a prolonged deployment of UNISFA. One civilian participant who has been with UNISFA for more than six years stated that “*the arrangement of having troops only from Ethiopia has not been working in Abyei and it failed to deliver the expected results.*” Though there were divergent views on the efficacy of Ethiopian troops in Abyei, however, the evidence

on the ground suggested that the UNPKO in Abyei was effective in bringing stability after the war but not in the full attainment of peace and security as evidence by continued conflict.

Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) averred that military personnel and their conduct in peacekeeping operations, influenced the destiny of the operations. Whereas, Kjeksrud (2019) added that military tasks include patrols, demilitarization, protecting the buffer zone and protecting civilians among other tasks. This was in agreement with UNISFA's mandated tasks to the Ethiopian troops which included the demilitarization of Abyei, PoC and ensuring security of Abyei (UNSCR 1990, 2011). Using the mandated tasks as a yard stick for the efficacy of a mission, evidence collected proved that Abyei has not been fully demilitarized as indicated by the continued armed attacks; hence peace and security remained alien to the local communities, leaving civilians vulnerable.

Measuring the results of mandate implementation in Abyei with the prediction of neo-liberalism theory, one would question the neo-liberalism assumption that through institutions, peace can be realized. As such, the kind of peace attained in Abyei was 'negative peace', enforced by outsiders and not as a result of harmony between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities.

It is prudent to note that participants who argued for and against the efficacy of UNISFA in Abyei, both agreed that there were constraints that either challenged or limited the effectiveness of UNPKO in Abyei. In this regard, this study discovered some notable constraints presented, analysed and discussed hereunder.

4.3.1 Poor leadership

Poor leadership resulting in lack of morale of the troops was identified as a constraint affecting the efficacy of Ethiopian troops in Abyei. Late payment of troop allowance by the TCC, poor management of troop welfare concerns and poor decision making were highlighted as evidence of poor leadership by the participants.

A military participant highlighted that, *“the troops would at times go for 2 months without receiving their allowances from their own government. Troops were not allowed to take leave to visit their home country except on serious emergencies, resulting in some going for 24 months without seeing their families.”* Whereas, a Ngok Dinka participant, believed that the failure to patrol and establish new team sites in well-known hotspot areas was a reflection of poor decision making by the leadership. The frequent attacks on the Ngok Dinka villages as viewed by another Ngok Dinka participant, was a sign of, *“improper deployment plan by the mission commanders from the general headquarters.”*

When troops lack morale, they underperform or misperform, hence the critics claimed that having troops only from Ethiopia was detrimental to the overall quest for peace in Abyei. These findings agreed with the assertion of Akpan & Olisah (2019) and Sarwar (2007) in chapter 2, who identified the misappropriation of the allowances of troops serving under the UN mandate by their commanding officers, as a constraint that affected the morale of troops. Akwara et al. (2021), cited as an example, the misappropriation of the allowances of Nigerian soldiers that served in Liberia and Senegal under the UN by their commanding officers, which killed their morale. Such behaviour of leaders substantiated contradicted neo-liberalism belief that human beings were essentially good and not evil as portrayed by realists.

In proffering a solution, a military participant recommended constant and consistent effective training programs for such leaders. A remedy that could add to Akwara et al., (2021), who recommended that the UN should pay the allowances direct into the bank accounts of the troops in the mission as they do with Milobs and SOs. A police participant added that top military positions of the mission such as of FC, DFC and heads of various sections, should be rotated among different countries.

4.3.2 Complex mandates and complex conflicts

The complexity of the conflict resulted in the complexity of the mandate for the UNPKO in Abyei hence it was hard to achieve it for the past 10 years with the usage of troops from only one TCC. Factors highlighted by participants as making the conflict complex include, lack of political solutions and the three tier level conflict at local, national and international levels. The clash of ethnicity, the Misseriya and the Ngok Danka's at local level for pastures and water sources; the clash of political and economic interests between Sudan and South Sudan at national level and the clash of religious supremacy between Islam of the Misseriya and Christianity of the Ngok Dinka at international level, which also includes the social clash of the Arabs and the Africans (Sudanese Participant). Conflict at every level challenged Kantian's assertion of perpetual peace and substantiated realism assumption that conflict is endemic.

As detected in the data collected, further complicating the conflict were issues of the culture of revenge attacks; the celebration of cattle rustlers; high illiteracy rate caused by prolonged period of conflict; lack of employment opportunities; misconception of the mandate by local communities; failure to agree on minor issues by local and national negotiators; lack of an agreed

administration; and threats posed by other minor communities in Abyei, namely the Nuer and the Twic Dinka communities. Supporting this notion, one military participant stated that, “*The conflict in Abyei was so complex to the extent that some of the UN troops did not even know their purpose in the region.*”

The existence of oil in Abyei caused the national actors to remain adamant as they hold tightly on their national interests. Whereas, neo-liberalism, believes that where there is interdependency between two states, peace will be achieved. In this case, whilst there was interdependency between Sudan and South Sudan in the processing of oil in Abyei in which net-oil revenues were to be divided as follows, “*Sudan receives 50%, South Sudan 42%, Bahr el Ghazal Region 2%, Western Kordofan 2%, Misseriya 1% and Ngok Dinka 1%,*” (Comprehensive Peace Agreement, 2005:65). However, the ordinary local people remained poor and thirsty for peace and security.

Williams (2015), cited as an example the complexity of the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), which was expected to implement twenty-seven priority tasks. In this regard, some may say UNISFA has failed to achieve its mandate, yet on the other hand it was the mandate itself which was unachievable.

Solutions proffered by participants include constant review of mandate; incorporating the local people in mandate review; educating the locals of the mandate in their own language; improving the quality of induction to the peacekeepers, deploying a multinational peacekeeping, facilitating the realization of final political status of Abyei through negotiations of the African Union and IGAD and prolonging the mandate life time from six months to three years to allow smooth flow of the mission operations. In addition, a police participant suggested that, “*national and local*

actors should value life, stop supporting armed elements and allow companies to do business in Abyei.”

4.3.3 Communication Barrier

Communication barrier was another constraint noted by participants and exacerbated by using UN peacekeepers from only one TCC. Amharic speaking Ethiopian troops struggled to communicate with the Arabic and Dinka speaking locals as well as with the English speaking Milobs and SOs deployed for observation and administrative duties, respectively. As opined by a former military peacekeeper, *“Ethiopians had their own closed culture as they were never colonised like any other African country. Hence, Ethiopians knew no other language except their native Amharic.”* In this regard, those deployed in Abyei, according to one Ethiopian military participant, *“would be taken on a crash program to learn English language just before deployment,”* and the results were not so pleasing.

Communication challenges were worsened by lack of translators among the Ethiopian contingent and the nature of duties done by armed troops which were not accommodative to non-military translators. Moreso, in the event that a local translator was engaged in non-combat circumstances between the troops and the locals, their services were not so polished due to the low standard of education in the conflict torn Abyei. The communication barrier was so huge that it also affected the Ethiopian top brass entrusted to make informed decisions based on sound communication. The utterances by a long serving civilian expert sums it all when he said that, *“Language barrier was at the highest level, wherein, some Ethiopian Force Commanders could not speak sound English and yet they were in positions to make strategic decisions for the whole mission.”* These

findings dovetailed with the findings by Akpan & Olisah (2019), who averred that language differences were an obstruction to UNPKO in other missions. In this regard, the neo-liberalism quest to encourage communication within institutions was hampered. As a remedy, a Ngok Dinka participant proffered that it has to be a specification for all troops to be deployed in mission areas to have they own translators, well trained and conversant with the local languages in the mission area.

4.3.4 Poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment.

From the data presented by the participants, the researcher deduced that due to poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment in Abyei on a backdrop of an Ethiopian contingent which was no so well equipped, such environment became a constraint for using troops from only one TCC. A former Milob highlighted that, *“key and basic infrastructures were missing in Abyei, namely electricity, water, roads, telecommunications, fuel, educational and medical facilities and Ethiopians found it very difficult to operate in such conditions.”*

As cited by most participants, the incessant rains resulted in frequent flooding on the backdrop of poor roads and poor drainage system, making mobility of the troops in the rain season almost impossible. A former SO stated that, *“Limited mobility of troops would affect routine patrols necessary for conflict prevention and mitigation, access to team sites for resupply and logistical issues, and access to conflict and crime scenes.”* The situation was worsened by poverty and famine contributed by lack of governance that was supposed to facilitate development. Whereas, in the dry season, the nomadic Misseriya herders are forced to move southwards into Ngok Dinka domiciled areas, in search for pastures and water bodies, resulting in conflict, armed attacks, kidnapping and cattle rustling.

These findings agreed with Akpan & Olisah (2019), who averred that African countries were identified as the platform of poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment due to limited development. African countries have remained underdeveloped yet being part of the UN, a neo-liberalism institution established to maintain peace and security and to facilitate economic cooperation and development among member states. However, lack of development in Africa puts a dent on this neo-liberalism assumption. In fact, the research results by Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) which identified DRC, Liberia, Sudan, Darfur, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, Chad and Central African Republic (CAR), all on African soil, as examples of difficulty mission areas, can without harm add Abyei to the list.

As a remedy, one civilian participant categorically stated that, “*Abyei just needs tarred roads, anything less, is not feasible in the terrain.*” Another civilian expert participant added that the tarring of the roads needs engagement of the private sector that can do the work and recover their dues through the installation of toll gates, since Abyei has seen an increase of traffic flows across its major highway. However, since some participants view Sudan as hostile to any development in Abyei, it therefore follows that a final political status should be achieved first for Abyei to experience meaningful development. A multinational peacekeeping force was another option noted, especially the deployment of troops from developed countries with better equipment. Lastly, peace conferences should be sustained for migrations routes agreements, to prevent conflicts for pastures and water in dry season.

4.3.5 Internal politics

Police participants believed that internal politics, mostly between the military and police were detrimental to the efficacy of UNPKO in Abyei. Police participants stated that mission dynamics shifted from purely combat conflict to law and order issues where criminals used arms to commit violent crimes. In this regard, UNSCR 2469 (2019:3), reduced the military establishment by 385 to 3,550; whereas the police establishment was increased from 345 to 640. However, this was not fully implemented, due to the military/police politics, as opined by a civilian participant who stated that, *“the mission operating with less than 50 Individual Police Officers (IPOs) at any given time since the increase.”* The politics were intensified by having troops from only one TCC who were motivated to remain in the mission, not only for the sake of peace and security, but for the sake of incentives they received from the UN.

As opined by a police participant, that, *“If there were more than one TCC, there could have been positive competition for peace and security. Abyei internal politics were a constraint to peace and security since the Ethiopians monopolized the mission, and believed that they owned the mission and believed that their troops should not be reduced.”*

Internal politics raised the debate between neo-liberalism and neo-realism, in which neo-liberalism argues that actors were concerned with absolute gains and neo-realism argument of relative gains. Actors in this regard, the military and the police, were moved more by relative gains to the detriment of peace and security for the local people.

According to a former police peacekeeper in charge of administration, the identified Formed Police Units (FPU) from Rwanda, China and Tanzania, were not granted entry Visa's by Sudan since 2020. Police participants believed that this was due to the internal politics, yet the military

participants argued that Ethiopians had no influence to the decisions by Sudan to deny the police the entry VISAs. In fact, the mission leadership headed by the Acting head of Mission and Force Commander (AHoM/FC) had at numerous times engaged Khartoum for the issuance of Visa's but to no avail. Police participants questioned the sincerity of a military boss to facilitate the reduction of the military from his own country and an increase of the police.

Issues of politics between the military and the police within missions are not new, as pointed by Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019), that most TCCs have been slow to accept and implement the practical measures required to match the political and rhetorical favour with which they endorse the development of a large number of civilian police to conflict area. To manage the internal politics in Abyei, a police participant suggested for the appointment of a Civilian Head on Mission (CHoM), to bring neutrality in the leadership, and do away with the system whereby the FC of the Military acted as the Head of Mission.

4.3.6 Misconduct, human rights violation and abuse of military forces

Whereas, some of the participants described the Ethiopian troops as highly disciplined compared to other troops in different missions, with a few cases of misconduct reported. However, a military participant argued that, "*one case of abuse is one too many,*" citing a case in which an Ethiopian soldier was fined \$4,000.00 for sexually exploiting a female and married local Ngok Dinka person. Due to the fact that Ethiopia was the only TCC in Abyei, the military participant stated that lots of sexual exploitation and abuse cases were swept under the carpet, hence being a huge constraint for the peace and security of the local populace.

Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) and Sarwar (2007), reported similar cases in Cambodia and Liberia respectively. Whereas, the UN has come up with some control and management measures

against possible violations of the troops in addressing the scourge; inclusive of internal investigations (Lowe, et. al., 2010). However, these measures could not work in Abyei which operated with troops from only one TCC, for they could not investigate themselves with obvious bias to protect own image and integrity. Hence, a military participant was of the opinion that a multinational peacekeeping force would assist to bring checks and balances. A police participant with experience in gender issues argued that sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers was rampant even in missions with multinational peacekeeping forces, and suggested that Milobs and SOs should be equipped to detect and investigate such cases. Military misconduct is against the dictates of neo-liberalism, which promotes individual rights through a set of rules, expectations and norms that should govern such behaviour.

4.3.7 Deployment of neighbours/Interests of Ethiopia

Besides being the only TCC in Abyei, Ethiopia is also a neighbouring country to both Sudan and South Sudan, and its deployment had its own fair share of challenges, that became constraints to UNISFA. As asserted by a military participant, *“The fact that Ethiopia was a neighbour of the two countries, it had its own biases, own interests to protect and monopolised the mission to the extent that instructions where coming from Addis and not from New York, the UN Headquarters.”* In fact, the deployment of Ethiopia as a neighbour was a chance for neo-liberalism to disprove realism assertion that behaviour of nation states in an anarchy was controlled by their national interests.

However, according to a former SO, as substantiated by OCHA (2020:1) report, the Ngok Dinka tribe demonstrated against the Ethiopian troops of bias towards the Misseriya. The same former

SO explained that the Ngok Dinka accused the Ethiopian troops of confiscating their weapons more than they were doing with the Misseriya and thereafter not doing enough to protect them. The accusation was validated by the Kolom attack in which Misseriya armed men killed 33 Ngok Dinka people, wounded 18, with 15 children missing and 19 houses burnt down (OCHA, 2020:1). These accusations were supported by an international participant who averred that, *“South Sudan troops were secretly deployed in Abyei to protect their own people from attacks by the Misseriya armed men, as they lacked trust in UNISFA’s sincerity to protect them.”* Another former military participant added that the Ethiopians were not sincere in seeing the end of conflict in Abyei as there were receiving incentives in form of allowances for both human and material resources such as vehicular and air assets, suggesting that their behaviour was influenced by their national interests. However, an Ethiopian former peacekeeper argued that the merits of deploying Ethiopia in Abyei outweighed the demerits. Arguing that the deployment of Ethiopia was sanctioned by the conflicting parties after recognising its mediation role and an in-depth understanding of the conflict.

The data acquired by this study was in sync with Wondemagegnehu (2018) who discovered the two sides of deploying a neighbouring country for peacekeeping duties. One side supported the deployment of neighbours, because troops from the neighbouring countries would operate in familiar terrains with high commitment to prevent the spillover effects to their home country. Whereas, on the other side, results showed inherent biases, failure to be impartial and actions driven to protect own national interests, not necessarily for the achievement of peace and security.

Remedial recommendation by the participants were also in sync with that of Wondemagegnehu (2018), who highlighted the unwritten principle that UN peacekeeping missions should seek to avoid deployment of troops from ‘neighbouring countries’ in order to mitigate the risks associated with these countries’ national interests in the host countries. However, a military participant emphasized the need to deploy troops from countries within the region that identified with the culture and norms of both the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, who view them as fellow brothers and sisters.

4.3.8 Inherent weaknesses of a deployed TCC

Participants noted some inherent weaknesses of Ethiopian troops that included lack of expertise, weak experience, feeble professionalism, aged air assets and a closed operating system that made it hard for them to accept outside military advice. One participant from the medical department exposed cases where Ethiopian troops would fall from their moving pick-up trucks during patrols, and suffered serious injuries, evidence constituting lack of expertise among the troops. To prove their lack of professionalism, a former military participant opined that, “*Ethiopian troops modus operandi were heavily affected by over familiarisation in their rank and file which was caused by knowledge on certain individual social and rank status back at home by fellow troops.*”

A police participant averred that Ethiopian contingent had ‘*quantity but not quality in terms of resources*’ such as vehicular and air assets, which suffered constant breakdowns with notable helicopter accident on 9 February 2019 in which three crew members were killed when the helicopter crashed on landing at UNISFA HQ, in Abyei (Dabanga, 2019:1). This was in sync with Sarwar (2007) who averred that peacekeeping has become much more challenging as it

demanded more specialized capacities which underdeveloped but willing TCCs lacked. Whereas, as believed by the neo-liberals, the UN is supposed to fill the anarchy vacuum, and such weaknesses within its system would support the neo-realism assumption that anarchy is an unchanging condition. In this regard, participants agreed that the deployment of multinational peacekeeping force would bring the balance needed to cover the inherent weaknesses of Ethiopian troops.

4.4 Constraints affecting the impact of UN Partnership with Local Actors in Peacebuilding

Conflict prevention and mitigation; and the establishment of the rule of law are the two major goals of peacebuilding processes as the UN partners with local actors (UNSCR, 2069). The impact is measured by checking the extent to which such partnerships would have gone in achieving these two key peacebuilding goals. UNISFA partnered with Joint Community Peace Committee (JCPC) a political entity comprised of 10 Ngok Dinka and 10 Misseriya leaders; the Community Protection Committees/Joint Protection Committees (CPC/JPCs) composed of local civilian volunteers entrusted with the maintenance of law and order; and with other Civic organisations. Since neo-liberalism believes that anarchy can be mitigated and peace achieved through institutional cooperation, UNISFA saw it befitting to facilitate cooperation between Sudan and South Sudan in Abyei as represented by the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, respectively.

However, few participants described the partnership as effective but with constraints as it contributed to conflict prevention and mitigation through the Peace Conferences involving the

UN and the JCPC. Whereas, the majority of the participants claimed that the impact of the partnership was very minimum with constraints as evidenced by continued conflict and the absence of the rule of law in Abyei. According to a civilian expert participant, “*the partnership between UNISFA and the local actors lacked impact because it was simply and merely cosmetic.*” Regardless of all the arguments, the participants did not argue on the point that there were notable constraints that affected the impact of UN partnership with local actors to achieve peacebuilding goals. Such constraints are presented, analysed and discussed hereunder.

4.4.1 Budgetary Constraints

Where there is limited funding, there is also limited impact. Participants revealed that budgetary constraints, caused by limited member state contributions to the UN budget against a very high UNPKO budget, resulted in UNISFA’s failure to support some partnership programs with the locals such as policing activities of the CPC/JPC. Literature by Forti & Gowan (2020) and Mellon (2021) agreed with the view of the participants, however, added that member states funded programs only where there were connections to their own national interests. The UNPKO worldwide requires a budget of US\$6,38 billion every year, with Abyei requiring a budget of US\$260.4 million per year (Report of the SG, 2022). Budgetary constraints resulted in limitation of material resources such as communication systems and restricted provision of services for the expansion of more team sites to have a wider coverage in the mission area. A police participant suggested that, “*UN member states must fulfil their target contributions; train missions to do their best with the available funding; UNDPO to adopt cost effective mandates through research; and market expert posts to attract sponsorship.*”

4.4.2 Lack of expertise, experience and professionalism of UNISFA Staff

UNISFA's partnership with the local actors was done by the military mainly through engagement in joint security meetings with JCPC; the UNPOL oversight of CPC/JPC operations; and the civilian staff such as the Community Liaison Officers who facilitated the Peace Conferences. In this regard, participants pointed to lack of expertise, experience and professionalism among some of the UN military, UNPOL and Civilian Staff members as a constraint that hampered the impact of peacebuilding efforts in Abyei. This being caused by recruitment systems that recruited personnel on the basis of politics and not skills and reluctance by Sudan to issue entry Visas to nominated experts, like the Civilian Head of Mission. Sudan's behaviour is a result of a self-help international system opined by neo-realists, thus, putting a dent to neo-liberalism which believes that the rules, expectations and norms established by the UN can regulate state behavior.

Giving an example, a police participant stated that, "*there were only four occupied professional posts in the UNPOL section in 2020. Other offices supposed to have been occupied by professionals such as Gender Officer, Chief of Administration and Public Information Officer, were either unmanned or manned by Individual Police Officers (IPOs) some of which lacked the necessary skill-sets for such offices.*" These facts dismiss the argument by Forti & Gowan (2020), that there was progress in deployment of expert staff in UNPKO as far as Abyei situation was concerned. Moreso, as added by Kool (2016) that there was lack of a Civil Society Focal Person in the Department of Peace Operations at the UNHQ, this constraint therefore needs attention.

Such constraints were also as a result of lack of sponsorship of specific professional posts. As cited by another police participant, *“If no country offers to pay the allowances of an UNPOL Gender Officer, then such office would be given to an Individual Police Officer who might not have the requisite qualification for the office.”* These participants suggested for marketing of experts posts for funding by member states, engagement of Sudan to issue entry Visa’s to the nominated and sponsored experts for deployment in Abyei and an improvement of the UN recruitment and selection system to favour skills over politics, to address these constraints.

4.4.3 Biasness

Data collected revealed that the Ngok Dinka accused UN peacekeepers of being biased towards the Misseriya as they believed that they were more targeted in the demilitarization efforts of UNISFA. On the other hand, due to the location of the UNISFA HQ in Abyei Town, an area dominated by the Ngok Dinka, the Misseriya accused UNISFA of being biased towards the Ngok Dinka, believing that the Ngok Dinka were benefiting more than them. Such accusations were also raised regarding the UNISFA’s Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), which are small, rapidly implemented projects intended to meet urgent community needs. Due to the nomadic nature of the Misseriya, it was hard to implement QIPs such as sinking of boreholes to them; whereas the same projects were feasible for the Ngok Dinka. This scenario resulted in the Misseriya accusing UNISFA of bias towards the Ngok Dinka, breeding anger and mistrust between the two communities, which would manifest into more armed attacks. Such mistrust within the partnerships was also raised by Kool (2016).

The solution, according to the participants, should therefore be the final status of Abyei to allow the host to deliver service to their citizens, educating the locals about the mandate of the UN and embarking on the QIPs in consultation with the locals in sync with Mellon (2021) remedy that UNPKO should have a deeper understanding of the local context so as to maintain healthy trust levels. Failure to solve this misconception, the local communities would be reluctant to cooperate with UNISFA, thereby impeding the peacebuilding efforts in the area.

4.4.4 Lack of continuity

Lack of continuity and lack of sound institutional memory due to 12-month rotational working structure for the military and police was cited as a constraint in peacebuilding processes by the participants. For example, as alluded to by a police participant, *“Most of the police deployed in Abyei, it will be their first time to work under an international banner. Their first month is spent on induction processes, the second month is spent on finding their own feet into the new system and they only jell with others probably in the third month. They grow in the system from the fourth to the fifth month and take leave in the sixth month. From the seventh to tenth month, they give their best, and in the eleventh month, their output is reduced as they start to prepare for exit in the twelfth month. And the circle goes on”* The rotations themselves were not fluid, because at times, one would leave the mission before the arrival of the reliever and some had less than a week for handover and takeover processes.

These findings agreed with assertion by Kool (2016) that the mismatch between UN peacekeepers short term focus to reduce immediate threats versus the long term focus and relations by the local actors, was detrimental to the attainment of sustaining peace. The mismatch

however caused UNISFA to fail to support community based intervention opined by Mellon (2020). As a solution to this constraint, a civilian participant suggested that deployment period be extended from 12 to 24 months to allow continuity and seamless support to community based interventions. A police participant added that long deployment would give a chance for military/police personnel to attend courses which the UN policy stipulated that one can only be due after serving 6 months and with 6 months remaining in the mission. This situation, means that one can be due for a course only for one day, the median day of his/her 12-month tour of duty. At times, the mission would have no option than to send the available personnel for a course, which the course participant would not use in the mission.

4.4.5 Segregation of small tribes, women and youth civic groups

A civilian participant averred that UNISFA partnerships with local actors was not all accommodative, firstly of all local tribes such as the Nuer and Twic Dinka, as well as civic groups for women and the youths, yet such small tribes were actively engaged in spoiling peace in Abyei, with women and the youths the worst affected. Such a constraint contradicted the promotion of inclusivity and participation of all in peacebuilding (Mellon, 2021).

In a world in which the participation of women is called for, limited participation of women in Abyei's peacebuilding initiatives is a cause of concern. Statistics received from an expert participant, claimed that, *“as at end of 2020, the JCPC had a composition of 20 members, 10 per each community and all 20 were men; the JCP at the Amiet market had 44 members and only 4 were females; and the CPCs had a strength of 593 and only 89 were females.”* Local cultural beliefs that marginalised the girl child caused many not to attend the few substandard schools in

Abyei, and most women remained enclosed in the illiterate bracket, hence lacking a voice when it matters most.

A police participant argued that though still at a small level, but UNISFA had made progress in engaging small tribes, the women and the youth. However, the point was that on serious matters of peace and security, UNISFA does not engage them, as evidenced by Misseriya and Ngok Dinka male dominated peace conferences. The fact that Abyei is a patriarchal society makes it worse, as voices of women and the youth are subdued and suppressed, in contradiction of neo-liberalism precepts which promotes individual rights and civil liberties. Hence, in proposing a solution, participants called for UNISFA to include all in peacebuilding processes. However, Forti & Gowan (2020), pointed that with this remedy, UNPKOs struggled to identify credible and legitimate partners in these segregated groups. On the contrary, Kool (2016) argues that women can add real value to peacebuilding processes as did in Liberia. Participants also suggested to capacitate the Gender offices in Abyei with adequate resources to improve its efforts of lobbying with the patriarchal traditional leaders on the importance of including women and children in decision making processes and peace meetings.

4.4.6 Weak or lack of political will power by local actors (JCPC, Traditional Leaders)

Data obtained from the participants agreed with the assertion by Forti & Gowan (2020) and Mellon (2021) that weak/lack of political will power by local actors was a constraint towards peacebuilding., though with different causal factors. UNISFA facilitated peace conferences and weekly joint security meetings (in the dry season) with the JCPC as peacebuilding initiatives, where agreements were made for migration routes used by the Misseriya nomads for access to pastures and water.

Though some participants agreed with assertion by Lino (2020) that the JCPC contributed to the reduction in number of killings and incidences of violent conflict, some disagreed. These voices of dissent argued that the partnership of UNISFA and the JCPC was a waste of resources as it was hard to reach and implement a resolution, due to weak/lack of political will by the JCPC members. Substantiating this argument, a civilian participant averred that, “*Whenever UNISFA engaged with the local actors in Peace Conferences, it was a well-known norm that one of the parties would refuse to sign the peace agreement, not because they were not in agreement with the resolution, but simply for the sake of contradicting with the other part.*” A Ngok Dinka participant added that, “*Such weak political will, was on the basis of rigidity, the need to protect migration rights by the Misseriya and land rights by the Ngok Dinka, as well as their appetite to protect their culture of revenge killings.*”

Whereas, Forti & Gowan (2020) pointed to illiteracy, and Mellon (2021) pointing to failure by UN to support local peace building mechanisms as causal factors; data collected added agreed with Forti & Gowan (2020) assertion, and added to the list, lack of trust between the two communities and desire to maintain the status core by some leaders benefiting from the conflict. One local Ngok Dinka supported this latter view claiming that, “*all national staff recruited by the UN and its Agencies and Contractors, were recruited in consultation of their traditional leaders and had to pay some form of tax to them when they receive their allowances.*” Hence, police participants questioned the sincerity of such leaders in seeing the end of conflict in these circumstances and labelled the partnership from the lenses of realism as, “*disjointed, divided and distorted.*” Though there was cooperation between the actors within the institution of the UN as predicted by neo-liberalism, however, the quality of such cooperation has been affected by evil

human nature as assumed by realists. Hence, in search for a possible remedy, neo-liberal proposals were made by participants to intensify peace conferences and security meetings, since they believe that repeated interactions can improve the quality of cooperations.

4.4.7 National Actors interferences and limitations

Data collected supported the researcher's assumption and was in agreement with assertion by Lino (2020) that the impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors in Abyei's peacebuilding process is not effective because of the massive interference by the national actors, Sudan and South Sudan. UNISFA/JCPC partnership was affected by interference of national actors who sought to preserve their own national interests in Abyei, just as realism averred that a nation state behaviour is molded by power politics and need to protect national interests. For instance, A Ngok Dinka opined that, "*the political interests of the two nations were driven by their own national interests, especially on the aspect of oil, hence a major decision by the locals had to be blessed at national level, hindering and delaying the peace and reconciliation processes between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities.*" Hence, a Misseriya participant claimed that national actors wanted to maintain the status core in Abyei, and Sudan went to the extent of arresting and detaining their own Misseriya negotiators on their way from a Peace conference. Another Misseriya participant noted with concern that, "*whenever the two governments met, Abyei was not discussed,*" a sign that they wanted to maintain the status core at the expense of innocent civilians killed in conflict.

Whereas, UNISFA has been crucial in providing backing for the JCPC, in agreement with Rolandsen (2019), the political and economic interests of Sudan and South Sudan remained

visible in Abyei making it seemingly impossible for local peace to avoid being entangled with national politics. A permanent remedy, as suggested by local participants is for the AU to take Sudan and South Sudan to task, and assist them to reach final political status for Abyei. However, one would question the authority of the AU to whip the nations into track, pointing to the ineffectiveness of neo-liberal institutions in closing the anarchic gap in international relations.

4.4.8 CPC/JPC constraints

Data collected showed that Misseriya and Ngok Dinka volunteers joined the CPC/JPCs with recommendation of their traditional leaders to maintain law and order, in the absence of the envisaged APS. The CPC is composed of the Ngok Dinka volunteers working in the Ngok Dinka areas, and the JPC is composed of 44 members (22 Misseriya and 22 Ngok Dinka) working at the Amiet Market, a place where the two communities co-exist. In partnering the CPC/JPC, the UNPOL has a function to mentor, monitor and supervise their policing operations for the establishment of the rule of law. A police participant opined that, *“the lack of APS was a constraint on its own. Unisfa was supposed to partner with APS, but now forced to partner with civilians in policing work, resulting in poor performance.”*

A lot of constraints have been noted by police participants, and these include, lack of skilled, motivated and competent human resources; lack of basic policing material resources such as uniforms, handcuffs, vehicles and communication systems; lack of infrastructure such as administration blocks and detention centers; lack of arms to deal with armed criminals and the list is endless. The CPC/JPC lacked proper training as it was very difficult for UNPOL to train the illiterate and yet willing local volunteers to do police work effectively on a backdrop of

limited training aids and strained resources. A police participant opined that, “*We tried to train illiterate people, and at times aged people, who can’t even write their own names to write a standard police report.*” Hence, civilian participants criticised the CPC/JPCs for biasness, corruption, incompetence, lack of professionalism and for disregarding human rights.

Due to lack of host government, it was not clear which law the CPC/JPC were supposed to establish and protect in Abyei, hence resorting to the local customary laws which often times contradicted with the international law tenets. For example, marrying a girl child has been part of the local culture and the arrest of such ‘husbands’ was regarded as infringement of such man’s rights. UNPOLs, coming from different countries, governed by different laws, some Roman Dutch and some English law, lacked a united voice in monitoring the CPC/JPCs. What might be an offence in one PCC, might not be an offence in another PCC. For example, homosexuality is an offense in many African states and a right to be protected in most western countries. This would leave CPC/JPC with a lacuna in terms of implementation and application of laws in Abyei, hence they were criticised for disregarding human rights.

To address these constraints, police participants suggested for the establishment of the APS which will have standards in recruitment, posting, training and performance. However, it will be practically difficult to establish the APS since Sudan and South Sudan are more driven by relative gains of the neo-realists rather than absolute gains of the neo-liberals. Other participants suggested that the UN should have a specific budget for CPC/JPC operations to cater for allowances and resource mobilization as well as to adopt Arabic language as a UN language and deploy Arab speaking UNPOLs for effective communication with the CPC/JPC.

4.4.9 Cultural barrier

UNISFA had a mixture of different cultures due to its multinational nature in its Milobs and Staff Officers of the military, police and civilian components, that hindered it to have a single voice and strategy of engagement with the locals. As alluded to by a civilian participant that, “*there were divergent views, divergent practices and divergent cultures within the UN that limited its efficacy in peacebuilding processes.*” On the other hand, there wasn’t much difference between the cultures of the two communities save to say that the Misseriya were predominantly Islam and the Ngok Dinka predominantly Christian. However, as highlighted by police participants, the shared culture of revenge attacks among the two communities, fueled by impunity prevalent in Abyei as locals took the law into their own hands, resulted in their failure to negotiate in bona fide faith.

To counter cultural constraints, participants recommended adherence to the UN guidelines by peacekeepers to have one voice in UNPKO, to conduct workshops for the locals that denigrate the culture of revenge attacks, and to effectively demilitarize Abyei of all arms and ammunition. Remedy by Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019), of educating UN troops on beliefs and customs of the Muslims, can also be adopted.

4.5 The constraints of the UN Peacekeepers in the Protection of Civilians.

There are three stages in the protection of civilians (PoC), namely supporting host governments to uphold their primary civilian protection responsibilities; mediation role played by political good offices; and the physical PoC by the UNPKO under chapter VII of the UN Charter. The first could not be achieved since Abyei has been a contested land with no agreed host

government. In the second stage, AU mediation role failed to achieve the final political status for Abyei. The focus of this research question fits in the third stage and the researcher explored the constraints of UN peacekeepers in the PoC in Abyei.

Some participants opined that the UN's PoC in Abyei was effective but with constraints, as exemplified by the increase in population and the functionality of Early Warning Systems to prevent and respond to attacks, resulting in a sense of security among the locals. On the contrary, other participants argued that UNISFA was not effective in the PoC in agreement with the researcher's assumption, due to constraints as evidenced by on-going conflict with civilian casualties, increasing numbers of street children in Abyei Town and cases of sexual exploitation of women and children. As recently as May 2022, Ocha (2022:1) reported that, "*intercommunal tensions increased in the Abyei, allegedly driven by longstanding territorial disputes, inter-tribal tensions, and revenge seeking, resulting in 36 civilians being killed and more than 50,000 displaced.*" The civilian casualties recorded in the midst of ongoing UNPKO, are enough proof of constraints in the PoC in Abyei.

Regardless of divergent views, however, there was consensus on the presence of constraints which are herein presented, analysed and discussed.

4.5.1 Inability to cover all areas

Inability to cover all areas through ground and air patrols; due to limited human and material resources, few air assets, high price of flying helicopters, impassable roads owing to incessant rains in wet season were noted as constraints affecting the efficacy of UNPKO in the PoC in Abyei. A civilian participant reported that, "*UNISFA's capacity to protect civilians through*

provision of escort and security to humanitarian workers from IOM and WRF in Abyei, was constrained in the wet season due to impassible roads.” Covid-19 protocols such as prevention measures and containment strategies, also restricted the mobility of the peacekeepers, as some were quarantined after exposure. Those who were due for rotation in January 2020, had to spent 12 more months as travels were restricted. Stringent covid-19 protocols of the receiving states of Sudan and South Sudan, hindered the smooth flow of rotations. Efforts by UNISFA to improve the roads were derailed by lack of resources and lack of cooperation from Sudan, as argued by a civilian participant that Sudan denied several times to assist UNISFA with the murrum, a type of gravel soil used to surface minor roads.

Critics of neo-liberalism would argue that the assertion that nation states can be made to cooperate with each other does not hold water since Sudan has been reluctant to cooperate, as evidenced by its refusal to issue entry Visa to the FPU from Rwanda, Tanzania and China. This is not a new phenomenon, as in Chapter 2, Shankata (2016) opined that the limitation of peacekeepers was at times caused by the refusal of host states to issue travel Visa’s to troops. Sudan should therefore be pressurised by the UN to issue entry Visas to the FPU and other experts so as to improve the efficacy on the PoC in Abyei. However, Fjelde et al., (2019) argues that even with a sizeable peacekeeping force, large areas with grave security concerns often remained outside the reach of international forces. It therefore follows that the increase in human resources should be balanced with sound leadership and well thought strategies necessary to achieve the PoC.

According to a military participant, “*UNISFA conducted air patrols for just one hour per week, every Wednesday morning. A situation that could be predicted by peace spoilers. When Agok was attacked in wet season, UNISFA troops did not even bother to attend the scene.*” Such failure to attend by UNISFA troops was due to impassable roads, limited air assets and the high expenses of flying the existing helicopters. Hence, the proposal by one military participant that it was high time for the UN to acquire its own air assets to cut flying costs.

A Ngok Dinka participant averred that, “*UNISFA engineers should construct water channels and trenches to curb the flood water from affecting the whole environment.*” Besides this suggestion being proof of misconceptions of UNISFA mandate, expecting UNISFA to be the government of Abyei, however, the reality on the ground and the challenges faced by the local people, caused the local communities to look up to UNISFA for provision of amenities and development of their area. Some participants proposed for the increase of Team Sites to cover more area, but a military participant argued that some of the existing Team Sites were actually seasonal, being operational for less than six months a year due to impassable roads. Hence, the increase of Team Sites should be in tandem with the improvement of road networks in Abyei.

4.5.2 Capacity/ability to protect by the peacekeepers

The efficacy in the PoC is influenced by the capacities of the troops as opined by Sarjoon & Yusoff (2019) & Akpan & Olisah (2019). In this regard, UNISFA dominated by the Ethiopian troops lacked capacity to protect civilians in Abyei, due to lack of adequate resources and skills as substantiated by Bellamy & Williams (2012), who claimed that troops from the south which the UN heavily relied upon, had limited military capacities to protect civilians. Misseriya and Ngok Dinka armed men have been spoiling peace, yet the UNISFA troops have been in Abyei

for the past decade. Hence, the assertion by a police participant that, “*the conflict was bigger than the capacity of UNISFA.*” And a military participant added that, “*Ethiopian troops were not strong enough to demilitarise the Abyei box.*” Local participants criticised UNISFA for undermining the voices of the civil society which fuels anger and resulting in peaceful demonstrations, which the UNISFA troops had no capacity to deal with. Further proposing that efforts should be made by UNISFA to listen to the voice of the civic society and to deploy the FPU, trained to deal with public order issues.

Data collected also showed that UNISFA lacked capacity to protect women and children. Police participants are of the view that though there is a Gender office in Abyei, much is still lagging behind due to lack of experts within UNISFA, citing the lack of a professional Gender Officer and a Children’s Protection Officer in the UNPOL section. A participant with legal background was of the view that there was lack of legal framework, facilities, referral networks such as medical support, psycho-social support, counselling and justice in UNISFA, that limited its capacity to protect women and children. Ngok Dinka children have been a target of Misseriya kidnapers, with 15 children reported missing in the Kolom incident alone. UNISFA should therefore deploy a Gender Officer and a Children’s Protection Officer in the UNPOL section, which deals more with the locals than the military.

4.5.3 Lack of POC camps

Lack of PoC camps as a constraint was not covered in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. As suggested by a civilian participant, that, “*Just like other missions such as UNMISS in South Sudan which has various PoC camps to maximise the PoC, UNISFA operated without even a*

single PoC camp.” This was substantiated by an OCHA (2020) report, which highlighted that when the Ngok Dinka village of Kolom was attacked by suspected Misseriya armed men in 2020, leaving 33 people dead; other villages had to relocate themselves to Abyei town nearer to the UN main Camp. However, under normal circumstance, such civilians would have been taken into a POC camp in other missions. Such displaced people stayed in the open and in fear, yet UNISFA mandate demanded their utmost protection. Participants could not locate the causal factors for the absence of PoC camps in Abyei, and the best they did was to proffer a remedy for the establishment of such camps in Abyei, as a matter of urgency.

4.5.4 Security of UN peacekeepers

UN peacekeepers safety and swiftness of their medical evacuation (medevac) procedures had a huge contribution in how the peacekeepers fared in the PoC. As suggested by a military participant, there was a time when the medevac process for the injured peacekeepers was not swift, due to Covid-19 protocols, and delays in the issuance of flight clearances by Sudan. This resulted in less commitment by the UN peacekeepers to protect civilians. The same participant went on to state that, *“Safety must be assured before helping civilians.”* Remedial suggestions by participants include gathering of intelligence before assisting the civilians and that medevac processes should be improved, so that they become effective and efficient to save lives of peacekeepers.

4.5.5 Weak or lack of political support from the national actors

Weak or lack of political support from Sudan and South Sudan was a constraint that affected the efficacy of UNISFA in the PoC in Abyei. These findings are in sync with the findings by

(Williams, 2015), that the engagement with national actors was hampered by lack of host country's support. Such lack of political will by the two governments can be traced back to their national interests in Abyei on both economic and political grounds. And, it is exemplified by the failure of the two governments to reach a final political status for Abyei. Data collected showed that Sudan had been reluctant to allow the deployment of Civilian Head of Mission (CHoM) in Abyei, which would allow the Force Commander to give full attention to military operations, and pave way for the CHoM to focus on political engagements with the national and local actors, for the betterment of PoC efforts.

The statement by a Sudanese participant explained the reasons behind national actors behaviour by stating that, *“Sudan cannot afford to lose Abyei since their own people, the Misseriya who had traditional grazing rights in Abyei might fail to gain access in the event that the region is appended to South Sudan. Similarly, the South Sudanese government have a political right and economic obligation to protect their own territory at whatever cost.”* Therefore, as a remedy, participants suggested that Sudan should be pressured to cooperate with the UN, and allow unhindered peacekeeping operations by UNISFA.

Meanwhile, though the researcher had the assumption that the national actors were reluctant to fully cooperate with UNISFA due to the conclusion made by Chingono's (2017) thesis that UN peacekeeping doctrine conceals the fact that it is primarily designed to advance the self-interests of the big powers at the expense of the weak states in conflict situations. During data collection, there was no participant who substantiated that assumption.

4.5.6 UNMAS – Mine action

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), is a service located within the UNDP, specialized in activities to limit the threat posed by mines, explosive remnants of war (ERW) and improvised explosive devices (IED). UNMAS has been considered to have done well in its mandate in Abyei as suggested by civilian participant who claimed that, “*Due to UNMAS efforts, there has been very minimal cases reported of locals injured by the mines, ERW or IED in Abyei.*” Attributing this success to the acceptance of UNMAS activities by the locals, who have been well educated through the Mine Risk Education (MRE). However, another civilian participant averred that UNMAS successes were reversed by the on-going conflict, as the cleared area were prone to re-plants, for example the ERWs found in Malal Achak in which casualties of both people and cattle were reported. UNMAS activities were also restricted in the wet season due to impassable roads. As a possible remedy, participants suggested that roads be improved to enable easy of mobility of UNMAS and the national actors to reach the final political status for Abyei to stop the conflict.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the data obtained from the fieldwork mainly in verbatim quotations. The data which was selectively coded into themes in line with the research objectives was analysed through content analysis in pursuance of giving answers to all the three questions of this study. The identified constraints of the UNPKO in Abyei were also assessed in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and guided by the theoretical framework provided by neo-liberalism theory.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the researcher systematically summarized the entire study, with special attention given to the aim, objectives and questions of the study, and the constraints that affected the efficacy of the UNPKO in Abyei. The conclusions of the findings and how such conclusions related to the theory of neo-liberalism, which guided the study, were also summarized. The chapter suggested the recommendations that can be adopted to improve the efficacy of UNPKO in Abyei for the realization of peace and security. The chapter ends with proposals for areas of further research.

5.2 Summary

Upon noticing the absence of peace in the presence of UN peacekeepers in Abyei for close to a decade, the researcher purposed to assess the constraints of United Nations peacekeeping operation (UNPKO) in Abyei with a view to improve its efficacy. To achieve this purpose, the study had three subsidiary objectives which translated into the research questions. Firstly, to examine the constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (Ethiopia) in Abyei peacekeeping operations. Secondly, to assess the constraints affecting the impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors in Abyei's peacebuilding processes. And lastly, to explore the constraints of the UN peacekeepers in the protection of civilians (PoC) in Abyei.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 exposed that UN peacekeeping constraints were studied by other researchers with results showing similarities in constraints across missions. However, a research gap was noted due to the three level conflict in Abyei, wherein results from other missions which operated at a single or double level, could not be generalized to it and the available literature failed to provide satisfying answers of the research questions of this study. The researcher realized that UN and its peacekeeping operations, were founded on the basic principles of neo-liberalism which emphasized on the role international institutions play in facilitating cooperation for nation states that leads to stability and peace, hence adopting neo-liberalism as the theoretic framework of the study.

This research employed constructivism philosophical paradigm, used qualitative methodology and was guided by case study design to achieve the research objectives. Key informant interviews and semi structured questionnaires, and documentary sources were used to gather data. The population accessed through purposive and snowballing techniques, was comprised of military, police and civilian personnel serving and once served as UNISFA peacekeepers as well as the local Misseriya and Ngok Dinka nationals. The researcher faced challenges in creating and building trust as many participants were not comfortable in sharing information online and to a stranger which he overcame using snowball technique and using an assistant researcher in Abyei to conduct some face to face interviews. The researcher, also used purposive sampling technique to select participants who speak from among the Arabic speaking Misseriya and the Amharic speaking Ethiopian participants. In all this, the researcher considered reliability, validity and ethics of the study.

As highlighted in Chapter 4, the study found out that there was a barrage of constraints that hugely affected the efficacy of the UNPKO in Abyei towards the realization of peace and security. The constraints that affected the efficacy of using UN peacekeepers from only one TCC were inclusive of a complex conflict resulting in a complex mandate that the Ethiopian troops found hard to deal with.

Regarding the constraints of using UN peacekeepers from only one TCC (Ethiopia) in Abyei, overwhelming evidence on the ground suggested that the UNPKO in Abyei was effective in bringing stability after the war but not in the full attainment of peace and security due to constraints as indicated by continued conflict. The constraints that either challenged or limited the effectiveness of UNPKO in Abyei, and such constraints inclusive of poor leadership and communication barrier, were presented, analysed and discussed in Chapter 4.

Conflict prevention and mitigation; and the establishment of the rule of law were identified as the two major goals of peacebuilding processes as the UN partnered with local actors. The researcher measured the impact of UNISFA's partnership with the Joint Community Peace Committee (JCPC) and the Community Protection Committees/Joint Protection Committees (CPC/JPCs), by checking the extent to which it progressed towards achieving the two key peacebuilding goals. With the provision of evidence, few participants described the partnership as effective but with constraints, and most of the participants regarded the impact as very minimum with constraints, citing continued conflict and the absence of the rule of law in Abyei. The constraints which were agreed from both angles of the argument, that include lack of funding and interference by national actors, were presented, analysed and discussed in detail.

The study explored the constraints of the UN peacekeepers in the PoC in Abyei. The data gathered showed that most of the local people believed that UNISFA failed to protect them from imminent threat of violence, as evidence by the continued conflict with casualties. Hence, both Sudan and South Sudan were deploying their own armed men to protect their own people from one another. The constraints that hindered the efficacy of UNISFA in the PoC in Abyei that include inability to cover all areas and lack of capacity to protect, were presented, analysed and discussed at length in Chapter 4.

5.3 Conclusions

The data obtained from the research showed that there were both merits and demerits of using UN peacekeepers from only one TCC (Ethiopia) in Abyei peacekeeping operations. However, due to a barrage of constraints, the demerits outweighed the merits hence the conclusion that the deployment of Ethiopian troops only in Abyei was only effective in stabilizing the conflict but not in the full attainment of the peace and security. Hence, the researcher concluded that a multinational peacekeeping force should be deployed in Abyei, that would bring checks and balances and positive competition, fertile for the success of the mission.

The impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors, the JCPC and the CPC/JPC, in peacebuilding activities was minimum as it was heavily affected with numerous constraints. To improve such impact and overcome the identified constraints, funding should be increased for UNISFA activities and Sudan should issue entry Visa's to allow the deployment of experts such as the Civilian Head of Mission and the Formed Police Units. Due to constraints, the UN peacekeepers were not so effective in the PoC as exemplified by attacks on civilians yet

UNISFA has been in Abyei for the past decade. In this regard, the AU should therefore facilitate the realization of the final political status of Abyei, that would then allow the host state to take its primary responsibility to protect its own people by creating government institutions such as the Abyei Police Service and the Justice system that would establish the rule of law in Abyei. The constraints noted need to be addressed if the UNISFA has to gain its respect as a peacekeeping entity. However, if there is no attainment of the final political status for Abyei by the national actors, most of the constraints will be hard to address, though their effects can be minimized.

Neo-liberalism emphasized on the role the UN and AU played in facilitating cooperation between Sudan and South Sudan. However, for the past decade, these institutions could not facilitate the permanent solution of realizing the final status of Abyei, which is key for the attainment of peace and security in the contested area. Temporary measures that can be taken to mitigate the effects of the noted constraints includes the deployment of a multinational troops in Abyei, the deployment of the FPU and the deployment of expert civilians such as the Civilian Head of Mission, as a matter of urgency. Lastly, it is prudent to note that even though UNISFA was no so effective in preserving peace and security in Abyei, there remained no other substitute for its services, hence the need to address the constraints in haste and improve its peacekeeping efficacy.

5.4 Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations, some as temporary measures and some as to bring permanent remedies in Abyei: -

- UN should deploy a multinational peacekeeping force with a mixture of both developed and developing countries in Abyei in order to correct the overwhelming demerits of using only one TCC in UNPKO in Abyei.
- UN should revise the duration of its mandate time frame from six months to three years to allow for long term planning the mandate implementers and to consult minor communities, the women and the youth in mandate development.
- AU should nominate a new team of good offices that will be mandated to facilitate the realization of the final political status of Abyei by Sudan and South Sudan.
- UNISFA should budget for CPC/JPC operational expenses inclusive of the allowance of members to improve the impact of its partnership with these temporal policing measures.
- Sudan and South Sudan should establish the Abyei Police Service (APS) that they would fund as a long term measure.
- Sudan and South Sudan to establish the Abyei Area Administration that they fund and operate as a developmental vehicle for Abyei and her people.
- Sudan should issue entry Visas to all UNISFA personnel inclusive of the Civilian Head of Mission and the Formed Police Units that would deal better with the political development and crime increase, respectively.
- UN should increase the tour of duty of peacekeepers from 12 to 24 months to allow continuity and to get the best out of each peacekeeper.
- UNISFA to establish PoC camps in Abyei to improve efficacy in the PoC.

5.5 Areas of further study

In light of the argument proffered in this dissertation, the researcher suggested the following as areas of further study: -

- An assessment of the constraints hindering the realization of the final political status of Abyei: Sudan/South Sudan.
- An analysis of the internal politics between the military and police in Abyei peacekeeping operation.
- An assessment of the efficacy of African Union in conflict resolutions on the continent.

5.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher systematically summarized the entire study from chapter one to chapter four, with special attention given to the aim and objectives of the study, and the constraints that affected the efficacy of the UNPKO in Abyei. The conclusion of the findings, recommendations, and areas of further study in relation to peace and security summed up this chapter.

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APPENDIX: A

KEY INFORMANT - INTERVIEW GUIDE

Date & Time of Interview: _____

My name is Innocent Takaendesa, a Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) Master of Science in International Relations student and my Student ID is B211829B. I'm conducting a study titled, **AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CONSTRAINTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ABYEI: SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN.**

I kindly request to conduct an interview with you at your approval for about 30 minutes. No names or any identification marks are required in this interview, so please feel free to respond honestly. The information will be used solely for academic reasons and will be kept private and confidential.

Designation of the interviewee: _____

The following questions were formulated in an endeavour to address the problem.

1. Are there any constraints faced by UNISFA in fulfilling its mandate in Abyei? If yes, can you list them.
2. What were the causes of such constraints?
3. What mitigation factors do you propose against such constraints?
4. Where there any constraints faced by UNISFA by using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (Ethiopia) in Abyei?
5. If yes? How can such constraints be addressed?
6. List and explain any constraints that impacted UNISFA's partnership with local actors (Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities) in Abyei's peacebuilding processes?
7. What was the impact of UNISFA's partnership with local actors (Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities) in Abyei's peacebuilding processes?

How effective was/is UNISFA in the protection of civilians in Abyei?

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Innocent Takaendes, a Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) Master of Science in International Relations student and my Student ID is B211829B. I'm conducting a study titled, **AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CONSTRAINTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ABYEI: SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN.**

You are kindly requested to contribute towards this noble cause by completing this questionnaire honestly. The study findings will assist in recommending remedial strategies and ways to mitigate the constraints faced by the United Nations Peacekeeping operation in Abyei, for the attainment of security and peace, desperately needed by the local communities. The information provided will be used for the purpose of this study only. Your response will be treated with confidentiality, hence no names or any personal identification should appear on this questionnaire. I thank you in advance for your maximum cooperation and assistance in this regard.

INSTRUCTIONS

You are kindly requested to answer all questions by ticking in the appropriate box or completing short statements whichever is applicable.

SECTION A

1. What is your occupation?

- a) Military [] b) Police [] c) Civilian []

2. Are you current serving with UNISFA?

- a) Yes [] b) No, I completed my tour of duty []

3. What is your nationality: _____

4. If you are a local person, which community do you belong to?

- a) Misseriya [] b) Ngok Dinka [] c) Other [*Specify*_____]

SECTION B: EFFICACY OF USING UN PEACEKEEPERS FROM ONLY ONE TROOP CONTRIBUTING COUNTRY (ETHIOPIA) IN ABYEI.

5. List any constraints faced by UNISFA for using UN peacekeepers from only one Troop Contributing Country (Ethiopia) in Abyei?
6. What are the causes of such constraints
7. How can such constraints be addressed?

SECTION C: CONSTRAINTS ASSOCIATED WITH UNISFA’S PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL ACTORS (MISSERIYA AND NGOK DINKA COMMUNITIES) IN ABYEI’S PEACEBUILDING PROCESSES.

6. Can you list any constraints associated with UNISFA’s partnership with local actors (Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities) in Abyei’s peacebuilding processes?
8. What are the causes of such constraints?
9. How can such constraints be addressed?

SECTION D: UNISFA’S EFFECTIVENESS IN PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ABYEI.

10. List UNISFA’S constraints in the protection of civilians in Abyei?
11. What are the causes of such constraints
12. How can such constraints be addressed?.....

SECTION E: ANY OTHER CONSTRAINTS FACED BY UNISFA IN FULFILLING ITS MANDATE IN ABYEI

13. Are there any other constraints faced by UNISFA in fulfilling its mandate in Abyei? If yes, can you list them.
14. What were the causes of such constraints?
15. What mitigation factors do you propose against such constraints?

Thank you!

APPENDIX: C

CONSENT FORM

I consent and voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

- a) I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- b) I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- c) I have heard the purpose and nature of the study explained to me and I was given opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- d) I understand that participation involves interviews, casual discussion and surveys.
- e) I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- f) I agree with my interview being audio-recorded.
- g) I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- h) I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- i) I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in dissertation, conference presentation, and published papers.
- j) I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in encrypted form on a secure server, only the researcher will have the access to data.
- k) I understand that under freedom of information legalization I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- l) I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

..... Signed by Research Participant

..... Date

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

..... Signed by Researcher (Innocent Takaendesha,
B211892B)

..... Date

MSc International Relations; Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)
