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Politics of the Apolitical: A Study of Operational Autonomy and International Non-Governmental Oganizations (INGOs)

Rachel Wilson
The College of Wooster, rwilson17@wooster.edu

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POLITICS OF THE APOLITICAL: A STUDY OF OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY AND
INTERNATIONAL NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (INGOS)

By Rachel Wilson

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Advisor: Kent Kille

Second Reader: Boubacar N'Diaye

Abstract

This study seeks to further dialogue on international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) by posing the following question, *How do political actors in the international system influence service-based humanitarian INGO operational autonomy?* By conducting a comparative case analysis, the study seeks to discuss how an INGO maintains operational autonomy, the ability to act as they choose, through the lens of Principal-Agent relationships. The cases studied are Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF's) involvement in Afghanistan (2001-2004) and Somalia (2006-2013). As both are complex political emergencies with several political actors present, each case demonstrates a multiple principal structure with an assigned terms of access explaining principal constraints on the ground. A collective principal model (CPM) with an assumed strict terms of access is applied Afghanistan, and a multiple principal model (MPM) with an assumed weak terms of access is applied to Somalia. The study hypothesizes that strict terms of access results in a limited degree of operational autonomy, while weak terms of access results in high operational autonomy. This study finds, however, that not only do the cases fail to exhibit the assumed terms of access, but that the multiple principal models chosen did not predict MSF's maintenance of operational autonomy. Factors that pose potential explanatory power for operational autonomy are complicity of the principals and level of insecurity tied to the number of actors present. This study concludes that further research should address the potential influences of these presented factors and that the continuation of academic discourse on INGOs is imperative.

El Resumen

Este estudio busca promover el diálogo sobre las organizaciones no gubernamental internacionales (ONGI) por proponiendo la siguiente pregunta, *Como los actores políticos en el sistema internacional influyen la autonomía operacional del ONGI servicio y humanitario?* Con conducir un análisis de caso comparativo, este estudio busca discutir como un ONGI mantiene la autonomía operacional, la capacidad para actuar como deciden, a través del lente de los relaciones del principal-agente. Los casos estudiados son la participación de Médicos sin Fronteros (MSF) en Afganistán (2001-2004) y Somalia (2006-2013). Como los dos son emergencias políticas complicadas con varios actores políticos, cada caso demuestra una estructura de principales múltiples con términos asignados explicando los restricciones principales sobre el terreno. Un modelo colectivo principal (MCP) con una supuesta condición de accesos estrictas está aplicado a Afganistán, y un modelo múltiple principal (MPM) con una supuesta condición de accesos débiles está aplicado a Somalia. El estudio propone como un hipótesis que las condiciones de accesos estrictas resultan en un punto limitado de la autonomía operacional, mientras las condiciones de accesos débiles resultan en un alto punto de la autonomía operacional. Sin embargo este estudio halla que los casos no solamente fallan en demostrar las supuestas condiciones de accesos, pero también que los modelos de múltiples principales elegidos no predicaban el mantenimiento de la autonomía operacional de MSF. Los factores que tienen el poder explicativo potencial para la autonomía operacional son complicidad de los principales y el nivel de inseguridad, lo cual es atado al número de actores presentes. Este estudio concluye

que más extenso investigación debería indagar las influencias potenciales de los factores presentado y que la continuación del discurso académico sobre ONGIs está imperativo.

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List of Abbreviations

AU- African Union
CRASH- Le Centre de Réflexion Sur L'action et les Savoirs Humanitaires
CSR- Corporate Social Responsibility
DV- Dependent Variable
ICU- Islamic Courts Union
IDP- Internally Displaced Person
IGO- International Governmental Organization
INGO- International Non-governmental Organization
IO- International Organization
IV- Independent Variable
IR- International Relations
ISAF- International Security Assistance Force
MDB- Multilateral Development Bank
MDM- Médecins du Monde
MoH- Ministry of Health
MPM- Multiple Principal Model
MSF- Médecins Sans Frontières
NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEO- New Economics of Organization
NCCI- NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq
NGO- Non-governmental Organization
OEF- Operation Enduring Freedom
PA- Principal-Agent
SNM- Somali National Movement
SSDF- Somali Salvation Democratic Front
TFG- Transnational Federal Government
TNC- Transnational Corporation
UN- United Nations
UNAMA- United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNITA- The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
USAID- United States Agency for International Development

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose

Following the title, "politics of the apolitical," this study analyzes organizations that claim

independence from political influence and concerns, yet must engage repeatedly within the

international political system. International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) interact

frequently with political actors in locations in which they operate. Service-based emergency

relief organizations are particularly dependent on engagement with political actors to garner

support for their operations.

The purpose of this study is to analyze these interactions between INGOs and

political actors. The specific question this study poses is, *How do political actors in the*

international system influence service-based humanitarian INGO operational autonomy?

The first assumption is that political actors will exhibit some influence over INGOs. The

focus is narrowed to study influences specifically on operational autonomy, meaning the

ability of an INGO to carryout the operations that they want, when they want, and in the way

that the organization wants. This study hypothesizes that for organizations with low

state/IGO funding, INGO operational autonomy is influenced by the strict or weak terms of

access established by the political actors.

> H1: Low state/international governmental organization (IGO) funding and strict terms
> of access result in a limited degree of operational autonomy.
> H2: Low state/international governmental organization (IGO) funding and weak
> terms of access result in a high degree of operational autonomy.
> The specific INGO studied in this project is Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), known

in English as "Doctors Without Borders." MSF is designated as a service based INGO

because of its specialization in medical humanitarianism. Additionally the INGOs

commitment to principles of independence, neutrality, and impartiality, suggests the organization would strive to maintain its autonomy in all operations. MSF also places a value on speaking out against injustices and abuse, and because of this is likely to be active an participant in the international political system.

Contributions to the Field

The importance of this project is in studying organizations that are often marginalized within discourse on international organizations (IOs) and generally the international political system. While it is true that INGOs hold less political capital than states or organizations which have member-states, these types of IOs can be argued as a more effective way to address humanitarian crises as this is the INGOs sole objective. Additionally, the humanitarian objectives these organizations seek to fill in crisis situations, such as medical humanitarianism, often replace services that are expected of the state. Despite being identified as a *non-governmental* organization, suggesting an apolitical nature, INGOs become participants in the political structures of the crises they engage in by simply being present and objective driven.

Another motive of this study is to shed light on the capacity of humanitarian organizations to provide assistance. Following that INGOs often provide services the state can not, humanitarian organizations are at times the last resort for vulnerable populations. Many INGOs address crises overlooked by the international community and provide assistance regardless of state interest. These organizations, instead, act in the interest of the people they strive to help.

This study looks beyond interactions between INGOs and political actors in order to prove political participation, and instead focuses on INGO operational autonomy. As participants in the political system with little political capital, they are not viewed as sovereign entities. However by studying how INGOs work to maintain operational autonomy and how political actors influence this operational autonomy strengthens the literature on the capabilities and influence of INGOs in International Relations. These organizations have been and will be active participants as the need to address humanitarian crises continues and global civil society increasingly diversifies.

Overview of Thesis

The next chapter addresses both the theoretical framework and review of relevant literature. Principal-Agent (PA) theory is used to establish a theoretical framework and modeled to explain the presence of multiple political actors, renamed principals. This framework is applied through the study as a lens through which to analyze the influences of political actors on an INGOs operational autonomy. The subsequent literature review organizes how scholars have previously discussed INGOs and their operations into two main sections: direct and indirect influences on operational autonomy. From this review, an area of expansion within negotiated access was identified to which this study could contribute.

The third chapter structures the comparative case study methodology for this project. The independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV) are defined, and control conditions set to mitigate potential outside influence. This chapter details, through PA theory, how an INGO attempts to gain access and conduct operations as conditions for negotiated access, renamed terms of access, change.

The fourth and fifth chapters are the individual data analyses for the two case studies. First, MSF operations in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2004 are studied under the collective principal model (CPM) and applied strict terms of access. Second, MSF operations in Somalia from 2006 to 2013 are analyzed under the multiple principal model (MPM) with a weak terms of access designation. Both cases analyze the DV, operational autonomy, through three operationalized measures: decisions and actions, desired versus met objectives, and mission attributes. Both cases also follow a shared structure: situational context given to justify the PA model assignment, analysis of the DV measures, and finally application of the hypothesis.

The last chapter serves as both the comparative analysis and conclusion for the study. First, results from both cases and their corresponding hypotheses are compared according to the individual measures. An analysis summary ties together trends observed across the measures and cases as a whole. Finally the results are compared back to the theoretical framework and literature review. The conclusion identifies study strengths and limitations, as well as potential directions for further research based on the results analysis and observed applicability of the theory.

Chapter 2: Influences on Service INGO Operational Autonomy

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the what the literature presents as influences on the operational autonomy of service-based international non-governmental organizations (INGO). For this study operational autonomy can be understood to mean the ability of an organization to make choices free of prominent outside constraint or sway. Scholarly work has started shifting political focus from a state sovereignty driven discourse to discussing the presence of other important actors as well. One prominent facet of this developing literature is non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which this study narrows to INGOs as the general focus. Broadly speaking international NGOs will be taken to mean organizations that carry out operations and services internationally.

This chapter's first section briefly identifies how scholars have discussed INGO's place within the international system and what relevant theoretical frameworks are applied. Emphasis is placed on this study's theoretical foundation, Principal-Agent Theory. The main section presents an organized thematic approach to the various scholarly sources, addressing direct and indirect influences on INGO autonomy. The distinction between direct and indirect influences centers on the immediacy of the influence; whether the influence itself hinders autonomy or the influence effects the conditions in which the INGO operates and consequently the organization's autonomy. Each theme is related back to the theory section and consequently how INGOs interact with other relevant actors in the international system.

The direct influences discussed in this chapter center on two specific issues: the implications of donor-specific funding and market realities, as well as the restrictions

imposed by sovereign actors and limitations of negotiated access. The donors identified in this section are divided into public actors or states and IGOs, as well as the private sector or corporations and individual fundraising. Neutrality of humanitarian operational space addresses the indirect influence discussed in this chapter. Although a less developed area in the literature, scholars argue neutrality is a central focus of INGOs and significant concern when cohabitation with other actors in humanitarian space occurs. The final section of this chapter will summarize the present literature's findings and identify where expansion is needed.

Theoretical Foundations of INGOs in the International System

A theoretical foundation must be identified in order to build the chapter and centralize analysis of the literature. This section briefly discusses previous INGO theoretical development and how this study expands on these arguments by applying PA theory. Specifically, traditional theories, such as Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism, only debate the existence or the contributions of INGOs in the international system. Assuming that INGOs exist and contribute to the system, a more pertinent theoretical approach would explain how INGOs interact with other political actors. This study's theoretical focus in PA theory addresses the nature of interactions between the actors: INGOs as agents and states/IGOs as principals. This interaction, according to PA theorists, manifests as a delegating relationship when the principal is powerful enough to allot authority to the agent (Hawkins et al. 2006).

INGOs and the International System

In his book on NGOs and Transnational Networks, DeMars gives a broad view on the central schools of thought present in international system literature. He discusses Realism as a state-centric theory that only includes INGOs as passive channels for states interest, while he identifies Pluralism (Liberalism) where "NGOs are understood as the articulate and organized element of civil society acting largely independent of government" (DeMars 2005, 36). Finally, he introduces Globalism (Constructivism) which posits that NGOs implement and enforce norms passed from UN organs and multilateral agreements, but are not norm generators themselves (DeMars 2005).

Similar to DeMars, Barnett and Finnemore argue that in the Realist and Liberal tradition, international organizations (IOs) are considered passive actors of state interest or merely structures reminiscent of Regime Theory through which the members operate (1999). Barnett and Finnemore argue as a counterpoint that IOs are "purposive actors" with their own centralized objectives; that they are more than just their membership composition (1999, 726). Here the authors apply a constructivist centered approach which does afford INGOs more authority in norm development than DeMars (Barnett and Finnemore 1999). It should be noted, however, that Barnett and Finnemore focus their discussion of IOs on international governmental organizations (IGOs) almost to the point of assuming equivalency. This is shown through their emphasis on state membership, which does not apply to INGOs who the literature also considers under the IO umbrella (Karns and Mingst 2010; Archer 2015). Regardless of their assumption, the desire for theoretical development placing IOs as more autonomous actors fits well with this study's specification of INGOs.

Although quite different in content, these various schools act in agreement on the principle that NGOs, or more specifically INGOs, have in one way or another a place in the international system. However, these theories do not truly encompass INGOs contribution system-wide. In response DeMars presents a Structural Theory of NGOs that "portrays NGOs not only as agents of social and political action but also constituting the structure of international relations at 3 levels: micro-level of individual NGOs, mid-level of the country or regional network, and the macro-level of the international system" (2005, 61). This theory moves a step in the right direction by arguing that INGOs have agency. What is still largely missing from the literature is a theory capable of explaining interactions or the various relationships that exist between INGOs and other actors. This study argues Principal Agent (PA) Theory addresses this discrepancy.

Theory Foundation: Principal-Agent Theory

PA Theory was first developed within the context of US national politics and congressional dynamics (Hawkins et al. 2006). In their book *Delegation and Agency in International Organizations*, Hawkins, et. al. apply PA theory to IOs and the international system. They "build on this work by reintroducing and emphasizing the importance of IOs as actors that implement policy decisions and pursue their own interests strategically" (Hawkins et al. 2006, 5). Specifically, why actors like states delegate authority and what the conditions are of delegated authority are discussed (Hawkins et al. 2006). Hawkins et al. define delegation as "authority granted from principal to agent" with this authority being conditional and institutions designed to illicit some mechanism of control (2006, 7). These mechanisms of control all hinge on the principal's ability to monitor and screen a competing selection of agents or use contracts and funding conditions to limit IO autonomy. Therefore, autonomy is

defined as the "range of potential independent actions available to an agent after the principal

has established a mechanism of control" (Hawkins et al. 2006, 8).

Delegation and Agency in International Organizations also follows the same focus on

IGOs that Barnett and Finnemore emphasize. In contrast, however, Barnett and Finnemore

do briefly touch upon the implications PA theory only to reject the potential theoretical

approach in favor of bureaucratic politics (1999). They disregard PA theory on the grounds

that agent's (IOs) mission statements are often the creation of the principal (states), and

therefore cannot fuel "the necessary disjuncture of between what agents want and what

principals want" (Barnett and Finnemore 1999, 705). What gives more legitimacy to the

arguments established in the edited volume by Hawkins et al. is that PA theory deals not

simply with the agency of IOs at their inception but the agency of IOs as operational actors

(2006). The specifications of this study further contradict Barnett and Finnemore's argument,

because INGOs as IOs are not created by the will of a state or responsible to states as

members of the organization. Removed from this restraint, INGOs are free to engage with

principals in an effort to interact and simultaneously attempt to protect their autonomy. The

PA relationship is also an appropriate characterization, because while INGOs are not

weighed down by state membership they must interact with relatively stronger actors that

possess varying degrees of sovereignty.

Other facets of PA theory discussed in the edited volume are situations where

multiple principals exist (Lyne et al. 2006) The reading suggests these situations are either

explained by a multiple principal model or a collective principal model (Lyne et al. 2006).

According to Lyne et al., the existence of multiple principals in conflict prevents the creation

of synthesized objectives (2006). This opens the window of opportunity for agency slack,

defined as "independent action by an agent that is undesired by the principal" (Hawkins et al. 2006, 8). The difference between the two principal situations is that more agency slack could occur when multiple competing principals exist versus a centralized group of principals acting as a collective (Lyne et al. 2006).

Cooley and Ron in their article on NGOs and organization insecurity, present a version of PA Theory that more closely relates to NGOs. They provide a more narrowed contribution to the conversation by focusing on NGOs as the agent versus IOs generally. Specifically, Cooley and Ron identify a donor to an NGO as the principal because they have the power of funds, while the NGO they contract work out to is the agent (2005). Additionally, Cooley and Ron address multiple-principal problems, however they argue in this case agency slack or increased autonomy would be the recipient of the aid versus the contracted NGO. Here the argument falls short, because it places competing contracted NGOs as principals along with donors. What is important, however, is that Cooley and Ron apply PA theory to INGOs and argue that multiple principal problems can be associated with agency slack. In tandem with work on delegation and agency, support for the explanatory power of PA theory regarding INGOs and States/IGOs is provided but still more work can be done.

Direct Influences

Before proceeding into the first thematic section of this literature review, the definition of "direct" influences should be reviewed. This categorization is employed to organize influences on INGO operations, where the influence itself hinders or limits autonomy for said organizations. This differs from indirect influences, which effect the environment the INGO

exists in and subsequently the effected environment hinders or limits autonomy. The first and most widely discussed influence drawn across the literature is the issue of donors and funding. The second direct influence, negotiated access, has less scholarly support but is also an important contributing factor to INGO operations.

This first part of the section is broken down according to actor identity. States or IGO donors demonstrate authority by delegating objective-driven finances to an INGO following a PA relationship. These principals yield significant control as centralized sovereign actors. In opposition, private actors without a centralized objective yield less power over an organization. The second section, negotiated access, discusses the principals ability to delegate authority as access to a humanitarian operational space.

Donor Identity: States and IGOs

First it is essential to recall back to the theory section that interactions between actors in the international system play a significant role in every point of influence. The case of donor identity is no exception. One of the more comprehensive studies on the implications of state and IGO involvement in INGO funds is Alexander Cooley and James Ron's article on INGO organizational insecurity and economic factors of INGO-State/IGO relations (2002). In formatting this first thematic discussion, Cooley and Ron act as the central scholarly source because the article provides the most focused discussion on the hindrance donor relations can have on INGOs. From this focal point a dialogue can be constructed in which other scholars contribute and where the arguments presented by Cooley and Ron can be re-emphasized.

Cooley and Ron frame their article under the overarching New Economics Organization (NEO) Theory, which "focuses on the incentives and institutional outcomes generated by contractual relations, incomplete information, transaction costs, and property

rights" (2002, 6). Their arguments are two fold: that the increasing numbers of IOs and INGOs advances "uncertainty, competition, and insecurity for all organizations in that sector;" and that dysfunctional outcomes result from the "marketization of IO and INGO activity" (Cooley and Ron 2002, 6). Three specific issues building out of these two positions are principle agent problems, competitive bidding, and multiple principles problem (Cooley and Ron 2002). Building across the larger literature collection, both principle agent problems and competitive bidding seem to carry the most relevance and connections to the positions of other scholars. Cooley and Ron's discussion of Principal-Agent problems and the subsequent theory application to INGOs also provides support for this study's developed theoretical foundation. To fit within the general scope of the literature, principal-agent problems will be expanded to donor objectives and competitive bidding will be refocused as marketization in the aid industry.

<u>Donor Objectives</u>

Under the umbrella of principle agent problems, Cooley and Ron identify donors as the principal and the contractor as the agent (2002). For the purposes of this review donors can be thought of as states and IGOs and contractors as the INGOs funded. Cooley and Ron are certainly not alone in a conceptualization of funding relationships between INGOs and states/IGOs (Ahmed and Potter 2006; Duffield 1997; Ferris 2011; Gordenker and Weiss 1995; Mills 2005). Cooley and Ron extend this conceptual relationship to explain patterns of deceitfulness by agents as organizations might intentionally filter information to the principles whose objectives might be at odds with that of the agent (Cooley and Ron 2002). Recognizing this initial relationship of donor-contractor (principal-agent) is an important transition to the dialogue developed across scholars.

How other scholars have sought to tackle the issue of INGO interactions with objective driven actors would best be described in the form of a spectrum. On one end would be the placement of INGOs as fully subverted below donor policies and objectives, while the other end reflects the mutual coexistence of INGO missions and donor objectives. By applying a new theory to the humanitarian environment, neo-humanitarianism, Kurt Mills emphasizes subversion (2005). He argues "humanitarian aid becomes a strategy for political containment rather than problem solving" (Mills 2005, 164). It is certainly noted within the literature that this subversion can result in INGOs becoming foreign policy tools of the state, or at the very least constituting a sort of aid policy to be carried out by INGOs in specific regions (Duffield 1997; Ferris 2011; Mills 2005). These arguments emphasize how sovereignty can dominate other actors in the international system, however such an extreme stance does not appear to be the consensus.

The vast majority of the discourse does not appear to be so critical of donor influence. Generally the literature indicates that donor objectives limit rather than fully hinder what INGOs feel they can accomplish or do (Ahmed and Potter 2006; Cooley and Ron 2002; Gordenker and Weiss 1995). A specific example of such a limitation would be the question of general success of project proposals by INGOs seeking donors. Gordenker and Weiss argue "proposals that run counter to donor policies would hardly be likely to succeed" (1995, 372). Another example from Cooley and Ron explains that INGOs might constrain public statements if a donor did not desire such an action (2002). On the flip side Ahmed and Potter state that organizations such as USAID make vocal support for foreign policy objectives compulsory for INGOs (2006). While some INGO managers might welcome such donors and their capacity for sizeable donations on the grounds of increasing scope of operations,

many in INGO leadership are "troubled about being exploited by governments or IGOs rather than remaining institutions with their own unique and independent wherewithal" (Gordenker and Weiss 1995, 377). Gordenker and Weiss further argue that the "key to operational integrity is being a partner and not simply a contractor" (1997, 377). However as the trend of aid marketization in the literature demonstrates, such a partnership is more theoretical than practical.

What seems to be a common difference from Cooley and Ron's original proposal of PA relations is a focus on the agency of the principal verses the agent's deceitful action. Explained more fully, other scholars have looked at how donors influence INGO autonomy versus how INGOs seek to respond to potential constraints by donors. What donor objectives do not account for explicitly is the growth of INGOs and how such a trend affects operational autonomy. Although this trend does benefit donors as they seek to preserve their objectives, in that it gives them the upper hand in a competitive market.

Marketization

Keeping with the focus on Cooley and Ron the theoretical application of NEO to INGOs is particularly useful in starting the discussion on marketization (2002). NEO literature proposes that INGOs behave like market-driven corporations, in that they are concerned about their organizational survival which in turn relies on funding (Cooley and Ron 2002). Other scholars similarly agree with this comparison of INGOs to traditionally corporate practices and concerns (Archer 2015; Ramia 2006; Siméant 2005). More specifically the marketization of the aid industry is characterized by competition explained by the explosive growth in INGOs over the years (Cooley and Ron 2002; Duffield 1997; Ramia 2006; Siméant 2005). This growth can be explained through concepts such as mutual reliance

between principals (states/IGOs) and agents (INGOs), where principals rely on agents for implementations of objectives and agents rely on principals for funding (Mills 2005). Other structural factors beyond INGO growth also exist to help explain the development of an aid market. According to Duffield in the "mid-1980s, a noticeable change in donor funding from direct donor assistance to recognized governments in favour of international support for private, non-governmental sectors" led to the promotion of a such a market (1997, 532). Not only was the supply readily available but so was the demand. IGOs also became a significant contributor to this demand as organizations like the UN increasingly delegated responsibilities to INGOs (Murdie 2014; Ramia 2006; Reimann 2006). In other words a growing relief expenditure, often in the form of grants or contracts, resulted in increased competition (Duffield 1997).

Describing how marketization emerged does not fully represent the scholarly consensus that the marketization of INGO activities produces dysfunctional outcomes and incentivizes prioritizing contract renewal over INGO self-reflection (Cooley and Ron 2002). This more specifically engages with the term utilized by Cooley and Ron, competitive bidding (2002). Not only are INGOs competing with themselves for contracts, particularly the larger organizations, they also are competing with new actors such as local NGOs, for-profit corporations, and other IGOs (Cooley and Ron 2002; Ferris 2011). Murdie even goes as far to connect marketization of INGOs to the trend of rent-seeking behaviors by INGOs, although she recognizes that not all such organizations engage in rent-seeking activities (2014). Connecting back to the discussion of donor objectives, marketization and the competition for contracts certainly demonstrates how INGOs can become subject to donor

objectives. As Cooley and Ron mention, individual INGOs are not irreplaceable and a donor could easily switch funding to a more submissive competitor (2002).

The literature on INGO marketization also addresses a trend that may not exactly be a limitation to operations but an example of influence over operations. Internationalization of NGOs can arguably be explained by competition for funding. Siméant studied how French NGOs, such as (Médecins Sans Frontières) MSF and Médecins du Monde (MDM), turned to internationalization in order to confront an unstable and competitive environment (2005). Not only was internationalizing, increasing operational sections globally, beneficial for increasing access to funding sources but also for enhancing credibility and authority (Siméant 2005). Internationalization of INGO operations and administration shows not only an increase in funding access, but also a diversification of donors.

Donor Identity: Private Sector

The second grouping of donors comprised of private sector actors is not as largely discussed as other donors within the literature. However, these private sector actors influence over INGOs can be connected back to trends previously established, particularly actor objectives. This grouping is broken into two specific actors: corporations and private (individual) fundraising. The first shows once again that objectives matter, while the latter shows not limitation on operational autonomy but an opportunity for agency.

Corporations

Baur and Schmitz are among the few scholars to address NGO's relationships to corporations (2012). Although it has been shown that INGOs behave similarly to corporations, this does not prevent corporations from acting as potential donors/principals. The focus of their article is on the pressures of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and NGOs need for financial

support. Specifically they argue that partnerships between corporations and non-profits, depending on the type of CSR, increase the likelihood of co-optation and compromise the independence of NGOs (Baur and Schmitz 2012). The two types of CSR identified are political and strategic. Strategic CSR implies that the corporation is motivated only by their vested interests, while a political CSR means the corporation will likely be interested in cooperation with the INGO based on the principles promoted by the organization (Baur and Schmitz 2012). It is argued that strategic CSR leads to a desire for co-optation, meaning an increased control over the organizations (Baur and Schmitz 2012). Furthermore they posit, "co-optation is more likely because the independence of the partner organization is not an explicit goal of the relationship established [by the corporation]" (Baur and Schmitz 2012, 18). Boli also notes the tendency of INGOs and TNCs (transnational corporations) to exhibit mostly hostile relationships (2006). It should also be mentioned that INGOs mostly discussed within this specific relationship are advocacy NGOs which will not be the focus of this study (Baur and Schmitz 2012).

Although limited this discourse connects back to state and IGO donors and the role these organizations' objectives play. Following the arguments made across the literature, co-optation's influence on INGO operations and autonomy is made possible by the INGO's reliance on funding provided by these donors. Reimann speaks extensively on the idea of mutual reliance between INGOs and donors, even going as far to suggest a symbiotic relationship among states, IGOs, and NGOs based on mutual goals shared (2006). Just as INGOs depend on funding, "states and IGOs rely on NGOs to fill in institutional gaps and help them achieve their stated goals" (Reimann 2006, 64). It is these goals that become problematic, not only from states and IGOs but other organizations driven by stated

objectives. Even Reimann concedes that "states determine which opportunities are opened and which remain closed" (2006, 64). Connecting back to PA theory, corporations are shown to have to have the ability to impact the funding an INGO receives just like states and IGOs. This means corporations, particularly those employing strategic CSR, can act as principals However, their power as a principal depends on the extent to which the INGO relies on that specific donor's funds.

<u>Private Fundraising</u>

Considering the previous discussion on objective-centered funding, donations that come directly from individuals of the private sector are very appealing because they are arguably free of any centralized and politically motivated objective. Even if an individual had a particular interest or desire to influence an INGO's autonomy, it is doubtful the power of their single donation would be substantial enough to have any effect. As Siméant analyzed internationalization of French NGOs for greater access to funding, she argues a major specific drive would be for greater access to private funding (2005). An example would be the creation of the MSF-USA section for the purpose of expanding funding opportunities to support operational sections like MSF-France (Siméant 2005). The most significant result of this discussion is that the more substantial private donor funding, the greater the sense of independence for the INGO (Siméant 2005).

      Unlike previous sections, private fundraising is a sign of hope for an INGO's preservation of operational autonomy. However, private fundraising sectors do not fit the construction of a principal. Although each individual donor does give money to the INGO, the donation is likely not large enough to constitute any form of authority. Also pooling

donors together into on fundraising block does not make a principal, because the group has no collective objective or agenda.

Negotiated Access

Within INGO literature, discussions of how these organizations negotiate with other actors to gain access to humanitarian operational space is limited. However, utilizing existing literature there appears to be two identifiable sub-camps of negotiated access: negotiating with a strong state and negotiating with a weak state. Depending on the power of the state the amount of control levied in negotiation varies. For this reason, negotiated access is highly relatable to the relationship established through PA theory.

Although this is not a connection established in the literature, delegation and agency can still be observed. As the state grants access to an operational humanitarian space, they additionally grant or delegate authority. This shows that as the principal they have the power to maintain sovereign control over the operational space sought by INGOs. However, when the principal is weak there is the question of whether adequate sovereign control exists for the state to delegate access. Although the focus of this section is on states as principals, IGOs should not be ignored as potential contributing principals. Depending on the political context of the humanitarian operational space, present IGOs might have the strongest political authority or be a third party with who INGOs must cooperate.

Though underdeveloped as a whole, this distinction in the literature allows exploration to how different political conditions effect how INGOs operate. The following authors explain the variety of challenges present to INGOs as they seek to gain access to particular humanitarian spaces. Organized by the political context, these challenges influence the choices an INGO can make and therefore affect operational autonomy.

Additionally, before this discussion can begin it is necessary to address how the literature distinguishes between three important terms for INGOs: impartiality, neutrality, independence (Jobbins 2013; Mills 2005). These concepts are important for INGOs because they are often subjects of compromise or concession that the organization concedes in order to retain access to operational humanitarian space. This section, as well as the full literature review, focuses mostly on neutrality and independence, however all three distinct principles are important for preserving operational autonomy for an organization.[1] Mike Jobbins provides distinct definitions to clarify potential discrepancies:

> impartiality, meaning the implementation of actions solely on the basis of need, without discrimination between or within affected populations; neutrality, meaning that humanitarian action must not favor any side in an armed conflict or other dispute where such action is carried out; and independence, meaning the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented (Jobbins 2013, 78).

In situations of negotiation, as shown below, these principles to which INGOs align can be threatened or tainted. As dilemmas of action arise an organization will be forced to choose which is more valuable: their principles or access.

<u>Strong State</u>

A strong state will logically have greater sovereign control over their territory than a weak state. By understanding sovereignty as a potential mechanism of control, this would also distinguish strong states as strong principals and weak states as weak principals. As such INGOs are forced to negotiate with these actors in order to gain access (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008; del Valle and Healy 2013; Jobbins 2013).

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[1] For this study, these three principles are renamed fundamental humanitarian goals.

Hernan del Valle and Sean Healy provide a focused case study analysis to explain INGO involvement in authoritarian states (2013). Specifically, the article focused on the role MSF played in both Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as they attempted to provide and improve healthcare (del Valle and Healy 2013). In both cases MSF was prevented from making choices autonomously from the states in question. Additionally, MSF was forced to engage in negotiations with state representatives in Turkmenistan and the Ministry of Health in Uzbekistan in order to conduct their medical operations (del Valle and Healy 2013).

Negotiating with states that have authoritative control over their internal functions means that "aid agencies must enter a negotiating space where their leverage is very limited" (del Valle and Healy 2013, 198). From this restriction in leverage comes a restriction in operational autonomy. Restriction of operational autonomy is most clearly seen by MSF's debate between maintaining access to an operational space, and therefore the population, or attempting to maintain the maximum level of autonomous action. del Valle and Healy document how in the Turkmenistan case MSF expressed concern about keeping quiet, in order to retain access, regarding medical malpractice in projects in which they were involved (2013). Ferris a similar trend explains within the context of human rights abuses, where humanitarian NGOs typically choose not to speak out when they observe rights abuses in order to maintain access from the government (2011) The question became if MSF was willing to comply with problematic behavior and risk damaging their independence, meaning ability to remove themselves from the political objectives of the state who sought to maintain a degree of authority over project operations. In the case of Turkmenistan, MSF opted to leave and close all operations rather than continue complicity with malpractice (del Valle and Healy 2013).

<u>Weak State</u>

In the case of a weak state, the situation of multiple principals often arise where many parties are present and competing for control. The two types of situations discussed in the literature are also reflective of the multiple principal models presented by Lyne et al (2006). These are the collective principal model (CPM) and the multiple principal model (MPM). Both situations, exemplified by Iraq and Angola in the literature, exhibited necessary negotiation between the INGO and principals (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008; Hilhorst and Serrano 2010). The difference is Iraq's coalition government demonstrated a more centralized and focused collective principal with which to negotiate, while Angola showed the chaos of competing multiple principals. The literature supports the idea that a weak state fosters the growth of multiple principals and could yield varying power dynamics as a result.

Bolton and Jeffrey's article focuses on NGO registration in both Bosnia and Iraq during times of internationally established governance. In both cases, the process of legally required registration indicated to be constricting to the operational autonomy of the INGO (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008). Registration was equated to official legal existence that for both Bosnia and Iraq was a prerequisite for international funding (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008). In a similar light, Hilhorst also argues about the pressures of legal constraints and that INGOs are still held to follow local legislation (2005). In Bosnia, INGO operational autonomy was inhibited by "the pressures of gaining (and retaining) donor funding, [and] of conforming to regulatory norms" (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008, 587). The NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI) also advocated that an order requiring registration inhibited the ability of NGOs to complete their relief objectives (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008). However, while these interactions with international protectorates or collective principals shows a concern for an INGO's

agency, the case of Iraq demonstrates the limits of a principals delegating power.
Specifically, many European NGOs refused to register and continued work with little
repercussions. On the other hand US NGOs that relied on government funding found it
difficult to not register as the US was a leading member of the coalition government and
could potentially withdrawal funding (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008). This shows how influences
can be interrelated and jointly inhibit operational autonomy.

Offering a different political context, Hilhorst and Serrano detail Angola's
humanitarian landscape throughout its conflict and post conflict phases (2010). The article
explains how access to certain areas changed as the conflict escalated and deescalated and as
control shifted between multiple competing principals, mainly Government forces and
UNITA (The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) forces (Hilhorst and
Serrano 2010). Access to civilian populations in need was often blocked by both forces in an
effort to control the populous. Additionally, "access to populations by the few international
agencies was, throughout the war, closely linked there to the (ascribed) identity of these
organizations" (Hilhorst and Serrano 2010, 188). This meant that Government or UNITA
forces could refuse permit entry to an organization known to have previously operated in
opponent held territory (Hilhorst and Serrano 2010). Hilhorst and Serrano argue that often in
Angola's case, agencies would subvert neutrality in order to preserve as much access as
possible (2010). In addition to compromising neutrality, INGOs also risk becoming pawns in
conflict as they have little military or political support and are forced to negotiate with many
actors (Mills 2005). It should also be noted that principals like IGOs can play a significant
role in delegating authority, in this case negotiating access. For example, in complex
emergencies the UN can act as a lead organization that secures negotiation and access with

groups in conflict that allow INGOs to operate (Duffield 1997). This situation exemplifies how INGOs answer not only to delegation of authority by states but also delegation by IGOs.

As a whole, multiple principals in a complex humanitarian emergency pose a difficult negotiating situation to INGOs as agents. Depending on the strength of the principal, agency slack could allow for increased INGO autonomy. In Iraq coalition principals had little leverage over European INGOs and these organizations chose which coalition-established regulations to follow, resulting in agency slack. Hilhorst and Serrano did not establish specific instances of agency slack for operating INGOs, however Angola's competing principals did prevent the production of centralized legal frameworks for the INGOs to follow (2010). In contrast, the strong state environment in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan greatly inhibited the INGOs operational autonomy as the principal was strong enough to constrain negotiation and access.

Indirect Influences

In contrast to the literature's discussion of how donor identity and funding as well as negotiation can *directly* hinder INGO's operational autonomy, the concern of neutrality in humanitarian operational space can be characterized as an *indirect* influence on autonomy. Neutrality has been a central tenet for humanitarian efforts, beginning with the founding of the ICRC. Both neutrality and independence are concepts that express most INGO's desires to be considered different and separate from military and political responses (Olson 2006).

Two topic subsections, militarization of humanitarian operational space and politicization of humanitarian space, address the prominent concerns regarding preservation of neutrality within the literature. These sections are distinct as one shows influence of a

military's physical presence and the other the influence of political objectives. However, militarization and politicization can not be considered mutually exclusive as militaries carry political objectives as well. Infringement of neutrality, by either the physical presence of a foreign military actor or humanitarianism's association with foreign political objectives, is argued to directly impact the security of humanitarian space. However, this section of the literature is considered an indirect influence on INGO operational autonomy because the primary effect is on the security of the organization (Mills 2005; Olson 2006; Stoddard and Harmer 2006). By extension this hindrance of security would negatively impact an INGOs ability to effectively operate autonomously.

Although neutrality as an important and relevant concept is commonly addressed by scholars, linkages of infringed neutrality to INGO operations are a less substantiated body of literature. Regardless, neutrality of space is an important part of the INGO story and has a place within this chapter. Additionally, these influences are not mutually exclusive. The role that actors such as states/IGOs play in effecting neutral space is at times connected to donor objectives. Just as the model shows above, fundamental humanitarian goals are objectives mutually sought or mutually lost by INGOs.

Militarization of Humanitarian Operational Space

This section focuses on situations in which a physical foreign military presence cohabitates in the same space as INGO operations. Within the literature particular emphasis is placed on the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008; Olson 2006; Stoddard and Harmer 2006). These cases show very divisive military engagements with strong political actors possessing objective driven policies. In these situations due to "asymmetric warfare and counter-insurgency operations, and the increased blending of civil and military

responses, humanitarian actors see themselves operating in an environment in which their core humanitarian principles are increasingly compromised" (Stoddard and Harmer 2006, 23-24). As previously stated, these principles include a commitment to neutral operations and independent operational space.

Neutrality of space is effected by a variety of militarized situations. The first could be considered a co-optation of humanitarian objectives for militaristic benefit. An example would be the US administration's reference to NGOs in Iraq post-invasion as "force-multipliers" (Stoddard and Harmer 2006). Such wording un-willfully connects NGOs to US military objectives. Donini speaks harshly on this point arguing "humanitarianism is institutionalized to advance political agendas under the cover of R2P and so-called humanitarian intervention" (2010, 228). Bolton and Jeffrey, also focus on Iraq and the US-led coalition's attempt to monitor and "micromanage" NGO operations through forced registration (2008, 600). Although enforcement of certain registration policies slacked, the effort for control still demonstrates military encroachment on humanitarian space.

A second situation is described as a "dangerous blurring of lines between aid and military work" (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008, 13). As Donini argues, the military is becoming increasingly involved as actors within the humanitarian spectrum (2010). There appears to be an agreement across the literature that this blurring of operations makes distinguishing combatants (military) and noncombatants (NGO staff) difficult, and therefore opening up INGOs to significant security concerns (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008; Mills 2005; Olson 2006; Stoddard and Harmer 2006).

Politicization of Humanitarian Space

Expanding on the cohabitation with military actors, INGOs are operating in more politically

complex contexts. The consequence, intended or not, is what scholars have recognized as the

politicization of humanitarianism (Mills 2006; Stoddard and Harmer 2006). This

politicization can manifest itself as an association of neutral INGOs with Western powers

(Hilhorst 2005). Additionally, objective-driven funding exposes politicized humanitarianism.

As previously stated, many US INGOs operating in Iraq felt compelled to submit to

registration policies for fear that government funding would be withdrawn. In contrast,

European INGOs did not feel such a pressure to register because they did not receive the

same level of funding from the US government (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008). This example

shows how an INGO can become forcibly associated with a governing coalition therefore

potentially harming independence and perceived neutrality.

Lastly, given complex political conditions INGOs must make difficult decisions

between preserving neutrality entirely or reaching as many vulnerable populations as

possible. Hilhorst and Serrano describe conditions in which humanitarian actors in Angola

had to make this difficult choice, such as becoming incidentally associated with either

government or UNITA forces depending in whose territory the INGO last operated (2010).

During the US-led reconstruction effort in Iraq, INGOs also had to make choices of whether

to participate or not (Bolton and Jeffrey 2008).This connects back to access and the idea that

an INGO might have to choose with which political actor to seek delegation of authority.

Such a choice might be between a coalition government or dealing independently with

multiple political parties (Donini 2010).

Why Neutrality Matters

Considering the literature's discussion of the negative effects on core INGO principals, Mill's question appears highly appropriate, "is neutral humanitarianism becoming fiction?" (Mills 2005, 162). Another question implicitly posed and explicitly answered in the literature is why neutrality matters? Scholars agree that traditional models of humanitarian action consider preservation of neutrality as a security measure (Olson 2006; Stoddard and Harmer 2006). As Stoddard and Harmer argue part of the security triangle is to seek and foster local trust (2006). What politicization and militarization threaten is ability for INGOs to be perceived as neutral actors free of political objective and therefore trust and independence is stripped. Because of this politicization trend "affirming fidelity to core principles is no longer sufficient to guarantee the safety of staff" and INGOs become targets (Donini 2010, 233; Mills 2005). Given these security concerns, INGOs operations can be affected. For example, in 2004 MSF chose to leave Afghanistan after the murder of five staff members (Olson 2006). Additionally, "humanitarian actors operating in the most highly insecure environments do face significant pressures by western governments to conform to their broader security agenda" (Stoddard and Harmer 2006, 26).

In conclusion of this section, while neutrality is irrevocably important to INGO operations, the literature does not empirically show that INGOs are targeted solely on the grounds of contested neutrality. The question asked by scholars is whether neutrality plays a role in insecurity or if INGOs working in conflict zones are merely soft targets and windows of opportunity (Mills 2005; Olson 2006; Stoddard and Harmer 2006). In other words are INGOs and their staff targeted "because they are seen as allies of the coalition or convenient

targets?" (Stoddard and Harmer 2006). Empirical study is needed in the literature in order to address this discrepancy.

Also a whole this section does not connect as smoothly to PA theory relative to the other influences. INGOs and states/IGOs can still be labeled as agents and principals, but there is not as clear a path of authority delegation from principal to agent or an avenue for agency slack. Through militarization and politicization of the humanitarian operational space, the principals can establish mechanisms of control over the environment in which INGOs exist. However, the mere presence of a military or equating INGOs to Western objectives does not directly hinder or limit what an INGO can do, instead it destabilizes the environment. To establish a strong PA relationship the present military or Western political authority would have to make a decision regarding the INGOs ability to access the operational space.

Conclusion

As a whole, the construction of this literature review resembles a collection of several moving parts. Because there is no formally established literature regarding INGO operational autonomy, an organized conglomeration of scholarly arguments must be created to address potential influences to autonomy. Although IR scholars are continuing to focus on global governance and the role of INGOs, more work needs to be done.

The first step to organizing the wide range of materials is breaking down possible influences on an INGO's operational autonomy into two camps: direct and indirect influences. The distinction between the two is that the direct influences itself effects a change in operational autonomy. Indirect influences effect the environment in which an INGO exists

and the changed environment therefore influences operational autonomy. Donor identity and funding are addressed to the greatest extent in the literature, while negotiated access comprises a relatively smaller part of the discussion. Neutrality of space, an indirect influence, also plays an important role in explaining how the presence of other political actors could influence operational humanitarian space. The application of PA theory ties the literature review together as a whole. Each influence detailed how a PA relationship would exist in that context where the INGO as the agent interacted with a principal.

As previously stated, the arguments regarding donor identity and objective-driven funding are well founded within the literature. Several scholars have recognized that state and IGO funding can restrict operational autonomy, and evidential support has been given. Neutrality of space is discussed in less detail comparatively, but emphasizes the influences of other political actors in the same operational humanitarian space. Particularly the politicization of humanitarian operational space opens the floor back to a larger dialogue on negotiated access. These influences, though presented distinctly for organizational clarity, are not mutually exclusive and may contribute to one another. However, more specified research needs to be done on how INGOs gain access to operational space and how decisions are made regarding operations.

Extension of Study

As scholars consistently build on top of previously established research, so this study will seek to expand on the terms and conditions of negotiated access. This body of literature is underdeveloped, however it has the potential to hold explanatory power for how INGOs create and maintain operational autonomy. Following the established theoretical framework,

this study focuses on PA relationships and specifically the CPM and MPM identified by Lyne et al (2006).

Literature on donor funding and the market behavior of INGOs is extensive enough hold as an assumed condition. Additionally, neutrality of operational space fails to fully capture the extent of influence a principal can have on an agent's operations, because the focus is on influencing the environment in which the INGO resides. What is a more crucial part of the puzzle is where INGOs (agents) must work and negotiate with other political actors (principals) in order to conduct operations. In other words, the acquisition and influence of an INGO's resources has been explained in detail. What is left to explain is how an organization utilizes those resources and seeks to enter into a humanitarian operational space. This is where negotiated access or more appropriately named terms of access gains influence. As the following methods chapter details, the PA relationship between states/IGOs and INGOs and how access and operational decisions are delegated are explained through a study of terms of access and operations. This study focuses on complex political emergencies, indicated by the multiple present political actors, and utilizes the CPM and MPM. The hope of this study is to delve further into how various actors in the international system act together. More specifically, to study how INGOs can bypass, if at all, the strictures of a PA relationship in order to gain or maintain operational autonomy.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

As concluded in the previous chapter, negotiated access by INGOs has not been an area widely explored by scholars, yet still has the potential to provide significant insight regarding INGO operational autonomy. For this reason negotiated access, renamed terms of access, will be the focus of this study. This study has chosen to adjust the terminology to account not only for the negotiation that occurs between actors but also the decisions (terms) made through these interactions. Generally speaking, the literature traditionally views non-governmental actors as either organizations completely absent from the international political system or organizations co-opted by states for their own interests. This study seeks to examine a different conception for INGOs, where these organizations are actors in their own right within the international political system. The research question addressed is: *How do political actors in the international system influence service-based humanitarian INGO operational autonomy?* The political actors studied includes local and international actors, with local actors comprising either the state or localized non-state political actors and international actors represented by foreign states or IGOs. Keeping with the general consensus of the literature, objective-driven funding is assumed as influential, leaving terms of access as the independent variable identified in this study's hypotheses:

> H1: Low state/international governmental organization (IGO) funding and strict terms of access and operations result in a limited degree of operational autonomy.
> H2: Low state/international governmental organization (IGO) funding and weak terms of access and operations result in a high degree of operational autonomy.

As shown above, only INGOs that accept low levels of state/IGO funding are considered for this study. As state/IGO funding or objective-driven funding is assumed to be negatively

influential to INGO operational autonomy, an organization that does not rely on state/IGO funding is void of this particular negative influence.

This chapter is organized into two main sections. The first defines and justifies the parameters of the study as well as the variables. This includes an explanation for how and why the scope of this study is narrowed, how the independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV) are defined, and how the PA theory framework is tied to these definitions. The second section is a detailed approach to the comparative case study method conducted in this study. More specifically the defined variables are operationalized, case selection parameters identified and justified, and the method standards to which each case is held is explained. Finally, the data utilized is explained and organized by the variable to which it applies. Throughout this chapter, where applicable, justifications are tied back to previous studies.

Study Description

Scope of Study

As stated in the research question, this study focuses on INGOs that can be identified as service-based and humanitarian. Such distinctions are representative of scholarly classifications used to organize the plethora of NGOs. First, however, it is necessary to clearly define what this study considers an INGO. ECOSOC defines an INGO as "any international organization which is not established by intergovernmental agreement shall be considered a non-governmental organization for the purpose of these arrangements" (Boli 2006, 335; Murdie 2014, 20). However, this definition is vague and potentially includes a variety of organizations that would arguably fall more appropriately under at non-state actor definition, including terrorist organizations (Karns et al. 2010). Murdie offers a more detailed

definitional approach to INGOs by arguing they are non-profit, non-state, apolitical, and primarily non-violent formal institutions which "has international interests, goals, or objectives" (2014, 25). Ahmed and Potter also accept ECOSOC's definition albeit with constraints: "a NGO cannot be profit-making; it cannot advocate the use of violence; it cannot be a school, a university, or a political party; and any concern with human rights must be general rather than restricted to a particular group, nationality, or country" (2006, 8). Through these constraints the authors hoped to clarify a NGO from a Non-Profit Organization (NPO) (Ahmed and Potter 2006).

The definition this study will employ is a hybrid of both those presented by Murdie and Ahmed and Potter. Specifically this study defines INGOs as *a non-profit principled institution with a set organizational structure that has apolitical, nonviolent objectives and acts internationally.* The addition of "principled institution" reflects the exclusion of rent-seeking NGOs, but also addresses Ahmed and Potter's constraint of generalized concern versus biased objectives (Murdie 2014; 2006). Also the first overarching distinction utilized by this study is focusing research on INGOs versus NGOs. This choice was made in an effort to capture organizations which possess great capacity and influence in the international system, as well as operate across borders. This expands the potential net of principals which could influence INGOs. Focusing on INGOs also means recognizing the results of this study do not apply to local NGOs which operate in different political contexts and therefore have extraneous variables with which to contend.

The second group of distinctions relates to the type of INGO studied. The first dichotomy is service versus advocacy INGO. This addresses the types of operations the organization primarily conducts, whether they are focused on on-the-ground relief and/or

development aid versus advocating the international community to achieve specified objectives (Murdie 2014). Murdie also argues that these distinctions represent the primary focus of the organization and are not mutually exclusive (2014)**.** For this study, service-based emergency relief operations will be the primary focus, however, it is also acknowledged that certain organizations can use advocacy in tandem with service oriented operations. As identified below, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is the INGO used in this study. Although the organization is characterized as service-based they also engage in "témoignage/witnessing" meaning a form of advocacy against abuses (Fox 2014, 46).

Just as INGO operations can be categorized, so can the central objectives of the organization in general. For this reason scholars employ a humanitarian versus human rights categorization. This classification essentially shows whether an organization focuses energy on addressing a deprived need or a deprived right (Leebow 2007; Murdie 2014). These coincide with distinctions in operations, as humanitarian INGOs are often service-based and human rights INGOs utilize advocacy primarily (Murdie 2014). The justification for these distinctions is to narrow to a sample that would pose the most explanatory power for studying terms of access. This research focuses on service-based and humanitarian organizations, because these INGOs carry out tangible operations that require delegation of access in program implementations. Advocacy and human rights INGOs focus less on negotiating for operational space and more time lobbying to condemn and change policies. This does not require delegation and therefore does not exhibit a clear PA relationship.

The final aspect of this study's scope is the political environment. It is important to emphasize that only complex humanitarian emergencies are studied. Leebow identifies complex humanitarian emergencies as situations where "humanitarian workers [begin] to

interact with a range of other international actors" (2007, 227). For the purpose of this study, this definition should be amended to situations where INGOs engage with multiple principals, both local and international as specified above. The majority of the literature focuses on states (foreign and domestic) or competing local political actors as the prominent principals in negotiating access. IGOs still are included as possible principals, however, they are more likely in CPMs where the IGO often plays a role in fostering and legitimizing coalition development. IGOs also have the potential to act as third parties in negotiations (Duffield 1997). These complex humanitarian emergencies allow for the application of multiple principal models as a further test for the explanatory power of PA relationships.

Variable Definition and Operationalization

This study will follow the traditional independent variable (IV) - dependent variable (DV) structure with a discussion on assumed constants. The variables are first defined and then operationalized. Considering the underdeveloped status of the literature on *terms of access* and *operational autonomy*, especially tied to PA theory, the following defined and operationalized variables are not direct products of scholarly arguments. Rather operationalization is justified as a rational and semi-controlled measurement of a variable to adequately test the study's hypotheses. Definitions are rooted in the literature where applicable. It is important to note that all of these measurements are qualitative and reflective of a comparative case study.

Independent Variable: Defined

Terms of access is the chosen independent variable through which to analyze influences on INGO's operational autonomy. The two distinctions of the IV studied are strict versus weak *terms of access*. There is no agreed upon scholarly definition for the IV, however this

subject's discussion in the literature review can inform a newly created definition. This study

defines *terms of access* as authority delegated to an INGO (agent) by a political actor

(principal) in order to access an operational humanitarian space and implement operations as

well as place restrictions on those actions. This authority can be delegated implicitly,

meaning without official dialogue, or explicitly, understood as a product of direct

negotiation. As a clarifying point, operational humanitarian space is "a zone of independence

from political conflict that facilitates access to needy populations" (Leebow 2007, 225). This

definition is important for the study as it identifies an achievable goal of the IV, as well as

how the DV is operationalized below.

Independent Variable: Operationalized

The IV is operationalized by connecting strict versus weak *terms of access* to a

corresponding multiple PA model which arguably should mirror the variation in terms of

access (Lyne et al. 2006). This variable operationalization utilizes the study's theoretical

framework, PA theory. Strict, heavily principal-dictated, *terms of access*, are situations in

which the principals exhibit a great deal of centralized authority and hypothetically limits an

INGO's operational autonomy. This includes a greater ability of the principals to delegate

authority versus allowing the agent to act on their own accord. Following the theories

developed for cases of multiple active principals, strict *terms of access* most closely

corresponds to a CPM (Lyne et al. 2006). This model reflects a more centralized and uniform

coalition of principals lending power to the ability to delegate authority. Here the principals

should act in support of collective interests and goals. Again, it is important to note that even

in strict terms of access delegated authority can be implicit, meaning control produced

outside of direct negotiations between principal and agent. A more simplified approach is to

operationalize strict *terms of access* as powerful principals acting collectively with a high degree of delegable authority.

In contrast, weak *terms of access* are not heavily principal-dictated. In this political environment multiple principals exist but they do not operate collectively nor do they exhibit shared interests or goals. The MPM is used to characterize an environment of competing principals vying for political control (Lyne et al. 2006). Such contestation should lead to a fractured and fragile political system, meaning that the principals' delegating capacity would be limited. If the principals are unable to act collectively or a hegemonic principal of the collective does not exist to hold an agent under their authority, then the agent's operational autonomy could be less limited. Concisely explained, weak *terms of access* means the principals exhibit less control over what the agent seeks to achieve and has less delegable authority. The IV designations and the model assignments are assumed to be linked, therefore the cases are chosen according to the model.

Dependent Variable: Defined

Operational autonomy, in contrast to the IV, does have an established definition within the literature. This study incorporates Hawkins et al.'s definition of autonomy: "the range of potential action available to an agent after the principal has established a mechanism of control" (2006, 8). The mechanism of control can be understood as leverage by the principal over the agent and the actions of the agent are specified to those of service operations and implementation. This is part of the principals' authority. More specifically operational autonomy can be understood as directly, actions made independently by the INGO, or indirectly, through analyzed mission attributes. Included in the general view of *operational autonomy* from the perspective of PA theory is agency slack. Recalling from previously in

the literature review, agency slack is defined as "independent action by an agent that is undesired by the principal" (Hawkins et al. 2006, 8). *Operational autonomy* for an INGO rests in the decisions and actions they are capable of making freely without the necessity of a principal's delegated authority.

Dependent Variable: Operationalized

Operational autonomy can be best operationalized as a spectrum of an INGO's potential agency separate from what they are reliant on by means of principal delegated authority. A specified measure of *operational autonomy* includes three parts: objectives desired versus objectives met; independent decisions and actions; and mission attributes. All of these measures of the DV will also be analyzed along with how the principals respond. This spectrum is clarified by explaining hypothesized *operational autonomy* measurement results relative to the absolute extremes: no *operational autonomy* and complete *operational autonomy*.

On one extreme the principals have complete authority and allow the agent no freedom regarding *terms of access* (IV) leaving the INGO with no *operational autonomy* (DV). Specifically this would manifest as: no objectives desired are met; the INGO makes no decisions or does not act independently; and the INGO's specific mission is very short resulting in forced cessation of operations. The other extreme is that the INGO makes every decision or acts with no principal-dictated constraints concerning *terms of access*, giving the INGO complete *operational autonomy*. Regarding the DV measurements this would look like: all desired objectives are met; the INGO makes every decision and acts completely independently; and the specific mission is long with closure of operations only occurring when the mission is complete and on a voluntary basis.

Figure 1. Operational Autonomy (DV) Measurement Spectrum
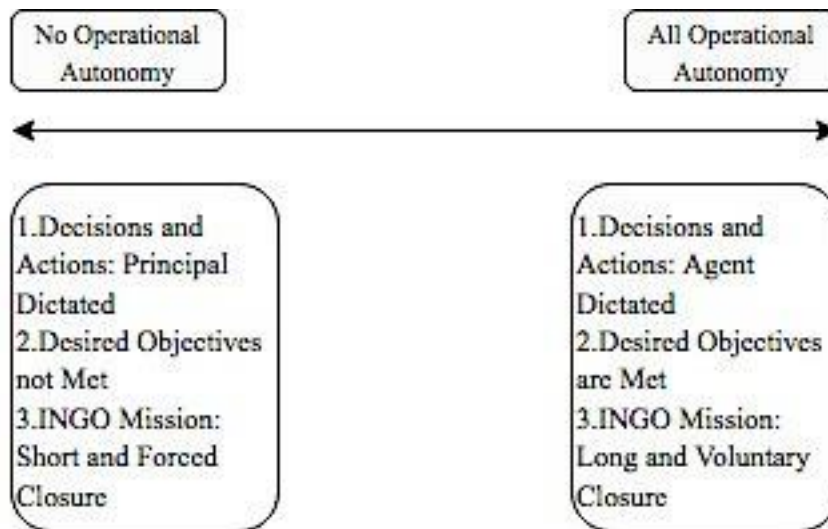
Both extremes are illogical and unlikely, but based on the results of the model and measured *terms of access* the case can be placed in a relative location along the spectrum. Although distinct points on the DV spectrum are difficult to identify given the study's qualitative nature, relative placement is explained (see Figure 1). For example, based on the study's hypotheses stricter *terms of access* will likely result in a placement on the spectrum closer to the absence of INGO *operational autonomy*. The more authority falls to the principals or agent actions/objectives are rejected by principals, the case is recorded on the left side of the spectrum. When decisions and objectives are made and met by the agent (INGO) and either accepted or unchangeable by the principals the case falls to the right, closer to absolute *operational autonomy*.

Assumed Constant

The final definition to contend with is not a variable rather an established constant. As the literature review has shown, donor identity and objective-driven funding is an assumed

influence, that will be held constant to help isolate the IV. This study holds that both cases

exhibit low levels of state/IGO funding, because as clarified in the case methodology the

INGO is kept constant. Funding is specifically defined within the context of this study as a

form of delegated authority by states/IGOs in the form of financial support to INGOs. As

established in the literature, funding might be delegated authority but it also comes with

attached mechanisms of control through which principals promote their own objectives. By

studying INGOs without this delegated authority, the agent already possesses a form of

autonomy and the study will not have to contend with outside variables. This constant is

justified in the methodology below.

Methodology

Comparative Case Study

In order to test for the influence of political actors on an INGO's operational autonomy, the

comparative case study method is used. This case study is structured to draw out the potential

influence *terms of access* has on an INGOs operational autonomy. Separating the two case

studies by the variation in the IV, strict versus weak, and examining its influence on the DV

is made possible by controlling for a number of factors. These include studying one INGO

across both case studies, looking only at cases identifiable as complex humanitarian

emergencies, and controlling for the effect of objective-driven funding. Below, the case and

INGO selection is explained and the method structure established. The method structure

follows the three *operational autonomy* measurements, and also acts as a form of control in

itself. By structuring each case study chapter in the same format and analyzing both cases

according to the same guidelines, then ideally the number of outlying influences is limited.

Case Selection

The first consideration for case selection is which INGO to select for both cases. It is important to hold constant the organization in order to also control for potential outlying variables that could bias the study's results. The INGO selected for this study is Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), abbreviated as MSF. This organization is selected for its reputation of commitment to the fundamental humanitarian goals. These organizational qualities, previously defined in the literature, mean that MSF is committed to maximizing their *operational autonomy*. This pursuit of autonomy is not only to meet objectives but also to maintain moral and ethical culture of the organization. This manifests most clearly as a distance from governmental support and control (Fox 2014). This is seen specifically by the INGO's reliance on private funding sources to avoid the implications of donor objective-driven funding (Siméant 2005). Making the INGO constant also means that the study is restricted to cases in which MSF has conducted operations. Additionally, it is important to note that MSF's structure is decentralized to various country operational sections with an overseeing MSF-International branch. Although different operational sections of MSF have different funding compositions and they carry out different missions, it is difficult to clearly distinguish specific actions by operational section (Siméant 2005). For this reason, MSF operations are viewed from the macro-organizational level in both case studies.

The first case selected must be representative of the CPM in order to demonstrate strict terms of access. For this case, Afghanistan during the international coalition governing years (2001-2004) represents the model. This case was selected given the supported efforts between the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) coalition, Security Council backed International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and United Nations Assistance Mission in

Afghanistan (UNAMA) (Ayub and Kouvo 2008; S/RES/1378 2001; S/RES/1386 2001; S/RES/1401 2002). Though local actors, such as the Taliban, were present at this time their influence was substantially decreased by coalition efforts. The focus of this case study is on the collective of international actors, however local actors are addressed where applicable.. The second case should show weak *terms of access*, and therefore the MPM is the case selection criteria. MSF's second mission in Somalia (2006-2013) is a good representation of this model by showing competing political authorities vying for power (Neuman and Ludoc 2011). The lack of a centralized hegemonic governing authority also contributes to Somalia's assignment under a MPM. General guidance for case study selection was informed by MSFs publication, *Humanitarian Negotiations Revealed: The MSF Experience* (Magone et. al. 2011). This larger text provides an in depth analysis of negotiations involved in specific MSF missions, and supports the above case PA model assignments. Additionally, a temporal limit was placed on case selection based on the missions that occurred after the establishment of the internet. Missions occurring after this advancement have more digitized documents accessible on MSFs various websites, where the majority of the study's data is collected.

Method Structure

A standardized method structure is developed and applied to both cases. Each case identifies and describes the complex humanitarian emergency, and then follows the DV's measurements as an analysis tool. The first steps are to identify points of situational context. These include establishing a brief conflict history, leading to identify who the principals are that grant authority or have limited ability to grant authority. Additionally, it is important to provide evidential support for the case's assigned PA model: MPM or CPM. This means

proving that there is more than one principal and how these principals may or may not work together.

The next section focuses on data collection and analysis, which again is qualitative not quantitative. Each case would need to address perceived level of complicity by the principals to MSFs goals and how access to an operational humanitarian space was gained. Complicity is used for analysis context rather than a measure of operational autonomy. The remaining sections mirror the *operational autonomy* measurements identified above. The first is an analysis of decisions and actions made by MSF versus the principals. This looks at how MSF communicates with the principals, particularly how access to operational space was discussed and gained. The next point is to establish if MSF or the principals appeared to make the majority of decisions in terms of how operations were conducted. Potentially important decisions include if certain mission goals were implemented or project changes were approved or rejected by the principals. The second measurement addressed is objectives desired versus objectives met. This contributes to the analysis of decisions and actions, because it shows what MSF was able to achieve in that particular PA context. Finally the last measurement analyzed is mission attributes. This includes duration of the mission and the reasons for closure of a mission. This is an indirect measurement of operational autonomy that seeks to fill the gaps left by a lack of official and recorded dialogue between the principals and agent.

The last substantive section is a preliminary analysis of each case that: summarizes the level of *operational autonomy* achieved by the INGO, and evaluates whether the hypothesis matches the realities of the case's identified *terms of access*. Any conditions of agency slack is also discussed in this section. Following a brief conclusion to the case,

comparative analysis of the case study findings is presented in the conclusion chapter. This chapter compares both case's operational measurement results and the concluding DV designation (limited or high operational autonomy) for each case, relative to each other.

Data Sources

The data sources used to build the case study are compilations of material produced by MSF (primary sources) and material produced by scholars detailing the case in question (secondary sources). The material produced by MSF was collected from English speaking websites: including MSF-International, MSF-USA, MSF Field Research, and Centre de réflexion sur l'action et les savoirs humanitaires (CRASH). From these websites any statement, report, press release, conference transcript, or article related to the cases in question were analyzed for data on PA interactions and measures of operational autonomy. Beyond these primary sources, other scholars have also spent a great deal of effort to detail their own studies of MSF operations. These books and articles provide academically accountable information of the details discussed within the case studies. One such book identified previously is *Humanitarian Negotiations Revealed: The MSF Experience*, which provides the most detailed account available of the negotiations in which MSF engages (Magone et. al. 2011).

Both *terms of access* and *operational autonomy* use similar data sources, including a combination of primary and secondary sources. However analysis of the DV relies most heavily on primary sources collected online from MSF. The case's assigned IV's corresponding model is supported by secondary academic literature. These case studies are constructed like puzzles with large collections of small pieces of data informing how the case developed contextually, how access was gained and negotiations conducted, and a general

idea of operational autonomy. Prior to the conclusion of this methods chapter it is necessary

to provide a general overview of the goals and character of the INGO studied. MSF prides

itself on their commitment to assisting the most vulnerable of populations in the worst of

conditions.

Overview of MSF

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is one the leading aid providers in medical

humanitarianism. It is known for not only its prestigious history and reputation, but also its

scope of access to crises across the globe. The five principles which drive MSFs missions

and operations are: medical ethics, independence, impartiality and neutrality, bearing

witness, and accountability (MSF 2016a). The steadfast adherence to these principles will

guide this study's understanding of the goals each MSF mission hopes to achieve. The ability

to remain true to these principles in the face of authority yielding principals will also speak to

the organization's operational autonomy.

As previously stated in the methodology, MSF exists as a decentralized

conglomeration of operational sections all under the umbrella of an international branch

(MSF 2016b). Although this study will assume the organization acts with mostly the same

objectives and principles, this decentralization speaks to MSFs distinct choice to avoid the

constraints of hierarchical bureaucracy (DeChaine 2005). Expanding upon this idea of

relative operational independence within the INGO, MSF also refuses to accept large

quantities of public institution funding. Instead, MSF relies on mostly private fundraising and

donations in order to maintain independence and neutrality (DeChaine 2005). In a 2013

publication MSF was cited for having 90% of their funding come from nongovernmental sources (Roeder, Jr., Simard).

For the purposes of the upcoming case studies, MSF serves as the common denominator agent in order to evaluate two different Principal Agent (PA) environments: CPM, and MPM. The ultimate goal of this study is to explore the political context in which this INGO must consistently engage. Larry Winter Roeder, Jr. and Albert Simard argue that "MSF was founded with the understanding that you cannot divorce aid from politics" (2013, 66). While this might appear to contradict MSF's fundamental humanitarian goals, on the other hand such a statement explains how INGOs must work within the existent political system to carve out humanitarian space. Each case study demonstrates how MSF worked to establish this access and space to carry out their operations. MSF's ability to meet these objectives speaks to the degree of operational autonomy that particular mission is able to maintain, depending on the designated PA model. Regardless of the results of this study, engagement with political actors through negotiation and dialogue is greatly apparent.

Conclusion

This methodology details and justifies the scope and parameters of this study, as well as how the study is structured and variables operationalized. The primary objective of this chapter is to provide as much clarity to the components and processes of this qualitative study as possible. The goal of this study is to contribute to existing work on INGOs as actors in the international system, and demonstrate how INGOs operate in incongruent power structures and potentially advance their own agency. Application of PA theory is used to analyze these power structures including when INGOs like MSF can bypass the typical PA authority

delegating structure. This PA relationship is evaluated in both case studies where the variation in *terms of access* is hypothesized to match the corresponding principal models: CPM and MPM. The conclusion chapter of this study more fully compares the analyzed results of the two cases and looks at operational autonomy relative to both cases. Here an overview of the general success or failure of the study is presented, and an explanation given for why this was the outcome. Finally, the chapter argues for avenues of continued research and revised hypotheses.

Chapter 3: MSF and Centralized Principal Authority in Afghanistan

Introduction

For the latter part of the 20th century until present, Afghanistan has teetered closely on the edge of instability and collapse. Violent political contestation and several waves of international military involvement have triggered horrendous humanitarian crises. In response to these dire conditions, many aid organizations have had long histories of involvement in Afghanistan. MSF first began missions during the tumultuous years of Soviet occupation and continued presence through the Taliban's regime (Crombé and Hofman 2011).

While recognizing MSF's long presence in Afghanistan, this case focuses specifically on MSF's return to operations directly after 9/11 and through the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) coalition. The case study ends with MSF's departure from Afghanistan in 2004. A brief conflict history is provided for context, but also as justification for this case's assigned Principal Agent (PA) model: Collective Principal model (CPM). As demonstrated in the following sections, the coalition of international actors, including both state militaries and IGOs acting as a collective, greatly influenced MSF's ability to maintain operational autonomy. The subsequent section, PA Model Analysis between MSF and the International Coalition with their supporting actors, analyzes operational autonomy through three measures of the DV: actions/decisions made, objectives desired versus met, and mission attributes. A concluding analysis combines these measures of operational autonomy into a cohesive result applicable to the hypothesis.

Situational Context

Conflict History

A commonly heard sentiment in regards to international military involvements in

Afghanistan is that the country is inhospitable and unconquerable. While the validity of this

statement could very well be contested, Afghanistan has become a metaphorical black hole

through which British, Soviet, and US militaries have invested endless resources to no avail

(Dalrymple 2014). This section provides a brief conflict history leading up to attacks of

September 11 and is followed by an analysis of the political situation at the time of MSF's

involvement once returning to Afghanistan after 9/11.

Conflict Development to 9/11

Ghost Wars by Steve Coll is a highly comprehensive and detailed text of the series of Afghan

conflicts leading up to World Trade Center attacks on 9/11 (2004). Coll's analytical approach

connects the Soviet Invasion of 1979, civil conflict between Mujahedeen war lords,

development of Al-Qaeda, and the rise of the Taliban all into a clear cause and effect

relationship. He demonstrates that 9/11, the impetus for decisive international involvement in

Afghanistan, was an unavoidable result from a long and conflict ridden history (Coll 2004).

The same idea of interconnectedness is applied to this case study, as conflict development

helps to explain the complex political emergency in which MSF found itself starting in 2001.

  Afghanistan is often compared to the Soviets as what the Vietnam War is to the US.

The invasion of 1979 was a proxy war fought within the Cold War tradition and culminated

in a gravely expensive and disastrous conflict through which little was gained (Ayub and

Kouvo 2008). What did arise as a response to this conflict was a grassroots resistance

campaign in the 1980s organized around the Mujahedeen war lords and their respective

armies (Ayub and Kouvo 2008). The various factions of Mujahedeen, meaning "holy warrior," were able through clandestine assistance from the US CIA to drive out the Soviet occupiers (Ayub and Kouvo 2008; Coll 2004, 45). However, upon the withdrawal of the Soviets and the fragile and decimated state of the country, a power vacuum was left to fill. For Afghanistan, this resulted in another wave of fighting between Mujahedeen war lords vying for political control (Ayub and Kouvo 2008; Coll 2004). Out of this civil conflict, the Taliban, an extremist religious regime, rose to power and established government control throughout Afghanistan (Ayub and Kouvo 2008). This would be the governing regime at the time of US military engagement.

Blended into this history is the story of Al-Qaeda and their development within Afghanistan. During the counterinsurgency against the Soviets several wealthy Arabs lent their support to the Afghan cause including armed service or funds. One such Arab fighter was Osama bin Laden (Coll 2004). This connection laid the foundation for the transnational terrorist group's tie to Afghanistan, including protection and operational space under the Taliban (Coll 2004). After 9/11, the US demanded the Taliban lift their protection over Al-Qaeda, and Taliban's refusal to comply marked the start of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and a consortium of international involvement (Keane 2016).

US Engagement and International Involvement

The US military was the first and foremost participant in the war against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Less than a month after 9/11 the US government notified the UN Security Council that it was starting military engagement against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. While unquestionably unilateral, the Security Council still affirmed US action "as a legitimate exercise in self-defense and supported the US-led military efforts in Afghanistan, giving

authorization under Chapter VII for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to maintain security in Kabul" (Ayub and Kouvo 2008, 647). Approval by the UN as well as support from NATO also marked the start of further internationalization of the conflict.

In the months following the start of OEF on October 7, 2001, several countries including Britain, Turkey, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, France and Poland deploy troops to bolster OEF (CNN 2016). From this moment the war in Afghanistan was no longer a unilateral action but rather a coalition. The internationalization of actors also continued with increasing UN involvement. In December of that year the UN hosted the Bonn Conference which resulted in an agreement recognizing an Afghan interim government to replace the fallen Taliban regime and established a framework for drafting a new constitution and future elections (Ayub and Kouvo 2008; CNN 2016). What the Bonn Agreement also accomplished was a division of reconstruction responsibilities between the coalition countries. For example, the US was responsible for the military, Britain covered counter-narcotics and Germany bolstered the police force (Keane 2016). Additionally, ISAF fell under UN mandate and was led by a number of states before NATO finally assumed leadership in 2003 (Ayub and Kouvo 2008; S/RES/1386 2001; S/RES/1413 2002; S/RES/1444 2002; S/RES/1510 2003). Finally the UN developed the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in March of 2002, which sought to centralize all UN missions in Afghanistan and promote implementation of the Bonn Agreement and management of UN humanitarian relief operations (S/RES/1401 2002).

By 2004, the first democratic elections were held, however progress had not halted the worsening security situation and increasing allegations of government corruption (Ayub and Kouvo 2008; CNN 2016). Although this case study only covers the time period up until

July 2004, when MSF withdrew all operations, the international community and the newly

engineered Afghan government struggled to successfully rebuild Afghanistan. The Taliban

resurgence and US-led coalition military engagement continued the humanitarian emergency

well beyond 2004.

Principal Structure

As the previous section indicates, after 9/11 several international actors entered into

Afghanistan's operational space in order to fill the power vacuum left by the Taliban's

removal. In some way all of the these actors possessed authority within Afghanistan. The

most obvious and the most powerful would be the United States military, as this actor

initiated and spear-headed military engagement. Those countries working in coalition with

the United States' OEF were also given oversight authority by the Bonn Agreement

possessing a degree of authority over the internal functions in Afghanistan. In connection

back to this study's theoretical framework, Principal Agent (PA) theory, any actor possessing

authority over an actor or delegating authority to that actor is a principal. Likewise, any actor

that is under the authority of an actor or receives authority from an actor is an agent. MSF

serves as the agent and the coalition of political actors present, including the UN and Afghan

interim government, act as principals.

The justification for applying the CPM to this particular MSF mission in Afghanistan

is the political environment created after US-led military intervention. These principals all

worked together towards a collective interest and exhibited cross-principal support. The first

example of support between principals was the Security Council's approval of US military

engagement at the start of the conflict (Ayub and Kouvo 2008). A second example would be

the avenues of coordination between principals, such as UNAMA sacrificing the role of

strong overseer to allow for "lead nations" to take responsibility for certain divisions of labor (Ayub and Kouvo 2008). Even implicitly, the US and other coalition states' participation on the UN Security Council and in NATO could account for collective action among principals. In regards to a collective interest, all five identified principals (US, Coalition States, UN, the coalition-supported interim government, and NATO) promoted or supported the eradication of terrorism in Afghanistan, stable and democratic regime change, humanitarianism, and a strengthened security environment (Ayub and Kouvo 2008; S/RES/1378 2001; S/RES/1386 2001; S/RES/1401 2002). In accordance with the model these principals acted as a collective in pursuit of this interest. Recalling the theoretical foundation, it is expected with the CPM that the case will exhibit strict terms of access. How well this case adheres to this assumption, in relation to measures of operational autonomy, is discussed in concluding analysis.

PA Model Analysis

As stated, the CPM is the focus of Afghanistan's case study and represents the Coalition and UN effort in Afghanistan at the start of the war in 2001. Although other political actors do exist, such as the Taliban and Al Qaeda, these principals operate in opposition to the CPM. Given the quick military response to 9/11, these non-state actors' authority was effectively pushed to the margins. The Taliban and Al Qaeda's authority mainly resurfaced as the insurgency gained speed (Bruno 2013). For this reason actors outside of the CPM are only mentioned when relevant to MSF's dealings with the CPM. Additionally, actions taken by individual principals are treated as actions of the CPM in order to simplify PA interactions in

the study. A justification is that MSF does not, except in necessary cases, name individual principals.

Through this analysis, the three measurements of operational autonomy are applied in order to evaluate the model's influence on the DV. These include decisions/actions, objectives, and mission attributes. The following analysis finds that while operational autonomy is not explicitly denied by the principals, severe restrictions on MSF's operational autonomy do occur when objectives were unable to be met and withdrawal was a necessary decision.

Overview of PA Complicity

Identifying the level of complicity means addressing the shared interests/goals that exists between principals and the agent. Although not a component of the model, complicity provides analytically relevant context. If principals agree with the general aims and objectives of the agent then operational autonomy could be more achievable than if the principals reject the objectives or presence of the organization. In the case of Afghanistan, the CPM appeared to agree or at the very least permit MSF's involvement in Afghanistan.

This complicity is shown by both military and IGO principals citing concern for the welfare of Afghan civilians. The UN Security Council shortly after the start of the conflict called for "urgent humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of Afghan people both inside Afghanistan and Afghan refugees" (S/RES/1378 2001). The United States, the leading principal within the CPM, utilized dual rhetoric throughout the conflict. First, military engagement was justified as a necessary response to terrorism where all means available would be used to "defeat the global terror network" (Bush 2001). The second form of rhetoric put the conflict in the context of humanitarianism. In his speech to Congress directly

following 9/11, President Bush argued that the "United States respects the people of Afghanistan- after all, we are currently its largest source of humanitarian aid" (2001). Humanitarian rhetoric by the US government increased as engagement continued (Ayub and Kouvo 2008). In summation, the general ideals at the onset of the conflict would be have been complicit to MSF's aim of providing medical aid to vulnerable populations in the war zone.

A question to explore though is where the line exists between complicity and co-optation of humanitarian objectives. When militaristic principals utilize humanitarian rhetoric and labels for their own political objectives, they inhibit the fundamental humanitarian goals. Aid becomes no longer purely about assistance to vulnerable populations, but as a co-opted means to win a war. At this point complicity no longer is a benefit to operational autonomy but a hindrance.

Decisions and Actions: Principal or Agent?

For the case of Afghanistan it seems unfair to claim one actor as the sole, or even primary decision-maker, over the other. The analyzed material demonstrates no blatant effort by the CPM to stop MSF from making decisions regarding operations or to directly hinder MSF from carrying out any action. In the same spirit though, MSF was also unable to effectively influence or change decisions/actions of the principals. In fact, MSF had no desire to be a part of the direction of military operations, rather they only desired a preservation of humanitarian space. For this reason MSF did not advocate, as other present INGOs for a ceasefire at the start of the conflict (Salvatore et al. 2001).

This section looks at specifically the various methods through which MSF and the CPM communicated, including the limited publicized evidence of MSF's negotiations with

the principals, as well as a general analysis of decisions/actions made by MSF compared with decisions/actions by principals. The analysis of operational autonomy from this section leads into the discussion on objectives desired versus met, which gives the clearest view of operational autonomy for this case.

PA Communications

From data collected regarding MSF involvement in Afghanistan, communication with principals occurred in three ways: direct small-scale negotiation, publicized statements, and public appeals directed at a principal's political bodies. Direct negotiation is considered a fundamental part of MSF's strategy, and one that allows for the establishment of politically savvy relationships. For example, "if we [MSF] are going to help people whose lives hang in the balance, we need to reach them. This means negotiating with government officials, high ranking military officers, clan elders and rebel leaders" (Neuman 2012, qtd in Roeder, Jr. and Simard 2013). Put in the Afghan context, during the Taliban regime MSF negotiated one-on-one with doctors in the Ministry of Health (MoH) (Salvatore et al. 2001). It is assumed in this study that any contact MSF would have had with the MoH after the establishment of the Afghan Interim Government would have appeared as general communications with the Afghan government. During a press conference following the closure of MSF operations in Afghanistan, Kenny Gluck Director of Operations for MSF-Holland stated that MSF had been meeting officials at the Pentagon, British government, and other coalition countries' embassies for the past three years (Gluck and Buissonnière 2004). Although there is a lack of specific records of these individual meetings, these statements demonstrate the general trend and importance of direct engagement and negotiation to MSF. When operating in the politically contentious context of war, it is beneficial to have relationships with all parties.

The second form of communication, publicized statements, is a much greater compilation of accessible evidence. This form of communication is indirect as there is no specifically addressed receiver, and the intended subject is not always explicitly stated. Because this type of communication would be accessible to the CPM as well as the public, it is still viewed as communication with principals. This form of communication also evokes a foundational ideal of MSF, "témoignage," meaning witnessing. This ideal allows MSF to speak out against injustices while still maintaining the aesthetic of neutrality (Fox 2014). Most of the data collected for analysis is this type of communication including: MSF press releases, reports, Op-eds, and academic articles.

The third form of communication is also a small category, but represents a combination of the previous two communication styles. Publicized appeals to a principal's political body is another form of communication and negotiation to attempt to protect operational autonomy. These appeals are direct and depending on the size and power of the political body could be very influential. An example would be Nicolas Torrente of MSF-USA speaking at a Joint Hearing of the US Congressional Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Subcommittee and the International Operations and Terrorism Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (de Torrente 2001). The variation in communication methods demonstrates how entrenched PA relationships are within MSF's operational context.

<u>Overview of Important Decisions and Actions</u>

The aim of this section is to discuss major decisions and actions made by MSF and compare them to decisions and actions made by the CPM. Although this measure does not

demonstrate much of a negative effect on operational autonomy, the data analyzed is used to support the section on objective's influence over MSF's operational autonomy.

This section relies heavily on published press releases from MSF-USA between 2001 and 2004. Roughly a month after 9/11 and weeks before OEF commenced bombing campaigns, MSF withdrew its international staff, while still keeping a small presence in Northern Alliance held territory (Bruno 2013; MSF Press Release 2001a). Starting in November, MSF began to attempt to reestablish itself in Afghanistan, despite the ongoing war. On November 8 MSF established two new programs in Mile 46 and Makaki, and by November 12 an exploratory team had been sent to Kabul to access the situation and reestablish contact with local MSF staff (MSF Press Release 2001c; MSF Press Release 2001d). Within the year MSF had sent teams to Mazar-I-Sharif and Taloqan, as well as established activity in Herat, Kunduz, and Jalalabad (MSF Press Release 2001e; MSF Press Release 2001f; MSF Press Release 2001g; MSF Press Release 2001h). This meant MSF now had an established presence in the North, East, South, and along the Pakistan border. No press release during this time mentioned any opposition by coalition forces to MSF regaining operational access. However, international staff did have to evacuate from Jalalabad during the Tora Bora bombing campaign.

According to the press releases, re-establishment appeared to be a relatively uncontested process with little interference from the CPM. While there was a lack of press communication during 2002, 2003 to 2004 became a time of uncertainty and instability for MSF. These publicized statements were products of decisions made by the CPM that indirectly affected MSF. The singularly influential decision on agent operational autonomy made by principals was utilizing rhetoric that mixed both military and humanitarian goals.

Evidence for this mixed rhetoric was mostly voiced by the US government, however actions reflecting this rhetoric were carried out by many in the CPM. All the accusations were regarding actions that clearly blurred the line between military space and humanitarian space. Examples of actions carried out by coalition forces were: military personnel wearing civilian clothing and driving in unmarked vehicles; US special forces posing as humanitarian workers; and distributing leaflets at airdrops claiming aid was dependent on political cooperation (Kelly and Rostrup 2002; de Torrente 2004a).

Beyond decisions and actions taken strictly by military principals, the UN and UNAMA also engaged in the mixing of military, political and humanitarian rhetoric. Examples include: the Security Council citing support for OEF; UNAMA advocating for political regime change while seeking to coordinate humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan; and the UN supporting ISAF (S/RES/1510 2003; S/RES/1401 2002; Gluck and Buissonnière 2004; S/RES/1386 2001). Finally, combined efforts of the CPM pressured INGOs operating in Afghanistan to support state-building efforts and reconstruction, effectively making "politics and aid integrated under the same structure" (Crombé with Hofman 2011, 31). Such integration could be translated as an endorsement of coalition actions and the new Afghan government. Such forced integration did not directly affect MSF as the majority of control was exhibited over INGOs reliant on state funding (Crombé and Lemasson 2003; MSF 2003/2004). MSF's well established funding independence helped them to reject being a part of an integrated reconstruction plan (Crombé and Hofman 2011). However, MSF did experience the consequences of operating in an environment that promoted integrated military-humanitarian objectives.

Following these decisions and actions made by the principals, MSF press releases

began to regularly include statements calling out the blurring of lines between military and

humanitarian space (MSF Press Release 2001h; MSF Press Release 2003; MSF Press

Release 2004a; MSF Press Release 2004b; MSF Press Release 2004c). Specifically, MSF

called for militaries to respect humanitarian organizations as neutral, impartial actors, and

that the politicization of aid can be very dangerous (MSF Press Release 2003; MSF Press

Release 2004a). This section shows that despite MSF being seemingly able to maintain

operational autonomy in gaining access to locations in 2001, the preservation of a framework

of secure space for humanitarianism was threatened by principal actions and decisions. At

this point, preservation of space and security become a question of objectives versus concrete

decisions or actions.

Summary

From PA communications and exhibited decisions/actions, negotiation was a phenomenon

that MSF engaged in either directly or indirectly in order to gain access and conduct

operations. Looking specifically at decisions and actions, operational autonomy in access and

implementation was relatively high for MSF. No principal of the CPM openly contested

MSFs reestablishment throughout Afghanistan during the war. Given this result, it is

important to discuss why MSF withdrew from Afghanistan in 2004 while the conflict was

still ongoing and vulnerable populations were still in need. To answer this, an examination of

objective discrepancies is important.

Objectives

When studying objectives, the term can be classified in two parts: what is initially desired

and what is actually achieved at the end of a period of time. A discrepancy where there are

more desired objectives than met objectives means much was not achieved and the result is limited operational autonomy. In other words, this study argues an INGO's objectives are not met because the organization does not have enough autonomy to ensure those objectives are met. This would be a clear situation of principal authority over an agent.

Desired Objectives

The objectives MSF strives to achieve in every mission are clearly laid out under the organization's section on "Charter and Principles," including: medical ethics, independence, impartiality and neutrality, bearing witness (témoignage), and accountability (MSF 2016). First and foremost, MSF recognizes that it is a provider of medical humanitarianism and as such seeks out the most vulnerable of populations. For example, Weissman specifies that "humanitarian action [MSF action] is on the side of the losers in the here and now" (2010). MSF also considers medical assistance as multi-faceted in that they not only seek to respond to violent trauma but also other healthcare concerns such as mental health (Lucchi 2012). Additionally, MSF seeks as often as possible to work with any viable existing healthcare structures in a location (Lucchi 2012).

Taking these general mission objectives outlined by MSF, a larger meta-objective can be identified: a framework for operational humanitarian space. This term, used in part above, is derived from MSF statements and includes the designation *operational* to incorporate the organization's primary effort, medicine (Gluck and Buissonnière 2004). Though the ideals of this objective are valued in all MSF missions, this objective was specifically desired in Afghanistan. As a whole a framework for operational humanitarian space represents the ability of MSF to have a place to provide impartial medical assistance to vulnerable populations regardless of the political situation, and do so while maintaining independence

and neutrality. In short, this framework means a place for MSF to exist. Peter Redfield offers a similar definition to humanitarian space, as "the ability of humanitarians to work freely in a given set of circumstances" (2013). This would also include the ability for MSF to speak freely without the threat of reprisals. An essential facet to this framework, and also in itself an objective, is security of operations. MSF tries to secure missions by maintaining a clearly distinct operational space and requesting that parties to the conflict respect this space (de Torrente 2001). Objectives as a measure of operational autonomy mean that if MSF achieves both desired objectives: a framework of operational humanitarian space and security, then the organization has achieved high operational autonomy.

Met Objectives

High operational autonomy was not achieved, however, as both objectives sought by MSF (a framework and protection) were not met. As the decisions and actions analysis starts to articulate, MSF spent a great deal of time in publicized statements and reports speaking against the co-optation and invasion of humanitarian space. Despite so adamantly speaking on behalf of the preservation of space and calling upon all parties to respect such a framework, no significant allocations were made by the CPM to help MSF meet these objectives. Starting in 2001 MSF began calling on parties of the conflict to respect humanitarian space and continuously tried to appeal to the CPM to heed their warnings. In 2003 MSF published an article asking "Is Independent Humanitarian Action Over in Afghanistan?" and stated that INGOs were facing "increasing resistance and misunderstanding from the Afghan government, donors, and UN aid agencies to preserve their independence" (Crombé and Lemasson 2003, 1). Despite the actions and decisions made, MSF was not able to establish or preserve a framework for operational humanitarian

space or protect their operations in Afghanistan. The coalition war effort still moved forward advocating for a new war strategy of a "military-humanitarian" coalition (Crombé and Lemasson, 2003).

Even after cessation of MSF's activities in Afghanistan, the organization continued to speak against co-optation or violation of protected operational humanitarian space. A 2010 piece by Weissman, entitled "Not in Our Name" discusses the growing trend of "civilized wars" or wars conducted according to humanitarian norms (195). However, the author recognizes that deploying soldiers and protecting civilians are too different objectives. When militarizing humanitarian operations, such as convoys and facilities, those operations can become military targets (Weissman 2010). During a press conference in Kabul, MSF also stated that a fundamental part of war is being able to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate targets (Gluck and Buissonnière 2004). As a part of the framework of operational humanitarian space objective, full access is gained on the condition of refusing to pronounce any war aims as legitimate (Weissman 2010). This is why MSF has viewed access for missions as contingent upon the fundamental humanitarian goals. Any action that blurs the lines of what is military-political and humanitarian also blurs the lines on what are legitimate and illegitimate targets.

What would become a flashpoint for MSF's difficult and constraining experience in Afghanistan with the CPM, was the murder of 5 MSF staff members in Baghdis province (MSF 2004a). Following the attack, an alleged Taliban spokesman released a statement saying that MSF was carrying out the policies of the US government and warned MSF would remain a future target (de Torrente 2004b). This action, by an actor outside to the CPM, demonstrated to MSF that indeed a respected and protected framework for operational

humanitarian space did not exist in Afghanistan and security for humanitarian operations and aid works could no longer be trusted. Noting the Taliban's statement, blurring of lines had resulted in MSF being perceived as operationally linked to the CPM. Because a clearly distinguished space for MSF did not exist, the INGO"s maintenance of operational autonomy was hindered.

Summary

By the end of the mission in Afghanistan, MSF had failed to achieve either a framework for operational humanitarian space or security. Despite allowing MSF to act and establish several different operations, the CPM made no substantial effort to accommodate a humanitarian space untarnished by aid co-optation, for the sake of military objective. Although MSF made decisions and acted with general operational autonomy, because the organization did not achieve their desired objectives MSF's operational autonomy in Afghanistan was still limited overall. Though having surface level complicity with their operations from the CPM, MSF did not maintain a suitable framework for operational humanitarian space or security as the principals involved did not respect the fundamental humanitarian goals. This failure to meet objectives directly effected the mission duration and caused mission closure.

Mission Attributes

The final measurement of operational autonomy looks at the MSF operations in Afghanistan as a whole. This section addresses the end result of all MSF's decisions/actions and failed efforts to achieve desired objectives. This is not an analysis of mission success, rather a final analysis component for how MSF as the agent was able to operate in the presence of a CPM.

Mission Duration

Although MSF had worked continuously in Afghanistan before OEF, this study identifies the start of this mission when MSF returned after 9/11 under the centralized authority of the CPM. Taking this start date into account, MSF mission activities only lasted from November 2001 to July 2004, a little under three years. Given the continuing severity of need in Afghanistan and the wide variety of medical assistance provided, this is a shockingly short time period. Before leaving, MSF was working in 13 provinces, provided basic and maternal care as well as surgical units, treated malaria and TB, worked to improve sanitation, and helped internally displaced persons (IDPs) (MSF 2003/2004).

Mission Closure

The decision to close activities in Afghanistan did not come lightly and also MSF experienced backlash. The INGO has stated that "definite withdrawal is only discussed when comparing risk against medical impact" (Sa'Da, Duroch, and Taithe 2013, 323). Considering the great potential of medical impact MSF could have provided, the security risk must have been measured to be very high. Just as the killings of 5 MSF staff represented to failure to meet mission objectives, so it also characterizes the severe security situation in Afghanistan. MSF identified that, principally, the failure of armed actors to respect security was the INGO's reason for full departure (Gluck and Buissonnière 2004). Though this is directly focused on the insurgents who carried out the attack, the indirect blame also falls on the CPM for not respecting humanitarian space. In a letter to the editor, Rowan Gillies rejects a previous op-ed's opinion that INGOs should work in closer collaboration with the [US] military (2004). Instead, the article stresses that MSF's departure was because of the killings and the Afghan government's failure to investigate and prosecute the attack. This was

compounded by MSF having to fight back against confusion of assistance by militaries and military co-optation of humanitarian space (Gillies 2004).

<u>Summary</u>

Given how short the mission duration was, and taken with previous measurements, MSF's operational autonomy appears even more constrained. Not only were desired objectives not met, but the time frame of the mission did not allow for any significant reduction in medical needs for the Afghan people. Additionally, the analysis of mission closure shows that MSF's choice was a last resort, and a step that the organization felt was ultimately necessary. The organization specified that MSF would return if a framework for aid was available and if the CPM stopped undermining humanitarian space (Gluck and Buissonnière 2004).

Operational Autonomy Analysis

This concluding analysis section combines all three previous measures in order to give a holistic view of operational autonomy for MSF in Afghanistan. This combined measure of the dependent variable is applied to the case's designated hypothesis in order to evaluate if the hypothesis is accepted or rejected. Also the case's applicability to the independent variable, strict versus weak terms of access and corresponding PA model, is discussed. Finally, a concluding summary of this case and results are provided.

Results Analysis

Recalling the study's research question, *how do political actors in the international system influence service-based humanitarian INGO operational autonomy?,* the main goal is to observe MSF's level of operational autonomy through the lens of the multiple principal structures. Taking all measures of operational autonomy together, MSF exhibited limited

operational autonomy while conducting missions in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2004. From the previous analysis, this limit in operational autonomy was characterized by an absence of a humanitarian framework for MSF to work in, where the CPM would respect humanitarian operational space. Also a sense of blurred lines between military and humanitarian space and objectives limited MSF's perceived operational autonomy, as the CPM engaged in co-optation of aid. The overall measure of operational autonomy as limited in Afghanistan is demonstrated by figure 2.

Figure 2. Afghanistan Results Diagram
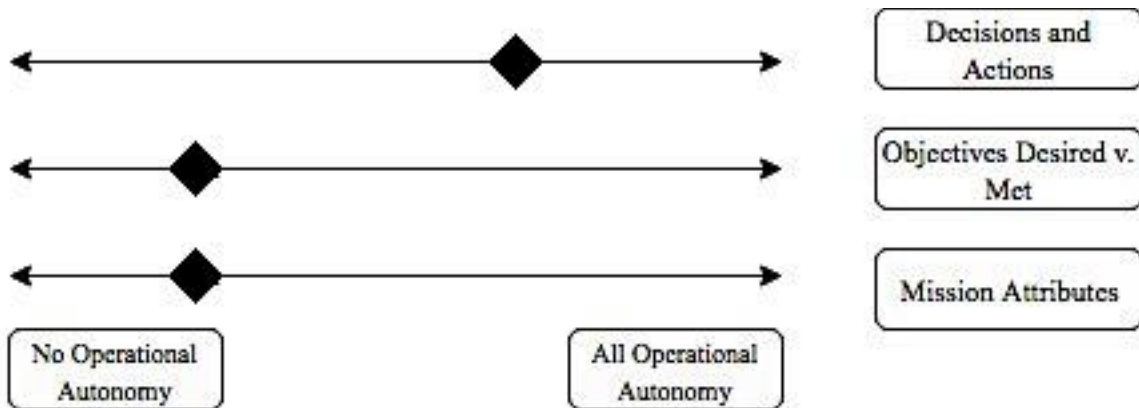
As the diagram illustrates, two of the three measures (Objectives and Mission Attributes) scored as showing limited operational autonomy for MSF in Afghanistan. MSF was unable to meet their objectives of maintaining a framework for humanitarian operational space and security. Additionally, MSF concluded that withdrawal was a necessary decision only after three years from re-instating missions in Afghanistan after 9/11. The short duration and reasons for leaving, and lack of objectives met, meant that MSF was unable to operate

autonomously or to operate how they best saw fit. The first measure did demonstrate some level of operational autonomy for MSF, but this measurement did not sway the overall designation of limited operational autonomy in Afghanistan. MSF was able to make their own decisions and act without continuously consulting the CPM. However, MSF was also unable to influence decisions or actions made by the CPM that affected the INGO's operational autonomy.

The interrelatedness of these measures demonstrates how a cohesive operationalization of the DV is formed. By MSF being unable to influence decisions or actions by the CPM, or at the very least preventing decisions like co-optation of humanitarianism from affecting MSF operations, MSF was unable to meet desired objectives. Additionally, when desired objectives like security were not met, mission attributes such as short duration and forced closure of missions resulted.

Hypothesis Application

For this case the hypothesis is mostly supported, except for the unexpected result of the decisions and actions measure, which does not follow the PA models predicted outcome. The hypothesis applied to this case is, *H1: Low state/IGO funding and strict terms of access and operations result in a limited degree of operational autonomy*. Based on this hypothesis the study predicted that in an environment where authority was centralized, principals would have greater delegating authority over an agent. This was the justification for assuming a CPM would exhibit strict terms of access, which was theoretically grounded in PA relationships. From here it was hypothesized that the CPM and assumed strict terms of access would limit operational autonomy. Additionally, the theoretical framework suggests agency

slack would be less likely because the agent would be unable to maneuver around the principals' mechanisms of control.

As previously stated, this hypothesis was partially supported because the results indicate MSF had limited operational autonomy in their Afghanistan operations. The problem with arguing that this case fully supports the hypothesis is because the decisions and actions measure shows that MSF did exhibit more operational autonomy then expected. Despite there being centralized authority through the CPM, the case analysis suggested that the INGO decided where to operate, which populations were in need, and which services were necessary. According to the model, it was expected that MSF would have had to seek approval for activities or have to concede to the CPM's desired objectives. Likely the hypothesis failed to predict this result because the measures of operational autonomy do not account for the principals' potential complicity of an agents operations. In the case of Afghanistan, the CPM did advocate for similar goals of humanitarianism as MSF. Although this did lead to situations of co-optation of objectives, in regards to decisions and actions the CPM did not desire to prevent MSF from providing medical aid. Also, because the CPM had no direct and observable mechanism of control over MSF, and that the CPM did not fundamentally disagree with MSF's actions, then MSF could not engage in agency slack.

Another problem is that the CPM did not seem to have a vested interest in micro-managing MSF projects. Additionally, because of MSF's funding background, the CPM was unable force MSF to integrate with their reconstruction plan for Afghanistan. Despite not having a direct authoritative hand over MSF operations, the CPM maintained military-political presence in Afghanistan and exhibited co-optation of humanitarian space. Because of this, MSF's operational autonomy was still greatly affected and eventually resulted in

MSF's complete withdrawal from the country. Overall, the political situation in Afghanistan did accurately represent a CPM, however there is a problem in assuming the CPM in this case exhibits strict terms of access. It appears that the CPM's complicity with MSFs objectives as well as a lack of a viable mechanism of control over MSF, i.e. funding, meant MSF was not subjected to strict terms of access.

Conclusion

Despite MSF's well established history in Afghanistan, the political environment created during OEF resulted in highly insecure conditions and military co-optation of an independent, impartial, and neutral humanitarian space. Although the CPM may not have yielded dominating authority over MSFs operations, their presence did greatly inhibit the ability of MSF to form the necessary trusting relationships with the local population. Throughout these three years engagement in Afghanistan, the organization consistently fought against actions by the CPM that they felt blurred the lines between what was military and a legitimate target, and what was humanitarian and an illegitimate target. By mid-2004 MSF felt that there was little choice but to leave Afghanistan. They perceived the environment created by actors in the CPM made MSF's operations impossible without compromising fundamental humanitarian goals. Compromising these founding principles was not a risk MSF was willing to take.

Chapter 4: MSF and Decentralized Principal Authority in Somalia

Introduction

Like Afghanistan, Somalia demonstrated a complex political emergency culminating out of decades of war and humanitarian crisis. So severe was Somalia's violent political climate starting in the 1990's, that analysts developed a new term for situation (Paul et al. 2014). Somalia was classified as a "collapsed state," defined as "rule of the strong, a vacuum of authority, and a 'dark energy' that pushes the state into a veritable black hole in which political goods can be obtained only through private or ad hoc means" (Paul et al. 2014, 151). The political context in which Somalia found itself after the collapse of formalized government is one with many actors, each with varying degrees of control and support. An amendment this study poses to the above definition, is rather there was a vacuum of *centralized* authority and instead the presence of many smaller and competing units of authority.

It is in this context that MSF first began missions in 1991 to help alleviate some of the need generated by conflict and famine (MSF Article 2013). Since that point MSF maintained a nearly continuous presence in Somalia until 2013. This study specifically focuses on MSF activities beginning in 2006 for two reasons. First, 2006 marks the first formalized political actions of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and then the subsequent uprising and takeover of Mogadishu by the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) from the south. Second, the French section of MSF re-entered the field after leaving in 1993 (Neuman and Ludoc 2012).[2] Following these transitions this study is able to analyze how

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[2] Recalling that MSF's structure is comprised of different operational sections, MSF-France re-entered Somalia while other operational sections had maintained a presence since 1991. While the

access was gained by new actors and how a changing political environment affected operations.

This chapter follows the same format as the Afghanistan case study. First, due diligence will be paid to Somalia's conflict history and establishing the political context as a multiple principal model (MPM). Second, an analysis of each three measurements of operational autonomy is conducted: decisions and actions, objectives desired versus met, and mission attributes. Finally a concluding analysis connects the case back to the study's hypotheses and reflects holistically on operational autonomy for MSF engagement in Somalia.

Situational Context

Conflict History

For the historical context of this study, an important starting point would be Siad Barre's regime. Following decolonization in Somalia, multiple political parties arose which then resulted in a one party led parliamentary democracy (Lyons and Samatar 1995). After this parliamentary system failed to be of any political relevance to Somali issues, a military coup led by Gen. Siad Barre overthrew the government in 1969 (Lyons and Samatar 1995; Paul et al. 2014). This regime tried to shift ideology from tribalism to a nationalist "Greater Somalia," although Barre often relied on "manipulating clans and implementing classic tactics of divide and rule" to maintain power (Lyons and Samatar 1995, 14). His military dictatorship lasted until 1991 when an eleven year long insurgency finally toppled Barre's rule and send him into exile (Paul, et al. 2014). Part of this collective insurgency was the Somali National Movement (SNM) and Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). In the

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operational section is distinguished here, the rest of the case study considers all MSF-France activities as a part of MSF actions as a whole.

process of liberating Somalia from Barre, the insurgency also threw the country into ungovernable chaos (Paul et al. 2014). At the time Ethiopia, a rival of Somalia's, also backed armed factions like SSDF (Elmi 2010). Ethiopian, as well as many other foreign actor's, involvement in Somalia would continue episodically through the state's collapse.

Shortly after the fall of the Barre regime, several large armed groups fractured into many separate warlord-run militias. Clans continued to be very powerful actors and influencers of armed factions (Paul et al. 2014). Kinship or blood ties have always been an important demarcation in Somali society and these connections were certainly reflective of MSF's negotiation experience during several operations. The variety of armed actors present in Somalia included: armed faction splinter groups, sub-clan militias, armed gangs, private security forces, neighborhood watch groups, municipal/regional security, and Islamist groups (Paul et al. 2014). Starting in the early 1990's was also a series of interventions led by the UN and US. Ultimately these efforts failed and resulted in little political improvement (Paul et al. 2014).

Regional efforts during the Nairobi Peace Accords tried in 2004 to establish the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), "Somalia's best hope for stability and governance in years" (Paul et al. 2014, 160). However after the TFG met for the first time in February of 2006, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) from Southern Somalia arose and took control of Mogadishu and large parts of Southern-Central Somalia (MSF 2005/2006; Paul et al. 2014). This offensive against the TFG also led to Ethiopian military support for the newly formed government (Paul et al. 2014). It is in this context that MSF sought to establish access to new locations and was forced to continuously renegotiate space as actors changed.

Principal Structure

Following the study's hypotheses, this case study represents a MPM. As the above conflict history indicates, by the start of this study Somalia was in a state of complete failure and no one centralized political actor existed. Instead, Somalia has been a country of countless armed actors with complex systems of allegiance, as well a political culture of decentralized clan and tribal divisions. Each location that MSF sought to establish access or conduct operations typically meant a new set of actors with whom to negotiate. To give context of the extent of the political decentralization, Egypt sponsored a peace conference in 1998 in which 27 different armed groups were present (Paul et al. 2014). Because no regional or international intervention was successful in establishing a centralized authority, by 2006 this was still the political reality. For this case, all political-military actors that MSF established relationships and negotiated with between 2006 and 2013 are identified as principals. All of these actors exhibited some degree of authority over MSF. The following section analyzes just how much authority MSF was delegated by these various principals and how much operational autonomy the organization was able to maintain.

PA Model Analysis

Similar to the previous case study this section analyzes the three measurements of operational autonomy for MSF engagement in Somalia. Recalling the multiple principal model (MPM) from this study's theoretical framework, this structure should exhibit more instances of operational autonomy then a CPM environment. However, this section demonstrates that the complexity and decentralization of Somalia's political structure greatly hindered MSF's ability to operate autonomously, contrary to the theory's expectation. As the

conflict history shows, Somalia was a very difficult and highly volatile environment to work in, and while operations could be carried out they hinged on negotiation and relationships with the variety of principals.

The analysis shows that the first two measures, decisions and actions and objectives desired versus met, represent the most egregious impediments to MSF's operational autonomy. Mission attributes, rather, constitutes more of a puzzle to the case's evaluation of operational autonomy. Prior to addressing the three measures, PA complicity must also be addressed. In contrast to Afghanistan's CPM that identified humanitarianism as a goal, political actors in Somalia solely demonstrate vested interest in political and military gain.

PA Complicity

In a political context such as Somalia, a generalized expression of complicity across all principals for MSF's operations is impossible to determine. Rather, various principals work individualistically without any sort of collective position. While not purely at odds with MSF's humanitarian goals, interests in gaining power and influence were the primary concerns within the MPM. For MSF this meant that complicity relied on meeting principals' interests. A quote from MSF's 2011 Annual Report explains this idea as "the scope of [operational] space will depend largely on the organization's objectives, the diplomatic and political support it can garner, and the interest taken in its activities by those in power" (MSF 2011). As shown below, meeting these interests and establishing complicity involved significant negotiation. This is reflected in the chapter title "Somalia: Everything is Open to Negotiation" in *Humanitarian Negotiations Revealed: The MSF Experience* (Neuman and Ludoc 2011).

Negotiations are explained in more depth in the section on PA communications, however, the two concerns for MSF gaining complicity were establishing relationships with principals and addressing their needs. For example, MSF established a working relationship with a war lord in Mogadishu named Qanyare who also opened up contacts in other armed factions that were members of Qanyare's clan (Neuman and Ludoc 2011). When setting up the Daynile hospital in Qanyare's controlled section of Mogadishu, MSF made clear that all factions could use the hospital and therefore addressing a principal's need (Neuman and Ludoc 2011). Similar to everything in Somali politics, complicity was gained or lost on a localized basis. As shown below, a principal's level complicity with MSF operations could mean whether or not access to a location was gained.

Decisions and Actions: Principal or Agent?

Looking holistically at MSF operations in Somalia from 2006 to 2013, MSF was able to decide where was best to operate and how to act. By October 2011 MSF was operating 13 different projects throughout the country (MSF Press Release 2011b). However, if focus was shifted to each of those individual projects, one would see that these decision and actions were not made autonomously. Again, these actions were reliant on compliance by the principals in control of that particular area. Thinking of complicity and approval of access or operations as a delegation of authority, MSF's operational autonomy was limited. These limitations are clearly analyzed by first explaining PA communications and then looking more directly at complicity's influence over important decisions and actions in Somalia.

PA Communications

As previously stated, communication between the variety of principals and MSF can be characterized as localized communication. This means that MSF could not have a

standardized form of communication with all principals in all locations. Instead, MSF had to engage with local clan leaders, small armed factions, and larger Islamist groups like Al-Shabaab (MSF Article 2007a). These "local" areas could be as small as different neighborhoods in Mogadishu.

PA communication in Somalia was mostly direct negotiation considering the small scale of engagement with principals. MSF identified negotiation as the most pertinent form of communication with the MPM by citing how important negotiation was to daily operations. Similar to Afghanistan, there is little evidence of specific dialogue between actors, but publicized statements by MSF frequently referenced the term negotiation. These publicized statements represent the viewpoint of MSF as they engaged with the principals. In 2007 MSF called opening new programs in Somalia "challenging" because months of negotiations were required between the multiple actors present in that desired location in order to gain access (MSF Article 2007b). Even for basic administrative tasks, MSF had to undergo long periods of negotiations which delayed responding to needs. An example would be vaccination campaigns (Cabrol, 2011). For certain armed principals, like Al Shabaab, this access was difficult to negotiate (Neuman and Ludoc 2011). Negotiation was also an important form of communication during situations of insecurity. For example during an abduction of two staff members in Bassaso, MSF called on "all parties involved to continue negotiations to achieve a peaceful and immediate resolution" (MSF Press Release 2007g). Simply put, negotiation was about addressing need, what MSF felt vulnerable populations needed and what principals felt they needed to remain complicit.

<u>Overview of Important Decisions and Actions</u>

The most influential decisions regarding operations that MSF was able to make was

identifying viable locations and services where need was greatest. Starting in 2006, MSF was

working in roughly seven locations mostly clustered in Southern and Central Somalia (MSF

Press Release 2006a). MSF carried out exploratory missions in sections of Mogadishu and

Merka in order to establish contacts and assess security (Neuman and Ludoc, 2011). As

MSF's mission in Somalia continued, the INGO tried to expand operations and diversify

operations to meet a growing need. Mainly need was identified in Southern Central Somalia

and the two services focused on were malnutrition and primary and emergency care for

victims of violence.

By December 2006, MSF had already started expansion into Belet Weyne in order to

establish surgical activities in response to military confrontations in the south (MSF Press

Release 2006b). Surgical operations were also established in Daynile and Kismayo in 2007

and by 2011 MSF was providing free medical care in 8 regions: Bay, Hiraan, Lower and

Middle Shabelle, Galgaduud, Lower Juba, Mudug, and Mogadishu (MSF Article 2013). As

the conflict in Mogadishu escalated in 2007, MSF also began offering more support for

internally displaced persons (IDPs) that had relocated to Afgooye (MSF Press Release

2007b; MSF Press Release 2007c; MSF Press Release 2007d; MSF Press Release 2007f;

MSF Press Release 2008d; MSF Press Release 2008e; MSF Press Release 2009d). Violence

in Mogadishu also greatly affected trapped civilians in the city, particularly women and

children injured by indiscriminate violence. MSF attempted to provide assistance but

insecurity prevented many in need from reaching health facilities (MSF Press Release 2007e;

MSF Press Release 2008d; MSF Press Release 2008e; MSF Press Release 2009d; MSF Press

Release 2010b). In the Daynile hospital in Mogadishu, the surgical ward "[had] treated over 2,100 people suffering from traumatic injuries since the beginning of 2008" (MSF Press Release 2008d).

In addition to injuries inflicted by violence, malnutrition was also rampant and a critical issue MSF worked hard to address. By November 2011 staff were treating roughly 54,000 children in feeding programs (MSF Article 2013). Specific feeding centers were established in Hawa Abdi, Bassaso, Huddur, Galcayo (MSF Press Release 2007f; MSF Press Release 2007g; MSF Press Release 2009c; MSF Press Release 2010a). However, despite the expansion of feeding centers and treating over 3,000 children in 2010, Somalia's crisis of malnutrition was grossly under-addressed (MSF Press Release 2011a). The inability to meet the full needs of the Somali people characterized the entirety of MSF's operational experience. In 2007 MSF issued a statement saying the INGO "is angered and deeply unsatisfied with the level and quality of care it is currently able to provide" (MSF Press Release 2007d). Although specifically targeting the situation in Mogadishu, this sentiment was felt throughout all operations.

As explained in the section on PA communications, the aid MSF wished to provide was contingent upon what local principals viewed as acceptable. First and foremost, much of the need in South Central Somalia went unaddressed because MSF could not access large portions of the territory. Even certain sections of Mogadishu were unreachable to MSF (MSF Press Release 2007b; MSF Press Release 2007d; MSF Press Release 2011a; MSF Press Release 2011). This could because of general insecurity between warring actors or "because local authorities are hostile to such interventions, on cultural or ideological grounds" (MSF 2011, 16).

For places that MSF was able to gain access, security and presence became a balancing act that required "juggling the allocation of benefits and resources that a relief operation brings... among all the clans and political, military and business interests" (MSF 2011, 16). Providing surgical facilities that principals could access as well as the general population and supplying opposition doctors with supplies were ways of meeting these interests (Neuman and Ludoc 2011). MSF needed to prove itself useful or at the very least non-threatening. Along these lines MSF was wary of an international intervention or involvement that could portray humanitarian assistance as connected with political/military policy (MSF 2011). Additionally, indirect attacks or approaching front lines on MSF facilities inhibited the ability for MSF to care for patients (MSF Press Release 2007e; MSF Press Release 2010a). An example was a mortar strike on the side of an MSF facility in Belet Weyne (MSF Press Release 2010a). Also inhibiting delivery of aid was a variety of temporary or permanent operation closures as situations became to insecure. These instances are addressed in the analysis on security in the met objectives section.

Summary

Despite MSF being able to carry out a variety of missions that did address aspects of the crisis, the enormity of need and reliance on principal compliance or acceptance resulted in very limited operational autonomy. In order to gain access to a location MSF engaged in months of negotiation in order to have authority delegated to them. Statements of MSFs dissatisfaction with the scope of operations also reflect the organization's recognition that operational autonomy was restricted. MSF was unable to act or make decisions completely on their own. Either there was required direct engagement with principals to establish access or MSF remained concerned over appeasing the interests of the MPM. This concern over

principals' interests also made MSF question if they were compromising their fundamental goals of humanitarianism in order to maintain access. Upon leaving Somalia, MSF acknowledged that the balance between accepting these compromised goals and providing medical care no longer existed (Liu and Oberreit 2013). From here the discussion turns from decisions and actions made to the objectives MSF was and was not able to fulfill.

Objectives

The complex political situation in Somalia, resultant in the MPM designation, forced MSF to make compromises and rely heavily on the whim of local principals. For the objectives that MSF sought to achieve, the MPM was a critical influence. Similar to Afghanistan, there was a distinct discrepancy between the objectives that MSF desired to achieve and what objectives were actually met. This goes back to the idea of balance. MSF did not appear to have grand expectations in establishing a distinct and secured framework for humanitarian operations. In the eyes of the organization, as long as the medical assistance MSF provided was worth the risk then objectives were generally met. By MSF's closure of missions in Somalia, however, MSF had failed to maintain that balance due to the complexity of violence and the number of principals active.

Desired Objectives

From analyzing MSF publications on operations in Somalia, the two main objectives sought were respect from warring parties for operations and the minimum conditions necessary for operations security. Security was a substantial concern for MSF staff in Somalia, but there appeared to be a sense of awareness from MSF that security would not always be assured considering the volatile context. In an article published in MSF Field Research, the author acknowledged that "conflict, violence, lack of access for humanitarian organizations have

been the norm since the overthrow of Barre's regime in 1991" (Cabrol 2011, 1857). In MSF's 2006/2007 Annual Report, the INGO recognized that humanitarian space in Somalia required minimal conditions, because insecurity was such a pervasive reality (Stokes).

In accordance with the fundamental goals of humanitarianism MSF asked all principals to generally respect operations. Asking this of all armed actors and establishing working relationships with as many principals as possible was in effort to bolster MSF's image as neutral and impartial in Somalia. Between 2007 and the end of the mission MSF consistently asked in press releases that warring parties respect MSF spaces and operations (MSF Press Release 2007a, MSF Press Release 2007b, MSF Press Release 2008b, MSF Press Release 2009d, MSF Press Release 2010a, MSF Press Release 2012a, MSF Press Release 2013b). As insecurity ebbed and flowed warring parties respect for spaces and operations varied depending on location. As the following section shows, the minimum necessary conditions and respect from the MPM were not met and ultimately would be why MSF left Somalia.

Met Objectives

Between 2006 and 2013, MSF engaged in several actions, ranging from persistent negotiation to publicized statements, to help achieve their desired objectives. However, these objectives were continuously rebuffed by the MPM making it impossible for MSF to achieve general respect of space and operations as well as minimum conditions for security. The most apparent violations of respect from warring parties came from attacks on staff or facilities. These attacks directly affected security, meaning that minimum conditions necessary were not met, and in response MSF had to scale back certain operations. When MSF reduced

operations in a country already lacking the assistance it needed, the INGO's operational

autonomy was compromised.

Over the time period studied there were several instances of blatant disregard for

MSF staff and operations by the MPM. Extending beyond 2006, 14 staff members had been

killed in Somalia since the start of operations in 1991 (MSF Press Release 2013b). MSF

published statements shortly after each attack, although specific principals responsible for the

attacks were never named. MSF hardly mentioned principals by name, "the risk we [MSF]

run when we speak out in a complex situation is huge" (Neuman and Ludoc 2011, 56).

Reported attacks on MSF staff members either resulted in murder or abduction and eventual

release. Two abductions occurred in Somalia in 2007 and 2009. Both resulted in release

within a month and MSF relied on negotiation with responsible principals and support from

the local community to secure release (MSF Press Release 2007g; MSF Press Release

2009b). The most jarring single attack on MSF staff occurred in Kismayo, Southern Somalia.

In 2008 three MSF staff members were killed in what appeared to be an "organized attack"

not far from the MSF health facility (MSF Press Release 2008b; MSF Press Release 2008c).

This attack resulted in a withdrawal of all international staff from Somalia and closure of

Kismayo operations (MSF Press Release 2008b; MSF Press Release 2008c).

There were also six instances where MSF facilities were damaged as a result of direct

intrusion on operational space or indiscriminate violence (MSF Press Release 2006b; MSF

Press Release 2007b; MSF Press Release 2009d; MSF Press Release 2010a; MSF Press

Release 2011c; MSF Press Release 2012c). How blatant these violations of space and

disregard for MSF facilities were varied. For example, in 2006 representatives from an armed

group that had recently taken control of Dinsor in Southern Somalia, entered an MSF facility

and forced MSF staff to give them confidential patient records (MSF Press Release 2006b). This was a clear intrusion of MSF's operational space and instance of intimidation towards staff members. A different scenario demonstrating indiscriminate violence, would be MSF facilities existing in close proximity to frontlines and are damaged during the conflict. For example in 2007 a rocket landed on an MSF run healthcare center in Yaqshid and in 2012 shells from fighting in Mogadishu struck the Daynile hospital (MSF Press Release 2007b; MSF Press Release 2012c). Regardless of how egregious a principal's violation was for respect for humanitarian space and operations, all of these instances contributed to increased insecurity that directly affected MSF's ability to provide medical assistance to populations in need.

The second objective of minimum conditions necessary for operations security relied heavily on how much respect principals maintained for MSF space and operations. When staff or facilities were attacked or damaged, the minimum conditions for security were not met. In response to insecurity, MSF either temporarily evacuated international staff or closed operations (MSF 2006/2007). For example, after armed men looted an MSF nutritional center in Jilib in 2009, MSF was forced to suspend activity in that region (MSF Article 2009). Depending on the severity of insecurity, these evacuations or closures could also be permanent. Although necessary, these responses greatly inhibited the Somali people's access to aid and medical services. The largest response by MSF was to evacuate all international staff from Somalia after the murder of three employees in Kismayo in 2008. International staff were never fully reestablished in Somalia, although they were re-stationed in Nairobi and occasionally participated in short excursions into Somalia (MSF Press Release 2008b; MSF Press Release 2008d; MSF Press Release 2010; MSF Article 2009). Despite succeeding

in establishing telecommunications between international staff in Nairobi and Somali, this was a significant decision for MSF to make that affected an already strained and overstretched national staff (MSF 2011; Zachariah et al. 2012).

Summary

Like the previous measure, the inability of MSF to meet the objectives they desired in Somalia demonstrates limited operational autonomy. This limit to the dependent variable is most clearly seen in how unmet objectives greatly affected the medical aid MSF was able to provide. The organization made several statements to this effect before and after closure of the entire mission in Somalia. In 2008 MSF stated "assistance is dwindling in quality and quantity due to high insecurity and increased targeting of aid workers" (MSF Press Release 2008d). Additionally, when MSF closed all activities in the Hodan district of Mogadishu, this decreased MSF assistance to the city and its population by half (MSF Press Release 2012b). It was forced reductions in capacity for aid delivery, like these, that made MSF identify that the "overall humanitarian response is inadequate" (MSF 2009). Because of a lack of respect and minimum security conditions from the MPM, MSF was unable to meet the organizations overall aim of providing medical assistance.[3]

Also limiting to MSF's operational autonomy were Kenyan, Ethiopian, and AU forces, AMISOM, that participated in military interventions within Somalia (MSF 2006/2007; MSF Special Report 2012; MSF Article 2011). These forces not only contributed to insecurity and violence within the country, but also added to confusion surrounding aid organization's neutrality (MSF 2006/2007; MSF Special Report 2012). These military offensives forced suspension of activities in some areas, and in 2012 the UN and AU

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[3] http://www.msf.org/en/msf-charter-and-principles

attempted to promote integration of aid political and military strategy (MSF Press Release 2013a). Similarly to Afghanistan, MSF was very vocal against what they feared could be co-optation of aid and a further inhibitor of respect for INGO space and operations. Though not part of the MPM, these international actors did aggravate security situations involving principals of the MPM with whom MSF was forced to engage.

Mission Attributes

Compared to the previous measures, a holistic analysis of MSF mission in Somalia produces a puzzle of how to judge operational autonomy. Conflicting results between the two sub-measures, mission duration and closure, mean that a clear measurement of operational autonomy could be contested. MSF's mission duration was rather long as the mostly continuous operation began in 1991, fifteen years before the focus of this case study. However, the reasons for MSF's departure were very severe.

<ins>Mission Duration</ins>

MSF's presence in Somalia did last an impressive 22 years, especially concerning how challenging the security environment came (MSF Press Release 2013b). Within the timeframe of this case study, the duration is only measured as seven years (2006-2013). According to the methodology, when applying mission duration to operational autonomy, the longer an INGO is able to stay in a complex political emergency while need is still present is a good indicator of operational autonomy. However, Somalia does seem to prove otherwise. This study's seven year duration also shows a number of temporary or permanent evacuations of international staff and a continuous shifting of operations as missions closed and opened due to insecurity. This resulted in impediments to MSF adequately meeting their goals. Additionally, MSF was forced to allow the hiring of armed guards at several of their clinics

and compounds. Although often times this business was sorted out by local community leaders, MSF had to compromise on their traditional stance against armed guards and take this as a reality of the security situation in Somalia (MSF Press Release 2013b; Neuman and Ludoc 2011). Therefore length of mission duration in Somalia appeared reliant on compromises in operations.

Mission Closure

Considering how volatile the political situation was in Somalia, and the number instances of insecurity analyzed, mission closure was a necessary decision. In a 2013 Op-Ed by then MSF-International President Karunakara, mission closure came with a very heavy heart especially considering the need that was still present in Somalia. He stated that security concerns were not why MSF pulled out, instead "that it was the very parties with who we had been negotiating minimum levels of security [that] tolerated and accepted attacks against humanitarian workers" (Karunakara 2013). He iterated that MSF had "reached its limit" with the number of staff attacked (Karunakara 2013). In a 2013 press release, MSF recognized that the organization accepted huge levels of risk and limits on access because the need from the Somali people was so great (MSF Press Release 2013b). MSF could not find a balance of assistance that would make the risk unacceptable (MSF 2013).

Summary

Taking these two sub-measures together, operational autonomy does appear to be limited under mission attributes as well. The justification for this designation is that in both sub-measures MSF was forced to make decisions for which they had no other option, ie. hiring armed guards or closing all programs in Somalia. These decisions were compromises on

what MSF desired to achieve therefore limiting operational autonomy. This measure is discussed further in this study's concluding chapter where the case studies are compared.
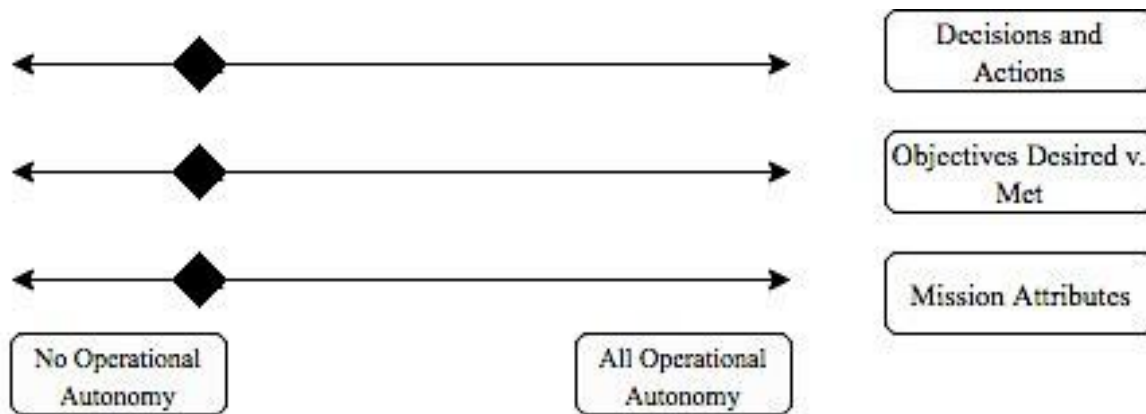
Operational Autonomy Analysis

This section analyzes operational autonomy holistically by combining the results of three measurements. These results are then applied to the case's designated hypothesis which, along with application to the theoretical framework, are evaluated for analytical support. Finally a conclusion is drawn from the entire case chapter, summarizing MSF's experience in Somalia from 2006 to 2013.

Results Analysis

This chapter studied the influence of the MPM on MSF's efforts to gain and maintain operational autonomy. Looking at the three measures together is a more complete picture of the DV. As a whole MSF exhibited severely limited operational autonomy in Somalia. This severe limit of autonomy was characterized by an overabundance of principals exhibiting a lack of respect for aid workers and humanitarian space leading to increasing insecurity. Additionally, delivery of medical aid, a fundamental objective of MSF, was slowed by small-scale negotiations with many actors.

Figure 3. Somalia Measures of Operational Autonomy

All three measures point to limited operational autonomy for the MSF mission in Somalia. Both decisions and actions as well as objectives clearly show limited autonomy because these measures were hindered by the extent of required negotiation between MSF and the MPM. This meant that MSF was unable to independently make decisions and carry out operations because the organization relied on local actors to approve and support their actions. MSF had to seek authority from the principals that controlled each operation's location in order to ensure security. These continuous negotiations, in addition to slowing aid delivery, also did not effectively guarantee the minimum conditions of security as aid workers and MSF facilities were continuously attacked. These attacks further inhibited the ability of MSF to access populations as insecurity often prompted temporary withdrawal from a location.

Mission Attributes are a more puzzling measure to contend with in this case. Although it does exhibit generally limited operational autonomy, because the other measures contributed to mission closure, the duration of the mission was long. Although seven years

may not seem a long time for a crisis as dire as Somalia, the pertinent question is why MSF

stayed despite severe insecurity. Over the course from 2006 to 2013 MSF lost more than 5

staff members and over 4 were abducted by armed groups. With the enormous risk MSF

continued to shoulder, at great cost to their staff, it is curious that closure of the mission did

not come sooner. The conclusion chapter goes into greater detail concerning the problem of

risk and mission duration.

Hypothesis Application

The pooled analysis of operational autonomy produces an answer that does not match the

hypothesized result. Based on the model and the assumed weak terms of access IV

designation, operational autonomy was predicted to be higher than the result of the previous

model. However this case study, while corresponding to the MPM, behaves completely

opposite to the expected result.

The hypothesis applied to the MPM, and therefore Somalia, reads, *H2: Low*

state/IGO funding and weak terms of access and operations result in a higher degree of

operational autonomy. This hypothesis expects that multiple principals, whose authority is

decentralized and fragmented, would not yield substantial authority over an agent. According

to the theoretical framework, it would be likely that the agent is able to skirt around what

control the various agents possess through agency slack. This could look like negotiating

around conditions of access or operations levied by principals or seeking authority from

another principal. Therefore the designated weak terms of access and operations would allow

for more opportunity of operational autonomy for MSF.

However, the results collected from the analysis reject the hypothesis. Operational

autonomy was not something easily gained or maintained by MSF and the avenue through

which MSF could have exhibited agency slack, negotiation, proved to be the greatest hindrance. The only chance that agency slack could have been used was to lengthen mission duration, however this would be merely speculation. Although authority was decentralized, at the local level armed actors exhibited a great deal of control and kept a heavy hand over operations. Negotiation took a large amount of time, even for simple administrative procedures. These results also call into question how applicable the designation weak terms of access is to the case. Weak terms of access failed to account for how powerful actors could be at the local level. Looking at Somalia holistically, there was not one centralized authority governing all operations throughout the country. According to this statement Somalia should exhibit weak terms of access, however by looking at power and authority regionally or by specific locations, these armed actors could inflict a great deal of control over MSF.

Complicity is also important to address as a potential influential factor. Unlike Afghanistan, there was not general complicity from the MPM regarding MSF actions, unless those actions could be viewed as helpful the principals' local struggles for control and influence. In summation, what this model did not account for was how time consuming and difficult negotiation between many different principals can be, particularly when those principals stand at odds with the agent.

Conclusion

MSF spent a great deal of time and resources attempting to address the crisis in Somalia. Often times the responsibility MSF felt to provide assistance outweighed the risk MSF shouldered. The overwhelming need present in Somalia made MSF more risk acceptant as well as open to pursuing new tactics for providing aid. These included paying for armed

guards at MSF facilities and international staff telecommunicating in from Nairobi to assist national staff. Despite all of the organization's efforts, the presence of many competing armed actors who did not respect humanitarian space and operations and the constant insecurity inhibited MSF's operational autonomy. By 2013 MSF decided that the continuous lack of respect for MSF operations made the risk of continuing those operations no longer acceptable. As with Afghanistan, this was a difficult decision for the organization to make considering the need still present in Somalia. However, in a question of balance between need and risk, MSF decided it could no longer accept the insecurity caused by the very principals with whom MSF was forced to negotiate.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The goal of this study was to further dialogue centering on INGOs through the research question, *how do political actors in the international system influence service-based humanitarian INGO operational autonomy?* Developed out of a gap in the literature, the question investigates how INGOs are able to conduct missions on their own terms while operating in contexts that are not conducive to the fundamental goals of humanitarianism. By applying principal agent theory, already used study IGO agency and autonomy, the aim was to find a framework through which INGO interactions with political actors could be analyzed.

       This study focused on MSF as the agent because the organization exhibited a high commitment to the fundamental goals of humanitarianism, meaning the preservation of these goals would be foundational to maintaining operational autonomy. Because service-based INGOs, like MSF, often work in complex political emergencies where many political actors/principals are present, a subset of PA theory focusing on multiple principal structures was chosen. The two models, collective principal model (CPM) and multiple principal model (MPM), outline situations where principals either act collectively under a form of centralization (CPM) or act separately and focus on their own interests (MPM). The study hypothesized an inverse relationship that as centralized principal authority increased and exhibited strict terms of access, operational autonomy would decrease. Therefore the second hypothesis is that decentralized principal authority (MPMs) exhibiting weak terms of access would allow for an increase in operational autonomy. However, as the previous analysis chapters have shown, the reality of MSF in Afghanistan and Somalia did not support either of

these hypotheses. The difficulty of applying the hypotheses to the case studies suggests that the PA structure models do not have the anticipated explanatory power.

This chapter focuses on three main sections: a comparative analysis of the two cases, study strengths as well as limitations, and suggestions for further research. Pooling the analyses of both case studies and their respective conclusions is the final component of this study's comparative case analysis. Drawn across the cases is a discussion of how predictive the theoretical framework was to MSF operations, as well as how the results connect back to previous literature. This raises questions regarding if there is a better approach to evaluating operational autonomy for INGOs working in different political contexts. Study limitations and future research focuses on ideas that either build off of this study or explore other potentially influential variables.

Comparative Analysis

After conducting an individual analysis for both cases, it was determined that both MSF in Afghanistan and MSF in Somalia exhibited limited operational autonomy**.** On the surface this demonstrates MSF's position as an agent that must operate under a principal's authority. However, the application of the hypotheses proved less conclusive and calls into question the potential explanatory power of the theoretical framework chosen.

Taking the results produced by both case analyses as a whole, the hypothesized relationship between multiple principal structures and operational autonomy is rejected. Although MSF operations in Afghanistan did appear to support the first hypothesis as operational autonomy was limited, Afghanistan's case exhibited more operational autonomy when compared to MSF operations in Somalia. Recalling back to figure 2 and 3, only two of

the three measures for Afghanistan registered as limited operational autonomy, while Somalia registered all three as limited. As stated, the expected inverse relationship between increasingly centralized authority with an assumed stricter terms of access and decreasing operational autonomy was not supported.

Operational Autonomy Measures

Decisions and Actions

Following this measure both hypotheses were rejected. MSF decisions and actions in Afghanistan were measured with more operational autonomy while MSF decisions and actions in Somalia were measured as having limited operational autonomy. These cases deviated from expected results because of two outside factors: complicity and communication.

Complicity, means the propensity of the principals to agree or approve of the operations of the agent. In the case of Afghanistan, the coalition and UNAMA exhibited an inclination towards humanitarianism that meant they did not revoke or question MSF's operations. In this way, MSF was able to remain relatively autonomous in decision making. Somalia, in contrast, clearly was a situation where complicity by principals was not guaranteed or expected. By principals agreeing with the general operations of an agent, it is more likely the principal will let the agent act on their own. The expectation was that centralization of authority and the corresponding terms of access would effect an organization's ability to act autonomously. However, when a principal disagrees with MSF more hurdles exist as that actor will likely try to hinder MSF operations in their controlled territory.

At this point, communication is essential. The expectation is that either negotiation between MSF and principals would be more difficult as authority is centralized or would become less necessary as authority decentralized because of conditions for agency slack. However, the results indicate that decentralization of principal authority combined with a lack of complicity meant negotiation became a necessary action. Somalia's MPM demonstrated the multitude of actors MSF had to negotiate with on a localized basis, making standardization of communication impossible. It was this reliance on negotiation, even for small administrative tasks, that slowed operations and therefore decreased operational autonomy. In contrast, MSF publications of their involvement in Afghanistan (CPM) showed less focus on negotiation.

Objectives

When measuring the discrepancy in objectives desired versus objectives met, it is important to distinguish MSF's wording between the two missions. Analyzing different levels of objective discrepancies would be ideal, like which case met more objectives compared to the other. However, the measures are not quantified making this type of comparison very difficult. The observable difference, and one that is analytically valuable for analyzing operational autonomy, would be MSF's different wordage used in publications about each mission.

Despite both case's desired objectives revolving around the protection of humanitarian space, MSF choose to alter the wording of their objectives from Afghanistan to Somalia. MSF in Afghanistan demanded a framework for operational humanitarian space, while MSF in Somalia only requested respect and minimum conditions for security. The result of this wording change suggests that MSF could potentially ask more from the CPM

than the MPM. However, this is certainly not a conclusive correlation. Another potential contributing factor could be that complicity from the CPM emboldened MSF to ask a for more distinct humanitarian space than what the MPM would have allowed. For objectives as a measure of operational autonomy, this change should mean that when less is expected of principals (ie. minimum conditions versus an established framework), desired objectives would be easier to meet. As stated previously in the methodology, meeting desired objectives is a contributing measure to an INGO maintaining operational autonomy. However, despite MSF in Somalia expecting less of the principals, the desired objectives were not met and the INGO greatly struggled to maintain operational autonomy in the face of other contributing factors.

Mission Attributes

This measure was constructed from two sub-measures: mission closure and mission duration. For both cases, MSF decided to cease all operations on the grounds that security risks, exacerbated by unmet objectives, could no longer be accepted. Mission closure in Afghanistan supported the first hypothesis, expecting the CPM to limit operational autonomy to the point that necessary withdrawal could be a reality. Mission closure in Somalia, however, did not support the second hypothesis. MSF was expected to be able to work around the MPM in order to stay and conduct operations autonomously

Although both cases ended in mission closure before MSF was able to adequately address need, examining the duration of both missions presents an analytical mystery. MSF's mission in Afghanistan lasted from 2001 to 2004 during the time period studied.[4] MSF's

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[4] As a reminder, the start of this mission coincided with MSF's return in November 2001 after departing shortly after 9/11. It should be noted that MSF did have a long history in Afghanistan prior to this brief departure in 2001. However, 2001 is chosen as a starting date of study because of the corresponding change in regime structure to the international coalition or CPM.

mission in Somalia lasted continuously between 1991 and 2013, however the duration compared to Afghanistan is only 2006 to 2013. Both cases exhibited significant need and at least equally insecure conditions, so the question raised is why did MSF last much longer in Somalia than Afghanistan? Potential factors might be Somalia exhibited greater need that MSF judged to be worth the risk. Additionally, perhaps the risks were more acceptable when international staff were not continuously present in Somalia.[5] Also MSF in Somalia did compromise certain, like hiring armed guards that were deemed necessary for continuing operations, but did not make such compromises in Afghanistan. Another potential explanation could be MSF in Somalia exhibited more propensity for agency slack because MSF was able to skirt around the MPM's decentralized authority. However a problem with this assertion is that MSF in Somalia did not exhibit any other conditions pointing to operational autonomy which, according to the theoretical framework, agency slack would promote.

Comparative Analysis Summary

Taking all these measures into consideration, both cases exhibited limited operational autonomy. However, the inverse of what the study predicted occurred when the CPM in Afghanistan demonstrating relatively more conditions for operational autonomy than the MPM in Somalia. The emphasis is now placed on how to address what this study failed to predict. Two problems were presented during the analysis of the cases: that strict versus weak terms of access designations did not fit their assumed correspondence to the multiple principal structures, and that new factors emerged that the study was not designed to capture.

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[5] Recalling that international staff were removed in Somalia in 2008, and instead based remotely in Nairobi.

It is assumed in the methodology that cases exhibiting a CPM should exhibit strict terms of access because principal authority was centralized. On the other hand MPM's should demonstrate weak terms of access because principal authority was decentralized. These terms of access designations were assumed to connect to the models and were applied in order to draw a connection from the PA models to operational autonomy. The hypotheses predicted that the stricter the terms of access made by the principals, the more limited operational autonomy would be for the INGO. However, the results demonstrate that these assumed terms of access did not match the cases to which they were applied.

The problem with this study was that the level of centralization of principal authority did not accurately demonstrate strict or weak terms of access as assumed. The study did not account for decentralized local principals possessing significant authority over MSF operations within their local territory. The faulty assumption this study made was that MSF would act holistically across the country. However, as Somalia demonstrated, MSF established operations only in accessible locations which may not have been the areas of greatest need. Within these communities MSF engaged locally, and as the focus was local therefore local political actors possessed much more influential power than expected.

Additionally, the level of authority centralization, according to these cases, was not the indicator for stricter or weaker terms of access. Rather it was outside factors such as principal complicity and negotiation. Both of these cases exhibited strong differences in regards to these factors that also suggests a correspondence to the operational autonomy results. For Afghanistan the principals were found to be mostly complicit with MSF's medical humanitarian goals and did not pursue blatant actions that would directly hinder or stop MSF from conducting operations. In the case of Somalia, the variety of principals MSF

engaged with did not hold the same perceived complicity for MSF's humanitarian operations. As shown in Somalia's case, principals rarely supported MSF's presence and operations unless principals perceived these operations as a direct benefit to their individual goals. In this regard negotiation became a necessary form of communication and engagement with the MPM. Through individual negotiations MSF had to not only convince principals that operations would serve their interests, but also seek approval for small tasks during operations such as administrative needs. Though individual negotiations might have been successful, they limited MSF's operational autonomy because MSF had to consistently seek delegated authority and it slowed the speed to which MSF could deliver aid.

How does complicity and negotiation explain MSF's measured limit of operational autonomy in Afghanistan? The INGO had a relatively complicit CPM and did not speak as frequently about the hindrances of negotiation as MSF did in Somalia. It is still problematic, however, to suggest that the CPM's centralized principal authority produced strict terms of access that led to limited operational autonomy. For this case, the objective emphasized was the establishment and protection of a framework for humanitarian action through which MSF could operate securely in Afghanistan. Although the CPM was complicit in MSF's operations, complicity often blurred into co-optation of humanitarian aid. This co-optation of humanitarianism resulted in a blurring of military/political-humanitarian lines that prevented the establishment of MSF's desired framework and left MSF vulnerable to insecurity. Because this objective was not met and the result was insecurity for MSF operations, operational autonomy was limited for the organization. In comparing the cases, both a lack of complicity and reliance on negotiation hindered operational autonomy in Somalia, while only over-complicity and blurring of lines was a problem in Afghanistan. For this reason, MSF

operational autonomy in Somalia was more limited than MSF operational autonomy in Afghanistan.

Review of Theoretical Foundation

In analyzing the successfulness of the project, it is also important to review the applicability and contributions of the study's theoretical foundation based on the comparative analysis. As a whole, the application of PA relationships to INGOs and relevant political actors addressed these interactions. However, the theoretical foundation proved less successful in explaining the relationship between an agent and multiple principals.

Interactions between MSF and present political actors does resemble PA relationships, because the political actors with whom MSF engages holds power or authority over the INGO. This is the essence of the PA relationship, that a principal has authority which it can choose to delegate to the agent. In both case studies, MSF worked within the boundaries established by principals and attempted to maintain its status as an independent, non-governmental organization. What the study hoped to see, however, was how MSF maintained a sense of agency despite having authority levied over the organization and its operations. A model was developed that combined both a general understanding of PA relationships for IOs and the proposed alternative PA structures, CPM and MPM, could explain the influence of multiple principals.

The model's application of these alternative PA structures appeared to be unsuccessful for predicting the case study results. The first explanation for this failure was that the application of this model was an extrapolation of the original intent of the theory. While the theory was applied to IOs, which technically include INGOs, the focus was on IGOs whose principals were member-states of the organization (Hawkins et al. 2006). The

alternative PA structures, CPM and MPM were specifically studied in context of multilateral development banks (MDBs) to which states were also members (Lyne et al. 2006). For IGOs the mechanisms of control that principals could utilize were the rules of procedure to hold the IGO accountable. In the case of an INGO as the agent, these standardized rules of procedure do not exist, and mechanisms of control for delegating or withholding authority vary by the principal and situational context. As previously stated, the mechanism of control in these cases is only the leverage a principal can yield. The theoretical framework applied to this study suggests that the corresponding strict and weak terms of access to the CPM and MPM would act as this mechanism of control. However, as the comparative analysis concludes, the assumed terms of access designations did not correspond. Instead, Somalia exhibited strict terms of access. Also as member-states, principals to IGOs automatically recognize the validity and objectives of the organization, while principals to an INGO are not guaranteed to support the organizations presence or operations.

Moving beyond the possibility of extrapolation, the model also did not account for the potential influence of a higher number of principals. As MSF operations in Somalia demonstrated, as the number of principals the agent must individually engage with increases, the time it takes to establish and conduct operations increases. Another factor not captured that potentially affects INGO's operational autonomy is that as the number of principals in a conflict increases, so the chances of insecurity increases. In this regard, perhaps MPMs and CPMs could still prove to be influential to cases where insecurity is not so high. The final factor not captured by the developed model, but still discussed for context, is principal complicity. Based on the case studies, how much principals appeared to agree with MSFs

presence and operations reflected the ability of MSF to act with relative operational autonomy. Complicity proved to be a much more influential factor than expected.

Overall the model of multiple principal structures developed does not hold for either case studied. PA relationships did provide an understanding of power dynamics between principals compromising a political environment and agents (INGOs) engaged in that political environment. However, the multiple principal structures failed to account for factors such as number of principals, insecurity, and principal complicity.

Application to Literature

Relating the results of this study back to the study's review of the literature, the conclusions drawn do not match the distinctions made between direct and indirect influences on operational autonomy. This study was designed as an extension of the literature discussing negotiated access within states experiencing complex political emergencies and exhibiting strict or weak terms of access. However, when terms of access failed to predict levels of operational autonomy, the study indicated the potential influence of unaccounted factors, such as complicity, number of principals, and a blurring of lines between military and humanitarian space. In the literature review, the blurred lines phenomena was considered an indirect influence distinct from negotiated access. Taken as a whole however, this study demonstrates how interconnected influences on INGOs operational autonomy can be and that, by nature of the topic, clear cut distinctions and categorization are not always possible. The results of the Somalia case study also connect back to the literature's discussion on Angola, where both were MPMs and demonstrated few conditions for agency slack because of the ensuing conflict.

Study Limitations and Strengths

Limitations

Moving beyond the failure of the developed model to predict INGO maintenance of operational autonomy, study limitations can be seen in three different areas: research data, methodology, and the topic itself. Limitations in research were first affected by the scope of this study. This project relied almost entirely on what was publicized by MSF. Very little research was done regarding statements made by principals, except what was needed to support the case's designation as a CPM or MPM and the degree of complicity with MSF. This reliance on only what MSF felt was important to publish exposes the study to potential bias, where only MSF's perceptions were used to measure operational autonomy. Interviews with either mission staff members or leadership within the organization would have been a way to diversify research and obtain data that MSF might not have publically stated.

Limitations originating from the study's methodology are the time period studied potentially not representing the full history of MSFs engagement in a country. Also not covering the re-establishment of missions after closure (ie. MSF's return to Afghanistan in 2006) could limit the evaluation of operational autonomy, particularly if the return is shortly after mission closure (Crombé and Hoffman 2011). Another limitation in the methodology is also not distinguishing MSF operations by their different operational sections. Because MSF is a semi-decentralized organization, different operational sections often exhibit their own culture and way of conducting operations. This was also a limitation in research data because MSF's international website did not distinguish specific activities by operational section and the websites of specific sections were not always available in English. As a general trend,

publications by MSF regarding missions were mostly framed as actions and thoughts of the organization as a whole.

Finally, a limitation that affected this study was humanitarianism as a topic. While much effort was spent controlling for outside variables, such as focusing on one INGO for both cases, the results drawn were mostly inconclusive and still demonstrated influences of outside factors. Studying humanitarianism and INGOs is by nature a multifaceted issue and clear correlations are difficult to observe. This is especially exacerbated by the limited explanatory power of a comparative case study analysis. In both cases, the political and humanitarian crises were extreme and MSF had no choice but to leave. These specific types of cases exhibit many complexities and potential inhibitors to INGO operational autonomy. These cases leave the question of whether maintenance of operational autonomy is even achievable in this political environment.

Strengths

This study's primary strength is the continuation of dialogue within the literature regarding INGOs. Civil society and IOs are growing in relevance and importance to IR scholars, and this study has sought to contribute to this discussion. The study's support for arguing INGO's placement in the international political system is demonstrated by how entrenched MSF became in both cases' political contexts. Despite striving to maintain the fundamental goals of humanitarianism, which encourage political independence, MSF's ability to operate in Afghanistan and Somalia hinged on their political participation with principals. Beyond this study's general contribution to IO literature, it also proposes the expanded theoretical applicability of PA relationships from US national politics and IGOs to INGOs. Although multiple principal structures may have failed to predict the level of INGO operational

autonomy, MSF did in both cases exhibit agent qualities as they sought authority delegation from the principals. Finally, another strength is that studying INGO operational autonomy also extends discussion from just INGO's political relevance to their place as service providers. The study's analysis starts to explore the influences of different contexts of engagement and in turn could assist organizations develop more effective strategies of aid provision. These contributions are expanded upon in the section on further research.

Further Research

This study's suggestions for future research are divided into two sections: improving the application of PA theory to INGOs, and exploring other avenues for studying operational autonomy. Applying a study strength of expanding the theoretical applicability of PA theory, a suggestion is to diversify the INGOs studied or choose cases that exhibit less insecurity and conflict. While focusing on one INGO was a conscious choice to try to hold outside variables constant, comparing two different INGOs rather than two different principal structures could provide greater insight to PA relationships. Additionally, studying cases where insecurity was not quite as high could provide a clear picture of the influence of PA relations without the persistent constraint of security concerns.

Another suggestion is, instead of controlling for the influence of security conditions, studying the influence of these conditions. An alternative study might place security as the independent variable in order to study the relationship with INGO operational autonomy. In a similar fashion, studying PA complicity as an independent variable could also provide an insight into conditions for INGO operational autonomy. Another suggestion is to explore the implications of blurred military/political-humanitarian lines. Here the literature needs an

empirical quantitative study to test for correlation. These suggestions for further research would also build on analysis for INGO aid provision effectiveness.

Conclusion

This project began as a way to study how INGOs are able to maintain their organizational autonomy and still complete operations in the face of principals yielding comparatively much more authority. Not only does such as study speak to the undervalued placement of INGOs in the international system, but also the environmental conditions in which an INGO stands to most effectively operate. Although the project did exhibit difficulties, the most valuable contributions arise from a continued expansion of research. INGOs are often the actors that stand to affect the most focused change for populations in need, because they exist as independent actors whose objectives are primarily service and advocacy based. Not only do these organizations provide necessary assistance to the populations in greatest need, but INGOs also challenge who are conventionally thought as actors within the international political system. Though described as apolitical actors, this study has demonstrated that INGOs are participants within international and local political systems because of necessary engagement with political actors. International Organization literature must continue to study these interactions because INGOs will remain contributive and evolving actors within the international system.

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