Conflict Management, Ethnicity, and Religion: A comparative case study analysis on state approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict in Myanmar and Malaysia

Reid, Joseph

Student Number: s2768399

Conflict Management, Ethnicity, and Religion

A comparative case study analysis on state approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict in Myanmar and Malaysia

Source: AFP

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities of Leiden University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations.

Specialization: Global Conflict in the Modern Era

Supervisor: Dr Vincent Chang

Word Count: 13473

Leiden

July 2021

Contents

Introduction

Ethno-religious conflict is not a new phenomenon. Communities divided along ethnic and religious lines have been engaged in protracted periods of conflict throughout history. Yet despite ethno-religious conflict being a constant detriment to the functionality of domestic, regional, and international politics, as well as the associated significant loss of life, little has been done to investigate the different approaches used to manage it, and why some states have been comparatively more successful.

In the post-Cold War era, the vast majority of ethno-religious conflicts are intractable and intra-state. One of the most internationally visible and mechanically complex ethno-religious conflicts of the post-colonial era has been the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict in Myanmar. Situated on the western coast of Myanmar, the state of Rakhine has beared witness to increasing levels of ethno-religious conflict and inter-communal violence between the Buddhist Rakhine and the Muslim Rohingya. Supported by the Buddhist Myanmarese government, the ethnic Rakhine believe that the Rohingya have no rightful place in post-independence Myanmar due to their lack of perceived ancestry, and their divergent linguistic and religious practices (Ng, 2020). Conversely, the Rohingya contend that they have ancestry in Myanmar as far back as the 15th century, and thus deserve to be treated the same as their Buddhist counterparts and not discriminated against due to their different ethno-religious identity (Ware and Laoutides, 2019).

In contrast, one of the lesser studied, but still exceedingly relevant intra-state conflicts of the post-colonial era has been the Malay-Chinese conflict in Malaysia. In its post-independence era, Malaysia has been subject to a continual political and economic tug-of-war between the ethnic Malays and Chinese. Supported by the Islamic Malaysian government, the ethnic Malays resent the dominance of the Chinese in the business and economic sectors of Malaysian society due to their still perceived immigrant status, and fear of Malaysia becoming aligned with non-Muslim values (Noor, 2009). Simultaneously, the Chinese feel that since their familial ancestors have called Malaysia home for well over a century, they should have their voice heard in Malaysian society, resenting the preferential treatment ethnic Malays receive, their dominance over the central government, and the prevalent ideological belief that being ‘Malaysian’ is heavily tied to also being Muslim (Haque, 2003).

With both Rakhine-Rohingya and the Malay-Chinese conflict show similar ethno-religious and post-colonial characteristics, it could be assumed that they would have similar levels and intensities of ethno-religious conflict. In reality, this could not be farther from the truth; Myanmar experiences higher levels of regular violent and protracted conflict between the Rakhine-Rohingya, whereas Malaysia has only one recorded instance of violent conflict between the Malay-Chinese in its entire post-independence history.

Relevance and Scope

Despite there being a broad range of scholarly work surrounding ethno-religious conflict, the current academic literature primarily focuses on the theory underpinning the potential pre-conditions, triggers, and general management strategies. What is currently missing is in-depth and comprehensive analyses on the effect these different state-led strategies have, and why they produce different outcomes. By analysing the effect these state-led approaches have on conflict dynamics and social processes in Myanmar, a country who has had little success in managing ethno-religious conflict, and Malaysia who comparatively has had significantly more success in managing ethno-religious conflict, I build on the current most prominent theory put forth by Ivan Ng (2020) who posits that this difference in success is due to their different state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict. To do this, I hypothesise that when using a strategy of managing ethnic differences, a state reduces or removes the communal disadvantages shared by groups or communities over time, prevents new forms of disadvantage, and mediates conflict over existing ones, leading to a decrease in communal grievances being formed and a reduction in the likelihood that groups will mobilise to address these perceived disadvantages and grievances. Whereas, when using a strategy designed to eliminate ethnic differences, a state does not reduce, remove, or prevent communal disadvantages or grievances, or mediate conflict over already existing ones, but instead creates new instances, meaning communities will continually mobilise to address both the old and new grievances, eventually leading to a vicious cycle that is constantly perpetuated.

By exploring the effects these state-led management strategies have on conflict dynamics and societal processes, academics and researchers can discern a clearer picture of the causes of ethno-religious conflict and how different types of state intervention can affect their success at managing it. This will illuminate why some state-led strategies are more effective and why some conflicts are more intense and volatile, despite sharing similar characteristics.

Questions and Objectives

Within my research, I will seek to answer the question:

'Since gaining their independence, why, despite sharing common post-colonial and ethno-religious characteristics, has Malaysia had greater success at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar?'

To achieve this, I initially aim to prove that both the Rakhine-Rohingya and Malay-Chinese conflicts have distinct, and similar ethno-religious characteristics. Next, through categorising the different state-led approaches in each case study, this research strives to show how Myanmar uses state-led approaches that seek to eliminate ethnic differences, whereas Malaysia utilises state-led approaches that attempt to manage them. The final goal of this thesis is to formulate a theoretical generalisation as to why managing ethnic differences is a better strategy than eliminating them and define the exact conflict dynamics and social processes that make this a reality. To achieve these aims, I first conducted a within-case analysis on both Myanmar and Malaysia, then, to produce a theoretical generalisation, I performed a cross-case analysis between Myanmar and Malaysia.

Overview of Structure

This thesis will be structured in the following way: In Chapter 2, I will provide an overview and critical analysis of the existing academic literature centred around theories in ethno-religious conflict, state approaches towards managing it, and finally explanations as to why these approaches matter. Chapter 3 will discuss methodology and research design, detailing my chosen methodological approach, analytical framework, and gathering and analysis of data. Chapters 4 & 5 will contain detailed within-case analyses of Myanmar and Malaysia to illuminate the areas in which they differ, as well as evidencing how both conflicts have distinct ethno-religious characteristics. Chapter 6 will move onto a cross-case analysis between Malaysia and Myanmar's different state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict, ascertaining what affects these strategies have on conflict dynamics and social processes and why. Chapter 7 will consider alternate explanations, discussing whether the difference in state-management approaches towards ethno-religious conflict is the reason why Malaysia, when compared to Myanmar, has experienced comparatively lower levels of ethno-religious conflict throughout its period of independence. Chapter 8 comments on the results of the cross-case analysis considering the results of the discussion in the previous chapter, then

reflections on the limitations of my analytical approach and finally recommendations on the directions of future research.

Literature Review

Introduction

Although intra-state conflict has been part of a consistent pattern of conflict since the 19th century, traditional, inter-state warfare throughout the 20th century has drawn the attention of most academics. However, throughout the 1990's, a wave of intra-state conflicts erupted across the world, and in conjunction with the end of the Cold War, heralded a shift in focus within the discipline of conflict studies (Duyvesteyn, 2012). A wide variety of concepts, theories and hypotheses have since been generated in an attempt to explain what creates, sustains, and resolves different types of intra-state conflict. This review will first evaluate the available academic literature on the potential causes of contemporary intra-state conflict, before focusing in on the sociological, ethno-religious perspective, and exploring how different state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict can be categorised and how this can affect conflict dynamics and social processes.

Causes of Intra-State Conflict

This sharp rise in the frequency of intra-state conflict in the closing decades of the 20th century presented an interesting research puzzle for academics. Intra-state conflict was not a recent phenomenon but deducing its primary drivers would require a new set of theoretical tools and applications.

One of the first scholars to tackle this phenomenon was Paul Collier in 1999, concluding that when attempting to identify the primary drivers behind civil war, it is always a choice between either 'greed or grievance' (Berdal, 2005). By drawing on statistical data of intra-state conflicts from the mid-1960's he determined that 'any grievance-based explanations for civil war' were 'seriously wrong' (Berdal, 2005, p. 687). His greed thesis argues that the key to understanding why intra-state conflicts erupt is through the greed of conflict actors, who fight for control of a state's resources (Berdal, 2005). Yet despite Collier's 'greed and grievance' thesis making waves throughout academic circles and stimulating a significant amount of discussion, this is perhaps its only worthwhile legacy, since intra-state conflict cannot simply be broken down to the concept of 'resource wars' (Berdal, 2005). As time has progressed, the more it seems the notion that simplifying intra-state conflicts and civil wars down to simply 'greed or grievance' can be seen as being crude and rudimentary, at best.

In their landmark paper 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War' James Fearon and David Laitin wrote that decolonisation throughout the 1940's to 1970's produced a series of financially, bureaucratically, and military weak states (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). They went on to argue that due to the effects of decolonisation; poverty, a large population, and instability are more likely the primary drivers of intra-state conflict than ethnic, religious or cultural diversity (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). Yet despite the highly regarded nature of Fearon and Laitin's paper, it is a study conducted mainly using quantitative methods. As Mats Berdal (2005, p. 690) describes, when studying the interactions of greed and grievance, the triggers of intra-state conflict, what factors sustain and mutate it over time- quantitative analysis is limited in its utility. Furthermore, Gudrun Østby (2008, p. 144) argues that not just their methodological approach, but also their conclusion 'inequality does not increase the risk of intra-state conflict' is severely misguided as it fails to take into account 'the group aspects of inequality'. When studying identity-driven conflicts, it is imperative to view these conflicts through a sociological lens and investigate them through the use of qualitative methods, so the nuances and intricacies of human and social processes can be accounted for.

Social Cleavages and the Sociological Approach

Every society has their own unique mix of social cleavages, each presenting a distinct set of challenges for researchers and policy makers to unravel. Social cleavages are usually defined as historically determined social, religious, cultural, ethnic, or linguistic lines which divide citizens into distinct societal groups (Stefano and Peter, 1990). Most academics agree that if these cleavages are not properly addressed in the form of responsive equitable policy initiatives, then these divisions can fracture leading to instances of intra-state conflict (Stern and Druckman, 2000). Furthermore, by failing to address these cleavages, states create horizontal inequality among societal groups, with many scholars believing this can lead to an increased chance of group mobilisation through the formation of shared grievances, and even severe, protracted intra-state conflict if left unaddressed (Gubler and Selway, 2012; Østby, 2008).

Sparking Ethno-Religious Conflict

Ted Gurr and James Scarritt's (1989) 'Minorities at Risk' model states three variables that they believe can cause minorities at risk to engage in resistance and conflict towards the dominant elite: 'communal disadvantages; communal grievances; group mobilisation'. The

theory states that when a communal group who share an ethnic identity are subjected to a collective disadvantage when compared to the dominant elite, whether this be economic, political, social or a loss of autonomy, shared grievances arise, resulting in the group mobilising into protest or rebellion.

However, despite Gurr and Scarrit's model being well respected, there is debate about how all-encompassing the model is. Jonathon Fox (1999) argues that they failed to acknowledge the root causes of these disadvantages and therefore the sources of these communal grievances, missing one of the most critical triggers when discussing how minorities at risk can be drawn to engage in resistance and conflict. Fox (1999) subsequently argues that this missing trigger is religion, and to counter this drawback, incorporates religion as an explanation for these sources. Establishing a set of six hypotheses, Fox's basic theory suggests that 'a challenge to a group's religious framework can provoke a violent reaction from that group', with a communities religious framework encouraging individual members to mobilise in collective action (Fox, 1999, p. 451). This collective viewpoint of Fox, Gurr and Scarrit finds widespread support in academic literature.

Managing Ethno-Religious Conflict from the State Level

When discussing classifying state approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict, Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1997) was one of the first to create a set of classifications that can be used to assess policies relating to the management of ethnic conflict across multiple regions. He classifies these policies into three distinct categories: 'assimilation, where a dominant "nationhood" is imposed on the polity to incorporate immigrants and minorities; exclusion, which ranges from physical violence to institutional discrimination; and pluralism, which permits the multiplicity of ethnic and cultural identities' (Stavenhagen, 1997, p. 295).

These categories present a solid basis for categorising state approaches towards managing ethnic conflict, however when applied, they could be considered too broad. John McGarry and Brenden O'Leary (1994) however provide a more in depth and comprehensive model of evaluating what they call 'state-macro strategies for managing ethnic differences'. In their study, they split state macro-strategies into two main sections and eight sub-sections. The first section being 'eliminating ethnic differences' which they further split into: 'genocide; mass population transfers; partition/secession; integration/assimilation' with the second

section being 'managing ethnic differences' which they further split into: 'hegemonic control; arbitration; cantonisation/federalism; consociation' (McGarry and O'Leary, 1994, p. 95-114).

Comparing Macro State Approaches in Myanmar and Malaysia

Arguing that ethnicity and religion have been core tenets of Myanmaerese politics for over a century, Robert Taylor (2005, p. 264) describes the situation as being characterised by 'the politics of multiplicity of ethnic identities' and the 'conflicting concepts of ethnic rights'. Aurel Croissant and Christoph Trinn (2009, p. 32) agree with this observation stating that 'Myanmar's conflict landscape can be analysed from the perspective of ethno-nationalism, involving groups defined by language or religion and characterized by a primarily "micro-nationalist" focus'. Similarly, Leo Suryadinata (2015, p. 134) argues that ethnicity in Malaysia 'has been a cornerstone of the Malaysian state, with politics characterised by ethnic-based contentions'. Croissant and Trinn (2009) observe that in a striking parallel to Myanmar, Malay society has been segmented into 'two, large internally heterogeneous groups – immigrants and their descendants from the Chinese mainland and ethnic Malays' (Croissant and Trinn, 2009, p. 38).

Ivan Ng (2020) provides the only available comparison of state-management approaches to ethno-religious conflict in both Myanmar and Malaysia. They hypothesise that the difference in their successes is due to state-management techniques towards ethno-religious conflict, with Myanmar focusing on techniques that aim to eliminate ethnic differences, whereas Malaysia mainly focuses on techniques that aim to manage ethnic differences (Ng, 2020).

Ng (2020) underpins their theory well as to why Myanmar and Malaysia have differing levels of success in managing ethno-religious conflict, however, there are a number of clear flaws to their study. Firstly, NG only provides a surface level investigation, missing a large number of state-led management approaches used by Malaysia and Myanmar, such as 'arbitration', 'consociation', 'genocide/ethnic cleansing', 'mass population transfers', and 'partition/secession', instead only focusing on 'assimilation' and 'hegemonic control'. Secondly, NG's argument is methodologically flawed as they only provide evidence for Myanmar and Malaysia being plural societies, showing they have the capacity to foster ethno-religious conflict, not that the Rakhine-Rohingya and Malay-Chinese conflicts are actually distinctly ethno-religious in nature. By failing to sufficiently establish that both the conflicts are distinctly ethno-religious in nature, doubt is brought to the validity of their classifications

and conclusions. If it is not first proven that the conflict in both Myanmar and Malaysia did stem from an ethno-religious source, then it is not possible to accurately theorise whether or not state approaches towards managing ethno-religious conflict are the key to Malaysia's relative success, or due to a separate contextual factor, rendering NG's analysis incomplete, and creating the possibility that the causes of ethno-religious conflict have been identified inaccurately. Finally, NG doesn't seek to explain why eliminating and managing ethnic differences can create different outcomes, again making it difficult to determine whether these factors contribute towards a state's success at ethno-religious conflict.

Conclusion

In sum, the breadth of literature regarding intra-state conflict suffers from a focus on quantitative methods and outdated views on what primarily drives this type of conflict. The combination of Gurr, Scarrit and Fox's theories on the causes of ethno-religious conflict, and McGarry and O'Leary's strategies for categorising state-led approaches provide an excellent foundation to begin deconstructing how the cycle of ethno-religious conflict is continually perpetuated, and how it can be broken. However, the literature specifically exploring how state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict can affect conflict dynamics and social processes is sparse, with there being even less which directly compare two case studies with two different approaches in an effort to evaluate to what degree this difference is important. Furthermore, the pieces of work that do attempt to delve into this topic fail to offer insights into why different state-led approaches create changes in conflict dynamics past the state level of analysis, when the answers to these questions lie on the sub-state level. Therefore, in order to address the current shortcomings in this field, research into the direct effects that different state-led approaches have on a state's ability to successfully manage ethno-religious conflict is needed.

Due to this gap in the current academic literature, my research question is thus: 'Since gaining their independence, why, despite sharing common post-colonial and ethno-religious characteristics, has Malaysia had greater success at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar?'.

Research Design and Methodology

Case selection

Paul Stern and Daniel Druckman (2000) describe three methods of selecting cases for analysis: 1) Investigating all potential cases; 2) Random Sampling; 3) Purposeful/Deliberate Sampling. It would be impossible within the scope of this thesis to analyse all potential cases state management approaches towards ethno-religious conflict in South-East Asia and undertaking random sampling would likely give case studies that are not comparable in nature. I therefore chose to use purposeful sampling and select case studies that would suit my research objectives specifically.

When selecting case studies, I decided to go with a 'most-similar' case study design. Essentially, I chose to examine cases that were as similar in nature and characteristics as possible, except for the variable I was interested in measuring. The main advantage of choosing a most-similar case study design is the ambition to keep extraneous variables as constant as possible, a benefit which is helpful when undertaking a comparative study on a regional basis (Anckar, 2008). The theory behind this method is if only one variable is different between cases, yet the outcome I am measuring is also different, then this difference variable can be considered probable cause for the outcome.

Two cases were therefore selected which were similar in their key independent variables *(see figures 1 and 2)* but diverged on the dependent variable I wanted to study: the state-led approaches used to manage the ethno-religious conflict. By comparing the effects this dependent variable had on these case studies' success at managing ethno-religious conflict, this analysis offered insights into the causal mechanisms between state-led approaches and what effect this difference has on the dynamics of each conflict.

Throughout this thesis I will use a number of phrases interchangeably that all refer to state approaches towards managing ethno-religious conflict, these are: state-led interventions; macro-state approaches; state-led approaches; state-led policies; state management strategies; state approaches; state-led policy; state management policies.

Figure 1: Case Selection Comparison - Myanmar

Conflict	Country	Time Period	Actors	Plural Society	Ethno-religious Characteristics	Post-Colonial Characteristics
Rakhine – Rohingya	Myanmar	1948-present	Myanmarese government (state) Rakhines (non-state) Rohingyas (non-state)	Yes	Majority Buddhists (Rakhines), supported by government Minority Muslims (Rohingya) Government spread of ethno-religious propaganda (Buddhisation) Ethno-religious discrimination against minority groups Government sponsored ethno-religious legitimacy Central government as the main ethno-religious institution High levels of group identity and cohesion Minority groups provoke reactions from majority groups Both majority and minority groups have mobilised in the face of perceived discrimination	Former British colony Gained independence - 1948 Power void created after British withdrawal Fractured national identity Collective, traumatic memory from historical conflict

Figure 2: Case Selection Comparison - Malaysia

Conflict	Country	Time Period	Actors	Plural Society	Ethno-religious Characteristics	Post-Colonial Characteristics
Malay-Chinese	Malaysia	1957-present	Malaysian government (state) Malays (non-state) Chinese (non-state)	Yes	Majority Muslims, (Malays), supported by government Minority Buddhists (Chinese) Government spread of ethno-religious propaganda (Islamification) Ethno-religious discrimination against minority groups Government sponsored ethno-religious legitimacy Central government as the main ethno-religious institution High levels of group identity and cohesion Minority groups provoke reactions from majority groups Both majority and minority groups have mobilised in the face of perceived discrimination	Former British colony Gained independence – 1957 Power void created after British withdrawal Fractured national identity Collective, traumatic memory from historical conflict

Research Goals

In order to successfully answer my research question 'Since gaining their independence, why, despite sharing common post-colonial and ethno-religious characteristics, has Malaysia had greater success at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar?', I have determined three research goals that must be met:

1. Show that both the Rohingya-Rakhine conflict in Myanmar and the Malay-Chinese conflict in Malaysia have distinct ethno-religious characteristics, and where the roots of these characteristics stem from.

2. Explore, contrast, and categorise how the range of state-led approaches taken by Myanmar and Malaysia to target ethno-religious conflict are different.
3. Determine that this difference in state approaches is the reason why Malaysia has comparatively been more successful at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar and why this is the case.

Methods of Data gathering

In order to meet 1), I will use Fox's (1999) dynamic theory on what sparks ethno-religious conflict through the use of primary sources such as demographic and ethnographic studies, governmental and NGO reports, newspapers, and interviews to identify distinct ethno-religious characteristics in each individual conflict, before finally using the opinion of expert judges to back up any conclusions drawn. These identified characteristics are not an exhaustive list of all ethno-religious instances, but merely provide enough evidence to show that the conflicts are ethno-religious in nature. To meet 2), I will use specific state policy instances from Myanmar and Malaysia, taken from the same primary and secondary sources as 1), before matching them to McGarry and O'Leary's (1994) categorisation framework. Lastly, to meet 3), I will use secondary sources by comparing and contrasting expert opinions from the available academic literature to assess how the differences in state-led approaches have affected the conflict dynamics and societal processes of each case study and to then weigh these results against the contextual factors present.

Qualitative vs Quantitative

With scholarly focus shifting away from inter-state conflict in the post-cold War period, academics needed a new cache of tools to begin examining the increased levels of intra-state conflict that had erupted worldwide. With aspects such as language, culture, religion, identity, and ethnicity being prominent factors, examining intra-state conflict requires a different set of methodological skills when compared to examining inter-state conflict. In a bid to find the answers to resolving intra-state conflicts, academics have shifted away from quantitative studies to ones more qualitative in nature (Berdal, 2005).

Sidney Tarrow (2007, p. 596) sums up the need for this switch to more qualitative based research as 'it is not quantities but interactions that are the key to the dynamics of violence in intra-state conflicts' and that if scholars wish to make sense of these conflict dynamics they

have to focus their attention not purely on insights gleaned from data sets, but instead on the specific mechanisms and processes that create and continually drive contention.

In line with Tarrow's thoughts on quantitative research, by undertaking a qualitative study, I was able to highlight particular human and community experiences on a sub-state level (Ayres, Kavanaugh and Knafl, 2003), whilst also making choices about which competing mechanisms are the most significant, create links between contextual factors, and identify which key actors are complacent in the emergence and longevity of my chosen conflicts (Berdal, 2005).

Single and Comparative Case Studies

Berdal (2005) explains that case studies excel at offering contextual insights into complex conflict situations, and whilst quantitative methods are often included in case study work, their commitment to greater precision and objectivity when analysing conflict does not lend itself to investigating social processes and a wide range of other cultural actors. Therefore, I chose a qualitative case study approach as its enhanced construct and internal validity mechanisms meant I had the ability to incorporate a more diverse range of indicators for the representation of a theoretical concept and secure the internal validity of causal links or theoretical interpretations within the case studies (Given, 2012).

A qualitative case study approach can be attempted through using either single or multiple case studies. Whilst the single case study approach is possible, it is seldom used as they tend to be entirely descriptive and are not motivated to generate hypotheses (Lijphart, 1971). Therefore I chose to use what Lijphart describes as 'hypothesis generating case studies', by starting with two vague hypotheses and then testing them out initially among a small number of cases, with the aim to construct theoretical generalisations in an area where theory is currently lacking (Lijphart, 1971).

Cross-Case Analysis

This research utilised a cross-case analysis approach as this allowed me to explore the different outcomes of different state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict. This method further provided the ability to analyse large-scale structures, processes, and policies, not just on a macro-level, but on the level of communities and individuals too (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003). Moreover, using a cross-case approach meant I could

engage in systematic and contextualised comparisons of cases that are both similar, yet also contrast over a long period of time (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003). Therefore, I chose to use dual, comparative case studies in my analysis as well as not selecting a short phase of each conflict that would limit my ability to evaluate how events unfold over time.

By not using a large-N approach, I was able to switch between theory and history throughout my analysis, whilst also formulating, discovering, and refining new concepts, explanations and pre-existing theories in conjunction with detailed case evidence from my research (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003). Furthermore, I could examine the specific nuances of each case, achieving a higher level of conceptual ability in each of their broader contexts compared to if I had used a larger number of cases. This meant I was able to perform both within-case and cross-case analysis, allowing me to explore the complex interactions between common, causal factors and more accurately trace the multiple paths of their causation (Rueschemeyer, 2003).

Analytical Framework

Definitions

Ethno-religious conflict does not have a singular, set definition. However, for the purpose of this thesis, ethno-religious conflict will be defined as 'Those conflicts which involve parties that are defined along ethno-religious lines, societies where ethnicity and religion are an integral aspect of social and cultural life and where ethno-religious institutions represent a significant portion of the community and possess moral legitimacy as well as the capacity to reach and mobilise adherents throughout the community' (Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009, p. 265).

Theories in Ethno-Religious Conflict

To first prove that both the Rakhine-Rohingya and the Malay-Chinese conflicts have distinct ethno-religious characteristics, I used Gurr and Scarritt's (1989) 'Minorities at Risk' model and Fox's (1999) six hypotheses from his theory on the causes of ethno-religious conflict. Fox's addition to Gurr and Scarritt's (1989) 'Minorities and Risk Model' results in the generation of six hypotheses; however, these hypotheses are broad and contained significant overlap. As such, I condensed and reduced these six hypotheses down to three to better fit the scope of this thesis and provide a more precise and coherent analysis.

Hypothesis 1: Regardless of the cause, perceived ethno-religious discrimination is likely to result in the formation of grievances within the affected ethno-religious group (Fox, 1999).

Hypothesis 2: The formation of grievances within an ethno-religious group is likely to result in the mobilisation of said ethno-religious group through protest and rebellion. If this group is a minority, it is likely to trigger a negative reaction from the dominant ethno-religious group through increased discrimination and oppression (Fox, 1999).

Hypothesis 3: The projection of ethno-religious legitimacy by established ethno-religious institutions can facilitate the mobilisation of both minority and majority groups unless institutional elites have an interest in maintaining the status quo (Fox, 1999).

I then matched specific instances from both the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict and the Malay-Chinese conflict, using the opinion of expert judges to show how they consistently fit into Gurr and Scarrit's, and Fox's models.

Categorising State-Management Techniques

The second step was to categorise the different state led approaches to managing this ethno-religious conflict. I used McGarry and O'Leary' (1994) 'state macro strategies for managing ethnic differences' model (*see figure 3*) , by identifying different state approaches used by Myanmar and Malaysia to control ethno-religious conflict, matching them to methods suggested by McGarry and O'Leary , then categorising them into the broader sections of 'eliminating ethnic differences' and 'managing ethnic differences' or a combination of both (McGarry and O'Leary, 1994, p. 94).

Figure 3: Categorisation of state-macro strategies for managing ethnic differences

Eliminating Ethnic Differences	Managing Ethnic Differences
Genocide/Ethnic Cleansing	Hegemonic Control
Mass population transfers	Arbitration
Partition/Secession	Cantonisation/Federalism
Integration/Assimilation	Consociation

Measuring the Effect of State-Management Techniques

The third step was to assess to what degree differences in state management strategies can affect ethno-religious conflict. To do this, I compared expert opinions extracted from peer reviewed publications and journals, written by academics and scholars with specific

knowledge and expertise on the results that these state management strategies have had on ethno-religious conflict in Myanmar and Malaysia.

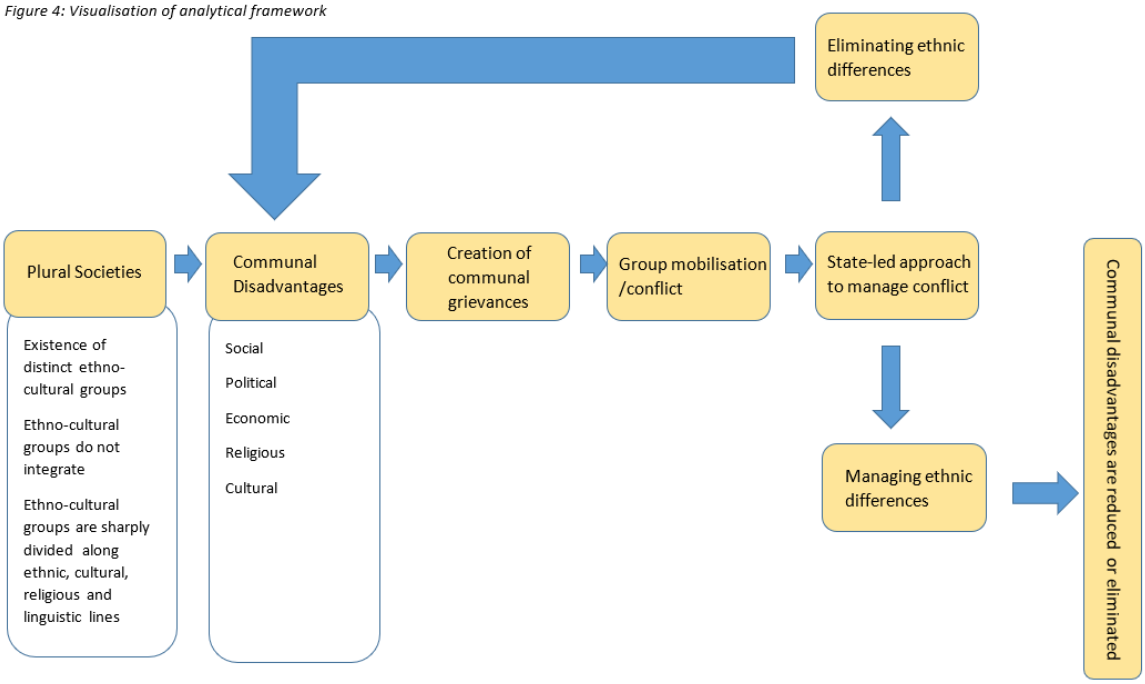
Why is Managing Ethnic Differences the Better State-led Approach?

The fourth step was to investigate why managing ethnic differences, as opposed to eliminating them as a state-led approach, is a better policy. Through reviewing the literature, I found no direct answer to this question past Ng's (2020) implicit assumptions, however my hypotheses are thus:

Hypothesis 4: When attempting to manage ethnic differences, states seek to reduce or remove the communal disadvantages shared by groups or communities over time, prevent new forms of disadvantage, and mediate conflict over existing ones, leading to a decrease in communal grievances being formed and a reduction in the likelihood that groups will mobilise to address these perceived disadvantages and grievances.

Hypothesis 5: When attempting to eliminate ethnic differences, states do not reduce or remove communal disadvantages or grievances, seek to prevent new ones from forming, or mediate existing conflict, but instead create new instances or reinforce old ones, meaning groups or communities will continually mobilise to address both the old and new grievances. (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Visualisation of analytical framework



Due to comparison being an essential element when attempting to analyse the effects different state-led approaches have on success at managing ethno-religious conflict, hypotheses 7 and 8 will not appear in the Myanmar and Malaysia within-case analyses.

Contextual Factors

The fifth and final step was then to take the notion that Malaysia has been more successful at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar due to the difference in state-led approaches and weigh it against a range of other influencing factors, such as economic development, environmental security, and interference from international actors. External contingencies like these can never be fully ruled out, but by recognising them and exploring their potential effects, I was able to assess their impacts.

Case Study: Myanmar

Case Description

Despite Myanmar experiencing various configurations of ethno-religious conflict since its independence in 1948, the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict has continually captured the attention of both the international and scholarly community through its longevity and exceedingly complex conflict dynamics. In Myanmar, around 88% of the total population identify as Buddhists, with Muslims making up approximately 4.3%, of which the Rohingya only form a small minority, numbering around 1.3 million prior to 2015 (Subedi and Garnett, 2020). Zooming into the state of Rakhine, which has always been the primary battleground to this conflict, 51% of the population self-identify as ethnic Rakhine, whereas only 6% identify as Rohingya (Mckay, 2019; *figure 5*), firmly putting the ethnic Rakhine in the majority and the Muslim Rohingya in the minority in terms of demographics.

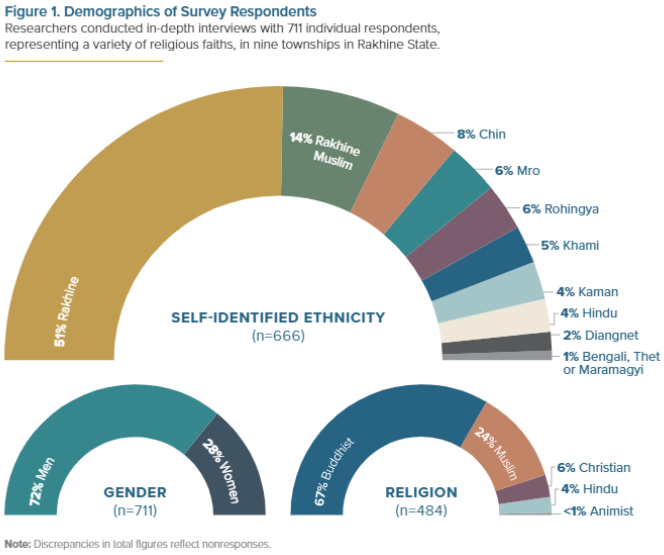


Figure 5: Demographics of Rakhine State (Mckay, 2019)

The Rohingya are the resident Muslim population in Rakhine State, practicing a Sufi-inflected variation of Sunni Islam and tracing their origins in the region back to the fifteenth century (Ware and Laoutides, 2019). However, they are not recognised as being one of Myanmar's indigenous minorities, often being dubbed as 'illegal Bengali immigrants' despite being able to trace their roots back in Myanmar for centuries (Albert and Maizland, 2020). Conversely,

the Rakhine are the native people of Rakhine state with the majority being staunch Buddhists. Contrasted to the Rohingya, they are defined as one of Myanmar's indigenous minorities under the 'Taingyintha' policy, being able to trace their origins to around the tenth century CE. The Rakhine and Rohingya differ significantly along ethnic, religious, and linguistic lines, with these differences forming the basis of much of the conflict between the two groups.

Pinpointing an exact time tensions began to erupt between these two groups is challenging due to the heavily disputed nature of their shared history, however it is said to date to the colonial period when Myanmar was under British rule (Ware and Laoutides, 2019). During the Second World War, when fighting broke out in Rakhine state, the majority of Rohingya Muslims aligned with the British, whilst the Rakhine aligned with the Burmans who were supported by the Japanese (Ware and Laoutides, 2019). This clear division of support through traumatic, collective memory was heavily reinforced by British imperial policies which heavily favoured the Rohingya, and continued post-independence with both groups engaging in bouts of violent conflict with the aim of enhanced autonomy ever since (Ware and Laoutides, 2019).

Yet despite the conflict between the Rakhine and Rohingya being continually inflamed since Myanmarese independence, 2012 witnessed a distinct push by the Myanmarese military to drive the Rohingya out of their homes, which was further compounded by a series of violent attacks on military installations by a group of Rohingya militants calling themselves the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) in late 2017. This created a renewed call by the ethnic Rakhine for retribution against the Rohingya, leading to a visible uptick in violence, escalation in tensions and an exodus of Rohingya Muslims fleeing to Bangladesh, which still continues to this day (Albert and Maizland, 2020).

Case Analysis

Ethno-Religious Characteristics of the Rakhine-Rohingya Conflict

To label the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict as ethno-religious, definitive characteristics must be identified. To do this, I will utilise hypotheses one-three from the previous Methodology section.

Hypothesis 1: Regardless of the cause, perceived ethno-religious discrimination is likely to result in the formation of grievances within the affected ethno-religious group (Fox, 1999).

Becoming Prime Minister after Myanmar's independence, in 1948 U Nu embarked on a radical 'Bamarisation' and 'Buddhisation' initiative designed as a cultural centralisation policy that discriminated against ethnic minorities who diverged from the central linguistic and religious features of the ethnic Myanmarese (Mong, 2007). This radical policy of forced homogenisation set the scene for the implementation of Myanmar's most prominent indigenous policy, with the concept of 'Taingyintha' being unilaterally introduced in 1982. Taingyintha is a name given to those considered to be the 'national races' of Myanmar, with indigenous ancestry dating back to before the British occupation in 1823 (Cheesman, 2017). It is built on the ethnic classifications of the British, being simultaneously inclusive to all those included in the classification (like the Rakhine) due to the perceived equality of their shared ancestry, and exclusionary due to those ethnic groups who are excluded (like the Rohingya) (Ng, 2020). Under Myanmar's 1982 citizenship law, only those who are part of the taingyintha are considered citizens, with those excluded being 'partial citizens' or even stateless (Ng, 2020).

A practical example of the Taingyintha policy is that in many Rohingya townships couples are limited to only two children and need government approval to move homes. Additionally, there are many conditions of marriage, for which they need permission, such as photographing the bride without a headscarf and the groom as clean shaven; practices directly against Islamic customs (Albert and Maizland, 2020). In comparison, none of these conditions are present for those recognised under the taingyintha label. As such, it can be clearly seen that this ethno-religious discrimination has likely formed a significant number of grievances among the Rohingya, not just against the government, but also against the Rakhine who have not been the target of these government policies, are included in nationalisation polices, and have been allowed to live in relative peace.

Hypothesis 2: The formation of grievances within an ethno-religious group is likely to result in the mobilisation of said ethno-religious group through protest and rebellion. If this group is a minority, it is likely to trigger a negative reaction from the dominant ethno-religious group through increased discrimination and oppression *(Fox, 1999).*

From the point of view of the Rohingya, the government has continually employed strategies straight from the British colonial playbook, aiming to divide and conquer the Rakhine Buddhists and Muslim Rohingya (Kreibich, Goetz and Murage, 2017). Kreibich, Goetz and Murage (2017) argue that this complete rejection of an autonomous Rakhine state proposed by the Rohingya, and their subsequent and continued denial of citizenship saw a rise in group mobilisation and insurgency, leading to amplified tensions between the Rakhine-Rohingya and further cycles of conflict. Furthermore, these types of policies began to create a split, those who saw violence as unacceptable, and the ever increasing number who believed violence was a valid method of resistance, and thus began to splinter off into cells within their ethnic group (Kreibich, Goetz and Murage, 2017).

Prior to the 2012 Rakhine state riots between the Rakhine and Rohingya, the Rohingya had held deep seated grievances against the Rakhine, largely due to their perceived preferential treatment by the central government in allowing them to increase the power disparity against the Rohingya using coercive, deceptive, and threatening means (Fang, 2018). This induced significant competition between two groups, resulting in the mobilisation of the Rohingya community in protest (Deutsch, 2014). This frequent mobilisation of the Rohingya community evolved into the aforementioned splintering of the group, and culminated in the eventual ARSA terrorist attacks throughout Rakhine state in 2017. Matt Schissler, Matthew Walton and Phyu Thi (2015) view all post-2012 Rohingya mobilisation and violence as a characterisation of ‘the sustained policies and practices of discrimination’, with Ware and Laoutides (2019) noting that historically the Rohingya have never been a particularly violent or radicalised population, despite years of discrimination and marginalisation, but a growing sense of existential despair and lack of perceived options has allowed a growing number to justify violence as a recursive action.

This negative reaction through increased discrimination and oppression is evidenced in the aftermath of the 2016 and 2017 ARSA attacks on police and military outposts which killed more than 70 people. In response to the ARSA attacks, the Myanmarese military, in

conjunction with Buddhist and Rakhine militants, launched a brutal crackdown on Rohingya villages indiscriminately raping, murdering, and committing arson, resulting in the deaths of more than 1,000 Rohingya civilians and the exodus of some 700,000 more into neighbouring Bangladesh (Kreibich, Goetz and Murage, 2017; CFR, 2020).

Hypothesis 3: The projection of ethno-religious legitimacy by established ethno-religious institutions can facilitate the mobilisation of both minority and majority groups unless institutional elites have an interest in maintaining the status quo (Fox, 1999).

In the scope of Myanmarese ethno-religious legitimacy, there is only one option; you must be part of the taingyintha, and you must be Buddhist. Any other dual designation constitutes someone as an alien, part of the 'other', and just overwhelmingly viewed in a negative manner (Ng, 2020). Due to the Rohingya being neither Buddhist nor part of the taingyintha, and the negative perception of this propagated by a government not interested in maintaining a status quo, it often gives the Rakhine a ready excuse to actively discriminate and mobilise against them across economic, political, and social spheres. Many Rohingya subscribe to the notion that since they can trace their familial origins in Myanmar back generations, even to before the British occupation, they are therefore deserving of being classed as taingyintha with full citizen status and as such mobilise in protest of this grievance.

Due to this rigid and uncompromising nature of Myanmarese national identity, the most established ethnic and religious institution is the central government. The presence of this ethno-religious behemoth has played a significant role in mobilising the Rakhine against the Rohingya, and has continuously been uninterested in maintaining the status-quo in Rakhine state as this would not meet its aims of a 'Buddhist-only' Myanmar. Subedi and Garnett (2020) postulate that the central Myanmar government has been engaged in a campaign of radicalising previously peaceful Buddhists into a campaign of violent extremism against Muslims. Fisher (2014) further articulates that both political and religious institutions have shown an overcommitment to the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict, ensnaring its participants in violence through the continual encouragement of Muslim targeted violence and being an overall hindrance to any attempt to de-escalate intercommunal violence.

Categorising State-led Approaches to Managing Ethno-Religious Conflict

Partition/Secession

U Nu's 1948 Bamarisation/Buddhisation policies, and by extension the 1982 Taingyintha policy, created a conceptualisation determining who belonged in post-independence Myanmar (Farzana, 2017). This meant that anyone not adhering to traditional Myanmarese ethnic and religious values or falling outside of one of the 'national races', was excluded from the modern Myanmarese state, partitioned away from the majority, and forced to secede to not corrupt or sully the purity of the central government's vision. This specific type of partition/secession, where certain ethnic races are grouped together as being 'national races' and others are excluded, is called 'Indigenism' (Ng, 2020). This government led social engineering of national indigenism led to the banishing of the Rohingya from the collective Myanmarese identity, creating a tear in the social fabric of Rakhine-Rohingya relations (Subedi and Garnett, 2020).

Genocide/Ethnic Cleansing

In the wake of both the 2012 Rakhine riots and the 2016 and 2017 ARSA attacks on government outposts, the Myanmarese military enacted a brutal crackdown on the Rohingya resulting in at least 24,000 Rohingya deaths as of 2018 (Mohshin Habib *et al.*, 2018). This resulted in the UN Human Rights Commissioner labelling the situation in Rakhine as a 'textbook case of ethnic cleansing' (CFR, 2020). In comparison, the government reaction to violence perpetrated by ethnic armed groups, such as the Kachin Independence Army and the Karen National Front, was more reasoned with the use of peacebuilding devices, such as ceasefires, and only targeting those in the group who had taken part in the violence rather than the entire ethnic community. It can therefore be suggested that this was a deliberate response to eliminate the Rohingya rather than manage their ethno-religious differences.

However, it is not just the central government who is participating in the potential genocide/ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya. They have also radicalised the Rakhine into Buddhist militants through the consistent spread of anti-Muslim narratives. In May 2015, a politician from the central government incited a crowd by publicly rallying to 'kill and bury' all Rohingya; a notion that was readily applauded and repeated by those present (Kreibich, Goetz and Murage, 2017). Previous to this, the 969 movement and the Ma Ba Tha movement

encouraged Buddhist extremism and incited violent actions against Muslims; both without repercussions from the central government, even gaining their support (Subedi and Garnett, 2020). It can be suggested that not only is the central government directly committing genocide/ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya, but also radicalising Rakhine Buddhists to do the same.

Mass Population Transfer

Whilst many Rohingya were subjected to the central government's murderous intentions, the ones who survived were only marginally better off. It is estimated that the total number of stateless Rohingya refugees in Bangladeshi refugee camps are now over 909,000 as of March 2019, with many more spread across other parts of the world (OCHA, 2019). Despite this being a 'voluntary exodus', in reality the fleeing Rohingya had little choice but to escape, due to the systematic and sustained scorched-earth policy inflicted upon them by the central government (Zarni, 2020).

Of the estimated 500,000 Rohingya still left in Myanmar, around 120,000 have been labelled as 'Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's)', and forcibly locked in camps throughout Rakhine state, with a visiting German diplomat labelling them as 'concentration camps' (Zarni, 2020). The remaining Rohingya have been forced to exist in destitute conditions, in ghettos where they are deprived of freedom of movement, access to healthcare, adequate sources of nutrition and no access to meaningful livelihoods (Zarni, 2020).

Hegemonic control

Although, in theory the Rakhine have their own agency to utilise, in reality, they are consistently forced into the structure of the central government. By using hegemonic control as a method of managing ethnic differences, the central government has used 'the coercive apparatus of the military' to dominate minority ethnic groups, such as the Rohingya, and force groups part of the ethnic majority, such as the Rakhine, to toe the governmental line or suffer the consequences (McGarry and O'Leary, 1994, p. 105).

Conclusion

Regarding the ethno-religious nature of the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict, defining it purely as one will always be near impossible due to the number of contextual factors that affect the conflict. However, from the evidence shown in hypotheses one-three on defining a conflict as ethno-religious, it is evident that Myanmar fulfils all of these hypotheses to varying degrees,

and as such, it can be said that the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict displays distinct ethno-religious characteristics. Finally, through matching policies of state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict in Myanmar to McGarry and O'Leary's categorisation framework, it can be shown that Myanmar predominantly uses genocide/ethnic cleansing, mass population transfers, partition/secession, and hegemonic control; with the majority of these strategies fitting firmly into the 'eliminating ethnic differences' category.

Case Study: Malaysia

Case description

Throughout its post-independence history, Malaysia has not experienced high levels of violent ethno-religious conflict when compared to its regional neighbours; however, this is not to say it hasn't experienced forms of ethno-religious conflict at all. In Malaysia, based on data collected in 2010, 67.4% of the population were Bumiputera (ethnic Malays) with 24.6% of the population being Chinese and the remaining 8% being comprised of Indians and 'others' (DoSM, 2011; *figure 6*). Within these statistics, 61.3% identified as Muslim, with 19.8% identifying as Buddhist and 1.3% identifying as other traditional Chinese religions (Confucianism, Taoism, Tribal/Folk), clearly showing that the Muslim Malays are in the majority when compared to the Minority Chinese in terms of demographics (DoSM, 2011; *figure 7).*

*Figure 6: Malaysian population by ethnic group (*DoSM, 2011)

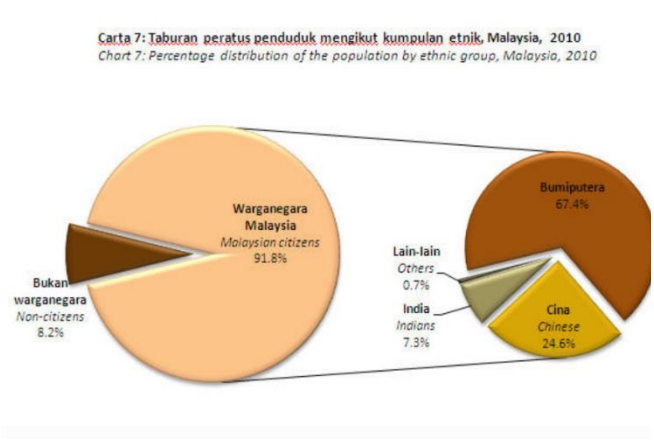
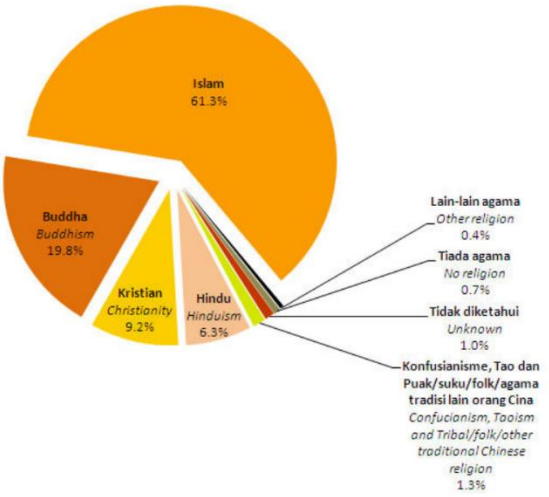


Figure 7: Malaysian population by religion (DoSM, 2011)



The Malay are linked to the original population of Malaysia, having descended from the early Malayic-speaking Austronesians and Austroasiatic tribes who founded several ancient kingdoms across South-East Asia (Milner, 2008). Despite there being considerable genetic, linguistic, cultural, and social diversity between the different Malay sub-groups, the vast majority are Muslims, adhering to a form of Sunni Islam which they see as being intricately woven into the fabric of their ethno-religious identity (Barnard, 2004). They are considered to be 'Bumiputera', a broad ethnic category that refers to Malays and other indigenous groups

which allows them to reap the benefits of government-led affirmative action schemes (Crouch, 2001).

The ethnic Chinese present in Malaysia are mostly citizens of Han Chinese ethnicity, descended from Southern Chinese immigrants who arrived in Malaysia between the early 19th century and the mid-20th century. The majority adhere to Buddhism or other Chinese folk and tribal religions, and consider their ethnic ancestry and religion to be fundamental components of their identity (Haque, 2003). Yet, despite many Malaysian Chinese being able to trace their family lineage in Malaysia back generations, they are not considered to be part of the 'Bumiputera'. This has often resulted in them ceding advantages to the ethnic Malays who are given preferential treatment through positive discrimination policies in a range of societal spheres as they are categorised as a 'national race' (Crouch, 2001).

Ethnic-tensions and conflict first have their roots in Britain's colonial legacy, which is still heavily felt to this day. Due to Britain's open-door policy on immigration during the colonial period, by the 1950's, the Chinese had become the single largest ethnic group in Malaysia, instigating a radical change in societal dynamics, as in the pre-colonial period, Malaysia was almost mono-ethnically populated by the ethnic Malays (Gabriel, 2015). This process was compounded with the Japanese occupation of Malaysia from 1941-1945, who whilst implementing a 'pro-Malay' and 'anti-Chinese' policy , caused a significant increase in inter-ethnic tensions, and a continual cycle of violent Chinese-Malay clashes until the Japanese withdrawal, resulting in the formation of collective, traumatic memory on both sides that still persists in the modern day (Kheng, 1981).

Malaysia as a nation, and all the mechanisms that help it operate as a country, are based on ethnic identity, with citizens being squarely placed into a distinct ethno-groupings (Ng, 2020; Noor, 2009). On top of this, Malaysian ethnic identity has been closely tied to Islam since the 15th century, whereas Chinese ethnic identity in Malaysia has always been intertwined with Buddhism or simply being non-Muslim (Noor, 2009). This has resulted in many Malays and Chinese 'wearing their ethno-religious identities on their sleeves', each representing their heightened 'Malayness' or 'Chineseness' in an effort to retain as much of their ethnic, religious and cultural identity as possible (Noor, 2009, p. 166). Attempts at protecting their ethno-religious and cultural identities is where most of the conflict between the two groups has sprung from.

Case Analysis

Ethno-Religious Characteristics of the Malay-Chinese Conflict

To classify the Malay-Chinese conflict as being ethno-religiously driven, specific characteristics must be identified. I will use hypotheses one-three from the Methodology section to identify these relevant characteristics.

Hypothesis 1: Regardless of the cause, perceived ethno-religious discrimination is likely to result in the formation of grievances within the affected ethno-religious group *(Fox, 1999).*

1957 didn't just mark a critical moment in independence for Malaysia, but also marked the introduction of one of Malaysia's most important indigenous policies, which is still in effect; the Ketuanan Melayu. The Ketuanan Melayu is a political concept, literally meaning 'Malay Supremacy' that reifies the Malay pre-eminence over other non-indigenous races guaranteeing them a special position and special rights due to them being considered a national race (Haque, 2003). The intention of the Ketuanan Melayu is to safeguard the rights of the ethnic Malays due to perceived discrimination through colonially inherited poverty and economic disadvantage in the business, economic, and education sectors, resulting in high levels of income inequality between themselves and the non-Malay groups (Yeoh, 1999; Lee, 2000; Haque, 2003). This is done through positive discrimination policies that aim to correct imbalances in industries where Malays are underrepresented and maintain their overrepresentation in politics. However, many of the non-indigenous races have argued that it is essentially tantamount to ethnic discrimination due to its subordination of the non-Malay ethnic groups, resulting in both sides forming parallel grievances (Wade, 2009).

Hypothesis 2: The formation of grievances within an ethno-religious group is likely to result in the mobilisation of said ethno-religious group through protest and rebellion. If this group is a minority, it is likely to trigger a negative reaction from the dominant ethno-religious group through increased discrimination and oppression *(Fox, 1999).*

Whilst the Malays are happy with an ethnic-centric political system that clearly favour their rights and indigenous status, the minority non-Malays are consistently vocal about wanting a state system that treats them equally (Ng, 2020). This discontent and unhappiness concerning the special rights policies among non-Malays, came to a head in 1969 with the eruption of racial, intra-state riots between the Malay and the Chinese. Due to provocative actions by

the Chinese in response to their political parties gaining seats in the Malaysia parliament following an election, the ethnic Malays responded with violence, eventually culminating in the suspension of the Malaysian parliament and the declaration of a national emergency (Ng, 2020). These riots spread throughout Malaysia in a wave of Sino-Malay sectarian violence, presenting a physical manifestation of the communal grievances both sides had, expressed through violent group mobilisation.

However, these grievances did not completely subside in the 21st century, even with the introduction of the National Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971 in the aftermath of the 1969 riots and its subsequent policy successor the National Development Policy (NDP) in 1991 (Haque, 2003). In 2007, Malaysia established the 55-member National Unity Panel in response to a 15% increase in ethnic clashes from 2006, with a total of 950 ethnic clashes being recorded that year and it being reported that over 70% of them were between individuals or groups from different races (Hamidah and Lee, 2007). This shows that the same ethnic grievances are likely being expressed by individuals and groups through mobilisation, even in modern Malaysia.

Hypothesis 3: The projection of ethno-religious legitimacy by established ethno-religious institutions can facilitate the mobilisation of both minority and majority groups unless institutional elites have an interest in maintaining the status quo *(Fox, 1999).*

Due to the national identity of Malaysia being closely tied to Bumiputera and Islam (Yuval-Davis, 1997), through the pushing of policies by a succession of ruling coalitions, the central government acts as the most established ethno-religious institution. Through a constant stream of government propaganda, the successive ruling coalitions in post-independence Malaysia have perpetuated the fear among the ethnic Malays that if Malaysia is opened up to the non-Malay communities, then the notion of Malaysia as an Islamic country is at risk, and they are likely to further lose control over land due to the non-Malays perceived economic superiority (Noor, 2009, p. 166). Conversely, the non-Malays (primarily the Chinese), are worried that if they do not defend their identity, both culturally and religiously, they will be completely emasculated under the political pre-eminence of Malay dominance (Noor, 2009). As the major ethno-religious institution in the country, by capitalizing on the fears of both the Malays and non-Malays and through divisive policies on ethnic identity, the central government has perpetuated the politics of ethno-religious identity in post-independence Malaysia, resulting in the mobilisation of both groups (Noor, 2009). However, despite the

continual projection of ethno-religious legitimacy by the Malaysian government, because these institutional elites are interested in maintaining the status-quo, there has been no major mobilisation of the Chinese-Malaysian community since the 1969 riots.

Categorising State-led Approaches to Managing Ethno-Religious Conflict

Hegemonic Control

McGarry and O'Leary (1994, p. 106) argue that hegemonic control can be defined as 'where there are two or more deeply established national or ethnic communities, and where the members of these communities do not agree on the basic institutions and policies the regime should pursue, then majority-rule can become an instrument of hegemonic control'. The crafting of the Ketuanan Melayu and the further reification of Malay dominance through policies such as the NEP and NDP, created a device in which the central Malaysian government could use to exert hegemonic control over the non-Malays and effectively subordinate them. Due to the general state of disagreement between the Malay and Chinese about how Malaysia should be governed, the institutions that should be created, and generally the policies the ruling coalition should pursue, meant that the central government had to assume this control to enact policies of affirmative action in favour of the ethnic Malays. This allowed them to push through preferential policies in order to address the horizontal inequalities between the two groups and, in theory, reduce ethno-religious conflict between them.

Arbitration

A concept closely connected to Ketuanan Melayu is the Malaysian 'social contract', introduced in the same period during the move towards Malaysian independence in 1957. Departing from the traditional interpretation of a social contract, the Malaysian social contract represents the 'painstaking compromises between the ethnic Malays, Chinese and Indians on their mutual rights and privileges, their bargains with the Malay rulers and the British for the creation of a democratic, monarchical, federal and non-theocratic system of government' (Tay, 2017, p. 48). According to Tay (2017), the specifics of this bargain revolved around the Chinese and Indian communities allowing the position and special privileges afforded to the Malays whilst under British colonial rules to continue, preserving the traditional Malay rulers as constitutional monarchs, and recognising that the only national language is Malay, as well as Islam becoming the official religion of the Malaysian Federation. In return, the Malays would recognise the Chinese and other non-Malay immigrants

legitimate interests (mainly those in the economic and business spheres), rights to citizenship, residence, freedom to preserve, practice, and propagate their chosen religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions/values (Noor, 2009).

By assuming a policy of arbitration between the Malays and non-Malays instead of one dedicated to cultural assimilation towards a single 'pan-Malay' identity, the arbitration policy established an arrangement of 'communal compartmentalisation' which allowed both groups to preserve their cultural identities and traditions through an intentional 'division' along ethno-religious lines (Croissant and Trinn, 2009).

Consociation

Originally theorised by Arend Lijphart's, 'Consociationalism' postulates the idea that a state can effectively nation-build and remain stable despite severe internal divisions along ethno-religious lines, without having to submit to compatible values by establishing a political system based on cooperation between different, antagonistic groups (Lijphart, 1969). Geoffrey Stafford (1999) argues that when considering the success of their ethnicised approach, Malaysia presents a classic example of Lihphart's consociationalism due to the ethnic structure of its society being reflected in the structuring of its political parties and institutions.

By combining the concepts of Ketuanan Melayu and the Malaysian social contract, the successive ruling coalitions in post-independence Malaysia have managed to create a consociationalist society where both ethnic Malay and the Chinese communities can co-exist without having to constantly resort to violence to protect their core ethno-religious identities. Moreover, the central government has created this peace without having to enact policies forcing assimilation or integration.

Partition/Secession

Despite the cooperative nature of Malaysia's arbitration and consociationalist policies, the concept of Bumiputera is inherently problematic due to its elements of indigenism. By determining the ethnic Malays as 'Bumiputera' and the non-Malay Chinese and Indians as 'non-Bumiputera' from their refusal to follow Islam and not being classed as one of the 'national races', the Malay government has partitioned the non-Bumiputera into their own separate societal group. Consequently, due to positioning ethnicity and religion so highly in their political framework, these state-imposed ethno-religious labels have created a situation

where communal variances result in differing power dynamics through the giving of special forms of political, economic and social powers (Noor, 2009), further accentuating the divide between the Bumiputera and the non-Bumiputera.

Conclusion

When discussing specific ethno-religious characteristics of the Malay-Chinese conflict, the evidence gained from hypotheses one-three displays distinct ethno-religious dimensions, however, as is the case with all levels of conflict analysis, it is near impossible to say it is uniquely ethno-religious without considering the multitude of contextual factors. Lastly, through the practical application of McGarry and O'Leary' categorisation framework to specific state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict in Malaysia, it is clear that Malaysia utilises hegemonic control, arbitration, consociation, and partition/secession; the bulk of these policies fitting squarely into the 'managing ethnic differences' category.

Cross-Case Analysis

Introduction

In the previous two sections I performed a within-case analysis of my chosen cases: Myanmar and Malaysia. Within this section I will perform a cross-case analysis thematically comparing the differences in state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict, exploring the effects these different approaches have had on social processes and conflict dynamics, and theorising the mechanisms behind them.

Similarities

Throughout the previous analyses, it is clear that Myanmar and Malaysia share a high number of post-colonial, ethno-religious, and societal characteristics (*see figures 1 and 2*). Yet despite the many similarities, Malaysia and Myanmar differ in two main areas: their state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict and the results of these different approaches.

Differences in State Approaches to Managing Ethno-Religious Conflict

From the previous analyses, it was clearly shown that Myanmar uses state-led strategies that revolve around eliminating ethnic differences, whereas Malaysia uses policies that revolve around managing ethnic differences.

By using state-management approaches that seek to eliminate ethnic differences, disrupting the status-quo through attempting to remove Rohingya culture and values, and propagating racialist ideals throughout the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict, Croissant and Trinn (2009, p. 34) argue that Myanmar has 'conditioned the political and economic marginalisation and cultural discrimination of the Rohingya' resulting in the creation of a nationwide ethno-nationalist paradigm which regularly results in periods of protracted conflict. Ware and Laoutides (2019) build on this point by concluding that the politicisation of ethnicity and religion through 'national races' and propagated by Myanmar's exclusionary politics have been the driving force behind the intractable and violent nature of the conflict.

In contrast, by using state-management approaches that aim to manage ethnic differences rather than eliminate them, continually working to maintain the status-quo through allowing the Malaysian Chinese to maintain their culture and values, and addressing horizontal

inequality through ethnocracy, Malaysia has managed to avoid any major incidents of Malay-Chinese violence since the 1969 riots. According to Wilson Tay (2017), the arbitration of the social contract and the subsequent granting of citizenship to immigrant communities, was a watershed moment in racial relations in Malaysia's post-independence history. Despite the long-term sustainability of the 'social contract' being called into question by a number of researchers and international commentators throughout the 21st century, it allowed the non-Malay communities to be an official part of Malaysian society, and as citizens they could participate in the political system, without fear of being deported or refused entry into the country (Tay, 2017); a set of privileges that have never been afforded to the Rohingya through their continual denial of citizenship. Croissant and Trinn (2009, p. 40) contend that it isn't just the cultural guarantee of this inter-ethnic bargain that explains Malaysia's peaceful management of ethno-religious conflict, but the 'invention and implementation of a conception of multicultural citizenship (Ketuanan Melayu) based on the acceptance of cultural differences which attempts to mitigate its political conflict potential by way of a compromise founded on integration through accommodation'. Again, this is a compromise that has never been attempted with the Rohingya, and although the central Myanmarese government is completely set on never allowing them into the 'Taingyintha', this concept of multicultural and a different form of citizenship has the potential to be the middle ground.

On the surface it may seem like the hegemonic control used would lead to high levels of ethno-religious conflict, and in fact, Yeoh (1999) argues these policies have meant Malaysia still remains a deeply divided society with significant socio-racial cleavages. However, thus far the combination of state-led preferential policies towards the ethnic Malays and the elements of consociationalism in Malaysian society have been successful at managing ethno-religious conflict when compared to Myanmar. When examining the raft of preferential policies afforded to the ethnic Malays, these discriminatory practices may seem radically unfair. However, when examining the results Malaysia has seen, it is evident why Malaysia has lower levels of ethno-religious conflict. The results of these preferential policies have seen the Malays become more educated and move from primary, to secondary and tertiary industries, with levels of Malay poverty falling from 50% in 1970 to 9.5% in 1995 (Lee, 2000). So, despite these preferential policies being inequitable in nature, and seeming like they have increased discrimination against the Chinese, they have in fact successfully addressed horizontal

inequality between the Malays and non-Malays by increasing their overall quality of life, reducing one of the main pre-conditions to intercommunal conflict in the process. Once more, these sort of preferential policies that lifted the ethnic-Malays out of poverty, and allowed them to compete with the Chinese economically, have never been utilised by the Myanmarese government to help manage the conflict between the Rakhine-Rohingya; meaning the Rakhine have consistently experienced policies that maintain or improve their quality of life, whereas the Rohingya have been subject to policies that only decrease theirs.

Analysis

However, just analysing these effects on a state and societal level is not enough, to gain insight into how these state policies affect conflict dynamics, societal processes, and how they actually produce or reduce conflict, these state policies must be analysed on an individual and group level. For example, it has been shown that reducing horizontal inequality decreases the likelihood of conflict, but not how this process actually works. To do this I will utilise hypotheses seven and eight from the Methodology section.

Hypothesis 4: When attempting to manage ethnic differences, states seek to reduce or remove the communal disadvantages shared by groups or communities over time, prevent new forms of disadvantage, and mediate conflict over existing ones, leading to a decrease in communal grievances being formed and a reduction in the likelihood that groups will mobilise to address these perceived disadvantages and grievances.

The Malaysian social contract was a critical juncture for all non-Malays who were living in Malaysia in the pre-independence era. Prior to this compromise, a major individual and communal grievance amongst the Chinese was the feeling that they were 'aliens' in a country they called home, without the right to be involved in politics and the threat of deportation or refusal of entry (Tay, 2017). By giving them their own unique form of citizenship, the Malaysian government reduced the communal disadvantage felt by the Chinese, and by arbitrating between the two groups, managed to mitigate a proportion of the historical, collective trauma that had plagued relations between the two communities since before independence, therefore reducing the number of recurring communal grievances formed, which subsequently reduced the risk of group mobilisation on both sides.

Simultaneously, the Ketuanan Melayu achieved a similar result by creating preferential policies that reduced the underrepresentation of ethnic Malays in key spheres, reduced the communal disadvantages shared by them, and therefore reduced the creation of communal grievances and the likelihood of group mobilisation. Evidently due to the 1969 riots, this wasn't enough. But in the aftermath of the riots, and due to the continual evolution of policies such as the NEP and NDP, the Malaysian government have managed to reduce communal disadvantages and grievances, preventing new ones from forming to such a degree, that the Malays and Chinese have not felt the need for major mobilisation. However, as previously mentioned, the long-term sustainability of the 'social contract' and additionally the Ketuanan Melayu is increasingly being called into question. Whilst the 'social contract' was a seminal moment for Malaysian Chinese, this was agreed over 64 years ago, and there have been few concessions afforded to the Malaysian Chinese since then. Conversely, the Ketuanan Melayu has been continually providing the ethnic Malays with preferential treatment since Malaysian independence. It is likely that if this unequal distribution of concessions continues, that Chinese grievances from this perceived discrimination may manifest to the point they mobilise in protest, due to decades old grievances not being addressed and continually reinforced.

Hypothesis 5: When attempting to eliminate ethnic differences, states do not reduce or remove communal disadvantages or grievances, seek to prevent new ones from forming, or mediate existing conflict, but instead create new instances or reinforce old ones, meaning groups or communities will continually mobilise to address both the old and new grievances.

In comparison, there have been no such critical junctures for the Rohingya or Rakhine in Myanmar's post-independence era. Issues such as the stateless nature of the Rohingya have only been reinforced with the 'Bamarisation/Buddhisation' and 'Taingyintha' policies. By attempting to eliminate the ethic differences of the Rohingya instead of managing them, Myanmar has not attempted to reduce or remove existing communal disadvantages and grievances or prevent new ones from forming, but instead have continually reinforced already existing grievances, maintaining the likelihood that the Rohingya will mobilise in protest. By refusing to arbitrate between the Rakhine and Rohingya, the collective, historical trauma shared by both parties has been allowed to fester for the better part of 75 years, continually reinforcing historical grievances that have continually led to mobilisation on both sides.

Furthermore, the Myanmarese government's volatile reactions to group mobilisation in protest of these disadvantages and grievances through methods such as genocide/ethnic cleansing, partition/secession, and mass population transfers, have created new instances of communal disadvantage and grievance, increasing the already high likelihood of group mobilisation in protest. This consistent policy of not reducing or eliminating communal disadvantages and grievances means the Rakhine and Rohingya continually feel the need to mobilise, locking the state of Rakhine in a perpetual cycle of intractable conflict.

Contextual Factors

Despite the previous evidence showing how Myanmar and Malaysia differ in their state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict, there are other important differences and contextual factors that could potentially provide alternate explanations as to why Malaysia has been comparatively more successful in this endeavour.

Economic Development

One essential contextual factor is the differing levels of economic development experienced by Myanmar and Malaysia. In 2019 Malaysia had an Annual GDP of $364,684 million, with a GDP per capita of $11,213; whereas in 2019, Myanmar had an Annual GDP of only $81,257 million, with a GDP per capita of $1,273 (Country Economy, 2021). Ejaz Ghani and Lakshmi Iyer (2010) argue that conflict can often be triggered by 'internal deficiencies in development', explaining how the lower economic opportunity cost of rebellion in poorer areas can lead to a higher likelihood of conflict, and whilst more economically developed regions experience conflict as well, rapid growth, job creation, and better institutions and state-run safety nets help them manage conflict more successfully. This analysis suggests that an increase in economic development is closely associated with a reduced risk of conflict relapse over a long time period (Adam, Collier and Davies, 2008, p. 108).

Environmental Security

Although environmental factors often take a backseat to other more visually prominent conflict factors, a significant number of academics argue it to be one of the primary drivers behind violent conflict in the developing world (Theisen, 2008). Two of the main concepts in environmental security theory revolve 'eco-scarcity' and subsequent 'resource wars'. Thomas Homer-Dixon (1999) contends that when access to resources is decreased, frustration is experienced by the affected population, resulting in grievances being formed against the state

and their agents, leading to a weakening in civil society and an increased chance that a violent reaction will occur. Furthermore, when powerful governments and elites seize scarce resources, groups weakened by these resource grabs turn to violence to regain access to key resources (Theisen, 2008). Although Rakhine state is rich in natural resources, it is the poorest state in the country with successive ruling coalition's confiscating land from local communities since the 1990's, and allowing international companies to exploit and deprive local communities with little oversight, then funnelling profits back to the central Myanmarese government instead of to local populations (Mckay, 2019). Whereas in Malaysia, environmental resources are sustainably managed by the government and distributed in an equitable fashion through state-run institutions, reactionary environmental policy, and long-term ecological planning (Danced/EPU, 2007).

Interference from International Actors

Despite many foreign actors having influence in Myanmar and Malaysia, China is the state that has significant influence in both countries, albeit in different forms. Myanmar has been the most enthusiastic participant in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) throughout South-East Asia, with seven multi-million dollar projects being either in the late planning stages or actively being built (Taidong, 2019). This has led to substantial levels of infrastructure improvement, however it has also generated large amounts of protest and conflict throughout Myanmar due to environmental security issues (Lwin, 2019).

Simultaneously, Ware and Laoutides (2019) argue that the internationalization surrounding the plight of the Rohingya has provided the wrong signalling to local conflict actors, resulting in further cycles of violence due to the empowerment of insurgent groups through human rights discourse, transnational civil advocacy and growing worldwide Islamic solidarity. In contrast, China's influence in Malaysia stems from their rise as a global economic power and their status as the largest market in Asia, forcing the Malaysian government to adopt policies and a more favourable stance towards the Malaysian-Chinese community, as to improve China's perception of Malaysia, and allow increased access to China's expanded market (Haque, 2003). Therefore, although both Myanmar and Malaysia have experienced interference from China, it is to wholly different degrees; China's interference in Myanmar has created tension, grievances, and conflict, whereas China's interference in Malaysia has

been indirect in nature, resulting in only more favourable policies for the Malaysian Chinese community.

Discussion

Summary of Key Findings

Throughout this thesis it has been my aim to answer the question 'Since gaining their independence, why, despite sharing common post-colonial and ethno-religious characteristics, has Malaysia had greater success at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar? I initially conducted a within-case analysis on both Myanmar and Malaysia. These analyses support dual hypotheses regarding Myanmar and Malaysia, most notably that 1) both the Rakhine-Rohingya and Malay-Chinese conflict have distinct ethno-religious characteristics; 2) Myanmar uses state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict that mostly revolve around eliminating ethnic differences, whereas Malaysia primarily uses strategies that seek to manage ethnic differences. In order to explain how these differences in state-management approaches affect success at managing ethno-religious conflict, I then performed a cross-case analysis between Myanmar and Malaysia. The results also showed that by using approaches that aim to eliminate ethnic differences, the Myanmarese central government has been one of the primary reasons behind their lack of success at managing ethno-religious conflict, whereas by using strategies that aim to manage ethnic differences, the Malaysian government's policies have been a likely reason for their comparative success at managing ethno-religious conflict.

Interpretations and Implications

Throughout the cross-case analysis, I found there was a clear relationship between success at managing ethno-religious conflict, and the different approaches Myanmar and Malaysia took. In line with hypotheses 4 and 5, the evidence I provided supports my hypothesis that reducing communal disadvantages and grievances results in more successful management of ethno-religious conflict. My conclusions support Ng's (2020) determination that the difference between Myanmar's and Malaysia's success is due to their different state-management techniques, but goes further by first determining that both conflicts are distinctly ethno-religious in nature and secondly by exploring the social processes and sub-state mechanisms behind why this is the case. In regard to theoretical generalisations, the results of my interpretation heavily contradict Collier and Hoeffler's (2004) 'greed vs grievance' debate, firmly placing grievances as a more likely driver of conflict. However, Stern and Druckman's

(2000) theory of unaddressed horizontal inequality among societal groups leading to increased level of conflict, and Gurr and Scarritt's (1989) and Fox (1999) frameworks on ethno-religious conflict have gained a considerable amount of supporting evidence.

Regarding alternate explanations, the difference in economic development is clearly a contributing factor to some degree, with the low-cost of rebellion in Myanmar providing a lower opportunity cost overall and a more developed state apparatus in Malaysia mitigating much potential conflict. Similarly, environmental security and interference from international actors are evidently critical contributing factors to generating conflict in Myanmar, with Malaysia being able to control them in a more equitable fashion. However, although all these differences contribute to the lack of success in managing ethno-religious conflict in Myanmar, due to the evidence provided in this study it is clear that the difference in managing ethno-religious conflict is one of the primary reasons for Malaysia's comparative success.

Limitations and Weaknesses

Despite being able to provide some tentative conclusions, there are a number of limitations to this thesis. Firstly, although it was possible to accurately categorise the different state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict that both Myanmar and Malaysia took, due to the small sample size of only two case studies, the evidence provided for hypotheses 7 and 8 provide only workable theoretical generalisations for these specific case studies rather than state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict as a whole. Secondly, due to the size of this thesis I was not able to provide an exhaustive breakdown of all ethno-religious characteristics associated with each conflict, meaning the evidence provided was not the full picture and conclusions could have been strengthened with more evidence. Thirdly, due to the Rakhine state of Myanmar being in a partial media blackout, the polarising nature of the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict, and independent reporting from the region being scarce at best, getting accurate, non-biased data and opinions is challenging, as such any conclusions drawn are only as reliable as the data used. Lastly, due to the number of contextual factors present in both Myanmar and Malaysia, it was beyond the scope of this thesis to completely control these confounding variables, meaning that ascertaining to what degree the differences in success at managing ethno-religious conflict is due to state-led approaches, and to what degree they are due to these contextual factors is not completely clear. Despite these limitations, my conclusions are nonetheless valid as they provide supporting evidence

towards a theory as to why Malaysia has been comparatively more successful at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar and goes further than the current academic literature in explaining the effects their different state-led approaches have had and why.

Conclusion

In conclusion, by analysing the similarities and differences between Myanmarese and Malaysian post-independence society and political governance, this thesis has shown how different state-led approaches can directly affect a state's success at managing ethno-religious conflict. This study clearly demonstrated that both Myanmar and Malaysia share common historical and post-colonial markers, as well defining both the Rakhine-Rohingya and Malay-Chinese conflicts as having distinct ethno-religious characteristics. By initially establishing the similarities between the two conflicts this method isolated state-led approaches towards managing ethno-religious conflict as a potential factor in the comparative success of Malaysia. Then, through exploring the effects the different state-led approaches had on communal and individual social processes, hypotheses 7 and 8 provided evidence for the initial theory of state-led approaches being a major contributing factor. However, contextual factors present in both Myanmar and Malaysia introduced multiple alternate interpretations to the research question that my methodology and research design was not able to entirely rule out or mitigate.

Yet, despite the uncertainties surrounding the effects of contextual factors on managing ethno-religious conflict, by categorising Myanmar's state policies as seeking to 'eliminate ethnic differences' and Malaysia's as seeking to 'manage ethnic differences', it can be suggested that this was the primary reasoning behind Malaysia's comparative success due the effects these different methods had on sub-state social processes. In this regard, when attempting to eliminate ethno-religious differences between the Rakhine and Rohingya, the central Myanmarese government has never reduced or removed communal disadvantages, and grievances, attempted to prevent new forms of discrimination, or mediated conflict over existing ones, instead creating new instances, and reinforcing old ones leading to a continual cycle of violent mobilisation. Whereas, when attempting to manage ethnic differences between the Malays and Chinese, consecutive Malaysian governments have successfully reduced or removed communal disadvantages and grievances, prevented new forms of discrimination, and mediated conflict over existing ones, essentially breaking the cycle of mobilisation.

Overall, this thesis contributed to solving the puzzle as to why Malaysia has been considerably more successful at managing ethno-religious conflict than Myanmar through not just providing a more comprehensive and detailed categorisation of both state's approaches, but by also by offering an explanation as to how this difference in state-led approaches to managing ethno-religious conflict resulted in differing levels of success; an area that represents a gap in the current academic literature.

Based on these conclusions, future research could build on these conclusions by providing a more in-depth understanding of the social processes that occur as a result of differences in state-led approaches to ethno-religious conflict. To this effect, the natural next step would be to conduct primary, ethno-graphic research that elicits information and opinion directly from the people involved, rather than secondary interpretations of others work. Moreover, in order to develop theoretical generalisations that explain how and why differences in state-led approaches affect success in managing ethno-religious conflict, research is needed that explores and incorporates a wide-range of case studies from multiple geographic regions. Finally, to better understand the implications of these results, future studies could investigate the effects of contextual factors on Myanmar's and Malaysia's ability to successfully manage ethno-religious conflict, without this, it will be impossible to determine beyond doubt whether or not state-led approaches are the primary reason for their differences in success, and as such it would also be difficult to create accurate theories as to how different state-led approaches cause and reduce ethno-religious conflict.

Bibliography

Adam, C., Collier, P. and Davies, V. A. B. (2008) 'Postconflict monetary reconstruction', *World Bank Economic Review*, 22(1), pp. 87–112.

Albert, E. and Maizland, L. (2020) *What Forces Are Fueling Myanmar's Rohingya Crisis?*, *Council of Foreign Relations* . Available at: https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/rohingya-crisis (Accessed: 7 December 2020).

Anckar, C. (2008) 'On the Applicability of the Most Similar Systems Design and the Most Different Systems Design in Comparative Research', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. Carsten Anckar, 11(5), pp. 389–401.

Ayres, L., Kavanaugh, K. and Knafl, K. A. (2003) 'Within-case and across-case approaches to qualitative data analysis', *Qualitative Health Research*, 13(6), pp. 871–883.

Barnard, T. (2004) *Contesting Malayness: Malay Identity Across Boundaries - Google Boeken*. Singapore, Singapore University Press.

Berdal, M. (2005) 'Beyond greed and grievance - and not too soon …', *Review of International Studies*. Cambridge University Press, 31(4), pp. 687–698.

CFR (2020) *Rohingya Crisis in Myanmar | Global Conflict Tracker*, *Council of Foreign Relations*. Available at: https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/rohingya-crisis-myanmar (Accessed: 21 November 2020).

Cheesman, N. (2017) 'How in Myanmar "National Races" Came to Surpass Citizenship and Exclude Rohingya', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 47(3), pp. 461–483.

Collier, P. and Hoeffler, A. (2004) 'Greed and Grievance in Civil War', *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56(4), pp. 563–595.

Country Economy (2021) *Country comparison Malaysia vs Burma - Myanmar*, *Country Economy* . Available at: https://countryeconomy.com/countries/compare/malaysia/burma (Accessed: 29 June 2021).

Croissant, A. and Trinn, C. (2009) 'Culture, Identity and Conflict in Asia and Southeast Asia', *ASIEN*, 110(January), pp. 13–43.

Crouch, H. (2001) 'Managing ethnic tensions through affirmative action: The Malaysian experience', in Colletta, N. J., Lim, T. G., and Kelles-Viitanen, A. (eds) *Social Cohesion and Conflict Prevention in Asia*. Washington D.C: The World Bank, pp. 225–262.

Danced/EPU (2007) *Malaysian-Danish Country Programme for Cooperation in Environment and Sustainable Development (2002-2006)*. Copenhagen.

Deutsch, M. (2014) 'Cooperation, Competition, and Conflict', in Deutsch, M., Eric C. Marcus, and Peter T. Coleman (eds) *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution : Theory and Practice*. John Wiley & Sons, pp. 1–252.

DoSM (2011) *Department of Statistics Malaysia Official Portal*. Available at: https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/ctheme&menu_id=L0pheU43NWJwRWVSZklWdzQ4TlhUUT09&bul_id=MDMxdHZjWTk1SjFzTzNkRXYzcVZjdz09 (Accessed: 20 May 2021).

Duyvesteyn, I. (2012) 'The Escalation and De-escalation of Irregular War: Setting Out the Problem', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 35(5), pp. 601–611.

Fang, B. (2018) 'Intercommunal Violence Incarnated: The Persecution of Rohingya Ethnicity in

Rakhine, Myanmar', *Journal of Living Together*, 4(5).

Farzana, K. F. (2017) *Memories of Burmese Rohingya Refugees*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. doi: 10.1057/978-1-137-58360-4.

Fearon, J. D. and Laitin, D. D. (2003) 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War'. Library African Studies Centre, 97(1), pp. 75–90.

Fisher, R. (2014) 'Intergroup Conflict', in Peter T. Coleman, Morton Deutsch, and Eric C. Marcus (eds) *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution : Theory and Practice*. John Wiley & Sons.

Fox, J. (1999) 'Towards a dynamic theory of ethno-religious conflict', *Nations and Nationalism*, 5(4), pp. 431–463.

Gabriel, S. P. (2015) 'The meaning of race in Malaysia: Colonial, post-colonial and possible new conjunctures', *Ethnicities*, 15(6), pp. 782–809.

Ghani, E. and Iyer, L. (2010) *Conflict and Development: Where is Conflict Concentrated in South Asia?*, *World Bank*. Available at: https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/conflict-and-development-where-conflict-concentrated-south-asia (Accessed: 28 June 2021).

Given, L. M. (2012) 'Case Study', in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, pp. 68–71.

Gubler, J. R. and Selway, J. S. (2012) 'Horizontal Inequality, Crosscutting Cleavages, and Civil War', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* , 56(2), pp. 206–232.

Gurr, R. R. and Scarritt, J. R. (1989) 'Minorities Rights at Risk: A Global Survey', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 11(3), p. 375.

Hamidah, A. and Lee, D. (2007) 'Panel wants Institute of Ethnic Relations set up', *New Straits Times*, 13 July, p. 2.

Haque, S. . . (2003) 'The Role of the State in Managing Ethnic Tensions in Malaysia: A Critical Discourse', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 47(3), pp. 240–266.

Homer-Dixon, T. F. (1999) *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kadayifci-Orellana, S. A. (2009) 'Ethno-Religious Conflicts: Exploring the Role of Religion in Conflict Resolution', in Bercovitch, J., Kremenyuk, V., and Zartman, W. (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution*. London: SAGE Publications Inc., pp. 264–284.

Kheng, C. B. (1981) 'Sino-Malay Conflicts in Malaya, 1945-1946: Communist Vendetta and Islamic Resistance', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 12(1), pp. 108–117.

Kreibich, M., Goetz, J. and Murage, A. M. (2017) *Myanmar's Religious and Ethnic Conflicts | Background Report*, *Heinrich Böll Foundation*. Available at: https://www.boell.de/en/2017/05/24/myanmars-religious-and-ethnic-conflicts-no-end-sight (Accessed: 21 November 2020).

Lee, H. G. (2000) *Ethnic relations in Peninsular Malaysia: Cultural and Economic Dimensions*. Singapore .

Lijphart, A. (1969) 'Consociational Democracy', *World Politics*, 21(2), pp. 207–225.

Lijphart, A. (1971) *Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method*, *Source: The American Political Science Review*.

Lwin, N. (2019) *Myanmar Signs 3 Agreements at Belt and Road Forum*, *The Irrawaddy*. Available at:

https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-signs-3-agreements-belt-road-forum.html (Accessed: 15 January 2021).

Mahoney, J. and Rueschemeyer, D. (2003) 'Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas', in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3–42.

McGarry, J. and O'Leary, B. (1994) 'The Political Regulation of National and Ethnic Conflict', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 47(1).

Mckay, M. (2019) *PEACEWORKs the Religious Landscape in Myanmar's Rakhine state*. Available at: www.usip.org (Accessed: 21 November 2020).

Milner, A. (2008) *The Malays*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Mohshin Habib *et al.* (2018) *Forced migration of Rohingya : the untold experience*. Ontario: Ontario International Development Agency. Available at: https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/7857480 (Accessed: 1 June 2021).

Mong, S. K. (2007) 'The Shan in Myanmar', in Hlaing, N. and Ganesan, K. (eds) *Myanmar: State, Society and Ethnicity*. ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, pp. 256–277.

Ng, I. Y. C. (2020) 'State approaches towards managing ethnic diversity in Myanmar and Malaysia: British legacies, postcolonial nationalism and contemporary issues', *Asian Ethnicity*. Routledge, pp. 1–21.

Noor, N. M. (2009) 'The Future of Malay–Chinese Relations in Malaysia', *Peace Psychology in Asia*, pp. 161–172.

OCHA (2019) *Rohingya Refugee Crisis | OCHA*, *United Nations Office for the Cooirdination of Humanitarian Affairs* . Available at: https://www.unocha.org/rohingya-refugee-crisis (Accessed: 14 December 2020).

Østby, G. (2008) *Polarization, Horizontal Inequalities and Violent Civil Conflict*, *Source: Journal of Peace Research*.

Rueschemeyer, D. (2003) 'Can One or a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?', in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 305–336.

Schissler, M., Walton, M. J. and Thi, P. P. (2015) *The Roots of Religious Conflict in Myanmar – The Diplomat*, *The Diplomat*. Available at: https://thediplomat.com/2015/08/the-roots-of-religious-conflict-in-myanmar/ (Accessed: 21 November 2020).

Stafford, G. (1999) 'Economics and ethnicity: Why Malaysia will not follow the Indonesian example of racial relations', in *2nd International Malaysian Studies Conferencend International Malaysian Studies Conference*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya.

Stavenhagen, R. (1997) *Ethnic Conflicts and the Nation-state*, *Human Rights Quarterly*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stefano, B. and Peter, M. (1990) *Identity, Competition and Electoral Availability: The Stabilisation of European Electorates 1885-1985*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stern, P. C. and Druckman, D. (2000) *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*. Washington D.C.: The National Academies Press.

Subedi, D. B. and Garnett, J. (2020) 'De-mystifying Buddhist religious extremism in Myanmar:

confrontation and contestation around religion, development and state-building', *Conflict, Security and Development*. doi: 10.1080/14678802.2020.1739859.

Suryadinata, L. (2015) *The making of Southeast Asian nations : state, ethnicity, indigenism and citizenship*, *World Scientific*. Singapore : World Scientific .

Taidong, Z. (2019) 'Aligning the belt and road initiative with Myanmar's sustainable development plan: Opportunities and challenges', *IDS Bulletin*. Institute of Development Studies, 50(4), pp. 69–88.

Tarrow, S. (2007) 'Review: Inside Insurgencies: Politics and Violence in an Age of Civil War Reviewed', *American Political Science Association*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 5(3), pp. 587–600. doi: 10.1017/Si537592707071575.

Tay, W. T. V (2017) 'Dimensions of Ketuanan Melayu in the Malaysian constitutional framework', in Harding, A. and Shah, D. A. H. (eds) *Law and Society in Malaysia*. London: Routledge, pp. 45–71.

Taylor, R. H. (2005) 'Do states make nations? The politics of identity in Myanmar revisited', *South East Asia Research*, 13(3), pp. 261–286.

Theisen, O. M. (2008) 'Blood and Soil? Resource Scarcity and Internal Armed Conflict Revisited', *Journal of Peace Research*, 45(6), pp. 801–818.

Wade, G. (2009) 'The Origins and Evolution of Ethnocracy in Malaysia', *The Asia-Pacific Journal* , 7(47).

Ware, A. and Laoutides, C. (2019) 'MYANMAR'S "ROHINGYA" CONFLICT: MISCONCEPTIONS AND COMPLEXITY', *Asian Affairs*, 50(1), pp. 60–79.

Yeoh, K. . (1999) 'State, socioracial diversity and the public sector: Implications for Malaysia', in *2nd International Malaysian Studies Conference*. Kuala Lumpur : University of Malaya .

Yuval-Davis, N. (1997) *Gender and Nation*, London, SAGE Publications.

Zarni, M. (2020) *Rakhine-Rohingya reconciliation key to liberation for both communities*, *Anadolu Agency*. Available at: https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/opinion-rakhine-rohingya-reconciliation-key-to-liberation-for-both-communities/1952777 (Accessed: 21 November 2020).