

RIMCIS

International and
Multidisciplinary
Journal of
Social Sciences

Volume 6, Number 3

Hipatia Press

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An Investigation into the Optimal Experience in Reading Journalistic Texts in Light of Instructing Fairclough's and Van Dijk's Model

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Date of publication: November 30th, 2017

Edition period: November 2017 – February 2018

To cite this article: Hamed, S.A., Hamed, S.M., Hamed, SM., & Hamed, M.H. (2017). An Investigation into the Optimal Experience in Reading Journalistic Texts in Light of Instructing Fairclough's and Van Dijk's Model. *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(2), 232-250. doi: 10.17583/rimcis.2017.2848

To link this article: <http://doi.org/10.17583/rimcis.2017.2848>

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An Investigation into the Optimal Experience in Reading Journalistic Texts in Light of Instructing Fairclough's and Van Dijk's Model

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Abstract

The present study aims at exploring the extent to which Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) familiarity may have an impact on flow experience. In so doing, the community sample of 60 students comprising 16 males and 44 females participated in the study. Initially, the pretest was conducted to ensure the homogeneity of their proficiency level. Besides, the participants were asked to reflect on their flow experience while reading three distinct genres of journalistic texts prior to the application of the treatment. During the treatment phase, they were instructed how to critically examine other journalistic texts relying on Fairclough's (1989) three dimensional model along with Van Dijk's (1995) theoretical framework of CDA over 10 successive sessions. Finally, utilizing paired- samples t-tests, the results of the posttests on the very three texts which were conducted at the pretest stage, indicated that the application of CDA has a significant influence on the students' optimal experience while reading descriptive, expository, and narrative genres of journalistic texts.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, flow experience, reading, journalistic texts, Fairclough's model, Van Dijk's theoretical framework

Una Investigación sobre la Experiencia Óptima en la Lectura de Textos Periodísticos para la Enseñanza de los Modelos de Fairclough y Van Dijk

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Resumen

Este estudio pretende explorar hasta qué punto la familiaridad con el Análisis Crítico de Discurso (ACD) puede haber tenido un impacto en el flujo de experiencia. Con esto, una muestra de 60 estudiantes, 16 chicos y 44 chicas, participó en el estudio. Inicialmente, el pre-test se llevó a cabo para asegurar la homogeneidad de su nivel. Por otro lado, se pidió a los participantes que reflexionaran sobre su experiencia de flujo al tiempo que leían tres tipos distintos de géneros periodísticos antes de aplicarles el tratamiento. Durante la fase de tratamiento se les enseñó durante diez sesiones a evaluar críticamente textos periodísticos en base al modelo de tres dimensiones de Fairclough (1989) y al marco teórico de ACD de Van Dijk (1995). Finalmente, utilizando muestras pareadas de t-test los resultados de los post-test en los tres textos que se repartieron durante la fase pre-test, indicaron que la aplicación de la ACD tiene una influencia significativa en la experiencia óptima de los estudiantes en la lectura de los géneros descriptivos, expositivos y narrativos de textos periodísticos.

Palabras clave: usos del e-marketing, tecnología, rendimiento empresarial, manufactura, pequeña y grande empresa

2017 Hipatia Press

ISSN: 2014-3680

DOI: 10.17583/rimcis.2017.2704

Hipatia Press
www.hipatiapress.com



Numerous psychologists have been focused on positive aspects of human existence, such as hope, wisdom, creativity, future mindedness, courage, responsibility, spirituality, and perseverance (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Relevant to such fields of interest is the concept of optimal experience or flow which has developed new lines of inquiry in the field of positive psychology (Asakawa, 2004).

The term flow has been described as “a state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at a great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 4). In other words, it is an intense engagement or complete absorption in the task as the mind is in its optimal state in which the individual feels deeply involved, highly motivated, and cognitively efficient (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Indeed, from the time Csikszentmihalyi pioneered studying flow in the mid-sixties, several flow studies have been conducted in various contexts and across a variety of cultures to develop a robust and empirically well confirmed universal theory of flow (Asakawa, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Ghonsooly & Hamedi, 2014; Inghilleri, 1999; McQuillan & Conde, 1996; Massimini & DelleFave, 2000; Mirlohi, Egbert & Ghonsooly, 2011; Webster, Trevino & Ryan, 1993).

To gain this objective, amateur athletes, chess masters, rock climbers, dancers, high school basketball players, and composers of music were the target population (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Actually, in gaining optimal experience two criteria must be met (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, 1990). Firstly, the perceived challenges of the activity should be in accordance with the individuals’ perceived abilities or skills and secondly, such task challenges and the individual’s abilities or skills must be at a relatively high extent (Massimini & Carli, 1988). Henceforth, experiencing optimal learning is bound to the skills-challenge balance along with the person’s enjoyment, control, and intense attention (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

The point of the fact is that among the most reported flow inducing activities, reading is the most noted flow generating activity (Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi & DelleFave, 1988; McQuillan & Conde, 1996; Sato, 1988). Initially, Trevino and Webster (1992) held a view that flow experience can be noted in native language reading, however, subsequent

studies (e.g., Ghonsooly & Hamed, 2014; McQuillan & Conde, 1996) notified a number of non-native English speakers who reported flow while reading English texts. The participants' characterized concentration on the task, interest, attention, immersion, and the loss of self sense as the major determinants of the flow experience (McQuillan & Conde, 1996). Moreover, with regard to the modes of writing Ghonsooly and Hamed (2014) found the descriptive genre as the most contributing cause of incidence of optimal experience in reading. Likewise, Mirlohi, Egbert, and Ghonsooly (2011) discovered the descriptive genre as the most flow inducing one in the realm of translation.

As a matter of fact, although the widespread occurrence of flow in reading has been well confirmed, little is known about the procedures through which people engage with the optimal experience promoting texts (McQuillan & Conde, 1996). As Chastain (1988) maintained that reading is sometimes erroneously regarded as a passive skill while it requires mental processing for communication to take place, specifically, the present study attempts to examine the effectiveness of the application of Csikszentmihalyi's (1988) flow model along with Fairclough's (1989) model and Van Dijk's (1995) framework for CDA, in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes as the contributing factors to promoting optimal experience in reading journalistic texts. Taken together, the following research questions guided the present investigation:

1. Can reading journalistic texts be flow inducing for EFL learners?
2. Can the integration of Csikszentmihalyi's (1988) flow model with Fairclough's (1989) CDA model and Van Dijk's (1995) framework for CDA be conducive to promoting flow while reading journalistic texts?

Literature Review

Optimal Experience

With the introduction of flow to the field of positive psychology, it is deemed as an underlying driving source for the individuals who pursue to enhance their life quality along with attaining more mental and emotional complexity (Asakawa, 2004).

Originally, flow theory was developed by Csikszentmihalyi's (1975) who believed that learners can gain optimal experience during the tasks if the relationship between challenges and skills was high. When skills are high and challenges are low either relaxation or boredom occurs; when skills are high and challenges are low anxiety or worry can arise; when both skills and challenges are low apathy may result. Thus, flow can be experienced on the condition that both the skills and challenges are high. More specifically, Csikszentmihalyi (1990, p. 71) defines flow as:

A sense that one's skills are adequate to cope with challenges at hand in a goal directed, rule bound action system that provides clear clues as to how one is performing. Concentration is so intense that there is no attention left over to think about anything irrelevant or to worry about problems. Self-consciousness disappears, and the sense of time becomes distorted. An activity that produces such experiences is so gratifying that people are willing to do it for its own sake, with little concern for what they will get out of it, even when it is difficult or dangerous.

Overall, Csikszentmihalyi (1997) characterizes clear goals, immediate feedback, deep concentration, avoiding distractions, control, loss of self-consciousness, fleeting time, and autotelic experience as the required conditions for the occurrence of flow. More importantly, Egbert (2003) specifies skill-challenge balance, attention, interest, and control as the fundamental flow dimensions.

Flow in Language Learning and Reading

A few studies which have applied flow theory in language learning have confirmed the relationship between flow and classroom language learning (Egbert, 2003; Ghonsooly & Hamed, 2014; McQuillan & Conde, 1996; Schmidt & Savage, 1992). As noted, among the classroom activities, reading is reported as a flow inducing task in that the recreation of the writer's intended meaning can be accomplished only when the reader integrates the textual information with his background knowledge (Haji Maibodi, 2008). Hence, the input just beyond the learners' current competence that is mostly comprehensible but still be challenged to make a progress (Brown, 1994) might be influential in generating flow experience in language classes at all levels. Nonetheless, Egbert (2003) contended that the students at the

rudimentary levels might hardly gain flow as they lack the sufficient competence to be far immersed in the texts. Indeed, since language learning is a complex activity, the kinds of factors that might promote or prohibit flow experience are still shrouded in mystery, however, Egbert (2003) has depicted the relationship between optimal experience and language learning by highlighting the importance of the target language task as well as general environmental factors which might be practical in clarifying the issue with all its complexities (Figure 1).

In sum, further investigation into flow is required as it might have significant potential to act on one's personality along with improving the life quality (Asakawa, 2004). Surprisingly, to the researchers' best knowledge, relatively a small number of studies have been conducted on flow theory and its implications in Eastern cultures as compared to Western cultures. More importantly, such studies have been exclusively focused on physical activities rather than exploring its possible application in education, mental activities, or other related areas which might contribute to the quality of life as well (Asakawa, 2004). Henceforth, regarding the scarcity of flow research in the Iranian EFL context, it seems that more rigorous empirical investigation of the concept is called for.

CDA as a Research Tool

CDA has emerged from critical linguistics, critical semiotics, and from a socio-politically conscious and oppositional way of investigating language, discourse, and communication and is widely used as a special approach in the analysis of text and talk (Van Dijk, 1995). Fairclough and Wodak (1997) characterized the main tenets of CDA as follows:

- I. CDA addresses social problems
- II. Power relations are discursive
- III. Discourse constitutes society and culture
- IV. Discourse does ideological work
- V. Discourse is historical
- VI. The link between text and society is mediated
- VII. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
- VIII. Discourse is a form of social action

Since CDA does not have a unitary theoretical framework (Van Dijk, 1995), the present study utilizes two widely applied models which are developed by Fairclough (1989) and Van Dijk (1995) as the major research tools for the instruction of systematic theoretical analysis of the journalistic texts. Fairclough's (1989) model for CDA takes the three inter-related dimensions of discourse into account. These dimensions are the object of analysis, the processes through which the object is produced and received, and the socio-historical conditions which govern these processes. Similarly, each of these dimensions requires a distinct type of analysis including text analysis (description), processing analysis (interpretation), and social analysis (explanation). In short, Fairclough's three dimensional model comprised of the three stages of CDA as follows:

Description is the stage which is concerned with the formal properties of the text.

Interpretation is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction with seeing the text as a product of a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation.

Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26).

On the other hand, Van Dijk (1995) framework highlights the significance of CDA in bridging the gap between micro and macro level of language analysis. More specifically, to arrive at a unified critical analysis of these various levels, one must consider:

- I. Members- groups: Language users participate in discourse as members of social groups, and organizations, and conversely, groups may act by their members
- II. Actions-process: Social acts of individuals are the main components of group actions and social processes, such as legislation, news making, or the reproduction of racism
- III. Context-social structure: Discursive interactions are the constituent part of social structure
- IV. Personal and social cognition: Language users have both personal and social cognitions through which they can exert influence on the interaction and discourse of individual members.

In addition, Van Dijk's (1995) theoretical framework underlines social power of groups or institutions in controlling people's mind and subsequently their actions more discursively. Thus, issues of discursive power would address the two following basic questions:

- I. How do more powerful groups exercise control on the public discourse?
- II. How does such a discourse control the minds and actions of less powerful groups and with what social consequences?

Concerning the prominent role of political discourse in the enactment, reproduction, and legitimization of power and domination, CDA seems to be a practical tool in clarifying the implicit discursive notions such as power, dominance, hegemony, ideology, class, gender, race, discrimination, interests, institutions, social structure, and social order (Van Dijk, 1995). Therefore, the present study aims at investigating the effect of the application of these two models on promoting optimal experience while reading three genres of journalistic texts.

Methodology

Participants

A sample of 60 EFL Iranian university students comprising 16 males and 44 females who were studying at a private university in Mashhad, Iran, volunteered to participate in the study. They were majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). The data were collected from junior students attending a Reading Journalistic Texts course. The respondents were advanced learners of English who were taking the course as the compulsory one at the university. Their age ranged from 18 to 44 years with the mean age of 25.65. All participants received an extra credit for their participation in the study.

Instruments

The informants' perceptions of their experiences were reflected on a perceptions questionnaire (see Appendix A) adapted from Trevino, Webster,

and Ryan (1993) and Terevino and Webster (1992) ($r = .79$ Cronbach's α). The questionnaire contained 14 items in the seven-point Likert-type rating scale format from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Four questions were scored reversely. For the sake of clarity, the scale was pilot studied with 20 university students and edited in the content but not the structure of the questions for the further intelligibility of the scale. To examine whether high scores on perceptions scale truly reflected flow experience as well as probing the informants' reactions to the texts, flow dimension open-ended form consisting of eight open-ended questions which was adopted directly from Mirlohi, Egbert and Ghonsooly (2011) was administered (see Appendix B). Moreover, the instructional materials consisted of some agreed upon journalistic texts by all the students were taken from Reading English Newspapers (Shams, 2007) and some other online newspapers. Finally, to instruct critical analysis of the journalistic texts, both Fairclough's (1989) model and Van Dijk's (1995) framework were applied.

Procedure

The present study was conducted over 16 sessions between January to May 2015. Four steps were followed to determine the sequence of the study. 1) Conducting a TOEFL sample to ensure the homogeneity of participants regarding their proficiency level, 2) flow perceptions questionnaire to reflect on their flow experience after reading three agreed upon genres of journalistic texts at the pretest phase 3) integration of CDA into classroom activities through the application of Fairclough's (1989) model and Van Dijk's (1995) framework to raise the students' awareness of discursive aspects of language followed by discussing the multiple inner layers, 4) administration of flow perception questionnaire during the posttest after reading the very three texts given at the pretest stage.

The mutually agreed instructional materials were from Reading English Newspapers (Shams, 2007) and some journalistic texts extracted from online newspapers. The course book aimed at promoting the students' skills in reading journalistic texts by introducing critical aspects of reading newspapers such as detecting various forms of biases and ideologies, however, it did not provide them with the theoretical coherent framework to

facilitate further the processes of analysis. Therefore, to tackle this problem, the explicit instruction and application of Fairclough's (1989) model along with Van Dijk's (1995) framework were incorporated within the syllabus during the treatment phase. To be more specific, CDA models were applied to pinpoint how language is used discursively to establish specific ideologies by drawing the students' attention to the biased presentation of language in the media which might be imperceptible to the common readers.

Initially, the students' flow experience was assessed on three agreed upon journalistic texts by devoting each session to one text. The extent of flow experience was captured on the perception scale as well as the open-ended form after reading each text. After the instruction and application of CDA models on 10 agreed texts which were taken either from the course book or the online newspapers, the students were asked to reflect on their degree of optimal experience on the same three texts which they read during the pretest phase. Finally, paired-samples t-tests were employed to examine the effect of the integration of these two models on the students' flow experience while reading three genres of journalistic texts.

Results

To investigate whether reading journalistic texts might be flow inducing for EFL learners or not, the means and standard deviations (Table 1) were examined on the perceptions scale right after reading three texts, each on the separate session, once prior to the instruction and once after it on the same texts.

According to Egbert (2003) the participants who averaged 5.0 or above on any survey (equivalent to agree on all questions) are believed to have experienced flow. In this respect, previous research designates the flow experience as being above average on skill and challenge. From these data, it can be established that reading journalistic texts has demonstrated to be flow inducing for EFL learners on all the three tasks both during pretests (NT1, ET1, DT1) and posttests (NT2, ET2, DT2). Moreover, the results designated the descriptive as the most and the narrative as the least flow generating genres. To examine the effect of the instruction of Fairclough's (1989) model and Van Dijk's (1995) framework, paired-samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the impact of the intervention on students' scores on

the flow perceptions questionnaire after reading the same texts once during the pretest and once the posttest phase.

As Table 2 suggests, there was a statistically significant increase in flow scores on the narrative journalistic text (NT) from Time 1 ($M = 71.93$, $SD = 7.99$) to Time 2 ($M = 76.28$, $SD = 11.75$), $t(59) = 3.12$, $p < .0005$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in flow scores was 4.34 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -7.13 to -1.55. The eta squared statistic (.14) indicated a large effect size. Besides, the flow scores on the expository journalistic text (ET) gained a statistically significant increase from Time 1 ($M = 74.78$, $SD = 9.05$) to Time 2 ($M = 78.23$, $SD = 9.86$), $t(59) = 3.33$, $p < .0005$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in flow scores was 3.44 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -5.51 to -1.37. The eta squared statistic (.15) indicated a large effect size. Finally, flow scores took a significant incremental trend on the descriptive journalistic text (DT) from Time 1 ($M = 76.03$, $SD = 6.03$) to Time 2 ($M = 79.30$, $SD = 8.35$), $t(59) = 3.69$, $p < .0005$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in scores was 3.26 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -5.03 to -1.49. The eta squared statistic (.17) indicated a large effect size. Therefore, as the data suggest, it seems that the application of Fairclough's (1989) model and Van Dijk's (1995) framework for CDA can pave the way for promoting optimal experience while reading journalistic texts.

Discussion and Conclusions

The present study attempted to provide information to extend our understanding of the impact of implementing CDA on fostering the flow experience while reading journalistic texts in EFL classes. In doing so, firstly, the researchers investigated whether reading journalistic texts can be flow generating by itself or not. The results indicated the positive and significant effect of journalistic materials on creating optimal experience. In this respect, the growing literature plausibly asserts that reading is the most widely reported flow inducing activity (McQuillan & Conde, 1996).

In particular, Sato (1988) has conducted several studies on flow experience in that the participants' descriptions of the flow of reading fit other optimal experiences. It can be reasonably argued that attaining optimal experience in turn can result in sustaining more control, attention, interest,

and immersion in the text (Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi & DelleFave, 1988). More specifically, attention as the flow dimension is consciousness raising given that undivided attention has a facilitative role in detecting the stimulus, categorizing it depending on the prior information, and organizing it more effectively (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988).

Moreover, the results confirmed findings of Mirlohi, Egbert and Ghonsooly (2011) in the field of translation along with Ghonsooly and Hamed (2014) in the EFL context in that the descriptive mode revealed to be the most and the narrative as the least flow inducing genres. More importantly, the ultimate issue that may make a substantial contribution to the higher productivity of instructional materials is that the study corroborates McQuillan and Conde's (1996) assertion that the students' selected texts are far likelier to produce flow than the assigned texts. Taken together, Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi (1990) concluded that flow experience can be conducive to developing personal abilities along with promoting higher learning to respond to the potential challenges more successfully and readily.

The findings also substantiated the researchers' presumption that the explicit instruction and application of CDA models may have an impact on flow experience while reading journalistic texts. The role of CDA in affecting the optimal experience is not surprising given the fact that CDA is, in essence, concerned with an oppositional analysis of the structures and strategies of dominant discourse and their cognitive and social conditions and implications. In this respect, it conforms to Brunner (1976) model of scaffolding as it highlights the significance of explicit instructions at the initial stages to help the learners develop their full potentials. To reach this end, the application of Fairclough's (1989, 1995) model can be beneficial as it directs the learners' attention to the signifiers that make up the texts, the specific choice of vocabularies, their juxtapositioning, sequencing, and so forth (Janks, 1997) by specifying textual analysis, processing analysis, and social analysis as the three interrelated dimensions of discourse required for conducting a detailed critical analysis.

Simply put, Fairclough (2001) presents ten questions for text analysis and divides them under three headings of vocabulary, grammar, and textual structures based on Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar (1994).

In this regard, one has meticulously to examine lexicalization, patterns of transitivity, use of active and passive voice, nominalization, mood, modality or plurality, thematic structure of the text, cohesion devices, and the information focus (Janks, 1997). Concerning the interpretation level, Fairclough (2001) emphasizes on intertextual contexts, quotes, sources, and assumptions as well as the discourse types and frames which are connotative and give additional information to the message. The ultimate level, explanation, aims at interpreting discourse in view of power relations, ideologies, and socio-historical conditions by analyzing social determinants and the expressed ideologies within the text (Fairclough, 2001), however, Van Dijk (1995) contended that CDA is beyond the usual methodological three dimensional model in that CDA is a part and parcel of social and political life which explicitly takes its oppositional stance. Consequently, it goes beyond saying that CDA can be effective in enhancing the learners' flow experience as long as it enables the readers to take the engaged or estranged positions. In other words, estrangement or alienation can facilitate the critical analysis of the text (Janks, 1997).

The findings of the present study are also compatible with the theories that underline the primary role of readers' exposure to the ideological assumptions of the text in the improvement of their critical thinking abilities (Wallace, 1992; Hashemi & Ghanizadeh, 2012) which can be a plausible explanation for promoting optimal experience, accordingly. Viewing from this perspective, as CDA would have an impact on detecting the inherent hybrid discourses and presuppositions, it would pave the way for reading between the lines to discover and reflect on the ideological assumptions of the text more effectively (Hashemi & Ghanizadeh, 2012), henceforth, it would result in the easier attainment of three dimensions of Egbert's (2003) flow model namely, skill-challenge balance, attention, and control. This would be hardly surprising since the profound effect of CDA on interpretation and identification of unstated assumptions as the two components of critical thinking has been well established (Watson & Glaser, 2002 as cited in Hashemi & Ghanizadeh, 2012). Ultimately, the development of critical thinking abilities would lead to the enhancement of emotional, motivational, and metacognitive factors (Leung & Kember, 2003) which

might be in turn another contributory factor in the rise of the flow experience by affecting the reader's interest as another dimension of the flow model.

Taken together, the findings of the present study should be treated cautiously as it is suffering a number of limitations. Firstly, the participants were chosen based on available sampling structure. Secondly, a true experimental design consisting of the control group along with the experimental one could not be applied due to the ethical issues of depriving the control group from the beneficial treatment for a two-credited course. Thirdly, the role of gender, age, degree of familiarity with all the subject materials, and other confounding variables could not be taken into account, exclusively. Besides, in spite of the researchers' awareness of using qualitative methods such as interviews, observations, case studies, and more importantly experience sampling method as the most commonly applied method in the flow studies, the flow perception questionnaires as well as the descriptive open ended form were the major sources of data collection due to the operational conditions. Therefore, a new line of inquiry is recommended to examine the potential effect of the extraneous variables on flow experience coupled with overcoming the stated limitations more practically.

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Appendix A: Flow Perceptions Questionnaire

1. This task excited my curiosity.
2. This task was interesting in itself.
3. I felt that I had no control over what was happening during this task.
4. When doing this task I was aware of distractions.
5. This task made me curious.
6. This task was fun for me.
7. I would do this task again.
8. This task allowed me to control what I was doing.
9. When doing this task, I was totally absorbed in what I was doing.
10. This task bored me.
11. During this task, I could make decisions about what to study, how to study it, and/or with whom to study.
12. When doing this task I thought about other things.
13. This task aroused my imagination.
14. I would do this task even if it were not required.

Appendix B: Flow-Dimension-Open-Ended Form

1. What did you find challenging or too hard in this task?
2. What did you find that was boring or too easy?
3. What made this task interesting to you?
4. What made this task not interesting to you?
5. What helped you to focus on this task?
6. What made you lose focus during this task?
7. What parts of the task could you control?
8. What parts of the tasks could you not control?

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Discourse analysis on Nationalism debate reported in Indian print media during Feb-Mar 2016

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Date of publication: November 30th, 2017

Edition period: November 2017 - February 2018

To cite this article: Ray, S., & Singh, J.K. (2017). Discourse analysis on Nationalism debate reported in Indian print media during Feb-Mar 2016. *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(3), 251-280. doi: 10.17583/rimcis.2017.2899

To link this article: <http://doi.org/10.17583/rimcis.2017.2899>

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Discourse Analysis on Nationalism Debate Reported in Indian Print Media during Feb-Mar 2016

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Abstract

In the age of progressing information technology, media reporting has evolved in the selection, role portrayal, articulation of the news on the basis of presentation and comprehensibility. Both print and broadcast media have reformulated news reporting pattern considering the current global market, advertising and latent political agendas. Use of particular discourse not just influences mindset; its rhetorical presentation modulates perception on an explicit level. News as a discursive tool transforms the reader's perception on the topic. In the initial phase of 2016, Indian media extensively reported an incident at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) New Delhi and its effect on the pro- and anti- national sentiments. The reporting was in the context of slogan shouting by a group of students, which was perceived to be anti-national. With due course of time, debates restructured the news into a nation-wide sensation involving various facets, such as, importance of nationalism and patriotism, credibility of the university education, involvement of students from different ideological and identity background (*Dalit*, Kashmiri Muslim, etc.). In this paper, broad categorisation is being made, namely as, JNU (the university, administration, faculty and its culture), the students (JNUSU president, ASFI members and AVBP members), the state (Judiciary, the ruling party and the opposition parties) and the others (media, celebrities, lawyers and citizens). The present study discusses the impact of news as discourse on the ideological position and activities of news characters (actors) as well as its contextual salience in the national politics.

Keywords: identity, news as discourse, nationalism, politics in higher education institutions

Análisis de Discurso del Debate del Nacionalismo Informado en los Medios Impresos de India durante Febrero y Marzo 2016

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Resumen

En la era de una progresiva tecnología de la información, la elaboración de las noticias en los medios han evolucionado en la selección, la representación de roles, la articulación de las noticias sobre la base de la presentación y la comprensión. Tanto los medios impresos como los de radio han reformulado el patrón de informar sobre las noticias teniendo en cuenta el mercado global actual, la publicidad y las agendas políticas latentes. El uso de un discurso particular no solo influye en la mentalidad; su presentación retórica modula la percepción en un nivel explícito. Las noticias como herramienta discursiva transforman la percepción del lector sobre el tema. En la fase inicial de 2016, los medios indios informaron extensamente un incidente en la Universidad Jawaharlal Nehru (JNU) de Nueva Delhi y su efecto sobre los sentimientos pro y antinacionales. Las noticias se realizaron en el contexto de los gritos de un lema de un grupo de estudiantes, que se percibió como antinacional. Con el transcurso del tiempo, los debates reestructuraron las noticias en una sensación nacional que involucraba varias facetas, como la importancia del nacionalismo y el patriotismo, la credibilidad de la educación universitaria, la participación de estudiantes de diferentes orígenes ideológicos y de identidad (*Dalit*, cachemira musulmana, etc.). En este documento, se está haciendo una amplia categorización, como JNU (la universidad, administración, profesorado y su cultura), los y las estudiantes (presidente de JNUSU, miembros de ASFI y miembros de AVBP), el estado (poder judicial, el partido gobernante y la oposición) y los demás (medios de comunicación, celebridades, abogados y ciudadanos). El presente estudio analiza el impacto de las noticias como discurso sobre la posición ideológica y las actividades de los personajes de noticias (actores), así como su relevancia contextual en la política nacional.

Palabras clave: identidad, noticias como discurso, nacionalismo, políticas universitarias

In the era of affluent broadcast & social media, print media is acquiring an endangered status. As business survival, Print media is restructuring in formats more suitable to the needs of present generation readers, such as web news accessibility and mobile applications. With all possible forms, news text remains an important source of local and global source of information for the readers. Hence, News texts are common form of written discourse. Online news, being easily accessible on non subscription facilities, attracts readers equally as broadcast media. News texts, both on paper and websites are preserved as valuable archives and serve as primary data in social science researches. News is supposed to be value neutral and objective, hence maybe used as unbiased data. As a critique of this premise, news text reflects the business model based on customer based news production and the political model based on ideologies associated with the government and media houses (Chomsky & Herman, 1988). News production is a continuous process, as the text is a representation of information collected from the diverse sources including specific group of informants and is further presented to a wider group of people. The biased-unbiased stand of news text may be detected by the syntax and semantics used in the headlines and subsequent news stories. Discourse, analysed on the line of Social constructionist approach focuses on the meaning production process, based on four assumptions, namely, 1) they are socially constructed; 2) inter-textually between socio-political and cultural aspects of historically constituted concepts; 3) multiplicity of meaning available for a single actor in a particular situation; 4) different meanings as multiple and overlapping resources influencing social actors.

Publishing of particular news is dependent on several factors termed as 'filters' by Chomsky & Herman (1988). There are five filters, 1) media ownership; 2) advertising houses; 3) sources of news; 4) reader's response; 5) avoidance of communism. Breaching these filters, news text are designed to be value neutral, but language content carries the effect of filters on an ideological level (Mooney & Betsy, 2015). Acceptance and popularity of any newspaper is based on the readers' trust on the particular media house, which is modulated by semantic unity (Van Dijk, 1983) and news values (Bell, 1991). Semantic unity of any text can be assessed by the consistency of news flow, i.e. whether the story is progressing according to the headline

and lead or changes in the midway or end. News value is the newsworthiness (Mooney & Betsy, 2015) of the story, i.e. the significance of the event and actors in the said socio-temporal domain. Other than these, the marketing strategies and age of media house also plays role in the selection of a newspaper. After the reader selects the newspaper, reading of the news story is dependent on the headline, picture, captions and the writer. The interplay of politics, power and ideologies influence the syntax and semantics of the text which creates a demonstrable discord in the discourse. The resultant impact created by the news reports are criticised with the objective of emphasising the use of politically driven discourse instead of comparatively neutral and value free text. In this paper, we have highlighted nature of publicity by the leading Indian media house while presenting 2016 JNU protest.

The News

On 9th February, 2016 a cultural event was proposed under the title ‘Poetry Reading – ‘The Country without A Post Office’ to be organised at *Sabarmati Dhaba*, Jawaharlal Nehru University Delhi. With due written permission, arrangements were initiated. Later The University authorities cancelled the permission saying that organisers have not provided detailed information regarding the event. The posters implicated the programme to be an event showing solidarity with the demand of the Kashmiri people for their democratic right to self-determination (Appendix 6) and to criticize the 2013 hanging of Parliament Attack convict, Afzal Guru. Some of the assembled students shouted slogans, a few of which are alleged to have been anti-national, leading to a scuffle between the ABVP and the Left organisations present there. ABVP student leader complained to the JNU authorities that the event had anti-national contents, which eventually led to police interruption in the campus followed by a detailed speech by JNU Students Union president Kanhaiya Kumar on 11 February 2016 (Kumar, 2016a). As a result, he was charged with sedition and criminal conspiracy, and subsequently arrested along with many of his associates. What followed thereafter was reported and recorded in the court and media extensively for a period roughly extending more than one month (Appendix 1). The post-

event debate and discussion included more than one epicentre covering issues such as anti-national debate, freedom of expression, role of JNU, involvement of *Dalit* perspective and political ideologies governing the entire issue.

Present Study

In the present study, the event is being discussed in light of the above mentioned criteria because a comparative evaluation of media reporting illustrates the discourse elaborately leading to an ambiguous cause-consequence analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Initially the news reporting portrayed JNU as the protagonist, but gradually several actors played vital role in the formation of news (Van Dijk, 1988a). Amidst the various news agencies, in the present study, reporting are selected from print media only, as broadcast media and social media requires analysis of additional stimuli other than just discourse. Discussions are shaped based on the two fold objectives of answering how the various actors are represented through the use of language, and to what extent media contributed in creating a neutral or biased stand of the actors and the overall event.

Method

An event followed by media unrest, judicial involvement, social debates and political interference marks certain level of impact on the readers. The 9/2/16 JNU event, as it has received variety of nomenclature from the media in its due course of progress, is being addressed in this study as 2016 JNU protests (n.d.). Forums like print media, news channels, social networking websites, personal blogs, political speeches, and public debates encompassed the present event during February 2016. In this study, only news reports from print media are analysed. The Times of India (TOI) was selected on the basis of its popularity and circulation (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2016). It is the largest English daily newspaper in India as well as the sixth largest newspaper in terms of circulation with its head office at Delhi followed by The Hindu and Hindustan Times. Its online and App-based readership is also highest in India (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2016). TOI's position in

Indian media is not only because of its simple language, it also belongs to the biggest media conglomerate in the country, The Times Group (Bennet, Coleman and Co. Ltd.). The current owners of the conglomerate took over TOI in 1986, when the newspaper was in decline (Menon Malhan, 2013). Since then, the newspaper is running in a business model leading to its current success status (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). TOI, alike its other counterpart media agencies, has been criticized for its corporate, neo-liberal capitalist bias (Chaudhuri, 2010), but in terms of aligning towards any particular political party, TOI is usually considered value neutral.

Although the 2016 JNU protests ranged from February to October and is still under Judiciary, the highest media coverage was during February and March, approximately one month. Since TOI is published and circulated nation-wide, only the Delhi/NCR (National Capital Region) editions were enlisted for the study. News articles with content related to the protest, direct comment and criticism by public figures, administrative actions and judicial proceedings were collected from archive section of online portal of each newspaper. As a selection filter, headlines with phrases like, JNU/JNUSU/ABVP, name of students and leaders involved, nationalism, sedition, anti-national, slogan, Afzal, police, court, journalist, and lawyer were picked for further analysis.

Contemporary development of discourse analysis profoundly draws contribution of scholars like Van Dijk (1988a), Wodak (1989), and Fairclough (1992). Among the three, Van Dijk's (1988b) model calls for an overall analysis of the text, its structure and process of production based on power and ideology (Boyd-Barrett, 1994). Wodak's (1989) model specifies in the historical involvement in any discourse production and analysis, whereas, Fairclough (1992) puts emphasis more on the news comprehension from reader's point of view. In the present study, Van Dijk's (1988b) socio-cognitive model is being used for the analysis, which claims that discourse is not only text but involves social components in its production and cognitive components during its conception. Apart from the syntax and grammar analysis of the headline, lead, physical structure of news reports and frequency of the news are considered for the analysis (Van Dijk, 1988b).

Amongst the variety of news articles published on the 2016 JNU protest, similar reports of Hyderabad Central University (HCU) and University of

Delhi were present in the media. The present study consists of analysis of news headlines of articles (not editorials) associated with the 2016 JNU protest. Following the inclusion criteria, 30 news articles out of 310 were selected for further analysis (Appendix 3). The articles were front page top position placed, from each day of the month (10 February 2016 - 10 March 2016). The rationale behind conducting this study was to understand the portrayal of the event by a distinguished Indian media houses and its pattern following one month duration, post event.

Analysis

The 2016 JNU protest is not the first event of its kind held in higher education institutes of India (George, 2016a). Issues of nationalism, Dalit rights and campus ideologies are streaming continuously in institutes of national importance, such as, Hyderabad Central University, Jadavpur University, University of Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University (Roy Choudhary & Grover, 2016) Although the flare of protest is instigated by students' wings of major political parties, participants associated with the cause add to the discourse along with their personal viewpoints. Nationalism in India, either Hindu or secular (Varshney, 1993) articulates wide range of contrasting meanings, especially with reference to the JNU discourses (Martelli & Rahman, 2016). The issue of judicial killing raised on 9 February 2016 was portrayed as a threat to Indian democracy by the University opposition parties, political leaders and media. Transparency and justification of the speech was subjected to distortion and repeated manipulation (Garg, 2016), leading to a chaotic phase on national podium. National-anti national debate was an overall shield to cover wider issues like poverty and social inequality prevailing in the country. Followed by the event, different antagonistic adjectives were added to JNU and the students involved (Press Trust of India, 2016a; TNN, 2016b; Gohain, 2016a). In such situation, media plays an important role because readers' perception is modulated less by the actual fact, but more by the news, both on broadcast and print.

Macrostructure and Superstructure

Macrostructures are crude derivative from a text formed on the basis of knowledge and beliefs. They may be inter-subjective; the most prominent information of a news article may vary on the basis of reader's cognition and expectation (Van Dijk, 1980a). Macrostructures are strategic presentation of a text which serves the purpose of storing information in memory, but also that such macrostructures represent the information that is best recalled, whereas microstructure or local meaning details are usually forgotten after longer delays (Van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983).

In case of 2016 JNU protest, there were plural macrostructures based on multiple actors. Each of the 30 articles produced a semantic macrostructures based on the three-level coding (Appendix 4) forming six schematic superstructures of the entire event (Van Dijk, 1988b). The superstructures were clustered from the microstructures based on their eventual position in the event; as stated below:

- (1) JNU's political position was presented as a rebellious institution exploiting the state facilities and producing anti-national ideology amongst students.
- (2) Unprecedented judicial killing of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru was questioned by the protesting students, followed by their arrest under sedition.
- (3) Union ministers claimed JNUSU president's speech as 'anti-national' and anticipated it as threat to national integrity.
- (4) The videos and discourse broadcasted by the media invoked an omnipresent nationalism debate in media and academia.
- (5) Few MLAs and lawyers threatened and attacked JNUSU students and president.
- (6) Students arrested under sedition charges were found not guilty by the court and the videos responsible for the whole debate was proved to be forged.

Frequency of the News: Although there are no specific rules regarding limits of news publications on a single issue (Press Council of India, 2010), such decisions rest on business interest of media houses. Times of India,

being one of the most popular news agencies of India ([Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2016](#)) published 310 news articles directly related to 2016 JNU protest (Appendix 2) excluding the editorial section. Publications related to the event, lasted throughout the month in the mainstream news section. For the analysis, the total period of one month (10 February 2016 to 10 March 2016) was equally divided into three temporal stages, namely, initial, mid and residual. More articles were in the mid stage followed by the initial stage and the residual stage.

The pattern of coverage frequency escalated with the reporting of sedition and consequent involvement of political leaders. Recurrence of news related to the event was encouraged as a political debate between the majorities of political leaders. Within a week of the event, media circulated jargons like ‘anti-national’ as addressed by the union ministers marking a sudden rise of coverage frequency. Encompassing the one month period, on 18 February 2016, there were highest reporting. The initial period marked a state of ‘panic’ ([Van Dijk, 1988a](#)), as published in the TOI ([Bhattacharya & Shakil, 2016](#)).

Considering the qualitative aspect of news appearance, TOI created widespread and more dramatic stand in the initial stage to create the readership on the issue. The mid stage created a wider space for discussing the 2016 JNU protest, incorporating political views, social response and judicial follow ups. The residual stage especially consisted of Editorials and graphical portrayal of the news actors. Heavy news reporting in the initial stage acted as way of commercialising the debate and creating a forum for collateral discussions of National interest. Along with newspapers, broadcast media also flared up protest and associated debates. As the 2016 JNU protest was followed by the Union Budget announcements, media houses had the option to control the defamation ([Press Council of India, 2010](#)) of University, student and political leaders supporting the debate ([Chatterjee, 2016](#)). The unrestrained flow of news reporting was not parallel to the other national events going on; it was politically influenced ([Desai, 2016](#)).

Position of the News: Overall macrostructure of the news juxtaposed with the physical position of news articles showed congruent findings. Initial article was a moderate sized lower left placed page 5 reporting under ‘city’

section. Ideological position of the article is reflected prominently by the headline: *JNU pulls plug on event against 'judicial killing'* (TNN, 2016a). With direct name of the university as agent, there is lack of neutrality maintained. Other than the headline, the lead covers all the actors, namely, the University, ABVP, Afzal Guru, students involved in protest.

One month coverage of 2016 JNU protest was consistently highlighted in TOI; throughout the period, widely the articles were positioned in page one (N= 37) and page two (N= 64) and their follow-ups in page three (N= 10), page four (N= 19), page five (N= 9), page six (N= 34), page seven (N= 16), page eight (N= 29), page nine (N= 8), and page ten (N= 5). Being the highest circulated paper in the country, discourse produced by TOI plays role in shaping social cognition of the readers (Van Dijk, 1990). Prominent position of news articles attracts the reader and the grouping of actors in the report sustains readers' curiosity for further follow up. Other than this, readers' interest was directed towards the 2016 JNU protest and distracted from other contemporary issues of national importance.

Microstructure

Macrostructure observes the abstract, overall structure expressed at a concrete level of overall news presented as sentences whereas microstructure distinguish meaning and its expression in exterior structures, such as phrases, clause, and sentence forms (Van Dijk, 1980a). There are two levels of presence and absence of actors in the headline and news text based on their role and portrayal of role in the article (Van Leeuwen, 1996), known as *Suppression* and *Backgrounding*. Beside presence of the actors, suppression means the absence of actor in the entire text, whereas backgrounding is de-emphasising of actor in the text. In case of multidimensional event like the 2016 JNU protest, there was a periodical involvement of the actors resulting in complete absence of actors of the final phase in the initial stage of the month. An actor is not essentially an individual character in the text but may be a collection of characters of similar role in the text (Van Leeuwen, 1996). There were five actors influencing the entire event being present, suppressed, back grounded and absent in the news texts; they are- JNU administration, JNUSU students involved in the protest, ABVP students

opposing the event, Ministers involved in debate, Leaders of opposition partisan national politics (Appendix 5).

Lexical style of the news: Text used in the news articles consists of grammatical accentuation of an event or actor under consideration. Choice of words to describe the actor and action emphasises their role in the text (Van Dijk, 1980a). Although lexical pattern of the headlines act as primary eye catcher for the reader to read further, text lexicons strengthens reader's affiliation with the actors. In case of all the headlines, 2016 JNU protest was titled by TOI as Afzal event (TOI, 2016a) and JNU turmoil (TNN, 2016c). Beside the event, 'JNU' is used synonymously with university as a whole, institutional ideology and administration. Framing of sentences as active or passive voice is important. Actors presented with active voice are emphasised as the doer whereas if presented with passive voice become redundant in action (Van Dijk, 1988a). In the initial news headlines JNU is presented with active voice as of the subject/ actor in the headlines whereas simply as the object/ target in the proceeding texts. For all the front page headlines throughout the month of Feb-March, JNUSU students involved in the protest and Ministers involved in debate were presented with active voice, as the doer or subjects confronting each other. ABVP students opposing the event were not presented in the headlines as subjects but only the texts. One of the major concerns associated with presentation of a news article is the use of individual names and identities (Van Dijk, 1988b). Repeated use of names of individuals in the news may lead to defamation, particularly when the person is under judicial trial and not convicted yet. For 2016 JNU protest, name of students associated with the event were dilapidated with recurrent use in headlines and news text (Gohain, 2016c; Chakravatry, 2016; Garg & Shakil, 2016; TNN, 2016i; Gohain, 2016d; Bhagwat, 2016; TNN, 2016j; TNN, 2016k). Instead of unwarranted repetition of names, anonymity could have been maintained.

Rhetoric pattern of the news: Rhetoric expresses formulation and context of the discourse (Van Dijk, 1980b) dealing with persuasive speaking or writing pattern. Rhetorical structures associated with assertive speech presented in the news text enhance the beliefs of the readers assigned to the

asserted suggestion of the text. Persuading the reader may be subtle change of opinions or attitudes only (Condor, Tileaga, & Billig, 2013).

In the one month debate political rhetoric is evident in speech of JNUSU students involved in the protest, Ministers involved in the debate and other political leaders from the opposition parties. Groundwork of the 2016 JNU protest was rooted in students' unrest related to the way Government handled student's movements in other universities, especially Hyderabad Central University (HCU). In all the text published, statements by JNUSU students reflect significant power led suppression by the Government, as cited below (TOI, 2016):

Even as protests continued to rage over an event held at JNU to mark the Afzal Guru hanging, Delhi Police's move to slap sedition charges on a group of unknown persons evoked a strong reaction on Thursday. Student groups called the police action "misuse of power to settle political differences" and likened it to the events leading to the death of University of Hyderabad student Rohith Vemula. Shehla Rashid, JNUSU vice-president, said: This is going overboard and a repeat of the HCU incident. On this campus, everything happens through a dialogue process. Involving the police and state machinery is nothing but misuse of power.

Use of particular phrases like, 'slap sedition', 'misuse of power' and 'going overboard' indicates the perception regarding political power embossed by government. This power rhetoric is signifying interference of police (government) in University campus issues. As mentioned earlier, Ministers involved in the debate created the political rhetoric of anti-nationalism surrounding the event, as cited below (Jha, 2016):

On a day Union home minister instructed Delhi Police not to spare anyone indulging in anti-India activities, cops arrested JNU students' union president Kanhaiya Kumar on sedition charges over a pro-Afzal Guru event held on campus earlier this week, prompting fierce protests from students and teachers in the university. There was heavy police presence at JNU as students clashed with cops, who went on to search hostels looking for "anti-nationals".

As a national leader, the rhetorical use of words spoken and published influence the audience perception of the event. The repeated use of phrases like 'anti-national' and 'not spare' create an environment of hostile rhetoric (Condor, 2000). Other than the national leaders, political leaders of different parties consistently commented on the issue. The rhetorical comparison drawn between the two actors, JNUSU students involved in the protest and Ministers involved in debate displays power abuse (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Discussion

The first query arising out in this study was the importance laid off to the 2016 JNU protest by Indian media houses. Over a stretch of one month, everyday at least one news article was published over the issue in TOI. An event of politically charged nature was not novel to the history of JNU; students are involved in active political discussions and encouraged to develop keen analytical interest in issues of national interest (Martelli, 2016). Contemporary JNUSU consists of both right-winged parties and left-winged parties, but primarily feminism and *Dalit* centred communist ideologies are prevalent in everyday discourses (Martelli & Rahman, 2016). For a premier educational institutes envisioned to train students and scholars in analytical political thinking, JNU suffices a dynamic curriculum and liberal campus structure. In case of such an active university campus, 2016 JNU protest was unduly overrated by media leading to further national-level debate. Grass root reason behind the protest was a non-violent event of poetry recitation and photo exhibition, organised by ten students inside the campus to express their solidarity with the Kashmiri people (Appendix 6-the poster of the event).

Discourse plays important role in the expression, functioning and reproduction of cognition and resultant ideologies (Van Dijk, 1998), due to the pattern of language used. It governs the attainment, argumentation, conflict of interest, and other processes in the formation and amendment of ideologies. But ideologies cannot be reduced to discourse entirely as it is dynamically modified with other social practices (Van Dijk, 1998). As discourse, talks and texts acquire the power of influencing the cognition of a reader. In case of 2016 JNU protest, there was underlying ideological

conflicts subtly guiding the entire national debate. The question was not of the nature of nationalism prevailing among JNUSU students involved in the protest; rather, it was of the ideologies related to the schemata (Billig, 1991). Ideological burst up of ABVP on ‘anti-nationalism’, ‘disrespect to martyrs’, and ‘integrity of India’ were not at all counter-reflections of the event agenda as rendered in the event poster (Appendix 6). Restoration of people’s right in Kashmir, as a national issue already debated on International platform, was the context (Van Dijk, 1998) behind the event. News reporting were rarely addressing the context, however, the TOI editorial reports (N=48) were inclined to caress multiple views from different social thinkers, scholars and authors. This paper did not cover further analysis of editorials as those were subjective reflections in the debate, whereas news reporting was more factual in nature.

Actors and Their Role

News is a medium of communication between the news actors and readers via an agency (media) maintaining facts and objectivity (Pajunen, 2008). News actors are supposed to be presented in a value neutral position in case of debates and discussions, but semantic and lexical choice of the news reporting add qualifier to the news actors. A news actor is not necessarily an individual person, it may be a group of persons associated with unanimous on an idea. Multiple news actors were associated with the 2016 JNU protest, but in this paper five have been identified who were directly involved in the debate. The five news actors in the entire event were JNU administration, JNUSU students involved in the protest, ABVP students opposing the event, Ministers involved in debate, Leaders of opposition parties in national politics. The news actors present in the event have discrete role in the nationalism debate, certainly divergent in their ideology (Van Dijk, 1998). Throughout the period of one month, JNU’s political position (Martelli, 2016) was presented as a rebellious institution exploiting the state facilities and producing anti-national ideology amongst students. As a national institute of higher education and academic excellence, JNU administration believes in dialogue and discussion (Kumar, 2016b) instead of hooliganism, strikes or violence. In such environment, political intolerance for a scholar’s

view was not being accepted. Of the other issues under debate, unprecedented judicial killing of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru (George, 2016a) and death of HCU Dalit student Rohith Vemula were questioned by the protesting students. JNUSU students, especially JNUSU president declared an open debate under the ideology of party present in Union ministry. Hence, the Union ministers claimed JNUSU president's speech as 'anti-national' and anticipated it as threat to national integrity (George, 2016a). On the corollary the debate on Newspaper was transformed into a place to blame people.

The videos and discourse broadcasted by the media invoked an omnipresent nationalism debate in media and academia (Aavedna, 2016). In the initial phase, controversies were stirred by the politicians but gradually there was significant comments and support from Professors of national (TNN, 2016d; Pandit, 2016; TNN, 2016e; TNN, 2016f; TOI, 2016b; TNN, 2016g; Gohain, 2016b) and international Universities (TNN, 2016h; TOI, 2016c; TOI, 2016d).

Followed by the arrest of JNUSU president, TOI reported MLAs and lawyers threat towards JNU students and president (Rodrigues, 2016). The recurrent interest shown by media to sustain the debate in a particular University event led to publicity for all the commentators and all kind of aligned views were highlighted by media. Without the trial of court and judiciary, JNUSU students were compelled to be socially ostracised and victimised (Scholars at Risk, 2016) for 'being anti-national'. Unnecessary publicity to each and every speaker superficially raised number of news actors clouding the primary concern of the debate. Students arrested under sedition charges were found not guilty by the court and the videos responsible for the whole debate was proved to be forged (Rani, 2016). Prior to the judicial actions, the actors portrayed in the period of said one month were not quoted in further TOI reporting. Also there were least follow up reports regarding the event, 2016 JNU protest and nationalism debate generated by the event.

The Nationalism-Patriotism Debate

Nationality, as a group invokes two parallel concept of nationalism and patriotism, which differ in terms of comprehension and application. Nationalism is composed of national pride and superiority, the events portrayed in any national news reinforce and strengthen that feeling (Li, 2009). On the contrary patriotism is a personal and internalised affection and love towards the nation. Individuals nurturing patriotism tend to be more sacrificing towards the nation than those high on nationalism parameter (Druckman, 1994). 2016 JNU protest invoked nationalism debate in print, broadcast and social media adding views of different stake holders. In print media scholars and politicians discussed various issues, but only to the theoretical premise. Mere brainstorming the idea of nation and nationalism could not be envisaged as promoting patriotism among citizens.

Texts and art have been a source of formation and enhancement of national attachment since the ancient era, including patriotic movies and nationalist literature. Newspapers are easily accessible source of sharing thoughts between leaders, authority and the readers. Although media is an autonomous organization, news ideologies are influenced by the authority on political and administrative grounds (Van Dijk, 1985). Idea behind presenting 2016 JNU protest was not to add a feasible change in national ideology; rather it was a business and sales strategy, as applicable for other news (Menon Malhan, 2013). Purpose of polarising the news actors was to flare the protest movement from plural perspectives of Government and JNUSU participating students. Crystallising of two groups led to a superficial conflict picture for the entire period of debate.

Conclusion

News, in all sorts of media, may act as discourse, framing an event to be represented in the public forum. The formation and consumption of news are in a progressive continuum often leading to discord between editor's conception and reader's interpretation of the text. Although the text is considered objective, the news presentation involves ideology and power (Wodak & Ludwig, 1999). News incorporates text and context duly guided

by the semantics, textual schema, lexicon and rhetoric (Van Dijk, 1988a). The textual narration of the event and semantics used for presentation of a news story covers the publishers' perspective. In case of news covering conflicts and legal procedures, the text acts as a schematic guideline for the readers. Moreover, directive use of adjectives and metaphors create ambiguity and in some cases lead to formation of prejudged view of the reader. In conflict situations, the 'us versus them' concept is debated until the news text uses decisive verbs in reporting, which in turn polarises the readers and creates either belief or disarray. The sentence structure and grammar used in the text and the specific lexicon used in the headlines present implicit meanings open to subjective explanation (Van Dijk, 1988a).

This paper discusses the way India's largest English newspaper discussed and flared up the event to a national level debate along with its other media equivalents. The reason behind instigation of nationalism debate was the ideological standpoint of the student's demands (Sirnate, 2016). As a reputed English Newspaper in National forum, TOI displayed fair amount of negligence in maintaining balance of neutrality. By and large the nationalism debate was among ideological standpoints rather actors or people. The debate was apparently nationalist versus anti-nationalist in nature, but the question underlying was the process of implementation of education and practice of argumentation.

The judicial strategies applied on JNUSU students was evident for how political power can be handled by the government to clamp down views of dissent that confront majoritarian politics (Manjrekar, 2016). Events at HCU and JNU, as projected by the print media, led to ample amount of brainstorming among university students and teachers to rethink about the arbitrary and taken for granted status of academia in national politics. However, there was no remarkable change in terms of policy implications on the basis of arguments generated during the 2016 JNU event. At stake was the sole idea behind all kind of higher educational institutes which are meant to nurture intelligentsia. As the largest English daily, TOI holds readership among readers across different classes and geographical regions. Applying this argument, it acts as a communication channel between Government and society in terms of presenting news. In such circumstances politically mediated news portrayal and profit laden publicity policies deviates the

media houses from performing its social responsibility. During the entire one month, parity was lost between the initial issue and final arguments leaving a state of indecisiveness among the readers. Instead of portraying a news report, media houses dramatised the event and actors associated with it only.

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Appendix 1: The series of major highlights following the event are briefly tabulated below

Date	Post-event highlights
February 09 th 2016	The event followed by slogan shouting
February 10 th 2016	Media started reporting the event followed by allegation of uttering anti-national slogans
February 12 th 2016	JNUSU president was arrested and his associates went into hiding
February 15 th 2016	JNUSU president and journalists faced violence by the lawyers at Patiala court Delhi
February 16 th 2016	JNUSU president was sent to 14-day police custody
February 17 th 2016	Three ABVP members left official positions protesting the labeling of JNU as an anti-national institution.
February 18 th 2016	Intelligence Bureau reported that no evidence was found against JNUSU president in JNU campus
February 21 st 2016	Students associated in the event reappeared in front of media
February 22 nd 2016	Lawyers confessed intent of violence against JNUSU president
February 27 th 2016	The case was transferred to special cell for further investigation
March 2 nd 2016	Forensic report proved the videos presented as evidence against the convicts were forged.
March 3 rd 2016	JNUSU president was released from the jail
March 7 th 2016	Delhi government filed case against 3 TV channels over JNU issue

Appendix 2: News Reporting In Feb-March on 2016 JNU Protest: The one month chart of Times of India (Delhi/NCR circulation)

Initial		Mid		Residual	
Date	No. Of article	Date	No. Of article	Date	No. Of article
10 Feb 16	01	20 Feb 16	13	01 Mar 16	03
11 Feb 16	01	21 Feb 16	12	02 Mar 16	08
12 Feb 16	01	22 Feb 16	11	03 Mar 16	08
13 Feb 16	09	23 Feb 16	12	04 Mar 16	10
14 Feb 16	10	24 Feb 16	24	05 Mar 16	05
15 Feb 16	08	25 Feb 16	17	06 Mar 16	06
16 Feb 16	18	26 Feb 16	17	07 Mar 16	05
17 Feb 16	25	27 Feb 16	05	08 Mar 16	05
18 Feb 16	29	28 Feb 16	12	09 Mar 16	03
19 Feb 16	18	29 Feb 16	11	10 Mar 16	03
Total	120	Total	134	Total	56

Appendix 3: Selected News article Headlines from Times of India (Delhi/NCR circulation) for discourse analysis

10 February 2016	JNU pulls plug on event against 'judicial killing'
11 February 2016	JNU to probe event to mark Afzal death
12 February 2016	Afzal event: Sedition case filed
13 February 2016	JNU students' union prez arrested for sedition: cops search hostels
14 February 2016	netas of all hues wade in, made JNU theatre of national politics
15 February 2016	Afzal Guru event at JNU backed by LeT: Rajnath
16 February 2016	JNU students, journalists thrashed by lawyers in court as cops look on: BJP MLA Sharma Seen Beating CPI Activist
17 February 2016	MLA sticks to his guns on shooting 'anti-nationals'
18 February 2016	Cops Give Goons A Free Hand, Again
19 February 2016	Kanhaiya bypasses trial court & HC, goes straight to SC for bail citing threat to life
20 February 2016	JNUSU President's Lawyers To File Writ Under Constitution To Argue Violation Of Fundamental Rights

21 February 2016	'Diversity key to national unity': JNU Prof G Arunima Says Attempt To Impose Homogeneity Is Dangerous
22 February 2016	All 5 wanted students back on JNU campus, likely to be arrested
23 February 2016	JNU standoff: Students won't surrender, cops bide time before arresting
24 February 2016	Govt won't back down on JNU, ready for showdown
25 February 2016	Govt stands its ground on JNU, Rohith: After Oppn Charges It With Crushing Dissent, Smriti Counter-Attacks With Nationalist Pitch
26 February 2016	Police story: Videos just a part of proof
27 February 2016	Lawyers get SC notice for thrashing Kanhaiya
28 February 2016	Kanhaiya video nails Bassi claim on attack
29 February 2016	JNU community debates future course
01 March 2016	'Tell-tale' Kanhaiya video blurs
02 March 2016	Umar, Anirban sent to 14-day judicial custody
03 March 2016	Kanhaiya gets 6-month bail with a warning: Stay Away From Anti-National Activities: HC
04 March 2016	Want freedom in India, not from India: Kanhaiya
05 March 2016	My icon is Rohith Vemula, not Afzal Guru: Kanhaiya- 'JNU Certainly Not Home Of Anti-Nationals'
06 March 2016	Cops to track Kanhaiya to keep him safe: Ask JNU To Tell Them About His Movements
07 March 2016	AMID NATIONALISM DEBATE, POLICE PROPOSAL DOESN'T CLICK WITH STUDENTS: Cameras on campus to keep track of outsiders?
08 March 2016	Voice from Valley leads JNU narrative
09 March 2016	The other face of JNU story
10 March 2016	JNUSU greets registrar with boycott

Appendix 4: Example of derivation of macrostructure from news article (JNU pulls plug on event against 'judicial killing', Times of India, 2016, February 10)

- The news text

JNU pulls plug on event against 'judicial killing

Once again, a “cultural programme” planned at Jawaharlal Nehru University to protest against the “judicial killing” of Afzal Guru has been scuttled by the administration.

The JNU division of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad had written to various members of the administration against it and messaged students to protest against the “anti-national” event.

The organizers—a handful of students—say the administration had granted permission “in writing” and then withdrew it “verbally.” A photography and a painting exhibition had been planned as part of the programme. “They’re not allowing us.

A large number of guards arrived and started removing the photographs. This is not just about Guru but about Kashmir,” says Umar Khalid, one of the organisers, adding, “It’s like the administration and ABVP are working together. It’s the same as what happened in Hyderabad.” Apparently, scuttling such tributes is pretty routine.

Khalid says the administration had pulled the plug on a similar event planned last year, also at the “last moment.” ABVP’s member in the JNU Students’ Union, Saurabh Kumar Sharma, had called for a protest. “Some students [are] organising [a] cultural evening to commemorate terrorist Afjal Guru (sic). Please gather at 24*7 (an eatery) to protest [against] this anti-national event. Shaheedo ka apmaan nahi sahega Hindustan,” says his message to fellow students.

The dean, students’ welfare, S K Goswami explained the withdrawal of permission saying the students “obtained permission by making an incomplete statement.” “They said it was just a cultural event and did not give us any details. That’s why we have withdrawn permission”.

- The first level of Macrostructure

1. Cultural programme was organised at JNU to protest against judicial killing of Afzal Guru
2. JNU administration cancelled the programme
3. JNU division of ABVP complained against the cultural programme to the administration and termed as ‘anti-national
4. Few students were in the organising committee who reported that the permission was granted in written form but cancelled verbally

5. Photography and painting were part of the exhibition under cultural programme
 6. Umar Khalid, one of the organisers anticipated ABVP and JNU administration to be associated. He addressed the event to be for Kashmir and also related ruining of the event to student protest of Hyderabad Central University (HCU)
 7. Khalid also added cancellation of such event last year
 8. ABVP member of JNUSU called for students to protest against such event
 9. JNU administration clarified that due to lack of information about the cultural programme, the event permission was cancelled
- The second level of Macrostructure
 1. A group of few students organise cultural programme in JNU for protesting against judicial killing of Afzal Guru and supporting Kashmir issue
 2. ABVP, a comprising party of JNUSU is against such protest event and tag the students organising as ‘anti-national’
 3. JNU administration reports lack of information about the nature of event
 - The third level of Macrostructure- the Schematic Superstructure
 1. The cultural programme organised by some JNU students was opposed by students’ wing of the university only; the event was not associated with the university and its administration.

Appendix 5: Example of derivation of microstructure from news article (Cops Give Goons a Free Hand, Again. Times of India, 2016, February 18)

- The news text

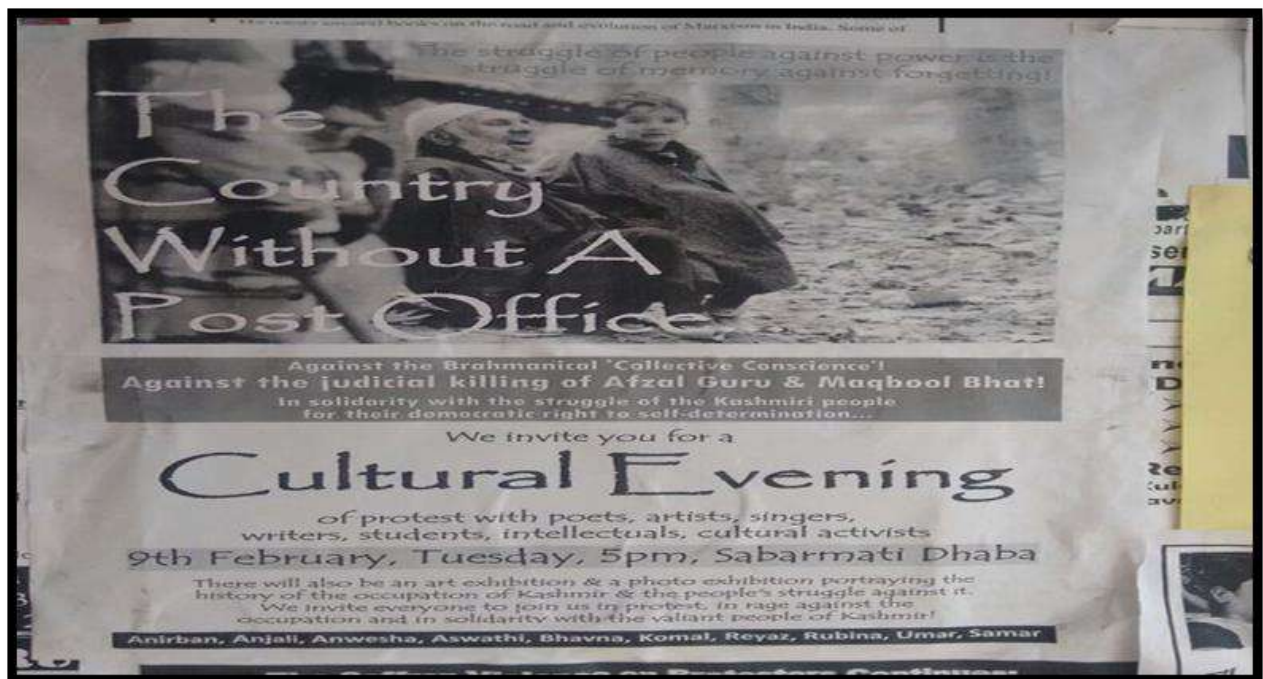
Cops Give Goons a Free Hand, Again

House Courts complex — equidistant from the police headquarters and (the seat of the Union government)⁴ — saw an unprecedented breakdown of law and order, for the second time in three days, on Wednesday. Unbelievably, the goons in black robes who had terrorised reporters and others on Monday, returned for a repeat amidst heavy police presence. Waving the tricolour and shouting slogans, they ran berserk, thrashing reporters, clashing with other lawyers and, finally, assaulting (JNUSU president)¹ (Kanhaiya Kumar)², who was being produced for a

hearing on the sedition charges against him. No action was taken against the lawyers, who had a free run of the place, though the policemen did sporadically intervene to escort people out. Late at night, amidst widespread outrage and condemnation, Delhi Police registered an FIR under sections of assault on the basis of a statement by Kanhaiya which he recorded in the presence of the judge. Police sources said he has identified one of the attackers in the statement. The police are likely to register a second FIR taking suo motu cognisance of the ruckus created by the lawyers through the day. Kanhaiya was brought to court around 2.40pm through Gate No. 4. While he was being escorted to the court room, 80-100 lawyers surrounded the accompanying policemen and rained blows and punches on him. The policemen managed to push back a few of them but were overpowered. However, more cops arrived and managed to rescue him. Some lawyers tried to attack Kumar outside the court as well but the police stopped them. One of them, Surinder Tyagi, later bragged, “We have done our job for today, slapped him... He had to be taught a lesson.” Others were heard saying they could “finish” the job if arrested and sent to Tihar.

Actors	JNU administr ation	JNUSU students involved in the protest	ABVP students opposing the event	ministers involved in debate	leaders of opposition parties at center
Micros tructur e	Backgro unding ¹	Presence ²	Absence ³	Suppressi on ⁴	Absence ⁵

Appendix 6: Poster of the main event of 2016 JNU protest (Retrieved from www.thequint_2016-02_f5d0a984-87e1-4fca-9584-1353d2caa459_AfzakEvent.jpg)



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Epistemología Depredadora y Paz Violenta. Consideraciones Filosóficas sobre la Construcción de una Justicia Cognitiva

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Date of publication: November 30th, 2017

Edition period: November 2017 - February 2018

To cite this article: Christiansen, M.L. (2017). Epistemología Depredadora y Paz Violenta. Consideraciones Filosóficas sobre la Construcción de una Justicia Cognitiva. *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(3), 281-306. doi: 10.17583/rimcis.2017.2992

To link this article: <http://doi.org/10.17583/rimcis.2017.2992>

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Predatory Epistemology and Violent Peace. Philosophical Considerations on the Construction of Cognitive Justice

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Abstract

This article will propose an *epistemological* approach on the possibility of constructing dialogical connections between different knowledges. Some pluralistic notions introduced by the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos will be appealed, in special the term “ecology of knowledge” and its two concomitant concepts: post-abysmal thought and radical co-presence. On this base, an attempt will be made to answer the question as to how the very diversified cosmovisions that form the map of current knowledges should be correlated, gnoseologically. It will be argued that, the response given to this question, depends significantly on the epistemological position adopted, which can range from a *modern rationalist* epistemology (abysmal, predatory, verticalist and reductivist) to an *ecological-integrative* (post-abysmal epistemology, pluricultural, promoter of horizontal networks of cooperation and respectful of the otherness of cognition). Such contrast is of great importance, since each epistemology establishes very different patterns of *social relation*; while the former motorizes links of domination and epistemic colonization, and institutes conditions for a “violent peace”, the latter fosters ties of solidarity, autonomy, recognition and reciprocity. From this last perspective, will advocate in favor of the thesis of Santos, according to which there is no global *social justice* without global *cognitive justice*.

Keywords: universal rationality, predatory epistemology, cognitive justice, ecology of knowledges

Epistemología Depredadora y Paz Violenta. Consideraciones Filosóficas sobre la Construcción de una Justicia Cognitiva

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Resumen

Este artículo propondrá un abordaje *epistemológico* acerca de la posibilidad de construir conexiones dialógicas entre distintas formas de conocimiento. Para ello, se apelará a algunas nociones *pluralistas* introducidas por el sociólogo portugués Boaventura de Sousa Santos, en particular la de “ecología de saberes” y sus dos conceptos concomitantes: pensamiento post-abismal y copresencia radical. Sobre tal base, se intentará responder a la cuestión de cómo deberían correlacionarse, gnoseológicamente, las diversificadísimas cosmovisiones que configuran el mapa de los saberes actuales. Se aducirá que, la respuesta otorgada a ese interrogante depende significativamente del posicionamiento epistemológico adoptado, el cual puede ir desde una epistemología racionalista moderna (abismal, depredadora, verticalista y reductivista) hasta una epistemología de corte ecológico-integrador (post-abismal, pluricultural, promotora de redes horizontales de cooperación y respetuosa de la alteridad cognoscitiva). Tal contraste es de gran relieve, ya que cada epistemología instaaura patrones de *relación social* muy diferente; mientras que la primera motoriza vínculos de dominación y colonización epistémica, e instituye condiciones para una *paz violenta*, la segunda fomenta lazos de solidaridad, autonomía, reconocimiento y reciprocidad. A partir de esta última perspectiva, se abogará en favor de la tesis de Santos, según la cual no hay *justicia social* global sin *justicia cognitiva* global.

Palabras clave: racionalidad universal, epistemología depredadora, justicia cognitiva, ecología de saberes

Nada es nada, hasta que se lo distingue por primera vez y se lo nombra o se lo simboliza (Wallach, 1989). Sin la capacidad humana de distinguir una cosa de otra no habría descripciones posibles, y esta aptitud está en la raíz misma de nuestro conocimiento espontáneo. Conocemos a partir del contraste; por ejemplo, podemos señalar lo blanco por su diferencia con todas las cosas que no son blancas. El brillante matemático Spencer Brown (1969) destacaba que el trazado de *límites* es nuestra operación más primitiva y elemental, ya que nos permite discriminar algo con respecto a su trasfondo, individualizarlo; de hecho, “la palabra “existir” deriva del latín *existere*, que significa “destacarse de”: un “esto” existe cuando ha sido separado de un “aquello”” (Efran, Lukens & Lukens, 1994, p. 59).

Ahora, el hecho de considerar que el trazado de *distinciones* constituye la piedra basal del conocimiento, cuestiona el ortodoxo postulado empirista según el cual el origen y el fundamento del conocimiento es el acto de *observar*. Tanto la filosofía de la ciencia, como la fenomenología, la psicología de la percepción y la antropología sensorial, han cuestionado severamente la vieja idea de que la observación es simplemente la recepción pasiva de imágenes retinales. Innegablemente, la experiencia perceptual de un observador depende de la información en forma de rayos de luz que entra en sus ojos, y de las imágenes retinales, *pero* también está constreñida por lo que su experiencia pasada, sus creencias previas y sus expectativas lo inducen a “ver”. Una reacción de la retina es solamente un estado físico, una excitación fotoquímica. Como afirma Norwood Hanson (1958), son las personas las que ven, no sus ojos. La visión es una experiencia *humana*, no compartida con las cámaras fotográficas ni con los globos oculares. Lejos de ser *tabulas rasas* sobre las que se imprimen los datos empíricos, los sujetos que observan aprenden a hacerlo. Sobre esto, Michael Polanyi (1973) nos ofrece un ilustrativo ejemplo:

Pensemos en un estudiante de medicina que sigue un curso de diagnóstico de enfermedades pulmonares por rayos-x. Mira, en una habitación oscura, trazos indefinidos en una pantalla fluorescente colocada contra el pecho del paciente y oye el comentario que hace el radiólogo a sus ayudantes, en un lenguaje técnico, sobre los rasgos significativos de esas sombras. En un principio, el estudiante está

completamente confundido, ya que, en la imagen de rayos-x del pecho, sólo puede ver las sombras del corazón y de las costillas que tienen entre sí unas cuantas manchas como patas de araña. Los expertos parecen estar imaginando quimeras; él no puede ver nada de lo que están diciendo. Luego, según vaya escuchando durante unas cuantas semanas, mirando cuidadosamente las imágenes siempre nuevas de los diferentes casos, empezará a comprender; poco a poco se olvidará de las costillas y comenzará a ver los pulmones. Y, finalmente, si persevera inteligentemente, se le revelará un rico panorama de detalles significativos: de variaciones fisiológicas y cambios patológicos, cicatrices, infecciones crónicas y signos de enfermedades agudas. *Ha entrado en un mundo nuevo*. Todavía ve sólo una parte de lo que pueden ver los expertos, pero ahora las imágenes tienen por fin sentido, así como la mayoría de los comentarios que se hacen sobre ellas. (p. 101. Énfasis añadido).

¿Cuál es ese “mundo nuevo” en el cual ha entrado?: el de los marcos distincionales. Nuestro acceso a eso que llamamos “el mundo” está mediado por las distinciones que tenemos disponibles, por lo cual las posibilidades de que observemos o no observemos tal o cual cosa quedan expuestas a condiciones culturales e históricas en permanente cambio. La premisa decisiva en torno a este punto es que, para ser capaces de entender las observaciones propias como las ajenas, debemos comprender desde qué distinciones “se ve lo que se”. El historiador mexicano Alfonso Mendiola ilustra este señalamiento con el caso de la noción de “naturaleza”: si nos preguntamos a qué se refiere o qué significa ese término, las respuestas variarán según las distinciones hechas por observadores situados en diferentes contextos. En tanto *distinción*, la “naturaleza” no es definible sin conocer aquello de lo cual se distingue: para entender el concepto medieval de “naturaleza”, tenemos que distinguirlo del concepto de “gracia”; pero el siglo XVIII, en cambio, la designaba a partir de la diferencia naturaleza/sociedad; el siglo XIX la describió en función de la distinción naturaleza/espíritu, mientras que el siglo XX partió de la distinción natural/artificial. Lo que Mendiola (2000) quiere destacar es que, fuera de esos horizontes distincionales, la “naturaleza” no remite a nada, y cada una de las acepciones mencionadas nos retrotrae a la pregunta “¿bajo qué distinciones la naturaleza es esto y no lo otro?” (pp. 201-202). Tal manera de

enfocar la cuestión de qué significa algo en tanto distinción, está en las antípodas de una ontología sustancialista, que consideraría a ese algo como una entidad en sí misma (es decir, con existencia independiente del observador).

La aceptación de que conocemos en la medida en que hacemos distinciones tiene un corolario de relevancia capital para la epistemología, ya que sugiere que, ese supuesto mundo independiente que se creía compuesto por objetos, cosas, esencias o sustancias, está más bien conformado de *relaciones*, pues *distinguir* implica, simultáneamente, una *relación de contraste* con lo que es distinto, y de *similitud* con lo que se asemeja.

En 1978, Nelson Goodman escribió un libro llamado *Ways of World-Making*, en el cual se ocupaba largamente de esta destreza humana de distinguir, nombrar y clasificar; años más tarde, el filósofo canadiense Ian Hacking retomó los argumentos de Goodman en un artículo llamado “World-making by Kind-making” (1992), haciendo hincapié sobre cómo el advenimiento de nuevas categorías o distinciones hacen visualizables “realidades” nuevas, ante las cuales parecíamos haber estado increíblemente ciegos. Hacking analizó esta cuestión poniendo varios ejemplos de las ciencias humanas: cuando una comunidad profesional inaugura una nueva categoría, se pueden desencadenar “epidemias clasificatorias” que poblarán el mundo social de nuevas clases de sujetos agrupados o “diagnosticados” bajo la nueva rúbrica. Por ejemplo, habitar en un entorno cultural que considera que cierta forma de conducta es patológica -como la homosexualidad en el siglo XIX- nos induce a que observemos dicha condición como si *naturalmente* perteneciera al ámbito de la enfermedad mental. Desde aquel punto de observación decimonónico, esa condición era una enfermedad (“perversión”) incluso desde antes de que se descubriera como tal. Ahora, aquel contexto que no cuestionaba que la homosexualidad fuese una condición mórbida, es categorial y ontológicamente distinto del contexto cultural en el cual la homosexualidad es considerada como una elección libre e inherente a la autonomía decisional de cada persona. Esto tendrá, por supuesto, hondísimas implicaciones morales. Un medio social que condena la homosexualidad y la representa como enfermedad no sólo instiga a observar y nombrar a los homosexuales bajo un molde perceptual patologizante, sino que ésa etiqueta también exhorta a menospreciarlos o a

tratarlos compasivamente. Si bien siempre han existido personas que prefieran parejas del mismo sexo, su identidad social está impregnada de las preconcepciones que cada marco categorial propone o impone. Pero, a partir de la existencia de nuevas descripciones, otro “mundo” se crea, abriéndose la posibilidad de renombrar y reclasificar las conductas humanas de acuerdo con los prototipos que las nuevas taxonomías vuelven disponibles. A la luz de una nueva categoría, no sólo advienen otras formas de percibir y percibirnos, sino de tratar y de ser tratados por los demás. Por lo tanto, hay un nexo inseparable entre las categorías lingüísticas que usamos y los lentes a través de las cuales observamos e intervenimos sobre “la realidad”. Así de importante son los nombres que le damos a las cosas; a veces, como decía Nietzsche (1981, p. 67), ese nombre importa más que las cosas mismas. La connotación que las distinciones y las palabras pueden adquirir cambia los mundos simbólicos en los que anidamos. Observar, describir y explicar como “normal” ciertas acciones no es, por ejemplo, una operación que acontezca en un vacío social, sino que compartimos con nuestra comunidad epistémica una cierta noción acerca de qué es típico y deseable sobre las conductas humanas. En consecuencia, las distinciones que trazamos y que utilizamos como ladrillos del conocimiento, se van estabilizando mediante procesos de socialización y estandarización que, en general, culminan en consensos bien establecidos. Claro que esto no significa que esos ovillos distincionales internalizados dentro de un grupo social puedan universalizarse sin más. Por el contrario, la enorme diversidad epistémica y cultural nos insta a pensar más bien en la existencia de enjambres distincionales que pudieran parecer irracionales para quien no pertenece a esa comunidad de sentido, pero que conforman un horizonte de inteligibilidad para quienes han aprendido a observar “el” mundo desde los esquemas categoriales que tienen “a la mano”.

Pues bien, del conjunto de incertidumbres que se suscitan ante el reconocimiento de la pluralidad epistémica y los multiversos distincionales, surge la pregunta de cómo, a pesar de la diversidad y la contingencia de nuestras observaciones-basadas-en-distinciones (cambiantes y revisables), hemos llegado a creer compulsivamente en el discurso del conocimiento objetivo y universalmente verdadero.

Desde la imagen pública que se tiene sobre la ciencia en nuestro medio cultural, se la sigue concibiendo como paradigma de la racionalidad y de la validez universal, por lo cual se le adjudica la producción de un saber no anclado a ningún contexto histórico y a ningún marco distincional en particular. Dicho de otro modo, la ciencia es masivamente idolatrada como garante absoluto de la neutralidad y de las explicaciones emanadas de análisis puros, no distorsionados por las espurias gafas de las distinciones. Se ha repetido hasta el cansancio que se ocupa únicamente de *hechos*, sin pronunciarse por tal o cual preferencia, interés, gusto o inclinación idiosincrásica, política o axiológica. Por lo mismo, se presume que los juicios establecidos por el investigador están asentados en *observaciones* hechas a una *distancia* que separa tajantemente al sujeto del objeto: para el observador, lo que las cosas *son*, lo son de manera *independiente*; simplemente *descubre* cómo es el mundo, y entonces lo explica, lo predice y lo modifica según la guía que ese conocimiento le otorga.

Pero, todo este imaginario que brota de los canales de divulgación científica, hace enmudecer los estridentes problemas que surgen cuando reconocemos el papel crucial de nuestros actos de distinción, sometidos a la inevitable variabilidad histórica, cultural y social. Para que se mantenga incólume la prístina visión de la ciencia objetiva y universal, se ha evitado pisar el enlodado terreno de las críticas filosóficas que atacan los privilegios epistémicos concedidos a las distinciones trazadas por las comunidades científicas (como si no existieran otras formas de hacer distinciones y de construir explicaciones e intervenciones). La idealización de la ciencia, alcanzada en gran parte mediante la extirpación de sus límites internos, ha contribuido definitivamente en el poderío hegemónico del que hoy en día goza. La ciencia puede jactarse de ser, actualmente, el único conocimiento financiado con gasto público; asimismo, puede vanagloriarse de que el ciudadano de a pie apruebe tal inversión como un gran logro en nombre de un “bien común” (aunque tendríamos que definir si es, a secas, un “bien”, y si ese bien es, efectivamente, “común”).

La Absolutización Cientificista de las Distinciones: Pensamiento Abismal, Colonización y Epistemología Depredadora

La Objetividad es el motor principal del *pensamiento único*. En el ámbito de una discusión acalorada, nada puede ser más aplastante que demostrar que el propio argumento defendido está basado en evidencia obtenida “neutralmente”. Tal imparcialidad confiere grandes chances de ganar el combate argumental: certeza y dominación se pasean juntas y hacen alianza con gran facilidad.

La pretensión de ser-imparcial supone un exceso de autoafirmación de las propias creencias (y distinciones), así como una correlativa inferiorización epistémica de las distinciones del adversario. Bajo la férrea convicción de que la posición adoptada es la correcta, y de que esta superioridad es un hecho objetivamente comprobable, no hay auténtico lugar para el disenso. La interlocución con ese “Otro equivocado” solo puede tener el sentido de mostrarle su error, y de conducirlo por la senda correcta, invadiendo su campo argumental. Empero, cabe interrogarse sobre las siguientes cuestiones, que aquí consideramos medulares, a saber: ¿qué formas de relación y trato social se ven alentadas desde una *postura cognitiva colonizadora*, como lo es la del cientificismo¹? ¿Cómo son tramitadas las diferencias, las distinciones, los disensos y las rupturas, desde una concepción científicista que niega la validez de otras formas de conocimiento y las devalúa, pero sacando ventaja, al mismo tiempo, de su supuesta inferioridad?

Para abordar este complejísimo proceso, se propondrá aquí la noción de una “epistemología depredadora”, la cual apenas será esbozada en sus aspectos introductorios. Como parte de esta zambullida hacia un enfoque crítico, nos remitiremos a algunas de las reflexiones del sociólogo portugués Boaventura de Sousa Santos, ya que ponderamos a muchos de sus aportes como importantes luces para alumbrar estas zonas marginales de la filosofía del conocimiento. Partiremos del señalamiento que Santos y Meneses (2014) subrayan cuando dicen que “no hay epistemologías neutrales y las que pretenden serlo son las menos neutrales” (p. 5). El falso neutralismo, que se incubaba en el núcleo de una epistemología universalista, no deja cabida para

concebir el conocimiento en términos de *pluralidad*. La pretensión de universalidad “excluye, ignora, silencia, elimina y condena a la *no existencia epistémica* todo lo que no es susceptible de ser incluido en los límites de un conocimiento que tiene como objetivo conocer para dominar” (Santos, Gutierrez Meneses y Arriscado Nunes, 2004, p. 65. Énfasis añadido). La reverenciada *razón universal* de la cultura moderna occidental deviene, en la perspectiva de Santos, una *razón indolente*, que “tiende a utilizar la misma vara de medir para todas las culturas, no reconociendo más parámetros y valores que los suyos propios” (Santos, 2005, p. 152, citado en Aguiló Bonet, 2009, p. 5).

A través de la *homogeneización* distincional, el moderno cientificismo occidental ha realizado esmerados esfuerzos por *absolutizar* la validez de la ciencia, mancillando las distinciones que contraríen sus creencias ya establecidas; en gran medida, lo ha conseguido mediante una estrategia epistemológica muy efectiva, que radica en construir esas “otras” distinciones como “inexistentes”. Esta maniobra es emblemática de lo que Santos denomina un estilo de pensamiento *abismal*, el cual divide la realidad social en dos universos: el universo de “este lado de la línea” (que abarca las distinciones, experiencias, saberes y actores sociales que son útiles, inteligibles y visibles) y el universo del “otro lado de la línea”, donde están depositados los que son inútiles o peligrosos, ininteligibles, objetos de supresión u olvido (Santos & Meneses, 2014, p. 11).

Santos afirma una confluencia estrechísima entre el pensamiento abismal-absolutizador y las construcciones de inexistencias:

La división [abismal] es tal que «el otro lado de la línea» desaparece como realidad, se convierte en no existente, y de hecho es producido como no existente. No existente significa no existir en ninguna forma relevante o comprensible de ser. Lo que es producido como no existente es radicalmente excluido porque se encuentra más allá del universo de lo que la concepción aceptada de inclusión considera que es su otro. (Santos, 2014a, pp. 21-22).

En el caso de Occidente, esta línea abismal ha situado en el terreno *acientífico* todos los saberes y enunciados que aspiran a ser enunciados de conocimiento pero que no son reconocidos como tales por las formas

vigentes de soberanía epistémica, y que se consideran como portadores de error e ignorancia, meras creencias o formas de superstición (Arriscado Nunes, en Santos y Meneses, 2014). Tal separación no es inocente ni casual, ya que los saberes relegados a “ese otro lado de la línea” resultan drásticamente descalificados, ya sea por *apropiación* o por *eliminación*. Según Joao Arriscado Nunes, un ejemplo del primer caso -de apropiación- sería la transformación de los conocimientos locales sobre biodiversidad en “etnociencias”; sobre el segundo caso -de eliminación-, pueden mencionarse las diferentes modalidades de destrucción de saberes subalternos, como ha ocurrido durante las misiones evangelizadoras, la escolarización cientificista o la devastación ambiental. Citando a Santos (2007, p. 9), Arriscado Nunes (2014) afirma:

La transformación del saber y el conocimiento en algo susceptible de convertirse en un objeto de apropiación privada, separado de quienes lo producen, transportado, comprado y vendido, sujeto a formas de derecho de propiedad ajenas al contexto en el que ese saber o conocimiento fue producido y apropiado colectivamente, corresponde, en realidad, a una operación de eliminación oscurantista de saberes y experiencias en nombre de la racionalización y subordinación a los cánones epistemológicos asociados a la ciencia moderna. El resultado pasa, por tanto, por dos caminos: el de la destrucción física, material, cultural y humana, y el de la incorporación, apropiación o asimilación (p. 237).

A partir de este agudo pronunciamiento, Santos remarca que el distintivo más sobresaliente de este pensamiento abismal es *la imposibilidad de la copresencia de los dos lados de la línea*: el lado privilegiado prevalece en la medida en que angosta el campo de la realidad relevante. Más allá de esto, solo está la invisibilidad, la no existencia. En el caso del cientificismo, esto se ve nítidamente: se traza una demarcación entre ciencia y pseudociencias, considerándose a las primeras como representativas de un saber rigurosamente evaluado, y a las segundas como fraudulentos intentos de simulación científica. Sin embargo, y aunque pudiera parecer que las pseudociencias se tratan como “inexistentes”, no lo están, porque se sitúan, al igual que las ciencias, “de este lado de la línea”: comparten la

característica de tener un valor veritativo (verdadera la primera, falsa la segunda), y ambas, ciencia y pseudociencias, combaten en el *ring* del conocimiento. Algo similar ocurre entre la ciencia y la filosofía: se debaten su superioridad y su estatus cognoscitivo, pero *ambas* son reconocidas como alguna forma de saber.

En cambio, del otro lado de la línea, hay saberes y experiencias que ni siquiera son visualizados como tales; lisa y llanamente, “no existen”, ni siquiera como falsedades. Conocimientos tradicionales, orales, populares, laicos, plebeyos, campesinos o indígenas desaparecen como conocimientos *relevantes* o evaluables, ya que carecen de ese valor veritativo que pudiera darles mínimamente alguna presencia. “Eso” que ocurre del otro lado de la línea, no es concebido como conocimiento real; hay creencias, opiniones, magia, idolatría, comprensiones intuitivas o subjetivas, hechas inconmensurables o incomprensibles por no adaptarse a los cánones de justificación del conocimiento hegemónico. Que la distinción científica verdadero/falso sea obsoleta para juzgar su validez, los hace desaparecer. Las interminables “visiones del mundo” quedan subsumidas a algún segmento de la línea de progreso que conduce hacia la “visión correcta del mundo”, que no es sino la “visión occidentalista del mundo”. Las creencias que inicialmente generan extrañeza, porque son *incomprendidas*, se tornan rápidamente *incomprensibles*, y asisten a una muerte lenta. En virtud de esto, Santos anuncia:

Hay un problema de destrucción de *conocimientos alternativos* sin lo cual el conocimiento hegemónico no logra ser hegemónico. La gran creación científica de nuestro tiempo está basada en un *epistemicidio*, en la muerte de otros conocimientos (2012. Énfasis añadido).

Los epistemicidios han sido el caballo de Troya de los proyectos universalistas, ya que la supremacía de un saber queda cómodamente justificada cuando las disidencias han sido presentadas en términos de ignorancia, involución, barbarie o salvajismo. El problema es que, como dice Santos, esos avasalladores proyectos universalistas necesariamente emanan de contextos históricos con raíces idiosincrásicas e intereses específicos. Pero entonces, lo universal no es universal, sino particular. En el caso del eurocentrismo, la paradoja se revela abiertamente: si el universalismo es

europeo, entonces no puede ser universal (y, por ende, si es universal, no puede ser europeo).

Por otra parte, además de acobijar pretensiones epistémicas contradictorias como la que se acaba de mostrar, los universalismos perpetrar actos epistemicidas que no solo anulan creencias y experiencias alternativas, sino que también, y principalmente, anulan al sujeto humano que las crea, las mantiene, las defiende, las practica y las fundamenta. Peor aun cuando el otro lado de la línea aloja prácticas mágicas o idólatras obscuras y enigmáticas: la perplejidad puede ser, incluso, el disparador de la negación de la naturaleza humana de los agentes de las mismas. Santos lo ejemplifica al recordarnos la particular “humanidad” de los humanistas:

En la base de sus refinadas concepciones de humanidad o dignidad humana, los humanistas alcanzaron la conclusión de que los salvajes eran subhumanos. “¿Tienen alma los indios?” era la cuestión central. Cuando el papa Pablo III respondió afirmativamente en su bula *Sublimis Deus* de 1537, lo hizo por convencimiento de que la población indígena tenía alma como un receptáculo vacío, un *anima nullius*. (2014a, p. 27)

La idea de un *anima nullis*, un alma vacía, incitaba a tratarla como lo que podía -o debía- ser llenado por el conocimiento válido, al que también aprenderían a desear, ya que la bula así lo admitía: “los indios son verdaderamente hombres y [...] no sólo son capaces de entender la Fe Católica, según nuestra información ellos *desean* extremadamente recibirla” (Santos, 2014a, p. 27. Énfasis añadido).

No hay que olvidar que, esta poderosísima metáfora del *anima nullis*, estaba emparentada con la de *terra nullis* (tierra de nadie), un concepto de vacío jurídico que, al igual que el supuesto vacío de “auténtico” conocimiento, justificó la invasión y ocupación de los territorios indígenas (Santos, 2014a). A lo largo de la historia de Occidente, esa colonización *territorial* -mostrable, evidenciable- y la colonización *epistemológica* -simbólica, no visible- se han retroalimentado para *naturalizar* la idea de que la apropiación no es apropiación, sino *conquista*. Aquí reside, a nuestro entender, el nudo neurálgico de una *epistemología depredadora*, que consume un desprecio activo por eso que desprecia, pero 1) manteniendo,

inadvertidamente, un reconocimiento -lo reconoce como *no-existente*-, aunque se trate de un reconocimiento negado, no aceptado, no asumido como tal (Pereda, 1999); y 2) usufructuando de los beneficios de tal “inexistencia”. Su naturaleza epistemicida está vinculada con el interés de autolegitimar el conocimiento que considera válido; por eso no se trata sencillamente de una “desaparición” de lo alternativo, sino también de autofavorecerse con dicha extinción. Pretende hegemonizarse, pero solo lo puede lograr al diferenciarse de lo no-hegemónico, tanto mejor si este último es degradado incluso en su estatus ontológico más básico, el de la existencia. Según la etimología, el verbo *colonizar* viene del latín *colonia*, que significa “territorio establecido por gente que no es de ahí”. Dicho verbo lleva un elemento compositivo, *izar*, que indica “convertir en” (en griego *idzein*). En general, cuando se piensa en colonialismos, se los sitúa exclusivamente en la esfera política, geográfica, histórica y/o territorial. Sin embargo, el *colonialismo epistémico* es mucho más potente, porque extrae su ferocidad precisamente de su sutileza. Coloniza sin aparentarlo: impone ideas, distinciones, formas de describir, de explicar y de validar, pero esa colonización no es vista como tal porque prevalece la concepción objetivista de que el verdadero conocimiento está exento de luchas de poder.

Ahora, en lo que concierne a este último punto, sobre las relaciones mediante las cuales los saberes se confrontan en un campo de fuerzas, conviene hacer una precisión: ni todos los encuentros de saberes tienen que ser colonizadores, ni todas las colonizaciones deben ser depredadoras. Una colonización epistémica es depredadora cuando está empujada por un epistemicidio oportunista. Cuando esto último sucede, la colonización desata un dramático dismantelamiento de los saberes locales ya existentes, considerando que esa devastación no es una pérdida sino parte de un proceso de “arado de suelo” para sembrar genuino conocimiento; pero, dado que tal operación opera en el imperceptible nivel *simbólico* de las creencias y los significados, no genera reacciones violentas contundentes.

Epistemología Post-abismal, Pluralismo y Copresencia Radical

Darle existencia a lo inexistente, darle presencia a lo ausente: tales son los objetivos programáticos de un cambio epistemológico sustentado en el

rechazo de la epistemología que establece invalidaciones *abismales* hacia los conocimientos que no reafirman la cosmovisión eurocientificista. Tal como Santos nos advierte una y otra vez, la comprensión del mundo es mucho más amplia que la comprensión *occidental* del mundo (2012). Si, como alega el pluralista, la racionalidad no puede seguir pensándose como un conjunto canónico, fijo e inmutable de reglas conducentes a un *único* resultado, entonces tampoco puede concebirse un modelo *a priori* de racionalidad al cual la ciencia se apegue ineluctablemente (Olivé, 2004, p. 65).

Hay que señalar que, en la filosofía, se han realizado sustanciales esfuerzos por desmitificar el idilio sobre la certeza y la universalidad de la ciencia. Este corsé universalista no solo había sido abanderado hasta mediados del siglo XX por el afamado positivismo lógico del Círculo de Viena, sino también por la concepción heredada del empirismo lógico y el racionalismo crítico que hizo escuela con Karl Popper. Incluso esa inmaculada imagen de la racionalidad científica sigue perenne en la percepción *pública* del conocimiento científico. Ante tal optimismo sobresimplificador, varios filósofos se vieron influidos por las incisivas críticas de Thomas Kuhn (1962/1970), que le dio un remarcado relieve a la *historicidad* de las cosmovisiones -o *paradigmas*- que mediatizan el conocimiento humano. Tal postura exige el reconocimiento auténtico de la diversidad de puntos de vista y, fundamentalmente, de los criterios de evaluación que los hacen válidos. En deliberada oposición a la monumental concepción de la racionalidad *única* y *universal*, se ha llegado a aceptar que existen *múltiples* formas de conocer e interactuar con el mundo, sin que ninguna de ellas sea externamente preferible o representativa de un progreso absoluto en comparación con sus rivales. Esa variabilidad epocal y cultural de los conocimientos no es visualizada como un defecto epistémico a rectificar o superar, sino, por el contrario, como un oasis de marcos conceptuales que nos invitan a explorar, como decíamos al principio, “mundos nuevos”.

Numerosas propuestas pluralistas como las postkuhonianas han abonado al rechazo del cientificismo abismal, atacando principalmente su plan sistemático de ejecuciones epistemicidas a diferentes escalas históricas (véase, por ejemplo, Fleck, 1935/1979, Hanson, 1958, Douglas, 1987, 1996/1998, Hacking, 1995, 1998, Davidson, 1967, 1991). Muy

probablemente, como admite Santos, existan, o hayan existido, formas de pensamiento abismal *más allá de Occidente* (2014a, p. 21). Lo importante, en cualquier caso, es que las epistemologías sean evaluadas por aquellos que viven sus *consecuencias*; que los afectados por ellas generen consciencia sobre las incontables maneras en que el pensamiento abismal busca asegurar su preeminencia. Sin ese reconocimiento, dice Santos (2014a), “el pensamiento crítico permanecerá como un pensamiento derivado que avanzará reproduciendo las líneas abismales, sin importar cuánto de antiabismal se proclame a sí mismo” (p. 40). Su iniciativa está orientada a hacer prosperar una epistemología *postabismal* que, desde la trinchera del *pluralismo*, nos exhorte a pensar desde la perspectiva del otro lado de la línea (esto es, desde el reino de lo impensable en la modernidad occidental). No es aprender *sobre*, sino aprender *desde* y aprender *con*, lo tratado como ausente o inexistente.

Así, una epistemología no-abismal, o post-abismal, debe cuidarse de no incurrir en los vicios por los que ha repudiado al pensamiento abismal. Un primer factor que Santos considera como *conditio sine qua non* es que tal epistemología deje emerger aquello que, precisamente, han negado los pensamientos abismales: una *copresencia radical*. Esto significa que las prácticas y los agentes de ambos lados de la línea puedan ser reconocidos como *contemporáneos* en condiciones *iguales*: no hay lugar para clasificar a uno en términos de progreso y al otro en términos de rezagado. Santos (2014a) pone el siguiente ejemplo:

Si, hipotéticamente, un campesino africano y un oficinista del Banco Mundial, en una incursión rural rápida, se encuentran en el campo africano, de acuerdo con el pensamiento abismal, ellos se encuentran simultáneamente (..), pero son no-contemporáneos; por el contrario, de acuerdo con el pensamiento postabismal, el encuentro es simultáneo y tiene lugar entre dos individuos contemporáneos (p. 41).

La copresencia radical presupone, dice Santos (2014a), rebasar ideologías de tipo hegeliano, según las cuales “ser miembro de la humanidad histórica” (estar de *este* lado de la línea) significó ser un griego y no un bárbaro en el siglo V a.C., un ciudadano romano y no un griego en el siglo I de nuestra era, un cristiano y no un judío en la Edad Media, un europeo y no un salvaje

del Nuevo Mundo en el siglo XVI, y, en el siglo XIX, un europeo y no un asiático, congelado en la historia, o un africano, que ni siquiera es parte de la historia (p. 41).

Pero la copresencia radical tiene alcances más vastos: implica también la abolición de las formas más intensificadas de su negación, que son la *intolerancia* y la *guerra*. Este punto es especialmente relevante, y merece ser aquí subrayado, ya que usualmente estos fenómenos han sido abordados como problemas estrictamente éticos y políticos, en detrimento de su ineludible flanco epistemológico: *el desprecio por el conocimiento del Otro es el primer paso hacia el desprecio por el otro* (Pereda, 1999). Dicho de otra manera: en la base de las prácticas de maltrato interpersonal, violencia comunitaria y destrucción social, hay compromisos con una epistemología de ínfulas universalistas cuyos efectos y secuelas no han dejado ilesos a quienes supuestamente “no existen” detrás de la línea abismal.

Hacia la Ecologización de los Saberes y la Epistemología de la Acción

Los espacios *monoculturales* que han propiciado el monopolio cientificista no son, por supuesto, campos fértiles donde se puedan sembrar relaciones interculturales e interepistemológicas abiertas a la *integración*. Se requiere, en ese sentido, de una nueva cartografía epistemológica que Santos propone en términos de una *ecología de saberes*; ésta se encuentra cimentada en el reconocimiento de la pluralidad de conocimientos heterogéneos y en las interconexiones continuas y dinámicas que puede haber entre ellos, sin que su autonomía se vea comprometida. En el contexto de dicha ecología de saberes, el conocimiento se convierte en *interconocimiento*; es decir: la pluralidad de saberes existentes en el mundo es aceptada como infinita e inabarcable, pero cada uno de ellos solo puede conocerse a sí mismo en la *comparación* con otros saberes distintos. Tal como lo decíamos al principio, nada es nada hasta que se lo distingue de un “otro”. Al compararse con otras formas de conocimiento, un saber puede advertir sus propios alcances, sus propios límites, su elasticidad, sus fronteras y también sus posibilidades de transformación.

La ciencia moderna quedará expuesta, así, al mismo imperativo de discernir autorreflexivamente qué tipo de respuestas puede dar, como

también las preguntas a las cuales *no* puede responder porque no forman parte de su dominio (esto marca un parteaguas con la prominente ilusión de una ciencia omnisapiente, omnímoda y omnipotente ante las preocupaciones humanas). Lo mismo puede decirse de la filosofía, del arte, de la teología, y del amplísimo abanico de saberes que emanan de la inagotable capacidad humana de construir explicaciones sobre la experiencia. Esa riquísima comparación que permite explorar y valorar lo propio al explorar y valorar “lo alterno” no solo hace valiosa la *diversidad*, sino que también la torna *necesaria*.

En el ánimo pluralista que inspira esta nueva vertiente epistemológica, no asoma intención alguna de reivindicar alguna de las clásicas investiduras de las epistemologías universalistas que aspiraban a una teoría *general* del conocimiento (el apelmazado prototipo de una *ciencia unificada*). Dado que no solo cambian las creencias, sino también los *criterios* de lo que cuenta como conocimiento *válido*, una epistemología general caería, una vez más, en la trampa abismal de forzar o aplanar lo diverso hasta hacerlo encajar inexorablemente en el cientificismo reduccionista.

Ahora, la embestida ecológica esbozada desde un pluralismo post-abismal no adopta una actitud anticientífica; no es la ciencia la que resulta aquí impugnada, sino, como ya hemos dicho, su uso hegemónico, ideológico, mutilante. Si se admite que todo el conocimiento tiene sesgos distintionales, y que está teñido por la incompletud, las fuentes de saber no-científico constituyen una mina de posibilidades en aras del ensanchamiento de experiencias y aprendizajes. Sin restarle importancia a los ámbitos concretos en los cuales la ciencia ha mostrado una mayor efectividad, hay que destacar también las prodigísimas intervenciones exitosas que se han obtenido prescindiendo del saber científico. Por ejemplo, si se estima como valiosa y deseable la ya aludida preservación de la biodiversidad, podría ser a su vez muy fecundo el entrecruzamiento entre lo que se sabe científicamente del tema y las formas de conocimiento rurales e indígenas, en lugar de que éstas sean subvaloradas como un conocimiento local de escaso e insignificante valor práctico (Santos, Arriscado Nunes y Meneses, 2004). El rendimiento de los saberes no puede prejuzgarse según jerarquías *abstractas*, sino en función de las *consecuencias* eminentemente concretas que tienen en la vida de los interesados y afectados. Un ejemplo

proporcionado por Lansing y Kremer, y retomado por Santos (2014a, p. 47), ayuda a evidenciar la fuerza de este argumento:

En la década de los sesenta, los sistemas de irrigación de los campos de arroz de Bali, de mil años de antigüedad, fueron reemplazados por sistemas científicos de irrigación promovidos por los partidarios de la Revolución Verde. Los sistemas de irrigación tradicionales estaban basados en conocimientos ancestrales y religiosos, y fueron utilizados por los sacerdotes de un templo hindú-budista dedicado a Dewi Danu, la divinidad del lago. Estos sistemas fueron reemplazados precisamente porque se consideraban basados en la magia y la superstición, el “culto del arroz”, como fueron despectivamente llamados. Sucedió que su reemplazo tuvo resultados desastrosos en los campos de arroz, las cosechas declinaron más de un 50%; fueron tan terriblemente malos, que los sistemas científicos de irrigación tuvieron que ser abandonados para restablecer el sistema tradicional (Lansing, 1987, 1991; Lansing y Kremer, 1993).

Cuando Santos emite su postura acerca de este caso, lo hace denunciando el subyacente prejuicio abismal que condujo a las malas decisiones tomadas sobre este marco de problemas prácticos. Al respecto, Santos (2014a, p. 48) afirma:

(..) la presupuesta incompatibilidad entre dos sistemas de conocimiento –el religioso y el científico–, ambos concernientes a la misma intervención –irrigar los campos de arroz–, resultan de una evaluación incorrecta basada en la superioridad abstracta del conocimiento científico. Treinta años después de la desastrosa intervención técnico-científica, modelada por ordenadores –un área de las nuevas ciencias– mostró que las secuencias del mantenimiento del agua usadas por los sacerdotes de la divinidad Dewi Danu eran más eficientes que cualquier otro sistema concebible, ya fuera científico o de otro tipo (Lansing y Kremer, 1993).

El potencial de una ecología de saberes para evitar este tipo de desperdicio de la experiencia reside en hacer depender la credibilidad del conocimiento no de su capacidad representacional, sino *pragmática*, medida

por los involucrados de acuerdo con las intervenciones deseables o no deseables que se facilitan o se previenen. Ciertamente, la ecologización del saber no supondría negar que, en las prácticas sociales, se jerarquizan formas de conocimiento según las prioridades que se establezcan en cada caso; lo que más bien quedaría descartado es la pretensión de que deban subscribirse a una jerarquía universal y descontextualizada.

En gran medida, la tentación de querer imponer una jerarquía preestablecida está impulsada por una asimetría entre los saberes vigentes en diferentes culturas: lo desconocido se nos aparece como extraño, pero esa extrañeza epistemológica comúnmente se manifiesta menos como una cuestión epistemológica que como una cuestión *política*: “la asimetría entre los saberes ocurre sobrepuesta a la asimetría de los poderes” (Santos, 2014b, p. 452). La reacción habitual ante tal asimetría ha sido la de acentuar la diferencia entre los saberes, preservar la adecuación y superioridad del considerado “correcto”, y devaluar aquellos saberes que se resisten a la reducción uniformadora. Santos denomina “fascismo epistemológico” a tal estrategia epistemicida, ya que, como lo adelantamos, constituye una relación violenta de “ortopedización”, eliminación o supresión de otros saberes: “Se trata de una afirmación de fuerza epistemológica que oculta la epistemología de la fuerza” (2014b, p. 452)

Pero, precisamente, la ecologización de los saberes (que, tal como el fascismo epistemológico, también es una opción epistemológica y política) se propone como una tentativa opuesta, que tiende a minimizar al máximo esa asimetría en la relación comparativa entre saberes; obviamente, no podría ser exitosa si los diversos saberes no admitieran la necesidad de comparaciones recíprocas, así como la búsqueda de límites y de posibilidades cruzadas.

Más allá de sus bondades, hay que aceptar que las dificultades que alberga un proyecto ecológico como tal no pueden subestimarse. Por empezar, dada la diferencia epistemológica recién aludida, se vuelve complejo determinar el tipo de interrelación que puede trazarse entre los saberes, y que pudieran ir desde la inconmensurabilidad, la incompatibilidad y la contradicción hasta la complementariedad. En ese punto, la cuestión de la *traducción intercultural* se vuelve un factor clave.

Pero, además, adviene el desafío de cómo crear el conjunto de saberes que participará de un determinado ejercicio de ecologización, ya que la pluralidad de saberes es incalculable. Santos señala que el motivo que guía la interacción de saberes no tendría por qué ser estrictamente epistemológico, ya que los intereses, valores y aspiraciones de diversos grupos sociales podrían converger en tanto preocupaciones comunes. Por ejemplo, siguiendo con el ejemplo anterior, la preocupación por la preservación de la biodiversidad podría llevar a una integración ecológica entre el saber científico y el saber campesino o indígena. Análogamente,

la preocupación por la lucha contra la discriminación puede conducir a una ecología entre saberes producidos por diferentes movimientos sociales: feministas, antirracistas, de orientación sexual, de derechos humanos, indígenas, afrodescendientes, entre otros. La preocupación por la dimensión espiritual de la transformación social puede llevar a ecologías entre saberes religiosos y seculares, entre ciencia y misticismos, entre teologías de la liberación –feministas, poscoloniales– y filosofías occidentales, orientales, indígenas, africanas, etc. La preocupación por la dimensión ética y artística de la transformación social puede incluir todos esos saberes y también las humanidades en su conjunto, la literatura y las artes (Santos, 2014b, p. 455)

En un océano de potencialidades, estas y otras articulaciones ecologizadoras pueden vislumbrarse como la dimensión epistemológica de un nuevo tipo de *solidaridad* internamente diversa, en la que cada grupo se moviliza por razones propias y autónomas de movilización, pero entendiendo que las acciones colectivas que pueden transformar esas razones en resultados prácticos sobrepasan lo que es posible llevar a cabo por un solo actor o grupo social. Es importante recalcar que, para Santos, estos saberes que dialogan, que mutuamente se interpelan, se cuestionan y se evalúan, no lo hacen como una actividad intelectual aislada de otras actividades sociales, sino en el entramado de prácticas constituidas o por constituir: la epistemología esta encapsulada en las repercusiones *reales* de los saberes nacidos y criados en tradiciones y contextos locales con necesidades puntuales.

Así, la preeminencia de un determinado saber ya no quedará definida por el nivel de institucionalización y profesionalización que haya adquirido, sino por su contribución *pragmática* a esos ámbitos singulares. Santos destaca que, a partir de tal transmutación, se vuelve factible la desactivación de uno de los motores del fascismo epistemológico que ha caracterizado la relación de la ciencia moderna con otros saberes: “Para ciertas prácticas, la ciencia será probablemente determinante, tal como para otras será irrelevante o hasta contraproducente” (Santos, 2014b, p. 456).

Este *descentramiento de los saberes*, que no pone en el centro a ningún conocimiento, porque de hecho no hay, *a priori*, un núcleo central, es un alto objetivo del programa ecológico, puesto que las grandes disputas entre escuelas de saber erudito dejan de ser relevantes si su importancia para la vida y para la experiencia práctica no es demostrada. Santos piensa, incluso, que el campo de interacciones donde se despliegue la ecología de saberes estaría dado por todos los lugares donde el saber es convocado a convertirse en *experiencia transformadora*, y no como una práctica social *separada* (tal como sí ocurre usualmente en las universidades o centros de investigación que monocultivan la ciencia a expensas de otras formas de saber). El terreno apto para el desarrollo de esta ecología es el de la vida *cotidiana*, donde se planean acciones concretas, se calculan las oportunidades, se miden los riesgos, se pesan los pros y los contras. Santos lo llama “una artesanía de las prácticas”; nosotros lo llamaremos “una epistemología de la acción”.

Conclusión

Si bien es cierto que, desde la segunda mitad del siglo XX, la crisis de las epistemologías convencionales ha minado la confianza en el racionalismo universalista, también hay que decir que una buena parte de esas críticas han seguido ocupándose de las relaciones entre la ciencia y los demás saberes. Un abordaje semejante mantiene a la ciencia como eje epistemológico, obstruyendo la condición de *equidad* o *justicia cognitiva* que una auténtica ecología de saberes exige. La epistemología depredadora, que aquí hemos caracterizado como una visión del conocimiento que descalifica, niega o clausura a los saberes que se resisten a la colonización epistemológica (al mismo tiempo que los fagocita para hegemonizarse), puede dar falsos signos

de apertura, presentándose bajo magnánimos discursos de Verdad, Objetividad y Progreso o Bien Común.

Por ello, la *vigilancia epistemológica* es imperiosa si se tiene como prioridad el ejercicio autorreflexivo que oxigena permanentemente al *pluralismo* epistémico. En este punto, la contribución de Santos ha sido esclarecedora: el pensamiento abismal es resistente y hábil en sus esfuerzos por reatrapar a quien lo desafía; por lo tanto, la construcción postabismal de una ecología de saberes no puede abandonar la constante autoobservación y autocrítica, así como la actitud de integración y simetrización de los diversos saberes con los que se relaciona.

No obstante, hay que reconocer que la defensa de algún tipo de filosofía pluralista hace acechar por doquier el fantasma del *relativismo*: si hay que conferirles dignidad y validez a todos los saberes, entonces, evocando a Paul Feyerabend (1993), cabría preguntarse si “todo vale”. La propuesta de Santos no podría estar más alejada de esta interpretación: aceptar la equivalencia de todos los saberes en su dignidad y validez supone que ninguna forma de conocimiento podrá ser descalificada sin poner a prueba su pertinencia y *validez* en condiciones *situadas*. Los conocimientos han de ser juzgados por sus efectos y resonancias, es decir, *pragmáticamente*. Por lo tanto, ningún saber podrá ser elevado a la categoría de norma para evaluar la validez de otros saberes sin tener en cuenta las condiciones únicas de su producción, su movilización y sus resultados. En otras palabras: los saberes son igualmente válidos, pero no igualmente *deseables*. La reducción de ciertas sabidurías populares, de sistemas de creencias locales, folclóricos, místicos o mitológicos, que la ciencia ha lanzado, sin más, a la fosa común de “lo inexistente”, no tendrían por qué ser excluidas, negadas o eliminadas *antes de* considerarse muy seriamente la función que cumplen en el marco de tradición que les dio vida, vigor, uso y continuidad.

Por último, es importante señalar que la propuesta ecologizadora no se ciñe a pregonar la diversidad de pensamientos y de formas de vida al estilo de un *multiculturalismo simplificador*. La organización ecológica de los saberes no es una mera *sumatoria*, sino una *multiplicación*. Como dice Santos (2014a, 2014b, 2012), si la perspectiva *multicultural* implica dar por hecho que existe una cultura dominante que acepta o *tolera* la existencia de otras culturas, entonces la propuesta ecologizadora *no* es multicultural (ya

que la hibridación de saberes no es vivida como un lastre a soportar, sino como un fomento de la reciprocidad y la disponibilidad para el enriquecimiento mutuo entre ellos).

Finalmente, cabe agregar que, si el proyecto de la inclusión de saberes no se plasma en vínculos de *horizontalidad*, entonces la paz que resulte de esa supuesta inclusión es una “paz violenta”: saberes en colisión que simulan superficialmente una convivencia sosegada, mientras encubren, en lo profundo, una guerra epistémica no declarada.

La ecologización epistemológica enarbolada por la corriente argumental a la que Santos representa, y a la que hemos suscripto, entraña la presentificación de los saberes que han sufrido la exclusión sistemática, el ostracismo epistémico y el frío rechazo de las elites académicas que frecuentemente observan la realidad social desde la comodidad de su torre de marfil. Sin esta experiencia de “hacer existente lo existente” y de “tratar como presente a quien está presente”, no puede aflorar una *justicia cognitiva*, que no es ni más ni menos que el primer paso hacia una *justicia social*.

Notas

¹ Por *cientificismo* debe entenderse la *ideología* que eleva a la ciencia por encima de cualquier otra forma de conocimiento, representándola como el *summum bonum* de la evolución cognoscitiva. Debe quedar muy claro que la actitud cientificista no es exclusivamente originada, ni unánimemente compartida, por la propia comunidad científica, sino que tiene fuentes muy diversas.

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Inter-institutional Framework towards Improvising SDGs in Somaliland: The Transformative Paradigm

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Date of publication: November 30th, 2017

Edition period: November 2017 - February 2018

To cite this article: Madar, M., Subari, M.D. & Baqutayan, S.M.S. (2017). Inter-institutional Framework towards Improvising SDGs in Somaliland: The Transformative Paradigm. *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(3), 307-329. doi: 10.17583/rimcis.2017.2072

To link this article: <http://doi.org/10.17583/rimcis.2017.2072>

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Abstract

The United Nations (UN) Rio+20 summit obligated nations to develop set of universal development goals as indicated in the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs). These goals were designated to enhance and further improve strategies cope with failures of the expired millennium development goals (MDGs) (United Nations, 2013). Researchers and other official reports at present indicate that SDGs are the extension or the continuation of the expired MDGs. The MDGs were mostly relief projects toward improving human life through aid based approach. The MDGs projects did not thus so far remarkably improve the target sectors but alleviated hunger and reduced extreme poverty in some countries while in countries like Somaliland, hunger, and poverty are on the increase. This doesn't mean that MDGs were totally failed projects, but to indicate that the set targets were not improved as supposed to be due to lack of context-based national strategic framework. Additional monitoring and evaluation of MDGs were haphazard since there had not been specific indicators adapted to report the progress. The SDGs signed up by the Somaliland government this year (2017) would inherit challenges hindered MDGs to produce the anticipated outcomes if they are not strategically avoided. Socioeconomic development and national sustainability are often posed as being in conflict because of tradeoffs between the growing demands of least developed counties like Somaliland as well as lower standards of living and poor capacity of the national institutions. This review paper suggests a need to adopt an indigenous integrated framework, which ensures that synergy is exploited and collaborative strategies are put in place towards achieving SDG targets. This paper proposes a comprehensive framework and key recommendations focusing on filling the gaps left in the MDGs and accelerate in achieving the new goals and targets of SDGs.

Keywords: SDGs, MDGs, framework, outcome, monitoring, evaluation

Marco Interinstitucional hacia la Mejora del SDGs en Somaliland: El Paradigma Transformador

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Resumen

La cumbre Rio+20 de las Naciones Unidas (NU) obligó a las naciones a desarrollar un conjunto de objetivos universales de desarrollo como los indicados en los objetivos para un desarrollo sostenible (ODS) de las NU. Estos objetivos fueron designados para mejorar y profundizar en la mejora de las estrategias para afrontar los fracasos de los objetivos de desarrollo del milenio (ODM) ya expirados (United Nations, 2013). La investigación y otros informes oficiales actuales indica que los ODS son la extensión o continuación de los expirados ODM. Los ODM eran proyectos de ayuda orientados a la mejora de la vida de las personas a través de proyectos basados en ayudas. Los proyectos de ODM no mejoraron remarcablemente los sectores objetivo pero aligeraron el hambre y redujeron la pobreza extrema en algunos países mientras que en países como Somaliland, el hambre y la pobreza están aumentando. Esto no significa que los ODM supuso un fracaso de todos sus proyectos, sino que indica que el conjunto de objetivos no mejoraron como se esperaba debido a la falta de un marco de estrategias nacionales basadas en el contexto. La evaluación y supervisión adicional de los ODM fue accidentada debido a que no hubieron indicadores específicos para medir el progreso. Los ODS firmados por el gobierno de Somaliland este año (2017) heredaría desafíos que impedirían que los ODM produjeran los resultados previstos si no son estratégicamente evitados. El desarrollo socioeconómico y la sostenibilidad nacional se presentan generalmente como si estuviesen en conflicto debido a intercambios entre las crecientes demandas de los países menos desarrollados como Somaliland así como por el menor nivel de vida y la pobre capacidad de las instituciones nacionales. Este artículo sugiere la necesidad de adoptar un marco indígena integrado, que asegura que se explota la sinergia y que se orientan las estrategias colaborativas a la consecución de los objetivos del ODS. Este artículo propone un marco comprehensivo y recomendaciones clave centradas en llenar los vacíos de los ODM y en acelerar la consecución de los nuevos objetivos y metas del ODS.

Palabras clave: ODS, ODM, marco, resultados, supervisar, evaluar

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the status of the expired MDGs and the future SDGs as have been reported on many international conferences. Somaliland signed up both the MDGs and the initiated SDGs, which are the continuation and extension of the preceded projects. Electronic sources and reports were exploited through a comprehensive review to understand the nature of the MDGs followed currently by the SDGs. This review paper relates to MDGs projects that have been implemented in Somaliland to respond the pressing needs ranging from social, economic development among others. Toward this end, the paper consults with official reports and unofficial documents related to MDGs and SDGs to organize the trajectory of their outcomes and the way forward ([United Nations Development Programme, 2007](#)).

The rest of the paper is divided into six sections. The first section discusses the nature of MDGs and SDGs trajectory. The first section reviews quick background information about the initiation and the implementation of both MDGs and SDGs as two complementary projects toward addressing priority needs of the global context. The second section notes how the MDGs differ from the SDGs in terms of goals set and implementation strategies. The third section argues the challenges and setbacks hindered MDGs to deliver the expected outcomes and suggest potential improvements on the SDGs approach to government institutions. As such, much consideration will be given to establishing comprehensive and collaborative framework as a guide for future development goals. The third section also briefly outlines the substantial contributions of MDGs to the prescribed targets based on Somaliland national development goals (SNDGs). The fourth section suggests the effective approach of implementing SDGs and proposes an inter-institutional framework to be adopted to foster both national and global sustainability. The fifth section reviews key arguments and suggestions in monitoring the progress and evaluating the milestones including the expected outcomes as well as adopting appropriate reporting system. The final section presents sound conclusions about SDGs endeavors and the way forward followed by relevant key recommendations.

Background

In September 2000, at UN Millennium Goals Summit, world leaders agreed on eight measurable Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015, which outlines broad commitments to human rights, good governance and democracy followed rudimentary social development initiatives. The MDGs consisted of three categories at grass root levels include; social, environmental and economic improvements. The eight target goals of MDGs are cross-cutting issues aimed at deploying relief projects to alleviate poverty, improve health care provisions, increase access to education, and enhance basic infrastructures like roads and water facilities. Nonetheless, it is undeniable and noteworthy the difference that MDGs created across all Somaliland regions even though there were remarkable variations within Somaliland context in terms of institutional capacities, peace and security issues, which affected on the progress and the performance of the interventions (Sachs, 2012).

By 2006, it was also clear that progress towards meeting these goals was slow and uneven, with Asia seeing the greatest reduction in poverty but chronic hunger still widespread in sub-Saharan Africa and particularly in Somaliland (Pingali et al., 2006). There were significant increases in universal primary education, particularly in a few Asian countries like India. Conversely, the context in the poorest regions of Africa, particularly in Sub-Saharan including Somaliland; there had been slight improvements rather than developments in the stated goals. Health care provisions are very poor, incidents of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria were still on the increase. Additionally, the environmental degradation particularly the rate of deforestation had increased since there are no alternative energies in a place.

Most importantly, both the MDGs and SDGs have common targets to achieve such as; social, economic and environmental issues. Nevertheless, the SDGs implementations seek to integrate a more comprehensive platform than that of MDGs. Most importantly, the targets within the set 17 goals use the notion of sustainability to intertwine comprehensive programs that extend well beyond the social issues (United Nations, 2014). The 169 proposed targets generally comprise three main issues; social, economic and

environmental. These three general or main goals need self-resilient strategy that helps the 17 proposed SDGs are achieved (Griggs et al., 2014).

The 2012 Rio+20 conferences prompted an intergovernmental process to identify a set of universal, integrated and transformational SDGs. Consultations over the SDGs are programmed to convey an actionable post-2015 development agenda by the end of 2015. So as to reach dates set for SDGs, it is very crucial to glance back the best practices in the MDGs. While SDGs are the extension of the MDGs upon which the scope has been furthered so as to meet the common universal priorities across the globe (Sachs, 2012). The targets of the MDGs and their means of implementation were kind of haphazardly governed in the least developed countries like Somaliland and that did not substantially make a sustainable progress in the targeted sectors. This does not mean the MDGs interventions were not fruitful but did not deliver the expected outcomes. These drawbacks could have been attributed to the actionable means of implementation, which lacked national framework based on the country's short-term and long-term goals (Caritas Internationalis, 2016).

As MDGs targets were acknowledged and extensively supported by the international development agencies for achieving these goals. Nonetheless, it has been recognized that a hastily-designed governance goal would compromise accomplishing the targets set for the MDGs within the designated period. Despite the fact that this might have had a modest impact on comparatively uncontroversial and straightforward MDGs. On the other hand, good governance and related functional structures together with appropriate actionable means of execution would possibly have a more pronounced effect on the successful implementation of SDGs. Furthermore, SDGs are both multiple and interdisciplinary approaches and adopting integrated and transformational strategies might enable to achieve the goals set (Olsen et al., 2014).

The SDGs can be broadly divided into three categories: First, an extension of MDGs, which focuses the rudimentary human needs at grass root levels aimed at improving social well being. The second category pays particular attention to development in terms of availing the basic infrastructures including road building, job creation, and other extension projects. And the third category is focused on sustainability in general and urbanization which

cover the last seven goals. The last seven goals discuss sustainable cities, life below water consumption and production; climate action; resources and environment; peace and justice; and the means of implementation and global partnership for it". The adoption of SDGs now marks the transition, also institutionally, to a more eco-centric view. While MDGs had only one goal directly related to the environment, the current SDGs have 7 comprehensive goals that directly address environmental issues and human rights for healthy living conditions. These 7 goals are both holistic and more inclusive (Shariq et al., 2015).

The idea of the SDGs has quickly gained ground because of the growing urgency of sustainable development for the entire world. According to scholarly reports and publication, SDGs basic concepts start with the so-called triple helix bottom line approach to human wellbeing. Almost all global community of nations acknowledged and embraced all initiatives toward inclusive development for all. As such, the main goals are generally designated to improve social, economic and environmental issues to achieve a holistic sustainability. Apart from the general concept, specific objectives within the universal goals for sustainability are different from one context to another due to the fact that their national priorities might also be at variance. Undoubtedly, still, no harmony pertaining the trade-offs and synergies across the economic, social and environmental objectives agreed. Still, a shared focus on economic, environmental, and social goals is a hallmark of sustainable development and represents a broad consensus on which the world can build (Sachs, 2012).

Nevertheless, achieving the targets of the MDGs were critical for Somaliland to effectively progress towards SD. Discovering new and innovative ways as SDGs strategy for least developing or undeveloped countries, in this case, Somaliland is thus both vital and pressing main concern. Though the SDGs frameworks, values, and underlying principles are generic and applicable to all countries regardless their economic, social and environmental contexts nonetheless there are still divergence (Adams, 2017). As result of this, universal goals are not easily be translated and applied to all nations due to dissimilar initiation position, capacities, priorities and the like. Consequently, for SDGs be practical for all countries and create inclusivity, global goals should be adapted in ways that match with targets and

measurements that reflect national context for each and every country. The challenge will be to ensure coherence between broad global goals and widely differing national contexts (Urama et al., 2014).

However, most of the developing nations, as well as the least developed nations like Somaliland, still lacked basic sanitation systems, and although development assistance from the more affluent nations had increased, it was still below the targets set a few years earlier. Eleven years earlier, the Human Development Report for 2004 had also noted uneven progress, starting soberly that; at the present tempo Somaliland regions will not meet up the goals set for educational for all until 2129 or the goal for decreasing child mortality by two-thirds until 2106-100 years away, rather than the 11 called for by the goals. In three of the goals-hunger, income poverty and access to sanitation-no date can be set because the situation in the region is worsening and not improving (Fukuda-Parr, 2008).

The MDGs were largely determined by OECD countries and international donor agencies. The SDGs have been set up and negotiated by both middle and low-income countries through a balanced approach so as to endure that no nation is left behind. The SDGs are globally inclusive and are applicable to all countries if only they follow certain priorities of the hosting country. The SDGs are holistic –they cover poverty alleviation and disparity, sustainability and economic growth with job creation. Somaliland signed up the SDGs in January this year. Somaliland is not part of the developed world and neither in the developing world due to its persisting extremely poor socio-economic status, which put the country the fourth least developed countries in the world. Therefore, the prerequisite for implementing SDGs in Somaliland needs fully functional institutions, which institutionalize the 17 goals across all economic sectors and move the country from undeveloped to a developing nation and beyond (United Nations, 2014).

MDGs Status in Somaliland

Depending on the level of socio-economic status together with the capacities of the national institutions of any MDGs recipient country reflected the achievements of the set targets. Middle-income developing and least developed countries showed discrepancies in the post-implementation

indicators. For instance, Asia countries, like India, the targets set have been significantly improved, in the case of hunger, has been eradicated but still, there is extreme poverty (UNDP, 2007). Similarly, other targets including; education, health, women empowerment have gradually improved as we cannot claim holistic improvements at all levels in all sectors. Conversely, in African Sub-Saharan countries, particularly in Somaliland context, the targets set for MDGs did go well, though, substantial differences were made in some areas (United Nations, 2008).

In the case of Somaliland, there are sectors that have been improved significantly include; education, health, infrastructure and business sectors. But while these improvements have not come from the inputs of MDGs but there are well-established institutions of higher learning as well as governments ministries who collaboratively managed to meet some of the targets (Ministry of National Planning & Development Somaliland, 2014). While some developing countries have made significant progress towards accomplishing the MDGs, though the progress reported is vastly variable across goals, countries, and regions (Sachs, 2012). As MDGs' indicators are not homogenous, they compromised to project health-related MDGs, which in most cases the estimate of progress made extremely unreliable and inconsistent. Even the MDGs' major goal of extreme poverty reduction, economic improvements, an increase of education enrollment have been severely criticized on methodological grounds (United Nations, 2014).

The momentum created by MDGs in Somaliland was not sustained with focus on completing the unfinished task of MDGs. Somaliland-specific goals, targets, and indicators along with the roadmap to achieve these were not drawn up by the concerned ministry and states and union territories. One major challenge was fund these goals are that there was no a unified strategy adopted to achieve the targets of the MDGs. while development partners are increasingly committed to state building, their approaches do not sufficiently reflect the need to support government institutions fostering state-society relations. They have not moved beyond "relief interventions" rather than institution building and capacity development to support broader national economic development and history in the making. State building efforts tend to focus on the executive at a central level, with less support for the legislature, judiciary, and decentralized administrations. In the case of Somaliland,

support is often concentrated on formal institutions and "traditional" areas of intervention such as election support, public-sector management, and service delivery, while support to civil society organizations, in order to foster good governance, social capital, domestic revenue mobilization or job creation, lags behind. In particular, many reports on MDGs highlighted that engaging with non-state actors and legitimate local organizations to strengthen state-society relations remains a challenge for development partners (OECD, 2011). The absence of these stakeholders in the participation of MDGs consequence the sluggish progress and limited capacities of national institutions address the set targets (Caritas Internationalis, 2016).

Despite this impressive achievement at the global level, 1.2 billion people are still living in extreme poverty. In sub-Saharan Africa, almost half the populations live on below the poverty line and Somaliland is one of the four poorest countries on earth. Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region with a number of people living in extreme poverty rise increasingly overwhelming, as such, from 290 million in 1990 to 414 million in 2010, accounting for more than a third of people worldwide who are destitute. The World Bank projects that, by 2015, about 970 million people will still be living on less than \$1.25 a day in countries classified as low- or middle-income in 1990. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia will each be home to about 40 percent of the developing world population living in extreme poverty. Around the world, particularly in the Somaliland context, abject poverty is found in areas where poor health and lack of education deprive people of productive employment; environmental resources have been depleted or spoiled; and corruption, conflict and bad governance that waste public resources and this discourages private investment.

The international community now needs to take the next steps to pursue to tackle down poverty at all these various levels (United Nations, 2013). Based on literature or reports on MDGs in Somaliland indicate that almost all MDGs targets were not met accordingly and as planned. MDGs progress reports all indicate that all of the 8 MDGs targets not achieved as sourced from UNDP Somaliland report. The latest updates in figures reported by the World Bank on MDGs database-ranked Somaliland at the very bottom 51 out 52 in Africa (Shariq et al., 2015).

Development partner implementation of whole-of-government approaches appears to be most effective when it is explicitly aligned to national frameworks that link political, security and development objectives, for example, the Agenda for Change in Sierra Leone, the Poverty Reduction Strategies in the DRC and Liberia, and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in South Sudan. In other words, where national governments are able to articulate what they consider key connections and objectives in these areas, development partners are in turn able to optimize their whole-of-government approaches. In contrast, limited capacity within government (as is the case in Somaliland) can be a constraint to effective and integrated implementation but should nevertheless not be seen as an insurmountable obstacle. A whole-of-government approach hence also requires a comprehensive effort to strengthen the capacity of relevant national institutions (OECD, 2011).

In Somaliland, for instance, the neutrality of humanitarian aid is felt to be compromised by political objectives (anti-terrorism and anti-piracy laws have prevented humanitarian aid from being delivered to certain areas due to security reasons. In the context of Somaliland, weak institutions encourage corruptions and lack of incompetency across all government institutions were key factors that put MDGs to achieve less of the planned.

Relying only on MDGs allotted funds could not bring a sustainable progress, therefore, it would have been also important to estimate the budget required and to identify where funds are from and their allocations. The initial projections from global meetings propose mobilizing needed resources are major challenges and remained to be current limitations. The need to establish a scheme of gathering appropriate information to scrutinize the improvement was critical to realize these goals, targets, and indicators that were much larger in numbers compared to MDGs. The reliance on data from surveys shows that MDGs did meet the desired goals. For instance, at the present, there are extreme poverty and hunger across all Somaliland regions. Majority of the population do not access to safe drinking water, health care provisions and education. Some MDGs cannot even be measured –either because no indicators or targets were set, or because no data is available for certain indicators to need to be contextualized and minimized. The health goal will need a major effort in addressing no contagious diseases and accidents and

injuries while sustaining efforts to address maternal and child health and nutrition.

Challenges of SDGs

The SDGs are a step forward. But if development is to be inclusive and just, and leave no one behind, it must be rooted strongly in grass root levels based on the pressing needs of the national priorities. The preceded challenges slowed down the MDGs holistically address the expected targets are still in a place and would hinder the SDGs achieve the set targets. The seventeen goals of SDGs are more inclusive and designed to address global challenges in terms of socio-development issues tailed with universal agenda on SD. Many of the targets within the MDGs were addressed in isolation of one another (maternal health, hunger, gender equality). The SDGs should seek to open communication and efforts between the 17 goals in order to present a united and integrated agenda (Sachs, 2012).

As currently envisaged, the SDGs are much more ambitious than the MDGs. For example, where the MDGs intended to halve severe poverty and reduce under-five mortality by two thirds in 25 years, the SDGs are expected to aim for complete poverty eradication and to abolish preventable child deaths in just 15 years. Such ambitious targets are welcome and long overdue, but they are also extraordinarily challenging (United Nations, 2014). The SDGs, however, should speak to institution building and collaborations in all nations (developed and developing). If the exterminating poverty is truly at the heart of the goals, then there must be a worldwide and all-inclusive drive to find an agenda that speaks to all countries and all levels of economic development, to ensure that no one is left. SDGs should benefit from the valuable lessons learned from MDGs. These also carry forward the unfinished agenda of MDGs for continuity and sustain the momentum generated while addressing the additional challenges of inclusiveness, equity, and urbanization and further strengthening global partnership by including public and private sectors (Olsen et al., 2014).

A key problem in fragile states like Somaliland context is the lack of a strong common vision, shared by society and government, of the role of the state and the priorities for state building. External support to provide adequate

space for discourse amongst key stakeholders remains limited. Similarly, the government and the international community often lack a shared vision of the overarching state-building priorities (OECD, 2011). They reflect continuity and consolidation of MDGs while making these more sustainable by intensifying environmental goals. There are main challenges that required to be addressed so as to achieve SDGs as explained below:

Some of the SDGs that have been budgeted showed that the cost of the SDGs is huge. The allocation of this budget to fulfill these goals need to be reflected the current pressing needs and prepare the Somaliland nation for the trajectory of development.

1. Maintaining peace is essential for development: A threat to international peace and stability by non-state actors is emerging as a major factor for both developed and developing countries. The recent political crisis in Some Somaliland regions has forced a huge population to leave their homes and made them refugees.
2. Measuring the progress: A quit number of SDGs' targets are not quantified due to lack of harmonization within. First, indicators for measuring progress have not yet been identified inclusively. Yet if two indicators are designated to each and every target there are over 338 indicators required to measure, monitor and evaluate the outcome. "Having 169 targets is like having no targets at all". Measurability will depend on the availability of data and capacity to measure them.
3. Accountability: There has been lack of accountability for inputs into MDGs across all sectors and levels. Good governance and collaborative efforts for accountability must be addressed in SDGs to ensure that the targets are implemented within an agreed framework. At the international level, most of the developed countries have not met the target of allocating 0.7% of GNI to international aid in the last 40 years. The lack of priority in funds allocation within country budget has also been a problem during MDGs. Similar lack of accountability exists at a ministry, state, and local administration level. If we take SDGs seriously the accountability needs to be strengthened at all levels.

Adapting SDGs in Somaliland

The idea of the SDGs has quickly gained ground because of the growing urgency of SD for the entire world. Although specific definitions vary, SD embraces the so-called triple bottom line approach to human wellbeing. Almost all the world's societies acknowledge that they aim for a combination of economic development, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion, but the specific objectives differ globally, between and within societies and are determined by national priority needs of the country (Sachs, 2012).

Mainstreaming SDGs into national planning and implementation at both national and sub-national levels requires innovative governance arrangements and practices that integrate vertical and horizontal collaborations. Strong horizontal collaboration between the national body and the diverse segments of the economy including finance, environment, and social departments among others is critical in new Somaliland country. At the same time, vertical relationships exist between the national body and other sub-national bodies including the states, provinces, districts, cities, and communities (Urama, 2014).

The current SDGs framework has a number of conceptual and implementation challenges that still necessitate enhancing further the collaborative efforts amongst the government institutions, HEIs, and other stakeholders. Global research initiatives such as Future Earth aim to mobilize researcher/professionals to collaborate tackle these issues in partnership with policy-makers and stakeholders, and more broadly to provide the knowledge needed to support transformations towards SD. The trajectory of the following proposed framework is four folds including:

- The proposed SDGs offer major improvements on the MDGs. The SDGs framework addresses key systemic barriers to SD such as disparity, unsustainable utilization patterns, weak institutional capacity, and environmental degradation that MDGs neglected.
- The SDG framework would benefit from an overall narrative articulating how the goals will lead to broader outcomes for people and the planet. An overarching goal could be formulated. For instance, in the political declaration framing the post-2015

participation, inclusion, and sound economic institutions that support the private, public, and civil-society sectors in a productive and balanced manner. Sustainability requires the leadership and responsibility of the private sector alongside the public sector and civil society. The business private institutions are the main productive sector of the world economy and the holder of much of the advanced technologies and management systems that will be crucial to the success of the SDGs. Private-sector companies should support the SDGs in practical and measurable ways, in their policies, production processes, and engagement with stakeholders. They should refrain from lobbying and political activities that might endanger the SDGs (PwC, 2016).

The paper then contends that more attention is needed to how national institutions within including HEIs handle three core functions: 1) steering and employing realistic strategies which synergize; 2) the allocation and distribution of resources to comply with achieving with the set goals; and 3) the monitoring, evaluation, and learning to improve the performance.

Certain factors are found to be responsible in Somaliland for effective collaboration to occur at the vertical level. These include coordinated approaches in planning and implementation; access to information; space for participation of all actors; empowerment of communities to implement priority actions; application of subsidiary principle; capacity building at community levels; and raising of awareness at all levels. Similarly, integrated development planning with respect to horizontal collaboration is realized in the Somaliland context when: issues identified at lower levels (sub-national) are fed upwards to national levels; guidelines for planning and mainstreaming SD are provided; provisions are made for gender mainstreaming and consideration for vulnerable groups; experiences are shared among communities; provisions for legal framework and adherence to the rule of law; and when the "silo" thinking mentality is removed (Caritas Internationalis, 2016).

Other considerations include accountability and transparency; clear responsibilities; good monitoring systems at all levels; effective communication of results to stakeholders; integrating systems thinking in the educational curriculum; adult education; political goodwill and less corruption. Other horizontal enablers in Somaliland country include: regular communication and feedback mechanisms; integration of indigenous

knowledge systems; effective monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems; linkages with global, regional, national and local policies and plans; removal of financial barriers to integrated planning; inclusion of an environmental budget; mobilization of resources to address priority issues; continuous capacity building; planning based on cultural heritage; minimal external influence on domestic issues; design of “living plans” that are regularly reviewed; and long-term planning as an act of parliament, among others.

This inter-institutional framework depicts roles and responsibilities for each entity are expected to play in achieving national SDGs. These institutions are together responsible for implementing and enforcing any policies, rules, and regulations as well as other plans aimed at ensuring the SDGs in 2030. The preceded MDGs did not employ and adopt any strategic framework and that was the main reasons escalated the manageable challenges into setbacks and perhaps interrupted the anticipated outcomes. Therefore, developing or adopting a comprehensive and integrated framework designated to SDGs would guarantee a success in the implementation process through the balanced approach and maximizes the expected outcome (Griggs et al., 2014).

Monitoring and Evaluation

As the post-2015 development agenda is being established, intensifying information dissemination and the use of better data in policymaking and monitoring are becoming increasingly recognized as fundamental means for development. The MDG monitoring experience has clearly demonstrated that effective use of data can help to galvanize development efforts, implement successful targeted interventions, track performance and improve accountability. Thus SDGs demands a data revolution to improve the availability, quality, timeliness, and disaggregation of data to support the implementation of the new development agenda at all levels (United Nations, 2015).

The need for efficient monitoring, reporting, accountability, and institutions have been identified as crucial for innovative planning and scaled-up implementation of SD practices at national and sub-national levels. Yet Somaliland did not adopt or put any mechanism in place for monitoring, reporting and accountability processes as well as institutions to have been able

to achieve all of its national SDG targets by 2030 ([Ministry of National Planning & Development Somaliland, 2014](#)).

MDGs targets were universal that has been cascading to regional and national level based on priorities of respective countries. Achievements of the goals were exceptionally important but difficult to measure since there had not been any standardized indicators designated for the development viability. As result of this, there is no empirical evidence for an outcome of the series MDGs interventions let alone to isolate the contributions of the existing resources to the predetermined targets ([Olsen et al., 2014](#)).

On monitoring issues, the critical enabling factors and arrangements required to put in place include the availability of comprehensive data sets used for measuring progress in planning and implementation activities; and the setting of clear goals at the national and sub-national levels that align with global SD goals. The goals should have clear indicators that are SMART and tailed with national and sub-national levels that mirror the global indicators as well. Other monitoring issues to be addressed by Somaliland country include social, economic, and environmental governance; and participatory monitoring that takes local knowledge into consideration ([Urama et al., 2014](#)).

On reporting issues, vertical and horizontal reporting in Somaliland is important for ensuring effective planning and implementation of SD activities. Such reports are timely and based on effective monitoring and analysis of data, with adequate capacity to achieve this at the national and sub-national levels. The SDGs require that “data and information from existing reporting mechanisms should be used where possible” ([Ishigaki, 2015](#)).

The accountability issues implemented by Somaliland include: building trust among stakeholders; the need for all stakeholders to be accountable to the entire process; accountability/performance indicators agreements; monitoring and evaluation that are supported by resources; budgetary allocation based on sectorial priorities; and targeting a manageable set of indicators (result, outcome, and output). The evaluation process has to be timely, with a feedback loop. It is participatory and needs capacity as well as effective coordination.

An effective institutional framework at the national and sub-national levels is in place in Somaliland regions to accomplish SDGs targets. These institutions regularly provide information sources that will enable monitoring

and evaluation processes. Six months passed until the end of the MDGs – the framework used to measure global development progress since 2000. Government institutions, in general, have a key role in financing MDG targets and any expending should be reported in very transparent manner. Yet surprisingly, in course of MDG endeavors, almost all international community or donors are yet to conduct broad-based and all-inclusive monitoring or analysis of government spending. Therefore, as monitoring and evaluation are crucial for ongoing performance and outcomes of SDGs, relevant government institutions together with SDGs funding consortium should suggest key indicators to be followed to ensure the trajectory process and the success.

Conclusions

MDGs assisted in mobilizing international community, leaders, politicians, civil society and related line ministries, and departments to focus on achieving these time-bound and quantifiable goals. These goals were not achieved all but a substantial progress had been made in saving lives and humanizing quality of lives of millions of people within the country and globally. Sub-Sahara of African including Somaliland has not made progress commensurate with its socio-economic development, institutional building, infrastructure might and needs to do more. MDGs have been simple to relate, comprehend, communicate, implement, monitor and evaluate progress. Whereas SDGs, though to some extent, are extension or continuation of MDGs, yet experience or suffer from the weakness of being too many and awkward to implement and monitor. This has probably resulted from a large consultative process where everyone wants to see their areas of interest included, which might hearten the alleged corruptions.

There is a need to improve accountability from international level to local level. The next 15 years is likely to see the unprecedented mobilization of resources and efforts to make the world a better place to live for "we the people", especially the marginalized and disadvantaged groups. Regardless of all this, the economist sees no real reasons why the MDGs cannot be realized in full, as they are eminently achievable, requiring relatively modest amounts

of aid from developed countries and alterations to trading regulations (Sachs, 2012).

The number of the world extreme poor has declined to become a relatively small proportion of the global population-less than 20 percent. The current SDGs aimed at improving socio-economic conditions, develop basic infrastructures and protect the environment as well as building global collaborative efforts towards national and global economic development. A significant challenge still remains in a number of countries is the lack of a common national vision on the role and functions of the state, and the key priorities for state building (DRC, Haiti, Somaliland), while the need for greater local leadership on state building is cited in others (CAR, Chad, South Sudan, Togo). Similarly, the effectiveness of development partners' state-building efforts in some countries is limited by a lack of mutual understanding on the overarching state-building priorities and vision between the government and the international community.

The rich parts of the world are now extremely rich and the aim of increasing the overseas aid from developed countries to 0.7 percent of gross national product (GNP) is fairly small. 'The point is that the MDGs can be financed within the bounds of the official development assistance that the donor countries have already promised' (Sachs, 2012). This paper advises that the recent emphasis on means of implementation under the SDGs has the potential to improve upon experiences with the MDG's handling of governance. Finally, there are no processes in place to systematically measure and assess the progress and results of development partner interventions in support of state building (OECD, 2011).

Recommendations

This paper will propose four areas in which SDGs should have to improve upon which MDGs failed to address.

First, the 15-years MDGs period had no intermediate milestones and outcomes. As a result of that, the 15-years of SDGs should include both intermediate outcomes and milestones with clear dates within the scope and the budgets allotted. 15 years are a good stretch for serious policymaking, but

intermediate stages along the way would ensure closer feedback between policies and outcomes.

Second, the means of support of the MDGs and SDGs should be data that are accurate, timely, and available to managers, policymakers, and the wider public.

Thirdly, the business private sectors should be crucially engaged in the verily and first start, so they their investments are aligned with the goals set. Neither the MDGs achieved nor the SGS will be achieved without the leadership and active participation of private companies, large and small in all endeavors. Multinational companies bring unique strengths: a worldwide reach, cutting-edge technologies, and massive capacity to reach large-scale solutions, which are all essential to success. Yes, many large companies are also lobbyists for policies antagonistic to sustainable development, so engagement with business has to be done cautiously, but it should also be active, forward-looking, and intensive.

Fourth, and finally, the success of the SDGs will need societies worldwide to invest adequately in their success. Sustainable development is the only viable path for humanity, but it will not be achieved unless a small part of consumption spending is turned into investments for long-term survival.

In short, the following key recommendations would comprehensively address the betterment of SDGs and the long-term strategic impact on Somaliland.

- Orient international objectives to the overall objective of strengthening state-society relations and helping foster a common vision of the role of the state by supporting civil society and local processes or public debate.
- Adopt a broader state-building approach encompassing the legislature, judiciary, and decentralized administrations, not just the executive at a central level.
- Broaden the scope of state building support to the executive to encompass activities essential to the sustainability of the state and economic development, including job creation and domestic revenue mobilization.
- Pay greater attention to ensuring that the way aid is delivered does not undermine state-building processes.

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Achieving Social Impact. Sociology in the Public Sphere

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Date of publication: November 30th, 2017

Edition period: November 2017 – February 2018

To cite this article: Vieites, M. (2017). Achieving Social Impact. Sociology in the Public Sphere [Review of the book]. *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(3), 330-332. doi: 10.17583/rimcis.2017.3091

To link this article: <http://doi.org/10.17583/rimcis.2017.3091>

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Review

Soler, M. (2017). *Achieving Social Impact. Sociology in the Public Sphere.* Springer Publishing Company. ISBN 978-3-319-60270-7

El objetivo de toda recensión es incitar a la lectura del libro. Para ello normalmente se describen sucintamente el contenido de cada capítulo o apartado y se concluye con alguna idea o ideas que animen a su lectura. En este caso se presentan a continuación cuatro motivos fundamentales por los que este libro es de imprescindible lectura, que a su vez irán desvelando la estructura del libro en cuatro capítulos.

En primer lugar, será de gran utilidad para cualquier investigador o investigadora que quiera conocer cómo funciona desde dentro un grupo de investigación puntero a nivel internacional: Cuáles son sus principios, sus prácticas, los valores de su actuación. Las claves del éxito para CREA son: la interdisciplinariedad, la diversidad, la formación intelectual al más alto nivel de todos sus miembros a través de la lectura y discusión de los libros más relevantes para el conocimiento científico, el desarrollo de proyectos de investigación basados en un diálogo igualitario con la sociedad y la coherencia con valores como igualdad, justicia, diversidad, anti-racismo y anti-sexismo. En la introducción del libro se especifica que el libro está dirigido a “investigadores que buscan respuestas a cómo hacer avanzar teoría e investigación que contribuya a informar el cambio social” si bien esta es una obra que puede inspirar también a aquellas personas y organizaciones de la esfera pública y la sociedad civil a entender cómo se constituyen grupos

de trabajo basados en solidaridad con potencial de generar impacto social y político además de científico.

En segundo lugar, se presenta el debate y entramado teórico que sustentan los conceptos de “relaciones dialógicas” y “relaciones de poder” y se describen los principios de la “Metodología Comunicativa Crítica” que es la utilizada por este grupo de investigación. Un conocimiento indispensable para todos aquellos y aquellas que quieran hacer una investigación “con y para” un sector social determinado y no “sobre” el mismo. Un conocimiento que revoluciona la manera de hacer investigación volviéndola útil, con impacto, democrática, basada en un diálogo igualitario entre investigador y personas investigadas; una forma de hacer investigación que se centra en identificar prácticas transformadoras que contribuyen a reducir la desigualdad o a mejorar condiciones de vida o bien a identificar dimensiones que ponen barreras a esta transformación. Una invitación, en definitiva, a repensar la relación entre ciencia y sociedad y una propuesta concreta a apostar por teorías sociales elaboradas en debates públicos entre autores de diferentes disciplinas y contando con la pluralidad de voces de todos los ciudadanos y ciudadanas.

En tercer lugar, el libro recoge el conocimiento más relevante a nivel científico y mundial para superar la violencia de género y en general la violencia en las relaciones. Se explica la construcción social del amor y el deseo y cómo el discurso social dominante liga violencia y atractivo, trivializa la violencia y asocia la atracción a algo biológico o mágico, pero no social. Si bien, no se queda solo en el análisis de cómo se produce esa socialización que determina a qué personas elegimos para relacionarnos, sino que propone caminos concretos para su transformación (en caso necesario) basados en evidencias científicas. Todo esto desde una Sociología pública fundamentada en la metodología comunicativa que no solo hace avanzar el conocimiento científico, sino que mejora *in situ* la vida de las mujeres, las adolescentes y todas las personas implicadas en la investigación.

Finalmente se aborda la idea de “Sociología democrática”, vital para nuestras sociedades. Para ello se presentan dos ejemplos de cómo el grupo CREA está haciendo una Sociología pública basada en principios de una democracia dialógica. El primero es la transformación y mejora de una escuela y un barrio en una de las regiones más desfavorecidas de España y la

segunda es la contribución hacia un feminismo más dialógico contando con las voces de mujeres no académicas. Con estos dos casos se quiere ejemplificar un modo de proceder que debería ser habitual en toda investigación científica: identificar Actuaciones de Éxito (aquellas que tienen el aval de la comunidad científica internacional porque han demostrado evidencias de mejora) y aplicarlas a objetivos democráticamente decididos por la ciudadanía.

En definitiva, un libro de obligada lectura no solo para aquellos y aquellas con vocación científica y académica sino para todas las personas interesadas en construir sociedades más libres, más democráticas y más justas.

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