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La *révolution verte* au Rwanda : au-delà de la dichotomie domination et émancipation

Aymar Nyenyezi Bisoka*

Résumé

Cet article étudie la résistance aux prescriptions dominantes des politiques agricoles développées en Afrique dans le cadre de la *nouvelle révolution verte* promue depuis le début des années 2000. L'article part de l'étude de cas du Rwanda, un pays considéré comme le *success-story* de cette révolution verte en Afrique. Il étudie la manière dont la résistance s'y manifeste par rapport aux prescriptions de cette politique agricole. L'article montre que les actes de résistance y sont nombreux et de plus en plus documentés par la littérature dans le domaine du développement rural post-génocide au Rwanda. Cependant, il montre aussi une limite : cette littérature se concentre sur la dichotomie domination/émancipation ou encore pouvoir/résistance par rapport à la norme. Or, cette vision dichotomique entre le pouvoir et la résistance ignore comment, dans la performance même de la norme, la vie des corps – que la norme assujettit – a une agencéité qui peut permettre de subvertir cette norme. Finalement, le cas du Rwanda permettra de montrer qu'en plein conformisme, consciente ou inconsciente de la norme, la résistance est possible grâce à un pouvoir que la vie des corps a sur les normes qui les assujettissent.

Mots-clés : résistance, révolution verte, Judith Butler, subversion performative, Rwanda.

Abstract

This article addresses the issue of resistance to dominant agricultural policies that were developed in Africa within the framework of the new Green Revolution, and promoted since the early 2000s. The article presents the results of a case study on Rwanda, a country considered in Africa as the success

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* Assistant professor, Université de Mons, Belgique. Email: aymar.nyenyezi@gmail.com; aymar.nyenyezibisoka@umons.ac.be

story of this Green Revolution. It studies the manifestations of resistance to the prescriptions of this agricultural policy. The article shows numerous and increasingly documented acts of resistance in the literature on post-genocide rural development in Rwanda. However, it also shows a limit: the literature is more about the domination-emancipation or the power-resistance dichotomy as compared to the norm. However, this dichotomous vision between power and resistance ignores how, in the very performance of the norm, the life of bodies – subjects of the norm – have an organization that allows the subversion of the norm. Finally, the Rwanda case study will show that, in full conformity, resistance – conscious or unconscious – to the norm, is possible thanks to the life power of bodies over the norms that subjugate them.

Keywords: resistance, green revolution, Judith Butler, performative subversion, Rwanda.

Introduction

Une large littérature sur la résistance au Rwanda s'est développée cette dernière décennie (Hahirwa et al. 2017 ; Ansoms & Cioffo 2017). Il s'agit d'une littérature qui pose de nombreux défis quant à la manière dont la résistance est comprise et conceptualisée. En effet, dans cette littérature, la résistance est abordée la plupart du temps dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre des politiques publiques (Purdekova 2017). Elle est considérée comme étant la réaction des populations locales à des politiques qui tentent de s'imposer à elles. En essayant de s'exercer sur les gens, cette forme de rapports de pouvoir implique la présence des intérêts des acteurs et des rapports de force, ce qui explique la résistance. Il s'agit d'une littérature dont la conception de la résistance emprunte essentiellement à quatre auteurs, dont Marx, Gramsci, Foucault et Scott (Thomson 2013 ; Huggins 2017). Le principal avantage de cette littérature a certes été d'opposer à ce que présente généralement le gouvernement rwandais un regard sur certaines politiques publiques au niveau local au Rwanda et une réception critique, voire contestataire. Mais sa principale limite a été de tourner parfois en rond sur ce qu'est ou ce que n'est pas la résistance à partir de perspectives théoriques différentes. Ce qui a contribué à ce qu'elle ait du mal à faire avancer les débats théoriques sur la résistance et à proposer d'autres lunettes théoriques pour observer et donner du sens à différentes modalités de questionnement des politiques par les populations locales.

Le présent article tente de remédier à cette limite et de faire progresser le débat théorique sur la résistance au Rwanda en partant de la réflexion de Judith Butler sur la résistance. Dans l'article en effet, nous tentons de comprendre les modalités d'imposition de cette prescription dans le cadre de la *nouvelle révolution verte* promue depuis le début des années 2000.

Plus particulièrement, nous essayons aussi de comprendre la résistance à cette prescription. Notre analyse de la résistance s'intéresse aux acteurs intermédiaires, c'est-à-dire les membres des organisations de la société civile (coopératives agricoles et associations locales d'appuis aux agriculteurs) et les autorités décentralisées aux échelons inférieurs de l'administration locale. Trois raisons font à ce qu'à ce stade, nous nous intéressons très peu aux autorités centrales quant à leur réaction à cette injonction. Tout d'abord, même si dans l'histoire du Rwanda les politiques agricoles rwandaises ont toujours soutenu théoriquement l'autosuffisance alimentaire prioritairement, les élites centrales ont le plus souvent investi dans l'agriculture de rente pour les recettes qu'elle offrait à l'État, d'où sa proximité historique vers cette injonction productiviste (Nyenyezi Bisoka et al. 2019). Ensuite, le Rwanda est actuellement considéré par l'Union africaine et ses bailleurs de fonds comme l'élève modèle dans la mise en politique et la mise en œuvre de cette prescription via son programme de la révolution verte (Banque africaine de développement 2014). Enfin, cette prescription a vocation à être « décodée » au niveau des ministères de l'Agriculture dans le processus de sa mise en politique afin de s'adapter aux réalités locales. Il devient dès lors normal qu'il y ait des éléments de décodage ou encore d'adaptation de l'injonction productiviste dans les politiques au niveau national. Mais cette politique garde toujours les trois éléments essentiels de la nouvelle révolution verte africaine à savoir : la réforme et la consolidation de l'usage des terres, les techniques agricoles dites modernes et une culture orientée vers les marchés (Huggins 2017).

Du point de vue théorique, l'article s'inscrit dans une approche nominaliste selon laquelle il n'existerait pas *a priori* de réalité essentielle derrière les mots. Par conséquent, il nous mène à saisir la résistance comme un élément de langage dont nous tenterons de comprendre le sens dans une généalogie constituée à partir des récents travaux de Judith Butler sur les liens entre les normes et la vie. En tant qu'élève modèle par rapport à la mise en œuvre de cette prescription, l'étude de cas du Rwanda nous semble idéale pour l'étude de la résistance. L'article montre l'intérêt croissant de la littérature pour les actes dits de la résistance dans le domaine du développement rural post-génocide au Rwanda. Ce faisant, il montre aussi sa limite : celle de toujours se concentrer sur la dichotomie domination/émancipation ou encore pouvoir/résistance par rapport à la norme. Or une telle orientation a le désavantage de passer à côté des possibilités d'observer des expériences de la liberté à partir des nouvelles manières de se détacher de la norme. En d'autres termes, de ne pas voir comment, dans la performance même de la norme, la vie des corps – que la norme assujettit – a une agencéité qui peut permettre de subvertir cette norme. Une telle approche, qui jette un trouble sur toute une histoire

occidentale de la philosophie dans sa manière de penser la résistance, ouvre à d'autres possibilités de formuler « une idée culturellement corporalisée de la liberté ». Elle permet aussi d'envisager la manière dont ces possibilités peuvent parvenir à subvertir le système plus largement.

Ainsi, nous tentons de penser la résistance à partir d'une étude de cas constituée des données de terrain récoltées à l'ouest du Rwanda entre 2015 et 2018 et à la suite de la pensée de Butler. Il s'agit de montrer la possibilité d'une agencéité performative et subversive des vies des paysans dont les corps sont assujettis par la norme productiviste de la nouvelle révolution verte. Plus fondamentalement, il s'agit de questionner les théories de la résistance construites sur l'opposition en amont et *a priori* entre pouvoir et résistance et de montrer des possibilités de résistance dans la répétition même de la norme dominante. C'est ce que nous appelons la revanche des vies sur les normes. Ainsi, l'un des apports de cet article, c'est de contribuer aux débats sur la résistance cachée qui souvent, à partir des travaux de James Scott (2008), montrent la possibilité de la résistance dans des contextes autoritaires sans en penser réellement la faisabilité, et encore moins la capacité d'impacter le système. En d'autres termes, dans la continuité de Scott et à partir des travaux de Butler, l'article montre comment penser une résistance cachée capable d'impacter un système plus large sans devoir passer au stade de la résistance ouverte comme cela est envisagé par Scott.

Les données de terrain utilisées dans le présent article sont issues d'une étude qualitative approfondie menée entre 2016 et 2018 autour de quatre coopératives agricoles à l'ouest du Rwanda. Dans le cadre d'entretiens non structurés et semi-structurés, nous avons interrogé plus de 200 répondants au total, comprenant des agriculteurs appartenant ou non à des coopératives, des responsables des coopératives, des agents de l'administration décentralisée et centralisée, jusqu'au niveau ministériel. La méthode utilisée dans la recherche est celle de l'étude de cas. Nous avons considéré le cas de Mbiza comme une arène socio-politique (Olivier de Sardan 1998). L'arène contient des acteurs, des groupes stratégiques, des intermédiaires. C'est aussi un espace régi par le pluralisme juridique présent dans tous les espaces sociaux concernés (État, structures décentralisées, coopératives, etc.). Nous avons parlé à autant d'acteurs que possible représentant ces espaces sociaux, puis nous avons procédé à une triangulation des données. Nous avons complété les entretiens individuels par des *focus groups* basés sur le théâtre action participatif (voir la méthodologie « Land Rush » : www.land-rush. org) dans lesquels des conflits relatifs à l'accès et au contrôle des terres ont été mis en scène. Cette technique est particulièrement utile pour capturer

et analyser les discours cachés des paysans et des élites dans des contextes très conflictuels (Ansoms & Nyenyezi Bisoka 2016). Nous avons déployé de grands efforts pour assurer la confidentialité des déclarations afin de garantir la sécurité de nos informateurs.

Ci-dessous, nous développons tout d'abord un cadre théorique de la résistance chez Judith Butler ainsi que ses avancées par rapport à d'autres écoles théoriques sur la résistance (section II). Nous faisons ensuite une brève histoire de la manière dont la norme productiviste est devenue une prescription dans l'agriculture africaine en général (section III). Nous proposons une étude de cas qui montre comment cette norme productiviste de la révolution verte est subvertie par les agriculteurs à l'ouest du Rwanda (section IV) et la manière dont la pensée de Butler nous permet d'investiguer et comprendre ce phénomène en tant que participant entièrement de la résistance (section V).

De la dichotomie domination-émancipation à la subversion performative

Dans son travail sur les rapports entre sujet et normes, Butler s'intéresse à la compréhension de l'action des normes dans la vie humaine et de la vie des normes – ou encore leur devenir – dans les actions humaines (2002 ; 2006 ; 2007). Il s'agit d'essayer de comprendre le pouvoir de la norme dans la vie et le pouvoir de la vie dans les normes, c'est-à-dire la manière dont l'insertion du sujet dans un réseau de normes le contraint et en même temps la manière dont les pratiques ordinaires de la vie requalifient la norme de manière permanente. C'est pour cela que, chez Butler, la norme a deux logiques : tout d'abord la productivité de la norme en tant qu'elle a pour but de prélever des comportements, de régler les vies. Et ensuite l'usage de normes en tant que susceptible d'être contesté de l'intérieur et de produire ainsi un hors-norme ou une anormalité.

Du côté de la productivité de la norme tout d'abord, en s'inscrivant dans la continuité du travail de Michel Foucault (1976), Butler montre comment le sujet comme corps est envahi par la norme afin de produire des comportements particuliers. Cette production de comportements suppose un assujettissement, c'est-à-dire la soumission du corps à l'autorité de la norme. Ce « processus par lequel on devient subordonné à un pouvoir » est aussi le même « processus par lequel on devient sujet » dans la mesure où le sujet s'origine à travers cette soumission au pouvoir (Butler 2007:23). Dès lors, penser les rapports entre la norme et le sujet, c'est pouvoir produire une analyse du corps se situant dans une forme d'incorporation des normes.

Mais il s'agit ici de normes sociales, ce qui n'autorise plus une distinction entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur du sujet, car «notre persistance en tant que sujet "je" dépend fondamentalement d'une norme sociale qui excède ce "je" et qui le situe, de manière "extatique" hors de lui-même, dans un monde aux normes complexes et temporellement variables», tellement «nos vies, notre persistance même dépendent de telles normes» (Butler 2007:23). Il s'agit donc d'une vie hors de soi et dont la réalité s'origine dans des pratiques relationnelles d'imposition de la norme et de son respect, ce qui rend cette vie vulnérable.

Du côté de l'usage de la norme, Butler montre que la vie a un réel pouvoir sur les normes dans la mesure où le sujet est en mesure de requalifier celles-ci au cours de l'action. En effet, la répétition de la norme implique «sa dispersion dans des figures» toujours nouvelles et ne signifie donc jamais sa reproduction à l'identique. Chez Butler le sujet n'est jamais «déterminé par les règles qui le créent, parce que la signification n'est pas un acte fondateur, mais un processus régulé de répétition» (2005:271). Si donc les normes sont productives, elles essaient de s'imposer sur des vies qui ont une capacité d'agir par des corps, ou encore une agencéité, qui ne peuvent se limiter à leur répétition. Dès lors, la productivité de la norme signifie la sollicitation des corps en vue des comportements normés. Mais cette sollicitation peut ne pas se réaliser et on est alors ici dans l'a-normal ou encore dans la contestation de la norme dans la mesure où user d'une norme, c'est aussi pouvoir la contester.

Butler jette ainsi un trouble dans les deux logiques de la norme (sa productivité et son usage) dans la mesure où la productivité de celle-ci tente de produire des comportements normés en même temps que ces comportements, en tant qu'effets de l'usage de la norme, tentent toujours de la défier et arrivent parfois à la défier en la contestant par la même occasion. Au-delà, le travail de Butler s'inscrit dans une tradition philosophique post-structuraliste qui est en effet une philosophie du sujet comme étant partiellement déterminé (Sato 2012). Dans cette tradition, la résistance est considérée comme une réaction à la manière dont ceux qui exercent le pouvoir tentent d'influencer ou «d'agir sur les actions des gens» (Foucault 2001:249). Ainsi, la question de la résistance pose celle du rapport à soi ou encore des technologies de soi – c'est-à-dire l'ensemble de pratiques subjectives qui participent au dressage des sujets (*ibid*). Les conditions de résistance passent alors par une éthique, ou encore par le «souci de soi», dans laquelle la subjectivation est un processus de dés-assujettissement faisant nécessairement appel au repérage et à la prise de conscience du fait que le «je» est constitué par les rapports de pouvoir (Foucault 2001).

Ceux-ci emploieraient des «dispositifs» de pouvoir et auraient recours à des «techniques de soi». Cela permet une résistance ou encore un «devenir» soi. En d'autres termes, la résistance apparaît lorsque le «je» questionne le «sur-moi» en décidant de ne pas suivre ses propositions en termes de ce qu'il faut sentir, voir, penser et faire (Sato 2010).

Butler s'inscrit dans cette perspective foucaldienne où le sujet est nécessairement constitué des rapports de pouvoir, avec un ancrage très complexe fait à la fois des techniques de gouvernement et du rapport à soi. Mais il nous semble que la différence avec Foucault, c'est que Butler considère les sujets comme des corps qui, en performant la norme, ont la capacité de la subvertir. Dès lors, contrairement à Foucault, la prise de conscience de la nécessité de «devenir soi» pour pouvoir résister cesse chez Butler d'être la condition nécessaire de la pratique de la résistance. Pour elle, il peut parfois suffire de performer la norme pour produire de l'a-normal, car la vie des corps qu'investit la norme ne peut pas toujours en répéter les exigences.

Aussi, Butler est d'accord avec Scott sur le fait que l'apparence de la domination des dominés ne signifie pas l'inexistence de la résistance de leur part (2007). Pour Scott en effet, même dans les pires situations de domination, il est possible de résister. Cette possibilité est liée au fait que, même lorsque les dominés montrent publiquement qu'ils acceptent leur domination, il peut en aller différemment dans leur intime conviction. Cette apparence d'adhésion à la domination peut être simplement stratégique. Pour Scott, cette stratégie (évocation stratégique du discours public et du discours caché) est déjà une étape importante à partir de laquelle la résistance publique peut se construire. Mais contrairement à Scott – chez qui l'acceptation publique de la domination ne peut exclure une certaine conscience de classe visible dans des actes cachés de résistance –, Butler montre que la conscience de la domination n'est pas nécessaire pour qu'on puisse parler de résistance. Pour elle, même lorsqu'on accepte de performer la norme en toute conscience, la vie a le pouvoir de résister à la norme dominante qui est en train de s'imposer aux corps et il y a aussi lieu de comprendre ainsi la résistance.

Mais cette vision de la résistance de Butler a tendance à naturaliser la résistance, à la considérer comme étant substantiellement inscrite dans les corps vivants. Cela pose des questions sur l'agencéité des acteurs en tant qu'action réflexive, c'est-à-dire nécessairement volontaire. Aussi peut-on se demander quelle est la portée politique de cette perspective naturaliste de la résistance face à la pensée de l'émancipation qui implique une praxis.

Subvertir la norme productiviste à l'ouest du Rwanda : étude de cas

En 2001, les chefs d'État africains se sont réunis en Zambie pour approuver la « Nouvelle initiative africaine » (NIA) appuyée par les bailleurs de fonds tels la Banque mondiale, l'Union européenne, les USA, etc. Devenu « Nouveau partenariat pour le développement de l'Afrique » (NEPAD, 2000) la même année, celui-ci s'est fortement engagé en faveur de l'agriculture productiviste, via le Programme détaillé pour le développement de l'agriculture en Afrique (PDDAA). La déclaration de Maputo a ensuite repris l'engagement des chefs d'État africains à allouer au moins 10 % des dépenses publiques à ce modèle agricole. À partir de la crise agraire et alimentaire de 2008, la nouvelle prescription sur l'agriculture en Afrique continua à se préciser, notamment via le Rapport de la Banque mondiale qui encourage la *nouvelle révolution verte* en Afrique, considérée comme une agriculture d'inspiration néo-libérale (World Bank 2008). C'est ainsi qu'a fait progressivement son chemin cette prescription dominante qui existe actuellement au niveau des États africains et selon laquelle les politiques agricoles devraient permettre de booster la croissance et, par là, de lutter contre la pauvreté. Mais à condition de moderniser le secteur agricole pour satisfaire le marché pour tout État qui voudrait bien bénéficier de l'aide des bailleurs des fonds, particulièrement la Banque mondiale et l'Union européenne (CETRI 2015). C'est cette nouvelle révolution verte qui a été implémentée au Rwanda depuis 2005 (Gouvernement du Rwanda 2004 ; 2007). Les autorités rwandaises ont tellement investi pour se conformer aux pratiques et logiques de cette réforme que le Rwanda est actuellement considéré comme l'élève modèle de la révolution verte par les bailleurs de fonds (Huggins 2017 ; BAD 2014). Mais ce conformisme des autorités rwandaises s'accompagne de contraintes vis-à-vis des agriculteurs. Cela a été à la base de certaines contestations qui ont été relevées par la littérature.

En effet, au Rwanda, l'élaboration de la révolution verte est centralisée au niveau national et sa mise en œuvre est top-down. Cela ne permettrait pas de rendre suffisamment compte des particularités locales et serait à la base de la vulnérabilité des paysans (Ansoms, Cioffo 2016). Cette politique est inspirée par le souci d'améliorer l'efficacité et de réaliser des économies d'échelle dans la production alimentaire, avec le but ultime de contribuer à la réduction de la pauvreté (Huggins 2017). Elle promeut ainsi une agriculture marchande et encourage les crédits aux agriculteurs pour accroître leur productivité. Pour cette politique, l'agriculture devrait être une activité commerciale et non de subsistance (Gouvernement du Rwanda 2007).

Ainsi, la norme productiviste de la révolution verte est incorporée dans un dispositif de pouvoir qui tend à produire un certain paysan modèle au Rwanda (1). Il s'agit d'un dispositif qui régule le quotidien des paysans et au sein duquel ils adhèrent parfois à la norme productiviste, la négocient ou la contestent (2). Parfois, il est arrivé que les paysans parviennent à détourner et à subvertir cette norme productiviste de la révolution verte pour en produire une autre totalement contraire. Mais pour y parvenir, ils n'ont pas eu besoin de contestation élaborée et ouverte ou même assumée (3).

Imposition de la norme dans un dispositif de pouvoir

Juillet 2008, les paysans du secteur de Mbiza à l'ouest du Rwanda apprennent qu'ils doivent désormais cultiver le haricot et le maïs dans le cadre de la révolution verte. C'est une injonction du ministère de l'Agriculture dans le cadre de cette politique. Alors que la plupart de ces paysans faisaient encore de la pluriculturelle dans la logique d'assurer leur sécurité alimentaire principalement, ce nouveau programme veut qu'ils s'inscrivent dans la perspective d'une agriculture productiviste pour les marchés. Une telle agriculture devrait promouvoir la croissance économique et la lutte contre la pauvreté à partir du développement des chaînes de valeurs (culture, stockage, transformation, commercialisation). Elle devrait aussi promouvoir l'intégration progressive, dans l'agriculture marchande, d'un groupe d'agriculteurs disposant d'un minimum de capital terre et animal. Cette injonction productiviste n'est pas une simple proposition faite aux paysans. Elle s'inscrit dans un dispositif de pouvoir plus large, constitué de quatre facteurs poussant les paysans à adhérer à cette prescription (Nyenyezi Bisoka & Ansoms 2019).

Premièrement, pour appuyer ce programme et pousser les paysans dans la nouvelle révolution verte au Rwanda, il existe tout un système organisationnel qui se réalise à partir d'une combinaison de quatre éléments. Il s'agit tout d'abord d'un programme d'intensification agricole. Ce programme veut promouvoir la croissance et la lutte contre la pauvreté à partir de la promotion d'une agriculture des marchés. Cela doit passer par la rationalisation de l'usage des terres et le recours à des techniques culturales imposées par le gouvernement impliquant la régionalisation des cultures. Ensuite, le programme exige de regrouper les paysans en coopératives régies par une loi spécifique et assistées par la *Rwanda Cooperative Agency*, une institution nationale. Ces coopératives ne sont pas autonomes. En effet, en dehors des lois qui les régissent et qui leur imposent des règles de fonctionnement, elles sont soumises à une hiérarchie qui décide souvent en leur lieu et place. Ces coopératives dépendent des Unions des coopératives au niveau des provinces et de la Fédération des coopératives au

niveau national. Celle-ci définit les prix, les acheteurs, certaines pratiques des coopératives, etc. Aussi, au niveau local, les autorités administratives s'assurent que les paysans se soumettent parfaitement à ces règles. En outre, en dehors de l'organisation des agriculteurs en coopérative, le programme agricole exige que les paysans cultivent leurs terres ensemble dans le cadre de la consolidation de l'usage des terres. Les paysans cultivent les uns à côté des autres et tout le monde sait ce que l'autre fait. Tout le monde surveille tout le monde. Enfin, ils sont obligés de pratiquer à la lettre des consignes par rapport à ce qu'il faut cultiver et la manière de le faire. En effet, à Mbiza, on ne peut cultiver que le maïs et le haricot. Toutes ces exigences orientent fortement les actions des payants dans leurs activités quotidiennes.

Deuxièmement, cette révolution verte se nourrit d'une réorganisation territoriale de la paysannerie (Cioffo, Ansoms 2016), entre autres grâce à une décentralisation administrative. Cette décentralisation a mis en place des autorités locales qui contrôlent soigneusement sa mise en œuvre. Les contrats de performance (Chemouni 2014) – qui ont entre autres pour but de définir les objectifs de développement à chaque niveau de gouvernance – s'inscrivent dans ce système décentralisé et permettent de faire le contrôle de la mise en œuvre du programme de manière top down. Ces contrats de performance sont souvent imposés par les autorités qui veulent que leurs entités soient cotées parmi les meilleures dans la mise en œuvre des plans de développement local – qui contient le programme agricole. Pour cela, il y a des autorités qui poussent les paysans à s'engager pour des résultats qu'ils n'ont pas les moyens d'atteindre.

Troisièmement, la politique de la révolution verte exige que les paysans fassent ensemble les récoltes, les stockent au même endroit en attendant de trouver un acheteur commun. Ils doivent désormais utiliser les usines agréées par l'État pour la transformation de certains de leurs produits. Dans certains endroits, ils doivent aussi vendre leurs produits dans des zones bien déterminées par l'État.

Quatrièmement, les paysans sont sujets à plusieurs stratégies de surveillance et à des mesures incitatives dans le but de prévenir la contestation. Pour ce qui concerne les stratégies de surveillance tout d'abord, le recours à des menaces à caractère ethnique, ou encore la militarisation des réunions des coopératives, ainsi que les sanctions aux récalcitrants montrent cette volonté de dissuasion. Pour ce qui concerne les mesures incitatives ensuite, pour continuer dans ce modèle agricole, l'État offre par exemple des subventions pour certains intrants, des formations aux techniques culturales et la mise à disposition de certaines infrastructures. Aussi les paysans qui dénoncent les récalcitrants sont-ils souvent gratifiés par les autorités locales.

Ces quatre éléments qui composent le côté organisationnel de l'agriculture au Rwanda constituent une forme de gouvernementalité dont l'objectif est de mener les populations locales à cultiver d'une manière bien déterminée. Elle permet aussi d'intégrer la norme productiviste dans les corps et les pratiques des paysans.

Contestation et négociation de la norme au sein d'un système

Janvier 2011, une association locale du secteur de Mbiza se rend compte que les cultures et le système organisationnel autour de la production agricole imposés aux paysans du secteur ne permettent plus à leurs familles d'assurer la sécurité alimentaire. En effet, l'essentiel de ces paysans ne dispose que d'une moyenne de 0,6 hectare d'espace cultivable par famille familiale. Ils n'arrivent donc pas à s'inscrire dans une agriculture orientée vers les marchés. En effet, cette agriculture marchande exige des paysans d'avoir assez de moyens de côté pour survivre en attendant que les grossistes puissent acheter leurs cultures. Or l'essentiel de ces paysans est pauvre et n'a pas ces moyens. Avant la révolution verte, leurs activités agricoles avaient pour principal objectif de garantir leur sécurité alimentaire à la plupart d'entre eux. Mais les cultures de soudures comme la patate douce ou encore la banane, qui permettaient aux paysans de survivre dans des moments difficiles ne sont plus permises dans le secteur, à cause de la révolution verte. Et souvent, lorsque les récoltes sont finalement vendues, les paysans se retrouvent avec beaucoup de dettes et d'obligations légales (remboursement des dettes liées à l'achat des intrants, cotisations dans les coopératives, taxes sur les terres, etc.). Ainsi, il leur reste trop peu pour survivre après la vente de leurs récoltes. Il est arrivé que les récoltes ne soient pas de bonne qualité (à cause des maladies, de l'excès de pluie, etc.). Ou qu'elles ne soient pas suffisantes pour des raisons d'intrants ou de qualité des terres. Cela a mis beaucoup de paysans dans l'incapacité de payer leurs dettes, de s'acquitter des obligations de la prochaine saison culturale (achats des intrants et cotisations dans la coopérative) et d'assurer leur survie.

C'est ainsi que le secteur de Mbiza a connu une famine à partir de septembre 2012, et les autorités ont préféré parler de disette pour ne pas faire le lien avec la politique agricole. Des paysans se sont alors adressés aux responsables de leurs coopératives pour exprimer leurs problèmes. Mais ceux-ci n'ont pu rien faire malheureusement, car les règles par rapport aux coopératives sont édictées par le niveau national et sont très strictes. Les autorités locales au niveau des villages connaissent la situation. Ce sont d'ailleurs des agriculteurs aussi. Ils savent que le modèle agricole ne marche pas, mais ils ne peuvent pas décider de déroger aux règles.

Mais en dehors des coopératives et des autorités locales, il existe une association locale du secteur Mbiza qui encadre des coopératives et qui est composée des paysans. Cette association essaie de faire un plaidoyer pour changer les choses par rapport à cette situation difficile des paysans, sans jamais remettre en question le modèle agricole. Mais elle se heurte à plusieurs problèmes. En effet, l'association sait que la population cultivait aussi les choux, la banane, la patate douce, etc. C'est très important pour la sécurité alimentaire et les échanges commerciaux au niveau local. D'ailleurs, dans quelques villages du secteur, certains paysans cultivent déjà ces cultures interdites, mais de manière secrète. Mais ce risque pris par ces paysans a un coût très élevé, car ceux qui sont attrapés pour la première fois doivent payer de fortes amendes. Et à la deuxième fois, le risque est de perdre son champ, voire d'être emprisonné, en plus des amendes. C'est dans ce contexte que l'association veut faire quelque chose pour changer la situation des paysans.

Tout d'abord, l'association doit s'adresser aux autorités locales pour faire part de la situation et proposer des solutions. Ce n'est pas la première fois qu'elle essaie de le faire. Elle se heurte toujours à la difficulté de devoir montrer que ses revendications sont scientifiques. En effet, depuis presque deux décennies, le gouvernement rwandais investit beaucoup dans la formation des agents de la fonction publique. Il rend disponibles plusieurs bourses d'étude, de formations, de séjours d'étude, etc. à ses agents pour renforcer leurs capacités. Les contrats de performance et leurs régulières évaluations permettent de s'assurer de l'effectivité des compétences ainsi acquises dans cette course à la performance. Il s'est au fur et à mesure développé une sorte de culte de la scientificité de la part des autorités, aussi bien au niveau local que national : toute revendication relative aux politiques publiques doit être fondée sur une étude scientifique quantitative. Cela est problématique pour ces associations qui n'en ont ni les moyens ni les compétences. Un membre de l'organisation dit :

> Il ne faut pas aller parler aux autorités lorsque vous n'avez rien à dire ; c'est-à-dire lorsque vous n'avez pas fait une étude scientifique et représentative. Cela demande des compétences que nous n'avons pas. Nous sommes obligés parfois de recourir à des consultants, mais ça nous coûterait trop cher. Nous n'avons pas assez de moyens. Il faut donc trouver d'autres stratégies. Notre gouvernement reconnaît seulement un seul type de savoir. Il s'agit des savoirs « scientifiques » qui tentent toujours de se légitimer en niant la légitimité des savoirs locaux. (Responsable de l'organisation, Mbiza, décembre 2015)

Ensuite, lorsque ces organisations d'encadrement des coopératives paysannes n'arrivent pas à faire ces études, elles ne peuvent pas contester ouvertement les politiques. Ce n'est pas parce qu'elles sont trop proches des autorités ou d'accord avec les politiques, mais parce qu'elles ont conscience du risque d'être «écrasé ou avalé» par le pouvoir si elles deviennent ouvertement critiques. Selon un paysan :

> L'exemple de l'ODH (une organisation locale) nous a servi de leçon. Il faut prendre ce gouvernement avec des gants. Ils sont forts et capables de vous écraser, de vous détruire si vous êtes simplement perçus comme opposants. Beaucoup de personnes de la société civile qui ont été obligées de quitter le pays à cause de leur travail critique nous demandent de ne pas faire comme eux. Ils nous expliquent combien ils ont souffert sans jamais avoir eu d'aide de ces partenaires qui les poussaient à la critique. (Membre de l'organisation, Mbiza, décembre 2015)

Aussi, selon ces paysans, leur gouvernement est certain de ses préférences dans presque tous les domaines et ne s'arrête pas là. Il a des stratégies pour les défendre et les imposer. Selon eux, même les ONG internationales ont fini par s'aligner sur les exigences du gouvernement et sont devenues des sortes de «prestataires de services». Il est clair que les organisations de la société civile au Rwanda se sentent seules face aux bailleurs de fonds et au gouvernement, chacun avec son agenda. En cas de risque, elles sont laissées à elles-mêmes. Un membre de l'association nous dit :

> Il faut être conscient du fait que beaucoup de membres de la société civile ont une carte du parti pour se protéger. Ce n'est pas pour autant que ces personnes sont en phase avec la politique du gouvernement rwandais ; notre survie et notre sécurité doivent être la priorité. Ce qui compte pour nous c'est que nos familles et nous soyons toujours vivants. (Membre d'une coopérative, Mbiza, décembre 2015)

C'est probablement un tel contexte qui fait que l'association d'encadrement des coopératives paysannes dans le secteur de Mbiza ne conteste pas ouvertement la révolution verte, mais essaie de trouver des moyens pour simplement avoir l'autorisation d'entretenir plus de cultures. Ce qui compte pour l'association, c'est le bien-être de ses membres vivant dans le secteur Mbiza. Il fallait donc trouver d'autres solutions pour y parvenir sans nécessairement être dans une logique de contestation ouverte ou de négociation au sein du système. Ci-dessous, la suite des événements montre que cette négociation va finir par subvertir le modèle agricole en instaurant une pluri-culture qui valorise la sécurité alimentaire des paysans. Certes, cette situation est informelle, mais elle est réelle pour les paysans de Mbiza.

Détournement et subversion de la norme

L'organisation s'est alors décidée à prouver scientifiquement les effets pervers des décisions politiques vécus clairement par les populations locales. Mais pour ses membres, il n'était pas question de recourir à un « habillage scientifique », mais de toujours partir des réalités de la base pour ensuite montrer les méfaits du modèle qu'ils ont adopté à partir de ses conséquences sur la vie de la population. Un membre de l'organisation dit :

> Nos coopératives membres nous ont vite dit que la culture du haricot imposée par les autorités locales ne pouvait pas marcher ici. Au lieu de contester ouvertement le fait que le gouvernement via le MINAGRI nous avait imposé une telle culture, nous lui avons fait une petite enquête auprès de nos membres pour connaitre leur point de vue. Nous les avons ensuite partagés aux autorités locales. Elles ont été très attentives, mais nous ont fait savoir que le ministère de l'Agriculture aurait besoin des preuves scientifiques pour pouvoir permettre le changement. (Membre d'une coopérative, Mbiza, janvier 2016)

Dans ce cas, la remise en question par les paysans de la décision de cultiver seulement le haricot et le maïs dans ce secteur n'est pas partie d'une analyse de la politique agricole en soi – ce qui aurait exigé une grande expertise des partenaires –, mais de ses conséquences enregistrées au sein des paysans. Mais aussi, pour l'organisation d'appui aux paysans, il n'y avait pas besoin actuellement au Rwanda d'une lutte en faveur du changement de cette forme de « positivisme » (forme de stratégie politique utilisée par les autorités et qui consiste à affirmer que seules les méthodes dites scientifiques et qualitatives peuvent être considérées comme vraies). Tout ce qui comptait, c'était de pouvoir trouver des solutions à des problèmes que vivaient les gens et qui étaient en lien avec la mise en œuvre d'une politique agricole. Les paysans tentaient simplement d'utiliser les opportunités qui étaient à leur disposition pour y parvenir, mais sans être en confrontation avec les autorités. Un membre de l'organisation nous dit :

> Les autorités locales ont besoin de nous, car ils savent que nous pouvons mieux sensibiliser la population qu'elles. Elles savent que la population a plus confiance en nous. Par exemple, nous leur donnons des informations résumées sur les contrats de performances, sur les défis au niveau de la population quant à la participation citoyenne, etc. Il y en a beaucoup d'entre elles qui n'ont pas d'expérience. Ils ont souvent peur de leur hiérarchie ; il suffit juste de savoir comment les aborder. (Membre d'une coopérative, Mbiza, janvier 2016)

Les paysans se sont donc posé la question de savoir ce qu'ils pouvaient être en mesure d'influencer et dans quelle mesure. L'un d'entre eux dit :

> On peut parler au Rwanda, on peut dire ce qui ne va pas, mais tout dépend d'où, de qui et surtout de comment et de quoi on le dit. Par exemple, c'est plus facile d'avoir de l'espace au niveau local, avec les autorités locales. Il s'agit alors de parler des modalités de mise en œuvre des politiques et pas de les questionner. […] Disons qu'on peut questionner certains aspects des politiques à caractère socio-économique, mais pas socio-politique. (Membre d'une coopérative, Mbiza, janvier 2016)

Ce point est très important dans la mesure où il permet de situer le curseur sur : les choses à dire et à ne pas dire ; des domaines où il faut agir très stratégiquement et d'autres où cela n'est pas important ; des autorités dont on peut dénoncer facilement les faits et d'autres dont la simple mention peut être dangereuse. Deux arguments sont ressortis souvent des entretiens. Premièrement, le parti au pouvoir est une *learning organisation* (Ansoms, Rostagno 2012), ce qui offre des marges de manœuvre à la société civile afin d'être écoutée dans son travail politique. Mais à condition d'avoir de bonnes stratégies pour pouvoir les exploiter à bon escient. Aussi, plus ces organisations font un plaidoyer sur des questions considérées comme socio-politiques (prisonnier politique, intégrité physique, génocide, élections, liberté d'association, liberté d'expression, etc.), plus s'accroît la pression sur eux. En conséquence, le risque d'inefficacité (éventuellement, à cause de l'auto censure) ou d'insécurité des paysans devient élevé. Cela est différent pour ce qui concerne des thématiques socio-économiques (mutuelle de santé, contrats de performance, révolution verte, participation politique, travaux communautaires, etc.), même si là aussi il y a plusieurs aspects à considérer. Selon un paysan :

> Depuis un moment, « la participation » est devenue le nouveau « refrain » du gouvernement rwandais. Pour celui-ci, de même qu'on ne peut pas attendre le salut des Rwandais de l'extérieur, de même on ne devrait pas l'attendre du gouvernement lui seul, mais de l'apport de tout un chacun : le gouvernement, la société civile et la population. Nous tous, on est rwandais, qu'on soit du gouvernement ou non, et nous devons faire avancer le pays. Tel est l'actuel discours que connaissent par cœur tous les Rwandais. (Membre d'une coopérative, Mbiza, janvier 2016)

L'association a donc utilisé ce ton « thatcherien » du gouvernement rwandais. Elle a considéré les questions agricoles comme un domaine où ils pouvaient proposer un changement. Ainsi, diront des membres d'une coopérative :

> Tout ce qu'on nous demande à faire c'est d'appuyer le programme du gouvernement. Les arguments ne sont pas forcément du FPR, loin de là. Celui-ci puise dans l'accord de Paris, précisément sur la question de

> l'efficacité de l'aide : si les bailleurs des fonds devaient s'aligner derrière les programmes du gouvernement, pourquoi la société civile financée par ces mêmes bailleurs ne devrait pas faire de même ? [...]. Les populations locales apprécient beaucoup le fait que le président de la République soit à leur écoute. Il va souvent évaluer les contrats de performance tout seul. Il fait des descentes de terrain lui-même et essaye d'écouter la population, prend des mesures, exige aux autorités locales de résoudre certains problèmes, etc. Il met aussi beaucoup de pression sur des autorités au niveau central, ce qui les pousse à s'adapter continuellement […]. Nous avons fait des enquêtes et des reportages que nous avons montrés aux autorités pour dénoncer des situations […] de malnutrition à cause d'un modèle agricole qui ne donne pas des résultats escomptés. Les autorités nous ont demandé de ne pas publier ce reportage, mais nous ont assuré qu'ils prendront des mesures pour régler la situation. Ils l'ont ensuite fait. (Membres d'une coopérative, Mbiza, décembre 2015)

Ainsi, la pression sur les autorités à différents niveaux a ouvert une opportunité de plaidoyer au niveau local pour l'association. C'est ainsi que l'association a parlé du problème de la malnutrition aux autorités locales et de la nécessité de respecter les contrats de performance qui promettaient de réduire le nombre d'enfants souffrant de la malnutrition dans le secteur et dans les villages. Or, pour l'association, le seul moyen de combattre cette malnutrition, c'est de laisser les paysans cultiver plus de cultures sur les terres consolidées.

Ainsi, en mars 2013, au niveau local, les paysans pouvaient déjà cultiver jusqu'à cinq cultures. Cela s'est fait en complicité avec les autorités au niveau des villages de la cellule Mbiza. Le secteur qui est le niveau intermédiaire de la décentralisation et le district, son niveau supérieur, n'en savaient rien. Un paysan nous dit :

> Grâce aux activités de plaidoyer de notre association, nous avons commencé à cultiver jusqu'à cinq cultures, un peu plus que lorsque nous cultivions avant la révolution verte. C'est vrai que beaucoup de paysans trichaient déjà en cultivant plus de deux cultures. Mais ici, nous avons eu l'accord des autorités ; ils ont semblé nous dire qu'ils comprendraient, mais que nous n'avions pas l'accord formel du gouvernement et que les autorités au niveau du secteur, mais surtout au niveau du district ne devaient pas le savoir. C'était déjà un pas important de savoir que la sécurité alimentaire de nos enfants avait été mise en avant dans la révolution verte à Mbiza. [Membre d'une coopérative, Mbiza, janvier 2016]

Pour les paysans, en effet, il ne s'agit pas de dire si on est ou on n'est plus dans la révolution verte. Pour eux, le fait que les politiques nationales aient décrété cette politique suffit pour affirmer qu'ils sont dans la révolution verte.

Mais aussi, il y a tout le décor de cette révolution verte, qu'on a vu dans le système organisationnel que nous avons décrit ci-haut. Il y a en tout cas des éléments du décor qui sont visibles dans ce secteur, tels l'aménagement des marais, les terrasses radicales, la chaîne de valeur, etc. Mais en réalité, dans cette cellule, après cinq années de mise en œuvre de la politique agricole, l'un des éléments substantiels de la révolution verte, qui est la monoculture, n'existait plus. Une autorité nous dit :

> Nous savons qu'il existe des autorités au niveau local qui laissent faire les paysans. Dans certains villages on ne sait plus trop si on est dans la révolution verte ou si désormais tout le monde cultive comme bon lui semble. En tout cas cela est un problème non pas de la politique en soi, mais celui de la mise en œuvre qu'on devrait voir de plus près. Il y a un laisser-aller qui est lié au fait qu'il y a la famine et nous pensons que le gouvernement doit nous dire quoi faire par rapport à cette situation. (Autorité du secteur, Beza, juin 2016)

Pour l'organisation locale, il ne s'agit pas d'un défaut de mise en œuvre d'une politique publique, mais d'une adaptation de la politique dans sa mise en œuvre. Pour elle, cette adaptation négociée progressivement a l'air d'avoir dénaturé la politique en question. Ainsi, un membre de l'association dit :

> Les autorités locales comprennent que la révolution verte devrait s'adapter au contexte. Mais personne n'acceptera que cette reconnaissance de la nécessité d'adapter l'agriculture rwandaise au contexte local vienne des luttes et des négociations au niveau local. Nous espérons que le gouvernement finisse par comprendre qu'il y a de quoi mettre fin à cette révolution verte, non pas parce que nous n'en voulons pas, mais simplement parce qu'elle ne permet pas de lutter contre l'insécurité alimentaire. [Membre d'une coopérative, Mbiza, décembre 2015]

Repenser la résistance

La mise en œuvre de la norme productiviste comme référentiel dominant dans l'agriculture au Rwanda est rendue possible par un dispositif gouvernemental (Foucault 2001) complexe et plus large que le secteur agricole. Ce dispositif est composé de six éléments qui tendent à pousser les populations paysannes à adhérer à ce référentiel. Il y a d'une part des politiques de la révolution verte, de la décentralisation et de l'organisation des marchés agricoles et d'autre part des mesures de surveillance, disciplinaires et incitatives. Dans le discours officiel, les paysans adhèrent à ces politiques et mesures, mais dans la pratique, cette adhésion n'empêche pas que certains d'entre eux tentent de subvertir ces politiques et détourner ces mesures, et de les faire ainsi évoluer.

Il s'agit de comprendre comment, dans certaines zones, la prescription productiviste de la révolution verte au Rwanda se transforme dans la mise en œuvre de ces politiques, c'est-à-dire dans l'usage de cette norme. Cette transformation n'est pas à rechercher forcément dans une stratégie cohérente mise en place par un groupe révolutionnaire conscient des différences de classes et des problèmes qu'elles posent (Marx 2003). Elle n'est pas non plus portée par des gens qui comprennent nécessairement leur adhésion à un dispositif de domination plus large concernant la manière dont l'agriculture doit être faite, par exemple (Foucault 2001). Il ne s'agit pas non plus des dominés conscients de la domination, mais résistant en cachette (Scott 2008). On n'est donc pas nécessairement dans une situation de prise de conscience radicale, de mise en place d'une stratégie globale et d'actions de contestation ouvertes ou cachées.

On est simplement dans un contexte où les paysans adhèrent à la norme en tentant de mettre en œuvre une politique qui leur promet le bonheur, mais qui produit le contraire. Il s'agit d'une situation où les paysans tentent simplement de vivre leur vie et se rendent compte du fait que la politique ne s'adapte pas à leur mode de vie et à leurs besoins et proposent des solutions qui finissent par subvertir la politique en question. On est ainsi dans un cas d'usage de la norme et de la manière dont la vie y exerce un réel pouvoir, dans la mesure où les paysans sont en mesure de requalifier celle-ci au cours de la mise en œuvre. Cette norme de la révolution verte est répétée dans la mise en œuvre et cette répétition la disperse dans des figures nouvelles et différentes au point qu'à un moment donné elle ne signifie plus sa reproduction à l'identique. Elle devient même à un moment donné son contraire, c'est-à-dire une politique qui vise la satisfaction de la sécurité alimentaire à la place des marchés.

Ainsi, contrairement aux objectifs du dispositif de pouvoir qui poussent les paysans à s'inscrire dans la norme de la révolution verte au Rwanda, on se rend finalement compte que les paysans en tant que cibles de cette politique ne sont jamais déterminés par les règles qui tentent de les créer comme «paysans modèles» de la révolution verte (Ansoms, Cioffo 2016). En effet, la production de ces paysans comme des modèles n'est jamais un acte définitif, mais bien un processus normé de répétition qui peut parfois être subverti et produire des effets contraires à ce qui est escompté. Ainsi donc, si les normes de la révolution verte sont productives, elles tentent de s'imposer sur des vies paysannes qui ont, au cours de la mise en œuvre des politiques agricoles, une capacité d'agir dans plusieurs directions. Il s'agit ici d'une agencéité des corps qui ne peut se laisser voir que dans la répétition de la norme qui finit par être subvertie.

Ainsi, comme on l'a vu à Mbiza, il est vrai que la productivité de la norme de la révolution verte au Rwanda a signifié la sollicitation des corps des paysans en vue des comportements normés dans le sens de cette politique. Cependant, cette sollicitation peut parfois ne pas se réaliser, comme nous l'avons vu dans le secteur de Mbiza. Cette non-réalisation a fini par produire l'a-normal ou encore une contestation de la norme de la révolution verte, de telle sorte qu'user de cette norme a fini par signifier la possibilité de la contester.

Cette perspective de Butler nous paraît dès lors intéressante dans la construction du sens des actions des paysans rwandais vis-à-vis de la révolution verte. En effet, nous l'avons vu, par sa réflexion, Butler jette un trouble dans les deux logiques de la norme dans la mesure où la productivité de celle-ci tente de forger des comportements normés, en même temps que ces comportements, en tant qu'effets de l'usage de la norme, tentent toujours de la défier, parfois en la contestant par la même occasion. Mais au-delà, Butler propose une avancée majeure dans la tradition philosophique post-structuraliste qui interroge la relation entre le pouvoir et la résistance.

Nous l'avons vu plus haut, la vision de la résistance chez Butler pose deux problèmes fondamentaux : il s'agit tout d'abord de sa tendance à naturaliser la résistance, à la considérer comme faisant partie des corps vivants, ce qui pose des questions sur l'agencéité des acteurs en tant qu'action réflexive. Il s'agit ensuite de la portée politique de cette perspective naturaliste de la résistance face à la pensée de l'émancipation, qui implique une praxis.

En effet, comme dans le cas étudié plus haut, cette approche butlerienne sur la résistance permet de lire le réel et de donner du sens au vécu des personnes qui vivent dans un contexte de domination. Elle permet surtout de montrer comment le changement par rapport à des rapports de pouvoir ou encore à la domination advient inéluctablement lorsque les prescriptions de la domination répriment des corps souvent sans défense. Ce changement est en fait lié au fait que les corps dominés doivent s'ajuster et s'offrir l'espace nécessaire pour se maintenir, en rognant ainsi l'espace de la domination. C'est dans ce sens que, malgré le fait que les paysans rwandais, dans l'étude de cas, ont accepté au départ les principes de la révolution verte, celles-ci ne leur permettaient pas de survivre. La nécessité de se nourrir de leurs activités champêtres les a poussés à bousculer progressivement les règles de la révolution verte jusqu'à les subvertir.

Et donc, si Butler nous permet d'observer comment un tel changement social est devenu possible, sa théorie de la résistance ne nous permet pas de comprendre comment penser un changement social à venir ; comment le planifier. En d'autres termes, à partir de cette perspective qui paraît naturaliste, il est difficile de penser une action politique de la part des

paysans pour tenter de changer un système ou des politiques contraignantes et répressives. Mais quoi qu'il en soit, cette théorie appuie (en allant encore plus loin) les postulats des études paysannes sur la résistance et en particulier les travaux de James Scott qui ont montré que, même dans des situations de grande domination, les paysans arrivent toujours à résister.

Conclusion

La prescription dominante actuelle selon laquelle les politiques agricoles doivent permettre de booster la croissance et, par là, de lutter contre la pauvreté, s'inscrit dans le programme de la nouvelle révolution verte promue en Afrique depuis le début des années 2000. Cette prescription tente de promouvoir la modernisation du secteur agricole pour satisfaire les marchés pour tout État qui voudrait bien bénéficier de l'aide des bailleurs des fonds, particulièrement celle de la Banque mondiale et l'Union européenne. Aussi cette prescription s'inscrit-elle dans un cadre cognitif composé de valeurs et de normes qui proposent que le secteur agricole migre d'une agriculture « traditionnelle » de substance vers une agriculture productiviste adaptée à la demande des marchés. Cet objectif devrait se réaliser à partir du développement des chaînes de valeurs et d'une intégration progressive des ménages disposant d'un minimum de capital terre et animal, ce qui suppose l'exclusion des agriculteurs pauvres du secteur agricole.

Le présent article s'est donné pour objectif d'analyser la résistance à cette prescription des politiques agricoles en partant de l'étude de cas du Rwanda considéré comme le success-story de ces politiques en Afrique. En s'inspirant du travail de Judith Butler sur la résistance, l'article a tenté de montrer une limite à la littérature sur la résistance : à force de se concentrer sur la dichotomie domination/émancipation ou encore pouvoir/résistance par rapport à la norme prescrite, cette littérature passe souvent à côté d'autres possibilités de formuler « une idée culturellement corporalisée de la liberté » et de comprendre comment ces possibilités peuvent parvenir à subvertir le système plus largement. En d'autres termes, une telle orientation a pour inconvénient de passer à côté des possibilités d'observer des expériences de la liberté à partir des nouvelles manières de se détacher de la norme. Il s'agit du désavantage de ne pas voir comment, au sein même de l'alignement à la norme, l'agencéité des corps auxquelles la norme est assujettie peut permettre de subvertir cette norme.

L'article a donc tenté de montrer que certes, la productivité des normes tente de produire des pratiques normées ou normales en essayant de s'imposer sur des vies. Mais il s'agit ici des vies qui ont une capacité d'agir sur ces corps pris par la norme. En répétant la norme dans la vie quotidienne, ces corps

finissent par reproduire autre chose que la norme ; ils finissent par proposer des actes qui défient, contestent ou subvertissent la norme. Ces corps vivant la norme finissent par produire une agencéité qui émerge de la répétition de la norme. En d'autres termes, la productivité de la norme signifie la sollicitation des corps en vue des comportements normés, jusqu'à ce que cette sollicitation rate sa réalisation et produise l'a-normal. Cet a-normal signifie aussi la contestation de la norme dans la mesure où, ici, user d'une norme c'est aussi pouvoir la contester en fin de compte.

Butler rejoint aussi un courant de pensée qui montre que, même si les dominés paraissent souvent sous le joug de la domination, il y a lieu d'observer de la résistance de leur part (Scott 2008). Mais contrairement à ce courant dans lequel les dominés peuvent être conscients de leurs faits de résistance à une domination bien identifiée, chez Butler, cet élément de conscience n'est pas nécessaire *a priori*. À ce titre, l'article propose une piste théorique importante pour dépasser l'hypothèse de la résistance cachée de James Scott qui actuellement domine les études paysannes sur la résistance. Chez Scott en effet, la résistance cachée n'est qu'une étape vers une résistance ouverte capable de changer le système. Dès lors, l'étude des effets des actions cachés des paysans sur le système plus large est limitée par cette perspective marxienne reprise et réinterprétée par Scott et nécessitant des discours ouverts. Cet article vient donner une voie de sortie à cette limite.

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Acquiring Pedagogic Authority
While Learning to Teach

Zahraa McDonald*, Yusuf Sayed**, Tarryn de Kock***
& Nimi Hoffmann****

Abstract

The quality of an education system and the quality of its teachers and teaching are interconnected. Learning to teach and teach meaningfully and equitably is a core priority of education reforms. In this article we reflect on what the process of learning to teach might mean for teachers in an education system. We ask how and to what extent initial teacher education mitigates and reduces education inequities. In particular, we examine the relationship between teaching practice as a core component of initial teacher education and education inequities. The article draws on data examining the nature of student teachers' experiences of teaching practice in the Western Cape of South Africa. We argue that the data illustrates that teaching practice does indeed invest future teachers with pedagogic authority. As such, it does indeed legitimate the position of student teachers in the classroom and within the education system, albeit with varying and differentiated outcomes for equity.

Keywords: Initial teacher education, pedagogic authority, South Africa, teaching practice

Résumé

La qualité d'un système éducatif et celle de ses enseignants et de son enseignement sont interdépendantes. Apprendre à enseigner et enseigner de manière significative et équitable est une priorité essentielle des réformes de l'éducation. Dans cet article, nous réfléchissons aux significations du

*   University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Email: zahraamcdonald@hotmail.com
**   University of Sussex and Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Email: sayed.cite@gmail.com
***   Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa.
        Email: tarryngabidekock@gmail.com
****   University of Sussex and Cape Peninsula University of Technology.
        Email: nimi.hoffmann@gmail.com

processus d'apprentissage de l'enseignement pour les enseignants d'un système éducatif. Nous demandons comment et dans quelle mesure la formation initiale des enseignants atténue et réduit les inégalités en matière d'éducation. En particulier, nous examinons la relation entre la pratique de l'enseignement comme composante essentielle de la formation initiale des enseignants, et les inégalités en matière d'éducation. Le document s'appuie sur des données sur la nature des expériences d'élèves-enseignants dans la pratique de l'enseignement au Cap occidental (Afrique du Sud). Nous soutenons que les données montrent que la pratique pédagogique investit, effectivement, les futurs enseignants d'une autorité pédagogique. Malgré des résultats variables et différenciés en matière d'équité, elle légitime, en effet, la position des élèves-enseignants dans la classe et au sein du système éducatif.

Mots-clés : formation initiale des enseignants, autorité pédagogique, Afrique du Sud, pratique de l'enseignement

Introduction

It is commonly asserted by policy-makers and in public discourse that the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers (Mourshed, Chikjioke & Barber 2010). In this context, then, teachers are shaped by their professional development including their initial teacher preparation. The process of learning to teach is thus fundamental to what is possible within an education system.

In this article we reflect on what the process of learning to teach might mean for teachers in an education system. We ask *how* and *to what extent* mechanisms of teacher education reproduce or disrupt the nature of the South African education system. In particular, we tease out the relationship between teaching practice, a central mechanism within the process of teacher education, and the nature of the South African education system. In so doing, we expand the understanding of how the process of learning to teach or becoming a teacher impact inequality in the education system. Specifically, we draw on data that examines the structure and nature of student teachers' experiences of teaching practice in the Western Cape of South Africa.

The year 2020 marks twenty years since the publication of the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (NSE) in South Africa. The NSE was gazetted by the then Department of Education (DoE 2000) and, subsequently, teacher education providers in South Africa were required to implement the policy, which meant re-aligning and reconceptualising initial teacher programmes (Robinson 2003:19). These programmes, subject to approval, are regulated by multiple statutory bodies including the 'national and provincial education departments, the CHE [Council on Higher Education] and SAQA [South African Qualification Authority]' (Kruss 2009:24).

Alongside the NSE, which intended to provide a framework for teacher education curricula and shift the qualification structures and requirements, there were major alterations to the governance of the sector (CHE 2010:9). These fundamental changes were considered essential to bring about redress, equity, efficiency and quality in terms of teacher preparation for implementing the new [school] curriculum (CHE 2010:9). The transformation process has been described as a 'frenzy of policy documents and acts' (Sayed & Jansen 2001 cited in Sayed 2002:383) and 'seen as being linked to a larger governmental modernising project, the goal of which is to ensure local legitimacy and international credibility' (Mattson & Harley 2003 cited in Schäfer & Wilmot 2012:42).

Currently, it is well established that the learning attainment of learners in South Africa is unequally distributed. By 2017, based on the previous year's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) assessment, learners who completed the assessment in African languages scored considerably lower than those taking English (372) and Afrikaans (369) tests (Howie et al. 2017:54). Learners writing in isiXhosa (283) and Sepedi (276) scored the lowest (Howie et al. 2017:54). In essence, this means that assessment results for learners are not equal; the talents of all students are not being cultivated equally; and these largely mirror historic patterns of racialised inequality. Racial classification in South Africa remains fraught as a result of its apartheid past. For the purposes of this discussion, we deploy historic classifications (such as black, coloured, Indian and white) as a way of situating the historical context and identifying continuities with the unequal past. However, this is not an endorsement of their application as objective categories. Our usage of this concept is to discuss patterns of inequalities in the South African teacher education system, and we understand race to be a socially constructed and an often problematic means of describing difference.

The article is structured as follows. Firstly, it offers a theoretical framing for the position of teachers within an education system in order to analyse mechanisms of teacher education. The theoretical framing, premised on the concept pedagogic authority (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990), is embedded within a literature review of the history of teacher education in South Africa. We then explain the methodology of the study, followed by the presentation of findings. The data demonstrate that student teachers acquire pedagogic authority during their teaching practice at schools. This acquisition is bolstered by a policy framework which frames teaching practice as a central mechanism in the process of learning to teach or becoming a teacher, as well as the manner in which initial teacher education programmes implement the teacher education qualification policy framework. Teaching practice experiences are therefore a mechanism for legitimising their position in

the classroom and within the education system. In other words, existing conditions in schools are constructed as an accepted social reality for student teachers, at least partly due to their experiences of teaching practice. The implications of this is that, based on the experiences of teaching practice drawn from the participants in this study and the literature on the history of teacher education, the process of learning to teach feeds directly into the social reproduction of class and other inequities in South African society.

Teachers: Pedagogically Authoritative Agents in the South African Education System

In order to analyse mechanisms of teacher education, this section offers a theoretical framing that situates teachers within an education system, drawing on the work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1990). In *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, Bourdieu and Passeron (ibid.) demonstrate how teachers in positions of pedagogic authority are regarded as a legitimate authority with 'power to exert symbolic violence (power that legitimates meaning and conceals power) which manifests in the form of a right to impose legitimacy' (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990:13). Those who receive information from a pedagogic authority recognise the legitimacy thereof, internalising the message (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990:21).

Pedagogic authority is embedded within Bourdieu and Passeron's concept of a pedagogic action. 'All pedagogic action is … the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power' (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990:5). While pedagogic action can occur within a national education system, it is not confined to it. Pedagogic action can be associated with a social formation or groups (diffuse education), within families (family education) or within institutions that have an educative function (institutional education) (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990:5). In other words, pedagogic action can be observed in schools, but is not limited to schools.

Pedagogic actions draw on mechanisms that legitimise meaning and conceal power relations. These mechanisms operate in schools, which Bourdieu and Passeron regard as a dominant (though not the only) site of pedagogic action. Moreover, school pedagogic action is recognised as that which reproduces the dominant culture, hence securing 'a monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence' (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990:6). Bourdieu and Passeron (1990:x) note that 'the school helps to make and to impose the legitimate exclusions and inclusions which form the basis of the social order'. One of the mechanisms schools draw on while exerting pedagogic action is termed *pedagogic authority* by Bourdieu and Passeron (1990:11-54). Paid teaching, salaried employment of teachers and the establishment of schools

wherein new teachers can be trained are markers of an institutionalised inculcation of pedagogic action (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990:55).

The presence of a pedagogic authority implies that there has to be a process whereby individuals are invested with the legitimacy to exert pedagogic authority. To the extent that teachers exert pedagogic authority, teacher education becomes the process whereby future teachers are invested with the legitimacy to exercise pedagogic authority. A teacher's legitimacy within an education system 'is socially objectified and symbolised in the institutional procedures and rules defining his [sic] training, the diplomas that sanction it, and the legitimate conduct of the profession' (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990:63).

Pedagogic authority, as conceptualised by Bourdieu and Passeron, emphasises the centrality of teachers and, consequently, teacher education within an education system. Although Bourdieu and Passeron proffer that the process whereby individuals acquire pedagogic authority relates to the institutional procedures and rules that define their training and the diplomas that sanction the training, they do not address how the process of teacher education or learning to teach unfolds, and therefore what these conditions mean for maintaining, reproducing or disrupting an education system. Indeed, their assumption is that by virtue of the fact that pedagogic authority is the recognised authority with power to exert symbolic violence, the process ought to, by definition, reproduce the nature of the education system. By paying closer attention to the process of acquiring pedagogic authority or learning to teach, one might be able to enhance understanding of the potential for disrupting the nature of the education system in an effort to cultivate the talents of all more equally.

The way pedagogic authority is acquired can be illustrated within the process of learning to teach and, as such, by the mechanisms of teacher education. A reflection on the history of teacher education in South Africa makes clear the relationship between the nature of the education system and the conditions of acquisition of pedagogic authority. The nature of racial inequality that characterises the education system in South Africa is visible in the manner in which pedagogic authority has historically been acquired within the South African education system. Colonisation and racial segregation inflect the history of teacher education in South Africa. Paid teaching, salaried employment of teachers and the establishment of schools wherein new teachers can be trained have been present within the South African education system since the introduction of mission schools during colonisation.

It stands to reason that the capability of an education system to train teachers would be established later than paid teaching. As such, an education system would have first attained a high level of institutionalisation by the

point at which teacher training is established. The first training institution in South Africa was established in Genadendal in 1839 by a Moravian Mission Society (CHE 2010:6). The first Department of Education established in 1839 introduced the pupil-teacher system in 1842 (CHE 2010:7). Pupil-teachers spent five years assisting in classrooms and receiving an additional hour's instruction after the school day ended before being recognised as qualified teachers (CHE 2010:7). As schools proliferated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, so teacher training expanded in South Africa (CHE 2010:7), as teacher training was introduced to the education system by the colonial missions. Mission schools were the first sites of teacher education.

By 1886, there were three official teacher education institutions for white student teachers, located in Cape Town, Wellington and Grahamstown (CHE 2010:7). In 1891, the Battswood School for coloured teachers was established offering a six-year teacher programme. The programme, which required a Grade 6 (at the time Standard 4) pass, focused on academic subjects, religious subjects and practical instruction. There were no dedicated education institutions for black students; secondary schooling was considered 'teacher education' for black teachers (Welch 2002 cited in CHE 2010:7).

The South Africa Act of 1909 divided education into two broad categories, namely: higher education, controlled by the central government; and school education controlled by the then four provinces (CHE 2010:7; Sayed 2002:381). Despite teacher education having been declared a 'facet of higher education', it was placed under the control of the provinces (CHE 2010:7). Delegates from the provinces of Natal and the Orange Free State expressed their concern that centralised teacher education could limit the ability of their individual education systems to achieve the intended outcome: 'cultural preservation' (DBE & DHET 2011:18). By 1930, there were thirty colleges of teacher education, all controlled and administered provincially (Kallaway 2008 cited in CHE 2010:8). Primary school teachers, together with some secondary teachers, were educated at these colleges. Most secondary school teachers were, however, educated at universities (DBE & DHET 2011:18).

Apartheid policies, such as the Bantu Education Act of 1953, necessitated new and separate educational institutions for black, coloured and Indian teachers (CHE 2010:8; Sayed 2002:381). Different departments, such as the Department of Bantu Education and Department of Coloured Affairs, administered the colleges of teacher education for respective race groups. Bantustan policies devolved teacher education so that each '"independent" African homeland took control of teacher education in its own area' (Sayed 2002:381).

By the end of the 1980s, there were eighteen colleges for white and sixteen for coloured students respectively. There were two colleges designated for Indian students and thirteen colleges for black students (CHE 2010:8). In addition, there were more than seventy-eight colleges of teacher education scattered throughout the 'homelands' of South Africa (CHE 2010:8). At the same time, universities continued offering teacher education (CHE 2010:8). The 'difference between the offerings of the colleges and those of the universities was essentially the teacher's qualifications' and the type of knowledge emphasised (CHE 2010:8). 'Universities believed their qualifications equipped students to teach with a strong knowledge base. The colleges, on the other hand, were sceptical of the universities' academic emphasis and insisted that induction into the profession depended on sustained practice' (CHE 2010:8).

University access and admission was regulated racially and ethnically during the period of the apartheid government prior to 1994. White students required a matriculation exemption to gain entrance to a university (CHE 2010:8). Coloured and Indian students predominately attended the University of the Western Cape and the University of Durban Westville, respectively, both founded in 1959, where students were admitted without a matriculation exemption to do a non-degree Higher Education Diploma (CHE 2010:8). Schäfer and Wilmot (2012:42) claim that, for whites, teacher education was far superior to that of their Indian, coloured and black counterparts due to the ease with which white students could attain a university education. It is further reported that many black students were qualified as 'teachers with Standard 8 leaving certificates' (CHE 2010:8) as opposed to attending a college of teacher education or university. Sayed (2002:382) purports that 'most of the graduates from black teacher training colleges were trained in subjects such as religious studies and history' and were underdeveloped in areas of mathematics, science and technology (Sayed 2002:382).

Chisholm (2012) argues that African teachers in teacher training colleges were led to achieve the minimum levels of literacy and numeracy, and low-budget primary schooling for Africans was provided by African women, whereas white teachers with the advantage of secondary schooling were trained in post-secondary colleges of education. She argues that teacher training expanded for African teachers in the Bantustans, but with quality gradually deteriorating (Chisholm 2012). As repression intensified in the 1960s, the proportion of African teachers in secondary and high schools possessing university degrees plummeted (Chisholm 2012). By 1965, only 2.5 per cent of African teachers had university degrees (Chisholm 2012).

The racial stratification of teacher education, compounded with geographical variation, unsurprisingly resulted in a lack of overall coherence in the system, according to Robinson (2003:19). This further translated into different requirements, curricula and qualifications intersected by the race of the student (Robinson 2003:19). As a corollary, teachers in 'African schools particular[ly], but also in coloured schools were poor' (CHE 2010:9). It should be noted, though, that this determination was not based on outcomes of standardised learner assessments. Rather, it was based on the fact that individuals who were learning to become teachers attended teacher education institutions that were unequal in resources and quality. It should also be remembered that, irrespective of the differences in scope and nature of various teacher education providers during colonialism and apartheid, pedagogic authority was acquired by individuals who completed their training at those institutions. In other words, they could legitimately enter school classrooms and teach children.

For Sayed (2002:382), limited 'quality assurance procedures and mechanisms were another characteristic of the system'. This produced generations of teachers, of all races, 'with distorted and deficient understandings of themselves, of each other and of what was expected of them in a divided society' (Essop cited in DBE & DHET 2011:19). Put in relation to the discussion thus far, it is evident that pedagogic authority was acquired in racially segregated institutions tasked to invest individuals with unequal competencies. The intended aim was to institutionalise racial segregation or stratification within the education system. In other words, the way pedagogic authority was acquired became a mechanism for racial segregation and its unequal stratification.

Furthermore, schools were racially segregated, meaning that during teaching practice student teachers were placed in schools based on their race and taught learners who shared the same race, culture and identity. In other words, teachers were also 'acquiring their professional competencies through socialisation in a racialised environment' (Carrim 2001 cited in Sayed 2002:382). At that time, the notion of diversity and racial mixing was a crime. The demand and supply of teachers was based on 'the need to maintain racial and ethnic segregation and [was] not related to an overall national plan' (Sayed 2002:382). By the end of apartheid, teacher education was spectacularly fragmented along racial, geographic and nature of qualification lines (CHE 2010:10; DBE & DHET 2011:20). Essentially, what this meant was that, by 1994, pedagogic authority was acquired within a profoundly unequal education system wherein racial segregation was paramount. Notwithstanding segregation, these teachers were recognised as legitimate authorities with the power to legitimate

meaning in and through education. That legitimated authorities entered spaces which were clearly unequal is likely to have contributed to the durability of inequality in South African.

As noted in the introduction, 1994 ushered in the possibility, and indeed the intention, to equalise the education system. While teacher education occurred in a wide array of institutions segregated on the basis of race and ethnicity, a common purpose prevailed—to prepare school teachers, to invest individuals with pedagogic authority. The new government's transformation plan envisioned major modifications to both the governance and curricula of teacher education, shifts in qualification structures and their requirements (CHE 2010:9). These (so-called) fundamental changes were regarded as essential to bring about redress, equity, efficiency, and quality in terms of teacher education and teacher preparation to implement the new curriculum (CHE 2010:9).

As stated previously, the first policy regulating teacher education in South Africa, the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (NSE), was gazetted in 2000 by the Department of Education (DoE 2000). By 2005, initial teacher education programmes were being offered at twenty-one universities across South Africa (DBE & DHET 2011:21). In 2011, the second nationally implemented post-apartheid teacher education policy framework was legislated in South Africa and later revised in 2015 (DHET 2011, 2015). Teacher education continues to legitimate individuals to enter school classrooms, but these have not changed fundamentally. In other words, the acquisition of pedagogic authority continues unabated although the legislation, regulations and conditions have shifted in some ways.

This section has discussed pedagogic authority as conceptualised by Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) within their theorisation of the reproduction of society through education. In South Africa, individuals were invested with or acquired pedagogic authority in a range of racially and ethnically segregated institutions during colonialism and apartheid. Teacher education thus contributed to legitimating and sustaining racial segregation in South Africa. Although these institutions have been formally deracialised and restructured in the post-apartheid period, the fundamental process of learning to teach in schools, conceptualised here as an acquisition of pedagogic authority, has not shifted since the introduction of colonial mission schools.

In the remainder of this article, we further unpack *how* and *to what extent* mechanisms of teacher education maintain, reproduce or disrupt the nature of the South African education system, by presenting data drawn from student teachers' experiences during teaching practice. Two decades have passed since a process to govern teacher education institutions

centrally (together with all higher education institution) began (DBE & DHET 2011:21). Gaining insight from current student teachers regarding their experiences within teacher education programmes would shed light on the efficacy of related mechanisms for how pedagogic authority is currently acquired. The concepts developed in this section frame the analysis of the data. A discussion of method precedes the presentation of the data.

Methodology

For this study, qualitative data was gathered from policy documents, teacher education programme documents and student teachers. Selected education policies were sampled, which together frame the general milieu within which student teachers are being developed and prepared. The education policies were reviewed to understand the formal process that governs how individuals become teachers in South Africa, as the policies represent the formal process of acquiring pedagogic authority within this education system. Teacher education programme documentation was reviewed to determine how programmes implement the legislated process of acquiring pedagogic authority. The details regarding the number and nature of courses within a teacher education programme also determine the experiences student teachers are likely to lack. This experiences are however regarded as critical for them to qualify as teachers and thus place them in a legitimate position in a school classroom.

An open-ended questionnaire was administered to third-year Bachelor of Education (BEd) student teachers. BEd programmes are four-year degree programmes offered at universities in South Africa (DHET 2015). The assumption is that after three years as students, their experiences of the programme would be vital to further understand how pedagogic authority is currently acquired within teacher education programmes. The questionnaire explored their experiences at schools during teaching practice. For example, one question asked them to describe their experience at schools and another to describe the classroom in which they had been placed.

Although the governance of teacher education institutions is currently centralised within the Department of Higher Education, school governance is decentralised (Ahmed & Sayed 2012). The questionnaire also asked participants why they chose to become teachers as well as their views on the purpose of education. The aim of these questions was to examine their views of the process on which they had chosen to embark. The resulting data were analysed thematically with the view to understanding how their experience of teaching practice may enable a deeper sense of what it means

to learn to teach in South Africa and hence how pedagogic authority is acquired. From the analysis, conclusions have been drawn regarding *how* and *to what extent* mechanisms of teacher education maintain, reproduce or disrupt the nature of the South African education system.

Acquiring Pedagogic Authority in South Africa

This section presents data from education policies in the first part, followed by a thematic discussion of the responses in the open-ended questionnaire. Data from the programme documents are drawn from both sections and thus not discussed separately. The data combines to describe how pedagogic authority is acquired in the context of South Africa. The findings inform a discussion of *how* and *to what extent* mechanisms of teacher education and development maintain, reproduce or disrupt the nature of the South African education system.

Education policy establishes the acquisition of pedagogic authority

Education policies relating to teacher education as instituted from 2011 in South Africa comprise the main focus of analysis in this section. The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) (DHET 2015) provide the overarching legal framing of student teachers' experiences of those selected to respond to the questionnaire. Additional education policies are noted, to the extent that they contribute to framing the experience of teacher education and thus learning to teach, specifically with regards to teaching practice. This analysis contributed to a description of how education policies establish the framework for learning to teach and thereby acquire pedagogic authority.

Similar to the NSE, the MRTEQ (DHET 2015) establishes a policy environment in which individuals who wish to teach in schools are required to qualify as teachers in one of two programmes offered at a higher education institution or university. In South Africa, learning to teach involves registering for and ultimately graduating with a degree, the qualification that certifies competence to teach. A qualification must be school-phase and/or subject-specific (DHET 2015). The phases and subject specialisations correlate directly with the national curriculum, currently the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (see for e.g., DBE 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d). By implication, the only teacher qualifications sanctioned by the state are for school teachers, and to be a school teacher a certification conforming to MRTEQ (DHET 2015) is required. Graduating from a certified programme grants an individual legitimacy to act in a school classroom.

Teaching practice is an integral, compulsory component of teacher education programmes, which MRTEQ defines as work-integrated learning (WIL) (DHET 2015:10). WIL 'takes place in the workplace' (DHET 2015) which is to be interpreted by teacher education programmes as school classrooms. The MRTEQ constructs the classroom as the place where individuals learn to teach: 'Learning in practice involves teaching in authentic and simulated classroom environments' (DHET 2015:10). Presence and experience in classrooms during the process of learning to teach is thus firmly established in teacher education policy.

The MRTEQ requires newly qualified teachers (NQTs) to be capable of effectively managing classrooms across diverse contexts so that conducive learning environments are established (DHET 2015). It is expected that teacher education programmes expose enrolled students to diverse contexts. The expectation is not that diversity be minimised but rather that teachers accept diversity and facilitate learning irrespective thereof. Evidence of large-scale assessments suggests that learning outcomes are far from equal across diverse contexts and wealth quintiles (Sayed et al 2017). From the perspective of the MRTEQ (DHET 2015), diversity is something to be managed and thus accepted, not necessarily disrupted or questioned in the process of learning to teach. This benign discourse of diversity is unlikely to promote transformative practices in the education system to ensure equity.

The MRTEQ's (DHET 2015:62) vision for NQTs is that they demonstrate a positive work ethic, display appropriate values and conduct themselves in a manner that befits, enhances and develops the teaching profession. While the vision of the MRTEQ with respect to NQTs is relatively vague in that it does not spell out exactly what is meant by a positive work ethic, appropriate values or befitting conduct, there is little doubt that these, for the most part, are intended to occur in a traditional classroom context that is raced, classed and gendered. Moreover, the inference is that the teaching profession is a legitimate enterprise. The essence of the MRTEQ (DHET 2011, 2015) discourse is that the legitimate space for a teacher is the classroom, action in that space by a teacher is legitimate, and the teaching profession is legitimate.

Once qualified, most teachers are beholden to Provincial Departments of Education (PEDs) by contractual obligations (DoE 1998). Those teachers who are directly contracted by school governing bodies (SGBs) are no less beholden to organisations for which the classroom is the primary site of work. A teacher's work is not constructed beyond the classroom within education policy. In South Africa, individuals acquire pedagogic authority to legitimate pedagogic action within the classroom by virtue of having learned to teach in education programmes sanctioned by education policy,

currently the MRTEQ (DHET 2015). No person without a qualification sanctioned by the MRTEQ would be acknowledged as legitimate in the classroom. However, those who are yet in the process of learning to teach are considered legitimate for the purpose of completing the requirements of WIL or teaching practice in teacher education programmes.

In the next part of this section, data is presented regarding experiences of those participating in a university education programme. In particular, their experiences with regards to teaching practice are unpacked to configure an explanation of how pedagogic authority is acquired.

Acquiring pedagogic authority during teaching practice

The participants in this study were enrolled in their third year of a Foundation Phase (FP) Bachelor of Education (BEd) teacher education programme in the Western Cape of South Africa. During the four-year programme, these individuals are required to pass courses in Mathematics, Languages and Life Skills, the subjects in the FP Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (see for e.g. DBE 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d). Additional courses in educational theory and professional practice are included as course requirements. WIL, or teaching practice, comprises roughly six months of the four-year enrolment of the individuals in the programme. This is not a continuous span of time in the classroom. In the programme for which the participants in this study were registered, individuals are in school classrooms for four weeks during the first two years of the programme in July/August and eight weeks each year during their third and fourth years of the programme in April (four weeks) and July/August (four weeks). All the WIL, or teaching practice, experiences reported by the participants occurred in school classrooms.

To fulfil the requirements of WIL or teaching practice in the programme, participants select an FP classroom at a school in the Western Cape for each four-week session. In other words, student teachers in this study would be in a different classroom for each four-week span of teaching practice. During teaching practice, time is spent observing the teacher in that classroom as well as presenting lessons to the learners in that class. In addition, both the teacher in that classroom as well as an appointee of the university evaluate lessons presented by the student teacher during these four-week sessions. Assessment of teaching practice or WIL thus comprises individual lessons taught in the classroom selected for teaching practice.

Themes that emerged from participant responses to experiences in the schools and classrooms in which they conducted their teaching practice included grasping one's place, identifying what works and identifying what does not work.

Grasping one's place

Teacher education policy establishes teaching practice as a compulsory mechanism of teacher education in South Africa. Accordingly, teaching practice is a non-negotiable feature of the learning-to-teach process and hence the process whereby an individual is legitimately positioned in the classroom. Pedagogic authority is acquired during teaching practice. Teaching practice, then, can be viewed as a central mechanism for acquiring pedagogic authority. What can the experiences of teaching practice reveal about maintaining, reproducing or disrupting the nature of the South African education system?

The participants in this study described their experience at schools in ways that resonate with the assertion that teaching practice is a mechanism that legitimates their position in the classroom. In other words, from participants' perspectives, teaching practice is how they experience becoming teachers. The excerpts below offer a general sense of participant descriptions:

> Teaching practice was basically a learning experience. (Participant 5491)

> The experience of teaching practice has been an eye opener; where it all [being a teacher] becomes a reality. (Participant 5326)

> Teaching practical is a reality check to what is done at university. (Participant 2983)

In a nutshell, participant experience at a school provides each with the opportunity to experience being a teacher, more so than only their time at university would allow. It might be said that what happens in the classroom is legitimate—their 'reality'. The following excerpt suggests that what participants learn at university, while not unimportant, becomes 'real' during teaching practice.

> I have a great time when on teaching practice, it makes my studies way more meaningful and real. (Participant 3397)

Being present in this 'real' setting of the classroom also builds participant confidence, as they express:

> It [teaching practice] also gives me confidence to carry on going. (Participant 5326)

> Teaching practice allowed me to build up my confidence in a classroom. (Participant 9851)

These and similar responses from participants illustrate how, over the course of teaching practice sessions in the BEd programme, the constant exposure of individuals to classrooms in different schools combines to entrench them in the school environment as teachers in a classroom. In the process of participating in teaching practice, they come to realise what a school classroom is in 'reality'; they come to apply what they learn at university in particular and specific

ways; and they gain confidence in being 'present' in a school classroom. To this end, there does not seem to be any disarticulation between what teacher education policy intends and what participants experience.

Several responses demonstrate participant comprehension that schools and school classrooms are not exactly the same, as with these example excerpts:

> I have learnt what not to do when I become a teacher. (Participant 8335)

> It [teaching practice] gives me the knowledge about how learners differ from school to school. (Participant 6432)

> I have seen in what type of school I will enjoy teaching more! (Participant 0479).

The responses demonstrate that, according to the participants, learners in schools and schools themselves differ. Teaching practice therefore gives participants opportunities to witness these differences and to be introduced to various learner and school 'realities'.

It should be remembered that the students are evaluated only on a lesson presented in a classroom, together with reflections on how that lesson might have been taught better. Acquiring their legitimacy in the classroom hinges on a solitary moment of lesson presentation, not on shifting 'reality' in any way. Based on the assessment, it could thus be asserted that the format (or pedagogy) of teaching practice does not encourage participants to alter the nature of the education system in any way. The experience of teaching practice allows participants to firmly grasp their place within the existing classroom as well as to identify the differences they would be required to navigate once they have completed their learning-to-teach process, once they have been legitimated to exert pedagogic authority within a classroom.

The following two parts of this section demonstrate in more detail how participants describe the differences in school classrooms experienced during teaching practice. These experiences legitimate for participants a 'reality' of school classrooms as differentiated, and unequally so.

Identifying what works and what does not work

In describing their experiences at schools and classrooms during teaching practice, participant responses coalesced around what worked well and what did not for their development as teachers. The focus of what worked and what did not was similar in many instances. For example, classroom size was noted by some as adequate, whereas not for others. From participant responses regarding what worked and what did not, it is possible to distinguish pronounced differences between school classrooms selected by individual students while registered in this BEd programme.

Excerpts from participant responses of what worked and what did not are discussed in this section. These excerpts highlight the levels of differentiation experienced by participants in this study during teaching practice. The focus of responses was on interactions with learners in classrooms and class conditions.

Interactions with learners

It is not surprising that interaction with learners would form a significant focus of participant responses to school and classroom experiences during teaching practice. What is insightful about the responses are the differences experienced with regards to interactions with learners: participants focused on the number of learners in the classroom, learner disposition, classroom discipline and learner background.

Student teachers often described the number of learners as part of their experience of teaching practice. Student teachers, for instance, divulged that their classrooms were crowded (e.g. Participant 5663); that there were too many learners in the class.

Additional aspects related to the behaviour and/or disposition of learners in their classroom as reported by participants. Student teachers described learners as well behaved and hardworking, for example.

The presence or absence of discipline in the classroom was a common aspect of participant responses regarding interactions with learners. 'The children had good discipline' (Participant 7177). Similarly, other participants also described the discipline of learners as 'good' (e.g. Participant 9056). On the other hand, one participant (5107) disclosed that teaching practice 'was difficult … with no discipline'. Likewise, others admitted a lack of discipline in classrooms (e.g. Participant 6499).

Participants also described learners' background. One participant (1777) mentioned that the learners are from 'good homes', for example, whereas another participant (2668) noted that learners 'had issues at home'.

Classroom conditions

Another unsurprising feature of participant reflections related to the condition of classrooms. Similar to interactions with learners, participant reflections on classroom conditions during teaching practice accentuated vast differences. The common aspect of class conditions that emerged from participant responses included classroom atmosphere, physical size of classrooms, organisation of classrooms and resources available in the classrooms. Student teachers readily described the general atmosphere of the classroom. Positive comments regarding the general atmosphere in

classrooms included phrases such as 'child friendly' (e.g. Participant 2121) and a 'good learning environment'. Negative comments regarding the general atmosphere in classrooms included 'noisy', 'congested' and 'messy'.

Responses related to descriptions of the physicality of classrooms distinct from the number of learners in the classroom. Participants reflected on the physical size of their classroom (e.g. Participant 4930), many indicating that classrooms were small. Moreover, participants noted that small classrooms are a problem, a negative factor of the condition of the classroom. One participant, although reflecting on the small space as negative in a classroom, felt that for her this was a good learning experience. Other participants complaining of small classrooms, however, found that this limited space restricted the learning. Other participants felt the opposite, describing the physicality of classrooms positively. One participant stated, for example, that the classroom was spacious. There were participants who noted that the classrooms were big (e.g. Participant 4930) as well as crowded (e.g. Participant 8369). At a very basic level, one participant stated quite simply that there was a place in the class for everyone. By implication, it is assumable that if this is not stated, this might not always be the case.

Classroom organisation emerged as a common aspect of participant responses. Participants noted that classrooms varied between organised (e.g. Participant 7572) or disorganised (e.g. Participant 0813). Related to organisation, one participant noted that the classroom was always neat (Participant 7948). Whether comfortably sized or organised or not, classroom space was a salient theme in participant responses regarding their experiences of teaching practice. Given the understanding that a classroom is the authentic space for learning to teach in education policy as well as the only space wherein student teachers are assessed for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the BEd programme, it stands to reason that classroom space is significant. What this means for student teachers is that 'space' is constituted as their legitimate 'real' domain during the learning-to-teach process, as they are legitimated to enter this space. Responses in regard to classroom resources add further credence to this interpretation.

The availability of resources (for mediating learning) was commonly noted in participants' descriptions of their classrooms. Many responses in this regard described well-resourced classrooms, with the nature of the resources included in some participant descriptions. For example, a participant described the class as colourful and enriched with fun, interactive posters. The presence of posters was interpreted by one student teacher as creating an educational space (Participant 0890). Other resources mentioned were books, pictures and timetables. A few participants also mentioned the

availability of technology (e.g. whiteboards) as a resource in the classroom they were in (e.g. Participant 1302); others noted the opposite, a lack of technological tools (e.g. Participant 7274). Several participants described the classrooms as under-resourced (e.g. Participant 3399), with one participant (4724) noting that 'there was not enough reading materials'.

Varied responses regarding resources, size, and organisation of classrooms, together with interactions with learners, all suggest that student teachers need to expect any conditions in this space. While student teachers might be aware that the range of conditions are not all equally conducive for facilitating the curriculum, all are constituted as equally legitimate to the extent that the expectations and requirements of completing teaching practice are not thwarted in the face of any classroom condition. The WIL or teaching practice is rendered legitimate under any and all conditions of learner interaction or classroom state.

This section illustrates, based on an analysis of teacher education policy and experiences during teaching practice, how pedagogic authority is acquired in the South African context. The section demonstrates that both from the perspective of teacher education policy as well as participant experience, teaching practice is a central mechanism of teacher education experience and, consequently, the experience through which an individual assumes the legitimacy to enter classrooms for the purpose of facilitating the curriculum. In other words, policy frames the time spent in school classrooms as integral to the process that legitimates an individual in that space. This section demonstrates that student teachers experience teaching practice as legitimating their position as teachers. Legitimacy is therefore an objective policy condition in the education system as well as a subjectively experienced enactment of that policy.

While in school classrooms during teaching practice, student teachers are also acclimatised to differences in this space. Learner, classroom and school difference is established as a 'norm' during teaching practice. During the process of learning to teach, and in teaching practice specifically, the presence of diversity or difference is not presented as something unexpected or needing disruption in order to be legitimated in that space; student teachers need only manage it. In other words, for those legitimised to exert pedagogic authority, it can be contended that differences within school classrooms are constructed as a normal feature of the education system through their teaching practice experience. To this end, based on the analysis of teacher education as a central mechanism of teacher education, the nature of the South African education system is maintained and reproduced in the process of learning to teach.

Discussion and Conclusion

This article has problematised the process of teacher education as a mechanism in maintaining, reproducing or disrupting the nature of the South African education system. The reason for this has emerged from the illustration of inequalities in national assessments decades after the introduction of a transformative education agenda which seeks to cultivate the talents of all people. Based on data gathered from an analysis of teacher education policy, focused on teacher education as well as student teacher experiences during teaching practice, this article demonstrates how pedagogic authority is acquired in the process of learning to teach in a Foundation Phase BEd programme. The article describes how an individual can become a recognised legitimate authority within the South African education system. Specifically, it shows that student teachers model their practices on what they see their mentors do, and later, as professional teachers in their first schools. This grants them pedagogic authority and validates particular ways of teaching. Thus student teachers, in their experiences of teaching practice, become accustomed to accept particular logics of the South African education system that mitigate against transformation.

Individuals are legitimated to enter classrooms as they move through their teaching practice experiences; so too, the classroom, despite differences and diversity, is constructed as the legitimate 'real' domain. Teaching practice, a central mechanism of teacher education, therefore, maintains and reproduces the nature of the South African education system. A limitation of the data collection method is that we were unable to ascertain from the institution or the education department the extent to which they have impressed on student teachers the need to change classroom conditions. What we learned from student experiences, however, is that their teaching practice is valid irrespective of the diversity and differences they experienced therein.

Teacher education in South Africa has its origin in the establishment of schools by colonial missions. Since then, teacher education has focused only on producing teachers for schools emanating from colonisation. To the extent to which schools differ by class, intersected by race from South Africa's colonial and apartheid past, teacher education is a mechanism for maintaining the nature of the education system. Formally qualified teachers in South Africa cannot conceive of themselves in the absence of school classrooms; those wishing to become formally qualified teachers envision the school classroom as their legitimate 'real' abode. In the Western Cape, WIL or teaching practice occurs only within school classrooms and schools.

This means that the process of learning to teach, as it relates to the teacher education programmes in which the study participants are enrolled, does not engage student teachers in any behaviour which might challenge existing social inequalities as embedded in education. However, while this analysis does depress the extent to which social transformation *may* be possible through teachers in education, teachers are not agents of peace and social justice as many hope to be (Sayed et al. 2017; Pantic 2015); they are agents of pedagogic authority who legitimate inequality within the South African education system rather than transform the nature thereof. Critical pedagogies (Freire 1970; Giroux 1988; Apple 2006) do not disrupt the position of teachers as pedagogic authorities because they do not disrupt the pedagogic action of education systems. The aim of critical pedagogies is to expect teachers to undermine the authority with which they have been vested. While this may lead to individuals challenging the values of an education system, it is unlikely to do so in a manner that transforms the education system in South Africa, a transformation that disrupts inequalities.

The analysis of teaching practice in this article illustrates that while the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers, so too the qualities its teachers regarded as legitimate cannot exceed the qualities of the education system wherein they learn to teach. This tautological conundrum has insightful implications for how teaching practice as a central mechanism of teacher education might be reimagined. One has to reimagine the process to circumvent obvious tautological obstructions.

For us, the analysis suggests that, as individuals, teachers would have little hope of systemically shifting the nature of their position. As a collective, however, teachers might be able to force a shift if not completely disrupt the status quo within the education system. Teacher education institutions are well positioned to imbibe a sense of collectivity within the next generations of teachers. Working collectively, teacher education institutions could inject a sense of illegitimacy with regards to the nature of inequality during the process of learning to teach, in order to disturb the acceptance of inequality in contemporary education. For example, if teacher education institutions refused to assess student teachers in classrooms that are overcrowded or at schools that lack fencing for safety, this could potentially delegitimise these conditions. Moreover, teacher education institutions could encourage a greater sense of collectivity among student teachers and inculcate them with the power of 'togetherness' and 'collective action'. For example, when inadequate conditions are identified, student teachers could be encouraged, under the auspices of the institution, to report the conditions to the Education Department or even organise a campaign to address the problem constructively.

Once inequality is delegitimised and student teachers learn to act in concert, teacher collusion may disrupt conditions, which would spark a transformation in the nature of the South African education system. At that point, we might move closer to 'creating a system which cultivates and liberates the talents of all our people' (DoE 1995:2). But as teacher education institutions themselves are circumscribed by teacher education policy, the extent to which these institutions may be able to initiate transformation in the education system of which they are a central part requires careful investigation.

Assessment outcomes are not randomly distributed between classrooms (and by implication, individual teachers), but by schools within the education system. Moreover, the distribution patterns distinguish between class and race. The statistical analysis thus confirms the need for a systemic shift in pedagogic action, similar to the theoretical propositions of Bourdieu and Passeron (1990). The analysis in this article reveals teacher education as a mechanism for maintaining and reproducing unequal differences, not disrupting it. Expecting individual teachers who are legitimated within the system to disrupt the system is disingenuous at the least. Teacher education institutions could, however, work collectively to encourage disruption and consequent transformation. The inherent and widely accepted inequality that the system reproduces needs disruption at its root, in the political and economic processes that maintain the social structure of neoliberal capitalist societies; one such process is learning to teach, in which teaching practice is a central mechanism.

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Dimensions of University Governance and Community Relations in Ghana

Edmond Akwasi Agyeman*, Emmanuel M. J. Tamanja**
& Bernard B. B. Bingab***

Abstract

This article examines the dimensions of university governance and community relations among five public universities in Ghana. It focuses on how the universities exercise their corporate social responsibility within the communities where they are located. Place building theory was used for analysis. Key informant interviews were conducted within the research areas. Findings from the study show that there are agitations from the universities' host communities demanding greater social responsibility and engagement. However, whereas some of the universities have developed an interdependent orientation, others have adopted an independent perspective with respect to their surrounding communities. The article recommends that a multi-stakeholder approach involving the universities, surrounding communities, government institutions and other third sector organisations is required to address the developmental needs of the communities.

Keywords: public universities, Ghana, governance, community relations

Résumé

Cet article examine les dimensions de gouvernance universitaire et les relations communautaires dans cinq universités publiques du Ghana. Il étudie la manière dont les universités exercent leur responsabilité sociale d'entreprise au sein des communautés où elles sont implantées. La théorie de construction des lieux a été utilisée dans l'analyse. Des entrevues avec des informateurs-clés ont été menées dans les lieux de recherche. Les résultats de l'étude montrent une agitation latente dans les communautés d'accueil des universités qui réclame

* University of Education, Winneba. Email: kwasikyei2004@hotmail.com; eaagyeman@uew.edu.gh
** University of Education, Winneba. Email: etamanja13@gmail.com; etamanja@uew.edu.gh
*** University of Education, Winneba. Email: bbingab@googlemail.com

davantage de responsabilité sociale et d'engagement. Cependant, alors que certaines universités ont développé une orientation d'interdépendance, d'autres ont adopté une perspective d'indépendance à l'égard de leurs communautés environnantes. L'article recommande une approche multipartite impliquant les universités, les communautés environnantes, les institutions gouvernementales et d'autres organisations du secteur tertiaire dans la réponse aux besoins de développement des communautés.

Mots-clés : universités publiques, Ghana, gouvernance, relations communautaires

Introduction

This article focuses on university governance and community relations in Ghana. It examines the extent to which public universities in Ghana address questions associated with their social responsibility towards the communities where they are located in order to ensure peaceful co-existence and mutual benefit. Universities, just like all other organisations, have an environment in which they operate, that is, local community stakeholders, whose interest must be important to the university. This is so because, unlike in earlier times when the basic functions of universities were mainly teaching, learning and research, modern universities have an additional obligation to render services to their host communities (Jongbloed, Enders and Salerno 2008; McLaughlin 2006). In line with this new agenda, some universities have established strong business and social partnerships with the surrounding communities, while others have extended community engagement through a variety of support activities. The new direction is premised on the assumption that the ivory tower fever of universities has been superseded (Weinberg and Kistner 2007; Cross and Ndofirepi 2016).

Currently, there are nine public universities in Ghana. At the time of the establishment of these universities, the local communities where these institutions are located had high expectations that the proximity of the universities would offer them opportunities for upward social mobility and socio-economic development through access to higher education and more rewarding job opportunities. This was also premised on the fact that the establishment of universities in Ghana came at a high cost to these local communities that forfeited their land for such grand projects (Kwarteng, Boadi Siaw and Dwarko 2012; Kaburise 2003; Agbodeka 1998). In many instances, local communities willingly forfeited their land because they had the expectation that university engagement with community businesses and industry would improve the local economy. Moreover, the acts establishing the universities had community engagement and development embedded in them.

In many instances, however, there have been tensions between Ghanaian universities and their host communities. Host communities have accused universities of exclusion, neglect and reneging on their social responsibility. In some cases, host community members have perceived the universities to be distant and elitist, thus serving the interest of only the privileged in society. In recent times, these issues have generated tensions and conflicts between universities and local community members in Ghana. Due to the many faces of the universities, this article focuses on governance issues and addresses the following questions: What governance systems and practices have been put in place by the universities to address the needs of the local communities? What form of relations/engagement exist between the universities and their surrounding communities? How do these relations/engagement lead to the improvement of the socio-economic wellbeing of the local communities?

The main objective was to examine the dimensions of the relations between public universities in Ghana and their host communities and the implications of such relations. The focus was on the kinds of engagements that universities have developed with their host communities and whether or not these engagements address the needs and expectations of the host communities. Specifically, the article analyses the governance systems of public universities in Ghana and how they accommodate and address the needs of their host communities.

The article is structured in five main parts. Part one focuses on the theoretical framework. This is followed by the methodology in part two. In part three, we look at the profiles of the public universities under examination. Part four of the work focuses on university governance systems and approaches to community engagement. The article ends with findings and conclusions.

Theoretical framework

This article is grounded on the place building theory advanced by David F. Thomas (2004) to assess the corporate social responsibility of organisations. The theory 'explains the degree to which an organization values and invests in its social and geographical location, and its "local community"' (Kimball and Thomas 2012:19). According to this theory, an organisation's perspective on the place in which it is physically located goes a long way to determine its attitude towards the place, how it exercises its corporate social responsibility and the level of impact it makes on the place.

There are three key components underlying place building theory. These include: place building dimension, agent perspective, and place building profile (Thomas, Kimball and Suhr 2016). The place building dimension

of the theory examines how an organisation values the place where it is physically located based on five items, namely: nature; social relationships; material environment; ethics; and economic relationships. Nature includes everything about the natural environment where the organisation is located, including land, natural resources, landscape, fauna and flora and how the organisation values, relates and contributes to nature and the environment. The social relations dimension focuses on the spectrum of interaction between the organisation's staff and stakeholders with other organisations and the local community members and its institutions, culture and values. The material environment dimension, also referred to as the 'built environment', includes all man-made assets of the organisation such as office space, building and road infrastructure. The value placed by the organisation on these structures in relation to the local community reflects how the organisation values its host community. The ethics dimension of the theory focuses on the organisation's business practices and how they implicitly or explicitly affect its social contract with the people and how it establishes its legitimacy within the community where it operates. The economic relationship dimension focuses on the level of investment by the organisation in the physical wellbeing of the community (Thomas 2004; Kimball and Thomas 2012; Thomas, Kimball and Suhr 2016).

The agent component of the theory focuses on how the organisation perceives itself in relation to the local community. The agent perspective 'encompass[es] not only how organizations conceptualize themselves in relation to place, but also the meaning they give to a place, which then influences their goals, contributions to place and all variety of their behavior' (Thomas, Kimball and Suhr 2016:21). In line with this theory we have interrogated how the universities in this study conceptualised themselves in relation to the community either as interdependent or independent. If they conceptualised themselves as interdependent, they would certainly consider themselves members and integral parts of the surrounding communities and therefore mutually dependent on each other. Thomas Kimball and Suhr suggest that such 'organisations consider themselves responsible for the well-being of the place, view their success as intimately tied with the greater well-being of the place, and actively seek a variety of opportunities to invest and contribute to the multiple aspects of place' (2016:22). If they position themselves as independent, on the other hand, they regard themselves as mere occupants of the place where they operate. Such organisations focus mainly on achieving their institutional goals, satisfying their shareholders and not as directly or indirectly responsible for the wellbeing of their

communities. Independent organisations behave as mere occupants of place. They demand legal protections from the state and their only contribution to the place is provision of jobs and payment of taxes or royalties.

There are four place building profiles of an organisation which are determined by how the organisation expresses its agent perspective and place building dimension. They are transformational, contributive, contingent and exploitative. Transformational organisations identify themselves as change agents and act to improve the wellbeing of the people in places where they operate. Contributive organisations invest and contribute towards the wellbeing of the places where they are located. Contingent organisations, on the other hand, view themselves simply as 'participants' in the place where they are located, while exploitative organisations also position themselves as independent agents that have little or no obligation towards the place where they are located (Thomas, Kimball and Suhr 2016).

In line with place building theory, this study examined how public universities in Ghana orient themselves in relation to the places where they are located. The article examines whether the universities take interdependent or independent agency roles in relation to the communities and the manner in which the universities promote peaceful co-existence with the communities.

The proposition/hypothesis is that, universities that accommodate and address the needs and concerns of their host communities are more likely to succeed in delivering on their mandate than those that do not incorporate the needs and concerns of their host communities. This proposition is tested by examining the governance, management structures and practices of the universities studied in line with the key components of the place building dimension, agent perspective, and place building profile.

In this article, university–community relations encompass all the relationships and networks that universities develop with the wider community where they are located. Community is viewed as a social space where there are interactions and interconnections at interpersonal and institutional levels among members. In this sense, members are expected to demonstrate concern, or systems are supposed to function, for the wellbeing of others in order to advance the common good and to ensure that there is community life. It involves a geographical space which, for the universities, can be seen on three levels, namely: local, national and international community. By university governance and community relations we refer to all policies, structures, activities and initiatives put in place to ensure constant interaction between the university and the wider society.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research methodology, making use of data in the form of words to generate descriptions and explanations (Bangura 2019). A narrative design, focusing on a single phenomenon and the setting of participants (Shisanya 2019:55), was used. The design enabled us to focus on the perspective of engagement and relations between the university and host community members. The design also allowed for the creation of a platform for in-depth discussions of the issues in order to gain insights regarding the effectiveness of university–community relations.

Primary data was obtained through 73 in-depth interviews with key informants. These took place within a period of six months (from June to December 2018) on the campuses and in the communities of five public universities. These include the University of Ghana (UG), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), University of Cape Coast (UCC), University for Development Studies (UDS), and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW).

The first stage of the research involved mapping of the communities and identification of participants for interviews. A purposive non-random sampling technique was adopted for selection of participants and sites. For communities, land ownership and proximity were the determining factors, while for the interviewees, key informants who held some form of authority in decision making within both the communities and universities were sampled. Because some of the communities that gave out land to establish the universities are located far from these institutions, while others are located within the environs of the universities, we ensured that these two categories of communities were represented in the sample. For UG, six out of ten communities were sampled. These include Okponglo, Shiashie (located close to the university), and Ogbojo, Agbawe, Frafraha, Oyarefa and La (located far from UG). For KNUST, 19 communities were identified in all and four were sampled for interview. They include Ayigya and Bomso (close to the university), Boadi and Awomaso (distant from the university). For UCC, interviews were conducted in Amamoma, KwesiPra, Kokoado, Apewosika, Akotokyir and Kwaprow, all of which are located within the environs of the university. In UDS, interviews were conducted in Sanerigu, Dungu in Tamale Township, and Nyankpala. Interviews in UEW were limited to Winneba Township.

The interviews sought to unearth the relations, both structural and social, that exist between the communities and their respective universities. In addition, historical documents, reports and commissioned studies, the statutes and acts of the universities were examined to tease out the legal and policy frameworks of the universities that shape university–community relations. In

other to protect the identity of participants, pseudonyms have been used to identify them in this work. Themes were generated from the data for analysis.

Profile of study areas

UG and its communities

UG was established in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast. It was affiliated to the University of London until it gained full university status in 1961 (Agbodeka 1998). Its mission is 'to create an enabling environment that makes it increasingly relevant to national and global development through cutting-edge research as well as high quality teaching and learning' (UG 2014:9).

The university was sited at a hilly location called Legon, which in Ga language means the Hill of Knowledge. Land for the establishment of the university was acquired by the Colonial Government from the La Traditional Council. At the time of its establishment, the university's location was far away from Accra township and the other Ga communities. It was in later periods that towns and communities began to develop around it.

Due to Accra's position as the capital of Ghana, and later becoming a centre of learning for higher education in the late 1940s, the city began to experience rapid population growth as a result of large volumes of people migrating to Accra to seek white and blue collar jobs, higher education and to engage in trade and other forms of economic activities. These happenings led to rapid development of new settler communities in Accra and surrounding towns. In the light of this, new communities began to sprout around the surroundings of the University of Ghana. Today, these communities are East Legon, Okponglo, Haatsu, Shiashie and Atomic Junction. Some of them, such as East Legon, Haatsu and Shiashie are elite settlements while others, such as Okponglo and Shiashie, constitute some of Accra's poor neighbourhoods. Some of these communities have in recent times been at loggerheads with the university over land disputes and access roads which have in some cases ended up in court.

KNUST and its surrounding communities

KNUST was established in 1951 as the Kumasi College of Technology. It officially opened in 1952 when 200 teacher trainee students were transferred from Achimota in Accra to form the nucleus of the new college (Pitcher 1976). The mission of the university is to provide an environment for teaching, research and entrepreneurship training in science and technology for the industrial and socio-economic development of Ghana, Africa, and other nations.

The university is located at Kumasi and its lands were offered by the Asante King, the late Otumfuo Sir Agyeman Prempeh II. In all, about 11 square miles of land, belonging to several communities stretching from Bomso to Awumaso, was involved. The communities include Kwamo, Fumasua, Ayeduase, Kotei, Ayigya, Ahinsan, Kantinkrono, Oduom, Deduako, Awumaso, Benimase, Bebre, Jinyase, Bomso No. 1, Domeabra, Boadi and Kronpong. The traditional authority of the afore-mentioned towns and villages received an offer of £3,500 as 'drink money' for the acquisition of the site for the Kumasi College of Technology. However, from 2002 the communities staged series of protests against the university demanding equal access, extension of social amenities, greater social responsibility and recognition. In addition, the university has since encountered land litigation issues with some of the community chiefs and individuals. These events have forced the university to reorient its relations with the communities and set up what is known as the Surrounding Villages Committee (SVC) to oversee the university's relations with the communities.

UCC and its surrounding communities

UCC was established in 1962 as a University College and placed in a special relationship with the University of Ghana, Legon. It attained the status of a university in 1971. Its original mandate was to train graduate professional teachers for Ghana's second cycle institutions and for the Ministry of Education, in order to meet the labour needs of the country's accelerated education programme at the time. However, with the expansion of some of its faculties and the diversification of programmes, the university has since extended its mandate to meet the demands of other sectors of the economy, apart from education.

Unlike the UG and KNUST, UCC shares the same geographical space with several poor rural communities. They include Amamoma, KwesiPra, Kokoado, Apewosika, Akotokyir, Kwaprow, Abora, Ankafor and Nkofor. Greater portions of the university's student population and staff live in these communities. This has put a lot of pressure on land usage, estate, and social amenities of these communities. These communities are at the centre of various forms of litigation with the university over the ownership of the land. The original intention of Kwame Nkrumah, the founder of the university, was to expropriate the communities' lands for the university and relocate and/or compensate them, but this was never materialised until his overthrow in 1966 (Kwarteng, Boadi Siaw and Dwarko 2012). As a result, the communities and the university share the same geographical space. However, due to

the university`s ownership claim over the lands, the communities have not been able to expand. Poverty levels are high and the traditional economic activity of the indigenes, which was farming, has largely been curtailed by the presence of the university. This has generated a great deal of tension between the university and these communities.

UEW and its surrounding communities

UEW was established in September 1992 from seven pre-existing diploma awarding institutions 'to train competent professional teachers for all levels of education as well as conduct research, disseminate knowledge and contribute to educational policy and development' (UEW 2019:3). It has four campuses, located in Winneba, Ajumako, Kumasi and Mampong.

Like UCC, the Winneba campus of the university where this research was conducted is located in the heart of Winneba Township. The university has four further campuses in other parts of the country. Traditionally, the main economic activity of the people of Winneba is fishing. However, with the establishment of the university, several businesses including trade, hostel services and transport services are booming. But due to their dependence on the university, they are faced with several degrees of seasonality challenges. Businesses boom only when school is in session. Living standards among the local community members are generally low and the town is also known for being one of the epicentres of child trafficking and child labour in Ghana. As a result, NGOs such as Challenging Heights and Plan Ghana have developed in the community to address this menace. The Winneba lands on which the campuses are located were compulsorily taken by the state during Nkrumah's regime. In 2017, a native of Winneba took the university to court to challenge the legality of the university's governing council. He further accused the university of reneging on its social responsibility by denying the local community members fair access to university jobs and admissions as well as contracts to local companies.

UDS and its surrounding communities

UDS, unlike the other public universities, was established with a peculiar focus of helping to address the development challenges of the regions in northern Ghana. As a result, the university was strategically designed to blend academia with communities. Established in May 1992 by PNDC Law 279, the university began its academic work in September 1993 with the first batch of 39 students admitted into the Faculty of Agriculture at

Nyankpala. The vision of UDS is 'to be a home of world class pro-poor scholarship'. In accordance with this vision, 'the University's principal objective is to address and find solutions to the environmental problems and the socio-economic deprivations that have characterized northern Ghana' (UDS 2017:6; Manuh, Gariba and Budu 2007:166). By its vision, the university provides an important example of interaction between the university and society with the view to improving the latter. In the light of the above, the university runs a university–community interface academic programme, which is a combination of academic and community-based field practical work known as the Third Trimester Field Practical Programme (TTFPP). Currently, the university has four satellite campuses spread out in the three northern regions of Ghana.

Our fieldwork was limited to the campuses in the northern region, namely Tamale and Nyankpala. The Tamale campus has Sanerigu and Dungu as well as Tamale Township as its immediate communities whereas the Nyankpala campus has Nyankpala and Kumbugu as its immediate communities. The land on which the Nyankpala campus is located was acquired by the state and used as the site for the then Agricultural Mechanization Centre and later for the Nyankpala Agricultural College before being transformed into a university. However, the campus in Tamale, which hosts the main administration of the university and the Medical School, was freely given for the establishment of the university by the Chief of Sanerigu, the paramount chief of the traditional area. Generally, living standards in these communities are low, just as is the case in most communities in northern Ghana.

Governance systems and place building perspective of the universities studied

In this section, we examine how the universities position themselves with regard to the surrounding communities, i.e. whether they perceive themselves as independent or as interdependent, and the emerging kinds of relationships as well as the implications for the two parties – the institutions and the communities. In doing so, we pay particular attention to the presence or absence of enabling governance arrangements, administrative structures, the key stakeholders involved in them and their roles, positive or negative efforts from the universities towards building their places and strengthening common spaces with their communities, or in other words, the level of permeability of the university to community members (Etzkowitz 2012). We scrutinise the achievements in this regard and prevailing perceptions about them.

Perspective of independence, unilateralism and mistrust/tensions

Sifuna (2014) has argued that after independence African universities were designated as 'development universities', with the task to help advance the socio-economic development of their home countries. Sifuna observed that these kind of 'expectations stressed the key responsibility of the university as an institution serving its society in direct, immediate and practical ways that could lead to the improved well-being of the people' (2014: 127). However, most of the universities failed to 'emerge as development universities' due to the various degrees of internal, structural and political challenges that they faced over time. Perhaps one of the reasons also lay in the way the universities perceived themselves with respect to place.

In the case of Ghana, the governance system inherited by the universities from the University of London, whereby the universities derive their powers from the statutes and the acts establishing them, excludes local community engagement. Instead, a bicameral model made up of a council and academic board and their sub-committees has the prerogative in the governance of the universities (Agbodeka 1998).

Evidence from our study showed that some of the public universities stress their autonomy in relationship to surrounding communities. As a result, they have not put measures in place to engage their neighbouring communities as part of their social responsibility. This perspective was strongly evident in three of the five universities studied, namely UG, UCC and UEW:

> our responsibility as a public institution has from the beginning been country-wide and not focused closely on the immediate environment…. We have a public institution that, I think in the minds of those who bequeathed it to us, was meant to equal any of the best in the world, and I think, as at the time that I was at the university, Legon ranked among the best in Africa and worldwide (KK, former registrar, UG).

> The monies that we collect, immediately they enter the university coffers, they are public money. And so, anything that we were doing, we needed to be very careful. That's the way I saw it … frankly speaking, as I sit here, I don't know what exactly it is that the university should do for such a community. Because our resources can't cater for that. I'm not too sure that even Legon can do it. What sort of relationship should happen between Legon and Accra? Legon will be swallowed up (WW, former VC, UEW).

> Well, I think that if the university decides to engage with the communities formally it's going to run into a serious problem because there will be all sorts of demands which the university will not be able to meet. And another thing is that we are already providing education for the people of Ghana and not only for the people from the immediate communities (AA, senior academic, UG).

The general understanding among the senior university management staff we interviewed was that the universities are meant to perform a national agenda and to compete internationally, and for that matter it was not the business of the university to enter into community development projects. Another reason was the fear that the universities are likely to be overwhelmed with all sorts of demands once they open up to the surrounding communities. Therefore, not only do the three universities entertain an independent institutional approach with respect to the surrounding communities, but they hope to remain so.

Due to agitations from the surrounding communities, these universities have, in their various capacities, instituted some interventions to mediate the situation. For UG, some protocol admissions have been offered to the La chiefs. UCC has also established a committee known as the Joint University–Community Consultative Committee, made up of representatives from the communities (most of whom are traditional leaders) and staff of the university. However, people in the communities regard the committee as ineffective and manipulative. It is seen by them as serving the interest of the university at the expense of the communities. Some believe these representatives are used by the university to communicate its decisions and policies to the communities, without actually engaging them. These concerns were buttressed by the following narratives by some community members:

> We have the chief and his elders here who are members of the committee, but we don't know if they are able to dialogue with the university and I don't think they do because if they did, we would know what the outcome has been (Yaw, retired educationist, Amamoma).

> Our members on the committee are supposed to meet the community and tell them the discussions that they have with the Vice-Chancellor and his people, but very often that doesn't happen (Kofi, former assembly member, Apewusika).

UEW, on the other hand, has responded to agitations by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the local community. In addition, the paramount chief of Winneba has been appointed onto the university's governing council. However, some of the senior university staff interviewed held that once the universities formalise their relationships with the surrounding communities, they are likely to run into problems. In this sense, therefore, remaining independent could be seen here as a governance and administrative strategy by the universities, but this posture also generates various degrees of mistrust and tensions between the universities and their communities.

Perspective of interdependence, engagement and mutual benefits

Two of the universities studied, namely UDS and KNUST, have developed an interdependent orientation with respect to the surrounding communities. For UDS, this is mainly found in their curriculum and community outreach programme which is tied to the main vision of the university, to transform the economies of northern Ghana. KNUST on the other hand, adopted community engagement initiatives from 2002 after agitations from the surrounding communities.

UDS has an outreach training programme known as TTFPP where the communities are used not only as field laboratories but as beneficiaries for the training of students. The objective and substance of the programme was explained during an interaction with a senior university staff as follows:

> The thinking behind the TTFPP is that, usually, people see university as an ivory tower that is sitting somewhere far from the rest of the community.... So, the essence is that the community is also important and not going there for the sake of going there. We can learn from them and they can also learn from us as a university. You know, the students go there to learn. It's a field laboratory for students. The students who go into the community come from different disciplines and they go in groups…. The motive is that, community issues are multi-faceted, so you send people of different backgrounds and they are able to tease out these issues better and everybody will look at a particular issue with regard to his or her own lessons based on the background. The idea is that before they come out, they might have looked at the community in a holistic manner and the information they get will be comprehensive enough. They conduct background studies, profile the development challenges of the communities and develop interventions to solve such challenges. Some of the reports have been shared with institutions and have resulted in solving water problems and the provision of infrastructure in some communities. In short that is what is happening (Director of the TTFPP).

There is a department which coordinates the UDS outreach programme headed by a professor. The programme ensures that students not only learn from the communities, but are also able to initiate interventions to address identified development challenges with the community members (Kwoyiga and Apusigah 2019). The goal is to integrate host community needs in university education while at the same time helping to build good relations and training students who will be sensitive and responsive to community issues, be development agents and have the capacity to help improve living standards in society (Kwoyiga and Apusigah 2019; Kaburise 2003). The UDS approach is similar to what was practised at Saint Francis Xavier University at the beginning of the twentieth century, which later

came to be known as the Antigonish movement, blending adult education, cooperatives, microfinance and rural community development to help small resource-based communities improve their economic and social circumstances (Irving 2014).

Similarly, KNUST has initiated series of engagement initiatives with the surrounding communities under the oversight of the Surrounding Villages Committee which was established in 2003. The committee constitutes 20 village representatives (Chiefs and Queen Mothers) and is chaired by a senior academic, who is also a paramount chief and an employee of the university. It was established as a result of agitations from the communities demanding greater social responsibility from the university:

> In 2003, the university had problems with the surrounding villages. They were agitating for support from the university. They felt the university was not doing much to support their communities, so we had some attacks from one of these communities where they spoilt some flower pots as they marched to the main administration. The Vice Chancellor at the time asked for my opinion. I said the people do not have a forum or channel where they can freely express their concerns…. He had this discussion with me in the morning, the following day he asked me to constitute a committee for surrounding villages of which I was made the chairman (AA, senior academic staff, KNUST).

Besides the committee serving as a medium for community heads to channel their grievances to the university, it has also enabled the university to initiate several social interventions in the communities, including protocol admissions, extension of electricity supply, construction of access roads, provision of ICT equipment, cordially agreed security and safety measures, and many others.

KNUST has since 2006 appointed the Asante Monarch, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II as chancellor. Only in the case of KNUST do we have a traditional ruler being appointed to the highest governance position in a Ghanaian public university. For the university, his appointment was strategic to enhance university–community relations:

> The Academic Board, Council Select Committee … preferred his candidature because of the link between himself and the government, and, at the same time, the link between himself and the traditional authority here. That is why I said earlier that it was strategic. If this decision was not strategically considered, we would have run into a host of problems (AB, former vice chancellor, KNUST).

Additionally, KNUST has introduced adult education programmes, some of which are targeting traditional heads of the communities. For example, the Centre for Cultural and African Studies has designed new academic

programmes aimed at building the leadership capacity of traditional rulers. These include MPhil, MA, Postgraduate Certificates, and Certificate of Participation in Chieftaincy and Traditional Leadership Studies. These programmes are highly patronised by traditional leaders. For instance, the Chief of Boadi and the Queen mother of Bomso whom we interviewed had enrolled in the programme. Also, the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development unit of the university was established purposely to identify and address the development deficits of rural communities. Moreover, some departments of KNUST use the surrounding communities as their training laboratories.

Theory and evidence from the studied areas

Place building theory identifies five areas, namely: nature, social relationships, material/built environment, ethics, and economic relationships where organisations have to make interventions as part of their corporate social responsibility. However, some authorities of the public universities argued that it was not within their mandate to venture into infrastructure development in the communities.

In addition, it appeared that public universities in Ghana have divergent motivations for extending relations to the communities. Whereas for some, the main objective for engaging with surrounding communities is for the purposes of place building, for others it is to ensure healthy and peaceful co-existence. Areas where we found the universities extending their services to surrounding communities included education, employment, outreach and privileges given to traditional rulers for various reasons and motivations.

Access to education

Etzkowitz (2012) has observed that making university boundaries permeable to community members is one of the key tenets of university–community relations and services that universities render to society. Moreover, in the case of Ghana access to university education remains a strong concern due to limited facilities (Kwarteng, Boadi Siaw and Dwarko 2012; Manuh, Gariba and Budu 2007; Gasu 2018). Therefore, in response to tensions and conflicts between universities and their neighbouring communities, some of the universities have instituted admission quotas and scholarships to the benefit of local community members. Among the five universities, KNUST and UG run an admissions quota system for their local communities, whereas the rest do not. However, the motivation for doing so is not the same for the two institutions. In the case of KNUST, which provides four admission slots to each traditional ruler of the surrounding

communities during each academic year, these are to maintain cordial relations and to address the needs of the disadvantaged in the communities. Also, the university, through the MasterCard Foundation, has established a scholarship scheme to support needy but brilliant students to enable them to complete their studies. The main purpose is to ensure educational inclusion. In the case of UG, which provides 15 admission slots to the La Traditional Council every academic year, the main purpose is to placate the La Traditional Council in response to their claim over some university lands:

> Okponglo is a recent development. Before Okponglo we had Bawaleshie and of course we had the La, Osu people who had sovereignty over the lands. So much later we developed some association with the people of La largely because they were being a little prickly or trying to milk the university for funds; that is, financial resources. At one time we tried to 'encash' our land area by letting portions out for commercial development: gas filling stations and so on, and the La people came up with all kinds of 'legal arguments' on these lands. Even though it is our right as the land was properly acquired and gazetted. They came up with very serious argument that they gave us the lands to establish an educational institution and not for commercial purposes. So, we entered into some dialogue [with them] and reached some arrangement whereby we would grant them a small [admission] quota (WW, former registrar, UG).

Another area of importance concerning access to university education is the basic schools that are established and run by the universities. Indeed, apart from UDS all the other four universities run basic schools. Because of their nature as university basic schools, they keep higher standards and children who gain admission into these schools have greater chances of progressing to the university. In the KNUST basic school, admission is open to children from the surrounding communities. In addition, the school's strategy is to ensure that there is inclusion and due recognition given to community demands. This was clear during an interaction with the director of the KNUST basic school:

> because the school is situated in an environment of some towns, we work with them. During admissions we consider them not actually saying that we are giving a quota to people of this nature or that. Sometimes you get the chiefs coming in saying 'this is from my palace or this is somebody in our community we value so much. We wish that the person will get admission in your school'. And after our normal entrance exam even if the person doesn't pass we find a way of admitting the child (Director of Basic School, KNUST, Kumasi).

However, at the UG basic school, a quota is applied for children of surrounding communities. Apart from that, non-university staff and parents from the surrounding communities pay more for their wards than university staff. However, this was the reaction by one of the chiefs:

> University primary? You can't even get admission there. … Their children are the ones going. The people of Okponglo don't get admissions over there (EK, traditional leader, Okponglo).

For the UCC basic school, we found that admission was open to community members, but, surprisingly, the school has five different streams, from 'A' to 'E', where students are placed based on performance. As a result, stream A constitutes the best performing students and it is the best performing Junior High School in the central region, whereas stream E of the same school is made up of the least performing students and is, thus, one of the worse performing schools in the region. At UEW, even though the basic schools are christened as 'University Practice Schools', they are managed by the Ghana Education Service through the Municipal Education Office, except the Pre-School at the North Campus. As a result, the university has not helped to raised standards in its Practice Schools. Therefore, with regards to the university basic schools, we see that only KNUST has developed an inclusive approach. The approaches of both UCC and UG represent a segregationist mentality of distancing universities from communities.

Local economy and employment

The fact that large tracks of land were required to establish each of the public universities has denied many local community members the land upon which, being originally peasant farmers, their livelihood depended. The communities that have been affected most include those of UCC and KNUST. However, the presence of the university has also opened a lot of economic opportunities including estate development and hostel services, petty trading, food vending, provision stores, transport services and other forms of businesses. The economy of Winneba, for example, is largely reliant on the university. This was evident during the interviews:

> We have been depending solely on the sea for our livelihood…. The only thing we had which supported the economy of Winneba and the nearby towns was the Pomadze Poultry Enterprise which Nkrumah started…. What also became prominent in Winneba was the Specialist Training College. Art teachers venturing into ceramics and that also made Winneba very popular. All 'chop bars' and restaurants were coming to Winneba to buy ceramic

bowls. Suddenly the Chinese brought their plastic bowls of various degrees of beauty and quality so the ceramics industry collapsed…. Fishing gradually is becoming an endangered occupation. Life in Winneba hasn't been so good … poverty is significant in Winneba. Fortunately, University of Education, Winneba (UEW) was established. UEW became the primary employer (Traditional head-1, Winneba).

The right of access to university jobs was one of the most contentious issues existing between the public universities and their local community members. The nature of some university jobs is such that only highly qualified persons can access them, though one can argue that it is the same universities which have the responsibility to train and develop people to enable them to have the needed qualifications to access such jobs. In any case, some community members felt the fact that the university was located in their neighbourhood gave them rights over others to access university jobs:

I was employed by the University because I qualified. It was advertised, I applied, got interviewed and was eventually selected. People think being an indigene is a guarantee for employment even if they are not qualified (Kwame, Winneba Municipal Assembly).

In order to address the situation, each of the five universities has a different recruitment policy or practice in relation to their local communities. In most cases, there is some level of informal discrimination in favour of indigenes, particularly for jobs that need lesser or no qualifications. Yet in most cases, community members are not satisfied with university recruitment practices. At UDS, for example, the director of works indicated that about 60 per cent of the casual workers are recruited from its surrounding communities. This, he indicated, was meant to improve the living conditions of the people. However, sentiments of community members during the interviews were contrary to the views of the director as expressed in the following:

Some of our people work there, but how many are they? The chief has made us to write to them and we have even followed up on them but no way. Dungu chief should have been considered for a quota every year but there is nothing like that. The youth from here go there to seek jobs but they are not given. But where they are was where we used to farm. We always get the information that they recruit their employees from elsewhere. This is a problem for us. You (researcher) have to let them know our stance. The youth must take care of the elders, but if their lands have been given to you and you will not also give them jobs to do, how can they take care of them? (Mahama, community leader, Dungu, Tamale).

At UCC, community members complained of lack of access to university jobs. Some complained university jobs for community members were

menial, demeaning and the least rewarding. The following interviews elucidate the point:

> Because most of our people are illiterates, they don't employ us. They say we don't have the qualification … so, for jobs, no. Even labourers who weed, we are not given the opportunity to work in the university. Anyway, there are a few who work there as labourers and cleaners. But is that what we call jobs? You can't tell anyone that you work in the university as a labourer or cleaner and they will respect you. How much will they pay you? Very small salary when they are taking fat, fat salaries and buying big cars and building big houses (Kwaku, Akotokyir, UCC).

> Now, many of us don't have work to do. The little piece of land that some people are able to get is what they use for their subsistence farming. The university even fails to employ majority of the young people from this town…. Some of those in authority at the university bring people from their hometowns to employ them. They claim that our people do not like to work (Kojo, community leader, Amamona, UCC).

Some community members mentioned that one reason why they are unable to access university jobs is the stereotypical perceptions that the university authority has developed about the indigenes. This is shown in the interview below:

> The UCC farm unit, the agriculture department, has not helped at all…. They employ labourers all the time from other places and yet they refuse to employ common labourers from this town. Meanwhile farming is what people do in this town for a living. It is very bad. I went there to challenge them. What they told me was that people from this village will steal the farm produce when they go to work there (Kwaku, Akotokyir, community leader, UCC).

Among the public universities studied, it was at KNUST where community members expressed favourable sentiments about the university regarding access to employment. The following are the views expressed by some of the community leaders:

> Oh, I have presented a lot of them. For instance, security, cleaners, etc. … You can work in the office if only you qualify. Over there, your CV and certificate speaks on your behalf since the university is made up of highly educated professors and doctorate holders (Queen mother, Bomso, KNUST).

> Yes of course. Many people from the surrounding communities are working at various levels and sectors of the university. For instance, one Mr Mike who was a neighbour was working in the university. He has passed on, but one of his children has been employed after his death (Nana K., Ayigya, KNUST, Kumasi).

It should be added that the communities that are located close to KNUST have benefitted a great deal with respect to the development of small and medium size businesses, and hostel services, with the exception of Ayigya, which, unfortunately, has not experienced much transformation over the years. Some of the universities also engage in various forms of outreach programmes, which do not necessarily have the surrounding communities as their main focus. At KNUST, for example, there is a periodic health outreach to offer health screening, education and treatment to communities. The Department of Planning through the Spatial Planning for Regions in Growing Economies (SPRING) programme helps communities in selected districts to prepare their development plans as part of the training of students on the programme. Students pursuing health and engineering related programmes also undertake hospital and industrial attachments in the communities. These actions are also replicated at UG and UCC for students in health sciences. UEW also has a one semester internship programme for its final year students. However, these initiatives are more practical training programmes for students than clear social intervention strategies of the universities.

Towards healthy university–community co-existence through a multi-stakeholder approach

Bender (1988) has noted that universities have had contrasting relationships with their surrounding communities over the centuries. Whereas at times universities have been defined and sustained by their host communities, in some situations, the very existence and survival of universities have been threatened by urban development. In addition, the key challenges confronting the public universities in Ghana include the definition of space, and the extent of engagement they should have with surrounding communities. Some of the institutions put their focus on national agenda as spelt out in the acts establishing such institutions, whereas others, depending on the exigencies of their times, have initiated some mitigating engagement initiatives with surrounding communities.

However, the growing pressure on the universities from their surrounding communities requires a strategy that could lead to a win-win situation for both the universities and their communities. Cox (2000:11) has argued that effective university–community engagement can address community development challenges, especially in the area of 'housing, education, health, economic development, job training or leadership development' through a multi-stakeholder partnership. The responsibility does not fall on the universities alone but it involves three sets of stakeholders. These, according to Cox (2000), include: (1) the community residents (people

who live in the communities and organised groups and associations which they have formed to represent their interests including: religious groups, schools, businesses, trade unions, property owners, and social services); (2) the university situated within the community; and (3) state institutions and other stakeholders that are or are not located within the neighbourhood (local government agencies and their leaders, state and regional development agencies and non-governmental organisations).

A multi-stakeholder approach will avoid a situation whereby the communities develop a dependency posture with respect to the universities. Rather, it will lead to a situation where responsibilities are shared among all parties involved in the process of community development. It requires a deep interaction between the faculty and students of the universities, the community members and relevant stakeholders, and the application of knowledge and ideas developed in the universities for the practical needs of society (Cross and Ndofirepi 2016).

Conclusion

In this article we sought to examine the kind of relationships that exist between public universities in Ghana and their surrounding communities. The study showed that out of the five universities studied, three have an independent attitude whereas two have an interdependent attitude with respect to their host communities. For universities that have an independent attitude, the general understanding among staff was that the universities are meant to perform a national agenda and that it was not their duty to enter into any form of engagement with the host communities. They also believed that by opening up to host communities, they are likely to be overwhelmed by demands that may adversely affect the universities' quest to achieve their mission and goal. However, universities that have taken such stance are saddled with several forms of tensions and conflicts with the surrounding communities that are demanding greater social responsibility from these universities. The strategy that the universities have adopted to manage the situation includes admission concessions to the communities, setting up of committees to oversee university–community relations, and the inclusion of prominent community leaders into governance positions.

Two of the universities studied, however, were found to have an interdependent orientation with respect to the host communities. These were UDS and KNUST. For UDS, the act establishing the university has played a key role in ensuring that it played an interdependent role with respect to the university. This is largely because the UDS was established with the mission to help transform the economies of communities in northern Ghana. As a

result, community engagement was built into its academic programmes and governance system right from the beginning. This has helped the university to directly engage the surrounding communities and impact on them. In the case of KNUST, three reasons account for its interdependent relations with the surrounding communities, namely, agitations for recognition and inclusion by the surrounding villages, the role of Asante monarchs, and the leadership styles of some of the vice chancellors of the university. In 2002, there were agitations by the surrounding communities which spurred the university to act quickly to address community demands. The university established the Surrounding Villages Committee to address the needs of the communities. This also shows that, as has been observed by Cox (2000), communities should not be seen as passive agents in university–community relations. Therefore, whereas place building theory appears to show that the organisation is the main agent of change (Thomas and Banning 2014; Thomas and Cross 2007), it seems to overlook, or sometimes underestimates, the agency role of the communities that can force organisations to alter their engagement perspectives in relation to the communities. Additionally, the roles Asante monarchs have played in the university have shaped the kind of relations that have developed between the university and the communities. At the time of establishing the university, the Asante king, Otumfuo Agyeman Prempeh II, took a personal interest in the project and appointed his nephew (a trained surveyor), who later succeeded him as Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, to lead the team for the survey of the lands meant for the university (Pitcher 1976). Today, the Asante King, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II is the chancellor of the university. In addition, most of the emblematic buildings at the university, including its library, are named after members of the Asante royal family. Therefore, the role and influence of the Asante monarchs and the recognition given them by the university are the factors that have helped build ties between the university and the surrounding communities. Finally, the leadership style of some KNUST vice chancellors also played a key role in university–community relations. Domfeh and Imhangbe (2019) have observed that justice and fairness are the hallmark of an 'ethical leader' and it is such leadership that can make a positive impact in society. For KNUST, the late Professor K. A. Andam who was vice chancellor of the university from 2002 to 2006 is credited for establishing the Surrounding Villages Committee to engage the surrounding communities and for introducing other social interventions such as special admission concessions for children from 'less endowed' schools and the Mastercard Foundation Scholarship for needy students which have been replicated in some universities in Ghana.

Based on the above observations, our hypothesis that universities that accommodate and address the needs and concerns of their host communities are more likely to succeed in delivering on their mandate appears to hold. Such relationship ensures mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence between universities and their host communities. We therefore recommend a multi-stakeholder approach where all parties including universities, communities, government institutions and other stakeholders bring their resources together to help address their community needs in a win-win situation.

Acknowledgements

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« Afrikki mwinda » :
Y'en a marre, Balai citoyen, Filimbi et Lucha – catalyseurs d'une dynamique transafricaine de l'engagement citoyen

Mamadou Dimé*, Pascal Kapagama**, Zakaria Soré***
& Ibrahima Touré****

Résumé

Cette contribution montre comment Filimbi et la Lucha en République démocratique du Congo, le Balai citoyen au Burkina Faso et Y'en a marre au Sénégal traduisent des permanences et des ruptures dans les processus, figures et modes de contestation sociopolitique et d'engagement citoyen en Afrique. S'appuyant sur une démarche qualitative, elle met l'accent sur une discussion des dimensions relevant du contexte national sur le projet sociopolitique porté par ces mouvements d'affirmation citoyenne. Elle discute des enjeux, des modalités d'articulation, des défis et des limites de la « transafricaine de l'indocilité » que ces mouvements désirent incarner et impulser. Elle étudie enfin l'ancrage idéologique de ces mouvements et les modalités de déclinaison de leurs actions politiques et de leurs conquêtes citoyennes.

Abstract

This contribution shows how Filimbi and Lucha in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Balai citoyen in Burkina Faso and Y'en a marre in Senegal translate permanencies and ruptures in the processes, figures and modes of sociopolitical

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*   Département de sociologie, Université Gaston Berger, Saint-Louis, Sénégal.
        Email : mamadou.dime@ugb.edu.sn
**   Département de sociologie, Université de Kinshasa, Kinshasa, République démocratique
        du Congo. Email : paskpgm@yahoo.fr
***   Département de sociologie, Université Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.
        Email : sorefils@gmail.com
****   Département de sociologie, Université Assane Seck, Ziguinchor, Sénégal.
        Email : ibrahima.toure@univ-zig.sn

contestation and civic engagement in Africa. Based on a qualitative approach, it focuses on a discussion of the dimensions of the national context on the socio-political project carried by these citizen movements. It discusses the issues, the modalities of articulation, the challenges and limits of the 'trans-African of indocility' that these movements want to incarnate and impulse. Finally, it studies the ideological anchoring of these movements and the methods of declining their political actions and their citizens' conquests.

Introduction

La décennie en cours est marquée dans certains pays africains par l'irruption sur la scène sociopolitique de mouvements citoyens. Leur caractère inédit, la singularité de leurs modes d'action et de rayonnement, la portée de leurs revendications et les figures qui leur ont donné naissance ont attiré les projecteurs médiatiques, mais aussi le regard des chercheurs. Cela, en raison de leur volonté de transcender les frontières nationales pour fédérer leurs actions et, à terme, de définir un agenda politique commun tout en apprenant les uns des autres. Ces mouvements citoyens occupent une place grandissante dans les épisodes de contestation et de mobilisation sociopolitiques. En tant qu'organisations collectives, ils se définissent par la façon dont ils énoncent et dénoncent des questions sociales, culturelles et politiques. Ils revendiquent de plus larges espaces de liberté et l'avènement de politiques publiques mieux articulées aux aspirations des populations. Ils exigent des modèles de gouvernance qui préservent les intérêts économiques des populations africaines en rompant avec les logiques néocoloniales de prédation des ressources.

Les jeunes sont les initiateurs de ces nouveaux mouvements sociaux que connaît le continent africain. Face à l'émergence de cette nouvelle forme de contestation, la riposte des autorités a oscillé entre violentes répressions, tentatives de corruption, d'infiltration, de diabolisation, de musellement, voire d'instrumentalisation, mais également d'ostracisme. Aujourd'hui, les pouvoirs publics sont souvent déroutés par les méthodes d'action et les stratégies d'organisation de ces mouvements sur le terrain. Ces derniers se démarquent par leur capacité à utiliser les opportunités qu'offrent les technologies de l'information et de la communication. Leurs stratégies de mobilisation, leur rayonnement, la diffusion de leurs slogans et leur organisation territoriale reposent pleinement sur l'usage stratégique des réseaux sociaux. Aussi n'est-il pas étonnant que l'une des stratégies répressives « soft », devant l'éventualité de périodes troubles, soit justement de couper l'Internet dans l'espoir de bloquer toute tentative de contestation à travers les réseaux sociaux.

Avec ces mouvements citoyens, les jeunesses africaines semblent marcher d'un énième pas dans la longue tradition de dissidence et d'indocilité dont les racines remontent à la période coloniale (Mamdani & Wamba Dia Wamba 1995 ; Mbembe 1992 ; Siméant 2013). Les dynamiques de contestation ont pris de l'épaisseur pendant le règne des partis uniques, mais surtout lors des moments de revendication pour l'instauration de la démocratie (périodes des conférences nationales en 1990 et 1991). Ces luttes ont servi de socle aux mouvements citoyens avec l'éclosion, à partir de 2011, d'une nouvelle génération d'activistes aux profils socioprofessionnels diversifiés, mais unis par leur volonté de trouver un ancrage idéologique dans le panafricanisme, l'utopie « sankariste » et la revitalisation des rêves des pères fondateurs (Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba, Julius Nyerere, Amilcar Cabral, Cheikh Anta Diop, etc.) ainsi que par leur désir de bâtir un réseau transafricain d'activisme politique.

La dynamique transafricaine d'indocilité et de dissidence est avant tout portée par les pionniers des mouvements d'engagement citoyen que sont Y'en a marre au Sénégal, le Balai citoyen au Burkina Faso et enfin la Lucha et Filimbi en République démocratique du Congo (RDC). En plus de leur caractère novateur, ces quatre mouvements ont été choisis pour la coïncidence de leurs périodes d'émergence relativement proches (début de la décennie 2010), la similitude des dynamiques de revendication, qui commencent par des questions de société suivies de l'aspiration à un profond renouvellement de l'élite politique et à une transformation des systèmes de gouvernance dans leurs pays respectifs. Les quatre mouvements sont également aujourd'hui engagés entre eux dans un processus de collaboration qui préfigure leur volonté de conférer une dimension panafricaine à leur combat.

D'ailleurs, la première édition de l'Université populaire de l'engagement citoyen (UPEC) a été organisée en juillet 2018 à Dakar sous l'impulsion des quatre mouvements. La participation de plus d'une vingtaine d'autres mouvements citoyens est révélatrice du profond désir de mise en place d'une dynamique panafricaine de lutte ainsi que d'un agenda de revendications et de modes d'action cherchant à faire fi des clivages linguistiques, des barrières nationales, des contingences des histoires nationales et des conjonctures politiques locales. À cette occasion, une plateforme panafricaine dénommée « Afrikki mwinda »[1] a été mise en place pour porter les messages de « ceux qui ont remplacé les armes par leurs voix, leurs balais et leurs sifflets pour la démocratie […] et placent la bonne gouvernance, la responsabilité de l'État et le respect des libertés fondamentales au cœur de leurs revendications ».[2]

Y'en a marre, le Balai citoyen, Filimbi et la Lucha se targuent d'avoir influé dans les alternances politiques dans chacun de leurs pays. Y'en a

marre continue de s'arroger un rôle politique déterminant dans la deuxième alternance politique que le Sénégal a connue en mars 2012. Le Balai citoyen revendique une responsabilité décisive dans la mobilisation politique qui a mis fin au régime de Blaise Compaoré au Burkina Faso le 30 octobre 2014 et précipité sa démission puis son exil le lendemain.[3] Filimbi et la Lucha font face, en RDC, depuis 2015 à une répression féroce dans un contexte d'incertitude politique. Ils ont participé avec d'autres forces de la société civile, notamment l'Église catholique, à des actions de contestation et à des mobilisations qui ont conduit à l'organisation le 30 décembre 2018 d'élections présidentielles auxquelles le président Joseph Kabila n'était pas candidat. Cela a rendu possible l'alternance, en janvier 2019, avec l'arrivée au pouvoir de Felix Tshisekedi. Les résultats de ce scrutin ont toutefois été fortement critiqués. Ils ont surtout laissé un goût d'inachevé aux activistes de Filimbi et de la Lucha. Plusieurs faits montrent que l'actuel président de la RDC, Félix Tshisekedi, longtemps opposé à son prédécesseur, Joseph Kabila, demeure lié à ce dernier à la faveur d'un « accord » de partage de pouvoir qu'ils ont signé tous les deux.[4] Face à cette situation, la Lucha et Filimbi ont prudemment pris acte d'une alternance qu'ils jugent de « façade » seulement. Loin de se décourager face à l'illusion du changement souhaité, Filimbi et la Lucha ont choisi de poursuivre la lutte afin d'obtenir une transformation en profondeur du système sociopolitique congolais. Ce qui les expose indéniablement aux tentatives de bâillonnement du nouveau pouvoir.

Après plusieurs années d'existence, Y'en a marre, le Balai citoyen, Filimbi et la Lucha sont à la croisée des chemins sur le sens à donner à leurs actions, sur leur démarche protestataire, le sens de leur lutte et leurs stratégies de mobilisation. Plusieurs recherches se sont intéressées à la portée de leur engagement, à leurs stratégies d'action, à leurs usages des médias sociaux, aux réactions des pouvoirs politiques, aux incidences des « printemps arabes » sur leur naissance et enfin à leur inclusion dans une dynamique plus globale d'indignation citoyenne (Polet 2016, 2018 ; Bangré 2016 ; Dieng 2015 ; Dimé 2017 ; Touré 2017). Mais il a manqué jusqu'ici un regard transversal sur ces mouvements. La présente contribution s'engage sur cette piste de recherche. Pour ce faire, nous exposons d'abord brièvement nos questions de recherche ainsi que les défis théoriques et méthodologiques que nous avons dû surmonter. Nous nous intéressons ensuite aux significations et implications des quatre mouvements d'engagement citoyen à l'étude. Nous portons enfin notre regard sur les processus de mise en place d'un réseau transafricain de contestation citoyenne que Y'en a marre, le Balai citoyen, Filimbi et la Lucha veulent incarner et parallèlement impulser.

Une posture théorique et méthodologique pleine de défis

La présente contribution privilégie une analyse croisée visant à mettre en lumière ce que Filimbi, la Lucha, le Balai citoyen et Y'en a marre traduisent comme permanences et ruptures dans les processus, figures et modes de contestation sociopolitique et d'engagement citoyen. Pour ce faire, elle cherche à mettre en exergue leurs points communs et de divergence relatifs à leur naissance et leurs trajectoires. Elle vise à mettre en relief les implications de leurs actions et les justifications de leur engagement et de leurs revendications. Elle examine leurs modes d'organisation, la structuration de leurs réseaux, leurs modes opératoires et les résultats de leurs luttes. Il s'agit globalement de proposer une radioscopie de la portée des mouvements d'engagement citoyen en mettant l'accent sur une analyse croisée de leurs constances, consonances et dissonances à partir de grilles de lecture mobilisées dans le champ de la sociologie des mouvements sociaux.

Plutôt qu'une étude de cas de chaque mouvement pris individuellement et de tenter, par la suite, d'isoler leurs ressemblances et leurs différences, il s'agit de développer une approche plus synthétique et moins rivée sur les singularités locales.[5] Ce regard transversal est d'autant plus difficile à mettre en œuvre que chaque chercheur a été responsable de son terrain et a conduit sa collecte de données par rapport aux spécificités de son pays et du mouvement concerné.[6]

Les données sur lesquelles nous nous appuyons dans le cadre de cette recherche proviennent d'une enquête qualitative multisituée. Elle a été fondée sur l'observation directe, lors de diverses activités de ces mouvements (manifestations publiques, réunions, activités lors de l'université de l'engagement citoyen, mobilisations au moment des élections, etc.). La majeure partie des matériaux provient cependant d'une série d'entretiens semi-structurés et de *focus groups* avec des leaders et des membres des quatre mouvements. Des entretiens semi-structurés ont été également menés avec des acteurs venant des milieux gouvernementaux, des médias, des partis politiques et des organisations de la société civile dans chaque pays. Deux guides d'entretien standardisés pour les trois pays ont été utilisés pour la réalisation des entretiens.

En RDC, les enquêtes de terrain ont principalement été réalisées à Goma, Bukavu et Kinshasa. Située à 2 000 km de Kinshasa, Goma est la ville où est née la Lucha en 2012. Ce mouvement s'est ensuite implanté à Bukavu, distante de 100 km de Goma. Filimbi a officiellement vu le jour à Kinshasa en 2015. Il s'est établi à Goma et à Bukavu. Les personnes enquêtées dans ces trois villes présentent divers profils : leaders et membres de la Lucha et de Filimbi, étudiants, autorités politico-administratives, membres de la société civile et des partis aussi bien de l'opposition que du pouvoir.

Au Sénégal, les entretiens ont été principalement menés à Dakar, où sont concentrées les activités de Y'en a marre. Les entretiens ont ciblé les leaders et les membres du mouvement. Ils ont été élargis à des journalistes spécialisés sur les questions politiques au Sénégal, ainsi qu'à des membres de partis politiques et de la société civile. Le même profil d'acteurs a été visé au Burkina Faso : membres de la coordination nationale du Balai citoyen, membres du mouvement, personnes-ressources de la société civile. Le travail de terrain y a été mené à Ouagadougou et à Ouahigouya au nord du Burkina Faso à l'occasion du « camp *cibal* » annuel du Balai citoyen.

Une autre source des données utilisées dans cette recherche est la production écrite des quatre mouvements (communiqués de presse, actes de l'université populaire de l'engagement citoyen), ainsi que leur empreinte numérique (tweets, messages sur Facebook, vidéos sur YouTube).

Nous avons globalement disposé d'une palette diversifiée de matériaux sur les quatre mouvements permettant de proposer une analyse de leurs enjeux et de leurs limites dans les situations d'alternance politique au Sénégal, au Burkina Faso et en RDC. Une telle analyse croisée est un exercice délicat en raison du caractère fortement contrasté des histoires nationales, des traditions politiques, mais aussi des degrés de violence répressive effectivement mis en œuvre par les autorités dans chaque contexte et qui ont eu un impact fort sur les modes de contestation possibles, réels ou imaginables.

Les mouvements citoyens au prisme de la sociologie des mouvements sociaux : de la subjectivation au changement social

Les mouvements citoyens ont aujourd'hui gagné en visibilité (Branch & Mampilly 2015) en plus d'attirer de plus en plus l'attention des sciences sociales (Farro 2000 ; Mc Adam *et al.* 1998 ; Révillard 2003 ; Péchu 2009 ; Tall *et al.* 2015 ; Meister 2017). Non seulement ils font aujourd'hui partie intégrante de la vie ordinaire des démocraties, mais ils sont au cœur des conquêtes pour la citoyenneté et l'État de droit. Plusieurs travaux récents proposent de renforcer les connaissances sur la nature et la structuration des mouvements citoyens en Afrique (Dieng 2015 ; Arnaud 2016 ; Gorovei 2016 ; Meister 2017). Une part importante des analyses a porté sur *Y'en a marre* au Sénégal (Dimé 2017 ; Dieng 2015 ; Gellar 2013 ; Dalberto 2011 ; Haeringer 2012 ; Kelly 2012 ; Havard 2013), le *Balai citoyen* au Burkina Faso (Bonnecasse 2015 ; Gorovei 2016 ; Hagberg *et al.* 2015 ; Ouedraogo 2014 ; Soré 2017), la Lucha et Filimbi en République démocratique du Congo (Bangré 2016 ; Kapagama 2017 ; Rimondi 2015 ; Polet 2016, 2017, 2018 ; Bouvier et Omasombo Tshonda 2015 ; Dugrand 2012).

Ces mouvements sont cités comme des figures emblématiques d'engagement citoyen en Afrique francophone. Ils ont la particularité de cibler des jeunes et d'avoir pris corps essentiellement en milieu urbain (Vigneron 2016). Ils se distinguent des mouvements sociaux traditionnels (organisations syndicales, mouvements étudiants, etc.) par leurs implications grandissantes sur les questions de société, d'économie, d'alternance politique et de gouvernance publique.

D'un point de vue sociologique, un mouvement social est défini comme une forme d'action collective, de protestation ou de revendication, menée par plusieurs individus, de façon concertée et intentionnelle, en vue d'une finalité précise (Neveu 2015 ; Mathieu 2002, 2004 ; Le Saout 1999 ; Cefaï 2001 ; Chazel 2009). Y'en a marre, Filimbi, la Lucha et le Balai citoyen constituent des mouvements qui cherchent à exprimer et défendre collectivement des demandes et des revendications (respect de la constitution, réouverture de dossiers judiciaires, gestion vertueuse des ressources publiques, assainissement des mœurs politiques, respect de la légalité républicaine). Ils traduisent un agir-ensemble intentionnel marqué par le projet explicite de se mobiliser de concert dans une logique de revendication et de défense d'une cause d'intérêt collectif. Ils ont en commun de posséder un degré minimum d'organisation qui permet de recruter et de motiver des participants ainsi que d'accumuler des ressources matérielles, sociales, politiques, symboliques qui vont être investies dans une « économie morale de la protestation (Fassin 2015).

En sociologie politique, le cadre conceptuel proposé par Ted Gurr (1970) dans l'explication des mobilisations citoyennes est relatif à la notion de frustration relative. Il y a selon Gurr un lien de causalité directe entre la situation de l'individu et son engagement dans l'action : c'est la frustration de l'individu et son insatisfaction qui le motivent à rejoindre l'action collective. Ce qui est le cas des quatre mouvements citoyens étudiés. Leur objectif délibéré est de transformer les structures sociales, politiques et économiques des sociétés sénégalaise, burkinabè et congolaise (Gorovei 2016 ; Hagberg et al. 2017 ; Sivya 2017 ; Dimé 2017 ; Polet 2017, 2018).

D'autres travaux se sont inscrits dans le cadre du modèle de la « structure des opportunités politiques » (Tarrow 1994). Ils se sont attachés à démontrer l'influence du contexte politique sur les mobilisations sociales (Siméant 2013). Le concept de « structure des opportunités politiques » emprunté à Tarrow (1994) vise ainsi à montrer que le déclenchement et le déroulement des mobilisations sont influencés par les opportunités qui se présentent à elles, en fonction du contexte politique (Le Saout 1999 ; Rimondi 2015 ; Sivya 2017). On peut dégager, en suivant Neveu (2015), quelques composantes de

base de cette structure des opportunités politiques, soit le degré d'ouverture ou de fermeture du système politique, l'état des alliances au sein du champ politique, les relais dont disposent les groupes protestataires au sein du système politico-administratif, le type de réponse apporté par le système politique (Neveu 2015). Ces opportunités peuvent donc peser selon les pays étudiés (Burkina Faso, Sénégal, RDC) sur le déclenchement, le déroulement et le succès des mouvements sociaux. Si dans le cas de la RDC, Filimbi et la Lucha ont organisé leur mobilisation dans un contexte de régime autoritaire (Hilgers & Mazzocchetti 2010), au Burkina et au Sénégal, les opportunités existent à travers la liberté d'association et de manifestation reconnue dans leur constitution (Dimé 2017 ; Soré 2017 ; Touré 2017). Les dimensions biographiques de l'engagement sont également explorées. L'examen est mis sur différentes figures d'entrepreneurs de la mobilisation citoyenne. *Y'en a Marre, le Balai citoyen*, *la Lucha* et *Filimbi* ont la singularité de rassembler des jeunes appartenant à différents milieux : associatif, universitaire, artistique, politique, culturel, etc. L'engagement citoyen peut être alors analysé comme un moyen d'ascension sociale et politique qui confère une visibilité médiatique et une renommée internationale. Certains détracteurs des mouvements citoyens considèrent d'ailleurs que les mobilisations citoyennes ne sont jamais totalement désintéressées, car dans un contexte de raréfaction des emplois, elles apparaissent comme des modalités d'accès à la réussite sociale. En RDC par exemple, les mouvements citoyens sont aussi un creuset d'ascension sociale qui a permis à certains membres d'acquérir la notoriété, de voyager à l'extérieur et même d'y occuper des positions professionnelles lucratives pour ne pas rester confinés dans le statut « d'éternels activistes désargentés ».

En nous référant à Pleyers et Capitaine (2016), *Y'en a marre, le Balai citoyen, la Lucha* et *Filimbi* peuvent être considérés comme des mouvements sociaux contemporains. Pleyers (2014, 2016) appelle les jeunes qui les composent des « alter-activistes ». Selon Pleyers (2014), la « culture politique "alter-activiste" ne se réfère pas à un mouvement particulier, mais à une catégorie heuristique qui renvoie à une forme d'engagement, une "culture militante" définie comme une logique d'action basée sur un ensemble cohérent d'orientations normatives et une conception du monde, du changement social et de la nature et de l'organisation des acteurs sociaux qui portent ce changement » (Pleyers 2017:30). Il se dégage de la vision de Pleyers (2016) que les mouvements citoyens ne peuvent être considérés comme des nouveaux mouvements sociaux au sens d'Alain Touraine. En effet, ce dernier considère les nouveaux mouvements sociaux comme étant ceux de la société postindustrielle des années soixante et qui sont centrés sur la connaissance, la communication et la culture, plutôt que sur le travail et l'économie (Vaillancourt 1991:217).

D'après Pleyers (2014, 2016), les mouvements sociaux contemporains doivent être analysés sous l'angle de la subjectivation. Celle-ci fait référence à la construction du sujet avant que ce dernier ne devienne acteur du changement. L'engagement personnel de chacun des membres de ces mouvements citoyens revêt une dimension fondamentale. «L'implication dans un mouvement social travaille l'individu jusque dans sa subjectivité et sa subjectivation entendue comme la manière de se penser et de se construire soi-même comme principe de sens» (Pleyers & Capitaine 2016:8).

Avec la subjectivation, le sujet se réalise à travers ce que Michel Wieviorka (2015) s'inspirant des travaux d'Alain Touraine, définit comme «la possibilité de se construire en tant qu'individu, comme être singulier capable de formuler ses choix et donc de résister aux logiques dominantes, qu'elles soient économiques, communautaires, technologiques, politiques ou autres. Le sujet, c'est la possibilité de se constituer soi-même comme principe de sens, de se poser en être libre et de produire sa trajectoire» (Wieviorka 2004:286). Il s'agit néanmoins d'un processus d'autoproduction de soi qui met en tension la construction de soi et les contraintes qui pèsent sur celle-ci. On est donc en face d'un double mouvement de production du sujet et d'assujettissement induit par les systèmes de contrainte (notamment) politiques qui pèsent sur les individus, y compris dans le travail militant.

Globalement, depuis leur apparition, Y'en a marre, le Balai citoyen, Filimbi et la Lucha ont attiré le regard des médias et des chercheurs, fascinés pour beaucoup par leur caractère inédit et leur rôle dans les alternances politiques au Sénégal et au Burkina Faso notamment (Dimé 2017 ; Soré 2017 ; Touré 2017). D'autres chercheurs se sont également intéressés à ces mouvements analysés individuellement (Fouquet 2017 ; Dalberto 2011 ; Dieng 2015 ; Bangré 2016 ; Ouedraogo 2014 ; Bonnecase 2015 ; Meister 2017 ; Rimondi 2015 ; Haeringer 2012 ; Havard 2013). Les dynamiques de mobilisation citoyenne ont enfin été abordées dans la perspective plus large des mouvements sociaux et altermondialistes avec les travaux pionniers du CODESRIA (Mamdani & Wamba Dia Wamba 1995) jusqu'à des publications plus récentes (Siyya 2017 ; Bruijn & Both 2017 ; Simeant 2014 ; Tall *et al.* 2014).

« Nous sommes la nouvelle jeunesse africaine engagée ! » Sémiologie et praxis des mouvements Y'en a marre, Filimbi, Lucha et Balai citoyen

Pendant les années d'immobilisme politique des années quatre-vingt, on a pensé que la verbalisation du désespoir des jeunes utilisait la violence comme principal canal d'expression. Puis on a cru, au cours des décennies suivantes, que la contestation sociopolitique et l'énonciation de la citoyenneté

pouvaient avoir chez les jeunes comme caisse de résonance essentiellement la musique et l'expression artistique. Il n'est donc pas surprenant de constater à partir de 2011 au Sénégal, en 2013-2014 au Burkina Faso, et en 2015 en RDC, l'émergence des activistes de nouveau type pouvant décider de se faire une place par le discours et la praxis, au point de constituer des forces politiques redoutées par les pouvoirs publics.

Y'en a marre, la Lucha, Filimbi et le Balai citoyen se définissent par la façon dont ils mettent en avant des questions sociales, culturelles et politiques devenues de plus en plus cruciales pour la vie individuelle et collective de leurs sociétés respectives. L'avènement d'une plus grande prise de conscience de ces questions relève de la volonté des jeunes de braver les conséquences de la dénonciation. Ainsi, les actions de ces mouvements font propager ces questions dans l'ensemble de la vie sociale des milieux respectifs de leurs interventions. Ces mouvements se singularisent par leur composition (du point de vue de leurs leaders et membres), leurs mots d'ordre et les formes de revendication conventionnelles et non conventionnelles auxquelles ils ont recours. La prise de conscience de la responsabilité collective se remarque dans leur saisie des problèmes qui affectent leurs sociétés respectives. Dans leurs efforts pour appréhender les processus de subjectivation des autres, ils découvrent des déterminants de l'impossibilité pour ces derniers de se constituer comme sujets. Cela peut être de manière volontaire et structurelle du fait d'un déni de leur droit aux besoins essentiels par un pouvoir qui se soucie très peu des conditions de vie des populations, ou du fait de l'ignorance inhérente à un accès limité à l'information, quelle qu'en soit la raison.

La nature de ces mouvements, leur distinction par rapport aux conduites sociales et leur dissidence face à l'ordre social de leurs sociétés respectives ne peuvent nullement se départir des logiques internes relevant des cultures politiques prévalant dans leurs pays de naissance. Les formes d'expression de leur ras-le-bol face aux conduites des gouvernants répondent au contexte de chaque pays et aux modes d'acceptation des populations de la participation aux mobilisations qu'ils envisagent, ainsi qu'au désir d'audibilité qu'ils cherchent à conférer à leurs luttes.

> La Lucha a commencé avec les étudiants qui ont compris qu'il était urgent d'agir au lieu, comme le font de nombreux jeunes révoltés, de rejoindre les groupes armés. On a pris une autre approche qui est la non-violence active et à l'époque, il y avait la guerre de M23 qui menaçait la ville de Goma. Il y avait la poussière et la carence d'eau et on s'est demandé qu'est-ce qu'on fait à l'université si nous n'arrivons pas à apporter des solutions dans la société ? [Entretien avec un leader de la Lucha, Goma, mai 2018]

La même démarche peut être observée pour la création du Balai citoyen. Il y a non seulement la volonté de rupture, mais aussi l'incitation de la jeunesse à prendre les devants de la lutte pour l'avènement de la bonne gouvernance :

> Beaucoup de gens et surtout les jeunes ont crié leur ras-le-bol. Ils disaient que si les vieux pères[7] ne peuvent plus mener la lutte, ils n'ont qu'à leur donner la lutte parce qu'ils estimaient que c'était une trahison. À partir de cette période, j'ai commencé à rencontrer pas mal de jeunes qui se plaignaient, qui râlaient. Avec Osiris, nous avons installé ici ce qu'on appelait Sankoré, il y avait un *grin* ici dans la cour où on discutait, on débattait tous les jours et très souvent de sujets qui concernent la jeunesse africaine, la gouvernance publique. Il y avait un groupe mélangé, des journalistes et de jeunes activistes et même les artistes Smockey et Sams'k Le Jah passaient de temps en temps. C'est à partir de là que l'idée de créer un mouvement a commencé à germer autour d'un noyau […]. Il y a eu des rencontres qui ont commencé et des réflexions autour d'un manifeste. [Entretien avec un membre fondateur du Balai citoyen, septembre 2018]

Ces mouvements citoyens se construisent en tant qu'actions qui définissent des conflits pour contrôler la production et la diffusion des informations, en opposition à la maîtrise que les acteurs dirigeants ont de celles-ci. En effet, les membres de Y'en a marre, du Balai citoyen tout comme ceux de la Lucha et de Filimbi, révoltés par les différents problèmes de leur société et convaincus qu'au travers des messages qu'ils véhiculent auprès des populations pour sensibiliser sur l'importance de réclamer leurs droits, ils produisent la «vraie information», a contrario de celle «officielle» relayée par les dirigeants sur la non-réalisation des actions devant participer à l'amélioration des conditions de vie. Pour ce qui est de la RDC, devant l'absence de financement suite à une crise généralisée que brandissent les dirigeants, les activistes de la Lucha et Filimbi leur opposent les prévarications dans lesquelles ils sont empêtrés. Devant l'absence de moyens en matière de défense et de sécurité nationales permettant de contrer les violences des groupes armés sévissant à Beni et dans d'autres localités de la RDC, les jeunes opposent les détournements de solde et autres frais de logistique par les généraux. Face aux situations de pauvreté et de misère, les jeunes brandissent les inestimables richesses dont regorgent les pays et qui ne profitent qu'à une minorité de personnes au pouvoir.

> Ce qui est énervant dans cette affaire-là, c'est que nous savons tous que cet argent, ils ne l'ont pas mérité. C'est l'argent du contribuable détourné, c'est l'argent qui devait servir à la construction d'écoles, de dispensaires, de routes. En gros, c'est notre argent qu'ils ont volé. Ils ont trop volé, ils sont immensément riches, mais ils continuent de voler encore. C'est inacceptable! [Entretien avec un militant du Balai citoyen, Ouagadougou, septembre 2018]

Autant de situations pour lesquelles le contrôle et la production de la vraie information font l'objet des conflits entre les dirigeants et les mouvements d'engagement citoyen.

> Aujourd'hui, notre génération est confrontée aux mêmes problèmes et nous devons inventer nos propres réponses. Comment formuler et articuler un projet capable d'amener les peuples africains vers l'épanouissement dans un quotidien qui ne permet pas de rêver ? Comment la jeunesse africaine, qui est cantonnée dans le sous-emploi et l'absence de formation, qui a faim et soif, qui ne se soigne pas, peut-elle arriver à formuler autre chose que la contestation de cet ordre injuste dans lequel elle est maintenue par ses propres gouvernants en complicité avec des puissances impérialistes de tout genre ? [Entretien avec un leader de Y'en a marre, Dakar, août 2018]

En RDC, le contexte politique a intensifié le conflit sur la production et la diffusion de l'information. Alors que du côté du pouvoir, différents stratagèmes étaient pensés pour changer la constitution afin de permettre au président de la République de se maintenir au pouvoir, les membres de la Lucha et de Filimbi ont objecté le respect de la loi fondamentale. Diverses stratégies ont été élaborées pour faire face à celles du pouvoir en place. Profitant des technologies de l'information et de la communication, les membres de Filimbi et de la Lucha ont trouvé dans l'internet et les divers réseaux sociaux des moyens efficaces de communication pour mobiliser en vue d'engager différentes actions qui ont été suivies par la population : des marches, des tintamarres, des plaidoyers, des sit-in, etc. Les mêmes méthodes de lutte ont été fortement employées par Y'en a marre dans le contexte sénégalais et par le Balai citoyen au Burkina Faso.

> On utilisait beaucoup les réseaux sociaux, on diffusait toutes les actions instantanément. On montrait les gens qui campaient à la place de la Révolution, les courses-poursuites avec les CRS, les coups de matraque, etc. On se disait qu'en montrant ces brutalités, la répression, on allait créer plus d'indignation et avoir plus d'adhérents [Entretien avec un membre de la coordination nationale du Balai citoyen, Ouagadougou, septembre 2018]

> C'est qu'Internet a contribué à nous donner beaucoup de visibilité au Sénégal comme à l'étranger. On utilise le pouvoir des réseaux sociaux pour la diffusion de nos messages et pour rejoindre le maximum « d'esprits[8] » Y'en a marre […] Vous avez vu comment notre université de l'engagement a eu du retentissement. Les gens ont pu nous suivre partout grâce aux live que nous faisions sur Facebook. [Entretien avec un leader de Y'en a marre, Dakar, août 2018]

Les autorités au pouvoir n'ont pas lésiné sur les moyens pour réprimer les activités des mouvements citoyens. La détermination de ces derniers à affronter la répression a entraîné des arrestations, des départs en exil et des vies en

clandestinité en RDC. Au Sénégal, le régime a été davantage dans une logique de tolérance de Y'en a marre tout en maintenant sur lui une surveillance étroite, non sans recourir à la répression lorsque les circonstances l'exigeaient. En effet, le pouvoir n'a pas hésité à interdire certaines manifestations, lors notamment du vote de la loi instituant le parrainage le jeudi 19 avril 2018. Craignant une forte mobilisation populaire, des arrestations ciblées ont été opérées dans les rangs de Y'en a marre assez tôt ce jour-là. De même, à la veille du début de la campagne présidentielle, le régime a cherché à ébranler les capacités d'action de Y'en a marre en sanctionnant administrativement (lettre de mise en demeure, retrait de l'agrément, blocage des comptes bancaires) certaines ONG accusées de fournir un soutien financier au mouvement. Au Burkina Faso, les leaders du Balai citoyen, notamment Smokey et Sams'k Le Jah, n'ont pas non plus échappé aux menaces physiques et aux tentatives d'intimidation pour les faire taire.

Affriki mwinda : Déclinaisons et avatars d'une transafricaine de l'engagement citoyen

La première édition de l'Université populaire de l'engagement citoyen (UPEC), qui s'est tenue du 23 au 28 juillet 2018 à Dakar, constitue un moment charnière dans l'évolution des mouvements citoyens. Cette initiative est d'ailleurs considérée comme le moment de matérialisation de plusieurs années de combat en vue de constituer un mouvement citoyen panafricain. Pour nous, chercheurs qui essayons de proposer une analyse croisée, cette semaine d'activités était une occasion pour observer de très près les balbutiements et les péripéties de la naissance d'un réseau panafricain de l'engagement citoyen que les quatre mouvements cherchent à impulser et à symboliser.

> Initiée par les mouvements citoyens africains, l'UPEC se veut une école, un incubateur où des leaders interagissent et envisagent le changement avec la conscience claire d'un destin commun. Comprendre déjà cette communauté de destin est un grand pas. Avoir le sens de la responsabilité de se mettre ensemble pour discuter des futurs possibles dans le seul but de soulager les populations et de les sortir de l'impasse est un autre grand pas dans la marche du continent. De ce point de vue, l'UPEC a été un grand succès. Elle a rassemblé les Africains divisés par la colonisation, les religions et les barrières ethniques. Anglophones, francophones, arabophones, lusophones ont interagi en parlant le langage commun de l'espoir. Ils ont pu transcender les conjonctures actuelles qui ne permettent pas de rêver pour scruter et faire avancer les questions panafricaines. L'UPEC est l'agenda des mouvements sociaux africains. L'initiative est née du constat qu'il manquait dans l'espace public africain un rendez-vous où parler de nos problèmes et de nos mouvements et se projeter dans « des utopies actives ». [Leader de Y'en a marre Sénégal, août 2018).

Y'en a marre a été le maître d'œuvre et le principal artisan de cette rencontre qui a abouti à ce qui a été appelé la *Déclaration de Dakar* comme en écho aux déclarations des congrès panafricanistes du passé. Les initiateurs de l'UPEC revendiquent clairement une connexion historique, une fidélité idéologique et un continuum dans l'engagement, avec la première conférence panafricaine organisée à Londres en 1900. Comme chercheurs, nous avons été dans une posture d'observation constante du déroulement des activités. Nous avons également conduit des entretiens approfondis avec des activistes des quatre mouvements ainsi que de ceux en provenance de la Côte d'Ivoire (GT Jeune, Novox), de Madagascar (Wake Up Madagascar), du Togo (En aucun cas), du Mali (Je n'en veux plus).

Un trait fédérateur de ces mouvements est leur inclination à fonder leur acte de naissance et leur entrée dans le débat politique et social par la puissance du slogan. Un slogan suffisamment doté d'une puissance énonciatrice et dénonciatrice et qui est de surcroît décliné dans les langues internationales. Excepté Filimbi, cette posture, qui les met en contradiction avec le projet de rupture symbolique avec la *colonialité* et ses avatars que leur naissance veut incarner, s'inscrit dans un processus de dialogue plus opérationnel avec les mouvements et de rayonnement de leur combat à l'échelle internationale. Que ce soit pour Y'en a marre, le Balai citoyen, la Lucha, le slogan s'écrit dans une grammaire de la *colonialité* même si les mouvements cherchent à rompre au niveau discursif avec cette situation vectrice d'aliénation aux plans symbolique et historique.

Dans la praxis, cette posture de dénonciation est mise à l'épreuve à travers la recherche des moyens pour financer le combat en faveur de l'engagement citoyen, car celui-ci a un coût de l'avis d'un leader de Y'en a marre. Il s'agit d'une faiblesse qui alimente une bonne partie des critiques qui leur sont continuellement faites. Ces critiques soulignent que les leaders du mouvement ont succombé à l'argent, aux privilèges et au culte du vedettariat du fait des compromissions qu'ils ont faites dans le contexte d'institutionnalisation du mouvement à la suite de l'alternance politique de 2012 au Sénégal. Les mouvements ont-ils été capturés et neutralisés par l'argent? L'une des réponses apportées par le régime politique actuel au Sénégal renseigne sur la vulnérabilité de Y'en a marre sur cette question de l'origine des ressources financières et des logistiques mobilisées depuis 2012. En effet, les pouvoirs politiques sénégalais, dans leur volonté de neutraliser les capacités d'action du mouvement Y'en a marre à la veille des élections présidentielles de 2019, n'ont pas hésité à sanctionner des ONG comme Lead Africa et OXFAM suspectées de financer les activités du mouvement. Les pouvoirs publics sénégalais ont suspendu l'agrément de Lead Africa avant de revenir sur la mesure et ont mis en demeure OXFAM.

En RDC, la question du financement de la Lucha et Filimbi fait également débat. Le pouvoir en place est convaincu que ces mouvements sont financés par des organisations internationales dont le projet est de déstabiliser la RDC. Les événements du 15 mars 2015 ayant conduit à l'arrestation des membres des quatre mouvements à Kinshasa étaient considérés par le gouvernement, à travers son porte-parole, comme une « atteinte à la sûreté de l'État ». Plusieurs responsables politico-administratifs rencontrés lors de nos enquêtes de terrain sont unanimes à souligner que ces mouvements sont soutenus par des organisations internationales, sans préciser lesquels. Les responsables de Filimbi et de la Lucha relativisent de leur côté cet appui étranger. Tout en reconnaissant certains soutiens, mais qui ne les empêchent pas de garder leur indépendance, ils démentent en ce sens les importants financements que leur attribuent les dirigeants politiques. Nos enquêtes nous ont permis de constater que la Lucha et Filimbi dépendent davantage des cotisations non obligatoires de leurs membres et des revenus tirés de l'organisation d'activités artistiques, notamment pour Filimbi.

L'accusation de manipulation par des puissances étrangères a été également brandie à l'égard du Balai citoyen, notamment vis-à-vis de ses responsables les plus en vue, en l'occurrence Smokey et Sams'k Le Jah. Elle explique d'ailleurs la virulence de la répression qui les a ciblés lors de la résistance au Coup d'État de septembre 2015. En vue de réduire au silence ces deux musiciens populaires, le studio d'enregistrement de Smockey a été incendié, tandis que le domicile de Sams'k Le Jah a aussi été attaqué.

Y'en a marre, Filimbi, la Lucha et Balai citoyen se sont forgé une place discursive dans la sphère publique par la puissance du slogan. Ils ont été dans une posture d'indignation et de dénonciation qui arrime leurs messages à divers objets de discours mobilisateurs. Ils ont pu arriver à leurs fins grâce à des choix linguistiques et à des pratiques langagières en dissonance avec celles des élites dominantes. Ont également été décisives des dynamiques d'hybridation entre formes musicales et politiques ainsi qu'une certaine propension au positionnement discursif anticonformiste.

Par ailleurs, les mouvements demeurent unis par les responsabilités qu'ils se sont données dans le renversement de régimes politiques. Si Y'en a marre et le Balai citoyen pouvaient brandir comme trophées de leur lutte le départ du pouvoir d'Abdoulaye Wade au Sénégal en 2012 et de Blaise Compaoré en 2014, Filimbi et la Lucha évoluent dans un contexte d'incertitude politique plus prononcée et de répression à l'endroit de leurs leaders. Filimbi et la Lucha sont dans une posture de radicalité plus aiguë et, contrairement à leurs camarades sénégalais et burkinabè, leur combat n'a pas débouché sur un bouleversement politique majeur. Le trophée qu'ils s'octroient étant

que, par leurs multiples initiatives agrégées aux dynamiques de mobilisation d'autres acteurs en RDC (syndicats, Église catholique, organisations de défense des droits humains, société civile, populations), ils ont empêché Kabila de briguer un troisième mandat malgré les multiples manœuvres qu'il a faites dans ce sens. Pour eux, le système Kabila est parti pour mieux rester alors que de nombreuses vies ont été sacrifiées pour y arriver ; pourtant avoir réussi à contrecarrer les manœuvres du pouvoir est sans aucun doute un réel succès politique qui les met dans la lignée des mobilisations citoyennes ayant permis d'accoucher d'un nouvel ordre sociopolitique.

Conclusion

Y'en a marre, Filimbi, la Lucha et le Balai citoyen ont engrangé en quelques années d'existence des succès pouvant être appréciés à l'aune de plusieurs critères. En tenant compte de leur popularité et de l'originalité de leur action, force est de reconnaître que ces mouvements sont devenus des acteurs sociopolitiques majeurs dans les trois pays où ils évoluent. Ces mouvements se distinguent par leur forme de mobilisation et la trajectoire de leurs membres. Cette singularité a contribué à susciter la sympathie et le soutien de différentes couches de la population. Ce qui, en retour, a accru leurs capacités de mobilisation. La crainte qu'ils suscitent auprès des pouvoirs en place est assez révélatrice des capacités de nuisance qui leur sont à tort ou à raison prêtées.

Ces mouvements n'ont pas manqué de peser sur certains moments clefs de l'histoire politique et sociale récente en RD Congo, au Burkina Faso et au Sénégal. Du point de vue de l'influence, ils ont élargi leur combat à d'autres pays africains où ils ont fait des émules comme au Gabon (Ça suffit comme ça), au Tchad (Iyina On est fatigué), aux Comores, à Madagascar (Wake up), au Cameroun (Jeune et fort), en Côte d'Ivoire (GT Jeune), au Congo Brazzaville (Ras-le-bol), en Guinée (Balai citoyen Guinée), au Togo (en aucun cas), etc.

Leur rayonnement se mesure également à l'aune des importants soutiens internationaux qu'ils ont réussi à mobiliser et de l'aura planétaire qu'ils ont pu donner à leur action au point d'avoir réussi à attirer l'attention de leaders mondiaux comme Barak Obama à l'époque où il était président des États-Unis, ou le milliardaire Georges Soros et sa Fondation pour les sociétés ouvertes, etc. La multiplication des recherches sur ces mouvements et les moyens financiers qu'ils arrivent à capter auprès d'ONG et de bailleurs de fonds séduits notamment par l'originalité de leurs modes et répertoires d'action collective sont autant d'autres indices des succès de ces mouvements.

Les initiateurs des mouvements citoyens ont atteint ces performances en mettant fortement à contribution une stratégie d'action marquée par

l'hybridité, la performativité, ainsi que le maniement de positionnements discursifs iconoclastes, la manipulation de slogans dissonants, captivants et mobilisateurs. Leur ingéniosité et leur abnégation ont dérouté les pouvoirs en place, qui ont dans l'ensemble privilégié des réponses fondées sur la répression et les représailles (intimidation, tentative de corruption, diabolisation, emprisonnement, assassinat, etc.). De ce point de vue, ce sont les militants de Filimbi et de la Lucha qui ont subi, avec le plus de récurrence et de férocité, la répression de leur mouvement, alors que dans le contexte sénégalais ou burkinabè, les régimes, même fortement contestés, ont cherché à neutraliser les mouvements par diverses manœuvres allant de la tentative de cooptation aux menaces physiques et à l'intimidation.

Après plusieurs années qui leur ont permis d'acquérir une réelle notoriété et surtout de chercher à poser les jalons d'une dynamique transafricaine de l'engagement citoyen, Y'en a marre, le Balai citoyen, Filimbi et la Lucha semblent être aujourd'hui à la recherche d'un nouveau souffle. Les mouvements semblent ainsi s'exposer aux contrecoups d'une banalisation et d'une institutionnalisation de leur action. Ils donnent l'impression de se mouvoir dans une posture de rentier de l'engagement citoyen ainsi que dans un processus d'*ongéisation*. Par ce terme, nous cherchons à désigner le processus d'institutionnalisation qui conduit les mouvements citoyens à se muer en structure professionnelle orientée vers la captation de ressources, surtout financières, circulant dans le marché du développement. Cette tendance a été surtout incarnée par le mouvement Y'en a marre qui a réussi à se positionner comme maître d'œuvre de projets de mobilisation sociale de jeunes dans le cadre de partenariats avec des ONG comme GRET, OXFAM et LEAD Africa. La volonté de se professionnaliser, donc de s'*ongéiser*, est une manière, pour les responsables des mouvements citoyens, d'éviter d'être confinés dans une posture d'indignés permanents en démontrant une capacité professionnelle d'action. Qui plus est, ils évoluent dans un contexte qui a vu la multiplication des mouvements citoyens, d'autant plus que la mobilisation citoyenne est perçue par de larges segments des jeunes urbains comme un moyen d'ascension sociale et d'accès à la notoriété.

Finalement, Y'en a marre, Filimbi, la Lucha et le Balai citoyen se voient concurrencés sur le plan de la virulence et de la radicalité critique par de nouvelles dynamiques de mobilisation comme celles s'organisant par exemple autour du rejet de la monnaie CFA. Pour ne pas rester confinés dans un positionnement contestataire sans fin et, par la même occasion, continuer de démontrer leur légitimé et leur utilité, mais surtout la nécessité de donner une dimension transafricaine plus marquée à leur lutte, Y'en a marre, la Lucha, Filimbi et le Balai citoyen doivent certainement redéfinir leurs missions et se donner de nouveaux enjeux de mobilisation.

Notes

1. En lingala (langue parlée en RD Congo et au Congo Brazzaville), Affriki signifie « Afrique » et *Mwinda*, veut dire « lumière ».
2. Voir une tribune parue dans le journal *Le Monde* et signée par les dirigeants des quatre mouvements. Elle est intitulée « Nous sommes la nouvelle jeunesse africaine engagée », URL : http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2015/04/17/nous-sommes-la-nouvelle-jeunesse-africaine-engagee_4618336_3212.html#RV5fDb8lb0Skvwqz.99 consultée le 15 mars 2019.
3. Les têtes d'affiche du Balai citoyen (Sam's K Le Jah notamment) aimaient d'ailleurs arborer, après la chute du régime Compaoré, un tee-shirt sur lequel on pouvait lire : « chasseur de dictateur ».
4. L'actuel président avait reconnu l'existence de ce « deal » lors de son discours devant la communauté congolaise à Windhoek en Namibie le 26 février 2019.
5. Il convient de préciser que l'étude a été menée par trois chercheurs. Chaque chercheur ayant en charge les enquêtes de terrain dans son pays. Pour ce qui est de la RDC, la recherche a été réalisée sur trois sites différents (Goma, Bukavu et Kinshasa).
6. Par un effort de documentation variée, chaque chercheur a essayé d'avoir une maîtrise globale de la thématique de l'engagement citoyen en Afrique. Il faut néanmoins reconnaître que chaque membre de l'équipe est avant tout un spécialiste du mouvement citoyen de son pays et a été responsabilisé dans ce sens pour conduire les enquêtes de terrain sur place.
7. Cette expression est utilisée pour désigner les aînés.
8. *Esprits* : membres du mouvement Y'en a marre.

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Aesthetic of Innocence: Experiencing Self-filming by the San of Zimbabwe

Oswelled Ureke*, Nhamo A. Mhiripiri**,
Mercy Mangwana Mubayiwa*** & Ratidzo Midzi****

Abstract

This article discusses the process and outcome of a participatory video production endeavour in which selected members of the Twai Twai San community in Zimbabwe were taught to operate video cameras and mobile phones for the purpose of documenting their realities. The study was aimed at finding out the nature of audio-visual narratives that the marginalised community would create if empowered to do so. The article pays particular attention to representations of the self by the San community, the underlying power dynamics and socio-technical concerns of the production process. A combination of participatory action research and filmmaking methodology was employed for the study. Data for the study were collected through interviews and focus group discussions with the filmmakers and some members of the community. The article also benefits from the authors' observations of the film production process, which is critical in the analysis of the completed ethnographic video-films *The Golden Story of Makhulela* and *The San of Twai Twai*. The study established that the films made by the San youths projected the ways in which they perceived themselves as a community. As such, the films were some form of self(ie)-representation. This perception of themselves could be the chief reason behind the film techniques employed and narratives chosen by the San youth as well as the aesthetics of the video-films. It was also found in the study that video-film could play a critical role of preserving or archiving Tyua language, which is slowly dying among the San.

Keywords: San, cellphilm, Twai Twai, ethnography, participatory video, action research

*   University of Johannesburg and Midlands State University. Email: urekeo@staff.msu.ac.zw
**   Midlands State University. Email: mhiripirina@staff.msu.ac.zw
*** Midlands State University. Email: mercymangwanam@gmail.com
**** Midlands State University. Email: ratidzomidzi@yahoo.com

Résumé

Cet article discute du processus et des résultats d'un effort participatif de production vidéo dans lequel des membres de la communauté Twai Twai San du Zimbabwe ont appris à utiliser des caméras et des téléphones portables afin de documenter leurs réalités. L'étude avait pour but de découvrir la nature des récits audiovisuels qu'aurait créé la communauté marginalisée si elle était habilitée à le faire. L'article porte une attention particulière aux représentations de soi de la communauté San, aux dynamiques sous-jacentes de pouvoir et aux préoccupations sociotechniques du processus de production. Une combinaison de recherche-action participative et de méthodologie de réalisation de films a été utilisée. Les données de l'étude ont été recueillies à l'aide d'entretiens et de discussions de groupes avec les cinéastes et des membres de la communauté. L'article bénéficie également des observations des auteurs sur le processus de production du film, chose essentielle dans l'analyse des films ethnographiques achevés comme *The Golden Story of Makhulela* et *The San of Twai Twai*. L'étude établit que les films réalisés par les jeunes San projetaient leur perception d'eux-mêmes en tant que communauté. Ainsi, les films étaient une forme de représentation de soi. Cette perception d'eux-mêmes pourrait être la principale raison des techniques cinématographiques employées et des récits choisis par les jeunes San, et l'esthétique des films. L'étude a également révélé que les films pourraient jouer un important rôle dans la préservation ou l'archivage de la langue tyua, qui meurt lentement chez les San.

Mots-clés : San, cellphilm, Twai Twai, ethnographie, vidéo participative, recherche-action

Introduction and Background

This article discusses the process and outcome of a participatory video production endeavour in which selected members of a San community in Zimbabwe were taught to operate video cameras and mobile phones for the purpose of documenting their realities. The main objective of the research project was to find out the nature of audio-visual narratives that a marginalised community would create if empowered to do so. The San are among Zimbabwe's marginalised groups in terms of economic development, as will be discussed in detail later in the article. The article examines the processes of engagement between the community and researchers who initiated the project, and analyses two video-films produced from the endeavour, paying particular attention to representations of the self by the San community and the attendant power dynamics and socio-technical concerns of the production process. This section provides the background, context and justification of the study. Subsequently literature related to the subject is reviewed, including discussion of the study's theoretical framework and methodology. The last sections of the article present and analyse data in line with the main research objective.

Sabase is a small village in Makhulela Ward, Bulilima District at the periphery of Matabeleland South, with a population of about 400 people, most of them San or of San lineage. The village is characterised by thatched pole and daga huts and Mopani-populated bushes. The terrain along the drive to the village is bumpy and almost renders the place inaccessible. Driving there in summer is extremely difficult. The clay soil retains water, making the roads impassable, even for the best off-road vehicles. When it is not raining, the African sun is at its most scorching in this area. These are the conditions encountered by the team of researchers who ventured into Sabase on a research endeavour that involved teaching some San community members how to use audio-visual recording equipment. Our involvement with the San community was part of a protracted negotiation process in which we visited Sabase several times to seek the community's consent to involve them in the project mentioned above. There are several theoretical and ethical implications to this negotiation process, some of which are discussed under the theoretical framework of this article. A detailed discussion of theoretical and methodological issues of the study are accommodated elsewhere (see Mhiripiri et al. 2020). The negotiation for entry started in 2018 when we approached local authorities such as police, the President's Office, the headman and eventually Matjena Ncube, the female village head, who cautiously consented to our research after acknowledging that it might benefit youths in the community with life-long skills. At some point during the project, one of the participants, Knowledge Ndlovu pointedly asked our team leader how the San community would benefit from the project and why we had selected them as a group worth making films about. Knowledge insisted that this conversation should appear in one of the edited films. Upon reflection, we found the question pertinent as well, because it continuously reminded us of the core purpose of our endeavour and the attention it might attract. That question compares very well with what Navajo leader Sam Yazzie asked Sol Worth and John Adair in a similar project they conducted with that community: 'Will making movies do the sheep any harm?'; then, 'Will making movies make the sheep good?'; to which questions the answer was 'No' upon which Yazzie asked 'Then why make the movies?' (Worth and Adair 1975:4). To these scholars, the last question remained unanswered, but in our case, a key assumption is that making the movies might help the San realise the agency to represent themselves (hence action research and participatory video). It is assumed that there is a relationship between access to, and ability to manipulate media technology and how subaltern communities imagine and represent themselves. As Stuart Hall (1980:33) argues, people should be active in making their own films. There are multiple reasons for this, as shall be discussed later in the article.

Indigenous Filmmaking, Participatory Video and Self(ie)-Representation

There has been similar research in the past but there remains a dearth of literature on the African continent. Worth and Adair's project with the Navajo Indians in Pine Streams, Arizona, cited above, is quite related to our research endeavour. Their main research question is one that concerned us too: 'What would happen if someone with a culture that makes and uses motion pictures taught people who had never made or used motion pictures to do so for the first time?' (Worth and Adair 1975:3). While in *The Navajo Film Themselves*, the end-product of Worth and Adair's endeavour resulted in seven films of varied themes, in our case, only two video-films were completed, although they each contained different themes as well. Also of interest is Fran Edmonds' (2014) work that documents how Aboriginal youths developed digital stories using mobile phones and content extracted from Facebook, as well as Grady Walker's (2018) work, conducted in Nepal, which explored the potential of visual story-telling in critical pedagogy. There is also the Shootback Project, started in 1997 by American photographer Lana Wong and Kenyan youth leader Francis Kimanzi, which equipped youths in Nairobi slums with cheap cameras to tell their own stories. The Kenyan participants photographed their lives and wrote about them over three years, with the images becoming the basis of a book (Wong 2000). In Tanzania, locals of Stone Town started Baraza Television, an initiative in which film was used to raise awareness about the Stone Town heritage site (Mhando 2005). The current study complements the growing body of literature on First Peoples and on participatory video in an African context.

The study is informed by theoretical work on participatory video (Mhando 2005; Lunch and Lunch 2006; Blazek 2016; Walker 2018) and the subject of selfies and self-representation (Rettberg 2018; Edmonds 2014; Cruz and Thornham 2015). We consider the San's activities as acts of mimetic representation in which they try to show their own life as it is. At the same time, the various procedures that they undertook during pre-production and production were designed to achieve a particular negotiated outcome – films that not only showed the world who the San were, but that also showed themselves how they appeared on film, hence selfie-videos. As Rettberg (2018:444) argues 'Self-portraits can be a way to communicate with others, but they can also be a way for the photographer to imagine how he or she could be different.' The video-films produced by the Sabase community youths can be classified as 'selfie-videos' to the extent that the producers appear extensively in the narratives, but are also participatory to the extent that they are produced by the San themselves. However, as

argued by Cruz and Thornham (2015), the visual might be a smokescreen for deeper lying power relations. Thus to limit our analysis to the images produced would be at the expense of the socio-technical dynamics behind their production. For a long time, it has been the white male (invariably Western) filming or studying the 'Other' of colour. While we do not make our claim for space on racial grounds, we do subscribe to the call to decolonise visual anthropology (Schiwy 2009). Freya Schiwy (2009:2) argues that 'the geopolitics of knowledge invokes a hegemonic structure of thinking' in which the North is the centre of knowledge while the 'so-called Third and Fourth Worlds produce culture'. Likewise, Valentine Mudimbe's (1988:10) questions about representatives of an African gnosis are pertinent in this critical reflection: 'Who is speaking about it [African gnosis]? Who has the right and the credentials to produce it, describe it, comment upon it, or at least represent opinions about it?' This would also invite the question: why should we be the ones *deciding* that the San make a film about themselves? It appears, in trying to help the San attain agency in their cultural narrative, we had to take it away first, or at least be the ones to give it.

The concept of participatory video tackles the problematic of engagement between researchers/producers and the researched/performers, in this case the assumed roles and the production activities thereafter. Participatory video can be defined as 'the range of activities involving novices creating a film collaboratively as an act of political or social expression or investigation' (Walker 2018:29). The 'collaborative' aspect of such production work is not as straightforward as it may seem. There are underlying power dynamics that present both opportunities and challenges to those involved. We adopt the 'outsider to insider' model of participatory video (see Walker 2018) in which external agents initiate the engagement. The researchers/facilitators, in this case, are the outsiders: 'the external initiating agents whose goal is to disseminate information or change behaviour with the help of video', while the San are the insiders: 'certain members of a community on whom the initiating agents are trying to have an impact' (Walker 2018:30). We accept that for being non-San we are outsiders (which explains why the filmmaking had to be negotiated), but for being Zimbabweans, we are equally insiders. We are aware that our economic and intellectual privileges make us a dominant group that, to some extent, 'others' the San just as they have been othered in previous research and cultural production and this also has its influence on the subject matter and production tendencies. However, from an Africanist (see Schumaker 2001) and nationalist standpoint, we are insiders hoping to contribute, from the global South, a voice to the discourse on cultural knowledge on the First People. It is from that background that we embed ourselves, in collaboration with the San, in the production of

both culture and knowledge – an alternative epistemology – being scholars from the South and indigenes of Zimbabwe.

Filming and Research Methodology

We are not sure whether to describe this work as 'ethnographic' or 'anthropological', both of which, depending on the definition adopted, exclude this study to some extent. For instance, Durington and Ruby's (2011) definition of ethnographic film as that made by 'professional anthropologists' disqualifies ours, as none of us, including the San filmmakers, has formal anthropological training. Emilie de Brigard's (1995:13) definition of an ethnographic film as one that 'reveals cultural patterning' is much more accommodative of our endeavours. Nevertheless, the methods of filmmaking and research employed can be described as participatory. The films may alternatively be described as participatory videos, 'bio-documentary' (see Gross 1980) or simply 'research films' (see Durington and Ruby 2011:192–5) that have some ethnographic value. As such, we use the ethnographic 'I/we' to narrate our experiences and observations.

The study utilised collaborative participatory methodology. It is participatory action research anchored on reflexive filmmaking techniques and qualitative methods of research. Participatory action research combines theory with action and participation. It accumulates knowledge through practice while advancing the interests of underrepresented social groups (Walker 2018; Gillis and Jackson 2002). It is a combination of reflective action and theoretical practice whose main aim is to impart social change (MacDonald 2012; Chevalier and Buckles 2013). In this case, filmmaking is expected to encourage the San to think critically (from the dimension of visual representation) about their circumstances and, hopefully, take up careers in filmmaking as a result of knowledge attained in training. This project fits the description of 'converting indigenous communities into protagonists' (Schiwy 2009:6). From that view, the community might identify its own problems and aspirations and proffer solutions from within itself even when probed by outsiders. Participatory action research therefore offered us the opportunity to suggest to the San community the benefits of documenting their everyday lives, as well as the vocational skills that their youths could attain by taking part in the project. All collaborators in the project were therefore knowledge partners. Apart from the completed films, our everyday interactions with the San filmmakers and other members of their community constitute data. This means aspects like production choices, particular techniques employed during filming, which we observed, as well as conversations made informally, were important data. The article

only reflects our interpretations of San culture, which is influenced by many factors and may unconsciously omit other critical detail, although we do incorporate their own meanings gleaned from focus group discussions. In our write-up, we describe the participants interchangeably, sometimes as filmmakers, trainees, members or participants. However, in our interactions with them and in their introductions of us to others, we were either friends or brothers and sisters.

After the granting of consent to the project, 10 participants selected from the Sabase community through snowball sampling were divided into two groups. One had three females and two males, while the other had three males and two females. We identified the groups as 'female' or 'male' depending on the gender that constituted the majority in either group. Though these labels are only for convenience, it is possible that there could have been other underlying dynamics that influenced the females and males to group along gender lines, including their affinity to female and male members of our facilitation team that conducted the practical training sessions. Gender assigned roles were also evident in the ways the community interacted, even before we started training them: for example, females were the ones that cooked, males fetched firewood, males fetched water from the borehole, females washed the dishes etc. These dynamics seemed so socialised among community members that they seemed natural, and we did not question them because the same socialisation, to a large extent, characterises our own communities of origin. We envisaged that this gender orientation might have an influence in the documentaries that the participants would produce. The gender dynamics were also manifested in the reticence by some of the females, who appeared to let the males enjoy more prominence in all interactions.

Despite having initially selected 10 participants, when we visited Sabase later in January 2019, we found the numbers of our participants depleted. Only six of the original team remained – three males and three females. The other four participants had either migrated to Botswana or had gone to seek menial work in the neighbouring areas. Enias Moyo, one of the most promising talents of the male group, was said to have travelled to Botswana in search of employment, only to resurface much later, but only in time to view and comment on the completed drafts of the films. We had anticipated this development based on our prior readings on the migratory tendencies of members of this community. In fact, a close affinity with other San groups in Botswana still exists (see Madzudzo 2001). We also encountered during our visit a San man who was said to have visited from Botswana to live among the San of Sabase.

The remaining participants regrouped and reconstituted two groups of filmmakers that were distinctly demarcated on gender lines. Knowledge Ndlovu, Denis Moyo and Mpiliseni Sibanda constituted one group entirely made up of male participants. The females Kwenzakele Tshuma, Zondiwe Moyo and Anita Ncube made up the other group. From our research teams, a male member provided oversight and guidance to the male group, while a female did the same for the females, such that gender became the key organising criterion as well as a critical influencer of group dynamics, production choices and outcomes. The research team consciously tried to minimise its influence on how the two groups operated, being limited to trouble-shooting, technical advice and sometimes capturing behind-the-scenes photographs. However, while members of the research team filmed background scenes, these were not separated during editing from what the San filmmakers shot. However, some of the facilitator-captured shots were integrated into the edit to aid understanding (by an external audience) of the scenes in a reflexive way, rather than create their own narrative. We are also aware of the uniqueness of each member's filming style, which could be influenced by a number of factors, including how they each understood the technical instructions we provided, as well as other physical and psychological factors. Our team leader, Nhamo, admitted to them that he did not fancy camerawork because, standing at about two metres tall, it was cumbersome for him to stoop low, either to accommodate the tripod's maximum height or to film people at their own eye level. From this standpoint, we understood that the participants who operated recording devices each contributed their own unique capabilities and shortcomings, but we analyse their work as a composite, collective effort. Nevertheless, the analysis does benefit from our presence when the footage was filmed, such that we know who filmed what and who interviewed whom. An external audience would not be able to make this distinction from the edited films.

It is nearly impossible in the social sciences to attain pure objectivity and neutrality in spite of the best intentions of observing such a stance. That a male mentor aligned with a male group of San filmmakers and a female similarly aligned with a female group certainly has implications, for better or worse, for the subject-matter the respective groups ultimately decided to tackle in their films. Notwithstanding, this was an incidental outcome in spite of the project's critical quest to maintain researcher neutrality and objectivity, and to ensure that the filmed content was entirely the production and imaginative output of the San members.

The group led by Knowledge proposed to produce a short documentary on how the San traditionally constructed their huts. They pitched this idea after a short consultation. While the group seemed set on what they wanted

to do, the females initially seemed reserved and passive. This tendency towards 'tokenist participation' (Blazek 2016) is identified as one of the risks of participatory video, as a result of sedimented power relations. There might have been a realistic fear in the patriarchal community that the project would subvert existing gender power relations. The initial hesitation by the females and the general submission to patriarchy that we observed was somewhat ironic because the village head was a female who appeared to wield a lot of power as demonstrated on a few occasions in our presence. After further encouragement and brainstorming with one of our members, the female group decided to explore traditional indigenous medicine as well as reproductive health issues, themes that are usually closely guarded secrets among women.

Filming using both digital single lens reflex (DSLR) cameras and smartphones, as well as editing were conducted for a cumulative period of four weeks between December 2018 and April 2019, although there was other non-production related contact outside this time. The process culminated in two 20-minute long video-films titled *The San of Twai Twai* (by the males) and *The Golden Story of Makhulela* (by the females). Both films were shot, directed and conceptualised by the San filmmakers and feature, in large parts, their lifestyles, history and traditions. In both groups, members took turns to operate cameras and phones allocated to them. In our analysis of their activities, we are cautious not to generalise their behaviour to the entire San community.

After the collection of raw footage, four members of the groups visited our university studios for editing. Over a week, they were taught the fundamentals of editing but due to lack of prior exposure to computer technology, they had very limited capacity to actually execute the editing. To get around that problem, we asked members of our team to sit in the editing suites with the participants, who narrated their imagined narratives and how they could be visualised, and actively decided which shots would be placed where in the sequence, and to what effect. During the same week, the members were also introduced to and taught how to operate the drone, which Knowledge had had a previous unpleasant first encounter with when hunters deployed it over Sabase village. When the films were completed, they were saved onto a micro-secure digital (SD) card which the members took away for previewing with the rest of the community. A few weeks later, we exhibited the films to a 200-strong audience on a carnivalesque Sabase night. Focus group discussions followed the exhibition. The discussions involved both the filmmakers and other members of the community and elicited participants' opinions about the film content as well as (for the filmmakers) the filmmaking experience.

The San of Twai Twai and *The Golden Story of Makhulela*

At the onset of the project, we informed participants that we were not expecting them to rehearse cultural practices that had long been documented (albeit by outsiders) in documentaries and fiction films such as *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Uys 1980), *The Great Dance* (Foster and Foster 2000), *People of the Great Sand Face* (Myburgh 1986), *Once We Were Hunters* (Hangula 2012) etc. In this thinking we were trying to escape the long held suspicion that anthropology was a 'collection of curious facts, telling about the peculiar appearance of exotic people and describing their strange customs and beliefs … an entertaining diversion, apparently without any bearing upon the conduct of life of civilized communities' (Boas 1962:11). Indeed, it has been observed before, that one of the facets of marginalisation of the San people in Zimbabwe was based on 'other groups' ethnocentric evaluations of their culture' (Madzudzo 2001:78). A San model hut featured in one of the films had no bearing whatsoever on the conduct of their life, since they had been relocated from a place called Twai Twai to Sabase. The circumstances of the relocation are given later in the article. We were also quite sure that focusing on an architectural practice that was no longer existent was akin to a 'collection of curious facts' that had the net effect of exoticising and romanticising San life. Yet the historical, traditional themes in the San productions were another page out of *The Gods Must be Crazy* script. We, together with our participants, were no different from Robert Flaherty who has been criticised for not documenting reality but rehearsing and re-enacting dying traditions to capture them into some form of visual museum. The traditions include walrus-hunting in *Nanook of the North*, tattooing in Moana etc. We found that the content produced by the San youths bore more similarities than differences to the corpus of anthropological films mentioned above.

In both productions by the San youths, the filmmakers feature in the narratives, in addition to conducting interviews with other members of the community. Thus, the video-films straddle the range of reflexive-participatory-performative-observational modes as described in Bill Nichols' (2001) modes taxonomy. *The Golden Story of Makhulela* focused on diverse issues including herbal medicine and its extraction and preparation. It also features female sexual reproductive health issues such as contraception and child birth as well as alternative therapies for a variety of conditions. On child birth, the discussion juxtaposed hospital with home deliveries. The women who feature in the film express the opinion that despite the positives of modern allopathic medicine, it fails to acknowledge the positive contributions of traditional indigenous medicine. During the interviews

and demonstrations of how to acquire and use traditional medicine, the elderly ladies seem more knowledgeable and confident compared to their younger counterparts. The younger females, most of them single mothers, seem ashamed to talk about child birth and traditional medicine. They laugh uneasily during the interviews when the older women are talking. This augers with Walker's (2018:7) observation in the context of participatory video, that 'certain knowledge is not expressed out of fear of derision or of being seen as subversive', which might lead to the perception that dominated groups are complacent (Walker 2018:7). The younger females could have been much more aware of other external cultural dynamics, and were possibly afraid that their interests would be subordinated by our presence, that we might look down upon some of their practices as archaic and uncivilised.

Some scenes in the film show females talking about the medicine used to make the vagina tighter, to enhance sexual pleasure. The older women demonstrate the process of digging for roots and stripping tree-barks in the nearby forest and preparing these into a powdered concoction which would be used by women before having sex. The women explain why they think the vagina has to be tight, including that it makes sex more pleasurable for both parties. One woman declares that she uses herbs to ensure that her husband is satisfied and thus might not have extra-marital affairs.

Judging from the filmmaking process and the film content itself, it appears that the idea of marriage is sacred to most San females. To some that participated in focus group discussions, a dysfunctional marriage means a man is not sexually satisfied. They said they would do everything in their power to retain their marriage and the favour of their men. In spite of this, most of the young women in this community are divorced, single mothers. During the discussions the older women also revealed that they were burdened with taking care of their grandchildren whose fathers refused responsibility. This can be explained using the argument by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2017) that society conditions girls to aspire to marriage and does not equally prepare boys for marriage, so there is already a terrible imbalance at the start; the girls will grow up to be women pre-occupied with marriage. The choice of film content described above seems to buttress Adichie's point.

The San of Twai Twai is a multi-layered video-film in which the filmmakers/characters reflexively document the history of their community and advocate for the revival of their mother-language, *Tyua*. They also demonstrate how to erect a pole and thatch hut, a type of shelter they used in their past, and provide a sub-narrative to account for its extinction. Initially the group had pitched the idea of constructing a complete hut,

but given the limited time, scaled down on their ambition and opted to construct a miniature model instead. This was a small pole and thatch affair, which they managed to erect within an hour, without breaking much sweat in the sweltering summer heat. The conical thatched model hut is an architectural archetype that is nearly ubiquitous in cultural tourism sites where the San perform especially in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. For the Sabase community, such a structure only exists in their memory, as their architectural designs have since evolved, partly influenced by the Kalanga and Ndebele ethnic groups that surround them in Matabeleland South province. The group also pitched an idea of documenting how they could catch fish in the river using tree branches, an impression that they insisted on even when the Tekwane riverbed was dry. Both proposals centred on gender-assigned 'manly' tasks, which automatically excluded women. It is possible that the members of the group felt that they could demonstrate their masculinity by representing themselves conducting these manly tasks.

The group felt that their film reflected their history and culture. Knowledge, the leader of the group, declared that there was a need to resurrect or preserve this dying architecture.

> We selected this subject because it reflects our culture. Many people, particularly those living in the cities, do not know this. So this would be a way of showing them (Knowledge Ndlovu, interview).

Apart from demonstrating the construction, the group was also interested in the history of their community. They captured interviews with village elders Mavuka Tshuma and Bhomeni Tshuma to trace San genealogy and the transformation of their architecture over time. The interviewees revealed that the San community had been moved from a place called Twai Twai in 1997 by the Norwegian humanitarian aid organisation Redd Barna, also known as Save the Children. Redd Barna is a children's rights organisation with interests in areas of education, health aid and child protection.[1] It emerged in discussions with some members of the San community that they had been relocated from Twai Twai because it was feared that their hunter-gatherer lifestyles threatened game conservancy efforts in the area, which is situated near the Hwange Game Reserve. Ironically, tourists who visit the area for trophy hunting often use the San for tracking game. When they make a kill, they leave the San trackers with the carcass while they take away the precious parts of the animal, such as ivory and leather. Thus the San remain poor, marginalised and sometimes yearn for a return to their past, a theme that constantly appeared in their films. In *The San of Twai Twai*, the filmmakers Knowledge, Mpiliseni and Dennis introduce themselves in

relation to their residency in the village, with Dennis triumphantly shouting 'Twai Twai number one!'[2] Although this village in Makhulela ward is called Sabase, the San still nostalgically call it Twai Twai. Twai Twai/Thwayi Thwayi[3] rhymes with the place referred to as Kai Kai by John Marshall (see Barnard 2007: 56) and seems to occupy a special place in the collective nostalgia of the San community. Thus the film became a platform through which to project their pride in their community, their history and their identity.

An Aesthetic of Innocence

In making the films, the San members generally preferred wide shots, filmed from a 'safe' distance and at times the *mise en scène* was not well composed. Mobile phones were relatively easy for the youths to use, probably because a few members of the community already possessed such gadgets. Without the technical dexterity to zoom or dolly closer to their subjects, they tended to keep wide, distant shots. One could sense that this was 'good enough' for the members behind the camera. They trusted their eyes more than the recording gadget. In mimetic fashion, they tried to record events as they saw them with their eyes. A good example is footage of Mpiliseni chopping poles from a Mopani bush. The footage is a continuous, entirely wide shot from a very objective eye level, though remarkably stable. The same applies to when Dennis films Knowledge explaining what he is about to demonstrate (building the model hut). He records a long shot at eye level as he asks a few prompting questions. All three also rolled the recording devices for long periods, not wanting to miss any detail, no matter how seemingly trivial. Both Dennis and Mphiliseni filmed the hut construction sequence, from digging holes in the ground, erecting wooden poles in those holes and fastening them together into a cone structure, using flexible tree branches and bark, then thatching the structure with grass fastened with bark strips. The filming technique in these clips would tick all the boxes of ethnographic film produced by well-trained practitioners going by Karl Heider's (2006:3) argument that 'ethnography must take precedence over cinematography'. In their inexperience, they seemed motivated, not only to capture aspects of reality, but to reproduce it. In their filming technique, perhaps by accident rather than design, the group achieves something that Heider argues to be not feasible: 'It is not possible to demand that everything about an entire act be shown. That is unrealistic realism' (2006:71). Perhaps this curtailment would only apply to 'professional' ethnographic filmmakers whose awareness of the complexity of post-production limits the lengths of acts that they capture on record. In such cases, institutionalised standards curtail creativity and, quite often, the end product.

As a result of the continuous recording, on one of the days, within three hours the camera batteries were flat, though close to 20 gigabytes of footage had been recorded by each of the participants. What we witnessed was a 'naïve', if not innocent filmmaking style unfettered by theory and industry-imposed standards. It was an aesthetic of innocence. The edited films maintain that rawness, which purists can easily dismiss as 'poor technique'. The purity of San life that has long been narrated and sometimes romanticised and exaggerated (see Marshall-Thomas 1989) is somewhat evident in their choice of narrative and their treatment of it. The decision to hold eye level shots, which was observed when any of them were operating the camera, could have been influenced by a desire to tell an objective story. It was apparent that they were not concerned about an expressive aesthetic even when we had introduced them to it when we played back *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Uys 1980), a fictional film about the San of the Kalahari. We also noticed this objective, mimetic style when they interviewed elders. In Knowledge's respective interviews with village elders Bhomeni Tshuma and Sinyeyo Dube, he sat on a wooden stool and lowered the tripod to their seated levels. At first, it appeared this was a conscious decision carried over from the instructions we gave on camera handling. On closer analysis, this seemed to be also influenced by the cultural norms among the San, as indeed among other cultural groups in Zimbabwe, that one does not stand up when having a conversation with a seated elder. This is usually given as a rule of thumb, that 'youngsters must not see the top of elders' heads'. From this perspective, therefore, the participants were already socialised into what Edward Branigan (2006) calls an 'objective camera'. An objective camera focuses on unobtrusive reality in mimetic fashion. Like Dziga Vertov's *zhizn vrasplokh* (life caught unawares, as it is), the camera is motivated by its operator's desire to capture an objective, truthful account. This type of camera work is comparable to the Lumière brothers' actualities at the birth of modern cinema in the late nineteenth century.

Cellphilm Becomes Self(ie)-film: Points of Reference and Points of View

With more encouragement, the San filmmakers ventured closer to their subjects. They began to employ tighter, more detailed shots whenever necessary. They filmed the stumps of the chopped Mopani trees, the poles extracted for the purposes of the construction, as well as the axe, as it swung up and down. They filmed almost everything with daguerreotype honesty.

After erecting the model hut, the men tried to tell the history behind the infrastructure. They interviewed community leaders, their cultural reservoirs. One of the interviewees was the village elder Mavuka Tshuma, who said that the structure that had been constructed by the group no longer existed. It had been discovered over time that it was vulnerable to termites and animals that fed on the low thatch. In response to this challenge the community members resorted to moulding 'bricks' by ramming mud into tin containers and drying them in the sun. These 'bricks' offered a more durable structure, upon which a thatched roof would be erected. The group had enough awareness to film some incomplete structures erected using this type of brick. Knowledge later explained, after showing us his footage:

> We are a poor community. We cannot afford cement, so this is an affordable way to build our shelter. We want whoever will watch our film to know our conditions.

Over the years several studies carried out on the San people in Southern Africa have noted that the Zimbabwean groups had the lowest socio-economic status, both in the country and across the region. The architecture shown in the film as well as the general conditions we encountered in Sabase substantiate those observations. On our way we were marvelling at the modern structures that we saw on the roadside. Homesteads in the areas we passed through, Makhulela, Ndolwane among others, were modern structures with solar power and other civil works. Our host Forward Dube's home, though situated deep in the rural areas, was modern with a television set, tapped water, bath tubs and digital satellite television installations. What struck us was the economic shift. Twai Twai Village had traditional structures of mud, with cow dung floors and poles supporting the structures. In our focus group discussions, some of the women participants kept appealing to us that the government or civil society must train them and empower them with skills like dress making, chicken rearing or cooperatives for them to find a way out of their dire economic situations.

Furthermore, because the communities were unable to produce enough grain and livestock to feed their families, they were forced to offer cheap labour to other communities, including touring hunters, in exchange for food. On our production visits some of the students were not around and some came late for the sessions. This was mostly because they had gone to work in the fields of the Kalanga and Ndebele communities nearby. According to Hitchcock and Nangati (2000) some San adults and older children work in the fields of other ethnic groups in a kind of share-cropping arrangement, but most San people rely on irregular informal employment opportunities, and therefore do not have predictable incomes. About 10 per cent of the San people

had experienced working for other people, usually as herders, agricultural labourers, or domestic workers. Several of the selected participants did not complete the training because they had moved to neighbouring communities or illegally migrated to Botswana in search of employment.

From the above background, the desire expressed by Knowledge to have external audiences see the San's conditions presents an interesting aspect of self-presentation. The San were consciously manipulating reality through film to show existing and non-existing realities that they desired associated with them. This assumes that there might be some social reward to be attracted by their self-presentation of the well-documented poverty of the San community. Thus by showing 'to the world' their deplorable circumstances, the San are showing their need for modern infrastructure, social amenities and medical facilities. This confirms our assumption that access to and ability to manipulate media technology help subaltern communities such as the San to seize the agency to represent themselves, in the process articulating their needs, fears and aspirations.

Instead of using the recording devices to record pro-filmic events (with them behind the camera), the participants' own influence in the direction of the story was overwhelming. For starters, in both films, they feature as the first sets of interviewees, asking each other why they were doing what they were doing. Then the other interviewees follow, whom they carefully selected, more as reference points than the main subjects of the story. At times the interviewers offered more information than they solicited from interviewees. In such cases, as with Knowledge, the questions were heavily opinionated and subjective. Thus the video-films were not just a reflection of the San's everyday life, but of how particular members of this community (the filmmakers) preferred their story told – their points of view. They were a reflection of the identities of the filmmakers themselves who were not merely instruments in the construction of a narrative – they were auteurs.

Insights from the Exhibition Exercises

The Golden Story of Makhulela was deemed not suitable for the children and men to watch. Some male members of the community even suggested that it should not be screened. Their concern was that the film had strong language and its sexually explicit subject was not suitable for minors according to the community's rating. Content rating refers to the process of offering viewers advance information about the content (violence, strong language, nudity among other things) in the TV programme/film to be aired so that they can decide whether to watch or not. Kafu (2017) points out that content rating

systems have been put in place by various countries as a way of reducing media effects on children. There have been a number of studies on media effects on children and most of these studies have focused on the content's negative effect on children's social, cultural and psychological development (Friedman 1973; Grier 2001). It is on that basis that one argues that the community members that recommended a private screening for the film were using their culture as the rating apparatus to decide what was palatable or not for the community. The film was eventually screened to an exclusively female audience. The females were whispering and murmuring in agreement during the screening. They regretted not screening the film to men and suggested that the males should do a documentary about the herbs they used to increase their libido and sexual stamina. It can be argued that, inspired by the filmmaking process and outcome, female members of Sabase found a voice to challenge the social order in the community, a huge improvement from their initially passive tendencies at the start of production. Thus the film encouraged them to think critically about their circumstances and propose ways to confront them in an insider to insider manner (Walker 2018). Insider knowledge refers to local, indigenous epistemology. According to Walker (*ibid.*), insider to insider communication is important for purposes of conscientisation.

The San of Twai Twai was watched by a complement of audiences, including children. Many chuckled at seeing themselves appearing in the film. The most amusing scene was the hut construction, which had been sped up to create a time-lapse of the building process. Children laughed merrily at the awkward speed and movement created by the effect. During focus group discussions, elderly men from the community said what they enjoyed about the film was that it had been created by their own children and was therefore an 'accurate' representation of their life and history.

From our observations, we concluded that the participants were now able to operate video cameras and mobile phones with minimum supervision. One of the benefactors of the community, Forward Dube, suggested that he would depend on them to produce musical videos for an upcoming artist that he was mentoring and promoting, Leebraivale 'Tjabuda' Moyo. After we screened the movies, some of the community members asked about the continuity of the programme, afraid that we were just there to collect data and leave without sustainability plans for the programme. They asked about the impartation of the skills to the younger generation and we realised that if resources permitted, there was need for some investment towards the continuation of the programme. One of the participants, Dennis, asked to make a choice between seeking employment elsewhere (as was the case with

Enias) or working full time as a videographer or phoneographer, declared that he would be happy to pursue the latter occupation. Enthused by this concrete outcome, we argue that cinematography is a language in itself, with its own technical and psychomotor vocabulary that does not depend on reading and writing skills. Sometimes a rudimentary sign language could be used to indicate when to zoom in, tilt up or pan the camera. The same could be used when communicating when to start rolling or stopping the camera. The participants developed a story without even writing a script. Their rallying point was collective memory, cooperation and common interest. They were very sure and steadfast about what they wanted to achieve, and would not deviate from it.

Film As an Archive for Preserving Language and Culture

Apart from Mavuka and Bomeni Tshuma, an elderly lady Sinyeyo Dube, who was Bomeni's wife was also interviewed and filmed as an important referral person on cultural issues. The elderly lady was said to be the only person able to fluently speak Tyua (pronounced *qhua*), the language originally spoken by the San but now becoming extinct. She had been used as a point-person by the government in consultations to include the Khoisan language in the country's constitution. From this a dictionary had been compiled and availed to the Sabase community. A few other elderly women knew some Tyua words. Most community members, particularly the youths, knew it existed, but they did not know how to speak it. Even the few who claimed to know it were not confident enough to speak it. They laughed at each other for trying. It is slowly becoming a 'lost tongue'. In *The San of Twai Twai*, Knowledge asked Sinyeyo to translate some common words and phrases from Kalanga to Tyua. He asked her to translate words such as 'children', 'water', 'fire', 'chicken' and other phrases. Most of her translations featured the clicking sounds associated with the language. After the interview, Knowledge said:

> When all this is done, I want to sit down with her so that she can teach me the language. Only if it is passed down from generation to generation can it be preserved.

After interviewing Sinyeyo Dube for quite a long time, Knowledge offered to her, as a question/statement of fact:

> You see, when the Shonas come here, and you ask them something, or they want to tell you something, they do so in their own language. They do not change it for your sake. They insist on their own language. Why is it that here in Twai Twai we stopped using our language and now use Kalanga or Ndebele?

Knowledge made the point that in Botswana, where other San groups resided, it was common for children to speak Tyua compared to Sabase village where they spoke Kalanga. He further pointed out that it was not fashionable for anyone from their community to boast about residing in cities such as Bulawayo and failing to identify with Twai Twai, and importantly, the Tyua language. The camera in Knowledge's hands gave him power to express himself, both to his people that he interviewed, as well as the external audience who would hear his opinion on record. This shows the importance of participatory video in critical pedagogy. The filmmaking process provides important lessons to participants about their circumstances, which they may feel more inclined to address beyond the movie-making exercise. The Sabase youths became aware or got the opportunity to amplify an already existing awareness that they could be the saviours of their own culture. It also emerged that film could be used as an electronic archive of language as argued by James Monaco (2009). There was an intergenerational knowledge exchange. The elders had information, while the youths could manipulate the technology to preserve the information. The recorded translations by Sinyeyo, if properly archived, could forever be available as a reference resource for future generations. A similar documentary effort *The Lost Tongue* (Mudzingwa 2006) was produced in South Africa. It features a San woman from the Kalahari, who embarks on a mission to save the N!uu language spoken by her people, at a time when the number of surviving elders knowledgeable about the language is diminishing.

'Bushman' Mythology, Alcoholism, Dependency and Space in Modernity

While anthropological studies are renowned or notorious for focusing on vanishing peoples or cultures, our encounter with the San presents specific ontological and epistemological challenges. Our being there and their being there in 2018 presented novel existential realities. These are neither pre-modern people nor are they a community whose culture requires to be captured before it disappears. They are already remarkably transformed from the pristine images and narratives of people frozen in time and waiting to be 'discovered'. They are not a cultural throwback emerging from *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, but live in the present; some own mobile phones; and nearly all have an appetite for manufactured food products; and they know of cars and other technologies of communication. If anything reminded us of *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, it was Knowledge's ordeal with the drone. He was at the river when touring hunters launched a drone to survey the area

and track game. Knowledge was disturbed by the sight of the strange aircraft hovering above him. He told us:

> I thought maybe a war had started. I immediately rode my bike and cycled desperately away from it.

The hunters must have been amused by the sight of Knowledge, cycling at full speed in an attempt to escape from the drone. He said the drone descended and flew dangerously close to him as he desperately cycled home. It accompanied him all the way home, where he told the other villagers about the strange occurrence. Knowledge could only relate to the drone much later when he visited Midlands State University where he encountered and operated the drone. During our discussions, there was palpable relief when Knowledge told the villagers that the drone was not a 'war machine'.

Writings on San culture have tended to oscillate between mythical, often romanticised aspects of their life and their struggle with modernity. Our research team, most of whom were encountering the San for the first time, took a keen interest in observing this. The moment our vehicle drove into Twai Twai village, it did not escape our attention that some youngsters ran away, disappearing into the bushes. They seemed to be shy, even though this was our third contact with them, authorised by the village head. Even in some of our interactions, they seemed to be secretive, particularly about their traditions. Mau, one of the men who assisted in fetching firewood and cooking, could not open up when asked about traditional rituals such as rainmaking. Rather he deflected questions by talking about modern hunting activities that were headed by a white hunter, Mr Brown, in the conservancy nearby. He revealed that all they got from the hunt was elephant meat, and never the ivory and hides. They often got invited for the skinning and dehorning of the animals. Sabase is in the midst of a bushy area, making it susceptible to stray game from nearby conservancies. In avoiding talk about traditional issues, it appeared as if, among other possibilities, the San wanted to claim their space in the modern world even though there was evidence (for example the traditional medicine documentary engaged by the females) that they still practised a lot of traditional rituals. They still had incisions on their bodies, and rarely would we come across any young girl in contemporary fashion like skinny jeans. In informal conversations, they revealed critical knowledge about the types of winds that would bring rain (on the first day of our third visit, there was a heavy wind and a cloudy sky, but they insisted, against our fears, that no rain was coming). In spite of their justifiable claim to modernity, the San still possess some mystical knowledge and skill that they cannot let outsiders have, as evidenced by *The Golden Story of Makhulela*.

As the two groups filmed, two members of our facilitation team who were coordinating feeding logistics were confronted by one of the community members, a heavily drunk man with a deep facial scar and damaged eye. He staggered from the bushes demanding the whole pot of relish. The incident was resolved amicably, the man was fed and he eventually participated in the communal drawing on the large fabric that a South African colleague of ours Levinia Pienaar had brought. The drunkenness and alcoholism of First Peoples has been noted frequently in studies (Tomaselli 1993). Writing about Aborigines, O'Regan (1996:45) notes that 'aboriginal life-ways and aspirations are in many cases bounded by chronic social crisis manifested in alcoholism, violence, unemployment and homelessness, stemming from the 85 ongoing effects of colonization'. Similarly, writing about the Kalahari San, Louis Molamu argues that this alcohol abuse is a direct result of socio-cultural alienation, marginalisation and impoverishment. Alexander Stille calls it 'alcoholism of boredom' because he blames the absence of proper productive activities, compounded by the lack of skills and competencies to fit into modern capitalist economies, that haunt First Peoples. The alcoholism was a sideshow which nobody bothered to capture on film, and when told about it village head Matjena was far from amused. She was livid that 'her visitors' were made to see the murky side of her community.

Apart from the alcohol, we also had to deal with various demands for money, foodstuffs, clothes and the cameras we were using for the training. We learnt that neighbouring communities do not relate well with the Sabase San, a point that also came out in Mavuka's interview in the film *The San of Twai Twai*. Levinia, who is of mixed race and San heritage, and had visited us from Cape Town, South Africa to audit our project, experienced the chronic dependency first hand. Because of her light skin colour, everyone assumed she was white and that she was 'the boss' of the project. Members of the community were surprised when she revealed that she was also of San lineage. The women went out of their way to accommodate her and show some affection. Some of them even tried to speak to her in English and during the interviews they would answer questions directing to her, not their own filmmakers who were asking the questions. Her presence brought a whole new dimension into the filming exercise. The women wanted to prove that they had so much indigenous knowledge and offered to cure her menstrual pains. However one of the elderly women kept saying our female researchers should pay to be shown the medicine. Her argument was that they were outsiders and were being shown special concoctions meant for insiders. Taking these incidents into consideration, we also felt that film production could become a profitable enterprise that could help keep youths away from some of the social vices described above.

Conclusion

The article describes the filmmaking activities undertaken by researchers and selected members of the San community as part of participatory action research designed to find out what sort of films the participants would create if they were capacitated. The research participants, who received basic training in recording and editing videos, produced two 20-minute documentaries, namely *The Golden Story of Makhulela* and *The San of Twai Twai*. The films were exhibited to members of the San community of Makhulela, Matabeleland South, from which the filmmakers had been drawn. The article shows that the San filmmakers appreciated the importance of film technology in documenting their lives, histories and circumstances. In so-doing, they adhered to a simple style of recording a truthful account of events around them, while featuring in their own films at the same time. This culminated in an aesthetic of innocence that film purists may dismiss as poor technique. The study also shows that film could be used as an electronic archive to document and preserve dying languages and cultures. Above all, the films produced by the San members also reflect their identity as a people and the way they relate to the outside world, how they perceive themselves, and how they wish to be perceived.

Notes

1. https://www.reddbarna.no/internasjonalt.
2. The San in this area also identify themselves as *Amasili,* a record that exists in literature (see Madzudzo 2001; Hitchcock and Nangati 2000; Zhou 2014).
3. In a painting exercise, the participants wrote the name as Twai Twai, although it appears in Madzudzo (2001) as Thwayi Thwayi. The pronouncement is the same, however.

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Restructured Citizen–Government Relationship in Kenya's 2010 Constitution and the Right of Hawkers to the City in Nairobi

Esther Wangui Kimani*, Sammy Gakero Gachigua**
& George Mbugua Kariuki***

Abstract

This article interrogates how various actors in the Nairobi Central Business District (CBD) space have made sense of the 2010 Constitution's expansive provisions on socio-political and economic rights to advance hawkers' claims to the right to the city. Using Lefebvre's and human rights notions of the 'right to the city', the study finds that the Constitution has immense potential to secure the hawkers' right to the city. However, various challenges impede efforts towards its realisation. Firstly, the 2007 no-hawking-in-the-CBD bylaw exerts inordinate influence, in practice suppressing the Constitution's aspirations. Secondly, the City authorities' efforts to facilitate the hawkers' right to the city remain ambivalent or dependent on the whims of the serving governor. Thirdly, initiatives by other actors remain elitist, top-down and opaque with only the superficial involvement of hawkers. On their part, hawkers' initiatives to claim their right to the city have suffered from fragmented leadership and individualistic self-help micro-strategies. Furthermore, hawkers have underutilised judicial activism as an avenue for challenging the constitutionality of the city bylaws banning hawking in the CBD. This strategy would potentially have provided a discursive platform to make their claim to the city the moral-legal claim envisaged by the Constitution.

Keywords: Right to the City, Nairobi, Kenya's 2010 Constitution, hawkers

*   Nairobi City County Government. Email: kimaniesther.w@gmail.com
**   Egerton University. Email: gachiguas@gmail.com
*** Kenyatta University. Email: george.mbugua2@gmail.com

Résumé

Cet article interroge le sens que donnent divers acteurs de l'espace du Central Business District de Nairobi aux dispositions de droits socio-politiques et économiques de la Constitution de 2010 dans la satisfaction des revendications de droit à la ville des colporteurs. Utilisant les notions de Lefebvre et de droits humains (« droit à la ville »), l'étude constate que la Constitution a un immense potentiel de garantie des droits à la ville des colporteurs. Cependant, divers défis entravent les efforts de sa réalisation. Premièrement, la loi de 2007 contre le colportage dans le CDB a une influence démesurée, étouffant, en pratique, les aspirations de la Constitution. Deuxièmement, les efforts des autorités municipales de facilitation du droit à la ville des colporteurs restent ambivalents, ou dépendent des caprices du gouverneur en fonction. Troisièmement, les initiatives des autres acteurs restent élitistes, descendantes et opaques avec, uniquement, une implication superficielle des colporteurs. De leur côté, les colporteurs sous-utilisent l'activisme judiciaire pour contester la constitutionnalité de la disposition, et leurs initiatives de revendication de leur droit à la ville souffrent d'un leadership fragmenté et de micro-stratégies individualistes d'auto-assistance. En outre, les colporteurs sous-emploient l'activisme judiciaire comme moyen de contester la constitutionnalité de l'arrêté municipal interdisant le colportage dans la CDB. Cette stratégie leur aurait, potentiellement, fourni une plate-forme discursive et aurait fait de leur demande de droit à la ville la revendication morale et juridique prévue par la Constitution.

Mots-clés : droit à la ville, Nairobi, Constitution du Kenya de 2010, colporteurs

Introduction

Using the notion of the right to the city, this article seeks to interrogate how hawkers (as ever-present but marginalised inhabitants of the city), the Nairobi City County authorities and other relevant actors have made sense of the 2010 Constitution's enabling governance provisions to advance hawkers' claims of the right to the city. The article adopts the concept of the Right to the City from both Lefebvre's work and human rights perspectives to mean a collective right exercised by hawkers in deciding on the use of the street space. This includes participation in politics, management and administration of Nairobi City, and the right to access and re-organisation of the street space to further their social and economic benefits.

Kenya's 2010 Constitution, which has radically reordered the governance structure was received by citizens with optimism as it provided for expansive rights for citizens. In particular, and regarding the focus of this article, the constitiution provides for decentralised governance instruments, such as the

County Governments Act 2012 and the County Integrated Development Plan, that would guarantee greater urban citizenship rights to city actors, including hawkers.

Hawkers' claims to urban citizenship in Nairobi has historically been contested and regulated in a contradictory manner with the '[l]aw enforcement against street vending oscillating between tolerance and brutal eviction' (Racaud, Kago & Owuor 2018:4). Hawkers have thus always operated from the margins of Nairobi's urban space, enjoying limited urban citizenship. The continuous amendment of the bylaws on hawking shows a consistent ban of hawking in the CBD except for the sale of newss and secondhand books. However, these bylaws stand in contrast with postcolonial plans, including the 1973 Nairobi Metropolitan Growth Strategy, the 2008 Nairobi Metro 2030 and the 2014 Nairobi Integrated Urban Development Master Plan (NIUPLAN), all of which sought to integrate hawking in the Nairobi CBD but which have hardly been implemented (GOK 2008:87; Karuga 1993:15; Charton-Bigot & Rodrigues-Torres 2010:27).

Despite their precarious presence, hawkers have always played a significant role in Nairobi CBD's economic system by filling gaps in the formal economic system, Hawkers have served as a supply chain link between rural agricultural producers and urban consumers, and between manufacturers and urban consumers (Mitullah 1991; Kamunyori 2007). In Nairobi, hawking serves as the main source of livelihood for thousands of those involved in the trade, their families, generating supplement income even to those in formal employment (ibid).

More specifically, street hawkers in Kenya form a significant part of the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) sector, the majority of whom operate in the informal economy. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS 2016), the sector is large and dynamic, constituting around 95 per cent of the country's businesses and entrepreneurs. MSMEs contribute approximately 33.8 per cent of Kenya's GDP and employ about 14.9 million people, with 57.8 per cent being unlicensed enterprises. Further, according to Kenya's Economic Survey 2018, the sector accounts for over 83.4 per cent of job creation. In addition, Nairobi County accounts for the highest concentration of informal sector workers, and, since 2013, Nairobi County has contributed approximately 21.7 per cent to Kenya's GDP (KNBS 2019). The statistics here seem comparable to other studies that have shown that the informal economy remains the mainstay of urban employment in cities across Africa, Asia and Latin America (Brown 2017; Herrera, Kuépié, Nordman, Oudin & Roubaud 2012; ILO 2013).

The division of an economic system into formal and informal sectors is controversial, with various arguments on the practicality of the dualism and preconceived notions about who operates in the informal sector. On the one hand, the informal economy is understood as a kind of marginal, separate economy related to the survival strategies of marginalised social groups who share a common condition manifested in a lack of legal status and protection, extreme vulnerability and dependence on informal engagements that generate their own idiosyncratic political economy (Slavnic 2009). On the other hand, large firms, the state and its institutions are presumptively perceived as the formal economy, always operating in congruence with set rules and regulations, with the state and its institutions partly setting the rules and partly appearing as economic actors (Slavnic 2016). To the contrary, Slavnic (2009) observes that the formal economy and the informal economy should not be taken as mutually exclusive since formal actors are increasingly prone to act informally in ways that conflict with existing 'rules of the game', in order to survive economically.

The notion 'informal economy' was first coined by Keith Hart in the early 1970s, during a time when African countries were facing population growth and migration to rapidly growing cities. Hart described it as the entrepreneurial dynamism of the city migrants, as a way of generating income as the cities' limited industrial capacity failed to accommodate migrants (Hart 1973, 1985; Slavnic 2011, 2016). As such, the informal sector was seen as people taking back into their own hands the economic power that centralised agents had sought to deny them. De Soto (1989) described it as a response to the rigid mercantilist state that survives by granting to a small elite the privilege of legal participation in the economy. In developing countries, the informal economy is closely associated with poverty, minimal education and illegality. In developed economies, informality is associated with immigrants from developing nations as opposed to structural changes within these economies (Slavnic 2011, 2016).

As a consequence of the marginality thesis and the illegality associated with informal economies, Thornton (2000) observes that informal sector workers receive no supportive role from the state, since their activities are perceived to contravene existing laws and regulations. Consequently, informal workers have fewer ties with the government, they feel left out of the political system and are less likely to have high levels of support or protection. On the other hand, the formal sector participants receive government facilitation and protection. This results in a tendency for political, media and academic discourses to lay more emphasis on the formal bureaucratic society while entrenching the exclusion and marginalisation of informal economic actors (Thornton 2000; Slavnic 2011, 2016).

Despite the contribution of hawkers to Nairobi's economic system, the authorities constantly associate them with lawlessness, traffic congestion, crime and insecurity, health concerns, noise and environmental pollution, as well as a threat to tax-paying traders and enterprises (Bocquier, Otieno, Khasakhala & Owuor 2009). Hawkers are thus considered illegal, offered no protection from the state and local authorities and are forced to operate at the peripheries of the CBD. This denies them the right to a livelihood, the right to work and the right to participation and appropriation (Mitchell 2003). This exclusion further expands the disparity between the rich and the poor. Street hawkers' exclusion from the public street space signifies a dispossession of urban citizenship, which is the substantive citizenship that entails access to political, civil, cultural and economic rights that is established at the sub-national level (Purcell 2002; Swider 2015).

The 2010 Kenya Constitution gave previously marginalised communities an increased stake in the political system by enabling local solutions to be found for local problems (Cheeseman, Lynch & Willis 2016). As Bassett (2016) has observed, the 2010 Constitution offers transformative potential for urban governance in Kenya. It is against this backdrop that this article proceeds to interrogate how varied actors in Nairobi CBD have made sense of the 2010 Constitution and its other enabling legal frameworks to advance hawkers' claims to the right to the city.

Methodology and Data

The data for this article was derived from document analysis, interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as well as non-participant observation of hawkers and hawking practices within the streets of Nairobi.

The document analysis involved evaluating legal and policy documents relevant to hawking in the Nairobi CBD before and after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya. These documents included the Kenya Constitution 2010, the County Governments Act 2012, the Nairobi City County Persons with Disabilities Act 2015, the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood) Bill 2019 and the City of Nairobi by-laws amended in 2007.

With regard to interviews, three sets of actors in Nairobi City were interviewed between September 2018 and January 2019. The first set of actors interviewed were hawkers who sold goods and not services, were mobile and spread their merchandise on the ground or improvised stands on the major streets of the CBD. These are Tom Mboya Street, Moi Avenue, Ronald Ngala Street, River Road, Taveta and Latema roads.

The second group interviewed were county government departmental directors or their representatives who were directly involved in the formulation, implementation and enforcement of policies in the Nairobi City County Government touching on hawkers and hawking. In this respect officers from the following departments were interviewed: Urban Planning; Environment and Natural Resources; Security, Compliance and Disaster Management; and Commerce, Trade and Industrialisation. The third set of interviewees were officers from the Nairobi Regeneration Programme, which is a combined initiative of the National Government and the Nairobi City County that aims at changing the image of Nairobi.

The researchers also conducted FGDs with officials of the following hawkers' associations: Kenya National Alliance of Street Vendors and Informal Traders (KENASVIT); Kenya National Hawkers Association (KENAHA); Nairobi Informal Sectors Confederation (NISCOF); the United Disabled Vendors Group (UDTG); and People with Disabilities Small Traders Organisation (PDSTO). The FGDs were carried out on 18 July 2019 to establish the hawkers' awareness of the legal and policy provisions regarding their social political and economic rights and the efforts they were undertaking as individuals and groups towards claiming the rights provided for in law.

Theoretical Framework: The Right to the City

This section traces the origin of the concept of the right to the city, examines contrasting views of the notion and provides a conceptualisation of the right to the city in the context of street hawkers' claims to urban citizenship, as will be used in this study.

Though the notion of the right to the city can be traced from the works of Henri Lefebvre, which first appeared in his 1968 *Le Droit à la Ville*, the last decade has seen a resurgence of the notion as a central idea in urbanisation discourses. The notion continues to evolve as a unifying call for social inclusion against the exclusionary effects of urbanisation and the commodification of public space typified by the attendant urbanisation of poverty (Brown 2010; Omoegun 2015). According to Lefebvre, a French philosopher, the right to the city is a right to the 'oeuvre', the right to participation and appropriation (Mitchell 2003). While the right to participation necessitates the right of city residents to be involved in all decisions in the production of the urban space, the right to appropriation involves the right of city residents to move in, dwell and utilise by manipulating and modifying that urban space (Purcell 2002). Harvey describes it as a common right rather than an individual one, 'the freedom to make and remake our city and ourselves' (Harvey 2008:1).

Lefebvre envisioned the right to the city as a drastic reorganisation of political and social economic affairs as opposed to being a recommendation for reform or partial resistance. To a large extent, Lefebvre sought the establishment of rights not for all residents but for those whose rights had been denied and were in need (Mayer 2012) and for those whose rights had been deprived of financial and political power (Marcuse 2009). Though Lefebvre's argument was based on urbanisation experiences in France and largely in other Western nations, the rebirth of the concept has universal underpinnings.

Drawing from Lefebvre's original idea, advocacy institutions have fronted a human rights perspective for the right to the city aimed at addressing the exclusionary effects of neoliberalism (Mayer 2012). They conceptualise the notion as the overarching theme in efforts to direct legislation and public policy towards the promotion of equity and justice in urban development. However, the human rights perspective has faced a number of criticisms. First, the perspective has a conformist approach which fails to address the underlying invisible forces that necessitate the call for the establishment of rights in the first case. Second, while the human rights perspective aims at fostering inclusion in the existing global capitalist economic system, it fails to address the issues that surround this model of urban development, which are perceived as a foundational problem. Lastly, although the human rights perspective simply focuses on neoliberal policy, such as poverty alleviation, it fails to address the key economic policies of neoliberal policy that perpetuate exclusion and poverty (Omoegun 2015; Mayer 2012).

Both the Lefebvre and human rights perspectives share a common philosophical origin and envision just, sustainable and democratic cities (Mayer 2012). However, they differ on how the right to the city can be realised. While Lefebvre perceives struggles and confrontation as the means to achieving the right to the city, the latter sees international and legal instruments as the main approach (Omoegun 2015). Further, other scholars adopt a democratic perspective to the right to the city, with McCann (2005) noting that it involves a lack of marginalisation in decision-making and Harvey (2008) seeing it as a call to the democratic management of resources. Attoh (2011), though, generally agreeing with the democratic approach that the right to the city can be thought of as a right to communal decision, says it should also be thought of as a right against unjust communal decisions.

There are various conceptions of what exactly constitutes a right and who has a right to the city. To begin with, Mitchell and Heynen (2009) consider the right to the city as being capacious and open. These authors observe that the value of the right to the city is in its capaciousness, in that it 'allows for solidarity across political struggles while at the same time focusing attention

on the most basic conditions of survivability, the possibility to inhabit, to live' (Mitchell & Heynen 2009:616). Secondly, Lefebvre conceptualises the right to the city as a right to freedom, socialisation, right to habitat (make a life) and a right to inhabit (collectively own, dwell and be in a place unconstrained by demands of exchange value). Thirdly, Mattila (2005) considers that the right to the city encompasses: the right to housing; the right against police callousness and state overreach; rights to public participation; rights against established property laws; and rights to communal good. Fourthly, Mitchell (2003) considers the right as constituting the right to occupy; and fifthly, Gibson (2005) sees it as the right to define public policy. Finally, Marcuse (2009:190) notes, the demand for the right to the city is for the 'material necessities of life, the aspiration is for a broader right to what is necessary beyond the material to lead a satisfying life'. In a nutshell, the right to the city incorporates multiple rights that go beyond a right to public space, to constitute socio-economic, collective, negative and positive rights (Attoh 2011), indeed a 'right to a totality' (Marcuse 2009:193).

On the question of who has the right to the city, scholars accredit it to diverse groups, to those who 'live in the city, who contribute to the body of lived experience and lived space' (Marc Purcell as cited in Attoh 2011:675). Marcuse (2009) ascribes it to the excluded and as a cry for the alienated, to those who are deprived, oppressed, jobless, impoverished and discontent; in other words, those disrespected and given unequal treatment.

The recent revival of interest in the notion of the right to the city as a key theme in urbanisation discourses has been attributed to rapid urbanisation and the emergence of international social movements demanding the right to the city (Harvey 2008; Omoegun 2015). In this regard, this article on the one hand borrows from Lefebvre's work on the right to appropriation and participation—the right to make decisions and the right to access, dwell and utilise the urban space. On the other hand, it borrows from the human rights perspective, which seeks the realisation of the right to the city through the assimilation of universal human rights in national laws.

The subsequent sections present the findings of the study under four headings. First is a discussion of the provisions of the 2010 Constitution and the enabling County Governments Act 2012, and the extent to which the hawkers perceived the possibilities these legal provisions offer in advancing their right to the city. This is followed by a description of the strategies the hawkers have employed to advance these possibilities. The third section interrogates the Nairobi City County's position regarding the hawkers' right to the city after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution. The fourth section critiques initiatives by other actors seeking to advance hawkers' right to the city in Nairobi, and is followed by the conclusion.

Kenya's 2010 Constitution and its Possibilities for Advancing Hawkers' Right to the City in Nairobi

There are important hallmarks of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya that offer great possibilities in advancing hawkers' right to the city in Nairobi. The first is that the 2010 Constitution acknowledges from the outset that all sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya. The constitution also provides for citizen participation at all levels of decision-making and governance. The second is that the Constitution has an elaborate bill of rights rendered as an integral part of Kenya's democratic state, which provides the framework for social, economic and cultural rights. The Constitution declares that the purpose of the bill of rights is to protect and preserve the dignity of individuals and communities and to promote social justice and the realisation of the potential of all human beings.

Of note in the bill of rights, is Article 43, on economic and social rights, which enshrines the right to be free from hunger and the right to social security. The third key point is that the Constitution provides for a devolved government structure with forty-seven county governments—Nairobi City County being one of them. The objects and principles of the devolved government as captured in Chapter 11 articles 174 and 175 include, among others: promoting the democratic and accountable exercise of power; giving powers of self-governance to the people to enhance their participation in the exercise of the powers of the state and in decisions affecting them; recognising the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development; protecting and promoting the interests and rights of minorities and marginalised communities; promoting social and economic development and the provision of proximate, easily accessible services throughout Kenya; and ensuring equitable sharing of national and local resources throughout Kenya.

As an enabling law of the foregoing, as provided for in the Constitution, the County Governments Act 2012 has many provisions that would have seen the greater entrenchment of urban citizenship for hawkers in Nairobi. The Act provides for inclusivity and people participation in county governments. It also provides for the right to petition a County Assembly to consider any matter within its authority, including enacting, amending or repealing any of its legislation. Likewise, the Act provides for the protection and promotion of the interests and rights of minorities, marginalised groups and communities, and more specifically provides for these groups to seek redress for grievances they may have experienced.

As provided in the County Governments Act 2012, an important function given to County governments is the planning and development of the County guided by, inter alia, the following principles: protect the right to self-fulfillment within the County communities, with responsibility to future generations; protect and integrate the rights and interest of minorities and marginalised groups and communities; engender effective resource mobilisation for sustainable development; and serve as a basis for engagement between the County government and the citizenry, other stakeholders and interest groups. The County planning framework is expected to develop a County Integrated Development Plan, incorporating economic, physical, social, environmental and spatial planning, as well as sectoral plans. The plans would be expected to outline the desired or undesired utilisation of space in a particular area, identify areas where strategic intervention is required and indicate areas where priority spending is required. As is discernable from the foregoing, the Constitution and the enabling County Governments Act 2012 provided for a wide range of possibilities for hawkers to assert their right to the city.

The next section examines how hawkers have both perceived the provisions above and the strategies they have employed to advance their right to the city in Nairobi.

Hawkers' Claims to the Right to the City after the Promulgation of the 2010 Constitution

After the promulgation of the 2010 Kenya Constitution, both the national and County governments have continually taken a hardline stance, declaring street hawking in Nairobi CBD illegal and persistently and forcibly carrying out operations to evict hawkers from the streets. This leaves them excluded from the street space, forcing them to operate at the margins of the city. The exclusion of hawkers has been exacerbated by elitist laws that propagate the colonial ideals of hygienism and gentrification without considering circumstances that have changed over time as well as the power given to citizens to be involved in governance as enshrined in the 2010 Constitution.

We sought to understand from the hawkers, during our FGDs with the hawkers' association officials, whether they understood the wide range of possibilities the Constitution and the enabling County Governments Act 2012 provided for them to assert their right to the city. The officials expressed a clear idea of various avenues afforded them in the two instruments of governance, even though they said their understanding was not comprehensive, and was even less so among most other hawkers. One of the officials said '*katiba hatujaielewa kabisa*' (We have not understood

the Constitution comprehensively). However, they expressed their dismay at the Nairobi City 2007 bylaws banning hawking in the Nairobi CBD, which seemed to override the Constitution. One official said '*katika hawking Nairobi kuna katiba na bylaws … bylaws ambazo ndio mbaya kabisa hazitambui katiba, hazifanyi nini … hizi ndizo zinaendelea kutumika*' (For hawking in Nairobi there are bylaws and the Constitution … the bylaws, which are terrible, do not recognise the Constitution; they seem to be law unto themselves … they continue to be used to regulate hawking).

The Nairobi City (hawkers) bylaw, 2007 No. 11, states, 'any person who engages in hawking with or without a permit within the CBD area as defined by the Council from time to time shall be guilty of an offence under these bylaws'. In addition, bylaw No. 12 renders guilty of an offence any person who buys from hawkers. These bylaws remain in force to date despite successive master plans that have recommended the integration of hawking into urban policies and planning (GOK 2008; Nairobi City County [NCC[2014), nine years after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution. The continued existence of the bylaws, contrary to the spirit of the Constitution, infringes on the hawkers' right to appropriation, subsequently denying them the right to trade and earn a livelihood.

The FGDs revealed that hawkers seemed helpless in the face of existing bylaws that contravene the Constitution. Another official commented that:

> *wengi wetu, percentage kubwa wanaelewa kipengele una haki ya biashara—economic right—uko na haki ya kukula chakula—protection by the government, wanajua ziko lakini sio kwa kina. Swali ni aje haki nitapigania? Yaani nimepatiwa haki nitapigania aje?* (Most of us, a large percentage, are aware of economic rights and social rights though not in much detail. However, the question is, how do I fight for these rights? So, I have been given these rights; how do I fight for them?)

The researchers thus sought to find out what initiatives the hawkers had taken, as had been done by other sectors of Kenyan society aggrieved by existing legislation that ran afoul of the new Constitution, to challenge the Nairobi City bylaws that banned hawking in the CBD. The association officials clarified that they were aware of this possible line of action but rued the fact that it had remained unviable for a number of reasons. One handicap was that they perceived the justice system in Kenya as expensive. For instance, one of the officials said:

> *ndio upate justice in Kenya hata kama ni kortini tunajua hizo sheria ziko zinafanywa lakini hata kama ni kortini, kama huna pesa hakuna kitu ambao utafanya kitu ya kwanza kuna zile lugha za kisheria ambao zinatakikana zijulikane zitumike … inabidi nitafute wakili, kwenda kwa wakili utapata*

kufungua file inaweza kuwa ukiambiwa kidogo sana ni kama 20k. Sasa ndio uanze procedure ya kumweleza ndio sasa apeleke kortini so in the first place, utapata huyo wakili kama pengine hauna 50k zikiwa kidogo sana ndio hiyo kesi ainze, hauwezi fanya. (Securing justice in Kenya is very expensive—even if you know that laws supporting your cause exist. For instance, because of the legal jargon in which the law is written, you will need to hire a lawyer, open a file, which will cost you at least 20,000 Kenya Shillings. For the lawyer to commence the case in court, you will need at least 50,000 Kenya Shillings. Without this you cannot do much).

For the hawkers to effectively lay claim to their right to the CBD street space and secure a livelihood, they need legal aid and empowerment to defend the gains made under the bill of rights and to fight the seemingly hard-to-win legal battles that pit the hawkers against the City authorities. This approach apparently worked in the case of Durban street vendors in South Africa, and, as Skinner (2017) notes, having access to free and high-grade legal aid is vital for informal sector workers in the face of dominant formal sector interest.

In addition, the Nairobi hawkers' association officials observed that the different hawkers' associations had for a long time been fragmented and beset with rivalry, such that they were unable to form a united front to speak with one voice about their plight. One official, for instance, said, '*Shida ni kwetu, kwa mfano NISCOF wakisema hivi, KENAHA wanaamka wanasema hiyo hatujui ingawa tulikuwa mkutano pamoja tukikubaliana hivyo.*' (The problem is on our part [as leaders]. For instance, if a NISCOF official makes a pronouncement that had been agreed in a collective meeting of all hawkers' associations, KENAHA will protest, claiming that what was said is NISCOF's stand, yet that is what was collectively agreed).

Likewise, the FGD revealed that City authorities had perfected the art of manipulating the hawkers' leadership so that they were unable to unite. Furthermore, interviews with hawkers registered a cynicism about association leadership because experience had taught them that the leaders of such groups would normally use their positions to extract personal benefits from the authorities and City politicians to the detriment of the hawkers' claims to the right to the city.

By and large it would seem that, in the recent past, hawkers have underutilised macro-level strategies in their claims to the right to the city. Macro-strategies involve negotiations between organised groups of vendors and the state authorities (Forkuor, Akuoko & Yeboah 2017). Hawkers' associations are often marred by fragmentation, mistrust and opportunism, as well as a lack of pursuit of long-term policy and legal initiatives. This is

in contrast with the situation in the first decade of the twenty-first century, when, with the help of NGOs, hawkers' associations seemed to project a more united and visionary approach (Morange 2015). The status of hawkers' associations is by and large reflective of the national political party organisation landscape in the country, which is beset with the same issues (Gachigua 2016; Wanyama 2010).

In place of macro-strategies, hawkers have largely resorted to micro-level survival strategies. These take place between individual street vendors and City authorities (Forkuor et al 2017). These strategies include forming informally organised social security networks that alert hawkers of impending swoops, and operating lightly on the streets to ensure that they can quickly scoop up their wares and run when a sudden swoop occurs and, in the event of confiscation or loss of wares, minimise their loss.

Hawkers also offer bribes as individuals, and in some cases as groups, to appease City inspectorate officials to avoid disruptions and arrests. They engage in passive resistance, too, through pleading guilty to all charges preferred against them in court regardless of the truthfulness of the charges, in order to shorten the court process and secure their freedom to return to the streets. Furthermore, hawkers foster symbiotic relations with other seemingly antagonistic actors in the Nairobi CBD, such as public service vehicle operators and licensed traders, in order to help them negotiate their precarious presence in the city.

The discussions here suggest that the hawkers had a sufficient understanding of the provisions of the Constitution and the County Governments Act 2012. However, their overreliance on micro-level strategies in their claim to the right to the city at the expense of the macro-strategies may prolong their realisation of their right to the city in Nairobi, since. As Scott (1985) has commented, the micro-level strategies may work in the long run by nibbling away at the oppressive structures of society, but they take a long time to bear fruit.

It would seem that the hawkers in Nairobi might benefit from the experience of hawkers in India. Organising at the macro-level under the umbrella of the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI), the hawkers in India mobilised public support for the legal recognition of hawkers' right to the cities in India (Joshi 2018). The hawkers in Nairobi may also benefit from the counsel of Brown (2017), who notes that in the absence of collective empowerment and actions, whether formally constituted or informal, the marginalised, the poor and the excluded may not gather numbers large enough to effect the desired change. To strengthen a collective struggle, it is imperative for hawkers and other marginalised

groups to build forums and networks that provide social, political and economic space to resist, dialogue and organise proposals towards building more inclusive public policies.

The section that follows interrogates the Nairobi City County authorities' position on the hawkers' right to the city after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution.

Nairobi City County Authorities' Position on the Hawkers' Right to the City

As earlier stated, the County Governments Act 2012 stipulated that counties are required to develop a County Integrated Development Plan. In this regard, the Nairobi City County Government developed and inaugurated the Nairobi Integrated Urban Development Master Plan (NIUPLAN) in 2014. The plan envisaged a compact and inclusive city that ensured spatial and social equity with multiple core centres and a revitalised CBD. This plan recognised hawking as an integral activity in the city. It also acknowledged that the population of market traders was mostly low-income earners who ventured into micro-enterprise activities. These economic activities play an important role in the city's economy in terms of employment generation and the delivery of urban services. In addition, the plan acknowledged that the number of traders and buyers had increased considerably, putting pressure on the infrastructure and capacity of existing market facilities, thus encouraging street trading (NCC 2014:2–34). The plan therefore proposed ways of accommodating hawking into the urban planning policies. While the NIUPLAN acknowledged hawkers and the right to the city, it is yet to be implemented, more than five years after its launch.

In our interview with the Nairobi City County Director of Planning, he expressed frustration, saying that the department had painstakingly generated master plans informed by extensive research, yet for political reasons the plans had been ignored or not implemented as envisaged. He wearily commented: 'Politics is a problem to planning in Nairobi.'

There has also been an initiative by the County Executive to amend the 2007 bylaws in order to align them to the 2010 Constitution. This presumably included the amendment of the hawkers' bylaws that would have an impact on the hawkers' claim to the right to the city. However, this remains a proposal and has not reached the County Assembly for debate, several years after the inauguration of the County governments. The existence of conflicting legal and institutional domains on hawking in Nairobi CBD streets disadvantage the hawkers and leave them prone to exploitation and extortion. The continued existence of the repressive bylaws

represents efforts to redefine what is considered acceptable in the public space and recreate the public sphere as intentionally exclusive (Mitchell 2009). In this case, legal reforms and a collective push to implement an all-inclusive city plan are a prerequisite to extend the right to produce, occupy and utilise the CBD street space, as well as the right to work and earn a decent livelihood on the streets, not just for hawkers but also for other marginalised groups.

Even in the face of the contradictory approaches to handling hawkers' right to the city, as shown above, there seem to be some subtle differences in the manner in which hawkers have been handled by the two successive Nairobi City County regimes. Though the hawkers we interviewed generally were not satisfied with the benefits the new Constitution had brought to their right to the city, they felt that the first Nairobi County government, under Governor Evans Kidero (2013–2017), was less hostile to hawkers compared to the succeeding one under Governor Mike Sonko, who took charge in 2017. They observed that, though street hawking was illegal, Kidero's government was sympathetic to hawkers living with disabilities, who would be given temporary permits to hawk in the CBD streets in the spirit of the Disability Act 2015. In addition, the County government would generally issue seasonal permits to hawkers to sell seasonal goods, like examination success cards during the national examinations period, Valentine's cards, etc. The majority of the hawkers also held the opinion that during Kidero's government, the City courts were less punitive and the City *askaris* (officers) less brutal when evicting hawkers from the CBD streets.

In contrast, hawkers expressed disappointment with Mike Sonko's government, whose pre-election populist promises had made them believe that they would be allowed to trade in the CBD streets. Furthermore, they claimed that the enforcement officers have become more aggressive, with standby *askaris* manning the city streets day and night to prevent the hawkers from carrying out their business. Both hawkers with disabilities and those without decried the confiscation of their merchandise, exorbitant charging of impounding fees and even loss of their merchandise to the *askaris*. During the devolution era, hawkers claim that the County courts have become more punitive, because upon arrest and arraignment in the City courts, one is charged with a minimum of four counts, each attracting a fine of 2,000 Kenya shillings.

It is evident from the foregoing that the position of Nairobi City County to facilitate hawkers' right to the city after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution remains at best ambivalent or half-hearted, and at worst, keen

on maintaining the status quo in which the hawkers are denied the right to the city. It is from this understanding that the article now turns to a review and critiques initiatives by other actors seeking to advance hawkers' right to the city in Nairobi.

Other Actors' Initiatives in Advancing Hawkers' Right to the City in Nairobi

The Nairobi Regeneration programme, proposed in 2017, but has not been implemented yet might help entrench the hawkers' right to the city of Nairobi. The Regeneration programme was a combined national government and Nairobi City County government initiative that aimed at changing the image of Nairobi. It was co-chaired by the President of Kenya or, in his absence, the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism, on the one hand, and the Nairobi City County Governor on the other. It comprised selected sectors in the Nairobi City County government as well as selected cabinet secretaries in the national government. Among its proposals under the theme of 'wealth and job creation' was to ensure that there were specified car-free days in some streets which would also be the days when hawkers would be allowed to trade in the CBD without restriction, on the empty parking slots. Consequently, decent, foldable stalls were designed in consultation with some hawkers in readiness for this. As much as these recommendations were to accommodate the hawkers and recognise them as belonging to the CBD streets, this programme has yet to bear fruit as hawkers remain barred from trading in the CBD streets.

Three issues militate against the success of this programme. Firstly, the programme seems an elitist initiative with only minimal or superficial involvement of hawkers and other interested parties. Secondly it is shrouded in opaqueness. For instance, in our FGD with the association officials, a NISCOF official observed '*Hii mambo tunasikia tu kwa magazeti*' (We only get to read about this programme in the newss). He further lamented that he had tried to find out about the programme and how his organisation could be involved '*nimeandika email mara mbili lakini hakuna reply*' (I have written two emails and both have not been replied to). However, a KENASVIT official acknowledged that the organisation and KENAHA had been invited to one of the programme's meetings where a sample of the foldable stalls for hawkers was unveiled. During the meeting, the KENASVIT official told us that it was agreed that a pilot roll-out of the programme would first be undertaken, and a list of the participants in the pilot roll-out would be made. However, the programme officials went mum for some time, and to the consternation of those who were to participate

in the pilot roll-out, they heard and read from the media that the entire roll-out of the programme was about to be undertaken. It also emerged that the roll-out of car-free days and hawking on the car-free streets was not supported by licensed businesses within the streets. It would seem that the programme to have car-free days and hawking in the car-free streets was a knee-jerk reaction by the Nairobi City County government and its national counterpart to resolve the hawker issue through rushed declarations that were unlikely to succeed. As the KENASVIT official, who is also a member of UDTG and PDSTO observed, '*wamechukuwa mambo mingi ambayo haiwezi kutimilika*' ([The initiative] took up a complex matter in a rushed manner that would never succeed). Another NISCOF official observed that this process was true to form, that when authorities deal with hawkers, they rush through initiatives in support of hawking to hoodwink them that their plight is being resolved, knowing that they will fail—in essence it is just a gimmick used time and again. Thirdly, it seems this programme was based on the goodwill of the president and the then governor—Mike Sonko. It is not necessarily anchored in law; thus its sustainability may not be guaranteed in the long run.

Another more ambitious proposition to have hawkers secure the claim to the right to the city in Nairobi CBD street space (as well as all other urban centres in Kenya) is the Hawkers and Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood) Bill, 2018, formulated by Governor Mwangi wa Iria of Murang'a County. In March 2018, he presented the Bill to the Senate Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industrialisation, which embraced it. The Bill has similarities both in name and content to the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act 2014 of India. The objective of this Bill is stated as: to provide a legal framework for the recognition, protection and regulation of street vending in Kenya as well as the identification of minimum standards for street vending in Kenya. The Bill in essence seems to codify the moral and abstract aspiration of the Constitution—the 'programmatic rights' into 'enforceable legal rights' with specificities about actionable courses of action regarding obligations and entitlements between the City authorities and hawkers (Watts & Fitzpatrick 2017:45).

The key provisions of the Bill include, first, the establishment of the Hawkers and Street Vendors Registration Authority, which would be tasked with registration and overseeing policy on all activities of hawkers in the country. Second, it provides for the survey, identification and designation of vending zones according to no-vending, restricted vending and restriction-free zones as well as amenities that hawkers should be provided with. Third, it provides for the establishment of County Vending Committees that would

register and license street hawkers. Fourth, it stipulates licensed hawkers' rights in Kenya, which safeguard them from unwarranted harassment and persecution, as well as stating their obligations, such as maintaining public hygiene and the right of way for other urban citizens. Fifthly, it provides penal provisions for offences committed under the Bill, including illegal vending and bribery. It also provides mechanisms for dispute resolution. More importantly, the Bill provides for County governments to review any bylaw and other legislation that would be in contravention with the proposed law within six months of its enactment.

About one year after it was presented to the Senate Committee on Trade and Industrialisation, the Bill was published, on 24 May 2019. It was subsequently renamed the Hawkers and Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood) Bill, 2019 and was subjected to the First Reading on 19 June 2019 and subsequently referred to the Senate Committee on Trade and Industrialisation to facilitate public participation, which was slated for 30 July 2019. All the hawkers' associations (KENASVIT, NISCOF, KENAHA, UDTG and PDSTO) represented during our FGD held on 18 July 2019 told us that they had not in any way been represented in the formulation of the Bill. The constant comment about the Bill was '*sisi tunasikianga tu hatujaiona*' (We just hear about it, but we have not seen it). This is an indicator that, unlike the formulation of the Vendors' Act in India on which this Bill is modelled, which adopted a bottom-up approach in which the Act organically grew from the lead activities of the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI), the formulation of the Kenyan Bill was elitist, adopting a top-down model.

As Joshi (2018:7) explains, the Indian Act was 'a campaign unprecedented in its scale as well as its scope'. It was spearheaded in 1998 by the NGO, the Self-Employed Women's Association, that would later become NASVI, in 2003. It involved a wide collaboration of vendors' associations, NGOs, academics and international organisations. It employed multiple strategies, such as publishing studies on hawking, providing education and insurance services to hawkers, and public relations campaigns to improve the perception of hawkers among the public, such as street food festivals to counter the fear that street food was unhygienic. It communicated its activities and goals through various platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, and maintained a website. The ultimate strategy by NASVI was to initiate legal reform and policy on street vending. Here, the organisation drafted a bill, monitored its progress, presented amendments and organised demonstrations and campaigns to nudge the politicians to pass the bill. All these concerted efforts resulted in the 2014 Act.

With regard to the formulation of the Kenyan law, an official of NISCOF told us that the only contact he had had with the Bill was during the launch of its popular version at the Sarova PanAfric Hotel in Nairobi, which he attended through self-invitation after hearing about the launch from a friend. The officials of PDSTO and UDTG on their part told us that they had made three attempts at getting the Bill without success. It is actually the researchers of this article who gave the hawkers' association leaders the comprehensive draft bill. On informing the officials of the hawkers' associations during the FGD that the Bill was due for public participation on 30 July 2019, they all expressed surprise that nobody had taken the initiative to tell them this beforehand. In essence, though the Bill is laudable, it is an initiative that is almost completely shorn of the participation of the very people it is meant to benefit. It is also an initiative by and large driven by a member of the political elite.

Conclusion

In this article, we have shown how the 2010 Kenya Constitution guarantees a basis for formulating better bylaws to safeguard hawkers' rights to the city. In turn, the County Governments Act 2012 guarantees substantive citizenship at the local level, which is meant to bring inclusivity to the management of county resources and enable local solutions to be found for local problems. However, the 2007 bylaw banning hawking in the CBD still exert considerable influence on how hawking is treated in Nairobi and in practice seems to supersede the provisions of the 2010 Constitution, creating what Brown (2017:28) calls 'fuzzy city governance', in which the national Constitution and the City bylaws operate on divergent trajectories. Though their existence is as old as the city, hawkers have persistently been deprived of the right to participate through involvement in decision-making and the right to appropriate, move in and utilise urban street spaces. They are therefore denied the right to work and earn a livelihood there.

Overall, the discussion in this article has shown that the Nairobi City County efforts to facilitate hawkers' right to the city after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution remain at best ambivalent or half-hearted, or largely dependent on the whims of the serving governor, and at worst, keen on maintaining the status quo. Further, the discussion has shown that efforts by the hawkers to claim their right to the city have over-relied on micro-level strategies, which have involved individual or small groups of hawkers negotiating their survival in the city with the City authorities, at the expense of macro-strategies that would involve a collective organisation and fight for the right to the city. It is also notable that the hawkers have completely

underutilised judicial activism as an avenue, unlike many other sectors of society in Kenya after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution, to challenge the constitutionality of the City bylaw banning hawking in the CBD.

In this respect, it would seem that the hawkers in Nairobi are in the foreseeable future 'condemned to perpetually negotiate their survival with the law, while necessarily remaining outside it' (Joshi 2018:2, citing Bhowmik, Zérah & Chaudhuri 2011). This is largely because the hawkers' association leadership is fragmented, distrustful of each other and distrusted by potential members, and has a leadership that is opportunistic and lacks the long-term collective vision to be able to somewhat replicate the successful NASVI of India. Further, the resort to primarily individualistic survivalist strategies by hawkers seems to be reflective of a widespread cynicism towards general civil and socio-political leadership as well as collective civil endeavours in Kenya today. A common response to collective civil endeavours is: '*kila mtu apambane na hali yake ya maisha*.' This is Swahili for 'In this life, everyone is on their own.' Generally adopting this strategy, hawkers have thus not effectively utilised the platform provided by the 2010 Constitution to raise their claims to the right to the city from a survivalist strategy into the moral-legal claim envisaged by the Constitution. As Watts and Fitzpatrick (2017) have noted, a platform that would challenge the constitutionality of unjust laws—such as the one offered by Kenya's 2010 Constitution—has the potential to provide a discursive platform. This would, firstly, raise consciousness about the marginalisation of the hawkers' right to the city; secondly, challenge the contradictions between the provisions of the Constitution and the City bylaws on hawkers and hawking; and finally help the hawkers construct their claims to the city as legitimate in the eyes of other urban citizens. Cumulatively, this would be very useful in asserting their right to urban citizenship.

In addition, the discussion in this article has shown that other recent initiatives to advance the hawkers' right to the city, namely, the Nairobi Regeneration Programme and the Hawkers and Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood) Bill, 2019, show promise but are also problematic in their own right. The former is an elitist top-down initiative with minimal or superficial involvement of hawkers and other interested parties, as well as being largely shrouded in opaqueness, besides being too dependant on the political goodwill. The latter is so far the most comprehensive and far-reaching initiative. However, it is also an elitist and top-down initiative with minimal participation so far from the hawkers who stand to benefit the most from it. It was not clear at the time of this study the extent to which County and national government involvement has

been sought during the formulation of the law by the initiators of the bill. Therefore, it remains to be seen how the bill will be embraced by the hawkers, the public and urban authorities, and whether the hawkers and other actors in the city would be able to reap the full benefits of the prospective law. Furthermore, it is not clear how the hawkers' failure to use the opportunity afforded by the Constitution to raise their claims to the right to the city as a moral-legal issue for debate will impact on the implementation of the new bill when it becomes law. Even when the bill is eventually passed, it is not clear how it would tackle the creation of space for vending, given the extensive reallocation of designated hawkers' markets, as has been documented by, for instance, Klopp (2000). Nairobi City County will also have to grapple with how to balance the interests of the hawkers vis-à-vis those of other entrenched city residents, such as licensed business owners, motorists and pedestrians.

Acknowledgements

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Wars as Postcolonial African Illness in Uzodinma Iweala's *Beasts of No Nation*

Omon Osiki*, Sola Owonibi** &
Oluyinka Ojedokun***

Abstract

There has always been a war somewhere in the world among *Homo sapiens*, allegedly the most advanced species in the universe. In Africa, right on the heels of colonialism and the celebration of independence loom the devastation and desolation of war. It is not a sweeping statement to conclude that everywhere colonialism has touched in Africa and let go, ruthless tribal wars have followed suit. The thematic preoccupation of the post-war literature is the training of children, mostly boys, to kill, in the form of the phenomenon of the 'child soldier'. This article argues that one of the extreme cases of geopolitical illness that Africa suffers is the prominence of war in the turbulent journeys of her nation-states to nationhood. The article also examines the psychological implications of wars and bloodshed on the lives of children, who ought to be protected, which results in illness behaviours. We explore these themes with close reference to Uzodinma Iweala's *Beasts of No Nation*.

Keywords: Africa, *Beasts of No Nation,* child soldiers, despair, illness, Uzodinma Iweala, literature, postcolonialism, war.

Résumé

Quelque part dans le monde, il y a toujours une guerre entre Homo sapiens, la soi-disant espèce plus avancée de l'univers. En Afrique, dans la foulée du colonialisme et des indépendances, se profilent la dévastation et la désolation de la guerre. Il n'est pas radical d'en conclure que partout où le colonialisme

* Department of History and Strategic Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
  Email: omonosiki@gmail.com
** Department of English Studies, Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria.
  Email: solaowonibi@gmail.com; olaowonibi@gmail.com
*** Department of Pure & Applied Psychology, Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria.
  Email: yinkaoje2004@yahoo.com; inkaoje2004@yahoo.com

a touché et puis abandonné l'Afrique, d'impitoyables guerres tribales ont pris le pas. La préoccupation thématique de la littérature d'après-guerre est l'entrainement d'enfants, pour la plupart des garçons, à tuer, créant le phénomène d'« enfant-soldat ». Cet article fait valoir que l'une des maladies géopolitiques dont souffre l'Afrique est l'importance de la guerre dans la turbulence de son évolution d'États-nations à nations. Le document examine également les implications psychologiques des guerres et de l'effusion de sang sur la vie des enfants, qui devraient en être protégés, créant des comportements pathologiques. Nous explorons ces thèmes en nous référant de près à l'ouvrage Beasts of No Nation d'Uzodinma Iweala.

Mots-clés : Afrique, *Beasts of No Nation*, enfants-soldats, désespoir, maladie, Uzodinma Iweala, littérature, postcolonialisme, guerre

Introduction

There has always been a war somewhere in the world among *Homo sapiens*, allegedly the most advanced species in the universe (Poster 2014). Literature concerning war on the continent of Africa, and its traumatic experience, is a growing field, offering valuable insights concerning war as a postcolonial African illness, the challenges faced by individuals and communities, and the prevalent use of child soldiers to prosecute wars.

War is a uniquely human scourge with complex biological, psychological, social and political determinants (Poster 2014; Gersovitz & Kriger 2013). The continent of Africa is rife with examples of turbulent histories in the majority of her nation-states, which have been captured in historical and literary works. These states include Mali, Libya, Chad, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Nigeria and Sudan, amongst others. Undoubtedly, the Nigerian Civil War and its effects on the Nigerian economy and political landscape remain fresh in the hearts of Nigerians. Its narrative has influenced the politics of the nation and the intellectual visions of several Nigerian writers, especially those who hail from a long line of war victims. For example, Chimalum Nwankwo (2008:3) affirms:

> African writers have followed the pulse of the continent and chronicled the historical event and upheaval simply and persistently, quite often with great candour, directness, simplicity, and in many cases an inventiveness which does not lose sight of the prize, to remain, as in much of traditional Africa, the last moral bastion of the people.

Chinyere Nwahunanya (1997), in his *A Harvest From Tragedy: Critical Perspectives on Nigerian Civil War Literature*, argues that writers who have committed their creative artistry to war have, in the process of positioning

literature as that huge reflection of society, crafted their works into '… a compass for social re-direction' (Nwahunanya 1997:14). The aim of such literary works, via the creative realities of death, suffering and trauma, or what aptly can be captured in psychological terms as 'post-traumatic stress disorder', is to help the reader into the realm where she/he critically reconsiders the causes and futility of wars and bloodshed, and then settles down to live in a post-war society.

Literature is an imaginary but plausible narrative which dramatises changes in society, human behaviour and relationships. The materials for literature are drawn from the writer's experiences and observation of life in a society. The major concern of literature is the condition of people in society and how to re/tell this condition with symbols and language to shape people's perception of the condition in a way that is meaningful. The book, *Beasts of No Nation* by Uzodinma Iweala, is about the history of war in Africa and its psychological and behavioural implications for children involved in conflicts. From the point of view of the author, the impact of war and conflicts go beyond that of the individual soldier at the war front.

A striking feature of war in Africa has been the prevalence of child soldiers. This occurrence has been well documented in the literature. In a study on the involvement of child soldiers in conflicts in Africa, Munro (2016:121) argues that the practice 'damaged masculinities' and altered the accepted rules of engagement in wars. This view is echoed in contemporary writings about war, as in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and Chris Abani's *Song for Night* (2007), which shed light on troubled masculinity as a central representation of child (especially boy) soldiers (Abani 2007:121-122). Catarina Martins (2013:651-652) captures some of the conditions under which a child soldier operates:

> Children involved in armed conflict are frequently killed or injured during combat or while carrying out other tasks. They are forced to engage in hazardous activities such as laying mines or explosives, as well as using weapons. Child soldiers are usually forced to live under harsh conditions with insufficient food and little or no access to healthcare. They are almost always treated brutally, subjected to beatings and humiliating treatment. Punishments for mistakes or desertion are often very severe. Girl soldiers are particularly at risk of rape, sexual harassment and abuse as well as being involved in combat and other tasks! (Martins 2013:652)

Inherent in the above description is the vulnerability, innocence and fragility that are part of the physical and psychological characteristics of children. Because of these, children are supposed to be protected, sheltered

and catered for by their parents in particular and society at large. However, at the outbreak of war, women and children are its first victims. Children are often recruited as combatants, taught to kill and to maim, and quickly assume the characteristics of savagery, barbarism, cruelty and brutality.

According to the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers' *Child Soldiers: Global Report* (2008:12), 'the military recruitment of children (under 18s) for deployment in hostilities is a much larger phenomenon, that still takes place in one form or another in at least 86 countries and territories worldwide.' Children are recruited into rebel/insurgent groups and armies, used in counter-insurgency operations by governments and employed as spies for intelligence gathering on behalf of governments. Many such children who survive wars are never the same, ever, again. Their psyches have been shattered, and, as a result, they find it difficult reintegrating into society.

In the case of the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) as portrayed in *Beasts of No Nation*, Ojukwu, the Biafran hero, enjoyed broad respect, adulation and admiration, which inspired Igbo children and women to support the Biafran side (Onuoha 2014:20). However, the war compromised the sanity of the child soldiers and disrupted their natural development processes (Mastey 2017:39; Balcells & Kalyvas 2014; Cramer 2007). This is the thematic preoccupation of Uzodinma Iweala in his debut novel, *Beasts of No Nation.*

Iweala and other writers, such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Dulue Mbachu have ostensibly responded to the challenge that 'writers, who had lived through the Biafran conflict, were too close to the suffering to write the definitive accounts of the war, and that the task would fall to later generations' who were more or less 'distant' from the event (Hawley 2008:15; De St. Jorre 1972; Denov 2010; Emenyonu 2008; Felman 1982). In *Beasts of No Nation*, a child soldier narrates his harrowing, traumatic story. Set in an unnamed African country, the protagonist, Agu, who has just been initiated into manhood, tells of an impending war. He watches his mother, sister and the entire womenfolk of his village being rescued by the UN while the men are left behind to fight and defend the village. Not long afterwards, the anticipated war comes and Agu would see '… bullet making his father to dance everywhere with his arm raising high to the sky like he is praising God' (Iweala 2006:89). Having witnessed his father dance metaphorically and in actual fact to the cruel rhythm of death, and with nowhere else to go, Agu is forced to join a rebel group as a child soldier. Agu is initially unwilling to join the rebels. However, after his father's death, he has no option but to join; he becomes seized by rage and carries out war atrocities so cruel that even the Greek gods tremble. This is an example of what war does to the human mind.

As a child combatant, Agu is forced to commit gruesome killings under the influence of drugs. He is also sexually abused by his commandant. Time and again, Agu struggles with his shattering psyche as he tries to hold on to his humanity. He suffers painful hallucinations that threaten his sanity. His inner resolve to battle the dark weight of trauma is what pulls him through his experience as a child soldier. In the end, his commander is shot dead and, once again, the path is open for Agu and his fellow child combatant, Strika, to walk into freedom in search of their humanity. Sadly, Strika does not make it through the exodus. His spirit is broken and crushed beyond survival by his excruciating experiences. As both friends walk through to freedom, Strika slumps into his own demise. Only Agu is able to complete this journey. He symbolises the very few child soldiers who manage to survive the horrible ordeals of war. Agu, as the tragic hero, lost so much to the war but he fails to lose his humanity because he consciously holds on to it and life. As the tragic hero, he lives to tell the story of the war because he engages with what psychoanalysis refers to as 'sublimation'.

Literature Review on the Child Soldier Phenomenon in Africa

History and literature are intertwined and can complement each other in understanding of occurrences in society. The child soldier phenomenon in literature is a good example of how writers can interrogate historical or quasi-historical events, shedding light on tragedy, trauma and the possibility for healing in parts of Africa where civil wars have devastated the socio-economic and political spheres of people. Studies have shown that homicide and other crime rates rise during civil wars (Ghobarah, Huth & Russett 2003:192; Kalyvas 2006; Keegan & Bull 2006; Lacina 2006; Pearn 1999; Roessler 2011; Ron 2005; Rosenau 1964). In this connection, child soldier narratives are meant to address the concept of troubled or 'adulterated' childhood in the affected areas (Mastey 2017:39). The Nigerian Civil War (also known as the Biafran War), which occurred between 1967 and 1970, involved the use of child soldiers (Stremlau 1977). Indeed, children of various ages fought alongside adults on the battlefield. These children did not have the 'luxury' of being in the classroom since most of the classrooms had been converted into 'war rooms' for the use of soldiers or internally displaced persons. Moreover, most of these child soldiers went through life in the three years that the war lasted not under the supervision of parents, relatives or teachers, but instead under the command of their military leaders on the battlefield. Expectedly, most of the child soldiers faced an uncertain future and their elevation was most times based on their military exploits rather than their age or period of enlistment.

While the military use of children in battles is not a common phenomenon in Africa, non-state combatants—such as the Boko Haram of Nigeria, rebels in the DRC, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Biafran forces—often recruited child soldiers for strategic reasons. However, Mastey (2017:39) believes that a few of the child soldier narratives appear to be a 'sensational depiction' of the lost childhoods of child soldier characters, thereby obscuring the apparent impact of the historicity of the child soldier phenomenon in African studies.

In the same vein, Munro (2016:122) quoted Eleni Coundouriotis, who argued that the child soldier narrative 'dehistoricizes the politically lively and locally relevant African war novel in order to cater to the Western markets that have come to dominate African publishing'. He also cited Maureen Moynagh's argument that the image of the child soldier is 'designed to encourage the "sympathetic intervention" of the viewer' (Munro 2016:40). Based on this perspective, Munro (ibid) argues that Ishmael Beah's *A Long Way Gone* (2006), Chris Abani's *Song for Night* (2007), Grace Akallo's *Girl Soldier* (2007), Emmanuel Dongala's *Johnny Mad Dog: A Novel* (2005) and Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah is not Obliged* (2007), among others, were ostensibly motivated by the market and taste of the West.

Catarina Martins' (2013:650, 649) work has demonstrated that since the late 1990s, the issue of children's participation in armed conflict has attracted increasing attention from scholars and other observers across the world because of its humanitarian implications, and that there is possibly an international and a humanitarian agenda behind the proliferation of child soldier narratives. Martins (2013:650, 671) interrogates the hegemonic and homogenised representations of child soldiers in literary and cinematographic works from the North and calls for a counter-hegemonic discourse in the understanding of the child soldier narrative in African studies, maintaining that the 'northern construction of Africa and the Africans has replaced Africa and the Africans and made them inexistent on the other side of an invisible abyssal line'.

In all, we must bear in mind that while literary works on child soldiers may expose the effects of wars and conflicts on the childhood of child soldiers, they are not actual historical accounts of everyday life or the conditions in which child soldiers operated during civil wars in Africa. *Beasts of No Nation* serves to illustrate the creative and literary interpretation of the Nigerian Civil War, and is purely an amalgam of fact and creative writing, even though it does show how the wartime experiences of child soldiers can disrupt their natural socio-economic, and psychological processes.

Beasts of no Nation, like the other works mentioned above, may be grouped under the category of 'new African novels', which employ a unique methodology that captures the themes of children in war situations, violence, trauma and distress to illustrate the cataclysmic effects of civil wars on state survival in Africa (Adesanmi & Dunton 2008:viii-x; Salehyan 2009; Stremlau 1977; Williams, 2011). Adesanmi and Dunton (2008:x) likened the situation to an 'obsessive engagement with the nation', to create 'the sense of an unfinished nation' or troubled nation-building efforts. Lastly, they observe that a major characteristic of the new African novelists is the urge to 're-narrativize' civil war events either as witnesses or as secondhand observers, with little regard to historical realities. What should be noted is that the third-generation African writers have benefitted from the antecedence of works such as Camara Laye's *L'enfant noir*, Ferdinand Oyono's *Une vie de boy* and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child*, in which young characters are used to demonstrate acts of resistance in their different societies.

Diagnosing the sick and traumatic nation

In *Beasts of No Nation*, Iweala presents to his readers the tragedy of a traumatised nation as narrated in the first person by the protagonist of the novel, Agu. Agu has survived the harrowing experience of war because he unconsciously relates to what Sigmund Freud termed sublimation, in other words a 'talking cure'. This 'talking cure' simply refers to what literature describes as catharsis (as embedded in the Aristotelian concept of tragedy), that is the purgation of emotional tension after an overwhelming experience. The term psychoanalysis also refers to a type of treatment where a psychoanalyst, having listened to the patient, formulates opinions with which they explain the unconscious basis of the patients' symptoms, health and character problems. The healing process involves the patient telling the psychoanalyst various thoughts and feelings. The psychoanalyst listens carefully, formulates and then intervenes in order to help the analysed develop insight into unconscious factors that cause her/his problems. Psychoanalysis aims to unearth wishes and emotions from prior unresolved conflicts, in order to help the patient and resolve lingering problems.

In the words of Robert Hemmings (2005:109), 'Psychoanalysis meets psychological pain with narrative. As a discourse, psychoanalysis was itself founded upon narrative.' Hemmings, in the above statement, corroborates Sigmund Freud and Joseph Breuer's position that narrative is a major therapeutic method in the treatment of hysterical suffering based on the catharsis of the 'talking cure'. The earliest articulation of this, according to Hemmings (2005:109), is presented in the form of 'case histories about patients written

by physicians'. Freud (1991:58) further stated that hysterical patients 'suffer mainly from reminiscences, very often the reminiscences of traumatic events in the past'. In the same vein, Hemmings (2005:109) claims:

> The narrative exchange between patient and physician in the therapeutic models that prevailed in early twentieth-century psychoanalysis was typically mediated by the physician through the case study, over which he had absolute narrative and interpretive control in spite of the patient's resistance.

While narrative plays a crucial role in restoring total wellbeing, Freud (1971:379) was of the opinion that no matter how 'complete' and 'self-contained' the patient's narrative seemed to be, there must be inevitable 'gaps and imperfections'. These 'lacunas' should be followed deep into this dissociated memory, which is the realm of the repressed traumatic experience (Freud (1971:380). Buttressing this, Hemmings (2005:109) avers: 'Primarily a blank or missing portion of a narrative "lacuna" comes from the Latin word meaning "hole" or "pit" … associations which inflect the narrative gap with a spatialized dimension consistent with archeological metaphors that characterize Freud's conceptualizing of the psyche.'

It then becomes the responsibility of the psychoanalyst to carefully fill the gaps with supporting interpretations after discovering the patient's lacunas. This will draw up the dissociated memory from the murky depths of the unconscious to the consciousness and to the surface of the narrative. This corresponding case history constructed by the psychoanalyst is what Hemmings (2005:110) termed 'sur-narrative.' He further clarified it thus:

> However, there are also cases in twentieth-century modernist literature of patients writing retrospectively of their psychoanalytic encounters to create their own sur-narratives. The sur-narratives of writer-patients often take the form not of case studies per se, but of homages. Lacking the genetic interpretative imperative of the case-study, patient sur-narratives do not so much fill in the gaps or seek to retrieve repressed dissociated memories as cover them over with layers of idealized memories of the physician-therapist, relayers replete with their own imperfections and lacunas.

The sur-narrative is not designed to conduct the reader back into the quagmire of trauma and pain; it is rather directed towards the possibility of spirituality, a purgation of harmful memory and pain.

Following the above, we may view a literary text as, perhaps, above all else, committed to the vision of 'diagnosing' society's social and cultural ills. A large part of African literary output is hinged on trauma—the trauma of colonisation, the trauma of failed independence and the trauma of cultural displacement experienced by Africans living in the diaspora. This depressing

reality is a strong reflection of the continental psyche of Africa (Owonibi 2012; Osinowo, Sunmola & Balogun, 1999; Owolabi & Ojedokun 2017). The testimony of the artist is the voice of the society that is being artistically captured. The continued prominence of civil wars on the continent tends to make one see Africa as a traumatised patient. Kurtz (2014:422), in his essay entitled, 'Literature, Trauma, and the African Moral Imagination', traces the initial testimony of trauma on the African literary canvas to the publication of Chinua Achebe's remarkable *Things Fall Apart*. He describes Achebe's debut novel as the '… story of a community left in fragmented disarray because of an external blow that overwhelms its ability to respond'. It is, in other words, 'a trauma narrative'.

When one reviews the African imaginative canvas, one comes face to face with the trauma of a continent. The African literary artist is unconsciously committed to the social vision of re-telling the traumatic journey of African nation-states from discovery of self to nationhood (Owonibi 2012). A consideration of the titles of African novels speaks volumes about the centrality of trauma to the literary and cultural consciousness of Africa—*Things Fall Apart*; *Weep Not, Child*; *Nervous Conditions*; *The Famished Road*; *Fragments*; *God's Bits of Wood*, among many others.

Trauma can roughly be conceived as a 'wound' which depresses the psyche, alters the perception of reality and affects the communication of extreme experiences. This idea was first explored in a literary context in Carthy Caruth's *Unchained Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996) and Kali Tal's *Reading the Literatures of Trauma* (1995). Carthy Caruth's current of thought is rooted in psychoanalysis and aligned with poststructuralism. It submitted that trauma, as a crisis in the unconscious, is manifested by complex contradictions in the communication of experience and language. The victim suffers an inability to communicate extreme experience, whether linguistically or semiotically. Since the inception of Caruth's views on trauma, the phenomenon has evolved into a theory in literary criticism, one that has been heavily shaped by semiotic, rhetorical and social concerns.

In 2001, the historian, Dominick LaCapra, published *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, wherein he attempted to draw up a correlation between history, trauma and writing. In his book, LaCapra posits that a victim of trauma would react to extreme experience by denial, acting out or working through. He describes 'acting-out' as a situation where an individual is hounded by, arrested by and forced to relive the traumatic experiences of the past. When this occurs, the victim is a forcefully dislocated reality and distanced into the past. LaCapra goes further to describe 'working-through'

as an articulatory practice. In this process, the victim oscillates between the past and the present, recalling the memories of the past and attempting to chart the future. This reaction, identified in literature as a stage termed 'denouement', or 'point of resolution', helps the individual to stay afloat of reality and to keep a balance between the past, the present and the future. It is within this frame that this study is ideologically located. It examines the oscillation of Agu between his past, his present and his future as a picture of the traumatic experience of African psyche in space and time.

Matured innocence: The struggle within

David Rosen (2005:3) submits that 'war is a constant companion in human life'. Indeed, societies have frequently plotted systematic war strategies against one another. In the bigger perspective, wars have erupted within and among communities so often that one can say that the end of wars among the human race is almost impossible (Osiki 2016:290; Osiki 2014: 212-226; Osiki 2021:88-99). Although the utopian vision of the UN and world leaders is the actualisation of a peaceful and warless world, and laws that criminalise and punish war crimes have been drawn up and enforced, the active pursuit of peace has yielded an almost insufficient progress and humanitarian organisations have argued that the prevalence of child soldiers in war situations has contributed largely to the slow realisation of the UN's utopian anticipation for the world. They have sought to press home various significations of children at war. Besides, humanitarian struggles against the reality of child soldiers rest on the fact that war, especially modern warfare, is gruesome and that vulnerable children fall prey to unmerciful adults who recruit them as soldiers. Indeed, the young and strong are usually the centre of attraction during warfare recruitment. Very young people in pre-industrial and postcolonial societies are known to have entered into the rituals, actions and dramas of war in childhood.

Following the advent of twentieth-century humanitarian organisations, the iconography of children wielding guns in war times has been used to fuel debates and campaigns against the use of children in war. Children are obviously seen as innocent and vulnerable, and, as such, should be protected from becoming victims of the atrocities of war. Another representation is the threat that children involved in wars pose to civilised societies. It is argued that when children are exposed to or engaged in wars, they become dangerous sociopaths who are capable of unleashing intentional and untold terror on civilians. Proponents who champion this trajectory argue that children do not willingly participate in war. Like the case of the Jewish Child Partisans, children become soldiers as a matter of absolute necessity. Either they allow

themselves to be recruited in order to save their lives or they remain as civilians and die. Upon their conscription, they become victims of circumstance. As Myriam Denov (2010:8) puts it, 'within this construction, children associated with fighting forces have been depicted as the pawns of deceitful yet powerful warlords, as well as broader undemocratic regimes and social forces.'

It is within this trajectory that Agu, the protagonist of *Beasts of No Nation*, locates himself. Having experienced the cruel death of his father by the merciless bullets of rebels, fear cripples him in the dark place where he hides to save himself from terror. Unfortunately, the rebels discover him. First, they accuse him of being a spy. Agu knows what the consequence of being a spy is and so he denies being one. Next, they ask him if he wants to be a soldier. In Agu's own words, he has no reason not to be a soldier since he could be severely punished by the commandant for refusing to be enlisted. Second, the other child soldiers around him would put their eyes on him and send negative reports about him to the commandant and there would be no hiding place for him. Third, he wants to be seen as a brave boy like the other child soldiers around him. That is the reason he tries so hard not to cry because that would portray weakness. Fourth, he needs the material and psychological benefits associated with being a soldier, such as being provided with shelter and a brand new military uniform like the other boys. Agu speaks of the commandant asking him, again:

> Do you want to be soldier, he is asking me in soft voice. Do you know what that is meaning? I am thinking of before war when I am in the town with my mother and I am seeing men walking with brand-new uniform and shiny sword holding gun and shouting left right, left right, behind trumpet and drum, like how they are doing on parade. (Iweala 2006:12-3)

He answers yes and is immediately enlisted into the rebel army.

As Myriam Denov submits, children who become child soldiers are pawns of powerful warlords. They become soldiers because they have no choice. Most times, they are deceived into believing that becoming a soldier remains the only way of avenging the death of their loved ones who have died in the war. The vulnerability, innocence and ignorance of children make it easier for them to be recruited as soldiers. Herein is the first geopolitical illness of Uzodinma's fictional society—its inability to protect the lives of its citizens.

In medical parlance, when the body is biologically 'disequilibriumed', it is unable to protect itself and its internal organs from the attack of sickness. Sociologists like Talcott Parsons advocated that sick individuals are usually unable to help, protect and provide for themselves. Like a disease, war conquers and crushes the defences of Agu's society. The rebels come to his village and they wipe out the men who should defend the place. Agu narrates '… I am

seeing arm and leg everywhere … I am seeing men lying everywhere with gun lying next to them' (Iweala 2006:89). It is obvious that war destroys Agu's society, leaving him as the only surviving and vulnerable child. He has no choice but to join the rebel group and make them his new family. The rebel group leader promises to fight the enemy that killed his father and this consoles Agu a little. But young Agu is ignorant of the fact that it is these same people who killed his father and wiped out the men of his village. Left with no defence and remembering his father's 'dance' under the murderous stings of bullets, it is easy for rage to build up in Agu and even simpler for him to say 'yes' to the rebels. Therefore, he succumbs to the illness that destroys his society.

All child soldiers, upon their recruitment, begin a journey from innocence to brutality in their wartime experiences. This is an integral part of the iconography of child soldiers and, perhaps, of Iweala's social vision for his work. Innocent children are conscripted into fighting squads where they are educated about the cause they are fighting for. Usually, these children are deluded by false justifications for war and the thirst for bloodshed. Interestingly, Africa is rife with historical examples where many children have been recruited into armed groups. With protracted wars having broken out in countries like Angola, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Chad, Burundi, Somalia, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo, children have been recruited either voluntarily or forcefully.

Agu is made to believe that he is fighting the enemy who killed his father with bullets. He therefore vents his anger on his victims. On one occasion, he and Strika come across a mother and her daughter who were not fortunate enough to have been evacuated by the UN. In the midst of the torture of their victims, Agu remembers his mother and his sister. He narrates his resistance to the thoughts of pity and mercy that sneak into his mind: 'I am standing outside myself. I am grabbing this woman and her daughter. They are not my mother and my sister. I am telling them, it is enough. This is the end,' (Iweala 2006:60). His rage is let loose when 'Commandant is saying that she is enemy, she is stealing our food, and killing my family because she is enemy.' The result is tragic and immediate.

It appears that one of the most potent ways by which warlords win the confidence and trust of child soldiers is the expert use of brainwashing. Child combatants are made to believe that violence is the only way to reclaim what has been lost to 'enemies' and as such, they must be willing to lay down their lives for justice. They come to believe they have the licence to maim, kill and commit unimaginable atrocities against fellow children, women and grown-up men (Iweala 2006:63).

The brainwashing takes on a political dimension, too. Young LaMamo is recruited by an armed group in Libya as a mercenary. He informs his brother of the political classes they attend at night. Sometimes these are held by important people, such as Charles Taylor of Liberia and Gaddafi of Libya, who brainwash them into believing that their struggles as child soldiers will help to liberate Africa from internal colonialism orchestrated by bad leaders, unbridled capitalism operated by the ruling elite and poor governance promoted by visionless political leaders (Iweala 2006:67). It is important to acknowledge the role of Charles Taylor in the Liberian crisis and especially the terrorist groups that Colonel Muammar el-Qaddafi trained in Chad.

The plight of children and their experience of the atrocities of war, whether as participants or supporters, are what inform the title of Uzodinma Iweala's novel and which he manifests in the characters of Agu and Strika. In earnest, Agu learns the life of a soldier. He begins to develop an affinity for the regimented moves of older soldiers. They educate him on how to kill without compassion as represented by the advice given by 'Luftenant', who has advised them not to think twice before maiming and killing people they consider their enemies. Indeed, 'Luftenant' instructs the child soldiers not to give a second thought to their murderous mission as that will make them weak and 'unsoldier-like' (Iweala 2006:15).

Very soon Agu experiences the killing of an enemy. He experiences the trauma of torture right before his eyes. He witnesses the commandant kick and piss over the enemy. Commandant says to Agu, '… see how we are dealing with this enemy' (Iweala 2006:24). The continued torturing of the enemy is an example of the hardened and remorseless life of soldiers, and witnessing it is a form of indoctrination. Such training techniques, according to Myriam Denov (2010:102), serve to '… minimise resistance by instilling compliance without question'. Agu is transmogrified when he is told to kill the enemy. Terror grips him but he has to do it. Commandant says to him: 'You want to be a soldier enh? Well—kill him. KILL HIM NOW!' (Iweala 2006:23).

Agu refuses and Commandant '… is simply taking my hand and bringing it down so hard on top of the enemy's head and I am feeling like electricity is running through my whole body' (Iweala 2006:25). Like a drugged soldier, Agu embraces the brutality and he begins to cut the enemy with his sharp machete while the other soldiers stand back laughing. He is joined by his fellow child soldier, Strika, and together '… we are just beating him and cutting him while everybody is laughing … the enemy's body is having deep red cut everywhere and his forehead is looking just crushed so his whole face is not even looking like face because his head is broken everywhere and there is just blood, blood, blood' (Iweala 2006:26).

The psychological impact on young Agu is enormous. This singular act is powerful enough to smash his psyche, but it is held together by his inner desire to retain his humanity. He says he wants to stop hurting people as the thought of it makes him vomit uncontrollably and feels like someone is using a hammer to hit his head. Yet, Commandant reminds him that maiming and killing people is like falling in love and the moment you are into it, it becomes difficult to quit. However, Agu is not sure the feeling he has within him amounts to falling in love because he is not really sure of the emptiness he feels within him (Iweala 2006:26).

Violence in war situations can be compared to the dynamics of illnesses. Victims of violence, like patients, enter into roles that they do not negotiate. Their behaviour during the violence of war is in stark contrast to their civility. After the killing, Agu takes time to convince himself that he is not a bad boy, that he is doing what is right because soldiers are meant to kill enemies. He constantly battles with the condemnation that stems from within him, struggling on all counts not to let that condemnation overpower him.

Although the reality of war can be conceptualised as an absolutely social and geopolitical phenomenon that is manifest in the 'disequilibriumed' pulse of societies, the prevalence of violence, of brutality and of dehumanisation are personal phenomena which are induced by such societies. The effect of war is shattering for the tender psyches of children. Usually, for successful indoctrination into the culture of violence and rage, child soldiers are made to use drugs. Myriam Denov (2010:100), in *Child Soldiers: Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front*, submits that '… there is evidence that the RUF strategically incorporated drug use into children's preparation for combat, particularly alcohol, the injection of cocaine, and the ingestion of gun powder.' In support of her view, she cites her interview with a forty-one-year-old former RUF commander during the course of her research. The commander explains the rationale and effects of the use of drugs among child combatants:

> 'We were very much aware of the effects of drugs on children … Drugs and alcohol were prevalent and served as [a] prerequisite for combat activities. Fighting with a gun is not an easy task because it puts so much pressure on the mind. So we needed to free the mind by taking drugs, and it worked.' (Former adult male RUF commander) (Denov 2010:100)

As Agu and Strika travel from innocence to brutality, they are introduced to the ingestion of gunpowder as a means of desensitisation, of easing their minds from the pressures and traumas of violence. Agu narrates how every one of them is encouraged to consume 'gun juice', a kind of hard drug that 'tastes like bullet, rock, pencil, sweet and sugar cane combined' and makes the child soldiers feel stronger, braver and easily lose their sense of humanity and compassion for

people. Under the influence of this substance the throats, foreheads and hands of the child soldiers burn like the 'fire of gun' and it makes them stop at nothing to maim and kill once they are given the command to do so (Iweala 2006:55-6).

Agu and Strika, under the influence of gunpowder, kill and maim gleefully. There is an inner urge in them that only the flow of blood can satisfy. Agu admits that he has perfected the art of slitting open pregnant women '… to be seeing who is a girl and who is a boy' (Iweala 2006:59). Under the influence of gunpowder, Strika rapes a woman who is old enough to be his mother: 'Strika is pulling down his short and showing that he is man to this woman while I am holding her one leg and another soldier is holding the other. She is screaming' (Iweala 2006:60). He then brutally amputates the arm of his victim's daughter. She dies immediately. Agu then indiscriminately uses his machete on the woman's body after he is told that she is the enemy who killed his father. The effects of drugs on child soldiers during war times can be conceptualised as another manifestation of illness behaviour.

Child soldiers also suffer victimisation at the hands of their warlords. Agu and Strika's victimisation takes the form of sexual abuse. They are frequently abused by their commander. Agu narrates his ordeal, especially how they are forced to take off their clothes and are subjected to different kinds of sexual molestations by Commandant and the unit leaders. On their part, the commander and other rebel leaders brainwash the child soldiers to believe that rendering sexual services is part of their duties and responsibilities to their military leaders because they are supposed to 'obey the last order' (Iweala 2006:103).

Sexual victimisation amounts to rape; Agu and Strika's victimisation is sodomy. Although the reader is not let into details of the psychological trauma that accompanies the violation of Agu's and Strika's sexual integrity, it is clear that the children detest the act but have to submit because of the insecurity of their lives. There is evidence that they could be killed if they refuse to submit their bodies. The first time he is assaulted by his commander, Agu narrates that he was helpless and could not struggle, knowing that otherwise he would be killed by the rebels, even though the act hurt him physically and psychologically. On one occasion, the commander put palm oil all over Agu to make the process easier, though it made him feel that 'his bottom is burning like it has fire in it' (Iweala 2006:104).

Strika is not left out of the abuse. He scribbles on the floor: 'God will punish him' (Iweala 2006:106). The fear of death keeps the young boys from resisting the sexual abuse. There is also evidence that the commander coerces the children to participate actively in their own sexual assault. This sort of participation acts on the psyche to break down their resistance and to transform them into lovers and perpetrators of such acts. Agu reports that

Commandant is forcing him to touch him sexually especially in sensitive places with his 'hand, tongue and lip' even though he is not interested nor in the mood for such behaviour (Iweala 2006:103-4).

Wartime denies children the opportunity to live in a healthy environment. Rather, children make their livelihoods in circumstances of stark poverty, despair and victimisation. As a result, many child soldiers never make it to the end of the war. The prevalence of war means the presence of geopolitical disequilibrium. War is also a social, political and cultural illness. Its rippling effects are manifest in the behavioural deviance of its victims.

Between shattered psyches and sane minds: Resilient hope, redemption anticipated

In the fourth chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth*, entitled 'Colonial Wars and Mental Disorders', Frantz Fanon (1995:252) examines the effects of colonial war on Algerians. He argues that the urge to repress unpleasant events in the memory is no match for the powerful attack of such events on mental processes. Consequently, these memories, having been denied access to the conscious, interrupt the mental coordination of the victim and produce disorders. These disorders, in their wake, do not hesitate to attack the ego '… practically always leaving as their sequel a weakness which is almost visible to the naked eyes'. To cure such victims, Fanon tried to get them to talk about the experiences that torment them. This is a strategy to let out unpleasant memories which, once expressed, bring mental calm to the victim, an indication that some sort of healing has begun. This is Agu's strategy to keep hope alive and anticipate redemption.

Agu's ability to negotiate his humanity brings him through the harrowing experiences of war; it is also what keeps him at an advantage, unlike his friend, Strika. On several occasions, Agu notes that Strika is always quiet. In fact, throughout Agu's narration, Strika speaks just once. Strika's parents were killed before his very eyes and he was conscripted into the fighting squad to save his life. He was disoriented by the emotional trauma of seeing his parents die and the brutalities of war. Agu narrates that as a soldier who maims and kills recklessly, he realises the trauma his own father would have gone through in the hands of his killers. He says the picture of his father's painful death that appears to him is that of a man who is not given the chance to cry or make any noise or sound before he eventually dies. When Agu asks Strika about the murder of his parents, Strika is mute but punches the air above his head to indicate that he wishes the war had never started (Iweala 2006:46-7).

Strika's silence is a testament to his shattered psyche, as is his brutality. His urge to vent his anger forces him to rape a woman who is old enough to be his mother. He has no friend in the camp except Agu, and both friends communicate with their eyes only. But Agu appears to be more skilled at managing his emotions. When things go awry and the hope of surviving dwindles, he says, 'When it is so, we are really all just waiting to die, I am still sadding too much. I am not liking to be sad because being sad is what happens to you before you are becoming mad' (Iweala 2006:93). When the sickening thoughts of his continued service to his commandant as a sex object flood his mind, he begins '… thinking as many good things I can think because if you are thinking good thing, nothing bad is happening to you' (Iweala 2006:100). He uses thoughts of his past life to balance his present predicament. He holds on to his dreams for a positive future after the war. He dialogues with his almost defeated mind and arms it with positive possibilities. He is filled with the thought of what to do if he survives the war. He plans to go to university to study a course that will make him useful to his society. This includes the possibility of becoming an engineer because he likes how their mechanics fixed their military trucks. At the same time, he wants to be a medical doctor because he wants to have the opportunity to help and save lives instead of ending them so that he can be forgiven for all his atrocities as a child soldier (Iweala 2006:94).

At the rehabilitation centre, Agu is taken through a procedure that encourages him to keep talking about his experiences, to keep letting out the repressed monstrous thoughts that are capable of destabilising him further. This talking-cure therapy leads to 'sublimation'. Healing is embedded in the talking process. Agu realises that things have somewhat changed— Commandant is dead, and there is no more shooting and fighting, only calm. But then, the memory of his best friend, Strika, hounds him and he regrets the events leading to the death of Strika whom he considered a close ally who protected him from 'all the thing trying to kill him' just as he also protected him (Iweala 2006:174).

In the midst of his hallucinations, Agu clings to the strength of love to pull him through. Although war makes him lose his moral sanity and religious piety, Agu is still clear about the past, before the war began and the future. He is still clear about the love that existed in his family and in his village. He knows that a normal society is governed by love, that killing and maiming are not normal. His hope for ultimate redemption survives the war unbroken; it is captured in the closing part of his narration when he relates that the doctor at the rehabilitation centre allows him to tell her his feelings and his thoughts about his future, especially his dream to go to university. He also tells her of his wish for oblivion in the face of his

recurring war memory, and how he plans to overcome it. Lastly, he tells her how he wishes to forget his past and live in the present so that he can be happy once more in his life (Iweala 2006:175-7).

Conclusion

This article, under the literary gaze, discusses how the concept of illness can be applied to the results of devastating socio-economic and political realities that shatter the psyches of individuals. It explores how physical illnesses and behaviours that can be considered forms of social deviation are induced more by issues of socio-political significance. Such behaviours may turn out to be threats to nationhood, freedom and order.

Using Iweala's social vision, one realises that the prevalence of civil wars in Africa continues to boost behavioural deviation and deny national order and true nationhood. Iweala tries to capture the conscience of his characters as he sets out the conflicts in his story, which he sustains with an engaging use of suspense. He uses this literary technique in order to drive home the message of his story (Hawley 2008:22). The prevalence of civil war shatters Commandant's superego, that 'awesome, punitive voice of conscience' (Eagleton 2010:136), as he remorselessly recruits, trains and rapes his child combatants, Agu and Strika. Under such socio-political circumstances, all traits of morality, conscience, law and religious belief evaporate from the souls of individuals. Agu and Strika come to be acquainted with the horrors of violence and bloodshed. They brutally kill, maim and rape. They are evidence that illness behaviours are strong manifestations of socio-political chaos and vice versa. Using the device of narration, in the application of the psychoanalytic talking cure, the traumatised is able to access healing as he re/tells his story. This aligns with Hawley's (2008:16) submission that fiction or literature generally, similar to time and art, may by default become 'the only effective means to digest the poison of the past, and to slowly heal from within the damage that has been done.' In conclusion, it is true that Uzodinma Iweala's *Beasts of No Nation* glorifies the virtues of the war hero, but the book may be read as an anti-war story, with a message for people in all times.

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The Impact of Short Message Services (SMS) Weather Forecasts on Cost, Yield and Income in Maize Production: Evidence from a Pilot Randomised Controlled Trial in Bembèrèkè, North Benin

Rosaine N. Yegbemey*, Aline M. Aloukoutou**
& Ghislain B. D. Aïhounton***

Abstract

In this study we analyse the impact of weather forecasts provided to smallholder maize farmers through mobile phone short message service on self-reported labour costs, crop yield and income. We conducted a pilot field experiment, involving 331 randomly selected eligible farmers in six villages. Randomisation was done at the village level. We used three regression specifications to estimate the impacts: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), Generalised Estimating Equations (GEE) with a small sample correction and Randomisation Inference (RI). We found that the treatment and control groups were well balanced. Farmers in the treatment group recorded lower labour costs but higher crop yield and income levels. Both the direction and the magnitude of the impact estimates were consistent across the three regression specifications, but significant with the RI model only (for labour costs and yield) or the RI and GEE models (for income). Weather forecasts can have an impact on smallholder farmers' labour, yield and income. These findings are strong evidence of the possibility of using weather-related information and mobile phones to build smallholder farmers' resilience to climate variability. Yet more research is required to build a solid evidence base to inform agricultural policies.

Keywords: Benin, climate services, impact evaluation, maize, randomised controlled trial, smallholder farmers

* Laboratoire d'Analyse et de Recherches sur les Dynamiques Economiques et Sociales (LARDES), Faculté d'Agronomie, Université de Parakou, Bénin.
  Email: ynerice@gmail.com; rosaine.yegbemey@fa-up.bj
** Bureau de Recherche et de Développement en Agriculture (Breda-ONG).
  Email: alma_aline@yahoo.com
*** Laboratoire d'Analyse et de Recherches sur les Dynamiques Economiques et Sociales (LARDES), Faculté d'Agronomie, Université de Parakou, Bénin. Email: aihountong@gmail.com

Résumé

Le présent article analyse l'impact des informations météorologiques (fournies à travers des SMS sur les téléphones portables) sur les décisions et les performances des producteurs de maïs. Une étude expérimentale pilote était faite impliquant 331 producteurs de maïs éligibles et aléatoirement échantillonnés dans six villages. L'assignation aléatoire a été faite au niveau village. Trois spécifications économétriques ont été utilisées pour mesurer l'impact : les Moindres Carrés Ordinaires (MCO), le modèle d'Equations d'Estimation Généralisé (GEE) avec correction pour échantillon de petite taille et l'Inférence Aléatoire (RI). Les résultats obtenus suggèrent que les groupes traités et contrôle étaient bien équilibrés. Les producteurs du groupe traité ont enregistré des coûts de main-d'œuvre moins élevés, mais des rendements et des revenus plus élevés. Les directions et magnitudes des impacts estimés sont cohérentes pour les trois spécifications et significatives avec le modèle RI uniquement (pour les coûts de main-d'œuvre et le rendement) ou les modèles RI et GEE (pour le revenu). Les informations météorologiques peuvent avoir des impacts sur la main-d'œuvre, le rendement et le revenu des petits producteurs. Ces résultats mettent en évidence la possibilité d'utiliser les informations météorologiques et les téléphones portables pour renforcer la résilience des petits exploitants agricoles face à la variabilité climatique. Cependant, des recherches supplémentaires sont nécessaires pour constituer une base de données probantes permettant d'éclairer les politiques agricoles.

Mots-clés : Bénin, essai contrôlé randomisé, évaluation d'impact, maïs, producteurs agricoles, services climatiques

Introduction

Climate change has been widely considered as the greatest challenge for most sectors in the world especially in developing countries. The effects of climate change will strongly affect African economies due to the fact that agriculture is highly climate-sensitive and there is a limited economic and institutional capacity to cope with and adapt to climate variability and change (Roudier et al. 2011). Evidence on climate change suggests that, by the end of this century, over West Africa there will be further increases in temperature of between 1.1 and 4.8 °C and larger differences in rainfall between wet and dry seasons (IPCC, 2013). As well, Sillmann et al. (2013) reported changes of -5 to -15 per cent in total wet-day precipitation in the region with large uncertainties. Under these predictions, crop yield will significantly decrease implying severe food insecurity problems in the region (Waha et al. 2013; Roudier *et al*. 2011; Schlenker & Lobell 2010; Palazzo et al. 2017). As implications, a review study by Roudier et al.

(2011) revealed a large dispersion of crop yield ranging from 50 to +90 per cent, with a median yield loss of about 11 per cent. By mid-century, the mean estimates of aggregate production change in sub-Saharan Africa for most staple crops, such as maize, sorghum, millet, groundnut and cassava, are predicted to be -22, -17, -17, -18 and -8 per cent, respectively (Schlenker & Lobell 2010). West Africa is projected to experience severe impacts on food production with extreme risks for food security and negative repercussions for human health and employment (Serdeczny et al. 2017; Palazzo et al. 2017).

In Benin, a West African country, evidence shows that rainfall will reduce from 20 to 30 per cent, and yields of maize, cassava, beans, groundnuts, rice, cotton and sorghum will decrease between 3 and 18 per cent by 2025 (MEHU 2011). These projected changes are likely to deepen the already existing, daunting challenges of poverty and food insecurity, as rain-fed agriculture is still a primary source of the economy. Therefore, adapting farming systems to climate change to sustain the livelihoods of rural households has become a major challenge for policymakers and researchers.

Empirical studies have focused on climate change impacts (Challinor et al. 2014; Hathie et al. 2018; Tol 2018; Waha et al. 2017; Wossen et al. 2018), perception (Baudoin et al. 2014; Callo-Concha 2018; Cuni-Sanchez et al. 2019; Debela et al. 2015; Foguesatto et al. 2018; Opiyo et al. 2016) and adaptation (Asrat & Simane 2017; Belay et al. 2017; Callo-Concha 2018; Fadina & Barjolle 2018; Waha et al. 2013; Yegbemey et al. 2014a; Yegbemey et al. 2017) as a way to address climate challenges. In addition, various adaptation strategies, such as the use of improved varieties, chemical fertilisers and pesticides, diversification of income-generating activities, crop diversification and adjustment of cropping practices are documented as imperative (Callo-Concha 2018; Fadina & Barjolle 2018; Wossen et al. 2018; Yegbemey et al. 2014a). However, little is known about the potential of these options to fit with the ongoing and future climate change. As argued by Guan et al. (2017), the optimal prioritisation of adaptation investments requires the assessment of various possible adaptation options and their uncertainties, which are not often the case of current adaptation options.

Some authors showed that farmers are willing to be informed about accurate seasonal climate forecasts (Amegnaglo et al. 2017; Yegbemey et al. 2017) which suggests that the use of climate forecasts is a probable adaptation option. Based on simulation exercises with farmers, Roudier et al. (2014) assessed the role of climate forecasts in smallholder agriculture in two agro-ecological zones of Senegal in West Africa. The findings

suggested that the introduction of seasonal and decadal forecasts induced changes in farmers' practices in almost 75 per cent of the cases and led to yield gains in about one-third of the cases, with relatively few losses. However, this study appears subjective as it is purely based on simulation and fails to provide evidence for how these changes affect input allocation and farm performance. This has been also argued by Tall et al. (2018) who highlighted that past studies on climate services were only based on ex-ante evaluation, suggesting the need to move towards experimentally designing climate service programmes that integrate impact pathway on various agricultural outcomes. Whereas ex-ante studies give insights only on possible impacts of climate forecasts for farmers, testing at the farmers' level and assessing the impacts should be a required step to provide sufficient evidence that can inform decision-making.

Against this background, we assess the impact of providing smallholder farmers with weather-related information through mobile phone messages. The central research question is: What is the impact of weather-related information on smallholder farmers' production decisions (i.e. labour allocation) and performance (i.e. yield and income)? The remainder of this article is organised in three main sections. These include a description of the study zone and the methodology, a presentation and discussion of the results and a concluding note summarising the study and its findings.

Since there is a lack of rigorous evidence for the impact of climate services on farmer livelihoods and resilience, our study is a contribution to the literature. Our core research hypothesis suggests that farmers provided with weather-related information will allocate their production resources better and therefore record higher agricultural outputs. The hypothesis testing plan included a field experiment designed as a Clustered Randomised Controlled Trial (CRCT). We analysed the impact of weather-related information (provided to smallholder farmers through mobile phone messages) on the self-reported outcome variables, such as labour allocation, yield and income, and our evidence is that weather-related information can have some positive impact on smallholder farmers' labour, yield and income.

Methodology

This section presents the study area and the empirical strategy we used to test the impact of providing weather-related information on farm performance followed by the sampling design, the description of the data and the limitations of the study.

Study Area

The study was conducted in six villages (Pédarou, Wanradabou/Wanrarou, Beroubouay Est/Ouest, Guessou Sud, Ina and Gessou Nord-Gamia Est) of the municipal area of Bembèrèkè in North Benin. Discussions with key stakeholders in the field allowed us to select villages based on four criteria, including accessibility to the village, the availability of a mobile phone network, a minimum five-kilometre buffer zone between villages and the predominance of maize production. These villages were further assigned treatment or control group status through a public lottery attended by each village representatives.

Bembèrèkè is located between 09°58' and 10°40' N, and 02°04' and 03° E. The area covers about 3,348 square kilometres and contains a population of about 131,255 people (INSAE 2013). About 74.2 per cent of this population live in rural areas and survive largely on agriculture. The production systems are mostly slash-and-burn with the use of rudimentary tools, such as hoes, cutters, etc. The rates of mechanisation, use of improved seed and extension services are still low though there have been some improvements over the past five to ten years. The common crops cultivated include yams, maize, cotton, rice, cassava and sorghum.

The municipal area of Bembèrèkè was primarily selected as it represents one of the major and typical agricultural production areas of Benin. In that respect, Bembèrèkè has the advantage of ensuring a good external validity of the results. Figure 1 presents the map of the study area.

Theoretical framework, study design, sampling and data collection

This study is an impact evaluation that creates a factual (treatment) group and counterfactual (control) group by using an experimental design. The core research hypothesis, that farmers provided with weather-related information will allocate their production resources better and therefore improve agricultural output, suggests that farmers are rational. Consequently, the producer theory was used.

The producer theory is commonly used in microeconomics in general and particularly in agricultural economics. It attempts to explain the principles by which a farmer decides how much of each crop to produce and how much input (e.g. land, labour, capital, fertiliser, etc.) will be needed. This refers to the decision-making process. The theory involves fundamental principles of economics, including the relationship between the quantities and prices of production resources but also between crops and production resources. Typically, farmers tend to maximise their yield (or income) under

cost-of-production constraints. Yet, agriculture is also a specific sector where farmers need to factor in several other aspects in their production decisions. Among the most important of these are weather and soil conditions, the social value of the crops, market opportunities, etc.
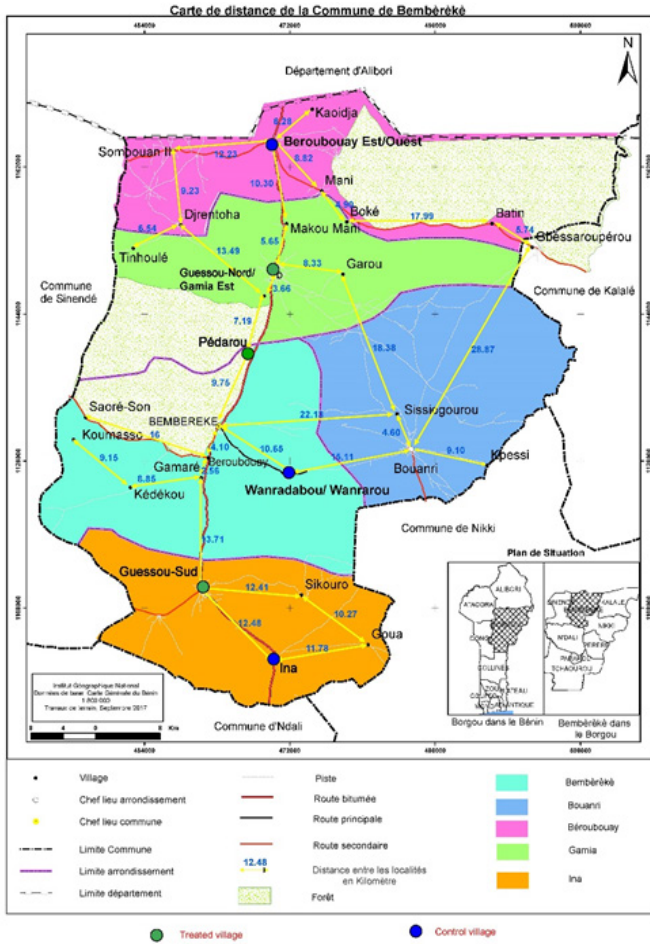
Figure 1: Map of the municipal area of *Bembèrèkè*

Source: Adapted from IGN Benin

With climate change, weather has become a key determinant of yield and thus a major driver of the farmers' production decisions. Unfortunately, in many developing countries like Benin, weather is not under the control of smallholder farmers as their production systems are mostly rain-fed. Unlike other common production resources, such as land or labour, which are quite

often limited but known (in terms of quantity and/or price) to farmers, weather is an unknown factor. This is especially true in settings where farmers have no or limited access to weather forecasts. The unknown nature of weather as described here does not undermine the role of local knowledge in helping farmers to anticipate events such as the onset of the rainy season, the possibility of rain, etc. Nevertheless, local or indigenous weather knowledge is not nearly as detailed and precise as weather forecasts are.

Broadly understood as a picture or statement of what the weather is likely to be for the next day or next few days, and usually broadcast on television or radio or printed in a newspaper, a weather forecast is the result of an analysis of the state of the weather in an area with an assessment of likely developments. It can provide very disaggregated and very detailed information, such as the quantity and timing of rainfall, temperature at different time points, wind speed and direction, humidity, etc. The information can be disaggregated to serve different purposes. All this information will likely make weather a 'known' production factor that farmers can, to some extent, integrate in their production decision processes. Based on this extension of production theory, providing smallholder farmers with weather-related information through mobile phone messages is likely to impact positively on production decisions as well as farmers' performance.

Farmers have a number of considerations on which to base their production decisions. These include decisions about methods of producing a desired quantity from a plot of land given its size and available equipment (short-run cost minimisation); the determination of the most profitable quantities of crops to produce on a plot of land (short-run profit maximisation); the determination of the most profitable size of land and equipment to be used (long-run profit maximisation), etc. In this research, we focused on short-run profit maximisation by focusing only on labour allocation, crop yield and income.

The study design involved a Clustered Randomised Controlled Trial (CRCT). The outcome variables were defined as follows:

- Labour allocation: This was measured in XOF (West African CFA franc) through the total labour cost per hectare. It includes household and paid labour involved in the maize production activities, from land preparation to harvest. The value of household labour for the same working time differs between the men, women and children engaged in production process. The following formula was used to calculate the cost of household labour HL):

$$HL = HML + 0.75 \times HWL + 0.5 \times HCL \qquad [1]$$

where HML is the total male labour in the household (in ManDay/ha), HWL is the total female labour in the household (in WomanDay/ha) and HCL is the total child labour in the household (in ChildrenDay/ha), respectively. The total household labour (in ManDay/ha) was then multiplied by the average unit price of labour in the area, which is 1500 XOF/ManDay. Paid labour is typically expressed in XOF/ha and added to the total labour cost of household labour.

- Yield: Quantity of harvest per hectare. This is the total quantity of maize harvested per hectare of cultivated land. To be consistent with the studies by Dillon and Rao (2018) and Kilic et al. (2018) on land size measurement error, we used Global Positioning System (GPS) to track and measure the land size of each respondent. This helped to avoid any misreporting problems that could lead to biased estimates. The crop harvest from an area of $1m^2$ has been used to measure maize yield. The total maize yield is then obtained by extrapolating the weight in kilograms obtained from the $1m^2$ area to the total area under maize measured with GPS.

- Income: Total net income in XOF. This is obtained by extracting the total production cost from the value of the Gross Product (Income = Gross Product - Total Costs). It is important to note that this is not the farm or household income, as farmers might have other plots of land allocated for crops other than maize. Farmers might also have other income-generating activities that are not accounted for in the outcome variable here.

In this pilot study, the intervention was 'providing weather-related information through mobile phone Short Message Service (SMS)' and the target population was maize farmers. Farmers in the treatment group received a seasonal weather forecast at the beginning of the survey and a daily weather forecast every three days. Farmers in the control group received no information. The study covered the entire agricultural season for 2018 to 2019, starting in April 2018 and ending in December 2018 or January 2019. An agreement was made with the Benin meteorological office to get access to weather forecast information. Village-specific weather information (i.e. rainfall forecasts) from three climate models were averaged and then shared with the treatment group. These models included the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) model (9 km), the Global Forecast System (GFS) model (22 km) and the National Environmental Modelling System (NEMS) model (4 to 12 km). Two field officers from a local NGO, Bureau de Recherche et Développement en Agriculture,

were in charge of monitoring the treatment at field level by visiting all the selected producers on a regular basis to ensure that weather information had been received and also to collect farm-level and high-frequency data on production input usage.

The statistical power calculations suggested a minimum sample size of about 300 respondents to be able to detect an effect size as large as a 0.8 standard deviation with 80 per cent of power at a 5 per cent level of significance. In each village, the survey sample consisted of fifty-one to fifty-six eligible maize producers randomly selected after a census survey. Eligibility criteria included: a) farmers should be maize producers; b) farmers should plan to produce maize during the rainy season of 2018/2019; c) farmers should own a mobile phone, including a valid and functional line number; and d) farmers should have the ability to operate (i.e. read SMS on) their mobile phone. Table 1 shows the sample structure.

Table 1: Structure of the sample

Village	Treatment Status	Sample Size at Baseline	Sample Size at Endline
Pédarou	Treated	55	54
Wanradabou/Wanrarou	Control	51	49
Beroubouay Est/Ouest	Control	59	54
Guessou Nord-Gamia Est	Treated	55	54
Ina	Control	55	53
Guessou Sud	Treated	56	49
Total		**331**	**312**

Source: Authors

A number of questionnaire-based surveys were organised by using tablets to collect data on the respondents' socio-economic characteristics as well as production-related inputs and outputs. These surveys included:

- A census survey (in April 2018) to build up the sample framework of eligible smallholder farmers;

- A baseline survey before the onset of the rainy season (in April-May 2018) to capture information on household demographic and socio-economic characteristics, production inputs and outputs prior to the intervention;

- An endline survey (in December 2018) at harvest time to collect data on yield.

In addition to these quantitative surveys, qualitative investigations were conducted at baseline and endline to better understand the situations before and after the intervention.

Data analysis

Following the CRCT design, the data analysis included a number of key steps. These were:

- Balance tests between the control and treatment groups on the outcome variables (i.e. labour, yield, income) as well as key covariates, such as respondents' age, education level, gender, household size, experience in agriculture, farm size, organisation membership, access to credit and contact with extension services. Differences between the treatment and control groups could, with respect to the selected co-variables, have some effects on the outcome variables based on the following assumptions:

  - Age: Age is often linked to greater knowledge (Heubach et al. 2011). Here, it is hypothesised that older farmers could be more knowledgeable and thus allocate their production resources better.

  - Education level: Like age, education is quite often associated with greater knowledge and better skills. Educated farmers could manage their production resources better and record higher yield and income.

  - Gender: In this research, gender was restricted to that of the household head. Many studies in sub-Saharan Africa reported that women have less access to resources (e.g. land, cash and labour), which often undermines their ability to carry out labour-intensive agricultural adjustments or innovations (Groote et al. 1998).

  - Household size: We assumed that larger households have more labour available for performing agricultural activities.

  - Experience in agriculture: Farming experience can potentially increase the probability to take up adaptation options. Additionally, learning from personal experience matters a lot in farmers' decision or behaviour. Learning from experience helps to reduce allocative errors (Huffman 1977). As a result, the more experienced the farmers are, the more likely they are to make rational choices and develop strategies to maximise their profitability.

  - Farm size: A mixed result can be expected betweem farm size and the outcome variables. While larger farms can benefit from economy of scale, small but efficient farms can record higher relative economic performances and larger but less efficient farms can record low relative economic performance.

- Organisation membership: Rural organisations and farmers' organisations in particular are strong social networks for information (Yegbemey et al. 2014b). Organisation membership is thus linked to better access to information.

- Access to credit: Access to credit is a key determinant of farmers' decisions (Shahidur et al. 2004). Access to credit enhances farmers' financial capital, enabling them to take some investment decisions that might be unlikely otherwise.

- Contact with extension services: Farmers who have enjoyed extension advice get more knowledge, skills and practice on improved technologies. They are likely to adopt improved agricultural practices and can adapt to climate change better (Yegbemey et al. 2014b).

• Impact estimate models: Based on the assumption that the control and treatment groups are well balanced, the following regression can be estimated:

$$Y_{ik} = \alpha_k + \beta_k T_{ik} + e_{ik} \qquad [2]$$

where Y_{ik} represents the outcomes of interest, representing labour, yield and income; T is the treatment status of the farmer i; e is the error term and α and β are the coefficients to be estimated. In this regression, β is the impact estimate (i.e. intention to treat - ITT).

This regression will yield biased estimates if the control and treatment groups are not perfectly well balanced. Two other issues arose from the design of the experiment:

- That villages were selected 'manually' and thus it is difficult to argue that they would actually be balanced on both observable and unobservable factors, especially because they are located in different *arrondissements*. Villages (less likely due to the manual matching) and *arrondissements* (more likely) could differ in terms of socio-economic setting (e.g. infrastructure or quality of infrastructure, soil conditions, local labour market, etc.) and this could lead to biased estimates.

- That individual farmers are nested within villages and the randomisation was done at the village level.

To account for these issues, both *arrondissement* fixed effects and cluster-robust error terms were used. *Arrondissement* fixed effects were used to remove unobserved heterogeneity between villages due to the local socio-economic setting at arrondissement level. Cluster-robust standard errors were used to account for the fact that farmers in the same villages might tend to be more alike than observations selected entirely at random. In sum, the first specification regresses the treatment status on the outcome variables

while controlling for key covariates and using arrondissement fixed effects as well as cluster-robust standard errors as follows:

$$Y_{ik}=\alpha_k+ \beta_k T_{ik}+\Theta_k Z_{ik} +\varphi_k A_{ik} + vce_{ik} \qquad [3]$$

Where Y_{ik} is the kth outcomes of interest of the ith farmer; T is the treatment status of the ith farmer; Z is a matrix of covariates; A represents *arrondissement* fixed effects; e is the error term clustered at village level and α, β, Θ, and φ are coefficients to be estimated.

Equation 3 was estimated by using OLS as the first specification of the study. Nevertheless, such specification in practice can yield unbiased and robust estimates with samples containing large number of clusters. Otherwise, despite the *arrondissement* fixed effects as well as clustered standard errors, the type I error rates are likely to be inflated (p-values would be too small and confidence intervals too narrow) due to the small number of clusters. The number of clusters (six in the current study) was purposively meant to be small due to the pilot nature of the study, which was perceived as a formative evaluation to pre-test an intervention. Yet, the results need to be as robust as possible.

Following Leyrat et al. (2018) mixed-models and generalized estimating equations (GEEs a number of methods can be used to address the problem of small samples in CRCTs with continuous outcomes, though the impact of these methods on power is still unclear. Based on different simulations of the number of clusters, the authors recommend, among other interventions, the use of mixed models with degree-of-freedom corrections, Generalised Estimating Equations (GEEs) with a small-sample correction, and unweighted or variance-weighted cluster-level analysis. To make the best use of the pilot survey, two additional specifications were considered:

- Specification 2: A GEE model with a small-sample correction estimate of Equation 3. Here the correction method used was based on standard errors with bootstrapping, as recommended by Leyrat et al. (2018).
- Specification 3: The Randomisation Inference (RI) method known as a method of calculating regression p-values that take into account any variations in RCT data that arise from randomisation itself. RI as specified for STATA by Hess (2017) was used to estimate Equation 3.

In all the three specifications, β estimates capture the Average Treatment Effect (here an ITT) and echo the causal impact of the intervention. Data analysis was done with STATA 15.1.

Study limitations

We believe that we used the best design (i.e. RCT) to address the (impact) attribution challenge in this impact study. However, despite RCTs being known as the gold standard approach in impact evaluation, they also have limitations that are worth noting. One of the key problems while conducting RCTs is failing to identify a good and valid counterfactual or controlling a number of threats (e.g. spillover, contamination, Hawthorne effects, John Henry effects, courtesy bias, confounding factors risk, inadequate survey instruments, etc.), which can affect the internal validity of the experiment.

In this pilot study conducted in the municipal area of Bembèrèkè, with the main objective to explore the possible impact of weather-related information provided to smallholder farmers through mobile phone messages, on their production decisions and performance, we controlled for the potential threats to internal validity. This was evidenced by the intervention monitoring data and qualitative surveys organised after baseline and harvest. For instance, a CRCT was used and buffer zones of five kilometres were considered between villages involved in the survey, to limit spillover and contamination. Enumerators were well trained on survey techniques to reduce possible Hawthorne effects. A local NGO was used as the implementing agency of the intervention and monthly data collection was routinely conducted simultaneously in the treatment and control groups by the NGO staff to avoid potential John Henry effects.

The potential limitations of the current research are its pilot nature and small sample size. We also did not test alternative options to provide smallholder farmers with weather-related information and compare the impacts. For instance, having several treatment groups can help to compare mediums of communication (e.g. local languages versus French; written SMS versus voice message, etc.). Such an exercise was not possible for this pilot research due to time and resource constraints.

Beyond the technical and common aspects of a good RCT, it is also important to keep in mind a few debates, especially when it comes to the possible policy implications of the current research. RCT has gained a lot of interest among researchers as the preferred approach to measure and showcase rigorous and high-quality evidence of policy-relevant causal effects. As a matter of fact, over the past decades, using RCT has become largely accepted practice in social science in general and particularly in development economics. Nevertheless, RCT does have shortcomings that we think need to be highlighted in the context of this research, which is a pilot study aimed at generating preliminary evidence on what works.

As argued by Deaton and Cartwright (2018), researchers tend to overrate RCTs over other methods of investigation. According to the same authors, randomisation only is not enough to have perfect balance between treatment and control groups, to get perfect estimates of the impact and to know why results happen. These limitations could still be addressed through a sound mixed-methods experiment.

Beyond internal validity, external validity is also an important aspect to consider. The ability to generalise effects estimated from randomised experiments is critical for their relevance to policy (Muller 2015). Following Muller (2015), researchers should do a much more thorough interpretation of the policy relevance of past work, which may not have addressed three important issues: 1) attaining external validity requires ex-ante knowledge of covariates that influence the treatment effect along with empirical information on these variables in the experimental and policy populations; 2) a theoretical replication-based resolution to the external validity problem is unlikely to be successful except for extremely simple causal relations, or in very homogeneous populations, of a kind that appear unlikely in social science; 3) the formal requirements for external validity are conceptually analogous to the assumptions needed for causal identification using observational data.

In the current pilot study, a number of key observable covariates were carefully selected based on the existing literature and researchers' experience. However, we need to be cautious and should not over generalise the results.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the key findings of the study and the subsequent discussion. First, we present some descriptive statistics from the respondents along with the balance tests at baseline. Second, we provide evidence and discuss the findings in terms of impacts on labour, yield and income, respectively.

Descriptive statistics of the respondents and balance tests at baseline

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the respondent farmers as well as the balance tests on the outcome variables and a number of key covariates at baseline. We tested balance at both cluster (village) and individual levels and the results are consistent.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and balance tests at baseline

Variables	Full Sample	Control (C)	Treatment (T)	T-C
Outcome variables				
Labour (XOF/ha)	86165.36 (72255.49)	86142.85 (77292.99)	86187.86 (67090.88)	45.01
Yield (Kg/ha)	2132.39 (1567.98)	2076.20 (1328.328)	2188.58 (1778.2)	172.35
Income (XOF)	1101081.89 (1854657.95)	1055402.02 (2224689.036)	1146761.76 (1395801.80)	91359.73
Covariates				
Age (years)	41.90 (10.29)	42.83 (10.64)	40.98 (9.88)	-1.85
Education (1=Yes/0=No)	0.36 (0.48)	0.34 (0.47)	0.37 (0.48)	0.03
Gender (1=Male/0=Female)	0.95 (0.20)	0.96 (0.19)	0.95 (0.20)	-0.01
Household size (persons)	13.81 (8.89)	14.89 (9.87)	12.74 (7.65)	-2.15**
Experience in agriculture (years)	17.15 (10.35)	18.20 (10.81)	16.10 (9.79)	-2.1
Farm size (ha)	20.39 (22.63)	21.64 (27.37)	19.13 (16.59)	-2.51
Organisation membership (1=Yes/0=No)	0.75 (0.43)	0.78 (0.41)	0.72 (0.44)	-0.06
Access to credit (1=Yes/0=No)	0.52 (0.50)	0.48 (0.50)	0.55 (0.49)	0.07
Contact with extension (1=Yes/0=No)	0.86 (0.34)	0.89 (0.30)	0.82 (0.38)	-0.07

*Significance levels: *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent.*
Values in brackets are standard deviations.

Most of the respondents were male farmers with lower levels of education. On average, the household head was forty-one years old, with no difference between the treatment and control groups. However, though there was a likelihood of correlation between farming experience and age of household heads, the average farming experience was about thirteen

years, with slight significance difference between the treatment and control groups. Households that did not participate in the treatment groups had on average two household members more than participating households. The majority of the respondents belonged to farmers' groups and were also in contact with extension services. About half of the maize producers had access to credit facilities. With regards to the outcomes of interest, there was a good balance between the treatment and control households at baseline.

It is important to note that the intervention monitoring records revealed that about 96 per cent of the smallholder farmers in the treatment villages mentioned that they received the weather-related information on their mobile phone and used this information in their production decision. This suggests a high compliance rate and the impact estimates (the average treatment effect) could be seen not only as an intention to treat (i.e. effect of treatment assignment on outcome, for all farmers assigned to the treatment group either they actually receive the treatment or not) but also as a local average treatment on treated (i.e. effect of treatment on outcome, for farmers who are assigned to the treatment group and actually received the treatment). On the other hand, the attrition rate was about 5.74 per cent (331 respondents at baseline against 312 respondents at endline with a required minimum sample size of 300 respondents).

Impact of weather-related SMS on labour cost

Table 3 shows the impact estimates of the weather-related SMS on labour allocation.

The impact estimates suggest that providing smallholders with weather-related information through mobile phone SMS can help them to reduce the costs of labour. On average, the farmers in the treatment group used slightly less labour than their counterparts in the control group. The impact estimates are consistent across the three regression specifications but significant ($p<.10$) with the RI only. Nevertheless, this result is consistent with the hypothetical expectations with respect to the possible impact of the weather-related information on labour allocation.

Most of the existing studies on the use of SMS in agriculture focus on market information. Through an exploratory literature review on the utility of mobile phone-enabled services for smallholder farmers, Baumüller (2018) reviewed twenty-three publications. Ten reviewed studies were conducted in India and most of them assess the impacts of information on services, including information on prices (nine studies), farming (nine studies) and/or weather (six studies).

Table 3: Impact estimates of weather-related SMS on labour allocation

VARIABLES (Y = LOGLABOUR)	OLS	GEE	RI
Constant	10.704***	10.704***	10.704***
	(0.336)	(0.190)	(0.298)
Treatment (1=Treated/0=Control)	**-0.273**	**-0.273**	**-0.273***
	(0.301)	**(0.186)**	**(0.116)**
Covariates			
Age (years)	0.005	0.005	0.005
	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.006)
Education (1=Yes/0=No)	0.087**	0.087***	0.087
	(0.041)	(0.023)	(0.044)
Sex (1=Male/0=Female)	0.032	0.032	0.032
	(0.091)	(0.044)	(0.092)
Household size (number of persons)	-0.001	-0.0012	-0.0012
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Experience in agriculture (years)	-0.007**	-0.007***	-0.007
	(0.004)	(0.0028)	(0.004)
Maize land size (ha)	-0.014	-0.014	-0.0012
	(.015)	(.010)	(0.002)
Organisation membership (1=Yes/0=No)	-0.160***	-0.160***	-0.160**
	(0.052)	(0.033)	(0.050)
Access to credit (1=Yes/0=No)	0.056	0.056	0.056
	(.058)	(0.037)	(0.063)
Contact with extension (1=Yes/0=No)	0.007	0.007	0.007
	(.057)	(0.025)	(0.059)
Arrondissement fixed effects			
Beroubouay	0.04	0.040	0.040
	(0.239)	(0.157)	(0.094)
Gamia	-0.008	-0.083	-0.083
	(0.338)	(0.165)	(0.110)
Ina	0.668***	0.668***	0.668
	(0.155)	(0.166)	(0.095)
Summary of the model	R squared = 0.363 F(13,295) =12.96***		R squared = 0.363

*Significance levels: *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent. Values in brackets are standard errors.*

However, none of these studies assessed the impact of mobile phone-enabled services on labour allocation at the farm-level. ICT programmes could impact under two mechanisms: 1) interventions that can increase farmers' production through use of better farming practices; and 2) interventions that can improve farmers' ability to negotiate better prices for their inputs and outputs (Chiappetta et al. 2015). The results of the present study suggest that, thanks to the weather-related information, farmers in the treatment group were more efficient in allocating labour because they were able to adjust their farming practices to fit the predicted climate. In the past, farmers performed the same production activity several times (e.g. sowing, fertiliser application, etc.) as a result of failures due to climate variability change. As they received accurate weather information, the farmers were empowered to develop more efficient decision-making regarding the allocation of their labour.

Impact of weather-related SMS on maize yield

The results of the impact estimates of the weather-related SMS on maize yield are summarised in Table 4.

The impact estimates suggest that providing smallholders with weather-related information through mobile phone SMS had a positive effect on yield. As in the case of the labour costs, the impact estimates were consistent across the three regression specifications but significant (p<.05) with the RI only.

On average, farmers in the treatment group recorded more yield compared with their counterparts in the control group. This result could be explained by the fact that farmers in the treatment groups were able to take more informed agricultural production decisions, such as when to apply fertilisers, etc. The results suggest that providing weather-related information could potentially help farmers improve their productivity. This finding corroborates with Roudier et al. (2014) who suggested through a subjective assessment that weather-related information is associated with changes in farmers' practices and yield gains.

Out of the twenty-three studies reviewed by Baumüller (2018), three looked at the impact of weather information sent by SMS to farmers. This included one study in Colombia which concluded that farmers who received weekly weather information reported 4-7 per cent less weather-related crop losses compared with the farmers in the control group who did not receive this information (Camacho & Conover 2019). Another survey of Indian farmers who were sent regular weather updates showed

that most (85 per cent) judged the information as useful. In contrast, Fafchamps and Minten (2012) did not find that service users were able to reduce crop losses after storms compared with control farmers. These results suggest that there is still more conclusive evidence needed on the impacts of weather-related SMS on yield.

Table 4: Impact estimates of weather-related SMS on maize yield

VARIABLES (Y = LOGYIELD)	OLS	GEE	RI
Constant	8.713*** (0.252)	8.713*** (0.102)	8.713*** (0.238)
Treatment (1=Treated/0=Control)	**0.282 (0.180)**	**0.282 (0.183)**	**0.282** (0.107)**
Covariates			
Age (years)	0.004 (0.004)	0.004 (0.002)	0.004 (0.005)
Education (1=Yes/0=No)	0.041 (0.040)	0.041 (0.026)	0.041 (0.041)
Sex (1=Male/0=Female)	0.241 (0.172)	0.241*** (0.082)	0.241 (0.174)
Household size (number of persons)	-0.001(0.003)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.0014 (0.0038)
Experience in agriculture (years)	-0.0005 (0.001)	-0.0005 (0.0006)	-0.0005 (0.0014)
Maize land size (ha)	-0.0009 (0.014)	-0.0009 (0.0092)	-0.0009 (0.0086)
Organisation membership (1=Yes/0=No)	-0.045 (0.056)	-0.045 (0.032)	-0.045 (0.051)
Access to credit (1=Yes/0=No)	0.035 (0.052)	0.035 (0.024)	0.035 (0.058)
Contact with extension (1=Yes/0=No)	-0.016 (0.045)	-0.016 (0.030)	-0.016 (0.047)
Arrondissement fixed effects			
Beroubouay	0.078 (0.135)	0.078 (0.163)	0.078 (0.110)
Gamia	-0.031 (0.171)	-0.031 (0.156)	-0.031 (0.076)
Ina	-0.267 (0.150)	-0.267 (0.168)	-0.267** (0.093)
Summary of the model	R-squared = 0.16 F(13,295) = 4.58***		R-squared = 0.168

*Significance levels: *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent.*

Values in brackets are standard errors.

Impact of weather-related SMS on farm income

Table 5 presents the results of the impact estimates of the weather-related SMS on farm income.

Table 5: Impact estimates of weather-related SMS on farm income

VARIABLES (Y = LOGINCOME)	OLS	GEE	RI
Constant	13.556*** (0.447)	13.556*** (0.193)	13.556*** (0.924)
Treatment (1=Treated/0=Control)	**0.286 (0.224)**	**0.286* (0.149)**	**0.286* (0.115)**
Covariates			
Age (years)	0.004 (0.010)	0.004 (0.006)	0.004 (0.011)
Education (1=Yes/0=No)	-0.070 (0.087)	-0.070 (0.063)	-0.070 (0.075)
Sex (1=Male/0=Female)	0.794** (0.322)	0.794*** (0.132)	0.794* (0.370)
Household size (number of persons)	0.004 (0.006)	0.004 (0.003)	0.004 (0.005)
Experience in agriculture (years)	0.002 (0.004)	0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.005)
Maize land size (ha)	0.074 (0.068)	0.074 (0.051)	0.074 (0.042)
Organisation member-ship (1=Yes/0=No)	0.085 (0.107)	0.085 (0.077)	0.085 (0.092)
Access to credit (1=Yes/0=No)	0.189** (0.073)	0.189*** (0.041)	0.189* (0.079)
Contact with extension (1=Yes/0=No)	0.151* (0.090)	0.151*** (0.047)	0.151 (0.102)
Arrondissement fixed effects			
Beroubouay	-0.198 (0.251)	-0.198 (0.175)	-0.198 (0.156)
Gamia	-0.283 (0.239)	-0.283** (0.0116)	-0.283*** (0.055)
Ina	-0.670*** (0.119)	-0.670*** (0.120)	-0.670*** (0.070)
Summary of the model	R-squared = 0.169 F(13,295) = 13.87***		R-squared = 0.379

*Significance levels: *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent.*
Values in brackets are standard errors.

The impact estimates suggest that providing smallholder farmers with weather-related information through mobile phone SMS may have a positive effect on farm income. Indeed, the yield gain in the treatment group in this

study was not enough to ensure a significant increase in the income. The impact estimates are consistent across the three regression specifications but significant (p<.10) with the GEE and RI.

Through a systematic review of the effects of information and communications technology on expanding agricultural markets in developing countries, Chiappetta et al. (2015) reviewed a total of twenty-four studies that examined the impact of ICT on farmers' income. About 75 per cent of these studies (eighteen out of the twenty-four) examined the effects of information provision on prices and found that ICT programs helped to increase income with statistical significance at least at the 10 per cent level.

Conclusion

We investigated the possible impacts of weather-related information provided to smallholder farmers through mobile phone messages on their production decisions (i.e. labour allocation) and performance (i.e. yield and income). The results show that providing weather-related information through mobile phone SMS can help smallholder farmers to reduce their labour costs (by 27 per cent) and improve productivity (by 28 per cent) as well as income (by 29 per cent). Indeed, it was found that farmers in the treatment group recorded lower levels of labour costs but higher levels of yield and income. Furthermore, the directions and magnitudes of the impact estimates are consistent across the three regression specifications but significant with the Randomisation Inference model only (for labour costs and yield), or the Randomisation Inference and Generalised Estimating Equations model with small sample correction (for income). These results imply that in the current settings, of maize production in the study zone, weather-related information through mobile phone SMS had a positive impact on labour, yield and income.

From a behavioural perspective, our findings suggest that smallholder farmers in the study area will use weather-related information to take informed-production decisions. Put another way, thanks to the weather-related information, farmers in the treatment group were able to better organise and plan their farming practices and activities. The positive and significant effect on yield reveals that each farming activity could be planned based on few-day (here, three-day) weather information, which will obviate the need for repetitive sowing, unnecessary weeding or fertiliser application and limit the risk of crop failure. Fertilisers, for instance, need to be applied at the right time. Providing weather-related information allows farmers to anticipate this application by including a known factor in their production

decision-making process. The findings are also important from the perspective of food security. Smallholder farmers could use the additional gains in yield to increase food consumption at household level and, where there is a surplus of production, earn additional income from the market.

From a policy perspective, the findings suggest a new potential tool or intervention to support food production and improve food security and income distribution in developing countries like Benin. In that respect, though it remains a pilot experiment, the current study brings fresh evidence to researchers, practitioners and policymakers in their efforts to reduce the food security gap by enhancing overall farm performance, which definitely would contribute to poverty alleviation in times of climate change.

Overall, our study has positive signals for the possibility of using weather-related information and mobile phones as a means to build smallholder farmers' resilience to climate variability. However, given the paucity of evidence on the issue, more evidence would be useful to inform agricultural policies. Even though the rapid spread of mobile phones throughout developing countries, including rural areas, offers a number of opportunities to reach very remote, dispersed and poorly serviced smallholder farmers, researchers could also explore alternative cost-effective ways to provide smallholder farmers with weather-related information at large scale. All this needs additional testing and validation though.

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