

Handling arguments concerning rivers

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Abstract

This study adds to the existing knowledge on the correlation between limited resources and global conflicts. This study focuses on analyzing the many tactics that national governments utilize to resolve conflicts related to rivers, regardless of whether the environment is hostile or cooperative. Our goal is to evaluate the comparative effectiveness of various solutions in resolving the controversial problems addressed. To be more explicit, we focus on the contradictory claims that occur in relation to rivers that cross national boundaries. To illuminate the found variances in conflict management tactics and their effectiveness, we focus on two key issues: the limited water availability and the institutions involved. We argue that conditions marked by a profound shortage of accessible water increase the likelihood of violent conflicts arising from competing demands for freshwater resources. Moreover, the presence of these conflicts presents substantial obstacles to the establishment and efficient administration of organizations specifically designed to address these issues. The objective of these groups is to intervene and resolve these conflicts. In addition, we analyze the impact of both comprehensive and river-specific groups that aim to promote peace. We argue that being a member of such organizations should encourage the adoption of peaceful approaches to resolve problems related to rivers. After examining the river claims data from 1900 to 2001, obtained from the Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) Project, it became clear that the presence of river-specific institutions reduces the likelihood of militarization and improves the success of peaceful settlement attempts. Data was collected from 1900 to 2001, covering a period of one century. However, the exacerbation of water scarcity heightens the likelihood of military resolution and augments the probability of diplomatic resolutions being ineffective. Elsevier Limited began distributing the book in 2005. All of our rights are reserved.

Introduction

Various scholars (e.g., Cooley, 1984; Homer-Dixon, 1991, 1994, 1999) have made predictions that conflicts arising from disputes over shared water resources will emerge as a substantial source of contention in the twenty-first century. This projection is based on the critical importance of water and its increasing scarcity on a global scale. The user's text is too short to be rewritten academically. Disagreements over transboundary rivers often arise due to the downstream state's objection to pollution, the upstream state's implementation of dam construction projects that may diminish or compromise the downstream state's access to water in terms of quantity or quality, or a combination of these factors. There have been several instances where both parties have made efforts to redirect water from the Jordan and Yarmuk rivers, along with more recent tensions between Turkey, Syria, and Iraq regarding the construction of a dam on the Euphrates River. These instances serve as noteworthy

examples of conflicts arising from disagreements over river management, resulting in the adoption of military measures. The genesis of these confrontations can be traced back to the 1950s and 1960s. Certain conflicts, such as the arguments between Mexican-Americans around pollution in the Rio Grande and the issue of damming on the Colorado River, have been addressed in a more harmonious manner.

Contemporary empirical studies (e.g., Sowers, 2002; Toset, Gleditsch, & Hegre, 2000) underscore the significance of shared water resources within the context of international relations. These studies demonstrate a noteworthy positive correlation between the presence of shared rivers and instances of militarized conflict between two nations. The global distribution of freshwater resources exhibits significant disparities. Europe and the Americas are often characterized by ample freshwater resources, while the Middle East and other geographical areas are currently grappling with escalating water scarcity issues. There is considerable variation in the form and functioning of organizations responsible for overseeing transboundary streams. As an illustration, it may be seen that North America possesses bilateral institutions, namely U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada, which are responsible for the management of transboundary water resources. Similarly, Europe has well-established regional organizations that oversee the Danube and Rhine Rivers.

Nevertheless, the management of rivers in the Middle East has yielded limited success thus far. This article tries to analyze the various settlement tactics employed by states in order to address river claims, and evaluates the effectiveness of these different approaches in resolving conflicts between nations that share river borders. According to Weargue, the regional disparities in the occurrence, intensity, and duration of conflicts over interstate rivers can be attributed to changes in two key theoretical factors: the scarcity of water resources and the presence of institutions, both of a general nature and specialized to river management. Our investigation focuses on the regions of the Middle East, Western Europe, and the Americas. This illustration encompasses three regions: the Middle East, characterized by the most severe water scarcity and institutionalization; Western Europe, distinguished by the highest level of multilateral institutionalization and ample water resources; and the Americas, exhibiting the lowest degree of water scarcity and predominantly bilateral institutionalization. The initial four theoretical arguments posited in our study posit that the efficacy of settlement endeavors and the strategies employed by governments to address disputed claims over rivers are influenced by international institutions and levels of water scarcity.

In situations when water resources are scarce, it can be posited that nations are inclined to resort to military force in order to safeguard access points, while simultaneously exhibiting a reduced inclination to seek assistance from other nations. Furthermore, it is posited that in areas characterized by ample resources, institutions for managing conflicts are more likely to proliferate and demonstrate greater efficacy. This section presents a comparative analysis of freshwater shortage and institutionalization in Western Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East from 1900 to 2001. This section provides a comprehensive overview of our research methods

and the spatial-temporal domain under investigation. In summary, we provide some empirical assessments that substantiate our theoretical propositions concerning the management of river-related matters, and propose avenues for further investigation.

A theory of managing riverine conflicts

The concept that a scarcity of resources enhances the probability of war is a longstanding idea within the realm of scholarly inquiry in the field of international relations. Marxism, Liberalism, and Realism do not exclusively represent the major schools of thought that examine the relationship between resources and conflict. Realists argue that states often find themselves obligated to employ military action in order to acquire resources, particularly when resources located outside their own borders are necessary to guarantee the life and security of the state. Realists also place significant emphasis on the notion of relative gains and the security dilemma. This theory posits that when a state acquires resources, it may be regarded as a threat by other nations or perhaps lead to direct conflict if numerous states compete for the same resource. Liberals adopt a more sanguine stance, contending that markets possess the capacity to allow effective allocation of resources.

In the international market, nations with constrained resources can easily engage in the exchange of these commodities. Marxist scholars eventually underscore the importance of nuanced distinctions across various economic systems. The presence of resource scarcity can contribute to the emergence of inequality at both the national and international levels, thereby heightening the probability of conflicts inside and between states. One example of this may be seen in the emphasis placed by proponents of world systems theory on the development of friction between governments located in the economic core and those situated in the periphery (Wallerstein, 1974). While acknowledging the validity of the arguments presented by the three schools of thought, it is our contention that they overlook a crucial aspect of the narrative. It is posited that the institutionalization and limited availability of resources throughout various global geographical locations give rise to significant variations in local contexts, potentially precipitating conflicts. To clarify, it is important to acknowledge the significant variations in freshwater shortage across different regions. As a result, it is reasonable to expect that conflict management approaches in relation to riparian disputes would differ across geographic locations. In regions characterized by limited resources, there is an intensified state of rivalry, which often leads to insufficient or ineffective formation of institutions aimed at resolving disputes.

On the other hand, locations abundant in resources will see a lower frequency of potentially contentious circumstances, hence enhancing the probability of instituting mechanisms to effectively address and resolve conflicts as they emerge. This suggests that in regions abundant in resources, the ability of institutions to facilitate conflict resolution will evolve and enhance their efficacy. This section further elaborates on the central argument by referencing previous scholarly investigations pertaining to the correlation between limited resources and instances of conflict.

Lack of resources and conflict

While various states prioritize the acquisition of both nonrenewable and renewable resources, our particular emphasis lies on nonrenewable resources, specifically the availability of freshwater for domestic, commercial, and agricultural applications. The continuous replenishment of groundwater resources by rainfall renders water a renewable resource. The current and future availability of water supplies is being significantly impacted by human use, the implementation of irrigation systems, the construction of dams, and the contamination of water sources, particularly rivers. Concurrent with the exponential growth of the global population and the rapid advancement of technology, there has been a substantial surge in the need for water. The projected increase in economic output and population is expected to lead to ongoing deterioration and depletion of rivers, aquifers, and other water resources.

According to Homer Dixon (1999:14), Critchley and Tariff (1993:332) posit comparable viewpoints, asserting that the future would witness a rise in population growth, agricultural production, and economic development, thereby intensifying the strain on current water resources. This escalation in pressure is anticipated to heighten the probability of conflict and violence. Considering the significant regional disparities in the availability and demand for freshwater resources, it is rational to infer that the varied levels of resource scarcity will lead to distinct conflict scenarios. Critchley and Tariff (1993:332) posit a correlation between competition for resources and conflict, establishing a direct and indirect relationship between the two phenomena. When resources in a particular place are experiencing a growing scarcity, are crucial for the existence of human beings, and can be physically extracted or controlled, they are purportedly a source of conflict. Freshwater supplies derived from rivers evidently fulfill these criteria; they are progressively diminishing in several areas (namely the Middle East and Northern Africa), they are indispensable for human existence, and the course of rivers can be regulated through the implementation of dams or extensive irrigation initiatives (Sowers, 2002).

Critchley and Tariff argue that the rivalry for limited resources will exert a substantial influence on the probability of conflict, whereas the persistence of conflicts specifically related to few resources is anticipated. The numerical value provided by the user is 6. The scarcity of resources within a community contributes to a decrease in stability and an increase in the likelihood of violent incidents. Similar to the perspectives of Homer-Dixon (1991, 1994, 1999), the authors contend that conflicts are more prone to occur as a result of factors such as the breakdown of legitimate institutions and social interactions, population displacement, economic collapse, and reduced agricultural production. The sociocultural consequences of environmental change often exhibit interconnections that mutually strengthen one another. (Terriff and Critchley, 1993, p. Rather than placing emphasis on the larger implications of resource constraint on interstate relations, the authors of this study highlight the propensity for internal conflicts to emerge within states. Previous studies have explored the correlation between interstate warfare and the depletion of resources, thereby expanding the breadth of inquiry. This phenomenon can be linked to the theoretical perspectives of early scholars like Choucri and North (1975, 1989), who

posited that internal resource constraints compel nations to seek external expansion, thereby heightening the likelihood of conflicts arising from antagonistic lateral pressure. Furthermore, Sprout and Sprout (1968) posited that the acts of a state in international relations are constrained by environmental constraints.

In recent times, there has been a surge in the publication of edited volumes that focus on the analysis of the correlation between conflict and the environment. Notable examples include the works titled "Environmental Conflict" by Diehl and Gleditsch (2001) and "Conflict and the Environment" by Gleditsch (1997a, 1997b). Additionally, several special issues of the Journal of Peace Research (Volume 35, Issue 3) have been dedicated to exploring this subject matter. Despite the lack of consistency in the empirical findings within this body of literature, they provide evidence that several environmental factors, including population growth (Choucri & North, 1975; Sally, 2003; Tir & Diehl, 1998), territorial disputes (Hensel, 2001; Huth, 1996; Vasquez, 1993), soil degradation (Stalley, 2003), land degradation (Hauge & Ellingsen, 1998), and limited freshwater resources, contribute to an increased probability of conflicts related to militarization. Furthermore, researchers have recently directed their scholarly efforts towards examining the relationship between water resources and conflict, in addition to the broader studies that encompass environmental resources and conflict.

During the 1980s, scholarly publications such as Cooley (1984) documented the anticipation of water conflicts in the Middle East. In recent years, a considerable number of academics have undertaken empirical inquiries that establish a connection between water resources and international conflict. In his study, Guner (1998) examines the influence of territorial conflicts and acts of terrorism on the allocation of water resources. The study conducted by Tosetetal (2000) explicitly examines the impact of shared driving resources on international conflict. Sowers (2002) conducted a research on the correlation between common variables and militarized conflict, revealing that regional wars exhibit significant variation on a global scale. Furthermore, the author establishes a correlation between the level of intensity observed in international conflicts involving states that have shared water resources and the distribution of those resources. In conclusion, it is increasingly recognized that the potential for conflict arising from disputes over transboundary rivers is a matter of concern, even though the existing body of empirical research on shared water resources and its relationship with armed conflicts is limited. The aforementioned research offer significant contributions to our understanding of the correlation between resource scarcity, particularly water scarcity, and the onset or escalation of conflict. However, it is worth noting that these studies often overlook the influence of scarcity on nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution.

The numerical value provided by the user is 8. Peaceful resolutions are not invariably antithetical to military conflicts; rather, it is customary for nations to adopt both nonviolent and militaristic methods in order to address their disputes. Furthermore, it is our contention that the presence of resource scarcity in general gives rise to distinct circumstances wherein peaceful conflict resolution tactics can be employed. The presence of significant resource constraints within a given region is

likely to give rise to a greater number of both direct and indirect conflicts, owing to heightened rivalry for limited resources. Under these circumstances, the ability of states to engage in bilateral or multilateral negotiations aimed at strengthening cooperation within river basins may be significantly impeded. In this study, we conducted an assessment of the efficacy of peaceful and military strategies in managing river conflicts, representing a unique and innovative method.

Our study centers around four key dependent variables: military conflicts arising from disputes over the utilization or mismanagement of rivers, two methods of peaceful conflict resolution (bilateral negotiations and third-party intervention), and the efficacy of peaceful conflict resolution strategies in addressing and resolving competing claims to transboundary rivers. In contrast to existing empirical studies on rivers and conflict, which usually analyze all possible (or politically relevant) pairs of countries and years, our research specifically concentrates on instances where two or more governments explicitly assert conflicting claims or demands regarding transboundary river resources. This phenomenon gives rise to a diverse range of conflict management options, facilitating the utilization of both military and nonviolent approaches to regulate territorial disputes, and establishing a direct correlation between the deployment of military force and a specific disagreement about a valuable resource. The idea posits that institutions and water shortages are the two main explanatory elements.

The concept of water shortage encompasses both the supply and demand of accessible water resources. In the realm of water resource management, institutions can be classified into two main categories. The first category pertains to formal agreements that are specifically tailored to govern shared water resources, particularly those related to rivers. The second category encompasses official regional or worldwide organizations that have established charters aimed at facilitating peaceful resolution of disputes. These organizations are commonly referred to as generic institutions.

Conclusion

Researchers in the field of social sciences have been captivated for a very long time by the potential linkages that may be formed between aggressive acts, limited access to resources, and negative impacts on the natural environment. In this particular piece of research, the exploitation of international rivers as a distinct type of renewable resource is explored. Specifically, international rivers are looked at as a category of resource. In spite of the significant amount of academic work that has been done to show the linkages between shared rivers, growing water limitations, and the likelihood for intrastate and interstate disputes, there is a notable dearth of research concerning the peaceful resolution of contested river claims. Because so little research has been done on the topic, there is a large information gap.

The varied degrees of water scarcity each produce their own unique set of problems that need to be conquered in order to effectively address both violent and peaceful disagreements. It is expected that rising levels of water scarcity would lead to a rise in conflicts pertaining to international rivers, in addition to a degradation in the growth and efficacy of institutions that are responsible for handling disputes among

peasants. This is due to the fact that increased levels of water scarcity will lead to a higher demand for water, which will in turn lead to a higher level of competition for water resources. These two scenarios will coexist in the world at the same time. This analysis will concentrate on four major characteristics that are responsible for determining the frequency of river conflicts as well as the efficiency with which they are managed.

The ability to reconstruct agreements that put an end to river conflicts is one of these prerequisites, as is the employment of bilateral or third-party peaceful means to resolve river claims and the management of violent disputes that result from cross-border river resources. Our point of view is that armed conflicts are more likely to break out in areas where there is a shortage of water resources, in particular when a number of different stakeholders place a high amount of importance on the river (this is referred to as the concept of salience). On the other hand, the probability of violent conflicts arising is lower when both governments exhibit democratic characteristics, when they participate in institutions that are either more general or river-specific, and when the target state enjoys a strong military superiority over its adversary. These factors combine to make it less likely that violent conflicts would occur. According to our strategy, in the context of amicably settling disputes, the prominence and capability advantages of the challenger act as hurdles, whereas institutions, high levels of water scarcity, and cooperative democracy serve as facilitators.

This is the argument that underpins our method. This is due to the fact that the challenger has access to a greater quantity of water than the winner does. In addition, we investigate the efficacy of nonviolent methods for resolving conflicts. Based on our findings, we hypothesize that the likelihood of parties being able to come to an agreement will decrease when the parties in question have a democratic governance structure in common, when the contentious issue is of significant importance, or when there is a high degree of water scarcity. Our investigation on the efficacy of peaceful methods of resolving conflicts has led us to the conclusion that this is something that should be considered. On the other hand, we anticipate a higher frequency of effective agreements when the parties are affiliated with either general institutions or institutions especially relevant to rivers. This is because general institutions tend to be more authoritative than river-specific institutions. When situations in Western Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas between the years 1900 and 2001 are compared, it is clear that there are major geographical disparities in terms of the prevalence of institutionalization and the availability of scarce resources like water.

The Middle East region is characterized by the lowest levels of institutionalization and is presented with the biggest issues in terms of water supply. In addition, the region has the potential to host some of the world's most dangerous conflicts. There is a substantial amount of variation across regions in terms of the frequency of cross-border river conflicts, the level of intensity they involve, and how they are managed. On a more general and river-specific level, these discrepancies may be linked to the varied degrees of water scarcity and institutionalization that exist. In comparison to regions that have a sufficient amount of both institutionalization and

water resources, areas that have a lower level of institutionalization and significant scarcity of water are thought to be more likely to experience higher levels of violent conflicts and to have a more difficult time effectively resolving disputes related to rivers. This is according to a theory that proposes regions that have a lower level of institutionalization and significant scarcity of water are more likely to experience higher levels of violent conflicts.

The fact that there is data to support the theory lends credence to the validity of this idea. An analysis of the data acquired from the ICOW Project at each of the three distinct locations is what is going to be used to establish whether or not the hypotheses have any basis in reality. The analysis of the fundamental interactions that take place between three or four distinct components can turn out to be a fruitful avenue for the conduct of future research. The results of our study are particularly noteworthy when considered in light of the fact that the commencement of violent confrontations between parties that claim ownership of rivers can vary quite a bit from case to case. In addition to this, significant insights have been revealed as a result of our examination into the efficacy of a variety of strategies for the management of conflict. In spite of the fact that there is a basis to indicate that higher levels of water scarcity limit the development of conflict management institutions and democratic regimes, our empirical models use institutions as exogenous drivers. This is because our empirical models are based on data from the real world. Tir and Ackerman (2004) zero in on the formation of river-specific institutions as the primary focus of their investigation because it is the dependent variable in their study. They have arrived at the conclusion that the likelihood of governments signing treaties with one another is increased when those states are highly developed, democratic, economically linked, and members of a large number of international organizations.

According to Russett and Oneal (2001), a number of different factors, such as democracy, economic development, and institutions, have a relationship that is mutually reinforcing, and this interaction contributes to the construction and maintenance of peace. In an upcoming study, we intend to analyze a multi-phase model that seeks to encompass these linkages, and we will do so in an effort to provide an explanation for them. This will be done in order to fulfill our research obligation. A important concern is the manner in which the connections between the four separate data sets are made. The International Commission for the Observation of Transnational Rivers (ICO) is in the process of compiling information regarding verbal disagreements that are connected to transboundary rivers at the present time. Given that it is determined by four independent and separate elements, the process of picking people for membership in this particular group may not be entirely arbitrary as a result of this fact. According to Gleditsch (2001), democracies are superior to other types of political systems when it comes to effectively addressing issues pertaining to the environment. In comparison to other political systems, this one has certain advantages. In situations in which institutions are either not present or have experienced some form of malfunction, there is a greater possibility that claims will be filed. It is strongly recommended that a two-stage technique be incorporated into any future study that

is conducted. In the first stage, all of the states within the Sammerer basin that may have concerns pertaining to rivers will participate, and in the second stage, an investigation into the post-filing administration of river claims will take place. The first stage would include all of these states as participants.

This research has the potential to contribute to a better understanding of the role that institutions and regime type play in the production of contentious claims, rather than their impact on the subsequent employment of militarized and peaceful conflict resolution strategies. This is because this research has the ability to contribute to a better understanding of the role that institutions and regime type play in the formation of contentious claims. This is due to the fact that the research in question places a primary emphasis on the part that institutions and regime type play in the formation of contested assertions. It is required to undertake the effort of acquiring a thorough understanding of the complicated linkages between political, social, and economic variables, as well as the influence these relationships have on the conflicts that develop from limited resources. This is a vital step because it is necessary to gain a complete grasp of the difficult linkages between political, social, and economic elements. This is particularly remarkable when considered in light of the various predictions that experts have made on the imminent "water wars."

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