United Nations’ Naming and Shaming of Children’s Rights Abusers in Conflict

A Critical Assessment

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Abstract

Naming and shaming is a widely used strategy by the transnational advocacy network (TAN) to prevent human rights abuses and increase compliance to international humanitarian law (IHL). However, existing research demonstrates controversial results about the efficacy of naming and shaming as a method to increase compliance to IHL. To add new insights to the ongoing IR debate, this paper investigates United Nations’ (UN’s) naming and shaming of children’s rights abusers in conflict. A quantitative analysis of UN’s Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict between 2013-2018 provides an assessment of the assumed link between public condemnation of state actors and armed non-state actors (ANSAs) who commit children’s rights violations in conflict, and an increase in compliance to IHL and protection of children. This paper aims to investigate the results of UN’s shaming policy through the theoretical framework of Constructivism and thus provide a critical assessment of the issue. The results of this thesis indicate that there seems to be a convincing link between the number of state actors listed on UN’s “lists of shame” and the number of parties who put in place measures to improve protection of children and increase compliance to IHL. On the other hand, the link seems to be weak when it comes to the number of publicly exposed ANSAs who subsequently commit to UN action plans and increase compliance to IHL.

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1. Introduction

Public condemnation of actors that abuse human rights has been a widely used method to increase compliance to international humanitarian law (IHL). In International Relations (IR) scholarship, this method is also known under the term of “naming and shaming” (DeMeritt, 2012:598). It is based on the assumption that public exposure of actors that engage in human rights violating behavior leads to a change in the actors’ behavior and prevent human rights (HR) abuses. The strategy of “naming and shaming” human rights abusers has been part of a long-lasting and continuing debate between IR scholars (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Franklin, 2008; Friman, 2015; Hafner-Burton, 2008; Lahti, 2018; Murdie & Davis 2012; Nyamutata, 2013; Schulz, 2015; Vadlamanatti et al, 2018). Advocates of the approach claim that the publicity brought by publicly naming actors who violate human rights has a positive effect in changing their behavior (DeMeritt, 2012; Franklin, 2008; Peterson et al, 2016), while opponents argue that it has limited effects, and sometimes may even lead to negative outcomes (Hafner-Burton, 2008; Nyamutata, 2013).

However, while most studies have focused on impacts that actors such as governments, NGOs and news media have on a wide variety of human rights abuses, there seems to be a lack of research about the specific impacts of naming and shaming children’s rights violators during conflicts. Furthermore, United Nations’ (UN’s) naming and shaming of children’s rights abusers, i.e. parties who abuse children’s rights in conflict is seldomly researched. Nyamutata’s article is a significant exception within the field (2013) and represents the main motivation for the following bachelor thesis. The UN is one of the most prominent international actors that uses naming and shaming as part of its key strategies to tackle the problem of children’s rights abuse. As such, it is a relevant actor to analyze within the broader field of literature that explores the effectiveness of naming and shaming as a strategy to increase compliance to IHL and improve conditions of human rights. The contested nature of the results of studies conducted so far, as elaborated in section 2, highlight the importance of further research upon the topic, especially because naming and shaming remains a highly popular technique amongst actors such as Amnesty International (AI), human rights NGOs, intergovernmental organizations and governmental bodies as well as the UN (Franklin, 2015:43). Therefore, effectiveness of the strategy may lead to significant empirical outcomes and policy decisions. Nonetheless, in Nyamutata’s quantitative analysis of UN’s shaming policies of children rights violators there seems to be no convincing link between the strategy and compliance to IHL (2013:151). While this study is highly relevant because it is a unique assessment of the practice for the period of 2002-2012, there seems to be a gap in literature that analyzes the issue after 2012.
Thus, in the following thesis, I conduct a quantitative analysis of data on UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights violators in conflict between 2013-2018.

What is the impact of UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights violators in conflict? How effective is UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights violators in conflict as a strategy to improve compliance to IHL? Do state and ANSAs respond differently to the “lists of shames”? This paper represents a modest attempt to answer these questions. A quantitative analysis whereby I tally figures of publicly condemned parties in the UN Security Council’s Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict shows that naming and shaming may be an effective way to prevent children’s rights abuses in conflict committed by state actors. On the other hand, this paper concludes that the link between naming and shaming armed non-state actors (ANSAs) that commit human rights violations against children in conflict is unsubstantial. The thesis evaluates the results of naming and shaming with a critical assessment through the theoretical lenses of Constructivism. Hereby, it argues that Constructivism is a highly applicable IR theory to explain the phenomena of compliance and non-compliance to IHL and the relationship between naming and shaming state actors and ANSAs, because the same theoretical concepts may be used to understand two contrasting behaviors.

The following text is structured as follows. Section 2 consists of a literature review that evaluates the existing research on the topic of naming and shaming. The literature review is divided into 3 sub-sections. It is followed by the theoretical arguments based on Constructivism and outline of two hypotheses. Then, the methodology of the thesis is outlined in Section 3, including a discussion on data selection and methodological limitations and justifications. The thesis moves on to the analysis in Section 4, which includes data representation in sub-section 4.2. and a discussion in sub-section 4.3. The discussion consists of two parts – the first part, 4.2.1. evaluates the results of UN’s naming and shaming state actors by applying theoretical concepts of Constructivism. The second part, 4.2.2. applies Constructivism to evaluate the results of UN’s naming and shaming of ANSAs. Moreover, the analysis ends with subsection 4.3. whereby final thoughts and implications of the findings are discussed. Lastly, the paper ends with a conclusion in Section 5.

2. Literature Review & Theoretical Argument

The next chapter of the thesis consists of a literature review that critically discusses the most relevant academic works related to the topic of naming and shaming children’s rights abusers in conflict. For organizational purpose, the chapter is divided into 4 sub-sections. First, the chapter introduces the strategy of naming and shaming and provides an applied definition of it.
Furthermore, in section 2.2., the discussion continues with an overview of the most influential early literature about naming and shaming as a way to increase compliance to human rights. The aim of this part of the literature review is to introduce the strategy within its academic IR debate and show the contested results of existing research so far, thus demonstrate its relevance for further analysis. Then, I move on to present the background of UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights violators in conflict specifically and introduce relevant articles within this topic. In section 2.4. I underline the theoretical argument based on constructivist IR theory which represents grounds for my hypotheses and forthcoming analysis. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary.

2.1. Naming and Shaming – the contested strategy of increasing compliance to HR practices

When it comes to human rights (HR) practices, differences exist between states and groups who respect them and those that abuse them. The international community has been placing significant attention into the matter since 1970s, when the discussion and overlooking of human rights became extremely prominent (Franklin, 2008:188). This was further impacted by the rising significance of NGOs like Amnesty International (AI) created in 1961 (Amnesty International, 2019), and special authority that was given to inter-governmental institutions such as United Nations Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). At the time, UNCHR became a significant actor authorized to explore the violations of human rights in states. Until today, the attention on human rights and their violations has only been growing in relevance. Both domestic human rights advocates as well as international ones attempt to find ways in which they could affect and improve the conditions in harshly oppressive governments or societies (Krain, 2012:575). These actors can be grouped under a widely known term in academic literature - a transnational advocacy network (TAN) (Keck and Sikkink, 1998 in Franklin, 2008:188). They include anything from inter-governmental institutions, international organizations and NGOs to domestic NGOs, individuals, multinational companies and others.

“Naming and shaming” is one of the methods used by actors within the transnational advocacy network as a sanction policy based on the philosophy of causing “reputational damage on moral grounds” by public criticism (Kahn, 2005:4 in DeMeritt, 2012:598). It is argued that public condemnation of an actor who, for example, abuses human rights, would lead to that actor changing their behavior in a way which will help them restore their reputation and bring them out of the international “spotlight” caused by the violating behavior (Hafner-Burton,
2008:694). Nowadays, naming and shaming is one of the key strategies used by human rights organizations (HROs) in an attempt to increase compliance to human rights. Moreover, prominent actors and organizations, such as Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch (HRW) and United Nations Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) are famous for their extensive use of the strategy. The transnational advocacy network would publicly list human rights violators usually in official documents, reports or media in an attempt to “shame” the violating actor, substantially impact their behavior and as a result improve conditions of human rights.

However, as widely as it is used, the efficacy of naming and shaming as a way to improve HR conditions is still highly debated and controversial (Lahti, 2018:605). The next subsection introduces the academic debate and its main arguments.

2.2. Naming and Shaming – effective or not?

In order to grasp the ideological reasoning of naming and shaming and furthermore evaluate its empirical efficacy by UN against children’s rights abusers in conflict, it is relevant to underline the scholarly works and theories that are most influential within the field.

Several traditional IR authors relate the method of naming and shaming to the logical premise of “leverage politics”, meaning that one actor has significant amount of power over another actor to influence its behavior (Keck and Sikkink, 1998:23). “Leverage politics” practiced through public exposure and condemnation has been commonly known for its use by transnational advocacy networks when seeking support to change behavior of governments that abuse human rights. In this way, public condemnation by one actor would lead to the actor altering their violating behavior and being under pressure to improve human rights conditions in the eyes of the international society. According to them, leverage between state actors may be both moral and material, yet its influence and result of public exposure will depend on numerous factors, such as sensitivity to pressure and others (Friman, 2015:3). While Keck and Sikkink (1998) certainly are one of the most relevant traditional IR authors who aimed to conceptualize and analyze the efficacy of naming and shaming, the debate about what effects this contested strategy brings, and under which conditions, is still ongoing.

Numerous contemporary scholars have researched the method of publicly shaming actors in order to increase compliance to international humanitarian laws (DeMeritt, 2012; Franklin, 2008; Hafner-Burton, 2008; Lahti, 2018 Murdie & Davis 2012, Nyamutata, 2013; Schulz, 2015; Woo & Murdie, 2017). While the analyzed actors and events within the listed literature vary, one common question that scholars attempted to answer is whether shaming and naming as a
tactic brings the desired results of improving the abused human rights conditions. As demonstrated below, results and their implications are mixed and oftentimes contradictory, which makes the topic a significant area for further research in IR.

Hafner-Burton (2008) conducted a statistical analysis of the effectiveness of naming and shaming governments by NGOs, news media, and the UN as a way to reduce two types of repressions: political terror and abuses of political rights (2008:696). Although her study did not analyze children rights violators during warfare specifically, it provides valuable insight into a large number of governments’ reactions to public shaming. The results indicate that, contrary to what might be considered rational belief, governments do not always end violations after being “put in the spotlight” (2008:707). As opposed to Hafner-Burton’s results, other studies suggest that shaming may lead to positive changes in the violator’s behavior. However, scholars emphasize that this may be true only under certain conditions. A well-known example is Franklin’s (2008) analysis of HRO shaming in Latin America. By conducting a quantitative analysis of human rights criticism in seven states in Latin America, Franklin finds that naming and shaming by different actors within the TAN has a positive impact on decreasing repression (2008:187). Nonetheless, his study suggests a strong correlation between this impact and other economic conditions connected to globalization, such as foreign capital dependence between states (2008:207). Even though Franklin’s research includes a broad range of NGOs, religious groups, foreign governments and intergovernmental organizations (2008:187), its restriction to Latin American countries creates cultural limitations to the possibility of generalization across countries from other regions in the world. Another relevant study which implies that naming and shaming is successful if certain conditions exist is conducted by Murdie and Davis (2012). By carrying out a global statistical analysis of HRO shaming through four empirical models, they conclude that the strategy is successful in improving human rights conditions if additional pressure by third-party states, individuals or domestic HROs exists (2012:13). In addition, a statistical analysis supported by a principle-agent theory developed by DeMeritt (2012:616) supports the success of international organization’s naming and shaming as a way to decrease government killings. DeMeritt emphasizes the drawbacks of the contradictory nature of empirical results within research on naming and shaming when it comes to policymaking and the capability to inform policy makers (2012:598). According to her, research results are often “aggregated” since various actors are analyzed through single units, which creates difficulties in determining clear consequential results. This is one of the main reasons for the following thesis to focus solely on UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights abusers in conflict. My belief is that by focusing research on a single actor who engages in naming and shaming, it is
possible to contribute to the IR literature in a way that would make the nature of mixed results in the wider topic of naming and shaming easier to differentiate, compare and understand. In turn, this could lead to less controversial and more specific policy information.

In another important contribution to the field, through an analysis of Amnesty International’s naming and shaming, Schulz argues that the strategy of naming and shaming is effective if, among other factors, the credibility of actors is high and contextual setting appropriate (Schulz, 2015:42). In this sense, the level of credibility and the identity of the actor who “shames” a party that violates human rights will directly impact the efficacy of the strategy (2015:36). The argument focuses on the identity power and legitimacy of the actor who shames, which Schulz supports by devoting the success of Amnesty International’s naming and shaming partly due to its international credibility, formal stature and receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977. Schulz makes an important point when it comes to analyzing the impact of international organizations, intergovernmental institutions and other individual actors in their attempt to improve human rights conditions. In this light, one may also question to what extent is UN’s naming and shaming influenced by the organizations’ credibility and legitimacy. While this thesis does not attempt to provide an answer to this research question, the relevance of actor’s identity and legitimacy is further discussed in the analysis section.

A relevant body of more recent literature has focused on analyzing the relationship between political and economic ties and the effects of naming and shaming (Esarey & DeMeritt, 2017; Lahti, 2018; Peterson et al, 2016; Vadlamanatti et al, 2018). This group of authors shares similar results when it comes to the effectiveness of naming and shaming and its dependence on different economic aspects. The literature implies that there is a strong correlation between public condemnation and foreign direct investment (FDI) and/or exports of a state. States that have faced naming and shaming for violating human rights experience decreased flows of exports to non-abusive states (Peterson et al, 2016:783), while shaming by IGOs such as the UNCHRCC may significantly affect FDI in the condemned state (Vadlamanatti et al, 2018:234). It is important to note that this body of scholarly literature represents the most recent one which analyzes the effectiveness of public condemnation by a variety of actors, however its emphasis on economic aspects creates once more difficulties of reaching conclusions about other aspects, for example when it comes to areas such as naming and shaming of children’s rights violators in conflict. Even though the significance of studies on public condemnation and economic ties should not be underestimated nor overlooked, there seems to be a gap in contemporary IR literature when it comes to analyzing the effects of public condemnation of actors who are not necessarily influenced by a country’s FDI or exports. An example is armed
non-state actors (ANSAs) that abuse children’s rights in conflict, which seem to operate separately from the official economic structures of states. It may be argued that due to this, the effects of public condemnation on ANSAs may be different to the ones of states. ANSAs are commonly defined as armed non-governmental actors that take part in armed conflict but do not possess the institutional capacity to be part of international treaties (Geneva Call, 2010 in Hafen, 2016:1007). The UN Security Council applies the strategy of naming and shaming to both ANSAs and governmental actors. Thus, this paper analyzes the possibly different impact of UN’s naming and shaming of state actors and ANSAs.

2.3. UN’s Naming and Shaming of Children’s Rights Abusers

United Nations is famous for its use of the “naming and shaming” strategy, especially when it comes to children’s rights violators in conflict. Ever since the establishment of the mandate of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict in 1996, the UN General Assembly has gathered information about children in wars and conflict areas around the world. From then until now, a number of resolutions on children and armed conflict have been endorsed by the UN Security Council and are still in place today. While the resolutions differ in their specific contents and aims, an overall goal and motivation behind all of them is to implement measures that will help stop the involvement and abuse of children in armed conflict, a highly emphasized issue by the UN Security Council (United Nations, 2019).

Under its agenda, the UN Security Council monitors and reports on “6 grave violations against children”. The six grave violations have been included throughout years through resolutions and represent issues that affect children in conflict most commonly and require urgent action and international attention in order to be solved (United Nations, 2019). The grave violations include: killing or maiming of children; recruitment or use of children by armed forces or armed groups; attacks on schools or hospitals; rape or other sexual violence against children; abduction of children; and denial of humanitarian access to children.

The remaining part of this section of the literature review focuses on a study conducted by Nyamutata (2013), which both represents the main motivation for my bachelor thesis as well as one of the very few articles that focus on UN’s shaming specifically (Nyamutata, 2013; Biersteker, 2015; Vadlamannati et al, 2018).

The United Nations has been listing (i.e. “naming and shaming”) parties who recruit child soldiers since adopting a resolution in 2002. This was further reestablished in 2015 by an unanimously voted resolution “2225” to list parties who commit one or more of the previously stated six grave violations of children’s rights (United Nations, 2015). How successful are these
lists in increasing compliance to international humanitarian law (IHL) practices and decreasing the abuse of children in conflict as defined by the six grave violations? In a quantitative analysis of UN’s Security Council’s Reports on Children and Armed Conflict, Nyamutata concludes that there is “no convincing link between naming and shaming and adherence to international humanitarian law” (2013:151). The study compared and contrasted tallied figures of parties that were listed on UN’s “lists of shame” and parties that either successfully completed action plans designed by the UN or put in place measures to do so. According to Nyamutata, it is possible to examine the assumed correlation between naming and shaming on one hand and compliance to IHL on the other hand. The research gathered primary data from UN’s annual reports between 2002-2012 and represents a critical evaluation of the results of the effectiveness of naming and shaming. Nyamutata implies that the strategy is particularly unsuccessful with non-state armed groups and thus proposes humanitarian engagement rather than shaming as a policy which could create a more significant impact (2013:169).

By conducting an up-to-date analysis of UN’s shaming and naming for the period of 2013-2018, my research aims to represent an advancement to Nyamutata’s study. My argument, in line with previous literature, is that shaming is successful with state actors, however, the impact is lacking on ANSAs. In addition, this thesis aims to investigate the relationship between states actors’ and ANSAs’ response to public condemnation and compliance to IHL through the lenses of Constructivism, another variation in comparison to Nyamutata (2013).

2.4. The Theoretical Argument

After the discussion of relevant literature and representation of motivation of the research of this paper, I proceed to explain the theoretical framework used in my analysis. In what follows, I will introduce theoretical arguments and concepts that I build my below stated hypotheses of this thesis on. The theoretical foundation is greatly motivated by previous literature on compliance with human rights and the strategy of naming and shaming (Schulz, 2015), but also grounded on one IR theory - Constructivism. As further demonstrated, my arguments for the upcoming chapters and the analysis section are in accordance with the dominant schools of thought within the field.

Scholars from traditional IR theories such as Idealism, Realism and the English School share the contested nature of thinking about public condemnation and its effects on increasing compliance to human rights (Friman, 2015:12). To begin with Morgenthau’s historical analysis of collective security efforts towards states by moral and material sanctions of the League of Nations, public exposure of a state’s violating behavior did not necessarily lead to a change of
behavior (Morgenthau, 1948:235 in Friman, 2015:9). The “pessimistic” view of Classical Realism about cooperation among states is thus apparent in the field of compliance to international standards of human rights as well. Traditional scholars within Idealism, on the other hand, emphasize that public condemnation is hindering the process of cooperation among states (Zimmerman, 1936:399 in Friman, 2015:6).

Bull, as a representative of the English School, on the other hand emphasizes that as a precondition for compliance with HR and behavioral responds to public condemnation, actors must value their international image, a socially constructed concept (Bull, 2002:260 in Friman, 2015:12). The English School and Constructivism are often tightly linked in terms of their philosophical and conceptual similarity (Reus-Smit, 2009:58). However, in the academic field of international compliance to HR there seems to be a classical dichotomy of two IR theories – Constructivism and Rationalism (Rousseau, 2018:318). For this reason, I apply the concepts of Constructivism rather than the English School, with the note that if the latter one was applied, certain ideas could be overlapping and used in a similar explanatory manner.

When linking compliance to children’s rights and human rights in general to IR theory, Constructivism may be applicable because it is based on the idea that “international relations is a social construction” (Fierke, 2013:188). Therefore, existing values such as human rights are understood as socially constructed concepts. The social construct of an international image, as described by Bull (2002:260 in Friman 2015:12), is an actor’s perception and understanding of their, or other actors’, role and value in the international society. Social constructs are influenced by social values, norms and assumptions – they are the result of complex interactions between individual units in a social world. Interactions and constructs may transform and develop over time through processes of interactions. Therefore, Constructivism also tries to understand change, for example change among states that occurred historically, as well as differences between existing actors in the international community. In this light the theory attempts to involve the understanding of different contextual and historical settings when analyzing different actors, whether states or individual actors. It comes as no surprise then that the theory may be applied to understand the differences in compliance with human rights between different types of states and actors. In a Constructivist view, the institutional identity of an actor, for example a liberal democratic country, is the essential reason for following human rights norms. “Identity as liberal democracy cannot be detached from an interest in complying with human rights norms” (Fierke, 2013:191). Interests are impacted by actor’s identity.
As described in the previous sub-sections of the literature review, there seems to be a general agreement about the discrepancy of state and non-state actor’s compliance to human rights norms (Nyamutata, 2013). In line with existing research, I argue that the differences in social identities and contexts between state and non-state actors affect their different compliance to human rights, and furthermore response to public condemnation. It is important to note that while this idea is not novelty per se, it is ground for the following hypothesis 1.

**H1:** UN’s naming and shaming has a substantial impact on state actors who commit six grave violations against children in armed conflict, thus leads to an increase in compliance to IHL.

A “substantial impact” refers to the successfulness of the shaming campaign and is understood as the consequential results that led to a decrease in children rights violations in the condemned state. In section three, the Methodology, this measure is operationalized. While Hypothesis 1 is developed based on the results of previous research and the previously mentioned concepts of Constructivism in the current IR debate within the subject of compliance to HR, this paper argues that the theoretical concepts of Constructivism indicate the following Hypothesis 2.

**H2:** UN’s naming and shaming has limited impact on ANSAs who commit six grave violations against children in armed conflict, thus does not lead to an increase in compliance to IHL.

This hypothesis is built on the same theoretical concepts of reality being a social construct; social norms, values and assumptions, institutional identity, international image and process of interaction. The underlying argument is that due to the differences in the meaning of the listed concepts between ANSAs and state actors, ANSAs do not improve compliance to IHL after facing public condemnation. As stated above, different social identities and contexts between state actors and ANSAs would lead to different behavioral outcomes when it comes to compliance to IHL. Social constructs and norms such as human rights seem to be absent in ANSAs who operate outside the international framework of the UN and its member states, and other human rights advocacy (Hafen, 2016:1007). The following research allows for an assessment of both hypotheses, with arguments further developed in section 4 – the analysis.

2.5. **Summary**

The literature review has outlined the existing debate within IR scholarship about the effectiveness of naming and shaming as a strategy to increase compliance to human rights
norms. After defining what naming and shaming is, the section went on to discuss the main puzzle within this field, namely the contradictory results of the strategy’s efficacy. As demonstrated, while some scholars argue that it leads to an increase in compliance to human rights, others find empirically inconsistent results. Nevertheless, the strategy’s extensive use by significant actors within the transnational advocacy network highlights the importance of research into the subject. One such actor is the UN which continuously uses naming and shaming as a tactic to improve conditions of children’s rights in conflict, as described in sub-section 2.3. The aim of this thesis is to assess the successfulness of this method by investigating the assumed correlation between the number of actors that are publicly exposed for violating and children’s rights in conflict and the number of actors that improve the protection of children afterwards. In sub-section 2.4. two hypotheses were formed, based on concept of Constructivist IR theory– that UN’s naming and shaming of state actors will have a substantial impact on ending the six grave violations of children’s rights in conflict, while the effects will be lacking on non-state actors. In the further section, I represent the methodology chosen to study this.

3. Method

In this chapter, I move on to describe in greater detail the methodology of the thesis to assess the effectiveness of UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights violators. Is UN’s naming and shaming children’s rights violators during conflict a successful strategy to help end such abuses? Do state and armed non-state actors agree to sign UN’s action plans and put in place measures to stop children’s rights violations after being put on the “lists of shame”? By attempting to give an answer to these questions, this thesis aims to contribute to the wider debate about the efficacy of naming and shaming human rights abusers by the transnational advocacy network and the UN specifically. As demonstrated in the Literature Review, the existing body of research applied a variety of methods to investigate the puzzle, from quantitative statistical analysis to case studies (Hafner-Burton 2008; Lahti, 2018). My chosen research method, built on the previously described study by Nyamutata (2013), is a quantitative analysis based on descriptive statistics of six annual UN Security Council Reports on Children and Armed Conflict. The analysis enables a comprehensive look into the matter between the years of 2013 and 2018. Furthermore, the thesis also investigates qualitative data from the reports in order to fill in the gap in information about what category the listed parties fall into – state actors or ANSAs. Results of the quantitative analysis are critically assessed in the analysis section 4 by applying the previously described theoretical framework of Constructivism.
The chapter is divided into three sub-sections. Firstly, the method of quantitative descriptive statistical analysis is introduced, critically evaluated and argued for. In subsection 3.2., I justify and discuss the data selection of the thesis. Lastly, subsection, 3.3., consists of the methodological limitations and justifications.

3.1. Analysis of UN Security Council Reports

In order to obtain and interpret the results of UN’s shaming strategy, this paper conducts an analysis of data from UN Security Council Reports. As noted, this research is to a great extent motivated by Nyamutata’s study on the same subject, however, represents a contemporary and up-to-date attempt to assess the effectiveness of UN’s shaming campaign. Also, it analyzes the results through the lenses of Constructivism and thus deepens the understanding of the subject. Nevertheless, the research method of this thesis is similar to the one conducted by Nyamutata. While Nyamutata concluded that UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights abusers in conflict between 2002-2012 had no significant impacts on adherence to international humanitarian law (2013:151), this paper allows for an assessment of the method during the period of 2013-2018.

Nyamutata’s study aims to “extrapolate figures of the named and shamed parties” of children’s rights violators in conflict by reflecting on the number of named and shamed parties on the Secretary General’s “lists of shame” (2013:160). The research does not represent a statistical analysis that applies models, tests or other tools of inferential statistics, rather a simple quantitative representation of descriptive statistics consisting of the numbers of two categories of parties. The first being state actors, and the second ANSAs. According to Nyamutata, it is possible to examine the assumed correlation between the number of parties named and shamed and the number of parties which increase their compliance to international humanitarian law afterwards (2013:160). An increase in compliance to international humanitarian law (IHL), i.e. adherence to human rights norms, in this case is operationalized through the implementation of measures during the reporting period to improve the protection of children, another element listed in the reports. A party is considered to have improved the protection of children in conflict if they successfully completed UN action plans or put in place measures to increase protection of children during the reporting period. For the purpose of this study, this is how compliance to IHL is operationalized as well. According to the UN, each party that is listed on the Secretary General’s “lists of shame” is asked to enter into agreements that would establish plans according to which the issues of grave violations may be improved (United Nations, 2019).
“An action plan is a written, signed commitment between the United Nations and those parties who are listed as having committed grave violations against children in the Secretary-General’s Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict. Each action plan is designed to address a specific party’s situation, and outlines concrete, time-bound steps that lead to compliance with international law, de-listing, and a more protected future for children” (United Nations, 2019).

Thus, entering into action plans with the UN may be understood as a clear step of commitment towards improving the violated conditions of children’s rights in war zones.

As previously described, the UN Security Council issues Annual Reports on Children in Armed Conflict. The reports elaborate on the organization’s yearly involvement in the issue of child abuse during conflict in affected countries, as well as the general situations in the conflicted areas. Moreover, the reports include a so-called “list of shame” in the annex of the documents, where state and armed non-state parties are named and listed accordingly to their commitment of grave violations against children’s rights. The annual reports are available online in the library of the United Nation’s website of the Office of the Special Representative and Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict (United Nations, 2019).

An analysis of these reports between the period of 2013-2018 enables conducting a numerical overview of the parties that are listed for violating grave violations against children during conflict and the number of parties that have agreed to sign UN action plans. Furthermore, the annual reports include results of UN action plans which are reviewed by the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflicts. By reviewing and tallying the number of parties who agree to sign action plans after being listed and/or put in place measures to increase protection of children, and furthermore comparing and contrasting the numbers of listed parties in the following years, the aim of this research is to observe whether a correlation exists between being put on the list and increasing compliance to international humanitarian law through entering into agreements with UN action plans. Moreover, I also represent figures of state and armed non-state actors who have successfully completed actions plans in the given time period.

As mentioned above, the analysis of Security Council Reports is entirely motivated by the methodology applied by Nyamutata (2013:160). At the time of writing this bachelor thesis, and to the author’s knowledge, Nyamutata’s study is unique in terms of representing a quantitative analysis of UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights abusers as a way to reduce the number of children’s rights violations in conflict. However, as of 2019 six further reports were issued which were not analyzed (2013-2018).
In addition to the quantitative analysis that tallies figures from Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict, the research gathered qualitative data about the types of actor that were listed in the annexes of the reports. Due to the difficulty of determining whether a party is a state actor or ANSA in cases where this was not marked, I read through the reports’ sections on country specific information in order to obtain the necessary information and categorize the party.

3.2. Data Selection

The thesis investigates primary source data in the form of official UN documents, specifically Security Council’s annual reports. The data is gathered from six UN Annual Reports of Children in Armed Conflict, starting from 2013 until the report of 2018 (issued in 2019). In this light, the methodology is document-based, a frequently applied approach in IR (Lamont, 2015:80). A major advantage of primary source data from is that it allows for an in-depth study of the UN and specifically the area of children in armed conflict. Moreover, UN Annual Reports of Children and Armed Conflict, availability is not a challenge as it is often the case with primary source data (2015:81). All annual reports are available online on the UN website of Children and Armed Conflict and are listed in the bibliography of the paper. Nevertheless, it is important to note that as with any exploration of primary source documents, a problem of “invisible” aspects behind the creation of documents arises. Documents do not contain all the organization’s details about data collection, numerous aspects of interactions remain unpublished (Lamont, 2015:82). The number of reported parties in UN’s lists of shames is a result of decision making and reporting mechanisms of UN authorities entirely, thus no third party took part in monitoring or checking them. Data’s reliability is therefore determined solely by UN’s reporting mechanisms. However, as noted in the annual reports (United Nations, 2016:1), all the published information is “vetted for accuracy by the UN”. The reliability of data analyzed in this thesis is therefore considered to be high due to the established prominent role of UN in the international society. Moreover, since the aim of the thesis is to analyze naming and shaming of children in conflict by the UN, the use of primary source data from UN Annual Reports of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict results in high validity of data selection.

3.3. Methodological Limitations and Justifications
All research may be argued to have its methodological limitations. The analysis of UN’s efficacy of shaming sanctions towards children’s rights abusers in conflict is limited in terms of generalization, as it only gives an insight into naming and shaming by the UN Security Council. Therefore, it is difficult to create conclusions about the strategy in general. Different types of actors within the transnational advocacy network may experience different results of the method. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the goal of this bachelor thesis is not to produce generalizable knowledge. Rather it is to conduct a “hypothetico-deductive” test of the currently found theories on responsiveness to naming and shaming in the case of parties that commit six grave violations in conflict. The aim is to test the previously stated hypotheses of this thesis and analyze the results by applying theoretical concepts of Constructivism. In this light, my research contributes to the current IR debate about the efficacy of naming and shaming by providing an analysis of the strategy’s successfulness when applied by one of the most prominent international organizations, the UN.

Another notable limitation of my research is the difficulty of reaching conclusions about the inferential relationship between naming and shaming and adherence to international humanitarian law. While descriptive statistics enables to observe which trend exists between listed parties and their agreement to UN action plans, it is important to note that this research would not create information on causal inferences about this relationship.

Moreover, difficulties arise when isolating the effects of naming and shaming from other inputs, such as diplomatic pressure or economic sanctions. In order to do account for these factors, it would be necessary to clearly define multiple variables, attach value to them and engage in more advanced statistical measures (Halperin & Heath, 2017:363). For the purpose of this thesis and due to its limited scope, such an analysis was not conducted. Examining the assumed relationship between naming and shaming and compliance to international humanitarian law by drawing conclusions on basic descriptive statistics such as the comparison between the number of listed parties and parties who have agreed to sign action plans is justified by Nyamutata’s previous use of the same method (2013:160). In addition, an analysis which draws on numerical figures enables a study of large data (Lamont, 2015:99), in this case between 2013-2018. The analysis does not specify names of the state or ANSAs, since for the purpose of this thesis and its research question this information is not relevant. Rather, all actors are categorized as either state actors or ANSAs. The categorization of actors into these two groups is significant as it addresses the issue of contrasting results of the efficacy of naming and shaming in literature so far (Nyamutata, 2013; Schulz, 2015).
Another limitation of the conducted methodology is that while tallying figures of the publicly listed parties from the annual reports on children in armed conflict, in some cases one party to the conflict would consist of several actors grouped under one name due to organizational closeness and interconnectivity. For example, while Taliban forces represents one ANSA in Afghanistan, it includes the Tora Bora Front, the Jamat Sunat al-Dawa Salafia and the Latif Mansur Network (United Nations, 2014:47). To overcome this issue, I count groups of actors that are grouped together as one single party. Even so, it is relevant to note that the numbers of actors do not always represent single actors but at times also groups of actors.

4. Analysis
What is the impact of UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights violators in conflict? How effective is UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights violators in conflict as a strategy to improve compliance to IHL? Do state and ANSAs respond differently to the “lists of shames”?
The following analysis represents an attempt to answer these questions. By assessing numerical figures from Secretary General’s reports and applying basic descriptive statistics, UN’s naming and shaming is critically evaluated and the hypotheses of the thesis are tested. Hypothesis 1 states that state actors improve compliance to IHL and the protection of children in conflict after being publicly condemned by the UN on the “lists of shame”. On the other hand, Hypothesis 2 states that naming and shaming of ANSAs is not a successful strategy to improve compliance to IHL and lacks the desired effects. To test the hypotheses, I tally and compare the numbers of “shamed” parties on the Annexes of Secretary General’s Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict with the number of parties that either successfully completed actions plans or put in place measures to improve conditions of children’s rights, for the period of 2013-2018.

The section is structured as follows. First, the data is represented and divided into two categories - state and non-state actors. Thereafter, I proceed to the discussion part of the analysis where I evaluate compliance and non-compliance for each type of actor in relation to the two hypotheses and theoretical framework of the thesis - Constructivism. Subsection 4.3. consists of final thoughts and implications of the analysis. Thereafter, the thesis ends with a conclusion in section 5.

4.1. State Actors Vs. ANSAs
To assess the effectiveness of UN’s naming and shaming state and ANSAs and furthermore determine the responsiveness of each type of actor to it, I investigated primary source data from
six Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict. The underlying aim was to tally figures of state and armed non-state actors that were listed on the “lists of shames” in the annexes of the six reports, just as previously conducted by Nyamutata (2013:160). By making a numerical representation of data, it is possible to obtain an overview of the numbers of parties listed on the lists of shames and the number of parties who committed to or have completed action plans and thereby improved compliance to IHL subsequently. The UN delists parties who have successfully completed action plans.

To begin with, for the period between January until December 2013 the Secretary-General has listed in total 52 parties that commit crimes recognized under the six grave violations against children in armed conflict (United Nations, 2014:49). These parties are on the agenda of the Security Council, while further 7 parties were listed from countries that are not on the agenda. In total, 59 parties were listed. The list does not categorize state and ANSAs separately, however, by reading through the report’s qualitative data, i.e. sections on country-specific situations it is possible to obtain this type of information. After careful examination, my findings show that out of the 59 listed parties, 7 consist of state actors and 52 are non-state actors. Moreover, 31 of the 59 parties are marked as consistent perpetrators, meaning that they have been consistently present on the lists for at least 5 years. 6 parties from the lists are marked as having concluded or agreed to commit to UN action plans, 5 of which were state actors whereas one was a non-state actor.

At this point, it is important to note that tallying the exact figures of state and ANSAs is in some cases inconsistent because at times the UN groups more than one actor under one party. For example, while Taliban forces represents one ANSA in Afghanistan, it includes the Tora Bora Front, the Jamat Sunat al-Dawa Salafia and the Latif Mansur Network (United Nations, 2014:47). Throughout the whole analyzed period of years, I follow the assumption that in cases where several actors are grouped under one party they may be considered as one actor.

During the period of 2014, the UN has listed in total 58 parties that commit grave violations against children, including both the ones on the agenda and not. No new parties were listed in comparison to 2013, and only 1 party was delisted. This was a non-state actor that transformed from an ANSA to a non-rebellious political party during the reporting period (United Nations, 2015:47). The actor has not previously entered into an action plan agreement with the UN. There were no other changes to the list in comparison to 2013, meaning that the total number of parties is 58, 7 state actors and 51 non-state actors. 5 state actors are marked as being part of UN action plans.
When it comes to 2015, 62 parties were listed in total. The list includes 7 state actors identical to the ones in 2013 and 2014, whereas the additional 4 new parties consist of ANSAs. No party has been removed from the lists, while 5 state actors are marked as having completed or being committed to UN action plans (United Nations, 2016:36).

Analyzing the number of parties in 2016 and onwards becomes less complicated because state and non-state actors are grouped under separate categories in the annexes of the annual reports of the Secretary-General. Furthermore, the Secretary-General differentiates parties which have put in place measures during the reporting period and parties which have not. Whereas in the previous years, parties were only marked when having completed or having signed action plans. To enumerate, 65 state and ANSAs were listed in total, including the ones on the agenda and the ones that are not. 56 comprise of ANSA and 9 of state actors. Out of these, 52 ANSAs have not put in place measures during the reporting period, while 4 have. On the other hand, 5 state actors have put in place measures and 4 have not. Compared to 2015, there was 1 new state actor and 4 non-state actors. 1 non-state actor has been delisted after successful completion of action plans.

As for 2017, 68 parties have been named to violate children’s rights in conflict by committing one or more of the six grave violations, including the ones on the agenda and not. 51 ANSAs are marked as not having put in place measure to enhance the protection of children’s rights in conflict, while 8 have put in place measures. When it comes to state actors, 3 have not put in place measures while 6 have done so. In total, 4 actors have been delisted, 2 non-state actors and 2 state actors. 3 ANSAs have been added to the lists, while no new state actors have been added.

Finally, the latest annual report was issued in 2019 and covers the period between January-December 2018. In this case, 68 parties were listed, including 57 ANSAs and 11 state actors. Out of the 57 ANSAs, 48 have not put in place measures to improve the conditions of children’s rights in conflict while 9 have. On the other hand, 8 state actors have put in place measures, whereas 3 have not. No new parties were added to the list in comparison to 2018. Additionally, no parties were delisted, although 2 parties were eliminated due to the fact that they ceased to exist (United Nations, 2019:37).

After assessing the number of state and ANSAs on UN’s lists of shames on a yearly basis for the period of 2013-2018, an attempt has been made to summarize the figures for the whole six years. This system of classification is useful for further discussion as it provides an overview of the total number of state actors and ANSAs that have been listed and delisted from the annual reports between the years of 2013 and 2019. Data is presented in Table 1 below.
<table>
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<th>STATE ACTORS</th>
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<td>No. of listed parties</td>
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<td>2014</td>
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<td>2015</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<td>2018</td>
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<td>57</td>
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Table 1

The numbers of state actors and ANSAs in the table include both parties that are under the agenda of Security Council and parties that are not on the agenda. This is because the UN has been listing both in each year and parties that are not on the agenda have been given the same opportunities to enter into action plans as parties on the agenda. Also, the numbers of delisted parties include only those parties that were delisted due to taking steps to enhance compliance to international humanitarian law and protection of children. Therefore, parties that were delisted because they ceased to exist were not taken into consideration for further analysis.

4.2. Discussion

After the representation of data, the thesis moves on to the evaluate the results in the light of previously described theoretical arguments. The aim of this analysis is to investigate how effective is the method of naming and shaming parties who commit grave violations against children as a tool to increase compliance to international humanitarian law. This effectiveness is assessed by comparing the number of parties listed on UN’s “lists of shames” and the number of parties that subsequently were delisted after successful completion of action plans, as well as parties that have put in place measures to improve the protection of children during the
reporting period. Hereby, it is possible to investigate the previously presumed link between UN’s naming and shaming and adherence to IHL, disputed by Nyamutata’s study (2013:151).

The discussion begins with an evaluation of Hypothesis 1 which predicted a positive effect of naming and shaming on state actors who commit grave violations against children. The hypothesis is tested and theoretically argued for through the lenses of Constructivism. Furthermore, the paper moves on to discuss Hypothesis 2 and once again applies Constructivism to evaluate the results.

4.2.1. State Actors & Compliance to IHL

As can be seen in Table 1, throughout the whole analyzed period of 2013-2018 state actors have been more responsive to UN’s listing in the annexes of annual reports on children and armed conflict than non-state actors. Indeed, most of the “shamed” state actors have either completed actions plans with the UN or have put in place measures to improve protection of children in the conflicted areas. The effects are not absolute and not all state actors seem to enter into action plans after being listed, however each of the analyzed year shows that the numbers between listed and de-listed actors and/or actors who have put in place measures are of similar values. The difference between the number of listed parties and the number of de-listed parties and/or the ones who have put in place measures during the reporting period was the biggest in 2016, with 9 listed actors and only 5 in the latter category. Aside from this year, the numbers of actors in both categories remained similar, for example 7:5 in the years of 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Hereby, the results show that there seems to be a convincing link between UN’s naming and shaming of state actors that commit grave violations against children in conflict and an increase in compliance to IHL. As previously discussed, an increase in compliance to IHL is measured by the number of listed parties which have subsequently completed or entered into action plans with the UN and taken measures to improve the protection of children. The numbers of “shamed” and delisted parties imply that UN’s naming and shaming may be an effective method to increase compliance to IHL and furthermore enhance the protection of children. Henceforth, Hypothesis 1 of this thesis is supported by the research results.

**H1:** UN’s naming and shaming has a substantial impact on state actors who commit six grave violations against children in armed conflict, thus leads to an increase in compliance to IHL.

The theoretical argument behind this hypothesis was built on the theoretical framework of Constructivist IR theory. As mentioned previously in section 2.4., Constructivism may be
applied to explain state’s responsiveness to UN’s naming and shaming and compliance to IHL overall.

First, the notion that reality is a social construct and not a given, permanent structure implies several arguments. One of the most relevant ones is the possibility of change, both within international relations and within actors individually (Fierke, 2013:188). Just like materials can be transformed into various shapes in order to be given contextual meaning, social phenomena are also shaped by history, culture and politics (2013:189). The changing nature of the international system and actors who comprise it means that the behavior of states and other actors, e.g. individuals or groups, is also likely to alter throughout different periods and situations. This theoretical assumption is relevant because it implies that actors may change their behavior depending on context and other social dimensions, such as the process of interaction. In this light, UN’s naming and shaming of children’s rights abusers may influence actors to improve the violating behavior as each actor is prone to change and react to various types of interaction, public condemnation being one example. The results of this thesis prove that many state actors do improve protection of children and increase compliance to IHL after being listed on UN’s “lists of shame” for violating six grave violations against children in conflict. Hence, the violating states who improved compliance to IHL are an example of how change in behavior is both achievable and may be influenced by different contextual settings in the international system. The same state actors who violated children’s rights in conflict agree to sign action plans and put in place measures to prevent these violations.

Another key point in Constructivism is the international image and identity of actors. As mentioned in section 2.4., Constructivism emphasizes the importance of social norms, values and assumptions as key factors that influence actor’s identity and behavior. When evaluating the successfulness of UN’s naming and shaming of state actors, a possible explanation may be that the identity of state actors makes them more responsive to public condemnation than non-state actors. State actors have a legally recognized role in the international society, since they represent parties that are part of the governmental legislatures of UN member states. According to Constructivism, the “institutional identity” of states is based on accepted values and norms within the international community (Sending, 2002:449, in Fierke:2018:188). In this light, it may be argued that states who have been condemned by the UN for violating children’s rights in conflict agree to enter actions plans with the UN because of the legitimacy of human rights norms that are widely accepted among member states. State actors are likely to share some common social norms, values or assumptions. Human rights and more specifically children’s rights are part of universally agreed standards, norms and regulations which shape the
normative foundations of IHL (United Nations, 2019). They are protected by the “rule of law” which consists of legally binding laws and regulations on national levels, executed through institutional structures. The aim of the rule of law is to ensure the “freedom to live in dignity” (United Nations, 2019). UN member states acknowledged the rule of law by adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as numerous subsequent declarations created to enforce human rights practices. Given this, one might argue that UN’s naming and shaming is effective with state actors because their institutional identity, i.e. being part of UN member states, makes them more likely to comply to IHL. Non-compliance with children’s rights in conflict and the commitment of six grave violations against children opposes an established identity of a UN member state which protects the dignity of lives through the rule of law and universally accepted declarations on human rights. Therefore, state actors who do engage in six grave violations may find themselves struggling to keep an international image of their institutional identity and thus comply to IHL.

The findings that UN’s naming and shaming may be an effective way to improve state actors’ protection of children’s rights in conflict are in line with previously discussed research that argued for the strategy’s effectiveness in increasing compliance to IHL (DeMeritt, 2012; Franklin, 2008; Schulz, 2015). They add to the existing literature in a unique way as they prove that UN’s public condemnation of state actors in conflict may improve conditions of children’s rights.

4.2.2. ANSAs & Non-Compliance to IHL

The second hypothesis of this paper states that naming and shaming by the UN is not a successful strategy when applied to armed non-state actors who abuse children’s rights in conflict. Grounded on theoretical concepts of Constructivist IR theory, the hypothesis presumes that public condemnation of ANSAs in warfare does not lead to a substantial impact on ending such abuses.

H2: UN’s naming and shaming has limited impact on ANSAs who commit six grave violations against children in armed conflict, thus does not lead to an increase in compliance to IHL.

By examining the quantitative data in Table 1, it is evident that the number of ANSAs who complete action plans with the UN or put in place measures to improve the protection of children’s rights after being listed for engaging in six grave violations in conflict remains relatively low when compared to the number of total parties listed. Between 2013 and 2016, the
Secretary General only marked parties which had successfully completed action plans to improve protection of children. The tallying of figures shows that only 1 ANSA did so during these three years, in 2013. On the other, from 2016 onwards parties are also marked for having put in place measures to improve the violated conditions. This might be a possible explanation as to why there are more ANSAs in this category than before 2016, i.e. 4, 10 and 9 in 2016, 2017 and 2018 respectively. Nonetheless, the overall figures do not seem to suggest a strong correlation between the number of listed (i.e. shamed) parties and the number of delisted/parties who have taken measures. What remains evident is that a higher proportion of the shamed state actors respond to public condemnation by the UN than the proportion of listed and delisted ANSAs. With this in mind, the previously stated Hypothesis 2 of this thesis is confirmed.

While Constructivism was used in an attempt to explain the results of state actors’ compliance to IHL, the same theoretical framework is now applied to interpret the lack of ANSAs’ responsiveness to UN’s naming and shaming. Hereby, the thesis demonstrates how one IR theory could be used to interpret two opposing phenomena – compliance and non-compliance to IHL.

Returning to the idea of reality being a social construct and social phenomena being shaped by history, culture and context (Fierke, 2013:189), the following arguments may be developed. First, a common view in academic literature is that “human rights violators can be shamed because, as members of an international society, they share common understandings, references, and standards” (Lebovic & Voeten, 2006:869). Assuming this is true, one might pose the question to what extent non-state actors who abuse children’s rights share the common norms and principles of the international society. The lacking correlation found between UN’s naming and shaming and ANSAs’ improvement in compliance to IHL and implementation of action plans can be attributed to inherently different norms and principles that exist between states and ANSAs. While UN member states are part of universal declarations on human rights backboned by the previously discussed rule of law, ANSAs are not part of this international legislature. Moreover, they seem to disagree with the international attitudes on IHL and the protection of children in conflict, often attributing them to pro-Western constructs established to inflict the world (Rosen, 2010:8 in Hafen, 2016:989). Since ANSAs are not officially part of nor creators of international norms and rules, they may lack the responsibility to comply to them. As a result, being shamed by the UN for violating children’s rights in conflict would have little impact. This argument leads back to the Constructivist concept of institutional identity. ANSAs lack the institutional identity of states, they are commonly defined as “non-governmental groups who are involved in conflict but lack the capacity to become part of the
relevant international treaties” (Geneva Call, 2010 in Hafen, 2016:1007). As armed non-state actors who operate separately from governmental structures, they are not part of the established international community within the UN such as member states. Therefore, when the UN Security Council lists them for actions that violate children’s rights in conflict, they might not necessarily perceive themselves as “outsiders” among the parties, resulting in a lack of sensitivity to public condemnation. ANSAs seem to be unconcerned about their reputational image in the international society (Bob, 2013:156, in Nyamutata: 2013:167). Their institutional identity i.e. lack of it within the international system enables them to behave accordingly to standards and norms that match their own understanding/construction of their image. Furthermore, the UN might not have legitimate power in the eyes of ANSAs because it promotes human rights practices which are essentially contradictory to their practices of using children in conflict, such as the recruitment of child soldiers for example. Numerous ANSAs do not share the same understanding of what children’s lives should consist of, like it is inherent in the values of the international community and human rights defenders (Rosen, 2009:86). Therefore, the difference in their understanding of norms and values would lead to a specific understanding of being shamed for actions that are not essentially “wrong” according to their normative and moral values. All this may be a possible reasoning for the substantially low numbers of “shamed” ANSAs who enter into action plans with the UN and improve the protection of children, as found in Table 1.

Furthermore, the process of interaction is another theoretical concept to consider when discussing the limited efficacy of UN’s listing of ANSAs that commit grave violations against children. As mentioned earlier, this constructivist idea is based on the philosophy that the behavior of an actor is likely to be influenced by the social, historical and political context they exist in, as well as the type of actors they interact with (Fierke, 2013:189). ANSAs who violate children’s rights in conflict usually operate independently outside the institutions of the international community, since they are not a legal part of it like states are (Geneva Call, 2010 in Hafen, 2016:1007). The lack of interactions with actors who promote human rights norms may be another reason for the lacking response to naming and shaming by the UN. States interact with each other through diplomatic ties and engagement in intergovernmental bodies like the UN, and through the lenses of Constructivism this reinforces certain values and builds norms which are then imbedded in the identity and behavior of actors. On the other hand, ANSAs are not part of these interaction processes. They are often led by powerful individuals who set their own rules of interaction independently from other actors in the international society. Public exposure by the Security Council for violating grave violations against children
in conflict calls for interacting with the UN, through the implementation of action plans and putting in place measures for the improvement of children’s rights. ANSAs might choose to reject these interactions because they are not part of their established social processes.

The findings are in line with Nyamutata’s results of the evaluation of UN’s shaming of ANSAs for the period of 2002-2012 (2013:169).

To summarize, Constructivism proves to be an arguably useful IR theory when discussing the results of UN’s naming and shaming on state actors and ANSAs, as previously demonstrated in the results of this paper. Concepts such as social norms, values, assumptions, institutional identity and interaction processes may be applied to explain compliance and non-compliance with IHL as well as the difference between the efficacy of UN’s naming and shaming among state and ANSAs.

4.3. Final Thoughts and Implications

The quantitative analysis of UN’s naming and shaming between 2013-2018 showed that the assumed correlation between public exposure and an improvement in children’s rights practices and compliance to IHL differs between state actors and ANSAs. While most state actors enter into action plans with the UN to improve the violating behavior towards children in conflict after being publicly condemned by the Security Council, only a limited number of ANSAs do so.

It is relevant to point out that while this thesis applied Constructivism to investigate the possible explanation for states’ and ANSAs’ differences in response to public condemnation by the UN Security Council, it does not dismiss the possibility of altering explanation for the investigated phenomena. For example, Rationalism is another IR theory that may be applied to explain why publicly exposed actors subsequently do not necessarily improve their human rights practices. Indeed, scholars frequently apply Rationalism to explain actors’ non-compliance to IHL (Nyamutata, 2013:157). According to Rationalism, actors act primarily in line with their “selfish” and profit-maximizing material goals (Fierke, 2013:191). Behavior that does not result in maximization of material capabilities is contradictory to rational choice. In this light, it may be argued that parties who abuse children’s rights in conflict act according to rational choice i.e. profit maximization. Abusing children in warfare by employing child soldiers brings substantial economic advantages that might deter parties from complying to IHL (Nyamutata, 2013:158). Nevertheless, my argument is that Constructivism is the most applicable IR theory in this case because it may be used to understand the reasons for both why
UN’s naming and shaming may and may not be a successful strategy to increase protection of children in conflict. As such, the theory proves its empirical strength.

Another key point is to remember that the quantitative analysis performed in this thesis is an attempt to present a numerical overview of figures of named and shamed parties and the ones who improve condemned abuses afterwards. The paper aimed to tally figures of state actors and ANSAs and test the assumed correlation between UN’s use of the naming and shaming strategy and compliance to IHL, just as previously done by Nyamutata (2013). The thesis did not test causal inferences of this correlation; however, it made an attempt to critically assess it through the lenses of Constructivism. As such, it represents an up-to-date version of previously discussed Nyamutata’s (2013) study and modestly tries to fill the existing gap in literature about the efficacy of naming and shaming as a strategy to increase compliance to human rights in general.

Further research should develop qualitative methods that would enable a deeper understanding of reasons why UN’s public condemnation of ANSAs has little impact. The results show that the impact is not completely absent and that some ANSAs do improve protection of children in conflict after finding themselves at UN’s lists. For example, as shown in Table 1 in 2017 10 out of 59 ANSAs put in place measures to improve children’s rights conditions during the reporting period. This raises the question of why some ANSAs are more likely to respond to being named and shamed than others. Qualitative methods such as interviews with members of ANSAs or case studies might enable a closer look into the issue. The importance of a comprehensive understanding of the issue is highlighted by the policy relevance in the use of naming and shaming as a strategy to increase compliance to human rights by the transnational advocacy network.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to assess the efficacy of UN’s naming and shaming of state and ANSAs as a tool to increase compliance to IHL and increase protection of children in armed conflict. The paper applied Constructivism to analyze the phenomenon of state actors’ and ANSAs’ compliance and non-compliance to IHL in relation to preceding public condemnation by the UN Security Council. Hereby, my research brought new insights to the scholarly IR debate of whether naming and shaming is a successful strategy to increase compliance to human rights and the possible theoretical explanations for the strategy’s results.

The paper started with an introduction where the main research puzzle and the outline of the thesis was introduced. Furthermore, it developed a literature review that discussed the issue of
naming and shaming as well as presented the most relevant academic works about the topic (DeMeritt 2012; Franklin, 2008; Hafner-Burton, 2008; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Lahti, 2018 Murdie & Davis 2012; Nyamutata, 2013; Schulz, 2015). As demonstrated in the literature review, the contested results of public condemnation as a way to increase compliance to human rights practices makes it a significant area for IR research. After the literature review, the thesis moved on to outline the theoretical framework of Constructivism which was used to analyze the results in section 4, the analysis. Prior to section 4, the method of the performed quantitative analysis was introduced and data selection justified. Finally, the analysis of this thesis critically examined the findings of this study and applied constructivist concepts such as reality construction, social norms, values and assumptions, identity, and the process of interaction. These concepts were used to discuss the findings on states’ and ANSAs responsiveness to UN’s naming and shaming of parties that engage in six grave violations against children in conflict. The purpose of the thesis’ analysis was to answer the following research questions. Is UN’s naming and shaming of parties in armed conflict a successful strategy to increase compliance to IHL? Do state and ANSAs agree to sign UN action plans and put in place measures to protect children after being listed on the Security Council’s “lists of shame”? A quantitative analysis supported by qualitative information from Secretary General’s Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict between 2013-2018 provided an answer to the stated questions. The analysis tested two hypotheses grounded on theoretical arguments of constructivism. The first one stating that naming and shaming is successful in increasing state actors’ compliance to IHL and putting in place measures to protect children in armed conflict. On the other hand, the second hypothesis stated that the strategy is not impactful on ANSAs who commit grave violations against children in warfare. Both hypotheses were confirmed in this paper.

The main conclusion of this thesis is that, in line with previous literature (Franklin, 2008; Nyamutata 2013), naming and shaming may be a useful strategy to increase state actors’ compliance with IHL. Throughout the analyzed period of 2013-2018, there seems to be a correlation between the number of state actors that are listed on UN’s lists of shame and the number of parties that subsequently completed action plans to improve protection of children in conflict or put in place measures to do so. Furthermore, the findings show that the link between UN’s public condemnation of ANSAs and compliance to IHL is weak. The number of ANSAs listed in the Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict remain substantially higher than the number of parties that enter into action plans or put in place measures to improve children’s rights protection. This paper argues that future research on the topic should focus on the exploration of reasons why some ANSAs do seem responsive to UN’s naming and shaming
while the majority does not. Employing qualitative methods such as interviews with ANSAs or case studies may provide an answer to this question and thus contribute to the understanding of the link between public condemnation and compliance to IHL.
6. Bibliography


United Nations (2017) *Annual Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict*. Available at:


