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# A Critical Analysis of Presidential Term Limits in Africa: A Mixed-Methods Case Study of Causes of Political Violence in Burundi

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A Critical Analysis of Presidential Term Limits in Africa: A Mixed-Methods Case  
Study of Causes of Political Violence in Burundi

by

Foday Darboe

A Dissertation Presented to the  
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences of Nova Southeastern University  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Nova Southeastern University  
2018

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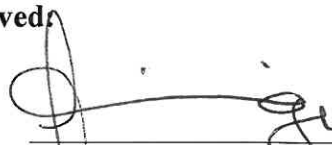
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This dissertation was submitted by Foday Darboe under the direction of the chair of the dissertation committee listed below. It was submitted to the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and approved in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Nova Southeastern University.

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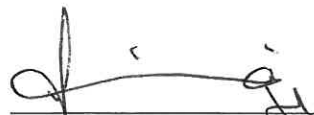
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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all the research participants in this study. Without them, this study would not have seen the light of the day. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to all the civil society groups across Africa for their tireless work in promoting democracy and good governance. Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to uncle Ousainou Darboe for his sacrifices in fighting dictatorship in the Gambia.

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## List Abbreviations and Acronyms

APRODH	Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Detained Persons
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset
AU	African Union
CITI	Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative
CNARED	National Council for the Restoration of Arusha Agreement and Rule of Law
CNDD-FDD	National Council for Defence of Democracy—Forces for the Defence of Democracy
CNDI	National Commission of the Inter-Burundian Dialogue
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	The East African Community
EC	Electoral Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMB	Election Management Board
EU	European Union
FNL	National Liberation Forces
FRODEBU	Front for Democracy in Burundi
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IRB	Institutional Review Board
MAPROBU	African Prevention and Protection Mission in Burundi
NIEC	National Independent Electoral Commission

Palipehutu	Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People—National Forces of Liberation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	The United Nations High Commission on Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPD	Union for Peace and Development

## Abstract

The crisis in Burundi began when President Pierre Nkurunziza declared that he would pursue a third term despite a two-term limitation in Burundi's Constitution. Opposition parties along, with some members of President Nkurunziza's own National Council for Defence of Democracy, Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), argued that President Nkurunziza's decision to extend his rule beyond the maximum two-terms was in direct violation of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation agreement, also referred to as the Arusha agreement, signed in 2000. This action triggered opposition parties and civil society groups to organize peaceful protests to challenge President Nkurunziza's third term bid. In response, government forces and Imbonerakure youth militia coordinated a campaign of repression and intimidation. The country of Burundi is characterized by political violence, targeted assassinations, and accusations of torture and rape by both government forces and armed opposition groups. The purpose of this study was to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Understanding this phenomenon is extremely important because the recent hike in violence among Burundians has negatively affected the peace and stability of the nation. Through a mixed-method case study approach, the study's main findings indicate the significant fracturing of citizen perceptions of peace and stability along identity lines, significant fear and insecurity among Burundians about the current crisis, as well as the continuing impact of the long-standing violence in the country's past. *Keywords:* presidential term limits, conflict resolution, political violence, term limit manipulation, qualitative case study, and quantitative survey.



## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Problem Statement**

Leadership change through presidential term limitations have generated unrest and violence across the African continent. It has been argued that two-term limits foster checks and balances and promote political stability by enabling a change of guards and serving as a deterrent to presidential abuse of power (Kiwuwa, 2013). Many African leaders, however, have bypassed or opposed term limit mandates in their respective constitutions to stay in power. When this phenomenon became a problem in many African countries, the consequence of term limit manipulations sparked a wave of protests, violence, unrest, and uncertainty, as seen in Burundi.

The Burundian crisis began on April 25, 2015 as a result of President Pierre Nkurunziza's desire to pursue a third term despite the maximum two-term limitation in Burundi's Constitution. President Nkurunziza came to power in 2005, when he was chosen by Parliament to serve as president after the end of the twelve-year ethnic civil war (1993-2005), which claimed an estimated 300,000 lives. President Nkurunziza and his supporters, including members of the Imbonerakure youth militia, trained and armed by the governing National Council for Defence of Democracy, Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), maintain that he was elected by Parliament in 2005 as part of the Arusha agreement and not by direct universal suffrage. Hence, they argue, Nkurunziza's third term should count as a second term (Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset, 2016; Ahluwalia, 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2014; Siegle, 2015; Thomas-Greenfield, 2015; Vandeginste, 2015).

Along with some members of President Pierre Nkurunziza's own CNDD-FDD, the opposition—National Council for the Restoration of Arusha agreement and Rule of Law (CNARED)—argued that President Nkurunziza's decision to extend his rule past the maximum allowable two terms was in direct violation of Article 96 of Burundi's Constitution and out of compliance with the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation agreement, also known as the Arusha agreement. The Arusha agreement was created in 2000 after prolonged dialogues that were spearheaded by former Tanzanian Presidents Julius Nyerere and South African Nelson Mandela. Opponents of President Nkurunziza further contended that the Arusha agreement should trump Burundi's Constitution or that the Constitution should clarify the Arusha agreement (Ahluwalia, 2016; Nantulya, 2015).

The Arusha agreement is a framework that ended the civil war and a series of violent conflicts. Its purpose was to usher in a power-sharing government, to provide checks on presidential power, and to promote political stability. Secondly, the Arusha agreement was implemented to ensure that no specific ethnic group could comprise more than 50% of military and security services. Both the Arusha agreement and the Constitution also prevented any ethnic group from occupying more than 60% representation in cabinet positions and in diplomatic and consular assignments. Thirdly, the Arusha agreement was a coalition building and a conflict resolution mechanism. Lastly, the Arusha agreement integrated former combatants into new, cohesive, and representative security forces. That is, the new national defense force would include 60% officers from the former government army and 40% who were former combatants (Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset, 2016; Ahluwalia, 2016; Daley, 2006; Hatungimana et al., 2007; Nindorera, 2012; Russell, 2015; Siegle, 2015; Thomas-

Greenfield, 2015; Vandeginste, 2015).

While the conflict in Burundi centers around term limit manipulation, issues of identity seems to be dominant. Given Burundi's history of conflict, Burundians are concerned that the conflict could reignite the already fragile ethnic division between Hutus and Tutsis—the country's two major ethnic groups. Additionally, acts of violence such as sexual harassment, rape, and torture are common in the current conflict. Human Rights Watch (2017a) and Amnesty International (2017a) have reported violence directed against women by government forces, the Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups increased since the conflict began in April, 2015. The report further noted that some security forces and Imbonerakure youth militia raped women in front of their families while arresting a male family member. Much of the violence appeared to have been directed at family members of alleged government opponents. The report concluded that sexual violence seemed to be used as a means to claim power over individuals linked to opposition parties or groups. In such instances, violence against women is used to send a message to perceived opponents (Human Rights Watch; 2017a; Amnesty International, 2017a).

President Nkurunziza's decision to manipulate the Constitution, violating the Arusha agreement, triggered unprecedented demonstrations by opposition parties and civil society groups to challenge his third term bid. In response, government forces and the feared CNDD-FDD Imbonerakure youth militia coordinated a campaign of repression and intimidation against opponents of President Nkurunziza's third-term bid. The group was accused of political violence that targeted opposition members and members of civil society groups. The name Imbonerakure, which means *those who see far*, originated from

the native Kirundi dialect, and the group emerged from the same disbanded militia as the ruling party (Nindorera, 2012; UN News Centre, 2015).

The former United Nations (UN) Human Rights Chief, Zeid Raad al-Hussein, claimed that his office began “receiving consistent testimonies indicating that Imbonerakure members operate under instructions from the ruling party and with the support of the national police and intelligence services, which provide them with weapons, vehicles and sometimes uniforms” (UN News Centre, 2015, p.1). The repression and intimidation spiraled into violence following a failed military coup d'état in May, 2015. After the failed coup, the crisis escalated, with security forces and armed opposition perpetrating more violence. Despite pleas from regional organizations and the international community to postpone the July, 2015 election until the crisis was mediated and peace and stability returned, President Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD party held an election. The election was boycotted by opposition parties, the UN, the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), and the United States, all of whom rejected the election results due to their lack of credibility. This crisis led to the deaths of an estimated 1,155 people between April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and to the displacement of over 300,000 refugees fleeing abduction, violence, and torture (Armed conflict Location & Event Dataset, 2016; Ahluwalia, 2016; Siegle, 2015; UNHCR, 2016; Vircoulon, 2015).

In addition to circumventing Burundi's Constitution and the Arusha agreement, opposition parties and civil society groups feared that President Nkurunziza was preparing to eliminate constitutional presidential term limits completely, allowing him to contest a fourth term in 2020. For instance, the National Commission of the Inter-Burundian Dialogue (CNDI), tasked with finding solutions to the deep political crisis,

revealed that a majority of the Burundians consulted “support the suppression of the presidential term limits and stand for the amendment of the constitution” (Uwimana, 2017, P. 1), and President Nkurunziza suggested that the “will of the people is above the judiciary” (Fraser, 2017, p. 2). The majority of CNDD-FDD hardliners welcomed this report, as most of them supported eliminating presidential term limits. In juxtaposition, Jérémie Ngendakumana, spokesman for CNARED, contended that “Burundians are not calm and not ready for the amendment. They are gripped by fear following the murders observed on a daily basis, kidnapping cases, forced disappearances, [and] arbitrary arrests” (Uwimana, 2017, p. 2).

In recent developments, President Pierre Nkurunziza and CNDD-FDD party loyalists sought constitutional amendments that would allow Nkurunziza to rule Burundi until 2034. The May 2018 referendum, it was feared, could trigger further deadly violence (Kaneza, 2018). Recommended amendments in the referendum included a change of the current constitutional limitation on presidential terms to two durations of seven years each, a change that would allow President Nkurunziza to stay in power for two additional seven-year terms (Johnson, 2017). Any attempt by President Nkurunziza to eliminate presidential term limits could create another intractable conflict, destabilizing the Greater Lakes Region.

ACLED (2016) stated that the conflict in Burundi claimed about 1,155 people between April 26 2015 and April 25, 2016. Of this number, at least 690 of the reported dead (roughly 60%) were civilians. Furthermore, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that the number of refugees fleeing abductions, violence, and torture in Burundi exceeded 300,000. Over 180,000 Burundian refugees crossed into

Tanzania, over 81,000 into Rwanda, over 42,000 into Uganda, over 18,000 into the DRC, and over 1,700 into Zambia (UNHCR, 2016).



*Figure 1.* Burundian refugee exodus. *Note.* Thousands of Burundians who have fled to Tanzanian territory on Lake Tanganyika, using an old ferry that can carry a maximum of 600 people. © UNHCR/T.W. Monboe.

A 2016 Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED) report suggested that many civilians who opposed President Nkurunziza's government or the ruling CNDD-FDD who were looking for a better life throughout the Great Lakes Region became victims of the crisis. Similarly, Siegle (2015) implied that the exodus of refugees to neighboring countries occurred due to fears of mass violence and the threat of a return to civil war. As Burundi finds a solution to the current conflict, the upcoming May 2018 referendum to amend the country's Constitution could jeopardize the East African Community (EAC) inter-Burundi dialogue and exacerbate violence further. Many

observers are also worried that the proposed changes to the Constitution could prolong the longstanding ethnic tension between Hutus and Tutsis.

An initial review of the literature indicated that a lack of checks and balances, weak government institutions, electoral malpractice, greed and corruption, and fear of punishment were key motivating factors for some African leaders to extend their grip on power. From this conceptualization, the main purpose of the study emerged: to understand how conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Understanding this phenomenon is extremely important because the recent rise in violence among Burundians negatively affects the economic conditions, as well as the peace and stability, of the nation. The other purpose of this study was to use conflict resolution approaches and analytical theories to expand research into and knowledge of circumstances of political violence in Africa, particularly in Burundi. The proposition that guided this study was that the impact of presidential term limits manipulations on peace and security in Burundi would differ along ethnic lines but not differ significantly along gender lines. The goal was to provide findings that would add new theoretical standards and provide recommendations for assessing future conflicts associated with presidential term limit manipulation.

### **Historical Overview of Burundi**

A key feature of the political structure of Burundi is the more than four decades of on-and-off intractable conflict over control of power, resources, wealth, and economic opportunity, as well as a history of inequitable policies between the Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority. Burundi's population constitutes three main ethnic groups: Hutu

(85%), Tutsi (14%), and Twa (1%). Historically, Tutsi ethnic groups have held power, dominated the security forces, and controlled the education sector. The Twa people were viewed as second-class citizens and had little role in the political and economic system. For the majority Hutus, these marginalizations affected every aspect of society, causing them to develop resentment toward the Tutsi minority. It is important to note that animosity between the Hutus and Tutsis in the region started during colonialism. The divide and rule approach that the Belgians established for dealing with indigenous people gave rise to the ethnic division between the Hutus and Tutsis, as it allowed Tutsis to gain higher levels of education, enjoy more success, and seize and consolidate more powerful positions than the Hutus (Ndikumana, 1998; Nindorera, 2012; Uvin, 1999).

As far back as 1962, when the country attained independence from Belgium, ethnic conflict has overshadowed most of Burundi's history. Violent conflicts in 1965, 1972, 1988, 1991, and 1993 claimed hundreds of thousands of Burundian's lives (Daley, 2006; Ndikumana, 1998; Nindorera, 2012; Russell, 2015; United Nations Security Council, 2004). Burundi's beleaguered past was a critical factor contributing to the current crisis. In April and May of 1972, an uprising headed by Hutu military officers against the Tutsi government of President Michel Michombero broke out in Burundi. In response to the uprising, the Tutsi-led government, assisted by Tutsi youth militia known as Jeunesses Révolutionnaires Rwagasore, went on a systematic killing spree that led to the deaths of an estimated 200,000 Hutus. A similar event occurred in the 1993 civil war, when Tutsi-dominated armed forces assassinated Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye and the Hutu majority responded with a killing spree against the Tutsi minority. The civil war, which lasted from 1993-2005, claimed an estimated 300,000 lives, and an almost 1.2



million Burundians fled the country. Some Hutus understood the massacre of the Tutsis in 1993 as payback for the occurrences of 1972 (Daley, 2006; Ndikumana, 1998; Nindorera, 2012; Russell, 2015).

In subsequent years, two rebel factions—the CNDD-FDD and the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People-National Forces of Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL)—took up arms against Burundi’s military. The main demands of the rebel groups included returning to democratic majority rule, ending their marginalization and the nation’s constant cycles of violence, and, most importantly, restructuring Tutsi-controlled armed forces and security services. Moreover, in January, 1994, in the midst of the war, the Hutu-dominated Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU) party elected Cyprien Ntayamira as president. In April, 1994, President Ntayamira’s plan was eliminated along with Rwandan President Juvéna Habyaimana’s, a fellow Hutu. Both presidents were killed, which sparked the Rwandan genocide and worsened Burundi’s civil war (Ndikumana, 1998; Nindorera, 2012; Russell, 2015). Throughout Burundi’s history, politicians and civil society groups from both of the ethnic groups tried to preserve some degree of ethnic equilibrium in government, but they failed to avert massacres of both Hutus and Tutsis.

As CNDD-FDD and Palipehutu–FNL fought against Tutsi controlled armed forces, the CNDD rapidly gained support among Hutus, and its members began to perceive themselves as the country’s largest and most cohesive rebel group. Both rebel groups had opposing views, tactics, strategies, and solutions to the civil war. After a peace agreement to end the civil war was negotiated between rebel groups, political parties, and combatants, several rebel groups were disarmed, disbanded, and integrated

into the national army and government. The current president, Pierre Nkurunziza, was active in the conflict, joining the CNDD-FDD and eventually becoming chairman of the group after the CNDD-FDD separated into factions (Hatungimana, Theron, & Popic, 2007; Nantulya, 2015; Ndikumana, 1998; Nindorera, 2012; Russell, 2015).

As these violent conflicts transpired, their consequences were particularly dire for women. For example, after the 1993-2005 Burundian civil war, women and girls were affected disproportionately. Of the grave consequences of the conflicts in Burundi, gross human rights violations—such as rape, torture, and other forms of sexual violence—became very alarming, and they continued even after the cessation of the war. Yeboah (2017) claimed that “violence was a part of the everyday lives of most women and girls during the periods of series of conflicts the country experienced” (p. 83). The conflicts reinforced pre-existing patterns of gendered violence and increased the marginalization of women. Likewise, throughout and after the series of wars in Burundi, existing disparities increased and social safety nets broke down, making women more vulnerable to gender-based violence and exploitation (Yeboah, 2017).

Although most of the violent conflicts in Burundi have deep roots in political and ethnic tensions—which, to a large degree, are the consequences of political struggles—the current crisis is more political than ethnic in nature. Nonetheless, many Burundians, policymakers, and scholars fear that prolonged ethnic tension could deepen violence if the political crisis is not resolved.

### **Violence by Ruling Party Youth and Security Forces**

Opposition leaders, opponents of President Nkurunziza’s third-term bid, civil society groups, journalists, civilians, and members of President Nkurunziza’s own

CNDD-FDD party who opposed him were harassed, arrested, unlawfully detained, and even assassinated. So far, the crisis has been characterized by a daily retaliatory form of violence among government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, armed factions of several opposition groups, or individuals perceived to be rivals of President Nkurunziza and CNDD-FDD (Thomas-Greenfield, 2015; Vircoulon, 2015). In December, 2015, armed gunmen targeted four military installations throughout Bujumbura; the following day, people found dozens of dead bodies dispersed in the streets. Many accused Burundi's security forces of summarily executing opposition members in neighborhoods and arresting hundreds more (Armed conflict Location & Event Dataset, 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2017a).

Human Rights Watch's (2017a) country summary for Burundi indicates that intelligence services, along with security forces, regularly partnered with Imbonerakure youth militia to conduct abductions, disappearances, torture, rape, and killings. Another Human Rights Watch (2017b) report added, "Members of the Imbonerakure have been involved in scores of human rights violations in Burundi since at least 2009" (p. 3). The report adds "Between December 30, 2014 and January 3, 2015, Imbonerakure members, Burundian soldiers, and police officers committed at least 47 extrajudicial executions" (Human Rights Watch, 2017b). For example, a spokesperson for the Union for Peace and Development-Zigamibanga (UPD) opposition party, Patrice Gahungu, and UPD president, Zedi Feruzi, were killed in May, 2015 (Armed conflict Location & Event Dataset, 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2016b).

On August 3, 2015, an unidentified gunman on a motorcycle attempted to assassinate the leader of the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and

Detained Persons (APRODH), Pierre Claver Mbonimpa; Mbonimpa survived with severe injuries, however. Mbonimpa's son-in-law, Pascal Nshimirimana, was killed near his home in Bujumbura in October, 2015, and his son, Welly Nzitonda, was killed on November 6, 2015 after security services stopped him (Human Rights Watch, 2016a). Security forces and Imbonerakure sometimes raped women whose male family members were believed to be opponents of the government, such as the National Liberation Forces (FNL). In some instances, "Imbonerakure and police raped women who attempted to cross into Tanzania, apparently to deter them from leaving Burundi" (Human Rights Watch, 2017b, p. 3).



*Figure 2.* Protester and police interactions. *Note.* In the Ngagara district of Bujumbura (AP), demonstrators trying to march to the town centre flee as police disperse them with tear gas.

Human Rights Watch (2017) and ACLED (2016) also reported that the numbers of disappearances and clandestine kidnappings increased from late 2015 to 2016. In December, 2015, for instance, several plainclothes men believed to be part of intelligence

services abducted Marie-Claudette Kwizera, of the human rights group Ligue Iteka, and her whereabouts remain unknown. Similarly, Jean Bigirimana, a reporter with the independent newspaper *Iwacu*, disappeared in July, 2016 after leaving his residence in Burundi's capital, Bujumbura, for Bugarama, in Muramvya province.

It is apparent that the crisis in Burundi has progressed down a dangerous yet familiar path, and little change has occurred to halt the violence. The continued human rights violations have also led to an influx of refugees seeking safety in neighboring countries. The crisis has had a continuing effect on the population, including inculcating a persistent fear of attacks and a return to civil war (Thomas-Greenfield, 2015).

### **Violence by Armed Opposition Groups**

Although originally nonviolent, some anti third-term bid protesters eventually resorted to violence. According to reports by ACLED (2016) and Human Rights Watch (2016a), various armed opposition groups systematically used violence against security forces, civilians, and government officials. Throwing grenades at police patrols and police stations and attacking military bases around Bujumbura, government opponents in certain Bujumbura neighborhoods increased this violence (ACLED, 2016). ACLED (2016) and Human Rights Watch (2017b) reported, in April, 2016, that unknown gunmen in Bujumbura used rockets to assassinate Brigadier General Athanase Kararuzza, an army advisor to the office of the vice president. Unidentified also gunmen killed numerous high-profile government officials in Bujumbura, including Jean Bikomagu, former army chief of staff, and Adolphe Nshimirimana, the former head of intelligence services.

In Bururi province, unknown armed men killed numerous CNDD-FDD party supporters in April and May of 2016, including Jean Claude Bikorimana. Three

government supporters were among four individuals killed at a bar on April, 2016; an additional assault on the same day assassinated CNDD-FDD a party supporter, Japhet Karibwami, at his residence (Human Rights Watch, 2017a). In November, 2016, unidentified gunmen assaulted and severely injured Willy Nyamitwe, President Nkurunziza's communications aide, close to his residence in Bujumbura. The assassination of Environmental Minister Emmanuel Niyonkuru on January 1, 2017, and various other acts of violence and terror indicate that Burundi remains deeply troubled (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2017a).

It is clear that violence orchestrated by government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups has been systematic and shows no sign of ending. These violent events, and many others, have further undermined the peace and stability of Burundi and the Great Lakes Region generally. Leaders around the region, as well as international organizations, are concerned about mass violence, the risk of renewal of civil war, an influx of refugees, and extrajudicial killings. Furthermore, incendiary rhetoric from both the ruling party and opposition leaders has exacerbated the division between Hutus and Tutsis.

### **Role of the International Community**

From the outset of the crisis in April, 2015, the AU, EU, and UN spearheaded numerous intervention frameworks to bring about peace and stability, but these efforts to prevent government forces and armed opposition groups from committing violence have been unsuccessful. As Ahluwalia (2016) argued, "the world is deeply conscious of the propensity of ethnic violence in this region to descend into genocide" (p. 1). One could argue that Burundi's current crisis, in which both government and armed opposition

groups targeted civilians, could escalate into civil war, creating serious consequences that would ripple across the region.

In August, 2015, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) agreed on a resolution to deploy 228 police officers to Burundi to aid UN human rights observers, but President Nkurunziza and his government rejected the deployment (ACLED, 2016; Ahluwalia, 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2017a). Similarly, in December, 2015, the AU authorized the use of 5,000 peacekeepers, called the African Prevention and Protection Mission in Burundi (MAPROBU), but the government of Burundi declined the proposal. The Burundian government withdrew its membership from the International Criminal Court (ICC) after the court initiated an inquiry into the Burundi crisis (Human Rights Watch, 2017a).

In his United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, Thierry Vircoulon, the Central Africa Project Director for International Crisis Group (2015), proffered the following warning:

The present patterns of violence are a reminder of what happened before the civil war broke out in 1993. For the Burundians, the story is repeating itself. The déjà vu feelings and the memories of the civil war are the reasons why so many of them have left their country. (p. 3)

Although the institutional restructuring among high-ranking government and senior military officials was based on ethnic lines (Siegle, 2015), thus far, however, mass ethnic violence has not been common in the current crisis; however, the AU and UN fear that prolonged ethnic tension could deepen existing violence in the future.

Moreover, the consequences of the crisis in Burundi entail economic, social,

political, and security repercussions for the Greater Lakes Region. Arguably, further crisis in Burundi might provoke an armed invasion from Rwanda, where resentments from of the 1994 genocide still linger. Such an invasion could trigger military responses from surrounding nations concerned about Rwanda's influence in the Greater Lakes Region (Siegle, 2015; Thomas-Greenfield, 2015). Earlier conflicts in the Great Lakes Region were rooted in similar identity problems as well as in nationalism, structural violence, power struggles, issues of governance, exploitation, and unequal access to resources. These dynamics have been strong drivers of conflict in the Great Lakes Region, but the AU, EU, UN, and other international organizations have framed a conflict resolution roadmap for resolving the Burundi crisis.

Such a unique roadmap is needed because of Burundi's particular circumstances. Historically, Burundi spent over ten years recuperating from a violent civil war and trying to reclaim greater social structure, but recent violence and oppression has brought memories of the past to the surface, buoyed by an accelerating outflow of refugees and increasingly desperate economic conditions. Burundi serves as a clear example in Africa of how a president will take extreme measures and use extreme means to maintain power, destabilizing a decade of peace, stability, and post-conflict reconstruction (Siegle, 2015; Thomas-Greenfield, 2015; Vircoulon, 2015).

**Term limit manipulations as a continental problem.** Over the past few decades, most African leaders were trapped in a complex web of term limit manipulations. In the Great Lakes Region, the dilemma of term limit manipulations raised many contentious and divisive sentiments within the region and elsewhere. Leaders in both the Republic of the Congo and Rwanda endeavored to change



constitutional limitations on presidential terms. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), President Joseph Kabila demonstrated his steadfast desire to retain power by delaying the 2016 presidential election. It is important to note President Kabila is now in the seventh year of a five-year term. The term limit manipulations phenomenon remains a prevalent threat to peace and stability across the Great Lakes Region, but presidential term limit circumvention has also increased across the continent and sparked unrest and instability, often degenerating into violence and instability. This was the case in Burundi, where unrest developed into a seemingly intractable crisis, with street conflicts between security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, armed opposition groups, security forces conducting arrests of suspected protesters throughout the country, grenade attacks targeting security forces, and violence against Internally Displaced People (IDPs) attempting to flee (ACLED, 2016).

From a historical point of view, many African leaders saw the presidency as a lifetime profession; Prempeh (2008) used the phrase “The Big Man” (p. 109); Kiwuwa (2013) used “presidential careerism” (p. 262); and Akech (2011) used the term “imperial presidency” (p. 98). These phrases describe African leaders who entrenched themselves in power and systematically manipulated their constitutions. As Tangri and Mwenda (2010) argued, “Politics in many African countries has been characterized by perpetual incumbency in leadership. This was particularly the case in Africa’s early independence decades when many presidents held power for indefinite periods” (p. 32). In the past, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Sékou Toure of Guinea, Jean-Bédél Bokassa of Central African Republic, Félix Houphouët-Boigny of Cote d’Ivoire, Hastings Banda of Malawi, and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya bestowed on themselves president-for-life status (Akech,

2011; Baker, 2002; Bamfo, 2005; Tangri & Mwenda, 2010). This phenomenon manifested throughout the continent. Cameroon's Paul Biya, Uganda's Yoweri Museveni, Sudan's Omar Al-Bashir, Equatorial Guinea's Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, Republic of the Congo's Denis Sassou-Nguesso, Eritrea's Isaias Afewerki, Chad's Idriss Deby, and Djibouti's Ismail Omar Guelleh all used their powers to undermine presidential term limitations in their individual countries. Most of these leaders came to office with progressive ideas, but they soon became consumed with greed, corruption, and using protective means to upholding their powers. They exploited their countries' weak institutions and used their positions to enrich themselves, their families, and inner circles. (Table 1 shows Africa's past and present long-serving leaders who circumvented term limits to stay in power.) Accordingly, "Term limits or enforced power alternation has come to symbolize not only an attack on the democratic freedom to choose one's leaders, but equally an unwelcome limitation and check on the power and potential of the incumbency" (Kiwuwa, 2013, p. 265). It is clear that term limit manipulations have contributed to the slowing down of good governance and democratization and, oftentimes, has contributed to violence and unrest.

Table 1

*Past and Present Long-Serving African Leaders*

<b>Country</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Assumed Office</b>
Algeria	Abdelaziz Bouteflika	1999-present
Angola	Jose Eduardo dos Santos	1979-2017
Cameroon	Paul Biya	1982-present
Chad	Idriss Deby	1990-present
DRC	Joseph Kabila	2001-present
Djibouti	Ismail Omar Guelleh	1999-present
Eritrea	Isaias Afewerki	1993-present
Equatorial Guinea	Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo	1979-present
The Gambia	Yahya Jammeh	1994-2017
Uganda	Yoweri Museveni	1986-present
Sudan	Omar Al-Bashir	1989-present
Republic of the Congo	Denis Sassou Nguesso	1979-1992 & 1997-present
Rwanda	Paul Kagame	2000-present
Zimbabwe	Robert Mugabe	1980-2017

In some instances, the presidency lasts until death. Baker (2002) agreed that some African leaders “want to be recognized until death as father figures of the nation or as those who brought democracy” (p. 287). For example, Gnassingbé Eyadéma of Togo died after 38 years as president. Muammar el-Qaddafi of Libya ruled his country for 42 years until he met his violent and ruthless death. Omar Bongo of Gabon died in office after 41 years at the helm, and Guinea Bissau’s João Bernardo Vieira was assassinated after a combined 31 years as prime minister and president. Rwanda’s Juvénal Habyarimana was assassinated after 21 years in office. Guinea’s Lansana Conté died after 24 years in office, while Ethiopia’s Meles Zenawi ruled for 21 years before he died. In some cases, the presidency is a family affair or business. For instance, after the death of presidents Omar Bongo and Gnassingbé, both were succeeded by their sons.

Manipulating constitutions by amending term limits, for the most part, worked for incumbents, but it has also created violence. President Obama noted this problem at the AU summit in Addis Ababa in 2015, at which he argued, “When a leader tries to change

the rules in the middle of the game just to stay in office, it risks instability and strife, as we've seen in Burundi" (Baker, 2015, p. 4). A year later, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon shared the same sentiment at the 26<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU. He warned that African leaders "should not use legal loopholes or undemocratic constitutional changes to cling to power, and they should respect term limits" (Blair & Maasho, 2016, p. 1). Third termers and the rise of president-for-life syndrome have generated regional and international outcry.

Many African leaders have continued to use one of the most common tactics for maintaining their grip on power: manipulating constitutions, imposing constraints on political competition, using violence, and, sometimes, changing rules to extend their grip on power in such a manner that their main opponents are excluded (Baker, 2002; Bamfo, 2005; Boadi, 2015; Widner, 2005). Some African leaders went as far as manipulating official rules to stop their rivals. In 2007, presidential nominee Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo blocked his challenger, Vice-President Abubakar Atiku, from receiving the ruling party's nomination. Former Zambian President Chiluba barred Kenneth Kaunda, from running in the 1996 presidential election by changing the Constitution to require Zambian lineage for all presidential contestants (Akech, 2011). In some instances, in places where intense multiparty elections were established, leaders conducted electoral malpractice (Akech, 2011; Prempeh, 2008; Tangri & Mwenda, 2010). In Burundi, the ruling party orchestrated election rigging, coercive methods, assassinations, violence against opposition leaders and their supporters, and members of civil society groups during and after election cycles (Human Rights Watch 2016a; Vandeginste, 2011, 2015; Yarwood, 2016).

In the last decade, some African heads of state stepped down after their terms ended, paving the way for the peaceful transfer of power. Olusegun Obasanjo in Nigeria, John Kufuor in Ghana, Mwai Kibaki in Kenya, Hifikepunye Pohamba in Namibia, Jakaya Kikwete in Tanzania, Armando Guebuza in Mozambique, Thomas Boni Yayi in Benin, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone all left office as required by their respective constitutions. In Ghana's 2016 presidential election, Nana Akufo-Addo defeated incumbent president John Dramani Mahama after serving only one term in office. Similarly, in Nigeria, for the first time, an incumbent lost a re-election bid and power transferred peacefully.

Efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to restrict regional leaders from extending their terms in office beyond the two terms failed because the "two terms in office has been dropped for the time being by heads of state in May, 2015. Togo and The Gambia, both with presidents who have been in power for more than two terms, opposed the idea" (Vines, 2015, p. 2). In the Gambia, the long-term president lost his fifth term bid in the December 2016 presidential election, and power transferred peacefully with the help of ECOWAS forces intervening to remove President Jammeh. As in Nigeria, this was the first time in the Gambia's history that a sitting president lost a re-election bid. In Togo, President Faure Gnassingbe currently faces nationwide demonstrations against his government as opposition parties and civil society groups are seeking an end of five decades of a ruling dynasty from father to son, electoral reform, and the reinstatement of presidential term limits, which the legislature amended in 2002. The demonstration against Togo's president has claimed seven lives to date, and many more have been wounded (Akwei, 2017).

Interestingly, some African leaders are defying the conventional wisdom of term limit manipulations by shortening term limit mandates. In Senegal, President Macky Sall pushed for a referendum to reduce the country's presidential term limits from seven years to five years. Similarly, in Benin, the legislature overruled President Patrice Talon's bill for a referendum to change the Constitution, including a provision to lower presidential terms from the current two five-year terms, to one six-year term in office (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2017b). In the Gambia, the new President, Adama Barrow, vowed to push a two-term limit. These leaders' efforts to lower term limits juxtaposed with the actions of some other African leaders, including those who scrapped term limits to stay in power. Indeed, momentum exists behind African leaders adhering to term limit mandates, but, as Prempeh (2008) argued, "Africa's current presidents may be term-limited but by all accounts, they have not yet been tamed" (p. 110). To illustrate this point, 93-year-old Zimbabwean former President Robert Mugabe vowed for decades to maintain power until he died (Dzirutwe, 2016). Mugabe finally surrendered to the mounting pressure of a military overthrow and impeachment (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2017c). Former president Yahya Jammeh of the Gambia had the same sentiment, desiring to rule the Gambia for "one billion years" (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2011, p. 1); yet, he too, was defeated and forced out of power. As Bamfo (2005) argued, the aspiration to cling to power remains a fundamental problem for current African leaders, just as it did for those in the not-too distant past. The Great Lakes Region is a prime example of the phenomenon of term limit manipulations becoming a regional security threat.

**Successful and Unsuccessful term limit manipulations.** Constitutional engineering, or constitutional coups, is nothing new in Africa. Since post-independence, presidential term limit manipulations generated controversy all over the continent, and in recent years, this trend seems to be on the rise in many African countries. Yoweri Museveni of Uganda set the example for this trend. In 1986, shortly after assuming power, President Museveni asserted that the “problem of Africa in general and Uganda in particular is not the people but leaders who want to overstay in power” (Tangri & Mwenda, 2010, pp. 31-32). However, in 2005, Museveni successfully changed Uganda’s Constitution, allowing him to pursue a third term in office. Ugandan parliament, on September 12, 2017, unanimously approved a law to eliminate age limits from Uganda’s Constitution, possibly permitting President Museveni to extend his rule. Currently, Uganda’s Constitution bars anybody over 75 years old from running for president, which prevents 73-year-old President Museveni from running in the presidential election scheduled for 2021 (Biryabarema, 2017). In Cameroon, President Paul Biya successfully eliminated a two-term limit in 2008. In 1999, former President Samuel Nujoma of Namibia changed the country’s Constitution to let him pursue a third term in office. President Nujoma argued that the constitutional restriction did not apply to him because he was indirectly elected before serving his first term. President Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi resorted to the same argument as President Samuel Nujoma. After he failed to reach a constitutional revision that would permit him to stand for a third term, President Nkurunziza argued that the 2005 election did not count due to the fact that parliament had elected him. The constitutional court agreed and ruled that President Nkurunziza was qualified to run again (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2016a).

In neighboring Burundi, Paul Kagame of Rwanda also extended constitutional limitations to preserve his grip on power. President Kagame spearheaded a referendum in December, 2015 to eliminate two-term limits in Rwanda's Constitution, which allowed him to run for a third term in 2017 (Boadi, 2015). As Kiwuwa (2013) noted, these concerted tactics by leaders to restrict their young democracies in the name of their continuous service to the public troubles democratic transitions. Table 2 shows a detailed list of successful and unsuccessful attempts to extend or remove presidential term limits in Africa.

Table 2

*Countries Where Extending Presidential Term Limit Mandates Were Proposed or Removed*

<b>Country</b>	<b>Year Amendment Proposed</b>	<b>Result</b>
Algeria	2008	Passed
Burkina Faso	2014	Failed
Burundi	2018	Passed
Cameroon	2008	Passed
Chad	2004	Passed
Republic of Congo	2015	Passed
Djibouti	2010	Passed
Gabon	2003	Passed
Guinea	2001	Passed
Malawi	2003	Failed
Namibia	1999	Passed
Niger	2010	Failed
Nigeria	2006	Failed
Togo	2002	Passed
Tunisia	2002	Passed
Uganda	2005	Passed
Rwanda	2015	Passed
Zambia	2001	Failed

President Denis Sassou N'Guesso of Republic of Congo (also known as Congo-Brazzaville) endeavored to change the Constitution in April, 2015. A referendum was held in October, 2015, in which term and age limits were removed. This permitted



President Denis Sassou N'Guesso to prolong his tenure in office. These leaders joined a growing list of past and present African presidents who pursued amending their constitutions to maintain power. Some African leaders' desires to manipulate constitutions were met with civic resistance. Tangri and Mwenda (2010) argued, "in Africa, presidential incumbents who have stepped down have done so because of the strength of domestic and international pressures" (p. 31). Nigeria's Senate dropped a strategic constitutional amendment in 2006 that would have allowed President Olusegun Obasanjo to seek a third term in office. Zambia's Frederick Chiluba was prevented from seeking a third term in 2001. In 2002, the aspirations of Malawi's Bakili Muluzi to change the Constitution, which would have allowed him a third term, were deserted in the face of protests against him (Akech, 2011; Lynch & Crawford, 2011; Prempeh, 2008; Tangri & Mwenda, 2010). Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Frederick Chiluba, and Bakili Muluzi relinquished power because of domestic and international pressures that were mounted against them.

In October, 2014, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso was overthrown in a widespread uprising after trying to prolong his 27 years in office by removing the two-term limits that had been inserted into the Constitution in 2000. A similar event occurred in Senegal in 2012, where Former President Abdoulaye Wade argued that the provisions of the Constitution he ushered in 2001 did not apply retroactively to his first term because the mandate came into being after his first election. The constitutional council allowed Wade to run for a third term, which incited thousands of citizens to take to the streets to contest the move. Wade, however, was defeated and relinquished power (Carter, 2016; Cornado, 2012; Yarwood, 2016).

The styles and tactics of constitutional engineering used vary depending on environment. In some instances, where the leader's party controls parliament, the leaders resort to these legislatures for constitutional alterations through a parliamentary vote. In other cases, leaders refer to courts to seek interpretation of the Constitution, as in Burundi's case, or hold referenda, as in Rwanda's case, to force constitutional alterations in their favor.

**Support for and against presidential term limits.** Numerous positions have been advanced in support of and against the implementation of presidential term limits in Africa. Recent instances of term limit circumventions have led to significant unrest, which demonstrated the difference between the interests of the political elite and the people whom they claim to represent. Kenya's opposition leader, Raila Odinga, has been a vocal critic of presidential term limit circumvention in Africa. He "warned the continent against encouraging sitting presidents to change their country's constitutions to remove term limits, saying that this could lead to political turmoil" (Leftie, 2015, P. 1). Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, echoing this view, argued, "Term limits may ensure that a Presidency does not become a long-term place of impunity because of legal immunities that may come with the office" (2016, p. 6). For instance, Dulani (2015), in a study detailing the levels of public support for presidential term limits in Africa, stated, "Results from 34 African countries show that there is strong support for presidential term limits among citizens across almost all countries" (p. 2). Another vocal critic of presidential term limit manipulations is Mo Ibrahim, a Sudanese billionaire who, in 2007, founded the Mo Ibrahim Foundation. The Mo Ibrahim Foundation awards \$5 million in initial compensation, and a \$200,000 yearly payment for life, to any African leader who

strengthens democracy, human rights, and the democratic transfer of power to their successors after their term ends (Cowell, 2013; McBain, 2013). Hifikepunye Pohamba, former Namibian president, won the award in 2014, and former Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf won the prize in February, 2018, making her the fifth winner.

On the other hand, opponents of presidential term limits believe that term limits are unconstitutional because they violate the rights of people to vote into office a leader or president of their choosing for as long as they desire. Lebas (2016) argued that “term limits are fairly weak as a tool for limiting executive power, and they do not address the deeper sources of Africa’s democratic deficit” (p. 170). In response to President Obama’s criticism of African leaders’ failure to respect presidential term limits, President Yoweri Museveni vigorously stated, “For us in Uganda, we rejected this business of term limits. If I am in power because I am voted by the people, then I am there by the will of the people” (Vanguard, 2015, p. 2). Furthermore, former Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe alluded to the term limitation principle being unfairly applied between African and western countries. He argued, “European leaders do not face the same term limits, yet are considered full democracies” (Du Plessis, 2015).

Although many incumbents have contended that term limits are contrary to African norms, this rationale disregards African-led initiatives and institutions that demonstrate the opposite to be true. In other words, presidential term limit mandates are measure to tackle the problem of long-serving presidents through establishing policies against presidents for life and moving away from one-party authoritarian leaders.

**Presidential term limitations as a concept of democracy.** It is important to note that presidential term limits are not a guarantee of democracy but are a core principle of

good governance. Democracy entails strong institutions and leaders who are elected freely and popularly by the will of the people through credible elections. Differing views exist on whether presidential term limits should be a main principle of democracy in Africa. Scholars such as Mann (1994) have succinctly argued that term limits weaken democracy by putting an end to professional politicians. Maltz (2007), for example, found that, aside from encouraging leadership rotation, presidential term limits, when they are reinforced, can assist to uphold democracy by avoiding downward spirals into oppression and autocracy. Hammerstad (2004) believed that, “A prudent look at the continent’s post-colonial history should, thus, lead to the conclusion that term limits are not just desirable, but necessary” (p. 96).

Furthermore, Hammerstad (2004) stressed that democracy “is not only understood as majority rule and regular elections. It includes all the paraphernalia of democratic governance: checks and balances, independence of the judiciary, political party pluralism, minority protection, constitutional protection, [and] freedom of speech and association” (p. 3). The African Union’s (AU’s) own definition of democracy, stated in the Lomé Declaration of 2000, clearly recognized seven particular components of democracy: the impartiality of democratic structures, impartial electoral commissions, comprehensive voter registration systems, multi-party politics, a wide-ranging political system, presidential term limits for heads of state, and the impartiality of the judiciary system (Hammerstad, 2004). Arguably, the majority of Africans, as Dulani (2015) argued, are increasingly demanding presidential term limits and democracies in Africa, even as a growing number of African leaders are undermining term limitations using electoral maneuvering and the increasing oppression and intimidation of opposing parties. Clearly,

a development is re-emerging across Africa in which presidential term limits are increasingly under attack.

### **Relevance of the Study**

In recent years, many leaders in Africa have attempted to circumvent their constitutions to stay in power beyond their tenures. This tactic is known as term limit manipulation. In some cases, they do so by silencing political opponents through targeted marginalization, and sometimes they employ violence. Due to employing these strategies, violence and unrest were extensively experienced between political leaders, government sanctioned militaries, civil society groups, and citizens in Burundi, DRC, Togo, and more. Despite issues surrounding presidential term limit manipulation, very few researchers have thoroughly studied this phenomenon.

Lack of research on how presidential term limits are manipulated or removed in Africa limits the ability to grasp the phenomenon. In some instances in which efforts to examine this phenomenon have occurred, the arguments were essentially outlined within the framework of the comparative political science discipline. For instance, earlier research by Van Ham and Lindberg (2015) examined the impact of electoral manipulation means accessible to presidents, such as the use of violence and intimidation, to prolong their grip on power. Lindberg and Clark (2008) studied military interventions as a means of regime change and democratization. Bamfo (2005) and Maltz (2007) mainly explored the merits of term limits, the devastating impact that long-term leadership had on the improvement of political institutions, and the effects of democratization. Goldsmith (2015) examined the impact of the lack of presidential term limits on civil violence, insecurity, and conflict. Prempeh (2008) studied the balance

between legislative and executive branches in instances where power was vested in the executive.

While these scholars have provided key understandings of term limit manipulations, they lack a conflict resolution framework, and their results have been limited to the political science discipline. To improve the study of presidential term limits in Africa, it is important to examine the conflict in Burundi through the prism of the field of conflict resolution. The current knowledge and research requires expansion for a more thorough grasp of the situation. Therefore, the researcher, for the present study, implemented a logical framework that started with the root causes of term limit manipulation with the hope that results of the study will be useful, in the field of conflict resolution and peace studies, for addressing disputes and conflicts related to term limit manipulation.

The aim of this study was not to make broad generalizations about presidential term limit manipulations in Africa; instead, the emphasis was on Burundi, but insights came from other African countries where term limit manipulations triggered violence, unrest, and uncertainty. The researcher chose Burundi because it offered an important example concerning peace building and conflict resolution mechanisms in Africa. This is because the country has a protracted history of power struggles, violent ethnic conflicts, and prolonged conflict resolution methods, and it is now resorting back to violence.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terminologies used in this dissertation are precisely described in political context: checks and balances, constitutional engineering, corruption, democratization, ethnic violence, good governance, political violence, presidential term

limits, term limit manipulation, and big man syndrome.

**Checks and balances:** Ensures that the executive, judiciary, and legislative branches of government check each other's powers. Checks and balances stop any single branch from abusing power.

**Constitutional engineering:** A process by which presidents or political leaders embark on changing presidential term limits in constitutions to benefit themselves. Oftentimes, they employ the legislature or the judiciary to change the Constitution. In some instances, they hold referenda to force constitutional alterations. Constitutional engineering is very similar to constitutional coups.

**Corruption:** The act of abuse of power by government officials to extract from government revenue/resources, or the same from the private sector, for individual enrichment, extending their grip on power.

**Democratization:** The process whereby more democratic systems of government are introduced to give the population equal participation and whereby decisions occur collectively. In essence, democratization means rule by the people.

**Ethnic violence:** Violence between two or more opposing ethnic groups, driven by ethnic animosity.

**Good governance:** The effectiveness of institutions and decision-making methods that allow states to conduct their affairs efficiently. Good governance has many characteristics, such as respect for the rule of law, fairness and inclusivity, accountability, and transparency.

**Political violence:** Violence against citizens that is politically motivated. Political violence is perpetrated by individuals and governments to achieve political goals.

Political violence includes civil wars, demonstrations, revolutions, riots, and insurgencies.

**Presidential term limits:** Laws in national constitutions that limit the total number of years/terms that a president can stay in office. In some countries, this means that a leader can only serve two 4-year or two 5-year terms.

**Term Limit manipulation:** The act of changing a Constitution to allow a president to extend his or her grip on power.

**The Big Man syndrome:** A term use to describe oppressive, authoritarian, and corrupt leaders who rule their countries for a long time. In sum, power is bestowed on one person—the president.

### **Research Questions**

Since the focus of this dissertation was on exposing the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi, it was appropriate to formulate a research question to help inquire into the root causes of violence. To understand this phenomenon, it was appropriate to ask the following questions:

#### **Qualitative Question**

1. How has term limit manipulation affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi?

#### **Sub-Questions**

1. Why did President Nkurunziza manipulate Burundi's Constitution to stay in power?

2. How has term limit manipulation impacted Burundians?



3. How can Burundians avoid more violence and create a pathway of peace and stability?

### **Quantitative Questions**

1. What are the differences in perceptions between Hutus and Tutsis towards the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?

2. What are the differences in perceptions between men and women towards the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?

### **Organization of the Study**

The dissertation is structured into five chapters. Chapter 1 examines the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation. The chapter provided a historical overview of conflict in Burundi, which set the foundation for this research. This chapter also examined the overarching issue with presidential term limit manipulations in Africa and argument for and against presidential term limits in Africa. Chapter 2 reviews the literature and discusses the main concepts pertinent to the topic. The literature review is divided into six sections. The first section covers lack of checks and balances, which enable some African leaders to extend their tenures in office. Section two examines the role of weak government institutions in democratic process. Section three analyzes electoral malpractice, which leaders use to gain an edge over their opponents, and the role that electoral malpractice plays in presidential longevity. Section four looks at greed and corruption, which influences leaders who overstay their mandates. Section five analyzes fear of punishment for corruption or human rights violations. Finally, section six looks at the theoretical framework used to explain and explore conflict. Elite theory, intergroup conflict theory, and structural violence theory can all shed light on the root causes of

these conflicts.

Chapter 3 describes the methodological style used in this study. The chapter examines the instruments used in the research—survey techniques, data collection methods, data analysis methods, and validity and reliability checks—and the ethical issues. Chapter 4 details the examination of the data and presents the research results. In Chapter 5, a summary of findings is presented, followed by discussions, the conclusion of the study, and recommendations for future research.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

This chapter, the literature review, sets an important foundation for the present study, as it links frameworks and ideas of presidential term limit manipulations, democratization, and violence. The literature relevant to research into presidential term limits in Africa and Burundi is diverse and describes complex dynamics. The focus of the literature is on whether African leaders should respect term limits, democratic institutions, democratization, and related issues.

After the end of the Cold War, the adoption of mandated presidential term limits in Africa became a widespread movement across the continent, but many African leaders resorted to changing their country's constitutions to remove term limits provisions.

Akech (2011) asserted, "between 1960 and 1962 alone, thirteen newly sovereign African states, beginning with Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana, amended or replaced their independence constitutions in favor of new 'rules of the game' that centralized public power in a one-person presidency" (p. 98). In the last decade, this approach came under increasing attack, with some leaders circumventing their constitutions to extend their terms. As Bamfo (2005) argued, African leaders emulated the behavior of other incumbents who pursued term extensions, whether their efforts were successful or not.

In this section, the researcher examines pertinent literature on presidential term limitations, violence, and democracy in Africa, with emphasis placed on Burundi. The researcher defines presidential term limits and how they differ from one African country to another and outlines two opposing sides regarding presidential term limitations—arguments for and against term limits. Next examined is whether presidential term limits

are worth embracing as a basic component of democracy in Africa.

Finally, the focus of the literature review was on five reasons considered most relevant to the research problem: first, a lack of checks and balances; second, weak government institutions; third, electoral malpractice; fourth, greed and corruption; and, fifth, fear of punishment. The results of this study add to the current scholarship base by examining the impact of these five concepts in relation to term limit manipulation in Burundi. The researcher applied elite theory, intergroup conflict theory, and structural violence theory to analyze the root causes of the crisis. These theories provided a filter for explaining and understanding how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi.

### **What are Presidential Term Limits?**

Presidential term limits are a vital medium to “check presidential power, but they concern the requirement to leave office after a number of terms” (Cranenburgh, 2011, p. 446). For instance, under Ghana’s, Egypt’s, and Nigeria’s constitutions, a president is eligible to serve a maximum of two four-year terms in office. In Burundi, Sierra Leone, Kenya, South Africa, Tunisia, and Tanzania, an incumbent is allowed to serve a maximum of two five-year terms, while in Liberia and Ethiopia, presidents are mandated under their constitutions to serve a maximum two six-year terms. Presidential term limits are a core element of democratic government and are essential to checking presidential power (Bamfo 2005; Kiwuwa, 2013). According to Maltz (2007), “Presidential term limits have become one of the defining features of democracy” (p. 129). Presidential term limits, however, are not a guarantee of democracy, but a core principle of good governance.

The implementation of mandated presidential term limits was never completely addressed in Africa until the 1990s. In the 1990s, a second wave of democracy ushered in term limits to prevent one-party systems and to introduce multi-party elections across the continent. Throughout Africa, the trend of mandated presidential term limits became important following events in Burundi, Rwanda, and elsewhere, where leaders succeeded in manipulating limitations when pursuing additional terms in office.

Presidential term limits benefit the cornerstone of democratic principles. On the one hand, they encourage the transfer of power away from incumbents, significantly support policy and structural changes, and advance the chances of political-party changes in the power structure of a country. On the other hand, a long term in office could lead to a power buildup, and more arrogance, along with and the propensity to exploit it (Bamfo, 2005; Kiyuwa, 2013; Maltz, 2007; Prempeh, 2008). There are five reasons why African leaders are able to cling to power (particularly, President Nkurunziza: (a), a lack of checks and balances; (b) weak government institutions; (c) electoral malpractice; (d) greed and corruption; and (e) fear of punishment.

### **Lack of Checks and Balances**

In a democratic system, the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches work in tandem, which means that they depend on each other for legitimacy. These three branches are independent of each other and check each other's potential abuses of power. On paper, most African countries incorporate these features, but power rests with the executive branch, making checks and balances problematic. Given the imposing strength of the executive branch, most legislatures in Africa do not check its power (Cranenburgh, 2011; Keating, 2011; Lynch & Crawford, 2011, Prempeh, 2008; Rakner & De walle,

2008; Tripp, 2004).

Despite the formation of multiparty politics across Africa, several scholars have noted, there differences in the degree to which democratization drove the reinforcement of formal institutions that check the executive branch. As Diamond (2008) explained, Africa is ruled by longstanding repressive personal rulers and power is highly concentrated in the hands of overpowering executives. Opalo (2012) stated, “In Africa as elsewhere, one of the best sources of protection for hard-won democratic gains in a country is the presence of an independent and resourceful legislature” (p. 85). Prempeh (2008) alluded to the fact that that “Constitutional design has helped to ensure presidential dominance over the legislature (p. 115). Bamfo (2005) echoed the same view, arguing that “Africa’s new democracies are still characterized by centralization of power around the presidency” (p. 347). Posner and Young (2007), providing an optimistic view, argued, “Across sub-Saharan Africa, formal institutional rules are coming to matter much more than they used to and have displaced violence as the primary source of constraints on executive behavior” (p. 98).

Boadi (2015) provided an optimistic view on the separation of powers, arguing that, “Parliaments have been flourishing, making at least some legislative oversight of the executive increasingly common in sub-Saharan Africa” (p. 102). Tripp (2004), however, held a pessimistic view, stating, “Power is concentrated and personalized in the executive, usually with a supportive military in the background in the context of civilian rule” (p. 7). As Prempeh (2008) emphasized, “Most of Africa’s legislatures have suffered substantial gaps in their institutional lives since independence. Those that do have a record of continuous existence have operated largely under single-party regimes” (p.

114). This pattern is familiar across the continent. Some African presidents unilaterally pass laws without consulting with their legislatures.

In December, 2015, President Yahya Jammeh of the Gambia declared the country an Islamic State without consulting parliament (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2015a). In a similar vein, in 1996, President Frederick Chiluba of Zambia declared his country an official Christian state without consulting his party, his cabinet, or the national legislature (Prempeh, 2008). Kiwuwa (2013) and McMahon's (2004) important discussion focused on whether the shift of African countries towards democracy was clear-cut and whether democratization in Africa failed to accomplish what were believed to be the principles of democracy. On imperial presidents, Tripp (2004) contended,

Power in their dictatorships was virtually equated with the ruling strongmen, who personally directed the administration and political institutions, arbitrarily passed laws to suit their own purposes, banned independent political organizations, maintained power through various forms of patronage, and used the military as a personal army. They used the state to perpetrate violence against citizens arbitrarily, with little regard for the law. (p. 4)

Increasingly, imperial presidents who controlled power over the other two branches of government undermined the separation of powers specified in many African constitutions. Given the power of the executive branch, the task of checking presidential power was left to the judiciary branch. Judiciaries across Africa, however, experienced the same problems that undermine legislative effectiveness (Prempeh, 2008). Burundi experienced several clashes between the executive and the legislative branches as well as disagreements between the executive and the judiciary. In 2015, Burundian President

Pierre Nkurunziza turned to the courts after a failed constitutional revision to authorize him to pursue a third term in office. Under pressure from the government, the constitutional court granted Nkurunziza the ability to run for a third term (Ahluwalia, 2016; British Broadcasting Corporation, 2015b; Vandeginste, 2015). Ahluwalia (2016) further noted that after Burundi's constitutional court allowed President Nkurunziza to stand for a third term, one of the court's magistrates absconded the country on the basis that he received several death threats. Since 2010, Burundi's legislature passed laws primarily targeting civil society groups and restraining democratic space. In June, 2013, the government passed a law restricting freedom of the press and, six months later, passed another law limiting public gatherings (Council on Foreign Relations, 2015). These proposals were intended to strengthen the executive branch while weakening the legislature's role in checking the president's power. One could argue that if checks and balances were effective and robust in Burundi, President Pierre Nkurunziza would be less likely to manipulate the Constitution to extend his tenure past the maximum two terms. Clearly, in Burundi, President Nkurunziza wields more power than do the nation's other political institutions and structures. The legislature and the judiciary protected the interests of President Nkurunziza and CNDD-FDD leadership rather than upholding overall political institutions and structures.

The question that reverberated in this literature was whether or not the concept of separation of powers was upheld in Africa and, particularly, in Burundi. Cranenburgh (2011) and Vencovsky (2007) suggested that the institutional context, especially the complete concentration of power in the executive branch, needed challenging to bolster democratization. Cranenburgh (2011) added that another way to tackle "executive



dominance is to limit presidential power, in the words of Prempeh, to tame African ‘imperial presidents’” (p. 446). It should be evident that an imbalance between a strong executive branch and weak legislature and judiciary enabled President Nkurunziza to manipulate Burundi’s Constitution to stay in power. The failure to check the powers of President Pierre Nkurunziza encompassed weak government institutions that allowed him unrestricted powers. Cranenburgh (2011) offered a prescription for confronting institutional apparatuses to check executive power, contending, “it is necessary to first examine the ways in which executive power is constituted and executive-legislative relations are structured in African countries in a section on the hybrid nature of these regimes” (p. 446). Ndikumana (2005) recommended that for institutional effectiveness and political stability to be sustained, there ought to be a “set of rules that not only reward success but also allow efficient institutions to veto the inefficient ones. In the case of Burundi, sheer force has prevailed as the only rule of the game in politics” (p. 22). These prescriptions seemed plausible, but, historically, the culture of corruption and impunity in Burundi was a main factor that impeded the effectiveness of the legislative and judicial branches in upholding the principle of separation of powers.

### **Weak Government Institutions**

The literature on weak government institutions in Africa, and particularly in Burundi, focused on weak opposition parties and weak government institutions, while presidential term limits did occur in stable democratic countries. In other words, the components of effective political structures are only as robust as the institutions that preserve them. As such, a lack of checks and balances strengthens weak government institutions, which enables leaders to manipulate term limits. As Craig (2015), quoting

Thierry Vircoulon, Central African project director for the International Crisis Group, stated, “The lack of strong institutions is the reason why you have a strong man. So, strong men are not going to build up strong institutions; strong men are going to build weak institutions to remain in power” (p. 1). Africa suffers from an overpowering executive. As Prempeh (2008) noted, “Africa found itself beset by the strange paradox of strong presidents sitting atop weak state—states that routinely lacked the requisite institutional capacities and resources to fulfill even their most basic foundations” (p. 111).

This was the case in Burundi, where President Nkurunziza and ruling elites preyed on weak institutions to safeguard their powers and wealth and suppressed those who threatened their power. Ndikumana (1998) underlined this point, describing how “key institutions such as the military, the judiciary, and the education system are controlled by ethnic and regional entities” so that “the population feels alienated and disappointed by the inability of the state to protect its rights and advance its interests” (p. 30). For instance, after the controversial 2015 presidential election, President Nkurunziza appointed his loyal supporters to every important institution of government to suppress dissent.

Another noted motive for periodic third-term presidents was the absence of robust political opposition in several African countries. Convincing evidence exists to suggest that weak opposition to individual leaders often determines that a president can stand for a third term. As Lebas (2016) noted, “Executives are able to act with impunity because there is no strong, organized opposition to challenge entrenched incumbents and push them toward a genuine political opening” (p. 171). Brown and Kaiser (2007) found that

representative government and civil society groups, two important cornerstones in a democracy, both tend to be ineffective in Africa as a whole. Rakner and De walle (2008) noted, “A stable and numerically viable opposition is a key requisite for horizontal accountability through legislative checks on executive power” (p. 109). McMahon (2004) suggested, “Many political parties in Africa do not have a broad support base of individual financial and volunteer contributions upon which to draw” (p. 302). Rakner and De walle (2008) believed that “three main factors appear to weaken opposition parties throughout the region: the advantages of incumbency that stem from executive dominance; the opposition’s limited access to resources; and the low legitimacy of opposition politics in the region” (p. 112). Burundi has weak government institutions; some of them are so weak that they appear not to exist at all. If an opposing party is strong and effective, the ruling government often suppresses it (Vandeginste, 2015). Oftentimes, the executive branch has suppressed opposition parties, making it impossible for them to function. Rakner and De walle (2008) agreed that “the strong presidency and the authoritarian legacy of many African countries tend to weaken parties generally and especially oppositions” (p.113). A 2015 Freedom House report outlining the suppression of opposition parties in Burundi stated that the 2010 local elections were affected by electoral wrongdoings, limitations on freedom of association for leaders of opposition parties, a ban on all opposition party gatherings, and the arrest of more than a dozen opposition activists. In 2014, President Nkurunziza’s regime constantly interrupted opposition party events, barring meetings and protests and targeting opposition supporters with harassment, arrests, violent attacks, and, in some cases, extrajudicial killings (Freedom House, 2015).

According to a Human Rights Watch (2014) report, “Most leading opposition figures who had fled the country after boycotting the 2010 elections returned to Burundi, encouraged by the government, in advance of the 2015 general elections. However, opposition party members continued to face obstruction and harassment” (p. 1). Opposition leader Zedi Feruzi, of Union for Peace and Democracy-Zigamibanga (UPD), for instance, was gunned down, along with his security guard, by government forces in May, 2015. Unidentified armed men assassinated Patrice Gahungu, spokesperson for UPD, on September 2015 (Amnesty International, 2015). Vandeginste (2015) argued that President Nkurunziza’s “CNDD-FDD’s dominant position allowed it to eliminate parliamentary opposition and “to divide and rule over opposition parties, which it systematically split into a ‘real’ and a government-friendly wing” (p. 625). These types of violence and intimidation are common in Burundi to a point that they effectively stop opposing candidates from involvement in election-related events and scare off their supporters from voting for the opposition. Gaynor (2014) contended that these systems are “at the core of Burundi’s problems. It is an institutionalized system of corruption, social exclusion, impunity, unpredictability, a total lack of accountability and clientelism” (p. 205). This strategy, manifested in Burundi for decades, weakened opposition parties and reduced the democratic space available to challenge the government. Zakaria (1997) characterized the outcome of this kind of limitation on political participation as “illiberal democracies” (p. 26). Similarly, Ottaway (2003) used the term *semiauthoritarian* to describe these types of political setting.

The absence of strong government institutions, such as a strong legislature and judiciary and an effective opposition party to effectively challenge an authoritarian

leader, seems to be one factor that enabled President Pierre Nkurunziza to extend his tenure past the maximum two terms. As Hausken and Ncube (2014) noted, a resilient opposing party is one that is well structured and is not “easily silenced by the incumbent regime. We suspect that another reason why most African presidents are re-elected without contestation is that the opposition is silenced or is so disorganized that it cannot conduct a large-scale contestation” (p. 612). The judiciary, legislature, and other governmental institutions, which are supposed to check the abuse of power in the executive branch, are all examples of weak opposition in Burundi.

Government institutions set up to check executive abuses of power have not fulfilled their purpose in Burundi. As such, institutional weakness facilitates impunity and enabled President Pierre Nkurunziza to manipulate the country’s political systems, extending his tenure past the maximum two terms. Solid institutional reforms are needed to bolster good governance and democratic principles.

### **Electoral Malpractice**

Among the drivers of long incumbency is electoral malpractice. In most elections in Africa, incumbent leaders have a vast advantage over their counterparts in accessing state funds, which allows them the upper hand in elections (Bhasin & Gandhi, 2013; Zamfir, 2016). Furthermore, Gyimah-Boadi (2007) argued that the presidency enables political leaders to “manipulate electoral institutions, electoral rules and procedures; to siphon off state resources and deploy them into partisan use in elections; to commission development projects; [and] to extort donations from private businesspeople and rent-seekers” (p. 29). Similarly, Zamfir (2016) added, “globally, incumbent leaders and ruling parties tend to win elections, but this appears more pronounced in Africa and can be

explained by a multiplicity of factors” (p .3). Based on these assessments, the power of incumbency severely affects the political process between opposing candidates and political parties. Before delving into the literature on electoral malpractice in Africa and Burundi in particular, it is important to define what the term means. Birch (2011) defined electoral malpractices as the manipulation of electoral processes—such as the manipulation of electoral systems, the manipulation of electorates, and the manipulation of voting—to help one party or an opponent in an election. Birch (2011) further explained that electoral malpractice goes by a number of terms: electoral corruption, electoral malfeasance, electoral fraud, electoral misconduct, and electoral manipulation. Electoral malpractice was characterized into three stages—pre-election stages, election stages, and post-election stages (Birch, 2011; Olawole, Adewunmi, & Oluwale, 2013). In all stages, incumbents use oppressive tactics to cling to power. As Bhasin and Gandhi, (2013) stated, “To achieve their goals, authoritarian incumbents have an array of strategies to choose from manipulation of electoral rules, media dominance, vote-buying, and electoral fraud” (p. 621). This hinders democratization efforts and the likelihood of free and fair elections. It also distorts the political playing field. For example, in Burundi, the opposition that protested repeated police harassment and intimidation of its supporters and members boycotted the 2015 presidential elections over fears that the political and security atmosphere might not guarantee free and fair elections. This was also the case in the 2010 presidential elections, when seventeen political parties decided to boycott the election due to deteriorating political and security threats.

It is important to note that elections facilitate participation and political competition, but, most importantly, they encourage the peaceful transfer of power.

Nevertheless, many African leaders deem losing an election as losing access to state resources, power, and patronage. To maintain their power, political elites take advantage of weak government institutions, manipulating polls, intimidating opponents, and, oftentimes, orchestrating violence against voters. Some cases of violent post-election conflict include Gabon in 2016, Uganda in 2016, Burundi in 2015 and 2010, Côte d'Ivoire in 2010, Kenya in 2007, and 2008 in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe's case, after President Robert Mugabe lost the elections, he managed to retain power by settling for a power-sharing government with the opposition in 2008.

From this assessment, it is reasonable to argue free and fair elections are both key sources of, and fundamental steps towards, effective democracy. The concept of a free and fair election comprises freedom of assembly, speech, and movement, and freedom from intimidation. A fair election consists of transparency and accountability in the electoral process, impartial electoral regulations, equal opportunities for all political parties, equal and unbiased access to the media, an independent and impartial election management board or election commission, and flawed counts/vote-rigging (Birch, 2007; Bratton, 2008; Mapuva, 2013; Van Ham & Lindberg, 2015). These issues were evident in Burundi, where President Pierre Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD party used their powers and resources during pre-election phases, election phases, and post-election phases to silence political rivals and their followers. For instance, after the election of 2010, top-level CNDD-FDD officials, along with security services, harassed and interrogated various reporters about their reporting and threatened them with lawsuits. The election, marred by uncertainty, was characterized by assassinations, harassment, and the intimidation of political opponents and their supporters (Human Rights Watch, 2014;

Mapuva, 2013; Vandeginste 2011). President Pierre Nkurunziza deliberately used violence, compelling opposing parties to boycott the presidential election, which improved his chances of retaining power.

As an apparatus of democracy, elections are the foundation for selecting representatives, allowing political parties to vie freely for votes; indeed, such competition is one of the trademarks of democracy (Bratton, 2008). Many incumbents manipulate electoral rules and processes by distorting the level playing field to preclude opposing leaders from challenging elections, or sometimes by restricting certain segments of the population from participation in the electoral process (Birch, 2011; Mapuva, 2013).

Incumbent presidents have an Election Management Board (EMB) or an Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) at their disposal. The essential reason incumbent presidents win elections involves the institutional and administrative independence of the election commission. In most African countries, the president nominates members of electoral commissions who often control the process (Van Ham & Lindberg, 2015). Figure 3 illustrates the various types of electoral manipulation in Africa from 1986 to 2012.



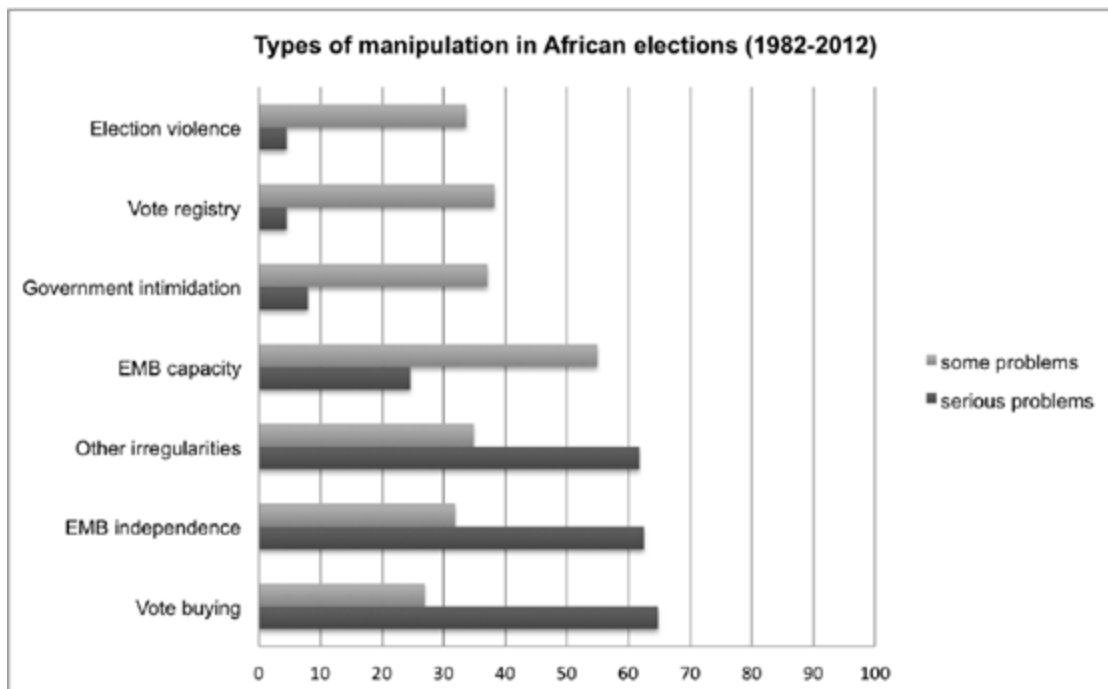


Figure 3. Types of manipulation in African elections (1986–2012). *Note.* EMB= Electoral management Body. *Source:* *V-Dem Dataset v3*.

The impartiality of the electoral commission is crucial to a free and fair election. For instance, in Burundi, seven National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) members were selected in advance by the President in meetings with other political party leaders, and he then submitted nominees for ratification to both chambers of the legislature for a final vote (Makulilo & Ntaganda, 2015). Several opposing parties demanded the nomination of a new electoral commission to reflect the equal number of members representing the ruling and opposing parties (Vandeginste, 2011). In the presidential elections of both 2010 and 2015, the leading opposition parties refused to take part in elections due to an overall atmosphere of voter intimidation, massive violence, pre-stuffed ballot boxes coordinated by top-level CNDD-FDD party members, lack of secrecy in the ballot booth, bribery, and lack of independence in electoral management (Human Rights Watch, 2016a; Vandeginste, 2011, 2015). Furthermore,

“opposition groups are also opposed to the current electoral commission because it isn’t complete after two of its five members fled” (Nzohabona, 2015, p. 1). It is apparent that when electoral management/commissions are weak or lack independence, all manner of manipulations and irregularities persist. These interrupt and undermine political participation.

The literature on electoral malpractice has acknowledged several elements explaining the intricacies of elections in Burundi. The relationship between elections, electoral violence, and democratization is multifaceted. As the cornerstones of democracy, elections increasingly create passionate discussions across the continent. The existing research on electoral malpractice in Africa, and Burundi in particular, has revealed the enduring legacy of incumbent presidents, their unrestricted powers, and their use of state resources, which weaken opposition parties and makes it difficult for them to compete effectively. For elections to function as instruments of democracy, they must be inclusive and free from misconduct. Hence, institutional safeguards are needed to safeguard the integrity of elections. These include distributing the authority to manage several electoral functions among various bodies and offering a counterbalance to the electoral administration (Birch, 2007; Bratton, 2008). As much as electoral malpractice allows leaders to stay in power, corruption and greed enable leaders to manipulate weak political systems, allowing them to maintain power for extended periods.

### **Greed and Corruption**

Scholarly attention to the ways in which greed and corruption have motivated many leaders in Africa to cling to power has increased over the past decade. Due to a lack of robust checks and balances and weak government institutions, an overbearing head of

state and his associates can effortlessly misuse or seize state resources and exploit their wealth to repress opposing parties and bolster their enormous power (Mosbacher, 2013). Taking this perspective, Yeh (2011) and Rakner et al. (2007) agreed that many African leaders see the presidency as an opportunity for amassing wealth and exploiting state resources, which helps to feed their struggles for control of power. Collier (2000) added, “Once a society becomes corrupt, there are powerful forces tending to keep it corrupt” (p. 197).

Anneke Van Woudenberg, deputy director of the Human Right Watch Africa division argued the following:

Retiring as a head of state in Africa does not usually come with a lot of benefits. Very few African countries—in fact almost none—have any kind of pension or security scheme for former presidents or heads of state. So, out of power means out of money. (Gaffey, 2015, p. 2)

In the same vein, Tangri and Mwenda, (2010) suggested,

Contributing to perpetual incumbency is the fact that executive power has brought with it many opportunities for accumulating wealth in an African context of scarcity and poverty and limited avenues of private accumulation. For example, the riches and private fortunes derived from Angola’s oil and diamonds have constituted a key motivation for President Jose´ Eduardo dos Santos and a narrow band of regime insiders to hold on to power for an indefinite period. (pp. 32-33)

This trend is widespread in Africa, where many leaders have used their political positions to embezzle resources, making themselves wealthy while leaving their citizens in absolute poverty. As Ayittey (2005) implied, the presidency in Africa is a gateway to

power and wealth accumulation, and presidents are prone to take any measure to preserve their power and wealth. Gurr (1970) suggested that the likelihood political conflict increases with perceptions of inequality and marginalization, while pervasive corruption conceivably encourages citizens to resort to violence. While President Nkurunziza and top-ranking CNDD-FDD elites enjoy an extravagant lifestyle, millions of Burundians lack basic human needs, such as education, healthcare, housing, food, and access to clean water and sanitation. In the case of Burundi, Vandeginste (2015) agreed that high-level corruption is a major motive for discontent with President Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD party, which is likely to prompt a new trend in political instability. In a similar view, International Crisis Group (2012) detailed the growing corruption scandals concerning high-level CNDD-FDD and state officials, which curtailed hope among Burundians of a change in governance and fair access to resources. The deepening corruption crisis discredited post-conflict reconstruction and drove political and social anger.

Since, in Burundi, access to state power also means access to wealth, which prolongs President Pierre Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD party's consolidation of power, Siegle (2015) contended,

In addition to the natural desire of many leaders in positions of authority to extend their time in power, Nkurunziza's efforts to retain control of the presidency likely stem from a Burundian political economy that rewards senior officials financially. Access to political power in Burundi allows for considerable control over public procurement processes, the mining sector, international financial assistance, and reimbursements for peacekeeping deployments. (p. 3)

Furthermore, an International Crisis Group (2012) report claimed that President Nkurunziza and his party officials are regularly involved in high-level government corruption scandals, using kickbacks and bribes via a public bidding and private mining and oil concessions permits. Siegle (2015) echoed the same view, arguing that presidential power allows for control over the public sector, privatization dealings, land and property sales, and import and exports. President Nkurunziza is able to do this by stacking key government institutions with supporters, developing patronage systems in which political loyalty is exchanged for resources.

Burundi's anti-corruption officials have constantly faced intimidation from top government officials. The International Crisis Group (2012) report added that the "heads of these anti-corruption institutions are also often subjected to strong pressure, adding to them the direct supervision of the executive: "They lack independence because some of their staff are activists or hold political office in the presidential party" (p. 11). Arguably, corruption is a manifestation of institutional ineptness or bad governance, and the political leadership in Burundi has depended mostly on misappropriation of the country's resources to maintain a political elite.

Much of literature reviewed in this section shows that President Nkurunziza and CNDD-FDD party elites undermined both the legislature and the judiciary, which are tasked with holding the executive accountable for corruption. It is clear that institutions set up to monitor greed and corruption in Burundi are ineffective and weak. Yeh (2011) clarified this notion by claiming,

Corruption is not only caused by a lack of checks and balances but also serves to prevent the emergence of the institutional reforms necessary to create checks and

balances. In the majority of African countries, corruption pervades the institutions that normally provide such checks and balances: the police, the judiciary and the legal system. (p. 632)

The core problem is a lack of effective government institutions to fight elite corruption. As a result, top-level corruption in Burundi creates an indispensable means of strengthening the present government in power. Experiences in Burundi indicate that top-level CNDD-FDD leaders are extremely powerful, allowing for the creation of effective, impartial anti-corruption commissions. With no efficient limitations on government conduct, corruption became widespread, which enabled President Pierre Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD ruling elites to turn state-owned institutions into mechanisms for self-enrichment. This created marginalization as well as grievances and discontent against President Nkurunziza and the ruling elites. One can conclude that access to political power is a major driver of corruption in Burundi. Ruling elites or governing elites use government resources to enrich themselves; more destructively, they use corruption to support client-patronage connections to heighten their political dominance and safeguard their inner circles.

### **Fear of Punishment**

Many scholars underscored fear of punishment as another reason that autocratic leaders retain power. Scholars such as Carter (2016), Tangri and Mwenda (2010), Igwe (2008), and Baker (2002) have suggested that the reason African leaders stay too long in power is because of fear of punishment for their human rights violations and corruption. For example, Baker (2002) argued, the unwillingness of leaders to “leave office may be that presidents fear a rush of lawsuits or even criminal and human rights prosecutions.

Chiluba, for instance, was said to fear such an eventuality in Zambia and for good reason, as current events demonstrate” (p. 287). According to Tangri and Mwenda (2010), a

motive for clinging to power is that leaders fear being prosecuted for their various misdeeds. There are presidents with dismal human rights records, and those who have been especially venal and rapacious while in office have perpetuated their political incumbency to prevent new leaders uncovering their abuses and prosecuting them for their corruption and personal enrichment. (p. 33)

This was the case in Gambia when President Yahya Jammeh agreed to step down after losing the December 2016 presidential election. A week later, he reversed his position, denouncing Thad election results after some opposition party members suggested prosecuting him for crimes against humanity and corruption (Reid, 2016). The Gambian case, and many other cases across Africa, highlighted how fear of punishment has encouraged some African leaders to cling to power.

Recently, the ICC charged several former African presidents with crimes against humanity. In June, 2016, Jean-Pierre Bemba, former vice president of the DRC, received an eighteen-year prison sentence for war crimes and crimes against humanity (Simons, 2016). In May, 2012, former Liberian warlord and President Charles Taylor received a fifty-year prison sentence for his part in the decade-long Sierra Leonean civil war (Simons & Goodman, 2012). Former President Laurent Gbagbo of Ivory Coast was sent to The Hague to face charges of post-election violence in 2011 (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2016b). In the case of Burundi, the ICC prosecutor’s office examined several reports describing acts of rape, other methods of sexual violence, torture, killing, false imprisonment, and enforced disappearances (ICC, 2016). Similarly, in April, 2017,

the prosecutor of the ICC stated that they were beginning an investigation into the crisis in Burundi (Human Rights Watch, 2017a). Siegle (2015, December 9) noted that the ICC Prosecutor's office warned, "any invocation to ethnic violence would be used as evidence in a future ICC investigation, have led to the tempering of such inflammatory remarks. Nonetheless, the intimidation and targeted killings continue" (p. 2). In addition, UN investigators reported,

Crimes were committed by Burundian state agents or individuals under their control. It said this included high-level officials of the National Intelligence Service, which reports directly to the president, the national police force, military and Imbonerakure, the ruling party's youth league. (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2017c, p. 2)

The report urged the ICC to act because human rights violations are crimes against humanity.

In recent years, many African leaders have ramped up their political powers to defy the impartiality of the ICC in order to make sure that incumbent leaders were shielded from prosecution, even when charged with crimes against humanity and other offenses under international law (Jalloh, 2009; Roth, 2014; Ssenyonjo, 2013; Sserunjogi, 2016). At the forefront of this effort is President Museveni of Uganda who, at the April, 2013 inauguration ceremony of Kenya's president Uhuru Kenyatta, accused the court of being "biased against African leaders." To his own fifth term inauguration in May, 2016, President Museveni invited Sudan's President, Omar al-Bashir, wanted by the ICC for crimes against humanity and genocide in Darfur. During his speech, President Museveni urged African leaders to "Forget about this ICC useless thing. Earlier, we thought the



ICC was useful, but to us, now African leaders, we see it is useless. It's a bunch of useless people" (Duggan, Ntale, & Swails, 2016; Roth, 2014).

Most African leaders argued that western leaders themselves commit war crimes with immunity while African presidents go on trial for crimes against humanity for the same issues. Mills (2012) added, "to date, all of the active cases the ICC is prosecuting are in Africa" (p. 410). Many scholars also argued that the ICC is inefficient, is solely concerned with African leaders, and failed to investigate similar cases elsewhere (Igwe 2008; Kastner, 2010; Mills 2012). The AU's relationship with the ICC and other international judicial bodies became more controversial in 2008. At its June 30 to July 1, 2008 assembly meeting, the AU "passed a resolution calling on non-African states (and in particular European Union states) to stop the practice of arresting and trying Africans for grave offenses under the principle of universal jurisdiction" (Mills, 2012, p. 417). Some African countries went as far as withdrawing from the ICC on the grounds that the court mainly preoccupied itself with African leaders. For example, in October of 2016, Burundi's legislature approved, with an overwhelming vote, to abandon the Rome Statute. Similarly, South Africa's Foreign Minister signed an Instrumental Withdrawal from ICC on October 19, 2016, and Gambia confirmed its decision to exit the Rome Statute on October 26, 2016 (Dersso, 2016). This occurred because African governments accused the ICC of unfairly targeting leaders from the continent.

In addition to fearing punishment for their human rights violations by international justice apparatuses, some African leaders were also prosecuted for corruption in their own countries. Moussa Traoré, former president of Mali, was convicted of corruption in Bamako in 1999, but former President Alpha Oumar Konaré

later pardoned him. Rutazigwa (2014) described a similar situation:

An example of such a situation was in Zambia, where the late president Levi Mwanawasa ordered an enquiry into the late President Fredrick Chiluba's financial conduct, who was found to have swindled resources from the state coffers; this was enough to send him to serve a prison sentence, and this has sent a clear signal to most leaders on the continent that leaving office on legal basis is another way of making oneself (the incumbent) susceptible to prison sentence.

The same case arose in Malawi, where President Bakili Muruzi, who was replaced by Bingu wa Mutharika, was subjected to a prison sentence after leaving the corridors of power. (p. 1)

Canada, France, and the United Kingdom each froze stolen assets from Zambia, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Congo-Brazzaville. Carter (2016) posited that Equatorial Guinea's Teodoro Obiang and the Republic of the Congo's Denis Sassou-Nguesso were targeted by anticorruption prosecutors in France and the United States, where these leaders have assets and residential properties. Furthermore, in 2007, a court in London found Frederick Chiluba, former president of Zambia, guilty of embezzling \$46m (£23m) in state funds (Transparency International, 2011; British Broadcasting Corporation, 2007). The main catalyst for this decision was lack of transparency and accountability, which is a suitable breeding ground for unrestricted power for political and economic gain. Chad's former president Hissene Habre was convicted in May, 2016 for crimes against humanity and received a life sentence at a groundbreaking hearing in Dakar, Senegal. This verdict was the first time that a former president has been found culpable in another African country (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2016c). Due to fear of

punishment, most African leaders have taken on the presidency as a lifetime profession and, in some cases, a father passes the position on to his son to avoid prosecution for human rights and economic crimes.

To summarize, the literature on presidential term limits in Africa and Burundi revealed a direct link between adherence to presidential term limits and peace and stability. President Nkurunziza's third-term bid in Burundi exemplified this notion. As the literature review noted, lack of checks and balances, weak government institutions, electoral malpractice, greed and corruption, and fear of punishment are all reasons why President Nkurunziza decided to extend his term beyond the required two terms.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

Generally, the analyses and arguments presented in this section share one unifying notion—presidential term limit manipulations in Africa, and in Burundi in particular, continue to be a challenge to democratization, peace, and stability; and, by most criteria, they are also a recipe for violence. The literature review pertinent to presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi is diverse and explains some thought-provoking concepts and dynamics; nonetheless, gaps exist in the literature. For example, two of the major gaps include lack of research or discussion on conflict resolution practices regarding presidential term manipulation and the perceptions of Burundians regarding presidential term limit manipulation.

One reason for the present study was that the current literature only explored this topic from a comparative political science discipline, revealing political consequences and dimensions of presidential term limits. To bridge the gap, it is important to examine this issue through the prism of the field of conflict resolution, which examines strategies

and practices for resolving conflict.

While previous studies have examined the Arusha agreement and constitutional interpretations of term limits, the literature has rarely explored the perceptions of Burundians regarding presidential term limits and peace. Conceptually, this study adds to the emerging literature on presidential power and how leaders in the Great Lakes Region are seeking to evade presidential term limits in order to prolong their terms in office.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The conflict in Burundi developed out of a deeply multifaceted political, ethnic, and socio-economic situation, but it would be a mistake to use a single theory to describe how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. In this section, three theories (elite theory, intergroup conflict theory, and structural violence theory) weave throughout useful analyses of the conflict. The theories highlight several key assertions about the intersection between control of state power, the use of violence to sustain power, ethnic dynamics, and the critical roles that competing elites play in this conflict. These theoretical considerations further refine the research question.

#### **Explaining the Conflict with Elite Theory**

Gaetano Mosca, Wilfredo Pareto, and Robert Michels are credited for developing the elite theory concept. In their reasoning, power is constantly exerted by a small elite group. An important concept of elite theory is that all societies are apportioned into two core groups—a ruling minority and the ruled—all vying for power and class structure in society (Berberoglu, 2005; Bottomore, 1964; Parry, 1969). In later years, C. Wright Mills concentrated on power relations and dynamics in society. In *The Power*

*Elite*, Mills (1956) argued that power elites are divided into three fundamental sectors (political, economic, and military) and that power elites control all three sectors. This is true in Burundi's case.

The epistemological context for elite theory is that governing elites or the ruling class control a substantial amount of wealth, resources, and capacities, occupying high-level government positions and exercising power through several networks (Berberoglu, 2005; Pakulski, 2012). Another important component of this theory is that all political and economic structures are controlled and systematized to benefit few elites. Elite theory is suitable for explaining presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi and the desire of governing elites or the ruling class to retain power.

At the heart of elite theory lies the main question of how conflict and competition operate within social groups in society. For the purpose of this dissertation, the researcher uses Wilfredo Pareto's "governing elites" and Gaetano Mosca's "ruling class" interchangeably to argue why President Pierre Nkurunziza and CNDD-FDD political elites or ruling class manipulated the Constitution to stay in power beyond two terms. In *Mind and Society*, Pareto (1916) suggested that power elites are devoted to the status quo and are prepared to use violence in its defense. In *Ethnicity and Power in Burundi and Rwanda: Different Paths to Mass Violence*, Uvin (1999) argued that "Violence has tended to occur at key points of political change when the interests of the elites were threatened" (p. 263). For Mosca, the central tenet of elite theory is that the ruling class controls the state apparatus and society in general. In his book *The Ruling Class*, Mosca (1939) suggested,

In all societies... two classes of people appear—a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first. (p. 50)

These notions of governing elites or the ruling class are applied in Burundi's past and present history. Since Burundi gained its independence, Tutsi elites captured its political and economic institutions. Hutu marginalization led to many violent conflicts. Today, CNDD-FDD political elites systematically use their power and positions to extend their rule, a cause of conflict with the Tutsi minority (International Crisis Group, 2012). Turner (2007) argued that politics in Burundi are determined by a few powerful elites in private, without the public knowledge, and that the current condition is the consequence of ambiguous laws and policies that the elites themselves created. Buttressing this notion, Hatungimana, Theron, and Popic, (2007), and Nindorera, (2012) all recognized that Burundi's civil war emanated from a power struggle perpetuated by the political elites or the ruling classes to attain and/or stay in power. Ndikumana presented a more pertinent and theoretically-connected description of Burundi's conflict (1998). For example, Ndikumana argued that "the ruling elite has basically 'privatized' the state: through clientism, patronage, and rent seeking, state institutions are used to accumulate wealth and to serve and protect the interests of individuals and ethnic and regional entities" (p. 30). The governing elites or the ruling class in Burundi constitute the president, high-level government officials, key cabinet members, close advisers, and high-ranking military officers who are constantly seeking to control government. Historically, Burundi has endured many routes of power alteration, from single party, military rule, and multi-

party forms of politics to imperial presidencies. At the center of Burundi's problems is a powerful ruling class that misuses the country's resources and wealth, obstructing democratization efforts. Conversely, the governing elites, or the ruling class in Burundi, created governance systems for their own benefit, and they struggle with each other over who is most suited to sit on top of the hierarchy. The political elites who have ruled over Burundi since the end of colonialism saw government as a source of power and personal enrichment. The aspiration for wealth accumulation and power remains a fundamental problem in Burundi.

When concentrating on the topic of governing elites in Burundi, it is important to discuss the vast gap between the governing elites who exercise power and the citizens they rule. To fully understand Burundi's governing elites, one must critically look at two fundamental dimensions of the role that governing elites in Burundi play. These two dimensions are the methods that governing elites use to hold the reins of power and the ethnic distribution of power. Both of these dimensions play a critical role in Burundi's political structure and power dynamics. In terms of methods used to maintain elites in power, President Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD party members orchestrate repression and intimidation to strengthen their grip on power and state resources. Ahluwalia (2016), Human Rights Watch (2016a), and Vandeginste, (2015) all agreed that in previous elections President Nkurunziza deliberately used violence and intimidation during pre-election phases, election phases, and post-election phases, which compelled opposing parties to boycott the presidential election, hence improving his chances of retaining power. According to Daley (2006), "The ongoing violence is attributed to an increasingly factionalised political elite, based on the multiple cleavages in Burundi society, who

mobilize ethnicity in their struggle for control of the state” (p. 657). The role of political elites in Burundi, in some degree, has produced an atmosphere of uncertainty.

The concept of governing elites that Mosca (1939) described places emphasis on the importance of the desire of the ruling class to control government agencies and society. Burundi’s CNDD-FDDs are suitable examples of the governing elites, or the ruling class’, persistent consolidation of power while systematically restricting political participation. Vandeginste (2015) agreed that Burundian economic, social, and political structures for the last two decades or more have been controlled by governing elites’ sharing of state resources among their networks. This political marginalization produces discontent, which leads to the type of violence epitomized in Burundi. Mosca (1939) and Pareto's (1916) critical examination of elite theory led to the conclusion that President Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD elites exhibit all the features of the elite theory of governance and dominance.

In terms of the ethnic distribution of power in Burundi, ethnicity has proven repeatedly to be a powerful mobilizing force for elites. In his book *Inequality and Post-Conflict Fiscal Policies in Burundi*, Janvier Nkurunziza suggested that “ethnic factors served the interest of the ruling elites responsible for the catastrophic consequences of their discriminatory policies” (2012, p. 219). In many ways, ethnic resentment and politics of distrust may be regarded as the chief threats to peace and stability in Burundi. Tutsis have been a minority in Burundi, but they run the nation’s elite institutes, such as the military, whereas Hutus constitute approximately 85% of the population but have held little power, leading to feelings of anger (Kliegman, 2016). In the last decade, however, these power dynamics have shifted. A Human Right Watch report (2016a)



added that although there are several Tutsi in high-level government positions, many of the important high-level government positions, including security services, were held by CNDD-FDD party members. Siegle (2015) echoed the same view, arguing that Pierre Nkurunziza's ruling CNDD-FDD leaders have been increasingly "employing ethnically polarizing tactics. Purges among senior military and government officials have largely been ethnically based" (p. 2). To contextualize Burundi's political elites, this theory establishes the critical role of the governing elites, particularly the role that President Pierre Nkurunziza played in the political development of Burundi, which, essentially, put the ruling CNDD-FDD elites in a higher position than the mass of the people.

### **Explaining the Conflict with Intergroup Conflict Theory**

Another theoretical approach used to explain the crisis in Burundi is intergroup conflict theory. Intergroup conflict occurs between different groups because of differences like race, class, ethnicity, educational levels, or when two or more groups are vying for power or inadequate resources. In Burundi's case, competition for power and resources, and the deep-rooted hostility between Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, remains a cause of violence, mistrust, and political struggle at all levels. Intergroup conflict is multifaceted—between groups, their self-interests, and their group's welfare. Given Burundi's history of violent ethnic conflict, ethnic groups are easily identifiable. A variety of political dynamics—ranging from political oppression to ethnic association and leadership—strengthens strong group connections.

The classic work of Muzafer Sherif provided groundbreaking research into intergroup conflict theory. Sherif (1951) underscored that conflict arises when two or more groups are vying for inadequate resources and power. In Sherif's reasoning, group

identity and categorization play significant roles in driving conflict. Furthermore, Allport (1954) and Doise (1978) described the dynamics of group conflict in terms of various kinds of prejudices. Intergroup conflict thrives on groupings and differentiation. In Burundi, political elites have used ethnicity to exploit the association between political allegiances and ethnic divisions. This creates intergroup violence. Understanding how Hutu and Tutsi have interpreted their conflicted past is essential for understanding the nuances of their intergroup conflict. For example, in November, 2015, high-level CNDD-FDD party leaders started using ethnically inflammatory language, evoking the example used in the Rwandan genocide. In his speech to supporters in Kirundi, Burundian Senate President Reverien Ndikuriyo lamented, "on this issue, you have to pulverize, you have to exterminate—these people are only good for dying. I give you this order, go" (Siegle, 2015, p. 2).

Ethnic conflicts have long been known as among the major threats to political stability, institutional order, and state cohesion in Burundi. Ethnic radicals on both sides have used ethnic feelings to underline the risk posed by the other group. On the one hand, Tutsi extremists have emphasized every Hutu-on-Tutsi act of violence, thereby fostering group unity against the Hutu threat. From another perspective, Hutu extremists have also referenced every Tutsi-on-Hutu act of violence, promoting group unity against the Tutsi threat. In this manner, both groups have strengthened their hold on power, limited state resources, and the state's powerful apparatus, which has amplified and increased the stereotypes and prejudices that both groups hold about the other, with mutual fear of massacre leading to preemptive attacks in the name of self defense (Daley, 2006; Ndikumana, 1998; Nindorera, 2012). In Burundi's case, perceptions of past violent

conflict play a vital role in sustaining and worsening intergroup conflicts. Violent conflicts in 1965, 1972, 1988, 1991, and 1993 confirmed this notion.

Moreover, social scientists have pinpointed circumstances under which group identities became destructive. For example, Tajfel and Turner (1979) portrayed how conflict over the allocation of inadequate resources strengthens self-identification with the group, causes ethnocentrism, and encourages hostile out-group behavior. Uvin (1999) stated, "Burundi presents a typical example of how discrimination and unequal access to scarce resources lead to violence. As the discrimination took place largely along ethnic lines, the violence and counter-violence became ethnic too" (p. 253). Unequal distributions of limited resources are prone to exaggerate conflict between majority and minority groups. As Ndikumana (2005) reinforced, "Distribution of economic resources and political power may be equal or unequal. Equal distribution of resources promotes cohesive group dynamics while unequal distribution creates antagonism between the privileged groups and the marginalized ones" (p. 413). In Burundi, it is clear access to power also means access to wealth and resources. Marginalization from politics causes discontent and can lead to ethnic violence. Gurr (1993), for instance, concluded that resentments stemming from inter-group competition for resources usually incites ethnic cohesion. Groups deprived of the allocation of resources often share both a common grievance and a common identity. In Burundi's case, disparity in the allocation of state resources and political control through ethnic identity became instruments of conflict.

It is necessary to understand that the existence of multiethnic societies can lead to intergroup conflict for economic resources, the struggle for political power, and vying for ethnic domination. The power struggle between Hutus and Tutsis stems from a

combination of factors, such as competition for scarce resources and governance policies and practices, which cause economic and social exclusion. The combination of these factors strengthened ethnic tensions in Burundi, particularly between the elites and the counter-elite. Arguably, the source of intergroup conflict in Burundi lies in the inclination of people to benefit psychologically from their group membership.

### **Explaining the Conflict with Structural Violence Theory**

The theory of structural violence provides a practical context for understanding structural deficiencies that systematically deny marginalized citizens their basic economic, political, social, and human rights. Galtung (1969), who coined the term and concept of structural violence, argued that unequal advantage is built into the political, economic, and social structures that rule societies. In structural violence theory, direct violence comes in different forms, which may include *physical force, killing, torture, rape, sexual assault, beatings, and verbal violence* (Galtung, 1969), while “structural violence is defined by inequality, particularly when it comes to the distribution of power in a social structure” (Galtung, 1969, p. 175). Galtung (1969) used a triangle to explain these three types of violence, assigning structural and cultural violence to the base, the left, and the right sides of the triangle, with direct violence at the top. Galtung (1969) argued that direct violence is the immediate result of the preventable failure to meet people’s basic human needs. In essence, the crisis in Burundi exemplifies Galtung’s structural violence theory. The human needs of the people in Burundi were long neglected. When people find it hard to meet essential needs and lack opportunities to develop to their full potential, they are forced to use direct violence, as happened during the demonstrations in Burundi.

The theory of structural violence may be utilized to examine relationships between structural and direct violence in Burundi. One could argue that structural violence is the primary cause of direct violence. In Burundi's case, direct violence was prompted as a result of conflicts of interest between the ruling CNDD-FDD and opposition parties. Taylor (2014) confirmed,

Structural violence, inequality, and political killings provide the evidence.

Ordinary Burundians frequently claim a lack of confidence in the state, citing corruption and the absence of good governance as major concerns, as well as the threat of further violence that is a consequence of impunity. (p. 198)

It is appropriate to understand the political and economic systems that have shaped the phenomenon of structural violence. The main components of structural violence were reinforced by the government forces killing, physical force against, and beatings of citizens and opposition members in Burundi. These kinds of violent acts negate democratic principles and stability. Recent political violence in Burundi indicated that established structures and systems—political, economic, social, and judicial—usually favor governing elites or the ruling classes, who have the bargaining power to bypass these structures with impunity. This shows that a disconnect exists between the government and its people, indicated by the history of repressive autocratic leaders.

The people of Burundi and their political leaders know that the issues at stake in the months leading up to the 2015 presidential election's violence went far beyond just the failed political system and oppressive laws that President Pierre Nkurunziza's and his party officials established. Oppression negatively affected the people and the socio-economic, political, religious, and cultural lives of people in Burundi. For instance, after

President Pierre Nkurunziza announced that he would seek a third term in the April, 2015, thousands were killed, and more than 300,000 people fled Burundi. People fled in fear of mass violence and the threat of a return to civil war, and also from abductions and torture (ACLEED, 2016; UNHCR, 2016). The government failed to investigate effectively credible allegations of excessive use of force, extrajudicial executions, human rights abuses, and mistreatment by supporters of the CNDD-FDD party's youth group, the Imbonerakure. Neither the National Intelligence Service, nor the Burundian National Police, nor President Nkurunziza or his administration embarked on an effort to hold these groups accountable (Amnesty International, 2015; Thomas-Greenfield, 2015; Vandeginste, 2015). Similarly, before the 2010 presidential election, President Nkurunziza clamped down on the

[f]reedom of movement of opposition leaders, arrested dozens of opposition activists, and banned all opposition party meetings. The elections were further marred by political violence that escalated with the kick-off of the presidential campaign on June 12, including nearly 100 grenade attacks, the killings of at least two ruling party activists and opposition activist, and arson attacks on at least 35 local offices of the ruling party. (Human Rights Watch, 2010)

These kinds of violence are embedded in the political, economic, and judicial structures in Burundi. Inequitable access to resources and political power are types of structural violence that often create direct violence. In Burundi, access to power and state resources is tantamount to the survival of President Pierre Nkurunziza and his party officials, and violence is the most effective tactic for silencing his opponents. To reform this system, Rubenstein (1999) emphasized that reforming political systems would

bolster opposition parties' contributions to decision-making and would also address deep-rooted structural issues.

Galtung (1969) articulated that structural violence has the ability to create and direct the behavioral effects of certain conflict situations. The behavior of demonstrators in burning government buildings, police vehicles, and other public property occurred because of the deep-seated nature of the structural violence involved. Since direct violence reinforces structural violence, President Pierre Nkurunziza and his security forces have been getting away with killings because they are protected by the system. One could argue that the people's actions were traceable to structural violence since the people were motivated by institutional direct violence. These kinds of direct violence acts in Burundi were carried out by government forces and the institutions that are supposed to protect citizens' interests. The people of Burundi feel severely undermined by the structural violence that encouraged cycles of violence from the different institutions of government.

Structural violence limits individuals' and groups' access to legal, political, social, and economic progress. It grants greater access to privileged groups like government officials to goods, services, resources, and opportunities, while other groups are denied (Winter, 2012). Such unequal arrangements are fostered in the fabric of social, economic, and political structures and systems that control outcomes in Burundi. Structural violence generally manifests as power imbalance, lack of basic needs, the refusal of fundamental human rights, unequal access to resources, and marginalization in policymaking (Ho, 2007).

As Winter (2012) argued, the concept of structural violence requires examination in relation to a general societal system structured on the foundation of aggressive political control; that is, one based on the degree of hostile political restriction imposed on opposition parties in Burundi. Weak government institutions are some of the sources of structural violence in Burundi, as they systematically deny, and marginalize citizens from achieving, their basic economic, political, social, and human rights. Moreover, the ineffectiveness of security forces (police, military, and intelligence services) and a culture of impunity exacerbates structural violence. For instance, in Burundi, several opposition members and their supporters have been killed, jailed, and arrested, and the government has failed to investigate excessive use of force effectively. This miscarriage of justice appears to be creating a culture of impunity. Another cause of structural violence in Burundi is political violence. Political violence often occurs due to the failure of opposition parties, citizens, and other actors in government to solve perceived or real grievances. Political violence is motivated by a number of factors: power inequity, ineffectiveness of security services, culture of impunity, weak penalties, corruption, and bad governance. These components are all visible in Burundi.

Rubenstein (1999) argued that many of these structural sources of conflict can be solved through reforming social structures or government institutions and open, transparent political participation. For example, in Burundi, opposing parties and civil society groups want strong democratic institutions to protect free space for political participation, the separation of powers, electoral reforms, respect for presidential term limits, and an appropriate balancing of economic and political power. If anything, Galtung's (1969) concept of structural violence can strengthen the ability of governments



to hold violent leaders accountable for their actions. The concept of structural violence, in other words, does not merely develop a logical understanding of the root causes of political violence phenomena, but it also offers a foundation for effective action to resolve conflict.

Elite theory, intergroup conflict theory, and structural violence theory all provide a conceptual framework for understanding the history, power struggle, inequalities, and ethnic dynamics of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi. All three theories can explain the root causes and effects of the phenomenon under study from an interdisciplinary viewpoint.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter merges the literature on term limit manipulation to establish an understanding of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The literature connects the frameworks and concepts of presidential term limit manipulations, democratization, and violence. The literature review focused on five reasons for these phenomena considered most relevant to the research problem: (a) lack of checks and balances, (b) weak government institutions, (c) electoral malpractice, (d) greed and corruption, and (e) fear of punishment. These five factors are the main enablers of many African leaders lengthening their grip on power, and particularly President Pierre Nkurunziza.

However, more research is needed in the field of conflict resolution to determine whether identity politics or ethno-politics play any role in conflict and presidential longevity. Furthermore, elite theory, intergroup conflict theory, and structural violence

theory were all part of the analyzation process in the search for the root causes of the crisis and an understanding of why the crisis developed. These theories provide a filter for explaining how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi.

In Chapter 3, a mixed method research methodology is applied to understanding the phenomenon under study. Chapter 3 also provides a comprehensive description of the steps followed to collect and process the data for this research.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

Chapter 3 contains an overview of the research purpose and methodologies applied in data collections and data analysis stages. This chapter covers the synopsis of the philosophical framework for the research, case study, research question, validity and reliability; and ethics and reflexivity.

### **Overview of Research Methodology**

The researcher chose qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Creswell (2005) inferred that qualitative research methods are mainly helpful for exploring the deep meaning of a specific experience and to understanding that people link these experiences to their lives. For example, Bogdan and Biklen, (2003), Creswell (2005), Denzin and Lincoln (2000), and Yin (2009) argued that qualitative research methodologies are mainly important for discerning the meaning that individuals give to the events they experience. For Stake (1995), qualitative methodology is necessary when the types of research questions asked involve examination. Both Patton (2002) and Seidman (1991) maintained that qualitative research gives the researcher a comprehensive backdrop to what is going on relative to the subject. Strauss and Corbin (1998) stressed that qualitative research allows the researcher to study experiences, such as feelings, which are hard to reveal or study via quantitative research methods. Qualitative research occurs using case studies (Stake, 1995), phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994), grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007), or narrative (Riessman, 2008). Whichever approach is chosen, Smith,

Flowers, and Larkin (2009) added, “Qualitative research is time-consuming, labor-intensive, and both imaginatively and emotionally demanding” (p. 42). A mixed methods case study methodology was suitable for this dissertation as it promoted a clear understanding of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perceptions of peace and stability of the people in Burundi.

Furthermore, the researcher used quantitative survey questionnaires to collect data from Burundians. Yin (2013) and Creswell (2013) asserted that survey research was useful for collecting a sizable amount of data and offering a far-reaching view of the phenomenon under study. Denscombe (1998) indicated that a quantitative survey approach is particularly helpful to finding data centered on a representative sample and generalizing those data to a large group or groups. For the purposes of this study, an independent *t*-test was used to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between people in Burundi. At the end, the researcher integrates quantitative and qualitative methods so that these different approaches shed light on the phenomenon under study.

### **Philosophical Foundation**

Applied in this dissertation, centered within the social constructivist paradigm, was a case study method used to understand how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Qualitative case study research offers two popular approaches. The first, which Merriam (2009) and Stake (1995) proposed, is a constructivist model, while the second, by Eisenhardt (1989), Flyvbjerg (2011), and Yin (2012), is a post-positivist viewpoint.

Both approaches added to the development of theoretical frameworks for the methodology.

Patton (2001) asserted that qualitative research examines a “real world setting [where] the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest” (p. 39). According to Stake (1995), “Most contemporary qualitative researchers nourish the belief that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered. The world we know is a particularly human construction” (p. 99). Merriam (2009) and Stake (1995), who based their case study methods on a social constructivist paradigm, argued that constructivism believes that people create the meaning of experiences and events and create the realities in which they take part. Furthermore, in qualitative case study research, a social constructivist paradigm reinforces a transactional approach, where the researcher develops a particular relationship with the phenomenon under study. Qualitative case studies also connect the researcher and the participants (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995).

This dissertation was based on understanding how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Participants constructed their perceptions based on individual and shared experiences. For this dissertation, the researcher conducted ten interviews, reviewed pertinent documents, and conceptualized the data to make sense of how research participants constructed their individual views of the conflict in Burundi.

### **Case Study**

To understand how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi, it was imperative to conduct a case study. Case studies facilitate the exploration and explanation of

multidimensional phenomenon, which allows for the collecting of several viewpoints from a variety of sources. Muvingi and Duckworth (2014) stated that case study research is fitting for exploring multifaceted social phenomena such as conflicts and the most effective actions to end or resolve them. As such, the researcher used a case study approach to explore and understand the phenomenon under study. A case study is fitting when (a) a researcher wants to answer how and why questions, (b) the researcher cannot influence participants' feelings or the data, (c) the context or phenomenon under study is important, or (d) there is lack of clarity explaining the relationship between the phenomenon and the context (Yin, 2003, 2013). Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) described the case study method as an approach of study in which the researcher studies an individual, group, event, program, or process. Furthermore, Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) used several terms to define various case studies. Stake (1995) outlined case studies as instrumental, intrinsic, or collective. Yin (2003) classified case studies as exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive, and he distinguished between holistic case studies, single case studies, and multiple case studies. For this study, the researcher applied an exploratory and an explanatory case study design to understand the phenomenon. An exploratory case study is generally useful for examining circumstances wherein the action assessed has no well-defined, particular established results (Yin, 2003), whereas an explanatory case study design usually answers questions to describe supposed causal connections in everyday life that are very difficult for experimental or survey approaches to ascertain (Yin, 2003).

Stake (1995, 2000) and Yin (2003) claimed that researchers using a case study gather comprehensive information via multiple sources of data gathering methods over a

specified duration of time. The researcher collected data via phone calls and audio Skype sessions, in-depth interviews, online-based surveys, and document reviews. Yin (2009) categorized five essential parts of a successful case study research design: (a) research questions; (b) purpose of the study; (c) unit of analysis; (d) the logic that connects data to propositions; and (e) the criteria for interpreting findings. The research questions address "how" and "why" type questions. In this study, the researcher asked how President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to manipulate the Constitution affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The second part of a case study research approach is describing the main reason for the study. The main purpose of the dissertation was to understand how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The third part of a case study research method is describing the unit of analysis, which defines the case. The unit of analysis in this study was Burundians' views of the current conflict. The fourth part of a case study approach is linking research data to propositions. The proposition in this study was that the impact of presidential term limit manipulation on peace and security in Burundi would differ along ethnic lines, but not significantly along gender lines. The researcher linked data to propositions after the data collection stage as themes developed. The researcher also matched subject matter that emerged in the data to the main propositions of the study. The fifth part of a case study approach is setting standards for the purpose of translating results. After developing the themes, the researcher gained understanding of results, which helped to determine suggestions for future study.

## **Research Questions**

As the purpose of this dissertation was to understand the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi, it was fitting to frame a research question to help inquire into the root causes of violence. To understand this phenomenon, it was appropriate to ask the following research questions.

### **Qualitative Research Question**

1. How has term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability of people in Burundi?

### **Sub-Questions**

1. Why did President Nkurunziza manipulate Burundi's Constitution to stay in power?

2. How has term limit manipulation affected Burundians?

3. How can Burundians avoid more violence and create a pathway to peace and stability?

### **Quantitative Research Questions**

1. What are the differences in perceptions between Hutu and Tutsi towards the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?

2. What are the differences in perceptions between men and women towards the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?

## **Hypotheses**

Based on the above research questions, the following hypotheses were created:

H01. There is no significant difference between Hutu and Tutsi perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.



H11. There is a significant difference between Hutus and Tutsis perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

H02. There is no significant difference between men and women in perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

H12. There is a significant difference between men's and women's perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

### **Data Collection Methods**

The mixed-methods design followed a convergent, parallel design: Quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously and then integrated. The goal of using quantitative data is to rationalize, strengthen, and offer more background to qualitative results. Yin (2009) detailed a well-organized case study research gain from using various data sources, which effectively safeguarded the study. Baxter and Jack (2008) noted, "In a case study, data from multiple sources are then converged in the analysis process rather than handled individually. Each data source is one piece of the 'puzzle,' with each piece contributing to the researcher's understanding of the whole phenomenon" (p. 554). For this study, the researcher used three data sources: (a) online-based survey questionnaires, (b) open-ended, in-depth phone/Skype interviews; and (c) a document review. The integration of various data enhances findings and supports an understanding of the case. Using multiple data sources is also useful for answering research questions and helps readers to understand the history of, and viewpoints on, the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2003, 2013).

## Quantitative Data Collection

The researcher obtained data using online survey questionnaires representative of Burundians. Online survey questionnaires were used to support the qualitative data on how term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability of people in Burundi. Of the 200 people recruited to take part in the online survey, 153 participated. The online survey questionnaires comprised 15 mixed questions on a 5-scale Likert measurement—*Strongly Disagree* = 1, *Disagree*, 2, *Neutral* = 3, *Agree* = 4, *Strongly Agree* = 5 (see Appendix A). The online survey was administered electronically using Survey Monkey. A web link to the SurveyMonkey websites was included in the email. SurveyMonkey offers participants guidelines on how to take and submit the survey. The researcher was also able to use the SurveyMonkey website to assess the online survey completion frequencies the entire data collection process. The researcher used Statistical Package for Social Science software Version 20.0 (SPSS) to analyze online survey questionnaires.

All participants met the inclusion criteria in this study in that they were all Burundians, both male and female, and over the age of 18 at the time of taking the survey. All of the participants who consented to take the survey varied in age, ranging from 18 to 45 years. All participants communicated with the researcher in English. Online survey participants also included both Hutus and Tutsis, the two predominant ethnic groups in Burundi and Twa. However, some of the participants selected “Other,” as this could mean mixed-ethnicities—individuals with a Tutsi father and a Hutu mother or vice versa. The only exclusion criterion in this study was that participants who did not speak or read English were excluded.

Due to the severity of the crisis in Burundi, the researcher used two research gatekeepers and several organizations in Burundi to help with recruiting participants who were relevant to the phenomenon under study. The organizations were the Association Saint François d'assise, IBurundi, both civil society groups from Burundi, and BurundiFacts, a pro-government group. The objective was to gather diverse views of the phenomenon under study. The research gatekeepers were Burundian nationals—one a refugee in Kenya and the other living in Burundi. Before data collection, both gatekeepers were briefed on any risks associated with this study and privacy concerns.

After the gatekeepers and Association Saint François d'assise, IBurundi, and BurundiFacts provided 200 names, the researcher applied simple random sampling. That is, the researcher randomly selected 175 participants out of the 200 names using a table of random numbers. Out of the 200 names provided, 110 were males and 90 were females. The researcher contacted them via email, phone, WhatsApp, or Skype to explain the nature of study. At the end of this process, 153 participants (103 males, 49 females and 1 “other”) agreed to take part in the online survey. The researcher will detail the underrepresentation of females in chapter 5 of the study limitations section.

Forty-eight hours before they took the online survey, the researcher sent consent forms to participants detailing the purpose of the study and the potential risks of participating in the study (see Appendix B). The researcher electronically sent survey links to each individual participant’s email address. On average, the online survey took about 10 minutes to complete. All online survey participants in this study voluntarily agreed to participate.

## **Qualitative Data Collections**

For the qualitative data collection, interviews and document analysis were the main approaches to data collection. For the interview, the sampling criteria was based on choosing participants who experienced the conflict and who were in favor of or against President Nkurunziza's third term bid. Purposeful sampling techniques were applied to recruit participants. In purposeful sampling, the focus is on certain features of a population who are of interest to answer research questions (Creswell, 2013). In addition to knowledge and experience, availability and willingness to share experiences and views are crucial in purposeful sampling (Bernard, 2002).

For the interview portion, the researcher used open-ended, semi-structured phone and Skype interviews. The interview comprised 10 questions (see Appendix C). The researcher initially began interviewing on June 19, 2017 and completed the last interview on October 11, 2017. All interview participants met the inclusion criteria in this study in that they were all Burundians and male or female over the age of 18 at the time of taking part in the interview. All the participants who consented to the interviews varied based on age, ranging from 18 to 35 years. All participants communicated with the researcher in the English Language. Similar to the online survey participants, interviewees were also composed of Hutus and Tutsis, the two predominant ethnic groups in Burundi, or "other." The only exclusion criterion for this phase of the study, as for the last, was that participants who did not speak or read English were excluded. The participants in the interviews were drawn from the same population as the online survey population. The researcher recruited participants who had characteristics pertinent to the phenomenon under study.

The researcher also contacted these participants via email, phone, WhatsApp, or Skype to explain the nature of study. Of the 14 people recruited from the pool of online survey participants, 10 agreed to interviews. Forty-eight hours before the study, the researcher sent consent forms to the interviewees detailing the nature of the study and the potential risks of participating in the study (see Appendix D). With participants' approval, the researcher audio recorded the interviews and then transcribed them following each interview. Interviews were approximately 28 minutes on average. All interviewees in this study voluntarily agreed to interviews about the phenomenon. Because of the severity of the crisis, participants were assigned alphabetical letters to protect them from potential harm due to participating in this study.

The researcher applied Merriam's (2009) interview approach to elicit demographic information and to reveal how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the interviewees' perceptions of peace and stability in Burundi. Esterberg (2002) noted that an interview is usually considered an exchange between the interviewer and interviewee, whereby the interviewer inquires and the interviewee answers. Stake (1995) suggested that using interview data allows for the triangulation of data attained from additional sources, which boosts the reliability of study results. The researcher followed the six question criteria that Merriam (2009) proposed for case study research: (1) experience/behavior, (2) opinion/belief, (3) feeling, (4) knowledge, (5) sensory, and (6) background/demographic. Using these six criteria are important to the research question because they allow participants to share their experiences, especially how they feel and how they interpret their views. The researcher avoided leading questions in order to encourage participants to answer freely and openly.

The researcher followed up with questions when needed to encourage the participants to elaborate on a response.

Since the interviews occurred via phone/Skype, the researcher applied active listening skills to capture what participants were saying. During the interviews, the researcher was twice faced with delays due to a poor Internet connection. The researcher rescheduled several interviews at different days and times. Moreover, the researcher explained pertinent information regarding the main purpose of the study, together with information about himself, with each participant to build the trust and rapport essential an interview. This allowed participants to be comfortable, which was important for an ideal interviewing atmosphere. The researcher also asked each participant if he or she had additional questions and concerns about the nature of the study or research techniques.

While interviews and online survey questionnaires were the main approaches of data collection, the researcher also gathered and examined documents to obtain meaning, gain understanding, and corroborate participants' experiences. Documents used as part of the study included: Afrobarometer, ACLED, Human Rights Watch Reports, Amnesty International Reports, International Crisis Group Report, United Nations Reports, newspapers, and transcripts from United States Congressional Testimony Hearing on Burundi. In addition to the authenticity, accuracy, credibility, and representativeness of selected documents, decisions in selecting documents were based on the research question and sub-questions and the theoretical perspectives germane to the study. For Afrobarometer data, the researcher only searched for documents that covered surveys done on Burundi about term limitations, the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation agreement, and democratization over the past five years. For ACLED, the researcher only used

documents that examined violence related to term limits and ethnic violence from 2015-2018. For Human Rights Watch Reports, Amnesty International Reports, and International Crisis Group Reports, the researcher used annual data from 2010-2018 on Burundi. Some of the key words used to identify relevant components of the documents included *ethnic violence*, *gender-based violence*, *violence by security forces*, *Imbonerakure youth militia*, and *armed opposition groups*. For UN data, the researcher examined documents that covered term limitations, the Arusha agreement, ethnic dynamics, increased militia violence, armed opposition violence, refugee issues, and security issues. For newspaper data, the researcher analyzed reports linked to term limits, gender-based violence, ethnic matters, and violence by security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups. All these documents were accessed from the organizations' respective websites.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

The researcher used the Likert scale to measure feelings, values, and opinions with the online survey questionnaires (Likert, 1932; Norman, 2010) with the response options *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, *Neutral*, *Agree*, and *Strongly Agree*. To prepare the data for analysis, Likert scale responses were recoded into numeric values as follows: *Strongly Disagree* = 1, *Disagree*, 2, *Neutral* = 3, *Agree* = 4, and *Strongly Agree* =5. Descriptive statistics, such as the demographic characteristics of participants, were provided. In addition, an independent *t*-test was used to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between Hutu and Tutsi, as well as female and male, opinions on how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Moreover, Levene's test

for equality of variances was conducted for each *t*-test. When Levene's test is significant, it indicates significant differences in variance, thereby indicating that the homogeneity of variances assumption is violated. When the homogeneity of variance of assumption is violated, a corrected, more conservative *t*-test is used, one that is explicitly designed for instances in which equal variances are not assumed (Field, 2013; Wright & London, 2009). Descriptive statistics explain descriptions of a particular data set by offering short summations about the sample and measures of data.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Data analysis for the qualitative component in this mixed-methods case study research proceeded as follows. As Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggested, qualitative research studies entail a constant collaboration between data collection and data analysis. This includes reducing and organizing significant amounts of collected data to understand their meaning. Unlike for quantitative analysis, there are no agreed upon procedures for qualitative analysis. For example, Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggested that qualitative data analysis does not develop in a linear manner. Creswell (2013) and Strauss and Corbin (1998) advised researchers on good practices and techniques to enrich the validity of qualitative studies. These data analysis techniques were used to make sure that findings from this study were valid, credible, and dependable.

The researcher applied thematic analysis to code the data collected. A thematic approach is suitable for theorizing through several cases, finding shared thematic components across research participants and the events they report (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013). This procedure also demanded exhaustive reading and re-reading of transcripts to look for similarities and differences, which allowed the researcher to



build themes and categories. To guide the data analysis stage, the researcher utilized Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of data analysis procedure. In step one, the researcher familiarized himself with the data. This included completely engaging the data by first transcribing the interviews then reading and re-reading the transcripts to understand the material and viewpoints conveyed. In step two, the researcher started generating initial codes, identifying preliminary initial codes that were important. In step three, the researcher searched for themes. This process included the interpretative analysis of key themes. Step four involved reviewing the themes. In this stage, the researcher classified the initial themes and inquired into whether to integrate, isolate, or reject them. Step five was defining and naming the themes. This involved refining and describing the themes and possible subthemes within data. Step six was producing the report. This final step included writing the report by using themes extracted from the data.

Following each interview, the researcher placed transcripts into Microsoft Word documents and thoroughly reread the transcripts line-by-line to make sure that they were detailed and correct. Chapter 4 will include a thorough description of the coding and theme development. The researcher used open and axial coding to analyze the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2007).

The categorizing stage involved using categorical grouping to create themes and sub-themes. By classifying groups for comparison, the researcher gave each group of words a theme applying Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis program, enabling themes and sub-themes to emerge. Interviewees' personal information was omitted and replaced by an assigned alphabet letter to safeguard their privacy. Using both computer-assisted data

analysis coupled with manual checks improved the trustworthiness, credibility, and validity of findings.

The document analysis involved reading through the data obtained from ACLED, Human Rights Watch Reports, Amnesty International Reports, International Crisis Group Report, United Nations Reports, newspapers, and transcripts from the United States Congressional Testimony Hearing on Burundi. This procedure entailed a thorough, more focused rereading and analysis of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Silverman, 2000), and the researcher took a closer look at selected data and performed coding and category building. This process included thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involves pattern identification within data and themes developing into categories for examination (Creswell, 2013). After identifying relevant documents, the researcher placed data into Microsoft Word documents. The findings section will show a detailed report of the coding and theme development. Open and axial coding was also used to examine the data, which enabled themes to develop on their own (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). The next stage included a categorizing stage, which included categorical grouping to create themes and sub-themes. The researcher again used Atlas.ti to help with the classifying and grouping of themes and sub-themes.

### **Validity and Reliability**

One of the core principles of any research study is the reliability and validity of the data and results. Reliability concerns the consistency, dependability, and replicability of the results obtained (Nunan, 1999). As already noted, an independent *t*-test was utilized in the quantitative portion of this study to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between Hutu and Tutsi, as well as between male and

female, perceptions of the crisis. The online survey questionnaire consisted of five demographic questions and fifteen thematic questions. The researcher used a Likert scale for the online survey questionnaires. According to Babbie (2007), a “Likert scale is a type of composite measurements developed in an attempt to improve the levels of measurement in social research” (p. 171). Obtaining similar results in quantitative research is rather straightforward using a Likert scale because data are presented in numerical form (Nunan, 1999).

Validity in qualitative research means whether the research really measures that which he or she planned to measure and to how accurate the research findings are (Golafshani, 2003). For example, Yin (2013) advised researchers to use three sources of data collection and analysis for case studies to improve the validity and reliability of studies. The three sources include several data sources, building a case study file, and maintaining a sequence of verification. Yin (2013) further stressed that the triangulation of data is one approach that a researcher can use to tackle problems of validity.

The importance of triangulation is that it minimizes biases, particularly the problem of relying on one data collection method. Patton (2002) supported the use of triangulation, noting that “triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches” (p. 247). In the triangulation stage, the researcher looked for uniformities in data sets and ensured that all aspects of the phenomenon were included in the examination and that all aspects were thoroughly examined. To check for validity within the qualitative data, the researcher followed Merriam’s (2002) concept of member checks by showing interviewees a copy of their interview transcripts and asking them to

validate the correctness of the content. Finally, the researcher maintained a chain of evidence, which helped him to track the information from the study database to the research question and the concept it was intended to examine. This process enabled the researcher to verify that the conclusions that the researcher drew from the data were reliable.

### **Ethics and Reflexivity**

In every research study, ethical implications exist, such as participants' safety, confidentiality, potential benefits, biases, and prejudices. Thus, the researcher assumed responsibility for ensuring that all relationships and materials investigated were respected at all times. Berg (2009), and Guillemin and Gillam (2004) defined ethics in research as following guidelines of acceptable and unacceptable conduct in research, which includes matters of privacy, the safety, and the confidentiality of data.

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) described reflexivity as a tool for understanding data and its collection and for understanding the type of ethics in qualitative research methods and the ways that ethical practice in research is accomplished. Research comprising human participants begins from an understanding of ethical tension (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). It is incumbent upon the researcher to uphold participants' rights to confidentiality and privacy and right to be free from physical and mental harm during and after the study. Therefore, in both the interview and online survey consent forms, the researcher summarized the purpose of the study, how he would protect the research participants' anonymity, and what measures would occur to secure interview audio recording and survey questionnaires when the study was completed. Research participants were informed that they had the option of either stopping the interview or

withdrawing from the research study altogether. To avoid coercion or inducement, participants in the study were not compensated. According to Bentley and Thacker (2004), compensating participants to take part in research raises concerns about inducing participants into taking part in a study that they would not participate in otherwise or influencing participants' answers to research questions. As part of the ethics protocol, the researcher conducted himself within the guidelines and conceptual frameworks of ethical practice in research and Nova Southeastern University guidelines when exchanging confidential information electronically. The researcher ensured that all data from newspapers, websites, memos, archival records, transcripts of interviews, and annual reports came from valid and credible sources and that they characterized the phenomenon in the most accurate possible way.

Before submitting to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher completed the mandatory Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Ethics Training Program offered through Nova Southeastern University. This study was conducted with approval from, and in compliance with, Nova Southeastern University IRB, project number 2017-373 (see Appendix E). Before starting the interview and the online survey questionnaire, respondents were provided with written consent forms expressing their agreement before taking part in this study. Research respondents were additionally asked to verify they were over 18 years of age.

Another ethical issue of concern was the researcher's personal biases on this topic. As an advocate of presidential term limits, democracy, and good governance in Africa, the researcher might hope to prove that manipulating constitutions, such as by amending term limits to stay in power, created political violence and instability in many

African countries. The interpretation of data was at risk of being influenced by the researcher's biases, which would affect the validity and reliability of the findings. To address this issue, the researcher adhered to high ethical standards and transparency throughout the research. Perkins and Baxter (2011) agreed that researchers should be aware of their own feelings, motives, and biases and identify possible preconceptions before these impact their studies.

Given the researcher's views on this topic, he applied several bracketing techniques to mitigate his biases. Gearing (2004) described bracketing as "a scientific process in which a researcher suspends or holds in abeyance his or her presuppositions, biases, assumptions, theories, or previous experiences to see and describe the phenomenon" (p. 1430). Tufford and Newman (2010) reinforced that "bracketing is a method used by some researchers to mitigate the potential deleterious effects of unacknowledged preconceptions related to the research and thereby to increase the rigor of the project" (p. 81). A methodical examination of different aspects of bracketing helps researchers to recognize their biases and find ways to mitigate them within their chosen qualitative research methods (Fischer, 2009; Gearing, 2004; Tufford & Newman, 2010).

During the data collection phase, the researcher wrote memos and abstract notes that clarified his thoughts and views. Writing down memos and notes following each interview enabled the researcher to deeply engage with data and helped him to document his personal biases about the subject under study. The researcher used bracketing during each interview session and each transcription to expand his understanding and engagement with the participants and the data. Thus, "bracketing interviews can increase

the researcher's clarity and engagement with participants' experiences by unearthing forgotten personal experiences" (Tufford & Newman, 2010, p. 86).

During the data analysis phase, the researcher used reflexive journaling. As Fischer (2009) explained, "reflexivity provides self-awareness, including awareness of how one has participated in developing particular understandings" (p. 588). Before undertaking this study, the researcher identified his preconceptions and made notes of them throughout the research process. Using this method throughout the entire research process alleviated the risk of the researcher leaning toward his own preconceptions and interpretations. Ahern (1999) added that adopting reflective journaling could improve a researcher's ability to maintain a reflexive standpoint. Using bracketing during the data analysis phase enabled the researcher to balance his biases and helped to bring both major themes and negative circumstances to the surface. Bracketing also helped the researcher to maintain self-awareness throughout the data collection, data analysis, and interpretation phases.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

Chapter 3 provided a summary of the methodology applied in the study and shed light on the mixed methods case study approach. The chapter provided a discussion of employing semi-structured interviews, survey questionnaires, and document review as the main data sources. Chapter 3 also provided an explanation of the approach used for the study, a mixed method case study design positioned within a constructivist model, which utilized constructivist data examination approaches. The researcher also explained the ethical concerns of the ethics protocol specified by Nova Southeastern University's IRB committee. The researcher addressed specific issues linked with online survey

questionnaires, interviewing, transcribing, and coding and analyzing interview and document data. Also discussed in the chapter were methodological triangulation, validity and reliability, and researcher reflexivity during the transcribing, coding, and analyses processes. In Chapter 4, the findings of the study are presented.



## Chapter 4: Research Findings

### **Discussion of the Research Findings**

The purpose of this study was to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affects perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Understanding this phenomenon was extremely important because the current crisis in Burundi affects economic conditions as well as peace and stability. The mixed-methods approach used required the collection of online survey questionnaires, interviews, and documents to measure the perceptions of Burundians. The mixed-methods design followed a convergent, parallel design: Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected independently and integrated in the analysis stage. The goal of the qualitative data analysis was to rationalize, strengthen, and offer more background to quantitative results.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

In this chapter, the results are explained and the data are presented by research category (i.e., quantitative data are presented first, followed by qualitative data). Data were triangulated to check the reliability and strengthen the results. For example, Tables 3-7 feature the demographic information of participants. Table 8 lists an in-depth analysis of Hutu and Tutsi perceptual differences regarding the conflict using an independent *t*-test to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed. Table 9 shows a detailed analysis of gender differences and participants' perceptions of the conflict. An independent *t*-test determined whether a statistically significant difference existed between female and male perceptions of the conflict. The quantitative portion of this study addressed the following research questions:

RQ 1. What are the differences in perceptions between Hutu and Tutsi towards the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?

RQ 2. What are the differences in perceptions between men and women towards the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?

Of the 20 online survey questions, five of the questions requested demographic information from the participants. The researcher ran an independent *t*-test analysis for 15 of the online survey questions to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between Hutus and Tutsis as well as gender perceptions of the crisis.

First, ethnic conflict has overshadowed the lives of Burundi's people as far back as 1962, when the country attained independence from Belgium. For example, a significant feature of the political makeup in Burundi entails more than four decades of on-and-off intractable conflict over control of power and access to resources, wealth, and economic opportunity along with a history of inequitable policies between the Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority. Secondly, it is critical to uncover gender perceptions since armed conflict and its outcome touch women's lives in ways that vary from the effects on men. For example, during the 1993-2005 Burundian civil war, women and girls were affected disproportionately.

Of the 200 people recruited to take part in the online survey, 153 participated. Below, Table 3 contains the frequencies for age demographics of the online survey participants. In terms of the age distribution of participants, six groupings were created (18-25 years old; 26-35 years old; 36-45 years old; 46-55 years old; 56-65 years old; and 66 and older). The largest age group was 18-25 years ( $n=75$ , 49%) and second largest age group was 26-35 years ( $n=61$ , 39.9%), followed by 36-45 years ( $n=17$ , 11.1%). No

respondents aged 46 and older responded to the online survey. The researcher only ran analysis on Hutu-Tutsi differences as well as gender differences. This is because identity seems to be the most significant factor in the conflict.

Table 3

*Age Distribution of Participants*

<b>Range</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
18-25 Years old	75	49
26-35 Years old	61	39.9
36-45 Years old	17	11.1
46-55 Years old	0	0
56-65 Years old	0	0
66-or older	0	0
Total	153	100

Table 4 comprises the frequencies for the gender demographics of the online survey participants. Concerning gender demographics, the majority of the sample identified as male ( $n=103$ , 67%), followed by female ( $n=49$ , 32%) and other ( $n=1$ , 0.7%). Even though women constitute over 50% of Burundi's population, more men than women responded.

Table 4

*Gender of Participants*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	103	67.3
Female	49	32
Other	1	0.7
Total	153	100

Table 5 illustrates the frequencies of ethnicity of the participants surveyed. The sample was close to evenly split between individuals who identified as Hutu ( $n=76$ , 49.7%) and Tutsi ( $n=68$ , 44.4%). Individuals who identified as other ( $n=8$ , 5.2%) were

those with a Tutsi father and a Hutu mother, or vice versa, and only one ( $n=1$ , 0.7%) identified as Twa.

Table 5

*Ethnicity of Participants*

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Hutu	76	49.7
Tutsi	68	44.4
Twa	1	0.7
Other	8	5.2
Total	153	100

Table 6 shows the highest level of education completed among participants, measured at a six-level variable (high school, technical/vocational training, bachelor's degree, master's degree, professional degree, and doctoral degree). There was an even split between those who identified as having a bachelor's degree ( $n=52$ , 34%) and those who had technical/vocational training ( $n=53$ , 34.6%). Furthermore, a small percentage of participants responded that they held a master's degree ( $n=15$ , 9.8%), and no participants earned either a professional or a doctoral degree.

Table 7 shows the occupation level of participants. "Unemployed" was the largest occupation category ( $n=56$ , 36.6%) and "student" was the second largest occupation category ( $n=42$ , 27.5%). Respondents who identified as self-employed were the third largest occupation category ( $n=22$ , 14.4%), "private sector" was the fourth largest occupation category ( $n=16$ , 10.5%), and "government" was the fifth largest occupation category ( $n=12$ , 7.8%), followed by "other" ( $n=5$ , 3.3%).

Table 6

*Education Level of Participants*

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
High School	33	21.6
Bachelor's Degree	52	34
Master's Degree	15	9.8
Technical/Vocational Training	53	34.6
Professional Degree	0	0
Doctoral Degree	0	0
Total	153	100

Table 7

*Occupation of Participants*

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Government	12	7.8
Private sector	16	10.5
Self-employed	22	14.4
Student	42	27.5
Unemployed	56	36.6
Other	5	3.3
Total	153	100

An independent *t*-test determined whether a statistically significant difference existed between the two groups, Hutus and Tutsis (see Table 8). The 15 online survey questions were relevant to the research question and they also unearthed Burundi's past conflicts, which entailed governance issues, the protracted history of the power struggle, lack of equal opportunities to access political power, and violent ethnic divisions between Hutus and Tutsis. Participants used a scale ranging from 1=*Strongly Disagree* to 5=*Strongly Agree*. Table 8 illustrates some significant differences between the two groups' responses to all of the questions.

On the question, *I support presidential term limits*, the resulting *t*-test was significant  $t(138.538) = -8.63, p < .001$ . This result indicated that Hutus and Tutsis had different opinions on this matter, with those who identified as Hutu ( $M = 2.50, SD =$

1.447), indicating greater disagreement and Tutsis ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = 1.101$ ), indicating greater agreement. In terms of whether *President Nkurunziza's third term bid violated the Arusha agreement*, a significant difference existed between Hutus ( $M = 1.92$ ,  $SD = 1.129$ ), who indicated greater disagreement, and Tutsis who indicated agreement ( $M = 4.41$ ,  $SD = 0.981$ ),  $t(142) = -14.057$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Opinions differed between Hutus and Tutsis regarding the question, *violence has increased due to Pierre Nkurunziza third term bid*. The  $t$ -test indicated that Hutus ( $M = 2.32$ ,  $SD = 1.073$ ) had stronger disagreement than Tutsis ( $M = 4.40$ ,  $SD = .831$ ),  $t(139.212) = -12.080$ ,  $p < .001$ . The question *Presidential term limit manipulation is the root of the current crisis* also resulted in different opinions. The  $t$ -test indicated that Hutus ( $M = 2.32$ ,  $SD = 1.098$ ) had stronger disagreement than Tutsis ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = 1.035$ ),  $t(142) = -9.771$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Perceptions were once again divided on the statement *Presidential term limits should be taken out of the constitution* with the results of the  $t$  test showed that Hutus ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 1.419$ ) had stronger agreement than Tutsis ( $M = 1.59$ ,  $SD = 1.136$ ),  $t(142) = 8.735$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . With regard to the question, *The crisis has enduring impact on the population including persistent fear*. The  $t$ -test results for this question showed that Hutus ( $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = 1.063$ ) expressed more disagreement than Tutsis ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = .731$ ),  $t(133.449) = -9.206$ ,  $p < .001$ . Likewise, opinions were divided on the statement; *The current crisis will make Burundi more volatile*. The  $t$ -test revealed that Hutus ( $M = 2.57$ ,  $SD = .984$ ) expressed more disagreement than Tutsis ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = .897$ ),  $t(141.950) = -8.023$ ,  $p < .001$ . Furthermore, Hutus ( $M = 2.39$ ,  $SD = 1.223$ ) showed more disagreement with the statement *Government forces are responsible for the violence* than Tutsis ( $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = .998$ ),  $t(142) = -9.902$ ,  $p < .001$ . Opinions were also divided on the statement,

*Armed opposition groups are responsible for the violence.* The results of the t test showed that Hutus ( $M = 4.30$ ,  $SD = 0.589$ ) had stronger agreement than Tutsis ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = 1.243$ ),  $t(93.279) = 5.749$ ,  $p < 0.001$ .

Table 1

*Hutu and Tutsi Perceptions of the Conflict*

Questions	Ethnicity	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
I support Presidential Term Limits	Hutu	2.50	1.447	-8.630	138.538	*** p<.001	-1.838
	Tutsi	4.34	1.101				
President Nkurunziza's Third Term bid violated the Arusha agreement	Hutu	1.92	1.129	-	142	*** p<.001	-2.491
	Tutsi	4.41	0.981				
Violence has increased due to Pierre Nkurunziza third term bid	Hutu	2.32	1.073	-	139.212	*** p<.001	2.081
	Tutsi	4.40	0.831				
Presidential term limit manipulation is the root of the current crisis	Hutu	2.32	1.098	-9.771	142	*** p<.001	-1.743
	Tutsi	4.06	1.035				
Presidential term limits should be taken out of the constitution	Hutu	3.47	1.419	8.735	142	*** p<.001	1.885
	Tutsi	1.59	1.136				
The crisis has enduring impact on the population including persistent fear of attack	Hutu	2.67	1.063	-9.206	133.449	*** p<.001	-1.388
	Tutsi	4.06	0.731				
The current crisis will make Burundi's more volatile	Hutu	2.57	0.984	-8.023	141.95	*** p<.001	-1.258
	Tutsi	3.82	0.897				
Government forces are responsible for the violence	Hutu	2.39	1.223	-9.902	142	*** p<.001	-1.855
	Tutsi	4.25	0.998				
Armed opposition groups are responsible for the violence	Hutu	4.30	0.589	5.749	93.279	*** p<.001	0.950
	Tutsi	3.35	1.243				

As with the other statements, *The Imbonerakure youth militia group is responsible for the violence* yielded significantly more disagreement among Hutus ( $M =$

2.01,  $SD = 1.400$ ) than Tutsis ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 1.495$ ),  $t(142) = -8.781$ ,  $p < 0.001$ .

Differences in opinion were also found with the statement, *President Nkurunziza third term in office risk causing a new civil war*. The  $t$ -test indicated that Hutus ( $M = 2.34$ ,  $SD = .946$ ) expressed more disagreement than Tutsis ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = .857$ ),  $t(141.974) = -9.957$ ,  $p < .001$ . Perceptions were divided on the statement, *The current crisis disrupted my life*. The  $t$ -test disclosed that Hutus ( $M = 2.47$ ,  $SD = .824$ ) stated more disagreement than Tutsis ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = .718$ ),  $t(141.904) = -10.732$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Moreover, dissimilarities in perceptions between groups were present in responses to the statement, *The government is working to improve peace and security*. The  $t$ -test showed that Hutus ( $M = 4.49$ ,  $SD = .663$ ) expressed more agreement than Tutsis ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.184$ ),  $t(102.663) = 9.331$ ,  $p < .001$ . Differences in opinions were also present with the statement, *The government lacks the capacity to guarantee security*. The  $t$ -test showed that Hutus ( $M = 1.63$ ,  $SD = .670$ ) expressed greater disagreement than Tutsis ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 1.255$ ),  $t(99.765) = -7.510$ ,  $p < .001$ . Finally, no significant difference occurred between Hutus ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 1.317$ ) and Tutsis ( $M = 4.46$ ,  $SD = 1.014$ ),  $t(138.993) = -1.530$ ,  $p = 0.128$ ) in responses to the statement, *Participants to the crisis should engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis*. This means there were no differences between Hutus and Tutsis. Additionally, looking at the mean values for each group, it can be concluded that both Hutus and Tutsis tended to agree with this statement.

In Table 9, a detailed analysis of the gender differences of participants is presented. An independent  $t$ -test determined whether a statistically significant difference existed between female and male perceptions of the conflict. Forty-nine participants identified as female and 103 participants identified as male. One participant identified as “other” and was excluded from analysis. The participant was excluded



because the researcher was interested in the differences between men and women.

Questions were recoded into numeric values as follows: Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree, 2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree =5. Table 9 illustrates some significant differences existed between the two groups in some of the questions.

With regard to the statement, *I support Presidential Term Limits*. The resulting *t*-test was not significant  $t(106.073) = 0.963, p = .338$ . This implied that females ( $M = 3.59, SD = 1.442$ ) and males ( $M = 3.34, SD = 1.636$ ) did not have statistically significant different perceptions of this statement. Similarly, the statement, *President Nkurunziza's third term bid violated the Arusha agreement* resulted in a *t*-test that was not significant  $t(104.954) = 1.060, p = .291$ . That is, females ( $M = 3.35, SD = 1.508$ ) and males ( $M = 3.06, SD = 1.691$ ) did not have statistically significant differing opinions about this statement.

Table 2

*Gender Differences*

Questions	Gender	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference																																																																																																																																																					
I support Presidential Term Limits	Female	3.59	1.442	0.963	106.073		0.252																																																																																																																																																					
	Male	3.34	1.636					President Nkurunziza's Third Term bid violated the Arusha agreement	Female	3.35	1.508	1.06	104.954		0.289	Male	3.06	1.691	Violence has increased due to Pierre Nkurunziza third term bid	Female	3.59	1.153	1.572	120.585		0.349	Male	3.24	1.511	Presidential term limit manipulation is the root of the current crisis	Female	3.45	1.100	2.106	121.980	*p<.05	0.449	Male	3.00	1.462	Presidential term limits should be taken out of the constitution	Female	2.39	1.511	-	150	0.886	-0.243	Male	2.63	1.615	The crisis has enduring impact on the population including persistent fear of attack	Female	3.63	0.951	2.037	119.153	* p<.05	0.371	Male	3.26	1.228	The current crisis will make Burundi's more volatile	Female	3.41	0.888	1.667	125.619		0.292	Male	3.12	1.223	Government forces are responsible for the violence	Female	3.67	1.231	2.395	111.787	* p<.05	0.547	Male	3.13	1.480	Armed opposition groups are responsible for the violence	Female	4.00	1.000	1.239	150		0.223	Male	3.78	1.057	The Imbonerakure youth militia group is responsible for the violence	Female	3.43	1.744	1.845	150		0.564	Male	2.86	1.771	President Nkurunziza's third term in office risks causing a new civil war	Female	3.22	0.848	1.286	133.920		0.224	Male	3.00	1.276	The current crisis disrupted my life	Female	3.35	0.948	1.328	150		0.240	Male	3.11	1.084	The government is working to improve peace and security	Female	3.76	1.146	0.218	150		0.046	Male	3.71	1.257	The government lacks the capacity to guarantee security	Female	2.16	1.007	0.776	115.896		-0.147	Male	2.31	1.260	Participants to the crisis should engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis	Female	4.35	1.165	0.408	150
President Nkurunziza's Third Term bid violated the Arusha agreement	Female	3.35	1.508	1.06	104.954		0.289																																																																																																																																																					
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The current crisis disrupted my life	Female	3.35	0.948	1.328	150		0.240																																																																																																																																																					
	Male	3.11	1.084					The government is working to improve peace and security	Female	3.76	1.146	0.218	150		0.046	Male	3.71	1.257	The government lacks the capacity to guarantee security	Female	2.16	1.007	0.776	115.896		-0.147	Male	2.31	1.260	Participants to the crisis should engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis	Female	4.35	1.165	0.408	150		0.085	Male	4.26	1.212																																																																																																																				
The government is working to improve peace and security	Female	3.76	1.146	0.218	150		0.046																																																																																																																																																					
	Male	3.71	1.257					The government lacks the capacity to guarantee security	Female	2.16	1.007	0.776	115.896		-0.147	Male	2.31	1.260	Participants to the crisis should engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis	Female	4.35	1.165	0.408	150		0.085	Male	4.26	1.212																																																																																																																															
The government lacks the capacity to guarantee security	Female	2.16	1.007	0.776	115.896		-0.147																																																																																																																																																					
	Male	2.31	1.260					Participants to the crisis should engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis	Female	4.35	1.165	0.408	150		0.085	Male	4.26	1.212																																																																																																																																										
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	Male	4.26	1.212																																																																																																																																																									

Note. N-144 \*p<.05. \*05. \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

Equally, the statement, *Violence has increased due to Pierre Nkurunziza third term bid* resulted in a *t*-test that was not significant  $t(120.585) = 1.572, p = .119$ . This meant that females ( $M = 3.59, SD = 1.153$ ) and males ( $M = 3.24, SD = 1.511$ ) did not have statistically significant different opinions on this matter.

For the statement, *Presidential term limit manipulation is the root of the current crisis*, the resulting *t*-test was significant  $t(121.980) = 2.106, p = .037$ , suggesting that females ( $M = 3.45, SD = 1.100$ ) showed more agreement with this statement than males ( $M = 3.00, SD = 1.462$ ). In terms of the question regarding whether *Presidential term limits should be taken out of the constitution*, the resulting *t*-test was not significant  $t(150) = -0.886, p = .377$ . This indicated that females ( $M = 2.39, SD = 1.511$ ) and males ( $M = 2.63, SD = 1.615$ ) did not have statistically significant differing perceptions on this matter. The statement, *The crisis has enduring impact on the population including persistent fear*, the resulting *t*-test was significant,  $t(119.153) = 2.037, p = .044$ . This showed that females showed more agreement ( $M = 3.63, SD = 0.951$ ) than males ( $M = 3.26, SD = 1.228$ ) on this issue. Likewise, for *The current crisis will make Burundi more volatile*, the resulting *t*-test was significant,  $t(125.619) = 1.667, p = .098$ . This inferred that females ( $M = 3.41, SD = 0.888$ ) showed more agreement with this statement than males ( $M = 3.12, SD = 1.223$ ). Likewise, for *Government forces are responsible for the violence*, the resulting *t*-test was significant,  $t(111.787) = 2.395, p = .018$ . This meant that females ( $M = 3.67, SD = 1.231$ ) showed more agreement with this statement than males ( $M = 3.13, SD = 1.480$ ).

With regard to the statement, *Armed opposition groups are responsible for the violence*, the *t*-test result was not significant,  $t(150) = 1.239, p = .217$ , suggesting that

females ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.000$ ) and males ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SD = 1.057$ ) did not have statistically significant different opinions on this matter. For the statement, *The Imbonerakure youth militia group is responsible for the violence*, the resulting  $t$ -test was not significant  $t(150) = 1.845$ ,  $p = .067$ . This meant that females ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 1.744$ ) and males ( $M = 2.86$ ,  $SD = 1.771$ ) did not have significant differing perceptions on this matter.

With regard to the statement, *President Nkurunziza's third term in office risks causing a new civil war*, the resulting  $t$ -test was not significant,  $t(133.920) = 1.286$ ,  $p = .201$ . This meant that females ( $M = 3.22$ ,  $SD = 0.848$ ) and males ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 1.276$ ) did not have statistically significant differing perceptions on this statement. The statement, *the current crisis disrupted my life*, the resulting  $t$ -test was not significant,  $t(150) = 1.328$ ,  $p = .186$ . This showed that females ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = 0.948$ ) and males ( $M = 3.11$ ,  $SD = 1.084$ ) did not have statistically significant different perceptions of this matter. For the statement, *The government is working to improve peace and security*, the  $t$ -test result was not significant,  $t(150) = 0.218$ ,  $p = .827$ . This meant that females ( $M = 3.76$ ,  $SD = 1.146$ ) and males ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 1.257$ ) did not have statistically significant differing perceptions of this matter. For the statement, *The government lacks the capacity to guarantee security*, the  $t$ -test result was not significant,  $t(115.896) = -0.776$ ,  $p = .440$ . This meant females ( $M = 2.16$ ,  $SD = 1.007$ ) and males ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 1.260$ ) did not have statistically significant different perceptions of this statement. Finally, for the statement, *Participants to the crisis should engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis*, the  $t$ -test result was not significant  $t(150) = 0.408$ ,  $p = .684$ . This suggested that females ( $M =$

4.35,  $SD = 1.165$ ) and males ( $M = 4.26$ ,  $SD = 1.212$ ) did not have statistically significant differing perceptions on this matter.

The researcher used two hypotheses outlined in chapter 3. Below are the complete hypotheses results from the online survey. The researcher used  $t$ -test to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between Hutu and Tutsi as well as female and male perceptions of the conflict.

H01. There is no significant difference between Hutu and Tutsi perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

H11. There is a significant difference between Hutus and Tutsis perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

Based on hypothesis one (1), the null hypothesis H01 is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between Hutus and Tutsis perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

H02. There is no significant difference between men and women perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

H12. There is a significant difference between men and women perceptions of the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

For hypothesis two (2), the researcher did not find sufficient support to reject the null hypothesis.

**Quantitative data summary.** The purpose of the quantitative data analysis was to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affects the

perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Data were collected through an online survey for the quantitative section. An independent *t*-test determined whether a statistically significant difference existed between Hutu and Tutsi as well as female and male perceptions of the conflict. In examining the data for Hutus and Tutsis, the results indicated that some statistically significant differences existed between the two groups in their responses to all of the questions. That is, Hutus and Tutsis viewed this crisis along ethnic lines. Overall, Hutus supported President Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term, while Tutsis opposed President Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term. Hutus blamed the violence on armed opposition groups, while Tutsis blamed members of the youth movement of the ruling party, Imbonerakure, and security forces for the violence. With regards to some questions, perception of females and males were different. For instance, on issues like whether term limit manipulation is the root of the current crisis, whether the crisis has enduring impact on the population including persistent fear of attack, and whether government forces are responsible for violence, the mean values showed that women agreed more with these statements than men. Also, the mean values showed that women agreed more with term limitations and the Arusha agreement more than men. However, in most of the questions, there were no gender differences observed.

### **Qualitative Interview Data Analysis**

The quantitative data results showed statistically significant differences between Hutus and Tutsis, as well as some significant gender differences, with regard to attitudes about the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation. For the qualitative phase of the study, qualitative data were collected with interviews and data from Afrobarometer, ACLED, Human Rights Watch Reports, Amnesty International Reports, International Crisis Group Report, United Nations Reports, newspapers, and transcripts

from the United States Congressional Testimony Hearing on Burundi. The purpose was to obtain meaning, gain understanding, and corroborate the survey information with participants' experiences.

Of the 14 people invited to participate, 10 agreed to complete interviews. Due to the severity of the crisis, participants were assigned alphabet letters to protect them from potential harm due to participating in this study. A demographic analysis of participants is shown in Table 10.

Table 10

*Demographics of Interviewees (n = 10)*

<b>Demographics</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
18-25 Years old	4	40
26-35 Years old	6	60
36-45 Years old	0	0
46-55 Years old	0	0
56-65 Years old	0	0
66 Years or older	0	0
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	6	60
Female	4	40
Other	0	0
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Hutu	4	40
Tutsi	4	40
Twa	0	0
Other	2	20
<b>Level of education</b>		
High School	0	0
Technical/Vocational training	0	0
Bachelor's degree	8	80
Master's degree	2	20
Professional degree	0	0
Doctoral degree	0	0
<b>Occupation</b>		
Self-employed	0	0
Student	3	30
Government	1	10
Unemployed	2	20
Private sector	4	40
Retired	0	0
Other	0	0

Out of the 15 interview questions, five questions gathered demographic information from participants. The majority of interviewees were 26-35 years old ( $n=6$ , 60%) and 40% were 18-25 years old ( $n=4$ , 40%). No respondents aged 36 or older were interviewed even though they were recruited. In terms of gender distribution, the majority of interviewees identified as male ( $n=6$ , 60%) and 40% identified as female ( $n=4$ ). For ethnic distribution, the numbers were evenly divided between Hutus ( $n=4$ , 40%), and Tutsis ( $n=4$ , 40%). Interviewees who identified as “other” ( $n=2$ , 20%) were individuals with a Tutsi father and a Hutu mother, or vice versa. No interviewee identified as Twa. Concerning education levels, the majority of interviewees identified as having a bachelor’s degree ( $n=8$ , 80%) and 20% identified themselves as holding master’s degree ( $n=2$ , 20%). No interviewee had earned only a high school graduation, technical/vocational training, professional, or doctoral degree. In the occupation category, private sector employment was the largest occupation category ( $n=4$ , 40%) and students were the second largest occupation category ( $n=3$ , 30%). Interviewees identifying as unemployed were the third largest occupation category ( $n=2$ , 20%), government employees were the fourth largest occupation category ( $n=1$ , 10%), and no interviewee identified as self-employed or retired.

Braun and Clarke’s (2006) analysis process was applied to the 10 interview transcriptions for the purpose of understanding the lived experiences of each of the interviewees from their personal accounts. The researcher applied thematic analysis to code the qualitative data collected because that approach suits questions connected to participants’ experiences or participants’ opinions and perceptions. Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six steps were used for categorizing, examining, and reporting the qualitative data



using thematic analysis. The six steps are as follows: (a) familiarizing oneself with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) writing the report.

Interview participants were asked to answer 10 interview questions about their experiences with the conflict. The questions were as follows:

1. Tell me about your experiences with the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?
2. How have President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term aspirations affected you?
3. Why do you think President Pierre Nkurunziza extended his term in office?
4. Did President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term aspirations contribute to violence? If yes, how so?
5. What does presidential term limits means to you?
6. What do you perceive as some of the consequences of term limit manipulation?
7. How should Burundians deal with President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term in office?
8. Could you reflect on the devastating cost to Burundi caused by President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to pursue a third term in office?
9. How has your family been affected by the crisis?
10. Is there anything else you would like to offer that I did not ask?

After each interview, the researcher placed transcripts into a Microsoft Word document and reread transcripts line-by-line. Open and axial coding was applied to analyze data. Seven key themes were uncovered from the thematic analysis of interview data: (a) importance of term limits, (b) concern of ethnic violence, (c) economic impact,

(d) sense of fear and insecurity, (e) culture of impunity, (f) violation of Arusha agreement and the Constitution, and (g) culture of greed and corruption. While themes were described as separate, a great similarity existed between them. Moreover, interviewees' answers to questions repeatedly touched on multiple themes. In those instances, interview data were explained where they clearly belong. Table 11 shows a summary of the themes and sub-themes established from the interview data. Data are presented with interviewees' quotes from transcripts used to support and refine the qualitative data analysis process.

Table 11

*Themes and Sub-Themes from Interview Transcript*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
Importance of term limits	Need for two-term limits Dictatorship Respect for term limits Democracy
Economic impact	Rule of law Lack of jobs Refugee crisis People fled Burundi Economy affected Foreign investors left Businesses closed their doors
Concern of ethnic violence,	Fear of ethnic violence Ethnic issues Fear of civil war Hutu and Tutsi representation
Sense of fear and insecurity	Fear Insecurity Refugee issues Fled the country Many people died Gender violence Cycle of violence
Culture of impunity	Lack of report on civilian deaths Violence by Imbonerakure militia Violence by armed opposition groups Lack of rule of law Violence between police and youth Violence against demonstrators Some people sabotaged the government

Violation of Arusha agreement and the Constitution	Human rights violations Violated the Constitution Arusha agreement violated Lack of clarity in the Constitution Constitutional issues Constitution violated
Culture of greed and corruption	Lack of respect for the Constitution Greed Corruption African leaders are greedy and corrupt Power comes with lots of opportunities

**Theme 1: Importance of term limits.** The concept of term limits refers to a limitation on the number of years that a president can serve in an elected office. The current crisis in Burundi is due, in part, to President Nkurunziza's desire to seek a third term despite a two-term limitation in Burundi's Constitution. Interviewees expressed different perceptions on, and prescriptions for, the need for two-term limitation in Burundi. For example, interviewees viewed two-term limits as curbing dictatorship as well as a prerequisite to democracy and good governance. For instance, interviewee H linked the importance of term limits to democracy and argued that term limits are important to preventing dictatorship. He suggested,

Term limits for president, for me, is very important in democracy or in democratic country. Here, we are refereeing to leadership that we are having in Africa or in other countries. Somebody in power start to rule, have an agenda or having a project; if his first term expires, people will evaluate him. If he does it well, he has a chance to go for another term. If citizens like him, they will vote for him again. But, in order to avoid dictatorship . . . it is important to have term limits. In order to bring new ideas, new projects, term limits are important for that. (Age 35)

Interviewee D supported this line of argument, stating,

We have this text that regulates the way a country functions. The way . . . the law, which we have to abide by. So, I think that, personally speaking, term limits . . . is a way or a sign of saying that a country is democratic or not democratic. (Age 26)

For interviewee C, term limits were an important component of the Arusha agreement and of Burundi's Constitution. This interviewee believed that term limits were necessary to check abuses of power. He extensively detailed the importance of term limits by arguing,

For me, it means, I now have to put it in the context of Burundi. Why they put third term . . . or term limits in Arusha agreement in our Constitution. That is, basically . . . you can find in Burundi's history the fact that we went from dictators to dictators. So, the negotiators at the Arusha talks, they had that in mind. Bringing term limits in the text was to ensure that we don't fall back into the abuse of power. So, for me, the term limit in Burundi's context is really to fight against the abuse of power that we have experienced in the past regime. People staying in power . . . without holding elections or without being accountable to anyone because no one voted for them; they just took power through violence. Basically, to have term limits . . . for us, it really helps to safeguard Burundi's democracy. I will try to avoid going into the broader meaning of term limits because it depends on the different context. As exactly, our leaders, now they tend to kind of argue when we talk about term limits. They bring examples of Germany or UK, where they have parliamentary systems, but without term limits. I think . . . for me to explain the meaning of presidential term limits, I want to explain that in the context of Burundi. (Age 30)

Furthermore, interviewee E believed that leaders should serve their mandates and step down to allow other leaders to bring new ideas. She maintained,

Well, like, any leader or government elected is supposed to run for a certain period and, later, he may give that position to another one to continue to bring new things to the lives of the people. So, the term limits, I think, are necessary; otherwise, the president will stay for a long time. They need to retire; they need to give the place to another; we need other people: we need to see other leadership because they are not the only people that are able to save the country. This is why I think term limits are necessary. (Age 24)

Interviewee E provided a recommendation to avoid the recurrence of this kind of violence in Burundi. She suggested,

Maybe we should extend to avoid some problems . . . it's my opinion . . . because if we have that thing that comes around every 5-year, each 5-year we don't know. It will be a circle, and it may never end; maybe for 10 years or forever. (Age 24)

These diverse perceptions of the importance of two-term limits suggested that term limits are imperative to Burundians. From this assessment, it appears that term limits are an important component of democracy and good governance.

**Theme 2: Concern of ethnic violence.** This theme captured each of the interviewees' concerns about ethnic violence and the longstanding ethnic struggle for control of power and state resources in Burundi. Ethnic violence, in this context, means violence between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority. Although the crisis in Burundi is often described in relation to political conflicts and division, it is not completely grasped without studying ethnic problems. While previous bouts of ethnic

violence were expressed in ethnic terms, the current violence hinges on political divisions. Interviewees were concerned that the violence could turn into an ethnic conflict. Previous ethnic crises in Burundi left a lasting effect on the people, including persistent fear of violence, communal division, and arbitrary violence. Many of the interviewees underscored this notion. For instance, interviewee I associated it with social, political, and psychological issues related to the current crisis. She stated,

...You know, people hate each other right now because . . . like the Hutu and Tutsi. Like, oh, the Hutu are in power, okay; now we have to revenge. You see revenge in the long run, and also hatred towards Hutu and Tutsi, and everything is not good for the country. It is a very bad idea, and it has challenges because it affects people economically, socially, politically, and psychologically. (Age 21)

Interviewee H looked at the ethnic problems through a political lens.

He suggested:

In some political contexts, also, he is there to do revenge of what happened in 1972. His father was killed; that happened. It happened to other people, but now in his speeches, in his statements, he has been declaring that, he has been declaring that he will revenge. He will show what people did, especially the Tutsi regime, what they did to Hutu. So, that's also revenge in political context. (Age 35)

Interviewee C provided historical context for the Hutu-Tutsi violent history. He contended,

in 1972 . . . there was massacre against the Hutu in Burundi. So, I think psychologically, that plays . . . is still playing a huge role in the way the

government or the people in government are currently reacting. So, it's a mix of revenge . . . on their parents or people that were closed to them. I think they are trying to say: "Okay, we are going to stay in power as much as possible." (Age 30)

Interviewee E (age 24) discussed the Hutu and Tutsi power dynamics, which were central to the crisis in Burundi. She argued, "now, they are talking about ethnicity, saying that the Tutsi ruled for so long, and now is time for Hutu to rule. And they say that . . . they say that now Hutu should rule as long as they want." For interviewee G (age 27), the Imbonerakure youth wing threatened to renew ethnic wounds left by the civil war and decades of sporadic ethnic killings before that. She stated,

We see many people who are caught without reason; I mean legal reasons. And I can say that, um, they target people to achieve their goals. Those Imbonerakure have to stop attacking, and most of those women and girls attacked are Tutsi.

Interviewee B (age 25) described Burundi's ethnic problems as a problem of the past generations. He argued,

When they came in power, they brought all these ideologies that my generation doesn't have. For instance, the issue around ethnicity; in my generation, these are actually not our issues. These are issues of our parents that have been passed through.

Interviewee F (age 22) interpreted the ethnicity problem differently. She strongly believed that this crisis had nothing to do with ethnicity and stated,

It didn't have anything to do with ethnicity, frankly speaking. Because the media or the opposition, they say, "Oh the Hutu . . . because he is a Hutu, he wanted to

destroy the Tutsi. I don't know they want to do that . . . they are preparing; he is keeping the power because he is keeping the term. He is adding the third term because they wanna . . . they are preparing the genocide, and they wanna do it, but it's just untrue. The decision was made by the president and his party. And, in his party, there are Hutu and Tutsi; there are all ethnicities represented in the CNDD-FDD. It doesn't have anything to do with that. That's my opinion. And I think the crisis . . . the crisis has nothing to do with ethnicity.

It became clear that the deeply rooted ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups created a foundation of fear, mistrust, violence, and political division at all levels. Fear of massacre by ethnic adversaries led many Burundians to flee to neighboring countries. This ethnic feeling behind the conflict is deep-rooted in struggles for state power and access to resources.

**Theme 3: Economic impact.** This theme elucidates economic conditions and their consequences resulting from the current crisis. Some economic issues that interviewees highlighted ranged from declines in foreign aid, foreign trade, and investments as well as the influx of Burundian refugees to neighboring countries in search of better livelihoods. Essentially, all interviewees agreed that the economy was impacted due to the crisis. Interviewee A summed this up by underscoring

life becoming different in terms of lots of investors left the country, and people who fled the country are the people who own businesses. The middle class and expats also left the country. Foreign aid was stopped, for a large part, on many aspects like government and NGOs. Even NGOs suffered from the crisis. The exchange rate dropped dramatically. So, all of that really comes down to



economics and life just becoming really hard on everyone. And investors, and all the people who are actually interested in investing in Burundi in some way or the other, not being interested anymore, given that Burundi was a poor country to begin with. (Age 30)

It is important to note that Burundi's economy has depended on aid from western donors, which was suspended in an attempt to get President Pierre Nkurunziza to negotiate with opposition and civil society groups. In this context, interviewee D (age 26) added,

Burundi is a poor country. . . . Half of the annual budget of Burundi is coming from the European Union aid. Yes, it is the EU, which supports the annual budget of Burundi. So, this, um, has caused the economy to decrease. In 2015, a dollar could be bought for 1,680 Francs, but, today, it has gone up and is at 2,690 Francs. So, this is practically a devastating cost because the local money has lost its value, and this affects the economy. The other thing is that there have been many NGOs that have closed; this created unemployment. People had to sell their cars; people had to change to see how they can abide. For instance, a father who used to get a salary of 5,000 Burundian Francs and the NGO closed, he doesn't provide for the family. So, this has affected many families, and some are aware of life to flee to go into refugee camps.

Interviewee F (age 22) argued that Burundi lost human capital due to the crisis, with qualified Burundians fleeing the country due to violence and poor economic conditions. This interviewee mentioned, "So, ah, the economy is low because there is insecurity, and what I can say is that when even Burundians, when their businesses are

not going well, they go to invest in another country, and that's a lost." In a similar vein, interviewee G (age 27) believed,

Economically, many people are running away from the country. And, many businesses are closing since the demonstration started. And, um . . . investment and, so, when businesses closed their doors, many people stayed at home, and I think people don't go to work because there is no money. People started to leave Burundi; they are becoming sick . . . you know.

Interviewee J (age 33) concurred,

There are many Burundians who are in foreign countries now because of the crisis. And, it also affected the economy of the country. People are not investing as they were doing before. This situation affected the economy of the country. The society also . . . because people were trying to invest, but the crisis stopped them.

Interviewee I (age 21) also agreed, "People keep fleeing the country . . . what does that mean? When people flee the country, meaning, um, human capital is lost."

Interviewee H (age 35) also agreed,

By chasing out a big number of people, like a director who could contribute in managing the life of the country . . . now they are in exile. By chasing away, also, a big number of poor citizens, those one who are in refugee camps in Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and even in other countries in Europe. This is a loss for a country because these are capital; these are people, who could produce for the country, who are producing outside.

The perception was that people leaving Burundi affects the economy. Perceptions related to this theme showed that Burundi's economic activities were seen as interrupted and trade within regional and local markets as distressed. Most of the elements explaining economic deterioration since the crisis began in April, 2015 were a result of the departure of foreign investors, foreign aid, and NGOs. The influx of Burundians to neighboring countries slowed down business and sped up the loss of human capital.

**Theme 4: Sense of fear and insecurity.** The theme of fear and insecurity explained another outcome of the mounting repression that is driving Burundians into neighboring countries. Fear and insecurity, in this context, meant the anxiety and fear that people experienced because they felt uncertain and vulnerable. It also refers to economic insecurity among Burundians. This theme captured interviewees' deep feelings about their lives and how they have dealt with the crisis. All of the interviewees mentioned fearing that their lives were at risk for supporting the government or because of the perception that they supported opposing parties. The interviewees also cited economic insecurity as a reason that Burundians were fleeing. For instance, interviewee D argued,

A father who used to get a salary of 5,000 Burundian Francs and the NGO closed, he doesn't provide for the family. So, this has affected many family, and some are aware of life to flee to go into refugee camps. (Age 26)

Interviewee E echoed the same view. She claimed, "Families are torn apart . . . and there is high-level poverty. It's very obvious that people are not comfortable in economic situation and also about security" (Age 24). Interviewee A (age 30) linked refugee issues to fear and insecurity. This interviewee believed that people were fleeing

because they feared for their lives or were targeted because of their opposition to President Nkurunziza's third term. He stated,

I didn't choose to live in the states. My situation is getting little better, but I had a good job; I had my own non-profit, which was growing a lot. I was independent; I was well off financially; things happened, and I just had to move and start my life over, which hasn't been . . . it's very hard. Yeah, um, I am in exile now, and I am starting my life over because of that term and everything that happens. This affected lots of my friends who were protesting; a lot of them are in exile now.

Interviewee participant B (age 25) referred to the same condition. He believed,

My brother lost his job in 2015 and decided to go to Rwanda. There, he found a job, but he got to be terminated and came back to Burundi, and now he is actually jobless. He is actually 32 years old. He is back in Burundi because he could not sustain himself in Rwanda, being jobless. So, he is back in Burundi. And I had lots of family members who have fled. Some of them are in Rwanda, some of them are in Uganda. And those who could . . . they have fled to Europe and the western world, where they don't even want to come back to Burundi.

Interviewee I (age 21) linked fear and insecurity to violence and psychological issues. She contended,

Obviously, people died and then... properties destroyed, houses were burned, people were killed. Um, people were not working. You see now there are so many who are psychologically unstable you know because of the memories that they have because of their relatives were killed in front of their eyes. It has very great impact.

Several interviewees mentioned the violence committed by Imbonerakure youth militia, which is the armed wing of the CNDD-FDD ruling party. Several interviewees accused this group of terrorizing, and instilling fear in, Burundi. For instance, interviewee C (age 30) claimed,

So, we saw the past regime using the army to cling to power. We saw the past regime using youths to kind of target political opponents. We saw past regime using torture, we saw past regime using mass graves to kind of, you know trying to cover-up evidence of human rights violations.

Interviewee H (age 35) blamed both the Imbonerakure youth militia and armed opposition groups. On one hand, he argued,

My family was affected, of course, because, like, where I am from in Gitega province, the second town of Burundi, my family has been investigated several times by the militia Imbonerakure or people belonging to the intelligence asking where they were I am. My sisters were threatened several times and then they decided to flee to Rwanda because they were planning to take them to jail and rape them. So, in Bujumbura, the capital, where I was living at my aunt's house, I was attacked three times there. The house was stoned, the roof was broken, then we had . . . you know, they did it again. Okay, so, that's . . . you see, they were affected in terms of properties; they were affected in terms of threats.

On the other hand, interviewee H also believed that “the violence was also seen where some group of young people belonging to opposition parties’ used grenades and weapons to also fight policeman, to fight military, to fight other civilians belonging to ruling party.”

Furthermore, interviewee J (age 33) explained the fear that he endured at the peak of the protest:

I was afraid of what was happening. It was not easy to see how everything was going bad. Lots of people were killed . . . yes, so many people died because of the crisis. Everybody was afraid . . . everything was slow; people were saying that maybe the war was going to occur. So, it was like I was afraid of that situation.

Interviewee G (age 27) discussed her experience at the height of the demonstration, accusing the Imbonerakure youth militia of instilling fear in Burundi. She explained,

Yes, in the first month of the demonstrations . . . it was very hard to move around. It was scary to go out because of fear, because of insecurity. . . . I can say people are running and they are scared to stay here because those men who are in power are killing people and people are scared to stay here. So, yes, socially we have . . . there is also an issue and human rights are not respected. We see many people who are caught without reason, I mean legal reasons. And I can say that, um, they target people to achieve their goals. Those Imbonerakure have to stop attacking; and most of those women and girls attacked are Tutsi.

This theme shed light on the constant fear and insecurity among the interviewees. Many interviewees described the climate of fear that drove hundreds of thousands of Burundians to flee their country. Interviewees agreed that government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and some armed opposition groups committed human rights violations. The interviewees linked insecurity to lack of economic opportunities that prompted Burundians to flee to neighboring countries.

**Theme 5: Culture of impunity.** The term “culture of impunity” describes the condition in Burundi where impunity, over the years, became institutionalized and systematized. Broadly, it means that leaders can get away with anything. The concept is opposed to the idea of the rule of law, with the result that victims and survivors never obtain justice and perpetrators are never brought to justice. In essence, the absence of justice eliminates a vital deterrent to future perpetrators. Interviewees discussed their perceptions of the culture of impunity from different viewpoints.

Interviewee C (age 30) used historical context to discuss the culture of impunity. He stated,

We saw the past regime using youths to kind of target political opponents. We saw past regime using torture, we saw past regime using mass graves to kind of, you know trying to cover-up evidence of human rights violations. We saw people fleeing the country because of the crisis. We are trying to understand the Burundi conflict, the current Burundi crisis...within the historical context.

Interviewee A (age 30) explained, at great length, the lack of rule of law. He feared that the president not following the law could set the precedent of encouraging lawlessness. He argued, “It’s just lack of rule of law; just lawlessness and people fearing that if that guy is supposed to be the leader and doesn’t follow the laws that were established by the leadership, why should I follow the law?” Interviewee B (age 25) equated the lack of rule of law and presidential impunity with the president using his position of authority in an abusive manner. He explained,

It creates a bad ideology around impunity, and also the fact that actually if you are in power, you have a hand in whatever is around: accountability, transparency,

and people's freedom. So, manipulating term limits does give to people who are actually the younger generation the perception that we live in a country where just being in power, you can do whatever you want. Nobody will come after you, or you don't need to be accountable for A, B, C, or D. So, I think it's a bad practice that affects a lot.

Several interviewees alluded to the violence conducted by government forces, the Imbonerakure youth militia, and some armed opposition groups. The interviewees believed that violence prolonged the method of extra-judicial killings and political assassinations. Interviewee G (age 27) accused the Imbonerakure youth militia of targeting Tutsi men. She argued,

Those young men had guns, you know, and they started to arrest young people who are not part of Imbonerakure who are not from CNDD-FDD. And most of those young men, most of them were men, and most of them were Tutsi.

Similarly, Interviewee H (age 35) argued that the government failed to stop the Imbonerakure youth militia from committing human rights violations—including killings, unlawful detentions, and torture—against perceived government opponents. Furthermore, he stated that the president

created another danger for the country because he armed a group of civilians, this militia—Imbonerakure—that he created. This is danger for the society. It is danger also for himself. . . . You wake up and see bodies that were killed. Another consequence is impunity. Impunity has given freedom for people to kill whoever they want. No one is controlling; justice is not working. So, at the end of it, there



is no powerful institution, there is no strong institution in the country. We don't have a country rule by a serious institution.

Interviewee B (age 25) blamed security forces for targeting civilians. He alleged, "The regime could send the police in the streets and they were shooting at people and the army targeting specific people and disappearances." Interviewee J (age 33) accused armed opposition groups for the violence. He described armed opposition to violence this way: "The opposition used grenades to attack the police and the military, and the police went after them. And they killed military people, police, and civilians. It was a crazy situation. And nothing happened."

This theme encompassed a broad range of issues, ranging from the lack of rule of law, violence carried out by security forces, violence by the Imbonerakure youth militia, violence by armed opposition groups, and human rights abuses. The failure of the government of Burundi to deliver justice and accountability meant that individuals suffered serious violations of their rights yet received no justice or amends.

**Theme 6: Violation of Arusha agreement and the Constitution.** At the core of the current crisis is the legality of President Nkurunziza's third term bid. The interviews related to this theme assessed the relevance of the Arusha agreement and Burundi's Constitution in light of his third-term bid. Both the Arusha agreement and Burundi's Constitution have provisions about term limitations, but this provision was strongly debated by both supporters and opponents of President Nkurunziza's third-term bid. On the one hand, opponents of President Nkurunziza's third term-bid argued that under the Constitution and the Arusha agreement framework presidents can only seek election for two terms in office. On the other hand, supporters of President Nkurunziza argued, his

first term did not count toward the two-term limit since he was appointed by parliament in 2005. Interviewees extensively discussed their perceptions on this issue. For instance, interviewee A (age 30) explained,

I was against the third term, but I wasn't for the opposition either. I wouldn't have cared if Nkurunziza's party gave us another candidate regardless of how corrupt they are or whatever. I just wanted Nkurunziza not to get a third term because that just violates the Constitution.

Interviewee B (age 25) worried that the president would eliminate term limits from the Constitution entirely, which could usher in authoritarian rule. He stressed, "My fear would be that they changed the Constitution, then we go to the authoritarian regime that we had in the previous. So, it means that the Arusha agreement would be thrown in the dustbin." Interviewee C (age 30) believed,

Nkurunziza's aspiration to third term basically questioned the Arusha agreement, which basically ended a decade-long civil war. So, Nkurunziza's bid for a third term basically attacks the social contract, as we called it at times, among Burundians.

Furthermore, interviewee H (age 35) discussed the importance of Arusha agreement, and the Constitution, which he believed were violated by the president. He stated,

Presidential term limit is written in the Constitution and in the Arusha agreement that no president should rule more than two terms. That sentence is enough. And, also, you know, ruling is about law. What is written . . . everybody considered what is written in the Constitution to be the law. So, just considering that, what

was said before even himself or in his ruling party . . . it was said that the other candidates . . . ah, you know, but at the end of the day he came himself.

Interviewee J (age 33) had a different perception of President Nkurunziza's third-term bid. This interviewee claimed that the Arusha agreement and the Constitution were not clear about term limits. He argued,

According to the Constitution of Burundi, the president was right . . . because the Constitution was not clear. So, it was like, what he was saying was the Constitution . . . even the opposition was saying the Constitution was not clear.

According to the Constitution, in one way, it was like, what we were saying about term limits

. . . the president has rights. It was not easy to say that the president was wrong about the third term according the Constitution. His third term is right because he has rights to run again. Even the Arusha agreement was not clear about term limits. This brought confusion between the opposition and the government. But the Constitution was not clear, and the Constitution is more important than the Arusha agreement.

Interviewee D (age 26) shared the same perception about the lack of clarity in the Constitution about term limits. He suggested,

There was the Constitution and there is an article in it, where it is written how many terms are limited for a presidential term. But the problem is, it was not clear or indicated how these terms are to be run.

Interviewee J (age 33) reiterated this view:

Maybe, for me, as the Constitution was not clear, Burundians could let President Pierre Nkurunziza run for another term and then look for how to correct this error, which was the Constitution. Because when you start to analyze the Constitution, you can see that there is an error in the Constitution. The Constitution was stated in a way that the opposition went against him. So, Burundians could understand each other to correct the error in the Constitution.

This theme encompassed different perceptions about the Constitution and the Arusha agreement. Some interviewees indicated that inconsistency between the Arusha agreement and Burundi's Constitution created violence.

**Theme 7: Culture of greed and corruption.** The last theme in the qualitative interview portion covered the culture of greed and corruption. Greed and corruption are defined by the desire for money or power, which often guarantee political elites full control over their economies and its rents. This concept suggests that politics in Burundi are synonymous with wealth and the quest for power. Interviewees stressed the economic and social costs associated with greed and corruption in Burundi.

Some interviewees believed that President Nkurunziza extended his term in office because of an appetite for power, greed, and corruption. For instance, interviewee C (age 30) implied that one of the reasons for the president to extend his term was economics. He stated,

If you see the level of corruption at the government level or around Nkurunziza, that would be one factor. The fact that they can amass lots of money . . . with them being in power. It sounds to me like not logical, but I would use logical for

the purpose of understanding. . . . In their thinking . . . if they leave power, they would be losing those opportunities to have access to those resources.

Interviewee H (age 35) explained in detail the reason that President Nkurunziza extended his term in office. He believed that the reason was the misuse and selling of Burundi's natural resources to companies. He stated,

Another point of cause is about the economy. This is somebody that I said that came from the bush, who doesn't care about others. Somebody who wants to take all common goods, all common goods, which should be shared by all members of Burundians. He wants to enjoy all this goodness of Burundi. Burundi is a country, which has nickel, which had gold, which has many resources, which has many good lands; good fertile land, which has petrol in Lake Tanganyika. All of these he will be enjoying, and he signed a contract with powerful countries and people. So, he wants to enjoy all this goodness.

Interviewee G (age 27) argued a similar viewpoint:

I think it was for his own ambitions, his personal ambition. He was just . . . um, he just wanted to stay there to keep the power, so that him and the people who are with him could use the country's resources . . . um, as they want.

Interviewee F (age 22) connected greed and corruption to power. She also viewed greed and corruption as a wider problem in Africa. She explained,

You know the majority of African leaders love power, if I can say that. No one, I don't know, no one wants just pass power to others. And, you understand, on one hand is understanding because it gives them the immunity, wealth, honor, and all kinds of material benefits.

With respect to this theme, interviewees' perceptions of greed and corruption ranged from the of exploitation of natural resources and the importance of holding political power, which guaranteed that President Nkurunziza and his political elites could maintain full control over the economy and its rents.

### **Interview Data Summary**

The purpose of the qualitative interview data analysis was to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Data were collected through open-ended and semi-structured phone and Skype interviews. It was clear that the crisis in Burundi had different moving components, but throughout the qualitative interviews, participants acknowledged the consequences of the crisis to their lives. Themes that emerged from these interviews included the need for term limits, concern about ethnic violence, economic impacts, the sense of fear and insecurity, the culture of impunity, the violation of Arusha Accords and the Constitution, and a culture of greed and corruption. Interviewees established that these issues contributed to the country's violent history and argued that if the political crisis was not resolved, violence risked repeating itself. These themes revealed the long-standing violent history of Burundi and a greater awareness of vulnerability among Burundians regarding the current crisis. Some interviewees broadly expressed views on one or several of the themes, while some interviewees made specific contributions regarding all themes. Accordingly, all 10 interviewees' opinions were described in this study.

The purpose of the next section, the qualitative document analysis, was to support interviewees' lived experiences with the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation.

### **Document Analysis**

For the document analysis, data were collected from Afrobarometer, ACLED, Human Rights Watch reports, Amnesty International reports, International Crisis Group reports, United Nations Security Council reports, newspapers, and transcripts from the United States Congressional Testimony Hearing on Burundi. Open and axial coding was applied to analysis of the data. This portion of the data analysis, using thematic analysis, revealed five key themes: (a) importance of term limits, (b) cycle of impunity, (c) climate of fear, (d) fear of ethnic crisis, and (e) refugee crisis. Data are presented with quotes from documents to strengthen and enhance the qualitative data analysis process. Table 12 shows a summary of the themes and sub-themes established from the documents.

**Theme 1: Importance of term limits.** Term limits are defined as measures to limit the number of years that a leader can hold office. Many of the documents analyzed the importance of presidential term limits. Burundi's Constitution only allows a president to serve a maximum two five-year terms. President Nkurunziza and his supporters maintained that he was first appointed by parliament in 2005, instead of through universal suffrage, and that he was, therefore, qualified to run again. This was the origin of the current crisis. ACLED (2016) detailed the opposition to President Nkurunziza's third term:

Opponents of a third term cite term limits stipulated by Article 96 of the Constitution and adherence to the Arusha Accords, which ended the civil war

fought from 1993 to 2005 by providing constitutional checks on monopolies of power by any one party or ethnic group. (p. 3)

Table 12

*Themes and Sub-Themes from Data Sources*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
Importance of term limits	Checks and balances Two-term limits and democracy Arusha Accords Democracy over dictatorship
Cycle of Impunity	Corrupt judges Violence by security forces Violence by Imbonerakure Violence by armed opposition groups Corruption within courts systems Weak justice system Court ruled in favor of third term Lack of trust in public institutions
Climate of fear	Gender violence Repression against demonstrators Government crackdown on civil society groups Imbonerakure youth wing forced people to protest for the government Violence by armed opposition groups Violence by Imbonerakure
Fear of Ethnic Crisis	Ethnicity issues Hutu-Tutsi violence Ethnic issues Fear of ethnic violence
Refugee crisis	Influx of refugees Burundians fled to neighboring countries Refugee issues

In her testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Thomas-Greenfield, (2015) argued that President Nkurunziza’s third term violated the Arusha agreement. She stated that President Nkurunziza’s “decision to pursue a third term also clearly violated terms of the 2000 Arusha agreement, which led to the end of the Burundian Civil War and became the foundation for relative peace and security over the past decade” (p. 2). Afrobarometer’s study supported this argument. Bentley et al. (2016) argued that president Nkurunziza’s actions “stand in sharp contrast to the convictions that Burundi



citizens expressed in the most recent Afrobarometer survey, in September-October 2014, including support for democracy, for free and fair elections and for limiting presidential terms to a maximum of two.” (p. 1). Bentley et al. (2016) argued, “A majority of Burundians (62%) favor a two-term limit on presidential mandates, as provided for by the Constitution of Burundi” (p. 2). A previous Afrobarometer study indicated, “Only 51% of Burundian citizens supported presidential term limits” (Afrobarometer, 2015, p. 1). In contrast, at his testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Nimuraba (2015) argued that “people in the countryside do not care about presidential terms or the nuances of constitutional law. They likely know nothing about what Arusha Accords say about presidential term limits” (p. 4). In a report featured on Reuters, Manirabarusha (2016) wrote that Burundi could eliminate presidential term limits from its Constitution since “Justin Nzoyisaba, chairman of CNDI, a commission set up by Nkurunziza last year to canvas public opinion on Burundi’s political system, said late on Wednesday that most Burundians wanted term limits abolished” (Manirabarusha, 2016, p. 1).

Siegle (2015) examined the implications of term limit manipulation on a continental level. In his testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he stated,

The outcome of the term limits battle in Burundi also has political implications for the rest of Africa. Since 2000, a dozen African leaders have tried to circumvent term limits that were instituted to limit the monopolization of power and foster a culture of democratic transitions in Africa. (p. 3)

An ACLED (2016) report also addressed term limit manipulation on a continental level. The report stated, “Burundi’s initial riots and protests starting in April 2015 mirror that of other African countries where long-standing presidents have attempted to defy or

constitutionally remove term limits” (p. 2). Furthermore, Siegle (2015) connected President Nkurunziza’s desire to run for a third term to greed and corruption. He believed,

In addition to the natural desire of many leaders in positions of authority to extend their time in power, Nkurunziza’s efforts to retain control of the presidency likely stem from a Burundian political economy that rewards senior officials financially. Access to political power in Burundi allows for considerable control over public procurement processes, the mining sector, international financial assistance, and reimbursements for peacekeeping deployments. (Siegle, 2015, p. 3)

The question of the constitutionality of President Nkurunziza’s third term was entirely central to the current crisis. Analysis of theme revealed that the issue of term limits would further entrench and divide the Burundian population, which will almost undoubtedly weaken the fragile peace and stability of Burundi.

**Theme 2: Cycle of impunity.** The theme of the cycle of impunity covered the lack of consequences or lack of rule of law in Burundi leading to a culture of impunity. Among the overarching issues related to this theme included violence carried out by security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups. This theme uncovered the systematic corruption within the justice system. Concern exists among Burundians that members of government forces, the Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups involved in human rights abuses during protests were not held accountable. The government failed to launch an investigation or to prosecute members of government forces who were blamed for violence, rape, and killings. The government

also failed to investigate claims of killings, harassment, and the intimidation of individuals by Imbonerakure youth militia and armed opposition groups.

Thomas-Greenfield (2015) argued that the cycle of impunity in Burundi was one of the major reasons for the continuing crisis. She stated,

The government has not taken action to seriously investigate credible allegations of human rights violations and abuses by members of the ruling party youth wing, known as the Imbonerakure, the Burundian National Police, and the National Intelligence Service, nor has the government taken action to hold these same groups accountable. (p. 2)

The United Nations Security Council (2017) Report of the Secretary-General on Burundi also alluded to the culture of impunity. The report revealed that the “alleged perpetrators of human rights violations continue to benefit from total impunity. Very little effort has been made to investigate human rights abuses committed by State agents or the Imbonerakure.” (p. 7). Taking a similar view, a report by Human Rights Watch (2017b) detailed the cycle of violence and the lack of efforts to bring perpetrators to justice. It stated,

Burundi ruling party’s youth league, the Imbonerakure, have brutally killed, tortured, and severely beaten scores of people across the country in recent months, Human Rights Watch said today. The killings and other ill-treatment reflect the widespread impunity for Imbonerakure members and the government’s unwillingness to prosecute or rein in the group. (p. 1)

A report by Amnesty International (2017a) also implicated armed opposition groups in violence against government officials and civilians. The report revealed:

In early 2016, there were regular grenade explosions in Bujumbura followed by targeted killings. On 22 March Lieutenant Colonel Darius Ikurakure, an army officer implicated in numerous human rights violations, was shot dead inside the army's headquarters. On 25 April gunmen fired on the car of General Athanase Kararuzza, killing him, his wife Consolate Gahiro and his assistant Gérard Vyimana and fatally wounding his daughter Daniella Mpundu. The previous day Human Rights Minister Martin Nivyabandi and Diane Murindababisha were injured in an attack. On 13 July unidentified gunmen killed Hafsa Mossi, a former minister and member of the East African Legislative Assembly. A senior presidential adviser, Willy Nyamitwe, was injured in an assassination attempt on 28 November. (p. 2)

This account suggested that perpetrators of human rights abuses frequently enjoy immunity due to lack of proper investigation and punishment.

A Human Rights Watch (2018) report agreed: “Impunity for serious crimes committed in Burundi remains the norm. The justice system is manipulated by ruling party and intelligence officials and judicial procedures are routinely flouted” (p. 5). Moreover, the weak justice system in Burundi is often blamed for its lack of will to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of violence. Amnesty International (2017a) concurred:

Victims of human rights violations continued to face serious challenges in accessing justice. Journalist Esdras Ndikumana was tortured in August 2015 and filed a complaint at the Supreme Court in October 2015. No progress was made in the case in 2016. (p. 3)

Wambua and Logan (2017) of Afrobarometer suggested:

Perpetrators have enjoyed near-impunity from a weak judicial system pressured into silence or collaboration. A notable example was described by former Constitutional Court Vice President Sylèvre Nimpagaritse, who after fleeing to Rwanda said the high court's judges had come under "enormous pressure and even death threats" to rubber-stamp as legal a disputed third term for President Pierre Nkurunziza in 2015. (p. 1)

In detailing another case, Human Rights Watch (2017b) stated,

One man said he filed a complaint with the police in February 2016, after two policemen raped his wife. They told him he was "staining the image of the security forces." After police threatened him and Imbonerakure members beat him up, he withdrew the complaint. (p. 2)

Examination of this theme revealed that there is no culpability for gross human rights abuses in Burundi. The several accounts related to this theme showed that state security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups have perpetrated serious human rights violations. This theme also clarified that the justice system in Burundi lacks impartiality and, consequently, that the Burundian government is neither willing to nor capable of conducting efficient investigations or prosecutions.

**Theme 3: Climate of fear.** The theme of the climate of fear emphasized the constant climate of fear in Burundi. A climate of fear is defined as the perception that individuals or groups may enflame fear in the general population in order to attain political objectives. In the context of Burundi, this entails fear imposed by security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups. Several of the

documents indicated that the mounting level of human rights violations have caused deep and widespread fear among Burundians. The International Crisis Group (2016) report suggested that the “political strategy to dismantle the accord and the return of violent rhetoric and tactics reminiscent of the civil war have generated great fear within Burundian society” (p. i). Likewise, the Human Rights Watch (2017b) report implied, “Burundians live in fear of the next attack, afraid to speak out to denounce the killings, torture, and other abuses” (p. 1). The same report also stated, “victims of rape and sexual violence who said they had recognized members of the Imbonerakure who had raped them. Some women were targeted because their husbands or male relatives were members of opposition parties such as the FNL” (Human Rights Watch, 2017b, p. 4).

Siegle (2015) argued, some Burundians feel a greater sense of vulnerability. He argued,

The foundation for genocide—the mindset climate of fear, and polarization—has been laid. Some Burundians have said the level of apprehension is now worse than during the civil war. Then, most of the killing was between armed combatants. Now civilians are also being targeted, causing a greater sense of vulnerability. (p. 2)

Amnesty International (2017a) emphasized intimidation conducted by Imbonerakure youth militia: “throughout the country, the Imbonerakure put pressure on people to join it or the ruling CNDD-FDD and carried out campaigns of intimidation against those who refused” (Amnesty International, 2017, p. 2). Human Rights Watch (2017b) revealed, “Many people refuse to file judicial complaints against Imbonerakure members because they fear them and have lost confidence in the justice system, which

they believe is unable to help the victims and may be involved in abuses” (p. 2). Furthermore, Human Rights Watch (2017b) “learned of several additional incidents of abuse, but victims were afraid to speak about what they or family members had suffered. Many said they feared reprisals from ruling party members if they spoke about the abuses” (p. 2). These kinds of intimidation tactics caused profound and pervasive anxiety among Burundians.

In her U.S. Congressional testimony, Thomas-Greenfield (2015) suggested, “Some elements opposed to President Nkurunziza have conducted targeted attacks on government officials, police officers, and civilians. These actions also threaten to escalate the situation and spark more widespread violence” (p. 3). This cycle of violence instills fear in the general population. Again, Siegle (2015) detailed the cycle of violence between security forces and armed opposition groups. He observed,

In the face of this intimidation and exodus, peaceful protests have waned, and violent reprisals have emerged. In early August, a well-coordinated rocket attack killed the most feared military figure in the country, General Adolphe Nshimirimana. Reflecting an apparent decapitation strategy, several other senior military figures have also been assassinated or targeted. Several dozen police officers have also been attacked. In apparent retaliation, civil society and opposition political leaders or their family members have been killed. (pp. 1-2)

The same view was supported by Thomas-Greenfield (2015), who reported,

Many of those attempting to flee have reported violent confrontations by party militias and police while en route. Since the crisis began in April 2015, amorphous groups of armed opposition actors have also carried out violence

against the security services and key targets in Bujumbura, and in Burundi's border areas, further exacerbating the conflict. (p. 3)

Another Human Rights Watch report (2018) underscored violence carried out by armed opposition groups. The report indicated that

[l]ocal journalists and human rights activists reported several grenade attacks and killings believed to have been committed by armed opposition groups. Other armed opposition attacks appeared to be more targeted and covert. (p. 4)

It is abundantly clear from the reports that the crisis in Burundi developed into a retaliatory conflict among government forces, the Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups and that this instilled fear among Burundians.

**Theme 4: Fear of Ethnic crisis.** The theme of fear of ethnic crisis refers to the existing fear of ethnic conflict among Burundians. More disturbing have been ethnic displays of violence emerging in Burundi. Political elites on both sides may be exploiting memories of past traumas for political goals, which could exacerbate the crisis. Concerning fear of ethnic crisis, mass ethnic violence has not been extensive in the recent crisis. However, the AU, UN, Burundians, scholars, and policymakers are afraid that persistent ethnic concern could deepen violence in the near future. The ACLED (2016) report concurred: "because of Burundi's recent conflict history, some, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, have warned that the ethnic dimensions of the conflict 'are flashing red'" (p. 1). An International Crisis Group report (2016) reported that President Nkurunziza's third term brought issues of ethnicity to the forefront. The report stated, "while many Burundians and the international community believed the ethnic problem had been solved with the Arusha accord, it has



returned to the fore with President Nkurunziza's third term" (International Crisis Group, 2016, p. i).

In an Op-ed for the *Washington Post*, Jones (2015) wrote,

The government uses ethnic rhetoric presumably to signal to the opposition the potential violence that could come their way and incite citizens to participate in violence. The opposition uses ethnicized rhetoric to push for international intervention, which has the potential of changing the makeup of government. (p. 3)

The United Nations Security Council (2017) Report of the Secretary-General on Burundi also mentioned how

political figures have used inflammatory and hate-filled language in speeches, on social media, in communiqués and in the press, calling on the population to 'protect' the country against so-called traitors and plotters allegedly trying to destabilize Burundi. (p. 9)

In Burundi, a key source of ethnic conflict is memories of past traumas, which increase fear and anxiety. These feelings, in turn, create a toxic pattern of doubt and suspicion that leads to ethnic violence. The Amnesty International's (2017a) report implied that "the fragile cohesion between different ethnic groups resulting from the implementation of the Arusha Accords was destabilized by the political crisis. Incendiary rhetoric from high-level officials increased tensions towards the end of the year" (p. 3). Siegle (2015) substantiated this concept by arguing,

In an effort to mobilize support among the Hutu majority, the CNDD-FDD has been increasingly employing ethnically polarizing tactics. Purges among senior

military and government officials have largely been ethnically based. In November CNDD-FDD leaders began invoking ethnically incendiary language, recalling the pattern employed in the Rwandan genocide. (p. 2)

In his testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Nimuraba (2015) argued for a different point of view regarding the ethnic dynamics in Burundi:

The shared struggle that both Hutu and Tutsi now experience is endangered by a small number of older people who retain vivid memories of ethnic hate the violent it spewed. These few sadly try to embed their fears among younger generations. (p. 4)

Examination of the theme of fear of ethnic violence comprised diverse approaches to conceptualizing fear of ethnic crisis among Burundians. In Burundi, past ethnic conflict was the main source of fear and anxiety.

**Theme 5: Refugee crisis.** Examination of the last theme in this qualitative data analysis, that of the refugee crisis, showed that the refugee crisis was a great concern to Burundi's neighbors. Due to border configurations in the Greater Lakes Region, leaders of neighboring countries gradually became concerned that the crisis could have a spillover effect across their borders. This theme emphasized insecurity, sociopolitical concerns, and socioeconomic issues, which were the reasons that Burundians fled to neighboring countries for safety and better livelihood.

For example, as the International Crisis Group (2016) reported, Some 250,000 Burundians have fled, including a significant portion of the political and economic establishment as well as civil society activists. The flight has drained Burundi of its most dynamic citizens and exposed divisions between

the regime on one hand, and the army, the capital and the Tutsi community on the other. (p. i)

Amnesty International (2017b) reported that Burundian refugees continue to have a real fear of abuse by security forces and Imbonerakure youth movement. The report stated,

Approximately 100,000 people fled Burundi in 2016, bringing the total number of Burundian refugees who had fled the ongoing crisis to over 327,000. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated that 139,000 people were internally displaced due to the crisis and natural disasters. People trying to flee were abused and robbed. Members of the Imbonerakure were largely responsible, although refugees also accused people in police and military uniforms. (p. 6)

A UNHCR (2017) report described the humanitarian crisis by claiming, “Burundian refugees remain in dire need of humanitarian assistance and support in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania” (p. 1).

The fragile situation in Burundi is creating a constant influx of refugees to neighboring countries. The United Nations Security Council (2017) report of the Secretary-General on Burundi underscored some interrelations between the ongoing crisis within the country and concerns for economic decline, youth employment, and Burundians fleeing to neighboring countries. The report claimed:

The key macroeconomic indicators show a decline in gross domestic product growth, a significant loss of foreign exchange reserves and a sharp drop in public

investment. Public debt increased to over 50 per cent in 2016. Unemployment rates are soaring, especially among youth. (p. 9)

Another issue that has played a critical role in spilling conflict from one country to another in the Great Lakes Region was forced migration resulting from conflict, as a consequence of which Burundi's neighbors worried about security issues and bearing the economic burden of the crisis. Due to the ethnic and border configuration of the region, refugees could easily bring conflict into neighboring countries, as there are parallel ethnic relationships within the Great Lakes Region. Kanyangara (2016) supported this view, arguing that

the Great Lakes Region has experienced situations where refugees were able to trigger significantly more destabilizing dynamics by impacting directly on ethnic relations in their host countries, or by building a base for rebel group mobilization and operations. (p. 8)

Furthermore, Thomas-Greenfield, (2015) noted, "The crisis in Burundi has also beset its neighbors with refugees continuing to cross into Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, and the DRC, and at times exacerbated existing regional tensions" (p. 7). Siegle (2015) shed light on the broader implications of economic burden on the entire region. He claimed, "already the Burundi crisis has placed a burden on its neighbors with 223,000 refugees—mostly in Rwanda and Tanzania. During the 1993-2005 civil war there was 870,000 Burundian refugees, exacting a prolonged economic burden on the region" (p. 3).

This theme emphasized the broader implications of the refugee crisis in Burundi for the entire Great Lakes Region. The document reviewed in this section revealed the inherent humanitarian and economic problems of the conflict.

### **Document Analysis Summary**

The purpose of the qualitative data analysis was to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The documents used in this section included Afrobarometer, ACLED, Human Rights Watch Reports, Amnesty International Reports, International Crisis Group Report, United Nations Reports, newspapers, and transcripts from United States Congressional Testimony Hearing on Burundi. Themes that emerged from this section included the importance of term limits, the cycle of impunity, the climate of fear, fear of an ethnic crisis, and the refugee crisis. The specific documents analyzed included four Afrobarometer reports on Burundi, the ACLED 2016 country report, the Human Rights Watch Report 2017, the Human Rights Watch Report 2018, the Amnesty International Report 2017, the Amnesty International Report 2016, the International Crisis Group 2016 report, four testimonies before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on the political and security crisis in Burundi, the United Nations Security Council Report of the Secretary-General on Burundi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Washington Post*, and Reuters News. Examination of these documents disclosed a long-standing violent history in Burundi and a greater understanding of insecurity among Burundians concerning the current crisis.

Open and axial coding was applied for theme development. This process included becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, analyzing themes, and defining

themes. Some documents broadly contributed understanding of one or several of the themes, while some documents made equal contributions to all of the themes. Analysis of data in this section revealed that the root causes and dimensions of conflict in Burundi were multifaceted and that the country's fragile peace is at stake, as is peace in the Greater Lakes Region as a whole.

### **Methodological Triangulation**

Methodological triangulation is defined as the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods so that different perspectives can shed light on a phenomenon. An integration of quantitative and qualitative methods is often understood to assist in supporting the claims that may result from a study (Patton, 1990). The mixed-methods approach for this study included the triangulation of online survey questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis to measure how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The goal of the qualitative data analysis was to rationalize, strengthen, and offer more background to quantitative results. Triangulation reduced bias by acting as a check or balance against data from only one method (Patton, 1990).

Quantitative results indicated that a statistically significant difference existed between Hutus' and Tutsis' perceptions of the conflict. For instance, on issues of who supports term limits, whether a third-term bid violated the Arusha agreement, whether term limits should be taken out of the Constitution, who is responsible for the violence, whether the crisis will have an enduring impact on the population, including a persistent fear of attack, and whether the current crisis will make Burundi more volatile.

Examination of these questions through the documents reflected some of the themes that were uncovered in both the interview and document analysis.

In analysis of data when split between Hutus and Tutsis, the results indicated that some statistically significant differences existed between the two groups in their responses to all of the questions. However, both Hutus and Tutsis viewed this crisis along ethnic lines. These and other findings in the quantitative analysis enriched the notion of ethnic dynamics, fear and insecurity, the importance of term limits, the culture of impunity, and violations of the Constitution and the Arusha agreement, which was mentioned in the interviews and discussed in the document analysis. In terms of gender differences, the results showed significant differences between female and male participants. For almost all of the questions, women were opposed to violence by government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups more than men. Across the board, women expressed greater support for term limitations and the Arusha agreement than did men. Furthermore, most women's concerns about the conflict were not based on party or ethnic lines, while men saw the same issues along party and ethnic lines. That is, Tutsi men blamed Imbonerakure youth militia for the violence, opposed President Nkurunziza's third term bid, and supported the Arusha agreement while Hutu men blamed armed opposition groups for the violence, supported President Nkurunziza's third term bid, and opposed the Arusha agreement.

Both the interview transcripts and the document analysis produced consistent and convergent results. The qualitative data analysis elucidated similar aspects of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The qualitative data analysis produced

eight combined key themes: (a) the importance of term limits, (b) violation of the Constitution and the Arusha agreement, (c) a climate of fear and insecurity, (d) a concern for ethnic violence, (d) a culture of impunity, (e) economic impacts, (f) the refugee crisis, and (8) the culture of greed and corruption.

The qualitative data corresponded with, explained the quantitative data, and helped to categorize the common themes. The qualitative data analysis also facilitated an understanding of conflict resolution frameworks and interventions. The quantitative results allowed for an understanding of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi while the qualitative results generated rich information relevant to the phenomenon under study. In terms of matters of ethnicity, there were several parallels between the quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data highlighted the importance of presidential term limits, the Arusha agreement, volatility, fear, insecurity, ethnic divisions between Hutus and Tutsis, and violence by security forces, Imbonerakure, and armed opposition groups. These issues were viewed along ethnic lines, and they have common characteristics. That is, the politics of ethnicity or identity politics helped Hutus and Tutsis to mobilize their bases in conflict situations. An important factor of this polarization also exists in the correlation between power struggle and the politics of ethnicity in Burundi.

Similarly, the qualitative results emphasized the importance of presidential term limits, the Arusha agreement, the longstanding ethnic dynamics, fear and insecurity, violence by security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups. The qualitative results revealed that the main cause of political violence in Burundi is



fear, ethnic animosity, and power struggle. Political leaders used fear and ethnic resentment for their own gains. As such, the social issues examined in the themes explored here are exploited as grounds for promoting shared values, beliefs, or concerns, as well as a means of achieving security.

In terms of gender differences, there were similarities and differences between the quantitative and qualitative data. In the quantitative results, there were significant differences between female and male perceptions of the conflict. For example, the women interviewed, in general, did not perceive the conflict along ethnic lines. Instead, they blamed the violence on government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups. By contrast, men viewed the conflict primarily along ethnic lines. Most of the Hutu men interviewed blamed armed opposition groups for the violence, fear, and insecurity and accused government forces and Imbonerakure youth militia of fomenting the violence. The quantitative results for gender differences showed how Burundian men and women perceived this conflict. As suggested earlier, a possible reason for gender differences on this matter could be that armed conflict and its aftermath touches women's lives in ways that vary from their effects on men.

Moreover, the qualitative data generated similar results between men and women. Both men and women underscored the importance of presidential term limits, the Arusha agreement, the longstanding ethnic dynamics, the culture of impunity, economic impacts, refugee issues, fear and insecurity and violence by security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups.

## Chapter Summary

The purpose of Chapter 4 was to present results that stemmed from the analysis of the online survey data, the interview data, and the document data. In this mixed method design study, the researcher used online survey questionnaires to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between Hutus and Tutsis, as well as gender differences, regarding how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected peace and stability in Burundi. For the interview portion, the researcher used open-ended and semi-structured phone and Skype interviews to understand the conflict. For the document review, data were used from Afrobarometer, ACLED, Human Rights Watch Reports, Amnesty International Reports, an International Crisis Group Report, United Nations reports, newspapers, and transcripts from United States Congressional Testimony Hearing on Burundi.

The researcher corroborated the findings derived from the data via the triangulation method, matching the results of the online survey responses, interviews, and documents. The findings verified the importance of presidential term limits in Burundi, the Arusha agreement, ethnic dynamics, and fear and insecurity among Burundians. In the following chapter, the results presented in this chapter are broadly discussed, connected to the literature and the theory. Furthermore, a conflict resolution framework, the limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research will be presented.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

This study examined how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Chapter 5 will review the results and interpretations of this study, their connection to the literature, and their connection to theory. It will also present a conflict resolution framework, the limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

### **Discussions and Interpretations of Findings**

The quantitative data showing Hutu and Tutsi opinions on how presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability of people in Burundi indicated that statistically significant differences existed between the two groups in response to all of the questions asked of them. For instance, the quantitative results suggested that Tutsi respondents blamed government forces and Imbonerakure youth militia for the violence in Burundi, while Hutus blamed armed opposition groups for the violence. In addition, more than the Hutu respondents, the Tutsi respondents had higher rates of support for term limitations and believed the Arusha agreement and the Constitution were violated. Further, Tutsi believed, more than Hutus, that the current crisis would make Burundi more volatile. Additionally, Tutsi respondents had higher agreement with the view that the crisis has an enduring impact on the population, including persistent fear, than Hutus. It is important to note that, historically, political divisions and ethnic divisions have overlapped. For instance, “Burundi’s past conflicts have stemmed from divisions between social groups, primarily along ethnic lines, between Hutus and Tutsis, but [were] intertwined with social and institutional control,

economic opportunity, and a history of discriminatory policies” (Council on Foreign Relations, 2015, p. 1). The results suggested that Hutus and Tutsis viewed the current crisis along ethnic lines. Studies by Daley (2006), Ndikumana (2005), and Uvin (1999) on ethnic divisions in Burundi implied that identity politics or ethno-politics have served both Hutus and Tutsis in their struggle for power and access to resources. It also served both groups in their effort to attain security in conflict situations.

The quantitative results supported the findings related to some of the themes in the qualitative analysis. That is because, due to violence conducted by government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups, Burundians are concerned about ethnic violence, fear and insecurity, refugee issues, and the culture of impunity. The quantitative results also suggested that Hutus and Tutsis had differing opinions on which groups are responsible for the violence. These findings aligned with Vandeginste’s (2011, 2015) studies on long-standing ethnic divisions within Burundi. She argued that ethnicity, engineered in a manner that benefits political elite interests and ethnic resentment, is a learned phenomenon that develops from political struggle and the unfair distribution of resources. It is important to note that the role of political elites or governing elites in Burundi, to some degree, created some of these long-standing ethnic divisions. In his book, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, Posner (2005) explained that politics revolve around identity politics and that politicians play the ethnic card for purposes of political mobilization. Clearly, the issue of ethnicity is contrived in a manner that helps ruling or governing elite interests in Burundi. The crisis in Burundi looms with further division as allegations of ethnicism are directed to both Hutu and Tutsi politicians.

Daley (2006), Ndikumana (2005), and Vandeginste (2015) provided a better explanation for ethno-politics and violence in Burundi. In their conclusions, they claimed that ethnicity, power struggle, and violence have been the main divisive principles in Burundi given their successive strategies of marginalization and exclusion. In a larger sense, the quantitative results suggested that historical animosities and resentments between Hutu and Tutsi still exist. This conclusion substantiated several of the themes drawn out of the qualitative analysis, which referred to concern for ethnic violence, a climate of fear and insecurity, and the culture of impunity.

In analyzing how gender differences in attitudes toward presidential term limit manipulation affected perceptions of peace and stability of people in Burundi by gender, the results suggested that women's perceptions of the conflict differed from those of men. Namely, respondents tended to blame the violence on government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and opposition armed groups more than men. Women respondents had a higher agreement that presidential term limit manipulation is the root of the current crisis than males. Women respondents also believed that the current crisis would make Burundi more volatile than did men. Additionally, women had a higher agreement that the crisis has enduring impact on the population, including persistent fear, than men. These findings are relevant to previous research on gender perceptions of war and violence showing that women are more likely to condemn violence and to strive for nonviolent resolutions than men. McKay (1998) argued that since women are especially affected by armed conflict, they encounter tremendous challenges in contexts of war and violence. Another explanation for this, according to Wilén (2014), is that women in Burundi are opposed to violence due to the devastating effects of armed violence on women. As

stated earlier, after the twelve-year ethnic civil war (1993-2005), Burundian women suffered greatly both during and after the cessation of violence; this could be a reason that Burundian women's perception of the conflict differed from those of men.

Further, the findings of this research supported previous research on how women cope in post-conflict societies. Wilén's (2014) report on gender narratives in Burundi suggested that women show broader support for issues related to peace and reconciliation than do men. The quantitative results also verified Rackley's (2005) findings that although both men and women recognize the adverse impact of armed conflict on civilian well-being and the social fabric, there remains a key gender gap in perceptions of armed conflict and safety. The qualitative data—which suggested that because of the violence carried out by security forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition, most of the women in this study were concerned about ethnic violence and the culture of impunity and were highly conscious of fear and insecurity—supported previous results related to male and female perceptions of the crisis. Burundian women were more likely to condemn violence and to support the Arusha agreement and term limitations than were men.

The qualitative data analysis revealed similar characteristics of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perceptions of peace and stability of people in Burundi. The findings of the qualitative data will be discussed accordingly. In both the interviews and the document analysis, the findings indicated that term limits maintain significant oversight of the concentration of power, support democracy, and safeguard continuing stability. For instance, an interviewee mentioned that term limits are seen as precursors to multiparty democracy and as a deterrent to

dictatorship. Another interviewee mentioned that term limits prevent institutional corruption. This concept confirmed Yarwood's (2016) and Afrobarometer's (2015) conclusions about the importance of term limits. They argued that civil society groups and citizens are progressively asking for a more accountable government and that Africans desire democracy and support presidential term limitations.

Another important concept that one interviewee expressed was that the president and his CNDD-FDD party officials were likely to introduce the abolishment of presidential term limits. One interviewee stated that the president was trying to change the Constitution so that he could rule forever. In the past, the government attempted to change the Constitution but failed. Recently, the ruling CNDD-FDD party officials initiated a reform process to eliminate presidential term limits. If the reform is approved, it would give President Nkurunziza and the ruling CNDD-FDD unlimited rule (Uwimana, 2017; Vandeginste, 2016). This action raised alarms among opposition leaders and regional negotiators who maintained that the current crisis and environment are not suitable for constitutional change.

The qualitative data findings underscored the significance of the Arusha agreement and the Constitution. At the center of the current crisis lies the issue of safeguarding the Arusha agreement and the Constitution. The legality of President Nkurunziza's third term bid generated conflict across Burundi. Third-term opponents frequently used political arguments against his actions while third-term supporters used constitutional legality and the rule of law to support his actions. Many interviewees stated that concerted efforts by President Nkurunziza and his party loyalists to undercut the Arusha agreement and Burundi's Constitution created significant violence. Previous

studies supported this point, noting that the root cause of the current crisis in Burundi was President Pierre Nkurunziza's desire to run for a third term despite a two-term limitation in Burundi's Constitution and the Arusha agreement. President Nkurunziza's third term was a violation of both the Constitution and the essence of the Arusha agreement, signed in 2000, which set presidential term limits at two terms, ended Burundi's civil war, and engaged a strong peace-building architecture to prevent future conflict (Green, 2015; Nantulya, 2015; Zamfir, 2016).

Furthermore, one interviewee mentioned the importance of the Arusha agreement in balancing power between ethnic groups in Burundi. The interviewee argued that the Arusha agreement paved the way for an ethnic balance of power and implemented a power-sharing system. Another interviewee reverted to the idea that President Nkurunziza's controversial decisions, combined with his broader contempt for the country's Constitution, made Burundi volatile. Another interviewee mentioned that President Nkurunziza and the CNDD-FDD party officials are committed to increasing their control over political institutions and security services, which is against the Arusha agreement. Nantulya (2015) validated these concerns, stating that some of the hardliners in the ruling party deemed some of the Arusha frameworks illegal and incapable of solving the current crisis.

An analysis of interviews and documents established that Burundians are living under a climate of fear and insecurity. For example, ACLED (2016), Amnesty International (2017a), and Human Rights Watch (2018) reports verified this claim, each stating that government forces targeted demonstrators in Bujumbura's Tutsi minority neighborhoods. Almost all opposition leaders, prominent civil society group members,



human rights activists, and independent journalists fled Burundi because of state-sanctioned pressure, oppression, and surveillance. Similarly, armed opposition groups engaged in a series of killings that mainly targeted CNDD-FDD party officials, members of security forces, and Imbonerakure youth militia. Interviewees, and several of the documents reviewed, emphasized the cycle of violence in Burundi. One interviewee mentioned how security forces and Imbonerakure youth militia in Bujumbura, Burundi's capital, targeted him and that a similar incident occurred in Gitega province. These incidents made him flee Burundi for Kenya. Another interviewee mentioned how armed opposition groups frequently targeted ruling party officials, the security forces, or government sympathizers. According to this interviewee, patterns of violence like this are putting ordinary Burundians at risk and instilling fear and insecurity. For instance, frequent grenade attacks in Bujumbura have caused several deaths and many injuries. The Human Rights Watch (2018) report substantiated this view, claiming numerous high-level assassinations targeted at CNDD-FDD party officials and prominent security officials, including army Chief of Staff Prime Niyongabo, who survived, and chief of the intelligence services, General Adolphe Nshimirimana, who was assassinated.

A review of interviews and documents confirmed these concerns about ethnic violence in Burundi. Many Burundians fear that if the current crisis is not resolved, it may turn on an ethnic dimension. Findings from the qualitative data analysis showed that violence by government forces, Imbonerakure youth militia, and armed opposition groups could turn into ethnic violence if the violence continues. The violence and killings on both sides have made Burundi increasingly unstable. One interviewee detailed how Burundi's history played a role in Burundians leaving in mass numbers to seek safety. He

argued that, psychologically, past ethnic violence affected the ways that people think and react. Anti-government and pro-government rhetoric that has regularly correlated with ethnic identity could destabilize the political system. This kind of ethnic rhetoric is especially troubling in light of the fact that conflicts in Burundi in earlier decades were portrayed by across-the-board ethnic killings (Jones, 2015; Vandeginste, 2016).

As the violence continues, there is fear it could devolve into a full-scale civil war. An interviewee revealed that President Nkurunziza could succeed in reversing history and establishing a Hutu-controlled regime, which is against the Arusha agreement. Additionally, another interviewee explained how the ruling CNDD-FDD elites represent a small social base and how they use ethnic-social discourse to infuse fear in the population. Most of the interview data and documents addressed ethnic patterns of violence that appear to be developing on both sides. Historically, both Hutu and Tutsi elites have used ethnic cues for political purposes. In Burundi, politicians and other elites have used ethnicity to manipulate and exploit ethnic ties to form alliances.

Additionally, for decades, the power base of the small faction of the Tutsi governing elite was based on fear, resentment, and repression of the Hutu majority, and the military has mainly orchestrated the violence. Thus, political, economic, and social biases became more rigid against Hutus, whereas the power of many Tutsis significantly increased (Uvin, 1999; Vandeginste, 2016). An interviewee warned that Hutus should prevent Tutsis from ever returning to power. There is a concern among many Tutsis about revenge from the ruling Hutu government. As marginalization, power imbalances, and unequal access to resources took place along ethnic lines, the violence and counter-violence also developed into ethnic violence. Fear of ethnic violence was relevant in the

current crisis, and political division overlaps with ethnic division. One reason why conflict in Burundi occurred is the early introduction of ethnicity as a factor of access to resources and power, beginning in the colonial period.

Another ongoing issue outlined in both the interviews and documents was the fact that the government of Burundi took inadequate action to hold the people responsible for human rights violations. The majority of the interviews and the document reviews confirmed that violence, murder, and rape persist among Burundians running away from the conflict. An Amnesty International (2017b) report indicated that between two to three women were raped each week, and there were reports of militias attacking opposition members in refugee camps in DRC and Tanzania. One interviewee recalled how the Imbonerakure youth militia threatened his sisters with rape several times, which eventually led them to flee to Rwanda. The conflict created, according to the interviewee, circumstances in which violence against women in general became more widespread. In such cases, violence against women is carried out to instill fear in local communities or in opposing armed groups. For Burundian women, the effects are mainly dire.

One interviewee stated that for Burundi to move forward, the country must shed its history of violence and address its culture of impunity. Impunity Watch (2015) held that a lack of government will to effectively address Burundi's violent past produced a culture of impunity for gross human rights violations and severe violations of international criminal law, and Uvin (1999) argued, "The issue of revenge is closely connected with that of impunity, a central feature of life in Burundi" (p. 264). Another interviewee mentioned the history of security service and judiciary failures to locate and

prosecute perpetrators of violence. According to the interviewee, this experience, among other things, created a cycle of retributive killings.

Furthermore, the lack of rule of law encourages corruption and violence.

Interviewees expressed this concept many times. For instance, one interviewee mentioned that impunity gives President Nkurunziza and top-level CNDD-FDD party members immunity and all kinds of material benefits. A study by International Crisis Group (2012) entitled *Burundi: A Deepening Corruption Crisis* detailed that elites' access to public and private resources. The results of the study showed that corruption issues concerning high-level CNDD-FDD officials and state officials were unpunished and that this could further fuel social and political anger. Some interviewees and documents reviewed indicated that greed and corruption are significant grievances of Burundians. Corruption is one of Burundi's major challenges, and corruption among high-level government officials are known to many Burundians. Transparency International ranks the country high in corruption, at 157 out of 180 as the most corrupt country (Transparency International, 2018). Mbogo (2012) stated, "Corruption scandals involving CNDD-FDD dignitaries and state officials have watered down hope of a change in governance and more equitable wealth distribution. The deepening corruption crisis is discrediting post-conflict institutions and fueling social and political resentment" (p. 1). One interviewee stated that when President Nkurunziza came to power in 2005, many Burundians hoped that he would end corruption and improve economic developments, but they lost hope.

An International Crisis Group (2012) study reported that despite President Nkurunziza's support for anti-corruption programs, his government defunded its own programs, placed political burdens on courts and anti-corruption taskforces, and

influenced state institutions to benefit party elites. An interviewee mentioned the amount of corruption and greed at the government level and around Nkurunziza as one of the factors that influenced the president to extend his term. The interviewee further argued that when the president and his top party members were in power, they amassed a great deal of money; if they left office, they would lose access to those resources and opportunities. Corruption creates impunity and weakens the rule of law. Several interviewees mentioned the idea that being an elitist provides one with multiple kinds of immunity. The endless cycle of corruption affects the entire government system—from social, political, and economic systems—and is a substantial impediment to economic development. Grievances associated with greed and corruption have been influential for rallying support for demonstrations against President Nkurunziza's third-term bid. Evidently, decades of impunity for corruption in Burundi have bred a lack of trust amongst Burundians.

The qualitative data also underscored the economic impact of the current crisis on Burundians. The economic issues that interviewees underlined ranged from a decline in foreign aid, foreign trade, and investments and the influx of Burundian refugees to neighboring countries in search of better livelihoods. Research has shown that the conflicts have large and substantial aggregate effects on macroeconomic symbols, such as GDP, foreign trade, and investments (Collier, 1999; Martin, Mayer, & Thoenig, 2008; Mueller & Tobias, 2016). Given Burundi's history, the current crisis plays a significant role in shaping the macro-level economy. Falisse (2015) added that trade with neighboring countries and local markets was significantly interrupted and that the government of Burundi recently assessed that the crisis cost at least \$32.7 million in

material destruction. Furthermore, the conflict only worsened Burundi's underlying economic issues, and the economy shrunk by 4.1% in 2015.

The data from both interviews and document reviews summarized the diverse channels and means through which the conflict can affect growth and development. These consequences comprised declines in employment and investment and an influx of refugees to neighboring countries. For instance, one interviewee revealed how life in Burundi became difficult because many investors left the country: Foreign aid ceased, NGOs stopped their programs, and the exchange rate plummeted. Another interviewee stated, for example, that a father who worked for an NGO and "earned 5000 Burundian Francs" was unable to provide for his family because the NGO for which he worked closed its doors. The interviewee further believed that this phenomenon affected many families and that some were aware of difficulties, which made them flee to refugee camps. Green (2015) substantiated these findings, arguing that "Burundians are leaving or losing their jobs as development partners pull out," and "every time someone loses a job, that's 12 people who are living off that, benefitting from that income" (p. 640). One interviewee mentioned that young people were not only migrating because of injustice, but also because of poverty. The economic impact of the crisis drove thousands of Burundians to seek better livelihoods in neighboring countries. The violence caused hundreds of thousands to flee, adding to problems in the agricultural labor markets and prolonging uncertainty and political violence, which have triggered many donors to stop their aid programs (Falisse, 2015; Green, 2015). Likewise, the violence forced foreign investors to leave. Indeed, since the conflict began, western donors have cut their aid to Burundi, whose annual budget depended on 49% of foreign aid (Falisse, 2015). One

interviewee substantiated this account by alluding to the fact that Burundi is a poor country and that “half of the annual budget” of Burundi came from EU aid. These issues were believed to be the cause of the influx of refugees.

Another issue of concern related to the refugee issue was that Burundi’s neighbors worried about refugee issues within their borders. Many documents reviewed for this study noted the possibility of violence spilling over to neighboring countries. Amnesty International (2017b) also expressed concern about rebel activities in Tanzania, where rebel groups recruit and train, oftentimes engaging in cross-border attacks from Tanzanian territory. Kanyangara (2016) used recent history to explain how conflict in the Great Lakes Region moved from one region to another. He argued that “conflicts in Great Lakes Region countries have always been interconnected. Although conflicts tend to be intrastate in the beginning, due to strong cross-border dimensions and transnational ethnic identities these conflicts have often spread to destabilize the whole region” (p. 2). Previous refugee crises in the Great Lakes Region produced new conflicts around the region via cross-border assaults. This was the case in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, for example. After the genocide, Hutus fled to the DRC with their arms, began to attack Rwanda, and subsequently formed an armed group (Kanyangara 2016; Khadiagala, 2006).

To support the findings from this study, it was essential to compare the quantitative and qualitative data, including the online surveys, interviews, and documents reviewed. Triangulation of these data showed that the findings of this were reliable and valid. Data triangulation and interpretation indicated that Burundians were divided along ethnic lines and that gender differences about how the conflict surrounding presidential

term limit manipulation affected perceptions of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Both the quantitative and qualitative data revealed that inequities between and within identity groups, together with patterns of identity-based deprivation, tend to produce conflict in Burundi. Further, the findings of this study suggested that marginalization, ethnic divisions, power imbalance, and unequal access to resources in Burundi often lead to violence. What is clear about the current crisis is that a large number of Burundians are worried about ethnic conflict, gender-based violence, the culture of impunity, and a climate of fear and insecurity because of ethnic patterns of violence that seem to be developing.

### **Connection to the Literature**

The findings from this study corroborated scholarly findings on presidential term limit manipulations, democratization, and governance. The literature review provided five justifications for why African leaders—in this case, President Nkurunziza—cling to power: (a) lack of checks and balances, (b) weak government institutions, (c) electoral malpractice, (d) greed and corruption, and (e) fear of punishment. The participants in this study mentioned some of these justifications.

Studies by Ndikumana (1998) and Gurr (1970) concluded that political conflict increased with perceptions of lack of equal opportunities to access political power, the ethnization of politics, inequality, marginalization, and pervasive corruption all conceivably bolstered citizens resorting to violence. Burundi's history of ethnic violence overlapped with power struggles, which have been predominately driven by ethnic tensions with roots in repression and marginalization. For instance, interviewee E (age 24) linked problem this to the lack of equal job opportunities. She argued, "This thing



about ethnicity. It's really hard work for people to apply for jobs. Because ethnicity has been a problem for so long but now it's like really out in in the open." Another participant expressed similar views. Interviewee C (age 30) added, "The other factor is . . . the power. I mean, power corrupts, as they say. So, looking at Burundi's history that was dominated by Tutsi led government or Tutsi regime . . . now having a regime that was previously in . . . took arms against the established previous government."

Interviewee E (age 24) also believed that the benefits of being in power were why the president decided to run for a third term. She argued, "He wanted to stay in power because once you are in power today . . . you are in power, tomorrow you may be afraid to lose the position you had." These notions suggest that power struggles resulting in political, economic, and social marginalization were the primary drivers of violence in Burundi.

The results also confirmed Carter's (2016), Tangri and Mwenda's (2010), Igwe's (2008), and Baker's (2002) findings that the reason that African leaders stayed too long in power was because of fear of punishment for their human rights violations and corruption. Interviewee B (age 25) explained at length how corruption and ethnicity were reasons that President Nkurunziza extended his term beyond the required two-terms:

The regime had actually . . . has been . . . a lot around corruption but also, you know, when they came in power, there was this discussion around ethnicity . . . from our history where the Tutsi faction that has been in power and because we have been threatened for so long. So, the country should remain in the hands of the Hutu ethnicity. So, I think there were those two involved—corruption and fear of being persecuted on these grounds.

Interviewee H (age 35) mentioned that President Nkurunziza was afraid to “leave power because of what he stole, because of many people that he killed. Because of whatever he did. He sees that once he leaves power, he will be followed by the justice; he will be taken to court.” The argument was that leaders are sometimes afraid of potential investigations and prosecution by succeeding governments, mainly when they have committed economic crimes or unlawful acts of killing and jailing political opponents and dissenters. Interviewee G (age 27) also believed that economics contributed to President Nkurunziza extending his term in office. She stated, “Yes, for economic reasons, but also . . . Um . . . he was . . . they know, after they quit, the crimes they did. So, that’s another reason that they have to stay there to keep the power.” Interviewee C (age 30) suggested, “The level of corruption at the government level or around Nkurunziza, so that would be one factor: the fact that they can amass lots of money with them being in power.”

On the issue of lack of checks and balances and weak institutions, Lebas (2016), Cranenburgh (2011), and Vencovsky (2007) concluded that the complete concentration of power in the executive branch encouraged impunity and weakened democracy, which suppressed opposition parties, making it impossible for political parties to function. The findings from this study confirmed these perceptions. Interviewee B (age 25) expressed that the lack of checks and balances and weak institutions in Burundi encouraged authoritarianism. He concluded, “I think it’s a bad practice that we are actually promoting. We are promoting dictatorship, and we are not actually reflecting democratic values that people can actually build upon them and go.” Interviewee F (age 22) believed that the lack of checks and balances, and weak institutions, supported impunity. She

concluded that unlimited power “gives them the immunity, wealth, honor, and all kinds of material benefits.”

The findings from this study corroborated the literature. This section identifies the causes of the current crisis and explains their different dynamics, which have created inequality and exclusion in Burundi. If the conflicts in Burundi have their roots in historical factors, bad governance, weak institutions, corruption, ethnic divisions, legacies of authoritarianism, socio-economic crisis, poverty, human rights violations, and politics of marginalization, then any effort to mediate the conflicts should transcend the ideas of inclusive government and institutions that will manage ethnic divisions, inequalities, marginalization, and good governance.

In reality, past Burundian conflicts, as discussed previously, were typical of political associations expressed in ethnic terms. From a historical point of view, post-colonial Burundi inherited divisive arrangements of power within particular ethnic groups, setting the ground for conflict and competition along ethnic lines. Burundi’s post-colonial elites prolonged this history of divide-and-rule to safeguard their interests and power, and Burundi’s weak institutions are incapable of, or unwilling to, playing the role of impartial authorities between competing identity groups.

Despite the correlation between the politics of ethnization and violent conflict in Burundi, it is clear that identity groups have a fundamental role to play in conflict resolution and peace building. As the construction of identity seems to be the most dominant factor in Burundi’s conflict, durable peace and security depends on reforming the emphasis on identities as building blocks of post-conflict reconstruction and in conflict resolution methods. Successful conflict prevention and resolution in Burundi will

involve the development of more established and evenhanded social, economic, and political institutions.

### **Connection to Theory**

The findings from this study supported the theoretical framework used to understand this conflict. This study used three theories (elite theory, intergroup conflict theory, and structural violence theory) to weave together useful analyses of the Burundian conflict. All three theories shed light on the intersections among the control of state power, the use of violence to sustain power, ethnic dynamics, inequality, marginalization, and the critical role that competing elites played in this conflict. The participants in this study referred to some of these issues as the root causes of conflict in Burundi. The competition for political power and control of Burundi's resources have long been an avenue for conflict to develop along ethnic lines.

In terms of elite control in Burundi, Mills (1956), Berberoglu (2005), and Pakulski (2012) concluded that an important component of elite theory was that all political and economic structures were controlled and systematized to benefit few elites. In Burundi, the ethnic distribution of power is a powerful mobilizing force for elites. The concept of governing elites, Mosca (1939) argued, put importance on the ruling class's desire to control government agencies and society in general. As Uvin (1999) noted, "Hutu (anti-Tutsi) ethnicity and its institutionalization in public policy were key components of the ruling elite's strategy of legitimization and control over the state. Whenever this elite was threatened, it exacerbated ethnic divisions to thwart democratization and power sharing" (p. 253).

Burundi's CNDD-FDD party is a suitable example of the governing elites or the ruling class's persistent consolidation of power while systematically restricting political participation. For example, Interviewee G (age 27) argued that the president and members of the political elites "just wanted to stay there to keep the power, so that him [sic] and the people who are with him could use the country's resources." On the question of why President Nkurunziza extended his term in office, interviewee D (age 26) also believed that being part of the political elite enabled the president to manipulate the system easily. He argued, "He is among the elites of the ruling party and he is also the president." As Ndikumana (2005) and Uvin (1999) concluded, political elites controlled Burundian economic, political, and social configurations for the last five decades or more, distributing state resources among their inner circles. This kind of marginalization produced discontent, which led to the violence seen in Burundi's history.

Moreover, the findings were also consistent with those of Gurr (1993), Sherif (1951), and Uvin (1999), who that asserted conflict occurs when two or more groups are vying for inadequate resources and power. According to this analysis, ethnicity or group identity and categorization have played a significant role in driving conflict. The results of this study have revealed that relationships between ethnicity and opportunities are evident in political competition. As Interviewee E (age 24) mentioned,

Saying that the Tutsi ruled for so long and now is time for Hutu to rule. And they say that . . . they say that now Hutu should rule as long as they want. This is what it is all about and sometimes it is difficult for people from other ethnicities to get jobs because this is something they take into account: this thing about ethnicity.

It's really hard work for people to apply for jobs. Because ethnicity has been a problem for so long, but now it's like really out in the open.

Given Burundi's history of violent ethnic conflict, ethnic groups are simply identifiable and very important to politics. Gurr (1993) implied that groups that are deprived of the distribution of resources often share both a common grievance and a common identity. In Burundi's case, disparities in the allocation of state resources and political control through ethnic groups became an instrument of conflict. Interviewee C reiterated this perception, arguing that there is

fear that the Tutsi minority might again claim power or come to power in the near future . . . because of the fact that Hutu might lose power. The other factor is also history: what happened in 1972. There was massacre against the Hutu in Burundi. So, I think psychologically, that plays . . . is still playing a huge role in the way the government or the people in government currently reacting. (Age 30)

Interviewee B (age 25) also alluded to this belief, stating that "ethnicity . . . from our history where the Tutsi faction that has been in power and because we have been threaten for so long. So, the country should remain in the hands of the Hutu ethnicity." The politics of ethnicity have long been recognized as one of the main causes of instability in Burundi, and both Hutus and Tutsi interviewed used ethnic feelings to highlight the risk posed by the other group. For interviewee H (age 35), President Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD party

Created chaos in the country by killing many people, by bringing up issues of ethnicity, which was already forgotten by civilians, but now he brought it up again. That is now created weakness in the army; because the army and the police

are divided even though you find them together. . . . Some in their minds they belong to opposition, others they belong to ruling party.

The results from this study also echoed Galtung's (1969) concept of structural violence. Galtung argued that direct violence comes in different forms, which may include *physical force, killing, torture, rape, sexual assault, beatings, and verbal violence*. Many of the interviewees expressed this concept. On the one hand, interviewee J (age 33) stated, "Many people died, and many people fled the country. The opposition used grenades to attack the police and the military, and the police went after them. And they killed military people, police, and civilians." On the other hand, interviewee G (age 27) blamed the Imbonerakure youth militia for the violence. She contended, "those Imbonerakure have to stop attacking, and most of those women and girls attacked are Tutsi." Interviewee H (age 35) equally blamed both government forces and armed opposition groups for orchestrating violence. He argued, "You see both sides produced violence. So, that third term brought violence, but I can't say that is the source of violence. I would say that it was a trigger because the roots causes are more than the third term." In the recent political violence in Burundi, the police, the military, Imbonerakure, and armed opposition groups carried out violence with impunity. Evidently, structural violence was embedded in the social, political, and economic structures of Burundi. Inequitable access to resources and political power were types of structural violence that created direct violence.

Issues of ethnicity, culture of impunity, fear and insecurity, violence, and the struggle for power and resources were widely discussed in the qualitative interviews. One important aspect of the ongoing violence was the role of the political elites in Burundi,

who use ethnicity to drive their quest for power and control of state resources. It is clear that, in Burundi, access to power also means access to wealth and resources.

Marginalization from politics in Burundi causes discontent and often leads to ethnic violence.

### **Conflict Resolution Framework**

The purpose of this study was to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The conflict in Burundi entails governance issues, a protracted history of power struggle, a lack of equal opportunities to access political power, violent ethnic division between Tutsis and Hutus, and structural violence. Ethnic division and identity politics are deeply rooted in Burundi's social and political fabric. Following its independence from Belgium in 1962, several civil wars erupted that killed hundreds of thousands of innocent Burundians. Since then, political arrangements in Burundi continue to have an ethnic factor. In essence, ethnic divisions or identity politics have brought about conflict between ethnic groups, as Hutu and Tutsi tribes compete with each other for control of economic and political power. According to Burton (1990), identity is the most important and highest of human needs, which explains why it triggers most of the conflicts. This form of deep-rooted conflict is among the most difficult to mediate as it requires both major political and societal changes.

Almost three years after the crisis began, the situation in Burundi remains very unstable, and the country struggles to find a durable solution. The AU, EU, UN, and leaders around the Great Lakes Region are all concerned that the conflict in Burundi could have a spillover effect and destabilize the region. As such, it is important to



understand the nature of the conflict in order to establish the most suitable and practical methods and mechanisms for conflict resolution. Burundi presented an interesting case of conflict resolution due to its history of violence.

In their work on conflict resolution, peace building, reconciliation, and intergroup conflict, Assefa (1996, 1998) and Nnoli (1998) argued that since political violence has potentially adverse effects on socio-economic and political development, peace building and reconciliation are essential to preventing further violence. Over the past decades, conflict resolution and peace building frameworks have become extremely relevant in discussions and debates across Africa and beyond. Accordingly, conflict resolution and peace building methods have played an important role in resolving the root causes of conflicts across Africa as seen in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and so forth.

First, conflict resolution seeks to understand the root causes and the main dynamics of conflict in order to establish suitable resolutions. Second, conflict resolution involves changing relationships and conditions such that the resolutions that conflicting parties develop are sustainable in both the short and long term. The root causes of the conflict in Burundi are multifaceted. Unequal access to national and natural resources, lack of equal opportunities to access political power, protracted violent ethnic division, structural violence, and marginalization are among some of the dynamics that propagate conflict in Burundi. These matters motivate tangible or perceived inequities and resentments amongst ethnic groups, which oftentimes results in, among other things, violence. In the case of Burundi, the conflict resolution method must require taking several steps, such as transforming state institutions, socio-economic development, and

democratization. Attaining such resolutions will involve tackling the systematic structural violence in Burundi. Based on this argument, it is imperative to develop a robust peace framework to address the current Burundi conflict. One could argue that the Arusha power-sharing agreement, which ended Burundi's decade-long civil war, must be a reference point for the current conflict. The Arusha agreement reformed the historical ethnic configuration of Burundi and ended the marginalization of Hutus from politics. Further, the Arusha agreement specifically addressed ending impunity for gender-based violence and crimes against humanity. The basic requirements of this framework offer the socio-political and economic structure for peace and stability in Burundi.

With respect to finding a solution to the current conflict, an immediate renewal of dialogue must include all stakeholders to rebuild the trust lost between the parties. For example, the EAC inter-Burundi dialogue efforts under the leadership of President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Benjamin Mkapa, former president of Tanzania, have not yielded any sustainable agreement. This is due, in part, to President Nkurunziza's refusal to include the real stakeholders in the conflict, including armed opposition groups, CNARED, civil society groups, religious groups, media groups, women, and youths in the negotiations. The fundamental purpose of any negotiation is to engage adversaries across the negotiating table; President Nkurunziza views this process differently. Clearly, without the involvement of all parties to the negotiations, including armed opposition groups involved in assaults on the security forces and government officials, a political solution to end the almost three-year conflict is unlikely. Proposed changes to the Constitution in May, 2018 could lead to even more unrest. Any proposed amendment to

eradicate presidential term limits runs against the constitutional spirit of the Arusha agreement.

For Burundi to attain a sustainable peace, it must focus on building democracy and ensuring socio-economic development for all Burundians, regardless of ethnicity and gender. Assefa (1996) and Nnoli (1998) argued that democratization and socio-economic development practices were considered important components in peace building and conflict resolution. This practice is expected to remove all adverse characteristics related to the root causes of the conflicts: dictatorial and authoritarian inclinations, the politics of ethnicity, practices of social discrimination, tyranny, and marginalization. This, in turn, will expand multi-party politics, civil society groups, and freedom of the press and speech. In this manner, the government of Burundi can redress past and present economic, social, and political marginalization. Such an initiative could also mitigate future conflicts. Moreover, socio-economic development grounded on beliefs in equality across the board is likely to lower poverty and unemployment and increase the standard of living of the majority of Burundians. Under such circumstances, conflicts can significantly be reduced in Burundi.

Even if the current conflict is resolved, ending the cycle of violence will be difficult without addressing issues of ethnicity, the culture of impunity, fear and insecurity, gender-based violence, the struggle for power, refugees, and greed and corruption. The results of this study related to gender suggest that the efforts of Burundian women cannot be ignored in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. A report by Lindborg (2017) argued that “women participants in peace processes are usually focused less on the spoils of the war and more on reconciliation, economic

development, education and transitional justice—all critical elements of a sustained peace” (p. 1). As such, women’s roles in peace negotiations and the transformation of Burundian society will be fundamental to sustaining peace, economic and social growth, and reconstruction.

Identity conflict in Burundi has existed for decades. Since its independence in 1962, Burundi experienced several events of mass ethnic violence, including massacres in 1972, 1988, and 1993. These events created bitter memories, crystallized Hutu and Tutsi violence, and produced an atmosphere of perpetual mutual fear. Throughout the 1993 to 2005 civil war, fighting between Burundi’s the two main ethnic groups, the Hutu and the Tutsi, left approximately 300,000 people dead. The quantitative results of this study indicated that Hutus and Tutsis viewed the crisis along ethnic lines. Additionally, the findings from the interviews and document analysis suggested that previous ethnic violence in Burundi has had a long-term effect on the population, including a continuous fear of violence and ongoing communal division. Similarly, Ndikumana (2010) added, “Deeply seated fear, hatred, mistrust and feelings of revenge characterized the relationship between Hutus and Tutsis and have been shaping Burundi political, social and economic structures ever since” (p. 269). Arguably, ethnic tensions in Burundi have been driven not merely by belief systems, but generally by ethnicity or by political elites or governing elites’ capability of provoking ethnic resentment for their personal gain.

Further, various scholars indicated that ethnic dynamics in Burundi are the main drivers of conflict. Assefa (1996), Mpangala (2004), Ndikumana (2005), and Nnoli (1998) all agreed that the competition for control of the Burundian state has long been an avenue where conflict turns out to be ethnic. Specifically, ethnic background and

opportunities usually move hand-in hand and manifest in political struggles. To mitigate the unequal distribution of power and access to resources, which seem to be drivers of conflict in Burundi, the government must also promote equality across ethnic groups as stated in the Arusha agreement. As Ndikumana (2005) argued, attaining economic and political stability in Burundi will involve the formation of institutional mechanisms that address the history of inequality of access to political and economic power across ethnic groups. By focusing on equal distribution, Burundi can foster lasting peace.

Intergroup conflicts encompass both objective and subjective components, both of which require addressing effective de-escalation (Assefa, 1996). This is achieved through third-party intervention. Since intergroup conflicts are so multifaceted, especially in Burundi, a viable reconciliation between Hutus and Tutsis must begin with a comprehensive conflict analysis. This method should entail a complete change in structures and systems. The politics of reconciliation and justice should be adopted at both the local and national levels as well as between the two main ethnic groups, and they should be part of the development of democratization to prevent future ethnic conflict. The AU, UN, EU, and EAC can play a key role in ensuring that ethnic reconciliation is sought in a way that will address decades of impunity and historical grievances. Such an initiative would be based on the common interest of the people rather than interests of a minority elite.

Moreover, the transformation of state institutions should encompass transforming the security sectors and the Imbonerakure youth militia of the ruling CNDD-FDD, who are believed to function under orders of intelligence services and national police. Equally, armed opposition groups must also stop targeting government officials, security officials,

and civilians. Such a transformation should change ideologies and structures so that Burundi can return to normalcy. To complement this, the government of Burundi must allow an outside observer mission that guarantees an end to security forces, Imbonerakure, and armed opposition violations. In this regard, the government of Burundi should accept the AU's 5,000 peacekeeping force for Burundi, as proposed in December, 2015. Arguably, a peacekeeping mission in Burundi is necessary to avoiding the lessons of failures in Sierra Leone and Rwanda.

As previously discussed, the Burundian political arena mostly functions according to rules familiar to the elite. That is, a violent political arena can still be functional for the country's elites as long as the violence remains managed internally and by elite unanimity. Many Burundians and leaders around the region worry that the current crisis in Burundi could turn into a competition that has a spillover effect. Various efforts to promote dialogue, including EAC inter-Burundi dialogue under the leadership of President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Benjamin Mkapa, former president of Tanzania, remain unsettled. In the case of Burundi, the question of the legality of a third term was vital in the current crisis. That said, the long-term solution to the current crisis would involve the formation of institutional structures to solve or correct the history of disparity in access to power and resources across ethnic groups.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Some limitations existed in this study. The first limitation was the language barrier. Although Kirundi is the language of the majority of Burundians, Burundi is considered a Francophone country, which means that French is the official language, while the selection of participants was based on people who were fluent in English. A

large number of Burundians were excluded from this study, therefore, because only a small part of the population is proficient enough to read, write, or speak the English language in a manner that allows them to interact with the researcher.

The second limitation was the sample size. Several reasons existed for the sample size, one of which was the language barrier. The second limitation for sample size is the underrepresentation of females in the online survey portion. The fundamental reason for women's underrepresentation in this research is fear of reprisals for taking part in this study. Gender-based violence is one of the most widespread human rights abuses in Burundi. The other reason for women's underrepresentation in this research is gender disparity in education. That is, fewer women than men are proficient enough to read, write, or speak the English. While the sample size was proper for this study's purpose, it was conceivable that it may not provide an accurate depiction of all Burundians' views of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affects the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi.

The third limitation of the study was the researcher's personal beliefs and biases on this topic. As a supporter of presidential term limits, democracy, and good governance in Africa, the researcher might hope to oppose manipulating constitutions, such as by amending term limits, which creates political violence and instability in many African countries. To address this issue, the researcher maintained self-awareness throughout data collection, data analysis, and interpretation phases of the study. For instance, the researcher used bracketing during the data analysis phase to enable him to balance his biases.

This study was primarily concentrated on Burundi, meaning that the sample size was selected to gain an understanding of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability of people in Burundi. Consequently, the conclusions from this study are not generalizable beyond this study. Future research should examine what was not addressed in this study. Certainly, however, the results of this study will be useful in the field of conflict resolution and peace studies.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The results of the study provided an important understanding of how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. Since it is challenging to examine everything in one study, the need for more research on presidential term limit manipulations in Africa is imperative given the recent violence related to term limit manipulations in the Greater Lakes Region. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following studies:

- a comprehensive study with a focus on the role of identity politics or ethno-politics in presidential longevity;
- a study with a focus on how term limit manipulations in the region influence other African leaders to follow suit;
- a study with a focus on how good governance ensures peace and stability; and
- a study with a focus on the intersection between multi-party democracy, inclusion, and political violence.



## Chapter Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation has affected the perception of peace and stability among people in Burundi. The current conflict in Burundi involves governance problems, a prolonged history of violent ethnic division between Tutsis and the Hutus, lack of equal access to resources and power, and systematic structural violence. Results in this study indicated fear and insecurity, but the issue also stretches to include economic security and the practicality of livelihoods, greed, corruption, accountability, and the failure and reluctance of the government to truly deal with past and current impunity.

Using a mixed-method case study approach, the researcher obtained detailed information from research participants and document reviews. Quantitative data indicated that statistically significant differences existed between Hutus and Tutsis as well as between genders related to the phenomenon under study. The qualitative data analysis revealed similar characteristics. Eight combined key themes were developed from the thematic analysis of the interview and document analysis: (a) importance of term limits, (b) violation of the Constitution and Arusha Accords, (c) the climate of fear and insecurity, (d) concern for ethnic violence, (e) a culture of impunity, (f) economic impact, (g) a refugee crisis, and (8) a culture of greed and corruption. These themes unearthed the long-standing violent past of Burundi and a better understanding of fear and insecurity among Burundians concerning the current crisis. The findings from the interviews mainly supported data gathered from the online survey responses and documents. The results of the study, concerning disputes and conflicts related to term limit manipulation,

democratization, and governance, provided knowledge applicable to the field of conflict resolution and peace studies

These findings also verified previous studies on governance, democratization, political violence, and power struggles. For example, the literature review was essential as it connected backgrounds and concepts of presidential term limit manipulation, governance issues, democratization, and violence. According to the literature review, it was stated that the lack of checks and balances, weak government institutions, electoral malpractice, greed and corruption, and fear of punishment were reasons or factors for access to power and sustaining it. The theories presented in the literature review made several key claims about the connection between control of state power, the use of violence to sustain power, ethnic dynamics, and the significant role that competing elites play in the conflict. The three theories—elite theory, intergroup conflict theory, and structural violence theory—provided analysis of the root causes of the crisis and helped to reveal why the crisis developed.

Burundi's current crisis has unfolded through almost three years of growing violence and repression. The situation in Burundi remains very volatile and the country struggles to find a long-term solution to the current crisis. Currently, the country is marked by political violence, targeted assassinations, and accusations of torture. Large numbers of Burundians fled the country because of fear and insecurity. The biggest impact of the current conflict in Burundi is not only the increase in refugee arrivals in neighboring countries, but also the regionalization of the conflict in the Great Lakes Region, as armed groups function out of both Tanzania and the DRC. Although accounts of overt violence have reduced, human rights groups have underscored a rise in killings,

enforced disappearances, and torture predominantly conducted by security forces and the CNDD-FDD Imbonerakure youth militia. Armed opposition groups are also part of this web of violence. Several high-level assassinations have targeted government or security officials, including high-level military officials. These retaliatory killings increasingly concerned President Nkurunziza and his CNDD-FDD party, and some party officials used ethnic rhetoric to gather support. This kind of ethnic rhetoric is alarming because previous conflicts in Burundi were categorized by across-the-board ethnic massacres. As the conflict continues, there is real concern that it could turn into civil war, which could destabilize the region.

The conflict resolution framework provides significant suggestions for explaining the root causes of the conflict in Burundi and approaches to attain durable peace. First, the Arusha agreement ushered in a significant political change. Its power-sharing arrangement improved Burundi's past ethnic structure of government and ended the marginalization of the majority Hutus from government. The Arusha agreement deserves respect, and emphasis must be placed on additional programs that improve equality throughout ethnic groups and support institutional accountability. Secondly, regional peace dialogues have been unsuccessful, with neither President Nkurunziza nor the deeply divided opposition parties making any sincere propositions about viable long-term solutions. It is also unlikely that negotiations will yield meaningful resolutions if key parties to the conflict are excluded. If serious negotiations fail to chart a conflict resolution roadmap, severe consequences will result in the Great Lakes Region as the opposition becomes more rebellious and hundreds of thousands continue to live in refugee camps. Without a peaceful resolution imminent, and with President Nkurunziza's

desire to eliminate presidential term limits, the risk is high for further violence turning into all-out war.

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## Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

### Introduction and demographic information

- How old are you?  
 What is your sex?  
 What is your ethnicity?  
 What is your level of education?  
 What is your occupation?

### Survey questionnaire

Please read the following statements and clearly and honestly circle the most correct response. Use the scale below. Your feedback is greatly appreciated!

1=Strongly Disagree    2=Disagree    3=Neutral    4=Agree    5=Strongly Agree

1. I support presidential term limits  
           1        2        3        4        5
2. President Nkurunziza's third term bid violated the Arusha agreement  
           1        2        3        4        5
3. Violence has increased due to Pierre Nkurunziza third term bid  
           1        2        3        4        5
4. Presidential term limit manipulation is the root of the current crisis  
           1        2        3        4        5
5. Presidential term limits should be taken out of the constitution  
           1        2        3        4        5
6. The crisis has enduring impact on the population, including persistent fear of attack  
           1        2        3        4        5
7. The current crisis will make Burundi's more volatile  
           1        2        3        4        5
8. Government forces are responsible for the violence  
           1        2        3        4        5
9. Armed opposition groups are responsible for the violence  
           1        2        3        4        5
10. The Imbonerakure youth militia group is responsible for the violence  
           1        2        3        4        5
11. President Nkurunziza third term in office risk causing a new civil war  
           1        2        3        4        5
12. The current crisis disrupted my life  
           1        2        3        4        5
13. The government is working to improve peace and security  
           1        2        3        4        5
14. The government lacks the capacity to guarantee security  
           1        2        3        4        5
15. Participants to the crisis should engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis  
           1        2        3        4        5



## Appendix B: Online Survey Participation Consent Letter



**Online Survey Participation Consent Letter for the Research Study entitled:  
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENTIAL TERM LIMITS IN AFRICA: A MIXED-  
METHOD CASE STUDY OF CAUSES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BURUNDI**

Funding Source: None

IRB protocol #: 2017-373

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This is a research study. Please read and decide if you would like to participate. Feel free to ask questions at any time.

**What is the study about?**

The purpose of this study is to understand the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi. The crisis in Burundi began on April 25, 2015 when President Pierre Nkurunziza declared that he would run for a third term, despite a two-term limitation in Burundi's constitution. This triggered opposition parties and civil society groups to organize peaceful protests to challenge his third term bid. Understanding this phenomenon is extremely important because the recent hike of violence among Burundians has negatively affected the peace and stability of Burundi.

**Why are you asking me?**

Because you are a Burundian who experienced the crisis at first hand. Because of this your participation in this study is imperative to the researcher in understanding more about the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi. Your participation in this survey is solely voluntarily and is really appreciated.

**What will I be doing if I agree to be in the study?**

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete demographic questions and this should only take a minute or two to finish. The survey questionnaire will ask you 15 questions. This section will comprise a more sensitive line of questioning about your perception of President Nkurunziza third term bid. This section should take approximately 25 minutes.

**Is there any audio or video recording?**

No audio or video recording will take place

**What are the dangers to me?**

There are risks associated with this study such as physical and psychological harm. Participants could face physical harm from government officials if their identities are made

public. Moreover, participating in this study can also result in psychological discomfort or distress. That is, collecting information about disturbing events may bring psychological issues to the surface. If you are uncomfortable, you may skip answering a question or stop participation, either temporarily or permanently. If you have any questions about this study, your research rights, or have experience physical and psychological harm as a result of your participation in this study, please contact Foday Darboe at (503) 728-8039 or email me at [fd234@nova.edu](mailto:fd234@nova.edu). You can also contact the IRB at the numbers indicated above with questions as to your research rights.

**Are there any benefits for taking part in this research study?**

There are no direct benefits; your participation will help the researcher gain additional understanding of the conflict, the result of the study will help advise project proposal and policy design as well as serve as guiding material for future research and interventions by development agencies interested in peace-building within the region.

**Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?**

You will not be compensated for taking part in this study, nor will it cost you anything for taking part in the study.

**Participant Rights**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time or decline to participate. During the interview, you may avoid any questions that you do not wish to answer. If you choose to withdraw, any information collected about you will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study and will not be part of the study.

**How will you keep my information private?**

All the information gathered in this study is strictly confidential except disclosure is required by law. Nonetheless, the Internal Review Board (IRB) or my co-Investigator may review research records if deemed necessary. Any information obtained during this research will be confidential; the real names of participants will not be used. All electronic correspondence, consent forms, survey results and data analysis will be password-protected, and all printed material will be locked. All data files will be destroyed 36 months from the conclusion of the study. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time or decline to participate. If you choose to withdraw, any information collected about you will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study and will not be part of the study.

**Voluntary Consent by Participant:**

I have carefully read this consent form by my own admission without being forced or coerced and duly accept my participation in this survey. I understand all of the questions and voluntarily consent to take part in the survey. If I have any additional questions, I will contact the principal investigator Foday Darboe.

**Clicking on the “I agree button” below, I am agreeing to participate in this study:**

I Agree	Exit
---------	------

## Appendix C: Interview Questions

### **Introduction and demographic information**

How old are you?

What is your sex?

What is your ethnicity?

What is your level of education?

What is your occupation?

### **Interview Questions**

1. Tell me about your experiences with the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation?
  2. How have President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term aspirations affected you?
  3. Why do you think President Pierre Nkurunziza extended his term in office?
  4. Did President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term aspirations contribute to violence? If yes, how so?
  5. What does presidential term limits means to you?
  6. What do you perceive as some of the consequences of term limit manipulation?
  7. How should Burundians deal with President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term in office?
  8. Could you reflect on the devastating cost to Burundi caused by President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to pursue a third term in office?
  9. How has your family been affected by the crisis?
- Is there anything else you would like to offer that I did not ask?

## Appendix D: Interview Participation Consent Letter



**Interview Participation Consent Letter for the Research Study entitled:  
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENTIAL TERM LIMITS IN AFRICA: A MIXED-  
METHOD CASE STUDY OF CAUSES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BURUNDI**

Funding Source: None  
 IRB protocol #: 2017-373  
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This is a research study. Please read and decide if you would like to participate. Feel free to ask questions at any time.

**What is the study about?**

The purpose of this study is to understand the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi. The crisis in Burundi began on April 25, 2015 when President Pierre Nkurunziza declared he would run for a third term, despite a two-term limitation in Burundi's constitution. This triggered opposition parties and civil society groups to organize peaceful protests to challenge his third term bid. Understanding this phenomenon is extremely important because the recent hike of violence among Burundians has negatively affected the peace and stability of Burundi.

**Why are you asking me?**

Because you are a Burundian who experienced the crisis at first hand. Because of this your participation in this study is imperative to the researcher in understanding more about the conflict surrounding presidential term limit manipulation in Burundi. Your participation in this survey is solely voluntarily and is really appreciated.

**What will I be doing if I agree to be in the study?**

If you agree to participate, Foday Darboe will interview you for no longer than 90 minutes. You will be presented with the interview guide ahead of time (see attached interview guide for complete list of questions). The interview covers 10 questions about your perception of President Nkurunziza third term bid. Your participation will last for the amount of the time the interview takes.

**Is there any audio or video recording?**

The full interview will be recorded on a digital voice recorder.

**What are the dangers to me?**

There are risks associated with this study such as physical and psychological harm. Participants could face physical harm from government officials if their identities are made public. Moreover, participating in this study can also result in psychological discomfort or distress. That is, collecting information about disturbing events may bring psychological issues to the surface. If you are uncomfortable, you may skip answering a question or stop participation, either temporarily or permanently. If you have any questions about this study, your research rights, or have experience physical and psychological harm as a result of your participation in this study, please contact Foday Darboe at (503) 728-8039 or email me at [fd234@nova.edu](mailto:fd234@nova.edu). You can also contact the IRB office with questions as to your research rights at (954) 262-5369/Toll Free: 866-499-0790 or email [IRB@nsu.nova.edu](mailto:IRB@nsu.nova.edu)

**Are there any benefits for taking part in this research study?**

There are no direct benefits; your participation will help the researcher gain additional understanding of the conflict, the result of the study will help advise project proposal and policy design as well as serve as guiding material for future research and interventions by development agencies interested in peace-building within the region.

**Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?**

You will not be compensated for taking part in this study, nor will it cost you anything for taking part in the study.

**Participant Rights**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time or decline to participate. During the interview, you may avoid any questions that you do not wish to answer. If you choose to withdraw, any information collected about you will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study and will not be part of the study.

**How will you keep my information private?**

All the information gathered in this study is strictly confidential except disclosure is required by law. Nonetheless, the Internal Review Board (IRB) or my co-Investigator may review research records if deemed necessary. Any information obtained during this research will be confidential; the real names of participants will not be used. All electronic correspondence, consent forms, survey results and data analysis will be password-protected, and all printed material will be locked. All data files will be destroyed 36 months from the conclusion of the study. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time or decline to participate. If you choose to withdraw, any information collected about you will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study and will not be part of the study.

**Participants Signature**

Your signature below indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given time to read this document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (Printed).....

(Participant's Signature)..... (Date).....

## Appendix E: Interview Participation Consent Letter

MEMORANDUM

To: **Foday Darboe**  
 From: **Pei-Fen Li, Ph.D.,**  
**Center Representative, Institutional Review Board**  
 Date: **June 7, 2017**  
 Re: **IRB #: 2017-373; Title, “**

**A critical analysis of presidential term limits in Africa: A mixed-method case study of causes of political violence in Burundi”**

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I have reviewed the above-referenced research protocol at the center level. Based on the information provided, I have determined that this study is exempt from further IRB review under **45 CFR 46.101(b) (Exempt Category 2)**. You may proceed with your study as described to the IRB. As principal investigator, you must adhere to the following requirements:

- 1) **CONSENT:** If recruitment procedures include consent forms, they must be obtained in such a manner that they are clearly understood by the subjects and the process affords subjects the opportunity to ask questions, obtain detailed answers from those directly involved in the research, and have sufficient time to consider their participation after they have been provided this information. The subjects must be given a copy of the signed consent document, and a copy must be placed in a secure file separate from de-identified participant information. Record of informed consent must be retained for a minimum of three years from the conclusion of the study.
- 2) **ADVERSE EVENTS/UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS:** The principal investigator is required to notify the IRB chair and me (954-262-5369 and Pei-Fen Li, Ph.D., respectively) of any adverse reactions or unanticipated events that may develop as a result of this study. Reactions or events may include, but are not limited to, injury, depression as a result of participation in the study, life-threatening situation, death, or loss of confidentiality/anonymity of subject. Approval may be withdrawn if the problem is serious.
- 3) **AMENDMENTS:** Any changes in the study (e.g., procedures, number or types of subjects, consent forms, investigators, etc.) must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Please be advised that changes in a study may require further review depending on the nature of the change. Please contact me with any questions regarding amendments or changes to your study.

The NSU IRB is in compliance with the requirements for the protection of human subjects prescribed in Part 46 of Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46) revised June 18, 1991.

Cc: **Ismael Muvingi, Ph.D.**  
**Pei-Fen Li, Ph. D.**