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A Historical Analysis of Media Reportage on the Sikh Genocide of 1984: Implications for National Security of the Indian State

Anup Singh Choudry, Isabirye Joel, Mbabazize Mbabazi, Ojo Olusola

Kampala International University (KIU)

judgeas2018@gmail.com, joel@joelisabirye.com, Mbabazi.mbabazize@kiu.ac.ug,
ojo.olusola@kiu.ac.ug

Abstract. This study critically examined the media reportage on the Sikh genocide of 1984. From the reports, the study drew inferences on the effect of the Sikh genocide on India's national security within the spectrum of the persistent agitation for self-determination by the Sikh people of Punjab. Despite the devastating implications of the crisis for India security architecture, much that is quite revealing has not been captured in extant body of literature on the subject of the Sikh genocide. This lacuna informs one of the major motivations for this treatise. Two main research questions were critical to this analysis: What was the effect of the Sikh genocide on the desire for self-determination of the Punjab people? What were the implications of the Sikh genocide of 1984 for the security architecture of the Indian State? To answer these questions, a content analysis of media reports on the subject matter was used as the primary method of data collection which was complemented by in-depth interviews of key stakeholders. Findings revealed that Sikh genocide of 1984 was the major catalyst for the call for self-determination and the resultant crisis that have erupted in the region since then. It was further revealed that the Sikh genocide of 1984 had negatively impacted on the security of lives and also on the perception of security by people in India and the Punjab state in particular. The study concluded that there is need for a permanent and acceptable solution to the issue of self-determination and mutual distrust in the Punjab State in the interest India's national security. It was recommended that a community based approach hinged on the principles of compromise and inclusiveness should be adopted towards resolving the crisis in the region.

Keywords. Sikh genocide 1984, self-determination, peace studies, conflict, Indian state, Punjab, Khalistan

Introduction

Agitation for secession or self-determination is not a new phenomenon. Nations since time immemorial have been created as a direct result of a clamoring for self-rule by an often marginalized or minority class. Since 1990, 34 new countries were created. The breakup of the USSR in 1991 accounts for 15 of these new countries. Some of the newest additions include South Sudan, Kosovo, and East Timor which were all created after the year 2000. Between the years 2002 and 2003 rebel groups from the Darfur region of Sudan attacked and looted facilities operated by the government which forced a retaliation from the government of Sudan. This

retaliation and subsequent all-out war that broke out led to the death of over 400,000 people and the displacement of over 2 million Africans (Reeves, 2006). By 2011, South Sudan gained its independence from Sudan and became a sovereign nation. This is not an isolated situation, as history is littered with nations birthed through civil wars and conflict. Punjab Nation might soon become the newest member of this very exclusive club of nations that seeks to break away from bigger nations and tread their paths, determine their future and preserve their cultural values. The journey to statehood for the Punjab Nation is one riddled with blood, and sacrifice that has largely been left forgotten in history's dustbin. Whether it was a war, military action, legal or illegal is open for debate, but this debate has not been had and heard and it is a great disservice to world history and the history of the minorities.

A deep search of some of Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, and other academic databases reveals that there is a very scarce academic discourse on the Sikh people and the pain the event that unfolded in the 1980s and how it has shaped the Indian nation and the Sikh people's realities. It is based on this background that this paper takes a critical and historical look at the Sikh genocide of 1984 and its effect on the Indian state.

Conceptualizing Genocide

There is often a bit of debate about what genocide means as no government in history is willing to accept that they have been involved in genocide or the complete annihilation of a people. It is therefore often the case that genocide is a term that is often forced on nation-states and also often rejected by these states. So, to properly put this study in perspective, it is important that the researchers conceptualized and contextualizes what genocide means generally and in the context of this study.

The term genocide was first created during the Second World War by Raphael Lemkin. He coined the word to try to describe the war crimes Germany committed that were aimed at annihilating nations. Lemkin gave a very broad definition of genocide. He explained that:

Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. (Lemkin 1944:79)

Lemkin went on to lobby the UN to make genocide a crime under international law and by 1948 the United Nations passed the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" effectively making genocide a crime under international law. The UN however gave a slightly different and narrower definition of genocide. They defined it as,

...any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (United Nations 1948).

Scholars of genocide often prefer to make use of the UN definition. This position is summed up by Kuper (1981) who explained that “to create new definitions of genocide, when there is an internationally recognized definition and a Genocide Convention which might become the basis for some effective action, however, limited the underlying conception” (p. 39). While this is the position of a lot of scholars, others feel the definition is either too restrictive or too broad, or even too vague. It is however worth noting that the definition adopted by the UN is a legal definition of genocide and not necessarily a scientific one. So some scholars have fine-tuned the definition to include political groups or a certain class of people (for example, Chalk & Jonassohn, 1990; Fein, 1993; Katz, 1994; Melson, 1992; Rummel, 1997). While others felt a narrower definition would be better. For Instance, Harff and Gurr (1988) separated the concept of politicide from genocide, explaining that politicide is when a group of people is targeted for their political beliefs or identity and genocide is when people are targeted based on their communal characteristics. Bauer (1999) defined genocide as the “elimination of a *genos*, an ethnicity, or nationality, or a race, as defined by the perpetrator” (p.:35). Bauer’s definition is problematic because it requires the perpetrator to explain or announce the reason for the attacks on a group of people when in reality most nations that invade other nations usually progress altruistic reasons for the invasion.

Another issue with the conceptualization of genocide is agreeing on what actions qualify as genocide or how many people need to die before it is considered genocide. It should be noted that a lot of the definitions of genocide restrict it to mean only direct killings or activities or actions that result in the loss of lives. There is however non-consensus on the degree of destruction or number of deaths necessary for an action to be termed ‘genocide’. In this regard, Katz (1994) explains that genocide “applies *only* when there is an actualized intent, however successfully carried out, to physically destroy an *entire* group” (p. 128). Harff and Gurr (1988) submitted that policies that “result in the deaths of a substantial portion of a group” (p. 360) qualified as genocide. In a similar vein, Melson (1992) also explained that policies “whose intent is the destruction in whole or in part of a social collectivity”. Charny on the other hand explains that killings can be considered as genocide only when there is a mass killing of a large number of human beings. From the foregoing, it is clear that a consensus has been reached on what constitutes genocide. The consensus however remains vague as they all agree that a large number of people from a particular area, or class must be killed for it to be called a genocide. However, what constitutes a large number remains to be agreed upon. Is 100 a genocide or must it be a thousand? These are only some of the arguments present in the discourse surrounding the conceptualization of the term genocide.

Yet another aspect to the definition of genocide is the argument on who can commit genocide. Some scholars submit that only governments can commit genocide (for example, Chalk & Jonassohn, 1990; Harff & Gurr, 1988; Melson, 1992). Other scholars in a bit to narrow the definition of genocide, explain that the action (of killing) must be sustained irrespective of the ability, inability, surrender, or helplessness of the victims (Chalk & Jonassohn, 1990).

However, for this study, the authors have adopted the definition has defined by the “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide”. Based on these definitions, it can be concluded that the actions of the Indian state in the 1980s meet the definition of genocide as prescribed by the United Nations and numerous scholars of genocide.

Requirements of Genocide

In Prosecutor v. Akayesu, (Lippman, 1996) the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) provided an ordered analysis for determining whether genocide had occurred

in Rwanda in 1994. In its first step, the Chamber asked if at least one of the enumerated acts in Article 2 of the Genocide Convention had occurred.

In Delhi, for example, during the massacres of Sikhs, the evidence is clear that mobs killed and caused serious bodily and mental harm to the Sikhs, fulfilling this element of genocide. Two major parameters frame the second step of the genocide analysis –the inquiry regarding the intent element in the definition of genocide.

On the one hand, is the necessity of a finding of specific intent to destroy a group-based on national, ethnic, racial, or religious grounds. As Lemkin wrote, the intent to destroy based on these grounds is what distinguishes genocide from mass murder (Grewal,2007).

On the other hand, the requirement of intent presents evidentiary difficulties for parties trying to prove genocide in a court of law. While the Nazis declared and documented their intent and immediate evidence was recovered, a similar paper trail has not surfaced in subsequent genocides (Grewal,2007).

In the case of the Sikhs, authorities have already destroyed key evidence, such as police reports, Ved Marwah’s handwritten notes from his inquiry into the police’s role, and affidavits of key deceased Army leaders. Despite this, the slogans of extermination, public speeches urging the elimination of Sikhs, over one thousand contemporary affidavits of survivors and witnesses, government committee reports, other police, and government records, and survivors themselves can provide evidence of intent, as discussed below.

The Sikh People and the Sikh genocide of 1984

The term Sikh originated from the word sisya, which means ‘student’ or ‘disciple’. The Sikhs are people who follow the doctrine of Sikhism which is a monotheistic religion that has its roots in the Punjab region of the Indian nation. Its founder is Guru Nanak. Sikhs who have undergone Kande-ki-Pahul, which means, “baptism by Khanda”, an initiation ceremony known as Amrit are required to adhere to 5 strict rules. The rules are that all Sikhs must always have what is referred to as the five Ks on their bodies, namely; Kesh (uncut hair that is always covered), Kara (steel or iron bracelet), Kirpin (a dagger-like sword), Kachera (cotton underwear) and Kanga (wooden comb).

The Punjab region of the Indian state is considered the historic homeland and origin of the Sikhs. Today, the Punjab State in India has the largest Sikh population in the world, while large pockets of Sikhs are present in different parts of the world. In 2020, the Sikhs were recognized in the United States of America has been a separate and distinctive ethnic group.

Sikh Genocide 84 was perpetrated against the Sikh religious minority in the Punjab province of India. Since the occurrence of the Sikh Genocide 84, there are questions as to not only the origins of the genocide but more importantly the consequences of this genocide on the Indian State. Various perspectives exist on these questions. One perspective is concerned about the relationship between the Sikh Federal province of Punjab and the Indian state. The other perspective is focused on the issue of self-determination advocated for by the Sikh community in India and elsewhere. Members of the Sikh community have conducted a non-state-sanctioned referendum whose results were prohibited by the Indian State. Their attempt to seek independence connotes that, the historical grievances against the Indian State have not been resolved.

Since its independence in 1947, India has had fragile relations with the federal state of Punjab in India. The completion of independence in 1950 did not consider the consequences of

the British strategies for forming and deforming aspects of the Indian State. The formation of the Indian State was modeled on the British formula of fragmenting different communities as long as it made economic sense or political logic for control. Thus, the all-powerful Sikh Nation of the pre-colonial era was divided and a section of it apportioned to India. Eventually, this forced integration did not only create a State within a State, but it also provoked tensions between the Sikh community that enjoyed historical glory and the Indian confluence of communities that they were immersed in. A major development that emerged from this crisis was the Sikh Genocide. It was during this time that several battles were fought between the Indian armed security and the Sikh non-combatants. The conflict between Punjab and the Indian State lasted until 2000 but the tensions have since remained.

The Battle of the Golden Temple

The propaganda issued by the Indian state that it stormed the Golden Temple to flush out a few militants or, conversely, Sikh freedom fighters was fake news to discredit the Sikhs, since preparation for the army attack had started two years earlier when there were no so-called 'militants' in the complex, and military operations continued for years thereafter. It was an insidious plan to take control of the Golden Temple from the Sikh leadership and disable them. The action was also intended to suppress the Sikh separatist movement, which took birth after decades of injustice and broken pledges to the Sikh community, and was analogous to control of Tibetan Buddhists by the communist Chinese to thwart their demand to remain sovereign (Grewal, 2007).

Review of the Literature

The impact of genocide on self-determination has been examined by Grodsky (2012) who found that many entities that seek to secede from various countries have used genocide as a justification of their agenda. Furthermore, Tomuschat (2006) and more recently Cats-Baril (2018) argue that self-determination should be pursued if there is genocide against a people. In other words, people who have suffered from the hostile and brutal actions of others should secede and pursue their destiny. This study is different in the sense that while the others are reflective of circumstances that occurred in different temporal and geographical contexts, it prescribes what should be done when genocide occurs. This is mainly because it is a policy brief. Whereas there is no stated geographical scope in the study, Cats-Baril (2018) does make brief references to American Independence and the French Revolution as markers of where the public decides to resist maltreatment. It is however important to note that both historical events were not genocides. The study is centered on reforming the legal regime, especially the law on secession to give victims of genocide mandates to secede if they want to. For the case of Tomuschat (2006), the question of whether a people should secede or not should arise if they are subjected to inhuman treatment to the extent of extermination.

A variation in how self-determination should take shape in communities that are victims of genocide is explored by Rechia (2018). Rechia suggests that increasingly, scholars and policymakers have contended that communities affected by genocide should pursue self-determination through internal democracy. To bolster the argument, the study draws from Somaliland and Bougainville.

The opposing argument that states that genocide is used by perpetrators to suppress self-determination also attracts several authors. According to Akhavan's (1993) journal article, genocide is used as an instrument to suppress the self-determination of people who want to secede from a given country. This argument contrasts the first argument that when communities

experience genocide, they prefer to secede. The study uses evidence of the Kurdish experience in Iraq. It states that the Iraqi government [under Saddam Hussein], used genocide, to suppress Kurdish aspirations for self-determination. Akhavan (1993) further states that the Kurdish experience became one of the most notable cases of crimes against humanity in the Middle East. While this study explains how genocides impact self-determination, it is more focused on the international responses to the genocide against the Kurds. Therefore, it does not give sufficient attention to examining this issue in depth that would have enhanced an understanding of how states use genocide to avert self-determination in respective communities.

One study that explores the patterns of genocide in East Timor, indicates that Indonesian forces used force and genocide to prevent self-determination by the people of East Timor (Lisson, 2008). At the time, East Timor was under Indonesian rule. Citing numerous incidents of genocide that forced international intervention to the dominion of East Timor until its secession, Lisson effectively demonstrates how genocide is a tool for subjugating those with the desire to chart out their destinies outside of the predetermined national arrangements. A more recent study from Taylor (2013) tackles genocide by European settlers against Tasmanian Aborigines in Australia. Building on to similar arguments advanced by Akhavan, Taylor submits that the Tasmanian Aborigines were rendered almost extinct because they sought to be culturally distinct and aspired for self-determination. The study highlights the view that genocide is particularly meted out on ethnic minorities, who advocate for their meaningful existence in broader society or seek to secede because of unfair treatment.

The literature that relates to the impact of genocide on self-determination captures different perspectives on how genocide is the result of or the response to genocide. In general, the studies provide some evidence that shows that when some communities are faced with genocide, they seek to secede. Other studies demonstrate that when communities seek self-determination, there is a tendency for those that govern them to subject them to genocide. These findings are significant for this study because, in the absence of adequate empirical studies on how the Sikh Genocide 84 in India has impacted self-determination in the Indian State, they provide a good starting point. As briefly noted in the review of each study, there are gaps to be aware of. Most of the studies are limited to a handful of geographical scopes, which means that more work needs to be done on the impact of genocide on self-determination.

Based on the foregoing, this study, therefore, seeks to answer the following research question:

RQ1: What was the effect of the Sikh genocide on the desire for self-determination of the Punjab people?

Evidence from studies reviewed indicates that genocide has a strong impact on the security of persons and property in the locations where genocide is taking place or has taken place. Most of the literature depicts that because genocide creates insecurity, the direct response of those affected by genocide is to flee. Forced migration and displacement, therefore, become the main outcomes of genocide.

Gyoyan 's (2014) study of the Armenian genocide of 1915 demonstrates using an early case of genocide, that the practice can lead to the insecurity that forces people to flee for their lives with assistance from the League of Nations. The study uses evidence of the refugees that emerged as a result of the Armenian genocide and who were forced to scatter to other places to save their lives. Many Armenians left their country and fled to the Caucasus, Russia, Furthermore, in Conley's (2013) study on genocide, there are historical indicators that genocide presents a threat to the lives of people which then causes the victims to live in fear, become vulnerable, and displaced. As a result, they flee the communities in which they are living to

escape the actions of their oppressors. The study contends that the early warning signs of a genocide automatically drive intended victims to mitigate the risk by taking off in time. It also argues that sometimes, long after the genocide is over, those who flee from their homelands, take a very long time to feel secure to return. In some cases, they make a permanent decision not to go back to these countries or localities where the genocide occurs. Therefore, genocide can have a lasting impact on feeling insecure in the minds of those who have experienced it.

Hagan and Kalser's (2011) study which is similar to that of Conley is more specific to a geographical setting. The study proposes that genocide is a driving force for insecurity in the sense that the victims flee because they fear for their lives. The resultant outcome is for victims to undergo internal displacement where they go and live in camps normally set up by the government or humanitarian organizations within the country, or they flee to refugee camps in neighboring countries in this case Chad. Millions of people are presented as having fled Darfur for the safety of their lives, ending up in neighboring countries. This study states that the issue of insecurity can be viewed in two ways, one is that the people who experience genocide from their judgment consider the situation as insecure (Hagan and Kalser, 2011). On the other hand, the perpetrators of genocide deliberately take actions that create a feeling of insecurity within the victim community, because their main goal is to expel them from where they live, if not decimate them.

An earlier study of Darfur Sudan by Adenauer (2005) also presents the case of Darfur Sudan to conclude that genocide causes insecurity which can be measured by the displacement it covers. In Darfur, the study indicates that 2 million people were displaced and they subsequently fled to either internal camps or refugee camps in neighboring countries. The magnitude and proportion of the displacement is a clear indicator of how a feeling of insecurity is produced by genocides. Adenauer's study is a well-researched report on behalf of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's office in Washington DC. It however relies on secondary data to draw its conclusions.

The study that Uzonyi (2014) makes of Myanmar, Burundi, and Sudan are more specific than the one done by Hagan and Kasler. The findings are similar to the studies previously mentioned in this section. Notably, genocide in the cases of Myanmar and Burundi lead to a feeling of insecurity as evidenced by a population in fear for their lives. Many of the residents in the victim areas were forced to flee the genocides to escape and find shelter in neighboring countries.

Using a relatively different context from the studies reviewed so far on the impact of genocide on security, Southwick (2005) in a journal article uses the case of Srebrenica in Bosnia (in the former Yugoslavia) to explain how genocide leads to insecurity. In Bosnia, several people, mainly from the Muslim community disappeared leaving those who remained terrified. Over the genocidal period, Bosnian Serb forces are said to have killed between 7,000 and 8,000, Muslim men of military age (Southwick, 2005). Subsequently, the communities started living in constant fear, which led some of them to seek refuge in neighboring communities or countries.

From the foregoing, it is clear that most of the studies conclude that genocide causes insecurity and for that reason, victims of genocide flee their communities. This leads to internal displacement or external displacement, as they seek refuge elsewhere. In some cases, the earliest warning signs of genocide can lead a specific community to move in large numbers to places that are deemed safer.

The researchers, therefore, seek to answer the following question:

RQ2: How did the Sikh genocide of 1984 affect the security of the Indian State?

Methods

Approach

This study made use of the qualitative research approach which included, textual analysis and interviews. The textual analysis involved analyzing media reports collected in the book, titled, “Sikh Genocide 84” formed a substantial part of the data used in this study. This was supported by information from key stakeholders’ interviews.

Study participants

Since this study made use of key informants’ interviews, the participants of this study included residents of the community who were adults at the time of the Genocide in 1984 and shed light on the general atmosphere around the Golden Temple before, during, and after the massacre. This category of respondents was selected because they were able to confirm whether atrocities were committed and the events that led up to the genocide of 1984. Secondly, members of the military and police force within the Indian government were also anonymously consulted for information on the genocide and the effects it has had on the general wellbeing of the Indian nation. Finally, two history professors with Indian heritage from top universities in India, as well as two Sikh professors also working in Indian universities were also part of the study participants. These individuals were purposively selected because as professors that are highly knowledgeable about Indian and Sikh history, it was expected that they would be able to shed light on issues and give perspectives that might otherwise have never been heard.

The study comprised 33 participants in total. The researcher stopped collecting qualitative data when it was realized that saturation had been achieved.

Data Analysis

Once interviews were carried out, transcribed, and coded in line with the research questions, the data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The thematic analysis involved a situation where key ideas in the data were clustered together into themes related to study objectives.

To arrive at the themes, the entire interview transcripts were carefully read by the researchers and while reading, the emerging themes were identified and coded. QDA Data miner software was used to analyze the interview transcripts, identify themes and collate data. Findings from the interview transcriptions were supported by data gotten the analysis of selected newspaper articles from 1984-to 1995

The content of the newspaper articles was analyzed using a coding sheet, as detailed below:

Table 1: Coding sheet for the content analysis of newspaper articles on the Sikh Genocide of 1984

Code	Themes	Definition/Description
Killings/deaths/casualty	Security	Security in the context of this study looks at all possible ways that the security of India was affected. Issues concerning death tolls, lynching, mobbing, protests, and other forms of unrest were all categories under this theme.
Unrest/protest		
Clampdown on protestors		
Mention of Khalistan	Self-determination	News articles/reports that cover the call the self-determination or make mention of the need for the creation of a Khalistan country
Agitation for self-determination		

Celebrating the death of Gandhi		completely independent of India were considered under this theme.
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Source: Researchers (2022)

Presentation and discussion of findings

The findings of this study were discussed in line with the research questions.

RQ1: What was the effect of the Sikh genocide on the desire for self-determination of the Punjab people?

To answer this research question, the researcher analyzed newspaper clippings as presented in the book titled, *Sikh Genocide 84*". According to media reports, the massacre occurred on the 6th of June 1984 and the report claimed that 298 people were killed in the Sikh Shrine. This triggered the start of a long battle that saw reprisal attacks and counter-attacks that culminated in the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi in October 1984 and the death of well over 2000 individuals cutting across supporters of the Indian state and Sikhs and their allies.

By the 25th of July, roughly one month after the Golden Temple massacre, Sikhs in Punjab called for a break away from the Indian country. The call was immediately rejected by the Prime minister, Mrs. Gandhi. This would be just one of many calls for secession from the state of India that was directly linked to the attacks at the Sikh temple.

News articles from Financial Times of 1984 showed the rejection of the call for Sikh statehood by the then prime minister of India, Mrs. Gandhi. From the newspaper report, it is clear that the call for statehood by the Sikhs was a direct result of the June 1984 military action in the Golden temple, as can be deduced from the fact that this rejection of the call for statehood by the Sikhs was made on the Indian parliament when MPs were debating the effect and implication of the Sikh massacre of June 1984. This attack led some leaders of the Sikh community to demand "Khalistan". This call for statehood served as the beginning of much unrest as seen in other print media reports during that same period.

In October 1984, the prime minister was murdered and this led to reprisal attacks against the Sikhs that left thousands of Sikhs and forced erstwhile moderate Sikhs into supporting the call for independence from India and the creation of 'Khalistan'. The assassination of the Indian Prime minister was directly linked to the Sikh genocide that occurred in June of that same year as can be deduced from various news articles from the period as reviewed in this study.

The October 1984 assassination of the prime minister by Sikh soldiers led to the extrajudicial killings of thousands of Sikhs in India. And in 1991, the call for the creation of an independent country called Khalistan was made once again. Since then, there has always been a large fraction of the Sikh community that desires and is actively working towards gaining their freedom from what they call a 'forced marriage'.

These two events (the Sikh genocide and the assassination of the Indian Prime minister in 1984) was the catalyst for the agitation for self-determination of the Sikh people of India. In fact, before these events, there was hardly a call for secession. It can therefore be concluded that the modern-day demand for self-governance and independence from the Indian state by the Sikhs can be directly traced to the events of June 7, 1984, and was further solidified in the minds of the Sikhs with the murder of over 1000 Sikhs in the month following the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi.

Similarly, findings from in-depth interviews of key stakeholders further established the linkage between these two events. A scholar that was interviewed explained that this agitation would never have come up if the Indian government had not taken the drastic step of storming the temple. By desecrating the temple, the Indian government showed that they do not respect the religion or culture of the Sikh community. This led to major divisions in the country and a growing desire to be free of the Indian government and its social and cultural norms/values. The researcher, therefore, concluded that the Sikh genocide of 1984 played a significant role in the desire for self-determination by the Sikh population in India.

The findings of this study support those by findings from Grodsky (2012) who found that many entities that seek to secede from various countries have used genocide as a justification of their agenda. It also lends credence to studies by Tomuschat (2006) and more recently Cats-Baril (2018) who argued that self-determination should be pursued if there is genocide against a people. In other words, people who have suffered from the hostile and brutal actions of others should secede and pursue their destiny.

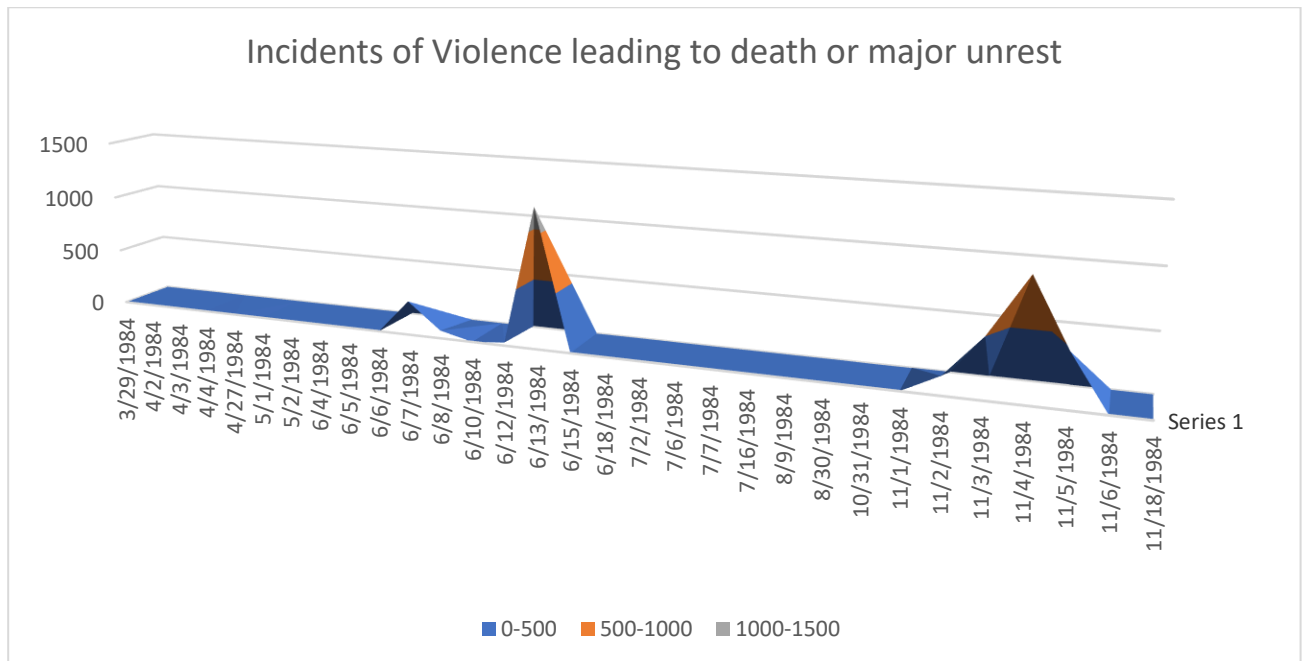
The findings of this study however contradict the submission by Rechie (2018) who suggested that communities affected by genocide should pursue self-determination through internal democracy. As such, they would remain part of their countries but have more democratic activities such as regular free and fair elections.

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that the Sikh genocide invariably led to the agitation for self-determination. Previous studies have shown and suggested that when there is genocide of such magnitude, then the tendency is that such a people will seek to leave such an alliance, as was the case of the Sikhs in India.

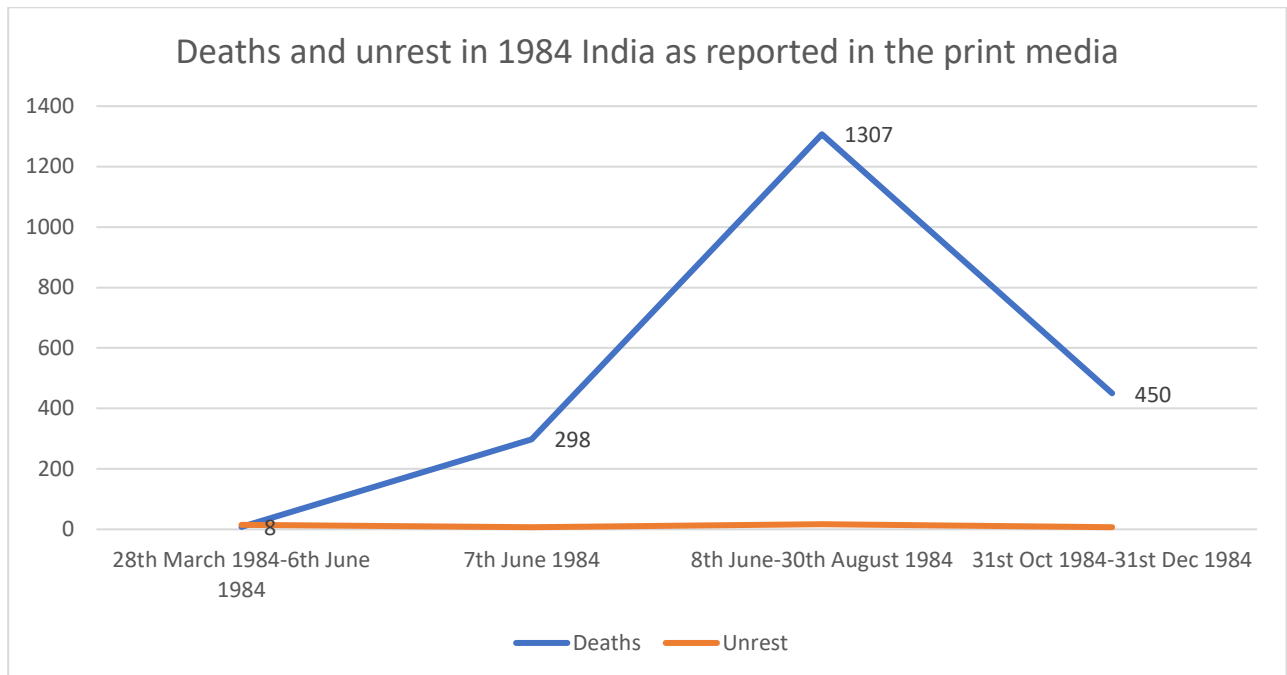
RQ2: How did the Sikh genocide of 1984 affect the security of the Indian State?

The term security in this study was conceptualized in relation to the violent actions and draconian arrests leading to deaths and major unrest in India. As such the population was not confident of surviving in such conditions, which made them feel insecure. To therefore find out the impact of the Sikh genocide of 1984 on the security of the Indian state, the researcher collected newspaper articles from March 1986 (3 months before the first major incident in 1984- the Storming of the Sikh temple that led to close to 300 deaths) to December 1984 (2 months after the assassination death of the Prime minister of India in 1984, Mrs. Gandhi).

Below is a chart showing the reported incidences of violence (deaths and unrest) from March 1984 to December 1984.



Looking at the chart above, two (2) periods immediately stand out: the period between 29th May and 29th June 1984, and the period between 29th October and December 1984. The months preceding and between these periods saw very little violence and unrest. In fact, between March and 6th June 1984, less than 10 deaths were recorded. However, on the 7th of June 1984, 298 deaths were recorded. This was the day the golden temple massacre took place. Some newspaper reports put the death toll at over 700. This massacre led to a series of attacks and unrest that left over 1300 dead in the months following June 6th, 1984. There was a bit of calm and then on 30th October 1984, the prime minister was murdered by her Sikh bodyguards. This again led to another series of attacks that left over 450 dead in November 1984 alone. Following the assassination of the prime minister and the violence that followed, an uneasy calm followed with eruptions of violence that continued all through 1984 to 1988.



News reports of the aftermath show a serious deterioration of society in terms of peace and peaceful coexistence. Immediately after the temple was taken over by the Indian Army on the 7th of June 1984, practically every day, there was a report of violence that was directly linked to the attacks on the Golden temple. On the 8th of June 1984, The Guardian headline read “Temples attacked by angry Sikhs”. On the same day, The Times reports, “20 die in the aftermath of Amristar”

News reports from June 7th up till the assassination of the Prime minister in October 1984 all point to an uneasy peace. Practically every week, there was a newspaper report that shows that the massacre of Sikhs at the Golden Temple on 7 June 1984 is far from forgotten. Below are some newspaper clippings that show the state of the nation in terms of perceptions of security and that can have an impact on the safety or perception of safety by residents of India at the time. A report by The Financial Times on July 31, 1984, titled, “...Punjab experiences a bitter peace”. The headline and the subsequent story paint a picture of people living in constant fear of attacks from the government or even extremists Sikhs. Brewing tension in the background, as manifested in the actions of Sikh youths who burnt an Indian flag, as reported in the news report below, shows that the tension and disenfranchisement were very much still alive two weeks after the event.

The findings point to the fact that the Sikh genocide of 1984 led to security challenges of untold proportions in the months after the anti-Sikh riots. Furthermore, data gotten from the in-depth interviews also suggest the same thing, that India experienced some of its worst national security challenges in recent years and till today, the security effects of the Sikh genocide are still being felt.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the security challenges experienced as a direct result of this 1984 massacre in Punjab, India, are numerous. The region and the entire Indian state have lived in constant fear of their lives and properties and up till today, a lasting solution to this deep-seethed distrust and hatred has not been achieved.

This finding supports those by Gyoyan (2014) in his study of the Armenian genocide of 1915 demonstrates using an early case of genocide. He concluded that the genocide led to

major insecurity issues that forced people to flee for their lives with assistance from the League of Nations. Similarly, the findings support those by Conley (2013) who explained that there are historical indicators that genocide presents a threat to the lives of people which then causes the victims to live in fear, become vulnerable, and be displaced. As a result, they flee the communities in which they are living to escape the actions of their oppressors. The study contends that the early warning signs of a genocide automatically drive intended victims to mitigate the risk by taking off in time. It also argues that sometimes, long after the genocide is over, those who flee from their homelands, take a very long time to feel secure to return. A very similar study to the current study was carried out by Hagan and Kalser (2011) and they posit, based on empirical findings, that genocide is a driving force for insecurity in the sense that the victims flee because they fear for their lives. The resultant outcome is for victims to undergo internal displacement where they go and live in camps normally set up by the government or humanitarian organizations within the country, or they flee to refugee camps in neighboring countries in this case Chad.

Also, studies by Uzonyi (2014) is supported by the findings of the current study., He concluded that genocide in the cases of Myanmar and Burundi lead to a feeling of insecurity as evidenced by a population in fear for their lives. Many of the residents in the victim areas were forced to flee the genocides to escape and find shelter in neighboring countries. The study quantifies the number of people who fled or were displaced as over 160,000 in Myanmar, 500,000 in Burundi, and 400,000 in Sudan.

Conclusion and recommendations

Despite these brutal conditions, voices of Sikh dissent continue to resist the repression of Indian security forces. With various mass mobilizations in the past five years, a new generation of Sikh activists continues to claim its right of political dissent and sovereignty. By the time of the study, examples include the uprisings against the pending execution of Sikh political prisoners and in support of their immediate release in 2012 and 2014, heavily featuring Sikh sovereignty at the center of political discourse outside of the Indian electoral system. The momentum of these uprisings has been channeled into reconvening the Sarbat Khalsa, a collective assembly of the Sikh people, for the first time in 19 years to re-establish independent institutions of Sikh self-governance to guide the Sikh liberation movement. This mammoth gathering of the global Sikh community represents an important strategic maneuver to establish sound leadership in the Sikh liberation movement while rejecting Indian political institutions, under the leadership of the revered guerrilla commander, Bhai Jagat Singh Hawara, as the Jathedar of Sri Akaal Takht Sahib.

It is clear that the approach of using force by the Indian state has not yielded positive results so far and has only led to more divisions between the Sikh people and the rest of India. To address this issue, the Indian state must adopt a compromise approach to conflict resolution where both parties come to the negotiating table knowing that they would have to accommodate some of the demands of the opposition if peace is to be achieved. Perhaps it is time for a more serious discussion about the role of the Sikh people, their culture, and religion in or outside the Indian state of today and tomorrow.

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