

POVERTY AND POLITICS:

EXPANDING ON THE THEORIES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE, ECONOMIC INSECURITY, AND THE ROOT CAUSES OF FORCED MIGRATION

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THE UNITED NATIONS High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) definition¹ of a refugee specifies that extreme conditions within a person's country must be so severe that that individual is compelled to leave the country. This study accepts the UNHCR's definition of a refugee as far as the extent to which violent threats to personal security present a "well-founded fear" to individuals in unstable political environments. However, I also argue that the UNHCR's definition of a refugee is narrowly constructed because it does not account for the impact of threats to the economic security of individuals living in developing nations. Accordingly, my analysis will look first at the intensity of conflict in determining migration, and subsequently at the role that economic conditions in a given country play in making the decision to become a refugee. Finally, this study will evaluate the results of this relationship between intense conflict, economic security, and forced migration in an effort to inform future policy strategies that are capable of addressing the growing refugee problem.

Previous studies have examined the relationship between violent conflict and refugee flows.² This study contributes to the literature by establishing that beyond the mere presence of violent conflict, it is the extent to which violence during conflict represents a physical threat to an individual's life that has an effect on the decision to flee. Thus, this analysis examines the types of conflicts that produce refugee flows and the nature of the conflict in terms of its intensity (i.e., widespread violence as opposed to isolated incident).

In this same vein, several studies that examined the root causes of refugee flows either found that economic conditions within a nation and/or across nations are latent causes of refugee migration

or dismiss their influence on refugee migration entirely.³ This analysis, however, argues that there is a definite relationship between economic insecurity and a person's decision to flee. I believe that previous measures of economic insecurity represent weak indicators; as a result, no direct relationship has been established between refugee flows and economic insecurity. Thus, using a more precise measure of economic insecurity would demonstrate that poverty within a nation represents a security threat and is a compelling reason for fleeing one's country.

This study presents a brief discussion of previous forced migration studies that address theories of violent conflict and economic insecurity. The primary goals of this study are to (1) establish that the intensity of violent conflict represents a more precise measure of the role conflict plays in contributing to refugee flows; and (2) provide evidence that there is a direct causal relationship between economic security and refugee flows, despite the UNHCR's limited definition of a refugee and the findings of previous statistical analyses.

VIOLENT CONFLICT LITERATURE

This analysis builds upon the foundation established by previous studies regarding the causes of refugee flows and enhances it through the use of statistical analysis. There are only a handful of published studies⁴ that empirically test their claims using datasets that reflect the migration patterns of several countries over time. Furthermore, literature on the etiology of refugee flows is limited, "with few comparative case studies and only a handful of studies that leverage the [explanatory] power of statistical inference."⁵

One exception is the Schmeidl and Davenport et al. studies,⁶ which provide a rigorous examination of the relationship between forced migration flows and violence. Schmeidl uses a database comprised of 109 countries from 1971 to 1990, and she conducts a multivariate analysis that considers both push and pull factors. Schmeidl finds that:

1. institutional violence has weaker predictive power than measures of generalized violence;
2. civil wars with foreign military intervention produce larger refugee populations and more prolonged migration flows than civil wars without external intervention;

3. ethnic rebellion creates small refugee migrations; and

4. economic and intervening variables have little impact on determining refugee flows.⁷

Similarly, Davenport et al. use a dataset comprised of 129 countries from 1964 to 1989 and examine both push and pull factors using multivariate analysis. Davenport et al. deviate from Schmeidl's analysis by measuring violence in society through the incorporation of state repression and political violence as indicators. First, Davenport et al. argue "the state can create a threatening environment in both 'active' and 'passive' ways."⁸ People choose to flee because they have become targets of human rights violations,⁹ or because they have voiced opposition to the government and anticipate forthcoming retribution from the regime in power.¹⁰ To measure "state repression," Davenport et al. use four conflict indicators. The first measure represents cumulative conflict. It records the number of protest demonstrations, riots, general strikes, antigovernment demonstrations, guerilla warfare incidents, and revolutions for each country-year, as reported in Banks' Cross-Polity National Survey.¹¹ The next indicator is the strategic variety of conflict, which is a count of the number of different types of dissident conflict behavior.¹² The third indicator represents the deviance from normal patterns of violence. Finally, a dummy variable is incorporated that indicates the presence of violent conflict.

Davenport et al. find that:

1. people rely on relational networks to make migration decisions (Massey et al., 1993; Schmeidl, 1995);
2. escalating dissident behavior produces a threatening environment, which contributes to refugee migration;
3. genocide and politicide raise the level of threat in the environment, forcing many to flee;
4. civil war has an independent effect on net migration;
5. shifts toward democracy are associated with forced migration because changes in policies allow for more open borders (Zolberg et al., 1989; Larrabee, 1992; Newland, 1993); and

6. economic threat has little impact on refugee migration.¹³

The measures of violence employed in both studies fail to capture dimensions of violent conflict that may be the true impetus behind significant refugee migration. These studies do not examine how the intensity of the violent acts and the extent of the violence during these conflicts contribute to refugee migration. In other words, do random acts of violence during a coup produce similar refugee flows as those produced by genocide? I argue that they produce immensely different types of refugee flows since genocide exhibits widespread, prevalent violence at an alarmingly frequent rate, whereas random acts of violence are more isolated and do not create the panic that genocide would. Different types of conflict produce vastly different types of refugee flows in both scope and magnitude.

ECONOMIC LITERATURE

Given the UNHCR's definition of a "refugee," there is tremendous debate regarding whether persons who leave their country of origin because of economic conditions are even refugees or simply economic migrants. The second main assertion of this study is based upon the need to statistically test the relationship between refugee migration and economic factors in an effort to demonstrate that economic refugees do in fact exist. Previous studies, however, have found little statistical support for the relationship between refugee flows and economic conditions. The Schmeidl and Davenport et al. studies also concluded that economic conditions have little effect on the refugee decision-making process. This study disputes their conclusions due to the need to provide better measures of economic conditions. The economic measures used in the Schmeidl and Davenport et al. studies can be improved, since they do little to explain the influence of internal and external economic conditions on refugee patterns. Both studies use per capita GNP to measure economic conditions, which provides incomplete information about the economic climate within a nation or the economic relationship between the host and sending nations. Although the UNHCR does not recognize economic refugees, they do in fact exist. A study conducted by Alastair Ager concluded that prior to refugee flight, many households experience a shortage of food and serious financial hardship as the result of disruption of income-generating activities.¹⁴

Furthermore, despite the UNHCR's definition of a refugee and previous statistical studies, substantial research has been dedicated to studying the economic refugee experience.¹⁵ These studies have found that economic disparities between two sovereign nations and poverty within a nation influence an economic refugee's decision to flee. For example, both the economic disparities between Haiti and the United States and the economic situation within Haiti influence the decision-making process of the Haitian refugee.

This study focuses on two key economic variables, income inequality and international economic disparities, in testing the assumption that economic conditions represent major contributing factors in the refugee's decision to flee his or her home nation. Income inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, and international economic disparities, measured by foreign debt relative to GDP, capture the full picture of the economic condition of a nation because these variables measure the level of economic security within a nation and its economic position relative to other nations.

ANALYSIS

DATA

The Davenport et al. study uses a pooled cross-sectional time series dataset (PCTS), including indicators of violent conflict, polity features, and economic factors for 129 countries from 1964 to 1989. Using the data obtained from the Davenport et al. analysis, this study employs statistical analysis to evaluate the socio-political and socio-economic factors that impact refugee migration. Like the Schmeidl and Davenport et al. studies, this analysis uses a global dataset, because the theoretical assertions of this analysis are not constrained by time or space. Furthermore, it minimizes the effects of selection bias that are often present when a regional dataset is used. Because of the theoretical assertions of the analysis, data from the *World Bank, World Development Indicators*¹⁶ and *Correlates of War* dataset¹⁷ were incorporated into the Davenport dataset to construct additional variables.

Hypothesis 1: *Intensity of violence during conflict contributes to refugee stocks.*

Hypothesis 2: *Poor economic conditions within and across nations contribute to refugee stocks.*

OLS Fixed Effects Model:

$$Y_{it}(\text{Ref}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Ethnic}M_{it} + \beta_2 \text{Civil}M_{it} + \beta_3 \text{Oppress}M_{it}$$

$$+ \beta_4 \text{Viol}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{Var}_{it} + \beta_6 \text{Econ}_{it} + \beta_7 \text{Inc}_{it} + \beta_8 \text{Pop}_{it} + \beta_9 \text{GNP}_{it} + \beta_{10} \text{Lref}_{it} + \beta_{11} \text{Ethnic}_{it} + \beta_{12} \text{Oppress}_{it} + \beta_{13} \text{Civil}_{it} + \beta_{14} \text{Mass}_{it} + \beta_{15} \text{Dev}_{it} + \beta_{16} \text{Dem}_{it} + \beta_{17} \text{Pol}_{it} + \beta_{18} \text{Dur}_{it} + \beta_{19} \text{Bor}_{it}$$

Dependent Variable-Refugee Migration

Net Stock of Displaced Persons = -1*(Number Hosted - Number Displaced)

Number Hosted = Asylum Seekers in the Country
Number Displaced = Emigrant Refugees + Internally Displaced

The dependent variable (*Ref*) represents refugee migration from a particular country of origin as well as the number of refugees in the international system.¹⁸ This analysis includes both refugees and internally displaced persons; they are summed together in order to estimate the number of individuals who left their homes in a given country.¹⁹ The number of asylum seekers is included as well. This provides us with a number that represents net migrants, which allows us to identify countries that produce a net stock of forced migrants as well as those that attract a net stock of asylum seekers in a given year. This measure provides the analysis with information regarding push and pull factors. The net stock number is finally multiplied by -1 so that positive net scores represent countries that produce refugees, and negative net scores represent countries that attract them.²⁰

Discussion of Independent Variables

The variable *genocide/politicide* (*Ethnic*) is a proxy measure for ethnic civil conflict. It is a binary variable that takes the value of "1" if genocide and/or politicide took place and "0" if genocide or politicide did not take place.²¹

The variable *civil war* (*Civil*) represents a measure of nonethnic civil conflict. This variable was constructed using data obtained from the Correlates of War dataset. It is a binary variable that takes the value of "0" if no civil war took place in a given country-year and "1" if a civil war took place in a given country-year.

The *cumulative conflict* variable (*Oppress*) is generated from Banks' Cross Polity Time Series dataset and is a proxy variable for the concept of oppressive government. It is composed of five indicators. The five indicators include antigovernment demonstrations, riots, general strikes, severe level of protest by the most populous group, and guerilla warfare/revolution for each country. The antigovernment demonstrations measure represents any peaceful public gathering of at least 100

Table 1
Variable Names and Definitions

Ref	the net stock of refugees in a given country
Ethnic	binary variable that measures the occurrence of ethnic conflict
Oppress	index variable that measures the occurrence of conflict against an oppressive government
Civil	binary variable that measures the occurrence of non-ethnic civil conflict
Mass	index variable that measures the number of massacres that occurred
EthnicM	interaction term that captures the number of massacres that occurred during ethnic conflict
CivilM	interaction term that captures the number of massacres that occurred during non-ethnic civil conflict
OppressM	interaction term that captures the number of massacres that occurred during conflict against an oppressive government
Viol	binary variable that measures the presence of any type of violent conflict that occurred in that year
Var	an event count of dissident conflict behavior
Econ	measures the percentage of foreign debt owed to the World Bank
Inc	measure of income inequality using the gini coefficient
GNP	per capita gross national product
Pop	population density of a given country
Bor	the number of country borders
Lref	lagged refugee net stock
Dev	deviance from normal conflict variable that measures dissident behavior
Dem	score of the level of democracy for each country

people for the purpose of displaying or voicing their opposition to government policies or authority, excluding demonstrations of a distinctly antiforeign nature.²² The riots measure includes any violent demonstration or clash of more than 100 citizens involving the use of physical force.²³ The general strikes measure represents any strike of 1,000 or more industrial or service workers that involves more than one employer and that is aimed at national government policies or authority.²⁴ The severe level of protest measure signifies any protest against the national government by the largest group in the country that involves any use of physical force.²⁵ Finally, the guerilla warfare/revolutions measure indicates any event that was classified as a guerilla-style conflict or a revolution in a given year. The measurement of the *cumulative conflict* variable (*Oppress*) replicates Davenport's measure of "state repression"²⁶ and captures the actions of dissidents who perpetrate

violent acts toward the government in direct opposition to government oppression.

The *massacre* variable (*Mass*) is a proxy variable for the intensity of violence against civilians not involved in the conflict.²⁷ Such acts should increase citizens' fears and thus increase refugee flows. This is an interval variable that takes the value "2" if there were major killings described as massacres, "1" if there were some killings described as massacres, and "0" if there were no large-scale killings. The *massacre* variable (*Mass*) was interacted with the each of the measures that represent three of the four modern-day conflicts to determine the relationship between refugee flows and intensity of violence during conflict.²⁸ The measurement of this variable is taken from data compiled in The Annual War and Political Instability Survey.²⁹

The variable *violent conflict* (*Viol*) is a proxy measure for the presence of conflict within a nation. It is a binary variable that takes the value of "1" whenever there is at least one event described as a civil war, an ethnic conflict, an interstate conflict, a guerilla warfare event, a riot or a revolution, and "0" when no violent event is reported. This variable was constructed using Banks' Cross Polity Time Series dataset, the Correlates of War Dataset, and the Harf and Gurr Conflict Data.

The *variety of conflict* (*Var*) variable is a count of the number of different types of dissident conflict behavior as recorded by the *cumulative conflict* (*Oppress*) variable. It ranges from "0" to "5" and indicates how many types of the previously identified protest events occurred during a particular time period.

The *foreign debt* variable (*Econ*) is a proxy variable for international economic disparities. This variable represents international economic disparities based on the premise that a country with substantial foreign debt has a developing economy that depends upon the wealth and resources of other, more developed nations. This proxy variable is the ratio of foreign debt owed to the World Bank as a percentage of GDP. This variable is included in the model because of Widgren's argument that economic disparities between developed and developing countries contribute to refugee flows. This analysis asserts that developing nations with economies that have a large foreign debt relative to their GDP have an unstable and weak economy that is heavily dependent upon the industrialized and developed world. This dependency opens the door for internal political instability and corruption, which develops into violent internal conflict and creates a refugee problem.³⁰

The concept of *income inequality* is measured using two indicators: the Gini coefficient (*Inc*) and per capita GNP (*GNP*). The Gini coefficient is a number between 0 and 1, and it measures the degree of income inequality in a given country. The coefficient equals 0 for a society in which each member received exactly the same income and 1 if one member received all the income and the rest received nothing. The data for the Gini coefficient were obtained from *World Bank, World Development Indicators* data.³¹

Per capita GNP is also used to measure *income inequality*. GNP is divided by midyear population to calculate this statistic. It was constructed using *World Bank, World Development Indicators* data.³² The Davenport et al. study³³ also uses per capita GNP to measure economic security. My study improves upon the Davenport et al. measure of economic conditions by including the Gini coefficient, which is a more accurate and widely used indicator of income inequality within a nation.³⁴

CONTROL VARIABLES

The control variable *population density* (*Pop*) is a proxy variable for measuring land shortage, which this study argues is the basis for territorial conflict. For some time, scholars have asserted that land shortages cause ethnic and civil conflicts over territory and that these conflicts lead to refugee flows.³⁵ The population density variable is calculated by dividing a country's midyear population by land area (square kilometers). Total population is based on all residents, regardless of citizenship or legal status. Refugees not permanently settled in the country of asylum are considered to be part of the population in their country of origin. Land area is considered the country's total area of land excluding the land under inland water bodies.

The control variable *number of borders* (*Bor*) is included in the model because existing literature has established that countries that are bordered by three or more nations typically have large flows of refugees during violent conflict.³⁶ This phenomenon occurs because it is less costly to flee across a land border than across a body of water.

DAVENPORT'S MODEL

Additional variables included in the revised model represent the theoretical assertions of Davenport's study; however, they are not the basis for the theory presented in this study. Nevertheless, they are included in order to avoid the argument that their absence would have biased the results achieved in the revised model. The *lagged refugee migration* (*Lref*) variable is

simply a lagged version of the dependent variable. It is included because "the information environment lowers the cost associated with relocation."³⁷ In other words, people do not make the decision to flee without receiving information from other individuals who have also made a similar decision.

The *deviance from normal conflict* (*Dev*) variable measures dissident behavior in the Davenport study. It was constructed using Banks' Cross-Polity Time Series dataset. The mean value for the variable *oppressive government* is calculated over time for each country. The years for which the value exceeds the mean are coded as "1," and the remaining years are coded as "0." This variable attempts to capture the excessive violent outbreaks of dissident behavior that take place in the presence of an oppressive government.

The next three variables (*democracy score*, *polity durability*, and *polity change*) measure features of regimes. Davenport argues that the structure and stability of the regime have an important influence on refugee migration.

The *democracy score* (*Dem*) was generated from Polity III and updated in Polity 98.³⁸ A score of "-10" represents the most autocratic nations, and a score of "+10" represents the most democratic nations.

Davenport believes that uncertainty about the future of the polity triggers initial refugee migration before violent conflict takes place. The variable *polity change* (*Pol*) is used to measure this uncertainty by identifying the length of time that a particular government existed without major transformation or abrupt changes to the polities or authority patterns.³⁹

Polity durability (*Dur*) captures the magnitude of instability experienced under a particular form of governance.⁴⁰ In other words, the variable ranges from "-16" (a large move toward autocracy) to "+16" (a large move toward democracy).

DISCUSSION OF THE MODEL

This analysis uses fixed-effects and least-squares estimators. This approach involves including a

dummy variable for each $N-1$ of countries in the analysis. Thus, the fixed-effects model assumes that each country in the model will have a different net stock of refugees and forced migrants when all other variables in the model assume a zero value.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Davenport's model suggests that information networks, genocide/politicide, durability of polity, civil war, and the variety of conflict all have a significant effect on refugee migration.

The results of the revised model are consistent with Davenport's findings. Although additional variables were incorporated into Davenport's model, the substantive and statistical significance of these variables did not change.

The empirical results of the revised model indicate that the intensity of violence during conflict appears to contribute to refugee flows.⁴¹ Furthermore, the results indicate that we cannot dismiss internal income inequality as a possible cause

of refugee migration. Nonetheless, other socioeconomic variables such as *population density* (*Pop*), *international economic disparities* (*Econ*), and *per capita GNP* (*GNP*) failed to achieve both statistical and substantive significance.

The theory behind the revised model argues that the intensity of the violent conflict is a more precise measure of the effect the conflict has on refugee migration. The interactions between the violent conflict variables and the intensity of violence variable capture this relationship. The results of the interactions between the variables measuring *ethnic conflict* (*Ethnic*), *oppressive government* (*Oppress*), and *massacre* (*Mass*) are consistent with the hypothesis that the more intense the violent act during the conflict, the greater the net stock of refugees from a country. It is important to note that in the Davenport model, the *oppressive government* variable (*Oppress*) did not achieve substantive or statistical significance. After

The measures of violence employed in both studies fail to capture dimensions of violent conflict that may be the true impetus behind significant refugee migration. These studies do not examine how the intensity of the violent acts and the extent of the violence during these conflicts contribute to refugee migration. In other words, do random acts of violence during a coup produce similar refugee flows as those produced by genocide?

Table 2
Results of OLS-Fixed Effects Regression Model, with Standard Errors in Parentheses

Variables	Davenport's Model-Equation 1	Davenport's Model-Equation 2	Revised Model
Lagged Refugee Migration (<i>Lref</i>)	.837*** (.01)	.91*** (.009)	.84*** (.012)
Oppressive Government (<i>Oppress</i>)	-.148 (1.03)	—	-1.62 (1.24)
Non-ethnic Civil Conflict (<i>Civil</i>)	95.19*** (17.6)	110.6*** (17.5)	105.01*** (29.7)
Variety of Conflict (<i>Var</i>)	22.5*** (7.05)	9.8*** (3.3)	18.7*** (7.2)
Violent Conflict (<i>Viol</i>)	-18.7 (12.7)	—	-13.2 (18.4)
Deviance From Normal Conflict (<i>Dev</i>)	-11.7 (12.6)	—	-10.14 (12.8)
Polity Change (<i>Dev</i>)	3.6** (1.9)	4.5** (1.9)	3.91** (1.9)
Democracy Score (<i>Dem</i>)	1.11 (1.19)	—	.86 (1.21)
Durability of Polity (<i>Dur</i>)	.34 (.50)	—	.31 (.50)
Population Density (<i>Pop</i>)	-2.83e-07 (2.45e-07)	—	-2.45e-07 (2.49e-07)
Per Capita GNP (<i>GNP</i>)	-.0005 (.002)	—	-.0007 (.002)
Genocide/Politicide (<i>Ethnic</i>)	67.2*** (17.1)	85.3*** (17.5)	42.97** (22.4)
Oppressive Government* Intensity (<i>OppressM</i>)	—	—	2.58*** (1.08)
Non-Ethnic Civil War* Intensity (<i>CivilM</i>)	—	—	-12.9 (18.4)
Genocide/Politicide* Intensity (<i>EthnicM</i>)	—	—	27.1** (16.0)
Income Inequality (<i>Inc</i>)	—	—	-2.4* (1.43)
International Economic Disparities (<i>Econ</i>)	—	—	-.12 (.26)
Intensity of Violence (<i>Mass</i>)	—	—	-5.8 (10.5)
Country Borders (<i>Bor</i>)	—	—	-4.9 (6.0)
Constant	-13.4 (13.2)	18.7*** (4.8)	123.9* (70.6)
Joint-F on Dummies	1.71***	2.04***	1.66***
Joint-F on Regressors	468.88***	1172.13***	338.24***
R-Squared	.84	.88	.84
Sample Size	2957	3095	2953
Number of Countries	126	128	126

*Significant 0.10 level
**Significant 0.05 level.
***Significant 0.01 level.

interacting it with the *massacre* variable (*Mass*) in the revised model, however, the *oppressive government* variable (*Oppress*) achieved both statistical and substantive significance. This indicates that the presence of violent conflict alone does not influence refugee migration. Rather, the intensity of the conflict contributes to refugee stocks.

Despite the encouraging results of the interactions, it is important to address the fact that the interaction between the variables *nonethnic civil conflict* (*Civil*) and *massacre* (*Mass*) did not achieve substantive or statistical significance, although *nonethnic civil conflict* (*Civil*) alone was both substantively and statistically significant. This perplexing result indicates that the relationship between the two variables is not consistent with the theory of the analysis. There may be several reasons why the results were inconsistent with the theory of this study. First, civil conflicts tend to be protracted conflicts taking place over several decades; therefore, the intensity of the violence may vary over time. Consequently, this variation would not be captured in the *intensity of violence* variable (*Mass*) used in this analysis. Also, it is possible that while the countries used in the analysis had nonethnic civil conflicts take place over the selected time period, the intensity of violence was low throughout many of these conflicts; in this case, the results would not support the proposed theory⁴² because once again this type of mild conflict would not be captured by the intensity variable used in this analysis. Further examination of how the nature of the violence that occurs during nonethnic civil conflicts changes over time is necessary to illuminate the nuances of the relationship between nonethnic civil conflict, the intensity of violence, and refugee flows.

It is also important to note that the *intensity of violence* variable (*Mass*) alone did not achieve either substantive or statistical significance. This result is not especially troubling, simply because the theory of this analysis assumes that the variable *intensity of violence* (*Mass*) cannot stand alone. This variable simply describes the character of the conflict. Therefore it must be interacted with a particular conflict in order to have any substantive importance.⁴³

As previously stated, the second main argument of this study asserted that poor economic conditions within a nation have a direct influence on refugee flows. The result for the Gini coefficient indicates that the lower the inequality between the earning power of citizens, the greater the net refugee flow. This result contradicts the hypothesis that people do consider poverty a credible threat and will choose to become a refugee because they believe emigrating represents a preferable economic alternative to their current economic situation. Understanding why the coefficient is negative would provide greater insight into the nuances of this particular relationship. We know that this analysis suffers from omitted variable bias; given further research it is likely that we

can identify additional indicators of income inequality that provide a more precise measure of this concept. Finally, similar to the Schmeidl⁴⁴ and Davenport⁴⁵ studies, the per capita GNP variable (*GNP*) once again failed to achieve either statistical or substantive significance. This result provides conclusive evidence that the per capita GNP variable (*GNP*) is a poor measure of economic conditions.

Therefore, future studies can exclude this variable since there is no indication that there is a relationship between it and refugee flows.

Next, the result for *international economic disparities* (*Econ*) also contradicts the hypothesis that economic pull factors do influence a person's decision to leave a poor country and become a refugee in a more economically developed nation. The coefficient for this variable fails to achieve both substantive and statistical significance. Given the results, the specification of the model may not be correctly estimating this relationship; therefore, further analysis is necessary to explore this particular relationship.

The variables *population density* (*Pop*) and *number of country borders* (*Bor*) also failed to achieve statistical and substantive significance. These two variables address the effect that land shortage has on refugee migration and the ease with which a person can flee, given the number of countries to which a person can safely flee. It is surprising that the variables that address geographical conditions

The theory behind the revised model argues that the intensity of the violent conflict is a more precise measure of the effect the conflict has on refugee migration. The interactions between the violent conflict variables and the intensity of violence variable capture this relationship.

and characteristics of a particular country failed to achieve significance in this analysis, given that case studies have found that these two variables are very important to refugee migration. For instance, conflict over shortages of land have been found to be major contributors of refugee flows, and the literature suggests that multiple land borders increase the likelihood refugees will decide to flee.

The *borders* variable (*Bor*) was incorporated in the revised model based upon the findings of several case studies.⁴⁶ This is the first instance in which this particular variable is incorporated into a statistical model; therefore, it is important that we explore the relationship between the number of borders and refugee migration. When we regress *net stock* (*Ref*) on *borders* (*Bor*), the parameter estimate is both substantively and statistically significant.⁴⁷ The results of the regression indicate that the greater the number of country borders, the greater the likelihood that refugees are going to leave their country of origin. Consequently, it is possible that the specification of the revised model used in this analysis fails to capture the unique relationship between the number of borders a refugee-producing nation has and refugee migration.

The *population density* variable (*Pop*) is a proxy variable that represents land shortage. The analysis intended to show that conflict over small pieces of land increases refugee flows. It is possible that the *population density* variable (*Pop*) failed to achieve significance because it does not measure the population density of arable land. Consequently, future analysis may be necessary to improve upon the measure to include the population density of only arable, inhabitable land.

The findings of this analysis strongly support the hypothesis that intensity of violence during conflict is a major contributing factor of refugee flows. However, there is weak support for the second hypothesis that income inequality and international economic disparities directly influence refugee flows. Despite the weak support for Hypothesis 2, this analysis goes beyond previous analyses by providing more accurate measures for internal and external economic disparities.

CONCLUSION

There appears to be no end to the refugee crisis, and there is admittedly no panacea; however, the UNHCR and the international community have the resources and the power to improve current refugee policies and develop better approaches to lessen the annual flow of refugees.

Anticipating and preventing conflict within developing nations is the first step toward reducing the flow of refugees. It has been established that refugees flee because of violent conflict and high levels of violence in their country. Reducing the incidence of violent conflict and the intensity of the violent acts would undoubtedly reduce the fears of many citizens, therefore ensuring that they remain residents of their countries and do not become refugees. While this analysis did not find strong support for this claim, it is logical to assume that improving economic conditions within a nation also has an effect on reducing refugee flows. Economic security lessens the impact of conflict on a nation and it provides stability for the government and its citizens. In addition, there is less incentive to bear the costs of fleeing if economic conditions are relatively good in one's own nation. Another option to consider is third-country resettlement. This postconflict refugee strategy has proven to be highly successful yet it is the least used because of political and economic considerations.

With the existing refugee population reaching almost 21 million, it is evident that current refugee policies are lacking and need to be reevaluated. The refugee situation will only improve when the global community and the UNHCR admit that existing policies are severely limited and are weakened by their failure to target the relevant causes of refugee flows. Consequently, policy-makers across the globe must be wholeheartedly committed to developing refugee policies that address the imminent causes of refugee migration and implementing policies that diverge from the traditional theoretical models.

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**Appendix 1
Countries in the Study**

United States	Romania	Libya	Canada
Soviet Union	Sudan	Cuba	Finland
Iran	Haiti	Norway	Turkey
Dominican Republic	Sweden	Iraq	Jamaica
Denmark	Egypt	Trinidad and Tobago	Mali
Syria	Mexico	Senegal	Lebanon
Guatemala	Benin	Jordan	Honduras
Mauritania	Israel	El Salvador	Niger
Saudi Arabia	Nicaragua	Ivory Coast	Yemen Arab Republic
Costa Rica	Liberia	Yemen's People Republic	Panama
Sierra Leone	Kuwait	Colombia	Ghana
United Arab Emirates	Venezuela	Togo	Oman
Ecuador	Cameroon	Afghanistan	Peru
Nigeria	China	Brazil	Gabon
Mongolia	Bolivia	Central African Republic	Taiwan
Paraguay	Chad	North Korea	Chile
Congo	South Korea	Argentina	Zaire
Japan	Uruguay	Uganda	India
United Kingdom	Kenya	Bhutan	Ireland
Tanzania	Pakistan	Netherlands	Burundi
Bangladesh	Belgium	Rwanda	Burma(Myanmar)
France	Somalia	Sri Lanka	Switzerland
Djibouti	Nepal	Spain	Ethiopia
Thailand	Portugal	Angola	Cambodia
German Federal Republic	Mozambique	Laos	German Democratic Republic
Zambia	North Vietnam	Poland	Zimbabwe
Malaysia	Austria	Malawi	Singapore
Hungary	South Africa	Philippines	Czechoslovakia
Botswana	Indonesia	Italy	Madagascar
Australia	Albania	Mauritius	New Zealand
Yugoslavia	Morocco	Papua New Guinea	Greece
Algeria	Cyprus	Tunisia	

Appendix 2
Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

Variable	Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Refugee Migration	3749	79.2	635.2	-5247	8601
Lagged Refugee Migration	3616	74.4	606.7	-5247	8057
Intensity of					
Violence During Ethnic Conflict	3481	.069	.351	0	2
Intensity of					
Violence During Conflict Against an Oppressive Government	3382	.071	.35	0	2
Intensity of					
Violence During Non-Ethnic Civil Conflict	3590	.06	.119	0	2
Intensity of					
Violence	3749	.551	.85	0	2
Violent Conflict	3749	.43	.50	0	1
Non-ethnic Civil War	3590	.083	.28	0	1
Ethnic Conflict	3481	.070	.26	0	1
Conflict Against an Oppressive Government	3382	.087	.36	0	1
Variety of Conflict	3749	1.25	1.65	0	5
Population					
Density	3437	3.35e+07	1.08e+08	249000	1.15e+09
Per Capita GNP	3364	2382.6	4171.7	35	33710
Income Inequalities	3977	45.7	3.17	28.9	64
International Economic					
Disparities	3977	58.31	31.6	.3	1205
Deviance from Normal					
Conflict	3749	.289	.45	0	1
Democracy Score	3530	-1.35	7.5	.10	10
Polity Change	3529	.088	1.86	-16	16
Polity Durability	3529	22.7	22.95	0	91
Number of Country Borders	3749	3.84	2.72	0	16

NOTES

1. "[O]wing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." United Nations High Committee for Refugees, *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Online. Available: [http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/basics/+SwwBmeJAIS_wwww3wwwwwwwhFqA72ZR0gRfZNFqtxw5oq5zFqfEIgfIAFqA72ZR0gRfZNDzmxwwwwwwwwww1F](http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/basics/+SwwBmeJAIS_wwww3wwwwwwwhFqA72ZR0gRfZNFqtxw5oq5zFqfEIgfIAFqA72ZR0gRfZNDzmxwwwwwwww1F)

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 4. Hakovirta, *Third world*, p. 91; Schmeidl, *Social Science*, pp. 284-308; Schmeidl, *From root cause*, p. 127; Gibney, et al., *Whither refugee*, p. 21; Apodaca, "Research Note," pp. 80-93; and Davenport et al., "Sometimes You Just Have to Leave," p. 42.
 5. Davenport et al., "Sometimes You Just Have to Leave," p. 29.
 6. *Ibid.*, and Schmeidl, "Exploring the Causes of Forced Migration."
 7. Schmeidl, "Exploring the Causes of Forced Migration," p. 284.
 8. Davenport et al., "Sometimes You Just Have to Leave," p. 32.
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26. Note: this variable is recoded as a dummy variable. Therefore "0" represents the presence of none of these indicators and "1" represents the presence of one or more of these indicators. It was necessary to code this variable as a dummy in order to interact it with the proxy variable for the intensity of violence.
27. The "massacre" variable is designed to measure the intensity of violence during conflict. The term "massacre" is used interchangeably throughout the analysis in lieu of the phrase "intensity of violence." Both terms are designed to represent identical concepts.
28. The *massacre* variable was recoded as a dummy variable "0" and "1" when it was interacted with the conflict variable. *OppressM*, *EthnicM*, and *CivilM* are the three conflict variables interacted with the *Massacre* variable
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47. $B = 19.69381, SE = 3.804908, P = 0.000$ where $Net\ Stock = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Number of Borders}) + \mu_1$

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