Leave No Stone Unturned
National implementation of International Humanitarian Law
and conflict related sexual violence.

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1 Introduction

The Nobel Peace Prize 2018 was awarded to Nadia Murad and Denis Mukwege for their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war in armed conflict. They both emphasize the importance of rule of law, prosecution of perpetrators, dissemination of information about international and national law, and justice for victims of sexual violence. For this reason, this thesis will focus on the relationship between conflict related sexual violence (CRSV) perpetrated by government forces, and national implementation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). This will be done by examining three conflicts in Africa, where there has been reported different levels of CRSV. The method of choice is structured focused comparison, where the same set of questions will be applied to all three cases, in order to examine if there is a correlation between national implementation of IHL and levels of the use of CRSV by government forces.

Even though CRSV is a phenomenon that has been a part of conflict history for decades, it was not addressed by the international community until 2000, when Resolution 1325 by the United Nation Security Council (UNSC), made it clear that CRSV is a threat to global peace and international security (Department of Public Information, United Nations, 2014). The first person to ever be accused of rape as a crime against humanity, was found guilty in 2001, by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). Soon thereafter, all forms of sexual violence was included in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, as a crime against humanity (Ibid). The perpetrators of conflict related sexual violence can be both men and women, which is also true for the victims. And even though research and media focus on rebel groups as the perpetrators of CRSV, it has been reported that government armed forces are no exception (Fjelde et al. 2017). CRSV is not only devastating for the victim, as it can lead to health risks, isolation due to stigmatization of sexual violence and unwanted pregnancies. It can also increase the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and AIDS, which can have destructive consequences for the community at large.

CRSV is a violation of International Humanitarian Law, which is specified in the Fourth Geneva Convention from 1949, which address protection of the civilian population during conflict, which includes protection against rape and other forms of sexual violence (Gaggioli, 2014: 512). IHL is a part of international law, and is meant to protect those who are not or are
no longer taking part in a conflict, such as civilians, humanitarian workers, wounded and prisoners of war. It also regulates the means of warfare permitted in armed conflict. The law goes back to the nineteenth century, and has since then been developed as society and the international community has grown and changed thereafter. A big part of IHL is to be found in the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and in the Additional protocols of 1977. The laws apply only to armed conflict, and it applies equally to all parties that take part in the conflict (ICRC, 2004). Almost every state in the world has agreed to be bound by the law, however, violations still occur. It is therefore necessary to further look into how states implement and enforce the laws they have agreed to be bound by, in order to prevent future violations. Even though both international and many national laws address these crimes, and non-governmental institutions are taking steps in the right direction, more needs to be done to understand what causes violations of IHL and the use of CRSV, in order to protect civilians and communities from this kind of physical and psychological trauma. For this reason, this study will examine the research question: *What is the relationship between national implementation of International Humanitarian Law and conflict related sexual violence perpetrated by government forces?*

The main argument in this paper is that the level of national implementation, and specific types of implementation has an effect on the levels of CRSV, perpetrated by government forces. The contribution made in this study is both empirical and theoretical, theoretical as it seeks to further explain the causes for the prevalence of CRSV by government forces, and empirical as it can contribute to future policy changes and implementation activities. The first section in this paper will provide an overview of previous research on CRSV, followed by the theoretical framework of this paper and the hypothesis that states the expected relationship between the variables. Subsequently, the research design, including operationalization, method of choice, and case selection will be presented and motivated. Thereafter, the operationalization will be applied to the selected cases, and the results will be presented, followed by an interpretation of the results. The final part of this paper will answer to other possible explanations, as well as limitations of the research design, before closing with suggestions for future research.
2. Theory

This section begins with an overview of previous research on the explanations for conflict related sexual violence, and implementations of International Humanitarian Law, which is followed by a description of the identified gap in the research field, which this paper will attempt to fill. The last and main part of this section is the theory which explains the expected relationship between the dependent and the independent variable, which is the mechanisms that the proposed hypothesis is based on.

2.1 Previous research

For several years conflict related sexual violence was perceived as a weapon of war, and was used strategically by military leaders and combatants to weaken their opponent. However, today most scholars has moved away from this theory, as it simplifies the phenomenon and ignores other possible explanations (Eriksson & Stern, 2010; Wood, 2014+). Rather, several other explanations has been presented, that includes both societal, political and economic aspects.

When a feminist approach was added to the political science field, gender inequality was introduced as a possible explanation for conflict related sexual violence. First of all, because conflict increases the differences between the genders, men become warriors and women become victims. Furthermore, the socialization process when men become combatants is gendered, in the way that it is based on particular ideas of manhood and masculinity, which includes the aspect of domination over the enemy, and where sexual violence becomes a tool to exercise this domination (Cohen 2013; Eriksson & Stern 2010; Wood, 2006). However, even though the explanation has received a lot of attention there is no consensus that this theory is applicable to all cases, as there are many empirical examples of variation in the levels of CRSV in countries with gender inequality (Sellström, 2015: 72). Another aspect of socialization as an explanation for the use of CRSV is that it is a result of the recruitment process and the initiation rituals, where combatants are drilled and hazed by higher officials and other members of the army, to create strong loyalty within and to the armed group. This
process also include dehumanization of the enemy, and it fosters violence within the group, which combined can increase the use of CRSV. Sexual violence can then be used as a way to strengthen cohesion within small groups, because everyone included are responsible for the atrocities (Wood, 2009:138). In other cases it is used strategically as a weapon, because the armed groups finds it effective in terrorizing and destroying communities. However, this theory is dependent on commanders that either command the use of sexual violence, or in other cases allow it, because the loyalty of the combatants lies with the army officials (Wood, 2006: 324).

Some scholars have argued that ethnic wars produce high levels of conflict related sexual violence, as it can be used as a form of ethnic cleansing, or a way to humiliate the enemy (Skjelsbæk, 2012: 62). Even though there has been found a correlation between conflicts with ethnic tensions, and the prevalence of CRSV, these conflicts are complex, and include other factors that affect the results (Carlsson, 2016:26). Another explanation that has contributed to the debate is that weak governance increases the levels of conflict related sexual violence. It is argued that when a state is weak, it lacks enforcement, which creates an opportunity for military forces to use sexual violence (Cohen, 2013; Hillman, 2012; Sellström, 2015; Wood, 2014). However, even though there has been found some correlation between the strength of the state and levels of conflict related sexual violence, this would mean that actors would always use sexual violence if they perceived that it would have no consequences, however, as previously mentioned, this is not the case. Connected to the argument of weak states is the explanation that impunity for conflict related sexual violence increases the probability for further violations (Sellström, 2015). First of all, that flawed prohibitions signals that the use of conflict related sexual violence has no consequences, secondly, that negligent authorities that does not punish violations, creates impunity. And last that amnesties explains impunity for conflict related sexual violence, among the armed forces (Sellström, 2015: 70-73).

These theories are all part of the debate on what explains the variation in the use of CRSV, and some are also connected to implementation of IHL, however it is not directly mentioned in the research. Both impunity for violations and state strength is connected to how IHL is implemented, and how the laws are enforced. Previous research has debated how IHL is best to be implemented, and what explains why armed forces violate the laws. The main argument
is that the actors, both the armed forces and the civilian society, lack information about the law and the consequences of violations, and that the IHL is not implemented thoroughly in the national laws and policies (Bangerter, 2011; Brassil, 2015; Muñoz-Rojas and Frésard, 2004). However, previous studies concerns all types of violations of IHL, even though it has been shown that the explanation for the use of different types of violence against civilians vary between the types and targets (Raleigh, 2012; Schwartz & Straus, 2018; Wood, 2010). Conflict related sexual violence is prevalent in many of the ongoing armed conflicts today (Gaggioli, 2014: 503), and sexual violence is a violation of IHL, however few studies has examined if implementation of IHL has an effect on the levels of CRSV in a conflict. Additionally, even though implementation includes dissemination of information to the public and the armed forces, ratification of the international laws, training of policymakers, police and the armed forces, enforcement and prosecution of perpetrators, previous research does not apply all measures in their studies (Brassil, 2015; Haugen, 2011; Ferdinandusse, 2009). And lastly, most of the previous research focus on rebel groups and not state military forces (Bangerter, 2011; Haugen, 2011), even though it has been shown that state forces violate the law in both previous and current armed conflicts (Fjelde et al. 2017).

To fill the gap in previous research, this paper will focus on conflict related sexual violence, perpetrated by government forces. Furthermore, the analysis of national implementation of IHL will include dissemination to all relevant audience, accession and ratification of international laws, military rules and training, as well as enforcement and prosecution. By examining all aspects of implementation it is possible to see if the different implementation activities has a different effect on levels of CRSV based on the type of measures that are taken.

2.2 Theoretical framework

National implementation is in this paper defined as the activities a state put into practice, in order to inform, monitor and prosecute violations of an international law. CRSV is a violation of IHL, and is the dependent variable in this analysis. CRSV will be defined according to the definition by Cohen and Nordås (2013), which includes rape, sexual mutilation, sexual
torture, forced sterilization-abortion, forced prostitution and sexual slavery, perpetrated by men or women in a conflict situation. So why should national implementation of IHL matter for the level of conflict related sexual violence perpetrated by government forces? The theory is that dissemination of information about IHL to the public puts pressure on the government to implement laws, monitor and prosecute violations. This will put pressure on the state armed forces to include information about IHL in their rules and in the training, and to monitor and report violations of the law. If the commanders and higher officials in the army are pressured to increase respect for the law and understand the importance of monitoring violations, they can change the perception of violence against civilians within the group, if the military institutions are strong. If combatants then receive information about IHL, understand that sexual violence is a violation, are trained to respect the law and punished if the law is violated, it will lead to lower levels of CRSV.

The first part of the implementation chain is based on one of the obligations in the Geneva Convention from 1949, which is that states are obligated to disseminate information about IHL to the actors it applies to (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2003). The law should be disseminated to the armed forces, police forces, humanitarian workers and to the victims of armed conflict. However, because actors interpret the laws and conflict situations in different ways, it is possible that they find that the international law is not applicable to them. Furthermore, some actors might not recognize the law because of their perspective on the countries and the international community that created the law (Mack and Pejic, 2008:11). However, if the law is thoroughly disseminated it can ensure that the necessary mechanisms to enforce the laws are in place (Brassil, 2015: 90). Dissemination also includes training legislators and policymakers, so that they can contextualize the laws, and thereby give them legitimacy among the population and the armed forces. If the actors the law applies to perceive that the law is legitimate, it is easier to increase compliance, because violating the laws would be perceived as wrong and immoral. Another aspect of dissemination of information about IHL is that the public is informed about the penalties for violations, and what they can expect from the government, the military and from legal institutions. If they receive this information, through public laws, education and media coverage, they can hold the government accountable and pressure them to monitor violations and prosecute perpetrators. Dissemination of information about IHL to legislators and policymakers is
therefore important, because it can increase legitimacy, and thereby increase compliance. Furthermore, the public has to be informed in order to hold their government accountable, pressuring them to monitor violations.

Secondly, prosecution is an important step in increasing compliance, because prosecution of violations can create legal deterrence, thus contributing to preventing future violations. It is therefore important that the national legal framework clearly states the penalties for the different types of violations, so that the national tribunals can convict perpetrators (Pfanner, 2009: 284; Sellström, 2015: 70). This is especially important since some of the laws in the IHL are not self-executing, and therefore needs to be implemented and legislated into an act in order to be applicable in national courts (Pfanner, 2009: 289). It is however important that conflict related sexual violence is explicitly prohibited in the national laws, and not just as a part of violence against civilians, because it is a violation that has been overlooked by many policymakers and commanders in the past (Alcorn, 2014: 2034). If incidents of CRSV is reported the government has to accuse and prosecute the perpetrators, so that combatants know that violations of IHL are taken seriously, and thereby does not commit future violations in fear of punishment.

The third part of the theory is that strong military institutions with respect for IHL is important for increasing compliance amongst combatants. If the government is pressured to implement IHL, they can pressure the military to implement the law in their institutions. There are three factors that are especially important for increasing respect among the military; (1) that sexual violence is prohibited by the commanders, (2) that the prohibitions is effectively communicated to the combatants and (3) that the institutions makes it possible and actually follow through on the penalties of violations (Sellström, 2015: 71). In order to increase compliance amongst combatants it is important with a strong hierarchy within the military, were the leaders perceive that respect for IHL is important and beneficial for them, and that they perceive that sexual violence is not an exception to the law. Furthermore, the leaders has to be willing to, and have the power to monitor and prosecute violations (Wood, 2009: 141). However, it is important that information about the law, as well as information about monitoring, prosecution and penalties, is included in military manuals, handbooks and codes of conduct, as one can not expect combatants to respect the law if they are not
thoroughly informed (Brasil, 2015: 104). Additionally, it is more likely that combatants will obey rules that are created by the military for the military, than a list of laws created by the international community (Brits & Nel, 2010:206). In addition to being implemented in written documents, these rules has to be translated into practical means in the military training to ensure that the combatants know how the law applies to them (Muñoz-Rojas & Frésard, 2004: 203).

As much as these extrinsic incentives are important, they can not alone increase compliance among the combatants, as these are not the incentives that usually drive the decisions in stressful situations, such as in armed conflicts. Previous research shows that in some conflicts, military leaders has been able to promote certain types of violence among the combatants, while excluding targeted violence against civilians and the use of sexual violence against both civilians and opponents, as a preferable option (Wood, 2004: 20). If one wishes to increase respect for the law, one has to change the perception of targeted violence, and the norms within the group. The commanders have to deliberately change the combatants preferences regarding CRSV through training and information about the costs of using certain types of violence, either as a strategic choice or as a consequence of the aggression produced and intensified in conflict (Hoover Green, 2016: 623). In the case of government military forces, it can be very costly to use CRSV, because it can undermine support among the civilian population, which will make it difficult to stay in power (Wood, 2004: 21). Additionally, a government force that strategically and consequently violate the law, or neglect to monitor and prosecute violations, risk losing support from the international community, which can be costly both in relation to military power, such as military support and weapon trade, but even more in terms of resource exchange and economic sanctions (La Rosa, 2008). However, it is important that these consequences are communicated to the commanders and the combatants, so that they realize how violations might affect them and the state. By changing the perception of what is beneficiary to the armed force, one changes the perception of what is acceptable behaviour, thus reducing violations, in this case conflict related sexual violence. In order to prevent violations of IHL and CRSV in conflicts, information about the laws has to be part of military codes of conduct and military training, additionally the commanders has to monitor violations and the tribunals has to prosecute perpetrators. Furthermore, the consequences of CRSV has to be communicated to the armed
forces, thus making it more costly to violate the laws, both in terms of legal and social consequences.

Based on this theory, the following hypothesis is proposed and tested in this paper:

*Higher levels of national implementation of International Humanitarian Law is related to a decrease in levels of conflict related sexual violence perpetrated by government armed forces.*

3. Research design

In the following section the method of choice will be introduced, followed by an operationalization of the dependent and the independent variable, and the sources where information about each variable is to be found. In the last part of this section the case selection strategy will be presented. The case selection is based on three control variables which are: gender inequality, ethnic tensions and fragile state structure.

3.1 Method

The aim of this thesis is to study the hypothesized correlation between the level of national implementation of International Humanitarian Law and conflict related sexual violence, perpetrated by government forces. For the purpose of this study, I will perform a qualitative structured focused comparison. The advantages of a qualitative study is first of all that it provides a deeper understanding of the research context, because it makes it possible to study the cases and the mechanisms that explain the correlation between the dependent and the independent variable, in depth. Furthermore, a qualitative study makes it possible to use complex measurements of a variable, which gives the measurements strong internal validity (Adcock & Collier, 2001: 531). In this case, a qualitative method is best suited, because the independent variable has so many dimensions. As previously mentioned, previous research has focused mainly on one of these dimensions, however, through a structured focused comparison it is possible to include several levels of implementation.
Structured focused comparison is structured in the way that one asks the same set of general questions to all the selected cases. Furthermore, it is focused because all the questions are connected to the phenomenon of interested, and focused on explaining the changes in the dependent variable, based on the changes in the independent variable (George & Bennett, 2004: 67). Another advantage of using structured focused comparison in this study, is that the independent variable is difficult to code in such a way that the results will have any meaning. As one in a structured focused comparison can collect and present more elaborate answers, it can increase the theoretical contribution. However, one of the limitations of this method is that it can be difficult to interpret the results and compare the cases, because one does not have clear values that are ranked in relation to each other. In order to solve this problem, I will look at the amount of implementation and how many of the activities are initiated, to say something about the level of implementation.

### 3.2 Operationalization

#### 3.2.1 National implementation of IHL

The independent variable, national implementation of International Humanitarian Law, is the implementation of a set of international laws that is meant to limit the effects of war and protect civilians, humanitarian workers, wounded and prisoners of war during ongoing conflict. Most of the law is part of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which has been developed and supplemented by further protocols regarding human security (ICRC, 2004). Almost every state in the world has agreed to be bound by the laws, however, the level of national implementation varies a lot between the states.

This is measured by gathering information about four implementation activities. First of all, by examining the domestic legal framework, to see if the entire IHL framework or parts of the law is ratified. However, since the main interest of this paper is the protection of civilians during conflict, specifically against sexual violence, the laws concerning protection of civilians, prisoners of war and refugees in armed conflict, will be what constitutes the base of level of implementation in regard to national laws. This is because these groups are especially
vulnerable to abuse in armed conflict. Additionally, International Humanitarian Law embody much more than just protection of civilians, such as method of warfare and protection of humanitarian workers and objects, which are not as relevant in this study. The second measure is dissemination activities, which include how information is spread to civilians, policymakers, the police force and the armed forces. This will be measured by looking at whether laws and policies are made public or if information about IHL is included in education. Dissemination also includes training of legislators and policymakers, because these are the ones that has to contextualize the laws and implement them in the national laws. Additionally, they need to be informed of the importance of IHL in order to realize and communicate the importance of prosecution. Furthermore, dissemination of information and training of the police and armed forces, is important because these are often the ones responsible for violations. This is measured by looking at whether the forces has received training and information about IHL in workshops and seminars. The third measure is how IHL is included in military rules and codes of conduct. To see how information about IHL is disseminated and implemented in police and armed forces, I will look at military handbooks, codes of conduct and military rules. The last implementation measure is whether the government has addressed violations of IHL in official statements, how the laws are enforced, and if there is a history of prosecuting perpetrators.

Based on these measures, the following questions will be asked to each of the selected cases to examine the levels of national implementation of IHL:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| National law: | • How is IHL laws ratified in national law?  
<p>|             | • Is conflict related sexual violence specifically mentioned in the law? |
| Dissemination: | • To what degree has the police force received training in IHL?            |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military law and codes of conduct:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- In what way is IHL included in military rules/law?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is conflict related sexual violence specified as a violation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is punishments for violations included in military law?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How is IHL included in military codes of conduct?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is conflict related sexual violence specified as unwanted behaviour?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prosecutions and enforcement:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Has violations been addressed by the government?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Has the government responded to accusations from the international community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Has perpetrators of violations of IHL been prosecuted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is respect or violations of the law monitored by the government or NGOs?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information about domestic laws connected to implementation of IHL is available at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), where the laws are divided by state, and
legal area, which also includes military codes and handbooks. Additionally, ICRC has country profiles where they gather reports and statements on IHL activities by country (ICRC, 2017a). Furthermore, in some of the yearly World Reports, produced by Human Rights Watch, there is information about government response, enforcement and violations in the states.

### 3.2.2 Conflict related sexual violence

Conflict related sexual violence is the dependent variable in this analysis, and will be defined according to the definition by Cohen and Nordås (2013), which includes rape, sexual mutilation, sexual torture, forced sterilization-abortion, forced prostitution and sexual slavery. The sexual violence has to be perpetrated during armed conflict, which is defined as “a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths” (Cohen & Nordås, 2013: 5). In order to measure this variable I will look at the prevalence of CRSV by government forces in past and ongoing conflicts. On reports of conflict related sexual violence perpetrated by both male and female combatants, against men, women and children.

This data is available in the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict Dataset from 2013, by Cohen and Nordås. The dataset is a good source, because it provides an extensive overview of CRSV from 1989-2009. The information is gathered from Amnesty International, the U.S. State Department and Human Rights Watch, which makes the reports more reliable, because the information is triangulated. In this dataset, the prevalence is divided into five categories. **Massive** (3) which implies that the violence is likely related to the conflict, and that it is described as innumerable or systematic, all report of 1,000 or more incident falls within this category. **Several** (2) implies that the incidents were widespread and common, and that there was between 25-999 reported incidents. The category **some** (1) means that there were a few and often isolated incidents and 25 or fewer reports, and lastly prevalence 0, which means that there were no reports of sexual violence related to the conflict. It is also included a category for missing information (-99) which means that the data was not available for the conflict or actor, that year (Cohen & Nordås, 2013:10).
3.3 Case selection and scope conditions

Due to the fact that this study will be qualitative, the case selection will be strategic. However, because the cases has to be representative for a larger population I will look for diverse cases, which are cases that represent variation in the different values of my dependent variable (Gerring, 2007: 89). Because I wish to look at the hypothesized correlation between CRSV perpetrated by government forces, and national implementation of IHL, I will look at cases where CRSV is low, medium or high, but where the set of control variables are held constant, in order to isolate my independent variable as the explanation for the change in my dependent variable. Since I wish to analyse cases that represent all three values explained in the operationalization of the dependent variable, I will select three cases. The main reason for why only a few cases are selected, is because the material that has to be examined is extensive, and it would be too time-consuming to analyse a bigger sample. Furthermore, there are only a limited set of cases that varies on the dependent variable, but where the control variables are held constant.

The first criteria when the cases are selected, is that they will be within the same geographical area, in order to hold other possibly influencing factors constant. The selected cases will all be within Africa, where national implementation of IHL has been a challenge to ICRC (Waschefort, 2016). Secondly, I will only choose cases that has ongoing conflict in a certain time period. The chosen time period is 2003-2006. First of all, because I want to analyse conflicts that are active during the same time, to further control for other circumstances that can affect the variation in the dependent variable. Secondly, there is problem with access to empirical material. Many countries lack information on most of the chosen variables before year 2000, either because researcher did not have access to the information, or because CRSV and national implementation of IHL is a relatively new phenomenon in the research field, compared to other social science phenomenons, and the data was therefore not extensively collected previous to the 21st century.

Furthermore, I will look for cases that have similar values on gender inequality, as it has been argued that countries with high levels of gender inequality before and during the conflict, has higher levels of conflict related sexual violence. Gender inequality is defined as a social process where people are perceived and treated differently based on their gender, even though the
surrounding circumstances are the same. This is measured by looking at differences between gender in different categories, such as education, healthcare, economic status and empowerment. This information is found in the Gender Inequality Index, provided by the United Nations Development Programme. It shows how women are disadvantaged in three categories; reproductive health, economic status and empowerment, in 160 countries. It ranges from 0 to 1, where higher scores implies more inequality (Gender Inequality Index, 2018). Another factor that has been argued to explain higher levels of CRSV is ethnic tensions, which can be defined as tensions between one or more ethnic groups based on access to, among other, government power, natural resources and territory. The Geographical Research On War, Unified Platform (GROW) offers an overview of different ethnic groups in most of the countries in the world, with information about “access to executive government power, their involvement in civil war, federal administrative units, physical elevation, nightlight data, as well as population and GDP data by area” (GROW, 2015).

Lastly I will select cases where the state structure is similar in terms of strength, because state strength has been argued to influence levels of CRSV. A fragile state structure implies that the government is unable or unwilling to provide security, basic social services and stability to its population, and where levels of corruption and poverty is high, while legitimacy, accountability and cooperation is low. This can be measured by looking at level of governance indicators, such as rule of law, corruption, accountability. As well as GDP per capita, human security, education standards and health care. This information is gathered and measured by The Fund For Peace each year, and presented in the Fragile States Index. The data starts at 2006, however it is a good indicator for the previous years, and it includes the last year of the chosen time period (FSI, 2018).
Based on these criterias I have chosen three countries in Africa, where the values on the dependent variable differ, but where the values on the other variables are quite similar:

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia-OLF</td>
<td>2003-2006</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,611</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>91,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda- LRA</td>
<td>2003-2006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,598</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>94,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan-SLM/A &amp; JEM</td>
<td>2003-2006</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>0,666</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>112,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first scope condition is the time period and geographical position. These cases are all from the same geographical region, and were all active conflicts during the selected time period. As shown in the table above, the level of CRSV vary between the cases, and all relevant levels of prevalence is represented. Furthermore, the cases score similarly on the gender-inequality, which is a score between 0-1, where all selected cases scored close to 0,6. Compared to many of the other countries in the index, the scores are relatively low. Ethnic tensions were also present in all conflicts during the selected time period. The tensions were in all cases based on political struggle for power, as well as economic, religious and cultural divisions. The last scope condition is weak or fragile state structure. In this dataset the state structure are measured based on different criterias, and the scores of each criterion is added together to create an estimate of level of state strength as a whole. The scores range from 0-120, the higher the score, the more fragile the state is. As shown in the table above, the scores of Ethiopia and Uganda are very similar, while Sudan scores higher in total. This is important to acknowledge, however as the measures range between 0-120 the difference is not very significant in comparison to other states. Furthermore, as it has been pointed out earlier in this paper, previous studies has argued that state strength and level of governance is connected to levels of CRSV, so a country with a very fragile state is expected to have higher
levels of CRSV, which is the case with Sudan. However, as shown in the table, Uganda and Ethiopia has very similar scores, while levels of CRSV varies, which strengthens the argument that state strength can not alone explain the difference in levels of CRSV. In order to find support for the proposed hypothesis, the study on the variation in levels of national implementation of IHL will have to show that states with higher levels of implementation, and a bigger variety of implementation activities, has lower levels of CRSV perpetrated by government forces.

4. Presenting the results

This section will begin with a short background for each of the conflicts, in addition to a short presentation of the results on conflict related sexual violence in the three selected cases, based on the information provided in the SVAC dataset, and Human Rights Watch reports. Secondly, it will present the different levels of national implementation of IHL in each of the cases, based on the questions in the structured focused comparison.

4.1. Conflict background and sexual violence

4.1.1. Ethiopia

4.1.1.1 Conflict background
The conflict in Ethiopia between the Government and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) began when the group was founded in 1974. The OLF was founded to fight for the rights of the Oromiya people in Ethiopia, which makes up around half of the population in the country. However, their cultural, political and social rights were suppressed, and they therefore started their fight for independence in the beginning of 1974. The conflict intensity was at its highest up until 2000, however the conflict is still ongoing (UCDP, 2017a).

4.1.1.2 Conflict related sexual violence
According to the SVAC dataset, there were no reports of conflict related sexual violence between 2003 and 2006, perpetrated by government armed forces in the chosen conflict. However, according to the World Report, provided by The Human Rights Watch (H.R.W),
the ethiopian military forces were responsible for violence against the Anuk people, in the Southwestern parts of Ethiopia, from the end of 2003. However, the reports are not extensive, and the violations are not specified (H.R.W, 2006a). Furthermore, this is not related to the conflict selected for this study.

4.1.2. Uganda

4.1.2.1 Conflict background
The conflict in Uganda, between the government and the Lord Resistance Army (LRA), began when the army was formed by Joseph Kony in 1987, to overthrow the sitting government. Due to the fact that the LRA received little support from the population in Uganda, Kony used brutal methods to terrify civilians into joining the force. Furthermore, the LRA kidnapped civilians to be used as slaves or combatants. In the beginning of 1996, the government realised that the LRA increased their strength by terrorizing and forcing the population to join them. The government therefore set up camps, and forced over 1.7 million civilians in the northern Uganda to displace, between 1996 and 2006 (Conciliation Resources, 2015).

4.1.2.2 Conflict related sexual violence
During the chosen time period, the state armed forces in Uganda were responsible for some (1) incidents of conflict related sexual violence, according to the SVAC dataset. In their description of the categorization, some implies that less than 25 incidents were reported, however, the reported incidents were likely connected to the conflict. According to the Human Rights Reports from 2005, the Government forces has been responsible for sexual violence, such as rape against civilians in refugee camps, in addition to other violations to the IHL (H.R.W, 2005). Furthermore, it was reported that the military and security forces in Uganda used, amongst other, genital mutilation on both men and women, as an interrogation strategy (H.R.W, 2004).
4.1.3. Sudan

4.1.3.1 Conflict Background
Since Sudan gained its independence in 1956, the Government has been involved in conflicts with different rebel groups. One of the main divides in the country is between the Arab muslims in the north, and the African christians in the south. The conflict started in the south, however, in 2003 the conflict spread to Darfur, in the north. Here the government was challenged by mainly two rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A), which have on occasion had military and political ties. In addition to the state armed forces, the government-aligned militia known as Janjaweed has been involved in the conflict. The conflict in Sudan has had devastating consequences for the civilian population, with widespread reports of brutal violations of IHL (UCDP, 2017b).

4.1.3.2 Conflict related sexual violence
As shown in the table above, the Sudanese military forces are responsible for the use of conflict related sexual violence within category 2 and 3, during the chosen time period. This means that the forces used sexual violence systematically, as an instrument of control and punishment or to terrorize the population, on a massive scale. Additionally, it means that more than 1000 incidents were reported (SVAC, 2013). Several reports state that both government armed forces, and government sponsored armed groups systematically raped women and children before they burned down their houses, thus displacing millions of civilians (H.R.W, 2006b: Amnesty International: 2004).

Even though sexual violence is stigmatized, and many civilians does not wish to be interviewed or report the violations, Amnesty International has been able to interview mainly civilians that made it to different UN refugee camps in Sudan. The testimonies include rape either by one perpetrator or by groups, some incidents are reported to have happened in public, or in front of relatives of the victim. The rapes took place in the midst of fighting, after the victims were abducted, or as they were trying to flee. The victims include men, women, girls and boys. There has also been reports of women and girls being exposed to sexual slavery and sexual torture.
4.2. National implementation of IHL

4.2.1. Ethiopia

The first category within national implementation of IHL is the national laws, and whether they include information and laws connected to IHL. The Ethiopian Penal Code from 1957 state that “compulsion to acts of prostitution, debauchery and rape are war crimes against the civilian population”, however this was repealed in 2004 with the Criminal Code. Instead, the Code states that anyone who, during armed conflict, organize, order or engage in violence against civilians can be punished with imprisonment, or in serious cases, life imprisonment or death. Additionally, other paragraphs in the Criminal Code states that the same punishment apply to all types of violence against refugees, wounded and prisoners of war. It was difficult to find specific military codes of conduct and military laws. However, the national Criminal Code applies to all residents, including combatants. Furthermore, military crimes, and crimes against international law is specified in some of the articles (Ethiopia Criminal Code, 2004). Ethiopia signed the Geneva Convention of 1949 in 1949, and ratified the laws in 1951. Furthermore, they ratified the additional protocols in 1994 (ICRC, 2017c).

In a report from 1996, on national implementation of IHL in Ethiopia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the national army would take steps to disseminate information about IHL within the army, and include it in their military training (ICRC, 2017b). Furthermore, Ethiopia has received a lot of support from the ICRC in implementing IHL through training of policymakers, police and military forces. In 2002 the ICRC introduced and conducted a dissemination program for ground forces in Ethiopia. This program was directed at both commanding officers and combatants. In connection to this training program, a handbook in IHL, produced by ICRC was translated to the local language, in order to make it understandable to all combatants. Furthermore, the ICRC and the government held several seminars for both regional and federal police forces, where aspects such as legal boundaries for law enforcement, means of investigation and interrogation and basic law enforcement was discussed in relation to IHL (ICRC-Ethiopia, 2002a). Seminars and training workshops for the armed forces and the police force continued in 2003 through 2006, where several
fractions of the state army was included. Additionally, the military weekly newspaper included information about ICRC activities and information about IHL. Furthermore, a conference was held in the capital of Ethiopia, where the participants discussed how female combatants could contribute to increasing respect for IHL (ICRC-Ethiopia, 2003-2006).

Another activity introduced by ICRC was a seminar for journalists and media personnel at a regional level in the People’s Regional State, Nationalities and in the Southern States. Where they were informed about the rules of IHL, and additional seminars was held in the following years in other regions. These seminars did not only inform journalists of their right to protection during conflict, but it also informed about ICRC activities in Ethiopia, and encouraged them to cover IHL dissemination activities in local media to inform the population. Furthermore, the ICRC introduced a project in 2002, to educate adolescents about respect for IHL. In cooperation with the Minister of Education and the regional authorities, a handbook about the basic principles of IHL, translated to the local language and adapted to the local needs, was introduced to secondary school students in the Harari region in Ethiopia (ICRC-Ethiopia, 2002b).

Regarding enforcement of the laws, and prosecution of violations, the government of Ethiopia has addressed these issues on several occasions. The Office of the Public Prosecutor in Ethiopia has claimed that over 5000 perpetrators were charged of violations of IHL, human rights and crimes against humanity by 1997. Furthermore, in 1995, the Special Prosecutor stated that the responsible government officials are obliged to know what constitutes international law, and to prevent that violations occur. In regard to amnesty for these violations, the Ethiopian constitution from 1994 states that no organ of state has the power to give amnesty for crimes against humanity and the crimes related to IHL (ICRC-Ethiopia, 2017). In the Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission, which was an agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, signed in 2003, it was made clear that women and children had the right to special protection, and that they should be especially protected against sexual violence (Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission, 2004).
4.2.2. Uganda

The state ratified the Geneva Conventions in 1964, and The Geneva Convention Act in Uganda states that “any person, whatever his nationality, who, whether within or without Uganda, commits or aids, abets or procures the commission by any other person of any grave breach of the Conventions” is to be punished (ICRC-Uganda, 2017a). The state acceded the additional protocols in 1991 (ICRC, 2017c). Furthermore, the Code of Conduct for Public Service in Uganda from 2005 includes an act prohibiting sexual harassment and unwanted sexual behaviour (The Code Of Conduct And Ethics For Uganda Public Service, 2005).

In 2005 the Government of Uganda and the ICRC signed an agreement stating that the ICRC would provide the police force and the national army with training in IHL and the understanding of humanitarian principles, during the following three years. This was the first big initiative taken to implement IHL within the armed forces (ICRC-Uganda, 2005). The first seminars for the police and combatants was held during the first months of 2006 (ICRC-Uganda, 2006). Furthermore, the state organized a Dissemination Directive who, in 2006, stated that the armed forces should comply with IHL during armed conflict, and that all violations should be reported and investigated. Additionally, they stated that the commanders of the national armed forces had a responsibility to disseminate information of IHL within the armed forces, by including it in training and military instructions (ICRC-Uganda, 2017b). Furthermore, the National Army Statute from 1992 states that rape is a criminal offence, in section 73, and the Codes of Conduct requires that combatants do not abuse, insult, shout or beat any member of the public (National Resistance Army Statute, 1992). This paragraph is included again in The Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces Act of 2005 (The Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces Act, 2005).

In 2001 an Amnesty Act was amended in Uganda, which granted amnesty to combatants who had engaged in combat, in crime connected to the conflict or collaborated with perpetrators of armed rebellion (Hardy, 2012). Furthermore, the government has been unable or unwilling to investigate and pursue prosecution of combatants and commanders who has violated the law. Additionally, the government and the police forces are not able to hold the army accountable, due to lack of discipline. It has also been reported that this lack of accountability and
monitoring is due to the unwillingness of the commanding officers to increase respect for and convey the principles of the law within the armed forces (H.R.W, 2005). However, Uganda has many active human right organizations that has taken on the responsibility of monitoring and reporting violations (H.R.W, 2000).

4.2.3. Sudan

Sudan acceded the Geneva Convention of 1949 in 1957, however they did not accede the two additional protocols of 1977, of the Geneva Conventions, until 2006. These additional protocols are the ones that are specifically developed to strengthen the protection of persons not involved in the conflict (ICRC-Sudan, 2006a). During the chosen time period, the Criminal Code from 1991 was the prevailing national law in Sudan. The law did however, not include any information about IHL, furthermore, no paragraphs go beyond common law offences (ICRC-Sudan, 2017). However, in 2003, the president signed an imposition, promising to create a commission that would work with the implementation of IHL, and assist the government with dissemination activities in Sudan (ICRC, Sudan, 2003). Some years later, in 2006, members of the Legislative Assembly in Sudan took part in a discussion about IHL, initiated by ICRC (ICRC-Sudan, 2006b).

The Government of Sudan has not monitored or prosecuted violations of IHL by state armed forces. Furthermore, no human rights organizations existed in government-controlled, or rebel-controlled areas in Sudan, due to threat of arrest and attention for opposing the government. However, in 2005 the government set up a tribunal to try persons guilty of violations of IHL in Darfur. Despite this effort, all crimes that was tried concerned minor crimes, and none concerned government officials or commanders for the state armed forces (H.R.W, 2006b).
5. Interpretation of results

The following section will present an interpretation of the results that was presented in the previous segment. The interpretation will connect the results to the theory and the hypothesis that was presented in the beginning of this paper.

Based on the results presented in the previous sections one can argue that there is a correlation between the level of national implementation of IHL and conflict related sexual violence. In Ethiopia, where the values, for the chosen conflict, were the lowest on CRSV, levels of national implementation was the highest. While Sudan, which had the highest values of CRSV, had seen almost no implementation activities before or during the chosen period. However, as shown in the section presenting the result of implementation in Uganda, they as well had ratified the laws early, implemented the laws in military codes of conduct and initiated dissemination activities. Despite these activities, the conflict in Uganda had higher levels of CRSV than the conflict in Ethiopia. This can be explained by looking at the differences in when implementation activities began, who the dissemination was directed at, and how the government has responded to previous violations in previous conflicts.

First of all, as previously mentioned, the government addressed the importance of disseminating information about IHL to the armed forces, and include it in military training, as early as 1996. Additionally, the dissemination programs by ICRC was introduced in 2002, hence before the time period chosen in this study. While in Uganda, an agreement concerning dissemination seminars and workshops was first signed in 2005. Based on the fact that dissemination activities has been in place in Ethiopia for a longer time period, it is reasonably that it respect for the laws and understanding of the humanitarian principles in the laws, are better implemented within the armed forces. However, since the levels of CRSV was lower in the conflict in Ethiopia, this shows that dissemination activities has a positive effect on levels of CRSV in a conflict. It can also be noted that the president signed an agreement in 2003, promising to create a commission that would work with IHL implementation activities, however, not much happened until 2006, when legislators met to discuss the issue. It would therefore not have an effect on levels of CRSV in the chosen time period.
Secondly, there is a big variation between the dissemination activities in the two states, and between whom the programs are directed towards. In Ethiopia the ICRC held workshops and seminars directed towards the police force, the national armed forces, legislators and journalists. In Uganda, on the other hand, the workshops was only held for the police force and the armed forces. Furthermore, that the handbook was translated to the local language in Ethiopia, at an early stage, made the information more available to all the participants. Another factor that might have influenced the variation, is that the Ethiopian military included information about the ICRC activities and about IHL in their weekly newspaper. This increased respect because information about the principles of the laws, and the importance of following them was conveyed by “their own”, and not implemented by an outside actor, thereby increasing its legitimacy within the armed forces. Additionally, it is an important contribution that information about IHL was disseminated to journalists in Ethiopia, so that they could inform the public about their rights, and thereby hold their government accountable. Moreover, by including information about the laws in the education of adolescents, and adapting the information to local conditions, one increases the understanding of the laws and the rights of the citizens from an early age. The students might then spread the information to the local community, and the audience that receives information increases. While in Uganda the information was only given to the actors who was required to follow the law, and not the people the law is supposed to protect.

The third variation is how the government has enforced the laws and reacted to violations. Despite the fact that the government of Ethiopia has been criticized for not thoroughly monitoring and prosecuting violations in the southwestern parts of the country during the chosen time period (H.R.W, 2006a), they have a history of prosecuting violations. And in the Ethiopia-Eritrea Commission the parties agreed that the use of sexual violence in armed conflict was prohibited, and that women and children was to be especially protected. First of all, prosecution of perpetrators in the past can create legal deterrence, which causes the combatants to respect the law in fear of being prosecuted if they violate it. Additionally, when the state officially address and prohibit sexual violence in conflict situations, this might affect the norms and the respect within the state armed forces, to a higher degree than if the prohibition is forced on them by the international community. In contrast, the amnesty given
to perpetrators in Uganda sends the opposite message. The amnesty was introduced to encourage negotiations and foster peace, however it might also decrease respect for the law, and cause the combatants to perceive that violations are not taken seriously by the government, despite the national laws, thus fostering future violations. This is argument is strengthened by the fact that commanders in the armed forces are unwilling to disseminate information about the laws, and the importance of respecting the laws within the armed forces, because they perceive the benefits of not respecting the laws are higher than the costs of violating them.

When examining the differences in levels of national implementation of IHL between the cases, it is clear that there is a variation in the effectiveness of increasing respect for IHL. First of all, just ratifying the law is not enough for increasing respect amongst the combatants and preventing CRSV from occurring in a conflict. As seen in Sudan and Uganda, where the laws were acceded and later ratified, but where violations still occurred. Furthermore, it is clear from the analysis that dissemination activities are important for preventing violations and for decreasing the prevalence of CRSV. However, information about the law has to be disseminated to a broader audience than just the military and the police force. In Ethiopia, where the information was directed at journalists, policymakers and adolescents, the levels of CRSV was lower than in Uganda, where the information was directed at the armed forces and the police. Lastly, enforcement of the law and prosecution of perpetrators is an important factor in increasing respect. However, much work still has to be done, as many of the perpetrators enjoy impunity for the violations they have committed, despite both national and international efforts to monitor violations.

6. Alternative explanations

This section will focus on alternative explanations for the changes in the dependent variable. Where the two main explanations is that the intensity of the conflicts varies, as well as the levels of one-sided violence on the government side differentiate between the cases. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the state strength varies between the state, which can
be an alternative explanation, or at least have an effect on the variation in the dependent variable.

First of all, the conflict intensity during the chosen time period varies between the cases. It has been argued that conflict intensity and other types of violence is connected to levels of CRSV (Carlsson, 2016:24). The measure that could have an effect on levels of CRSV perpetrated by government forces is one-sided state based violence, because this indicates to what degree the government is prone to using violence against civilians. The levels of cases one-sided state based violence during the chosen time period show a great variation, however in Ethiopia 800 died as a consequence of one-sided violence (UCDP, 2017c), while Uganda had 5 deaths (UCDP, 2017d), and Sudan had 4944 deaths as a consequence of one-sided violence by state armed forces (UCDP, 2017e). One can argue that there is a correlation in the case of Sudan, however, in Ethiopia where the levels of CRSV perpetrated by government forces had the lowest scores, the number of deaths as a consequence of one-sided violence was much higher than in Uganda, which does not give support to the explanation that levels of CRSV is connected to other violence, or at least that this theory can not alone explain the variation in the dependent variable.

Another alternative explanation is that state strength has an effect on level of CRSV perpetrated by government forces. As it was pointed out in the case selection, Sudan scored higher than the two other cases in the Fragile State Index. First of all, as previously mentioned it has been shown that state strength and level of governance is connected to levels of CRSV. However, since the two other cases had very similar scored on this variable, but still differentiated on the dependent variable, this theory can not alone the variation in the dependent variable either. It is, however, an important discussion to include the implications of weak state structure, as this can also have an effect on national implementation of IHL. In weak states the government often lacks accountability and legitimacy, furthermore the rule of law and control over corruption is weak, which are all factors that are important in order to implement IHL. Thus, one can not exclude this theory as an explanation, but rather view stronger state structure as a necessity for all aspects of national implementation of IHL to be successful.
7. Limitations of research design

The first limitation of this design has to do with the operationalization of the scope conditions or the control variables. First of all, when choosing to measure gender inequality by looking at only three aspects of social differences between men and women, one risks ignoring other factors, such as education and physical or psychological violence (Bigelow, 2018), which might have an effect on the results. Secondly, ethnic tensions is a complex and unclear phenomenon, which can be difficult to measure. The operationalization does not meet the criteria for external validity, as the results can be interpreted differently depending on how one defines ethnic tensions, and depending on what case the operationalization is applied to. This is also true for the “fragile state structure” variable, as the concept is vague and depending on how it is defined and how the operationalization is applied and interpreted, it can produce different results. Another limitation with the scope conditions is the chose time period. First of all, there was not a lot of information available on national implementation activities during these years, while a lot of law changes and implementation activities by ICRC took place after 2006. Furthermore, the short period of time does not say much about the effects of national implementation of IHL in the long run. If an activity or a law change was introduced in 2005, it would not have given the actors much time to adjust and change their behaviour. However, even though a longer time period would have been preferable, the time that was available to write this thesis made it difficult to examine implementation activities for several years for all cases.

Furthermore, the data collection strategy is also limited, as the main source for national implementation of IHL is ICRC. The evidence would be more reliable if it was possible to triangulate, however, there is little material available on national implementation of IHL in countries that has experienced conflicts over many years. And in the cases where violations have been reported, it has been difficult to find other sources with information about the violations, because the governments does not wish to admit that their forces has violated the law, with the fear of losing support (Bangerter, 2011: 360). Additionally, prosecution of violations of IHL has not been encouraged or prioritized in many ongoing or post-conflict situations, because many governments has given amnesty to perpetrators in order to reach a
peace agreement (Sellström, 2015: 22). However, ICRC is one of the main international actors working with national implementation and promotion of IHL, and their collection of legal documents and military protocols is extensive, which makes it a valuable and reliable source. Furthermore, the data on conflict related sexual violence is also possible to question, as conflict related sexual violence is a phenomenon with a lot of hidden statistics, as many of the incidents are not reported, either because the victims has died as a consequence of violence against civilians or because sexual violence is so stigmatized.

Lastly, a qualitative method faces limitations when it comes to generalizability, as one only goes in depth in a few cases. Even though the hypothesis is strengthened based on the selected cases, it can be difficult to argue that this will be true for the general population of cases. However, because the scope conditions in this study is clearly mapped out, the theory may be generalized to the population of cases within the same scope conditions. Additionally, the reliability becomes compromised with the chosen research method, because the results may vary, depending on how one interprets the questions and the empirical evidence. However, because structured focused comparison makes it possible to look at thicker concepts, and develop the variables, this trade-of is deemed acceptable.

8. Conclusion and recommendation for future research

The main purpose of this study has been to contribute to the research on the causes of conflict related sexual violence, and to examine the relationship between CRSV and national implementation of International Humanitarian Law. As mentioned in several parts of this study, previous research has argued that national implementation of IHL does have an effect on violence against civilians. However, previous research has mainly focused on rebel groups as perpetrators, and it has not specified what sorts of violence. Furthermore, the entire implementation frameworks has not been tested for in previous studies. For this reason, this study has examined the relationship between levels of conflict related sexual violence, perpetrated by government forces and levels of national implementation of IHL, based on inclusion in national law, implementation in military rules and dissemination activities. The study has shown that there exists a relationship, in the three selected cases from Africa during
the chosen time period. Furthermore, the study has examined which implementation activities are most effective for preventing violations of IHL and decreasing levels of CRSV. Based on the interpretation of the results, I argue that dissemination activities are most effective, if the dissemination is directed towards a broader audience than just police and armed state forces. Furthermore, the dissemination has to be contextualized, so that the information is available to all parts of the society.

Although this study found support for the hypothesis, it only includes three cases, and it is therefore not strong enough to hold up to a larger population of cases. A recommendation for future research is therefore to investigate this relationship on a larger scale, where more cases from different regions of the world are included. Furthermore, future research should examine this relationship over a longer period of time, so that the states and implementation agencies has time to implement the laws, and so that it is possible to examine how these implementations effect the society and levels of CRSV in the long run. Furthermore, a lot of national implementation activities has been introduced since 2006, and a lot more information is available from the last couple of years. However, it is important that future research use the entire implementation framework, in order to further examine what activities has the biggest effects, in order to make recommendations for policy makers, legislators and international organizations. In december 2018 the ICRC published a report that examines what influences the behaviour of armed actors in conflict. The report focuses on both state armed forces and rebel groups, and examines several types of violence. The study presented in this paper supports the arguments presented in the ICRC report, namely that even though ratification of laws, monitoring and prosecution is important to increase respect for IHL and prevent violations, disseminations activities that are linked to local norms and conditions, and disseminated to a broader audience is most effective when it comes to changing he norms and behaviour of armed groups (Terry & McQuinn 2018).

Another interesting result of this paper is the contribution to future policy implication. As argued in previous sections, the implementations activities with best effect, when comparing the selected cases, was dissemination activities. As shown in the results, dissemination of information about IHL has to be directed towards police forces, armed forces, policymakers, as well as journalists and the local population. Not only can these activities change the norms
within an state armed force, if contextualized and thoroughly disseminated, it can also support the local population to hold the government accountable during both in times of conflict and in post conflict. Another important aspect of disseminating this information to the civil society is that the rebel groups often recruit there combatants from the local population. If civilians are informed about IHL and the consequences of violations, they might take this information and perspective with them if they are recruited, thus effecting rebel groups use of violence against civilians and CRSV.

The main focus of the speeches held by the Nobel Peace Prize winners of 2018, was justice for the victims of CRSV and prosecution of the perpetrators. This is very important, not only because the victims of CRSV deserve justice, but also because the impunity the perpetrators of CRSV enjoy, does not prevent future violations. However, as this study has shown, the process of monitoring, reporting and prosecuting perpetrators of conflict related sexual violence is a process that is still ongoing, where much work has to be done to further implement laws, pressure governments to enforce these laws, and changing the stigmatization around sexual violence so that people actually report the incidents when they occur. Furthermore, even though prosecuting perpetrators is a major step in the right direction, more work has to be done to prevent these violations from happening in the first place. And this can only be done if the all actors involved in conflict know and respect what the laws regulating conflict are, how they apply in their local context, and what the consequences are if they violate them.
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