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Preface:

Working on this thesis has been incredibly interesting, while also incredibly challenging at times. However, I am proud that I got there in the end.

I would like to begin with thanking my supervisor Professor Indra De Soysa for all the invaluable help he has provided during this process. Without his knowledge and guidance this paper may never have seen the light of day. I really do appreciate it.

Secondly, I would like to thank all my friends from my time here in Trondheim. Thank you for supporting me, and making life a lot more fun!

A special thank you to Kamilla, my roommate and best friend, we both know that without your emotional support I couldn't have done this.

June 25th, 2022

Maria Høines Bakke

Abstract:

This master's thesis explores the effect of political corruption on homicide, and posits that the current literature on homicide is not sufficiently investigating the relationship between good governance and interpersonal violence (homicide). The assumptions of the available literature are that good governance measures are important in creating effective policies against criminal behaviour. This implies that factors of poor governance such as corruption should inevitably increase the homicide rate, and encourage anomie. Thus, this article tests these assumptions by utilising three different variables on corruption from the V-Dem Dataset as indicators of poor governance, namely political corruption, judicial corruption and public sector corruption, and homicide rates as a measure of interpersonal violence. The fixed effects regression results suggest that the different types of corruption have varying effect on the homicide rate. That is to say, whereas the literature predicts corruption inevitably would increase the homicide rate, the findings in this article contradicts these claims.

Firstly, the political corruption variable is found to have no statistically significant effect. However, a non-robust positive effect of good public sector governance on lowering the homicide rate are found. Specifically, the effect is only valid if the handful of rich countries are in the model. Lastly, judicial corruption is shown to reduces the homicide rate in an inverted U shape. This is illustrated by estimating the quadratic effect. These results are in contradiction to the theoretical literature; thus, they inform us that there are other mechanisms than state legitimacy and good governance that can be implemented in order to deter criminal behaviour. The evidence suggests that rather than focusing on broad policies such as good governance, more specific policies would be more capable and efficient in dissuading interpersonal violence.

Sammendrag:

Denne masteroppgaven utforsker effekten av politisk korrupsjon på drap, og hevder at dagens litteratur om drap ikke i tilstrekkelig grad undersøker forholdet mellom godt styresett og mellommenneskelig vold (drap). Prediksjonene i den tilgjengelige litteraturen er at «good governance» er viktig for å skape effektiv politikk mot kriminell atferd. Dette innebærer at indikatorer på «poor governance» som korrupsjon uunngåelig bør øke drapsantallet, og oppmuntre til «anomie». Derfor tester denne artikkelen disse forutsetningene ved å bruke tre forskjellige variabler på politisk korrupsjon fra V-Dem-datasettet som indikatorer på dårlig styresett, mer spesifikt politisk korrupsjon, rettslig korrupsjon og offentlig sektor-korrupsjon, samt drapstall som et mål på mellommenneskelig vold. Regresjonsresultatene med faste effekter tyder på at de ulike typene korrupsjon har varierende effekt på drapsraten. Det vil si at mens litteraturen forutsier at korrupsjon uunngåelig vil øke drapsraten, bestrider funnene i denne artikkelen delvis disse påstandene.

For det første viser det seg at den politiske korrupsjonsvariabelen ikke har noen statistisk signifikant effekt. Imidlertid er det funnet en ikke-robust positiv effekt av god offentlig styring på å senke drapsraten. Mer spesifikt, effekten er bare gyldig hvis en håndfull rike land er med i modellen. Til slutt er det vist at rettslig korrupsjon reduserer drapsraten i en omvendt U-form. Dette illustreres ved å estimere den kvadratiske effekten. Disse resultatene er i motsetning til den teoretiske litteraturen; dermed informerer de oss om at det finnes andre mekanismer enn statlig legitimitet og godt styresett som kan implementeres for å avskrekke kriminell atferd. Bevisene tyder på at i stedet for å fokusere på brede retningslinjer som «good governance», vil mer spesifikke retningslinjer være mer kapable og effektive til å forebygge mellommenneskelig vold.

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1.0 Introduction:

This article attempts to address the unsatisfactory research on variation in transnational homicide rates. That is to say, the current available literature does not sufficiently acknowledge the bigger and broader factors that affects variation in transnational homicide rates. To this day, the research suffers from incongruity and lacks certainty in their assumptions regarding these fluctuations. This is regrettable because homicide rates are often used as a symptom of bigger societal ills. In other words, if the homicide rate is high, it can be an indicator that there are bigger public issues than just interpersonal violence. For example, the homicide rate can be used as measure of security within a state, particularly in peacetimes. Thus, if what causes variation of homicide rates are unknown, creating policies on how to ensure security will be incohesive as well. The subsequent consequence of this is decreased legitimacy and a cycle of ineffective governance, particularly considering one of the main objectives of a government is to provide security to its citizens.

Within the literature, this usually encompasses preventing the outbreaks of civil wars and other bigger incidents, however this article argues that preventing interpersonal violence should take equal precedent. Principally because interpersonal violence, such as homicide, is far more prevalent in an individual's life. Not only that, but the lack of security could result in the decrease of interest in greater matters, such as human rights. That is to say, if an individual cannot feel secure walking down the street at night or going to school, other political matters will lose its importance for the individual. In other words, when you don't feel safe in general other societal issues loses their importance, because the individual is occupied worrying about their own safety. This is not only in context of the individual, but also governmental practice. Even democracy can be undermined by crime in the long run, through undemocratic methods of managing increasing crime rates and so on. Thus, in short, despite homicide not being big and catastrophic incidents such as civil war, it still has importance because crime can create disruptive and unstable societies.

However, previous literature on interpersonal violence, such as homicide, has mainly been within the criminological field of research, and rarely have criminologists tackled issues that preoccupy the political and economic sciences (Eisner, 2012). There has been a general acceptance of the fact that criminologists do not move beyond individual and structural

factors that drive criminality and murder, creating a divide between bigger instances of violence, such as genocide, civil war, and interpersonal violence. For these and other reasons, very rarely have they addressed broad societal factors, such as the question of good governance that can affect society broadly. As a consequence of this, research and theories on transnational homicide rates often falls victim to the omission of political and social influence on perpetrators and victims at the individual level. Therefore, the first important objective of this paper is to start bridging this gap in order to get a fuller understanding of the concept of homicide, which in the future could result in better policy making.

However, contemporary political research has begun to investigate the impact of social and political factors on the prevalence of homicide rates. This article's main objective therefore is to further bridge the criminological and political field. Homicide is considered the most major and serious form of interpersonal violent crime, and high levels thus functions as a good indicator of anomie in a society and captures everyday forms of violence. Within the political sphere focus on good governance has become a main objective in order to increase security and stability within a society. Good governance has become the backbone of development amongst institutions and organisations that promotes change. In example, the UN has included good governance in their Millennium Development Goals, namely the eight and last goal. According to the UN's agenda, good governance is crucial for sustainable development, that incorporates comprehensive economic policies and strong democratic institutions (Ghaus-Pasha, 2006).

This implies that the lack of good governance, such as corruption, or rather the implementation of it, should result in the decrease in homicide rates (Ghaus-Pasha, 2006). Thus, good governance as a concept is particularly important, not only because it is understudied within this field, but because despite there being a general decrease in criminal activity globally, there is an increase in homicide rates in some parts of the world (Newburn, 2016). Can it be that governance makes a difference? How democratic, inclusive governance matters is highly debated (Eisner, 2012). One of the assumptions is that all indicators of good governance should lead to the reduction of grievances and anomie, however there is little understanding on how to implement and formulate these indicators

into cohesive and effective policies. Thus, this is incredibly important to investigate and understand, because different methods cultivate different results. Nevertheless, the research on whether or not good governance have, or *can* have the desired effect

This article measures the levels of political corruption extracted from the V-Dem dataset against the homicide rates on a transnational scale. The V-Dem dataset is amongst the best available datasets on corruption. Including not only the perception of corruption and economic corruption, but also have extensive variables on different types of political corruption. Furthermore, as well as having extensive data on a broad spectre of measurements of democratic indicators, the data is collected through expert methods which captures features that are not directly observable. Therefore, as corruption can be considered such a feature, this dataset suits this article perfectly. The variables collected from this dataset includes three variables of corruption, firstly political corruption which is an index encompassing a broad spectre of different corruption types. Furthermore, the two other variables within this sphere are included in this analysis, specifically public sector corruption and judicial corruption. Subsequently, the data in this article inspect the effect of both corruption as a broad indicator of societal debility, and more specific measures that captures how and whether they differently impact the homicide rate.

The data is collected in a time-series cross section (TSCS) dataset, and measure each country´s homicide rates and corruption annually between 1990 and 2018. An issue with a TSCS dataset is that it often has autocorrelation, this is also the case amongst these figures. Therefore, Driscoll-Kray (DS) standard errors are included in the regression, so that both spatial and temporal autocorrelation are accounted for. In order to analyse the data, it is run through the Hausman test, to test whether fixed or random effects estimators are applicable. Following the results of this test, both modes of estimation are appropriate and thus included in the tables in order to compare results. The fixed effects model is particularly central in the results because it elegantly controls for unobserved country heterogeneity that is time invariant. This includes cultural, geographical, and other local-specific factors (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017). Due to the nature of this article being founded in societal issues, cultural and local-specific factors undoubtedly have an effect on

these problems, thus an impact on homicide rates. Subsequently, the fixed effects estimator perfectly controls for this.

2.0 Context and Rationale:

Criminological theories, going back to Emile Durkheim suggest that social dislocation / disorganization is a major source of the increase in personal violence due to anomie (Eisner, 2012). Anomie is a term coined by sociologists, and it describes the process where the moral of the individual is uprooted by the lack of social bonds. In other words, it describes a phenomenon where individuals become outcasts and breaks down social bonds. In the context of this article, it can be understood as a desensitisation from criminal activity. Homicide can be, as aforementioned, an indicator of greater societal disruptions and dislocations resulting from individual level anomie The lack of good governance, thus, could increase crime and violence due to the criminal behaviour of public officials. In other words, individuals can be more inclined to commit criminal offences because public life is governed by illegitimate, criminal activity. Furthermore, homicide is without a doubt the most violent form of interpersonal violence, and have the most serious consequences. Nevertheless, the research on cross-national homicide rates have thus far stayed within similar theoretical frameworks, and lacks more specific investigations of specific characteristics of good governance. This creates a scarcity of specificity, as in, there is no concrete acknowledgements of which measures, if any, of good governance that actually present themselves as either risk- or mediating-factors of homicide rates, nor to what extent it matters relative to other structural factors.

Consequently, policy makers are faced with a spider-web of contradicting research papers. Fortunately, however, current research has started investigating the link between the variation of homicide rates and state capacity and functioning. This line of investigation incorporates governance indicators, measures of corruption and variables of state legitimacy, which in turn creates a better foundation for policy change. It is of particular interest considering the fact that a few of these studies have indicated that state capacity and governance, despite being previously ignored factors in empirical research, could be relevant in explaining variation in intra-societal violence (Neumayer, 2003, Eisner, 2012). In

consequence, furthering this new theoretical and empirical avenue is the main objective of this paper.

Homicide is an indicator of levels of violence in a society: it is the strongest and most impactful form of interpersonal violence. Furthermore, the conceptualisation of crime in itself is hard, as definition of what is and is not an illegal action may vary, a deceased individual is close to impossible to define away. Even throughout history, a dead body would create curiosity as to what and how it was produced, thus records of homicide are a more reliable and tangible way of transforming violence and crime into statistics (Pinker, 2011). However, the literature investigating the variation of homicide rates has in recent years emphasized the importance of good governance and state legitimacy as mediating factors. In other words, the literature increasingly focuses on governmental structures and good policies, as a method of decreasing or controlling the homicide rate. However, despite this the literature mainly focuses on the effect that these idealistic measures have on decreasing the homicide rates, but not on what the opposite measures have on homicide rates. That is, what effect the opposite of good governance and state legitimacy have on the variation in homicide rates. Therefore, this article attempts to do that by operationalising different measures of corruption rates as indicators of the opposite of good governance.

2.1 Rationale Homicide

The first, and most obvious argument for why homicide is an issue deserving of more attention from political and other fields of research is the fact that it is, as aforementioned, the most violent form of interpersonal violence in a society. A crime of such gravity creates fear and uncertainty amongst the public, thus if there are high rates it could result in a general feeling of insecurity amongst citizens (Rivera, 2016). Therefore, as one of the main acknowledged objectives of the state government is to provide protection of its citizens, high homicide rates implies the opposite (Willis, 2016). Thus, not only does it incite fear, it also indicates government shortcomings in one of its main purposes. Furthermore, homicide rates are also, arguably, the most reliable indicator of such uncertainty, due to the fact that the severity of it make people generally more inclined to report it. Also, after a homicide, there is no avoiding the fact that it leaves behind a dead body. That is not to say that it is impossible to either hide a body or the fact that the death is the result of homicide. Indeed,

some governments may have an incentive to hide their crime statistics, but when deaths need to be recorded, then it is much harder to hide facts. High homicides and high levels of other crime generally go together (Neumayer, 2003)

Nevertheless, there are some obstructions in research on transnational homicide rates since homicide rates are dependent upon each individual state's capacity to account and register each death of an individual, and furthermore on its categorization of it. In other words, whereas in one country some killings might be considered homicide, others may categorize it as state sanctioned killings. This becomes an issue as homicide per definition is a judicial category, where all cases of the intentional infliction of trauma by a person results in the death of the person without legitimization by the state (Eisner, 2012). Thus, homicide is a categorization of a broad spectre of very different situations which all result in the death of an individual, how the result come to be however may vary indefinitely. Despite this being a concern, it is also a core argument for the relevance of this paper´s investigation. Does the characteristics and quantity of homicide vary dependent on the level of pacification in a society? In other words, are homicide rates affected by the levels of anomie in society? Or is it affected by other kinds of criminal behaviour. If good governance theorists were to answer these questions, they would argue that good governance policies and structures would be the solution. In other words, if these measures were effectively put in place the homicide rate would eventually decrease due to the reduction of anomie from good governance. Thus, within the framework of good governance, homicide is a symptom of poor governance.

These questions put variation in homicide on a macro-level, and stresses whether the causes of variation can be connected to bigger and contextual conditions and if these can be connected to the probability of violent behaviour (Eisner, 2012). In short, there is limited knowledge on the contextual aspects of homicide are universal or widespread across states and which vary in a systemic way. Following this logic, many theorists and philosophers posit that there is indeed a variety of connections between the homicide of individuals and that of organized intentional mass murders (Eisner, 2012), despite criminologists shying away from the topic. Therefore, it is foremost essential to unify, and subsequently adding perspective to the issue of homicide, in order to get a cohesive grasp upon what homicide

reveal about greater societal issues, such as factors that generate anomie, along with what its predictors may be. This is particularly useful for the furthering of policies attempting to handle rising homicide rates, both locally and internationally. In short, there is a need to understand the macro-level risk factors in order to create cohesive policies that tackle the issue of homicide (Eisner, 2012).

Lastly, however, it is important to acknowledge some of the issues researcher of transnational homicide rates may face. Countries with the highest homicide rates in the world tend to be victims of endemic violence, in the sense that these states have previously suffered civil wars, or are facing problems of organized crime alongside the high homicide rates (Eisner, 2012). Furthermore, when investigating homicide rates on a transnational scale, one must take into consideration that national averages do not account for regional differences. This could in example be relevant in countries where organized crime is either more or less prevalent, as in, the causal link between high homicide rates in one area of a state might be different from another area (Eisner, 2012). Additionally, another concern surrounding homicide rates is inconsistencies in the data. Firstly, in countries where levels of violence are high, the bureaucratic structures responsible for collecting information of death, either stop or are under so much pressure they cannot keep pace. This is particularly the case in areas where there is ongoing conflict or similar, as the distinction between intentional homicide, victims of war and political violence are hard to distinguish. Consequently, the data will in some areas be incomplete (Eisner, 2012).

2.2 Rationale for Corruption

Good governance is broadly measured by the absence of "corruption" in a society. The rationale for measuring the effect of corruption on variation in homicide rates, despite these two being separate forms of criminal activity, are based on the assumptions of the literature. Corruption can be considered a criminogenic factor in a society, that implies that since crime fosters crime, the presence of corruption should increase other types of crimes as well (Goede, 2013). Thus, corruption reveals deep-rooted flaws within governmental structures, and is deeply embedded in society. It cannot and should not be limited as a problem within the economic sphere, because in reality corruption is deeply entrenched in social, political alongside economic interactions. Therefore, corruption is not only a matter

of economics, but actually a reflection of the relationship between state and society. In example, whereas homicide is an indicator of state capacity to protect and control citizens, corruption reveals the legitimacy of these structures and institutions (Robinson & Acemoglu, 2013). Based on this logic, the assumption is that corruption will continue to undermine the effect of good governance. In other words, the relationship between governance and homicide should be negatively affected by the presence of corruption, because it dilutes the provision of state services controlling criminal activity, reduces the legitimacy of the justice system, and finally results in the failure of state deterrence because offenders believe they will not be penalised (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021).

Firstly, throughout the literature on homicide rates, the importance of state and judicial legitimacy is emphasized. Not only does high levels of corruption undermine this, but it also undercuts state institutions and democratic ways of governance in general (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). Particularly, in this area where good governance and democratisation are emphasized in academia. Therefore, it is evident that based on the literature, the assumption is that corruption contributes to insecurity, and thus also should have an effect on homicide rates, the highest form of interpersonal violence within a society. In short, the conjecture is that, albeit other factors impacting the variation in homicide, corruption functions as a good indicator of the multiple of them (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). The ideal has become a transparent democratic government; however, such a government is dependent upon balancing private wealth and public goods (Salihu, 2022). If the government fail in this balancing act, it could create a dysfunctional system. Thus, private accumulation of public wealth and undermining of public resources for personal gain become a big societal issue, in other words corruption becomes a big societal concern (Salihu, 2022).

Therefore, as corruption at its core undermines the very goals of good governance, it operationalises elegantly as an indicator of "poor governance". In a general setting, corruption is defined as the abuse of power for personal gain by individuals in public positions (Salihu, 2022, V-Dem Dataset, 2021). However, corruption can go beyond the public sphere and into the private sphere, but this is beyond the scope of the paper as it investigates the correlation between governmental practice and homicide rates. Corruption

is essential to investigate further within the political sphere because it primarily has been explored from an economic standpoint. Furthermore, corruption in the literature is considered to have major consequences on state security, not only because it weakens the efficiency and delivery of state service established to deter criminal activity. It also reduces the legitimacy of the judicial system, thus confirming the notion that the consequences of partaking in criminal activity are low. Hence it undermines the credibility of the governance itself. Subsequently, corruption often becomes a self-reinforcing cycle and a symptom of great societal issues.

In this article corruption is operationalised in three different variables, namely political corruption, public sector corruption and judicial corruption from the V-Dem dataset (2021). This dataset offers a broad spectre of corruption variables within the political sphere, thus opens up the possibility for going beyond the previous main focus on corruption which mainly has been within the economic and criminological sphere. Subsequently, this article is one of the initial investigations with a focus on political repercussion of corruption in this sphere. Nevertheless, these three variables were chosen because they collectively capture the scope of corruption. The full rationale and explanation of these variables will be explained in the data and methodology section. Lastly, it is important to acknowledge that there are some difficulties in measuring political corruption. Firstly, because these figures are in a transnational context there are most likely varying classifications of what corruption encompass. Particularly considering different types of regime are inclined to define corruption in different manners, in example autocratic regimes might be more lenient in their definition compared to democratic ones (Cruz, 2016). Furthermore, corruption happens behind closed doors and in the shadows, making the likelihood for dark figures high. Consequently, the risk is that corruption often can either go unreported or be hidden by officials.

2.3 Good Governance, Government Effectiveness, Corruption and Homicide

Good governance is an assortment of a number of factors that are considered to improve both stability and security within a country. The concept is highlighted in this article, because the literature has shown expanding interest in the topic and has been encouraged to be integrated into predicting the prevalence of homicide. Thus, this concept has received increasing attention in transnational homicide research in recent years, particularly in relations to policies. This increasing focus on good governance have subsequently resulted in policy makers progressing towards adopting measures that seeks to implement strategies in accordance with the research. The issue, however, is that the research thus far is incohesive. In other words, there are discrepancies in the literature, firstly in how to best achieve good governance, and secondly what good governance in reality is. Consequently, investigating the implications and effects of different measures of good governance has become increasingly important, in this article however, the focus will be on the opposite of good governance, defined as the level of different types of corruption. Thus, this article will focus on whether the effect of good governance is as inherently beneficial as it has been acknowledged to be, by looking at whether the lack of good governance is indeed harmful to societal security measured in terms of interpersonal violence.

The concept of good governance is defined as a subjective description on how public institutions manage their resources and public affairs in an effective and appropriate manner that benefits the people (Salihu, 2022). However, the issue is that this is, as aforementioned, subjective. Within the literature the general features of good governance are interchangeable dependent on the setting it is used. In example, it can be employed in settings involving economic growth, development and democratization. As one of the main components of good governance is focused on democratic structures and institutions, a consequence of this is that democracy and good governance are often operationally and conceptually conflated, which subsequently has resulted in a general assumption that factors like corruption are hidden behind the assumption that they are inherently disruptive, because non-democratic methods are considered so. That is not to say that corruption, or other non-democratic processes and structures should become a new ideal, rather that they might not have the effect that is claimed.

In reality, there is no linear correlation between good governance and a democratic regime structure, this is particularly true in developmental states. In other words, due to the expanding recognition of democracy as the "best" method of good and effective governance, the general belief is that these concepts overlap by definition and in practice. In contrast to popular literature however, Ishiyama (2019) did find that there are either no differences between one-party regimes and democracy in context of promoting the rule of law nor effective governance. Secondly, and most interestingly, he also found that in some instances semi-authoritarian one-party regimes are equally as successful at promoting the rule of law and effective governance as democratic regimes. To cherry pick an example from the real world, a high level of formal democracy in India does not mean it has a better record on the practice of the rule of law or even homicides relative to autocratic China.

This led to the conclusion that, despite democracy being a generally accepted ideal within the good governance literature, a democratic form of government is not necessary in order to achieve good "enough" governance. Nevertheless, that is not to say that in the long-term democratic institutions are the most durable when it comes to enforcing the rule of law. This logic implies that the general acceptance of democracy as the universally best form of governing, when it comes to the rule of law, stability, efficiency and security, might in some instance be questionable (Ishiyama, 2019). Subsequently, this should encourage further investigation into the real effects of democracy, not only in the long term, but particularly in the short term. The reality is that most the contemporary scholarship of democratisation has not sufficiently investigated the challenges faced during the transitional phase of democratisation. In other words, during the transformation process between one form of governance to another, a state encounters hardship as a consequence of the instability of rebuilding a state from scratch while also dealing with the breakdown of the previous form of governance.

As a result, the research on the relationship between democracy and homicide, and thus good governance, have increased, and resulted in several researchers finding a non-linear effect (Neumayer, 2003, Huebert & Brown, 2018, Lappi-Seppälä & Lehti, 2014). Actually, the effect of democratisation has been found to have an inverted U-shape, which implies that in the early stages of democratisation an increase in criminal activity should be expected,

however, as the democratisation process continues not only will the violent crime rate stabilise, but also decrease. Regions such as Latin America and Eastern Europe portrays a clearer picture of this discovery, as countries in these regions have been slowly undergoing a democratic transition from autocratic regimes. A consequence of this has been an increase in criminal behaviour, this can be assumed to be a consequence of the loosening iron grip of the autocratic regimes they were previously under. The implication of this logic is that there are types of non-democratic regime types that may be equally capable of deterring their citizens from criminal activity.

Another attribute of governance that is highly valued is the rule of law, that is, whether all participants in a society have the confidence in and abide by it (Ishiyama, 2019, Huebert & Brown, 2018). Not only is this important in the democratisation process, but also in the promotion of economic development, as it creates institutional trust and ability to protect. That is not to say, however, that this is only possible to achieve in a democratic state, rather that it is an ideal within it. Based on this logic, this article assumes that corruption is an indicator of the opposite of this. Firstly, because corruption in and of itself is the opposite of abiding by the rule of law, and secondly, since corruption inherently create distrust towards it.

Following this, another measure of what is necessary to achieve good governance, is government effectiveness. That is, in what capacity the government is able to provide quality public service, such as efficient and fair judicial systems. Not only that, but the civil service should be independent from political pressure and it should be focused on providing quality policy formulation and implementation (Ishiyama, 2019). Subsequently, it becomes evident that when a state is in transition, the main objective should not necessarily be mainly focused on good governance, but rather on the strengthening of institutions and on rule of law, so that the state is able to limit the instability of transitioning from one regime type to another. In other words, albeit democracy should be encouraged, the developing state should prioritise promoting and forming a rule of law where the elite are held equally accountable to the people, and thereafter implement further aspects of good and effective governance. Thus, a capable state must be formed before adopting the complexity of democratic rule (Ishiyama, 2019).

Good governance is predicted to reduce and mitigate grievances and anomie, thus when good governance policies are implemented individuals should have less reason for criminal activity. However, despite there being an abundance of academic literature on good governance, and why its implementation should be prioritised, good governance in and of itself are not necessarily the most important part. In reality, cases such as Latin America, proves that the implementation of good governance in itself isn't key, but rather the . of key aspects such as government effectiveness and the rule of law, which is independent of democratic institutions and values. Intuitively, this implies that corruption should do the opposite, corruption in the context of good governance should make people loose trust in the government due to loss of legitimacy. Subsequently, corruption can function as a quantifiable variable of the effect of this loss.

3.0 Previous Literature and Theories:

The contemporary research on transnational homicide rates is in many aspects insufficient in its explanation of its variation. As mentioned before, there is a need to further the research not only on the macro-level contextual influences of homicide rates, but also on the effect of government capacity, legitimacy and competence (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). This implies that measures of good governance, state legitimacy and other indicators of governmental influence needs to be more explicit in the research on transnational homicide. Subsequently, this section is split into three parts. The first part explores the historical literature on homicide rates which majorly consists of the sociological perspective. Thereafter, the second part focuses on contemporary research trends and patterns. This involves an increased focus on empirical and quantitative research and identifying risk factors. In the subsequent section this article attempts to bridge the criminological and sociological literature with political and structural theories. So far, this has been neglected in the literature.

3.1 From historic to modern societies; the Sociological Perspective

Historical literature on variation in homicide trends mostly consists of a cluster of factors that combine into the legitimacy and strength of the state and its institutions. This is also reflected in contemporary research later on. The argument of historical and sociological research is that violence levels have declined over the past centuries and millennia as a consequence of structural determinants such as an increase in macro dynamics, such as state control (*leviathan*), gentle commerce, feminization, and escalator of reason (Chap. 2, Pinker, 2011, Eisner, 2012). These macro-level mediators are based on the complexity of the logic of violence. This is reflected in human nature, where the core objective is to ensure the individuals survival, thus implying that violence in human nature, while it also isn't. In simpler terms, violence is a tool for self-preservation, it is however, not in human nature in and of itself (Pinker, 2011). The argument is therefore based on the assumption that the human being is inherently rational, and make decisions of participating in violent behaviour if its benefits outweighs the costs.

The assumptions of human nature and rationality can be traced all the way back to Hobbes in his book *Leviathan* (Hobbes, T., Schuhmann, K., Rogers, G., A., J., 2005). In this book Hobbes identified three causes for violence, firstly competition where individuals act upon the possibility of profit or gain. Secondly, diffidence or rather, fear, in order to ensure its own safety and survival. Lastly, glory, since reputation and honour are considered a tool of power in human society (Pinker, 2011). All three characteristics intertwine into a constant battle for social capital and power, and thus survival. This is referred to as the Hobbesian trap, however, the issue is how to best control and dissuade violence. In short it is essential to extricate the intelligent agent from being entangled in the snare of human nature. Subsequently, Hobbes identified the leviathan as a method of escaping this trap, a government authority that embodies the will of the people. In other words, the state should enforce a deterrence policy while having the monopoly of violence. If the government is successful it would remove the incentive for resorting to violence, thus preventing the rational individual from finding well-founded reason to participate in it. Contemporary research has adopted this assumption and based it upon more benevolent democratic practice of the rule of law.

In combination with the growth of the state as a monopolized enforcer of the rule of law, and thus also the deterrent of criminal activity, research emphasizes civilization process of the individual. In other words, the escalator of reason is assumed to be one of the causes behind the decrease of homicide on a historical basis (Eisner, 2012, Pinker, 2011). Following this logic, the concurrent implementation of self-control and social norms results in the dissuasion of violent behaviour because it makes the act much less profitable, and could result in being shunned from the community (Eisner, 2012). Therefore, it is commonly accepted that the pacifying effect of the state isn't only tied to its coercive power, but also rather the trust and legitimacy of the government. In short, the ability to deter criminality amongst the population isn't solely dependent on state control, but also on the rationality of its people and their trust in government. That is not to say that homicide is always rational because there are instances of passion-killings.

These types of killings can rarely be explained by the rational mind, and the *mens rea* are the pleasure of killing, where the act gives the perpetrator some gratification from the act of hurting others in itself (Pinker, 2011). Homicides that fall into this category however, albeit being studied in magnitude due to the curiosity and horror it awakens in the average individual are beyond the scope of this paper and belong within the psychological field of study. However, in the statistics of these crimes, the literature that have investigated this phenomenon have found that these desires of participation in violent behaviour are more common amongst a younger male population (Pinker, 2011). This has resulted in an assumption that a larger young male population may present itself as a risk-factor. The solution to this has however also mainly focused on the importance of education, and how this furthers the escalator of reason amongst individuals (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021).

Another aspect that is considered as a mediating-factor because it augments the effect of civilisation and rationality is that of gentle commerce. In short, this perspective focuses on how relationships between people are strengthened through the act of cooperation and trade, because it creates bonds of interdependence. Thus, the pacifying effect of capitalism and free trade, have over the course of history received stronger foothold in the literature, and been used as an explanation for the decrease in violence. Following this, the thought is that throughout history the escalator of reason has manifested itself in the literature

through the belief in human nature and rationality, and the different societal aspects that increases it. The assumption is that this accumulation of knowledge and social norms will eventually overcome prejudice and hostility. Therefore, it is assumed that violence should decrease alongside modernisation and cosmopolitanism, to the extent that individuals and groups apply the principles of reason to their affairs. Based on the assumptions presented here, if the authority of a state is questioned or weakened it will result in the opposite, as it will result in the escalation of violence.

3.2 Previous Literature; contemporary research trends

Contemporary literature on transnational homicide rates identifies several macro-level risk-factors, there is however contending evidence on how great these risk-factors affect homicide rates (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). Thus, despite there being an expanding literature there is few fundamentally acknowledged risk-factors. Firstly, however, it is essential to elucidate that risk-factors are another term adopted by Eisner (2012) in order to more cohesively describe the macro-level correlates. In other words, it is used to describe the different phenomenon and variables that have an effect on the variability in homicide rate. The major difference in more contemporary research compared to historical research is the focus on specific factors, particularly put into an empirical research setting, thus adding an additional dimension to the research. Nevertheless, there are discrepancies and insufficient consonance upon the severity of the risk-factors. Subsequently, this has resulted in contemporary research expanding their research focus towards measures beyond social and economic conditions (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). More specifically, the increased implementation of quantitative research has resulted in findings that diminishes the effects of the previously emphasized macro-level factors, thus the literature expanded. This resulted examination of more specific measures, such as institutional strength, stability and effectiveness (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). In short, the macro-level structural risk-factors do help us understand variation in transnational homicide rates to some extent, however but fails to explain it in its complexity.

Eisner (2012) found in his investigation of the literature that there are varying number between five or seven risk-factors identified that predict homicide rates. The most common ones are economic inequality, development and industrialisation, population/demographic structure, urbanisation, female labour force and unemployment (Rivera, 2016). Furthermore, there is also an increasing focus on cultural, social and ethnic heterogeneity, as is evident in the previously mentioned cultural theory. However, several of these risk factors have been found to not have or have little statistically significant effect on the fluctuation of homicide rates (LaFree, 1999, Trent and Pridemore, 2012, Eisner, 2012). This includes urbanisation and population/demographic structure and unemployment rates. Both Lafree (1999), along with Trent and Pridemore (2012) found that economic inequality and development are the two strongest macro-level risk-factors when it comes to understanding high homicide rates.

The former in the sense that separation between economic groups create grievances and anger, because the richer groups gets more and better opportunities. The poorer group on the other hand, have less opportunity to achieve their goals through legitimate methods. Not only that, but they also have less to lose by participating in illegal behaviour (Neumayer, 2003). The latter implies that the more developed countries generally experience lower rates of homicide than those that are less developed. In other words, states that are considered highly developed, generally experience lower amounts of homicide, than less developed countries. Following this logic, it can also be assumed that states that are currently in a process of changing its political, economic or social infrastructure may experience an increase in homicide. Furthermore, there is also support for the cultural and/or social heterogeneity in a state. This implies that in states where there are big or expanding divisions between social groups or ethnic groups, increases the probability for homicide, in example due to an increase in hate crimes and so on (Eisner, 2012).

On the other side, there is also mediating factors. This includes the previously high levels of development, indicated by indicators such as the human development index suggests low homicide rates. Such development indicators can in example be social welfare protection of the population, high modernization and socio-economic development. Additionally, ethnic homogeneity has an impact on the decrease in homicide rates. That is not to say that

countries with ethnic heterogeneity cannot stable and more developed, however that division within a country create more possibilities for grievances. Subsequently, the majority of the previous literature emphasizes that in contemporary nation states the homicide rates are higher in less-developed, poorer and more unequal states, along with low integration of ethnic and cultural minorities (Eisner, 2012).

Furthermore, Eisner and Nivette (2013) examined the effect of political legitimacy, and found that legitimacy is a strong and consistent predictor of homicide rates. This follows the logic of the historical literature, that individuals are less prone to violence in states where polities are considered legitimate and fair. Thus, by following this logic it is key to ensure the legality and impartiality of government institutions, both in the political, public sector and judicial sphere. In other words, state legitimacy implies the lack of corruption in these spheres of government, thus good governance is accepted as a key purpose of a secure state. Not only that, but good policy in general is considered key as a mediator of violent behaviour (Neumayer, 2003).

Subsequently, the second incongruity of the literature are found, because despite economic growth being considered a risk-factors in a majority of the literature; Neumayer (2003) found a negative impact of both income and economic growth, thus strengthening his claim that good economic policies are predictors of lower homicide rates. This can be deduced from a multitude of observable factors in his study, firstly that in reality, during economic growth homicide rates fall, however in economic recession it rises. Secondly, economic growth increases average income, which is also associated with lower homicide rates. Thus, it can be argued that albeit former literature has emphasized economic growth as a risk-factor, due to the increasing instability and divide it possibly could create, the data suggests otherwise, especially if good economic policies are implemented. On the other hand, inequality, the which is considered a major risk-factor of variation in homicide rate in the literature, have been questioned by increasing amounts of academic scholars do not find any statistically significant effect of inequality on the homicide rate in their analysis (Neumayer, 2003, Rivera, 2016). Thus, despite a general acceptance, there are discrepancies between the literature on theories of social dislocation and anomie and quantitative assessments on the outcome.

Another important factor that is considered to be mediating, is the democratisation process, aforementioned in the section on good governance. However, despite being a general acceptance of good governance and democracy as mediating-factors, contemporary literature is finding that the relationship is not as straight forwards as presumed. Firstly, as previously stated, the relationship between homicide and democratisation, have been found in more recent research to have an inverted U-shape, rather than linear (Huebert & Brown, 2018, Rivera, 2016). Therefore, despite previous belief, increasing democracy does not automatically decrease homicide rates, rather the beginning of the democratisation process increases homicide rates and later after reaching a certain level begins to stabilise and eventually decrease it (Huebert & Brown, 2018, Lappi-Seppälä & Lehti, 2014). Following this, the research on regime type's effect on homicide rate have started focusing on factors such as state legitimacy, and therefore also due process.

Huebert and Brown (2018) actually found in their research that factors such as due process, reduces, if not removes the impact of several other factors that are in the literature considered to have major impact on variation in cross-national homicide rates. This included due process and inequality. Based on their findings they drew the assumption that, despite democracy being considered a key factor in decreasing violent behaviour. It is the method of applying law and order, rather than strictly tied to regime type. In other words, functioning and effective policies of due process can be applied by a state that has not implemented democracy, and vice versa, and it will have a stronger effect than just implementing democratic policies in general. The aspect of the literature moves beyond the macro-level risk factors, this is because despite there being extensive literature on these factors, the actual effects of them seemingly vary within the literature. In short, albeit social and economic macro-level factors do shed some lights on the why there are such high variation in transnational homicide rates, they are not conclusive (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). Thus, there are other factors that needs to be further investigated, such as indicators of the capacity, competence and efficiency of state institutions.

3.3 Theories; bridging the gap between criminology and political theory.

The previous literature on homicide can thus be summarized in four theories, modernization theory, opportunity theory, cultural theory, political and civilisation theory, and lastly deprivation and economic theory. These, theories however, can also be classified within different criminological theoretical fields, or logics. Therefore, in order to bridge the literature between the political field and the criminological field, this section will separate into four common logics, and place the theories within each of them. The hope is that this will begin a new trend in interdisciplinary research between the two fields of research, and subsequently, create more opportunities for research. Not only that, but it will in part, fill in some gaps within both literatures. This will be executed through the four criminological logics identified by Thyne and Schroeder (2012). First, are *motivation,* which refers to the factors that induce criminal behaviour. Second is *control,* that focuses on the state's ability to deter anomie, and the imposing of constraints. Thereafter, *opportunity,* focuses on the impact of social interactions shapes social behaviour and affect criminal behaviour. Lastly, *constraints,* emphasizes the informal social mechanisms that foster criminal behaviour.

In short, motivation captures the societal structures that induces criminal behaviour. This includes economic factors that rather than deterring illicit acts they enable them. Examples of this are inequality or limited market opportunities, this falls within the theoretical framework of economic theory and rational choice theory. Despite being separated into two theories they do strongly correlate and are often fused into each other in the previous literature. In short, the theories assume that individuals make rational decisions before committing violent crimes (Neumayer, 2003, Rivera 2016). The implications of this is that before the criminal act is performed, the offender will weigh the benefits against the costs, i.e., the value of the payoff relative to the costs. Following this assessment, the individual will decide whether or not to commit the crime dependent on whether the possible benefit surpasses the possible cost.

In other words, the prevalence of violent crime, and thus also homicide, could be dependent on the probability of arrest and severity of punishment. These theories thus attach themselves to political theory, due to the fact that the ability to apprehend and sentence criminals are dependent on the state's capacity and willingness to do so. Subsequently, the

theory or logic therefore predict that factors such as poverty, inequality, unemployment and other economic factors that have a destabilising effect on an individual's personal economy results in criminal activity being more advantageous. Therefore, the solution would be based on cohesive and good economic governance and policies that reduce the incentives of criminal behaviour (Neumayer, 2003).

Hence, economic theory is increasingly relevant to understand variations in homicide rates as well. Specifically, it also predicts that these opportunity-costs play an increasing role, because the better economic prospect of an individual, the higher the risk of losing economic gains (Neumayer, 2003). Therefore, following this logic, better economic prospects would result in less violent crime, because it becomes less attractive compared to other opportunities. Subsequently, this implies that high economic growth and stability should in turn lower the levels of violent crime in a society substantially. This ties to deprivation theory, which emphasizes the effect inequality and deprivation of groups and individuals create grievances (Neumayer, 2003, Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). The creation of separation between social classes creates frustration and lack of social integration, and thus not only create economic inequality but also a difference in opportunity. Thus, lower social classes would be more inclined to partake in more desperate measures, especially if these groups become more concentrated and united.

This logic also correlates with another theory, namely opportunity theory. The ambition is to understand variation in homicide in terms of the different opportunities and conditions necessary for it to be beneficial for an individual to partake in violent criminal activity. Therefore, the theory bases its logic on the assumptions that an individual is rational, to the extent that it can determine whether the crime is worth it, and if the risk of getting caught are limited. Therefore, it is often contrasted with the term "motivation" in the literature, specifically because it implies that socio-economic factors such as poverty and inequality would have a major effect on variation in homicide rates (Rivera, 2016).

Not only that, but opportunity theory indicates that strong state control functions as a deterrent for violent behaviour because it makes the possibility of consequences of actions to be costly (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021). The second logic follows this reasoning of opportunity theory and emphasizes that weak state institutions are another predictor of anomie in a society. Thus, it considers the government's ability to deter criminal behaviour as a major factor on decreasing social violence. Rather than economic factors, this logic emphasizes the importance of strong structures of law enforcement and legal institutions as a core feature in controlling homicide rates. Structures that ensure the rule of law in a legitimate manner increases the aforementioned opportunity costs of offending, thus it becomes an essential factor in deterring criminal activity (Rivera, 2016).

Another theory incorporating the importance of governmental structures are political theory, which highlights the importance of governance and political organisation within in a country (Neumayer, 2003, Huebert & Brown, 2018, Lafree & Tseloni, 2006). This correlates with the aforementioned Hobbes and his concept of the *Leviathan*, where the state is a main contributor and enforcer by monopolising the right of legitimate use of force. Thus, the ability to deter is dependent on the level of state control in a society. Following this logic, government structures such as autocracies, usually have strong state control, subsequently they are able to suppress unwanted social behaviour successfully (Neumayer, 2003, Rivera, 2016). As a consequence, this logic also implies that in weak and unstable democracies, state control may be insufficient at deterring criminality until it reaches a certain level of democracy. Therefore, the assumption that democracy is linked to lower levels of criminality, can only be confirmed in countries with very high levels of democracy.

Furthermore, within the logic of opportunity, modernization theory, provides insight as to how and why these institutions are be weakened. Specifically, because it examines the impact strong economic growth and political transition have on the stability of a country. According to this theory these factors creates instability and thus are a risk-factor, implying that major transitions create disruptions of traditional modes of social organization and control (Neumayer, 2003, Huebert & Brown, 2018). Therefore, this theory predicts that the transformation process makes the likelihood for criminal behaviour and anomie more likely (Chainey, Croci & Forero, 2021, Lafree & Tseloni, 2006). Nevertheless, after the transition is

completed or has stabilized, and new forms of social control and economic stability have been secured, the assumption is that crime rates will decline.

On the other hand, if these institutions are considered illegitimate, or weak, it will create the perception that high figures of criminal activity are not penalised, thus lowering the risks. Following this logic, another part of the theory predicts that the people may as a result become more desensitised to crime and punishment, because they not only see their elite partaking, but also lack the deterrence from the state. Additionally, the perception of the levels of corruption here may have more sway than the actual corruption levels, because it is a choice an individual make based upon its view of the world, as if it believes that there are high levels of anomie in a society, they will be more inclined to partake in criminal activities themselves.

The logic of opportunity is not limited to governmental structures, such as modernisation, but also incorporates other structural conditions that create anomie. This includes a conflict perspective, within conflict theory the social disorganisation that are caused or followed by a conflict inevitably have an impact on the opportunities that arise both during and in a post-conflict setting (Thyne, C., L., Schroeder, R., D., 2012). Particularly because civil conflict is often related to specific conditions that create windows of opportunity even before the conflict breaks out (Rivera, 2016). Thus, albeit, the situation eventually is probable to stabilise, there is no say on when, how or whether these conditions will be eliminated. In other words, despite the conflict having ended, these conditions are often symptoms of bigger societal issues that existed before the outbreak of the conflict.

Lastly, the logic of social constraints goes beyond the formal mechanisms previously emphasized in the other theories. This logic rather focuses on structures that either encourage or deter criminal activity, these institutions however are not solely put in place by governmental or other formal establishments, but rather shaped and integrated into society through social interactions. Thus, cultural theory becomes relevant as it encompasses how ethnic and social differences in a society affect social behaviour (Neumayer, 2003). Subsequently this theory adds another dimension to the other theories, emphasizing the fundamental role of traditions and norms in a society, and how they affect

everyday life for the individual, along with its perspective on life and morality. Consequently, cultural theory emphasizes that there is no single and universal process of development, civilisation and modernisation, rather these processes are dependent and conditional to the cultural characteristics of a society. The implication of this is that it is hard to explicitly find how one process, what aspects of that process creates anomie. Nevertheless, there are methods of accounting for this, not only that but it is possible to pinpoint certain widespread risk-factors originating from cultural attributes.

Another theory that focuses on social and cultural factors are civilisation theory. The core of the theory accentuates the escalator of reason as an important constraint against violent behaviour. Therefore, not only are the governmental structures essential in decreasing violence, but social norms and increasing self-control of the individual is essential for state deterrence to be effective (Neumayer, 2003, Rivera, 2016). The theory however moves beyond state deterrence, and offers that eventually the escalator of reason will hopefully become so integrated into the individual that traditional forms of social control, external constraint and enforcement of law will become redundant. In short, eventually, the civilisation theory predicts that the individual will adopt a moral compass and self-restraint strong enough to self-police, without the use of external impact nor the threat of reprimand have a less effect than now. The prediction is thus that through education and other mechanisms which enforces logical and self-restraint would eventually increase the effect of deterrence.

However, despite these theories, contemporary research has found that variations in homicide rates cannot solitarily be explained by modernization, cultural factors, civilisation nor economic theory. Rather other aspects such as good governance and polities should be further investigated and researched. Particularly considering newer research have found increasing evidence for their importance (Neumayer, 2003). Particularly, the concept of good governance, as it has received increasing importance amongst policy makers and international institutions (Ghaus-Pasha, 2006). The level of good governance or the lack of corruption should affect both government legitimacy, government capacity and willingness to act, and social compliance with the rule of law if indeed state officials are corrupt (Ishiyama, 2019, Ghaus-Pasha, 2006). Implying that, if cohesive policies against corruption

are employed this should arguably reduce the homicide rate, because that implies good governance. In other words, the lack of corruption should according to most of the literature on good governance, increase social trust and reduce anomie (Eisner, 2012).

In order to account for the breadth of corruption, this article measure the effect of three different corruption variables. This is in order to cohesively capture the varying effects different types of corruption may have on the homicide rate. The first variable included in the model is political corruption, as a measure of corruption in general. Subsequently, this variable gives an indication of the effect of corruption as a general societal issue. However, considering the importance of policy and governmental legitimacy in the literature, two other variables are also used in order to look at more specific channels. The other two variables are public sector corruption and judicial corruption. The former measure the regularity and capacity of which public officials accept bribes, whereas the latter quantifies the frequency of bribes within the judicial system. Subsequently, two essential aspects of good governance are captured in these two variables, firstly in the governments capacity to efficiently provide and appropriate public goods. Secondly, judicial corruption captures the legitimacy of the state and rule of law. Based on the literature this article poses three hypothesises:

Hypothesis 1: Political corruption should increase the homicide rate.

Hypothesis 2: Public sector corruption should increase the homicide rate.

Hypothesis 3: Judicial corruption should increase the homicide rate.

The three hypothesises predict that all forms of corruption should increase the homicide rate. In the literature on good governance, posit that policies on effective and good governance are one of the most efficient mechanisms in preventing criminal activity. Subsequently, this assumption indicate that anomie and criminal activity is a consequence of poor governance and political illegitimacy. Thus, the presence of such factors should inevitably cause it to increase. Inherently, the presence of corruptive institutions and public officials should create grievances and other societal concerns that makes criminal activity additionally attractive. Hence, the formulation of these hypothesises are based upon these assumptions.

4.0 Data and Methodology:

The data in this article is collected from three different datasets in order to collect cohesive and systematic data that encompasses the previous literature, but also adds to the literature by highlighting a new factor, namely corruption, as a key component in understanding variation in homicide rates. For this article, the data on homicide rates are extracted from the World Bank, and the figures on corruption is collected from the V-Dem dataset. Additionally, data on civil wars are collected from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program. Thereafter, the data is utilised in a time series cross-sectional dataset (TSCS), this is so that the variation in time across approximately 202 countries can cohesively be measured. The data is then run through the Woolridge test to test for autocorrelation, which it confirms. Consequently, I utilise the Driscoll-Kraay (DK) standard errors to supplement for this. After this process, the data is estimated through fixed and random effects estimators, however in order to which estimator to use, the Durbin Wu Hausman test is utilised. The results show that both estimators each capture the data, thus both estimators are included in the table. Conversely, the fixed effects estimator provides additional confidence as it accounts for omitted variables, and thus avoid bias (Neumayer, 2003)

4.1 Data

Three variables are collected from the World Bank, more specifically its world development indicators (WDI) online database. Firstly, homicide rates are used as the dependent variable. This is because, as aforementioned, homicide function as a good measure of general crime levels within a state. Following this logic, it gives an indication of the general security level of the state. This is primarily due to the fact that homicide is the most violent form of interpersonal violence, and thus also most likely to be reported (Neumayer, 2003, Rivera, 2016). However, the variable captures the data on intentional homicide, consequently it does not include deaths associated with battle, in example deaths as a consequence of civil war are excluded. On the other hand, deaths associated with terrorism are included as a form of premeditated murder. Furthermore, the WDI database are chosen because the World Bank consistently collects and reports data on homicide from multiple sources, this includes national governments and the World's Health Organisation. Thus, it is one of the most reliable sources of available data on homicide rates.

The second variable collected from the World Bank, additional to transnational homicide rates, is gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. This is included as a control variable, because it is considered an important predictor of economic growth, and thus also modernisation. As a consequence of this it can be used as an indication of the level or stage of development for a state. According to modernisation theory, a steep increase in economic growth would increase insecurity, and thus also violent crime. However, eventually as the economic growth stabilises the homicide rate should also stabilise. Not only that, but GDP per capita function as an indicator of level of economic development, and this is important because poorer and less developed countries are often thought to be victims of higher levels of corruption and instability (Neumayer, 2003).

Therefore, GDP per capita indicates a significant number of factors about a state's situation, not only controls for the effect poverty have on levels of violent crime, but also corruption levels. Subsequently, the variable is essential to account for several important sectors of previous literature, and are efficient in controlling for the spurious effect of poverty. Thereafter, natural resource rent, measured in the percentage of the GDP it occupies, are important factors because of the impact that trade has on the economic strength and stability within a country. In other words, it functions as an indicator of the foundation that the state shapes its economic structures around, and its ability to create sustainable development.

Considering the fact that the majority of countries where a big bulk of their GDP are based on natural resource rents often falls within the less developed scale, and are often suffering from large economic inequalities, the assumption is that these countries are more prone to both corrupt behaviour and anomie. This is based upon the assumption of the resource curse, which in short theorises that countries whose economy are heavily driven by natural resources often falls victims to exploitation and failure to utilise their natural resource wealth efficiently (Wenar, 2016). This is often the consequence of weak state institutions, political instability and conflict; thus, it gives another insight into the country's general condition. Both GDP per capita and the natural resource rent are logged in the regression due to the fact that they were originally skewed.

Subsequently, in robustness tests, the Gini coefficient is added in order to measure the effect inequality has on a society. This is important as inequality is considered a major factor in creating incentive for criminal behaviour. However, it is not included in the model firstly because of the limited availability. Secondly, it is generally acknowledged through theory and literature that inequality creates grievances, however contemporary research has found varying results. Thus, in order to not obscure the regression, it is only included as a robustness check. Lastly, in those instances it is found to have impact, it is often substantial. Thus, due to the strength of its impact, it might obscure the results and thus take away the effect of other variables, such as corruption which may also have an effect albeit weaker.

On the other hand, variables on the different types of corruption are extracted from the V-Dem dataset (2021). The data set offers reliable and updated figures, firstly because they are collected through expert coding methods, and thus are subjected to various sophisticated methods of cross-validation. Subsequently, the V-Dem dataset is one of the most reliable sources of data that focuses on actual corruption, and not only perceived corruption. The variables are the independent variables in the regression because they are indicating state legitimacy. This is due to the fact that corruption is inherently illegitimate, thus if government institutions or structures are corrupt, they are fundamentally illegitimate. Considering the fact that a major section of the contemporary literature focuses on legitimacy, particularly in policy context this has received increasing attention. However, corruption is a broad concept that can be integrated in a multitude of different social and political instruments; therefore, this article has included three different variables in order to fully capture the more specific effects of corruption on homicide rates. The V-Dem dataset offers a broad spectre of different corruption measures, for this article the variables on political corruption, judicial corruption and public sector corruption.

Firstly, political corruption is a collective label, and it consists of six individual measures of types of corruption (V-Dem Codebook, 2021). The variable is included because it captures corruption as an anomie in society in general. Firstly, it covers all areas in the polity realm, this includes executive, legislative and judicial corruption measures. Furthermore, it also incorporates corruption in the form of embezzlement and bribery. Lastly, it distinguishes between the highest level of corruption in the executive realm and the public sector. This is

important to consider due to the fact that corruption often spread, and the existence of it in one sector often are symptom of it being prevalent in another sector as well. In other words, corruption rarely exist in vacuum within one sector, but rather as an indication of a bigger societal issue.

However, in order to more specifically target indicators of the impact corruption two additional variables of corruption are operationalised in two separate regressions. This is to cohesively look at more specific effects of corruption as indicators of state capacity. The effect of corruption may vary in degrees, as in whereas one type of corruption may have a positive effect, another can have a negative one. Also, it is interesting to see which type, if any, have a bigger effect than another. Thus, a more specific investigation into corruption from different sectors may underline, which societal and political issues should be prioritised when attempting to create cohesive policies. Firstly, judicial corruption encompasses the frequency of which bribes are offered and accepted in exchange for influencing, either the pace or outcome of judicial decisions. Secondly, public sector corruption, measure to what regularity and capacity employees in the public sector accept bribes or other material inducements, additional to how often public funds and state resources are stolen or misappropriated for familiar use. Thus, the inclusion of these two allows to search for more specificity in understanding the consequences of corruption.

Polyarchy or electoral democracy is also included as a control variable, because the literature thoroughly argues for the importance of democratic structures. In particular, legitimate and democratic means of governing demands free elections and representative governments. This indicates the strength of the publics power; thus, is it also captures the democratisation process. In other words, whether or not the public has power through the electoral process indicates the level or stage of democratisation. This has emphasized as an important element in the literature. In short, electoral democracy is a core requirement for good governance. Nevertheless, countries have been in a democratisation process, such as Latin America have not experienced the benefits that democracy is claimed to bring. Thus, the effect of corruption may differ between democratic and autocratic regimes, and those in a transitional phase. Furthermore, electoral democracy if favoured over other types of

democratic variables, because it captures the essence of democracy without adding other cultural values and norms.

The last two variables included in the regression controls for civil war and peace years, and are collected from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program. This program is the world's focal provider of statistics on organised violence; thus, the reliability of the figures is high. The variables are included because during times of instability, such as during a civil war, the lines between victims of war and victims of homicide are often blurred, and difficult to distinguish from each other. Furthermore, they are also included due to the emphasis on stability and state capacity, neither of which are possible during a civil war, nor will they be at full strength in the years following civil wars. Thus, the variables function not only as an indicator of whether or not there is war, but also because they work as an indicator of the development level within a state.

Following this logic, I also separate the data into two sections, a section for the world and a section for where countries in Western Europe, North America and Oceania (WENAO) are excluded. This section is called less developed countries (LDC) because, as was discovered in previous literature, development is an acknowledged risk-factor of high homicide rates by several researchers (LaFree, 1999, Trent and Pridemore, 2012, Eisner, 2012). This is also to control for certain cultural variables, such as education and female work force. Both these factors are prevalent in the literature, but their effect demands an entire research paper in and of itself. Therefore, as LDC's are less likely to have such systems and social structures in place, creating a separate section only for these countries thus separates the effect of these variables and makes it possible to see if there is any difference whether or not they are included.

However, beyond the factors that falls within cultural theory is difficult to test explicitly, considering the broadness and variability of it. Additionally, cultural effects are intricate and nearly impossible to quantify, firstly because data patterns on smaller cultural factors such as attitudes and levels of alcohol consumption, the availability of firearms, or grievances between cultural groups are unavailable from a multitude of countries (Neumayer, 2003). Secondly, cultural differences such as ethnic heterogeneity or religious composition are

changes that happens over longer periods, that can be considered time-invariant, however considering the importance of cultural theory in the literature, some control for it should be included (Neumayer, 2003). Therefore, in this article the inclusion of the fixed-effects estimator sophistically controls for these slow changes and developments, this will become further elaborated in the methodology section.

4.2 Methodology

I use a time-series cross section (TSCS) dataset. These data measure each country´s homicide rates annually between 1990 and 2018. TSCS analysis typically face problems related to autocorrelation in space and time (Spatial and temporal dependence of the data). In the case of such dependence, the standard errors are likely to be under-estimated. I use the Woolridge test, which suggested that my data are serially correlated (Drukker, 2003). Thus, I use OLS regression with the Driscoll-Kray (DK) standard errors (Hoechle, 2007). By incorporating the DK standard errors, I am able to estimate betas (coefficients) robust to both spatial and temporal autocorrelation, which are also robust to heteroskedasticity. Thereafter, the Hausman test is used to identify if the fixed or random effects estimator is better suited for the data (Ishiyama, 2019). The result of the test is that the random effects is consistent and efficient. I include both estimations in the tables that follow. Although both methods cannot be right at the same time, I include them for comparison following others (Neumayer, 2003).

Utilising a fixed effects estimator is often thought to be beneficial because it accounts for the unobserved country heterogeneity that is time invariant, such as culture and geography and local-specific factors that may explain homicides. In other words, it is invaluable to account for this as the unmeasured variable together with the within variance makes up the unexplained variance in the error term (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017). This means that not only the time-varying independent variables included in the model, but also the time-invariant independent variables not included in the model, along with the unmeasured time-invariant variables are accounted (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017). In short, the fixed effects estimator subtracts the effects if variables that are not observed in the model correlates with one of the observed variables (Neumayer, 2003).

Therefore, the benefits of employing a fixed effects estimator are many, especially because it controls for all time-invariant variables and thus the issue of spurious relationship are severely decreased. However, the drawback of the fixed effects model is that it only, as aforementioned, are able to estimate the effects of variables that vary over time. Subsequently, as the time-invariant ones are omitted from the model, it can be difficult to the estimate the variables that are stable and rarely change (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017). Thus, the random effects estimator becomes increasingly relevant. Particularly, since the Hausman test indicates that both estimators can be used, both provides interesting insight. Firstly, because they complement each other. Secondly, as the Hausman test concludes that both estimators can be included, the random effects estimator is more efficient, and the standard errors should be smaller than those of the fixed effects model (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017).

Lastly, the random effects estimator is used to measure the quadratic effect. This is in order to cohesively illustrate the individual effect of the predictor has on the variation of the dependent variable. More specifically, in this article the quadratic effects of judicial corruption and homicide rate is calculated because of the surprising results in Table 3. Explicitly, that judicial corruption has a negative impact on the homicide rate. It's inclusion is thus to better understand the nature of the relationship between judicial corruption and homicide rates, especially due to the counter-intuitive results in comparison to the literature. The results are illustrated through a graph in Figure 1. To understand this relationship is beneficial because it would be unwise to make controversial claims implying that judicial corruption could be a key factor in decreasing the homicide rate. In short, Figure 1 elegantly illustrate the relationship between homicide rates and corruption in an inverted U shape.

5.0 Results:

The result is comprised of three tables measuring the effect of the three different corruption variables on homicide rates. Each table has different statistical significance. Firstly, Table 1 on political corruption shows no statistically significant effect on homicide rates across the table. Table 2, measuring the effect of public sector corruption, however, indicates that the impact is positive, at least on a world basis. Lastly, Table 3, measuring the effect of judicial corruption, has the initially counter-intuitive results and it has the strongest statistical significance. The table reveals that the correlation between judicial corruption and homicide rates are negative, specifically in developing countries. Furthermore, in order to better illustrate the effect of this, Figure 1 displays an inverted-u shaped graph that indicates the relationship between judicial corruption levels and homicide rates.

Table 1 – Political Corruption

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| | Fixed | Random | Fixed | Random |
Dependent Var = Homicide Rate	World	World	LDC	LDC
Political Corruption	-0.00705	-0.128	-0.127	-0.243
	(0.190)	(0.144)	(0.195)	(0.169)
GDP per Capita	-0.362***	-0.382***	-0.396***	-0.519***
	(0.0470)	(0.0544)	(0.0608)	(0.0527)
Electoral Democracy	0.236*	0.162	0.218	0.108
	(0.126)	(0.107)	(0.133)	(0.113)
Civil War ongoing	0.117***	0.113***	0.137***	0.130***
	(0.0226)	(0.0231)	(0.0260)	(0.0263)
Years of Peace	0.00114*	0.00171**	0.00151	0.00147
	(0.000608)	(0.000685)	(0.000954)	(0.000934)
Resource rents/GDP	-0.0435	-0.0564	-0.0473	-0.0563
	(0.0337)	(0.0337)	(0.0374)	(0.0383)
Constant	4.035***	4.351***	4.443***	0
	(0.430)	(0.543)	(0.555)	(0)
Observations	3,033	3,033	2,388	2,388
Number of groups	154	154	131	131

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Table 1 exhibit the result for the regression on the effect of political corruption. What is surprising is that there is no statistical significance between variation in homicide rates and political corruption. Subsequently, Table 1 rejects the first hypothesis; that political corruption should have a statistically significant negative effect on homicide rates. The only two variables that are statistically significant is GDP per capita, with a negative effect. Along with civil war with a positive effect, both results that are expected and supportive of previous research. Neither discoveries are unexpected, considering the previous literature's focus on stable economy, and that that civil war creates unrest which increase insecurity (World Bank, 2020, Thyne & Schroeder, 2012).

Table 2 – Public Sector Corruption

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| | Fixed | Random | Fixed | Random |
Dependent Var = Homicide Rate	World	World	LDC	LDC
Public Sector Corruption	0.298*	0.227*	0.227	0.168
	(0.147)	(0.125)	(0.150)	(0.141)
GDP per Capita	-0.326***	-0.345***	-0.351***	-0.465***
	(0.0463)	(0.0531)	(0.0599)	(0.0523)
Electoral Democracy	0.320***	0.259**	0.319**	0.227*
	(0.113)	(0.107)	(0.118)	(0.111)
Civil War	0.122***	0.118***	0.142***	0.135***
	(0.0224)	(0.0236)	(0.0257)	(0.0264)
Years of Peace	0.00117*	0.00162**	0.00144	0.00123
	(0.000594)	(0.000670)	(0.000950)	(0.000943)
Resources	-0.0444	-0.0568*	-0.0484	-0.0572
	(0.0323)	(0.0330)	(0.0360)	(0.0375)
Constant	0	3.812***	3.839***	0
	(0)	(0.518)	(0.509)	(0)
Observations	3,040	3,040	2,395	2,395
Number of groups	154	154	131	131

Standard errors in parentheses

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$

In Table 2 however, the model achieves statistically significant results, but only when the sample includes the entire world. That is, when the developing countries only are tested, public sector corruption loses its statistical significance. This could imply that corruption in public sectors is capturing mostly the low corruption levels in the industrialized "western" democracies (WENAO countries). In other words, in countries that falls under the less developed category, there are some factors that mitigate the impact of public sector corruption on homicide. Nevertheless, the impact of public sector corruption is in correlation with the literature, it is positive. Thus, if public sector corruption increases, one can assume that the homicide rate does as well.

Subsequently, the second hypothesis, that public sector corruption should increase homicide rate can be partially supported by these findings with the caveat that it is not significant statistically only when the developing countries are tested. Hence, public sector corruption can be considered a risk factor regarding homicide rates very generally and perhaps not robustly. Furthermore, similarly to Table 1, Table 2 also indicate that GDP per capita has a negative effect on homicide rates, and civil war has a positive effect. However, in Table 2, both polyarchy and years of peace have a positive statistically significant effect as well. These surprising results suggest that the democratic portion of good governance has the opposite effects on homicide rates. Tentatively, these results do not support the view that state legitimacy, at least measured as democracy, has a homicide-lowering effect.

Table 3 – Judicial Corruption

Dependent Var = Homicide Rate	(1) Fixed World	(2) Random World	(3) Fixed LDC	(4) Random LDC
Judicial Corruption	-0.0503	-0.0699***	-0.0857***	-0.0988***
	(0.0305)	(0.0232)	(0.0289)	(0.0222)
GDP per Capita	-0.384***	-0.395***	-0.421***	-0.534***
	(0.0483)	(0.0569)	(0.0611)	(0.0559)
Electoral Democracy	0.200**	0.156	0.198**	0.121
	(0.0898)	(0.0995)	(0.0920)	(0.0963)
Civil War	0.117***	0.114***	0.139***	0.133***
	(0.0213)	(0.0214)	(0.0249)	(0.0245)
Years of Peace	0.000968	0.00158**	0.00122	0.00119
	(0.000580)	(0.000695)	(0.000949)	(0.000931)
Resource rents/GDP	-0.0385	-0.0500	-0.0392	-0.0467
	(0.0340)	(0.0337)	(0.0377)	(0.0380)
Constant	4.225***	4.373***	0	0
	(0.463)	(0.567)	(0)	(0)
Observations	3,033	3,033	2,388	2,388
Number of groups	154	154	131	131

Standard errors in parentheses

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$

Lastly, in Table 3 we find the most interesting results, particularly among the LDC-only sample. For the first time the results reveal a statistically significant negative effect. The sign of the correlation is unexpected. The results imply that higher judicial corruption actually decreases homicide rates. Therefore, the third hypothesis is contradicted. The hypothesis predicts that judicial corruption should increase the homicide rate, not decrease it. Nevertheless, according to these findings that is not always the case. The results also show the importance of not only investigating corruption in general, but also specific types of corruption. Namely in this article, that is, public sector corruption in Table 2 and judicial corruption in Table 3. Both tables have statistical significance, but they are in totally different directions. Whereas Table 2 identifies public sector corruption to have a positive effect on homicide rates on an international basis as predicted by the literature. However,

Table 3 refutes the previous literature by finding that judicial corruption in LDC countries actually has a negative effect on homicide rates. These two tables thus express that not only does different types of corruption have varying effect in general, but also that the level of development have different effect on the impact of corruption. Similarly, to table 1 and 2, table 3 also identify GDP per capita to have a negative effect on homicide rates, and civil war shows positive effects, as expected.

Subsequently, the results on corruption are not terribly robust. Especially compared to the effect of GDP per capita, it is rather weak. However, it gives useful and interesting insight, while also questioning the current assumptions about violence and legitimacy. Therefore, I also performed a robustness test where the Gini coefficient was included in the regression. When the Gini coefficient is included in a robustness check, judicial corruption loses its statistical significance, subsequently I checked for the correlation between judicial corruption and the Gini variable. The results show that they are highly correlated. Nevertheless, the correlation between the levels of corruption and inequality is not surprising, as they both often indicates a cycle of poor governance and exploitation. Where the rich and powerful uses their resources to increase their wealth and authority, thus creating small strong corrupt groups who controls the government and eventually social outcomes, such as personal violence. Following this logic, the strength of state control and institutions in part explain how the legitimacy of the governance and the rule of law isn't as essential for the peacefulness of the people.

Furthermore, there are also other factors that could have been controlled for in robustness checks. This includes population characteristics such as urbanisation, population size, youth population and female work force, along with economic factors such as unemployment. However, these features go beyond this article´s scope, and they have been increasingly contradicted in the literature, suggesting that they may not matter that greatly for the basic results shown here. That is to say, that factors such as unemployment are often correlated with inequality and poverty, which are accounted for in the regression and in the robustness test. Also, the former factors should have less effect if dynamics such as strong state control and deterrence have the effect they are claimed to have. Additionally, from a policy perspective, there is little that can be done against it, short of implementing policies

infringing upon people's liberties and rights. That is not to say, they have not been done in cases such as China's one-child policy. However, such strategies are not only beyond the scope of this article, but also not something that can be generalized for instructing theory.

Figure 1. The quadratic effect of judicial corruption on the homicide rate
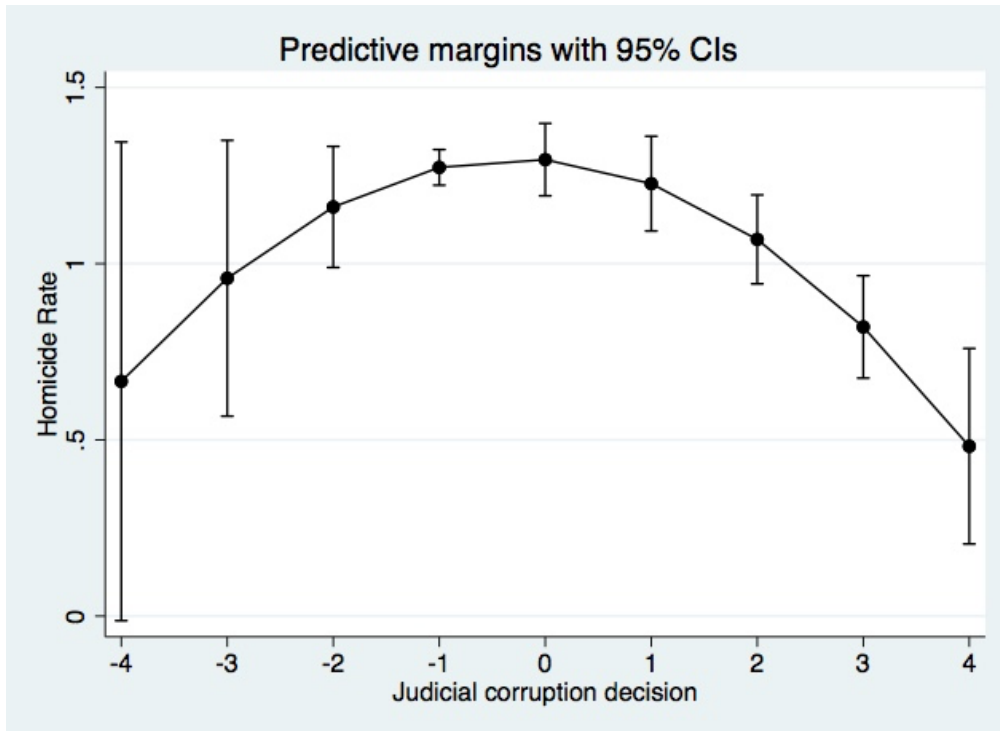
Furthermore, due to the unexpected results of Table 3 further investigation into the results are necessary. Thus, I measured the quadratic effect, and the results are visualised with a graph in Figure 1. The figure display how the relationship between judicial corruption and homicide rates correlate. As in, how the level of judicial corruption impacts the prevalence of homicide. The graph has an inverted U-shape, which correlates with the literature on democratisation. This indicate that when the levels of judicial corruption are low, so are the homicide rate. Subsequently, as the level of judicial corruption increases, so does the homicide rate but it reduces at extremely high rates of homicide. This graph is further indication that countries that might be extremely corrupt, such as North Korea, China, Equatorial Guinea, and Haiti are better at keeping violence down through deterrence than countries with some good governance, such as India and Costa Rica etc. Not only that, but it could also indicate why regions like Latin America is experiencing increasing homicide rates, despite implementing and forming democratic practices and institutions.

6.0 Discussion

These results elegantly illustrate the need to further investigate the relationship between corruption, thus also other aspects of good governance, and the homicide rate. In the first table, when broad political corruption is tested, there is no statistical significance, nevertheless these results are still rather interesting when looking at the literature. Considering how the literature emphasizes the importance of state legitimacy as a method of decreasing homicide rates, and predicts that this type of illegitimacy would increase the levels of relative deprivation and grievances. Thereafter, these consequences of corruption are theorised to increase the public's antipathy for the government and the rule of law. Following this reasoning, it is expected that the threshold for committing crime would decrease. Nevertheless, despite the literature being adamant on the importance of legitimate and fair government practice and rule of law, the evidence in the tables and Figure 1 implies that the opposite might be true, in example that state control and deterrence matters more than does solidarity-related factors discussed above.

In the second table, the first statistically significant results appear. These results indicate that corruption in the public sector does, as predicted by the theories and previous literature, increase violence in a society. Therefore, these results indicate that the predicted disruptiveness of corruption indeed have some footing, that is to say it *can* be. In other words, the results in Table 2 indicate a non-robust positive effect of good public sector governance on lowering the homicide rate, an effect only valid if the handful of rich countries are in the model. Furthermore, Table 3 and Figure 1 shows that judicial corruption reduces the homicide rate in an inverted U shape. These are the most counter-intuitive results compared with the bulk of the theoretical literature. In other words, they inform us that there are other mechanisms than state legitimacy and good governance that can be implemented in order to deter violent behaviour. However, as these results are highly unpredicted, Figure 1 generates more clarity on the subject. The inverted u-shape of the graph candidly demonstrates a clearer picture of the relationship between homicide rates and judicial corruption. Subsequently, the relationship is more complex than initially suggested, it shows that both low levels of corruption and incredibly high levels of corruption may reduce anti-social outcomes, such as violence. In other words, it is surprising considering the extensive literature that generally accepts corruption as inherently

disruptive regardless of other societal factors. Subsequently, a suggestion for further research is to investigate why corruption have different effects depending on the stages of development.

In line with that discussed above, in many of the models, electoral democracy does not create societal peace, rather it seems that a combination of strong state control and deterrence reduces crime. These results also support the theory of deterrence, where the state controlled by corrupt few might credibly deter crime. Thus, the rational choice and deterrence theory on one hand still holds its ground. Take North Korea as an example, where a small elite have strong control over its people. This connotes that the people are aware that they will most likely will be punished with severe penalties, rather than more lenient penalties such as in liberal democracies. On the other hand, the theory encompassing corruption and illegitimacy as a cause of dissatisfaction and inequality is unsupported. That is not to say that corruption cannot be either a cause or a symptom of them, but rather that they do not have the same impact as predicted. These results, taken together, broadly support also an emerging consensus in the general conflict literature based on civil war and rebellion, which is that societal grievances may matter less than opportunity factors for predicting anti-social behaviour (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004).

Subsequently, another suggestion for future research would be to investigate the relationship between different types of regimes and the variation of homicide rates. More specifically, exploring the specific crime fighting policies of different regime types and see whether they have any similarities or if there are other contextual factors that impact if such policies are successful or not. This would be in accordance with Ishiyama's (2019) findings that there was no difference between one-party regimes and democracy when it came to the rule of law and effective governance, rather than good governance.

7.0 Conclusion

This article has attempted to expand the literature surrounding good governance and homicide rates, and subsequently highlighted the importance of further investigation on more specific measures correlated with good governance. More specifically, corruption levels, as they indicate the opposite of good governance. As a consequence of the assumptions made in the literature highlighting the importance of state legitimacy and good governance in preventing anomie and high crime rates. The expectations of the literature are thus that homicide should be negatively affected by illegitimate government practices such as corruption, because it weakens the state's efficiency in providing state services, such as security, while also undermining the legitimacy of the rule of law. Subsequently, making judicial practices unreliable and untrustworthy, resulting in the failure of state deterrence. The literature predicts that good governance is the solution to this problem.

In contrast to the literature, the findings in this article does not find strong enough evidence for these assumptions. Two out of three hypothesises based on the literature, can be completely rejected. Explicitly, Hypothesis 1 and 3 which predicts that political and judicial corruption should increase the homicide rate. Furthermore, Hypothesis 3 are not truly confirmed either, because the positive effect is only when the WENA countries is included in the table. In other words, whereas hypothesis 3 predicts that public sector corruption should increase the homicide rate independently from other factors, this however is not the case. Thus, while this article cannot claim, and do not attempt to claim that good governance is beneficial, the results indicate that neither good nor poor governance can be identified as a causal mechanism in controlling variations of homicide rates on its own. In other words, the results in this article prove that there is much to be investigated surrounding governance and homicide rates, and the assumptions in the literature are flawed. Nevertheless, that is not to say that good governance is not beneficial, rather that it does not have the assumed effect on levels of violent crime such as homicide.

However, based on the findings in this article good governance and democracy is not essential in enforcing the rule of law and ensure citizen security. Thus, perhaps a better way of formulating measures that actually deter violence is "good enough" governance. In other words, it is not about the type of government, but rather the government structures and

how effective they are. In example autocratic regimes that are considered oppressive such as North Korea, have such strong state control and capacity, that they are not dependent upon good governance in order to deter individuals from criminal behaviour. Not only that, but regions such as Latin America, can no longer solely depend upon good governance measures in their development. The findings in this article rather imply that there are other factors such as strong state control and deterrence that are more influential in cohesively managing criminal behaviour.

The consequence of these findings is that we need to rethink how we understand development and democratisation. In other words, despite good governance being emphasised as a key factor for effective and stable development, the results indicate that this may not always be the case. Therefore, it is essential to find factors that can have create effective and successful development. Subsequently, the research emphasizing the importance of policy becomes increasingly imperative as it can provide new aspects and methods. In example, cohesive and specific policies, rather than broad and extensive policies, could limit the predicted damages that these transitional processes can have. Specifically, because they have the ability to provide specific measures that are both easier to implement and more effective. This is important because smaller policies could result in significant positive societal impact in the long run, and also stabilise the consequences of development. Especially because crime often have the opposite effect, it can destabilise democracies, create migration flows and create other detrimental consequences.

However, good governance should not be abandoned as a concept, rather that policies should not be limited to it and that smaller more specific policies could have greater impact. The results in this article did not find the predicted correlation between good governance and homicide levels, however that does not imply that good governance cannot have a positive effect. In other words, good governance policies might decrease the homicide rate, especially the long run, but based on the results this is not guaranteed to have the predicted effect. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that there might be other factors beyond the included controls that affect whether or not a country suffer from higher homicide rates. Such factors include drugs and organised crime, weapon availability and other cultural factors, however the objective of this article is to encourage the investigation

of more specific measures, because the current literature have not investigated homicide rates sufficiently from this angle.

In conclusion, this article has attempted to take a new approach to the topic of good governance and homicide rates, by operationalising political corruption as a parallel to good governance. The assumptions in the literature resulted in three hypothesises that predicts that all measures of corruption should fundamentally be criminogenic, and thus promote criminal behaviour. In contrast this article does not find strong enough evidence to support these assumptions from the literature. Subsequently, it becomes evident that continuing this line of research are important, because it could result in a better understanding of which societal factors actually increases criminal activity, instability and anomie. Thus, despite not finding sufficiently robust evidence to make substantial claims for either or arguments, this article at the very least have started a conversation in the literature.

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