

Quantitative research

[War](#), [Civil War](#)



Some scholars use quantitative methods in their study of the causes of conflict. Explain these methods and identify their strengths and weaknesses. The assignment should be 800-1000 words (excluding references).

Assessment: ability to focus on and answer the question set; command of the material (including the wider academic debate); analysis and critical discussion around an argument or approach; logical structure of arguments; use of academic language; editing; introduction and conclusion; and referencing. * What are quantitative methods? How have these methods being used in the study of causes of conflicts? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these methods, as well as of the alternatives? Criticism of Collier and his quantitative methods by Keen. Keen specifically critiques Paul Collier, a leading expert in greed vs. grievance theory, by claiming that Collier became too comfortable with “ numbers”, and needed to rely more on the actual opinions of people involved in conflicts. He spoke of Collier’s work and said, “ This is where econometrics tips over into arrogance and starts closing down the possibility of a genuine understanding of conflicts or, by extension, of a political settlement that addresses underlying grievances”.

[26] He doesn’t believe that it can be dismissed so easily. He was documented saying, “ It also annoys me that a lot of the ‘ scientific air’ of the Collier work is quite bogus as the selection of proxies is so arbitrary”, which demonstrated a distinct attack on Collier’s work, which emphasizes quantitative data.[27] David Keen is one of the major critics of greed vs. grievance theory, defined primarily by Paul Collier, and argues the point that a conflict, although he cannot define it, cannot be pinpointed to simply one motive. He believes that conflicts are much more complex and thus should

not be analyzed through simplified methods. He disagrees with the quantitative research methods of Collier and believes a stronger emphasis should be put on personal data and human perspective of the people in conflict. This isn't necessarily a complete dismissal of the greed vs. grievance theory, but rather a critique on its polarity and methods of data collection. David Keen. "Complex Emergencies: David Keen Responds" African Arguments: Royal African Society. Eprints critique of C&H In this paper I offer a critique of Collier and Hoeffler (C&H). 8 I argue that their research is filled with empirical, methodological and theoretical problems that lead to unreliable results and unjustified conclusions. I present an overview of their method and findings and then discuss concerns regarding inappropriate proxies; unsubstantiated explanations of results; incomplete, inaccurate and biased data; and theoretical and analytical flaws that preclude an adequate understanding of the causes of civil war. The greatest problem is that C&H seek to ascertain the causes of civil war without studying civil wars, and attempt to determine the motives of rebels without studying rebels and rebellions. Their most prominent finding — that dependence on natural resources heightens a country's risk of war because it affords rebels an opportunity for extortion — is not based on any evidence of rebel behaviour; it is an inference drawn from a correlation between the onset of civil war and the ratio of primary commodity exports to GDP. To borrow a felicitous phrase from Keynes, the C&H model suffers from a "frightful inadequacy of most of the statistics". (2) (3) With respect to C&H: there are various times when they attempt to 'find numerical indicators for their variables.' For some variables this is easy, but for some it is almost

impossible, of they have done it incorrectly. (4) For example: donations from diasporas for rebel groups: only look at percentage of country living in US.

Eprints. Critique of C&H