

Global Power Structures and the Indigenous Peoples' Rights

Analyzing Global Power Dynamics Between Indigenous People from the
Global North and the Global South

Abstract

The thesis aims to generate hypotheses about the power structures within the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. A comparison of the governing of Indigenous Peoples from the Global North and Global South respectively, is made. Firstly, the representatives in the Forum are counted. In a second step, a discourse analysis is conducted. Results show that the Global North have proportionally more representatives in the Forum in relation to how Indigenous People are distributed across the world. The discourse analysis indicates the problem representation of Indigenous issues favoring the Global North as it leaves out a problematization of global post-colonial structures. The dynamics between Global North and Global South is conceptualized in accordance with the third dimension of power in power theory by Steven Lukes. Postcolonial theory is explaining the origin of the structural oppression and how the power dynamics are legitimized. As the purpose of the study is to generate hypotheses about the power dynamics, the conclusions are that hypotheses can build upon the assumption that the way of working in the Forum is reconstructing colonial structures.

Keywords: The United Nations, Global North and Global South, Indigenous Peoples, Power, Global Governance

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1. Introduction

The discussion of global governance includes the issue of power distribution in the global community. Who governs the areas of common interest? I.e who has the power in the global system? (Avant et al. 2012, p.1-2). In this debate the terms “Global North” and “Global South” have been coined. The Global North refers first and foremost to the northern hemisphere while the “Global South” refers to the southern, which often constitutes former colonies. The purpose of the division is to conceptualize power and wealth in global governance. Results of power investigations indicate an imbalance of power and wealth between Global North and South (Braff – Nelson 2022).

Indigenous Peoples, Native Peoples, Aboriginal Peoples or First Peoples. There are several labels for the people across the world identifying as Indigenous (Amnesty 2022). The characteristics of the distinct groups of Indigenous Peoples are, amongst other, groups who construct pre-settler societies, with strong linkages to territorial areas and with distinct language, culture and beliefs (UNPFII 2007). Despite Indigenous Peoples' inherited *raison d'être*, they are and have been discriminated against by national governments, as well as the international legal system (OHCHR 2013, p. 1-3). Hence, Indigenous issues being subject to global governance.

The United Nations (onwards, the abbreviation “UN” is used) is arguably the most prominent actor in global governance, managing issues of global character, however without any coercive authority (Frova 2015, p. 174-175). The UN has made efforts to ensure the rights of Indigenous Peoples worldwide. Among other initiatives a declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples has been

published and a Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues with members originating from all across the world being formed (OHCHR 2013, p. 1-2).

The thesis will examine the governing of Indigenous Peoples rights through an investigation of the power structures within the Permanent Forum. It will be investigated whether the origin of Indigenous Peoples are affecting their influence in global governance. Furthermore, power structures within the global system steering the governing of Indigenous Peoples rights will be questioned.

1.1 Purpose and Research Question

As a result of the discussion of an uneven distribution of power within global governance, the thesis will investigate the governing of the global issue of Indigenous Peoples rights in order to generate hypotheses about the power dynamics in the governing of this area. Analyzing the UN, which is arguably the primary global authority on the area of Indigenous Peoples rights, is preferred in order to formulate hypotheses generally applicable to the area. A comparison of the treatment of Indigenous Peoples from the Global North and Global South respectively, will be used to demonstrate the power structures between Indigenous Peoples of different origin within the Permanent Forum.

As Indigenous Peoples' influence and representation on the global level is dependent on the possibility of exercising their rights within the state, the study will have an explorative/inductive approach rather than attempting to generate a definitive answer to the question. The study will attempt to generate hypotheses regarding the structural power dynamics, according to Steven Lukes, between the Global North and Global South. Postcolonial theory will be used to analyze the structural power dynamics. Examining the distribution of representatives in the Forum and analyzing the discourse about Indigenous Peoples within it will be the approaches used to generate the hypotheses.

The purpose of the study generates the following research questions:

How are the rights of Indigenous Peoples from the Global North and the Global South represented at the United Nations?

1.2 Relevance

A thesis' right to exist is depending on the relevance of it within the academic as well as the societal debate (Esiasson et al. 2017, p. 30-32). To enhance the relevance within research the investigation should be a "case of something", i.e it should be possible to generalize to a wider context. For the relevance outside research, the research should preferably relate to a contemporary debate or widen the understanding of an issue of relevance for the society outside research (ibid, p. 37-38).

The subject of power dynamics within the governance of Indigenous issues is relevant for the societal debate of both global governance and Indigenous issues. Investigating the *governing* of Indigenous issues as a conceivable issue in itself, shifts the focus from a national to a global perspective. Rather than further investigating the treatment of Indigenous Peoples by the national government, the treatment by the global "government" is shed light on. If discovering power imbalances within the governance of the issue it could be concluded that Indigenous Peoples of different origin are getting different possibilities to be heard, causing a desire for change. If equal treatment of Indigenous Peoples of different origin is the case, the structures and procedures can be used as a template for other entities in global governance. How this particular thesis is of relevance for an academic sphere will be described in the "Literature Overview"-section.

1.3 Overview

Section one has introduced the subject of the study, including the research question and purpose as well as the relevance of it. Following section will present

existing literature on the area, in order to further develop the relevance of the study. The purpose of section three is to give deeper insights into the area of the thesis, with a thorough account of necessary empirical background and a description of the theories used to generate hypotheses about the power dynamics within the Permanent Forum. Moreover, theoretical reflections will be included in this section. I will go on by presenting the used methods, in section four. The approach used is a mixed-methods-approach, hence, two different methods used will be explained. Furthermore, methodological reflections in regard to scientific ideals and the use of a mixed methods approach are made. Section five will be a presentation of the conducting of the study. The power dynamics within the Permanent Forum will be investigated through a two-step approach and postcolonial theory will be discussed in relation to the findings. In section six a discussion about the results and the study as a whole will be held. Section seven will provide a summary of the thesis as well as the conclusions drawn, including the hypotheses generated.

2. Literature Overview

The purpose of the following section is to give insights into the academic debates regarding the thesis' areas of coverage. As the purpose of the thesis is to investigate power relations between Global North and South in global governance [in the area of Indigenous issues], previous studies on global governance and the coining of the terms Global North and South as well as on Indigenous Peoples will be presented. Displaying this thesis in an academic context will ensure the thesis' relevance within research. Global governance will be discussed in the context of a debate regarding Global North and South and the power dynamics between them. The academic literature presented on the area of Indigenous Peoples will summarize which areas are being discussed in regard to Indigenous Peoples. Empirical facts on Indigenous Peoples, such as their distribution and issues endured, will however be presented in the successive section.

2.1 The Global North and the Global South

The attempt to divide the world according to its political and economic development have been on the agenda for researchers for decades. Rejecting the terminology of East/West and First/Second/Third world, researchers have agreed upon a division into Global North and Global South. Instead of categorizing them solely geographically, the Global North and South are (although the names are indicating a geographical division and the categorization indeed is following the hemisphere trend) categorized based on power and wealth. A conventional division of Global North and Global South is presented in *Table 1* in the *Appendix*

(p. 45). From a Global South perspective, the power distribution between the Global North and Global South is characterized by the historical but likewise *continuous* colonization of the Global South. The meaning of the categories as well as the relationship between them is defined by the sacrifice of the south on behalf of accumulation of power and wealth in the north (ROAPE 2020).

In academic literature, the discussion of power imbalances between the Global North and the Global South have been emerging within the debate of global governance over the last couple of decades (Avant et al. 2012, p.1-2). Scholte (2012) is, among others, a scholar discussing the terminology of Global North and Global South in relation to global governance. According to Scholte, global governance is built on the idea of wanting to solve mainly Global South issues. However, the governing of the problems itself can be beneficial for the Global North, expanding rich countries' authority and power. Another report, regarding the promises and risks of non-state action in global governance, acknowledges that a risk with non-state action in global governance is the fact that it could create bigger power imbalances as the global system is already characterized by power imbalances between Global North and Global South. As most actions are led by North-based actors and North-based actors will highlight the interest of Global North, the involvement of non-state actors will increase the power imbalance (Chan et al. 2019, p.3-4).

The rift between Global North and Global South is recognized within the UN as well. The UN has, arguably, a lot of problems to handle until becoming an effective institution. One being the rift between North and South causing a dichotomy of interest instead of a constructive climate of discussion. The distance between the categories has led to the groups only enhancing subjects in favor of themselves instead of the common good (Blinken Trustee 2010). Also acknowledging the North-South divide is Blicharska, Teutschbein and Smithers (2021), who are recognizing the power deficiency of representatives of low-income nations in relation to Global North actors. The focus of the study is to investigate the involvement of each category of actors in Sustainable Development Goals-partnerships.

2.2 Indigenous Peoples

Much of the academic literature on Indigenous Peoples is examining the enforcement of Indigenous Peoples' human rights and specific Indigenous rights within countries. The literature is regarding the inequality between Indigenous Peoples and the majority population within the nation.

Among other issues discussed is the representation of Indigenous Peoples and its effect on the enhancement of Indigenous rights. Aneja and Ritadhi (2021) have come to the conclusion that an increase in minority representatives in governments reduces their oppression within the nation to some extent. Another report regarding Indigenous Peoples in relation to the majority population is Mills (2002), discussing advantages and disadvantages with a definition of Indigenous Peoples. The advantages suggested in the report are formulated from a majority population-perspective.

In 2007 Del Popolo, Oyarce, Ribotta and Jorge, as representatives of The ECLAC, issued a report regarding the difference in conditions and treatment of Indigenous Peoples of different origin. The investigation is resulting in the conclusion that living conditions among Indigenous Peoples vary depending on the spatial settlement. The authors have the same ambition as I, i.e to examine whether the origin of Indigenous Peoples affects the treatment of them, although expressed in different terms. However, in contrast to this study, the authors are focusing on the inequality between Indigenous Peoples from rural and urban areas. Hence, a national focus and a focus on the treatment by the national government and surrounding society.

Koivurova, Lenzerini and Weissner (2022) have investigated the role of international and national law in the enhancement of Indigenous Peoples rights. The focus of the text is the effects of, among others, the Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights. The results show that there have been positive outcomes of the Declaration and other international laws regarding Indigenous Peoples rights. However, the discrepancy between their text and this thesis consists of the focus on heterogeneous or homogeneous effects. Koivurova et al. focuses on the effects

of global governing on Indigenous Peoples as a homogenous group. My aim is rather to investigate how global governance of the area is affecting Indigenous Peoples differently depending on their origin.

3. Setting the Scene: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Prerequisites for conducting the study are an understanding of some empirical background to the problem as well as a conceptual understanding of theory used. Most important to provide background information about is: (1) how Indigenous Peoples are defined and what issues they are faced with and (2) how the global society is handling Indigenous Peoples rights. As the thesis is conducting an analysis of power, the term power ought to be given a theoretical definition. Furthermore, a theoretical framework for the analysis needs to be presented. Best suited for the purpose of the study, is a definition of power as Steven Lukes' third dimension of power and a theoretical framework of postcolonial theory. Consequently, in order to set the scene for the thesis, the following section is subdivided into an "Empirical Background"-subsection, a "Power"-subsection and a "Postcolonial Theory"-subsection.

3.1 Empirical Background

A part of setting the scene for conducting the study is to increase the understanding of the unit of analysis, in this case Indigenous Peoples and their human rights. The definition of Indigenous Peoples, as well as Indigenous issues and the distribution of Indigenous Peoples needs to be established. Furthermore, the current governing of their rights is presented. Accordingly, a background on

Indigenous Peoples and the UN efforts to enhance the rights of Indigenous Peoples will be provided below.

3.1.1 Indigenous Peoples

Defining Indigenous Peoples has, as established, been subject to controversy (Mills 2002). According to the UN, the most important criteria to be defined as Indigenous is self-identification as such (DESA 2004a). As a result of several sources acknowledging this criteria as the most important one to define Indigenous Peoples and the Declaration classifying self-identification as a right for Indigenous Peoples, this definition is the definition chosen for the thesis (UNGA 2007). A separate declaration for the rights of Indigenous Peoples have been considered necessary as they are and have been deprived of their human rights.

Some challenges endured are exploited land and culture, displacement, limitation of access to healthcare and welfare and marginalization, violence and even extinction (Amnesty 2022). Although the problems exemplified above are generalized to Indigenous Peoples in general, Indigenous Peoples of different origin are suffering from specific problems as well (Sametinget 2015). Problems brought forward for Indigenous Peoples of Europe is above all [lack of] recognition, including endangered languages and extraction of land and resources but also problems related to climate change (Amiel 2019). In DRC, however, Indigenous Batwa People are said to be “killed, maimed and raped” (Africanews 2022). The Warao people of Venezuela have suffered from medicine and food scares, forcing them to flee (Flavia – Williamson 2018). Members of the Maa community in Kenya declare that they are killed, raped and the children get lost (Pauvarel 2022). While problems of recognition are the foremost problem of Indigenous Peoples of some parts of the North, testimonies from the Global South evidently indicate challenges even staying alive.

The distribution of Indigenous Peoples around the world is difficult to establish, because of both the lack of definition of them and thus the lack of a mapping of them (Mills 2002, p 57-62). Nevertheless, Amnesty International has presented results of an estimation stating that 70% of Indigenous Peoples are situated in Asia (Amnesty 2022). Concluded from the report “The Indigenous World” by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) is that the countries with the biggest shares of Indigenous Peoples are, except Greenland, situated in the Global South. Moreover, the sum of Indigenous Peoples presented in the report indicates a distribution of 90% originating from the Global South (Mamo 2022). Although the report is not presenting the total number of Indigenous Peoples, as they have not been mapped, it gives an indication of the distribution.

3.1.2 UN Efforts to Enhance the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Efforts to enhance the rights of Indigenous Peoples have, within the UN, been expressed through the creation of a special declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the introduction of mechanisms as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (World Bank 2022).

The Permanent Forum is the central body within the UN system that deals with Indigenous issues (Amnesty 2022). Its purpose is to enhance Indigenous People’s rights by being an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council within the UN. The mandate includes discussions in the ECOSOC about Indigenous Peoples’ economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health, and human rights (DESA 2022c). More precisely, the tasks of the Forum are expressed in *Table 2* in the *Appendix* (p. 45). It consists of 16 members of different origins, functioning as experts on Indigenous issues. Half of the members are chosen by governments, while the other half is chosen by the

president of ECOSOC. The Permanent Forum holds two-week sessions once a year in which Indigenous Peoples organizations, States, UN bodies and organs, inter-governmental organizations and NGOs¹ participate as observers. The first meeting of the Permanent Forum was held in New York in May 2002. Each session has a thematic focus (DESA 2022c).

3.2 Conceptual framework: Power

In order to establish what is to be examined, which is of the essence for the study, the terms of analysis need to be given an explicit, *theoretical definition* (Teorell – Svensson 2020, p. 56-57). To be able to investigate these phenomena, a way to measure them needs to be developed, i.e. the term needs to be *operationalized* (ibid, p. 38-39). To operationalize power, researchers have firstly investigated *perceived* power, from the interpreters point of view. Secondly, power is measured through a review of political decision making processes, investigating the *political output*. Thirdly, examining the amount of *resources* available for an actor, is a way of determining its power (Badersten – Gustavsson 2015, p. 71-72). Different theorists have given the power different theoretical definitions. Among the most prominent theoreticians doing so are Robert Dahl, Steven Lukes and Michel Foucault, who are representatives of contemporary power theory (Gottardis 2012, p.13-15).

The definition of power formulated by Dahl is built on the idea that one actor's direct effect on another actor, against his will, is power. It is a relation between actors going in one direction, i.e. an actor has power over another actor if he can get the other actor to do something against his will (ibid, p.13-14). "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something which he otherwise would not have done"² (Dahl 1957 cited in Lukes 2008, p. 25).

¹[...] That have consultative status with the ECOSOC

² Freely translated

The theorist Lukes opposes Dahl's idea of power only being a conscious action. Instead Lukes determines power as three dimensional, the first dimension corresponding with Dahl's definition as power (Gottardis 2012, p.15-16). The second dimension of power is focusing on collective decision making instead of the focus on individuals. Mainly, this dimension is power over the agenda. Powerful actors are those controlling which questions and interests to be decided upon (Badersten – Gustavsson 2015, p. 70). Consequently, it is regarding influence, authority and strength amongst others (Lukes 2008, p.28-30). The third dimension of power is a form of structural power. *Socialization* is the act of making people believe they are making an independent decision when, in fact, they are recipients of a message sent by another actor/structure. It is the power over the *language*. The language is constructing reality, hence it is the power over peoples' minds (Badersten – Gustavsson 2015, p. 70-71). However, Lukes declares that the power over people's minds, does not have to be conscious. Neither the actor exercising power over another actor, nor the actor being controlled have to be aware of the act of power. Invisible power structures are included in the control of another actor (Gottardis 2012, p. 15-16).

Foucault, on the other hand, does not share Dahl's and Lukes' conviction that power has to be exercised. Rather, he believes that power is automatic and permanent. Due to inherited structures, the subordinate actor himself is preserving the power dynamic as he is acting in line with what is expected by the current order. Knowledge and power is mutually constitutive and people cannot ever reach a liberated condition. Consequently, knowledge cannot be used without constructing or reconstructing an order of power (ibid, p. 16-18).

3.3 Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory could be described as the theory of how to speak about the discrepancy between people from the center and the "other". Young describes the experience of being situated outside the mainstream, spoken on behalf of,

excluded from discussions or being the object of perspective, as living in “a world of others, a world that exists for other” (Young 2020, p. 1-2). Constructing this perception of reality is the Western historiography which is focusing the discourse of “Us” and “Them”, “Us” being superior to “Them” (Carbin 2009, p. 391). Finding a way to discuss this experience is the focus of postcolonial theorists. In the work *Orientalism: Western Representations of the Orient*, Said examines ways of shifting the discourse about Western and non-Western people. Knowledge about non-Western experiences not only being entrenched in Western assumptions of them is a key premise for postcolonialist theory (Young 2020, p. 2). According to Young, knowledge of the world comes in two forms, experientially and institutional. When understanding other peoples’ realities, knowledge is institutional. Hence, taught by someone holding experience or institutional knowledge about the represented reality. The question is thereby whose knowledge it is regarding and who authorizes the knowledge about it. As a consequence of different interpretations of reality and different interpretations of others’ realities, knowledge about others’ realities cannot be portrayed objectively and unambiguously (ibid, p. 18).

3.3.1 Colonial Discourse: Colonialism and Neocolonialism

The definition of colonialism is, among other definitions, settlement in a new location by a group of people seeking to build a new society. This definition is based on the colonizers narrative, not the colonized, as it focuses on the building of a new society without recognizing the former society or mentioning the new settlement’s implications on the previous society. Legitimizing the new society is the idea that Europeans, which have been the colonizers, are more civilized, meaning more organized and the superior race (Loomba 2008, p.23). Throughout the colonial spectrum, European technology and knowledge is perceived as progressive and an ideal, making colonialism legitimate despite it including

exploitation and dehumanization and objectifying the colonial subject (ibid, p. 40-41).

Despite colonial spatial rule being history, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak states that due to this hierarchy of values, colonial control is not yet in the past. Instead, the new world order has adopted a different shape of colonialism, which Spivak labels as *neocolonialism*. The new form of exploitation is economic and/or subtle in its form rather than the power dynamics being direct and tangible (Carbin 2009, p. 391-392). A similar standpoint is proposing that the anti-colonial struggle is divided into three phases: political, economic and ‘cultural-discursive’ (Jabri 2013, p. 87-89). Thus, suggesting the colonial discourse as part of the colonial order in need of eruption. Williams and Chrisman go as far as to state that colonialism in itself can be defined as “a way of maintaining an unequal international relation of economic and political power”, meaning that colonialism is not yet transcended (1994, p.4).

Texts produced in the context of specific norms and values, are in desperate need of problematizing as it could be reconstructing a current discourse. Not questioning and problematizing the text’s steering ideology could contribute to the texts contributing to further domination over and exploitation of a specific group (ibid, p.4). Loomba is defining ideology as a world view of a distorted discrepancy between people and their environment. Wide spread ideologies are the ones reflecting the interests of the dominating group in society (2005, p.43).

3.3.2 Colonial Global Politics

Colonial structures permeate global governing in the sense that it benefits specific knowledge however disguised as global philanthropy. The global system is built on different entities claiming and presuming to represent those who cannot speak on behalf of themselves. Additionally, the interests of the ones deprived of the right to speak for themselves, are formulated by the superior group. The interests generated from global governing are in line with universal human rights.

Nonetheless, as the interests are formulated by others than the affected, the interests of the inferior group are undermined (Jabri 2013, p. 118-119). Actions in favor of human rights are seen as legitimate. Hence, global operations of power, being legitimized when framed as beneficial for human rights or an act of rescuing a population. It is a form of global governing maintaining colonial structures. On the other hand, global operations are not merely to be condemned. They have, in many cases in history, worked through the mediating of the postcolonial state which have been contributing with the lived experiences to the discussion. However, the postcolonial state is overdetermined structurally, having inherited an arrangement of control from the former colonial power. Consequently, the mediating of the postcolonial state could be regarded as an expression of colonial power in itself (ibid, p. 108-112).

The “technology of control” used by the colonial ruler, is the forcing of the population into submission. Due to the vulnerability of the inferior population, control of them is made possible. The control can include limitations of physical public spheres and the public sphere of media, hence limited political platforms, as well as acts of surveillance (ibid, p. 96).

3.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Reflections

Two theories are needed in parallel in the study. The theory of power is required to define the term power which is the backbone of the study, leading up to the research question of investigating the distribution of power. However, to research the power dynamics, a theory designed for that particular purpose is needed. As the study is focusing on the power dynamics between Global North and South and the division is largely based on former colonial rule, postcolonial theory is chosen.

In order to study power within the Permanent Forum, a *single* definition of power needs to be chosen. The definition by Dahl is, as established, built on the idea of direct and tangible power relations between actors. An actor’s exercise of

power over another actor is a conscious action. The goal of the UN, as an international institution, is to be a neutral arena for expressing the interest of the global community including all parts of the world (UN 2023). Thus, the power in Dahl's sense is not applicable. Global North and South are neither consciously steering the other actors in the opposite direction of its interest nor constituting a cohesive, single actor. As Foucault's assumption of power is that it is automatic and maintained by the subordinate actor, it could be suitable for the study. By using postcolonial theory, structural power is acknowledged. However, it also presupposes that consciousness of the situation cannot be reached and even less used in a liberating spirit. The non-scientific relevance of the study lies within its purpose of generating a hypothesis about the power structures on the area of Indigenous issues. Hence, the results being fruitful for a reformation of the system, if considered problematic. Lukes' definition, on the other hand, is suggesting the highest form of power as being structural. The power is *exercised*, unlike in Foucault's definition. However, the exercise of power could be unconscious, caused by structures in society, hence differing from Dahl's definition.

4. Method and Material

Important methodological ideals to be met in the study are, amongst others, the requirements for *objectivity*, *intersubjectivity*, *validity* and *generalizability* (Teorell – Svensson 2020, p.54-58, 68-70). The strive for objectivity is common to all science. Science as a concept is not compatible with arbitrary estimations, but rather based on an empirical reality (Esaiasson et al. 2017, p. 20-25). As political science is based on interpretations of theorists, hence not completely objective facts as in natural sciences, the requirement of intersubjectivity is the more important. Achieving intersubjectivity is made possible by displaying each step in the process of the study. Thereby, the results are repeatable and more legitimate (ibid, p. 25-26). Validity regards the fairness of the results of a measurement, i.e whether the method of measurement is measuring what it claims to be measuring. Validity is achieved if the results are valid (ibid, p. 58-67). The results of a study should preferably be generalizable to another context. It needs to be established how the selection of study objects are representative for a wider population, thus claiming to fulfill the nomothetic research ideal (ibid, p. 28). To ensure the attaining of these methodological criterias, it is arguably not enough to solely use one methodological approach to measure power dynamics. Therefore, the following part will present two types of text analysis suggested for the study, namely the quantitative content analysis and the discourse analysis and their combination is meeting the methodological ideals.

4.1 Quantitative content analysis

Quantitative content analysis is an interpretation of text focusing on the occurrence of something in the manifest message in the text (Badersten – Gustavsson 2015, p. 116). According to Neuendorf, content analysis could be defined as “[...] a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that follows the standards of the scientific method [...] and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the message are created or presented” (2016, p. 17). The frequency of appearances is the foundation of the conclusions. The method can, among other, be used to count the number of times something is mentioned in a specific material to draw conclusions about its value in reality. An example of how it has been performed is that a group of researchers counted the occurrence of different population groups on television, resulting in the visibility of the underrepresentation of minorities in society. With a theoretical framework, conclusions could be drawn about the underrepresentation being caused by the minority groups’ depreciation in reality. The underrepresentation in itself also ensued the continued depreciation (Boréus – Kohl 2018, s.50-53).

The method is commonly criticized for not taking the context into account. Critics state that the most meaningful conclusions to be drawn from the analysis could be uncovered by asking how and under what conditions something is portrayed, rather than how many times it is mentioned (ibid, p.79). As a result of ignoring the context, the method is criticized for not putting emphasis on the validity of the study (ibid, s. 80-81).

Another criticism consists of the argument that the invisible is not taken into account. The units of analysis are something explicitly put. Critics argue that the unspoken, latent message in a material is equally important to analyze as the manifest content. Sometimes, they would argue that the most important opinions are not put into words. Analyzing the withheld is more appropriate to tackle with a discourse analysis (ibid, s. 79-80).

4.2 Discourse analysis

The discourse analysis is based on the hermeneutic science tradition. Language is of the essence in a discourse analysis, which uses it to make in-depth analyses of text (Badersten – Gustavsson 2015, p. 118). It is not a single method, but rather a series of different methods aiming to uncover discourses, a discourse being “a certain way to talk about and understand the world [...]” (W Jørgesen – Phillips 2000, p. 7). The purpose of all kinds of discourse analysis is to expose power relations in society and problematize them. It suggests that language constitutes the social reality and intends to discover even the abstract discourses in society. The discourse method differentiates from other methods as it is a package of method and theory. It is built upon a foundation of social constructivist and poststructuralist theory, which the method has to take into consideration (ibid, p. 7-12). Common to all orientations of discourse analysis is the conception of language, to a smaller or larger extent, being inseparable from social practices. When analyzing current discourse, an analysis of both the object of study and the underlying structure needs to be investigated (ibid, p. 131-132). The broadest definition of the term “discourse”, used in the thesis, means that the discourse is a regulatory system including what legitimizes a certain group's hierarchical position (Bergström – Ekström 2018, p. 258). The WPR-approach used in the thesis is relying on this definition of the term “discourse” (ibid, p. 271,). Thus, not only analyzing the manifest content of the material but also the priorities made (ibid, p. 289).

Carol Bacchi is the founder of a relatively new orientation of discourse analysis, namely the *What's the Problem Represented to Be*-approach (the WPR-approach), which aim is to uncover the structures behind documents proposing a change. By analyzing the structure behind a policy, the power dynamics which are shaping and maintaining the current power relations are made visible (Bergström – Ekström 2018, p. 271). A characteristic of a policy document is the indication of a problem in need of change. The task of the discourse analysis is to make the problem, which is not necessarily explicitly expressed in

the manifest text, explicit (Bacchi 2009, p. ix-x). The “problem” within the text is, according to Bacchi, what needs to be changed. It does not necessarily need to be a “problem” in the common sense, i.e something difficult to handle. To understand the *problematization*, the “problem” needs to be characterized which induces the formulation of an explicit *problem representation*. In order to uncover the implicit problem representation of a material, it could be useful to define what is not considered a problem. Additionally, to comprehend how the problem representation is affected by, as well as affecting, presuppositions about a problem (ibid, p. xi-xiii). To understand the meaning of a material, it needs to be processed pragmatically. The approach to achieve this understanding is, according to Bacchi, to ask the six questions presented in *Table 3* in the *Appendix* (p. 46). The questions best related to the research should be selected. Thus, there is no requirement for using all questions (Bergström – Ekström 2018, p. 272-273). As a consequence of this thesis being limited in its extent and the research question not focusing on all areas intended by the questions, two questions will be of interest.

Question one in the approach is the basis for the rest of the analysis. The answer aspires to expose what change the policy document is wishing upon, i.e what the sender considers a ‘problem’. Establishing the problem posed in the material is a prerequisite for understanding the origin of the problem representation (Bacchi 2009, p. 2-4). As the first question of the approach is indispensable for the analysis, an answer to it will be provided in the analysis.

The ambition of the second question is to understand why something happens, why the problem is formulated the way it is. Attaining comprehension of the underlying cultural values is of the essence to understand the formulation of the problem. Included in the analysis of the problem is the knowledge of the policy not being developed in a vacuum. The reality is that the *discourse* is the context in which it is developed. To uncover the implicit meaning of the document in order to question the current order, binaries and concepts are identified respectively within the assumptions. Binaries are defined as questions entailing a separation into two mutually exclusive pools holding a hierarchical order between them. As the binary understanding of a question limits the

perception of it, it is important to identify. Concepts are broader political issues given different meanings depending on the ideology steering the sender (ibid, p.7-9). Trying to explain underlying assumptions in a document requires the use of theory to contextualize the idea. By using postcolonial theory it is understood how societal structures affect the representation of the problem at hand. Hence, the discourse being explained in a specific conceptual context.

The third question focuses on how specific events in history have shaped the formulation of the problem in the document (ibid, p. 10). As the history is included in the answer to question two, the third question is deprioritized in this thesis. The focus will be to explain the structures shaping the problem representation, rather than specific events shaping it.

To recognize several nuances in the question, Bacchi sees it as important to bring the “unspoken” to light. This is what is conducted in the fourth question. By examining what is excluded in the problem representation, knowledge of the foundation of the problem can be reached (ibid, p. 12-13). What is deprioritized in the problem representation is incorporated in the answer to question one. To define what is considered a problem an understanding of what is not included is required, hence the invisible being addressed already in the first question. Postcolonial theory also has a built-in mechanism for enhancing the voices of groups in society made invisible. Accordingly, the theory itself answers the question when explaining the underlying assumptions of the problem representation.

Question five investigated the effect of a specific problem representation. Consequences of the exclusion of a certain group in society is the target of analysis (ibid, p. 15-16). As postcolonial theory is used to analyze the problem representation, a critical lens is applied. Hence, the discourse analyzed in itself being an effect of historic structures. If finding that the same structures permeate the current discourse, the effect of the discourse will be the reconstruction of those structures.

The sixth question answers how some problem representations become dominant through institutional factors (ibid, p.19). Institutions or the exact processes of incorporating a discourse are not in focus for the study.

4.3 Methodological Reflections

The quantitative content analysis could, as established, be criticized for not taking the context into account. By only examining what is explicitly put, the validity and generalizability of the study may be disputed. Arguably, it cannot be claimed that the counting of members in the Permanent Forum is actually measuring the power dynamics within the Forum. Additionally, as there is no unambiguous divide of the Global North and Global South, drawing conclusions on the basis of a questionable categorization is vulnerable. Thus, a quantitative content analysis is not enough to ensure the validity of the study. Nor is the criteria of generalizability met by using a quantitative content analysis. The distribution of members is not a representation of the overall power dynamics within the Forum, according to this point of view. Nonetheless, the criteria of objectivity is met by conducting a quantitative analysis as a distribution of members cannot be arbitrarily interpreted. Further, the method enables a high degree of intersubjectivity. As the approach is profoundly hands-on the process is simply documented, enabling the replication of the results.

The discourse analysis, on the other hand, could be argued to *only* be taking the context into account. As the context cannot be unambiguously delimited but is depending on my own interpretation of what should be included to portray it, the reflections of the discourse cannot ever be totally objective. If pragmatically explaining how and why delimitations are made, the demand for intersubjectivity can nevertheless be met, however not with the same ease as with a quantitative content analysis. Instead the discourse analysis contributes with the enhancement of the validity and generalizability of the study. By using a method explicitly evolved for investigating power, the validity of the study is secured. In

addition, the results of a discourse analysis are more legitimate for describing the overall power dynamics within the Permanent Forum than a quantitative content analysis.

Consequently, the purpose of the thesis, i.e to generate hypotheses of the power dynamics between Global North and South, is in need of multiple measurement methods of power. It is seen as beneficial for the study to prioritize the mixing of methods, although at the expense of a deeper analysis of each measurement. By using both a quantitative and qualitative approach the methodological ideals of objectivity, intersubjectivity, validity and generalizability can be met.

5. Analysis

The following chapter will present and analyze the results of a two-step measurement of power. Firstly, the quantitative content analysis will be conducted. It will include a presentation of members of the Permanent Forum and the categorization of them into representatives from Global North and Global South respectively. Power theory will conceptualize the distribution in terms of power. Furthermore, postcolonial theory will be used to explain the origin and legitimization of the power dynamics. In a second step, a brief WPR-analysis will be conducted. On the basis of themes discussed in the Permanent Forum, conclusions will be drawn about the problem representation regarding Indigenous issues. Postcolonial theory will contribute to the explanation of underlying assumptions causing the current problem representation.

5.1 Outcomes of the Quantitative Content Analysis

The material analyzed for the part of the investigation conducting a quantitative analysis, are lists of members in the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples. All members ever being a part of the forum since the foundation of it, have been counted and categorized into representatives of the Global North or the “Global South”. As there is no unanimous definition of Global North and South, the results are a reflection of the chosen definition by Braff and Nelson (*Table 1* in the *Appendix* p.45). I have full respect for another division of the globe and the implications thus being different. The division of members from each category is compared to the division of Indigenous Peoples around the world.

5.1.1 Counting the Members

The outcome of the quantitative content analysis is that the members of the Permanent Forum from the Global North is 53 out of 109 representatives in total, which equals 49% of the members. Hence, the Global South accounting for 56 members, i.e 51% of the representatives. Each member represents a national government during a two year period. The distribution of members are analyzed from the time of the “council’s” establishment (2002) until today (2022) (DESA 2022a). The distribution of members is illustrated in *Table 4* in the *Appendix* (p. 46-48).

Although the exact number of Indigenous Peoples cannot be established, nor the exact distribution of them, it is not unlikely to draw the conclusion that there is a vast majority originating from the Global South (see part 3.1.1). Therefore, the distribution of members from the Global North and the Global South respectively, is not corresponding with the distribution of Indigenous Peoples across the world.

Following the principle that more resources equals more power, the visibility of Indigenous Peoples can be understood as a sort of resource in the third dimension of power. The more visibility a group of Indigenous Peoples has, the bigger the influence it has. Power in the third dimension equals power to shape peoples’ minds as more visibility (more representation) in the Permanent Forum creates a platform for shaping peoples’ view on Indigenous issues. In addition, more representatives of one’s group could equal the enhancing of rights of the represented group, therefore the extended representation has an intrinsic value. Hence, more representatives at an influential platform could be seen as *political output* in itself. In terms of power in the third dimension the greater political output could be seen as a reflection of who has power over the UN. Being assigned more power (in the form of more representatives) implies structural power within the UN. As the Global North has much to gain from being represented in the Permanent Forum and are privileged to get more representation, the conclusion can be drawn that they have power over the functions of the UN.

Furthermore, more representatives equals more visibility and resources, reconstructing the power of the Global North.

Both if power is operationalized as political output (and political output in this case means the amount of representatives) as well as if it is operationalized as resources (and the resources at hand, in this case is amount of visibility), it could be concluded that Global North have relatively more power than Global South compared to how many affected by the policymaking in each category.

5.1.2 Applying Postcolonial Theory

If the vast majority of Indigenous Peoples is situated in the Global South, which is the assumption made by the numbers presented above, 50% representatives in the Permanent Forum originating from the Global South is a reflection of the continued colonial structure of this entity within the UN. First of all, having relatively more representatives from the Global North having influence over an area concerning mostly the Global South is following the colonial principle of speaking on behalf of someone else. The inherited thought of Western knowledge as superior could be seen as legitimizing the higher level of representation of Global North. The overall view on Global North in the issues could be described as more civilized in regard to their Indigenous population. It is the foundation of colonialism that Western colonizers are legitimized to build a new structure without consideration of the current order. If using Williams and Chrisman's definition of colonialism, i.e that it is purely the "unequal international relation of political power" (1994, p. 4), colonialism is evidently not yet passed. According to Spivak, however, the Western ideal of being seen as superior is an example of neocolonialism. As the basic colonialism consisted of spatial rule, the new form of structural rule is rather to be described as the new form of colonialism.

Despite some findings owing to the quantitative content analysis, the method has its flaws. As established in the previous chapter, a common criticism of quantitative content analysis is the fact that it does not take the context into

account. In the case of this research, it could be argued that it is not enough to assume that representatives of a state represent the issues of Indigenous Peoples of their country. The influence of Indigenous Peoples within the country varies between different states. A part of the oppression of Indigenous Peoples is the reduced opportunity to be heard (in comparison to the majority population). It cannot be excluded that the spokespeople of Indigenous Peoples' issues from the states are appointed by the national governments and therefore only reflect the image of Indigenous Peoples from a "majority population"-narrative. To develop a hypothesis about the power structures between Global North and Global South, the quantitative content analysis is arguably not enough.

5.2 Outcomes of the Discourse Analysis

To uncover the structural power dynamics between the Global North and Global South within the Permanent Forum, a discourse analysis is suitable. This is because the method has a built-in mechanism for exposing power structures. It analyzes how an issue is discussed and can therefore draw conclusions on what underlying presuppositions that has come to construct the representation of the problem. To analyze the discourse about Indigenous Peoples within the Permanent Forum, documentation of the themes of sessions within the Forum is chosen as the material to examine. As the sessions are platforms for discussing the issues of Indigenous Peoples, documentation on them could be seen as material proposing changes. Hence, the WPR-approach with its focus on problem representations being an appropriate orientation of the discourse-method. In line with the WPR-approach, the method of analyzing is based on certain questions as a pragmatic way of processing the material.

5.2.1 What's the Problem Represented to Be?

The first question to ask a material in the WPR-analysis is what the sender of the material, read out of the material, is considering a problem. Furthermore, it is important to establish how the sender is portraying the issue. As the discourse analysis focuses on language and how the language is both reflecting and constructing reality, analyzing how a problem is portrayed (in language) gives an indication of what the sender considers an issue in need of a solution. Hence, also what is *not* considered an issue. When investigating the documentation of the sessions in the Permanent Forum, it is presented which themes are discussed during the session.

The main problem portrayed in the documentation overall is that Indigenous Peoples do not have the same rights as majority populations. This is proven solely by the formation of a Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues. However, each session has an individual problem representation as it focuses on a specific issue regarding Indigenous Peoples. Therefore, the problem representation varies from problems with Indigenous Peoples' lack of access to land to inequality in corporate life and the presence of women in delegations (DESA 2022c). *Table 5* in the *Appendix* (p. 48-49) shows all issue areas discussed in the Permanent Forum.

Not clarified in the problem representation is which problems are related to which groups of Indigenous Peoples or the diversity of experiences regarding the problem. As established in the "Empirical Background"-Section, Indigenous Peoples of different origin are enduring different forms of oppression. Regardless of that fact, when discussing Indigenous Peoples the vast majority of problematizations are regarding oppression of culture and the right to inherited land (DESA 2007, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2018, 2022b) This is as if the most urgent problems to solve for *all* Indigenous Peoples are those of land rights and recognition when in fact these are foremost problems for Indigenous Peoples from the Global North.

Another possible problem (concluded from the quantitative content analysis) not problematized in the problem representation of the Permanent Forum is the power imbalance between Global North and Global South in the international and global system. There is an absence of reflections on who is discussing and making decisions on the area, as well as who is affected by regulations. In the third session of the Permanent Forum, women's participation in delegations is problematized (DESA 2004b). Nevertheless, despite the relative lack of representatives from the Global South, the participation of the Global South as a category is not problematized.

5.2.2 Underlying Assumptions

The second question in Bacchi's WPR-analysis is, as established in the methods-chapter above, regarding which underlying assumptions and presuppositions that underlie the problem representation in the chosen material. A strategy to uncover these underlying assumptions, suggested by Bacchi, is to identify binaries and concepts. Binaries presented in a document is when a question is based on a subject being divided into two mutually exclusive categories, hierarchically arranged. Identified in the problem representation by the Permanent Forum, is the binary of Indigenous Peoples as a minority population vs. the majority population of nations. In terms of colonialism, the colonial structure recognized is the one of the majority population colonizing the Indigenous Peoples. This could be applied within nations as well as in the global system. Not Indigenous Peoples are situated higher in the hierarchy in all contexts than Indigenous Peoples. Acknowledging this power structure could be described as addressing power imbalances in the first dimension of power. Majority populations can get Indigenous Peoples to do things against their will, which is considered a problem in the Permanent Forum. Yet the hierarchy of Global North and Global South and the colonial structures which are the foundations of it is not included in the problem representation. As the control of Global North is based on

inherited structures and the higher order is not as commonly recognized as the one between Indigenous Peoples and their majority population, it could be described as a power imbalance in the third dimension. Consequently, a binary not acknowledged in the problem representation of the Permanent Forum.

Formulating a problem without including a problematization of how different Indigenous Peoples are treated differently in different parts of the world, indicates that the actor formulating the problem has something to gain from not including it. Gaining from global charity projects are, according to postcolonial theory, the Global North.

Postcolonial theory would argue that the absence of a problematization of this dominating ideology is reconstructing the postcolonial discourse and contributing to the further domination and exploitation of the inferior group, in this case Global South. As established in the quantitative content analysis, there are relatively more representatives from the Global North. If an explanation of why this is the case or if addressing this as an issue by involving it in the problematization, it could be unproblematic. However, by neither problematizing the distribution of representatives in the Permanent Forum nor the distribution of themes discussed, the idea of Global North representatives involved in the UN being philanthropists and saviors of the Global South is reconstructed. Not acknowledging it as an issue is, according to postcolonial theory, built on the idea of Western knowledge being superior. Not questioning the binary of Global North and South is reconstructing colonial structures as Western problem solving is established as an ideal.

6. Discussion

A criticism of the study could include that the idea of measuring power in the third dimension is not compatible with the definition of it. As power in the third dimension, according to Lukes, is power over peoples' minds, affected by deeply rooted structures in society, whether or not someone is affected by them cannot be made visible. In respect of these issues, the study is conducted in two steps, resulting in hypotheses about the power dynamics rather than claiming to present a deductive statement.

Counting the members of the Permanent Forum gives an indication of who has the most power in the third dimension as more resources (if seen as visibility) can affect the minds of people when seen as a legitimate authority. In terms of perceived power, more representatives can indicate power over the minds of the one appointing the members. As the goal of the Permanent Forum is to enhance the rights of Indigenous Peoples, it can be concluded that the representatives perceived as most likely to produce the desirable results are the ones chosen. Producing political output is a reflection of power. Hence, the most powerful representatives being chosen.

Conducting a discourse analysis could strengthen the hypotheses generated by solely the quantitative research, if indicating the same structures. The results of the discourse analysis indicates that there could be an uneven distribution of power in the area of indigenous issues, following the same trend as suggested by academics in the global system overall, also strengthening the results of the quantitative analysis. However, a discourse analysis can be criticized for being subjective. If power in the third dimension is acknowledged as power, the ruling structures are affecting everyone, including me as a writer. As everyone

is victims of structural impact, the dominating ideals are affecting my interpretation of the discourse of the Permanent Forum. Additionally, the discourse cannot be reflected as neutral as it is reconstructed by writing about it.

An analysis based in the perspective of postcolonialism concluded that it seems likely that colonial structures permeate The Permanent Forum. The problems of Indigenous Peoples are generalized into a common problem for all Indigenous Peoples. This is a Global North point of view as they have power in the third dimension, causing the agenda setting to be seen as fair and legitimate. Thus, the alternative to enhance the representation of the Global South, trying to solve the problem of the Global North speaking on behalf of the Global South, would be unfulfilling. Despite more representation of Global South, the Global North having power in the third dimension is causing the interest of the Global North to be in line with the interest of the Global North. This is an example of a state being structurally overruled, not standing a chance to its colonial ruler. According to this perspective, global governance cannot be conducted without reconstructing colonial structures. The postcolonial state (category of states) has inherited an apparatus of control, the involvement of them cannot contribute to a less colonial structure.

The generalization made in the thesis, that Indigenous Peoples of the Global South are facing issues of different character than Global North, is arguably based on a Western interpretation of the issues of Global South. Assuming that the Global South needs to be saved and can be so through an institution built on Western ideals, is in itself reconstructing global colonial structures. However, it is argued throughout the thesis that by engaging more people of the Global South in global prominent mechanisms discussing Indigenous Issues, a nuanced understanding of the issues can be reached in the global society. Involving relatively more representatives of the Global South, could affect the discourse to the extent that issues of the Global South are more focused. Additionally, the discourse could be shifted to focusing on the exchange of knowledge instead of Global North defining issues of the Global South.

If involving more Indigenous Peoples of the Global South as representatives and the discourse not changing, it could be an example of Global North having power over the Global South in Foucault's definition of power. In this case, it could be argued that the colonial structure forces the representatives of the Global South to act accordingly. Arguing for special rights, if getting the power to do so, is a way of establishing themselves in the prevailing order, as the inferior group. However, this could be subject to further investigation if first getting more representatives to the Permanent Forum. Until then it is still a question of power in Lukes' third dimension of power.

7. Summary and Conclusion

To summarize, the thesis has been conducting a two-step analysis on the power dynamics between Global North and Global South within a prominent mechanism on Indigenous issues within the UN. As the distribution of Indigenous Peoples around the world is hard to determine and power in the third dimension is not tangible (therefore difficult to measure), several methods of measurement are needed to generate hypotheses about the power structures.

A quantitative content analysis of the members of the Permanent Forum concluded that the sum of members throughout history is representing (almost) equally many members from the Global North as the Global South. With the knowledge that the vast majority of Indigenous Peoples are originating from the Global South, the Global North and Global South are not equally represented. Conclusions drawn from postcolonial theory is that the results are a representation of remaining colonial structures. As Western knowledge is seen as superior in the global system, Global North speaking on behalf of the Global South is legitimized.

The problem representation regarding Indigenous Peoples issues presented by the Permanent Forum, according to a WPR-analysis in combination with postcolonial theory, is excluding a problematization of the effect of colonial structures in the global system. Generalizing the problem into problems of Indigenous Peoples as a homogenous group is favoring the Global North. Moreover, the underlying assumptions are that Global North are saviours solving Global South's issues.

With respect to the issues of conducting a thesis of limited extent on a broad subject, the purpose of the study has been to generate hypotheses regarding

the power dynamics rather than to generate deductive conclusions. Consequently, the thesis is resulting in the following hypotheses: (1) The Permanent Forum reflects the colonial principle of speaking on behalf of others (2) The discourse of the Permanent Forum benefits the Global North as it is mainly directed towards the interests of the Global North, however covered as a philanthropists project. (3) The Global North has power over the “minds” of Global South, causing the Global South to have faith in global operations of power.

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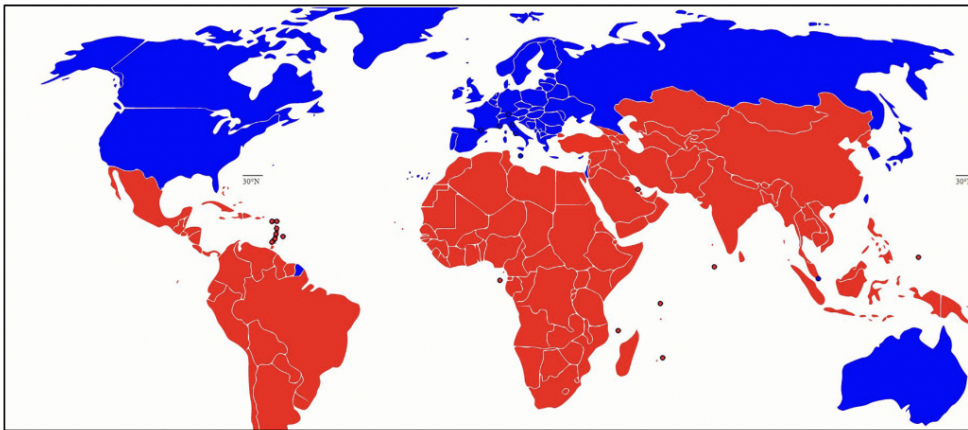
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Appendix

Table 1 in Section 2.1



The division of Global North and Global South. Blue nations representing the Global North and red nations representing the Global South (Braff – Nelson 2022).

Table 2 in Section 3.1.2

“The Permanent Forum:

- *provides expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations, through ECOSOC;*
- *raises awareness and promotes the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within the UN system;*
- *prepares and disseminates information on indigenous issues;*
- *promotes respect for and full application of the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration (Art. 42 UNDRIP).”*

The tasks of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (DESA 2022c)

Table 3 in Section 4.2:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What's the 'problem' represented to be?</i> 2. <i>What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?</i> 3. <i>How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?</i> 4. <i>What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?</i> 5. <i>What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?</i> 6. <i>How/where is this representation of the 'problem' produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?</i> |
|---|

The questions to ask a policydocument, in order to uncover its problem representation and underlying meaning, in Bacchi's WPR-approach (Bacchi 2009, p. 2).

Table 4 in Section 5.1.1:

Period	Represented Member States	Global North	Global South
2002-2004	Colombia, Norway, Russian Federation, Japan, United States of America, Mexico, Canada, Peru, Russian Federation, Togo, Denmark, Guatemala, China, Democratic	Norway, Russian Federation, Japan, United States of America, Canada, Russian Federation, Denmark, Canada	Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal

	Republic of Congo, Nepal, Canada		
2005-2007	Brazil, Morocco, Russian Federation, Australia, South Africa, Estonia, Canada, Guatemala, Greenland, Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, China, Russian Federation, Nepal, Philippines	Russian Federation, Australia, Estonia, Canada, Greenland, Denmark, Russian Federation	Brazil, Morocco, South Africa, Guatemala, Congo, Ecuador, China, Nepal, Philippines
2008-2011	Sweden, Morocco, Spain, Australia, Russian Federation, Uganda, Bolivia, Congo, Norway, Russian Federation, Philippines, Nigeria, United States of America, Philippines	Sweden, Spain, Australia, Russian Federation, Norway, Russian Federation, United States of America	Morocco, Uganda, Bolivia, Congo, Philippines, Nigeria, Philippines
2011-2013	Guatemala, Russian Federation, Russian Federation, Guyana, United States of America, Canada, Finland, Australia, Nicaragua, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Congo, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Estonia	Russian federation, Russian Federation, United States of America, Canada, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, Estonia	Guatemala, Guyana, Nicaragua, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Congo, Bangladesh
2014-2016	Guatemala, Russian Federation, United States of America Bangladesh, Mali, Estonia, Canada, Cameroon, Philippines, Kenya, Russian Federation, Bolivia, Australia, Iran,	Russian Federation, United States of America, Estonia, Canada, Russian Federation, Australia, New Zealand	Guatemala, Bangladesh, Mali, Cameroon, Philippines, Kenya, Bolivia, Iran

	New Zealand		
2017-2019	Finland, Nepal, Ecuador, Russian Federation, Tanzania, United States of America, Mali, Peru, Russian Federation, China, Denmark, Cameroon, Australia, Iran, Mexico, United States of America	Finland, Russian Federation, United States of America, Russian Federation, Denmark, Australia, United States of America	Nepal, Ecuador, Tanzania, Mali, Peru, China, Cameroon, Iran, Mexico
2020-2022	Burundi, Nepal, Denmark, Ecuador, Chad, Russian Federation, Namibia, Australia, Colombia, Finland, Bolivia, United States of America, Mexico, Estonia, Russian Federation, China	Denmark, Russian Federation, Australia, Finland, United States of America, Estonia, Russian Federation	Burundi, Nepal, Ecuador, Chad, Namibia, Colombia, Bolivia, Mexico, China
		/53 → 49%	/56 → 51%

All members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues throughout the history of the forum (DESA 2022a)

Table 5 in Section 5.2.1

Session & Year	Thematic issues
First session (2002)	-
Second Session (2003)	Indigenous Children and Youth
Third Session (2004)	Indigenous Women
Fourth Session (2005)	Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples with a focus on Goal 1 to Eradicate Poverty and Extreme Hunger, and Goal 2 to achieve universal primary education
Fifth Session (2006)	The Millennium Development Goals and

	Indigenous Peoples: Re-defining the Millennium Development Goals
Sixth Session (2007)	Territories, Lands and Natural Resources
Seventh Session (2008)	Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of Indigenous Peoples and new challenges
Eighth Session (2009)	-
Ninth Session (2010)	Indigenous Peoples: development with culture and identity articles 3 and 32 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Tenth Session (2011)	-
Eleventh Session (2012)	The Doctrine of Discovery: its enduring impact on Indigenous Peoples and the right to redress for past conquests (articles 28 and 37 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)
Twelfth Session (2013)	-
Thirteenth Session (2014)	Principles of good governance consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: articles 3 to 6 and 46
Fourteenth Session (2015)	-
Fifteenth Session (2016)	Indigenous Peoples: conflict, peace and resolution
Sixteenth Session (2017)	Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: measures taken to implement the Declaration
Seventeenth Session (2018)	Indigenous Peoples' collective rights to lands, territories and resources
Eighteenth Session (2019)	Traditional knowledge: Generation, transmission and protection
Nineteenth Session (2020)	Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of Indigenous Peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16
Twentieth Session (2021)	Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of Indigenous Peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16
Twenty-first Session (2022)	Indigenous Peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence including free, prior and informed consent

Twenty-second Session (2023)	Indigenous Peoples, human health, planetary and territorial health and climate change: a rights-based approach
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Thematic sessions in the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, throughout time (DESA 2022c).