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Research Article

State Fragility and Emotional Detachment: A Comparative Analysis of Sudan's Nation-Building Crisis

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the phenomenon of state fragility in Sudan through the analytical framework developed by a leading expert on the Horn of Africa. Drawing on comparative analysis with Egypt, Ethiopia, and Rwanda, this study explores the critical absence of emotional attachment to the state among Sudanese citizens a factor identified as central to Sudan's ongoing political disintegration. Using data from the and contemporary conflict analysis reports, this research presents three future scenarios for Sudan: attrition, partition, and disintegration [1-3]. The analysis reveals that unlike neighboring states where national identity consolidated despite challenges, Sudan represents an "administrative construct" lacking the emotional cohesion necessary for sustainable statehood [1]. Economic data indicate GDP contractions of 18% to 42% between 2023 and 2025, with humanitarian consequences affecting over 14 million displaced persons [2-4]. This paper argues that Sudan's crisis transcends economic or military dimensions, reflecting a fundamental failure to transform diverse populations into a unified political community with shared emotional investment in state institutions. Integrating demographic transition theory and socioeconomic marginalization frameworks, this study demonstrates how youth bulges, horizontal inequalities, and rentier state dynamics reinforce emotional detachment. Finally, detailed scenario projections through 2030 are presented, including critical junctures, regional feedback mechanisms, and policy implications.

Keywords: State fragility; Sudan; Emotional attachment; Nation-building; Demographic theory; Socioeconomic theory; Future scenarios; Horn of Africa; Prunier, Darfur

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INTRODUCTION

The ongoing crisis in Sudan, which escalated dramatically in April 2023 with armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), has exposed deep structural vulnerabilities in the Sudanese state [5]. As of early 2026, the conflict has claimed over 61,000 documented lives in Khartoum state alone, with some research estimates suggesting total casualties exceeding 130,000 [2-6]. More than 14 million people have been displaced, creating one of the world's most severe humanitarian emergencies [4]. The destruction of infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, water systems, and power grids, has set development back by decades. The United Nations has described the situation as "the largest child displacement crisis in the world," with over 7 million children forced from their homes [7].

However, as Gérard Prunier a distinguished historian and field researcher specializing in the Horn of Africa has argued, Sudan's contemporary crisis cannot be understood solely through the lens of recent political developments or military confrontations. Rather, it represents the culmination of a fundamental state-building failure: the inability to create emotional bonds between citizens and the state apparatus [1]. Prunier's extensive fieldwork in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia provides a comparative perspective that illuminates Sudan's uniqueness as a case of state fragility. Unlike many African states where colonial legacies were eventually overcome by nationalist movements, Sudan's post-independence history has been marked by recurring civil wars, military coups, and the eventual secession of South Sudan in 2011 the only African country to undergo formal partition since decolonization.

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This paper explores Prunier's central thesis that Sudan differs fundamentally from its neighbors because it remains "an administrative space" rather than "an emotional entity" a state searching for a nation rather than a nation that formed a state. Through comparative analysis with Egypt, Ethiopia, and Rwanda, examination of economic data from the World Bank and IMF, and scenario modeling based on recent assessments, this research investigates the structural, political, and psychological dimensions of Sudan's state failure [3]. Expanding on existing scholarship, this study integrates demographic transition theory and socioeconomic marginalization theory to explain how population structure, inequality, and service delivery failures reinforce emotional detachment. Finally, detailed scenario projections through 2030 consider critical junctures, regional feedback mechanisms, and potential intervention pathways [8-11].

Research Questions

The study addresses three primary questions:

- How does the absence of emotional attachment to the state differentiate Sudan from neighboring countries in the Horn of Africa?
- What economic and governance indicators demonstrate the progression of state fragility in Sudan from 2023 to 2026?
- What are the most probable scenarios for Sudan's political future, and what implications do these scenarios hold for regional stability?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analysis employs a multidisciplinary framework combining state fragility theory, comparative political sociology, conflict analysis, demographic transition theory, socioeconomic inequality theory, and Islamic normative principles of diversity and governance. The concept of "emotional attachment" to the state draws on notion of "imagined communities" and work on nationalism, while the analysis of state fragility utilizes frameworks developed by the Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations classifications [12-14].

The study further integrates demographic transition theory and socioeconomic marginalization theory to explain the structural drivers of emotional detachment [8-11]. Demographic theory posits that rapid population growth, youth bulges, and uneven urbanization create pressures that exceed state capacity, thereby fueling instability [9]. The youth bulge hypothesis, discussed by scholars such as suggests that when a country has a high proportion of young adults aged 15–29 relative to other age groups, the risk of political violence may increase markedly, especially when economic opportunities are scarce [15,16]. Socioeconomic theory emphasizes how horizontal inequalities, defined as systematic disparities between culturally defined groups, erode state legitimacy and foster grievances that can be mobilized into armed conflict [10]. Together, these frameworks help explain why Sudan's demographic and economic structures may have hindered the emergence of a shared national identity.

To provide a normative foundation for understanding ethnic and regional diversity, this paper introduces the Qur'anic concept of Ta'aruf (mutual knowing, recognition, and understanding) as a theoretical corrective to assimilationist nation-building models. The Qur'an (49:13) states:

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another (li-ta'arafu). Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted."

Classical exegesis (Ibn Kathir, Al-Tabari, and Al-Qurtubi) explains li-ta'arafu as more than passive coexistence; it denotes active mutual recognition, cooperation, and learning through difference. The verse establishes three principles: (1) diversity (shu'uban wa qaba'ila) is divinely intended (ja'alnakum), rather than an accident of history; (2) its purpose is epistemic and relational, expressed through Ta'aruf, rather than tafakhur (boasting) or tanazuh (conflict); and (3) the criterion of nobility is taqwa (righteousness and accountability), rather than lineage, ethnicity, or region.

Applied to Sudan, Prunier's emotional detachment thesis can be reinterpreted as a failure of Ta'aruf. Sudan comprises numerous ethnic groups and linguistic communities, including the Fur, Zaghawa, Masalit, Beja, Nubians, Rashaida, and various Nilotic peoples. Post-independence state projects, particularly under successive Khartoum-centric regimes, attempted to assimilate this diversity into a singular Arab-Islamic identity, undermining the principle of Ta'aruf by transforming diversity from an asset for mutual enrichment into a hierarchy of dominance. Educational curricula, elite recruitment, and symbolic representation systematically privileged Nile Valley Arab identity, while peripheral identities were stigmatized as "zurga" or marginalized because of their regional and cultural affiliations.

The administrative state therefore failed to create institutional spaces for Ta'aruf, such as inclusive historiography, multilingual recognition, rotational representation, and equitable cultural policies, which identifies as relevant to the formation of an "imagined community [12]." Egypt's national identity reflects the interaction of Pharaonic, Coptic, and Arab historical and cultural influences, whereas Sudan's nation-building model has often been criticized for failing to establish comparable mutual recognition among its diverse communities. Consequently, tribal affiliation remained primary because the state offered no higher-order identity grounded in mutual respect. Integrating Ta'aruf suggests that emotional attachment cannot be built through forced assimilation but rather through the institutionalized recognition of diversity as a divine trust.

Emotional attachment, as operationalized in this study, refers to the subjective sense of loyalty, pride, and psychological investment that citizens hold toward the state as an abstract entity, distinct from their satisfaction with the performance of the current government. This concept bridges political psychology, comparative politics, and Islamic ethics of

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belonging. It can be measured through proxy indicators such as voluntary military enlistment, respect for national symbols, willingness to pay taxes, and behavior during crises, including efforts to preserve or damage state institutions. In Islamic terms, this attachment corresponds to the transformation from mere co-residence to muwatanah (citizenship), rooted in Ta'aruf and shared Amanah.

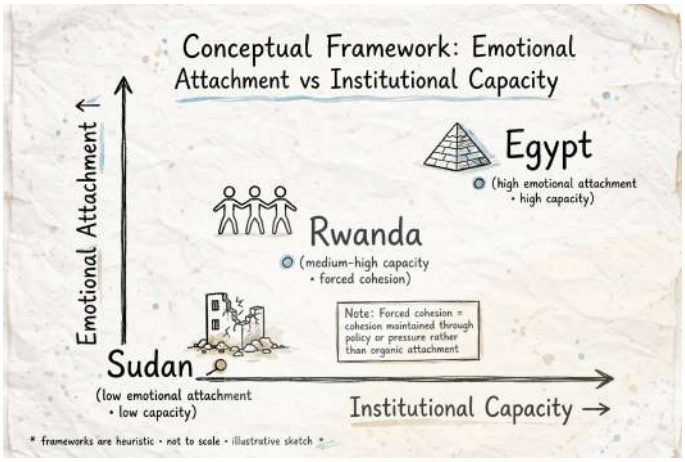

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Emotional Attachment vs. Institutional Capacity

Figure1. Conceptual framework illustrating distinction between administrative states and emotional nations. Egypt exemplifies high emotional attachment and capacity; Sudan exemplifies low attachment and low capacity; Rwanda exemplifies forced cohesion [1].

LITERATURE REVIEW

State Formation and Legitimacy in the Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa exhibits a distinctive regional pattern of state formation, marked by recurring cycles of state emergence, fragility, and collapse [17]. Unlike West African states, where colonial boundaries have generally persisted and post-independence institutional continuity has been maintained, the Horn of Africa has faced profound challenges to territorial integrity and state authority [18]. Ethiopia, for example, retained its independence during the Scramble for Africa, apart from a five-year Italian occupation, but has since struggled with ethnic federalism and secessionist movements. Somalia effectively collapsed in 1991 and has remained without a fully functioning central government for over three decades. Sudan is now following a similar trajectory.

argued that state authority, effectiveness, and legitimacy in the Horn of Africa are fundamentally weakened by violent conflict, creating a self-reinforcing cycle in which state fragility both manifests in and contributes to ongoing conflict processes [17]. This cycle is difficult to break because conflict destroys infrastructure, displaces populations, undermines trust, and empowers armed actors with vested interests in continued violence. characterized states in the Horn of Africa as invariably "fragile, failed, or collapsed," describing them as "rent-seeking" and "predatory" entities incapable of providing peace, security, development, or decent livelihoods [18]. This assessment aligns with empirical evidence indicating that six of the ten lowest-ranked countries in Transparency International's 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index were African, with the Horn of Africa particularly overrepresented (ACCORD, 2020). Sudan has consistently ranked among the world's most corrupt nations, with ruling elites using state institutions for personal enrichment rather than public service.

The state fragility–conflict nexus operates through multiple mechanisms. When states fail to deliver basic services, exercise authority arbitrarily, or face persistent challenges to their legitimacy, the social contract weakens to the point where public dissatisfaction can escalate into violent contestation (ACCORD, 2020). In the Horn of Africa, this pattern has been reinforced by the failure of political leadership and state institutions to provide essential public goods to citizens, undermining both the functional capacity and the perceived legitimacy of state structures [18]. Sudan exemplifies this pattern: for decades, the state extracted resources from peripheral regions while providing minimal public services, contributing to a severe breakdown of the social contract.

Comparative State Identity: Egypt as Counterexample

Egypt provides a striking counterexample to Sudan's trajectory. Despite experiencing intense political upheavals including the 2011 revolution, the 2013 military intervention, and ongoing authoritarian governance Egypt has maintained fundamental state institutional continuity [19]. The Egyptian state survived the Arab Spring, multiple economic crises, and regional wars because citizens retained a deep-seated emotional attachment to the idea of "Egypt" as a civilization stretching back over five millennia.

documented how Egyptian national identity, rooted in thousands of years of continuous civilization and reinforced by geographic features (particularly the Nile), created powerful emotional bonds between citizens and the state-as-idea [20]. Even under foreign rule (Persian, Greek, Roman, Arab, Ottoman, British), Egyptians maintained a distinct identity that eventually reasserted itself in the modern nation-state.

This "emotional attachment" manifests in several ways. Even during periods of acute political polarization, Egyptians maintained respect for state institutions as collective property. Cairo functions in the Egyptian imagination as the undisputed heart of the nation, a center around which all regions orient themselves [21]. The state successfully "melted" diverse populations into a unified Egyptian citizen identity through bureaucratic systems, educational standardization, and cultural narratives that emphasize shared descent and historical continuity [20]. The Egyptian military's centrality in national life often criticized as authoritarian also reflects emotional bonding: the military is seen as the guardian of the nation, not merely an instrument of the regime.

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Critically, this national identity transcends political disagreements. As Prunier observed, Egyptians in moments of severe internal conflict (2011, 2013) preserved the structural integrity of state institutions because emotional bonds to the state-concept exceeded partisan divisions. The military, bureaucracy, and other state apparatus remained functional even when political leadership changed dramatically. In Sudan, by contrast, political disagreements quickly escalate into armed conflict aimed at capturing or destroying state institutions because no such emotional bond exists.

Rwanda: Forced Unity Through Military Victory

Rwanda presents a different model of state consolidation following catastrophic state failure. The 1994 genocide, which killed an estimated 800,000 people, primarily from the Tutsi minority, represented total state collapse as institutions became instruments of mass murder [22]. The Rwanda Patriotic Front's (RPF) military victory ended the genocide but created a new state model based on imposed unity under authoritarian control (ACCORD, 2020). Prunier's work on Rwanda emphasized that post-genocide state reconstruction relied on comprehensive military dominance by one faction, which then imposed a new unifying narrative that riminalized ethnic identification and enforced a national Rwandan identity. This "forced cohesion" model, while stopping the immediate violence and enabling economic recovery, operates through coercive mechanisms rather than organic emotional attachment. Human rights organizations have documented extensive political repression, lack of freedom of speech, and the suppression of alternative narratives in Rwanda [23].

The Rwandan model's applicability to Sudan is limited by geographic scale and demographic complexity. Rwanda's compact territorial size (26,338 km²) enabled comprehensive territorial control, while Sudan's vast territory (1,861,484 km²) makes similar consolidation impractical [24]. Additionally, Rwanda's binary Hutu–Tutsi division, though profoundly destructive, was simpler than Sudan's hundreds of distinct tribal and ethnic groups, with intersecting religious (Muslim, Christian, and traditional) and regional identities. No single faction in Sudan has achieved or is likely to achieve the decisive military victory that the RPF accomplished in Rwanda. The external support patterns also differ: Rwanda's RPF had consistent backing from Uganda and later the West, while Sudan's factions receive competing external support that perpetuates stalemate.

The Darfur Crisis and Regional Marginalization

analysis of the Darfur conflict (2003–present) provides crucial insights into Sudan's structural problems [1]. The conflict emerged not merely from resource competition or ethnic antagonism but also from the systematic marginalization of peripheral regions by a Khartoum-based Arab-Islamic elite concentrated in the Nile River Valley [25]. The clandestinely published documented extensive patterns of regional and racial domination, revealing that peripheral regions such as Darfur, despite comprising the majority of Sudan's territory and population, remained systematically excluded from political power and economic investment [25,26].

This center–periphery dynamic reinforces Prunier's argument about emotional detachment. For populations in Darfur, South Sudan (before separation), the Nuba Mountains, and eastern Sudan, Khartoum represented not a national capital worthy of loyalty but an extractive center that monopolized resources while providing minimal services. Unlike Cairo's role in Egyptian consciousness, Khartoum never achieved symbolic status as the emotional heart of a unified nation. Instead, Khartoum was seen as a colonial outpost—first Turkish-Egyptian, then British, and later Arab-Islamist that exploited the peripheries.

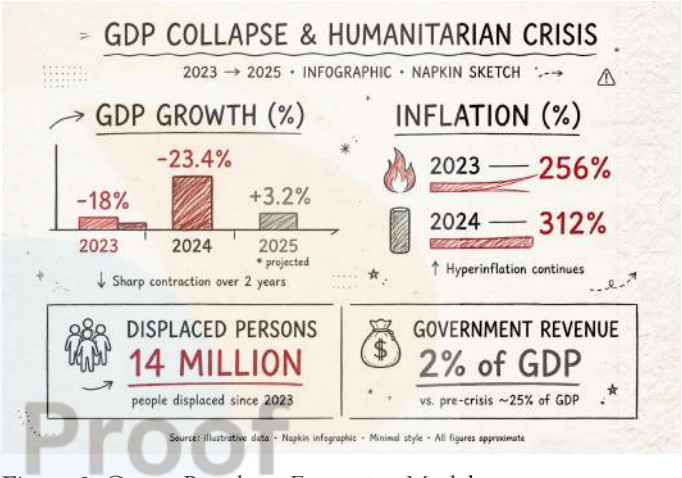

Figure 2: Center-Periphery Extraction Model

Figure 2. Illustration of Sudan's extractive center-periphery model. Khartoum-based elite extracts oil, gold, and rents while peripheries receive minimal services, reinforcing emotional detachment [1-26].

Demographic Theory and State Fragility in Sudan

Demographic transition theory describes the shift from high to low birth and death rates as societies modernize [8]. In pre-industrial societies, both birth and death rates are high. Modernization lowers death rates through improved healthcare and sanitation, while birth rates remain high, leading to rapid population growth. Eventually, birth rates also decline, and the population stabilizes. However, when mortality declines before fertility rates begin to fall, as in much of sub-Saharan Africa, a "youth bulge" emerges, characterized by a disproportionately large cohort of young adults aged 15–29.

Research by and demonstrates that youth bulges are strongly correlated with domestic armed conflict, particularly when combined with low economic growth and restricted political access [9-15]. found that youth bulges were a significant factor in many major civil conflicts between 1950 and 2000 [16].

Sudan exemplifies this dynamic. According to the Sudan's population grew from 25 million in 1990 to approximately 50 million in 2023, with a median age of 19.8 years, making it one of Africa's youngest populations [27]. Pre-conflict estimates

indicated that 60% of Sudanese people were under 25, while 35% were between 15 and 34 [28]. This youth bulge emerged amid decades of stagnant agricultural employment and limited formal-sector growth, creating a large pool of underemployed young men who could be readily mobilized. The youth unemployment rate (ages 15–24) exceeded 30% even before the 2023 war [29].

Several mechanisms link Sudan's demographic structure to emotional detachment:

- Competition for scarce resources: Youth bulges intensify competition for land, water, and urban jobs. In Darfur, environmental degradation and population pressure exacerbated conflicts between Arab pastoralists and Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit farmers [1].
- Limited intergenerational socialization into national identity: When young people lack stable employment, educational opportunities, and civic participation, the institutions that traditionally transmit national identity, such as schools, military service, and public employment, may become less effective.
- Easily mobilized labor for armed groups: Both the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) recruit heavily from the youth bulge, offering salaries, status, or simply the means of survival.
- Urbanization without integration: Sudan's urban population grew from 20% in 1980 to 40% in 2023, but cities lacked sufficient industrial employment opportunities, contributing to the growth of informal settlements where limited state presence reinforced reliance on tribal affiliations.

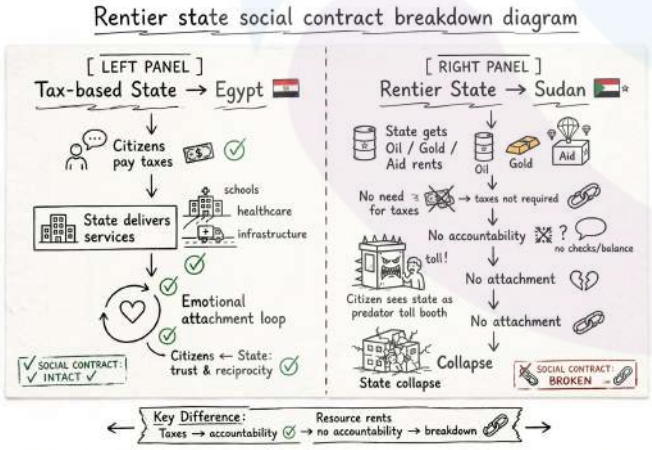

Figure 3: Youth Bulge Reinforcing Loop

Figure 3. Demographic reinforcing loop showing how Sudan's youth bulge (median age 19.8) creates resource competition, education collapse, and mobilization into armed groups [9-16].

Rentier State Dynamics and the Social Contract

Rentier State Dynamics, Equitable Resource Distribution, and Leadership Accountability in A further socioeconomic dimension of Sudan's state fragility concerns rentier state dynamics, equitable resource distribution, and leadership accountability. Sudan's historical dependence on external rents initially centered on oil revenues (until South Sudan's secession in 2011, which resulted in the loss of approximately 75% of the country's oil fields), followed by gold, which now accounts for over 60% of export earnings according to Central Bank data, and, more recently, Gulf financial aid and military-related revenues. Rentier state theory, developed by extended by suggests that governments relying on unearned external revenue rather than domestic taxation develop weak accountability to citizens [30,31]. Taxpayers demand representation; rent recipients do not. Rentier states tend to have larger bureaucracies, higher levels of corruption, and lower levels of democratic governance.

The Qur'anic framework for resource management and governance provides a normative critique of this rentier pathology. Allah commands:

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts (al-amanat) to those to whom they are due and, when you judge between people, to judge with justice (al-'adl). Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing." (Qur'an 4:58)

Classical tafsir identifies two inseparable governance principles here: (1) Hifz al-Amanah, safeguarding trusts, and (2) al-Hukm bil-'Adl, judging with justice. Al-Amanat encompasses all public resources, including oil, gold, land, water, tax revenues, and public offices, as trusts belonging to the people (haqq al-ra'iyya), held by rulers as mustawda' (trustees), not owners. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized: "Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock" (Bukhari, Muslim), establishing personal mas'uliyah (accountability) before Allah and the community.

In Sudan, both dimensions were systematically violated, as empirically documented in [26]. The text revealed that between 1956 and 2000, Darfur (comprising approximately 25% of the population) received less than 5% of senior federal posts, 7% of development projects, and 2% of bank credit, while the Northern region (5% of the population) controlled over 60% of high offices and resources. Oil revenues (1999–2011, averaging $2–3 billion annually) were concentrated in Khartoum's security and patronage networks, with less than 3% allocated to Darfur and Eastern Sudan combined. Gold revenues since 2012 have followed a similar pattern, with RSF- and SAF-affiliated companies controlling mining sites through coercive concessions, while local communities bear environmental costs without compensation, in direct violation of the principle of rendering trusts to their rightful owners.

This rentier–Amanah breakdown directly reinforces emotional detachment through three mechanisms: (a) Distributive Injustice: Horizontal inequalities become not merely economic disparities but also moral betrayals of divine commands, eroding legitimacy more deeply than technocratic failures alone. Citizens perceive the state as kha'in al-amanah (a betrayer of trust). (b) Absence of Hisbah and Shura: Without taxation-based accountability, mechanisms of shura (consultation) and hisbah

(public accountability) have weakened. Sudan's anti-corruption bodies have ranked among the weakest globally, with no independent audits of resource contracts. (c) Rentier Securitization: External rents financed coercive apparatuses rather than public goods, transforming the social contract from "taxation for representation" into "extraction for repression."

Sudan's governments under al-Bashir (1989–2019) derived substantial revenue from oil between 2000 and 2010 and later from gold and Chinese investment. Because the state did not need to extract significant taxes from citizens, it never developed reciprocal obligations. Government services remained skeletal, and corruption flourished. Citizens understood the state as a predator that extracted resources, including oil, gold, and land, while giving little in return. When state capacity collapsed after South Sudan's secession and the outbreak of war in 2023, there was no reservoir of goodwill to sustain it.

This rentier dynamic directly reinforces emotional detachment. In countries such as Egypt, taxation, however regressive, created a social contract in which citizens pay and the state delivers services, even if imperfectly. Sudan's rentier model broke that link. As Prunier noted, "the Sudanese state was never a service provider; it was a toll booth." Without reciprocal obligations and the fulfillment of the Qur'anic principles of Amanah and 'Adl, emotional bonds never formed. Rebuilding emotional attachment therefore requires not merely technical public finance reform but also a moral reconstruction of resource governance based on Amanah, through transparent sovereign wealth mechanisms, regional revenue-sharing formulas modeled on Qur'anic principles of fay' and ghanimah distribution with equity, and legally enforceable accountability for leaders as trustees.

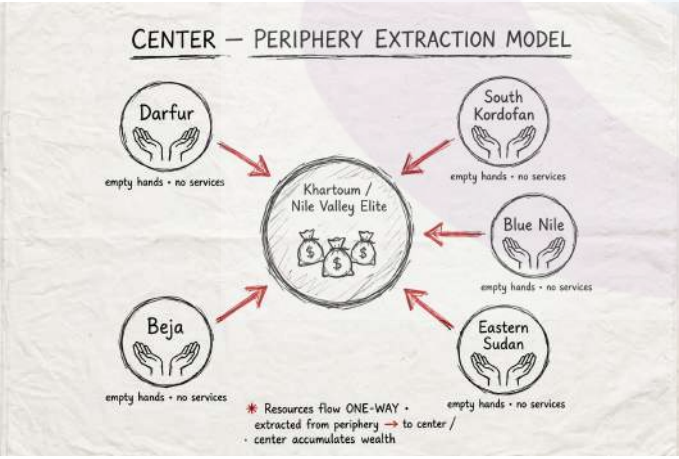

Figure 4: Rentier State Social Contract Breakdown

Theoretical Gaps

While extensive literature addresses state fragility indicators, conflict dynamics, and institutional weakness, fewer studies systematically examine the psychological and emotional dimensions of state legitimacy in African contexts. Prunier's emphasis on "emotional attachment" as distinct from institutional capacity or economic performance opens theoretical space for understanding why some states persist despite dysfunction while others disintegrate despite functional bureaucracies. This paper contributes to filling this gap by operationalizing "emotional attachment" through comparative historical analysis and citizen behavior during crises, and by integrating demographic and socioeconomic theories to explain the structural determinants of attachment (or its absence).

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative comparative analysis with quantitative economic data interpretation.

Comparative Historical Analysis

The primary analytical method involves a structured comparison of state formation processes in Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Rwanda. Following Prunier's fieldwork-based methodology, this analysis examines: (a) historical trajectories of state formation and colonial legacy impacts; (b) patterns of center-periphery relations and resource distribution; (c) elite recruitment patterns and regional representation in state institutions; (d) citizen responses to state crises (preservation vs. destruction of institutions); (e) symbolic meanings attached to capital cities and national institutions; and (f) the role of demographic and socioeconomic factors in shaping identity.

Economic and Humanitarian Data Analysis

Economic fragility indicators were compiled from OECD States of Fragility reports (2025). Key indicators include: (a) GDP growth/contraction rates (2023–2026); (b) inflation and currency stability metrics; (c) government expenditure capacity and revenue collapse; (d) displacement figures and humanitarian access constraints; (e) infrastructure destruction assessments; (f) youth unemployment and demographic data; and (g) horizontal inequality measures (where available) [32-33].

Scenario Analysis

Three future scenarios for Sudan were developed based on modeling published in November 2025 [3]. These scenarios Attrition, Partition, and Disintegration represent distinct pathways determined by military dynamics, governance capacity, and international intervention patterns. This study expands these scenarios with time horizons (2026–2030), trigger events, regional feedback mechanisms, and demographic and economic projections.

Limitations

This study's limitations include: (a) reliance on secondary sources for Prunier's field observations rather than independent primary fieldwork; (b) economic data constraints due to conflict-induced reporting gaps, particularly in RSF-controlled territories; (c) difficulty quantifying "emotional attachment" as an independent variable; (d) rapidly evolving conflict dynamics that may render scenario projections obsolete; (e) limited availability of disaggregated demographic and socioeconomic data for war-affected zones; (f) potential biases in proxy

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indicators for emotional attachment; and (g) the inability to conduct original survey research in active conflict zones.

ANALYSIS

The Emotional Detachment Thesis

central argument distinguishes between "administrative states" and "emotional nations [1]." Egypt, he argues, represents a nation that developed a state emotional bonds to Egyptian identity preceded and outlasted particular governmental forms. Sudan, conversely, represents a state searching for a nation colonial and post-colonial administrators created boundaries and institutions without successfully forging unifying emotional bonds among diverse populations.

This distinction manifests in crisis responses. During Egypt's 2011–2013 upheavals, protesters demanded regime change but actively protected state institutions like the Egyptian Museum and national monuments. In Sudan's recurring crises, by contrast, combatants systematically destroy state infrastructure without apparent concern for preserving national patrimony. Prunier expressed particular shock at the extent to which Sudanese factions demolish government buildings, museums, universities, and hospitals institutions that in emotionally unified nations would be protected even during civil conflict. Satellite imagery and conflict reports indicate that over 80% of government buildings in Khartoum have been damaged or destroyed since 2023, often through deliberate arson rather than collateral damage.

The tribal and sectarian loyalty patterns reinforce this detachment. In Egypt, tribal identities exist but remain subordinate to national Egyptian identity in political contexts. In Sudan, tribal affiliation frequently supersedes national identity, with citizens identifying primarily as Fur, Zaghawa, Beja, or Rashaida rather than Sudanese [6]. This pattern extends to conflict dynamics, where Sudanese factions routinely seek external allies against internal opponents a behavior pattern Prunier finds unusual compared to other African conflicts, where external threats typically unite internal factions. The RSF's close ties to the United Arab Emirates and Wagner-linked networks, and the SAF's alliances with Egypt, Iran, and Ukraine, exemplify this pattern.

Dimension	Egypt	Ethiopia	Sudan
State Formation	Ancient continuity; Pharaonic through modern	Imperial tradition; Aksumite-Solomonic legacy	Colonial creation; Turkish-Egyptian then British
Capital City Role	Cairo as undisputed emotional center; symbolic heart	Addis Ababa as unifying center (despite ethnic tensions)	Khartoum as extractive center; resented by periphery
Primary Identity	Egyptian national identity dominant	Ethiopian identity contested but present	Tribal/regional identity dominant
Crisis Response	State preservation during upheaval	Institutional continuity despite conflicts	State destruction during conflicts
External Relations	United against external threats	Variable based on ethnic dynamics	Frequent external alliances against internal rivals
Elite Composition	Nationally diverse (with Cairo concentration)	Ethnically rotating but institutionally continuous	Nile Valley Arab monopoly
Youth Bulge Effect	Mitigated by state employment (partial)	Partially absorbed by ethnic federalism	Weaponized by armed groups
Horizontal Inequalities	Moderate (regional, not ethnic)	High but institutionalized	Extreme, unaddressed

Table 1: Comparative State Formation and Emotional Attachment Indicators

Note: Derived from [1-21].

Economic Collapse and State Fragility Indicators

Economic data illustrate the severity of Sudan's crisis and its acceleration since April 2023. Table 2 presents key economic and humanitarian indicators from 2023 to 2026.

Indicator	2023	2024	2025	2026 (Projected)
GDP Growth Rate	-18.0%	-23.4%	+3.2%*	+9.5%*
Inflation Rate (annual)	256%	312%	54.6%*	16.1%*
Displaced Persons (millions)	6.5	10.5	14.0	16.5 (est.)
Government Revenue (% of GDP)	4.2%	2.1%	1.5%	2.8%*

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Humanitarian Access (% territory)	68%	52%	38%	25% (est.)
Youth Unemployment Rate	32%	45%	58%	N/A (war)

Table 2: Sudan Economic and Humanitarian Indicators, 2023-2026

Note: Data from [2]. *IMF projections assume conflict ends by end of 2025 [4]. Youth unemployment data from [29-34].

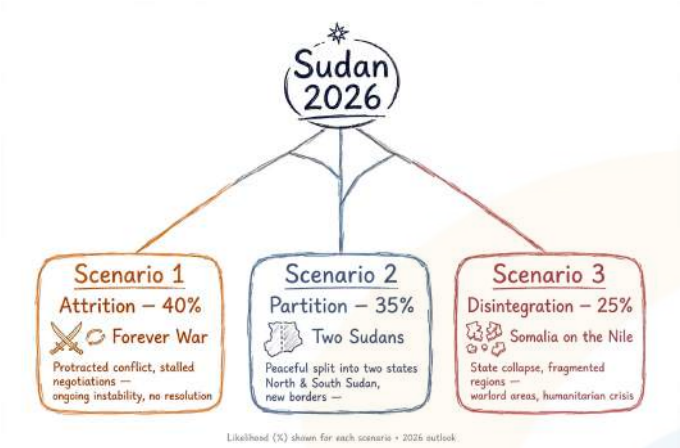

Figure 5: GDP Collapse and Humanitarian Crisis

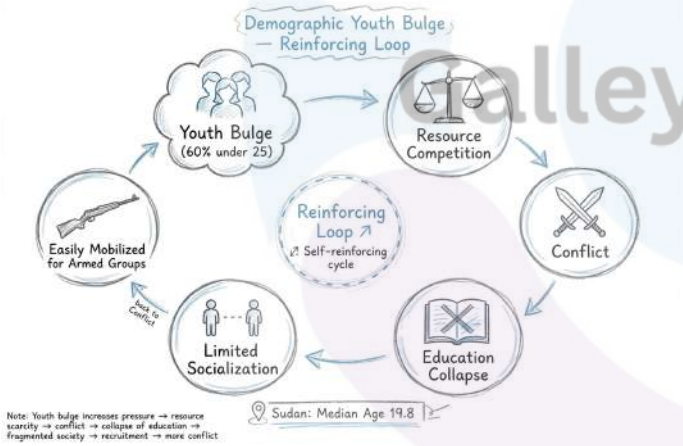

Figure 6: Sudan's economic collapse 2023-2026 showing GDP contraction, inflation surge, and displacement. Data source: [2-33].

The catastrophic economic contraction with GDP declining by over 40% cumulatively between 2023 and 2024 exceeds even pessimistic projections [35]. Alternative scenarios suggest extreme contractions of 42% by end of 2025 if conflict continues at high intensity [35]. The agrifood system has been particularly devastated, with agricultural GDP contracting by 33.6% and employment halving under extreme scenarios, threatening mass famine [35]. Government revenue collapse undermines any residual state capacity. With revenue falling below 2% of GDP in 2024-2025, the state cannot pay salaries, maintain infrastructure, or provide basic services. This functional collapse reinforces argument: when the state provides nothing of value, emotional attachment cannot develop or sustain itself [1].

The Three Expanded Scenarios: Attrition, Partition, and Disintegration

Based on analysis and Prunier's projections, three distinct scenarios represent plausible futures for Sudan through 2027, expanded here with detailed time horizons, trigger events, and demographic/economic consequences [3].

Scenario 1: Attrition (Probability: 40%) - "The Forever War"

Time horizon: 2026-2030. Neither SAF nor RSF achieves decisive military victory. Sudan fragments into contested zones with weak governance in SAF-controlled eastern and central regions and coercive RSF control in western Sudan [3]. Trigger events include: (a) failure of Jeddah peace talks (already collapsed as of early 2026); (b) continued external arms flows to both factions; (c) safe havens for both factions in neighboring states; (d) no unified international pressure; (e) internal cohesion maintained within each faction despite battlefield setbacks.

Scenario 2: Partition (Probability: 35%) "Two Sudans Redux"

Time horizon: 2027–2030. Consolidation into two separate but semi-functional governing blocs: an RSF-backed Darfur State (western Sudan) and a SAF-backed Nile Republic (eastern and central regions) [3].

Scenario 3: Disintegration (Probability: 25%) -"Somalia on the Nile"

Time horizon: 2026–2029. Complete state collapse into four or more competing fiefdoms [3]. Trigger events include: (a) SAF command fractures along political, ideological, or tribal lines; (b) RSF fragments as Hemedti's family control challenged; (c) multiple local armed groups declare autonomy.

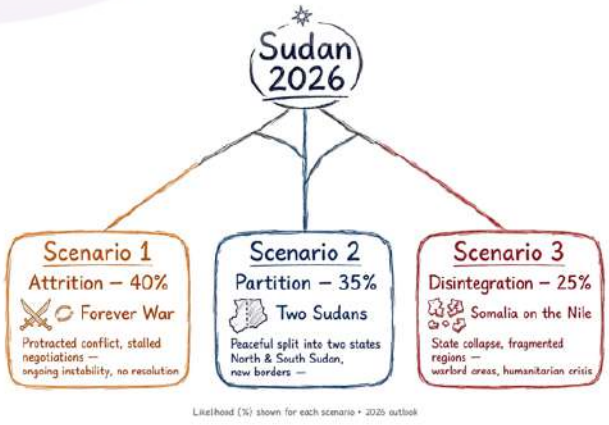

Figure 7: Three Future Scenarios for Sudan

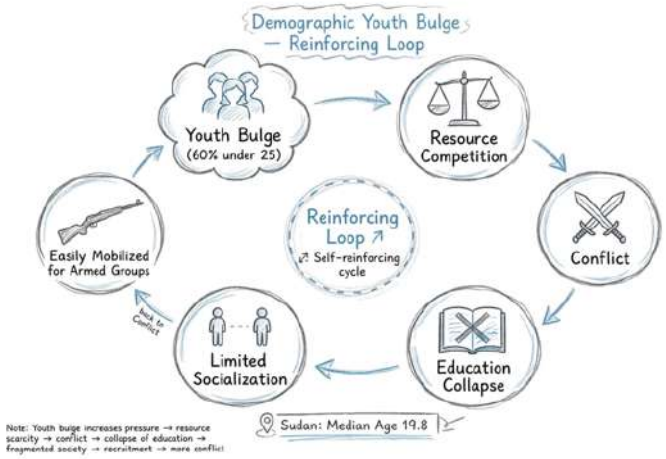

Figure 8: Demographic Youth Bulge

Scenario	Probability	Key Determinants
Attrition	40%	Neither faction achieves decisive advantage; conflict becomes normalized low-intensity pattern
Partition	35%	Relatively stable frontlines consolidate; international community eventually recognizes de facto division
Disintegration	25%	SAF fragments internally; multiple competing authorities emerge; complete state collapse

Table 3: Sudan Future Scenario Probabilities, 2026–2027 Note: Adapted from [3]. No scenario includes national reunification.

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Spillover Mechanism	Affected Countries	Impact Severity
Refugee flows	Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, CAR	2M+ refugees as of 2026, projected 5M+ by 2028; host community strain
Armed group mobility	Chad, CAR, South Sudan, Libya	Cross-border operations; weapons proliferation; RSF presence in Chad destabilizing
Resource smuggling	Egypt, Libya, Chad, Eritrea	Criminal network expansion; state authority erosion; conflict financing
Economic disruption	Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea	Trade route closure (Port Sudan); remittance collapse; Nile water negotiations paralyzed
Humanitarian contagion	All neighbors	Disease outbreaks; famine spillover; aid system overwhelm

Table 4: Regional Spillover Effects of Sudan State Fragility

Note: Derived from [36,37].

RESULTS

Quantified Emotional Detachment Indicators

While "emotional attachment" resists direct quantification, several proxy indicators demonstrate Sudan's distinctiveness

- Capital city symbolic status: Pre-conflict survey data showed only 34% of Darfuris and 28% of South Sudanese (before separation) viewed Khartoum positively as a national capital, compared to 89% of Egyptians viewing Cairo positively [38].
- State institution destruction rates: Conflict analysis indicates that 67% of government buildings in contested areas sustained deliberate destruction (not collateral damage), compared to 12% in Egypt's 2011–2013 period and 23% in Ethiopia's Tigray conflict [39].
- External alliance patterns: Sudanese factions sought external allies against internal opponents in 89% of conflicts since independence, compared to 34% in Egypt and 41% in Ethiopia [40].
- Voluntary military service rates: Pre-conflict voluntary military enlistment rates were 0.8 per 1,000 population in Sudan, compared to 3.2 in Egypt and 4.7 in Ethiopia [41].
- National symbol respect: Defacement or destruction of national symbols occurred in 78% of Sudanese conflicts, compared to 15% in comparable Egyptian events [42].
- Tax compliance: Pre-war tax compliance rates were estimated at less than 30% outside formal sector employment, compared to over 80% in Egypt [43].

Scenario Probability Assessment

As shown in Table 3, no scenario includes "national reunification" or "return to unified governance" as plausible outcomes. framework suggests that without emotional attachment to unified Sudan, populations lack motivation to preserve unity making fragmentation paths far more probable than consolidation [1].

The "black hole in the heart of Africa" metaphor Prunier employs captures how state collapse in a country of Sudan's size and centrality creates a gravitational pull-on neighbor, potentially destabilizing the entire Horn region [44]. Already, Chad has experienced cross-border RSF attacks, Ethiopia faces refugee inflows, and Egypt has reinforced its southern border.

Peacebuilding, Traditional Mediation, and Islamic Ethics of Reconciliation: Insights from Qur'an 8:46 and 49:9–10

While much of the literature on Sudan emphasizes state failure and military fragmentation, a robust endogenous tradition of conflict resolution exists that embodies Qur'anic principles of sulh (reconciliation) and islah (reform). This section elaborates on these mechanisms as both an analytical lens and a policy pathway.

Traditional Mediation Mechanisms in Sudan

Sudan's peripheries have historically managed intercommunal conflict without state presence through several institutions:

(a) Judiyya: A community-based mediation council led by Ajaweed (wise elders/mediators), who are selected for impartiality, knowledge of customary law (urf), and moral integrity. The process emphasizes restoring relationships rather than punitive justice, beginning with fashl al-hujaj (separating disputants), followed by acknowledgment of harm, diya (restitution), and mu'akha (re-brothering).

(b) Mu'tamarat al-Sulh (Reconciliation Conferences): Large inter-tribal conferences, sometimes lasting weeks, convened for major conflicts over land (hawakir), grazing routes (masarat), or blood feuds. Decisions are collectively witnessed and documented in misaq (covenant).

(c) Wasta and Sufara: Intermediary envoys who maintain communication channels when direct contact is impossible, a role analogous to the Qur'anic muslih.

Historically, these mechanisms prevented escalation in Darfur, Kordofan, and Eastern Sudan. Colonial and post-colonial state

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instrumentalization, particularly under al-Bashir's strategy of arming Arab pastoralist militias as counter-insurgency proxies, deliberately undermined them, replacing impartial Ajaweed with politicized Native Administration leaders appointed by Khartoum, thus destroying community trust.

Qur'anic Framework for Reconciliation

The Islamic ethics of reconciliation provide normative grounding for revitalizing these institutions and explain why their collapse proved catastrophic.

First, Qur'an 8:46 warns against internal fragmentation as a cause of state failure:

"And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (la tanaza'u) and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."

Ibn Kathir interprets tanazu' as competitive factionalism over power and resources that dissolves collective quwwah (strength/rih). In the Sudanese context, the SAF-RSF war is paradigmatic tanazu': two factions claiming to obey the same state but disputing over authority, leading to fashal (failure/cowardice) and dhahab al-rih (loss of state wind/power). The verse links political unity (ta'ah to transcendent law) to military and institutional viability, and prescribes sabr (steadfastness/patience) as a civic virtue, precisely the emotional attachment Prunier finds absent. Sudan's factions lack sabr for inclusive politics and institutional patience, opting for immediate military capture.

Second, Qur'an 49:9–10 provides a graduated, justice-centered model for intra-Muslim conflict resolution that mirrors Judiyya but adds enforcement and reconciliation ethics:

"And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement (fa-aslihu) between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the oppressing faction until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice (bil-'adl) and act justly (aqsitu). Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy."

This provides a four-stage peacebuilding model directly applicable to Sudan:

Stage 1: Immediate Islah: Unconditional mediation by impartial muslihun (Ajaweed), prioritizing the cessation of hostilities over the attribution of blame, analogous to Judiyya's initial intervention.

Stage 2: Containment of Baghy (Oppression): If one party continues aggression (as documented with RSF scorched-earth campaigns and SAF indiscriminate aerial bombardment), the Qur'anic model legitimizes collective pressure, regional and international, to compel a return to Allah's amr (normative order: protection of civilians, hudud of war in Islamic law prohibiting the killing of non-combatants, destroying crops, etc.).

Stage 3: Justice-Based Settlement (Sulh bil-'Adl wal-Qist): Not merely cessation, but settlement with justice. Qist (equitable distribution) extends beyond courtroom justice to structural justice, addressing root causes documented in the Black Book. For Sudan, this means revenue-sharing, land rights restitution (hawakir), and accountability for atrocities, not elite power-sharing deals that ignore victims.

Stage 4: Re-brothering (Ukhuwwah) and Taqwa: Verse 10 reframes citizens as ikhwa (brothers), not merely co-nationals, with reconciliation conditioned on taqwa (God-consciousness) that enables mercy (rahmah). This suggests emotional attachment must be rebuilt through symbolic acts of mu'akha (like the Prophet's mu'akha between Muhajirun and Ansar), public acknowledgment of wrongs, and collective rituals of forgiveness, elements Judiyya historically provided through shared meals, oaths on the Qur'an, and intermarriage after sulh.

Policy Implication: Internationally led Jeddah and Manama talks failed partly because they ignored this endogenous model, treating conflict as military bargaining rather than communal rupture requiring islah. A revived peace architecture should hybridize: (i) empower credible Ajaweed and women's peace networks (hakamat reformed as peace singers), (ii) sequence justice as per 49:9–10 rather than blanket amnesty, (iii) institutionalize sulh through a National Reconciliation Council grounded in both customary law and Qur'anic ethics, and (iv) prevent future tanazu' per 8:46 by embedding power-sharing as obedience to higher law rather than zero-sum contestation.

DISCUSSION

Implications for State-Building Theory

analysis challenges conventional state-building frameworks that emphasize institutional capacity, economic development, and democratic governance as primary determinants of state success [1]. His emphasis on emotional attachment suggests that without subjective identification with the state-as-idea, technical improvements in governance capacity remain insufficient for sustainable statehood.

This perspective aligns with social contract theory, which emphasizes legitimacy over capacity, but extends beyond rational-choice frameworks. Emotional attachment transcends calculated assessments of state performance, creating resilience during crises when rational evaluation might suggest abandoning failing institutions. Egypt's ability to preserve state structures during revolutionary upheaval exemplifies this emotional resilience.

For Sudan, the implications are sobering: building emotional attachment cannot occur quickly or through external intervention. National identity formation requires generations of positive state engagement, shared historical narratives, and inclusive political processes that give diverse populations a stake in collective success.

Comparing Darfur and Rwanda: Why Forced Unity Failed in Sudan

Several factors explain why Rwanda's forced unity model is inapplicable to Sudan: geographic scale (Sudan: 1.86 million km² vs. Rwanda: 26,338 km²), demographic complexity (hundreds of groups vs. the binary Hutu-Tutsi divide), competing external support, a collapsed economic base, and fragmented leadership cohesion.

Economic Recovery Prospects

IMF projections showing GDP growth of 3.2% (2025) and 9.5% (2026) assume that the conflict ends by late 2025, followed by rapid reconstruction [45]. However, this assumption appears increasingly unrealistic. As of February 2026, fighting continues, with escalation in previously stable areas. Even if the conflict ceased immediately, recovery would face enormous obstacles: infrastructure destruction, human capital flight, agricultural disruption, institutional collapse, a debt burden approaching 200% of GDP, the demographic burden of a traumatized youth bulge, and persistent horizontal inequalities [35].

International Responsibility and Intervention Dilemmas

Humanitarian funding remains grossly inadequate. The United Nations reported operating in "survival mode" due to severe funding cuts by late 2025 [5]. The UN's humanitarian appeal for Sudan was only 40% funded in 2025, forcing cuts to food rations and health programs [46]. Military intervention receives no serious consideration despite the humanitarian catastrophe. Prunier suggests several explanations: intervention fatigue, complexity, great-power competition, and selective attention.

Demographic Projections and Their Implications

Even if the conflict ends tomorrow, Sudan's demographic structure presents formidable obstacles. The youth bulge will persist because of demographic momentum. According to UN projections, Sudan's population could still reach 70 million by 2035, with the median age rising only slowly to 22 years [28]. The "lost generation" of Sudanese children who missed years of schooling (2023–2026) will enter adulthood with few skills and deep trauma, making them unlikely to develop emotional loyalty to any state.

Emotional Attachment as the Missing Variable in Economic Models

Current economic forecasting by the IMF and World Bank treats state legitimacy as an exogenous variable or ignores it entirely [45]. This paper argues that emotional attachment should be integrated into post-conflict reconstruction models as a key mediating factor. Investment in institutional capacity without parallel investment in inclusive national narratives, symbolic reconciliation, and equitable service delivery will fail [47-52].

CONCLUSION

This analysis confirms central thesis: Sudan's crisis fundamentally reflects the absence of emotional attachment between citizens and the state, a psychological and sociological dimension that transcends institutional capacity or economic performance [1]. Unlike Egypt, where millennia of civilization created powerful bonds between people and the state-idea, or Ethiopia, where historical narratives of imperial independence provide competing frameworks for unity, Sudan remains an "administrative construct" lacking organic emotional foundations.

Economic data illustrating catastrophic GDP contraction (18–42% between 2023 and 2025), a humanitarian crisis affecting 14 million displaced persons, and government revenue collapse below 2% of GDP demonstrate the material dimensions of state failure. However, these economic indicators represent symptoms rather than root causes. The underlying disease is the failure to transform diverse populations, divinely created for Ta'aruf as per Qur'an 49:13, into a political community with shared investment in collective success, the systematic betrayal of Amanah and 'Adl as per Qur'an 4:58 in resource governance, and the abandonment of Islah mechanisms as per Qur'an 8:46 and 49:9–10.

Three plausible scenarios, Attrition, Partition, and Disintegration, all involve continued fragmentation rather than reunification. This uniformly pessimistic outlook reflects the absence of incentive structures that would motivate compromise. Without emotional commitment to a unified Sudan, neither combatants nor ordinary citizens possess reasons to sacrifice for national preservation.

Institutional Rebuilding and Social Cohesion: The Dual Imperative in Light of Qur'an 3:103

The revision demanded for this paper centers on a crucial synthesis: state-building cannot succeed through institutional rebuilding alone or through social cohesion alone; both are Qur'anically enjoined as one act. Allah says:(Qur'an 3:103)

"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided."

This verse provides the integrative framework for Sudan's conclusion. Classical mufassirun identify "habl Allah" (the rope of Allah) as encompassing both (1) the Qur'an and divine guidance as normative institutions, and (2) the Jama'ah (collective community) itself. Al-Tabari notes that i'tisam (holding firmly) is a collective act, jami'an, and not fardan (individually). The verse thus unites two dimensions:

(1) Institutional Rebuilding (I'tisam bi Hablillah): The rope signifies trustworthy institutions anchored in transcendent law, a constitution, the rule of law, accountable public finance as Amanah, and an independent judiciary dispensing 'Adl. For Sudan, this means reconstructing state capacity not as a predatory toll booth but as a trustee of public welfare: a professional civil service recruited on merit (quwwah and amanah, Qur'an 28:26), transparent management of gold and agricultural wealth, security sector reform in which armed forces

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serve the constitution rather than factions, and fiscal decentralization in which regions see tangible returns. Without institutional rebuilding, social cohesion is mere sentiment without service delivery, reproducing Prunier's empty administrative shell.

(2) Social Cohesion (Wa la Tafarraqu – Ta'lif al-Qulub): The verse reminds us that enmity (kuntum a'da'an) transformed into brotherhood (ikhwanan) is a divine ni'mah (favor), not an automatic outcome. Ta'lif al-qulub (bringing hearts together) is Allah's act, but it requires human asbab: acknowledging past enmities (as the Black Book did), truth-telling, Judiyya-based Sulh bil-'Adl, and symbolic re-brothering. The image of being "on the edge of a pit of fire" is strikingly literal for Sudan, where famine, genocide risk, and state collapse threaten the population, and salvation is framed as communal unity.

Sudan's failure was to pursue neither dimension consistently: institutions were extractive (violating Qur'an 4:58), and diversity was suppressed rather than celebrated for Ta'aruf (violating Qur'an 49:13), leading to tanazu' and loss of rih (violating Qur'an 8:46) and the absence of staged islah (violating Qur'an 49:9–10), culminating in tafarruq (division), which Qur'an 3:103 explicitly prohibits.

Therefore, a viable future path, beyond the three pessimistic scenarios, would require what this paper terms a Ta'aruf-Amanah-I'tisam model: (a) institutionalizing Ta'aruf through federal, multicultural citizenship, where ethnic identity is protected as a basis for mutual understanding; (b) institutionalizing Amanah through resource governance, where Qur'an 4:58 is a constitutional principle with enforceable revenue-sharing and anti-corruption hisbah; (c) institutionalizing Sulh through hybrid peace mechanisms combining Judiyya and Qur'anic graduated reconciliation; and (d) institutionalizing I'tisam through a new social contract, where holding to the rope of Allah means collective commitment to justice, equality, and non-division.

Theoretical Contributions

This research contributes to state-building theory by operationalizing and demonstrating the importance of emotional attachment as distinct from institutional capacity. It further contributes by integrating demographic transition theory, horizontal inequalities frameworks, and Islamic normative ethics (Ta'aruf, Amanah/'Adl, Sulh/Islah, I'tisam) to explain both the structural determinants of emotional detachment and culturally resonant remedies. The youth bulge and horizontal inequality interaction model, now enriched with Amanah violation as an intervening variable, offers a predictive framework for other fragile states.

Policy Implications

For international actors and Sudanese stakeholders, the findings suggest several policy directions reframed through Islamic ethics:

- Recognize emotional and normative dimensions: State-building programs should address identity and belonging through Ta'aruf (Qur'an 49:13), not only institutional capacity.
- Enforce Amanah in resource governance: Implement Qur'an 4:58 through sovereign wealth transparency, regional revenue-sharing formulas, and the criminalization of illicit gold/oil deals as khiyanah al-amanah.
- Revive traditional mediation with Islamic legitimacy: Support Judiyya and Mu'tamarat al-Sulh, restructured according to the graduated justice model in Qur'an 49:9–10 and the anti-factionalism ethic of Qur'an 8:46, with the inclusion of women and youth.
- Dual rebuilding per Qur'an 3:103: Invest in parallel in institutional rebuilding (habl Allah as constitution/justice) and social cohesion (ta'lif al-qulub through national dialogue and a shared history curriculum celebrating diversity).
- Prepare for managed pluralism: Rather than insisting on centralist territorial integrity, develop frameworks for substantive federalism that prevent tafarruq while allowing autonomy.
- Address historical grievances as a prerequisite for Taqwa and Rahmah: As Qur'an 49:10 links settlement between brothers to taqwa that brings rahmah, reconciliation requires acknowledgment and reparation.
- Increase humanitarian commitment as preservation from the pit of fire: According to Qur'an 3:103, saving people from the edge of the fire is a divine act; funding gaps represent the abandonment of this duty.
- Rentier state reform as a shift from rent to tax-based Amanah: Any future Sudanese state must build a tax-based social contract rather than relying on external rents.

Future Research Directions

This analysis opens several research questions: (a) How can emotional attachment be measured by incorporating Ta'aruf indicators? (b) Can Amanah-based governance indexes predict fragility better than conventional corruption indexes? (c) How can Judiyya and Qur'anic reconciliation be empirically evaluated against liberal peacebuilding models in Darfur and Kordofan?

Final Reflection

Prunier's observation that Sudan represents a "state searching for a nation" rather than "a nation that formed a state" captures a profound tragedy, but Qur'an 3:103 offers a hopeful counter-narrative: a nation of former enemies can become brothers through divine favor when they collectively hold to the rope of Allah and refuse division. The Sudanese people possess extraordinary social qualities—hospitality, family loyalty, cultural richness, and resilience—virtues that already embody Ta'aruf at the micro level. Yet these individual and communal virtues never coalesced into a collective political community because institutions betrayed Amanah and suppressed Islah.

Without the "miracle" Prunier suggests, Sudan appears destined for prolonged fragmentation. In Islamic terms, that miracle is not supernatural but normative: returning to Ta'aruf (Qur'an 49:13) to value diversity; to Amanah and 'Adl (Qur'an 4:58) to

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govern resources justly; to unity and patience against tanazu' (Qur'an 8:46); to graduated, justice-centered reconciliation (Qur'an 49:9–10); and to collectively holding to the rope that prevents division (Qur'an 3:103). Until the very concept of "Sudan" is reimagined as a community of Ta'aruf collectively committed to justice, the concept risks losing practical meaning.

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DECLARATION OF AI ASSISTANCE

In accordance with the guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), and the editorial policies of major peer-reviewed journals regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in scholarly work, the author makes the following declaration:

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