The Democratic Republic of Congo: A Closer Look at the Internal Causes of Poverty

MSC IN DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (DIR)

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The Democratic Republic of Congo:
A Closer Look at The Internal Causes of Poverty

Research question: Why does poverty plague the Democratic Republic of Congo despite the country's abundance of natural resources?

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Abstract

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is one of the least fortunate countries on the planet, regardless of its status as a resource-rich country. A scope of elements is liable for the continuous poverty in the country. Certain causes of poverty are internal factors, others are outer elements. The wealth created by removing DRC's natural resources is benefited from by a few elites, leaving the remainder of the populace in poverty.

This paper investigates the historical, political, and economic internal reasons for poverty in DRC according to the viewpoint of three theories: colonialism, governance, and the resource curse. The colonialism theory contends that the exploitation and dominion of European colonizers in the late nineteenth century prompted the deliberate destroying of DRC's economy, society, and political designs and set the country on a way of poverty and underdevelopment that continues to this day. Furthermore, the governance theory argues that post-colonial leaders have failed to build strong institutions, and create the rule of law, have sustained poverty, and fueling corruption in DRC.

Thirdly, the resource curse theory proposes that DRC's resource abundance has prompted a concentration of power, struggle, and instability, causing lasting financial and cultural harm. Poor governance, botch of resources, ethnic struggles, and absence of interest in investment in infrastructure and education are some of the underlying causes of poverty in the Congo. By examining the connection between these theories, this paper means to thoroughly grasp the internal reasons for poverty in DRC. It contends that supportable advancement requires tending to the main reasons for poverty in DRC, including tending to historical wrongs, further developing governance, and overseeing resources to help the more extensive populace.

At last, the government should focus on social spending and execute strategies that advance monetary development, work creation, and more noteworthy transparency in the administration of resources. The thesis examines the IMF's 2013 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which distinguished complete strategies and changes to advance financial development, diminish poverty and imbalance, and further develop public service in DRC. The IMF's 2013 PRSP for the DRC was unsuccessful because of poor governance, absence of institutional ability, lacking resources, restricted investment, and deficient checking and assessment. The success of the PRSP requires a purposeful exertion from all partners, including government, the private sector, and societal organizations.

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List of Acronyms

BMI - Body Mass Index

DRC - The Democratic Republic of Congo

FDI - Foreign Direct Investment

HDI - Human Development Index

IDA - International Development Association

IMF International Monetary Fund

MPI - Multidimensional Poverty Index

PRSP - Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

SSA - Sub-Saharan Africa

UNPD - United Nations Development Programme

WB – World Bank

WHO - World Health Organization

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), an African country located in the middle of Africa, that was also called Zaire, is the 2nd biggest nation in Africa, following Algeria. And the eleventh biggest nation on the planet. The population of DRC is currently at 111,859,928 million people according to the CIA, and it is the biggest French-speaking country on the planet. Kinshasa is the capital of DRC and is equally the financial capital of DRC (CIA, 2023). The region of the DRC is wealthy in natural resources.

The natural resources include timber, oil and gas, gold, diamonds, and minerals necessary to evolve energy, such as cobalt and copper. DRC is considered one of the most biodiverse regions on the planet (UNEP, 2022). According to the International Trade Administration U.S. Department of Commerce, The DRC has significant undiscovered gold, cobalt, and high-grade copper reserves, yet similarly substantial security threats emphasized by inadequate infrastructure. Cobalt, one of the critical metals to the creation of electric cars, puts the DRC in an essential position for energy evolution (Administration, 2022).

In 2020, the DRC was the world's largest excavator of cobalt, with a development of 95,000 tons, or almost 41% of the world's cobalt. In 2020 the DRC was the sixth biggest maker of industrial diamonds, manufacturing 3.7 million carats (Administration, 2022). The nation has some of the most significant copper holds universally, with a portion of the mines assessed to contain grades over 3%, higher than the worldwide normal of 0.6 - 0.8 percent.

However, despite its tremendous natural wealth, the nation has been battling with high degrees of poverty. In DRC, approximately 80 percent of the population survived on less than 1.25$ a day in 2015 (UNECA, 2015), and as of 2022, almost 62% of the Congolese population, around 60 million individuals, live on less than $2.15 daily. Around one out of six individuals living in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) lives in DRC (Bank, 2023). One is pushed to inquire how a country with such an abundance of natural wealth cannot leverage the abundant wealth into economic prosperity. The reasons for poverty in DRC are multi-layered, from colonialism, political instability, corruption, conflict, weak institutions, and historical legacies of exploitation to weak social safety nets and inadequate infrastructure. These factors all contribute to the challenge of unlocking the country's economic potential, leaving a substantial percentage of the population in poverty.

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The paradox established above, demonstrating a natural resource-rich country plagued by poverty in all its forms, presents a question of why. Why does poverty plague the Democratic Republic of Congo despite the country's abundance of natural resources? The relevance of the resources in DRC is undeniable, as the country has a significant amount of most of the world's natural resources. Since there is relevance and market for the said resources, the country's economy should improve and rise out of extreme poverty. However, this is not the case, and DRC is still one of the poorest countries in the world.

This study aims to investigate the setting of poverty in DRC to grasp the reason behind the continuing poverty in a country wealthy in natural assets and has received international assistance to combat poverty. This thesis will examine historical, political, and economic reasons for poverty in DRC. This thesis will utilize three theories to establish the theoretical standpoints, namely colonialism theory, governance theory, and the natural resource curse theory. The three theories will help analyze the historical, political, and economic causes of poverty in DRC.

As previously mentioned, poverty in DRC is multi-layered; this is no surprise as poverty is relative and usually multifaceted. Even among poverty scholars, there is no agreement on the precise definition of poverty because poverty has so many layers that are difficult to encapsulate into one definition. To narrow down the subject of causes of poverty, the thesis will focus on the internal historical, political, and economic causes of poverty. For the sake of this thesis, a few causes deemed crucial by the author of this thesis will be examined from each of the three categories of the causes of poverty in DRC (historical, political, and economic). For historical and economic causes, colonial legacies, conflicts, inadequate management of abundant natural resources, and poor infrastructure will be investigated; for the political causes, corruption and poor governance will be examined, and the thesis will look at the resource curse perspective of economic causes of poverty in DRC thereby finalizing the economic causes of poverty in DRC.

1.1. Research question:

- Why does poverty plague the Democratic Republic of Congo despite the country's abundance of natural resources?

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1.2.   Thesis Relevance

The relevance of this thesis is different relying upon the field. Academically, the clarification given in this thesis would give a thorough understanding of the economic structural issues that cause boundless, steady poverty in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). DRC's poverty is brought about by different complex and multifaceted elements, including poor governance, corruption, an absence of infrastructure, civil distress, conflict, and unfair trade agreements, according to scholarly research based on various reports and studies. Likewise, the academic community would profit from comprehending the dynamics of how these factors contribute to the persistent poverty of the nation in light of the ongoing concerns.

The answer to the question posed in this thesis is important from a political standpoint because it brings to light fundamental problems with governance and the need for better policymaking. DRC has a turbulent past marked by conflict, political instability, and persistent government corruption. Political unsteadiness is a critical obstruction to financial development - political leaders need to lay out a steady starting point for improvement that supports unfamiliar ventures, reinforces establishments, and battles corruption. As a result, policymakers may be able to develop strategies to address the structural issues that are causing DR Congo's economic decline and political instability with the assistance of a comprehensive explanation of these phenomena.

The thesis is also important from an economic standpoint because it helps researchers and policymakers comprehend how the economy can derive little benefit from vast natural resource reserves. Some of the largest deposits of copper, cobalt, diamonds, gold, and other valuable minerals can be found in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nonetheless, while some have benefited from the natural assets, the Congolese residents continue live in extreme poverty. Investigating how financial actors exploit Congo's huge natural assets is an important opportunity for growth for scientists and policymakers to foster monetary strategies and regulation to work with practical financial development, decrease poverty, and advance a comprehensive change.

The answer to the question, "Why does poverty plague the Democratic Republic of Congo despite the country's abundance of natural resources" adds to existing information by aiding scientists, policymakers, and the global community to comprehend the primary issues

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influencing DR Congo's economy and investigating ways of tending to them. The thesis will confirm existing knowledge about the causes of poverty in the DRC, such as colonialism, political instability, poor governance, lack of infrastructure, and corruption which other researchers such as (Oko O. Elechi, 2018), (Tunamsifu, 2022), and (Margaret Kohn, 2023) suggest as the cause of poverty in DRC. They argue that the nation has been plagued by decades of conflict, corruption, and natural resource exploitation by domestic and foreign actors. The country has endured poverty due to these issues, which hampered economic growth. It urges researchers and policymakers to rethink the hidden reasons for poverty and investigate elective answers to the issue by bringing up such an issue. Finally, it highlights the need to go past the progressed clarifications and dig deeply into the circumstance's intricacies.

2. Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1. Research Design and Method:

This paper will take a qualitative case study approach to analyze and understand the reasons for persisting poverty in DRC despite the country's rich natural resources. The exploratory nature of a qualitative case study makes it ideal for this research because of the nature of poverty. Poverty is multifaceted, and most even describe it as relative (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003). Because of this, a case study is the best method to explore the causes of poverty in context rather than a quantitative study that seeks to categorize things based on statistics.

Using a qualitative case study will allow one to analyze the causes of poverty, especially the ones that are hard to quantify. Using a qualitative study also means that a generalized conclusion cannot be drawn as this research seeks to understand and analyze why poverty persists and whether the country is poor. The quantitative approach would be more helpful if this study focused on establishing if DRC is poor. If that were the focus, then quantitative research would have been more beneficial due to its ability to examine facts and draw a generalized conclusion. However, this thesis's author recognizes that quantitative research can also be done to explain, understand, or analyze why poverty persists in DRC, but the author does not prefer this method.

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2.2. Case Selection:

This qualitative case study selected the case based on the research question and the phenomenon of poverty despite abundant natural resources. Though there are several African countries with the same predicament as DRC, like Nigeria (in natural resources, oil, and gas, to be precise and conflicts), Sierra Leone, and Liberia (in terms of conflicts), the case of DRC is unique and spiked the author's interest. The case of DRC has been a paradox for several poverty researchers due to the factors contributing to poverty. Natural resources are assets, yet some have even argued that they cause DRC's predicament and can be considered a curse (Tunamsifu, 2022).

2.3. Data:

The data used for the analysis consists of literature on DRC's history, political regimens, and institutions, such as reports, secondary academic literature, relevant articles, relevant policy documents, books, and data from World Bank, UN, IMF, and CIA. The timeline for the data used covers the colonial era, the post-colonial era, and the present day. The timeline of the data is necessary to analyze and comprehend the causes of poverty in DRC, primarily since the thesis focuses on the internal causes of the current persistence of extreme poverty in DRC.

2.4. Validity and Reliability:

Since this paper is based on works of literature only and not primary data collected by the author, such as interviews or surveys, the data used in this thesis is carefully chosen with the case study in mind, using literature provided at the Aalborg University's online and campus library; each article is academic or from a reliable source such as the World Bank, CIA, IMF, UN, etc. Books are also selected based on their relevance to the research topic of this thesis. Several researchers verify the facts established in this paper and they are not based on opinions or one author. The variety of the data also establishes its reliability. The author of this thesis made sure to filter the authors of the data used for biases or other unverified opinions.

The data used was valid to the topic and provided useful insight on the research topic of this paper. The data was selected to help the author investigate the causes of extreme poverty in DRC. And the literatures were useful and accomplished their purposes by providing different perspectives to the issue of the causes of poverty in DRC.

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2.5. Delimitations:

There are several limitations to this research. However, one of the most significant limitations of this thesis is the scarcity of credible historical, political, and statistical sources. Some documents are available online and in libraries that can be accessed, but the number of documents available in English is limited. DRC uses French as its official language, which means that most policy documents and other valuable reports are primarily in French and require an intermediate or prominent level of French to utilize them. Another issue relating to sources is that several of the statistics or surveys available in developed countries are usually not conducted or unavailable in Sub-Saharan African countries. Sometimes it is due to unrest and war or other local problems like lack of accessibility to proper infrastructure, poor governance, and lack of appropriate institutions in charge of collecting data, but other times it is just negligence as no one has done the research or surveys needed to get the statistics.

Another limitation is that the thesis focuses only on the internal causes of poverty and not the external causes. The external causes can be as crucial as the internal, and in some cases, the external causes are more influential and vital as they could cause circumstances that do not allow DRC to break free from poverty. If the external causes are backed by powers or nations more potent than DRC, the probability of the DRC internally rising out of poverty can be exceptionally low. To have a complete overview of the causes of extreme poverty in DRC, one must examine both the internal and external causes of poverty; by looking at both perspectives, one can draw better conclusions on the actual cause. The conclusions presented in this thesis will be based on investigating internal causes and should therefore be considered partial causes of poverty in DRC.

To improve this research, conducting an interview or a survey in DRC would have elevated the findings of this thesis and improved the analysis section. Interviews focused on people's income versus their consumption and access to education, sanitation, healthcare, and other necessities would improve the arguments highlighted by this thesis. The interviews would improve the research and upgrade the researcher's skills for future use. However, conducting interviews in DRC requires funds and has specific difficulties that are not easy to overcome; therefore, this thesis solemnly relies on academic articles, books, reports, secondary data available at the libraries and online, and other sources like the Word Bank, IMF, CIA, UN.

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Another improvement would be to focus on both internal and external factors. For example, the internal and external would, as already mentioned above, make the conclusions presented in this thesis better due to the examination of both determining factors (internal and external causes).

3. Chapter 3: Background

3.1. Poverty Concepts and Measurements:

3.1.1. Poverty Concepts:

Poverty concepts vary in their definitions of poverty and how to measure poverty. All poverty scholars agree upon no single definition of poverty due to the multidimensional nature of poverty. Scholars have attempted to explain poverty through several definitions, but there is no settlement on a sole meaning or explanation and measurement of poverty (Philip Kotler, 2006). Various elements have intensified the issue of reaching one definition of poverty. First, poverty influences diverse groups differently, which makes poverty relative, relying upon various interests and people encountering it (Philip Kotler, 2006). The trouble encompassing the definition and estimation of poverty has frequently driven poverty professionals and policy creators to relate poverty to the ideas of impoverishment, hardship, the underprivileged, the oppressed, inequality, and the poor (Philip Kotler, 2006).

Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi (2003) presents four critical methodologies to define and measure poverty: monetary, capability poverty, and social exclusion poverty and participatory (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003). However, the participatory approach is irrelevant to this paper and will not be elaborated on. Instead, the three approaches that will be elaborated on include the monetary, capability, and social exclusion approaches.

The monetary approach characterizes poverty as how much an individual's pay (or utilization) does not reach the minimum level of resources. The monetary approach to poverty estimation includes systems that underline monetary pointers and an objective deduction of the poverty line (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003). Capability poverty is the inability of an individual to attain essential means to realize some vital needs at the lowest level sufficiently. The capability method interprets monetary resources to improve individuals' prosperity (Saith, 2001). The monetary asset is seen as an essential yet

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inadequate means to avoid poverty. Consequently, the capability approach underscores monetary and different assets to create or accomplish abilities (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003).

Social exclusion is when an individual is denied the chance to partake in everyday events or activities other residents participate in. As a social interaction, the social prohibition hypothesis views poverty as declining cooperation and admittance to assets (Majid Sameti, 2012). Every one of the three diverse types of poverty mentioned above holds various ideas regarding the definition and estimation of poverty. Some exact proof shows that the three poverty measures do not recognize similar individuals as poor (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003).

According to Ted K. Bradshaw, poverty is "*the lack of necessities such as Basic food, shelter, medical care, and safety.*" (Bradshaw, 2007, p. 9). These necessities mentioned by Bradshaw are usually considered basic human needs. However, what is needed for one individual is not consistently a need for others. Needs might be relative to what is conceivable and depend on social definition and individuals' previous experiences (Bradshaw, 2007). In other words, no universal necessities can be considered the same in every community, country, or social environment. For example, Charles A. Valentine mentioned that at the core of poverty is an imbalance, meaning the definition of poverty is a relative lack (Valentin, 1968).

A relative meaning of poverty mentioned by Valentin provides the framework for societies to deal with local acute poverty-related situations. An objective definition permits tracing advancement and contrasting one region with another (Bradshaw, 2007). An example of an objective definition is the "poverty line," first established in 1963 by Mollie Orshansky at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Bradshaw, 2007).

Absolute and Relative poverty concept

Poverty estimation depends on a correlation of assets to needs. An individual or family is recognized as poor on the off chance that its assets miss the mark regarding the poverty limit. The family information is then collected to acquire a general perspective on poverty (Foster, 1998). Poverty can be perceived from an absolute or a relative perspective. Renata Lok-Dessallien (1999) argues, "*Absolute poverty refers to subsistence below the minimum, socially acceptable living conditions, usually established based on nutritional requirements and other essential goods. Relative poverty compares the lowest segments of a population*

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with upper segments, usually measured in income quintiles or deciles." (Lok-Dessallien, 1999, p. 2). Even inside the absolute or relative poverty area, there are distinctions, as some are considered poor while others are considered extremely poor. The poor refers to living below the minimum considered, while extreme poverty indicates a lack of basic human needs necessary for survival (Lok-Dessallien, 1999).

Changes in society can also affect the line between poverty and extreme poverty; a rise in food prices and other basic needs without an equivalent rise in salary can redefine the line between poor and extremely poor. Extreme poverty is considered more acute by most policymakers and the international community due to the dangers associated with malnourishment, hunger, and other extreme poverty conditions (Lok-Dessallien, 1999).

Objective or Subjective perspectives:

Poverty can be understood from objective or subjective viewpoints. The objective viewpoint (in some cases called the government assistance approach) includes standardizing decisions regarding poverty and what is expected to move individuals out of their poor state. The subjective methodology prioritizes individuals' likings and the value they put on commodities and amenities (Lok-Dessallien, 1999).

Traditionally, economic experts have utilized the objective approach predominantly because of the deterrents experienced while attempting to combine different individual values across a populace (Lok-Dessallien, 1999). Supporters of this approach utilize the contention that people are not the best-appointed authority of what is best for them. For instance, most poverty estimation frameworks center around nutritional accomplishments. Albeit all people esteem food intake, some might put a higher worth on specific food types or food amounts that are not best for their physical prosperity (Lok-Dessallien, 1999). It is possible that the subjective methodology could both underestimate and exaggerate food taking when contrasted with the welfare approach, prompting clashing appraisals regarding who are poor people.

Poverty estimation has been overwhelmed by the objective methodology. Just moderately, as of late, has the international community overall taken a severe interest in estimating subjective poverty. This is basically because of mounting acknowledgment of the impediments related to objective indicators and the benefit of figuring out the points of view of people with low incomes in molding strategies and projects (Lok-Dessallien, 1999). Both objective and subjective points of view carry significant experiences to estimate and

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investigate poverty. They approach the peculiarities from various points and catch various parts of it, neither of which can be supposed to be entirely correct or wrong (Lok-Dessallien, 1999).

Physiological and Sociological Deprivation:

A few poverty ideas are gotten from apparent reasons for poverty. They can be partitioned into two sorts of hardships, physiological and sociological (Lok-Dessallien, 1999). Concerning physiological needs, the idea is that individuals are poor since they need a salary, food, attire, and accommodation. Both salary and fundamental necessities ideas of poverty originate from physiological lack (Lok-Dessallien, 1999).

The ideas of poverty rising from the viewpoint of sociological hardships are established in hidden underlying imbalances and integral difficulties. They depend on perceptions that, in any event, when assets are streaming into areas overwhelmed by poor people, the last option will be unable to make the most of them due to primary obstacles. These imperatives hamper access by people with low incomes to "outside" resources, like credit, infrastructure, land, and common property, and "inside" possessions, like well-being, nourishment, and learning (Lok-Dessallien, 1999).

The Human Capability Concept:

The human ability idea of poverty centers around extending individuals' chances and ranges both the physiological and sociological domains of hardship. Appropriately, poverty is not just in the devastated state in which the individual lives, but in addition, in the absence of genuine open doors because of social requirements and private conditions to carry on with significant and esteemed existences (UNDP, 1997, p. 16). Accentuation on engaging poor people, working with their support in society, and empowering them to move up on the socioeconomic hierarchy is vital to the human capability of dealing with poverty.

In functional terms, the attention on strengthening, supporting, and empowering makes unique difficulties. There is no agreement concerning what comprises an empowering and enabling setting, significantly less what is decent involvement. Second, the extension of the idea of poverty to incorporate other expansive areas of concern, like support, really sabotages the handiness of the idea according to a strategic point of view (Lok-Dessallien, 1999).

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3.1.2. Poverty Measurements:

Monetary Poverty Approach:

Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi (2003) presents four critical methodologies to define and measure poverty: monetary, capability poverty, and social exclusion poverty and participatory (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003). As previously mentioned at the beginning of this section, the monetary approach characterizes poverty as how much an individual's pay (or utilization) does not reach the minimum level of resources. The monetary approach to poverty estimation includes systems that underline monetary pointers and an objective deduction of the poverty line (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003). The money-related approach depends on the understanding that a uniform financial measurement can be utilized to control a mixture of people and their circumstances. It highlights that deciding poverty considering a financial measurement involves the decision of a marker, a unit of examination, and a poverty line (Majid Sameti, 2012).

The overall utilization of financial indicators to gauge poverty is legitimate because it can surmise parts of poverty or well-being that are challenging to quantify in a similar unit (Majid Sameti, 2012). Moreover, a money-related approach is a standard homogenous foundation of poverty estimation that facilitates the pressure between hypothetical intricacy and various poverty definitions and estimations (Majid Sameti, 2012).
The critique of the monetary approach is that it emphasizes the physical or moral characteristics of those with low income instead of the genuine reasons for poverty. Customarily, poverty is seen as an individual issue, even though many of the reasons for poverty can be traced back to the family level (Majid Sameti, 2012).

Capability Approach:

Capability poverty is the inability of an individual to accomplish fundamental capabilities to satisfy specific vital roles at the lowest level. The capability approach sees financial assets to assist with upgrading individuals' prosperity (Saith, 2001). The money-related asset is seen as a vital, however not adequate, condition to forestall the chain of poverty. Like this, the capability approach stresses financial and other assets to create or accomplish capabilities (Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, 2003).

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The capability approach gives a system that can be utilized to survey imbalance, poverty, and people's or, alternately, gatherings' prosperity. Amartya Sen's (1985) idea of capability works at two levels: at the degree of acknowledged prosperity or result estimated by working and at the degree of likely prosperity or opportunity estimated by capability (Sen, 1985). Working alludes to an individual's accomplishment, while capability alludes to the mix of different capabilities an individual can accomplish (Sen, 1985).

Alkire (2007) and Darling (2002) additionally featured that human resources or capability furnishes individuals with the vital expertise or capacity to work well in society (Alkire, 2007) (Darling, 2002). Alkire (2007) and Darling (2002) noticed that the absence of human capability puts a person in a more monetarily weak position when they face unfavorable instances, for example, loss of employment, sickness, or family changes. People with quality human resources do well in the work market, says Darling (2002). Numerous observational investigations consider well-being, nourishment, schooling, cleanness, water supply, and lodging essential for a respectable life (Darling, 2002).

Global Multidimensional Poverty Index:

The UNDP's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) combines the deprivation of those that are duplicate deprived in regions like schooling, well-being, resources, and amenities. Concentrating on duplicate deprived people gives more significance to poverty in various aspects than the Human Development Index (HDI), which is disinterested in the presence of various deprivations (Duclos, 2011).

MPI considers deprivation in three dimensions or with three indicators; Education indicators are how many children of the appropriate age are in school and how many family members are literate (Milorad Kovacevic, 2014). For instance, in DRC, the school entering age is 7, so if a kid old enough in the range of 8 and 15 does not attend class, the family is deprived of this pointer. Secondly, A family is denied school fulfillment if nobody has six years or more of schooling among the people mature enough to have accomplished six years of schooling (Milorad Kovacevic, 2014).

Health indicators include child mortality and diet (Milorad Kovacevic, 2014). A family is deprived if a child, regardless of age, died in the household within the past 60 months to the survey date. A family is deprived of a diet if one of these pointers is present. First, a child

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in the age range of 0-5 years is not within the height range for their age using the height range presented by the World Health Organization (Milorad Kovacevic, 2014). Secondly, if a teenager between 15 and above has a Body Mass Index (BMI) below 18.5 (Milorad Kovacevic, 2014).

Living Standards indicators are accessibility to clean water, electricity, and sanitation, a furnished house with appliances that can allow proper heating and cooking, support mobility and maintenance, and access to information (Milorad Kovacevic, 2014). This does not mean each family must have all these things but that the family should have at least some of the necessities vital for survival (Milorad Kovacevic, 2014).

3.2.   The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), an African country located in the middle of Africa, that was also called Zaire, is the 2nd biggest nation in Africa, following Algeria. And the eleventh biggest nation on the planet. The population of DRC is currently at 111,859,928 million people according to the CIA, and it is the biggest French-speaking country on the planet. Kinshasa is the capital of DRC and is equally the financial capital of DRC (CIA, 2023). Its neighbors include Angola, South Sudan, The Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Burundi, Central African Republic, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia, and the South Atlantic Sea (CIA, 2023).

Like most African countries, DRC has a colonial past. However, DRC was colonized in two stages: by the Belgian government from 1908 to June 30, 1960, and Leopold II as ruler from 1885 to 1908 (Tunamsifu, 2022). The reign of Leopold II and the control of the Belgian colonial government were depicted by the exploitation of essential resources and refusals of fundamental freedoms for the Congolese people (Tunamsifu, 2022). The Belgian Congo was more unfortunate than other settlements for suppression and erratic killings. Due to the mass killings, the general population in Congo fell by around 66% between the beginning of colonization and 1924 (Tunamsifu, 2022).

At the order of Leopold II of Belgium, a European search of the Congo basin in the 1870s finally allowed the ruler to acquire privileges over the Congo domain and designate it as his private property under the name of the Congo Free State (CIA, 2023). Leopold II's colonial military restricted the local population in the Free State to create rubber. Disease and

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exploitation claimed the lives of many Congolese from 1885 to 1908. Leopold finally gave in to international pressure and gave the land to Belgium, Belgium renamed the Congo Free State the Belgian Congo (CIA, 2023).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was liberated from Belgium in 1960, yet its initial years were damaged by political and social conflicts. Col. Joseph Mobutu clutched power and declared himself president in a November 1965 overthrow. As a result, he changed his name to Mobutu Sese Seko and the country's name to Zaire.

Mobutu maintained his position through an iron fist and fake elections (CIA, 2023). Ethnic battle and cross-country struggle, ignited by a massive inflow of evacuees in 1994 from the battle between Rwanda and Burundi, caused the overthrowing of the Mobutu administration in May 1997 with the support of Rwanda and Uganda and fronted by Laurent Kabila (CIA, 2023).

Kabila renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but in August 1998, a subsequent revolt supported once more by Rwanda and Uganda put his system to the test. To aid Kabila's reign, soldiers from Angola, Chad, Namibia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe interfered in favor of Kabila. In January 2001, Kabila was killed, and his child, Joseph Kabila, took over his position as president (CIA, 2023). The new president successfully arranged the October 2002 removal of Rwandan powers from the eastern DRC; All remaining fighting groups endorsed the Pretoria Accord after two months to end the conflict and establish a national solidarity administration. Kabila was officially elected president in 2006 (CIA, 2023).

Several elections were to be held in 2011 and 2016; However, Kabila was reelected in 2011, the constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo forbids President Kabila from running for a third term, but the government postponed the country's election, which was initially scheduled for November 2016, until December 30, 2018. This decision ignited more turbulence caused by Kabila's adversaries, worsening pressures in the turbulent eastern DRC areas and causing political unrest (CIA, 2023). On January 10, 2019, resistance contender Felix Tshisekedi was declared the victor of the election and took office two weeks later. Since the DRC gained its liberation, this marked the first-time power had been given to an opposition candidate without significant violence or a coup (CIA, 2023).

3.2.1. Poverty in DRC

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Whenever poverty is discussed in the current times, especially regarding Sub-Saharan African countries, the focus is on those living on less than 2.15 US dollars a day as of 2022 (Bank, 2023). The countries characterized by the international community as living in extreme poverty are all those within which a significant part of the population in the country is surviving on less than 2.15$ U.S. dollars a day. This amount was initially $ 1$ in the 1990s, and then it was raised to $ 1.25$ in 2005 and again to $ 1.90$ in 2015 (UNDP, 2016). The World Bank announced the most recent changes in September 2022. Poverty is not merely based on living on less than 2.15$ a day; other social issues are influential and must be considered. These issues vary depending on the country, and the realities differ in many places.

However, with more focus on the monetary approach, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is among the world's five poorest countries. In DRC, approximately 80 percent of the population survived on less than 1.25$ a day in 2015 (UNECA, 2015), and as of 2022, almost 62% of the Congolese population, around 60 million individuals, live on less than $2.15 daily. Around one out of six individuals living in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) lives in DRC (Bank, 2023). The poverty level in DRC is the basis for why DRC is categorized as a country with poverty. One can go as far as stating that all three approaches to poverty apply in the DRC case.

Figure 1: Global Multidimensional Poverty Index: dimensions and Indicators of Poverty
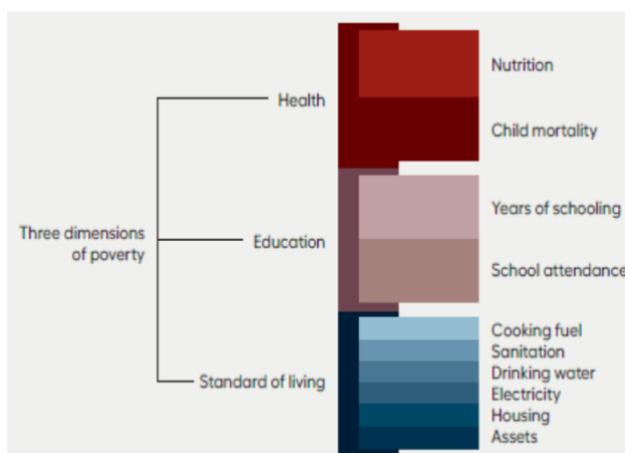

Source: HDRO and OPHI.

Source: OPHI (2018). Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2018 (OPHI, 2018)

The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index above determines poverty in all its phases and dimensions. The three dimensions of poverty illustrated by Figure 1, health, education,

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and standard of living, are present in DRC. Under health, death from transmittable diseases and maternal, prenatal, and nutrition conditions is at 56% in DRC, while in North America, it is at 5% in 2019 (Estimates, 2000-2019). Child mortality in 2021 was 62 per 1000 live births in DRC compared to 5 per 1000 live births in North America (UNICEF, 2021). Regarding education, the adult literacy rate of 15 and above is 80% as of 2021, and in North America, it was at 99% in 2005, and one can deduce that it is currently above that (UNESCO, 2021). School enrollment, preprimary (% gross) in DRC is 7% as of 2020, and in North America, it is at 100% as of 2020 (UNESCO, 2021). In terms of living standards, as previously mentioned, 62% of the Congolese population, around 60 million individuals, live on less than $2.15 daily in comparison with the West or, more specifically, Denmark, only 0.2% of the population live on less than 2.15$ a day (World Bank, 2020).

Figure 2: DRC's GDP per capita growth (annual %)
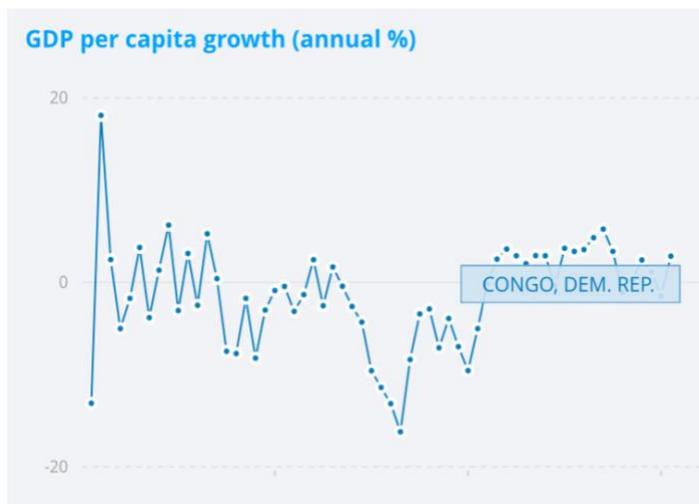
Source: World Bank Data (Bank, 2021)

Figure 2 illustrates DRC's GDP per capita growth (annual %) in 2021 which was at 2.8% and highlights the different difficulties in previous years (Bank, GDP per capita growth (annual %) - Congo, Dem. Rep., 2021). If one is to compare it to another developing country that is not considered extremely poor, like Botswana, which had a GDP per capita growth (annual %) of 9.6 in 2021, it is safe to suggest that DRC is indeed living in extreme poverty (Bank, GDP per capita growth (annual %) - Botswana, 2021).

On the other hand, the region of the DRC is wealthy in natural resources. Natural resources incorporate timber, oil and gas, gold, diamonds, and minerals necessary to the

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energy evolution, such as cobalt and copper. DRC is one of the most biodiverse regions on the planet (UNEP, 2022). According to the International Trade Administration U.S. Department of Commerce, The DRC has significant undiscovered gold, cobalt, and high-grade copper reserves, yet similarly substantial security threats emphasized by inadequate infrastructure. In addition, cobalt, one of the critical metals used to create electric cars, puts the DRC in an essential position for energy evolution (Administration, 2022).

In 2020, the DRC was the world's most giant cobalt excavator, with a development of 95,000 tons, or almost 41% of the world's cobalt. In 2020 the DRC was the sixth biggest maker of industrial diamonds, manufacturing 3.7 million carats (Administration, 2022). The nation has some of the most significant copper holds universally, with a portion of the mines assessed to contain grades over 3%, higher than the worldwide normal of 0.6 - 0.8 percent. Worldwide mining organizations pulled in by high-grade and minimal-expense mines are progressively drawn to the DRC's copper belt in the country's southern area (Administration, 2022).

In efforts to reduce poverty in the country, the Congolese government, in partnership with World Bank (W.B.) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), submitted its first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in July 2006 (IMF, 2007). The strategy comprised five pillars: *"...promoting good governance and consolidating peace, maintaining macroeconomic stability and growth, improving access to social services and reducing vulnerability, combating HIV/AIDS, and improving community dynamics.*" (IMF, 2007, p. 2) These pillars were selected depending on various contemplations, incorporating: (a) the new development of the country from civil war; (b) the condition of administration; and (c) the need to put resources into essential functional areas (IMF, 2007).

The strategy of 2006 failed or did not yield the expected results in implementation, and a new strategy was made in 2012 for four years. The strategy was to be implemented from 2012 to 2016. The strategic objectives of the 2012-2016 strategies were "*(1) strengthening governance, (2) diversifying the economy to accelerate growth and create jobs, (3) strengthening and developing economic and social infrastructure, (4) strengthening social development and inclusion, (5) ensuring balanced and sustainable development*" (Fund, 2013, p. 7). These strategic objectives were equally not achieved, and the IMF and the International Development Association (IDA) are yet to adopt a new strategy for DRC. There

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are many reasons why political will is required for the PRSP to be implemented successfully, but the DRC's political instability and corruption hindered the process. Corruption influences the allocation of resources and redirects reserves implied for public service to private people, making it challenging for the public authority to follow through on its poverty reduction objectives.

4. Chapter 4: Theoretical Considerations

4.1. Colonialism:

Colonialism did not start existing when Europeans invaded Africa. World history is overflowing with one society invading another and overtaking its territory (Margaret Kohn, 2023). In the 16th century, technological progressions in route improved people's knowledge of other societies in the world, causing a critical change in imperialism. The new technological improvements made it possible to get many people across seas and keep up with political control, although distance, European, or the modern version of colonialism and imperialism commenced (Margaret Kohn, 2023).

The trouble of characterizing colonialism comes from how the term is often utilized as an equivalent word for imperialism. Both colonialism and imperialism were ideologies that were supposed to help Europe strategically and financially (Margaret Kohn, 2023). The word colonialism is best used to depict the settlement of Europeans in Australia, North America, Algeria, New Zealand, and Brazil; the colonizers permanently moved to these areas to control the areas and maintain their political connection to the British Empire (Margaret Kohn, 2023). While the term imperialism is used to depict situations in which an outside power controls a nation or territory without many of its citizens settling in the said area or territory, for instance, the European control of Africa, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico by the Americans (Margaret Kohn, 2023).

Some researchers differentiate between colonies for settlement and those for exploitation, but there is no clear differentiation in most cases. Some even associate colonialism with countries that are governed by outside powers. The literal meaning of the terms differentiates them, as the term colony derives from the term "colonus," which signifies

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a farmer, and the term imperialism derives from the term "imperium," which signifies command (Edwards, 2019) (Oko O. Elechi, 2018) (Margaret Kohn, 2023). In most colonialism cases, the colonial power imposes educational, cultural, and political ideologies on their colonies. Colonialism is naturally exploitative and based on oppression which is the opposite idea of the custom of independence, human rights, and state sovereignty (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

The colonized have nothing to contribute to their relationship with their colonizers. To keep the power exercised over the colonized, the colonial authorities would employ supervision methods such as spying and using ordinary people as informants. This method ensured that the people were less likely to rebel and overthrow their colonizers (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

European colonizers based the lawfulness of colonizing diverse groups on the legitimate worldwide standard known as the doctrine of discovery; this standard gave the colonizers better freedoms over the native individuals in the land controlled by the colonizers. The contiguity ideology was another legitimate worldwide rule used to legitimize the control of different lands. Under this standard, the colonizer has a legitimate position to take land near the one already possessed (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

Between the sixteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, European nations colonized all African nations. The Europeans additionally settled states in Asia and the Americas during this time, which is, in many cases, portrayed as present-day colonization. Most European colonizers were Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, France, England, and Belgium. Before beginning the total colonization of regions, European colonizing specialists' introduction to Africa, Asia, and the Americas started with commercial, exchange, and strict missionary undertakings (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

Colonialism has different variations, such as internal colonialism, exploitation, plantation, settler, and surrogate. As different as they are, all these variations share the nature of oppression and exploitation (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

The framework where the motivation behind colonization is to exploit the human and natural wealth of the colonized state defines exploitation colonialism. In the plantation form of colonialism, the colonist government established long-lasting or temporary headquarters for plantations. The colonizer government backs or delivers assistance to another foreign

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power to colonize the landowners. Interior colonization happens when advancement is imbalanced inside a country, and there is innate exploitation because of political and financial disparities between the various region of the country (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

4.1.1. Critique of Colonialism

Colonizers have legitimized their actions on the idea that they had the moral obligation to bring civilization to the countries they had colonized. Philosophers such as Diderot, Smith, and Kant critiqued this ideology due to colonialism's exploitative and oppressive nature (Margaret Kohn, 2023). They are not alone in this view, as several German, British, and French enlightenment researchers have questioned the legitimacy of colonization in the 18th and 19th centuries. The colonization framework of subjection, land stealing, and unpaid hard labor contradicted the standards of liberty and independence. However, the ascent of political theories against colonialism needed more base than just the ethic of everyone being human and equal in all aspects (Margaret Kohn, 2023).

Marxist scholars contend that colonialism, like capitalism, exploits laborers, particularly laborers from the colonized nations. This viewpoint indicates that colonialism compelled social transformation and imbalanced advancement (Oko O. Elechi, 2018). Colonialism obliterated the schooling systems, economy, and culture of the colonized and made a reliance connection between the colonizers and the colonized. Colonialism altered, for instance, Africa's monetary and societal needs to address the issues of Europeans (Oko O. Elechi, 2018). Colonialism fortified race predominance belief systems that promoted the financial and societal benefits of Westerners and their future generations.

Colonizers likewise brought to the colonized illnesses that were not native to the colonies; consequentially, many native people of the colonies died. Europeans brought smallpox to Australia. For instance, smallpox killed over half of the native Australian populace (Oko O. Elechi, 2018). Colonialism weakened the colonized peoples' customs, dialects, religion, schooling regimens, and political frameworks, undermining their advancement. Some researchers fault colonialism for some of Asia's and Africa's financial, societal, and lack of industrial progression (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

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4.2.   Governance Theory

Traditionally the term governance had a different meaning than the current meaning of it, which has been influenced by Western political researchers (Keping, 2018). Now there is a clear difference between governance and government. The word governance is commonly used in other European languages, not just English, and is not just a political term; it is also used in other areas (Keping, 2018). Researchers around the world produce five suggestions on governance theory.

First, the term "governance" refers to a collection of establishments and actors within and outside the government. It maintains that the government is not the primary focus of a nation's authority and contests the power of the government in the conventional form. It is possible to become a robust community at a particular level if the community or private establishment is accepted by the people (Stoker, 1999).

Second, governance recognizes the confusion of restrictions and obligations to address societal and financial concerns. Third, it suggests the government is shifting its limited obligations to the public sector in contemporary culture. For instance, private sphere associations and voluntary units are taking on an increasing number of obligations that were previously the government's obligations. The government's negligence has resulted in the lines separating the civic and private sector and the government from the civil community; their obligations are gradually becoming muddled (Stoker, 1999).

Third, the government recognizes the power reliance between foundations associated with aggregate activity. To be unequivocal, each association committed to aggregate activity needs to rely upon different associations; The result of the trade depends on the assets of every actor, the game's rules, and the climate in which the trade happens. Finally, it should trade assets and arrange a shared objective with others (Stoker, 1999).

Fourth, the meaning of actors' independent, self-administering networks is underscored in governance. For example, a self-managing network can provide orders in a particular circle, work with the public authority in this circle, and propose its policy implementation obligations (Stoker, 1999).

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Furthermore five, the concept of governance acknowledges the capacity to carry out tasks without depending on the authority of the public authority to control or exercise dominance. There are additional executive methods and tools in public affairs management, and the government must use them to steer public matters (Stoker, 1999).

One of the most accurate definitions of governance is the one made by the Commission on Global Governance in their report called "Our Global Neighborhood" of 1995. Governance was defined as

> "governance is how individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated, and cooperative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance and informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest.' (Governance, 1995, pp. 2–3)

It has four characteristics: governance is certainly not a lot of rules or an act, however an interaction; the course of governance is not dependent on domination, yet on cooperation; Both general society and private areas are involved; It is continuous collaboration as opposed to a conventional establishment (Governance, 1995).

Based on the definitions mentioned earlier of governance, one can perceive that governance entails using power to uphold order and satisfy the requirements of the public within a specified scope. The motivation behind the administration is to lead, direct and regulate residents' actions using the force of various frameworks and affairs to amplify the public interest (Keping, 2018). The course of political management, plus the standardizing basis of governmental power, approaches to handling political matters, and the administration of public supplies, is indicated as governance in the setting of political science. Finally, it emphasizes how political power preserves societal order and is used in a specific area (Keping, 2018).

In literal terms, there appears to be no extraordinary contrast between 'governance' and 'government.' However, they differ immensely in political language and logic. According to many academics, knowing the difference between governance and government is necessary for a correct understanding (Gaudin, 1999). Like state government, governance is a political course that needs power and influence to achieve its fundamental purpose of preserving societal order (Keping, 2018).

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Primarily, the most central distinction between governance and government is, unlike government, governance needs influence, the kind which does not derive from governmental agencies. However, the government's power comes from the state. A society's governing body is always comprised of public institutions, but the governance body can also be a combination of public and private entities (Keping, 2018).

Second, management procedures divert power in various directions. For government by the state, power runs hierarchical every time as it applies the political power of the public authority to carry out top-down administration on communal and public undertakings by giving requests, making, and implementing strategies (Keping, 2018). In contrast, governance deals with civic activities utilizing collaboration, cooperation, partnership, instituting identity, mutual targets, and more as a managerial progression of collaboration among the leaders and the ones below them in ranks. Finally, governance is built on collaboration, mutual benefits, identity, and market values (Keping, 2018).

4.2.1. Good governance:

The good governance concept was coined to combat the weaknesses of governance. Good governance is the course of policy implementation that serves the public concern. It is another connection between the political state and common society, as well as the ideal condition of the two, and it is a sort of cooperative administration of public life performed by both the state and the residents. We can see that all viewpoints on good governance share six basics (Gaudin, 1999):

The nature of willful acknowledgment and compliance with social demand and authority is called legitimacy. Legitimacy has no immediate importance to regulations and guidelines, and from the lawful point of view, legitimacy does not imply lawfulness. Something can be legitimate without being legal (Stoker, 1999) (Keping, 2018). To be recognized as legitimate in political science, the power being practiced must be willfully acknowledged by the people. It is considered good governance if the power being exercised is legitimate. An uncomplicated way to achieve legitimacy is to increase a nation's sense of mutual identity. The government must then unite the population by solving conflicting ideas and goals and unite the state and the people to have legitimacy.

Transparency means that the government shares all necessary information with the population. Data about state arrangements vital to the population is to be shared uncensored,

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for example, laws, strategies, strategy implementation, the regulatory spending plan, public consumption, and other critical political data (Keping, 2018).

Then accountability implies considering each individual responsible for their actions. Accountability implies that directors and managerial bodies should satisfy the work and commitments of their positions. If they neglect to do their obligations or deal with their work inappropriately, that will show the absence of accountability (Keping, 2018). Government workers must have a high sense of accountability for good governance. Then there is also the rule of law, which means no one is above the law, no matter their social or professional position. Everyone is to be treated equally before the law. The rule of law helps control people's actions, order, and discrimination. The rule of law is also necessary for good governance (Keping, 2018). For good governance, the government must be responsive, meaning government workers must be diligent and deal with the people's problems responsively without unnecessary delays that cannot be justified correctly. They must be willing to answer the people's questions, clarify detailed information like laws or policies, and attend to the needs of those reaching out to the government. The last point is effectiveness. Effectiveness means that the government is well-organized, competent, and well-managed. They must be effective in their procedures to limit government spending while providing the best services to the citizens. The more effective the government is, the higher its good governance is (Keping, 2018).

A collaboration between the state and its people is the essence of good governance; democracy can ensure the success of good governance by allowing the population's participation in political and administrative decisions of the government. A mixture of good governance and democracy is ideal; it provides a space for freedom and power owned by the people to be used for better governance. Good government can be helpful though not to the same degree as good governance. The government has limitations that can prevent it from achieving good governance, but good governance is based on cooperation between the state and civilians and is more boundless as it stretches into unreachable areas for the government (Keping, 2018).

Good governance arose from democratization, which is about returning power to the people. The goal is not to remove the state's power but to ensure collaboration between the people and the state. The emphasis is on cooperation between state and civil society and removing the former ideology of the private sector versus the public sector. The best way is

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for cooperation that will allow the government to break free from the limitations of government and cooperate with other sectors through good governance (Keping, 2018).

4.2.2. Critique of Governance Theory

Governance theory positively changes the understanding of power and cooperation; however, it is not faultless. Western nations have a perilous inclination to use the theory to validate some superpowers and multinational corporations' efforts to establish international hegemony and intrusion into other nations' internal affairs (Keping, 2018). Governance theory, particularly global governance theory, underscores the nature of governance as an international and universal motion on the principle that the function of the nation, national sovereignty, and nation-state boundaries are insignificant. Undermining state sovereignty and sovereign government's crucial functions in internal and global governance poses a risk of providing multinational corporations and superpowers with a theoretical foundation for influencing other nations' inner matters and advancing their global hegemonic strategies. As a result, we need to be on the lookout for perilous inclinations (Keping, 2018).

4.3. The Resource Curse Theory

The impacts of natural resource overflow on less advanced economies have for quite some time been an active area of exploration in financial matters and are covered by a voluminous group of writing. Most exploration has focused on long-term development impacts, thereby identifying the "resource curse" (Sen A. S., 2021). The resource curse, sometimes called the paradox of plenty, argues that the nations wealthy in natural assets, like oil, gas, or minerals, will have slower financial development and less improvement compared with nations with fewer natural assets. Numerous nations, particularly those in the developing world, have demonstrated that resource wealth has not translated into greater economic prosperity, supporting this theory (Parlee, 2015).

The main idea behind the resource curse theory is that developing nations that rely too much on exports of resources are more likely to experience economic stagnation, political instability, corruption, and conflict. Stagnation can occur for a variety of reasons. A "Dutch disease," in which high commodity prices cause currency appreciation, making non-resource exports less competitive, and deindustrialization is one explanation. Another reason is that the

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ruling elite may be more likely to engage in rent-seeking behavior and less likely to promote democratic institutions due to their reliance on resource exports (Parlee, 2015).

An unambiguous clarification of the resource curse is the Dutch Disease occurrence. The discovery of large natural gas fields in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in a significant increase in revenue and an appreciation of the Dutch krona, resulting in a decline in manufacturing sector competitiveness, which led to the emergence of the term "Dutch disease." (Stijns, 2005).

For more understanding, when a country experiences a sudden and significant increase in revenue from exporting a natural resource, such as oil or minerals, this is the Dutch disease phenomenon. The country's currency appreciates due to this influx of money, making it less competitive and raising prices for other goods and services (James, 2014). As the natural resource area develops, different enterprises might contend with the higher wages presented in the natural resource area, which can prompt a decrease in the creation of non-resource labor and products. Thereby harming the agricultural and manufacturing sectors and contributing to a decline in economic diversity and competitiveness over time (Stijns, 2005).

The resource curse theory helps in gaining an understanding of the difficulties that resource-rich developing nations face. It has encouraged policymakers to promote economic diversification and invest in human capital and helped them comprehend the dangers associated with an excessive reliance on resource exports. The asset revile hypothesis has likewise permitted policymakers and scholastics to distinguish strategy estimates that can be taken to relieve the possible adverse consequences of asset riches, for example, laying out suitable administrative systems, putting resources into the foundation, and advancing neighborhood content (Auty, 2001).

4.3.1. Critique of The Resource Curse

According to the resource curse theory, countries with many natural resources have bad economic, social, and governance outcomes. However, critics of this theory question its usefulness, accuracy, and generalizability. There are some specific criticisms of the resource curse theory, such as the lack of mechanisms of cause, for instance. The resource curse theory has insufficient causal mechanisms to explain how resource wealth results in adverse outcomes. Additional intervening variables, such as political instability, institutional quality,

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or historical legacies, may influence the outcomes of resource-rich nations. Moreover, the job of outer players, like worldwide companies or contributor organizations, is often ignored in the recourse curse hypothesis (Lahiri-Dutt, 2006).

It is also criticized for bias in sample selection: The resource curse theory focuses on a few nations that have failed despite having abundant resources. This little and specific example restricts the generalizability of the hypothesis to other asset-rich nations where poor people experienced comparative results. Additionally, the resource curse theory's comparison group is weak because it is based on nations that do not share characteristics (such as a history of colonization) with resource-rich nations (Mehlum, 2005).

The resource curse is equally criticized for the endogeneity issue, which means a two-way causal relationship exists between resource wealth and adverse outcomes. Positive outcomes can result from resource wealth, but unfavorable outcomes can also result in increased resource extraction to recoup losses. Finally, the resource curse theory does not adequately consider endogenous factors that drive resource exploitation (Mehlum, 2005).

Resource political economy is another critique. The resource curse theory oversimplifies the complex political economy of resource extraction in resource-rich nations. Conflict, corruption, power struggles, and rent-seeking all play a role in this political economy, influencing resource-rich nations' outcomes worldwide. The resource curse hypothesis does not make sense of how these elements communicate and impact the results of asset-rich nations (Lahiri-Dutt, 2006).

The resource curse theory also fails to consider the variety of resource-rich nations' natural resources, locations, and historical and cultural contexts. Various kinds of resources affect the economy and society differently, and these effects vary from country to country. These variations are ignored by the resource curse theory, which views all resource-rich nations as identical (Parlee, 2015). The resource curse theory has confronted huge evaluations that challenge its precision, generalizability, and handiness. However, this should not result in the theory's abandonment; it should be improved by incorporating the criticisms into a more comprehensive theory that considers the context-specific outcomes of resource-rich nations.

4.4.   Contextualization of Theory to Research Question

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DRC is plagued by poverty despite its abundant natural resources, which can be explained by the resource curse, colonialism, and governance theories as this thesis aims to explain. The theory of governance emphasizes how institutions and governance contribute to economic growth. The absence of compelling foundations and administration in the DRC has prompted corruption, mismanagement, and weak law and order. Because of this, the government has been unable to effectively oversee resource extraction and revenue distribution, resulting in the extraction of natural resources by foreign companies at the expense of the local populace. In addition, armed groups have controlled resource-rich areas because of weak institutions, which has led to conflict and further hindered economic growth (Joyce Muraya, 2014).

Colonialism theory focuses on the legacy of colonialism in shaping economic structures and power dynamics in former colonies. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has a long history of colonialism, which has left behind extractive economic structures and oligarchic resource control. The extraction of assets has been constrained by unfamiliar organizations and elites with little advantage gathering to the local populace, sustaining poverty and disparity. As a result, the DRC's poverty is worsened by neglecting the infrastructure and human capital needed for economic growth (Tunamsifu, 2022).

The resource curse theory emphasizes how natural resource wealth holds back economic growth. Natural resources like oil and minerals can cause Dutch disease, and the growth of the natural resource sector causes a decline in other industries like agriculture and manufacturing. The Duch disease can lead to a concentrated concentration of power and wealth in the natural resource sector, with limited economic effects. In addition, resource-rich nations may be plagued by "rent-seeking" behavior, in which influential individuals or groups attempt to corruptly reap the rewards of resource extraction, further fostering poverty and inequality (Sovacool, 2010).

As a result, poor governance, colonial legacy, and the curse of natural resource wealth can all contribute to the DRC's poverty despite its abundance of natural resources discourse. If the DRC is to break the cycle of poverty and encourage economic development, it will be necessary to address these underlying causes.

4.5.   Theoretical Expectations

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As per colonialism theory, the financial and political exploitation of Congo by European powers during colonization has created a legacy of underdevelopment and inequality that endures up to the present day. This heritage has incapacitated the Congolese state to promote sustainable economic development and to offer basic types of assistance like medical services, schooling, and infrastructure to its residents.

In addition, governance theory suggests that corruption, unstable political institutions, and a lack of accountability significantly aggravate Congo's poverty and underdevelopment. Moreover, the weak governance structure undermines the state's ability to control the exploitation of natural resources and enforce regulations or policies that support the country's long-term economic growth.

At last, the resource curse theory suggests that abundant natural resources in nations like Congo frequently lead to financial and political instability, corruption, and conflict. Moreover, the high profits from natural resources encourage resource rent-seeking, which gives power to a small group of people who want to keep things the same and stop initiatives and policies that would help the economy grow more globally.

The theoretical expectations based on colonialism, governance, and resource curse theories suggest that resource-based rents that benefit a select few rather than the majority of the population and an exploitative colonial past are the primary causes of extreme poverty in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Congolese do not have the essential services they need to grow their economy to its full potential because of these structural factors.

5. Chapter 5: Analysis

This section investigates the reason behind the continuing poverty in DRC, a country wealthy in natural assets. This section examines the historical, political, and economic reasons for poverty in DRC. This section will utilize the theoretical considerations mentioned above, namely colonialism theory, governance theory, and the natural resource curse theory, to establish the causes of poverty in DRC. As previously mentioned in this thesis, the concept of poverty is relative and multifaceted. This is not different in the case of DRC. Poverty in DRC is equally multi-layered. To establish the internal causes of poverty in this section, few causes from each of the three categories of the causes of poverty in DRC (historical, political,

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and economic) will be analyzed. For historical and economic causes, colonial legacies, conflicts, inadequate management of abundant natural resources, and poor infrastructure will be investigated; for the political causes, corruption and poor governance will be examined, and the thesis will look at the resource curse perspective of economic causes of poverty in DRC thereby finalizing the economic causes of poverty in DRC.

5.1. Historical and Economic Causes of Extreme Poverty in DRC

5.1.1. Colonial Legacy as a Cause of Poverty

The Exploitation of Natural Resources and Forced Labor:

The colonial legacy of the DRC caused many problems for the country, especially poverty, and to analyze these colonial legacy problems that are historically the cause of poverty in DRC; one must look at them in detail to establish their influence on poverty today. There is a need to analyze three points in this section: exploitation of natural resources, infrastructure, and educational deprivation. These will help with understanding the role of colonialism in the poverty plague that DRC is experiencing.

Several factors contributed to poverty in DRC during the colonial era, including the exploitation of natural resources. First, the colonial powers, Belgium, established a highly extractive economic system intending to extract as much wealth as possible from the territory (Wong, 2012). The goal of exploitation prompted the improvement of an arrangement of forced labor, where the Congolese were obliged to work for the colonizers as a trade-off for wages that were barely enough for survival. The mines, from which the colonists extracted an enormous amount of copper, diamonds, gold, tin, and other valuable minerals, were where this system of forced labor was most prevalent (Tunamsifu, 2022).

Second, the colonizers were more concerned with exploiting natural resources for their gain than growing the Congolese economy. Because of this, the Congolese economy did not develop to its full potential because infrastructure, education, and healthcare were not sufficiently funded. A vicious cycle of poverty that continues to this day was created by a lack of investment in the Congolese economy (Tunamsifu, 2022)

Thirdly, extracting natural resources in the colonial era did not help the Congolese public. Instead, the profits from extracting the resources were sent to Europe, leaving the

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Congolese with little money. The Congolese had no choice except to trade with Europeans, which added to the development of a resource economy and the underdevelopment of the Congolese economy (Oko O. Elechi, 2018).

Fourth, the abuse of natural resources in the colonial era also had long-term environmental effects. The mining done by the colonizers caused the contamination, deforestation, and soil disintegration that destroyed the traditional agricultural practice of the Congolese. The destruction of the agricultural traditions of the Congolese people made it hard for them to produce enough food for their families, which made poverty in the Congo even worse (Sara Lowes, 2020). With this said, the colonial era's exploitation of natural resources contributed to poverty in the DRC in several ways. Even though colonialism ended many years ago, these effects still impact the Congo's economic and social landscape.

Lack of Infrastructure:

DRC has always struggled with poverty, and one of the reasons for this is that it did not have enough infrastructure when it was a colony. The doctrine of exploitation and neglect toward the colonies was followed by the colonial powers, who believed that their only responsibility was to extract resources for their use. Therefore, examining the historical context of the Belgian government's treatment of its colony is necessary to comprehend the infrastructure issue in DRC.

From 1885 to 1908, Belgium established the Congo Free State (CFS), which was brutal, oppressive, and exploitative, resulting in the deaths of millions of Congolese (Sara Lowes, 2020). The CFS primarily focused on ivory and rubber extraction. In addition, the Belgian government did not take any steps to develop the country by constructing infrastructure but did nothing to extend transportation offices, build fundamental public utilities, or put resources into social government assistance improvement projects (Sara Lowes, 2020).

A developing nation with few employment opportunities for the populace resulted from inadequate infrastructure investment. Because of the absence of infrastructure, rural areas, where many individuals reside, could not get transportation to their work. As a result, solid transportation routes were absent, making it inconceivable for farmers to get their items to the market, modern regions, or city centers (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2007). This troublesome transportation infrastructure worsened food scarcity, resulting in severe poverty in Congo. As a result, much of the population in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was confined to

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subsistence agriculture, resulting in a significant lack of economic diversification and insufficient employment opportunities.

Moreover, the poor infrastructure in DRC has hindered access to essential social services like medical care and schooling. The Congo is still considerably behind in developing primary healthcare facilities, contributing to Congolese citizens' high infant mortality rates and low life expectancy. As a result of the low literacy rate, people are stuck in low-paying jobs, which keeps them poor. At the same time, the education system is deteriorating, which has worsened the cycle of poverty (Leinweber, 2016).

The DRC's struggle with poverty was worsened by the absence of infrastructure during the colonial era. If the Belgians had worked on developing a better infrastructure, the DRC would have had better transportation, medical services, training, industry, and communications sectors. The repercussions of this disregard have gone on into the current day; the infrastructure in the DRC remains below average, contributing to poverty and underdevelopment in the country.

Educational Depravation as a Cause of Poverty:

One of the leading causes of poverty is the Congolese people's lack of access to education during the colonial era. During colonization, the Belgians did not focus on education, and only a few Congolese children had a proper education. The lack of access to education hindered human capital, a crucial component of economic growth and development (Vengeyi, 2013). The Congolese population could not participate in meaningful economic activities that required specialized skills like engineering, medicine, and law due to a lack of education. The nation missed crucial economic opportunities due to its lack of human capital (Vengeyi, 2013).

The Belgian government favored the European settlers, and the Congolese lived a life of forced labor with little to show. The country's economic decline, which continues to this day, was aggravated by this unequal distribution of resources in favor of Europeans. During the colonial era, a significant lack of funding for education led many Congolese to seek higher education abroad. The country lost some of its brightest minds due to this talent emigration, and these individuals may not have returned, limiting the country's economic growth, and maintaining poverty (William Shurtleff, 2009). Even after the Congolese gained

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independence in 1960, the colonial rulers continued to exercise poor governance and invest little in education. The country's development potential has been limited by successive governments' failure to prioritize education, which has led to low literacy rates and unskilled labor (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2007).

Due to educational deprivation during the colonial era, DRC has been denied an equitable opportunity to develop human capital, participate in meaningful economic activities, and receive an equitable distribution of resources. These factors have limited the country's economic growth potential, perpetuating poverty.

Conflicts as a cause of poverty

The conflict has plagued DRC for decades. It has experienced numerous internal and cross-border wars and armed conflicts that have resulted in political instability, widespread displacement, and human rights violations. These conflicts are regarded as one of the primary causes of poverty in the nation and have significantly impacted the country's socioeconomic situation. In this section, an analysis of the inevitable consequences of conflict will be examined, namely displacement of people and destruction of infrastructure, loss of human capital, Impediment to economic progress, and increase in criminal activities. Exploring the points mentioned earlier will help determine how conflicts in DRC have contributed to poverty in DRC today.

Displacement of People and Destruction of Infrastructure

For more than two decades, DRC has been mired in conflict, which has resulted in the massive displacement of people and the destruction of infrastructure throughout the country. As a result, poverty is widespread throughout the nation and has significantly impacted the economy (Sadiki Maeresera, 2017). Due to conflict, millions of Congolese have been forced to flee their homes and become refugees, either within the DRC or in neighboring nations. Communities have been evicted from their homes and forced to start over in new areas, resulting in extreme instability. The instability has brought about colossal impoverishment, with those dislodged frequently finding it challenging to get to fundamental necessities like food, water, and medical care (Sadiki Maeresera, 2017).

Additionally, DRC's economy has been significantly impacted by the destruction of infrastructure throughout the country. During the conflict, roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, and other vital infrastructure have been damaged or destroyed (Sadiki Maeresera, 2017). Due

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to this, people have had difficulty gaining access to essential services like healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. The destruction of infrastructure has made it challenging to restore the nation and recuperate from the conflicts.

The conflicts in DRC have likewise affected agriculture, which is the primary type of revenue for some individuals in the country. Insecurity or the displacement of their families has forced farmers to abandon their crops and fields (UNECA, 2015). The abandonment of crops and fields caused by insecurity has prompted a considerable decrease in food creation, bringing about food deficiencies and expanding food costs. Supply chains have also been disrupted due to conflict and displacement, making it difficult for food and other goods to reach markets and consumers (Morten Bøås, 2014).

Additionally, the conflict has created an atmosphere that makes it difficult to invest in the nation. Financial backers are often hindered by the instability that conflicts bring and the subsequent damage to infrastructure. The fear has brought about a decrease in private investment, with local and worldwide financial investors reluctant to commit assets to build organizations and enterprises in the country (Acquaah-Gaisie, 2007). Limiting economic opportunities, this makes the problem of poverty in the country even worse.

During the conflict in DRC, people were forced to flee their homes, and infrastructure was destroyed, significantly impacting the economy, and leading to widespread poverty. It has made it difficult to invest in the country, destroyed vital infrastructure, disrupted agriculture, limited economic opportunities, and created an unstable situation. It is unlikely that the situation will improve, and poverty will continue to be widespread throughout the nation unless the conflict's underlying causes are addressed.

Loss of Human Capital and Impediment to Economic Progress:

Another consequence of conflicts in DRC directly influencing poverty is the loss of human capital and impeding economic progress. One of the most significant effects of conflicts in the DRC is the loss of human capital. Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes due to the ongoing conflict, resulting in a significant loss of the nation's human capital (Adewale Collins Adetoba, 2014). As a result of fleeing their homes and abandoning their businesses, jobs, and infrastructure, individuals are now reliant on humanitarian assistance. The loss of human capital has significantly impacted the DRC's economic progress. Human capital is an essential component of economic growth.

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Another effect is a lack of skilled workers which has resulted from the loss of human capital. With the continuous conflicts, admittance to schools has become difficult, leading to the loss of future generations of skilled workers. One of the most important investments for a nation's progress is education. Without education, people lack the knowledge and skills necessary to innovate, increase productivity, and contribute to economic growth. The absence of gifted specialists has likewise prompted a significant brain drain, as numerous talented laborers have escaped the country to look for better open doors and security elsewhere (Gondola, 2002).

The obstacles that the conflict places in economic progress are another factor contributing to poverty in the DRC. The country has a lot of natural resources, which could help it make a lot of money. Conflict and corruption, on the other hand, have hampered the growth of these resources. As a result, the DRC has lost out on potential revenue due to the smuggling of minerals out of the country and the environment created by the lack of security in mining areas (Coghlan, 2007).

In addition, infrastructure like transportation systems, power plants, and communication networks have been severely damaged by conflict. The damage caused by conflict has hindered economic growth by limiting the capacity of industries to operate effectively and making it harder to move people and goods across the country (Gary King, 2001).

The deficiency of human resources and obstacles to monetary advancement brought about by conflicts in the DRC are significant drivers of poverty in the nation today. The ongoing violence has impeded economic expansion, including a lack of skilled workers, brain drains, and a decline in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (IMF, 2007). In DRC, a cycle of poverty and underdevelopment has been established because of corruption and a lack of political will to address them.

An Increase in Criminal Activities:

For decades, DRC has been in a lot of conflict, which has made the country more dangerous. One of the main factors contributing to poverty in the DRC today is the rise in criminal activity brought on by conflict. Criminal activities have contributed to the

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deterioration of living conditions and impacted the country's economic, social, and political aspects (Joyce Muraya, 2014).

The conflicts in the DRC have created an atmosphere of anarchy, which has led to an increase in illegal activities like theft, looting, and mining. The criminal acts have prompted the loss of revenue for the government and private sector organizations because of property destruction and theft of assets. Criminal activities have resulted in a decrease in economic expansion and an increase in the poverty rate (Joyce Muraya, 2014). An elevated level of insecurity has resulted from the rise in criminal activity, making it difficult for investors to invest in the nation. Thereby further slowing the country's economic growth, leaving individuals with fewer opportunities for employment and lower incomes. Furthermore, the worldwide exchange has been adversely impacted, prompting a decline in foreign exchange and investment.

5.2.   Political Causes of Poverty in DRC

Corruption as a Cause of Poverty:

In today's DRC, corruption is a significant contributor to poverty. Corruption alludes to the maltreatment of power for personal gain through illegal or unethical means. Corruption is prevalent across all government, institutions, and society levels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It includes, among other things, cronyism, bribery, fraud, embezzlement, and nepotism. Defilement destructively affects the country's financial turn of events and adds to the persistence of poverty (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2007).

Government officials mismanage public resources because of corruption. It indicates that corrupt officials divert funds intended for public programs and projects. As a result, vital areas like social welfare programs, education, infrastructure, and healthcare do not receive sufficient funding. Underinvestment in these areas will worsen the situation in a nation like DRC, which is currently battling property (Mehlum, 2005). An example of this is, although the DRC's population is entitled to the state's fortune under Article 58 of the Constitution of February 18, 2006, as amended in 2011, these assets have sadly been poorly managed and allocated; They do not help the population, and it is hard to hold state leaders responsible (Tunamsifu, 2022).

Corruption supports systemic inequalities that strengthen the difference between rich and poor people. Wealthy individuals and businesses can use wealth and influence on access

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opportunities unavailable to less fortunate individuals. Public officials frequently favor Wealthy individuals and businesses, allowing them to take advantage of lucrative contracts while excluding others who may be more qualified but lack connections or money. This disparity propagates poverty and other social issues (Kisangani, 2012). For example, Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja contends that Mobutu and Kabila have duplicated Leopold II's system in post-colonization DRC. Mobutu ruled the nation for 32 years, from 1965 to 1997, and his rule was marked by maladministration, corruption, and exploitation (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2007). President Mobutu was estimated to be the second richest man in the world, with over USD 8 billion in a numbered personal account at a Swiss bank, despite the country's foreign debt of more than $5 billion (Acquaah-Gaisie, 2007).

In contrast, Joseph Kabila, the nation's former leader from 2001 to January 2019, has a personal fortune of approximately $15 billion in banks in the British Isles and elsewhere (Tunamsifu, 2022). It is obvious that while the country's presidents are more prosperous than the country, ordinary people suffer severe poverty. The situation is like the situation during colonialism. While Belgium and Leopold II prospered, the Congolese people continued to suffer exploitation and other atrocities already mentioned in this paper.

Competition is distorted, investment is discouraged, and market efficiency is reduced when corruption is present. Because investors fear losing their money to corrupt officials, investors are less likely to invest in DRC or another corrupt nation. The result is less investment, less job creation, and fewer economic opportunities for the citizens.

Corruption increases the cost of doing business by expanding the expense of labor and products. Additionally, organizations participating in corruption must calculate the cost of payoffs in their business endeavors. The outcome is an inflated cost of living, which excessively harms people experiencing poverty (Tunamsifu, 2022).

Corruption incapacitates law and order by dissolving public confidence in establishments that ought to serve their well-being. People will lose faith in their government, resulting in unrest, demonstrations, and even rebellions. The same can also cause social instability (Kodi, 2008). People experiencing poverty, who are more susceptible to violence's social and financial consequences, will bear a sizable portion of the cost of maintaining order.

The DRC has been severely impacted by corruption, directly or indirectly leading to poverty. The people's rights have been violated due to corrupt government officials misusing

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state resources for their benefit. The tragic reality is that what is happening perseveres, and debasement infringes on the country's general advancement. Fighting corruption is essential to eradicating poverty in the DRC and reestablishing a sustainable society and economy.

Poor Governance as a Cause of Poverty:

Poor governance is one of the primary factors contributing to DRC's extreme poverty, which ranks among the world's poorest. As mentioned in this thesis's sections, the nation is wealthy in natural assets, including jewels, gold, copper, cobalt, and coltan. The DRC is plagued by extreme poverty due to poor governance, which manifests in the following ways despite its abundance of natural resources, corruption (already dealt with above), poor public finance management, a weak judiciary system, weak economic policies, and conflicts (elaborated above).

Poor Public Finance Management:

Poor public finance management is when the government fails to effectively manage public funds resulting in misallocation, misappropriation, or embezzlement of funds. Public finance management is fundamental for any country's financial development and advancement. In any case, when poor public finance management occurs, it can adversely affect the country's overall economic stability and influence the government assistance of its residents, causing them to confront or deal with extreme poverty (Governance, 1995). As a result, the DRC is plagued by extreme poverty due to poor public finance management, amongst other causes.

In public finance management, the DRC government frequently lacks transparency and accountability. The openness of government operations to public scrutiny is referred to as transparency. Holding government officials accountable for their actions is known as accountability (Keping, 2018). The DRC government has a history of mismanaging public funds intended to promote economic growth and provide essential services like health care, education, and infrastructure when there is a lack of transparency and accountability in managing public finances. As a result, funds are frequently stolen, embezzled, or mismanaged, which results in impoverished citizens living in extreme poverty. Citizens are

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denied access to high-quality public services and welfare, leading to extreme poverty when public funds are mismanaged (Governance, 1995).

The DRC government's public finance management procedures and systems are insufficient. Public economic management systems and processes refer to the policies, approaches, strategies, and frameworks legislatures use to oversee public funds. Budgeting, accounting, auditing, and procurement systems are examples. Public funds cannot be used to build infrastructure or stimulate economic growth when these systems are ineffective or nonexistent, perpetuating extreme poverty (Graseck, 2005).

Numerous allegations of embezzlement and corruption plague the DRC government, resulting in the misappropriation of public funds. When public officials steal or use public funds for their benefit, this is known as embezzlement of public funds. Corruption again alludes to the maltreatment of public office for personal gains. When these activities occur without the appropriate specialists investigating them, it prompts poverty and underdevelopment (Kodi, 2008).

Another issue that has encouraged poor public finance management and led to poverty in the DRC is the inability to gather sufficient income. Revenue collected by the government finances projects that contribute to a nation's economic growth. The budget in the DRC is driven by revenue collection. Sadly, the government has lost billions of dollars that could have been used to develop the country and lift people out of poverty due to its failure to effectively manage the revenue collection process (Gary King, 2001).

To summarize, poor governance of the DRC's public finances significantly impacts the economic growth and social welfare of its citizens. Its impact has hurt the nation's battle against extreme poverty, obstructed access to basic social amenities, bringing about underdevelopment. Better accountability, transparency, and systems for managing public funds are required to address the DRC's poor management of public finances.

Weak Judiciary System:

A weak judiciary system is one of the main factors adding to this dire situation of poverty. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a weak judiciary has created a situation in

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which there is no rule of law, rampant corruption, and human rights abuses are common, and the wealthy and powerful can act without being caught.

Corruption and impunity thrive in a weak judiciary system. Corruption is widespread because officials who are supposed to enforce the law can be easily bought. This framework, thus, establishes a climate where the rich and robust can act without risk of punishment, perpetrating violations, for example, financial corruption, land grabbing, and environmental degradation (Burke-White, 2005).

Property rights are not well-protected in DRC due to the country's weak judiciary. This circumstance discourages private investment and entrepreneurial endeavors because investors cannot be confident that their properties and businesses will be safeguarded. Similarly, the absence of property rights hinders agricultural productivity because farmers cannot be sure that their claims to their land will be honored (Burke-White, 2005).

Another issue is that disputes cannot be resolved fairly and timely if there is no functioning, impartial judiciary system. The lack of an impartial judiciary system, in turn, creates a situation where people are less willing to engage in economic transactions, hindering innovation and growth (Zakir Khan, 2022). People experiencing poverty are left without adequate legal protection because of a weak judiciary system. Due to their lack of formal education and knowledge of the law, many poor people are more likely to be exploited. With minimal legal or institutional help, they cannot protect their freedoms and interests, lessening their admittance to equity and propagating their poverty (Zakir Khan, 2022). Moreover, the weak judiciary system in the DRC makes it challenging for foreign financial investors to resolve significant ventures, especially in the Congolese mining area. As a result, the DRC is rarely able to provide these investors with a legal system that is fair, transparent, and predictable (Zakir Khan, 2022).

Overall, it is evident that poverty is not only a result of a weak judiciary system but also a critical factor that reinforces and sustains it. Poverty will continue to be a problem in Congo until the judicial system changes. The DRC's judiciary system must be strengthened efficiently to ensure that economic growth can be achieved and that people experiencing poverty receive the legal protection and rights they deserve.

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Weak Economic Policies:

DRC has been tormented by economic difficulties for a long time, which straightforwardly affects the degree of poverty experienced in the country. Corruption, conflict, a heavy debt burden, inadequate infrastructure, and poor management are the main contributors to weak economic policies. Most of these factors have been looked at in other sections. They are also mentioned here because of their involvement in this section, but for a better understanding of their role in creating poverty, please look above.

The DRC's debt has hindered efforts to alleviate poverty and improve the economy. Since the nation has taken on a significant amount of debt from lenders outside the country, debt service payments consume a sizable portion of the national budget. As a result, there has been little room for investment in crucial areas like infrastructure, healthcare, and education (Zakir Khan, 2022).

The poor state of infrastructure in the DRC has likewise hindered financial development. Roads, bridges, and airports are in rough shape, making it challenging for organizations to move products and access markets. As a result, many businesses operate informally and lack access to financing, which further restricts economic expansion and job creation.

Mismanagement has been a central question in the DRC, with government authorities neglecting to deal with the economy. There have been cases of mismanagement of public funds and an absence of clear strategies for improving financial development and diminishing poverty. As a result, the economy has not been able to reach its full potential due to this, and poverty has continued to worsen.

Overall, the weak economic policies in the DRC have contributed altogether to the poverty in the country. Mismanagement, conflict, excessive debt, inadequate infrastructure, and corruption have all significantly slowed economic growth and left many people in poverty. The public authority of the DRC should go to lengths to resolve these issues and carry out successful approaches that will advance financial development and reduce poverty to serve every one of its residents.

5.3. The Resource Curse Perspective of Economic Causes of Poverty in DRC

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Inadequate management of abundant natural resources:

DRC has many resources, but despite its abundant natural resources, the nation still ranks among the world's poorest, with a 70% poverty rate. The resource curse theory explains how the mismanagement of these resources has contributed to extreme poverty in the DRC. In the previous sections, the economic disadvantages dealt with in DRC have been examined differently. However, this section wants to look at the economic causes of poverty from the perspective of the resource curse theory. This perspective will provide a more theoretical insight into the economic causes of poverty in DRC.

According to the resource curse theory, natural resource-rich nations and regions frequently experience adverse economic and social outcomes, such as increased poverty, corruption, and conflict. The problems experienced by resource-rich countries are because the wealth generated by natural resources is concentrated in the hands of a small number of elites, who frequently mismanage or misuse these resources to the disadvantage of the general population (Philip Kotler, 2006).

This theory is demonstrated in the DRC in several ways. First, for many years, the country's mineral wealth, which includes diamonds, cobalt, and copper, has been a source of conflict and corruption. Armed groups, often backed by foreign interests, have battled about control of mines and resources, instigating violence and instability. As a result, a climate of uncertainty has made it difficult for economic growth and foreign investment to flourish (Sen A. S., 2021).

Second, the extraction of natural resources in the DRC has been characterized by worker exploitation and environmental degradation, deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution in rivers and lakes are all results of mining and logging practices. It is also well known that many workers in the mining industry are exploited, with many working in unsafe conditions and receiving low wages (Sen A. S., 2021).

Lastly, the DRC's mismanagement of its natural resources has resulted in a situation in which most of the country's wealth remains in the hands of a small number of elites while the country remains impoverished. Numerous citizens have been left without access to essential services due to the government's frequent failure to invest in infrastructure, education, and health care. Corruption has been an inescapable issue, with government authorities redirecting funds meant for development projects (Rapanyane, 2021)

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In conclusion, one of the primary causes of extreme poverty in the DRC is poor management of the country's abundant natural resources. Conflict, corruption, and the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few elites have all been aggravated by resource exploitation and mismanagement, according to the resource curse theory. To address this issue, a commitment to investing in sustainable development and greater transparency in natural resource management (Rapanyane, 2021).

5.4. Confirming theoretical expectations

The analysis section confirmed the theoretical expectations mentioned before as it has demonstrated that, according to colonialism, governance, and resource curse theories suggested that resource-based rents that benefit the elites rather than the population is a significant cause of persistent poverty.

The exploitative colonial past of the Congolese people is one of the primary causes of extreme poverty in RDC. The colonial era caused damages that the Congolese people have yet to escape. Such things as forced labor, murder, education deprivation, not investing in the country's economic future, and many other things have contributed to the colonial damage that continues to plague DRC's economic and social development.

The colonial era also left an inheritance of poor governance; DRC is filled with weak institutions that cannot protect the people or help significantly develop the country's economy. The country lacks essential welfare services such as medical care, education, economic opportunities, and employment. However, there is a severe vacuum as most intellectuals move to other countries for a better future, causing a severe brain drain in the nation.

The lack of good governance is a crucial cause of poverty in DRC. Many of the internal problems facing this country can be solved if the governance problem is solved. The institutions being fragile and unable to provide for and protect the people is a crippling fact that DRC is facing. The rich became richer while the poor experienced more poverty. The government does not protect people experiencing poverty or their properties.

The extraction of natural resources in the DRC has been categorized by worker exploitation, environmental degradation, deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution in rivers and lakes are all results of mining and logging practices. It is also well known that many workers in the mining industry are exploited, with many working in unsafe conditions

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and receiving low wages. Though these facts are known to the government, no protection is offered to the workers in the mines. Foreign extractors of natural resources exploit the people with no consequences. As a result, foreign extractors can exploit the people due to weak institutions that govern the country.

The reasons and the explanations provided in the analysis section confirm the theoretical expectation of this thesis. All three theories have been correct in their assumption of the situation in DRC as it is confirmed that they were relevant to answer the research question posed in this thesis.

6. Chapter 6: Discussion: IMF's Poverty Reduction Strategy

6.1. The IMF's 2013 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) for DRC

Much effort has been made to reduce poverty in DRC. However, there have been many fruitless strategies made by the Congolese government, including two PRSPs (one in 2006 and another in 2011(this one was first published in 2013)) from the IMF in partnership with World Bank, but these strategies are yet to produce the preferred or needed results (IMF, 2007).

As briefly stated in the background chapter of this thesis, the 2006 strategy failed, and therefore, there was a need for a new strategy. The strategy published by the IMF in 2013 was to succeed the one from 2006 and had made changes to the previous one (IMF, 2007).

The IMF's 2013 PRSP for the DRC centered primarily on promoting economic growth and reducing poverty through an extensive array of policy measures. The PRSP planned to address the primary and institutional limitations that have impeded financial improvement in DRC. This new strategy had five strategic areas to focus on (IMF, 2013).

Creating an inclusive and stable macroeconomic framework: The IMF recommended policies to maintain macroeconomic stability with low inflation and manageable debt. The PRSP additionally proposed measures to advance monetary discipline and straightforwardness by further developing expense assortment and excusing public consumption. The report underscored the significance of putting resources into the non-

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mining areas, particularly farming, and administration, to expand the economy and make occupations (IMF, 2013).

Enhancing public institutions and governance: The PRSP acknowledged corruption as a significant impediment to financial advancement in DRC. It proposed strengthening institutions like the judiciary and anti-corruption agencies to combat corruption. The report also suggested modifications to promote transparency and accountability in public economic administration (IMF, 2013).

Improving social service delivery: To lessen poverty and inequality, the PRSP sought to enhance education, health care, and social security. The report suggested making it easier for people in rural areas to get health care and primary education. It also proposed changes to work on the proficiency and adequacy of social insurance programs, such as money transfers for vulnerable populations (IMF, 2013).

Addressing infrastructure deficits: DRC's lack of proper infrastructure has significantly delayed economic development. The PRSP suggested investing in essential infrastructure like power grids, railways, and roads to increase connectivity and lower transaction costs. Additionally, the report suggested ways to guarantee the long-term management of natural resources, particularly in the mining industry (IMF, 2013).

Promoting private sector development: The PRSP acknowledged the significance of the private sector in reducing poverty and fostering economic growth. The report suggested reducing red tape, simplifying bureaucratic procedures, and strengthening property rights to improve the business environment. The PRSP additionally proposed intercessions to advance Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) development and facilitate access to finance for entrepreneurs (IMF, 2013).

The PRSP of 2013 equally failed for some of the reasons already explored in the analysis chapter of this thesis. The causes of the failure of the PRSP of 2013 include poor governance, lack of institutional capacity, insufficient resources, limited participation, and Inadequate monitoring and evaluation. Poor governance caused the failure of the PRSP because the DRC has a past of weak governance, corruption, and political instability, as already mentioned in previous chapters. Corruption and political interference prevented the government from effectively implementing the PRSP's reforms and policies in a productive manner that could produce the needed results (Moshonas, 2013).

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Another cause of failure is the absence of institutional capacity. The country's institutions could not implement the PRSP's reforms and policies. The government could not effectively implement the necessary measures to address poverty's underlying causes (Moshonas, 2013). Another cause is a lack of resources. The IMF's PRSP aimed to implement reforms and policies to alleviate DRC poverty. However, the government lacked the financial resources necessary for these policies. The country did not receive sufficient financial assistance from the IMF to carry out the PRSP-outlined reforms and policies. This lack made it impossible for the government, already dealing with economic problems, to allocate appropriate funds to fulfill the strategic points of the PRSP (Buiter, 2007).

There was also a lack of participation from civil society, local communities, and non-governmental organizations. They also did not fully participate in the creation of the PRSP. The policies' efficacy was diminished because these groups' perspectives and requirements were not considered (Taye, 2022). Another issue is that the PRSP's implementation was poorly monitored and evaluated by the IMF. Because of this, neither the government nor the IMF was held accountable for failing to achieve the intended objectives for reducing poverty (Taye, 2022).

To improve the outcome of the PRSPs, the IMF, the World Bank, the Congolese government, and all stakeholders must be willing to cooperate and have a common goal for the success of the PRSPs in DRC. The country has several difficulties, as already established in this thesis.

First, to ensure that all relevant institutions have the skills and resources to implement the PRSPs effectively, the DRC government must prioritize initiatives to build capacity. Training and development programs for government officials and civil society organizations, particularly those providing citizens with essential services, are examples of capacity-building initiatives.

Second, to create an environment advantageous to economic growth, the DRC government must invest in basic infrastructure, such as schools, roads, and healthcare facilities. Such ventures will create job opportunities and attract more investors, prompting a rise in economic undertakings, and decreased poverty.

Third, around 80% of people in DRC rely on agriculture for their livelihood. As a result, the government and the private sector should invest in agricultural development to

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enhance food security and raise farmer incomes. There must also be consideration that the strategy for reducing poverty cannot be effectively implemented by the public sector alone, as was mentioned earlier. As a result, the government ought to establish partnerships with the private sector to use the expertise and resources of the private sector to accomplish the objectives of the strategy for reducing poverty.

Four, to prevail concerning lessening poverty levels, there should be a degree of transparency and accountability in governance. The government must prioritize the rule of law, lowering levels of corruption, and press freedom. To improve access to essential services for the poorest and most vulnerable members of society and reduce income inequality, the DRC government should prioritize social protection programs like cash transfers, health insurance, and education sponsorships. Additionally, the poverty reduction strategy should include targeted programs that target the specific requirements of the poorest members of society. Programs on job creation, skill development, and entrepreneurship are examples of these.

All this sounds plausible, which it is. However, with the background and the current situation of the DRC, this kind of strategy is farfetched. The country does not currently have the governmental structure required to achieve the level of governance and development suggested in this section. However, there is room to improve, and with the appropriate assistance, all these suggestions are achievable.

7. Chapter 7: Conclusion

To understand the internal factors responsible for DRC's plague of poverty despite the abundance of natural resources in the country, one must consider the internal causes of poverty presented in the analysis section. Based on the points presented there, one can conclude that the colonial era's exploitation of natural resources contributed to poverty in the DRC in several ways. First, even though colonialism ended many years ago, these effects still impact the Congolese's economic and social landscape.

The DRC's struggle with poverty was worsened by the absence of infrastructure during the colonial era. If the Belgians had worked on developing a better infrastructure, the DRC

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would have had better transportation, medical services, training, industry, and communications sectors. The repercussions of this disregard have gone on into the current day; the infrastructure in the DRC remains below average, contributing to poverty and underdevelopment in the country. Furthermore, due to educational deprivation during the colonial era, DRC has been denied an equitable opportunity to develop human capital, participate in meaningful economic activities, and receive an equitable distribution of resources. These factors have limited the country's economic growth potential, perpetuating poverty.

Additionally, during the conflict in DRC, people were forced to flee their homes, and infrastructure was destroyed, significantly impacting the economy, and leading to widespread poverty. It has made it difficult to invest in the country, destroyed vital infrastructure, disrupted agriculture, limited economic opportunities, and created an unstable situation.

The deficiency of human resources and obstacles to monetary advancement brought about by conflicts in the DRC are significant drivers of poverty in the nation today. The ongoing violence has impeded economic expansion, including a lack of skilled workers, brain drains, and a decline in FDI. In DRC, a cycle of poverty and underdevelopment has been established because of corruption and a lack of political will to address them.

Conflicts also caused an increase in criminal activities in DRC. An elevated level of insecurity has resulted from the rise in criminal activity, making it difficult for investors to invest in the nation. This has further slowed the country's economic growth, leaving individuals with fewer opportunities for employment and lower incomes.

The DRC has been severely impacted by corruption, directly or indirectly leading to poverty. The people's rights have been violated due to corrupt government officials misusing state resources for their benefit. The unfortunate reality is that what is happening perseveres, and corruption keeps infringing on the country's general advancement. Fighting corruption is essential to eradicating poverty in the DRC and reestablishing a sustainable society and economy.

Also, poor governance of the DRC's public finances significantly impacts the economic growth and social welfare of its citizens. Its impact has hurt the nation's battle against extreme poverty, obstructed access to basic social amenities, bringing about underdevelopment. Better accountability, transparency, and systems for managing public funds are required to address the DRC's poor management of public finances.

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Overall, the weak economic policies in the DRC have contributed altogether to the poverty in the country. Mismanagement, conflict, excessive debt, inadequate infrastructure, and corruption have all significantly slowed economic growth and left many people in poverty. The public authority of the DRC should go to lengths to resolve these issues and carry out successful approaches that will advance financial development and reduce poverty to serve every one of its residents.

It is evident that poverty is not only a result of a weak judiciary system but also a critical factor that reinforces and sustains it. Poverty will continue to be a problem in Congo until the judicial system changes. The DRC's judiciary system must be strengthened efficiently to ensure that economic growth can be achieved and that people experiencing poverty receive the legal protection and rights they deserve.

One of the important causes of extreme poverty in the DRC is poor management of the country's abundant natural resources. Conflict, corruption, and the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few elites have all been aggravated by resource exploitation and mismanagement, according to the resource curse theory. To address this issue, a commitment to investing in sustainable development and greater transparency in natural resource management is required.

The international community has attempted to reduce poverty in DRC. The IMF's efforts to reduce poverty in DRC in 2006 through a PRSP failed, and the PRSP of 2013 equally failed. The causes of the failure of the PRSP of 2013 include poor governance, lack of institutional capacity, insufficient resources, limited participation, and Inadequate monitoring and evaluation. DRC did not receive sufficient financial assistance from the IMF to carry out the PRSP-outlined reforms and policies.

To improve the outcome of the PRSPs, the IMF, the World Bank, the Congolese government, and all stakeholders must be willing to cooperate and have a common goal for the success of the PRSPs in DRC. To ensure that all relevant institutions have the skills and resources to implement the PRSPs effectively, the DRC government must prioritize initiatives to build capacity. Second, to create an environment advantageous to economic growth, the DRC government must invest in basic infrastructure, such as schools, roads, and healthcare facilities. As a result, the government and the private sector should invest in agricultural development to enhance food security and raise farmer incomes.

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The government ought to establish partnerships with the private sector to use the expertise and resources of the private sector to accomplish the objectives of the strategy for reducing poverty. The government must promote the rule of law, lowering levels of corruption, and grant press freedom. The poverty reduction strategy should include targeted programs that target the specific requirements of the poorest members of society.

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