

# Anomie and Peace: A Cross-National Study<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

In today's world, which is rife with civil wars, terrorist activities, and different forms of violence, peace has become a complex concept, affected by various social, economic, cultural, political and psychological factors. One of the states of the society, which may pave the way for conflict or other forms of violence is anomie. Anomie, as a societal state, in which there is a threat of violence, war or terrorist activities, provides a rich area of study to develop deeper insights into conflictive contexts. After developing a theoretical framework and using formerly developed measurements and sequence results, we conduct two studies to further investigate the relation between anomie and peace/conflict. Results indicate that internal peace is associated with the breakdown in leadership and social fabric (Study 1A). Therefore, dysregulated and disintegrated societies as the result of breakdown in leadership and social fabric respectively, pave the way for direct and indirect violence. In addition, our results illustrate that anomie has an important role in predicting the contexts where conflict exists (Study 1B). Findings indicate that anomie data can be useful to forecast the contexts in which there is a potential conflict. They also highlight the importance of anomie in peacefulness or conflictiveness of societies.

**Keywords:** Anomie, Peace, Social fabric breakdown, Leadership breakdown; Dysregulated Society, Disintegrated Society

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1. This article is part of a research project entitled "Analysis of the Effect of Anomic Situation of Iranian Society on Peace Indexes of the State (At the Horizon of 2021)", conducted at the Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies by the corresponding author.

## 1. Introduction

Peace, as a context in which human relations, as well as the relation between human and environment stay in harmony (Karimi & Ahmadipor, 2016, p. 221), has been one of the most essential obsessions of the human beings throughout history; it is the sole context in which human life is preserved and therefore needs to be preserved deeply within societies. Moving from this truth, Johan Galtung (1996), in *Peace with Peaceful Means*, argues that there are three types of violence, including direct, cultural and structural violence. Based on this categorization, he introduces two types of peace: positive peace and negative peace. Positive peace means the absence of direct violence and negative peace means absence of indirect violence.

In today's world, which is rife with civil wars, terrorist activities and different forms of violence, peace has become a complex notion, affected by various social, economic, cultural, political, and psychological factors. One of the states of a society, which may pave the way for conflict or other forms of violence, is anomie. Jamieson (2002) argues that in social contexts, where anomie is present, important objective factors such as threat of war, long histories of war, or emergence of terrorist activities might exist.

The term anomie, as a well-established concept within sociological literature, was coined by Emile Durkheim (2014), who defined it as "breakdown in social structure and moral deterioration". According to Durkheim, anomie is a social condition, characterized by the breakdown in a society's moral standards, values, and regulations. In other words, anomie poses risks to social integrity and coherence. For Durkheim, anomie refers to a social condition, where moral norms and regulatory systems are no longer capable of regulating the society, since they lack legitimacy as well as authority (Hughes & Dodder, 1989; Passas, 1995).

Merton (1968) theorizes that anomie derives from inconsistency between the cultural goals of a society and legitimate means to realize these goals. He formulates five modes of adaptation or response to anomie, which refer to his strain theory and consist of conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, and rebellion. Messner and Rosenfeld (2001), however, have proposed a different theory related to anomie, which refers to a state of society. In their Institutional Anomie Theory (IAT), they look at Merton's theory from a different perspective, i.e., they argue that anomie is an institutional-based phenomenon and institutional-based social structure, which plays a key role as opposed to the socioeconomic-based social structure mentioned in Merton's theory. Based on IAT, in a state of anomie, social controls and moral norms are disintegrated because social institutions start to malfunction. There are four important social institutions identified by Messner and Rosenfeld (2001), which include the economy, polity, education, and family. They argue that the domination of social intuitions, which control and balance the society through economic values, results in anomie, and control capability of these intuitions is weakened by these values. As a complicated and dynamic concept, anomie refers to a social state, as well as an individual state of mind (Bashir & Bala, 2019). Recently, Teymoori et al. (2017) have argued that anomie is the perception of the state of society in which the social fabric, as well as the leadership break down.

In this study, we use the concept of anomie as the perception of the state of society, and we will outline the analysis of anomie from a peace/conflict perspective. The primary purpose of the current research is to develop a framework for investigating the relation between anomie and peace, and to examine this relation in 26 countries in which the anomie and the Global Peace Index (GPI) were measured. By developing a framework to study anomie from

the point of view of peace studies, we aim to provide a basis from which peace studies' scholars and peace activists can gain an understanding of the possible conflicts among societies. We hope that such an analysis will help to develop deeper insights into these kinds of conflictive contexts. As such, we aim to uncover the anomie factors that contribute to conflict.

## 2. Anomie Measurement

In order to indicate a broader context, it should be noted that there are three general approaches to anomie measurement. The first approach deals with measuring individual anomie (Merton, 1968; Durkheim, 2014), the second one measures anomie as a state of society (MacIver, 1950; Srole, 1956), and the third one measures anomie as a perception of state of society (Teymoori et al., 2017).

Researchers have developed different methods and indicators to measure anomie in a society. In sociology, Merton (1968) was the first scholar to develop an instrument to measure anomie. Other scholars, such as Messner and Rosenfeld (2001) later developed comprehensive indicators to measure anomie. In psychology, Srole Anomia Scale (1956) was one of the earlier methods. Other scholars, such as Fischer (1973), Teevan (1975), and Elmore (1962) developed other instruments to measure anomie. Recently, Teymoori et al. (2017) went beyond the conceptualizations of anomie; they combined the measurements of anomie as 'a state of society' and as a 'state of mind', and developed a measurement for anomie in which anomie is analyzed as a 'perception of the state of society'. This paper will adopt Teymoori et al.'s (2017) approach because of the following reasons:

- a. The interplay of individual-level as well as collective-level processes is well-captured by this approach;

- b. It develops a conceptual framework to operationalize and measure anomie as a perception in a society in decay;
- c. It not only proposes that for the emergence of anomie, two conditions have to be fulfilled (i.e., breakdown in social fabric and breakdown of leadership), but it also reveals the dynamic interactions between these two dimensions;
- d. It reveals the responses to the anomie: personal (authoritarianism) and social self (tribalism) contractions (Schenk, 2018; Teymoori et al., 2017).

The Model of Anomie, developed by Teymoori et al. (2017), is constructed on the assumption that “anomie encompasses two dimensions: a perceived breakdown in social fabric (i.e., disintegration as a lack of trust and erosion of moral standards) and a perceived breakdown in leadership (i.e., deregulation as a lack of legitimacy and effectiveness of leadership)”. Teimoori et al. (2017) argue that individuals respond to anomie by contraction of their personal and social self. The authors pay special attention not only to the scale construction, but also to its measurement and validation. In their research, they asked the participants in their study to indicate the extent of agreement and disagreement with the statements provided in a seven-point Likert-type format, where number 1 indicated strong disagreement with the statement and number 7 indicated strong agreement. In addition, for the sake of minimizing response bias, positively and negatively keyed items were included. The total score was created for anomie by reverse-scoring phrases that were negatively keyed, so that it could capture the social fabric and leadership, which are the two main perceptions of anomie, as separate factors. The higher the mean scores, the higher the perceptions of anomie.

The scale was developed through a two-step procedure. First, an explorative factor analysis was carried out. The explorative factor

analysis of the 32 items was checked among the Australian sample, which included 199 freshmen students of psychology at Queensland University. This made it possible to reduce the items to 12 (cf. Table 1). In the second step, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the American sample including 214 citizens aged 18-80 using these 12 items. The analysis confirmed the two assumed factors: the breakdown in social fabric, as well as in leadership. It also resulted in the suggestion that the internal reliability of PAS was satisfactory, with Cronbach's alphas of .81 for breakdown in social fabric, .87 for breakdown in leadership, and .88 for the whole PAS. The two dimensions were also significantly correlated,  $r = .55$ ,  $p < .001$  (Teymoori et al., 2016).

**Table 1.** Dimensions and Items of PAS

Anomie Scale	
Breakdown of social fabric	Breakdown of leadership
1. People think that there are no clear moral standards to follow. (+) (Moral decline)*	7. The government works towards the welfare of people. (-) (Effectiveness)*
2. Everyone thinks of himself/herself and does not help others in need. (+) (Trust)*	8. The government is legitimate. (-) (Legitimacy)
3. Most of people think that if something works, it doesn't really matter whether it is right or wrong. (+) (Moral decline)*	9. The government uses its power legitimately (-) (Legitimacy)
4. People do not know who they can trust and rely on. (+) (Trust)*	10. Politicians don't care about the problems of average person. (+) (Effectiveness)*
5. Most of the people think that honesty doesn't work all the time; dishonesty is sometimes a better approach to get ahead. (+) (Moral decline)*	11. The government laws and policies are effective (-) (Effectiveness)
6. People are cooperative. (-) (Trust)*	12. Some laws are not fair. (+) (Legitimacy)*

Instruction: Think of Australian society and indicate to what extent do you agree with the following statements? In Australia today.

\* item adapted from literature

Source: (Teymoori et al., 2016, p. 27).

### 3. Peace Measurement

There is a clear discontent among practitioners, scholars, and policymakers regarding the peace indicators that are available at present times (Firchow & Ginty, 2017), and also regarding the lack of availability of reliable statistics, which may even affect such basic information (Guelke, 2014). Many scholars have tried to develop comprehensive indicators of peace (Mac Ginty, 2013), but what is apparent is that much still remains to be investigated by peace scholars. In spite of being under critique (e.g. Mac Ginty, 2013), Global Peace Index (GPI) is currently the only country-level measure of peace, covering about 163 countries.

This index determines the level of Negative Peace in a state by means of three broad domains, namely ongoing conflict, safety and security, and militarization. The first domain deals with the internal and external conflicts between countries, as well as their duration. The second domain, Societal Safety and Security, concerns the assessment of harmony or discord within a nation, and is evaluated through the following ten indicators: “lower rates of crime, minimal terrorist acts and violent demonstrations, harmonious relations with neighboring countries, a stable political scene and a small proportion of the population being internally displaced or made refugees” (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016, p. 95). The third domain, militarization, deals with the militarization of a country, which reflects the “link between a country’s level of military build-up and access to weapons, and its level of peacefulness, both domestically and internationally”, and includes seven measurement indicators (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016, p. 95).

The GPI measures the extent of violence or fear of violence by using 23 quantitative and qualitative indicators, which were chosen

by the international panel of peace experts; these indicators are reviewed every year. The scores of the all indicators are normalized on a scale of 1-5, in which qualitative indicators are clustered into five groupings and quantitative indicators are scored from 1 to 5, to the third decimal point. The GPI group of indicators was later used to compute 2 sub-component weighted indices: the first measure was related to the internal peace (IP) of a country and the second measure was related to the external peace (EP) of a country, i.e., beyond its borders.

By implementing a weight of 60% and 40% to the internal and external peace measures respectively, the total score and index is computed. After a long debate, the advisory panel came to an agreement to implement a heavier weight, 60%, to the internal peace measure, on the ground that higher level of internal peace might result in lower external conflict, or that they can be correlated. Every year, the advisory panel reviews these weights before compiling each edition of the GPI (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016).

**Table 2.** Indicator weights in the GPI (Internal Peace 60%/ External Peace 40%) (Weight range 1-5)

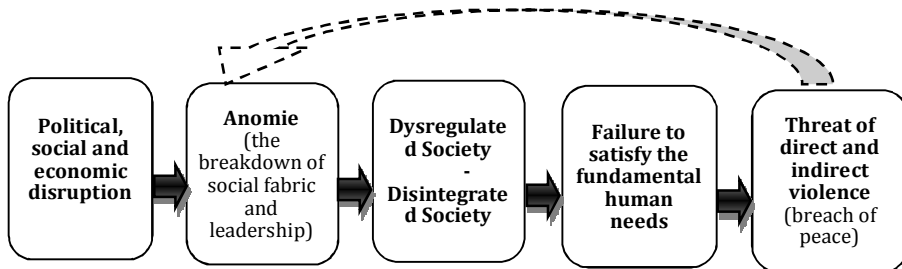
Internal Peace		External Peace	
Perceptions of criminality	3	Military expenditure (% GDP)	2
Security officers and police rate	3	Armed services personnel rate	2
Homicide rate	4	UN peacekeeping funding	2
Incarceration rate	3	Nuclear and heavy weapons capabilities	3
Access to small arms	3	Weapons exports	3
Intensity of internal conflict	5	Refugees and IDPs	4
Violent demonstrations	3	Neighboring countries relations	5
Violent crime	4	External conflicts fought	2.28
Political instability	4	Deaths from external conflict	5
Political terror	4		
Weapons imports	2		
Terrorism impact	2		
Deaths from internal conflict	5		
Internal conflicts fought	2.56		

Source: (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016, p. 98).



#### 4. Anomie and Peace: Conceptual Framework

As mentioned, in social contexts where anomie is present, important objective factors such as threat of war and conflict, long war histories, or appearance of terrorist acts might exist (e.g., Jamieson, 2002). Durkheim (2013) and Sorokin (1944) also put an emphasis on this matter by insisting that lack of social organization and norms within a society results in war as well as revolution. Furthermore, Merton (1968) in his theory of anomie, proposes a typology of adaptation modes, in which rebellion -as one of the responses to anomie- refers not only to the rejection of goals and means by individuals, but also their attempt to replace these goals and means by alternative ends and means, which results in the destabilization of a society and escalation of the conflict within that society. On the other hand, perpetual conflict and/or war in a society institutionalize anomie. Figure 1 illustrates how anomie and peace reconstruct each other.



**Fig. 1.** Conceptual framework of the relation between anomie and peace/conflict

Inspiring by Teymoori et al.'s model of anomie (2017), as well as Galtung's theory of peace (1996), the conceptual framework of the relation between anomie and peace/conflict is depicted in Figure 1. In the proposed framework, political, social and economic disruption cause anomie, which is characterized by a breakdown in social fabric and leadership, which in turn consequently cause a society to be dysregulated or disintegrated.

In a dysregulated society, it is perceived that the leadership is broken down, weakening the social fabric. Legitimacy and efficiency are among the most important qualities of leadership. Effectiveness and efficiency, as an important variable of good governance, associated with peace (Karimi & Shafae, 2018), exist when resources are distributed fairly and all members of a society are protected equally; it also implies that processes and institutions meet the needs of the society completely, and make use of the resources optimally. Furthermore, efficiency requires the sustainability of the development and environmental protectionism (Sheng, 2009). It has an efficient role in fair public delivery system, which in turn causes corruption (Karimi & Shafae, 2018), both of which are direct threats to positive peace (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019).

Legitimacy is also in direct relationship with peace and conflict. This dimension is in relation with voice and accountability, as one of the important variables and indicators of effective governance. Voice and accountability bring the responsiveness of politicians. IEP (2019) analysis supports the idea that countries in which there is a greater capacity for citizens to interact with the government and hold it accountable are more peaceful. Governmental institutions and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public, and to their societal norms. Transparency and the rule of law play an important role in making the government and civil society organizations accountable. The last point here is that it is hard to achieve accountability without adequate access to information (Sheng, 2009).

However, in a disintegrated society, it is perceived that the social fabric has broken down and there are no trust and moral standards. Trust is one of the main components of social capital, which is a necessary condition for social integration, economic efficiency, and democratic stability. Peaceful and stable social

relations, which are essential for harmonious collective behavior, are hard to achieve without trust in a society. In addition, trust helps to convert the Hobbesian state into a more pleasant and peaceful state (Newton, 2001).

Moral standards, in three scales including individual, social and political standards, are perceived as one of the pillars of positive peace (Karimi & Hafeznia, 1397 [2018 A.D.]), as they affect human acts, beliefs, sentiments and emotions. Moral standards are also the means by which people try to regulate and control the actions and behaviors of others (Azevedo, 2018). They are one of the most important principles of peace building and in particular peace education, since “the willingness to extend fairness to others, allocate resources to them, and make sacrifices, would foster their well-being” (Opatow, Gerson & Woodside, 2005, p. 306).

As described, anomie, with four main indicators including moral standards, trust, legitimacy and efficiency, is logically associated with peace and conflict. If these indicators exist in a society, there is a threat to peace, and high level of anomie is associated with low level of peace (in particular internal peace) and high level of conflict. However, the relationship between anomie and peace is mutual. As such, lasting violence, conflict and war institutionalize anomie. In other words, anomie and violence reconstruct each other. Yet, how does this happen? First, criminal motives originate from a general culture (culture of war versus culture of peace) and people learn these motives. The prohibition of murder in a war or conflict as a direct violence (Galtung, 1996) becomes relative, which causes other murders to be rationalized. Second, the economic crisis is sparked off by the conflict/war, giving rise to property crimes. The conflict/war has a direct and indirect impact on the economy and the way work and economic rewards are distributed, and also paves the way for unlawful economic

activities (Nikolic-Ristanovic, 1998). This situation is referred to as a 'state of anomie' (Durkheim, 2014; Merton, 1968).

## 5. Research Design

In search of the causes of violence and conflict among states, this research investigates the psycho-sociological state of the societies and the ways in which this notion influences violence and conflict in societies. Anomie, as a state that exists "at the interface between the individual and the social system" (Teymoori et al., 2017), affects peace between and within societies. In fact, dysregulated and disintegrated societies, as the result of breakdown in leadership and social fabric respectively, pave the way for direct and indirect violence at internal and external levels. In this relation, the main questions of the research are the following:

1. What is the relationship between anomie (independent variable) and peace (dependent variable)?
2. Are anomic societies more conflictive at internal and external levels?

Based on the above-mentioned questions, the following research hypothesis is proposed: States that are more anomic witness a high level of conflict and violence at both internal and external levels.

To investigate the relation between anomie and peace, we first used the anomie data gathered by Teymoori (2016), as well as EPI's Global Peace Index results for the year 2016. After developing a theoretical framework and using the formerly developed measurements and sequence results, we conducted two studies to further investigate the relation between anomie and peace/conflict. In the following sections, the results of the empirical analysis will be revealed and discussed; these results demonstrate that anomie data can be useful to forecast the contexts in which there is a potential conflict.

## 6. The Relation between Anomie and Global Peace Indexes: Study 1A

### 6. 1. The sample

Teymoori (2016) measured anomie in 28 countries. The number of the sample was 6112. Table 3 illustrates the descriptive statistics related to data and sample characteristics for each country.

**Table 3.** Results of PAS and GPI

Country	Independent variable (PAS)					Dependent variable (EPI)			
	BSF (mean)	BL (mean)	PAS (mean)	C. btw PAS Dim	Rank (based on PAS score)	IP (mean)	EP (mean)	GPI (mean)	Rank (based on GPI score)
Pakistan	5.03	5.28	5.15	.18*	1	3.635	2.364	3.135	153
South Africa	4.69	5.04	4.87	.31***	2	2.964	1.279	2.293	127
Poland	4.32	5.37	4.85	.42***	3	1.612	1.401	1.53	21
Hungary	4.74	4.92	4.83	.48***	4	1.637	1.263	1.482	19
Italy	4.54	5.06	4.80	.28***	5	1.967	1.386	1.734	38
Brazil	4.47	5.09	4.78	.27***	6	2.723	1.357	2.182	108
Spain	4.04	5.45	4.74	.15*	7	1.633	1.463	1.563	23
France	4.74	4.61	4.68	.28***	8	1.761	1.908	1.819	50
Iran	4.77	4.51	4.64	.37***	9	2.744	1.912	2.406	131
Latvia	4.42	4.84	4.63	.26**	10	1.902	1.425	1.647	32
Portugal	4.10	5.18	4.63	.12	11	1.431	1.125	1.305	5
India	4.79	4.41	4.59	.30***	12	2.877	2.1	2.569	141
Chile	4.47	4.60	4.53	.21**	13	1.936	1.156	1.623	28
Japan	3.96	4.86	4.41	.32***	14	1.221	1.601	1.374	10
Indonesia	4.12	4.61	4.37	.31***	15	2.121	1.322	1.798	47
Malaysia	4.43	4.29	4.35	.41***	16	2.021	1.167	1.682	33
Belgium	4.24	4.44	4.34	.42***	17	1.629	1.16	1.44	16
China	4.21	4.06	4.14	.48***	18	2.476	1.884	2.169	104
Australia	3.59	4.28	3.94	.23**	19	1.49	1.206	1.377	11
UK	3.69	4.08	3.87	.40***	20	1.702	1.874	1.775	44
Singapore	4.16	3.44	3.80	.29***	21	1.374	1.393	1.378	12
Canada	3.44	4.03	3.73	.33***	22	1.366	1.227	1.311	6
Netherlands	3.77	3.69	3.73	.39***	23	1.488	1.517	1.5	20
Finland	3.65	3.73	3.69	.44***	24	1.505	1.305	1.42	15
Denmark	3.48	3.69	3.59	.55***	25	1.198	1.15	1.178	2
Switzerland	3.68	3.46	3.57	.42***	26	1.282	1.506	1.367	8

BSF, breakdown of social fabric; BL, breakdown of leadership; C. btw Dim, correlations between dimensions.

\*at  $p < .05$

\*\* at  $p < .01$

\*\*\* at  $p < .001$ .

\*\*\* at  $p < .001$ . Source for PAS data: (Teymoori, 2016, p. 68).

IP, Internal peace; EP, external peace; Source for GPI data: (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016)

## 6. 2. Statistical Analysis

The simple associations between items were assessed by Pearson correlation coefficient. We used linear regression modeling to assess the adjusted association between the items. Using PAS data, we assessed how PAS is associated with GPI indicators. To this end, we included country-level indicators of GPI in a series of separate models, and we investigated the relationship between each of the dimensions of anomie, and GPI.

## 6. 3. Results

The correlation between GPI and PAS, as well as their constructing components is depicted in Table 4, where IP and GPI show a significant direct association with BSF and PAS. In addition, IP is significantly associated with BL.

**Table 4.** Correlation between peace components and PAS components described as Spearman's  $r$  (p-value) for  $n = 26$  countries.

	BSF	BL	PAS
IP	<b>.79 (&lt;.001)</b>	<b>.41 (.03)</b>	<b>.62 (.001)</b>
EP	.34 (.08)	.50 (.81)	.19 (.34)
GPI	<b>.77 (&lt;.001)</b>	.35 (.07)	<b>.58 (.002)</b>

## 6. 4. Discussion

Providing evidence for the relation between GPI and anomie, we found that PAS was positively related to Global Peace Index and its component, Internal Peace. These results indicate that anomie perception threatens peace, and in particular, internal peace; societies that are in an anomic state are therefore more prone to violence and breach of peace.

## 7. Predictive Value: Study 1B

As mentioned earlier, anomie is related to a reduced level of peace, and an increased level of violence and terrorism (Jamieson, 2002). Hence, a negative relationship between peace and anomie was predicted, since individuals who live in societies characterized by a high level of anomie will resort to violence, both directly and indirectly. Durkheim (2013) and Sorokin (1944) put an emphasis on this observation by insisting that lack of proper social organization and norms within a society could result in war and revolution.

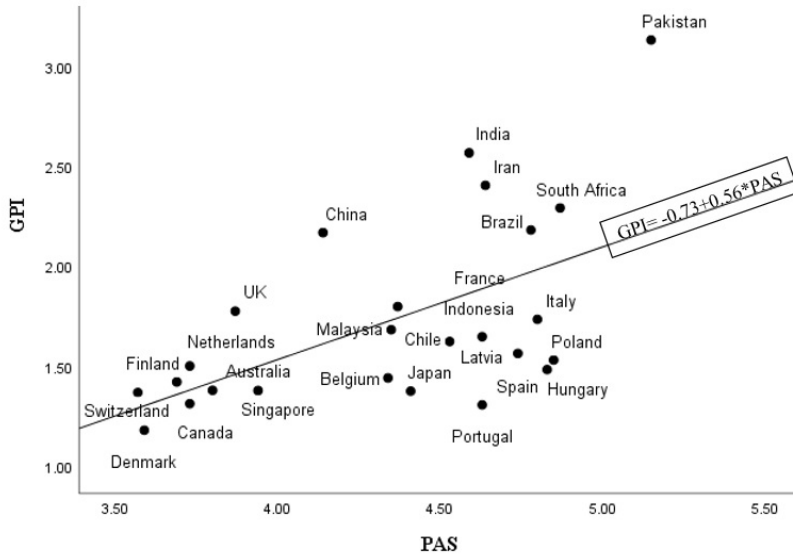
### 7. 1. Results

The results of the linear regression analysis are illustrated in Table 5. As indicated in the first two parts of the table, IP, EP and GPI had significant direct association with the BSF component of PAS (p-value<0.05). Furthermore, the association between GPI and PAS was significant (p-value= .002) with adjusted R-square of .30.

**Table 5.** Results of regression analysis for assessing the association between GPI and PAS and their components for n = 26 countries.

	Variable	Estimate	Std. Error	Standardized estimate	p-value	R-square	Adjusted R-square
IP	Constant	-2.34	.85	—	.01	.55	.51
	BL	-.05	.18	-.50	.77		
	BSF	1.06	.24	.77	<.001		
EP	Constant	.35	.59	—	.54	.23	.16
	BL	-.15	.12	-.27	.25		
	BSF	.42	.16	.58	.02		
GPI	Constant	-1.27	.65	—	.06	.53	.48
	BL	-.08	.14	-.11	.54		
	BSF	.80	.18	.78	<.001		
GPI	Constant	-.73	.73	—	.33	.32	.30
	PAS	.56	.17	.57	.002		

The scatterplot and linear association between GPI and PAS in 26 countries under study is depicted in Figure 2.



**Fig. 2.** Scatterplot of association between GPI and PAS in 26 countries under study)

## 7. 2. Discussion

Study 1B investigated the predictive value of anomie. We investigated the impact of PAS on internal and external peace. We found that higher levels of PAS will trigger violence, threat of war and conflict. In addition, the regression results indicate that after controlling the effect of breakdown in leadership, breakdown in social fabric has a significant direct impact on peace indexes as well as its components, i.e., internal and external peace (p-value <0.05).

## 8. General Discussion

In this study, we investigated peace, or the absence of direct and



indirect violence (Galtung, 1996), as one of the consequences of anomie on the societal scale. As argued earlier, anomie is related to a reduced level of peace and an increased level of violence and terrorism (e.g., Jamieson, 2002). After developing a theoretical framework to investigate the relation between anomie and peace, we organized two studies to conduct an empirical investigation of this relation. First, we confirmed that IP and GPI show a significant direct association with BSF and PAS. In addition, IP was significantly associated with BL. Thus, peace, and in particular internal peace is associated with breakdown in social fabric. Social fabric is often defined by the degree of trust and consensual moral standards within a society (Teymoori et al., 2017). Trust is one of the main components of social capital, which is a necessary condition for social integration, economic efficiency, and democratic stability. Peaceful and stable social relations, which are essential for harmonious collective behavior, are hard to achieve without trust in a society (Newton, 2001). Moral standards, in three scales including individual, social and political, are perceived as one of the pillars of positive peace (Karimi & Hafeznia, 1397 [2018 A.D.]), because they refer to “the willingness to extend fairness to others, allocate resources to them, and make sacrifices that would foster their well-being” (Opatow, Gerson & Woodside, 2005, p. 306). Within a society, social networking can be made easier by means of trust; consensual moral standards and weak ties or connections between distant people can be increased or strengthened, and information sharing can be facilitated. These factors consequently make a society coherent, where individuals become motivated to collaboratively advance the superordinate group's interests (Teymoori, 2016).

However, breakdown in leadership is directly related to internal peace. Within the superordinate group, constructive social

regulation is achieved through two leadership qualities that are interrelated as well as important. The first quality refers to the perception of leadership as legitimate. As explained by Kevin P. Clements (2014, p. 13), “the enhancement of state legitimacy has become a central dimension of multilateral development assistance and a prerequisite for stable peace”. This issue gains more importance when considering the fact that state legitimacy has been the cause of many of the conflicts in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Furthermore, legitimacy makes it possible to govern a state with the lowest level of force, and legitimacy convinces the people who are ruled that the state follows common good (Clements, 2014, p. 13). Democracies are also more accountable, when they can reduce the options available to the leader compared to a non-democracy. This issue has a significant impact on restricting international warfare. The second quality of leadership is effectiveness. Effectiveness and efficiency, as two important peace-related variables in an efficient governance (Karimi & Shafae, 2018) exist when resources are distributed fairly and all members of a society are protected equally. It also means that processes and institutions meet the needs of the society completely, and make use of all the available resources optimally. In such a state, actions are taken by effective leaders to fulfill the goals of the group (Teymoori et al., 2016).

Our purpose in study 1B was to find evidence for a PAS predictive value. Across 26 states of theoretically relevant outcome, peace was significantly predicted by PAS. The results of linear regression analysis indicated that internal peace, external peace, and Global Peace Indexes had significant direct association with breakdown in social fabric as a component of PAS ( $p$ -value $<0.05$ ). In other words, in a society in which trust and moral standards are in decay, internal peace is more prone to decay. Furthermore, the

association between GPI and PAS was significant ( $p$ -value= .002) with adjusted R-square of .30. This means that internal and external peace are in association with trust, moral standards, legitimacy, efficiency and effectiveness dimensions. This finding emphasizes the importance of investigating PAS and the role it has in predicting contexts where potential conflict exists.

Furthermore, the results indicated that perpetual conflict/war and anomie reconstruct each other. First, in a conflict/war, the prohibition against killing (as an anomic behavior and direct violence (Galtung, 1996) becomes relative, which causes the killing of the others to be rationalized. Second, the conflict/war produces economic crisis, which further contribute to the enormous rise of property crimes (indirect violence). This means more anomic state. As indicated by the results of GPI from 2008-2020, some countries such as Pakistan, are trapped in the cycle of anomie-conflict, because anomie creates and institutionalizes both conflict and a culture of conflict, and people learn motives from general culture that cause more anomic state and therefore more conflictive state. However, there are also some challenging cases in this relation. Some countries such as Hungary, Poland, Portugal and Spain, are relatively anomic states, but are among the more peaceful states. Regardless of these cases, the overall data analysis supports the hypothesis of the research.

## 9. Conclusion

The primary purpose of this study was to develop a theoretical framework for investigating the relation between anomie and peace, and to examine this relation in 26 countries in which the anomie and the global peace index were measured. To this end, we conducted two studies to explore the relation between anomie and

peace. Study 1A indicated that internal peace is associated with breakdown in leadership and breakdown in social fabric. As such, dysregulated society- as a result of breakdown in leadership- and disintegrated society- as a result of breakdown in social fabric- pave the way for direct and indirect violent behaviors, such as terrorism, criminal activities and war. In a society in which trust, moral standards, legitimacy and efficiency are declining, internal peace is more prone to decay. Study 1B indicated that PAS plays an important role in predicting conflictive contexts. This means that trust, moral standards, legitimacy and efficiency and effectiveness can predict internal and external peace in a society. In fact, anomie data can be useful to forecast the conflictive contexts in which there is a potential for conflict.

By developing a framework to study the relation between anomie and peace, this study provides a number of opportunities for future peace researches. First, anomie measurement, as a measure of societal conflict, presents the opportunity to fully understand the societies where conflicts exist. Second, periodical measurements of anomie in different societies would be effective in forecasting and preventing the threat of violence, terrorism, conflict and war. Therefore, peace scholars can gain a better understanding of possible conflicts in societies in the pre-conflict era. Third, peace and mediation activities are usually started when a conflict is triggered. The pre-conflict era is to some extent neglected in peace studies, while the main concentration of peace scholars and activists would be focused on finding some paths to prevent the conflicts in the pre-conflict era, since because when a conflict is started, it is hard to stop it and rebuild the society. Building cultures of peace through peace education can stop the cycle of anomie-conflict.

Finally, the present study has several limitations. First, the examination of the relation between anomie and peace is narrow because data of anomie is restricted to 26 countries measured by Teymoori in 2016 at the University of Queensland. Second, the dimensions of the anomie are narrow to cover the peace dimensions. These dimensions can be reviewed to gain an insight into the societies where conflicts exist. This is considered by the first author in his current project entitled “investigation of the anomie state of Iranian society in the path of sustainable peace”. Third, certain countries such as Hungary, Poland, Portugal and Spain are relatively anomic states, but are among the more peaceful states. Investigation of these cases can explore some possible mediation variables such as type of democracy (e.g., Bayer, 2010), etc. In spite of the above-mentioned limitations, the current study investigates the relation between anomie and peace in a cross-national study for the first time. The findings highlight the importance of anomie in societies’ peaceful or conflictive state.

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