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The Paradox of Justice: From Transitional to Everyday Justice

Peter Dixon, Pamina Firchow and Fiorella Vera-Adrianzén

Transitional justice lacks a coherent framework for articulating the relationship between distributive and corrective justice. Academic debates remain largely normative, focused on whether and how transitional justice should distinguish itself from the realm of the social, economic, and cultural. Where there is a bridge between legal logics and lived realities, it generally happens through victims' consultation, but these are often thinly designed processes, revolving around questions like "what do victims want" or failing to turn expectations into action. Taking inspiration from Sally Engle Merry's "paradox of measurement," in which measurements produce the realities they assess, we pose a "paradox of justice" in which victims' lived experiences are filtered and reproduced through the technology of consultation. While important, the question of "what do victims want" ultimately oversimplifies the complexities of how injustice is experienced. Drawing on a unique dataset of everyday indicators of justice from Colombia, this article establishes a framework for articulating the experiential dimensions of post-conflict justice. Ultimately, this framework highlights that justice is a process—whether in the courtroom or in a village reckoning with a massacre—and that the kinds of relationships that justice institutions build with victims are of equal relevance to what these institutions ultimately deliver.

INTRODUCTION

While the field of transitional justice remains animated by debates over its boundaries and goals, it has come to something of a consensus that, in the wake of war, transitional justice processes should recognize social, economic, and cultural rights alongside the field's traditional concern for civil and political rights (Miller 2008; Millar 2011; Selim and Murithi 2011; Gready and Robins 2014; Bundschuh 2015; Dixon 2016; Cole and Firchow 2019). Beyond this, however, there is little consensus about how to strike this balance in practice (Aloyo, Dancy, and Dutton 2022). This is a relevant challenge for diverse fields, including development and aid (World Bank 2011), but it is essential to the law, whose legitimacy is dependent upon maintaining boundaries with its neighboring, non-legal fields (McEvoy 2007; Dixon and Tenove 2013). As such, transitional justice processes are often rooted more in efforts to construct—or break down—these boundaries than in efforts to respond to the lived realities of victims.

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Where there is an effort, it happens through the lens of consultation, which, while it can take various forms in practice, generally revolves around the question of "what do victims want." This recalls Sally Engle Merry's (2016) paradox of measurement, where realities exist only if they are measurable. In this article, we extend Merry's seminal work to introduce the idea of a paradox of justice, in which victims' lived experiences during and after conflict are filtered, reproduced, and packaged through the technology of consultation to reinforce institutional priorities and agendas.

While an important antidote to the exclusionary history of transitional justice processes, the question of "what do victims want" ultimately oversimplifies the complexities of how injustice is experienced and how justice processes can and should respond. The focus remains the institutional interests, organizational standards, and existing capacities of the actors that create them, leaving less room for the lived experiences and justice-based needs of communities affected by war (Merry and Wood 2015; Merry 2016). Instead, we propose a framework rooted in "everyday indicators" of post-conflict justice to help confront this paradox. This helps us move beyond simple calls for increasing victims' consultation to understand what they want and toward thicker and more meaningful forms of engagement rooted in the experience of justice as a multidimensional process that should be victim led.

After conflict, there is a political battle within the international community over how to establish peace, with each sector pushing the transitional agenda in directions that align with their priority areas. This dynamic holds even where post-conflict processes are designed as highly consultative and inclusive, which lead to less meaningful transitional justice outcomes (Firchow and Selim 2022). In Colombia, for example, both the country's national reparations program and its historic peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People's Army (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia [FARC]) have been hailed as some of the most participatory models in history, inclusive of Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, women, and victims' groups (Ruiz-Navarro 2019; Fabra-Zamora, Molina-Ochoa, and Doubleday 2021). Yet Colombia's implementation process has still been highly centralized, driven by institutional logics and agency competition (Cuéllar, Dixon, and Firchow 2022). To the extent that it has been participatory, it has been constrained to limited forms of consultation that have been captured by political power dynamics and do not reflect the "the more messy reality on the ground" (de Waardt and Weber 2019).

We contend that, while indeed complex, this messy everyday reality can provide instructive lessons about how victims and affected communities experience injustice and justice during and after conflict. An everyday justice framework rooted in "everyday indicators" can help transitional justice move beyond traditional, "thinner" notions of victim consultation. The notion of everyday justice allows us to capture a multidimensional picture of how justice is experienced and understood in the daily lives of people emerging from war. We propose five experiential domains, developed through an inductive analysis of indicators of justice collected across eight communities in rural Colombia: mental and physical states, relationships and actors, time and space, practices and objects, and language and communication. We use this conceptual framework to elaborate findings from our dataset of everyday justice indicators to demonstrate how we can shift the justice focus to the everyday and what this means for transitional justice responses after conflict.

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This article is organized as follows: first, we give an overview of the existing approaches used to define and measure complex concepts like justice and explain our use of the everyday in relation to justice. We then explain our methodology, which uses the everyday peace indicators (EPI) approach (Firchow and Mac Ginty 2020). Next, we illustrate our conceptual framework and elaborate on the five experiential domains mentioned above. Third, we describe our fieldwork research design used to empirically develop a dataset of everyday justice indicators as well as the data analysis strategy taken in this article. We then draw on our data to demonstrate what everyday justice looks like in a post-conflict context and discuss our findings according to a framework of "everydayness." Finally, we conclude with some reflections on how everyday justice moves forward transitional justice debates and can inform transitional justice responses and consultation practices.

UNDERSTANDING AND MEASURING JUSTICE

A focus on defining justice according to everyday perceptions and experiences aligns with arguments made by transitional justice scholars, such as Colleen Murphy (2017), who assert that we must focus on relationships to transform society. For example, Murphy argues that respect and reciprocity for agency are fundamental for relational justice, where respect for agency acknowledges the importance for everyday people to govern their own lives and choose their own courses of action, and reciprocity requires accountability between state actors and citizens (Murphy 2017). Like Murphy, we see a need for a relational focus in order to put the lived, victim experience at the center of the implementation of the transitional justice project instead of the institutional struggles and logics that lie at the heart of most post-conflict processes. Our model of everyday justice offers a framework to guide and operationalize—and ultimately measure—these relational, lived experiences.

Everydayness is fundamental to understanding the nuances between transitional and everyday justice. Put simply, the everyday entails "the practices, logics, and spaces that constitute life, … the repetitive and often dull tasks that fill our lives and are often taken for granted" (Mac Ginty 2021, 29). It has often been used to capture the local, ordinary, informal, mundane, or routine aspects of life, and it is part of a large literature that spans the social sciences. While everydayness has fared less well in disciplines like political science and international relations (Björkdahl, Hall, and Svensson 2019), it has been used to analyze topics in law and society like legal consciousness (Hertogh 2018), how law works "on-the-ground" (Silbey 2019), and the role of local practices in transitional justice (Waldorf 2016). In sociology, where it has flourished (Lefebvre and Levich 1987; Highmore 2001; Jones 2018), everydayness was seen in the early part of the twentieth century as an alternative to the discipline's core debate over positivism versus critical sociology, between which there was relatively little room for scholarly inquiry or innovation (Adler, Adler, and Fontana 1987). Sociologists interested in the micro, in the presentation of self, and in the relationship between individuals and structures drew on the notion of the everyday to develop new approaches, including symbolic interactionism (Blumer 1986), dramaturgy (Goffman 2021), ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1991), and phenomenological sociology

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(Berger and Luckmann 1967), which in turn gave way to more contemporary variations of "everyday life sociology" like the sociology of emotions and conversation analysis.

The seemingly mundane and routine acts and logics of everyday life are both constituted by, and constitutive of, the broader political, economic, and social systems of more traditional social scientific concern. As such, "the chief point to take from [a discussion of the everyday] is that the notion ... encourages us to think about power" (Mac Ginty 2021, 30). In particular, for this analysis, a focus on the everyday in conflict-affected settings forces a reassessment of how justice and justice processes are measured in complex, conflict-affected contexts. This investigation, in turn, has significant implications for the way in which these processes are assessed, evaluated, and ultimately designed. It calls into question the assumptions that justice professionals can access the complexities of life during and after conflict simply by asking "what do victims want" and instead poses the need for a richer conceptual framework rooted in the everyday experiences of justice and injustice.

The first step in measurement is establishing a systematic definition of what a researcher understands by a concept like justice in light of the goals of the study and then moves on to its operationalization (Adcock and Collier 2001). However, when scholars conceptualize their variables, they may do so without consideration of the perspective of the researched or only with minimal consultation. At the same time, incorporating an insider perspective into post-conflict justice processes is further impeded by the forces of legalism, which pressure scholars and practitioners to maintain the sanctity of the law as distinct from the messiness of everyday life (McEvoy 2007; Dixon and Tenove 2013). Yet, while a wide variety of research topics lend themselves well to such deductive measurement, in matters related to post-conflict justice, the etic (outsider) perspective is limited in its ability to capture local, context-specific definitions (Merry 2016).

Yet there is growing recognition in the policy and practitioner communities that there are limitations to the existing approaches to justice and a wide range of approaches to measurement related to transitions from conflict and authoritarianism (Merry and Wood 2015; Schaffer 2015; Merry 2016; Goodale 2018). Much scientific and practitioner energy has been devoted to developing bottom-up and community-sourced methodologies in peacebuilding, stabilization, and humanitarian contexts (Khan and Nyborg 2013). These efforts have been mindful that top-down data gathering often lacks the conceptual clarity, nuance, and granularity required to fully understand the experiences of others (Chabal 2012). They were inspired by work from critical environmental studies that advocated a civic and plural epistemology and anthropological work that associated "local voices" with authenticity and accurate understandings of the needs and aspirations of local populations (Nordstrom 1997).

Despite this work, significant inertia hinders efforts to reform many existing indicators, particularly in the empirical assessment of the impact of legal processes, largely due to methodological concerns that require researchers to be more concerned about control over their indicators, ensuring that enough data is available to populate them or that they are universal enough to gather data across contexts, than capturing representative conceptual clarity (Merry 2016). The limitations of externally developed indicators can be summarized as follows (Firchow 2018): they tend to measure proxies of the concepts of interest rather than the concepts themselves; many techniques are limited

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to project or program evaluation, which may tell us little about the wider dynamics of the society in transition; current indicator exercises are often top-down, with exogenous actors initiating, organizing, and designing indicator collection and deployment; the subaltern position of the subjects of research may be reinforced by the ways in which indicators are represented and disseminated—for example, the statistical rendering of data may not be the lens through which communities see themselves; many existing indicators are unable to see the differences, often subtle, within and between communities; and external indicators are not able to pick up issues that may require measurement but have not been observed by outsiders (Merry 2016, 2018, 2019; Merry and Wood 2015).

Addressing these issues with a participatory, localized approach, however, comes at a cost. Community generated indicators are not universal and generalizable; therefore, rendering large-scale measurement systems that use participatory indicators is for the most part impossible, which is particularly problematic for policy makers interested in tracking progress across the world or within a country (Levy and Firchow 2021). Participatory measurement and indicator generation also requires significant skill, time, and resources. In addition, like external measurement, it is most complete when complemented by ethnographic work that delves deep into the dynamics of a particular context or community over a long period of time. Merry (2011, 2017) herself was clear about the limitations and ultimate dangers of deploying indicators without the rich, contextual background that ethnography can provide, even when indicators are informed by local knowledge.

As a response to some of these challenges, the EPI project was created in 2011.[1] EPI is a university-based initiative that brings together researchers who investigate issues related to peace and conflict using an inductive, participatory multi-method research approach (Firchow and Mac Ginty 2020). The EPI methodology investigates alternative, bottom-up indicators of peace and how such bottom-up information can be meaningfully integrated into policy processes (Firchow 2018; Firchow and Mac Ginty 2020). Taking its cue from studies in sustainable development, this approach asks community members to identify their own understanding and measures of particularly difficult-to-measure concepts being studied (such as "peace," "reconciliation," or "justice"). This is based on the premise that local communities are best placed to identify changes, needs, and priorities in their own circumstances, either alone or in conversation with experts. Indicator generation is sometimes accompanied by longitudinal surveys or qualitative assessments such as interviews or more participatory methods such as photovoice (Fairey, Firchow, and Dixon 2022).

As an explicit effort to bridge the gap between localized knowledge and broadly representative data, however, the EPI process is generally not accompanied by the sort of rich, ethnographic research that Merry cautioned against ignoring. Each local community generates its own set of unique indicators, often at the village or neighbourhood level; everyday indicators are themselves not universal or generalizable. Ultimately, reducing the complexity of human experience into context-specific, locally derived indicators can provide a technocratic language through which communities might access policy conversations and processes more easily. As with all research,

1. For more, see "Everyday Peach Indicators," https://www.everydaypeaceindicators.org/.

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TABLE 1.
Fieldwork research design in Colombia

	Treatment municipality	Control municipality
Department of Antioquia	**Dabeiba**	**Urrao**
Treatment communities	La Balsita: recipient of collective reparations San José de Urama: recipient of a Truth Commission program Las Cruces: recipient of Truth Commission program El Cañón de la Llorona: high presence of PDET programs Llano Grande: ETCR Jacobo Arango	La Encarnación: recipient of collective reparations
Control communities	Camparrussia: control community	Pavón: control community

however, the quality of the product and information gathered increases with more time spent in the communities using other complementary methods such as ethnography. We now review the methodology and research design deployed in this project.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

We conducted fieldwork in eight communities in the municipalities of Dabeiba and Urrao in the department of Antioquia (see Table 1 and Figure 1). The municipalities and communities were selected based on the presence or absence of federal programs related to Colombia's transitional justice and peace accord architecture. These programs included collective reparations programs from the 2011 Victims Law, projects of demobilized FARC soldiers living in their own communities, cases related to the Special Jurisdiction of Peace (JEP) and the Territorially Focused Development Plans (PDET). The JEP, Truth Commission, and PDET were all established in the 2016 Final Peace Agreement between the Government of Colombia and the FARC as part of a negotiated Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition.

Dabeiba, in northwest Antioquia, is a municipality in a key region for the JEP and Truth Commission. Dabeiba has lived through decades of armed conflict and is now home to several processes since the institutionalization of the Peace Agreement, including a site where former FARC combatants are advancing their process of reincorporating into civilian life (Dixon and Firchow 2022), a community that is receiving collective reparation, the presence of the Truth Commission, PDET activities, and investigations by the JEP. Urrao, a bordering municipality in southwestern Antioquia with a similar history of conflict but no JEP or Truth Commission presence, was the control municipal case. Within each of the latter areas, we selected communities according to the presence or absence of the peace institutions (see Table 1 and Figure 1). One of Urrao's communities is subject to collective reparations.

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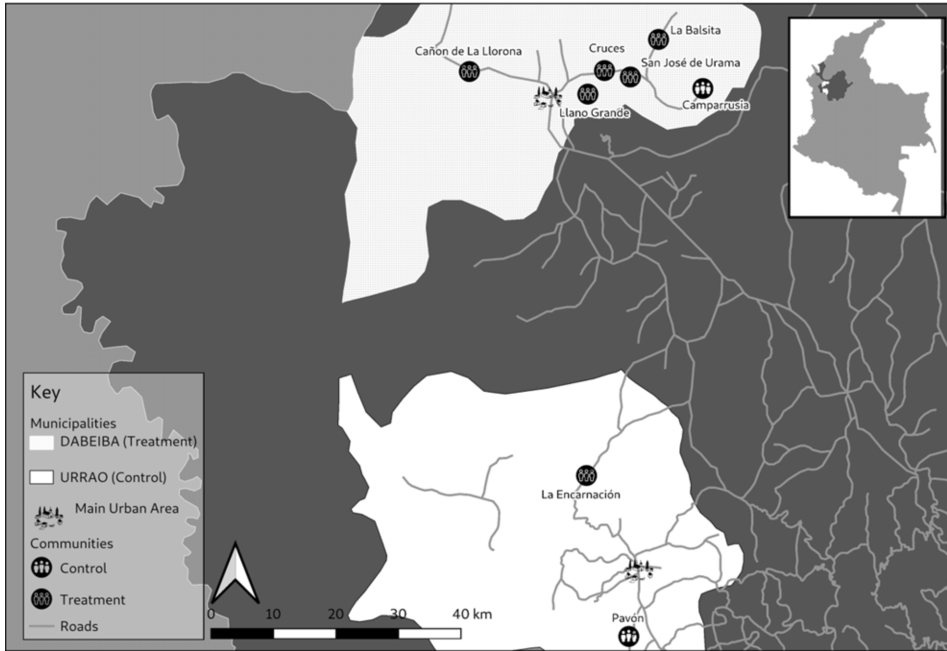

FIGURE 1.
Map of selected communities.

The traditional EPI indicator generation process involves a series of collective, participatory, and collaborative data collection activities working with local communities and organizations on the ground. At the community level, we rely on the context-specific knowledge and guidance of our local team members. Group facilitation and debriefing activities are employed from beginning to end to build rapport and generate a safe, respectful, and open communication dynamic between participants, our team members, and the community or group. Our research team consulted local leadership groups (generally the Juntas de Acción Comunal, which are local collective action groups) and village residents, chosen for their local knowledge, in order to define the boundaries of each community and select a diverse and representative set of participants for our focus groups in each community. We conducted a standard EPI process to collect indicators in the eight communities to define and measure local understandings of coexistence and justice (Dixon and Firchow 2022). Communities were defined as villages that share a common administrative and/or sociocultural identity.

Our research team led three focus groups (one each with men, women, and youth) of 10 to 15 community members for each of the focus groups in each village. In these groups, participants discussed questions such as "what factors do you look to in your daily life to determine whether you experience more or less justice?" and "what does justice mean to you in your community?"[2] Without influencing respondents toward particular kinds of justice—such as social, distributive, retributive, or

2. Even though we collected both indicators of coexistence and justice through the process described above, we focus exclusively on justice indicators for the purposes of this article.

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restorative—we left the discussions open to allow community members to share a broad spectrum of views. Indicators generated in this stage represent specific, countable, and measurable ways in which community members see justice—or injustice—happening around them and through their daily interactions. When selecting participants, we aimed for equal representation of all the different experiences of men, women, and youth throughout the community.

At the end of this stage, the lead researcher then worked with our local researchers to extract a long list of indicators from the transcripts and notes of the focus group discussions. These were vetted and ranked by both focus group participants and the community at large through a simple two-step voting process. First, the field research team presented the long list of indicators to representatives of the original focus groups during a verification focus group. In this group, the participants reassessed their lists and eliminated or added indicators. Next, the researchers invited the community at large to join the original focus group participants in a larger indicator-verification meeting where each participant casts fifteen votes for their top daily indicators. This final exercise represents a rigorous vetting of indicators resulting in a list of 366 justice indicators along with the number of votes each indicator received and whether or not the indicator was originally framed in terms of presence (for example, an indicator that this is justice is that the relatives of murdered victims can find their remains) or absence (for example, an indicator that there is no justice is that the victims are still waiting for reparation).

EVERYDAYNESS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In addition to our traditional thematic EPI coding (Dixon and Firchow 2022), we coded the indicators of justice collected in these communities according to the everyday experiential domains that the indicators represent—what we refer to here as an everydayness framework. Taking a cue from procedural justice, we defined these experiential domains as areas of life through which injustice and justice manifest (Tyler 1989; van Prooijen 2009; Sargeant, Barkworth, and Madon 2020). This is not simply the institutions or systems through which the state enacts justice but, rather, a much broader and more open-ended approach that starts with the everyday experience of life during and after conflict. Such domains illustrate an everyday, relational, and experiential approach to understanding justice in the wake of conflict. This helps us move beyond debates that focus on what kinds of justice victims want and move toward building a picture of the complexity of injustice and justice as they are experienced in daily life.

As Figure 2 shows, these domains can be represented as a Venn diagram, highlighting their overlap and intersection. In total, we organized the indicators into five overlapping everydayness domains: (1) mental and physical states; (2) relationships and actors; (3) time and space; (4) practices, events, and objects; and (5) knowledge and language. First, indicators of mental and physical states entail personal ideas, thoughts, feelings, wants, desires, and expectations. These include both conscious and subconscious states. These often correlate with statements about "what victims want" because they include desiderative expressions conveying need and aspiration, not only with regard to the speaker but also about members of their families, social

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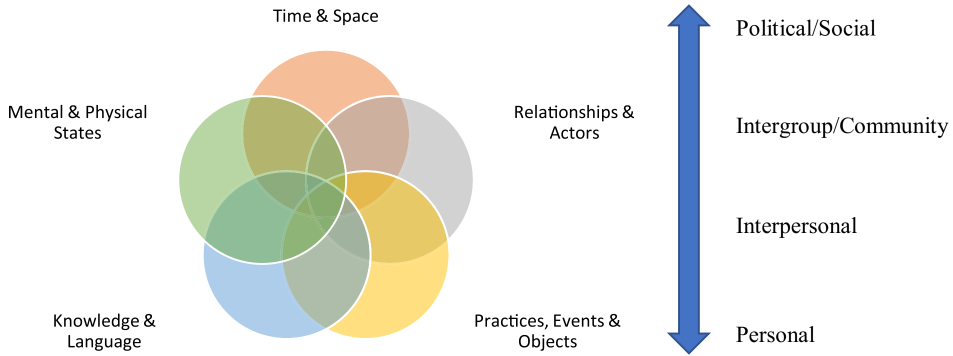

FIGURE 2.
Experiential domains of everydayness across relational levels.

circles, communities, or countries. Relevant indicators from our Colombia database include "the peace process brings a sense of tranquility," "farmers have easy access to credit," and "victims receive psychosocial assistance."

Second, indicators of relationships and actors capture the interpersonal, group, and social spheres in which people live in their daily lives. These relate to interactions and relations with both state and non-state actors as well as the more intimate relationships that people have with their family members, their neighbors, their churches, and other social groups relevant to daily life. Relationship indicators from our justice database include "those involved in and responsible for the war go to the JEP,"[3] "the military does not collaborate with paramilitaries," and "the state complies with the peace accord." Third, indicators of time and space reflect the importance of time usage and trajectories, physical structures, local geographies, and routes in daily life. Such indicators may reflect structures that people see or interact with, aspects of the natural environments that indicate a particular concept, and paths people take to and from destinations like school, work, and church. Some examples from our justice database include "excombatants have access to land," "farmers do not have to abandon their land," and "there is a substitution plan for illegal (coca) crops."

Fourth, indicators linked to practices, events, and objects capture activities, processes, and rituals both formal and informal, along with the objects that populate daily life. Indicators in this domain that were related to justice in our database include "youth are not killed for the actions (during the war) of their parents," "fathers do not spend their reparation money at the bar," and "the ambulance does not charge for its services." Fifth, indicators of knowledge and language refer to the production, sharing, transferring, reception, and awareness of information through multiple channels, including the traditional verbal and written sources as well as auditive, visual, and other sensorial means of communication. In this domain, we also include language and expressions, which can be spoken, heard, or seen, such as rumors, signs, speeches, and more. Example of these indicators from our justice database include "communities

3. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace is a restorative justice court established as part of the 2016 peace accord between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People's Army.

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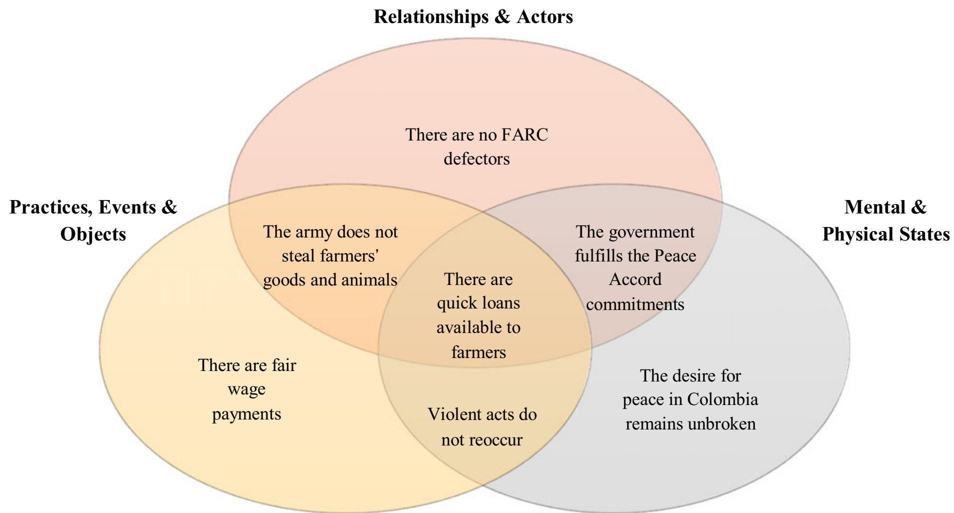

FIGURE 3.
Justice indicators within and across intersecting domains of everydayness.

tell the truth about what happened during the war," "people are not judged for rumors about them," and "we know the truth about those who disappeared during the war." Figure 3 further emphasizes the overlap and intersection across these four experiential domains.

In addition to these horizontal experiential domains, the justice indicators we collected can be framed in terms of a vertical hierarchy of levels through which individuals perceive and understand justice—from the individual to the social. First, indicators at the personal level relate to the self. They are intimate, personal experiences, feelings, actions, habits, and practices. They may pertain to subjects or themes outside of the self, but they are experienced personally. Individual-level indicators from our justice database include "a sense of tranquility," "no fear of FARC rearming," and "the truth is known to be able to grieve loved ones." Second, some indicators are framed at the level of interpersonal relationships. These exist at the level of family, friends, neighbors, and other proximate and intimate social circles. They do not necessarily correspond with indicators of relationships, but there is often a correlation. Indicators of justice at this level include "youth know the truth about the war-time experiences of their parents," "parents advise their children not to join any armed group of the conflict," and "people are not judged based on gossip."

Third, indicators can exist at the broader intergroup or community level. Indicators we source are representative at the community level, but "community" can be defined in a variety of ways according to what is relevant in the specific location in which we are working. Generally, we refer to community as a shared geography such as a village or collection of hillsides. When not defined geographically, though, communities can be defined through associational or identity-based dimensions. Indicators at this level refer to shared experiences like a community's relationship with other communities or shared, community-level experiences during conflict. They also refer to community institutions such as schools, the police, churches, and others.

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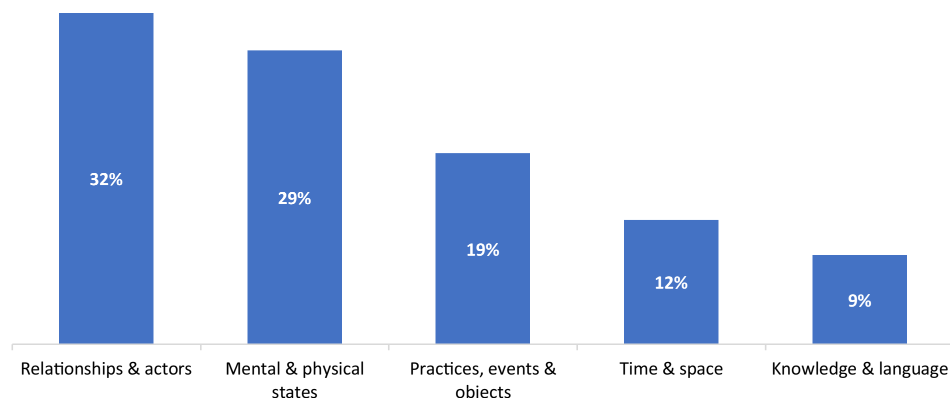

FIGURE 4.
Justice indicators by experiential domain.

Community-level indicators of justice include "the community is not in caught in the middle of crossfire," "the food in the school restaurant is sufficient and affordable," and "there is a police station." Fourth, indicators are also framed at the broader level of society, culture, and politics. These indicators refer to society as whole, to the state, and to municipal, regional, and national institutions. Many of these allude as well to the absence of these actors and institutions. Justice indicators at this level include "it is not necessary to beg the mayor's office for them to do their job," "the army does not help paramilitary groups," and "the government implements the peace accords."

The value of mapping notions of everyday justice according to these horizontal and vertical axes is in showing that, while complex, the lived experiences that inform notions of injustice and justice in the wake of conflict are not so messy as to be unusable for transitional justice consultation processes. The paradox of justice, that is, does not have to leave an unbridgeable gap between institutional logics and lived realities. Rather, this framework can help inform consultation processes to move beyond mere questions of what victims "want" to focus on the necessary kinds of processes and relationships. Indeed, certain patterns emerge from our experiential coding of these justice indicators. For example, our analysis underscores that people experience justice across a range of domains, highlighting that justice is a multifaceted process that is simultaneously personal, interpersonal, communal, and political. This underscores the broad lesson that, in daily life, justice is both understood and lived across a diverse range of domains. Binary debates between politico-civil and socioeconomic justice are therefore unproductive. Rather, victims' consultation and engagement must be able to account for these varied domains of everyday life through which people experience post-conflict justice.

But the story is also more than one of complexity alone (Figure 4). The two domains of "relationships with actors" and "mental and physical states" emerged in our analysis as particularly important. About one-third of the coding instances (32 percent) reflected relationships with the state and armed groups, and more intimate relationships in people's communities and families, while just under one-third (29 percent) reflected people's mental and physical states.

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This implies that victims' consultation mechanisms should address not only what people want out of a justice process—the forms of reparation they may prefer, for example—but also how they see justice institutions as actors with whom they share relationships at personal and communal levels and how these relationships impact on feelings of well-being and recognition. In addition, these results vary by community, demonstrating that not only is justice perceived and experienced across a diversity of dimensions and domains but that this variation also differs between localities. The eight communities in our dataset represent a cross-section of community types, with both shared and unique experiences of war and its aftermath. Notably, this variation includes different types of allegiances with the Colombian military, paramilitary groups, the FARC, and other non-state armed groups. It also includes different representations of Colombia's varied postwar institutional architecture. Explaining this variation goes beyond the scope of this article, however, it does underscore that thick consultation should also be localized and that states must invest in meaningful consultation mechanisms that can access differing realities at local levels.

DISCUSSION

In seeking to diagnose, understand, and represent the needs and priorities of affected groups and communities in peace processes, there is a paradox of justice wherein the complexities and contradictions of daily experience during and after conflict are filtered, reproduced, and ultimately simplified through the technology of consultation to be aligned with institutional agendas and priorities. Questions of how injustice and justice are experienced are reduced to questions of "what victims want," inspiring debates that reflect the institutional positions of those asking the questions (Dixon and Tenove 2013). These competing and dichotomous views of the kind of justice victims need, deserve, or want to emerge from particular institutional and normative spaces in the intersecting fields of transitional and international justice. The promise of consultation to create a bridge between institutional prerogatives and lived realities is limited when constrained to the mere assessment of needs. Rather, our framework highlights that justice is a process, whether in the courtroom or in a village reckoning with a massacre, and that the kinds of relationships that justice institutions build with victims are of equal relevance to what these institutions ultimately deliver.

Colombia's varied and overlapping systems of transitional justice laws, processes, and institutions have been hailed as holistic and participatory (de Waardt and Weber 2019). The peace process produced an unprecedented agreement with 578 varied stipulations from access to land to democratic mechanisms for citizen participation (Peace Accords Matrix 2022). However, the actual implementation has remained centralized (Cuéllar, Dixon, and Firchow 2022) and the victims consultation process relatively limited and inaccessible (de Waardt and Weber 2019). The framework we have developed of everyday justice opens up the possibility of a more inclusive assessment of perceptions of justice as it is actually lived. We seek to shift the focus away from post-conflict justice as a need to post-conflict justice as an experience that exists within a broader context of daily life. Our analysis suggests that in the everyday life of affected

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communities and individuals, justice is far from a unidimensional or dichotomous experience and that concerns for politico-civil and socioeconomic justice exist alongside, not in opposition to, each other and are of varying importance depending on conflict experience. These diverse priorities and concerns, however, are threaded by a more constant set of experiences that structure justice as a daily process.

By looking at the everyday justice experiences of victims, we hope to overcome some of the challenges posed by the institutional biases of external actors and scholars and advocate for a more inductive assessment of perceptions of justice as it is lived by communities themselves, underscoring the importance of a relational justice approach (Murphy 2017). Such an approach is relevant not only for local perspectives toward justice but also for informing the design and implementation of these processes. Our experiential coding underlines the significance of relationships and actors in mediating how communities receive justice processes and highlights the importance of consultation processes in identifying how justice processes should seek to foster relationships between justice institutions and victims and affected communities.

These results suggest some practical implications for community engagement. There is an important connection here between the way in which justice is defined and measured and the processes through which national and international institutions engage in and implement actual justice efforts. As with Merry's paradox of measurement, the paradox of justice is a tension in need of constant management. The consultation and participation mechanisms themselves that governments and institutions employ to explore what kind of justice victims want should reflect the complex and multifaceted experience of justice that communities live in their daily lives, and these should drive post-conflict interventions. Traditional, "thin" consultation mechanisms are not sufficient to capture the meaning and detail or "thickness" of how justice is experienced in everyday of communities, nor do they attend to the diversity and variety of experiences across a region. In particular, it is important to account for the differences that exist at the community level—a level of detail rarely seen in state-based or international justice efforts. At a minimum, such consultation should focus not only on the what of justice measures but also on the how and the who and where. These sorts of questions will begin to establish the partnership, reciprocity and respect for agency that are fundamental to a relational and experiential notion of justice.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Ultimately, the puzzle remains as to how peace and justice processes can be crafted and actually implemented without template approaches in order to attend to contextual differences and local experiences. Future research should focus more centrally on the question of why states like Colombia, which invest significantly in consultation across robust transitional justice and peace accord architecture, still fall victim to the paradox of justice. Three related questions stand out. First, what is it about the policy process that makes institutional logics and interests so difficult to escape? Second, how do the politics of transitional justice, driven by competition between state actors and civil society both domestically and internationally, influence the paradox of justice? Finally, how do everyday indicators play a role in political processes when actually

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wielded by victims and affected communities? There is potential for those most affected by war and post-conflict measures to be empowered by the technologies of measurement and ultimately shift justice processes toward their own interests.

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