

# Make Role Models Mainstream

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## THE GLOBAL POLICY HORIZONS LAB

*Empowering Evidence-Based Solutions*

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## Introduction

As per the renowned James Brown lyrics, “It’s a man’s world, but it wouldn’t be nothing without a woman or a girl.” The song by Brown highlights the significant role played by men in various spheres of our society, particularly in terms of pioneering innovations and ideas that continue to benefit us. However, the song also underscores the crucial contribution of women and girls in these endeavors, emphasizing their equal importance. Armed conflict is a complex and distressing manifestation of global and domestic politics. Instances of genocide and massacres are observed to be indiscriminate in their targeting of individuals, irrespective of their identity or physical appearance. It is important to acknowledge and respect the diverse range of experiences that individuals may have. Women and girl are among the demographic groups that are highly susceptible to harm in the context of armed conflicts. Gender equity remains a persistent challenge across diverse societies, as evidenced by a range of issues including restrictions on reproductive rights, incidents of femicide and barriers to educational access for girls and women.

The issue of gender equity remains a persistent challenge, with women's concerns continuing to demand attention. However, there exist measures that can be taken to advance progress towards the realization of these objectives. It is imperative to adopt a gendered perspective in analyzing politics, militarization, and societal norms. Neglecting the gendered dimension of these areas would undermine our ability to identify and address the specific areas that require improvement in contemporary times. This essay will analyze the gendered aspects of peacekeeping operations and the potential implications of underrepresentation of female peacekeeping personnel on operational efficacy. The feminist theoretical framework posits that by examining the various ways in which gender is constructed in our society, we can not only promote progress for women, but also for individuals of all gender identities. Insufficient attention has been devoted to the phenomenon of masculinization within the military. The absence of gender diversity within a peace and security team may foster a toxic culture of hierarchy predicated on the capacity for violence or ruthlessness, which is not conducive to the team's overall effectiveness.

The inclusion of women and girls in peace and security agendas is crucial as it has a significant impact on the overall well-being of all individuals. Neglecting to do so undermines the true essence of peace and security. The inclusion of female peacekeepers in a mission can offer diverse viewpoints on the implementation of security measures and civilian aid. Additionally, it can provide a relatable figure for local women and girls who face unique challenges due to their gender. The protracted nature of these operations has resulted in the gradual yet consistent development of harmonious state-society relations in these vulnerable states over extended periods of time, ranging from months to years to even decades. In times of armed conflict, a nation's social institutions, including its governmental, healthcare, residential, and educational facilities, may experience a decline. Following the agreement between the United Nations Security Council and the state, peacekeepers are deployed to facilitate a peaceful transition in



the post-conflict phase. The present analysis aims to investigate the educational attainment of girls before and during a peacekeeping mission, in the context of pre-conflict and conflict situations.

Developing countries that receive peacekeeping operations exhibit gender disparities within their educational systems. The period spanning from the 1980s to the 2000s has witnessed a notable rise in the level of educational achievement among female students. I am interested in understanding the role of peacekeeping operations in facilitating the transition to peace and post-conflict reconstruction in various nations that encourage educational development. Is there evidence of a societal shift with regards to the prominence of women peacekeepers in leadership roles, and if so, does this have a positive impact on the educational aspirations of young girls? The deliberate selection of secondary education is attributed to the fact that it encompasses a significant developmental phase for adolescents, spanning from ages 11 to 12 and extending to 18 to 19. This period represents the most substantial gap in education and a crucial time of transformation for this demographic. The study aims to examine the potential impact of female peacekeepers on the educational outcomes of secondary school girls, and if this shift in gender roles influences young girls both prior to and following intervention.

## **Literature Review**

The forthcoming literature review will examine various schools of thought pertaining to feminism and its intersection with conflict and conflict resolution. The present discourse will commence by examining feminist theories within the framework of warfare. Subsequently, the discussion will shift towards the debate surrounding the potential impact of female participation in peacekeeping operations on the efficacy of such operations. Subsequently, an analysis will be conducted to examine the intersection of said ideas with adolescent education. Additionally, the potential impact of gender role changes, specifically in the context of women in leadership roles, on the attitudes and aspirations of young girls will be evaluated.

### **Women in Peacekeeping**

The discourse surrounding gender mainstreaming is characterized by a diversity of theoretical perspectives. These perspectives reflect different schools of thought on the subject matter, which have emerged over time. The adoption of Resolution 1325 by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) marked a significant milestone in the realm of peace and security. This Resolution was specifically designed to facilitate the integration of women into all levels of decision-making and solution implementation in these sectors (UNSC 2000) (Caprioli, 2000).

The work of Kara Ellerby titled "(En)gendered Security" highlights the significance of gender in conflict resolution, with a particular emphasis on the role of women (Ellerby 2013, 442). The gendered framing of peace and security has prompted scrutiny of the prevailing literature on the essence of peacebuilding and security provision. The dearth of female representation in these domains has been identified as a significant factor contributing to the critique of peace agreements and the peace and security agenda. Ellerby's analysis highlights the role of women



as active participants in both the conflicts and the solutions that will ultimately impact them (Ellerby 2013, 437). Ellerby (2013) highlights the strategic measures adopted by Resolution 1325, including gender mainstreaming, as a means of achieving its objectives (p. 440).

Within the realm of peacebuilding, there exist two distinct ideological frameworks pertaining to the integration of gender considerations. The present discourse shall concentrate specifically on the United Nations Security Council's peacekeeping operations. Peacekeeping, as defined by the United Nations Security Council, refers to the collaborative efforts of the Council, participating states, and contributing states to provide troops, police, administrative personnel, and other staff members to support and facilitate conflict resolution in fragile states (UN, n.d). Gender disparity is a common phenomenon in peacekeeping operations, with women being largely underrepresented in these missions. However, it is worth noting that women have been involved in peacekeeping operations, albeit in limited capacities. The implementation of Resolution 1325 in 2006 marked the beginning of women's substantive impact on peacekeeping operations through the gender mainstreaming initiative (Ellerby 2013, 442).

Gender mainstreaming in security and conflict spaces is a widely supported approach, as evidenced by a substantial body of research. There exists a body of literature that presents divergent perspectives on the efficacy of gender mainstreaming as a mechanism for ensuring gender inclusivity across all tiers of peacebuilding. However, some scholars contend that gender mainstreaming may not be sufficient in fostering gender equity within peacekeeping teams. The article titled 'From Women and War to Gender and Conflict?' explores the evolution of the discourse surrounding the role of women in times of war and conflict, and the shift towards a more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics in such contexts. Zarkov analysis of "Feminist Theories" posits that gender mainstreaming was initially utilized to exclude women from government practices. However, it has since evolved into a mechanism for facilitating the integration of women into spaces characterized by significant power imbalances, thereby addressing the issue of women's marginalization (Zarkov 2014, p. 5).

The aforementioned phrase is commonly found in literature that advocates for gender mainstreaming as a means of addressing gender disparities. In Lindsay Heinecken's article titled "Are Women 'Truly' Contributing Uniquely to Peacekeeping?," a critical analysis is presented regarding the efficacy of gender mainstreaming and inclusion in the context of peacekeeping operations. Heinecken's proposition revolves around the impact of women's inclusion in peacekeeping operations on institutional dynamics within male-dominated spaces (Heinecken, 2015, p. 229). An analysis of the various schools of thought within feminism reveals a complex web of theories that intersect and diverge in significant ways. Each school offers a unique perspective on the nature of gender inequality and the strategies necessary to achieve gender justice. A thorough examination of these theories is necessary to fully understand the nuances of feminist thought and its implications in politics. Durbravka's work, "From Women and War to Gender and Con Trajectories," explores the gender dynamics present in the context of war. This article is essential in analyzing the feminist perspectives that are intertwined in the concept of



gendered security. Zarkov's analysis delineates three distinct feminist theoretical frameworks: radical feminism, liberal feminism, and intersectional feminism. The latter is further subdivided into Black, lesbian, and Third World feminism (Zarkov, 2014 p. 5).

According to Zarkov, the concept of women's rights pertains to the establishment of formal, legal parity between genders. Its efforts are directed towards institutions such as the state, the law, and the market, which are presumed to be unbiased and gender-neutral entities that ensure equality. As per the findings of Zarkov (p. 2), it can be inferred that women involved in conflicts are often categorized into a singular feminist ideology. According to Zarkov's analysis, radical feminism is characterized by the conviction that men hold sway over the world and that this power is rooted in their control and exploitation of women's bodies and sexuality (p. 2). The school of thought known as liberal feminism places significant emphasis on the institutionalized discrimination and inequalities experienced by women. The scholarly discourse centers on the notion of legal parity between genders, with emphasis on the expansion of domains such as the state, law, and market, which adopt a gender-neutral stance. The tenets of liberal feminism emphasize the importance of institutions acknowledging the existence of gendered structures. The predominant discourse in peacekeeping literature centers around the liberal feminist paradigm, which seeks to achieve parity through institutional means. This is exemplified by Resolution 1325, which recognizes the necessity of institutional reform in the peacekeeping realm. Zarkov's latest feminist viewpoint incorporates intersectional identities in addition to the female gender. The discourse centers around the intersectionality of Black, lesbian, and third world feminism, as evidenced in literary works such as Heineken and Kunz. This feminist theory underscores the intersectionality of gender with other social categories, such as race, sexuality, and class, in the analysis of feminist theories and gendered institutions.

Both ideological perspectives concur that the inclusion of female peacekeeping personnel is advantageous. According to Karim and Beardsley's research, augmenting the quantity of female peacekeeping personnel would potentially result in a rise in gender parity, as well as a boost in the mission's credibility and trustworthiness (Karim and Beardsley, 2016, p. 105). The study conducted by Karim and Beardsley examines the potential correlation between the presence of female peacekeeping personnel and a reduction in allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by local individuals. (Karim and Beardsley, 2016, p. 102). Karim and Beardsley's work delves into a significant aspect of feminist theory and conflict, namely the concept of militarized masculinity. The phenomenon in question can be characterized as a manifestation of institutional hyper-masculinity that is prevalent among military and law enforcement personnel. Institutions characterized by militarized masculinity are susceptible to a higher incidence of sexual exploitation and abuse, owing to the patriarchal culture of exploitation and abuse, as posited by Karim and Beardsley (2016, p. 103). Karim and Beardsley's analysis highlight the significance of incorporating women peacekeeping personnel in missions as a means of mitigating sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). This is premised on the notion that the presence of female personnel can serve as a deterrent for male personnel to engage in misconduct towards local populations. Karim and Beardsley's findings exhibit statistical



significance, albeit with a limited degree of statistical significance due to the relatively small sample size of women peacekeeping troops.

Heinecken's perspective is centered on the efficacy of women peacekeeping troops and whether their presence truly impacts the success of peacekeeping operations. Heinecken posited that the gendered dynamics of militarized spaces necessitate that women adopt masculine traits in order to command respect in peacekeeping operations. Heinecken cites an excerpt from an interview with a female peacekeeper, wherein she asserts that in order to gain the respect of rebels, she must adopt masculine mannerisms and speech patterns (Heinecken, 2015, p. 232). Heinecken's argument posits that the deployment of women peacekeepers serves as a symbolic gesture of goodwill towards women and children affected by military operations. According to Heinecken's (2015) research, there is evidence to suggest that women exhibit a greater propensity to seek assistance and engage with female peacekeepers. Female peacekeepers articulate their perception of their roles as potential agents of change in challenging traditional gender norms and serving as exemplars. According to Heinecken's analysis, there exists certain indications that advocate for the mobilization of women at the local level and their active recruitment into law enforcement agencies (Heinecken, 2015, p. 233). Finally, in order to substantiate my argument regarding the potential impact of peacekeeping missions on adolescent females, it is imperative to consider the role of peacekeepers in such operations. Heinecken recounts an illustrative encounter highlighting the influence of female role models on young girls. Specifically, a female peacekeeping officer observed a group of schoolgirls while visiting a village. They expressed that upon removing helmets, the women peacekeepers gender was revealed to the schoolgirls. The individuals exhibited a notable level of enthusiasm, prompting them to express a desire to engage in conversation with the women peacekeepers (p. 239).

The study examines the factors that influence the educational choices of boys and girls in secondary education. The article titled "The Role of Gender Ideology" authored by Vleutena, Jaspersa, Maasa, van der Lippe, delves into the significance of critical secondary education in shaping assigned gender roles for both male and female individuals. During the secondary education phase, children are exposed to the process of internalizing gender norms that are cast upon their gender. Vleutena, Jaspersa, Maasa, and van der Lippe have conducted a study on the impact of gender ideology on the vocational trajectories of young individuals. Gender roles have been observed to influence occupational preferences, with boys being more inclined towards STEM-related fields, while girls tend to show greater interest in arts and humanities. The aforementioned literature serves as the basis for acknowledging that the period of education is a pivotal juncture for the solidification of gender roles in the prospective professional trajectories of both male and female students. Buchmann, DiPrete, and McDaniel's work on Gender Inequalities in Education outlines the various phases in which gender-based discrepancies manifest within the educational framework. Buchmann, DiPrete, and McDaniel contend that the developmental stage spanning from kindergarten to high school serves as a critical juncture in the institutionalization of gender-based disparities within the educational



framework. The author posits that the influence of a child's circumstances is not limited to a singular context, but rather is contingent upon their socioeconomic conditions and the prevailing societal forces that surround them. According to Claudia Buchmann, Thomas A. DiPrete, and Anne McDaniel, there exist enduring inquiries regarding the impact of conventional gender stereotypes and norms on students' self-perceptions and the upbringing of girls and boys in their households and educational institutions.

### Girls in Education in Correlation to Gender Norm

The literature reveals a recurring pattern wherein certain educational strengths are associated with either gender. Lowe's research, titled "Gender Role Models and Early Career Decisions," examines the impact of a teacher's gender on female students' career choices in mathematics at the upper secondary school level in Germany. The study takes into consideration the role of gender in teaching and testing female students in arithmetic. According to Lowe's (2021) findings, there is evidence to suggest that female individuals exhibit a greater degree of receptivity towards same-sex role models in comparison to their male counterparts. The impact of female role models on the academic achievement of girls in subjects where they are underrepresented is of utmost significance (Lowe 2021, p.4).

Grant and Behrman's article titled "Gender Gaps in Educational Attainment in Less Developed Countries" offers a nuanced perspective on the issue of gender gaps in education within developing countries. Grant and Behrman's (2010) research suggests that the gender gap in developing countries is narrowing. This trend is attributed to the selective nature of the demographics of girls who have access to education in these countries (p. 86). Grant and Behrman's research findings indicate that in certain regions of South Asia and West Asia/North Africa, there exists a gender gap in the attainment of upper-level secondary education between the ages of 16 and 18 (Grant and Behrman, 2010, p. 87).

Both ideological perspectives acknowledge the advantages of incorporating female peacekeeping personnel. According to Karim and Beardsley's research, augmenting the quantity of female peacekeeping personnel would result in a rise in gender equality, as well as a boost in the mission's credibility and trustworthiness (Karim and Beardsley, 2016, p. 105). Kunz (2020) highlights potential pitfalls of gender mainstreaming, specifically the risk of imposing western gender norms on the global south without critical analysis. This approach, which may be implemented from a top-down perspective, could undermine the efforts of grassroots organizations already operating within the country to promote women's liberation. The current body of literature lacks a comprehensive analysis of the potential impact of mainstreaming on the gender norms of the intervening state. The extant literature on gender mainstreaming has primarily focused on the normative debate surrounding its necessity or lack thereof. However, there remains an absence of empirical research examining the societal impact of gender mainstreaming, both qualitatively and quantitatively. To what extent does the implementation of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations impact societal attitudes towards conventional gender roles assigned to women and girls? To what extent does the





implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives affect gender norms, particularly in the context of the potential masculinization of militant forces? The concept of gender mainstreaming has been subject to criticism, with some arguing that it represents a Western ideology that implies non-Western cultures are inferior in terms of gender equality. Some have gone so far as to suggest that gender mainstreaming is a form of colonization. The inquiry at hand pertains to the impact of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping forces on various societal facets. Beyond the current body of literature, I want to examine its effects on adolescent girls' motivation of breaking gender norms.

## Theory and Hypothesis

I argue that the integration of women peacekeepers in peacekeeping operations via gender mainstreaming would have a consequential impact on the effectiveness of the peacekeeping mission. One of the anticipated outcomes of this measure is the advancement of girls' education in these vulnerable states. The rationale behind the surge in female peacekeeping personnel can be attributed to the implementation of Resolution 1325, which aimed to address the significant gender gap in the participation of women in peacekeeping operations. The incorporation of additional women's peace and security mechanisms serves to acknowledge the prioritization of women as key actors. According to the tenets of liberal feminist theory, the institutional transformation of gender inequalities is reflected in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations (Zarkov 2014, p. 18). Empirical evidence suggests that in peacekeeping operations, there is a higher likelihood of women engaging with other women in the course of their duties. Bridges and Horsfall's research indicate that augmenting the number of women in leadership roles within peace and security operations leads to a corresponding enhancement in mission effectiveness (Bridges and Horsfall 2009, 120). Beardsley and Karim's research on women in peacekeeping missions posits that augmenting the number of women in such missions can potentially reduce the incidence of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

This, in turn, can foster gender equality norms among all peacekeeping personnel. The significance of this matter lies in the assertion made by Beardsley and Karim regarding the allegations of SEA, which they argue have adverse implications for the human security of communities hosting peacekeeping missions and contribute to a breakdown of trust between local populations and the peacekeeping forces. According to Karim and Beardsley (2016), the occurrence of abuse among the local population may result in a reduction in the perceived benefits and legitimacy of the peacekeeping mission. The primary objective of peacekeeping personnel in a fragile state should be to facilitate conflict resolution and mitigate violence rather than exacerbating it. According to research findings, female peacekeepers are perceived to exhibit lower levels of hostility compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, they are perceived to be more accessible to women and children. Irrespective of the feminist theoretical framework employed to justify the inclusion of women in peacekeeping operations,





The deployment of women peacekeepers serves as a symbolic representation of the disruption of traditional gender norms regarding women's participation in war and conflict. During the primary and secondary school years, young girls are particularly susceptible to internalizing gender roles and norms. These institutionalized beliefs can significantly impact their academic and vocational trajectories, as their performance is often evaluated and guided accordingly. In the context of secondary education, female students are often assigned gender-specific roles. Gender roles are not only enforced in school but also by the environment that the girls grow up in, which can reflect on their education. I think education is a great way to see if being subjected to women in different types of roles outside of gender norms affects how they perform in terms of the completion rate of school. I believe that this could serve as a driving force for promoting the empowerment of girls. When assessing this phenomenon within a post-conflict context, it can be suggested that the mere presence of a female role model in high-pressure settings can have a significant impact on the academic performance of young girls who are also in these conflicting environments. This is due to the potential for said role model to serve as a symbol of hope, illuminating the vast array of opportunities available to women in challenging circumstances.

The present analysis aims to investigate the hypothesis that the rise in the percentage of female peacekeepers has a favorable impact on the completion of secondary education by girls in states that are subject to peacekeeping interventions. The study in question identifies the independent variable as the percentage of female peacekeepers, and the dependent variable as the attainment of secondary education among girls. The inquiry pertains to the statistical significance of the association between the deployment of female peacekeepers vis-à-vis their male counterparts and the potential correlation with the advancement of girls' secondary education.

A statistical analysis will be performed to ascertain the statistical significance of the correlation between the percentage of female peacekeepers and the rate of completion of secondary education by girls. The proposed analysis entails the systematic collection of empirical evidence pertaining to the extent of female participation in peacekeeping missions, as well as the prevalence of gender-neutral deployment policies. In addition to assessing the efficacy of peacekeeping operations, it is possible to examine whether there exists a correlation between the presence of aid personnel and an increase in education levels within fragile states.

## **Research Model and Data**

The employed analytical framework for this study was a linear model, which aimed to scrutinize the correlation between two variables. This study aims to investigate the potential relationship between the gender of peacekeeping personnel, which serves as the independent variable, and the completion rate of secondary education for girls, which serves as the dependent variable. The research seeks to operationalize the effects of female peacekeeping personnel on the incentivization of young women to successfully complete secondary school at the lower level.



The statement aligns with prior scholarly works that emphasize the significance of the developmental stage of children and its impact on their conformity to prescribed gender roles. The inquiry at hand pertains to the potential impact of female participation in peacekeeping operations as a symbolic exemplar for young girls, thereby motivating them to pursue the attainment of secondary education.

The current research employed two discrete datasets that measure the magnitude of peacekeeping personnel in a particular observation. The study utilized a dataset sourced from the United Nations peacekeeping gender contribution by contributing country. This facilitated the comparison of the number of male and female personnel in each peacekeeping mission that had female personnel. The lack of a standardized set of guidelines for data collection led to an insufficient depiction of the methodology employed. The dataset exhibited an indistinguishable temporal deployment of personnel. A complementary variable was created to integrate the initiation and conclusion dates of the United Nations' mission mandate with the aim of conducting an analysis. The dataset being analyzed illustrates the differentiated titles assigned to male and female staff members. My analysis is based on the deployment of peacekeepers in the mission, which is determined by the involvement of women in UN interventions. The incorporation of personnel categorization within the dataset seems to lack substantial significance from a political science perspective.

I utilized the Harvard Data Verse dataset, which provides data on peacekeeping and third-party missions, encompassing the quantity of personnel deployed per mission. The mission's temporal parameters were delineated, encompassing both its initiation and cessation dates, in conjunction with the associated country codes linked to the mission. The examination of two distinct datasets played a crucial role in ascertaining the extent to which the proportion of female peacekeepers affects mission outcomes, or whether the presence of peacekeepers, regardless of gender, has an impact on the dependent variable, specifically the rate of completion of secondary school education among girls.

The third dataset, which has been amalgamated with the peacekeeping personnel dataset, concerns the rate of completion of secondary education among girls, as reported by the World Bank. The integration of the dataset was executed in conjunction with the nations that furnished data on the attainment rate of secondary education. The data presented is the result of a quantitative analysis, specifically measuring the ratio of female students who have completed the final year of lower-level secondary education in relation to the total number of eligible students enrolled in that grade. The incorporation of country codes within the given dataset has enabled the amalgamation of said datasets based on those specific metrics.

## **Result and Discussion**

The aim of my research was to investigate the potential correlation between the proportion of female peacekeepers and the completion rate of secondary school girls in countries receiving UN intervention. Based on the quantitative analysis of my data, I can reject my null hypothesis.



The findings reveal a positive correlation between the proportion of women peacekeepers involved in UN interventions and the completion rate of secondary school girls. Although the level of significance is only slight, it indicates a consistent relationship. This means that an increased percentage of female peacekeeping personnel is associated with a corresponding, albeit modest, increase in the number of girls completing secondary school in intervening states. However, when considering the total number of women peacekeepers in these missions, the impact on the completion rate of girls in secondary school is not statistically significant.

Women Peacekeepers Effect on Education of Girls in Secondary School

	Linear Regression	
	Education of Girls in Secondary School	
	(1)	(2)
Proportion of Female PK	11.620*	
	(6.411)	
Total of Females PK in Mission		-0.001
		(0.001)
GDP	0.0002***	0.0002***
	(0.00004)	(0.00004)
Adult Literacy	0.119***	0.147***
	(0.043)	(0.048)
Constant	29.799***	30.103***
	(4.010)	(4.125)
Observations	41	41
R <sup>2</sup>	0.667	0.654
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.640	0.625
Residual Std. Error (df = 37)	2.675	2.729
F Statistic (df = 3; 37)	24.705***	23.266***
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	



The limited presence of women peacekeepers does not appear to make a substantial difference in the educational outcomes of girls at this level. In summary, the data analysis supports the hypothesis and rejects the null hypothesis that a higher proportion of female peacekeepers is linked to a slight but positive correlation with the completion rate of secondary school girls in countries undergoing UN intervention. Nonetheless, the overall number of women peacekeepers is insufficient to have a significant impact on girls' educational attainment at this stage. I've observed 41 countries that have received interventions, and the R squared produced by this model is 0.64. This means from the observations captured 64 percent of the differences within the dependent variable. My second model has an R squared value of 0.654 which means that 65.4 percent of the total data is represented in the second model. In the proportional model a slightly larger percentage of the data is represented. Both models are largely representative of the data collected.

The empirical data presented herein provides compelling proof of a robust association between the participation of females in peacekeeping missions and the overall attainment level of young women in secondary education. It is imperative to recognize that there exist several supplementary variables that contribute to the favorable influence of women peacekeepers on the education of girls. A plausible dimension to consider is the symbolic impact that these women wield, serving as a source of inspiration and impetus for young girls to pursue advanced academic pursuits. Furthermore, the presence of security forces plays a crucial role in maintaining a stable environment, allowing for uninterrupted attendance of girls in educational institutions. Through the effective mediation of conflicts and provision of assistance to fragile states, peacekeeping operations establish secure environments that enable unimpeded access to education for young people.

## Conclusion

While the presented results are slightly statistically significant, they do provide evidence against the null hypothesis. This is consistent with the work of Buchmann, DiPrete, and McDaniel on Gender Inequalities in Education, which suggests that gender gaps and inequalities in education are the result of multiple factors. Girls' and boys' construction of gender norms and roles can be evaluated through an examination of their interactions with various individuals and entities. The gender roles that children are taught during their formative years, particularly during the elementary and secondary school years, can have a significant impact on their overall performance and development that extends beyond the classroom. It is plausible for adolescents to identify role models among a wide variety of individuals. Particularly, children living in regions of geopolitical instability may perceive those who administer state aid as symbolic role models. Exploring the potential impact of gender mainstreaming on the recruitment of individuals into conflict and peace-related occupations, particularly as it pertains to the presence of women in these fields, requires additional research. The potential impact of gender representation in peacekeeping on the future composition of peacekeeping forces merits investigation. Exposure to same-gender peacekeepers during formative years may



specifically serve to challenge gender norms and encourage young women to pursue careers in war, peace, and conflict.



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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Naima Dawid is a third-year international relations major at Webster University in St. Louis, USA. She is utilizing Clive Hamilton's "Silent Invasion: China's Influence in Australia" to write a research paper on a comparative analysis of the securitization of diaspora groups in China (Australia) and Russia (Ukraine and the Baltics).







## **ABOUT THE GLOBAL POLICY HORIZONS RESEARCH LAB**

Webster University's Global Policy Horizons Lab is a policy-focused research entity where students, Lab researchers, affiliated faculty, as well as members of the policy community from across disciplines, can explore national and global security issues, generate original research, as well as produce peer-reviewed policy papers and commentaries. The Lab pursues innovative research focusing on unconventional threats, identity and security, role of technology in security, economic security, as well environmental and food security. The goal of the Lab is to become a knowledge hub that informs national governments and other members of the global policy community on contemporary and future security challenges.

The current Director of the Lab is Professor Dani Belo, PhD.

