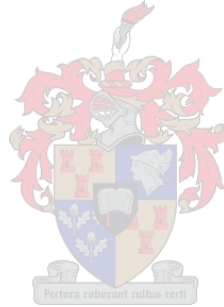


Are Women Making a Difference in Peacekeeping Operations? Considering the Voices of South African Women Peacekeepers

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Abstract

Although there has been a shift from state security to human security, feminist scholars pointed out the missing gender dynamic of a human security approach. The inclusion of a gendered lens has allowed for peacekeeping to come under scrutiny on how it affects the human security of the host society. Due to increased allegations of sexual exploitation of locals by male peacekeepers, the UN and scholars alike have advocated the increasing recruitment of women in peacekeeping operations, claiming that they have a number of unique contributions which improve the operational effectiveness of a peacekeeping unit and the human security of vulnerable populations. Broadly, the unique contributions women make to peacekeeping is:

1. They have a calming effect on men which decreases violence by peacekeepers;
2. Women are more inclined to interact with locals;
3. They are better respondents to victims of sexual violence; and
4. Women are inspirational to local women.

However, women have faced a number of challenges which inhibit them from fulfilling these unique contributions. This project contributes to this line of inquiry and, by conducting focus group discussions with women soldiers in the 9 South Africa Infantry (9 SAI) base, this study provides further understanding on the challenges women peacekeepers face in realizing their value to peacekeeping missions.

The evidence presented in this article suggests that even though women can have a positive impact on the operational effectiveness of a unit, the broadly advocated unique contributions of women peacekeepers presents a false holism of women in the military. In the South African case, patriarchal beliefs define gender perceptions and create a self-perception amongst women which inhibit them from realizing their contributions to peacekeeping missions beyond patriarchal lines. Furthermore, the South African National Defence Force's (SANDF) liberal feminist approach to recruiting women in the military is based on gender equality, which has come at the expense of valuing gender difference. Considering the South African case, and more broadly, the hegemonic masculine culture of military institutions allows for the creation of a soldier identity which only features masculine qualities. Therefore, both men and women do not value feminine qualities which are useful and needed in peacekeeping operations. In the end, women dilute their femininity to fit into this male

domain, defeating the point of adding more women to peacekeeping operations for their feminine qualities. This study shows that, ultimately, the correlation between recruiting more women and improving the human security of vulnerable citizens is hazy. Depending on the context in which peacekeepers are deployed, women peacekeepers may exacerbate the insecurity of the locals, the unit, and themselves.

To overcome these challenges, this paper advocates the creation of a new soldier identity which should be championed by the SANDF. Furthermore, gender training should be done on a regular basis. In addition, recruitment processes should especially target women and emphasize the value they may add to the military and peacekeeping operations. Finally, ongoing challenges difficult to overcome are the deeply entrenched patriarchal beliefs in the South African society, and the hegemonic masculine culture of the SANDF.

Opsomming

Alhoewel daar 'n verskuiwing in fokus vanaf staatsveiligheid na menslike veiligheid plaasgevind het, lewer feministiese teorie steeds kritiek op menslike veiligheid omdat dit faal om 'n geslagsaspek in ag te neem. Die insluiting van 'n geslagsaspek het veroorsaak dat navorsing oor die maniere waarop 'n vredesoperasie die menslikesekuriteit van die plaaslike bevolking beïnvloed gedoen word. As gevolg van toenemende bewerings van seksuele uitbuiting van plaaslike inwoners deur manlike vredebewaarders het beide die VN en ander geleerdes aanbeveel dat meer vroue gewerf moet word vir deelname aan vredesoperasies. Hul beweer dat vroulike vredesmagsoldate 'n aantal unieke bydraes kan maak tot die effektiwiteit van vredesmaginehede, asook die menslike sekuriteit van kwesbare bevolkings. Die unieke bydrae wat vroue kan maak tot vredesendings sluit die volgende in:

1. Hulle het 'n kalmerende effek op mans wat dus lei tot minder geweld deur manlike vredesmagsoldate;
2. Groter kommunikasie met die plaaslike bevolking;
3. Groter bevoegdheid om vroulike slagoffers van seksuele geweld te ondersteun; en
4. Inspirasie vir die plaaslike vroue.

Alhoewel vroue hierdie unieke bydrae kan maak, is daar 'n aantal uitdagings wat hul in die gesig staar en dus verhoed om hierdie unieke bydrae te kan maak. Hierdie studie maak 'n bydrae tot hierdie rigting van ondersoek, deur gebruik te maak van fokusgroepbesprekings met vroulike soldate van die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag om verdere begrip vir die uitdagings wat vroue vredesmagsoldate ondervind te kweek.

Die studie dui aan dat alhoewel vroue 'n bydrae kan maak tot die operasionele doeltreffendheid van vredesoperasies, kan hierdie unieke bydrae nie aan alle vroue toegeskryf word nie. Hierdie studie toon dat patriargie in die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks 'n groot uitdaging vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag (SANW) is omdat dit persepsies van geslag skep wat vroue verhinder om hul unieke bydrae tot vredesoperasies te realiseer. Verder, het die SANW se liberale feministiese benadering tot die werwing van vroue in die weermag gebaseer op geslagsgelykheid, gerealiseer ten koste van geslagsverskille wat waardeer moet word. In die geval van Suid-Afrika, asook militêre instellings in die algemeen, is daar 'n hegemoniese manlike kultuur wat voorsiening maak vir die skepping van 'n soldaatsidentiteit wat net manlike eienskappe reflekteer. Dit is dus die rede waarom manlike en vroulike soldate nie waarde heg aan vroulike eienskappe nie, alhoewel hierdie eienskappe nuttig is in

vredesoperasies. Op die ou einde is die toevoeging van vroue tot die weermag as gevolg van hul vroulike eienskappe onnuttig, aangesien hul hierdie eienskappe 'opgee' om in te pas by die manlike kultuur van die SANW. Hierdie studie trek die stelling dat meer vroue in vredesoperasies tot die verbetering van menslikeveiligheid lei in twyfel. In teendeel, afhangende van die konteks waarin vredesmagte ontplooi word, kan vroulike vredesmagsoldate die menslike sekuriteit van die plaaslike bevolking, die vredeseenheid, en hulself in gedrang plaas.

Om hierdie uitdagings die hoof te bied, stel hierdie studie voor dat die SANW 'n nuwe soldaatsidentiteit wat manlike en vroulike eienskappe insluit, skep en bevorder. Geslagsopleiding moet ook op 'n gereelde basis plaasvind. Daarbenewens moet die werwingsproses veral op vroue gemik word en die waarde wat hulle toevoeg tot beide die weermag en vredesoperasies beklemtoon word. Ten slotte, voortdurende uitdagings wat moeilik is om die hoof te bied sluit in: die patriargale oortuigings in die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing asook die hegemoniese manlike kultuur van die SANW.

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Most importantly, to Him who strengthens me, I give thanks.

Abbreviations

DOD	-	Department of Defence
DPKO	-	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	-	Democratic Republic of the Congo
GOC	-	General Officer Commanding
PKO	-	Peacekeeping Operation
SADC	-	South African Development Community
SAI	-	South African Infantry
SANDF	-	South African National Defence Force
SEA	-	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	-	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
TCC	-	Troop Contributing Country
UN	-	United Nations
UNMIL	-	United Nations Mission to Liberia
UNPK	-	United Nations Peacekeeping
UNSC	-	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	-	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNTAC	-	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNHRC	-	United Nations Human Rights Commission
OCHA	-	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NCO	-	Non-Commissioned Officer

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The introductory chapter aims to provide an overall contextualization of this study. This is firstly done by providing a brief background to the study to understand its context. Thereafter, the research problem and rationale are discussed. The overarching research question is mentioned along with the research objectives. In addition, the sub-questions are outlined, discussed and justified, which all pertain to answering the overall research question. The significance of the study is explained to the reader after which a section is devoted to the theoretical framework guiding this study. The following section provides a brief description of the research design and methodology, as well as an explanation of important concepts used throughout this paper. In addition, mention of the limitations of this study is made. Before concluding, a section discusses the appropriate authorization and ethical clearance received to conduct this study. Finally, a short section is devoted to the chapter outline where the main focus of each chapter will be briefly mentioned.

1.2. Background

Global questions on security and stability have shifted from a state centric approach which dominated the Cold War period, to one where the individual has become the focus of analysis; more appropriately dubbed a human security approach. The realization that weak states may easily spread instability beyond their borders has resulted in the United Nations (UN), major powers, and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) to focus on what causes individual insecurity which encourages the breakdown of states. The shift in focus towards factors causing human insecurity such as political violence and instability, war, human rights violations, poverty, or disease, has encouraged a spurt in UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs)¹ since the 1990s to overcome these catalysts of instability.

Initially, peacekeeping was hailed for its accomplishments in preventing a state from returning to war. However, as the scope of conflict evolved to include a wider variety of actors, a change in the peacekeeping mandate (more focused on the vulnerable population) resulted in increased contact with the local citizenry. In turn, a number of accusations came to the fore pointing towards male peacekeepers being found guilty of violence and different forms of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) involving the local population.² Initially, sexual violence in PKOs has been blamed on isolated

¹ The word 'peacekeeping operation' is used interchangeably with 'peacekeeping', 'peace operation', 'peacekeeping mission', and 'peace mission'.

² Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) was termed in the UNHRC and Save the Children report in 2002, which underwent a comprehensive study on the issue of sexual violence on refugee children in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2001. As

incidents due to a ‘few bad apples’ or the essentialist ‘boys will be boys’ approach.³ However, feminist scholars’ analyses of the environment in which peacekeepers are trained and deployed have developed different arguments as to why men become violent during peacekeeping missions. What research reveals is that the cause of violence by troops results from a militarized culture which fosters hyper masculine behavior among male soldiers. The military environment, which is highly masculine and male dominated, as well as the way in which troops are trained, does not correlate with the expectations of, and from, troops recruited into peacekeeping missions.

Feminist scholars pointed out the drawback in the human security approach, mainly that it did not take into account a gendered perspective in its analyses of the *individuals’* security. The growing realization that women and men experience conflict differently, as well as the revelation that peacekeepers could actually enhance the insecurity of those they were sent to protect, resulted in a number of promoted resolutions and strategies to overcome this issue. The watershed regarding the link between women, peace and security was the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), which acknowledged the different roles of men and women in peacekeeping and post-structural development and further encouraged a gender mainstreaming agenda by increasing the number of women in PKOs.

An agenda of mainstreaming gender into peacekeeping included prioritizing the fact that any decision made has a different security impact on men and women. Within the peacekeeping realm, the establishment of gender units and the training of soldiers to become gender sensitive became paramount, all furthering gender mainstreaming and the ultimate goal of gender equality. A widely promoted strategy, acclaimed by UNSCR 1325, other UN agencies, and scholars alike, was to increase the number of women in PKOs. The main reason for this was that women make special contributions to peacekeeping which enhance the operational effectiveness of the mission and improve the human security of the host citizenry.

Advocating women’s unique contributions to peacekeeping draws not on gender-neutral equality arguments, but on differential claims. The arguments involve four major contributions which women make to PKOs, which are different to men. These state that: women have a civilizing effect on men which will reduce misconduct by male soldiers; women are more compassionate and therefore are

a response, the UN secretary General bulletin in 2003 consolidated the term SEA. The bulletin defines sexual exploitation as “any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another”, it further states that sexual abuse refers to the threatening or actual intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force, unequal, or coercive conditions (United Nations, 2003).

³ The ‘boys will be boys’ caption came from when UNTAC mission observers questioned the success of the mission in Cambodia. When observers mentioned the SEA by peacekeepers to UNTAC head Yasushi Akashi, his ‘boys will be boys’ response shocked observers as it insinuated that male soldiers have the right to perform such acts.

more willing and able to interact with the local community; women are better respondents to victims of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV); and finally the presence of women inspires local women to take part in the peace process and become involved in political life which helps ensure long term peace and stability (De Groot, 2001; Karamé, 2001; UNSCR 1960, 2010; Olsson, 2000; Jennings, 2011, Cordell, 2011a). These contributions will be referred to as women's 'unique contributions' or the 'conventional arguments' promoting the recruitment of women.

A number of UN member states have ratified the gender mainstreaming agenda and opened their doors to women to be recruited into the military. This study draws attention to the case of South Africa, known for being a state with one of the largest percentages of women peacekeepers. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) recently increased the number of women recruits in the military to 40%, 30% on the decision making level (*Mail & Guardian*, 2014). However, increasing the number of women has not resulted in gender mainstreaming, and it has been noticed that women are faced with a number of challenges inhibiting them from contributing to PKOs in the way expected of them. With this in mind, the next section will discuss the research problem and rationale of this study.

1.3. Research Problem and Rationale

Even though the overall consensus is that women do impact the operational effectiveness of a PKO, there still remains controversy as to whether they make a positive or a negative contribution. For example, De Groot (2001) states that women have a civilizing effect on their male comrades; however, recollections of the pictures that flooded the media in 2003 of Private Lynndie England abusing male prisoners in Guantanamo Bay illustrates the contrary. Authors such as Simić (2011) have shown that women tend rather to change their behavior to become part of the 'boys' club'. Controversial debates such as this are mainly due to the dilemma of not having substantive evidence to support the claims that contributions made by women will automatically result from the mere presence of women. The research that exists is based on anecdotal evidence which often turns to essentialist views to back their claims.

What has been found is that even though women are present in PKOs, they often only make up a small percentage of soldiers deployed on peacekeeping missions. In addition, they are challenged by the masculine environment of the military, where their feminine traits are swallowed rather than utilized (Whitworth, 2004). Furthermore, misconduct by men still seems to take place, even with the presence of women, and incidents have occurred where male peacekeepers have sexually assaulted women peacekeepers.⁴ Questions have also been raised as to whether women are better respondents to SGBV,

⁴ Czech soldiers accused of raping an American woman peacekeeper in Bosnia in 1996 is a case in point (Vandenburg, 2005:153).

considering the possibility that victims do not respond to the gender of a peacekeeper but to their uniform (Simić, 2010). Furthermore, women's interaction with the local community depends on a number of external factors such as how they are perceived by local men, the nature of the security risks, and also the personal will of a woman peacekeeper which may not incline her to have contact with the locals.

The abovementioned controversy on the utility of women peacekeepers demonstrates a need for more research on identifying the value of women in PKOs, and which challenges they face in these environments. Authors focused on women peacekeeping all call for more systematic research to support the claims that women improve the operational effectiveness of a peacekeeping mission. Jennings (2011:11) argues that the “[d]ependence on the use of affirmative gender essentialisms in arguing for increased women's participation should decrease; instead (or additionally), arguments should be put forward on the basis of the practical (rather than presumed) benefits that women peacekeepers bring”. Additionally, Lopes (2011:2) urges that “we cannot understand how to make gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations more effective without exploring the gendered discursive practices and attitudes implicit within peacekeeping” itself. Furthermore, Cordell (2011a:37) encourages us to broaden our understanding on women's inclusion in the military and their effect on the operational effectiveness of a unit “specifically through the lenses of troop-contributing countries”. Major organizations such as the UN, African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have called for more evidence based research on gender equality and the utility of women in PKOs.

Furthermore, in South Africa, the SANDF has also shown interest in understanding the challenges, and value, of women peacekeepers in its Force. The Gender Conference held in 2008 on the feedback of the Department of Defence (DOD) gender mainstreaming action plan cited the need for the ongoing evaluation of the situation of women in peace operations (DOD, 2008a). In addition, the authorization of this study demonstrates the enthusiasm and will to understand the utility of its soldiers. During the peacekeeping and post conflict reconstruction and development media briefing on 31 March 2014, Minister of Defence, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula stated that the “Defence Force will become increasingly involved in peacekeeping missions, as [the SANDF] continue to deploy in conflict-ridden countries [in Africa]”. Due to South Africa's increasing role in African peace missions, the need to understand how to fully utilize all peacekeepers, women and men, to their fullest professional capacity has become paramount.

1.4. Research Question and Objectives

The overarching research question guiding this study is: *To what extent are women peacekeepers fulfilling the unique contributions they are expected to make to peacekeeping operations set out in UNSCR 1325 and literature advocating women's utilization in the military?* A number of research objectives and sub-questions are used to provide a clear indication of how the researcher aims to answer the overarching research question.

In order to understand the contributions women make to peacekeeping, it is necessary to first clarify what is meant by 'unique contributions' when discussing women's contributions to peacekeeping, which makes up the first research objective of this study. This objective is reached through the analyses of secondary data and will form the core of the literature review. Thereafter, it is necessary to identify whether the SANDF recruits women according to the value they might add to the peacekeeping unit, which is championed by the UN and relevant literature. This second objective is based on secondary data and is attained through an analysis of the literature. However, questions relating to how women feel about serving in the SANDF are explored by using primary data which facilitates this study.

The third objective aims to identify how women are making contributions to peacekeeping by focusing on the SANDF's deployment of peacekeepers. In turn, the researcher also aims to explore the challenges women face in the peacekeeping environment which hinders them from contributing to peacekeeping in the expected manner, making up the fourth objective. These objectives, with reference to the primary data, were obtained through focus group discussions held with women peacekeepers. Chapter 3, *Research Design and Methodology*, contains detailed descriptions of the data collection strategies used to obtain empirical evidence.

The fifth objective is to identify how women impact the human security of the local population. After identifying contributions women make to peacekeeping, and the challenges they face which constrain them from contributing to their full potential, the final objective is to provide valid recommendations that may assist the SANDF in overcoming these challenges. This final objective is to evaluate the data collected in the focus groups in relation to the SANDF's gender mainstreaming objectives.

In summary, the research objectives are as follows:

- 1 Clarify of what is meant by the 'unique/expected contributions' of women peacekeepers and debates surrounding these contributions.
- 2 Identify why women are recruited into the SANDF.

- 3 Discover if women are contributing to peacekeeping missions in accordance with the conventional arguments advocating the utilization of women in peacekeeping.
- 4 Based on their gender, identify what are the challenges women peacekeepers face which affect their ability to make the expected contributions to PKOs.
- 5 Identify how the deployment of women impacts on human security.
- 6 Provide valid recommendations that may guide the SANDF to overcome these challenges.

To ensure that the research objectives are met in a clear and structured manner, the following sub-questions will be used to keep the study within the boundaries of the above-mentioned objectives; and will facilitate the overarching aim of answering the main research question. The sub-questions are as follows:

- 1 *What are the reasons the SANDF recruit women in the military and deploy them on peacekeeping missions?*

The first step in the study will be to look at how the SANDF adopts the gender mainstreaming agenda. Relevant documents and reports will be looked at to identify what kind of discourse the SANDF uses to justify its recruitment of women in the military and deploy them on peacekeeping missions. This sub-question is asked to reach objective 2; to identify why the SANDF recruits women in the military.

- 2 *Are South African women peacekeepers able to contribute to PKOs in accordance with the conventional arguments advocating the utilization of women in the military?*

This sub-question aims to answer the first research objective, by clarifying what is meant by the 'unique contributions' of women peacekeepers and discussing the associated conventional arguments surrounding these contributions. Here, the focus is on the four overarching unique contributions women are claimed to make to PKOs that enhance the human security of the host nation (an in depth discussion of these contributions is set out in Chapter 2). In addition to clarifying Objective 1, the purpose of this question is also to meet Objective 3 that aims to discover if women in the SANDF are indeed contributing to peacekeeping in the ways expected of them.

- 3 *What are the challenges which impede women from contributing to peacekeeping in the expected way, and how do these challenges confront or confirm conventional arguments about the utilization of women in the military?*

If there is any disparity between what women in the SANDF contribute to peacekeeping missions and what they are expected to contribute according to UNSCR 1325 and related literature on women and peacekeeping, then this sub-question aims to identify this gap. In doing so, it will fulfill Objective 4 by

identifying the challenges women face in PKOs and assessing how these challenges impede women from contributing to peacekeeping in the expected way.

- 4 *In what way can these challenges be related to peacekeeping on a global scale, and in which ways do they uniquely relate to the historical and cultural context of South Africa and the SANDF?*

After identifying the challenges faced by South African women in peacekeeping missions, this sub-question is asked to tackle Objective 6, which aims to provide valid recommendations to the SANDF to overcome challenges facing women peacekeepers. In order to provide valid recommendations, it is important to know in which context these challenges are found, which in turn will help the researcher to avoid making recommendations that cannot be met in the South African context. Furthermore, even though this study is case specific, broader links on a macro scale will be attempted in order to contribute to the literature focused on global peacekeeping.

- 5 *Is the recruitment of women having a positive or negative impact on the human security of the host state or the unit?*

The main aim of adding women to PKOs is ultimately to improve the human security of the host state. The question then is whether locals are safer with the presence of women peacekeepers? This sub-question aims to achieve Objective 5, to identify how women peacekeepers impact human security.

- 6 *Are gender mainstreaming procedures sufficient and appropriate in preparing peacekeepers to be gender sensitive?*

Finally, after identifying the challenges women face in PKOs, this sub-question is aimed at achieving Objective 6. Not only will secondary data be used here, but input from participants will suggest whether appropriate gender mainstreaming strategies are being taken by the SANDF, leading to recommendations where necessary.

In summary, the overall aim of this research is to advance the understanding of the challenges that stand in the way of women realizing the positive contribution they can make to the operational effectiveness of a peacekeeping unit. The study is underlined by the debate as to whether women actually enhance or compromise human security of the local population whom they are said to protect, through direct means (physical presence and interaction), or by means of fulfilling or jeopardizing the mandate.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Whether or not South Africa is to live up to the expectations of being a leading player in the continent's peacekeeping needs, it remains an important TCC (Troop Contributing Country) ranking

among the top troop-providing states to UN peacekeeping missions. South Africa's peacekeeping forces are therefore an important tool used to continue the struggle for peace in conflict ridden areas. There is no doubt that the number of women in the SANDF has slowly increased and is continuing to do so. This research is important as it may help the SANDF increase the *quality* of its units through the identification of the aspects that are making positive or negative contributions to its operational effectiveness. The value of this study is as follows:

- By pinpointing and understanding which challenges women face in peace missions, the SANDF is given an opportunity to tackle these issues directly and realistically. In essence, problems need to be identified before they can be solved.
- To provide evidence based research on the value of women in peacekeeping and consequently to encourage these contributions to be focused on, valued and utilized by the military. This may not only improve the preparation of peacekeepers, but ultimately enhance the human security of the host society.
- To strengthen the peacekeeping debate by providing appropriate evidence which supports the contributions women make to peacekeeping.
- To provide more case study analyses that can be used in a comparative way to discover where universal challenges to women in peacekeeping are found, and which issues are case sensitive.
- Postmodern feminists believe that a multiplicity of women's voices must be heard lest feminism itself become one more hierarchical system of knowledge construction (Tickner, 1992). Therefore, this study is significant as it adds to the contributions made by non-western feminist thinking which will provide more substance to global feminism instead of western feminism.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

This study finds its place in the broader human security debate which argues for a changed perception of security, contrary to the traditional sense of the term primarily drawn from World War II and the Cold War period. The traditional theoretical approach to war and peace has been dominated by realist thinking. This mainstream approach and its focus on the state as the leading actor in security has been replaced by a new focus on the individual. The use of conventional military force is no longer seen as a vital means to reduce insecurity, and more humanitarian approaches are viewed as appropriate for the changing dynamics of conflict.

On a more focused scale, with regard to peacekeeping, addressing peacekeeping with a traditional security lens has also resulted in the threat of insecurity towards local populations. Peacekeepers are struggling to make the switch from fighting machine, needed in traditional security settings, to the more conciliatory soldier needed for peacekeeping. The argument is that women can help encourage

this shift in the military by adding feminine characteristics to the institution which is needed as the military itself is now more associated with issues of human security.

As already noted, human security has positively contributed to the shift in security now focusing on the individual. However, a feminist theoretical perspective indicates that human security lacks a gendered focus. Feminists have criticized the way in which human security collapses the difference between men and women under the term 'human'. The acceptance that men and women experience violence and war differently has made a feminist approach to the role of women in peacekeeping essential in understanding the way in which women contribute to the operational effectiveness of missions.

There is no single feminist security theory. Feminist scholars focusing on security branch out into different strands of thought often having contradictory explanations and prescriptions; yet, the consensus among all feminists is the fact that gender matters. The military has been seen as a highly gendered environment, not only due to the number of men, but also as a result of the militarized culture which espouses a hegemonic masculinity. With regard to the utilization of women in the military, a number of feminist schools diverge. For example, Goldstein (2004) categorizes these into three broad strands, liberal, difference, and postmodern feminism. Other scholars group feminist theories differently, rather associating them with inequality, oppression and difference (Hudson, 2002).

The broad divisions of feminist schools of thought are between liberal, radical and Marxist feminism, Marxist feminism is rooted in economic exploitation and capitalist patriarchy (Jaggar, 1983:239). Liberals claim that women suffer discrimination on the basis of their sex, and argue that no limitation should be placed on women as a group (Jaggar, 1983:176). Liberal feminism declares that men and women are equal, and physical or biological differences do not matter. It is rooted in equal rights based on the law, and individual rights are paramount. Therefore, women should have the right to participate in the same roles as men. Furthermore, liberals see men and women to be trained equally and used in the same roles within the military (Jaggar, 1983:181).

On the other hand, radical feminism focuses on how men and women experience things differently. Feminists focusing on the difference between men and women see this as either biologically based, or culturally based, and these differences are not necessarily bad (Goldstein, 2004:41). Either difference results in women being considered more peaceful than men, and more connected in their social relationships compared to the more autonomous man, yet the main problem is that feminine qualities are devalued and masculine qualities are hailed and championed (Goldstein, 2004:4; Jaggar, 1983:250). Radicals focus on the difference between men and women but may also have diverging arguments regarding these differences. The underlying consensus among radicals is that they see

women's oppression rooted in patriarchy, focusing on men's domination and exploitation of women (Goldstein, 2004).

Some radicals have an essentialist approach, stating that the physical weakness of women and their pacifist nature should keep them from serving in the military (Hudson, 2002). On the other hand, there are radicals who declare that because women are different, they treat conflict mediation differently to men, and hold feminine qualities which are valuable to peacekeeping (Malešević, 2010). Radical feminism champions the involvement of women in peacekeeping as they have unique skills which make them the right people for the job.

Under the banner of radical feminism, lie Post-modern and Postcolonial feminism. Postmodern feminism, often associated with constructivism, focuses on essentialism and how discourse constructs inequality between men and women. They take context into account and also look at other aspects of identity in addition to gender, such as class, race, or ethnicity, noting the interconnectedness of different forms of oppression, otherwise known as intersectionality (Goldstein, 2004). Rather than the equality/difference approach by liberals and radicals respectively, postmodern feminism argues for a diversity strategy linked to a more transformational gender mainstreaming approach. Postcolonial feminism has emerged as a response to the arguments that early stages of radical and liberal feminism is a 'Westernized' feminism and ethnocentric, universalizing women's issues (Hendricks & Lewis, 1994:71).

This study supports a radical feminist approach favoring the inclusion of women in the military, where their differential traits should be valued. In addition, some aspects of post-modern feminism is also supported, considering the context specific nature of this study and also the championing of a new soldier identity reflecting both masculine and feminine attributes, guided by neither equality of difference, but rather by diversity as a concept which transcends these dichotomies.

1.7. Research Design and Methodology

The following study is a qualitative study, representing a single case study design generating qualitative data. A qualitative method was more suited to a quantitative method as this research involves the lived experience of social subjects; women peacekeepers. A quantitative study would not be suited as not enough participants took part in the research to provide statistical data; this would also not provide in depth analyses to support this exploratory study. The research was based on a feminist principle of studying up rather than theorizing down. The most appropriate means of obtaining rich data was from a wide range of participants through focus groups with women peacekeepers serving in a branch of the army from which soldiers are typically drawn for peacekeeping missions. In the SANDF this is mainly the infantry. Non-probability sampling was used as the researcher had to rely

on the SANDF to provide the participants according to the criteria set, namely diversity in rank, race, and experience in peacekeeping missions. Focus group discussions were digitally recorded, personally transcribed, and the categorization of data in themes relating to the study's sub-questions and research objectives were used for analysis. In addition to the empirical data collected, this study also uses secondary data sources, in the form of documents associated with gender equality and gender mainstreaming in South Africa and in the SANDF. The methodology is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

1.7.1. Conceptualization of key concepts

1.7.1.1. Gender:

The terms gender and women are often used interchangeably, but this is incorrect. The UN Secretary-General defines gender as “the socially constructed roles ascribed to women and men, as opposed to biological and physical characteristics” (Women, Peace and Security, 2002:4). Gender roles vary according to socio-economic, political and cultural contexts and are affected by other factors, including age, race, class and ethnicity (Women, Peace and Security, 2002). In other words, gender is a malleable term (Hudson, 2005). Gender is a construct based on the perception of two principle features, either masculinity or femininity. Femininity is considered typical of, or appropriate to women, encompassing qualities and characteristics such as vulnerability, passivity, victimhood, compassion and peacefulness. On the contrary, masculinity is most often associated with men, and relates to the assumption that they are more aggressive, brave, dominating, and more inclined to violence. Both masculinity and femininity may be ascribed to different individuals at different degrees. Masculinity and femininity are often described in opposition to each another, therefore ‘othering’ each other.

1.7.1.2. Being ‘gendered’:

Often, institutions are described as being highly gendered. The term gendered can have one or all of three meanings. Firstly, an institution may be defined, structured and conceptualized in terms of a distinction between masculinity and femininity, resulting in it being essentially gendered. In addition, being dominated by a certain sex can also pertain to an organization being gendered. Lastly, an institution is gendered when it is symbolically and ideologically described and considered in terms of a discourse that draws on hegemonically defined masculinities and femininities (Dana Britton, *cited in* Carreiras, 2010). The military is a highly gendered organization.

1.7.1.3. Gender Equality:

Gender equality or gender balance has both a qualitative and a quantitative dynamic. Gender balancing is the promotion of equal participation of men and women in security sector institutions and

oversight bodies (Mobekk, 2010). Measuring gender equality is done by measuring parity; the number of men and women in institutions. However, often forgotten is the substantive aspect of gender equality. Equality should demonstrate a value and appreciation for both men and women, and should aim to achieve equitable influence on establishing development priorities and outcomes for women and men (UN Women, 2014). Different types of feminism has a specific view of gender equality which in turn informs the specific strategies employed in support of gender mainstreaming.

1.7.1.4. Gender Mainstreaming:

Within the United Nations, the term 'gender mainstreaming' is defined in ECOSOC's 1997/2 report:

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (*UN Women, 2014:2*).

Gender mainstreaming is more complex than gender equality, and much more difficult to implement and monitor. A number of member states have instituted gender mainstreaming as a method in reaching the ultimate goal of gender equality.

1.7.1.5. Peacekeeping:

The term peacekeeping has changed dramatically in recent years, where tasks assigned to UN PKO to best address threats to international peace and security have expanded significantly in response to shifting dynamics of conflict. Yet, there remain blurred lines as to what peacekeeping entails. Traditional peacekeeping was concerned with helping with the peaceful settlements of disputes between states. However, the peacekeeping experienced today tends more to 'wider peacekeeping' and 'peace enforcement'. Wider peacekeeping consists of multi-functional tasks necessary in what is now known as 'new wars'.⁵ On-going violence is usually associated with wider peacekeeping, along with a broader mandate as opposed to traditional peacekeeping. The mandate could range from delivering humanitarian aid and monitoring elections, to disarming warring parties, and protecting civilians, especially women and children (Bellamy & Williams, 2010). The principles of consent, impartiality, and minimum force, as enshrined by the UN, remain vital in wider peacekeeping. It is often known as peacekeeping under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Peace enforcement, mandated under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, is associated more with military action and the use of force.

⁵ See Mary Kaldor (2012) *Old and New Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*.

Peacekeeping may also be conducted by an organization outside of the UN, for example a regional organization such as the African Union (AU).

1.7.1.6. Peacekeeper:

The term peacekeeper has also broadened to include an array of actors working together to pursue peace. Peacekeepers can also work under different NGOs, yet, the UN is considered the main deployer of peacekeeping forces. The UN does not have its own peacekeeping force and therefore relies on donations by TCCs for peacekeeping personnel. Even though peacekeepers may consist of civilian personnel, or police units, they are mainly made up of military troops. It is for this reason that peacekeeping is dominated by male soldiers, as men make up the majority of a state's army. The focus of this study is on soldiers and not on civilian personnel or police units. The responsibilities of a peacekeeper depend on the mandate under which they are deployed.

1.7.1.7. Hegemonic masculinity, Hyper-masculinity/Militarized masculinity

A number of masculinities play out in the military. What is nearly always seen is that hegemonic masculinity is the norm in a militarized setting. Hegemonic masculinity refers to a form of masculinity which all men strive for, proving their manhood, and legitimating domination of men over women (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is not necessarily associated with violence, but more with culture and persuasion (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). In cases where hegemonic masculinity *is* associated with aggression, a form of hyper-masculinity emerges, which relates to aggression, violence and violence against women (especially sexual violence). A hyper-masculine culture is cultivated in military training to enable soldiers to become the necessary fighting machines ready for combat (Lopes, 2011). Some call this the 'militarized masculinity' within the military, however it is also referred to as hyper-masculinity.

1.7.2. Limitations

As with any qualitative study, a number of limitations are present and need to be acknowledged. A limitation of this study is the way in which the research sample was chosen, through non-probability sampling, yet the point of saturation was reached during the discussion as the same issues were raised throughout each focus group. Secondly, even though justified as the best suited data collection method of this study, focus groups do have some negative aspects, one of which is that of bias on the part of the researcher (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3). Additionally, research is limited due to the geographical focus on South Africa, and is focused on the 9 SAI base near Cape Town. As women have different experiences, generalizations cannot be made on a macro scale. Finally, the fact that this study only focuses on the perceptions and experiences of women limits it to the perception of these

women. Although men are also seen as valuable research subjects, due to time constraints and difficulty in gaining access to the Defence Force, men have been excluded from this study.

1.8. Authorization and Ethical Clearance

Ethical approval for this study was sought from Stellenbosch University. The researcher commits to abide by all protocols associated with conducting of research that involves human participants. Official permission was granted to Prof. L. Heinecken,⁶ the co-supervisor of this study, by Major General L. Yam, General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the South African Infantry Formation (See Appendix A).

1.9. Chapter Outline

The current *Introduction* chapter, Chapter 1, provides the reader with background information to contextualize the study, and subsequently the research rationale and significance of the study. The research problem and objectives are discussed in this chapter, and the underlying research question is mentioned, along with its supporting sub-questions.

Chapter 2, *Literature Review*, provides a review on the seminal literature regarding women and peacekeeping. This chapter identifies the main drivers which lead the UN and other advocates to encourage the recruitment of women in PKO. This chapter discusses the feminist theoretical approaches to women in the military, explores the debates surrounding the utilization of women in the military, and introduces South Africa as a case study and justifies the need for empirical data to enhance the debates on women's impact on the operational effectiveness of PKO.

Chapter 3, *Research Methodology*, details the research strategy and methodology of this case study. Details are discussed on how the researcher went about collecting the appropriate data, and also how the interpretation of the data was conducted. Furthermore, an in depth discussion is made on the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4, *Data Description*, consists of a description of the data obtained from the focus groups. Descriptions relate to the themes introduced in Chapter 3, and where necessary abstracts from the transcripts are used.

Chapter 5, *Data Analysis*, consist of a complete analysis of the data collected to answer the research question. This was obtained from the literature review and the empirical data collected from the focus groups.

⁶ Prof. Lindy Heinecken is a member of the South African Army Pool of Specialists and a leading academic at the University of Stellenbosch serving in the Department of Sociology. She was authorized to conduct this research with my assistance. The findings of this study will be presented to the General Officer Commanding of the Infantry Formation.

Chapter 6, *Conclusion*, provides an overall conclusion of the study. This is done by drawing out the main points of the study in accordance with the research objectives. In addition, recommendations for further study are made.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The rationale for increasing the number of women in PKOs is that war affects men and women differently, and it is believed that women peacekeepers are able to improve the operational effectiveness of the mission by being able to reach out to vulnerable populations; women and children affected by war (DPKO, 2010). However, literature is often based on anecdotal rather than substantive evidence indicating that women do in fact play a vital role in peacekeeping and furthering the goal of human security. This chapter aims to provide an overview of the literature regarding women in peacekeeping and demonstrates a need for more qualitative evidence to show the real experiences of women in the military and once deployed. To do this, the first section of this literature review introduces the circumstances that acted as a catalyst in increasing support for the recruitment of women peacekeepers in PKOs. Here the shift from state to human security is discussed; the lack of a gendered approach in human security; the changing perceptions of peacekeeping; and the role of a global ‘gender regime’ and the UN in gendering peacekeeping.

After revealing why a call for more women in PKOs has occurred, the second section discusses the contributions women are said to make once deployed on peacekeeping missions, referred to in this study as their ‘unique contributions’. The feminist theoretical framework guiding this study is explained, followed by the debates surrounding women’s unique contributions to peacekeeping. The third section explains why, if women are so valuable to the operational effectiveness of PKOs, the percentages of women in the military are still much lower than those of men. Here, the culture of the military is discussed, including arguments of hegemonic- and hyper-masculinity, and the soldier identity. Attention is also paid to the arguments made against women’s recruitment, relating to biological and physical differences, the problem of cohesion, sexuality, and security concerns.

The subsequent section focuses specifically on South Africa as a case study, and how the SANDF promotes and strives to achieve gender equality and implement gender mainstreaming and what obstacles women face within the operational peacekeeping environment. Before concluding, a summary of the literature survey is provided. The final section points out the value of this case study analysis to the broader literature regarding women and peacekeeping.

2.2. Introducing Women into Security Sector Reform

2.2.1. A Change in the Security Agenda: From Traditional Security to Human Security

There has been a radical departure from the traditional or otherwise realist perspective of security prominent in the Cold War period. This perspective holds states at the centre of the security debate, along with the principle of sovereignty. Most scholars point to the end of the Cold War which encouraged the freedom to probe different security epochs rather than the traditional state centric realist view. However, it has been noted that contributions to the change in security thinking started long before then (Bajpai, 2003; Rothchild, 1995).

Nevertheless, drawing from the issue of human development and human rights, a shift from the state to the individual has become apparent in security literature, giving rise to the term human security. This shift is often traced to the publication of *An Agenda for Peace* in 1992 (United Nations, 1992). What was noticed was a clear shift from military and arms, to a focus on development. However, most scholars' point of reference when referring to the new understanding of human security is the United Nations Development Programs' (UNDP) Human Development Report of 1994, highlighting the 'new dimensions' of human security and making it the central focus of its report. The Report defines human security as safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression. It also means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of one's daily life, such as in the home, work place, community or other environment (UNDP, 1994). Furthermore, OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) states that "human security underscores the universality and interdependence of a set of freedoms that are fundamental to human life: freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity". Similarly, the 2005 World Summit Outcome defines human security as follows:

We stress the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. We recognize that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential (*United Nations General Assembly*, 2005a:31).

In addition to the Cold War coming to an end, a shift in focus towards the individual is also a result of the breakdown of national borders due to the integration of global political and economic systems and peoples' lives, known as globalization. The realization that the probability of actions by citizens in one state could affect those in another has encouraged a shift in the way leaders think of security and how they address it. Even though some scholars argue that post-9/11 has brought back the traditional security discourse (Peterson & Runyan, 2009), Rothchild (1995) was correct in asserting that a focus on the individual within security debates was likely to be a continuing feature in post-Cold War politics.

Much of the literature on human security has been on pinpointing an appropriate definition for the term, or defending its legitimacy by championing its broad yet inclusive character. Considering the abovementioned definition of human security, focussed on freedom from want and fear, and freedom to live in dignity, it is difficult to assert what this broad framework of analysis may exclude. Paris (2001a) acknowledges its contribution to the study of security, but questions what human security is *not*. Feminist scholars in particular make up a large body of literature critiquing human security due to its disregard of gender. Accordingly, the next section looks at feminism as a theoretical framework and discusses its critique of human security.

2.2.2. The Utility of a Feminist Theoretical Perspective and its Critique Towards Human Security

Even though shifting the security focus from states to the individual has proved valuable to vulnerable populations suffering within insecure environments, a major drawback of the human security approach is the absence of a focus on the relationship between security and gender. It is for this reason that a feminist perspective has the potential to raise consciousness and contextualise the difference between women's and men's insecurity by considering gender as a principle of social organisation. Feminists commit themselves to using gender as a category of analysis; however they also consider broader socio-cultural tools of analysis such as race and class, committing themselves to gender equality as a social goal (Tickner, 1992).

Feminists challenge the theory of human security in two ways. The first addresses the absence of a gender lens in human security. The second addresses a more recent phenomenon where gender *is* considered, but which feminists argue is done incorrectly, mainly through a system called gender mainstreaming.⁷ At an early stage Woroniuk (1999) noted the missing element of gender equality within human security arguing that a gendered dimension in human security would broaden the understanding of security itself.

The value of feminist literature is that it brings forth the main question of 'whose security?' The blatant disregard of gender in the human security approach confirms the assumption that the term 'human' presupposes a false holism, which they claim undermines the goals of uplifting women (Hudson, 2005). This in turn creates the main problem of collapsing the feminine and masculine under the term 'human' (Hudson, 2005). Human security is viewed as a gender neutral term, but feminists argue that most often it is masculine (Chenoy, 2005). Even though feminists support the shift in focus towards the individual, they argue that human security does not guarantee *women* security. The

⁷ Gender mainstreaming calls for the consideration of both genders' needs to be included in all policies.

consensus is that women are discriminated against due to their gender, and the security of men is privileged.

In cases where individual security *has* shifted to considering a more gendered approach, feminist scholars have criticized this process, more commonly known as gender mainstreaming. In many cases where a gender perspective is considered, the link between women, peace and security is made by categorizing women as victims and men as belligerents or heroes (Puechguirbal, 2010). Women would be mentioned as the victims of war, or the mothers or caretakers in times of crises. However, the fact that women can also be belligerents in war, or be active participants in the peace process is often ignored.

Feminist scholars address mainstreaming from two complimentary approaches, an institutional and a discursive approach. The institutional approach asks how mainstreaming policies and procedures were adopted and implemented in particular organizational contexts. The argument many feminist scholars make is that the nature of most institutions is gendered, leaning more towards a masculine bias. The discursive approach asks how mainstreaming produces new forms of power through the diffusion of strategic language and framing processes which change the meaning of men, women and gender equality in a myriad of contexts (True, 2010).

Even with its criticisms, an increased focus on the individual has positively impacted the ways in which organizations and states address security. The realization that war no longer arises from the strength of states, but from their weakness, has encouraged a paradigm shift within security. This paradigm shift, along with the increased role of globalization, played a role in disintegrating the sovereignty of states and what some claim, prompted a 'culture of intervention' in the 1990s (Jakobsen, 2002; Thomas & Tow 2002). This culture of intervention was seen with the growing number of peacekeeping missions deployed globally. A study by Hultman (2013) confirms that a human security approach prompted more peacekeeping missions as the deployment of missions by the UNSC became directly proportional to high levels of civilian casualties in the host state. The next section will discuss the changing perspectives on peacekeeping to contextualize the circumstances which served as a catalyst for increasing the support for more women in PKOs. The growing realization that men and women experience war and violence differently is revealed in the changing assessments by scholars on the success or failure of PKOs.

2.2.3. UN Peacekeeping: From Optimism to Unintended Consequences

UN peacekeeping started in the late 1940s, and between then and 1990 only a handful of peacekeeping operations were conducted, all in the traditional sense of the term. The core values of traditional peacekeeping focussed on impartiality, consent of the disputants, and minimal use of force (Bellamy & Williams, 2010). Literature during this time was quite optimistic about whether peacekeeping was

achieving its goals (Fortna & Howard, 2008).⁸ However, achievements were measured by the ability of peacekeepers to sustain the absence of war (negative peace). No analysis existed on how peacekeeping affected different individuals or how peacekeeping missions contributed to long term development (positive peace).

With more peacekeeping missions being deployed since 1990, came a changing perception of PKOs. Scholars' increasing focus on the implications of peacekeeping missions beyond the mere absence of war, led to increased evaluation and reflection and the emergence of more qualitative analyses. It was Paris (2001) who encouraged the theorizing in the study of peace operations moving beyond the design, conduct and outcome of peacekeeping missions. Initial enthusiasm seemed to have progressively deteriorated with increased case study work extending caution, and raising suspicion about the impacts of peacekeeping on the host state, as well as its civilian population.

As a result, three themes emerged with regard to peacekeeping, women and security. The first theme is associated with armed conflict and gender relations, the second theme considers the relationship between peacekeeping and how it influences gender inequality, and finally, the third theme relates to gender roles within peacekeeping units (Baines, 2005). Even though these themes are linked, this study focuses more on the last two themes.

The second theme questions how international peacekeeping may exacerbate or help overcome gender inequalities. Fetherston (1995) was one of the first who questioned the social ramifications of deploying peacekeepers. With the changing dynamic of peacekeeping came increasing contact with civilians, prompting scholars to investigate the 'unintended consequences' of deploying peacekeepers (Chiyuki, de Coning & Thakur, 2007). Scholars started to discover how the deployment of peacekeepers negatively impacted the gender dynamics in society, and how women became more insecure in these environments. From 1992, increased allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), an increase in sex houses and prostitution, as well as child prostitution, along with the rising levels of fatherless 'peace babies', did show a clear gender dynamic to peacekeeping and the effect it had on women's insecurity (Simić, 2012; Bastick, Grimm & Kunz, 2007, Vandenburg, 2005). In addition, the discovery of emerging 'peacekeeping economies' was also found to have a gendered effect on society, negatively affecting both men and women (Aning & Edu-Afful, 2013).⁹ Jennings

⁸ The optimism and faith placed in peacekeeping at the time was encapsulated in 1988 when the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the UN Peacekeeping Forces.

⁹ Peacekeeping economies refers to the economy which arises when a large number of peacekeepers enter a host state. This has economic impact on food markets, the price of housing, and implicates small businesses. Peacekeeping economies also refers to the sex industry which usually booms with the presence of peacekeepers.

and Nikolić-Ristanović (2009) conclude their study by stating that peacekeeping economies have long term effects which undermine gender equality goals which peacekeeping missions aim to achieve.

The third theme is associated with scholars questioning how gender roles play out *within* peacekeeping units. Here, feminists focus on the soldiers' identity, issues of hegemonic masculinity, and more violent cases of hyper-masculinity within peacekeeping. The military can be described as a highly gendered organization (Carreiras, 2010; Whitworth, 2004). It is for this reason that gender is a salient element in understanding military organizations and the actions of its peacekeepers.

Taking into account the fact that unintended consequences of peacekeeping missions may actually enhance the insecurity of individuals in a host state, it became clear that traditional analytical tools for studying insecurity became limited and new approaches needed. The growing awareness of the negative consequences of peacekeeping and the lack of analytical tools to understand this dynamic, coupled with increasing feminist works on the matter, and the growing focus on individual insecurity and the championing of women's rights have encouraged the emergence of a global 'gender regime'. The evidence of a gender regime, Kardam (2004) argues, is found in formal components such as principles and legal instruments, is seen in the behaviour of states party to the regime, and the acceptance on the international level that women's rights are human rights. The next section focuses on how this 'gender regime' made its way into the realm of peace and security.

2.2.4. Gendering Peacekeeping

The growing consensus that women and men experience security differently, combined with increased lobbying by feminists for the UN to take the link between women, peace and security seriously, coupled with a growing 'global culture' championing a gender regime (Paris, 2003; Kardam, 2004), and also the surfacing of the unintended consequences of peacekeeping operations, have together encouraged the rise of what is known as "gender mainstreaming" in all branches of the UN and its member states' agencies.

In the ambiance of the Decade for Women, and the increased notion of Women's Rights as Human Rights, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action consolidated a global strategy of mainstreaming gender to promote the ultimate goal of gender equality. The watershed regarding the relationship between women, peace and security was seen in the passing of UNSCR 1325 in 2000. The Resolution strongly acknowledged that women are not just mere victims, but decisive role players in the peace process. Therefore, UNSCR 1325 strongly recommends that gender mainstreaming be implemented in all peacekeeping operations and mandates, and aims to "expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations". Cordell (2011a) argues that the contribution of women in peacekeeping is seen to have an over-all impact on security, since they contribute to long term stability as a more gender-balanced state has been proven to be more peaceful. In addition, Caprioli

(2000) found that higher levels of gender equality correlate with levels of international militarism: more gender equal societies are less likely to use military force to settle international disputes.

The accepted link between gender equality and peace encouraged the UN to establish a number of gender equality principles and has evolved its discourse surrounding the link between women, peace and security. The magnitude of SEA by peacekeepers prompted the UN to promote a Zero Tolerance policy against any form of sexual violence. This encouraged the Secretary General's Bulletin in 2003 on *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse* (United Nations, 2003). Furthermore, the DPKO provided a *Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operation* in 2004. *A Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, known as the Zaid Report (United Nations General Assembly, 2005), also promoted the recruitment of women in PKOs to overcome the issue of SEA.

In addition, resolutions were passed shaping the mandate of PKOs. UNSCR 1820 (2008) and UNSCR 1888 (2009) specifically acknowledged sexual violence as a tool of war, addressed SEA by peacekeepers, and stated that peacekeepers were to prioritize the protection of women and children against such violations. Furthermore, UNSCR 1960 (2010) was passed to deepen the agenda on women, peace and security. All the above-mentioned reports and resolutions promote the deployment of more women as a strategy to overcome sexual violence by peacekeepers. More recently, UNSCR 2122, adopted in 2013, urges for better implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions as well as more information and analysis on impact. Furthermore, the encouragement of quotas, the introduction of the Global Action Plan in 2004, and the increasing presence of gender units and advisors all aim to advance gender mainstreaming and reach the ultimate goal of gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming has had its fair share of criticism. From a top-down level there is a strong agenda for gender mainstreaming; however it falls short in reality (Basini, 2013). Simić (2010) criticized the UN for reinforcing gender stereotypes in their call for women peacekeepers, as they advocate that women are innately more peaceful than men. Furthermore, policies which promote gender mainstreaming are often the first to be discarded due to budget constraints (Charlesworth, 2005). In addition, global principles may not coalesce with local values, especially regarding religion and the position of women, and gender mainstreaming is difficult to translate into local languages (Winslow, 2009). Another problem in achieving the ultimate goal of gender equality through gender mainstreaming is the lack of women who enrol in the military in the first place, hence the lack of women to promote to leadership positions in order to advance gender mainstreaming. Furthermore, politicians seem reluctant to deploy women peacekeepers as it is seen as political suicide; women returning in body bags will cause significantly different reactions compared to men returning in body bags. This is clear in studies which show that even in cases where women are welcomed in the

military, politicians still allow mission risk levels to affect their decision whether or not to deploy women military personnel (Karim & Beardsley, 2013).

Nevertheless, advocates argue that increasing participation of women in peacekeeping is essential in improving the operational effectiveness of the unit due to the unique contribution women make to peacekeeping. The policy on Gender Equality in UN Peacekeeping Operations explains:

Collaboration and dialogue with TCCs shall advocate for the adoption of gender-sensitive policies which support the increased recruitment and deployment of uniformed women to peacekeeping, as part of the overall commitment to ensure maximum operational effectiveness of the peacekeeping operations in line with the commitments made by Member States in recent policy discussions (DPKO, 2010).

Scholars take different theoretical approaches with regard to their stance on women's unique contributions to PKOs. This, and clarification on what is meant by women's 'unique contributions' is discussed in the next section.

2.3. Unique Contributions of Women in Peacekeeping Operations

2.3.1. Contending Feminist Views Regarding Women in Combat Units

Feminist scholars focussing on women, conflict, and peacekeeping rarely find consensus and feminist views often contradict one another. However, feminism is placed under one umbrella due to consensus that gender matters in global politics. Yet, terms, categorizations and importance of subject may differ; some scholars give special attention to certain factors, which others disregard. For instance, Hudson (2002) points out three variant feminist theories which are associated with the recruitment of women in the military; pertaining to inequality, oppression or difference. Goldstein's (2004) categorizations differ, citing rather liberal, difference and post-modern feminism. For the purpose of this study, simplification of the feminist perspectives is needed.

As mentioned, a number of feminist schools exist. The main divisions are between liberals, radicals, Marxist, and post-modern feminism. Marxist feminism acknowledges the existence of male dominance, but it is not central to their theory, which is rooted in economic exploitation, claiming capitalism as the source of women's oppression (Jaggar, 1983:239). Post-modern feminism is also associated with women's oppression, yet focuses on essentialism and how discourse constructs inequality (Malešević, 2010:291). More appropriate to this study are the diverging schools of liberal and radical feminism.

A liberal or rights-based feminist approach is rooted in individual rights and the law; its central issue is gender discrimination. Liberal feminists argue that men and women are similar and focus on social obstacles preventing women from reaching their potential (Malešević, 2010:289). The aim for liberal

feminists is to promote equality for both men and women regarding rights, equal opportunities, and representation in politics in the existing order (Hudson, 2002). The aim of gender equality is reached through the existing order, “using the democratic system to reform the political, economic and social systems that perpetuate sexism and discrimination against women” (Heinecken, 2002). A liberal feminist approach claims that altering the number of women in the military will change the masculine dynamics within the institution. In essence, liberal feminism champions gender equality on the basis of equal rights to all citizens, not recognizing gender difference, but advocate that women should have the right to participate in the same roles as men.

The critique on liberal feminist theory with regard to women’s recruitment into the military is that it mainly asks for the ‘degendering’ of women, instead of imposing the same requirements on men (Goldstein, 2004). In other words, by integrating women into the military, women are expected to conform to masculine norms, in the end not changing the masculine environment of the military, but consolidating it.

Radical feminism draws from the oppression and exploitation of women by men, mainly due to the maintenance of patriarchy and power relations (Goldstein, 2004). Patriarchy, translating as ‘rule of the father’ has now taken on a broader definition where feminists consider it as the supremacy of men and the subordination of women (Cockburn, 2010). A militarist culture permeates the hierarchal gender relations of a patriarchal order; where men are masculine and authoritative, prone to violence and women are feminine, submissive, supportive and nurturing (Cockburn, 2010). Radicals believe that a patriarchal society promulgates a social reality which benefits men and champions male values only (Jaggar, 1983:250).

Radical feminism focuses on the difference between men and women. Some difference feminists see difference between men and women as biologically based, or culturally based, where gender is seen as a construct based on role perceptions (Goldstein, 2004:41). Either difference results in women being considered more peaceful than men, and more connected in their social relationships compared to the more autonomous man. In this sense, either women are recruited into the military for their different traits in order to reduce its hegemonic masculine culture, or should be excluded precisely due to their pacifist nature (Hudson, 2002; Heinecken, 2002). Biologically, women are considered weaker than men, and should be excluded from the battlefield.

Radical feminists are concerned with notions of equality, but are less focused on moral and structural equality, rejecting the notion of ‘equal opportunity’ between men and women, but rather aim for a radical transformation of the male centric social order to change patriarchal structures (Hudson, 2002; Malešević, 2010). The main problem radicals see is that sexist patriarchal cultures disparage feminine qualities (compared to masculine qualities) instead of celebrating or promoting them, and masculine

qualities are glorified (Goldstein, 2004:41; Jaggar, 1983:250). Masculinism therefore diminishes values such as greater nurturing abilities, better communication skills, propensity towards non-violent resolution of conflicts and greater sociability (Malešević, 2010:290). As these qualities are diminished, women soldiers would be subject to conform to male practices and values which are hegemonic within the military, in the end increasing the militarization of society (Hudson, 2002). Radicals promote a change in social order and power relations between men and women, and argue that the special qualities of women, due to their biological differences and socialization, should be recognized (Heinecken, 2002).

The critique of radical feminism revolves around scepticism that women can change the militarized culture of the military by introducing more feminine-like qualities. In addition, seeing women as peaceful ignores the countless examples where women have been supporters and active players in warfare. Women also play an invaluable role in consolidating gender roles especially masculinity and the warrior ethos (Goldstein, 2004:48,49).

Moving beyond the dichotomies of radical and liberal feminism, is Post-modern feminism. Post-modern feminism (also drawing from post-structural theory) sees gender as a fluid construct. It focuses on the diversity of women's experiences, and rejects the notion of a global sisterhood. Even though the main focus of this study is not on racialism, it is difficult to ignore in the South African context. Postcolonial theory concentrates on racialism and also on the “psychological motivations of dominant groups' projection of inferior or dependent 'others'” (Hendricks & Lewis, 1994:71). The following section discusses the arguments most commonly used to advocate the participation of women in PKOs and the debates related to these arguments.

2.3.2. Debates Regarding the Unique Contributions of Women Peacekeepers

It was a mixture of the failure of peacekeepers to appropriately interact with civilian populations, the increasing accusations of SEA, and the drive of gender mainstreaming which encouraged the promotion of women in peacekeeping and studies on the incorporation of women in peacekeeping units. The introduction of more women peacekeepers was a widely endorsed strategy to reduce the negative effects of peacekeeping. Debates about women adding to the operational effectiveness of a PKO are discussed below.

2.3.2.1. Civilizing Effect on Men

One of the main arguments for adding women to peacekeeping missions is that they are seen as having a civilizing effect on their male comrades. Drawing from evidence in a 1995 study for the UN Division of the Advancement of Women, reductions in accusations against peacekeepers allowed De Groot (2001) to conclude that men behave better when around women of their own culture. As a result

of this, the assumption is that the presence of women will help reduce the high level of prostitution which is often found close to bases, decrease the number of brothels, reduce the number of soldiers affected by AIDS, and reduce the number of abandoned babies (Simić, 2010). However reference is not made to relationships between men and women peacekeepers from different cultures. Feminists challenge the ‘boys will be boys’ assumption that men are only acting on their natural urges, and focus on the culture of masculinities in peacekeeping missions. This civilizing argument is in line with the argument that women are more passive than men. Women are found to calm a situation with their presence and negotiating skills, compared to men who supposedly act more aggressively in times of crisis (Karamé, 2001). In this sense, women are being called for the same thing which excluded them from the military in first place (De Groot, 2001).

History has proven that men are more involved in conflict; however women should not be ruled out of this equation. A report by the UN Secretary General in 2002 (Women, Peace and Security) did warn against claiming all women to be passive, stating that “not all women work for peace”. There have been a number of cases where women have been combatants taking part in suicide bombings for instance, or have supported male fighters by smuggling ammunition. Higate (2007) also points out the fact that not all men are ‘uncivilized’, and many do not partake in forms of SEA due to being committed to family at home, or for religious reasons. Feminists also question the assumption that men are sexual beings and women are asexual. Even though no women peacekeeper has been accused of SEA, women in militarized settings have shown to take part in mass atrocities, and in some cases gang rape (Wood, 2010). Finally, women are often swallowed by a hyper-masculine culture seen in militaries, and are forced to give up their feminine traits (discussed in more detail in section 2.4.2).

2.3.2.2. Contact with the Local Population

Women are also considered more compassionate and therefore more inclined interact with and befriend members of the local community, especially local women (Carey, 2001). This may enhance the intelligence of the mission, as information regarding the local culture can be collected when meetings are informal and friendly (Karamé, 2001). If locals perceive peacekeepers in a non-threatening way, this may also enhance the security of personnel. Additionally, women are vital in cases where body searches need to be conducted. In many cultures where contact between men and women is constrained, local men may perceive male soldiers as disrespectful if they conduct these searches themselves (Mobekk, 2010).

Challenging this argument is the fact that in many cases it has been shown that women peacekeepers do not come into contact with the local population, or have limited contact with them. This is due to a number of factors including resentment by local men, fear of being raped, or the lack of will to communicate with locals (Jennings, 2011). Other impediments include mandates which forbid contact

with the locals, or women are confined to the base while the men do patrols, or simpler challenges such as language barriers (Bertolazzi, 2010; Cordell, 2011a). In addition, a high turnover which is usually experienced in peacekeeping missions makes it difficult for women to establish close relationships with the locals.

2.3.2.3. Respondents to Sexual Gender Based Violence

Another contribution women peacekeepers make to PKO is that they are better able to respond to cases of SGBV (UNSCR 1888; UNSCR 1960). The argument is that women who have suffered from sexual abuse want to speak to a woman rather than a man. The assumption is that women are more understanding of what another woman is going through, and therefore more compassionate towards a victim of SGBV. However, gender may not be a defining issue in this regard as it has been noted that civilians often see the uniform before seeing the gender (Simić, 2010). Furthermore, cultural challenges and language barriers may also inhibit women from contributing in this way (Jennings, 2011). Finally, women soldiers are often not trained in responding to such cases and in many instances do not know where to report cases of SGBV (Heinecken, 2013).

2.3.2.4. Inspirational to Local Women

Finally, it is assumed that the notion of seeing women peacekeepers in uniform and seeing them successfully work together with their male counterparts is inspiring to local women. The positive example women demonstrate to locals is shown to inspire local women to take part in political life (Olsson, 2000). The most commonly cited example to support this argument is the increasing numbers of women enrolling in the police force in Liberia after the deployment of an all-woman Police Unit to the area (Mobekk, 2010).

However, the host society's culture may impact the effectiveness of women peacekeepers. Local culture may inhibit contact with women peacekeepers as seeing women in this military role may be inconsistent with local gender roles and beliefs, and may be considered disrespectful. On the other hand, women in uniform may be nothing new in some states. For example, women in military roles are often a known phenomenon due to women frequently being part of liberation struggles; which are the areas to which peacekeepers are usually deployed (Karamé 2001; Olsson, 2001). Considering the debates around the contributions women make to peacekeeping, the following section will focus on the challenges women peacekeepers face in the military and during deployments.

2.4. Women Peacekeepers and the Challenges they Face

The value women add to PKO begs the question as to why women only make up a tiny percentage of the military today. This is due to the numerous challenges women face within the military. These include issues of tokenism, the hegemonic masculinity which is embedded in military culture, and the

soldier identity to which men and women aspire which does not include feminine characteristics. Furthermore, arguments that women should be excluded from the military surround issues of them disrupting the cohesion of the unit, being inferior on both biological and physical scales, and women enhance complexities with regard to sexuality and may pose security risks.

2.4.1. Tokenism

One major challenge women peacekeepers may face can be related to Kanter's (1977) seminal work on tokenism. Kanter (1977) describes groups with a large number of one 'type' of person over another as a skewed group. Here, the numerically dominant types control the group and its culture, and may be called 'dominants'. Furthermore, Kanter (1977) calls those in the minority in skewed groups 'tokens' "because they are often treated as representatives of their category, as symbols rather than individuals". With regard to gender equality, tokens can be added to make an environment seem more 'fair', or as Eisenstein (2007) argues, become mere 'decoys' to allow an institution to be hailed as an equal opportunity provider. Tokens may also be expected to add, what Kanter (1977) calls, 'auxiliary traits' to the table. In other words, tokens are identified by certain characteristics (like gender) and are ascribed certain behavioural traits. This may lead to performance pressures, may cause them to be easily visible in a dominant group, and their representation is often extended beyond the individual to similar tokens. Concurrent with this issue of tokenism as a challenge preventing women from fulfilling the expectations espoused in UNSCR 1325 and other reports, is the extreme masculine environment which embodies the military.

2.4.2. The Masculine Environment of the Military

The military is probably the most masculine organization today, not only dominated by men in numbers, but by the hegemonic masculinity which is espoused by the organization itself. The military is a domain where intense socialization of masculinity takes place, and where masculine traits are encouraged and celebrated. It is important to understand that masculinity can be displayed in varying degrees. The most strived for, and advocated form of masculinity championed in the military is what Connell (1995) calls 'hegemonic masculinity'. Hegemonic masculinity allows for the subordination of 'non-hegemonic masculinities', therefore, any subordinate masculinity and also any form of femininity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Hooper, 1998).¹⁰ It allows for the continued domination of men over women.¹¹ Connell & Messerschmidt (2005:832) explain that hegemonic masculinity

¹⁰ As a response to the critique on Connells' (1995) initial work on hegemonic masculinity, Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) provide a reformulated conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity.

¹¹ Hegemonic masculinity may also allow for the subordination of other masculinities (see Hooper, 1998:33-38). For example, homosexual masculinity is highly subordinated within most societies (and especially military institutions) (Connell:1995:39-40).

embodies the most honoured way of being a man, requires all men to position themselves to it, and it legitimates the global subordination of women to men. Furthermore, they reiterate the importance of *both* genders in creating this most ‘honoured way of being a man’, stating the importance of “recognizing the agency of subordinated groups as much as the power of dominant groups”.

Military institutions foster violent forms of masculinity; research has shown that a heightened form of hegemonic masculinity is encouraged in the training of soldiers, resulting in what is known as militarized masculinity or hyper-masculinity. This masculinity is associated with the ‘warrior ethos’, encouraging a capacity for violence, aggression, courage and sacrifice (Lopes, 2011). Conformity to hegemonic masculinity is not only policed by men, but also through the threat of feminization, therefore, this ideology of manliness is based on misogynist thinking and calls (Hooper, 1998:35; Whitworth, 2004). What results are often extreme forms of discrimination, violence, and sexual violence, especially targeted at women. Feminists have argued that the main challenge is not to address the contested role of women peacekeepers, but to challenge the militarized and masculine culture which has overwhelmed military organizations since its introduction (Carreiras & Kummel, 2008; Whitworth, 2004).

The rise in a gendered regime has a significant impact on the soldiers’ identity, challenging this hegemonic masculinity. Traditionally the military soldier has strived and has been defined within masculine terms. This has encouraged a warrior framework to develop within military units. Whitworth (2004) argues that a major clash between the traditional soldiers’ identity and the identity needed for a peacekeeping context is evident. Whitworth argues that after the Cold War the military experienced a legitimacy crisis, where changes in the attitude towards warfare shifted to more humanitarian ideals which lead to a crisis of masculinity within the military. In PKOs this masculinist crisis has resulted in cases of hyper-masculinity and violence (Whitworth, 2004). Whitworth (2004) investigates the hyper-masculine culture experienced in peacekeeping troops due to the gap between what soldiers are trained to do and what they are expected to do on peacekeeping missions. Fetherston (1995) observes that there “is no switch inside a blue helmet that automatically turns a soldier trained for war-fighting into an individual prepared to work non-violently and with cultural sensitivity in a highly militarized environment”. In addition to the expectation-versus-reality gap, soldiers develop ‘geographically remote subcultures’ or a ‘culture of impunity’ which adds to their negligence towards their mandate and an easily emerging culture rife with hyper-masculinity (Higate, 2007; Burnham *et al.*, 2009; Martin, 2005).

Even though some scholars question the appropriateness of using soldiers as peacekeepers, studies have indicated that the presence of soldiers does reduce civilian casualties (Kathman, Hultman & Shannon, 2011). However, there seems to be a trade-off between civilian casualties and a negative

impact on human security caused by peacekeepers. Studies done in Kosovo, Haiti, and Sierra Leone, by de la Cuesta and Smith (2010) suggest that an increase in human trafficking is directly proportional to the number of troops deployed (which are male dominated).

The overwhelming presence of hegemonic and militarized masculinities in the military and peacekeeping environment has made it extremely difficult for women to contribute in the expected way. Men are ambivalent to feminine aspects of peacekeeping, and increasing the number of women may be seen as a threat to the missions' prestige, as the notion of 'if a women can do it' comes into play (Sion, 2008; 2009). This is mainly because masculine qualities are asserted in opposition to feminine qualities. What happens if women enter the military is that they dilute their femininity to conform, and even aspire to this hegemonic masculinity. Sion (2008) claims that women who want to become 'one of the boys' are forced to suppress their sexuality and femininity; therefore to be part of a male group requires a woman to become 'non-woman'. Furthermore, the hyper-masculine culture also seen in the military and PKO has forced women peacekeepers to adapt their own behaviour in order to be accepted by their male colleagues, in other words be part of the boys' club, therefore tolerating, if not actively participating in highly sexualized behaviour (Jennings, 2011, Simić, 2010). In the end this defeats the point of adding women to the military to make a difference. Sion (2009) encapsulate this problem nicely by arguing that peacekeeping still produces the same traditional combat oriented mind set of gender roles and limits women's ability to perform and contribute to peace missions. Therefore, the challenge to overcome the warrior culture remains one of the greatest obstacles for women in the military.

2.4.3. Cohesion

Another argument against recruiting women in combat units is due to their so-called negative impact on the cohesion, morale and discipline of a military unit, in the end negatively affecting the operational effectiveness of that unit. Contrary to the popular belief that cohesion is equated to male bonding, there are two types of cohesion to consider (Harrell & Miller, 1997). *Social cohesion* refers to the emotional bonding in a unit, therefore the closeness of a unit regarding friendship. On the other hand *task cohesion* refers to shared commitment and effort within the group to achieve a goal (Harrell & Miller, 1997). Maninger (2008) discusses a number of sociological factors regarding the recruitment of women in the military which may negatively affect unit cohesion. These have to do with biological differences and issues of sexuality (discussed in subsequent sections), all argued to have a negative effect on cohesion.

However, counterarguments exist which claim that cohesion is better seen once deployed, rather than in the barracks. Carreiras & Kummel (2008) contend that cohesion is based on shared hardships and not on gender; that women's physical strength inadequacies may be overcome with teamwork, where

integration may actually reduce prejudice and encourage cohesion. In the same vein, Harrell and Miller (1997) also note that task cohesion is more important than social cohesion, where social cohesion can actually be detrimental to group performance in cases where friendships are prioritized over tasks. In turn, gender differences do not solely play a role in unit cohesion, and divisions may also arise from class, race, and personal interests (Harrell and Miller, 1997).

2.4.4. Biological and Physical Differences

One of the main arguments for excluding women from combat zones is their biological and physical difference to men. In essence, men are genetically predisposed for warfare due to their physical strength, stature, testosterone levels and intrinsic character to gain power by force; women on the other hand are predisposed for being more peaceful as they are in most cases physically inferior to men, and are natural ‘care givers’ due to their ability to give birth (Malešević, 2010).

Considering physical differences, what is often cited as to why women cannot perform in the military is because women simply do not have the physical strength and stamina to keep up with the demanding environment often experienced in PKOs. This is most often seen during training for missions. Moreover, in cases where women keep up with training, double standards are set for men and women, where women may lift lighter weights or are expected to fulfil tasks within an extended timeframe. If women and men are held to different standards, it creates resentment from men in the group (Harrell & Miller, 1997). Men are often cited complaining about ‘equal rights’ versus ‘equal standards’ (Cohn, 2000).

In addition, where soldiers lack the capability to complete a task to the level of others, the overall trust within the group deteriorates. Yet, there are cases where women have matched the strength of men and even showed better results regarding stamina (Davis & McKee, 2004). Finally, the biological capabilities of a woman to give birth also play a major role in the ‘deployability’ of women soldiers. Women often have to take leave due to pregnancy or other family related incidents (Maninger, 2008). Women are also seen to be more prone to injury in training and illness once deployed. Furthermore, women’s menstrual cycle is also seen as a drawback in deployment.

2.4.5. Sexuality

Adding to biological and training challenges, women’s sexuality in itself becomes a battlefield within a military institution. It is argued that the introduction of women may distort male bonding within the unit through the development of sexual relationships, lust, love, marriage, or jealousy (Maninger, 2008). Studies by Harrell and Miller (1997) confirm this notion, bringing attention to the predicament which arises when relationships end on bad terms. On the other hand, Feitz and Nagel (2008) mention

how women's sexuality has been exploited to become a tool; a new type of war material to legitimize certain actions.

Furthermore, women's sexuality may be construed in patriarchal terms, therefore affecting their sense of authority. However, men's sexuality during war may also pose a problem. For one, intelligence sharing when in a relationship with a local may be an issue. Furthermore, when out of control, men's sexuality can lead to rape and generate reactions contrary to the missions' goals, as well as the spread of Sexual Transmitted Diseases (Goldstein, 2004:341).

2.4.6. Security

Closely linked to sexuality is the problem of security. Not much research has been done on how the presence of women directly enhances human security within the host state. Cordell (2011) does discuss a heightened sense of human security with the presence of women during UNMIL.¹² In Liberia, crime rates declined, women were active in intelligence gathering, and women were also seen to have broader and long term goals of positive peace in the community.

However, evidence has also suggested that the presence of women may enhance the insecurity of soldiers in the missions and perhaps even the local population. In addition, the hyper-masculine nature of peacekeeping makes the environment extra hostile to women, placing them at greater risk. Women's sexuality may pose a threat to their personal security, as they may become targets of rape. Becoming targets puts the unit at risk and may make fellow male peacekeepers feel vulnerable (Heinecken, 2013). Furthermore, fellow male soldiers become distracted and perhaps overprotective of women soldiers and may make reckless decisions. As mentioned earlier, the presence of women may also be considered disrespectful to locals and may cause resentment from the local community. Heinecken (2013) dubs these issues 'gendered security risks'.

2.5. From Global Norms to South African Interpretations

As previously stated, gender mainstreaming is adopted and utilized differently as the complexities of the relationship between women and security is context specific. This is due to the mandates and policies which a home country employs regarding peacekeeping, but also to the social and cultural context of a state (Hudson, 2002; Carreiras, 2010). Utilizing the new 'gender regime' to overcome the dominant military culture depends on a variety of factors; however each actor has operationalized and internalized the 'gender agenda' very differently (Carreiras, 2010; Kummel, 2002). South Africa is a case in point.

¹² United Nations Mission to Liberia which consisted of the first all-female Police Unit which was deployed in 2007.

Peacekeeping at the time of South Africa's independence was not high on the governments' agenda, as domestic issues were prioritized. Yet, closer to the end of the 1990s, it became clear that the stability and development of South Africa also rests on the development of the continent as a whole. It was then that the SANDF's primary focus shifted to missions of peace operations and support (Nibishaka, 2011). The SANDF has contributed troops to a number of PKOs, starting from 1998 (in Lesotho), either under the auspices of the AU, SADC, or the UN. Deployments were made to a number of countries including to Burundi, the Sudan, the DRC and Nepal.

South Africa provides an interesting case study for research into women peacekeepers and their recruitment into the SANDF. It is one of a handful of states which at the time of independence, opened the door to the full participation of women in the military, including artillery and armour, infantry, and the opportunity to serve on naval vessels and as fighter pilots. How gender relations have shaped and continue to shape the military is a vital characteristic to take note of when considering the debates regarding the recruitment of women peacekeepers. Considering South Africa's history, the governments' aim since independence is to correct past injustices.

Today South Africa has one of the highest percentages of women peacekeepers in the world, currently representing the highest in the SADC region (SADC, 2014). At the annual DOD Gender Conference in 2008, the recruitment of women was pushed up to 40%. South Africa is especially unique in the variety of non-traditional posts held by women in the cabinet: including the foreign affairs, and deputy minister of defence positions. Considering the number of women peacekeepers, and the high positions held by women, in theory, South Africa should also be one of the most capable peacekeeping forces in the world; taking into account the special contributions that women make to missions. However South African male peacekeepers have often been cited for behaving badly, accused of misconduct, or criticized for not protecting civilians.¹³

The fact that South Africa stands out due to the quantitative difference women peacekeepers make in the Defence Force, raises the question whether they actually make a qualitative contribution to its peacekeeping force? In other words, has South Africa utilized the gender mainstreaming agenda or does it continue to take an 'add women and stir' approach? Women in South Africa have equal opportunity, however recent studies by Heineken (2002, 2011) indicate that equal opportunities for women in the military do not result in the value of these soldiers being appreciated and utilized. This is due to South Africa being politically and legally motivated to increase women in the military rather than focussing on gender difference which is promoted by the UN. The reason why the SANDF

¹³ The South African military in Burundi from 2002 to 2008 recorded some 400 cases of misconduct and approximately 1000 military trials were heard. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the record was equally dismal, with 264 cases involving disciplinary misconduct and 546 military trials (Nibishaka, 2011).

became more representative at the time of independence was due to a number of factors. First, there was extreme emphasis placed on human rights according to the new Constitution; second, the SANDF was experiencing a growing problem of recruitment as it became an all-volunteer force, therefore tapping into non-traditional pools was essential; and finally, the SANDF became more representative to uphold its legitimacy (Heinecken, 2009).¹⁴

A number of obstacles have been cited which prevents the SANDF from properly implementing a gender mainstreaming agenda. An in depth study by Van Breda (2010) on the Status of Women in the Department of Defence (DOD) provides an array of challenges facing the SANDF, some of which include construed gender perceptions of women and men, patriarchy, and the questioning of women's competence. Many of these challenges are confirmed by a study by Heinecken (2013), and further points out challenges ranging from impractical uniforms, and intense training, to resentment from male soldiers and security risks women face once deployed. Further challenges noted by Schoeman (2010) include gender discrimination once deployed. Here, women are often confined to the base and not included in duties outside the base because of the security threat they may pose. Additional challenges include insufficient support when it comes to peacekeeping deployment, senior male officers discouraging women from volunteering for peacekeeping operations, lack of awareness and training regarding gender mainstreaming and Resolutions 1325, and not enough gender training prior to deployment (Schoeman, 2010; Heinecken, 2013). Considering the apartheid history in South Africa, Heinecken (2002) also notes the cultural values which spill over to gender relations. White women support more Western notions of women in peacekeeping where black women want to be treated equally to men and are more eager to take part in combat. This indicated that gender roles are closely linked to racial lines.

Heinecken (2009:28) challenges the extremely valued principle of equality within the SANDF, and argues that the "overriding emphasis on creating a representative military has been at the expense of valuing diversity". An Affirmative Action strategy by the SANDF is followed by setting quotas and providing special training for women to correct past injustices, which is all motivated by political consideration. "However, getting the numbers right means nothing, if those representing the numbers are not valued and respected" (Heinecken, 2009:44).

With the passing of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, a gender focus has added to the initial goal of correcting racial imbalances in South Africa. What is noted is that the reason for including women in the military does not correspond with the UN's goals of gender mainstreaming. Adding women to the SANDF is

¹⁴ An abstract of the South African White Paper on Defence cited in Heinecken (2009:26) states that "to secure the legitimacy of the armed forces, the Department of Defence is committed to the goal of overcoming the legacy of racial and gender discrimination".

seen as an end in itself, where at the UN level, it is seen as a means to an end: the ultimate goal of human security by means of gender equality through gender mainstreaming.

South Africa is subject to a number of protocols which enhance gender equality. Most importantly, section 187 of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996) describes the functions of the Commission for Gender Equality. The Constitution as well as the White Paper on National Defence (DOD, 1996) prioritize non-discrimination, including in respect to gender and gender equality. In line with the Constitution, South Africa developed a plethora of legislation and institutions designed to promote and protect equality, including the Human Rights Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality and the Office on the Status of Women, which is located in the offices of the presidency (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010). The SADC Gender Protocol was created in 2008, which contains 28 targets for achieving gender equality and the improvement of women's lives in Southern Africa by 2015. South Africa ratified the gender protocol in 2011. Furthermore, the Defence Review, previously criticized for not being gender sensitive has in 2014 incorporated a gendered approach. Yet, even with these milestones, women are not contributing to peacekeeping in the way expected. This calls for more investigation into the experiences of women serving in the SANDF and on deployments.

2.6. Summary of the Literature Surveyed

It has been demonstrated that a feminist approach helps to identify the gaps in the human security approach, being the lack of a gender lens to analyse individual security. This has especially been noted in analysing the degree of success of peacekeeping missions. Critique on the impact of peacekeeping on the host states' human security has prompted support for increasing the number of women in peacekeeping missions. Resolution 1325, UN agencies, and a number of scholars point to the unique contributions women can make to PKOs which ultimately make a positive contribution to the operational effectiveness of the mission. This is done in two ways. Firstly, increasing the security of vulnerable populations especially women and victims of SGBV, and secondly improving the behaviour of male soldiers, which enhances the security of locals, and the force, as peacekeepers are perceived as non-threatening. In essence, according to the UN the goal of recruiting women is not an end in itself, but a means to improve the operational effectiveness of a peacekeeping unit once deployed, and improve the security situation in the host state.

There are however a number of challenges which prevent women from contributing positively to PKOs. These include biological and physical characteristics which hail women inferior to men; the negative impact they are said to have on unit cohesion; and issues of security and sexuality. A great challenge they face is the military's masculine environment which sees the inclusion of women - perceived as feminine and therefore inferior - as a threat to the identity of the soldier and the military itself. To cope with this highly masculine and militarized domain, women 'give up' their femininity

and conform to the hegemonic masculinity championed by the military. This in turn defeats the point of including women in PKOs for their feminist characteristics which underwrite the unique contributions women are said to make.

The growing realization that Resolution 1325 cannot be applied to all peacekeeping missions as a blueprint for peace, has highlighted the importance of context specific work and prompted scholars to undertake ethnographic research on the experiences of women in peacekeeping (Hudson, 2000). This comes with the understanding that gender implications on peacekeeping missions are affected by the existing domestic structures and cultures of contributing countries (Carreiras, 2010:471). A number of examples of case study work include Somalia and Cambodia (Whitworth, 2004), Sierra Leone (Higate, 2003; de la Cuesta & Smith, 2010), and the DRC (Higate, 2003) to name a few.

The lack of clarity and contradicting realities of women peacekeepers points out that literature on this matter is fairly new, and its platform is only now starting to reveal cracks, pointing scholars to new directions of study. The consensus among scholars is that the presence of women in PKOs certainly makes a difference to the operational effectiveness of the unit. However, consensus on how this difference can be utilized and directed into a positive outcome remains hazy.

Focusing on South Africa, the small body of literature on women in the SANDF has demonstrated that women are not recruited for their unique contributions to PKOs. Women are recruited as an end in itself and not as a means to an end; being gender mainstreaming and the final goal of gender equality. In addition, they also face the challenge of being incorporated into a highly masculine domain. More case based research needs to be conducted to identify the specific challenges women face across missions. Once identified, this will allow the SANDF to address these challenges and ensure that women become more than mere numbers, rather making a qualitative difference in PKOs conducted by the Force.

2.7. Concluding Remarks

This study agrees with Carreiras (2010), noting that a context sensitive analysis will help to adequately account for and understand the gender dimension of peacekeeping culture. The goal of this study is not to champion or critique gender mainstreaming, but to examine institutional practices and deployment realities and how they correlate with theoretical expectations of women peacekeepers and official policies in South Africa. The aim is to identify what obstacles prevent women from contributing to peacekeeping missions, and to identify what changes need to be made to foster an environment where women's contributions to peacekeeping can be made a reality.

This study is important due to the need to establish realistic expectations about the contributions women can make to PKOs by taking the context of that unit into consideration. In effect, this will help

overcome the pretence of a 'global sisterhood' expected from women in security sector reform, and will also shed light on the fact that vulnerable women do not experience insecurity in the same way. This reiterates the value of case study analysis outside of the Western world, and helps create data which may equip scholars from the developing world to add to the richness of feminism. The following chapter (*Research Design and Methodology*) will discuss how the researcher plans to answer the overarching research question through the collection of primary and secondary data.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The need for more systematic research on the contributions women make to peacekeeping has prompted the researcher to collect empirical evidence to further the understandings of how women are challenged in realizing these contributions. The purpose of this chapter is to detail the research path and describe the research process. The first section is devoted to the research design, which justifies the need for a case study analysis in which focus group discussions and secondary data is used. The next section discusses the method of data collection. Here, more detail is given to justify the need to conduct focus groups and a description of the settings and participants is given. Thereafter, the data processing and analysis section is described. Here, the categorization of themes is explained. Furthermore, a section is included which reflects on the research process in terms of some of its challenges and shortcomings. Issues of population sampling, the data collection technique, and including only women participants naturally impose limitations on the study. Where possible, methods in minimizing these challenges were made and are also mentioned. In closing, a short section will discuss the ethical considerations of this study.

3.2. Research Strategy

This project was a qualitative study that set out to explore how women serving in the military and on peacekeeping missions see their contributions from a gender perspective. Qualitative analysis was more suited to this study than quantitative analysis. The reason for this is the amount of participants included in the study would not satisfy a quantitative statistical analysis which aims to make broad generalizations. Furthermore, where quantitative analysis provides conclusive findings, a qualitative approach provides exploratory research, which does not aim to provide definitive answers for an entire population, but aims to provide insights and further understanding into a specific phenomenon. For this reason a qualitative research approach was considered more suitable as the aim was to capture the voices of military women, especially those who have served on peacekeeping missions, to deepen the understanding of women in PKOs. As this study sought to explore and understand events or phenomena in a real world setting, the philosophical paradigm from which it emerges is from an interpretivist approach.

The research design used in this study is a critical case study design, facilitated by primary and secondary data collection. Burnham, Lutz, Grant and Layton-Henry (2008) state that a case study design “enable researchers to focus on a single individual, group, community, [...] or institution, and study it in depth”. In this study, the SANDF and particularly those groups of women who serve in the infantry were selected as the SANDF is one the few Defence Forces that recruit women in significant

numbers and deploy them on PKOs. Furthermore, women serving in the infantry were selected as this is a combat corps, typically hostile to women, but also the corps from which most soldiers who serve on PKOs are drawn. Therefore, a case study design focused on South Africa, and specifically the SANDF, is the most appropriate research design for conducting this exploratory study.

3.3. Data Collection

This study is comprised of two data collection techniques. The first technique relates to secondary data collection in the form of documents related to the SANDF and gender equality within South Africa. The second technique is based on primary data collection through facilitating focus group discussions with women serving in the infantry in the SANDF. Focus group discussions were facilitated by Prof. L. Heinecken (co-supervisor) and A. Alchin (author).

The collection of primary data was achieved through facilitating focus group discussions. Burnham *et al.* (2008:129) describe focus groups as a “series of discussions designed to obtain perception on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment”. Kumar (2011:127,128) provides a more concrete conceptualization by stating that focus groups are a strategy in qualitative research in which attitudes, opinions or perceptions towards an issue are explored through facilitated discussions between members of a group and the researcher. Collecting data through focus groups provides the opportunity for in-depth discussions with women peacekeepers on their experiences in the military and during deployments. In essence, focus groups were chosen as the appropriate means of data collection for the following reasons:

1. Focus groups encourage women to speak of issues which may seem sensitive; the collective feeling that others share the same thoughts or challenges is expected to encourage more discussion on the topic.
2. Focus groups allow for debate and stimulate ideas within the group, which allows for rich discussion and reflection.
3. Focus groups are useful when the time is limited to interview many people on the same topic who have similar profiles.
4. Focus groups were also chosen for institutional reasons, as this was easier for the SANDF to coordinate in terms of dividing members into groups to be interviewed at specific times.

In order to establish a framework so that discussions remained on track, the focus groups were guided by questions which were prepared beforehand. This being said, the questions were asked in an open ended manner which allowed for the interviewer to be open to new issues and follow different leads (within the boundary of the research question) according to the willingness and response from the participants. Open ended questions are necessary to encourage rich and meaningful responses, and

perhaps explore areas the researcher did not know of or think significant. As said before, the researcher went with the feel of the group and therefore the questions were not asked sequentially and were rephrased when needed. See Appendix B for the questionnaire.

Choosing the appropriate way in which to record the interviews seemed fairly easy. Digital recorders were used to ensure the reliability of the data collected and an accurate record of the recordings was completed in the form of transcripts. In addition to the focus group questionnaire, the researcher also gave participants the option of writing on a blank piece of paper any information they did not want to disclose or discuss in the focus groups, or comment on issues not raised in the discussions. This also gave the opportunity to individual participants who felt they were under the influence of group-think to express their different opinions.

In addition to the above-mentioned primary research which was conducted, secondary data was also used in this study. The reason for using secondary data was to answer the first sub-question posed in Chapter 1, being: *What are the reasons the SANDF recruit women in the military and deploy them on peacekeeping missions?* This will help reach the second objective also discussed in Chapter 1; to *identify why women are recruited in the SANDF*. Secondary data in the form of military documents and government documents relevant to gender equality and gender mainstreaming was collected to form part of the analysis. The secondary data came from a variety of documents, some of which are cited below:

- United Nations Resolution 1325
- SADC Gender Protocol and Gender Development (Article 28: peace building and conflict resolution)
- SADC Gender Protocol Barometers
- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (section 187 1-3)
- Republic of South Africa Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill
- 2014 South African Defence Review
- Department of Defence Gender Mainstreaming Policy

The secondary data, along with the data collected from the focus group discussions, provides a rich platform of data to establish the links between the contributions made by women peacekeepers in the SANDF and the challenges they face. The next section will shed more light on the participants and the setting in which the discussions took place.

3.3.1. Setting and Participants

The interviews took place at the 9 South African Infantry (9 SAI) base near Cape Town on 12 August 2014. The reason for choosing this site is because this unit had a large number of women and recently deployed on peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan. The target population was sampled through the means of non-probability sampling. This means that even though specific requirements stipulated to the Officer Commanding of 9 SAI in terms of the profile of participants, the researcher had to make do with the sample population given. As this was a non-probability sample group, the number of participants was unknown before the day of the interviews. There is disagreement on the appropriate number of participants which should make up a focus group, some authors say either six to eight participants (Burnham *et al.*, 2008), others claim eight to ten is the optimal number (Kumar, 2011:128). With regard to this study, a total of fifty participants took part in the seven focus group discussions, carrying an average of seven participants per focus group.

Before the focus groups were conducted, the participants were called to the eating hall and as they were seated, Prof. Heineken introduced herself and her fellow researcher (Ms. Alchin) to the group. A brief summary of the research was explained and the women were reminded that even though they were ordered by the Officer Commanding to attend the meeting, the discussions were voluntary, but that their inputs were valued. The ethical clearance and confidentiality of the study was also explained to the women. The participants had the option of who they wanted in their group to ensure that they felt comfortable, and wrote their names in specific time slots set out from ten o'clock the morning to three o'clock the afternoon. The only request was that members from the same rank form a group.

Focus groups were conducted by two researchers; the main reason for this was the time constraint and no option to return to the base the next day to continue the interviews. The first five discussions contained seven participants, focus group 6 contained only four participants (which demonstrated that women understood the voluntary aspect of the interviews), and due to times constraints, focus group 7 was a large group containing eleven participants. Both researchers were present during the first focus group; thereafter each researcher facilitated their own groups. Discussions lasted between sixty and ninety minutes.

Focus groups 1, 5, 6 and 7 were conducted in the same eating hall where all the women met during the introduction. Focus groups 3, 4 and 5 were conducted in a separate room as the noise level would have been too high if both focus groups were conducted in the same space which would have disrupted the recordings. Participants would arrive at their respective times and would be seated around a table in an intimate and relaxed environment. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the focus group specifics mentioned above. Statistics

Table 3.1 Summary of Focus Group Information

Focus Group	Time Slot	Where take place	Conducted by	Participants	Ranks
1	10am-11am	Eating hall	Alchin & Heinecken	7	Troops
2	11am-12pm	Separate room	Heinecken	7	Troops
3	12pm-1pm	Separate room	Heinecken	7	Troops
4	2pm-3:30pm	Separate room	Heinecken	7	Captains, Majors, Senior NCOs ¹⁵
5	11am-12pm	Eating hall	Alchin	7	Troops
6	12pm-1pm	Eating hall	Alchin	4	Privates
7	2pm-3pm	Eating hall	Alchin	11	Junior NCOs

This study only focuses on the participation of women. Even though the data would have been richer if men were included, the focus is on the experiences of *women* in the infantry and peacekeeping roles. In addition, the focus is also on how these women perceive the way in which men, and the SANDF value them as women, not to mention how they perceive and value themselves as women peacekeepers. Women participants were also desired due to the time constraint and the difficulty in accessing the Defence Force. Furthermore, women were chosen due to resource constraints; having only two researchers limited the number of focus groups that could be conducted in the given timeframe. Resources would have been outstretched if men were also added to the population sample.

3.4. Reliability and Validity

The thoroughness of research is important to ensure that the study serves valuable to the community. The need to discuss the reliability and validity of this study is noted, however, the terms reliability and validity emerge from quantitative research associated with a positivist paradigm. In term of a quantitative approach, reliability refers to whether the results are replicable, and validity refers to whether the means of measurement are accurate. As a quantitative approach makes use of statistical analysis and other means of quantified data, the terms reliability and validity seem appropriate. However, authors have argued that since “reliability and validity are rooted in a positivist perspective then they should be redefined for their use in an interpretivist approach” (Golafshani, 2003:597). Therefore, authors suggest concepts such as rigor, trustworthiness, and quality which are more appropriate to qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003; Gray, 2009).

External validity regarding qualitative research refers to generalizability, however, as qualitative data is usually context specific, this is difficult. Gray (2009:191) notes this dilemma and states rather that “the results from individual cases allow us to build working hypotheses that can be tested in

¹⁵ The participants in this group is often referred to as the ‘higher ranking officers’ or ‘higher ranking women’.

subsequent cases”. Internal validity can be done through expert checking, which, in the case of this study, is done by the researchers’ supervisors. In addition, by performing a literature review, findings are compared and contrasted with past works, also boosting the validity of the study.

A number of authors, as Golafshani (2003) notes, state that in qualitative research reliability is based on the *validity* of the study. Others often use different terms, such as credibility, quality, or trustworthiness to indicate reliability in research. As this study is based on conversational analysis, the use of recordings is more reliable than writing down what participants said. Additionally, the interpretation of the data is the area which needs to prove reliable. For the purpose of this qualitative study, the researcher utilizes the term credibility to demonstrate the reliability of the study. Credibility is ensured as the researcher is not only guided by two supervisors who validate the data, but the researcher is also guided by existing theory on women in peacekeeping. Furthermore, even though a limited number of participants took part in the focus groups, the researcher is satisfied that the point of saturation was reached as themes were frequently repeated in all discussion groups.

3.5. Data Processing and Analysis

The analysis of the primary data collected through focus group discussions consisted of a categorizing element and interpretive element. The categorizing element involved physically organizing and subdividing the data into themes, while the interpretive component involved determining the meaning of themes in terms of the sub-questions discussed in the introductory chapter. The use of themes facilitated data analysis of the qualitative data and ensures that the data is focused and reflect the main objectives of this case study.

The following themes used in this study reflect appropriately on the objectives which need to be fulfilled to answer the overarching research question. These include; *Recruitment, Behavior change, Interaction with locals, Challenges, Security, SA culture, Training, and Unit composition*. These themes do not indicate that the data collected within them are separate, contrary, the themes are interrelated and complex. The themes are only there to help the researcher in the analysis of the transcripts. After the transcripts were made, responses were categorized under the main themes and in their appropriate sub-themes. Sub-themes were necessary to organize data grouped under a main theme. The following two paragraphs will justify the chosen themes used to categorize the data. A summary of the following explanation is found in Table 3.2.

As indication of the depth as well as focus of this research, women peacekeepers were asked specific questions relating to themes which emerged from the literature review which the researcher thought important. The questions asked did not remain in their respective boundaries and as per the nature of focus groups, responses often related to various themes. In addition, some questions may overlap and serve more than one purpose. Nevertheless, questions were asked with the following themes in mind;

four questions were asked relating to the perceptions of why women are recruited for PKOs (Questions, 2, 3, 4, 10), two questions related to behavior change (Questions 5, 6), four questions on peacekeepers' interaction with the local community (Questions 7, 11, 12, 13), four questions relating to the challenges women face (Questions 7, 10, 14, 15), two questions related to security (Questions 8, 9); three questions addressed training (Question 17, 18, 19), and finally, one question related to unit composition (Question 16). Question 1 was asked to ease the participants into the discussion and to find out who, and where the participants were deployed. The theme regarding South African culture did not have a specific question related to it as secondary data was used in this regard; however, some responses were suitably categorized into this theme. (See Appendix B for questionnaire).

The themes were chosen in accordance with the research objectives and the sub-questions discussed in Chapter 1:

- Theme 1, *Recruitment*, correlates with *Objective 2* and *Sub-question 1*.¹⁶
- Theme 2 and Theme 3, *Behavior Change* and *Interaction with locals*, contributes to achieving *Objective 3*, and answering *Sub-question 2*.¹⁷
- Theme 4, *Challenges*, aims to achieve *Objective 4*, and addresses *Sub-question 3*.¹⁸
- Theme 5, *Security*, correlates with *Objective 5* and *Sub-question 5*.¹⁹
- Theme 6, *SA Culture*, aims to address *Objective 6*, and *Sub-question 4*.²⁰
- Theme 7 and Theme 8, *Training* and *Unit composition*, correlates with *Objective 6* as well, and addresses *Sub-question 6*.²¹

¹⁶ **Objective 2:** Identify why women are recruited into the SANDF; **Sub-question 1:** What are the reasons the SANDF recruit women in the military and deploy them on peacekeeping missions?

¹⁷ **Objective 3:** Discover if women are contributing to peacekeeping missions in accordance with the conventional arguments advocating the utilization of women in peacekeeping.; **Sub-question 2:** Are South African women peacekeepers able to contribute to PKO in accordance with the conventional arguments advocating the utilization of women in the military?

¹⁸ **Objective 4:** Based on their gender, identify what are the challenges women peacekeepers face which affect their ability to make the expected contributions to PKO; **Sub-question 3:** What are the challenges which impede women from contributing to peacekeeping in the expected way, and how do these challenges confront or confirm conventional arguments about the utilization of women in the military?

¹⁹ **Objective 5:** Identify how the deployment of women impacts on human security; **Sub-question 5:** Is the recruitment of women having a positive or negative impact on the human security of the host state or the unit?

²⁰ **Objective 6:** Provide valid recommendations that may guide the SANDF to overcome these challenges; **Sub-question 4:** In what way can these challenges be related to peacekeeping on a global scale, and in which ways do they uniquely relate to the historical and cultural context of South Africa and the SANDF?

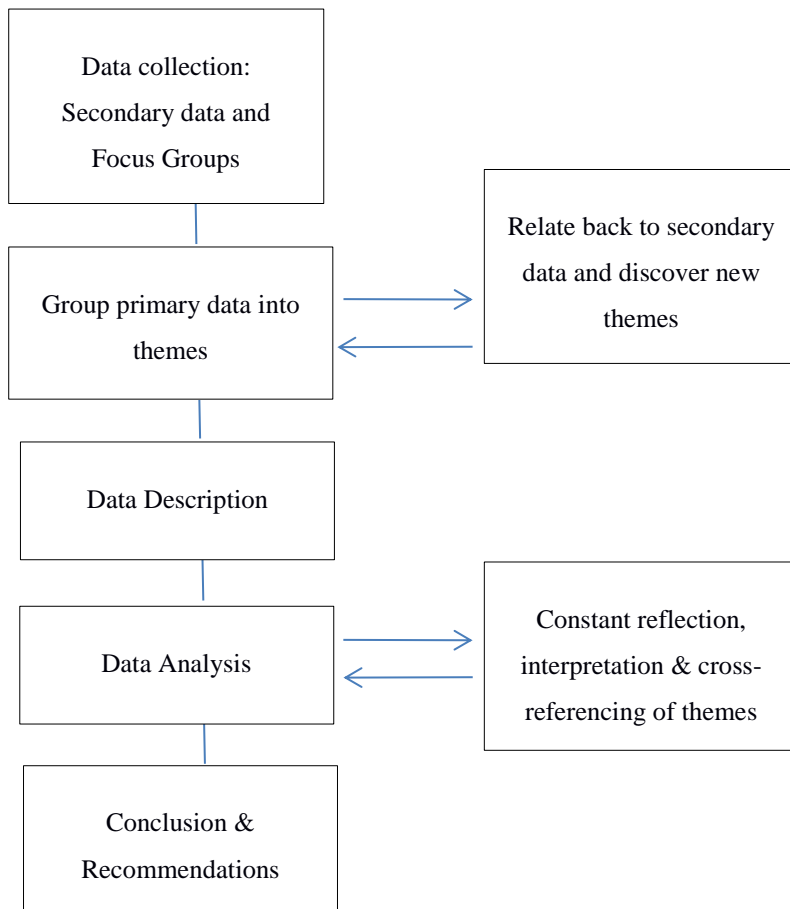
²¹ **Objective 6:** Provide valid recommendations that may guide the SANDF to overcome these challenges; **Sub-question 6:** Are gender mainstreaming procedures sufficient and appropriate in preparing peacekeepers to be gender sensitive?

Table 3.2: Themes Related to Questions and Objectives

Themes	Sub-themes	Number of Questions asked	Questions relating to theme	Themes relating to Objectives	Themes relating to sub-questions
1. Recruitment	- SANDF - Women PK	4	2, 3, 4, 10	2	1
2. Behavior Change	- Civilizing effect on men - women change behavior	2	5, 6	3	2
3. Interaction with locals	- Respondents to SGBV - Inspirational	4	7, 11, 12, 13	3	2
4. Challenges	- Masculine environment - Biological and physical differences - Cohesion - Sexuality - Women's self-perception	4	7, 10, 14, 15	4	3
5. Security			8, 9	5	5
6. SA Culture		-	-	6	4
7. Training		3	17, 18, 19	6	6
8. Unit composition		1	16	6	6

The main themes were thought of before the interviews took place, drawing from the main themes in the literature review. Many of the sub-themes also emerged from the literature review, however, as expected, new themes did emerge from the data and were used as sub-themes where appropriate. For example, one theme that did not emerge from the literature review but through the interviews is the self-perception of women within the military. This theme emerged throughout the interviews and as seen above, was added under the main theme of *Challenges*.

Diagram 3.1 demonstrates the research path and data analyses procedure. The diagram clearly demonstrates that the analyses of qualitative data is a non-linear process, and requires constant reflection of the data to properly capture and cross reference data with appropriate themes. The research analyses path is done by first collecting secondary data to develop a literature review, followed by the collection of primary data through focus group interviews. After this, primary data (in the form of transcripts) is categorized into themes relating to the secondary data and the literature review. Thereafter, data description will take place, and finally, the data is analyzed by means of constant reflection, interpretation and cross referencing between themes. After the data is interpreted, an appropriate conclusion will be drawn from the analysis and further recommendations are made.

Diagram 3.1: Research Path

3.6. Reflections and Limitations

As any research path is faced with limitations and challenges, it is necessary to reflect on the limitations of this study. As per the drawbacks of conducting case study research, generalizations cannot be made to all militaries that have peacekeeping forces composed of mixed units. In addition, this case cannot be generalized to all peacekeeping deployments made by the SANDF, as host states vary and therefore the experiences and challenges women face will also vary. However, even though immediate generalizations cannot be made, the more case studies are developed, the more opportunity this will provide scholars wanting to make broader generalizations to UN peacekeeping holistically. Tickner (1997) states that feminist arguments are careful not to find universal explanations for security, reiterating the importance of history, context, and contingency. Therefore, in this case the researcher is sacrificing the value of immediate *generalizability*, for a more in-depth study which can be compared to other case studies regarding women and peacekeeping. Findings can be related to other peacekeeping cases, and similarities and differences may be found between different contexts, and corresponding conclusions may improve the validity of this study.

Another challenge found in this study is associated with the data collection technique chosen to collect primary data; focus groups. Gaining access to the research subjects proved difficult. It was found that

the military is an extremely difficult environment for civilians to enter, let alone conduct primary research. Access to the military happened on a once off basis, which placed pressure on the researcher that interviews can only be done during this time, and if any mistakes were made they would be extremely difficult to rectify.

In addition to the sole focus on women, and the difficulty of gaining access to the sample, the use of focus group discussions itself affects the reliability of the study. The quality of the data in focus groups does not guarantee usefulness, but is highly dependent on the skills of the facilitator, and the level of input from the participants. For instance, participants may easily wander to areas outside of the research questions and some participants may not be able to express themselves properly. Care was taken in preparing for 'worse-case' scenarios, such as the participants taking over the interview completely, and much reading was done on the proper way to conduct focus groups. In addition, the researcher was exposed to a focus group interview with women peacekeepers before solely conducting focus groups. Furthermore, by using a digital recorder to record the interviews, the possibility of missing group interaction arises, as well as the problem of identifying participants in case a discussion gets heated and participants start talking over one another. Yet, discussions were digitally recorded to ensure that the researcher could solely focus her attention on the group, where necessary notes were made on the atmosphere during the discussion, and other relevant issues which the tape recorder could not record (body language for example).

The participants were made aware of the recordings and were reassured of the confidentiality of the data, as well as the purpose of the recordings; for transcription and to revert back to the data during the analysis phase. Transcribing proved time-consuming; however provides reliable and rich qualitative data. Furthermore, the researcher did not know, meet or speak to any of the participants face-to-face prior to the interview, this ensures that no familiarity between the researcher and participants exists, which could result in bias. Ultimately, the strategies discussed above are expected to minimize any bias or distortion.

Furthermore, members of focus groups can often be victim to 'group think', which means they revert from their own views or thought to conform to what 'the group' agrees on. To help overcome this issue, focus groups were conducted with members from the same rank. This ensured that the influence of authority, which is highly respected in a military environment, does not compromise the way in which members respond to the open-ended questions. This was also done to highlight the different perspectives of women in different ranks. Furthermore, the researcher prodded participants who looked skeptical of certain answers by asking what their view on the matter was. When speaking to women of higher rank, questions were asked with increased sensitivity, taking into account the respect these officials expect from civilians. Class is extremely important in a military context and therefore

was taken into consideration during the discussions. Despite the limitations mentioned above, an exploratory case study, with the facilitation of focus groups for the collection of primary data, is considered the most appropriate way to enhance the literature regarding women in peacekeeping.

Finally, the fact that only women peacekeepers were interviewed and not men, only allowed for 'one side' of the story to be heard. The value of men's responses to the same question would have enriched the analysis by taking into perspective both genders. However, due to time constraints, the researcher has decided to focus solely on women participants who have been deployed and who would best provide an in-depth account of the challenges *women* face in the military and thoughts on the contributions they make to PKOs. Even though a limited number of women took part in the focus group discussions (fifty), the researcher is confident that the point of saturation was met, evident in themes repeatedly arising throughout the discussions.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns are important especially in planning, conducting and evaluating research. Even though there is no universal code of ethics all researchers should follow, mainly pertaining to the fact that research in itself does not follow a single path but varies in accordance to the subject at hand, Burnham *et al.* (2008) cite five basic principles which in varied forms are usually encapsulated in literature pertaining to the ethical considerations of research:

1. Benevolence and the avoidance of harm: researchers ought to seek to do good rather than cause harm.
2. Avoiding deception and providing the truth: researchers should always tell their subjects the truth and not be misleading.
3. Privacy or autonomy: Individuals have the right to limit access to information about themselves
4. Confidentiality: closely related to the notion of privacy, the right to control the use of information about oneself.
5. Consent: the notion of informed consent, often recommended as an operational principle for the conduct of research.

The abovementioned points were considered throughout the research process. Firstly, the overarching goal of this study is to identify the challenges facing peacekeepers from contributing positively to the operational effectiveness of a unit. The identification of issues and challenges women peacekeepers face in the SANDF is not aimed to criticize the Defence Force, or gender mainstreaming, but to identify areas which are problematic and make recommendations on how to improve them. Second, there was care taken to ensure that participants knew the nature and purpose of the study. Third, individuals had a choice to take part in the interviews. In addition, the contact details of Prof.

Heinecken was made available to participants if they wished to ask any further questions or have any complaints on the way in which the focus group discussions were conducted. Fourth, confidentiality was assured to the participants prior to the focus groups took place. In addition, no names were asked during the interview process and only the author and her supervisors have access to the transcripts. Finally, authorization was granted by Maj. Gen. Yam, GOC from the South African Infantry Formation, to conduct the research. Furthermore, ethical clearance to conduct focus group research was also granted by the University of Stellenbosch.

3.8. Summary

In essence, this chapter has provided a detailed description of the research design and methodology used throughout this study. The research design was based on an exploratory case study where qualitative data was collected through primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected by means of focus group discussions. A total of seven focus groups were conducted at the 9 SAI base, where fifty participants took part in the research. The discussions were transcribed and data was categorized into different themes drawn from the literature review, and new themes also emerged throughout the focus groups. The analysis of the data was done with a constant reflection between the themes, and also between the themes and the literature. Additionally, secondary sources in the form of documents pertaining to gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the South African government and the SANDF was used. This chapter has also provided an in depth discussion on the limitations of this study and also mentioned the ethical concerns which had to be taken into consideration considering the research approach. The next chapter (Chapter 4) will provide a description of the primary data obtained from the interviews.

CHAPTER 4: DATA DESCRIPTION

4.1. Introduction

The facilitation of focus group discussions provided an opportunity to obtain in-depth information on the experiences of women in the military and on deployment. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a description of the data according to the themes which were introduced in the previous chapter (*Research Design and Methodology*). The first section of this chapter is devoted to the technical aspects of the content, and explains how the text should be understood. Thereafter, the themes into which the data transcripts were categorized are used as headings which title the data pertaining to the specific theme. Also, where applicable, each theme will be introduced by a short theoretical background to explain the context of the theme. Finally, a conclusion will draw on the main points of this descriptive chapter.

4.2. Understanding the text

The following description of the data collected is categorized in themes which were introduced in the *Research Design and Methodology* Chapter. Direct quotes by the participants will be specified by using *italic* writing and quotes within paragraphs will contain additional quotation marks (“...”). Words or phrases added by the researcher/facilitator to clarify the text to make it more understandable and readable will be indicated in square brackets ([...]). It is important to point out that the character of the participants’ comments is not lost. Words enclosed in brackets indicate the feel of the group, for example “(general agreement)” or “(laughter)”. In addition, words in **bold** will indicate a question by the interviewer. Finally, conversations quoted which contain the response of more than one respondent will contain a hyphen (-) to indicate the interruption of another participant, or conversation between a number of participants.

4.3. Data Description Categorized According to Themes:

4.3.1. Recruitment

4.3.1.1. Why the SANDF recruits women

One of the objectives of this study is not only to explore why the SANDF recruit women into the military, but also to explore the perceptions of women on why they *think* they are recruited. When participants were asked why they think the SANDF recruits women to join peacekeeping, no reply pointed to the special qualities women can make to PKOs. Those who answered indicated the rights of gender equality within South Africa. Gender equality was associated with gender balancing, in other words, the numbers need to be correct. The responses indicated that recruitment is politically based; “*They do it because it must be done*” and “*because the Constitution says [so]*”, and not due to the

value placed on women as peacekeepers; *“the recruitment is open, it’s fair, they don’t say because you say you are a woman you must come”*.

A troop in particular showed her frustration with the quota system. She and a fellow respondent’s discussion also indicated that women are placed in the SANDF preferably for their quantity and not quality:

The thing I don’t like is this ‘percentages’, everything that you do you must first count how many women and how many [men], it’s always a percentage -- but I think it also beneficiary to us, because us ladies first started with a lot of men and now we get a chance to be in equal amount with men, so it’s fine. -- But that’s the thing, it’s not because they value us so much, it’s because the numbers need to be [correct].

The overall consensus is that the SANDF does not focus on recruiting women specifically, let alone recruit women for the special contributions they make to peacekeeping. Even if the SANDF aims to do so, this sentiment is not felt by women in the infantry. The fact that women do not see their recruitment into the military as adding any additional value to the Force, results in women joining for a number of other reasons, discussed in the next section.

4.3.1.2. Why women join the military

Participants were asked why they joined the SANDF, and responses varied. Some cited the need to gain experience to move up the career ladder (even though some have served in the infantry for ten years). Only one respondent stated that she wanted to make a difference and protect the citizenry of the host state. In addition, women feel empowered when joining the military and when they are deployed, comments such as *“You feel big”* or *“Here [in South Africa] it’s like we don’t exist at all”* confirm this notion. Even though the responses varied, the overall feel from the group was that they joined due to the problem of unemployment, as one Junior NCO explains: *“It was all about the money, I just wanted a job”*.

In some cases it was family members who encouraged them to join the army, either because the family member served in the military, or because they were concerned about the need for an income. Nevertheless, one respondent in particular sums-up the overall feel of participants when asked why they joined the military: *“It is not like you had a dream to be in the army”*. Many women spoken to do not feel that the infantry is a place for a woman; one of the troops’ response captures this clearly; *“This field of army, infantier, I think us ladies we are in the wrong place, like seriously”*. Most

participants agreed that they would remuster²² if they had a choice, rather than stay in the infantry corps. A respondent clearly expresses her aversion; *“I hate this beret with all of my heart”*.²³

What is clearly noted is that women are placed in corps in which they do not want to be. The main reasons for this was found to be the constant lack of soldiers in the infantry corps, as well as the lack of open positions in other corps such as logistics or personnel. The higher ranking members also noted that the morale and motivation of soldiers are not to serve in the corps, and stated it is a problem if soldiers are not passionate about their service, seeing it as ‘just a job’.

There was however a handful of women who stated they wanted to serve in the infantry. The few who did say they enjoyed being in the infantry always associated the infantry with a man’s job; *“we fell in love with the infantry because it’s more ‘soldierly’”*. An officer explains: *“When you are on deployment, [then] you get there as a soldier, not as a woman, so you do the work of a soldier, and as a soldier, it’s a combination of male work”*. Another Officer asserts:

I know I want to be in the infantry, and I want to show that I can also do what the man can do, but for the rest of the members, they didn’t choose, they were forced, so it’s not in them to be in the [infantry].

Furthermore, the notion of being manlier when called to serve in the infantry is also shown through the response of a woman who disagreed with all her fellow participants who said they would rather remuster to another corps. She explains the reason for enjoying the infantry; *“I am a male trapped in a woman’s body.”*

4.4. Behavior Changes

4.4.1. Civilizing effect on men

One of the main reasons for recruiting women in the military and especially peacekeeping missions is for their civilizing effect on men (De Groot, 2001). Questions were not directly aimed at SEA by male peacekeepers, as this was considered too sensitive a topic. Therefore, participants were asked if men change their behavior around women peacekeepers. When this question was asked, many of the participants answered “No”. It was only when they were asked specifically if men become less aggressive with the presence of women when participants agreed that men do become less aggressive. One junior NCO in particular discussed the calming effect women have on men:

I think women can reason better than the man, like if they want to attack then the women can calm the situation before, [men] think ok they attacked us lets attack them back,

²² A military term which refers to moving to a different corps.

²³ Berets are the flattish caps which soldiers and military personnel wear as a component of the SANDF military uniform. Different colored berets represent different corps in the military.

women are a bit more reasonable, thinking about the children...we are better at peacekeeping.

However, when women discussed men's changing behavior, most discussions focused on increasing respect regarding the discourse between male soldiers. Apparently, men tend to watch what they say around women. This is mainly seen when new women are present in the infantry. However, this is also seen to change when men become used to the women, then they will revert back to their 'old ways' bragging about women they have 'had' over the weekend in front of fellow women soldiers, treating her presence as 'one of the guys'. A NCO explains the feeling of being a woman in this masculine environment:

You get use to [the interaction with men], [words] goes in and out. Like here I was working in the office, but in infantry I was working in the fire department, only two women, when we just came there they were like (showing whispering gestures), now they will say 'Yo, did you see that girl [referring to a girlfriend they had over the weekend].

The next section deals with women's interaction with the locals, including their interaction with rebel groups.

4.5. Interaction with locals

4.5.1. More Compassionate

The literature has three broad arguments which advocate women's participation in peacekeeping with regard to interaction with the local population: firstly referring to women's compassion which encourages them to have contact with the locals, second, women are seen as better respondents to victims of SGBV, and finally, women are inspirational to local women. The first argument is that women are more compassionate and therefore are more inclined to communicate with the local population (Carey, 2001). During the interviews it did emerge that women feel they are more compassionate than men:

*[Local women] ask for food, we give them food, or there was some of the [women soldiers] who took one child and buy them clothes – **[what do the men do?]** - They say you have money to waste.*

Furthermore, when a private was asked why she felt the need to buy a child clothes and give the parents food, responses related to being a parent, or to the assumption that women are more compassionate than men:

In terms of peacekeeping, there is times where you have to be a parent, put your job aside and think like a parent. For instance there are kids there, you see that this kid is suffering, you must take yourself and think oh I am a mother, and then you do something to help that child, as for men, most of the time they just say that is not my child.

It was also mentioned that women have a broader sense of what the impact of the missions entailed, where men focus solely on the missions goals. A troop gives recognition to this fact:

Women are more heart than men, women are more understanding than men, so when they are negotiating some stuff, then women would understand it not because it's just an operation, she will take the situation and put it on her side and make like she is in the situation, men will think it's just an operation, then they just do it this way, no other way.

Soldiers also explained that local women will be more inclined to speak to women peacekeepers because of the perception that women are more understanding than men. Two Privates note:

The [local women] come to women [soldiers] most of the time, because they know how understanding we are, they don't expect you to be harsh, unlike a guy.

Ja because you are a women, because people think every women has a soft spot, because they think if you go to a women [soldier] and tell that women your problems they will understand you more than a guy, so it does make a difference if you are a women.

Noting the compassion women peacekeepers have for the local population, it was also seen that other problems arise which inhibit contact with the locals. The participants did point out that the host state plays a major role. The general agreement was that civilians in the DRC were more receptive to peacekeepers, however in the Sudan contact with civilians was more difficult. A major problem in the Sudan was the language barrier. Women could not communicate with the locals. Some however, did use interpreters, who are always male; however interpreters can be unreliable, are limited, and are usually assigned to higher ranking officers:

[...] and we don't really get to talk to [locals] directly, it's the lieutenants the high ranking members who talk to them because they have the interpreters - as a group you only have one interpreter.

We go with interpreter, from Sudan, they are working with the AU, the interpreters are always male, the interpreters are also scared sometimes they even run and leave us, and even change the statements.

Furthermore, another issue with communicating with locals is the problem that locals do not know or recognize if peacekeepers are women or a men. Often, the uniform is recognized before the gender of a soldier:

*In Sudan it is very bad, you can't talk to them, the language also, but if you meet a woman you also see they are afraid of us – **[Because you are a soldier?]** - Yes, but once you start talking to them, as a lady you manage to put a smile on their face and show them this is wrong and this is right, even kids, when they see you they run away*

What is more noticeable is that soldiers are not always given the opportunity to interact with the locals. In many cases appointments have to be made to correspond with people in the villages, and often communication with the locals is not given as an appointed task and therefore not necessary. When asked about communication with the local population, responses revealed that interaction did

not occur regularly, “*it depends when you are given the opportunity to do it, then guys will also do it, but you can’t just go, you need to be given the opportunity*”. The constraint on the freedom of movement for peacekeepers also inhibits them from interacting with the locals, as a Junior NCO noted:

For us to go to other villages there is an appointment for us to go there, we don’t just go to that site, those people don’t just come to our base, the only free movement is those women who are working in our base.

In addition, women often do not see it as their job to connect with local women, or it is not in the mandate of the mission, a troop discusses:

There are people who are allocated who communicate with the locals, that’s not part of our job, we only protect those who go and communicate with the locals, so your job is just to stay there, be ready [for anything].

With regard to women’s interaction with the locals, literature suggests that women are valuable as they ensure intelligence gathering through informal meetings with the local citizenry (Karamé, 2001). The following response by a woman soldier indicates that women do collect information from the locals when necessary: “*We gather information, but sometimes we do patrols, the women are afraid to talk to the men, but me as a woman she can give me information*”. Yet, one higher ranking respondent also suggested that she gets her information from males, who she considers gather information much easier than the women:

But the people who gather information are the normal troops [men], because he is doing his own thing, and meets a girlfriend, that’s where he gets his information. With a female you need to use your communication skills. He does not need communication skills, he just gets a girlfriend. The information that I got was from the troops, when they were doing their rounds

In addition to the vulnerable citizenry, peacekeepers also come into contact with many belligerents. Especially in Sudan, women seem to face challenges when coming in contact with the rebels. Literature suggests that women can have a calming effect at check-points, where tensions often run high, as they are allowed to body search local women; a task which men often cannot do (Karamé, 2001). In many cases the rebels either were shocked or offended when seeing a woman in uniform. In Sudan the issue was that men do not speak to women in command, this is the problem which faced many women platoon commanders:

When they see a female driving a mamba with soldiers, to them they don’t like it, it’s like taboo, it’s not supposed to be like that, in trousers, or a commander, because they believe the head is the man.

It is difficult, like at the bravo camp that lady was a platoon commander, its actually her position that is difficult, because we reach the rebels – and they don’t want to talk to a

women remember they don't – so she was the commander, but the platoon sergeant is a guy, obviously he has to take over and negotiate with that rebel.

There have also been cases where women commanders actually use their sexuality to communicate with rebels. This is drawn from the officer's following statement:

With my experience when we went for patrols and I interact with the rebels, if the commander is a guy, what they use to say is that I am beautiful, I use my femininity to get what I want.

In addition, participants pointed out that peacekeepers are often not welcomed in the host state. In many cases the local population views the presence of peacekeepers with suspicion and lack of trust: “[The people of the village] say we are spies, we go there and get information and give it to the rebels and other people for them to come and attack”. Suspicions run to the top levels; “Even the government thinks we are working for the rebels, even the government of Sudan, no trust”.

4.5.2. Respondents to SGBV

The UN especially advocates the recruitment of women due to women being better respondents to victims of SGBV (UNSCR 1960; UNSCR 1888). Of the fifty participants who were interviewed, not one was faced with a case where she had spoken or had to help a victim of SGBV. Once it was established that no one in the focus group had such an experience, women were asked how they would react in such a situation, or did they know what procedures to follow. Responses varied, and no clear indication was given that participants knew exactly what to do:

Take her to the medics they will sort her out.

We are not told how to help those people or those who are raped, but I think a country like Sudan it's really hard to help those people, they tell you you only have two options if someone tries to rape you, you do it or you die.

A higher ranking member discusses:

Normally it's a severe thing, they will come to the base, and when you are there, obviously you must listen to the story, assess the story, if you see she is emotionally hurt, more than physical abuse, that is why the medics can help anybody, for the rape thing, then we will refer the person to the medics, emotional abuse we will refer her to the psychologists.

The NGOs are there to deal specifically with these things, most of the people we rescue is the kids who have been forced out of the community to join rebel forces, if they have a chance to run away they run to us, also we take them to the NGOs there are people who deal with that.

Even though women did not sound confident in what exactly they needed to do in such a situation, they did agree that women would be able to handle the situation better than men because they can easier sympathize with local woman. This was noted in some responses:

I think they may feel more comfortable and there's somebody that they can speak to as equals, so the women are like the bridge.

Maybe we will know how to calm the situation, to support, because you will treat it as if something happened to me, this is how I would like to be spoken to.

For us because you know we are sensitive we are women, we will always feel something, feel bad, feel like you want to help.

It was found that locals prefer men, or any gender with regard to security issues, but do not prefer women over men. The value of the uniform was often cited over the value of the specific gender of the soldier. Women soldiers were never preferred to handle security issues, but rather issues more associated with material needs and immediate survival concerns.

They do sometimes come to us and say they have been robbed or so, [they come to] whoever they find, because of the uniform.

The thing is we are not allowed to deal with things like that [victims of SGBV], if that person comes to you to report such an incident we must call the police [for internal deployments], in Sudan we never had such cases, they don't come to us.

It's more food and money [which they talk to peacekeepers about] , and I think they feel safe with having South Africa there, not just women, they go to anyone with security, even a lady or a male.

The following section surrounds the issue of women peacekeepers being inspirational to local women.

4.5.3. Inspirational to local women

The third branch of literature advocating the recruitment of women into peacekeepers pertains to them having an inspirational effect on local women (Olsson , 2000). The theory states that local women are inspired by women peacekeepers to step out of traditional roles and become part of political life and security reform.

When speaking to the participants, most agreed that they feel that they inspire local women. Many gave the reason that locals often say they wish they lived in South Africa. Not one respondent mentioned a situation where women wanted to become more independent, or get involved in security reform. In fact, when some peacekeepers discussed an event where they spoke to a group of women about not needing to live like they live, the women leader of that group responded in a way contrary to what they were saying:

Remember that women's day we had in Sudan, we spoke about these things, we told them that women can choose if she wants to cook or do what for her husband, and those ladies were so...they were thinking in totally opposite, they say no you don't have a choice.

The leaders of the ladies, when we had the women's day, there was two leaders because they are the wives of the leaders, they said to us 'whatever you are saying now, telling us

that a women is not supposed to this and that....yo (participant imitates women leader showing disbelief).

Throughout the interviews, being inspirational to local women was not mentioned as a skill or even a goal of peacekeeping. In fact, after asking the question participants showed more of a realization that this should happen:

I think that's what should actually happen, like when we deploy we should show the oppressed you don't have to be this way, the slave, that mattress that everyone sleeps on.

Women often agreed that local women admire their positions and the fact that they are working in the army beside men. Nevertheless, women peacekeepers were also very skeptical when asked if they had the power to change local women's attitudes. Many stated that this would be impossible. In addition, it was also pointed out that the lack of law and order in a host state also prevents local women from going against the norm: *"You will teach them what to do but they can't practice it, who is going to protect them when we leave?"*

4.6. Women's self-perception

Women's perception of their value towards peacekeeping emerged as a theme throughout the focus groups. When women were asked about their contributions towards PKOs, in all cases they were hesitant on answering. The answers surrounded tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes and organizing events. One respondent explains:

"Entertainment, for example, we are not running around, we also have time to socialize, it's always ladies that make sure that Christmas feels like Christmas, we cook, we bake for everyone. Women can organize, they are good at it, so the guys will sit back and join. [Do you like it that they sit back and join you afterwards?] Unfortunately we are the organizers, it's just in our human nature, we are not use to having men in the kitchen, I'm not saying it's not right, it's just naturally we are the ones.

Furthermore, it was stated that women can communicate better with local women and that women are more compassionate, however these skills were not considered as such:

I think us being women we can, for instance in Sudan the women can relate to us and they can open up to us. In their culture males are this side and women are this side, so they feel they can confide in us in whatever they want to talk about things and we encourage them in a way, but as to certain skills I don't know.

We don't do much, we drive, and you must always be ready for everything, that's the type of training you get you must always be ready for everything. We receive the same training. Like now when some women last time in Sudan, those other ladies wanted to talk to the guys, so they took us to talk to the female, because they feel they will open up to us rather than to the guys.

These responses indicate the lack of acknowledgement of the skills needed in peacekeeping. The next section focuses on the challenges women face in PKOs.

4.7. Challenges Women Face in Peacekeeping:

4.7.1. Masculine Environment of the Military

As the literature suggests, one of the main challenges women face in entering the military is that they are entering a highly gendered environment, dominated by hegemonic masculinity (Carreiras & Kummel, 2008; Whitworth, 2004). The interviews showed that women view the military as well as deployment sites as a male domain. Hence, being in the military does not mean being equal to men per se, but being the same as men:

When you are an infantier, certain instances you cannot be a women, especially when it comes to field faces (general agreement), you have to live the same life as a man, you can't say you as a women you must have a shower there or whatever, if man wash in the bushes you must also wash in the bushes, so for infantiers it is very difficult when it comes to that environment.

They even give you underwear which fit everyone at this force, the guys must wear it and the women. Where do you draw the line? There's no panties, they're onties (male underwear) - it's warm - I mean it's not for women, if you wear that thing...imagine! It says one size fits all.

In addition, one major theme emerging when discussing the behavior of men was the amount of resentment women felt from their male comrades. The overall consensus was that men see the presence of women as weakening the army. “*They say we are destroying the army*”, “*If they could vote us out they would*”. Further responses from troops suggest the capacity of resentment felt:

They will say harsh things like ‘why did you apply for the army’, ‘we didn’t call you up’- they are saying to us you say you can be like a man now prove it’ – ‘you volunteered to be here’ - ‘when it comes to money you want the same amount’.

I think they have that mentality because they have women here they are weak, because most other African countries, most of the soldiers, its only males, and even [if] they have women, you only see 4 or 3, not like us.

For us to always prove ourselves to men, when you make a single mistake they are on your neck, ‘ya, see there because of that now, proves that women are so weak’.

Even though some participants did claim that men often encourage the women, the overall feel from women is that men think they are weakening the military. Also, attention was drawn to the older generation who did not train with as many women as today. However some women did mention that certain men do encourage women at times: “*You get those gentlemen who will help you and then you also get the men who say ‘she wanted to be here let her do it herself’.*”

As the literature suggests, women who are exposed to this male environment often change their behavior to ‘fit in’ (Sion, 2010). There have been some responses which suggest that women change their behavior around men, some more explicit than others. Troops explain:

I think when the women is new yes [then men do change their behavior], but for us for instance, they treat us like parallel, like it's a workshop filled with a lot of men, so you end up feeling like them, even behaving like them (laughter).

Most of the time we are expected to be like men if I can put it that way.

During the visit on the base, as well as the discussions held with the commander prior to the focus group discussions, most men spoke of the women as the 'ladies' (as opposed to the females, or the women soldiers). This comes in sharp contrast to one troops claim that the overall feel in the military, and what is often heard, is that: *"There are no ladies in the army"*. When asked if women change their behavior around men, a troops' response was: *"No not really, a woman will always be a woman, a man will always be a man, even if we want to be equal to them it will never happen"*.

During deployment women are also forced to act like men and hide the fact that they are women. A troop comments:

If those rebels see you, you must just be, you must walk like a man, you talk like a man, because if you shake so [walk like a women] you give them wrong impression, - (agreement) behave like a soldier – you must always be aggressive there.

An emerging theme during focus group sessions was the challenge women of higher ranks face as they are more exposed to the male dominated environment, considering the fact that men are often the rank carriers in leadership positions in the army. This comment from a higher ranking officer confirms the challenge of being emerged in a male dominated environment:

Sometimes we as female leaders, sometimes we forget the fact that we are female, we try very hard to fit into the male environment unnecessary, like for instance I will know there are periods, we go to the field, we have different flow of period, [...] but we as female who needs to streamline everything sometimes we will turn a blind eye, we say no this one wants special treatment, instead of rectifying what needs to be rectified, and not try very hard to fit in the male environment, we will forever be female we will not change.

This was confirmed by complaints of higher ranking women by troops. When asked if placing more women in higher ranking divisions would make a difference the response from two conversing troops showed skepticism:

It's supposed to make a difference because they are suppose to be able to relate to us – when they get there on top they just behave like men now, they behave worse than men - Ya, they act like men.

While discussing the different training the 'women of today' receive in the military, one higher ranking officer stated that:

They still have that civilian minds instead of becoming soldiers, yes we are females, but what must come first? It is soldiers' work; it can be a female after.

Gender difference *is* taken into consideration at times, however these are based on stereotypical insights of what work is considered most appropriate for men and women. Troops showed frustration with the fact that they are expected to do the cooking and cleaning and other type of ‘household’ chores:

We were in Touwsrivier and my commander expected of me to carry his food after him, make him tea and clean his tent, and then I told him I am not your tea girl and I did not come here to clean out your tent, you sleep here, you clean it, then he declared to everybody I don't know how to do my work.

The older males will think why must they sweep the HQ [Headquarters] there's women to do it, it's like because we are female we are the inferior sex, that is what we are here for to clean and to do their washing, if the food is not cooked we must [do it], even if there's a braai [barbeque] we must cut the vegetables.

When we come to cleaning, we are different when it suites them, but when something else we are all equal, but when it suites them 'now it's the lady's job', it's no longer a soldier, it's a lady.

The general agreement was that women do not want to be treated differently. A comment was made that “*you are first a soldier and then a women*”. Women were especially adamant on not wanting to be treated differently but also pointed out that they are still women. When asked if they think women should be treated differently, responses were as follows:

No (agreement) – but in a good manner yes its fine – but there are times when because I'm a female I cannot do it, when we should all go into that water or whatever and I'm on my period I won't feel comfortable going there...they should understand and rather give me other corrective training that I can do.

4.7.2. Biological and physical differences

One of the main reasons why critics argue that women should not be recruited into the military is because they cannot keep up with their male comrades (Harrell & Miller, 1997). During the focus groups, women often stated that they do not keep up with the men, and that in many cases they cannot lift the heavy equipment and need the strength of a man. Therefore, when referring to physical fitness between men and women, women see themselves as not keeping up with the men, and also cite that men use this reason to emphasize their inferiority. A number of troops' responses reveal the frustration by women who are held to male standards:

Yes, but sometimes they don't want to see that [that we are women soldiers], they want to turn a blind eye to the fact that we are still women, there's nothing that the army can do to change the fact, it's not that we are saying we can't be infantry, myself personally I enjoy being infantry, it's fun, but if I can't carry a 30kg bag for 30km...?...you understand...they just expect if a guy can carry 30kg then I must also do it.

The problem with the guys is that they can't accept that some of us are trying our best, there is nothing more we can do, that is the challenge we are having, they can't accept we are not as strong as they are, only to a certain level.

He [male soldier] also has the skill, everyone has the skill, it's just that we don't have all the strength that they have, that's why us as females we will never be the same as the male.

As a response to these type of answers, participants were asked if they think strength is a vital quality to have in PKOs, the response was always “No”: *“I don't think the strength, because you need to be tactical, you need to be vigilant, smart, need to be able to run, do don't need strength”*. Furthermore, women are easily recognizable in the military and would often get called out because of their alien presence. A women soldier explains that women's mistakes are often highlighted even though male counterparts do the same:

I'm not saying they must give us special attention, if I'm wrong I'm wrong, then they must address it properly, 'you females are always doing this and this' and you find the guys are also doing the same thing, maybe they call you for certain things, and maybe you arrive a bit later, and half the guys are not there yet, then they say you ladies always want attention, you always doing this and that.

The biological differences between men and women as stated in the literature refer to hormones or women's ability to give birth (Goldstein, 2004; Maninger, 2008). One of the major biological differences which women cited was women's menstrual cycle, and the desire to have children. It seems that women are expected to ignore these differences on missions which are cited as major problems by some women. The following statements confirm this:

For women we have those things, like period pain, when in the infantry and come with that excuse the men think you are bullshitting, so some of the things for women is not easy, and when you stay in the field, and you are on your period, you need to wash need hygiene, they will tell you 'No' you are a soldier, forget your gender, for someone not washing for seven days... ai it's impossible.

They can't expect if somebody comes from maternity leave for example, they expect you all of a sudden to do guard duty, but they are forgetting your circumstances have changed at home, they don't adapt easily to changes that happen in our lives.

Women also indicated the fact that their body changes after they give birth, and that they cannot keep up with the men. Also, many also stated that they do not want to remain in the infantry for a long period because they want to have a family. Higher ranking members raised concerns about women as infantiers because of their biological characteristics such as child rearing which makes them less deployable than their male comrades:

[...] but the infantry is personally in my view not for women, basically because women are the manager, the organizers of the household, bears children, you cannot task her at

any time to go to CAR [Central African Republic], cannot just jump, in the infantry we need somebody that will be ready at any time under any circumstance.

The thing that I also see, when we women are still under training, it is easy for us to keep to the men, the pace and all this, but as we grow, the years grow older we are women, and you know we give birth, so it's difficult for us to be on the level of men, men even if he is 45 [years old], they can [outperform me], [...] and you are a women at the end of the day.

The next section focuses on cohesion between men and women, and also between women peacekeepers.

4.7.3. Cohesion

Another argument against women being recruited in the military is that women's presence disrupts the cohesion of a unit (Maninger, 2008). A theme which often emerged was that men are skeptical of the competence of women soldiers. This is either due to the psychological stress on the operational environment; *"They think we are too fragile, maybe if we see someone being killed we will throw away the weapons and run, they think that will happen"*; or skepticism that women cannot keep up in battle;

We do an all-round defence in some cases, now because you are a female [you must] just go stand on top of the tower with a LMG [Light Machine Gun], because you are not keeping up – so men think you are keeping them back.

Even though men seem skeptic about the presence of women during deployment, it has also been revealed that cohesion amongst groups has been better once deployed compared to cohesion levels at the base (Carreiras & Kummel, 2008). Comments confirm that cohesion amongst men and women are better once deployed:

In infantry a lot of times, especially when in the field for a long time, there isn't that much tension because we get use to each other after a while, at the beginning there can be some tension or uncertainty, but it gets better when people know how to work with each other.

In deployment we bond, we actually work better, - ja we are better on deployment – because who is he going to depend on now, he is going to depend on me.

A constant topic which arose during discussion was the lack of cohesion not between men and women, but amongst women themselves. Lack of cohesion amongst women was considered as the 'natural' way of things. Other reasons included the lack of opportunities for women in the military. This is aptly expressed by the following comments by an NCO and a troop respectively:

Even in this unit I can say women are pitted against each other for positions, I am your friend now but when I turn around and I need to get something done I must go to my male friend.

I think it comes where there is less opportunity for women, so you must stab each other in the back so that we can squeeze into those four slots of courses, if it was for everyone to develop to go to courses then you don't have to say something about someone to get first position, everyone has equal opportunity to develop their careers.

In addition, all women soldiers agreed that they would rather be lead by a man rather than a woman. Lack of cohesion is especially between women troops and women in higher ranks. A troop explains:

We need high rank carrying women so that we can interact with her, they only care as long as the structure is there then the thing is fine - But becomes a problem, you find a women given rank, now she does not even see you as a women, she is now the rank, you as a women try and talk to her knowing that she will understand because she has been through it, but now the rank is driving her crazy.

4.7.4. Sexuality

Research suggests that sexuality may also become a battlefield within a military institution. Literature shows that introducing women to the military may distort male judgment, and also pose a threat to women's own security (Maninger, 2008; Heinecken & Van der Waag, 2007). Some responses received in the focus groups suggest that women in the SANDF experience challenges relating to their sexuality. Firstly what was noticed was the challenges they face from their male comrades, whether on the base or on mission. It was noted that “[Men] become flirtatious” with the presence of women. Furthermore, a troop explains the situation regarding sexual tensions among men and women within the unit:

The one big thing also, after a certain while the men start to see women as sexual objects, then tensions start brewing - because you say no – sometimes we don't even have to wait at the field it happens here at the base – especially the rank carrier – they look at you like they looking at cattle, ok I want that one – and if you don't play along you become the target, that commander will take you out of that specific section especially if you are in HQ and you really don't want them, the next month you are in the platoon you must go and patrol.

Women also cited the challenges they face once deployed, especially regarding their dress code or the fact that they are surrounded by men who are away from home for too long. Troops discussing the matter revealed:

[...] you see in Africa it is very hot, you find yourself wearing tights and shorts and vests, and those particular men – that can't handle themselves- they will comment 'ah you are wearing shorts, we are men we have needs', then you find your sergeant major will say on roll call, you must not wear this and this, but they may wear what they want, it's very hot in Africa.

[...] there were guys complaining about our underwear on the lines, that say that 'now your panties are hanging there, we are away from home for six months', those type of

things , they can't expect us to put our wet panties in our rooms, it will smell and outside is very hot.

For me when it comes to dress code, the men must respect the ladies, and the ladies must remember there are people who have been away from their wives, we must accommodate each other.

Furthermore, many women perceived sexual harassment differently. Different comments from participants leaned towards the reaction of men to the presence of women as 'natural' and women cannot be too sensitive in the infantry. In a sense the comments indicated that women need to deal with these situations because they are in a male environment where comments are bound to be heard:

Especially in the infantry you must not be too sensitive, I once worked with the platoon it was all male soldiers, the comments we were getting there was not easy, but I got use to them that is who they are.

Maybe others take a comment as sexual harassment - exactly - because men are men and they will stay men, if she walks around there like with a short thingy, and I am a man I will obviously look and maybe I will comment, and if she takes it as harassment then you must go and stay in a cave.

It's not actually sexual harassment, it's just the way they are talking, these people they were not use to being around women, they were used to being alone, they must still get use to this thing of having women around them.

Due to their sexuality women may also become targeted by rebels and become victims of sexual crimes. This is discussed in the next theme.

4.8. Security risk

Reactions from rebels due to women's presence in the military as mentioned before vary; however, it has been found that it may cause a security risk not only to women peacekeepers, but also to the local population. Troops state that if peacekeepers are seen influencing the local culture, this could cause a security risk. They explain:

As long as they [women peacekeepers] do not interfere with their [rebels] women's business because us we are coming there to 'solve their problem', like we are 'better', or that we change those women's minds.

Maybe that is why the men don't want us there, because you are making their women wiser, like 'ok this can happen', you are making them wise.

Therefore, women peacekeepers may be threatening to local women because rebels think they are 'making their women wiser'. Secondly, what was also noted throughout the discussions is that local women do not speak to peacekeepers because the rebels may think that they are sharing information with the peacekeepers. As a result local women may be especially targeted for speaking to women soldiers. The following statements from troops reveal this notion:

[...] so [the locals] were scared, because once a women start talking to you, they are going to target that women, they are not allowed, then from there we don't find that women again.

*[Women] smile when they see us, so we don't know what they are believing – but when we approach them, they run – they will even leave the hut or kids there and go – **[Are they scared of the uniform?]** – no they are scared of their people, they will burn your house and kill you.*

The third security risk women may pose is the perception that an army is weak because of the presence of women. As a result, the unit becomes a target because of its perceived weakness of the unit, and the fact that rebels see the presence of a women soldier as disrespectful, and may especially target women. Some troops did mention this:

I think our guys feel that we are a security risk, - rape and so on – or when the base is under attack, they don't count on us – like as she says you have to hide in the mamba in order for the [rebels] not to see us, it means that you as a women are also maybe putting that sections life in danger. Because them those rebels see you they won't be happy with the fact that there are women.

There was an ambush on the whole platoon, the first thing they wanted was the ladies, so when the lieutenant said no we cannot give you our ladies then they started wanting something else, like a key for mamba, weapons, but the first thing they wanted was ladies.

In addition, men are seen as the protector by women peacekeepers. Often, extra pressure is also placed on males to protect their women soldiers:

You never walk alone, always in pairs, I will never walk with another woman on town pass, I will always walk with a guy - which also puts extra pressure on the guy.

For them it's like we add the risk, I think the men don't want to go with us, for them if [rebels] see us maybe they will kill us or rape us, it's also effecting [our male soldiers], that's why they don't want us to be there.

In addition, one higher ranking member stated that women are an easy target as men will surely surrender if *their* women are caught because they cannot fight back because then they place more risk on the women. She explains:

I will say one of the reason that they are saying women are a threat to them is, for instance if you are under ambush there is females amongst you, the rebels they will be targeting the females, and normally what they do with the females is they will say to the guys they must rape the females, after raping them while they are watching they also rape the females, so for the man they cannot fight back, instead they need to protect that soul, that female, so they like surrender in order for them to protect, if its only men, they cannot hold anyone hostage, its simple to hold a lady hostage.

This incident also indicates that a commander will have to direct his/her attention to the women soldiers while under attack, distracting him/her from the mandate of the mission. The difference

between a male and female casualty is noted among the women peacekeepers. Women's lives are often construed as more valuable than their male counterparts. A higher ranking officer explains an incident where this has happened:

There was a situation like that in Burundi, as I said with the females and the males, the males they tend to forget even though we are wearing uniform we are still females, there was a place that was under attack, males were also running away because it was a surprise attack, the ladies were not a lot, the commander said [the women] must withdraw because of the tenseness of the situation, withdraw the females and leave the males, but then the problem was the males were complaining that we are all here as soldiers, then why must other people be treated special and be withdrawn.

4.9. Patriarchy in South Africa

Most of the data collected for this theme comes from secondary sources, however, some responses also emerged which could be related to the patriarchal society of South Africa. Firstly, rank carrying women often find their authority questioned because of their gender. A troop explains:

In a working capacity the African guys, if you are a women commander and a lady they would not pay you no mind, but if it's a guy that gave them the order they would do it, but you as a women in that position they would not pay any attention to you, they will tell you 'you are a lady so don't tell me what to do'.

Even though not the primary focus of this study, different attributes were found among different races within the SANDF. This is seen in the above quote regarding the mention of "African guys". In addition, participants mentioned that coloured women tend to be cheekier and talk back to males if disrespected, the fact that some black women also behave like this is captured in a troops comment:

[...]coloureds are worse, and African women would maybe keep quiet because she was raised that way, but a coloured would not 'I will put you on your place just there' - Sometimes the black males get frustrated because the coloureds are rubbing off on the black women.

A troop explains that it does not matter what percentage women make up in the infantry, the patriarchal society at large undermines women:

It will always happen, whether you are minority or majority, and even outside the army, in the society, they undermine women everywhere. – but they always teach us that you are all equal, but not equal when deployed.

Furthermore, patriarchal thinking was prevalent in the way all women cite family responsibilities mainly as women's responsibilities (Van Breda, 2010). Women bear the burden of balancing responsibilities of being soldiers and the caretakers at home. The following section focuses on operational readiness training for peacekeepers.

4.10. Training

Training in the SANDF occurs in a gender-neutral manner. Men and women are trained together and are expected to do the same tasks. However when discussing training it was noted that women often leave the work to be done by the men. This is expressed in a discussion between troops and the researcher:

[So women don't really work well together] – Yeah [they don't] – [but when men are involved?] Yes, then we leave everything to the men – I don't do that – I work also yes – [the women] just keep quiet and let the men do it – the men complain.

However, placing women at different standards or accommodating women in such a way lead to one troop mentioning on the difficulties these women will face once deployed, as they will not be mission ready:

Somehow when doing the physical somehow [the men] say ok we will accommodate you as ladies but at the end of the day you as a lady will struggle when you go to the field because you are unfit and must operate with the guys.

In addition, a focus group consisting of troops in particular showed their frustration with the recent news that women are not allowed on the next SANDF deployment of peacekeepers to the DRC because of the high level of insecurity. Therefore, they opted rather for gender segregated training:

It doesn't make sense, we do the same training that they do, we carry the time, but when we are supposed to deploy and do the hard-core things we are excluded, so there must be different training for women and men, so times like these then men will go – then we will understand – but we did everything and the next thing we are separated – we are all found competent in the training but when it comes opportunities like this...

With regard to pre-deployment training regarding the specific host state, women soldiers were asked if this took place. Most participants said “Yes”, however none could recall any mission readiness training involving gender specific training. In most cases soldiers were explained what the situation is like in a host state. Mainly what the weather is like, what not to wear, or how the men treat the women (for example men will not speak to women). However, no cause was given as to why gender inequalities are rife in these states. For instance, women peacekeepers stated that the situation in the Sudan is ‘just the way things are there’, or ‘it's in their culture’ or the inequalities between men and women were blamed on the Muslim religion. Troops explain:

They taught us how those people live – no it's not like they give us gender reasons – they just have introduction of the place we are going, it's not like us as female will know exactly what is going [on] in females – they did taught us that we must not wear something short, or a dress, not short sleeve.

No we just find out when we talk to the people – you just ask questions, why you have ten kids – no this is the rule, a women works harder than a man, - they are not allowed to go

and work (women), only the men work (for money), then the female stay at home with children, they don't have a say they can't voice out their problems. – it is their culture.

In addition, when asked what women soldiers understood of the term gender mainstreaming not one respondent heard of the term (excluding higher ranking women who were not asked this question). A respondent actually suggested that the term refers to “*marginalizing women*”. Moreover, not one respondent has ever heard of UNSCR 1325. Furthermore, the term gender equality is understood in different ways and clarity seems to be construed, not only by the women but the men as well. A higher ranking officer explains:

There's gender equality, there are men who doesn't understand what it means, because at some point they will be expecting a women to do things that they know for sure a women cannot do, they are trying to prove a point, when she fails, they are like what is she doing here if she can't do this.

The following section discusses the issue of unit composition.

4.11. Unit composition

Most scholars claim the success of women contributions on the examples of all female units deployed to host states (Mobekk, 2010). When the women were asked if they would prefer all-female units the first response by all participants was negative, with all agreeing that mixed units are better: “*I don't see myself in a unit full of ladies - we will kill each other*”. The agreement was firstly that women do not work well together and secondly that the unit will be considered weaker due to the lack of men. One private did advocate for a fifty-fifty group: “*It should be 50:50, because we don't think the same, how guys think is needed and how women think is needed to push the peacekeeping missions*”.

However, most agree that the 50/50 division in the military will cause decay in the military and most troops prefer that women be in the minority:

No I think its fine, because if we are like this (7 in group) and two guys, ah it's going to be weaker, it's going to be chaos, if we go to countries like Sudan, there they still have mentality that women cannot rule, or hold weapons, we will struggle without men, no manpower, it's good to have 9 men and three women, the majority must be men.

Higher ranking participants agreed that women should be recruited into infantry only if they want to be in the infantry, if it is their choice and if they are passionate about the infantry. A higher ranking officer explains: “*It can't be 50:50 - but by choice from the female soldiers' side, if it's your choice then you must meet the criteria*”. The overall consensus was that women want to serve in mixed gender units and are strongly against gender segregated training. Reasons referred back to the lack of cohesion amongst women and the inability to work together.

4.12. Conclusion

In essence, the purpose of this chapter was to summarize the research findings in a concise and thematic manner. Naturally not all the responses were cited above, as over seven hours' worth of recordings was made. However, the overall themes were drawn from the interviews and the literature review and the most important responses were recorded within this chapter to emphasize the points made. In the following chapter, this data is analyzed in more depth in relation to the theory and broader literature pertaining to women and peacekeeping.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS

5.1. Introduction

The following chapter provides an analysis of the data, both primary and secondary, collected throughout this study. The analysis engages the debates on the value women add to peacekeeping regarding their impact on the operational effectiveness of the unit and the security of the host citizenry. Analysis is done from a top down level, considering the gender sensitivity of planning and implementation of policies, and a bottom up analysis, which takes into account the real life experiences of women deployed on missions by the SANDF. An attempt is made to highlight the gap between discourse advocating the contributions women make to peacekeeping (especially on the international level), and the reality women peacekeepers face, by showing the complex environment of military institutions and PKOs.

The first section discusses the different feminist approaches of the UN and the SANDF regarding the call for and the utilization of women in peacekeeping. The following section focuses on the SANDF and how women are contributing to its peacekeeping operations in relation to the way they are expected to contribute. This is contrasted with the conventional arguments regarding the value women add to PKOs. Thereafter, the challenges women peacekeepers face in the SANDF which impede them from contributing to PKOs are highlighted. These challenges relate to: issues of the hegemonic masculinity used to characterize a competent soldier; the patriarchal society of South Africa influencing the self-worth of women peacekeepers and the absence of proper gender recognition in the Force and the lack of proper training regarding complex peacekeeping scenarios. Finally, this paper outlines a number of recommendations to the SANDF and identifies complex challenges which will continue to affect the operational effectiveness of its peacekeeping units.

5.2. The Call for more Women in Peacekeeping: UN versus SANDF

True (2010:197) states that “[i]nstitutional analysis is important to understand why gender mainstreaming takes the forms it does in particular institutional settings and why it is often resisted and its potential to transform power relations compromised”. For this reason, it is important to understand the contrasting perspectives of the UN and the SANDF with regard to their stance on gender mainstreaming and the considered value of women peacekeepers.

Until the 1990s women have been sidelined when it came to PKOs, and virtually no special call was made to recruit more women to serve on missions. However, the call from women’s NGOs and scholars to recognize women in the security debate has, over the past two decades, encouraged the UN

to promote the participation of women in the call for peace. The UN especially has become an advocate for gender mainstreaming with the final goal of achieving gender equality. Simultaneously, it has recognized the need to incorporate a gender perspective into all aspects of security. One of the measures taken to achieve this goal is increasing the number of women in peacekeeping. For this reason the UN has become a primary advocate for recruiting women in peacekeeping missions. Advocating the recruitment of women in PKOs has snowballed since the passing of UNSCR 1325 in 2000. The reason for this is that the Resolution (along with a number of subsequent resolutions) claims that women possess specific skills and can make special contributions to peacekeeping which will positively impact on the operational effectiveness of the unit and the security of the vulnerable society. These unique contributions are based on essentialist notions, that women are inherently more peaceful than men and possess certain feminine traits which are important attributes necessary for pacifying the post-conflict environment (Jennings, 2011).

It is clear that the UN advocates the recruitment of women in peacekeeping missions due to their differential traits; they have feminine qualities (different to men) which are seen as valuable to PKOs. This allows us to conclude that the UN takes on a radical feminist approach with regard to the inclusion of women in peacekeeping. Through its reports and policies, the UN has repeatedly highlighted that the institution advocates equal rights for women and men, but recognizes their difference. This is captured in the DPKO (2010:6) policy on Gender Equality in PKOs which states that “[g]ender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men”. The Policy further states that “equality does not mean that women and men will become the same” (DPKO, 2010:6). Radical feminists do not want women to be like men, they want to develop new values, based on women’s culture as well, not only masculine values which are dominant and praised in society (Jaggar, 1983:251). The UN uses gender mainstreaming as a means of achieving gender equality.

Even though the UN is the frontrunner in promoting gender equality, it has been under scrutiny for exacerbating gender stereotypes (Sion, 2010). There have also been accusations that the UN takes an ‘add women and stir’ approach (advocating certain operational changes due to the increasing level of women peacekeepers) (Jennings, 2011). Signs of tokenism are also seen, as women are expected to add certain ‘auxiliary traits’ to the situation, as they are ascribed certain behavioral traits characterized by their gender (Kanter, 1977).

Focusing on South Africa, this TCC is the frontrunner regarding levels of women in deployments, and is one of the top TCCs to the UN, ranking thirteenth on a list of over 120 states (UN, 2014). Yet, the radical feminist approach seen at the UN level presents itself in stark contrast to what is seen in the

case of South Africa. Due to the strong association of gender equality anchored in the instruments of law, such as the Constitution and Gender Equality Bill, and the strong stance against any force of gender discrimination, it is appropriate to conclude that South Africa takes on a liberal feminist approach to gender equality and the inclusion of women in the infantry. Liberal feminism views individual rights as essential, and hardly takes gender difference into consideration (Malešević, 2010). The reason why the SANDF recruits women is to uphold its legitimacy as individual rights and equality are fundamental components of the South African Constitution (Heinecken, 2009:26). Here signs of tokenism are also revealed, where women are added to the military to make it seem more 'fair' and be hailed an equal opportunity provider (Kanter, 1977).

South Africa encourages the inclusion of women based on quotas, to allow for the military to appropriately represent South African society. However, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, gender equality "should demonstrate a *value* and *appreciation* for both men and women (UN Women, 2014 *emphasis added*). The SANDF sees equality with regard to representation, not with regard to value and appreciation. When it comes to gender mainstreaming in South African policy, highlighting the word 'women' or 'gender' at times seem sufficient. This was a major critique of the 2012 Defence Review Draft which was open to public scrutiny (Le Roux, 2012). Three years later, the 2014 Defence Review was hailed as a huge improvement on the draft (Cilliers, 2014). However, the term "gender mainstreaming" is not mentioned, let alone explained, in the over-300 page document. However, goals hinting at gender mainstreaming have featured in the Review:

It is important that in the planning of any of the peace building processes, cognisance should be taken of the fact that women, men and children are affected differently by conflict. The integration of gender perspectives in all aspects thus constitutes an important strategy to support inclusive and sustainable peace in post-conflict environments (South African Defence Review, 2014:2-22).

Despite this hint at gender mainstreaming, a gender perspective regarding peacekeepers who are present in these post-conflict environments is not taken into consideration. Gender difference plays second fiddle to the goal of gender equality within the SANDF. Hence, the encompassing goal to improve gender equality by means of merely adding more women negatively impacts on the ability of the SANDF to improve the operational effectiveness of its peacekeeping forces on a gendered level.

5.3. Value of Women Peacekeepers in the SANDF: Gap between rhetoric and reality

The value of women peacekeepers in the SANDF in some cases runs parallel to the value of women advocated by scholars, yet it is also clear that there remain gaps between what the discourse suggests and the reality experienced by women peacekeepers. The first contribution women are said to make to

peacekeeping is that they have a civilizing effect on men, because in essence, men behave better around women of their own culture (De Groot, 2001:37). This argument suggests that the levels of SEA, including prostitution and ‘peacekeeping babies’ will decline if more women make up the composition of a unit. This study did not investigate whether the presence of women in the SANDF peacekeeping missions lowered the levels of sex work, sexual violence, or other misdemeanors by male peacekeepers; as the resources to do so were limited. The focus was on whether men change their behavior around women.

The discussions did portray a strong consensus that men do act differently when in the presence of women and that women have a calming effect on men. The evidence shows that men do change their behavior around women, however, this cannot be considered as improving the operational effectiveness of a unit if this change is not a *lasting* one. Women did point out the fact that men become more shy or reserved, and are careful of what they say, with the presence of new women infantiers. However, after a while, when male soldiers become acquainted with new women infantiers, they return to their ‘usual selves’. This suggests that women’s ‘civilizing effects’ are short term.

Women participants did not mention any type of sexual abuse committed by male peacekeepers once deployed. However some did mention that men change their behavior around women in a more flirtatious way, rather than becoming more ‘civilized’. Furthermore, the ease in discussion about men’s sexual nature, the fact that “*today he has this girlfriend and tomorrow he has that one*”, demonstrates a sort of normality and acceptance of such behavior. In fact, “*men are men and they will stay men*”. It is clear that the gendered effects of men getting ‘girlfriends’ in the host state is not understood; the power differences between peacekeepers and vulnerable citizens come into play. However, it should not be the sole responsibility of the women to act as ‘sex police’ while on missions. Simić (2010:188) claims that this argument does not address the problem of SEA by peacekeepers and responsibility should be diverted from women back to the state. This study suggests that diverting the responsibility to the leadership of the military is more appropriate, and more practical.

The second argument that should be assessed relates to women’s interaction with the local population. Women are seen as more compassionate and therefore tend to communicate with the locals more than men do, especially with local women (Carey, 2001:53; Jennings, 2011). This not only enhances the opportunity for intelligence collection but also increases the security of the unit because peacekeepers are seen as less threatening (Karamé, 2001; Clarke, 2008).

Mixed sentiments were heard regarding contact with the local population. The discussion with participants indicated that motivation to deploy on missions was not prompted by a desire to help vulnerable citizens (or was not the main motivator). Only one participant stated this as a reason. The

rest cited either the need for experience to advance their careers or the appeal of money as their primary motivation. This indicates that women on peacekeeping missions did not deploy for reasons of compassion. Yet, examples given by the participants who were deployed *did* demonstrate that women have the inclination to be more compassionate, especially towards local women and children. In most cases, this is because many peacekeepers are also mothers and they place themselves in the shoes of the mother or picture their own child in such dire circumstances. The fact that women draw their sense of compassion from their ability to give birth and rear children is in line with the theory suggesting that women are inherently more compassionate than men (Malešević, 2010). Although, participants did mention that some men also made an effort to interact with the locals, the consensus was that interaction was dominated by women.

The third argument is that women are better respondents to victims of SGBV. This is one of the main purposes for adding women to peacekeeping and is strongly advocated by the UN (UNSCR 1960; UNSCR 1888). The increased use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, and the recognition that victims are mostly women and girls (even though men and boys also suffer from such crimes), together with women's ability to respond better to these victims enhances the ability of the unit to improve the human security of those individuals by assisting them to get the appropriate help and psychological support. The assumption is that, because most victims are women, they would feel more comfortable speaking to a woman peacekeeper (Mackay, 2001). On the other hand, it is also assumed that a women peacekeeper will handle the situation better than a man because of her sensitivity (Clarke, 2008:60).

However, the argument that women peacekeepers are better respondents than men is inconsistent with the reality experienced by women in the SANDF. Firstly, the argument assumes that women peacekeepers *assuredly* deal with victims of SGBV. Yet, no respondent mentioned any SGBV incident; this is surprising as the levels of rape are extremely high in the DRC and the Sudan. Perhaps this was due to women peacekeepers considering it not their job to deal with these victims, and that such incidents are felt to be the responsibly of locally based NGOs. Secondly, it is assumed that women will be able to handle the situation better than a man. However, discussions revealed that women peacekeepers are perplexed as to how to handle these situations and unsure of which procedures to follow when a victim approaches them.

Also noted was the importance women peacekeepers placed on dealing with these victims. What emerged from the discussions was that women seemed to think that preventing SGBV was more important than dealing with victims of such violence. Protecting women was part of their mandate, dealing with the repercussions of war, such as victims of SGBV, was not; as one respondent put it, "*that's not our job*" or "*take her to the medics, they will sort her out*". In addition, women

peacekeepers raised the issue that they were not trained in the gender dynamics of the host state. This lack of knowledge was prevalent in the responses of participants blaming gender inequality on the local 'culture' or 'religion' and not on patriarchal thinking or issues of militarized masculinities present in these post-conflict societies.

The above argument regarding women peacekeepers and locals is also advocated as contributing to the operational effectiveness of a unit as contact with locals can provide prime opportunities to gather information. However, even though examples have been mentioned of women peacekeepers and intelligence collection, the focus group discussions showed two predicaments which allow for one to view this argument with suspicion. First, the level of contact with locals is very context specific. It was found that in most cases (in the Sudan especially) local women are hesitant to approach women peacekeepers because they do not trust them. These women are either viewed as spies, or locals are uncertain about women soldiers because a woman in such a position presents itself in stark contrast to local tradition and beliefs. Second, if local women *do* interact with women peacekeepers, the perception of participants was that locals can relate to women and see them as equals. This encourages women to open up, but as the discussions indicate, not about security issues. The topics under discussion would relate to material needs, such as clothes or food. Therefore, one can question the literature advocating the use of women in improving the operational effectiveness of the unit due to identifying security issues related to local women. What should be noted here is that context is vital in deciding where women can actually make an operational difference on the ground.

The final contribution women are said to make to peacekeeping is that they are inspirational to local women and can encourage them to take part in security sector reform. Olsson (2000:9) refers to this as having a "positive demonstration effect" on locals. Initially, this can only be proven by actually investigating the perceptions of the locals. However, Cordell (2011) does point to changes in crime levels, and political participation in Liberia after the all-female unit was deployed there in 2007. Within this study, only the perceptions of women peacekeepers were taken into account and peacekeepers believe that they *are* inspirational to local women yet are doubtful of its impact.

During the discussions, participants explained that conversations with local women always included them stating that they wanted to live in South Africa. This suggests more of an escape to a better life, rather than inspiration to change gender inequality within their own state. In fact, women peacekeepers did not believe that they could change the attitudes of women in the host state, citing it as '*impossible*'. Furthermore, local women who are inspired to step out of their traditional roles face the difficulty of converting this inspiration into action, as most states lack the political will and appropriate mechanisms to utilize such women to further the call for gender equality. In essence, reactions from the locals were more surprise and disbelief rather than inspirational. It seems that rather

viewing women peacekeepers as agents of change, their interaction seemed to be superficial (Heinecken, 2013).

5.4. Factors Impeding Women's Contributions to Peacekeeping Operations

Considering the above, literature which advocates the unique contributions women make to peacekeeping are simply not reflected in the reality these women face in PKOs. This does not mean that women peacekeepers are *unable* to contribute to peacekeeping in this way, and future contributions should be aspired to. However, it does indicate that there are certain factors which challenge women in contributing to PKOs, and these challenges are real and complex. This study identifies five reasons why women in the SANDF cannot contribute to peacekeeping in the ways advocated by the UN and supporting literature. The factors discussed below are interlinked and include; 1 the masculine environment of the military, 2 the inability of the Defence Force to recognize gender difference, 3 the self-perception of women peacekeepers on the value they add to missions, 4 the patriarchal society of South Africa, and finally, 5 the lack of proper gender training for peacekeepers.

5.4.1. Masculinity within the Military and Peacekeeping Environment

Literature challenging the argument that women can make unique contributions to peacekeeping often cites the masculine nature within the military and peacekeeping environment which prevents them from doing so (Simić, 2010; Whitworth, 2004). These settings are both characterized as male domains and are overshadowed by a hegemonic masculine culture in which women find difficult to cope.

This hegemonic culture is especially found in military training (Lopes, 2011). Women find it difficult to cope with the severe training sessions, which entail physical strength and endurance where, on most occasions, men out-perform the women. This not only impacts on the self-worth of the woman peacekeeper, but also gives leverage to men in accusing women of not being proper soldiers, or justifies their argument that women are 'weakening the army'. Physical strength seems to be the primary measurement of meeting male standards, and women cited this as their main weakness. Strength is used by women and men as a measuring tool for what is considered a competent soldier.

As women are in the minority, their presence is considered distinct, alien, or obscure. For this reason they find it difficult to blend in with men, even by wearing the same uniform. Their minority status and distinguishable features allow for increased visibility, resulting in performance pressures inextricably linked to being tokens (Kanter, 1977). Participants often mentioned incidents where men and women would make the same mistake, such as arriving late, but the women would get called out for it. In addition, a sign of tokenism is that failures on the part of one token will be extended to all. If one woman cannot perform a task, *all* women are dubbed incompetent and lazy. Segregated training

was suggested during the discussions, but strongly opposed by the participants. Women actually preferred to be in the minority. The main opposition to segregated training was due to the lack of cohesion felt among women peacekeepers. Gender segregated training is not the answer, De Groot (2009) argues, because gender segregation is not in accord with gender mainstreaming.

Furthermore, women also face challenges within deployments as a hyper-masculine culture is rife, especially with the association of using women as weapons of war. It is specifically within these environments that women are required to give up their gender and conform to the hegemonic masculinity, which is said to be necessary in order to cope in such places. This is also one of the critiques of liberal feminism; that ‘degendering’ is expected from women and not from men (Goldstein, 2004:41). The overall analysis drawn from participants was that women are expected to fit into the male environment. If they fail to keep up with men, they are considered weak, held to be weakening the army, or men use it to justify the claim that women do not belong in the army. Radicals argue that the “dominance of masculinism diminishes the value of unique feminine qualities such as greater nurturing abilities, better communication skills, propensity towards non-violent resolution of conflicts and greater sociability” (Malešević, 2010:290). The discussions reveal that women peacekeepers dilute their femininity in order to fit into this environment. This is also revealed through the lack of value they associate with feminine qualities; “*Sometimes [being soft] is good sometimes it’s not good – but it’s mostly bad*”. The fact that women lose their femininity to fit into the demanding peacekeeping environment implicates their ability to utilize these feminine traits when the opportunity presents itself (for instance when they are given the opportunity to interact with the locals).

Women either dilute their femininity to fit into the masculine environment, or want to remuster. The discussions revealed that most women believe the infantry is no place for women, and if they had a choice, many would remuster. The women who liked the army would often make comments that it is manlier. It was apparent that women were not only expected to fit into the male environment, but strived to do so. The perception women have of what constitutes a proper soldier is to demonstrate male characteristics; being tough, or physically fit (to the standard of men), in essence, being more ‘*soldierly*’. Being able to wear a uniform and be a soldier is seen as a form of empowerment. This indicates that women associate empowerment with being more like a man, as being ‘*soldierly*’ is directly correlated to being more manly. This demonstrates how weakness of women is associated with femininity, which is everything that a soldier should not be.

Furthermore, many cite that a critical mass (approximately 30 per cent) of women is needed to change this hegemonic masculine culture (Olsson, 2000:9). However, it is clear that the strong presence of a hegemonic masculinity in the SANDF has actually dissuaded women from advocating that more

women should join the military. The lack of cohesion amongst women poses a major problem for the future feminizing of the Force. This lack of cohesion is blamed on the assumption that “*it’s just the way women are*”. Additionally, if women peacekeepers do show signs of femininity, they are pointed out as weak, lazy, or incompetent, not only by men, but by women too. In fact, the attitude of women and men in leadership is that “*there are no ladies in the army*”. This is not only seen in units with a minority of women and a majority of men, but also in military settings consisting of all-women. During the all-female Police Unit deployed to Liberia (often cited for its achievements in gender equality), Sergeant in Command Monia Gusain (a woman) often referred to the Indian women making up the force as “my men” (Carvajal, 2010).

5.4.2. Lack of Recognition with regard to Gender Difference

The main purpose of gender mainstreaming is to recognize gender difference. However, gender difference is not recognized in the SANDF and is considered the second factor which keeps women from contributing to peacekeeping in the advocated way. Feminine characteristics are not recognized as having a positive impact on the mission, even though those greatly impacted by war are women and children. Women soldiers, considered the holders of feminine traits, are not valued because the perception is that a proper soldier enshrines only masculine characteristics. Where gender difference *is* noted by troops or by higher ranks, it is done with a negative connotation, mainly related to women’s physical and biological ‘drawbacks’ in relation to male soldiers. Not only are women physically weaker than men, but due to their childrearing abilities and menstruation cycle, they are considered less ‘deployable’ and often disrupt the operational effectiveness of a unit.

In essence, what is expected when entering the military is to “forget one’s gender”. However, this is only expected of women. What is expected is that women should replace their gender with that of a man’s. Women are also not recognized as also having family at home; if one joins the military, it is expected that these issues be forgotten. It was mentioned that there are social workers who try to offer support to soldiers before and after deployment, however, this support is for the whole group and not for women alone.

The only time when women are valued is if they perform tasks traditionally assigned to women in society. These tasks encompass stereotypical ideas of which tasks are appropriate for women such as cleaning and cooking. This notion is strongly recognized by the participants, and all resent the fact that men see gender only when it comes to cleaning or domestic tasks such as cooking. Women strongly advocated equal treatment in the military.

The overwhelming emphasis on gender equality, without considering the gendered dynamic within the military, has come at the expense of valuing gender difference. Therefore, placing women in the military has not resulted in them being equal soldiers, but rather in them aiming to be equal *to* men.

Therefore, women cannot make any contribution to peacekeeping while they strive to act, and are expected to act, like men.

5.4.3. The Self-perception of Women Peacekeepers

When looking at how women see themselves and their value to peacekeeping, some surprising contradictions were revealed. When women were asked if they could do anything in peacekeeping which they thought specifically attributable to their gender some did cite that they had better communication skills than men, which is used for intelligence collection. Yet, these contributions were not discussed as such, they were mentioned as a sort of ‘side-effect’ of being a women, not as a vital skill valuable to the operational effectiveness of a unit.

‘Value’ was perceived if women peacekeepers could do the same thing male peacekeepers could do. The participants all showed a deep sense of wanting to keep up with men, but also accepted that they would never match the physical strength of men. When asked if physical strength is necessary and important in PKOs, the participants answered “No”. Therefore, even though women do not consider the value of strength vital to peacekeeping, they still strive to meet male standards as this is the only way they will be valued as soldiers. There appears to be a misconception as to attributes necessary to make a soldier a competent and valuable peacekeeper.

A surprising discovery was that when women did cite their value to peacekeeping (different from men), this value would relate to tasks such as cleaning, cooking and organizing events; the same tasks they strongly resented men for attributing to women. It is clear that women peacekeepers face a paradox with regard to their perceived value to peacekeeping. On the one hand women want to be treated equally and they resent having to live up to stereotypical tasks assigned to women. On the other hand, they see this is the only value they offer an operation which is different to men. Women peacekeepers are found to live these contradictions.

5.4.4. Patriarchal Society of South Africa

The gender specific tasks assigned to women based on a domestic responsibilities, along with the self-perception of women with regard to the contributions they can make to peacekeeping (or lack thereof) are drawn from the deeply rooted patriarchal beliefs within South African society. Malešević (2010:291,292) argues that patriarchal social conditions reinforce a strict gender division of labor, whereby fighting and warfare are for the most part identified with masculinity, while mothering and caring are synonymous with femininity. The fact that women cite examples where men question the competence of women to perform in battle; that they view women as weak or inferior; and the self-perception of women seen in the SANDF all emerge from patriarchal thinking. The status of women in society plays a major role first in how women are perceived by men from their own contingent,

second, how they are perceived by men and women of the local population in a host state, and third, how women perceive themselves.

South African patriarchal culture is seen on all levels, from the private home spheres to the very top level of politics.²⁴ Even though the prime focus of this study is not on different race categories within the SANDF, the discussions reveal that patriarchy is most prominent between black men and women. Patriarchal thinking is demonstrated in the way in which family responsibilities are hailed as a women's job. Even some higher ranking women stated that women do not belong in the infantry because she is the "*the organizers of the household [and] bears children*". Furthermore, a patriarchal culture undermines women of authority, as women describe men not following orders when those orders are given by a woman. However, what has also been noticed is that with the integration of different races, a sense of empowerment is seen as women are inspired to stand up to men if they see their fellow women soldiers doing the same.

Furthermore, within a patriarchal society, women are also seen as sexual objects (Jaggar, 1983). The focus group discussions revealed that women do have to contend with sexual advances from their male comrades, in deployments and on home base. An interesting finding however is that there was a sense of acceptance of this kind of behavior of male soldiers, even a sense of annoyance with women who had a problem with it; if a woman is to take a sexual comment as sexual harassment then "*she must go and stay in a cave*". The strong presence of a hegemonic masculine culture has allowed for an internalized guiding principle of what is considered sexual harassment despite the DOD policy on the Prevention and Elimination of Sexual Harassment. The consensus amongst participants was that women in the infantry "*must not be too sensitive*".

The challenge in overcoming patriarchy is not confined within the walls of the SANDF; it is a struggle facing all levels of South African society. The way to make women's voices heard, as many scholars suggest, is to increase the number of women in peacekeeping (Van de Walker & Webber, 2006). Yet, the context in which women are placed in the broader society has a major impact on the way they are perceived, respected, and treated in the military. Jaggar (1983:255) notes that the legitimization of male domination is done through society's inventions of ideologies prescribed to the subordinate group which makes them inferior to the dominant group. These ideologies pose a major challenge to the SANDF in changing gender perceptions and stereotypes which are causing the Force to deteriorate. What is used to define women in the military encompasses laziness, incompetence and weakness, and women's value lies in patriarchal stereotypical perceptions of what women are 'made' for. These

²⁴ The case when Zimbabwe's president publicly called South Africa President Jacob Zuma's international relations advisor, Lindiwe Zulu, a 'street women', and Zuma's response in keeping her quiet, does show a sense of the power dynamics between men and women in the very top level of South African society (Bell, 2013).

ideologies are used in contrast to justify the dominant role of men in the military and to continue to make the *male* soldier identity the ultimate identity to strive for.

5.5. Women Peacekeepers and their impact on Human Security

A fundamental aspect of peacekeeping operations is to improve the security situation within the host state. The UN's call for more women in peacekeeping roles is to improve the operational effectiveness of the unit, and ultimately enhance the human security of the host society. However, the impact of adding more women has often been related back to their unique contributions and not to whether their presence actually makes the local population feel safer (Cordell, 2011). Underlining this section is the debate surrounding whether women actually enhance or compromise the human security of the local population whom they are said to protect, through direct means (physical presence and contact), or by means of fulfilling or jeopardizing the mandate.

Persuading men not to commit acts of SEA definitely improves the human security of locals. However, as this study reveals, women's calming effect on men appears to have temporary rather than long lasting effects. Furthermore, whether women's presence actually reduces levels of SEA is strongly refuted by examples of men committing such acts even with the presence of women in their unit. Furthermore, as revealed through the focus group discussions, if women do not understand the gendered effects of men's and women's interaction with locals, misconduct may be diluted to become normalized events; such as men 'having a new girlfriend every day'.²⁵ Examples where women use their calming effects on men regarding situations where women revert to persuasion rather than confrontation is also a means through which human security is improved.

Human security is also said to improve with women peacekeepers' increased interaction with the locals. Intelligence collection will provide a deeper sense of understanding for the community's needs and standing in good faith with the community improves the security of the unit (Jennings, 2011). Furthermore, encouraging women to take part in security sector reform will help in achieving an equal society and long term peace.

As the discussions revealed, intelligence collection proved difficult as local women would approach women peacekeepers for material needs rather than security issues. Here, the patriarchal society may also play a role, as local women do not see women peacekeepers as capable of handling their security needs because they have never witnessed women in such authoritative positions. Furthermore, the language barrier also posed a major challenge. Women have to communicate with men to get to local

²⁵ Examples of men having consensual relationships with local women have been seen, even to the point where peacekeepers marry these women (Simić, 2012). However, a sexual relationship without any sense of power at play is rare.

women, either by first having meetings with men in leadership, or using male interpreters. Women peacekeepers also revealed that if there was an urgent security issue, locals would identify a soldier's uniform, rather than their gender. In addition, women peacekeepers were often acknowledged, but viewed with suspicion, even to the point where local women and children would run away from them. The abovementioned scenarios indicate that the assumption that women have the ability to improve the human security of the local population through their unique contributions is inconsistent with reality.

Furthermore, scholars advocating women's value with regard to their contact with local women should exercise caution especially with the changing dynamics of warfare. It has become apparent that local women in war are stepping from the sidelines as victims and becoming actively involved in warfare (Karamé, 2001). This is done through helping transport weaponry, volunteering as suicide bombers, and participating in combat. We do not see scholars advocating that male peacekeepers should have more contact with rebels or other belligerents due to their gender commonality, therefore, asking women to make a special effort to interact with local women may be a prescription which poses greater risk to women peacekeepers and threatens the security of the unit.

Not only are women questioned on their ability to perform their unique tasks in peacekeeping, but the discussions revealed that women's presence in peacekeeping may actually *enhance* the insecurity of local women. If the local gender dynamics are not understood, the presence of women peacekeepers may place local women more at risk. It was found that in the Sudan, if local women are caught speaking to women peacekeepers, they are seen as sharing intelligence with peacekeepers and for that reason are specifically targeted by rebels. One can also presume that women standing against traditional notions of gender stereotypes may also be exposed to higher levels of violence or stigma from the local community.

Besides placing locals at higher risk, the presence of women in PKOs enhances their own insecurity (more than men) and also enhances the insecurity of the unit. The nature of the peacekeeping environment is dominated by hyper-masculinity due to the high levels of violence against women and rape as a weapon of war. This makes PKOs extra hostile towards women. Women's sexuality therefore becomes a factor impacting their security. The focus groups revealed a number of examples where rebels would stop vehicles if they knew women peacekeepers were present. It was also suggested that rebels target the base because of the knowledge that there are women soldiers present at that base. This may relate to the fact that rebels think an army is weaker with the presence of women which makes the base an easy target, and/or due to rebels targeting women for rape. As women peacekeepers noted in the focus group discussions, the first thing the rebels demand from the base, would be the women peacekeepers. Furthermore, as it was discussed, women's sexuality also disrupts

the sense of authority in the unit. Rebels tend not to take the presence of a woman seriously, and also see it as disrespectful to their culture, increasing the resentment towards the peacekeeping unit. Women's sexuality therefore plays an eminent role in increasing the risk to fellow male soldiers, themselves and the unit.

Running parallel to this argument is the fact that men face extra pressure due to the need to protect 'their' women. Similar findings have been seen in the other studies (Heinecken & Van der Waag, 2007:532). Women soldiers are not considered in the same way as men consider other men. Puechguirbal (2010) notes that a hyper-masculine environment may foster the approach that women are the ones who need protection. An example in the South African case revealed that while the base was under attack, the platoon leader was focused on evacuating the *women* peacekeepers and getting them to safety. Following protocol or the mandate may become second priority to men when the safety of 'their' women is threatened. Women also *expected* this protection from men, stating that they would never conduct patrols without a man, and expressed the obligation of men to be extra vigilant when on patrol with a woman peacekeeper. Patriarchal thinking also comes into play here, as men are considered the protectors and women the ones who need protection. The need/obligation to protect women while on site dilutes the priority of their mandate and places male peacekeepers under extra pressure to carry out these protective roles, and also increases their security risk.

5.6. Ongoing Challenges and a Need for Change

The analysis of this study has revealed a number of areas which need to be changed in order for the SANDF to utilize the value of their women peacekeepers. Recommendations include: improving gender training for women and men, focusing on the value of women during recruitment procedures and advocating a new soldier identity. In addition, the challenge of overcoming gender perceptions anchored in patriarchal thinking remains a major issue as well as the tight constraints of the law which make the focus on gender difference difficult.

Training peacekeepers to be ready for the multitude of scenarios presented in the peacekeeping environment is an area in which the SANDF is lagging. Training mostly revolves around combat readiness, physical strength, endurance, and weaponry, because the majority of troops drawn for PKOs come from the infantry. As the nature of peacekeeping is often undertaken in high risk environments which involve some level of combat, this type of training remains a vital part of preparing soldiers to cope in these extreme situations. However, simply training for war contradicts the sole reason for sending peacekeepers on missions, which is to enhance human security and enable long lasting *peace*. It has been convincingly argued that long lasting or positive peace is directly correlated with gender equal societies, and peacekeepers trained on local gender dynamics can help achieve the goals of gender equality within the host state (Pinker, 2011, De Groot, 2009, DPKO,

2010; Caprioli, 2005). Furthermore, taking a gendered approach to training does not only improve the chances of fulfilling the mandate (creating lasting peace), but improves the professional capacity of the soldier, in the end ensuring the Defence Force receives its ‘value for money’. De Groot (2009) explains:

The most persuasive argument for mainstreaming gender is that of cost benefit: incorporating a gender dimension increases the likelihood of a better return on the time and money invested in a mission.

The lack of awareness among soldiers of UNSCR 1325 and being ignorant of the term “gender mainstreaming”, clearly demonstrates the need for the reassessment of mission readiness training. The DOD (2008) Gender Mainstreaming Strategy states that “the primary responsibility of Gender Mainstreaming lies with the leadership”. This needs to change, as gender mainstreaming must involve and be understood by *all* members of the DOD. Furthermore, gender mainstreaming is not simply a women’s issue, but an issue for men and women, therefore, men *and* women should be educated on the matter. The value of gender training cannot be undermined. It is necessary not only to allow men and women to understand the impact they have on the local community and their security needs, but also educate men and women soldiers on the value of women in peacekeeping. In the end, the goal of gender training is to reduce harmful forms of behavior by peacekeeping personnel and unintended consequences of PKOs. As participants could often not remember if they received any form of gender training, it is suggested that this training should take place on a regular basis.

A proper assessment of the host state along with gender training should be made to pinpoint where and how women’s gender may be valuable or harmful to the operational effectiveness of the unit, and the security of the local population. Briefings on the host state need to include gender issues to help peacekeepers understand the gender inequalities in peacekeeping environments. Puechguirbal (2003:113) states that “tailoring the training packages to specific contexts can yield valuable lessons for future gender training”. Furthermore, peacekeepers need to understand the gender dynamics of society because the post-conflict environment is a vital opportunity to shift the ideology of the host state’s military and its role in perpetuating militarized masculinities (Clarke, 2008).²⁶ Overcoming militarized masculinities within these societies will help surmount the main cause of the continuous marginalization of women within the host state.

Another area which needs attention is the recruitment of women into the SANDF. Due to high unemployment levels, women enter the military as a last resort. The lack of focus on the value of

²⁶ The opportunity to shift the ideology of the host states’ military, Clarke (2008) argues, is firstly due to civil society’s long experience of violence which has made it dissatisfied with the existing security forces, and secondly, security sector reform is attractive as it is a requirement for receiving international funding for economic reconstruction.

women during recruitment affects the way in which women see their position in the military; as gender equality decoys. By focusing on the quality of women during recruitment processes, women can know what to expect, and what qualities will identify them as competent soldiers. Identifying and advocating the value of women in peacekeeping could result in them actually realizing these contributions and striving to achieve them, as women actually focus on these attributes and understand their benefit to vulnerable populations in peacekeeping missions.

Due to the SANDF taking a liberal approach in providing equal opportunities for women in the military, the shortcomings of such an approach are apparent. These include the lack of appreciation for gender difference and the tight boundaries of the law which inhibit the SANDF from focusing on and utilizing these differences. This is mainly due to the fear of being hailed discriminatory. The liberal feminist approach challenges the SANDF in reaching gender mainstreaming goals advocated by the UN. This is why a radical feminist approach is needed. Radical feminism utilizes feminine characteristics which the UN advocates as necessary to improve the operational effectiveness of a peacekeeping unit. However, there are serious difficulties in taking a radical approach. Firstly, the South African historical context of inequality has put a tight leash on institutions straying from the Constitutional-based values of equal opportunity and treatment of men and women. Secondly, the SANDF faces the challenge of overcoming a military culture which is embedded in hegemonic masculinity and the warrior ethos. This culture is not only difficult to change, but blossoms in the patriarchal society in which South Africa finds itself, as Cockburn states: “Not only is patriarchy strengthened by militarism, but militarism needs patriarchy” (*cited in* Malešević, 2010:290).

The ongoing challenges of patriarchy continue to undermine women and cannot be overcome by the SANDF alone, but need to be tackled at a national and grassroots level. However, the SANDF *can* encourage the empowerment of women from within its Forces. This can be done by taking note of the abovementioned recommendations and facilitating an environment in which women can be identified as strong and valuable peacekeepers having the same professional caliber as their male comrades.

The final recommendation is associated with a much needed shift in the idea of the ideal soldier. Currently, the competence of a peacekeeper is associated with a soldier identity characterized solely in hegemonic masculine terms (or perceived in such way). Even though a ‘softening’ of hegemonic masculinity has taken place over the years, there remains a subordination of and under-appreciation for feminine qualities.²⁷ These characterizations exist in opposition to anything feminine. It

²⁷ This ‘softening’ of hegemonic masculinity, Hooper (1998:40, 41) argues, has occurred due to the spread of globalization, decline in conscription and more civilian influence on the military, and the emphasis on more caring humanitarian military duties where feminine qualities are being integrated into hegemonic masculine ideals.

encapsulates a ‘warrior ethos’ which stresses strength, cohesion and bravery. These characterizations are found in the Defence Force as well. Defining a soldier, the SANDF states:

An effective soldier is proud, tough, disciplined and displays morale, cohesion, trust, shared soldiering values and high standards of military conduct at all times. [...] Soldiers train for the application of lethal force under conditions of conflict and in so doing accept the risk of death [...] (South African Defence Review 2014:12-1).

Different eras can be associated with different types of hegemonic masculinities (Hooper, 1998:40). Therefore, we need to develop a new socially admired type of hegemonic masculinity in an era which strives for human security. It needs to incorporate the feminine characteristics which permeate the contributions women are said to make to peacekeeping: communication skills, compassion, sensitivity, and passivity. For women to change the hegemonic masculine culture within the military, a change in the soldier identity needs to be advocated. Women have a positive role in peacekeeping, yet, as Hudson (2005a:112) warns, any analysis of this kind must guard against fostering stark dichotomies of men as aggressive and women as being innately peaceful. This shift should be not the creation of one in contrast to the other, but should be seen on a spectrum, where the extreme opposites symbolize masculinity and femininity and the center the *ideal* soldier, who encompasses both features and can tap into these features in accordance with the changing peacekeeping environment around them.

We need to, in Van de Walker and Webber’s (2006:21) words, dissociate notions of peace, morality and humanity from feminism, femininity, and weakness. What has often been recommended in literature and advocated on national levels is to add more women to the military, with an expectation that their mere presence will alter the culture within the institution. However, women should not face the pressure of such a daunting task. As seen throughout the evidence, expecting women to alter the hegemonic masculinity within the military is close to impossible. What is needed is a shift in the minds of women *and* men as to what constitutes a competent professional soldier. Even if unit compositions are gender balanced, they remain skewed towards the hegemonic masculine ideal of what is needed to be a soldier, which favors men. What is needed is a mental liberation, as one troop explains:

It’s all in the woman’s own minds, if I believe I am weaker than a male I will be weaker, if I believe I am stronger than a male I am stronger, it’s all in my mind, if I only can do a mind-shift then I will be fine.

This mind-shift should not be compared to a man, but to what constitutes a competent *soldier*. In the end, this will lift the pressure off women expected to act ‘naturally’ in the ‘unnatural’ environment of PKOs. Rather, the focus will be on soldiers, acting ‘professionally’ in these ‘unnatural’ peacekeeping

environments. With this, an easier person-to-post fit can be made, where women wanting to serve in the infantry will do so because they see themselves as competent soldiers, a goal certainly more achievable than trying to be a man.

5.7. Conclusion

Women's role in PKOs has been advocated by the UN and related scholars as a means to achieve greater operational effectiveness of a peacekeeping unit and to improve the security of the host state. This instrumentalist approach ensures that adding women to peacekeeping is not an end in itself, but a means to an end: gender equality and lasting peace. South Africa has become a leading player in advancing the number of women in the military and PKO. However, the justifications used to do so differ from what the UN advocates. The UN takes a radical feminist approach, emphasizing gender difference, where South Africa champions a liberal feminist approach, which emphasizes gender equality rooted in law and in moral rights based arguments. This chapter identifies South Africa as seeing the inclusion of women as an end in itself: pursuing the goal of gender equality in terms of the numbers being right, recognizing quantity, not quality. The overarching focus on gender equality has come at the expense of valuing gender difference. The problem within South African society is a failure to discern between discrimination and utilizing difference. The failure to value difference has come from a liberal feminist approach with regard to equal rights bound by the law. The reality of this paradox is troublesome, as it may hinder the quality of the SANDF Peacekeeping Forces in the future.

This has impeded the contributions women are said to make to PKOs due to the masculine environment of the military requiring the 'degendering' of women. The masculine environment is not only overwhelming in mission readiness training, but also within deployments. Women face a higher degree of hostility due to the hyper-masculine nature of PKOs. Furthermore, the patriarchal society of South Africa has contributed to stereotypical gender perceptions which have not only allowed men to undermine the value of women, but have also allowed women to undermine their own value.

This chapter also indicates that women's presence in peacekeeping operations may enhance the insecurity of the host state, their unit, and themselves. What needs to be done is proper gender training, focusing on gender dynamics and gender inequality within the host state, and a proper gender assessment of the local population to understand their security needs. Furthermore, more focus needs to be placed on the value of women during recruitment. Finally, the SANDF needs to advocate a new soldier identity, one which enshrines both masculine and feminine attributes necessary for the dynamic peacekeeping environment in which peacekeepers are deployed. This is vital, as the SANDF becomes more involved in PKOs on the African continent and globally.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

Support for increasing the number of women in the military has increased significantly due to the UN and scholars advocating the utilization of women in PKOs. The overall justification for recruiting more women in peacekeeping is the belief that they make a number of special contributions to peacekeeping missions which enhances the operational effectiveness of the unit and improves the human security of the host citizenry. This study has explored the experience of women in the infantry, from which peacekeepers are drawn for deployment, to identify whether contradictions exist between what literature advocates and what women soldiers experience. The reason for this is that there is not enough evidence to support the claims that, holistically, women make these special contributions to peacekeeping. This study has also sought to find the challenges which prevent women from contributing in the expected way. The aim was to answer the overarching research question, namely: *To what extent are women peacekeepers fulfilling the unique contributions they are expected to make to peacekeeping operations set out in UNSCR 1325 and literature advocating women's utilization in the military?* This question is important in order to identify the real evidence based value women bring to peacekeeping, and to champion the utilization of those values, rather than advocating an expected contribution which may be superficial, or worse, pose a threat to the human security of the people they are sent to protect. By taking a qualitative approach to this study, exploratory research was conducted to further the understanding of women and security with regard to their role as peacekeepers. The aim of furthering these understandings was achieved by identifying how women are expected to contribute to peacekeeping missions, exploring how they *do* contribute, and discovering what challenges they face which restricts them from contributing in the expected way, all with reference to broader literature regarding women and peacekeeping.

6.2. Living up to Expectations: Empirical Findings

This study showed that there remain gaps between what the literature advocates as the contributions women make to PKOs and what they actually experience in these hostile environments. With regard to the contributions women are said to make to peacekeeping - having a civilizing effect on men, having more interaction with locals, being better respondents to victims of SGBV, and being inspirational to local women - the data revealed mixed results. The empirical evidence suggests that women *do* have an effect on the behavior of their male comrades, but this is short term. Men become more 'civilized', but once they become accustomed with the presence of women they revert to how they were without women in their unit. This is because, in order to fit into the masculine environment, women would rather not raise concerns over the way men act for fear of being isolated and not being

part of the 'boys' club'. This means that recruiting women in peacekeeping for the purpose of civilizing their male comrades is an advocated utility which is limited. This study showed that women are rather swallowed by the masculine environment of the military and reveal a sense of acceptance of men's 'uncivilized' behavior, rather than showing a desire to change it. Women's fear of going against men's 'norms' was revealed in the way they accept sexual comments and innuendos by men, and form their own code for what should and should not be considered sexual harassment. A shift in focus is suggested, from seeing women as the 'civilizers' of men, to returning the responsibility of imposing discipline to the military leadership.

This study also revealed that women's interaction with locals should not be presumed as a given due to a woman peacekeepers' gender. The women peacekeepers indicated that it was not their responsibility and they did not see the importance of interacting with the local community. Some women participants did cite intelligence collection as important, but did not see this as a 'contribution' in particular. Empirical evidence suggests that women are oblivious to the impact they may have on the local population. This is due to the lack of gender training and the fact that knowledge of local communities rests on shallow or superficial understandings which exclude dynamics of patriarchy, power relations between local men and women and between peacekeepers and locals, and ideology. By not seeing the value they have regarding their interaction with the locals, women peacekeepers do not view it as a priority during deployment.

What was also revealed was that locals often view women soldiers as suspicious and do not approach them with security issues (including issues of SGBV). This is either because seeing women in such untraditional roles causes skepticism among the locals, or because patriarchal beliefs in the host state view women as weak and incapable of dealing with such issues, and also because speaking with peacekeepers may enhance their insecurity. Furthermore, the discussions revealed that women soldiers are also not equipped to handle security issues as most have only received military training. Furthermore, even though peacekeepers felt they inspired local women, they were reluctant to believe that this could result in long term attitudinal changes in the host state.

This means that the assumption that women can improve the interaction with the locals is at best hazy, at worst non-existent. Suggestions on the interaction between women peacekeepers and locals are hazy because even though participants did show a sense of compassion, the level of actual interest among women peacekeepers to *have* contact with locals was low. Furthermore, when interaction did take place, the conversations with the local women pertained more to immediate survival concerns rather than issues of security. For instance women would provide food and buy clothes for locals, but security issues were not discussed with women peacekeepers. As indicated, the women peacekeepers were not trained in how to handle gender concerns in the host society, which made their interaction

not as effective as expected. On the other hand, interactions may be non-existent due to the local context with regard to culture, gender dynamics, and religion which inhibit women from interacting with locals. Furthermore, simple language barriers and limits set by a missions' mandate restrict women from interacting with locals. Finally, local women may see the interaction with women peacekeepers as threatening, and prefer not to come into contact with these women. Even though these findings seem cynical, this study does agree that women can have a positive impact on improving the security of local women, as well as the operational effectiveness of the unit if it is context specific and if women and men are trained appropriately on the gender dynamics within the host state.

6.3. Challenging the Utility of Women Peacekeepers

This study identified a number of challenges facing women's utilization in the military. What was found in the case of the SANDF, which correlates with previous case studies, was that women are expected to dilute their femininity to fit into the hegemonic masculine environment underscoring military institutions. A hegemonic masculine culture, emphasizing the dominance of men and glorifying masculine qualities, is seen in training procedures as well as military discourse which hail women as inferior and not belonging in the army. Furthermore, women are also exposed to hyper-masculinity, which enshrines violence and violence against women. This is especially obvious during deployments, where women peacekeepers not only experience the threat of rape from rebels, but are also viewed as either incompetent or inferior in combat. Furthermore, men also embrace a warrior ethos and victimise women, claiming that they are the ones who need protection.

Furthermore, women are not only expected to cope in this masculine environment, but strive to do so, seeing it as a form of empowerment. Women and men are expected to do the same tasks during deployment and women prefer not to be assigned gender specific tasks but want to be treated equally. Equality to them means to be treated equally *as men*. Even with women's aspirations to be like men, they do recognize that this is impossible, especially considering their physical weakness compared to men. Even with the acknowledgement that strength is not a vital quality needed in PKOs, women showed a deep sense of frustration with the fact that they could not match the physical strength of their male comrades. Physical strength along with other masculine features enshrined by the military is seen as necessary in order to be a competent soldier. Feminine qualities, such as being 'soft', are not seen as valuable and are considered inappropriate features of the soldier identity. This study showed that a competent soldier is defined in line with the warrior ethos; representing masculine qualities only. This indicates that utilizing the qualities women add to peacekeeping, which are based on feminine features, such as being more compassionate, collaborative, and passive, will not be made without a change in the perception of what is consistent with a competent soldier.

Along with the hegemonic masculine culture of the military, a key challenge the SANDF faces is the patriarchal beliefs which guide gender perceptions. Women find it difficult to assert their authority over men, as this is not traditionally appropriate for women. They also experience such difficulties once deployed in patriarchal societies. A particular important finding was that the patriarchal thinking of women in the infantry has influenced their self-perception. Women's self-perception is anchored in patriarchal beliefs. These beliefs are usually found in the private sphere, but are found to shape gender relations and gender specific tasks in the SANDF as well. These tasks encompass cleaning, and cooking, and organizing social events, tasks usually associated with the mother of a household. Women seem proud of having these values, but resent men for expecting women to perform these duties. This shows that patriarchal beliefs are highly prevalent as women are socialized in accepting these subordinate roles, but a desire was also revealed that they do not want to be perceived in such a way. Further patriarchal thinking was found with regard to family responsibilities which continue to be perceived as primarily women's responsibility. This was viewed negatively by the higher ranking women, as it affects women's deployability. Yet, 'mothering skills' can be a positive tool used in peacekeeping, as women peacekeepers cited this as essential in showing compassion to locals. This once again showed that the measuring tool for being a competent soldier ignores feminine qualities.

Furthermore, this study points out that the undervalued self-perception of women can also be blamed on the recruitment practices of the SANDF which do not emphasize the need for and value of women peacekeepers. This results in women seeing themselves as gender decoys. This correlates with the SANDF's liberal feminist approach regarding the recruitment of women into the infantry. It is based on an equal rights goal in line with the South African Constitution, championing non-discrimination and gender equality. By not focusing on the value of women in the military, women do not see the value they can add to PKOs and see their role in the infantry as just a job. Therefore, the SANDF strives for gender equality at the expense of valuing gender difference. The liberal feminist approach of the SANDF was contrasted with the radical feminist approach of the UN, which values women's differential traits and uses these traits as a means to an end; improving the human security of the host state. Equality within the SANDF has resulted in women not becoming 'equal' to men, but they are expected to become the 'same' as men, especially during training and deployments. By expecting women to dilute their gender, the SANDF inadvertently diminishes the quality of its women peacekeepers.

With regard to women's impact on human security, the findings revealed that in some cases women can make a positive contribution to vulnerable citizens' human security, and in other cases exacerbate their insecurity. Positive contributions are made in ways associated with women's compassion which, as indicated, they themselves often relate to being parents. Yet, with regard to women's gender, it was

not found that the gender of women had a significant *long-term* impact on the human security of the host citizenry. This does not mean that it cannot. The reason for women not having this impact is due to lack of gender and cultural training of the host state, and ignorance by peacekeepers of the impact they may have in post conflict development beyond their combat orientated roles. This study revealed that without the proper understanding of the host states' gender and culture dynamics, women peacekeepers may exacerbate human insecurity by making local women targets due to their association with these women. With regard to women soldiers *own* security, and the security of the unit, the hyper-masculine culture experienced in these environments make it especially hostile to women. This results in women peacekeepers being more insecure as they become targets of rape. It also increases male peacekeepers' insecurity, as they are faced with increased pressure and the obligation to protect 'their' women. Furthermore, women's presence may place the whole unit at risk as the patriarchal societies in which they are deployed view women as weak, therefore, the unit is perceived as a 'soft target'.

In light of the abovementioned challenges and findings, this study has made a number of recommendations to the SANDF which may help the institution overcome these obstacles. These include changing recruitment goals in order to champion the value of women in peacekeeping, and to provide regular gender training for all peacekeepers. Furthermore, the SANDF should advocate a new soldier identity which incorporates both feminine and masculine qualities. Even if these recommendations are followed, the SANDF faces ongoing challenges pertaining to the patriarchal society of South Africa which continues to shape gender perceptions in the infantry. Furthermore, the hegemonic masculinity which thrives in the Force is a culture which is extremely difficult to change.

6.4. Theoretical Contributions

Feminist theory has been vital in disputing the boundaries of human security. Not only has it championed a gendered approach to peacekeeping, but this has resulted in an improved way to include men and women in the human security approach, especially considering the changing dynamics of conflict. Chapter two provided an overview of the literature related to women and peacekeeping, explaining the feminist works which contributed to the broadening of the human security approach. This study has advocated a radical feminist approach regarding the utilization of women in the military, focusing on gender difference. However, this study has also cautioned against binding women to certain tasks. Gender difference should be recognized, and where appropriate (taking context into consideration) can be utilized to improve the human security of the host state and lay the foundation for lasting peace.

The value of women peacekeepers in PKOs is acknowledged, and the aim of this study is not to undermine the existing theory which advocates the unique contributions women make to

peacekeeping. Yet, this study has made some contributions to the existing understanding of women in PKOs. The analysis has pointed out that a false holistic approach has been taken when considering the contributions women make on missions. The theory on the topic has promoted the utilization of women based on anecdotal evidence, which has not only created a false perception of a global sisterhood among women peacekeepers, but also poses a risk in restricting women to these roles, enforcing a sense of tokenism. This study has shown that the gender perceptions of TCCs, in this case South Africa, have a significant impact on the utilization of women. A key finding is how patriarchal societies greatly impact on the way women perceive themselves and how this affects the value they add to peacekeeping missions.

What this study has also contributed to the theory regarding women and peacekeeping is that it substantiates the often cited role of hegemonic masculinity which undermines femininity within the military. This study showed that femininity is associated with weakness, masculinity with strength and a warrior profile. This means that masculinity overpowers any feminine features that could enhance the operational effectiveness of a peacekeeping unit, as well as human security. This is due to the overwhelming emphasis on assuring the correct numbers and representation in the military, rather than valuing diversity. This is also embodied by the culture of the military, which values uniformity, and a homogenous culture exemplifying the warrior ethos.

Furthermore, what has been found is that, contrary to widely advocated assumptions, women do not make the best peacekeepers. Simultaneously, men also do not make the best peacekeepers. It has been shown in this study that women may not always use their feminine qualities (willingly or ignorantly) to advance the security of the host citizenry, sometimes even exacerbating their insecurity. Men, on the other hand, only view peacekeeping in line with masculine qualities and ignore feminine qualities which are needed in some peacekeeping environments. Also, defining women as the ‘best peacekeepers’ automatically assumes that the term ‘women’ should be seen holistically. However, as this study has shown, not all women can be claimed to be competent peacekeepers merely because of their gender. Both men and women hold certain characteristics which are needed in the peacekeeping environment, yet both fall short of being the ‘better’ peacekeeper if they fail to tap into the feminine and masculine characteristics of ‘the other’. What this means is that the competent soldier needs to be assigned a new identity containing both feminine and masculine qualities.

6.5. Recommendations for Future Study

There are a number of areas that warrant further research given the limited scope of this study. This study was limited to the experience and perceptions of women in 9 SAI. By broadening the sample population to include women who have been deployed to other host states, challenges unique to those

home states may be revealed. This may help in advancing future gender training curricula, and furthermore, could provide more cases which may be used for comparative analysis.

As this study included only women in its sample population, future study including men in the data collection process is recommended. What should be investigated here is how feminine qualities are perceived and if men find these qualities particularly useful in PKOs. Hearing the voices of men and their perception of women could reveal more about the hegemonic masculine culture found in the military.

Desperately lacking in the literature regarding women and peacekeeping is the perception of the local population in host states. Conducting field research, where the researcher is physically emerged in deployments, may provide more substantial evidence on the perceptions of locals, how they react to peacekeepers, and how they interact with men and women soldiers. Furthermore, this may also add to the body of literature related to peacekeeping and its effect on human security.

Finally, debates about the utilization of women in PKOs tend to be discussed without a contextual basis. These debates diminish the importance of the far more complex peacekeeping environment in which peacekeepers are deployed, which differ with each mission, each host state, and each TTC. Therefore, more case study analyses should be done to understand under which factors the utilization of women can be described holistically, and where their utilization is only found to be made on a context specific basis.

6.6. Conclusion

In spite of what is often cited as the unique contributions women are sure to make to peacekeeping, this study has identified a number of challenges preventing women from contributing to peacekeeping in the expected way. These challenges have been identified as context specific, where the cultures and ideologies of the host state, the TTC, and the peacekeeper as an individual, come into play, or, regarding mission readiness training, where the minimal efforts invested in gender training has become a problem. This paper does not claim that women cannot contribute to peacekeeping in line with the conventional arguments, but has highlighted the challenges which stop them from doing so. In essence, women's recruitment into the military is advocated as a means to change the military culture; however the opposite is happening, where the military is changing women. What is necessary is to recognize these challenges as real and complex, and acknowledge their importance, rather than to promote a superficial role which women should play in peacekeeping. If unrealistic values of women are promoted, the achievement of these goals naturally also becomes unrealistic. The goal for adding women to peacekeeping to improve the human security of local women and children has in many cases not been met. Understanding the impact women have on the human security of the host state is

necessary to avoid the presence of women peacekeepers exacerbating human insecurity. The SANDF's focus on the representation of women in the military has been an important goal; however, priority should now be given to improving the utility of its women soldiers, which in the end will improve the security of those vulnerable societies they are sent to protect.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Authorization from GOC South African Infantry Formation

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sa army

Department:
Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SA ARMY HQ/R/103/23/3

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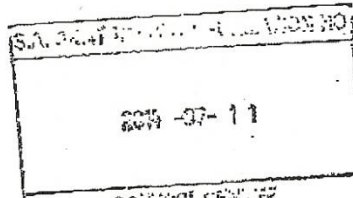
Department of Defence
SA Army Headquarters
Directorate Army Strategic Direction
Private Bag X981
Pretoria
0001

10 July 2014

REQUEST FOR PROF L. HEINECKEN TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH MEMBERS OF 9 SA INFANTRY BN WITH REGARD TO RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF FEMALE PEACEKEEPERS BEING UNDERTAKEN ON BEHALF OF THE SA ARMY

1. Prof L. Heinecken is a member of the SA Army's Pool of Specialists and a leading academic at the University of Stellenbosch. After gaining permission from C Army to undertake research into the role of women peacekeepers in PSOs on behalf of the SA Army, she presented the current status of her research to the AC on 24 June 2014.
2. By all accounts the AC was appreciative of the valuable insight gained from Prof Heinecken's research and understands the need for further study into what is an important subject for the SA Army. Prof Heinecken highlighted the fact during her presentation that further research needs to be conducted on the subject in order to gain a more complete understanding of the challenges faced by female peacekeepers as well as how these can best be addressed within the SA Army to increase the organisation's military effectiveness and professionalism.
3. As part of her continuing research into the issue, it is important that Prof Heinecken interviews as many subjects (female peacekeepers) as possible. The primary reason for having a large sample group is to minimise the potential for error.
4. Prof Heinecken has therefore requested permission, within the broader mandate for the research which has already been granted, to interview female peacekeepers as well as a small number of male peacekeepers at 9 SAI. Her reasons for choosing 9 SAI is that it is close to Stellenbosch where Prof Heinecken is based and it has suitable research candidates.
5. It is hoped this request will meet with both support and approval.

(E.F. DROST)
DIRECTOR ARMY STRATEGIC DIRECTION: BRIG GEN



Letšaba le Bolebhelele - Umphepo wezokufikeleka - Kqubo ye Tshishelelo - Iinkqubo zokufikeleka - Department of Defence - Indlela yokufikeleka
Umphepo wezokufikeleka - Ndawo-ndawo ye sika Madlathala - Letšaba le Tshishelelo - Department of Defence - Indlela yokufikeleka

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2

REQUEST FOR PROF L. HEINECKEN TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH MEMBERS OF 9 SA INFANTRY BN WITH REGARD TO RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF FEMALE PEACEKEEPERS BEING UNDERTAKEN ON BEHALF OF THE SA ARMY

COMMENTS/REMARKS

Authorised

Approved/Not Approved

Maj Gen
14/07/14

GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING SA INFANTRY FORMATION: MAJ GEN

DISTR

For Action

GOC SA Army Inf Fmn (Attn: Maj Gen L. Yam)

File: SA ARMY HQ/R/103/23/3

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Appendix B: Focus Group Questionnaire

Focus Group Questionnaire – 11 August 2014.

1. Where did you serve during deployment?
2. Why did you join the military?
3. Why do you think the SANDF makes an effort to recruit women into the military?
4. Why did you volunteer to serve in Peacekeeping Operations?
5. Do you feel you as a woman in the military must change your behavior around fellow male soldiers?
6. Do you think men change their behavior around women? If “yes”, how?
7. Describe your interaction with the local community as well as rebel groups where you were deployed?
8. Do you feel your presence as a woman made the local population feel more secure?
9. Do you feel your presence as a woman peacekeeper poses a risk the unit or the local population?
10. Do women peacekeepers possess certain skill sets that are particularly useful in Peacekeeping Operations? How do these differ from men?
11. Did you have to deal with victims of SGBV?
12. Do you feel men and women react differently to victims of SGBV?
13. In your view, do the local community or rebel groups react differently to male and female peacekeepers?
14. What difficulties do women experience during deployment?
15. On deployment do the tasks assigned to male and female peacekeepers differ? Describe under which circumstances this occurs?
16. What would be the advantages or disadvantages of deploying single sex units?
17. Do you feel sufficient gender training was done before deployment?

18. What do you understand from the term gender mainstreaming?
19. Have you heard of UNSCR 1325?