



**Two Decades of Agenda 1325 on Women in Peace and Security:  
Women's Engagement, and Challenges in International Peace and Security**

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**Abstract:**

The United Nations Security Council Resolution-1325 is a milestone for women's peace and security (WPS) and upholds significant global impact. However, after the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the resolution, overall progress is not good enough. Till now women make up less than 8 percent of uniformed personnel which indicates the barriers while unfairness remains in place that shrinks women's capacity to meaningful participation in UN peace missions. Though the inclusion of women in peace negotiations are slowly advancing, but the achievements are not satisfactory. The study articulates that patriarchal-social structure, military masculinity, and organizational culture have been excluding women from participating in the national security forces, which is reflected in women's more minor participation in international peace and security. Resolution-1325 overlooked these root causes and institutional barriers regarding gender balance in the national military and police. The study advocates re-politicizing the WPS agenda including policy renovation on gender equal opportunity in the national police and army, for the wider contribution of women in international peace and security.

**Keywords:** Agenda 1325, army and police, masculinity, patriarchy, peace and security, women

**INTRODUCTION**

Due to different social, political and religious constraints, women have been systematically excluded from the peace and security initiatives, and their contribution to conflicts is often neglected. Even modern society excludes women from peace- and security-related assignments. Women comprise more than half of the populace of conflict-affected people and half part of post-conflict peace and security. Without their equal participation and contribution sustainable peace and security is quite impossible (United Nations, 2006). After a prolonged wait and lengthy efforts, United Nations recognized the significant contribution of women to conflict and security. Finally, the UN Security Council allowed the remarkable Resolution 1325 (2000) on women in peace and security (WPS) for all member states as a normative global agenda (United Nations Security Council

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Resolution, 2000). This resolution has a global impact on international peace and security initiatives and gender mainstreaming both at national and international levels. Further, the resolution has opened a new outlook for women by providing the opportunity to have a seat at the table during the decision-making process.

The engagement of women in international peace requires a better understanding of the constraints and challenges at the national level. The study focuses on patriarchy social customs, uniformed masculinity and organizational subculture which are still the principal barriers to the entrance of women in national police and army of the force-contributing countries. Without considering the women force generation strategy in the national police and military the expectation of higher number of uniformed women for international peace and security seems unrealistic. Therefore, over the past twenty years, the lower rates of uniformed women's participation have consequences from multifaceted challenges and demand for transforming approaches to gender equality for women in peace and security.

The research investigates the trends of women's participation in international peace and security missions since the landmark Resolution 1325, and reasons for women lagging behind in security and peace. Moreover, the study searches for the root cause behind less participation of women in national security sectors police and army of the member states. The objectives of the research are: To examine women's involvement in international peace initiatives; To explore women's broader participation in international peace missions as uniformed peacekeepers since resolution-1325, and; to find out the constraints behind women's exclusion from national and international peace and security and to explore the policy transforming approach for the generation of uniformed women in national security sectors.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Women and men's experiences, participation and nature of actions are dissimilar in the circumstances of conflict. Men of combat age are most often the ones who are conscripted and therefore killed or injured during the battle. Women, however, are the main victims of war. This happens either directly as fatalities and casualties or indirectly through the breakdown of family and community structures (Byrne, 1996). Heyzer (2005) reported "women are both victims of, and participants in, an armed conflict. In addition, they can be – and are – agents of change." Therefore, men and women experience conflict in different ways and play different roles in conflict based on their gendered activities, needs, accomplishments, control over resources, and rights to participate in decision-making processes. Additionally, the opposition group even the state uses violence against women to suppress and control the community. Women and men, on the other hand, have different needs, interests, and approaches to peacebuilding after conflict. As a result, women participate in armed conflict in a variety of ways, including victims, combatants, survivors, peacemakers, and reformers. However, they also face greater gender discrimination during times of peace. Their sufferings and contributions to the conflict are almost completely ignored because of their low social status, and they are frequently portrayed as victims (Wikigender 2018).

Gender issues in peace and conflict were the primary focus of Agenda 1325, which clearly addresses women not merely as victims but as peacebuilders. The resolution advocates the women's role in all efforts of conflict, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace and security building. The

UN realized that the success of any peacebuilding process is highly influenced by the meaningful participation of women since if half of the population is excluded or discriminated against, sustainable peace will be impractical to achieve. The four fundamental engagement pillars for women in conflict settings that underpin Resolution 1325 are as follows: relief and recovery, participation, protection, and prevention (Akter, 2013). The WPS agenda has grown to include nine additional resolutions since the agenda-1325. Two of these resolutions focus on setting the agenda (1325, 2242), three on participation (1889, 2122, 2493), and four on protection, particularly from sexual violence (1820, 1888, 1960, 2106, 2467) (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, 2020). The resolution exposes the role and the capability of women as peacebuilders are recognized in the international arena, and women's participation in peacebuilding initiatives promotes the sustainability of peace. The peace process in North Ireland, Guatemala, Liberia etc. are good examples of women's participation in the peacebuilding process that remain successful. Women peacebuilders are internationally recognized by awarding the Noble Peace Prize-2011 to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkol Karman for their contribution in peacebuilding work (Peace Direct, 2020).

The present research aims to add the policy change in WPS in regards to enhancing the participation of women firstly in the national police and army and secondly increasing the number of uniformed women in international peace and security. This study fills this gap in the literature. Firstly, the research demonstrates the setting of UNSCR-1325 and the necessity of the resolution for women. Secondly, the study examines women's participation in peace negotiations and the contribution of women as uniformed peacekeepers for international peace and security in peace missions and the impact of UNSCR 1325. Finally, the study examines why women are excluded from the national police and army. The study concludes that uniformed masculinity and the patriarchal nature of the social system have deprived women of peace and security jobs in the police and army.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present study is mainly qualitative and data has been collected from the official documents of international agencies, government organizations and newspapers. The significant information for this article was drawn from United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, the United Nations Peacekeeping website, and the UN Women website. The study also describes some considerable issues about the theoretical aspects of uniformed masculinity and social patriarchy as means of cultural barriers to women in peace and security. In the literature, there are many studies of women's participation in UN peacekeeping missions. But only very few combine illustrations with a search for the underlying reason behind low participation of women in international peace and security, and why women are excluded from the army and police. Besides police and the army are more prominent than other organs of the state which have an influential role over other organizations. The research assumes that social patriarchy, uniformed masculinity and organization sub-culture deprived women of the national security forces like police and army job.

## **CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING: SOCIAL PATRIARCHY AND UNIFORMED MASCULINITY**

Several studies show that social patriarchy is one of the prime obstacles to women advancement and development towards power. Professor Abeda Sultana points out that the term "patriarchy" was used to both identify the root cause of women's subordination and to describe the power

dynamic between men and women (Sultana 2010,1). According to Bhasin patriarchy refers to male dominance, the power relationships by which men control women, and a system in which women are subordinated in multiple ways (Bhasin 2006, 3). Walby describes “patriarchy is a classification of social arrangement and practice where men dominate, suppress and utilize women” (Walby 1990:20). Patriarchy is the norm of men’s dominance and women’s subordination socially and economically throughout human history to the present day (Lim, 1997; Lerner, 1989). The patriarchal mindset uses the subordination of women to claim their rights in public space. Subordination is the circumstances wherein one is compelled to remain heavily influenced by others. So female subordination implies the social circumstances in which women are compelled to remain under the control of men, thus holding females under male authority. Androcentric society employs some social traditions, customs and roles as socialization measures. To protect male dominance, patriarchy produced ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ attributes, private and public domains by the gendered socialization system (Sultana, 2010).

Since twenty century security services uniform have become a dominating symbol of normative masculinity in Europe and other countries. Especially a large number of participation and sacrifice for male during first and second World War formed the domination of normative masculinity in the society (Schneider, 1997). However, the article refers uniformed masculinity is the expression of attributes, behaviours and roles associated within the security services which dominate others. In present days when women desire to join uniformed services, the expression of masculinity in uniform services become table talk. Men soldiers think women are weaker and have some biological limitations and explore their masculinity over the women soldiers and willing to subordinate women colleagues in the security organization in their gesture, posture and attitudes. So that women may leave or discourage the security services. Furthermore, social patriarchy is interrelated with the concept of Connell’s hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987) which analyses those attitudes and practices among men that perpetuate gender unfairness, concerning both men’s dominance over women and the authority of some men over others (often minority groups). The concept is widely accepted and also debatable. In recent days, hegemonic masculinity clarifies “a set of values that function to include and exclude, and to organize society in ways that are gendered differently, established by men in power. It combines the following qualities: a hierarchy of masculinities, men's different levels of access to power (over women and other men), and how men's identity, ideals, interactions, power, and patriarchy interact with one another” (Jewkes, & Morrell 2012, 40). Some research unveils hegemonic masculinity as a form of gender inequality which is the key social barrier to forwarding women and prevents women from social and mental power (Connell, & Messerschmidt 2005; Hearn et al. 2012; Jewkes et al. 2015; Shekhawat 2021). Due to masculine behaviour and violence, many women do not feel comfortable in uniformed services. Gender stereotypes and institutional bias within the military are common. Gender norms generally keep women in non-combat positions and encourage male violence and female passivity by separating troops, charges, and tasks along gender lines. Dean (1994) describes how the presence of women in fighting roles may negatively impact male soldiers’ effectiveness and capacity. Others claim that in high-stress conditions such as conflict men fail to control their sexual urges and their demeaning attitude towards women in the army (McKeon 2013; Neill 2000). study shows that most women soldiers experience “male soldiers most commonly insult their (women) femininity, sexual orientation, or gender expression as uniformed force” (Calkins et al. 2021).

The study considers that police and army are the two most powerful organs in the modern state. The police carry small arms, have the legal authority to enforce the law, maintain public order and play a vital role in governance, whereas the army is a symbol of power of the state that uses weapons to protect the country from an external enemy. Common people respect and fear the police and the army due to their legal power and the nature of their jobs. The present study claims that social patriarchy prevents women from becoming police officers or soldiers, because if women can enter the police force or the army then women will be relatively stronger economically and socially, which results in a corresponding decrease in the social power of men. Moreover, the patriarchal social structure might be weakened if more women can join in the uniformed force. Therefore, the patriarchal social structure always puts up numerous cultural and religious barriers so that women are discouraged from joining the police or the army. Even the state has also denied women's participation in peace and security through legal barriers. Until 1990 most of the states in the world denied women entrance as part of the regular force in the military: when women were recruited in the army it was for traditionally female roles such as doctors, nurses, seamstresses and cooks for troops. Therefore, Walby states "the state has a systematic bias towards patriarchal interests in its policies and actions" (Walby 1990, 21).

### **Impact of UNSCR 1325: Trends of Women's Participation in International Peace and Security**

With the UNSCR 1325, 22 years ago, history was made regarding gender security. First and foremost, the resolution acknowledges the inconsistent effects of war and armed conflict on women. Second, it calls gender-equality a part of every UN peacekeeping mission's mandate. Thirdly, it encourages the inclusion of gender perspectives in all post-conflict programs, including DDR and SSR. Last but not the least, the resolution replaces the phrase "women as victims" with "women as peacekeepers and peacebuilders" (Akter, 2013). Further, these initiatives show political commitment to advancing and protecting women during conflict (Kreft, 2017).

### **Participation of Women in Peace Negotiations and Peace Agreements**

During the violent conflict, women and girls are more susceptible because of sexual and gender-based violence, which is used as a weapon of war to weaken families and undermine the social fabric of the communities (Mootz, 2017). They face immense suffering after the conflict as rape victims, particularly if as a result they have babies and other factors which often lead to further stigmatization within the community (Wirtz et al. 2014). In 2019, 2,838 cases of conflict-related sexual violence were reported, 96 percent of which targeted women and girls (United Nations 2020). Unfortunately, women's significant roles in conflict are frequently overlooked during peace talks, and the majority of peace agreements generally deny their representation.

The landmark agenda of UNSCR 1325 (2000) adopts a gender perspective for all parties involved in peace agreements, including, *inter alia*, ". Since Resolution 1325, the UN initiated a series of steps to involve and promote women's participation in the peace process. But, the initiatives of women in peace negotiations and peace arrangements have resulted in limited achievements. Since Resolution 1325, the number of women involved in peace negotiations has been slowly rising but their role is frustrating and they are mostly limited as witnesses and informal participants (Beteta et al. 2010, UN Women 2021). Over the last 30 years (1992-1919) women constituted 13percent of negotiators, 6percent of mediators, and 6percent of signatories in important peace initiatives.



Besides, in the past five years (2015-2019), women have made up 14 percent of negotiators, 11percent of mediators, and 6percent of signatories. Additionally, out of the 504 peace agreements that have been signed since Resolution 1325's adoption, 138 (27%) acknowledged women. Prior to this, only 17 of the 664 peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2000 mentioned women (UN WOMEN 2021). According to the data, women were still excluded from seven out of ten peace processes as signatories or mediators. Women's involvement in conflict prevention has the potential impact to improve outcomes in the peace process. According to Nilsson (2012), participation by civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations, reduces the likelihood of a peace agreement failing by 64 percent.

The study shows strong participation of women in the Philippines, North Irelands, Liberia, Guatemala and Colombia peace talks that have increased the social stability, credibility and sustainability of peace agreements. For instance, Peace Accord-2014 in Philippines, where Miriam Coronel Ferrer served as chief negotiator to sign. Monica McWilliams was one of the key persons of the Good Friday Agreement which ended the decades-long conflict in Northern Ireland. Leymah Gbowee led the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace which played a significant role in ending the Liberian conflict in 2003. Ellen Johanson Sirleah served as the president of Liberia during the peacebuilding period (2006-2017). Leymah Gbowee and Ellen Johanson Sirleah, both women, were honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize 2011 for their efforts to end the war and build peace, by recognising their work on women's participation in peace towards the stability and durability of peace in Liberia (Nobel Prize Organization. 2011).

### Wider Participation of Women as Uniformed Peacekeepers

Research shows the WPS policy resulted in positive outcomes: women's participation as uniformed peacekeepers gradually increased since SCR 1325. Presently women are deployed in all categories of peacekeepers as police, military, volunteers and civilian staff, with a positive impact on peace operations (United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.). Women peacekeepers are crucial to the advancement of security and peace. Women peacekeepers have easier access to vulnerable women and girls in the communities and they can support them in a better way according to their necessities. Besides, women police officers can play a crucial role in operation monitoring and reporting, fighting impunity, and encouraging accountability, all of which contribute to improved rule of law, reconciliation, and recovery (Karim, 2017; UN Peacekeeping, 2021).

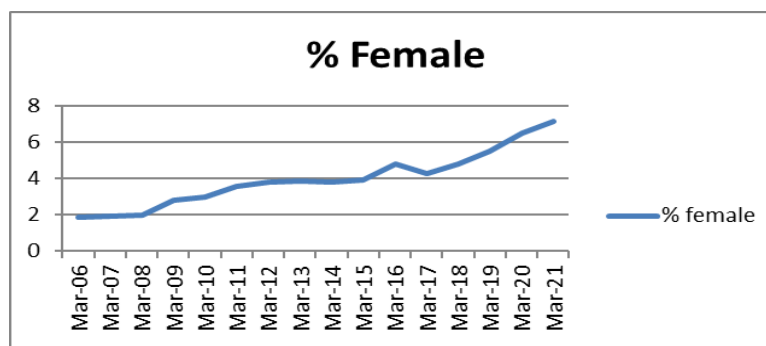


Figure-1: Wider participation of women in international peace and security since 2006 (United Nations Peacekeeping 2021).

On the tenth anniversary of SCR 1325, United Nations launched a special initiative to increase the number of female peacekeepers in missions. By 2014, the organization wanted female peacekeepers to make up 10percent of military units and 20percent of police units. However, the effort, which primarily consisted of exhortation, was unsuccessful (Karim, & Beardsley, 2013). During the UN's 32 years of peacekeeping, from 1957 to 1989, a study found that only 20 women were employed as peacekeepers. Women made up one percent of all uniformed peacekeepers in 1993. The number of female peacekeepers increased chronologically after 1993, albeit slowly. However, resolution 1325 has boosted women's participation as uniformed peacekeepers since 2000. A study shows that in March 2006, women contributed only 1.85percent of uniformed peacekeepers in the military and police, reaching 7.8percent in December 2021 (UN Peacekeeping 2021) (Figure-1 and Table 1).

Table 1: Participation of male and female in international peace and security (UN Peacekeeping 2021)

Year	Male	Women	Total	% female
March 2006	65555	1235	66790	1.85
March 2007	72059	1416	73475	1.93
March 2008	75953	1539	77492	1.99
March 2009	89634	2562	92196	2.78
March 2010	98945	2994	101939	2.94
March 2011	95662	3548	99210	3.58
March 2012	95261	3728	98989	3.77
March 2013	88989	3552	92541	3.84
March 2014	94121	3690	97811	3.77
March 2015	102711	4143	106854	3.88
March 2016	100354	5027	105381	4.77
March 2017	93608	4166	97774	4.26
March 2018	86,723	4,335	91,058	4.76
March 2019	84,795	4,895	89,681	5.46
March 2020	77290	5380	82670	6.51
March 2021	74480	5704	80184	7.11

In 2021, women accounted for 5,704 out of 80,184 uniformed peacekeepers (5.91% of military contingents and 17.92% of police components) in UN Peace missions. Research indicates that gender parity strategy of the United Nations has yielded positive outcomes. Further, Department of Peacekeeping Operation (DPKO) planned 15percent women in military and 25percent in police within 2028. In addition, the target for women serving in formed police units is 20percent by 2028, while the target for IPO (individual police officers) is 30percent. However, the fair composition of women peacekeepers in the military component is still far away; although women peacekeepers' participation in the police is advancing in a better way and is near the target (Tables 2, 3) (United Nations Peacekeeping 2021).

Table-2: Total number of army peacekeepers since 2006 (United Nations Peacekeeping 2021)

Year (December)	Male	Female	Total	% Women
2006	70639	1034	71673	1.44

2007	71872	1360	73232	1.86
2008	78407	1794	80201	2.24
2009	83312	2091	85403	2.44
2010	82286	2030	84316	2.40
2011	82439	2275	84714	2.69
2012	79418	2303	81721	2.81
2013	82692	2424	85116	2.85
2014	88817	2803	91620	3.06
2015	90161	3069	93230	3.29
2016	84676	2828	87504	3.23
2017	78454	3145	81599	3.85
2018	76077	3322	79399	4.18
2019	70302	3905	74207	5.26
2020	69225	4056	73281	5.53
2021 (February)	67923	4272	72195	5.92

Table -3: Total number of police peacekeepers since 2009 (United Nations Peacekeeping 2021)

Year (December)	Male	Female	Total	% Women
2009	11949	845	12794	6.60
2010	12942	1380	14322	9.64
2011	12846	1456	14302	10.18
2012	11151	1218	12369	9.85
2013	11728	1329	13057	10.18
2014	11262	1180	12442	9.48
2015	12447	1411	13858	10.18
2016	11545	1223	12768	9.58
2017	9953	1130	11083	10.20
2018	9119	1333	10452	12.75
2019	7705	1405	9110	15.42
2020	7747	1540	9287	16.58
2021 (February)	6557	1432	7989	17.92

Comparing the participation of women in the police and the military, the proportion of women peacekeepers in the police is much higher than in the military. In the last 12 years, the contribution of women as peacekeepers in the military has increased from 2.44percent to 5.92percent, whereas in the police this has increased from 6.60percent to 17.92percent (Tables 2 and 3). So we see the participation of women as uniformed peacekeepers both in the police and the army is slowly increasing, but gender balance is still far away. Despite the recent progress, UN is still far away from many targets and fails to meet them on time. The lower participation of uniformed women in international peace expresses, immense barriers to women's access to the military and police. Therefore, the study assumes that the wider participation of uniformed women in international peace depends on a similar increase of women in national forces.

### **Challenges to Uniformed Women in National and International Peace and Security**

The principal agenda of the SCR 1325 is the wider contribution of women to peace and security. Accordingly, DPKO has renewed their course of actions for gender balance for a higher number of



uniformed peacekeepers in peace missions. However, despite the numerous calls and policies in last two decades the overall progress has been slow. Twenty years after the adoption of resolution 1325, women are contributing only 7.8 percent of uniformed peacekeepers and growth rate has been only 3 percent in last decades. This raises the question, why is there few women peacekeepers in peace missions? and why the women's compositions are narrow in national police and the military? The study believes there are so many underlying social barriers and professional unfairness that shrinks women's capacity to meaningfully participation in UN peace missions and hamper the policy of WPS nationally and internationally ("Elsie Initiative," 2022). In addition, the proportion of women in the country's police and military determines the gender makeup of peace missions. Subsequently, the total systems are very complex and dynamic. The study considers the following major challenges and policy transformation in WPS for fair opportunity of women in military and police.

### **Institutional Sub-culture and Gender Discrimination in the Security Organizations**

The military, like any other organization or institution, has its own distinct organizational culture and sub-cultures that reveal the values, beliefs, and attitudes that its members have learned to share. The frame of position by which members of an organization explore dealings and behaviors is known as institutional culture, which is a collection of written and unwritten rules and customs. In particular, they frequently referred to a situation with widespread sexual harassment, violence and assault, either implicitly or explicitly (Nagel et al. 2021). Since ancient Rome, sexual assault in the armed forces has been shrouded in mystery and myth (Khul et al., 2018). Sexual harassment and gender discrimination are two vital factors in the security forces that remain significant issues related to the interests of women in the police and the army (Cramsie, 1983). Sexual assault or harassment that occurs in the workplace is referred to as "sexual trauma" (US Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019). Many international reports show that globally every year hundreds of incidents are reported regarding the sexual harassment of female police officers or soldiers by their male colleagues (Lonsway et al. 2013; Seklecki & Paynich 2007; Somvadee & Morash 2008; Taylor et al. 2020; Verma 2021). Terrence's review of media-reported cases from 2000 to 2019 in the USA shows a large number of women police are sexually harassed by their male colleagues in different ways (Terrence 2021). Verma (2021) claims sexism and sexual harassment appear to be endemic in the police sector across India. Over 150 police personnel in Delhi alone are under investigation for serious crimes, such as rape, stalking, sexual harassment and molestation of women police in the workplace (Seklecki, & Paynich 2007, 26). It has been demonstrated that female police officers' mental and physical health, retention, and job satisfaction affect as a result of sexual and physical harassment. Research shows female cops experience a larger number of episodes of sexual and/or physical harassment than male officials (Brodeur 2018; Taylor et al. 2020). In developing countries like India, Bangladesh sometimes women police are susceptible in workplaces. Sometimes women police are the victims of rape, which may lead to suicide. However, many women police do not report sexual harassment by their male colleagues due to the organizational culture. They ignore or conceal the sexual incidents and do not report them to the authorities because many of them believe the police are dominated by men or that filing a complaint could result in additional victimization, including rumours being spread about them or being transferred to a different station (Jahan 2021).

Sexual harassment is even worse in the armed forces. In the US, women are 20 times more likely than men to be assaulted during their service in the army (Southwell & MacDermid Wadsworth, 2016). RAND study 2021 describes that “the majority of the time, women soldiers are subjected to gender discrimination (being ignored, ill-treated, or isolated based on their sexual characteristics; sexist remarks about women's capacity to perform the respondent's duties); persistent attempts to establish an inappropriate sexual or intimate affiliation; and sexual remarks about their body or appearance (Calkins et al. 2021)”. Women members of the US Armed Forces are often the victims of sexual violence, nuisance and rape by their male contemporaries and sometimes these types of incidents are not publicly opened (Kuhl et al. 2018; Trobaugh, E. M. 2018). A number of the women who actively serve in the military left the job due to the organizational culture or violence. A report from the Pentagon shows women soldiers are 28percent more likely than men to leave the army early. According to Dickstein (2020), a large part of the reason why women leave the US military earlier than men is due to military sub-culture and family issues. He urges the Pentagon to address the military subculture and violence which prevents women from serving in peace and security services (Dickstein 2020).

Since the human race women are more close to child as a mother than men. Due to a lack of childcare facilities, women who get married, have children and leave the army more frequently than single servicewomen do. Many of them would like to continue in the army but depart because army policies often do not support women's roles as mothers (Goodman et al. 2013; King & DiNitto 2019). As a result, many women who joined the armed forces found that they were not treated the same as men, which led to their exit from the service (Rea, 2021). Sexual harassment in the military and police discourages women from seeking jobs in the force, or encourages women to leave the service. The study believes that sexual harassment within security sectors is strongly associated with uniformed masculinity, meaning many men cannot tolerate women as their colleagues with the same dignity. Besides, sometimes even the public tease women working in the police or army, because societies are still controlled by men. If the number of women police officers or soldiers increased in the security services, the conventional patriarchal social system might be challenged.

The present study views social patriarchy and different forms of masculinity as the two prime barriers against women which prevent women from taking their place and positions in the security sectors. Moreover, the organizational culture (uniformed culture), and gender discrimination discourage women from entering the army and the police forces for peace and security-related tasks. The study observes that the above issues are a global phenomenon that has been dominant everywhere since antiquity. The study thinks the present small proportion of women working in international peace and security forces reflects the fact that not many women are serving in the army and the police globally. Around the world women are in the minority in security forces, for example in the USA military women constitute 16.5 percent of the total forces (Dickstein, 2020); Chinese women account for about 5 percent (53,000) of total military personnel in the Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) (Kantaria, 2018); Russian women are roughly 4.26 percent (41,000) of total active-duty forces (“Women in the Russian military,” 2020); Australian women make up 22.3 percent of the navy, 14.9 percent of the army and 24.6 percent of the air force (Australian Government, 2020); Indian women are 6 percent of the navy, 3.9 percent of the army and 13.09 percent of the air force (“Women in Indian Armed Forces,” 2021); in the UK women form 10.9 percent of the regular armed forces (Government of United Kingdom, 2020); 19.8 percent of the

Canadian Armed Forces are women (Government of Canada 2021). Therefore, the study shows that women make up less than 10 percent of the national security forces on average in the world, which is reflected in the small participation of uniformed women in international peace missions.

### **Policy to Removal of Cultural Barriers and Gender Equity in the National Security Forces**

Security sector refers to all security institutions and structures whose duty is to maintain the sovereignty of the state, protect society from crime, disorder and violence, and to ensure safety and security of the country. Police and Military are the principal and visible institutes of security sector and people consider them, the most influential and powerful organs of the state. Government enforces the legal authority of the state mostly through police and army. Therefore, women participation in police and army are the vital issue for establishing gender equality in the society. Though agenda 1325 advocates opening the door for women in the security sector and encourage policies that give equal access to men and women in the army and police, but the global progress is highly insignificant. However, the resolution principally focuses the women vulnerability during conflict, protection of women and prevents SGBV and mainstream the gender perspective into peacekeeping operations. In critical analysis, the study shows agenda 1325 ignores the social and cultural barriers for gender mainstreaming in WPS. The resolution doesn't address any mechanism to enhance the women composition in national police and army. The resolution calls the wider participation of women in peacekeeping operation, but fails to address the actual fact in the member state's security sector.

Shekhawat (2021) argues that "gender equality is majorly constrained by a socio-cultural setup that is highly patriarchal. To advance gender parity in peacebuilding and other fields, there is an inherent flaw in the societal context that goes beyond language and text. To achieve the desired results, the highly masculinized sociocultural structure must be altered." Women, as survivors and caregivers, have been shown throughout history to be the primary victims of any conflict. Women's voices and rights have been restricted in male-dominated societies over time and have been suppressed in families and communities. It is evident that the main barriers to women's participation in peace processes and decision-making are the patriarchal social structure and cultural constraints (Mlambo, & Kapingura 2019; Porter 2003). The research finds, UNSCR 1325 consciously overlooks socio-cultural barriers in regards to gender balance in the military and the police in member states. Without addressing the mechanism of increasing number of women in the national security sector, the agenda calls for wider participation of women in international peace and security. Still woman participation in the national security sector is poor, they have limited role nationally, how could they contribute more in international security sector. Hence the existing policy of uniformed women's participation in peace mission is working so slowly. Therefore, the UN should put demands on the member state about the removal of all cultural, legal and organizational barriers against women's inclusion in the members' national security sectors. Moreover, member states should revise their policy of recruitment, offer special consideration for women (such as maternal health, maternity leave, child care etc.), relax some conditions for recruitment such as height and update the organizational environment to be more woman-friendly so that interesting women join the police and army. Gender equality in the security sectors is linked to sustainable development goals on gender impartiality to attain 'peaceful societies, justice and strong institutions'. So it is crucial to address patriarchal social norms and institutional socio-

political constraints that comprise the major obstacle to the implementation of the WPS agenda. Moreover, to implement the WPS, the UN should emphasize women's equal entrance right in national security forces of the member states. Therefore, the study thinks WPS should renovate the policy from national level to international level to generate uniformed women in national police and army which will routinely regenerate wider participation of women in international peace mission.

### **Promote Women's Participation in the National Political Process**

Women's participation in politics, elections and political processes are vital factors on the path to women's equality in peace and security. Indeed, women's participation in the national political process as members of parliament, ministers, elected representatives or as a part of government bolster changes in policies in favour of women. Moreover, women's greater participation in the national political process will enhance women's role in international peace and security. "...women's rights would not be protected, discriminatory and restrictive laws would not change, and the cycle of violence and instability would continue if women did not have a meaningful voice in parliament...." (Salah, 2019). However, agenda 1325 did not sincerely address women's participation in the national political processes which is a significant concern for national policy change for WPS. Though agenda 1325 reinforces the gender rights in peace missions but fails to call a significant participation of women in political power. The data shows that the representation of women in national parliaments in conflict-affected countries is 18.9percent on average (United Nations Security Council 2020), which is below the global average. The study observes the poor percentage of women in national parliament (mostly coming from quota) which fails to change the policy towards WPS in their countries. Besides the SSR programme in conflict prone nations have failed to uphold a significant participation of uniformed women in reformed police and army (Islam 2021; Griffiths Cecil 2011). However, the area of international peace and security has long focused on states, the most important and over dominant actors in global politics. States hold the political authority over the citizens, regulate the social and economic affairs and develop control mechanisms by enforcing laws. Besides, politics and politician are the driving forces of the state. Therefore, without significant participation of women in politics, the existing gender biased strategy remains unchanged. The study observes that WPS agenda fails to emphasis the women involvement in national politics of the state. Indeed, more women in politics will open a wider access of women in state police and military.

### **CONCLUSION**

At the national and international levels, the WPS Act marked a significant commitment to women's representation in peace and security. Women as peacekeepers and peacemakers replace women as victims in this resolution. Resolution 1325 promotes women's contribution to the national police and armed forces. Since resolution 1325, women's participation as uniformed peacekeepers (police and army) in international peace and security has increased from 1.5 percent (2000) to 7.8 percent (2022). More women are now in international security leadership positions and women have a place at the 'chair and table' in peace negotiations. However, research indicates that despite the numerous calls and policies in the last two decades the overall progress has been slow and not reasonable. Twenty years after the adoption of resolution 1325, till now women are contributing less than 8percent to the uniformed peacekeepers. The study believes there are so many underlying

social barriers and professional unfairness that remain in place to limit women's capacity to meaningful participation in UN peace missions which is not reflected in the WPS resolutions. The study addresses that cultural barriers, especially patriarchal social norms, organizational muscularity, and sexual harassment in the uniform service are the prime barriers to women's employment in peace and security. Moreover, gender discrimination in security sectors also discourages women from careers in the police and the military. In some cases, government policy hinders women from entering in police and army occupation. Therefore, the number of participation of women in the national police and army is highly insignificant. Consequently, women's contribution to international peace and security is not meaningful. Until gender discriminatory social constructions are challenged and subdued, resolutions – such as 1325 – will remain more theory and less practice. Therefore, the highly masculine nature of national security spaces and cultures are two pressing challenges against WPS.

Furthermore, the security sector especially the police and military is the basis of state power. The government takes action and enforces state legal authority through mostly police and the army. Moreover, people consider army and police personnel's as influential in society. Therefore, if women are deprived from the police and army that means they are mostly deprived of the state power which may be prolonged gender equality in society. To implement the WPS, the UN should emphasize women's equal entrance right in national security forces of the member states. If women can't access the national police and army how could women participate in international peace and security? The study shows that Agenda 1325 overlooks these crucial issues. Therefore, WPS should follow the policy from national level to international level: concentrate to generate uniformed women force in the national police and army to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in international peace and security. Present research advises the policy change in WPS, strategy to equal the participation of women in the national police and army; guidelines to remove of socio-cultural and organizational barriers for women's entrance into the national security sectors; and consider the natural limitation of women in uniformed services to encourage women in security sectors. The study believes the above changes will encourage a higher number of uniformed women in international peace and security. Finally, the study suggests to re-politicize the WPS agenda, reviewing all the gender-related resolutions since 1325 and adopting a transformative approach to WPS that focuses on the fair opportunity of women and men in national police and army including addressing all socio-cultural and professional barriers for women towards gender equality in the national and international peace and security.

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