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Gender Balancing in UN Peacekeeping Missions: A Case Study of Pakistani Female Peacekeepers

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to get insight of the dynamics of the UN female peacekeeping missions conducted in the light of watershed UNSC Resolution 1325. The paper argues that UN aware of the problems of females related to abuse and sexual violence, passed a resolution in 2000, related to women peace and security. Through this resolution UN urged to ensure women participation in conflict resolution and peace-building. Although women are not the central concern of peace and security studies but feminist theorists propose to document the sufferings of the females. On the other hand, the functionalists suggest that peace mission having female not only improve the prospects of pace-building but also interact with the inaccessible (women) which constitute 50% of the population. The paper further explores Pakistani female peacekeeping missions positioned to different war ridden areas. The UN in recognition of the services rendered by female Pakistani peace mission has awarded them certificates of appreciation.

Key Words: *Peacekeeping, Conflict-Resolution, Peace-Building, Women.*

Introduction

UN Peacekeeping operations ensued in 1948 with its first deployment in the Middle East during the Arab Israel war, while women's rights were ignored in the conflict zone. To this end, until year 2000, participation of women in the UN Peacekeeping missions remained ignored. In the absence of women force in the Mission, number of crimes against the local populace of women and children in the combat zone went unnoticed particularly in Somalia, Eritrea, Mozambique and Democratic Republic of Congo where gross violations of Human Rights were observed during the 90s.

In 2000, the UNSC passed a watershed resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security. Women's role was appreciated in the war torn regions and now they could not only pay their due in conflict prevention but in conflict resolution and other peacemaking efforts. The resolution urged the UN member states to ensure participation of female in all peace related initiatives. Above all it reiterated upon the members to

take enhanced measures for the protection of women in the war ridden zones. As a matter of fact, UNSCR 1325 asked for a gender based approach for formulating peacekeeping forces (Rasheed, 2020).

The UNSC passed number of resolutions and declarations during the decades of 70s and 80s besides sponsoring several conferences related to gender issues (Hudson, 2005). Within the UN, the gender issue gained momentum in 90s when in 1995 the 4th World Conference on Women (FWCW) was held in Beijing. Later in 2000, UNSC passed a resolution highlighting the women's participation in *peace and security* related matters and highlighted that women and girls are rather more prone to violence in the conflict zone. The resolution also paved the way for women participation in peacekeeping operations under the ambit of UN umbrella (Norville, 2010).

It was reported in 1993 that female peacekeepers constitute only one per cent of the total forces and progress for increasing the women participation remained slow. In 2014, the female participation of military personnel rose to three percent and that of the women police force to ten percent of the total peacekeeping forces. The data released by the UN HQ in late 2019 indicates 8% representation of women force of total UN peacekeeping missions (Rasheed, 2020).

Women have always been considered as weak folk in any conflict zone and war victim which needs protection. However, not many realize, that women could become leaders not only in the combat zone but also in post-conflict rehabilitation phase. They can play vital role in creating peaceful environment. Moreover, women can be utilized to mobilize the masses, revitalize the economy and rehabilitation of refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in the post conflict scenario. *"Women can act decisively in a conflict zone"*, says a report issued by the UN Institute of Peace (Norville, 2010). They can be assigned supporting roles in any conflict zone where there is a lot to do post conflict work. The safety and security of women and children will be a measure of sustainable peace in that area. But the potential of women in these fields are always neglected by the societies.

In a case study of 39 conflicts, it has been reported that 31 have recurred after the conclusion of peace agreement between the *warring factions*. In all these 31 cases, women were never tasked in the peace building process which indicates that the women's role in peace and security related issues is minimal. On the other hand, there is empirical evidence that women can be very effective in the implementation of the peace process. Just to quote the example of conflict between the *Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and government of Uganda*, women were assigned the task to mobilize the civil society and bring both the parties to negotiation table and bring an end to the conflict. Similarly, in 2003, a faction of women managed micro-credit groups to help reduce poverty to provide assistance to the peace process in Liberia (Norville, 2010). Elsewhere women played active role in helping the refugees in the camps in performance of their day to day livelihood. In fact, the UN aims to ensure involvement of women in conflict resolution as well as *peace-making*. In this backdrop, Resolution 1325 was passed by the UNSC in 2000 so as to provide due share to women's participation in international peacekeeping operations (UNSC, 2000).

Pakistan has been one of the largest troops contributing member of UN Peacekeeping operations besides maintaining 15% percent of female soldiers in its contingent, a distinction very few countries enjoy. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, these female soldiers accomplished many projects successfully under the flagship of Female Engagement Team (FET). These projects range from psychological workshops for Congolese police personnel to sessions for women undergoing psychological traumas, and vocational trainings etc. Other than military personnel, Pakistani civilian women have also joined UN peacekeeping missions as UN volunteers. A UN Report has been quoted to have reported more than 6 million volunteer

women for UN missions, including peacekeeping operations across the world (Rasheed, 2020). This paper focuses the changing perspective of UN on the role of female and their inclusion in the peace mission. It highlights the UN repeated calls for increase in the number of female in peace mission and its effort of gender balancing. For this reason, the paper has been divided into six part. The first part opens the debate explaining the significance of female peacekeeping mission. The second part is a conceptual debate that explain the feminist point of view and role of female in peace and security studies. The third part is also conceptual one that discusses the functionalist's ideas and need of female peacekeeping mission. The fourth part examine the role of women peace-making and peace-building. The fifth part studies the role played by Pakistani female peacekeepers and the praise they are collecting from the dignitaries of UN. The sixth and last part concludes the whole debate.

Feminist Perspective and Place of Women in Peace & Security

Since the landmark resolution 1325 is about the women peace and security, therefore, it is necessary to shed some light on the standing of women in peace and security studies and feminist perspective on it to elevate the role of women in conflict resolution. Traditionally women are not involved in foreign and defense policy neither are they given any opportunity to participate in the discourses of peace and security despite their involvement in the *peace movement* and increasing trend of research on *domestic violence* and related issues. Though we tend to forget they are much wiser on peace and security as they face insecurity, injustice and violence in their own lives. State, citizenship and nationalism, are central pieces to *conflict and violence* within and between states. Women see this from their own prism and perspective.

Feminist perspectives and gender analysis, with few exceptions, like Elise Boulding, (focusing on women and peace issues in particular) remained oblivion in the discipline of International Relations until recently (Boulding, 1974), still feminist perspective get partial coverage in many academic departments and journals. This implies that women are perhaps not the subjects of *international relations and political conflicts*. But with the passage of time this trend has been changing and this can be justified from UN resolution of 1325, a resolution on women peace and security. Nevertheless, as eluded earlier, women do experience nationalism, citizenship, and the state in their own particular ways. Grant and Newland are of the view that the courses on women and gender have occupied central place in international relations and peace studies (Grant & Newland, 1991).

In few of the instances, there are evidences that women often remain under threat from fellow men who may be their colleagues, acquaintances or who are from the same cultural group. Just to quote, Australian women do not consider themselves safe from violence even at the hands of men from their own clan and they do not consider themselves protected from violence. We may say that different places pose threats for different women; even they feel threatened from what we may call their *'protectors'* (Hanmer et al., 1989). These instances make it convincible for UN to demand increase in the number of female peacekeepers in their missions.

In war, it's a general perception that wounds sustained by women are less hurting than those of the soldiers which presupposes that women are of less value. Naturally they are more susceptible to violence during war. (Callaway,1987). If peace missions have females, they can easily develop bondage with the local women population and can better help them in rehabilitation process.

Feminist theorists propose to document the *women's experiences of violence and sexual abuse*. The aim is to devise ways how to deal with the sexual politics of *colonization*, *militarization and war*, and mitigate

the sufferings of those women who face or have been though the trauma of violence. In this regard, the work of Gabriela in the Philippines is noteworthy. It has lessons for those who are interested to conduct research on feminism (Afshar, 1991). Enloe is of the view that perhaps no state exists which has not experienced some degree of *militarization* (Enloe, 1983), nor is there any state where women are safe in true sense.

The *feminist perspective on peace and security* is dependent on many factors. This may include the nationality, age, class, ethnicity, and above all the *kind of feminism*. We may say it is the lens from which she is look through. Thus it implies that we cannot talk about all these securities related issues without taking into consideration the gender. The women need to be seen in *peace and security debates* even when women are not present. We have to make the gender relationship visible even at the cost of exposing women to certain kinds of masculinity dangers. Likewise, UN peacekeeping missions are approved where the conditions are severe and troops participation of the member states are restricted by the number of casualties, any state can afford to bear. Alongside the interconnectedness between various forms of domination and exclusion also need to be taken into consideration as these have profound effects on women's lives. This may include structural *militarism*, *violence*, and the *politics of domination*. However, the government sending women to hardest terrain are under political pressure as the term war and gender are developed in a way that goes against the societal norms of equal participation of women in military exercises.

Above all, analysis is also required with regards to kind of power, based on exclusion and draw up a link between the public / private and the sexual / political paradoxes which has set the artificial standards to seclude women from the sphere of power – listen to women and learn from their experiences and *analyses of danger and violence*, and of nationalism from a feminist prism, so as to broaden our insight of peace and security. Now the need is to find a way out to make the muted voices of such women audible and develop a link across the border transforming it into a world web and endeavor for peace and security (Pettman, 2007).

Functionalist Perspective & Rationale for Female Peacekeeping Mission

There exists important literature on the relevance of gender equality when it comes to peacekeeping, although at its infancy stage. Cohn (2004) is of the view that the UNSC resolution 1325 may label *men as war-makers* and *women as peacemakers* because women are considered peaceful by nature. So they could be assigned decision-making roles in peacemaking as well as peace-building.

As women possess functionalist qualities which primarily lead to peace and social order, they should therefore, be encouraged to become part of the peace process and *post conflict reconstruction*. It has been my experience that women in the mission area confide more with women peacekeepers and hence, think they can address their problems more effectively especially issues related to Sex and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). *Gender balancing* in peacekeeping has been advocated by the UN to address the needs of the operation area in the war-torn region (DPKO/DFS, 2010).

As per functionalist theory, female peacekeepers are also essential in the peacekeeping missions because they cannot only keep an eye on the unwarranted behavior by fellow security personnel but can also win the hearts and minds of the locals: thus improve the peace-building prospects in the mission area (Bridges & Horsfall, 2009). This argument follows that the inclusion of women peacekeepers allows addressing the women and children specific needs in the host country, with special reference to gender-based violence.

Female peacekeepers freely interact with what may be called neglected 50% population of the host country. These female operators enjoy added advantage in specific situations like body / house search, interviewing victims of SGBV, interaction with women prisoners and above all screening women combatants at DDRRR (*disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement)* camps (Co-author).

Few proponents suggest that female peacekeepers could be instrumental in the institution building of the host country and ensure gender mainstreaming in their legislation. To support its stance, the UN highlights that female peacekeepers played a vital role in bringing women to the polling stations for voting in Burundi and East Timor. This calls for increased women representation in the UN Peacekeeping missions. The all-female India police unit in Liberia has also received appreciation for mobilizing the local women for their vigorous participation in the security sector as well.

Few opponents suggest that *gender balancing* may be required in peace-building phase rather than the hardcore military operations phase of the mission. The department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in its guidelines on gender outline has also advocated ensuring presence of female military personnel as it enhances mission efficiency. They are of the view that *mixed patrolling teams* are better as local females develop confidence easily with the female peacekeepers, particularly in *the case of sexual violence*" (DPKO/DFS, 2010).

In nutshell, we may say that female peacekeepers can contribute to the missions in two manners: *Active and passive participation of women*. Within the host country their actions manifest promoting rights of women thus representing the local female population (Keiser & et al., 2002). This representation is extended during the outreach activities. These may include, but not limited to, provision of medical care to the locals and visit to female prisons besides orphanages by these peacekeeping contingents. These activities are far beyond the typical military duties. The enhanced voter turnout by local women is also attributable to presence of women peacekeepers active participation.

The passive participation of women is the behavioral change in the local women and girls (Keiser & et al., 2002). A woman would be more willing to share her sufferings with a woman just because she is a woman. I, as military observer in the DRC, would always be hesitant to speak to the local combatant / civilian women for obvious reasons unless they want to explain the situation at their own. Most importantly, male peacekeepers are more careful in the presence of women colleagues when it comes to engagement of any sexual misconduct (Kronsell, 2012).

The UN points out that the presence of female peacekeepers also reduces *aggressiveness and male domination*. The UN DPKO said in a statement, "Women's presence improves access and support for local women, … male peacekeepers are more ... responsible, and … (help) reduce conflict and confrontation." Similarly, Whitworth (2004) alludes to the fact that women are better peacekeepers as they are less subject to "*militarized masculinity*" syndrome. Kronsell (2012) is of the view that that sexual misconduct by male peacekeepers, albeit isolated incidents, very much undermine the *legitimacy of peacekeeping operations*, a different culture is introduced by their female colleagues and hence strengthen accountability.

If the functionalist rationale of active and passive representation is taking into account when it comes to the allocation of female peacekeepers then deployment of the female military peacekeepers should be both based on institutional as well as need based on sexual exploitation in the host country, that is to say, gender-based needs. In other words, female military personnel should be sent to those places where local

institutions are weak, where higher degree of gender inequality exists, and where sexual exploitation cases are at a higher pedestal. As the UNSC resolutions define the mandate, we should keep in mind that female peacekeepers go to places where gender issues are mentioned as this remains the top priority.

Women and UN Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKOPs)

May 12, 2014 marks as a momentous day in the history of UN Peacekeeping operations. That day the first female Major General Kristin Lund of Norway was appointed as the Force Commander in a UN peacekeeping operation. She was to command the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Cyprus.

As alluded to earlier, the appointment of Major General Lund as first female force commander has been in line with the UN Security Council resolution 1325, passed in year 2000. The resolution itself is manifestation of a shift in UN policy with regards to enhancement of female representation in peacekeeping operations around the globe. The resolution not only reiterated a gender perspective in all fields but also affirmed the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, … and post-conflict reconstruction. Further, it stressed the need to integrate gender perspective in all these fields (Ivanovic, 2014).

As a sequel to the resolution 1325 (2000), the UNSC passed six resolutions from time to time to further strengthen the women's role in peacekeeping operations. The aim is to provide a chance to women to prove their ability in maintaining *world peace and security* (Lyytikäinen, 2007).

In the word of UN Chief Mr. Herve Ladsous, "*women can and must play a leading role in …, conflict resolution and transition from conflict to peace"*(Ivanovic, 2014). Since the scope of peacekeeping has broadened, women have become an indispensable part of the peacekeeping operations. The women component of peacekeeping includes not only uniformed personnel (military, police) but also civilians. This women force has reinforced the peace process as well protecting the women's rights in the mission area.

Women have been performing their duties in consonance with their male counterparts in all their roles as peacekeepers / peace-makers. It is therefore, an operational necessity to maintain women force as peacekeepers(*Women in Peacekeeping, April 2019 Monthly Forecast: Security Council Report*, 2019). Sahana Dharmapur in one of her papers on the issue of women peacekeeping in the UN Missions, issued by the International Peace Institute, opines that there still exists a gap in the gender equality. She has indicated three reasons for this:

- Lack of understanding among Member States about Resolution 1325 and UN policy on gender equality in peace operations;
- Lack of data about women's participation in security institutions particularly the UN peacekeeping;
- Male dominance in the security related matters globally.

She is of the view that instead of utilization of the women's abilities in the operational area, the debate resonates on their role in combat zone.

The UN department of peacekeeping operations has addressed the issue through a three-pronged strategy: 1) appointment of specialist gender advisors in some of the missions; 2) to increase the number of women peacekeepers 3) and provide *gender awareness training to its personnel*.

That is why, gender training program has been introduced for peacekeeping forces in order to capitalize on these efforts (Lyytikäinen, 2007).

In conformity with the functionalist view, the success of any peacekeeping operation hinges upon access to the local population besides many other factors as the geography and demography is unknown to these troops. Recalling her experience in Afghanistan, General Lund indicated an edge over male peacekeepers that female peacekeepers enjoy, *"Being a female, I had access to 100 percent of the population, not only 50 percent".*

UN Peacekeeping operations are normally *mandated to protect civilians* who are under threat for their lives. For this purpose, they need to have comprehensive intelligence-gathering capabilities, a sine quo non for any operation to be successful. Unfortunately, most of the missions lack the requisite resources. Mostly human intelligence is the only available tool to the commanders. Thus this remains a challengous task given the situation on ground. For instance, the peacekeepers have to protect a country which is almost equivalent to the size of Western Europe and there are about 40 armed groups operating in that country terrorizing the local population (Ivanovic, 2014; co- author).

Leadership at all the levels in the Mission need to be aware of the threat perception and identify armed groups and its leadership. The personalities of these rebel groups need to be studied, their motivations, goals and the tactics they employ to operate.

It has been underlined by many scholars that gender training is a pre-requisite for the UN peacekeepers before their deployment to the mission area. The aim is to impart gender awareness training, to ensure implementation of the mandate and to avoid any action not in line with the mission policies (Lyytikäinen, 2007).

Based on the experience in operations in various regions of the world, resolution 1325 was tabled. It was learnt that female soldiers do not face cultural restrictions as compared to male members, in the host countries. They obtain information easily from females. To gain the trust of locals is *vital component of any peacekeeping operation*.

In fact, it was the "Female Engagement Teams" in Afghanistan who penetrated the *male-dominated society* and interacted with the local females. They were able to gain their trust and obtained information about areas where the insurgents received training and recruitment (Ivanovic, 2014).

Above all, these female peacekeepers are seen as role models for the females in the conservative societies and are able to raise their voices for their rights in all spheres especially in peace process. Therefore, an increased participation of women in the UN Peacekeeping missions is critical for its success. They could be assigned the tasks ranging from mentoring the local women to the rehabilitation of the ex-combatants in their reintegration into civilian life. Furthermore, these peacekeepers women can be helpful not only in reducing the conflict and confrontation but also provide a sense of protection to local population (*Women in Peacekeeping, April 2019 Monthly Forecast: Security Council Report*, 2019).

Women's participation in peacekeeping operations cannot be overemphasized. Most of the member states recognize that females play an instrumental role in bringing in the gender perspectives in peacekeeping missions. During the Security Council's debate on peacekeeping in November 2018, several member states focused on strengthening peacekeeping operations in Africa. The importance of women's representation in peacekeeping operations was underscored. However, few member states were of the

view that it may be difficult for them to meet the prescribed goals of women quota in view of the composition of their armed forces (*Women in Peacekeeping, April 2019 Monthly Forecast: Security Council Report*, 2019).

Pakistani Female Peacekeeping Mission

As elucidated above, Pakistan has been one of the oldest and largest contributing member of UN Peacekeeping operations. Alongside the male soldiers, its female military personnel have complemented the missions across the globe. Pakistan started sending its troops since 1960 with the deployment in Congo. Since then Pakistan has provided troops to 41 peacekeeping missions in 23 countries, with more than 150,000 peacekeepers, some deployed in the most challengeous environment (*About Pakistan—Pakistan Mission to UN*, n.d.). President of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Maria Fernanda Espinosa accompanied by then Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN Maleeha Lodhi visited Pakistan during the month of January 2020. Besides visiting Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS) at National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) the dignitary also delivered a talk at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad. Replying to a question by the co-author, the visiting dignitary paid rich tributes to the contributions of Pakistan for maintaining *international peace and security* under the umbrella of UN Peacekeeping missions.

As of 2018, women constitute 5% of uniform personnel in the UN Peacekeeping operations, with little increase from the previous trends. There are more than a dozen Peacekeeping operations at present in different parts of the world. Most of these are in Africa. Out of the ten top forces contributing countries also include Pakistan(Ahmed, 2019).

In a Tweet message, Ambassador Lodhi indicated compliance by Pakistan with regards to 15% mandate given by the UN for women force representation in the UN missions across the globe and 78 Pak army women peacekeepers are performing their duties in the UN Peacekeeping operations. This is to give due recognition to the services rendered by Pakistani women(Tribune.com.pk, 2019).

The deployment of 15 % women in UN Missions has been, in fact, based on the UNSC's call of 2015 on member states to double the female representation in its peacekeeping missions. The UNSC set the target to be achieved by December 2018, Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated(Ahmed, 2019).

It was also informed that Pakistan has deployed Female Engagement Team (FET) in the Democratic Republic of Congo by mid-2019 in order to strengthen peacekeeping in that country. At the time of the co-author's services in Congo during the period of 2004/05, Pakistani women force had no representation in this mission in that country called MONUC (UN Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo). Ms. Lodhi has been quoted to have said, "*Our faith in this indispensable tool for the maintenance of international peace and security is firm and abiding*." While referring to the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), the envoy also said, Pakistan has not only supported its mandate but has always been advocating to strengthen and expand it to make it more effective as it has a vital role in maintaining peace in the region.

United Nations maintains a Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, commonly known as C-34, is a platform where all stakeholders deliberate over the policies to address the growing challenges. While addressing the committee, Ambassador Lodhi said, the committee must play its due role in order to enable the peacekeepers perform their duties most effectively (Tribune.com.pk, 2019). It was reiterated that the safety and security of the peacekeepers must remain a top priority as the operation areas are

highly challengous. “Therefore, deployment of troops has to be based on mutual consent of all parties and *knowledge of the ground situation.* The Ambassador went on saying that an effort must be made by all the stake holders to provide all out support *to the mission”*(Ahmed, 2019).

As part of Female Engagement Teams, Pakistan Army women peacekeepers are serving as staff officers at various headquarters mostly in Democratic Republic of Congo, Darfur and Central African Republic. As of now, more than 450 women peacekeepers have performed duties in the UN missions. These women peacekeepers have earned praise from the UN authorities and brought laurels to the country (Niaz, 2020). Though the number of peacekeepers served the UN is not too high but when seen through the lens of feminism it is very significant that the females experience abuse and sexual exploitation in war ridden area are attended and supported and these peacekeepers in rehabilitation process makes women enable to try to find way out to tackle sexual abuse. Performing same kinds of activities Pakistani female peacekeepers have earned respect.

Deputy Superintendent of police commonly known as CivPol (Civil Police) as per the UN terminology, the first-ever UN International Female Police Peacekeeper award was given to Shahzadi Gulfam from Pakistan in 2011 for her outstanding performance. Pakistani police officers while serving in the UN missions bring a cultural change in their department besides getting a chance to serve again on the UN missions in prestigious appointments. One of the Deputy Police Advisors at the UNHQ has served twice as CivPol in the UN missions.

CIPS in collaboration with the UN Women (the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) has been imparting pre-deployment training to the Pakistani UN peacekeepers to ensure gender responsive UNPKOs, a sine quo non in gender perspectives while working under the banner of the UN. Gender-sensitive ‘policing’ is necessary to address the security needs on gender basis. The training modules are based on actual scenarios (case studies) so as to enable the peacekeepers to bring out practical solutions to gender-sensitive transformation after the conflict (Salman, 2016).

Among others, Major Fozia Parveen and Medical Officer Khushboo have been known for their services in the Mission area. The lady soldiers perform their duties at some of the most challengous environment in the mission area. They treat the war victims who have been through the trauma of operations. The UN thanked the government of Pakistan for its efforts in bringing peace and making the world a better place to live (*Female UN Peacekeepers From Pakistan | Propakistani*, 2019).

Another daughter of the land, Major Samia Rehman received appreciation certificate from the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for her outstanding achievements in DR Congo. In a Tweet message, she expressed, "*Working under the UN flag … for peace & stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo is an honor for the women peacekeepers*.” The lady officer has been carrying out *intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR)*missions for assisting in air operations in the war-torn country (*Pak Army’s Female Officer Maj Samia Awarded UN Secretary-General certificate—YouTube*, 2019).

Major Aroof Arif has been the only female officer who participated in the grueling Dancon March – a taxing 25 km march which she completed in five hours. Major Sadia, another Pakistani officer, is a proud member of the UN Integrated Training Team.

Pakistan has been imparting training to its soldiers prior to their deployment in the mission area at CIPS at NUST Islamabad. The center has been established to *share its experience and promote best practices in peacekeeping*(News Desk, 2020).

The UN Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres during a visit to Pakistan in February 2020 lauded Pakistan's contributions to the United Nations' endeavors in promoting and maintaining *international peace and security* under the ambit of UN peacekeeping missions (Niaz, 2020).

The peacekeepers are awarded with the UN medals on successful completion of their duties (Co-author). US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Alice Wells also acknowledged efforts of Pakistani women serving as part of the UN peacekeeping mission around the world. Expressing her appreciations, Ms. Alice Wells Tweeted, "*Inspired by Pakistani women serving with distinction in the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo"*(Daur, 2020).

Pakistani female officers include stress counsellors, doctors, psychologists, gender advisors, nurses, information officers, operations and logistics officers. These officers are normally assigned for one-year duty and are relieved by the same trade and rank of officers on yearly basis (Co-author). However, as discussed earlier, that female gets less attention in peace and security therefore, it is very much obvious that risk of a mission affects the allocation of female troops in peacekeeping missions. The UN policy shift of gender balance seems weaker where missions are more dangerous and where chances of casualties are high. Moreover, females are considered more vulnerable and it goes against the cultural norms of some countries if women are involved in military and war. Consequently, women are allocated to perform civic duties.

The success of any peacekeeping operations also hinges upon the information staring by the local community. Pakistani troops are friendlier with the local populous and therefore, receive first-hand knowledge from them. "*Throughout their deployment the Pakistani female officers worked hard to win the trust of the community",* a statement issued by the Mission office in Congo said (*Pakistani female army officers awarded UN Medal in Congo*, 2020).

Conclusion

The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) has introduced new avenues for female peacekeeper to be an active part of security related issues. The involvement of female in peacekeeping operations doesn't just boost the adequacy of UNPKO in tending to post-conflict rehabilitation phase, it further underpins the gender balancing issues as an instrumental component of security studies.

One of the biggest advantage of having female as peacekeeper is that they are more humane and more perceptive than men. Either in a leading role or just staying at the back of any mission the involvement of women in any mission could be vital for viable and durable peace. Female participation in any peacekeeping mission maintain gender balance as well. Having female in peacekeeping missions is particularly helpful for heterogeneous societies where females are not allowed to talk to any men, and there is prohibition of open physical contact between opposite genders. Within such communities, female peacekeepers are the most feasible choice. Since there are many instances of fights between the local residents and male peacekeepers, while the female peacekeepers are less prone to fights and therefore should be a part of the mission. As females have exhibited their proficient capacity in keeping peace with effectively achieved set targets, the UN should keep on concentrating on females' inclusion in peacekeeping.

A detailed study of Pakistani Female Engagement Teams (FET) activities and their efforts, and how they have achieved their mandated task in war torn areas is a reasonable start. How Pakistani peacekeepers penetrated the local people? These and other such questions and their answers could be beneficial for

future female engagement in any mission. The UN should follow the initiative taken by the Pakistani female peacekeepers in Africa that includes doctors, psychologists, nurses, gender advisors, information officers, operations / logistics officers.

The issue of sexual savagery, badgering, and exploitation that overwhelms post-cold war combats has elevated explicit endeavors from the UN to more readily connect with the women's role in conflict resolution. This deliberation has likewise been executed by the Pakistani government, by deploying more female peacekeepers in Africa. Pakistani women peacekeepers can help the United Nations while arbitrating and gathering data from the sufferer of sexual violence, while doing such job becomes a difficult task for male peacekeepers. This is simultaneously as ensuring and endorsing gender balancing in peacekeeping. The engagement of Pakistani female peacekeepers in Africa has insured that their involvement in peacekeeping mission must be maintained, which is significant during peace-making process.

Being a peacekeeper isn't a simple job, especially for Pakistani women. One simple reason is that for sure their physical capacity is in general more fragile than that of a man. Moreover, there is cultural restrictions with certain odds for females to be part of the military and conflicts, which has affected the response of the Pakistani government and society regarding women participation in peacekeeping missions. This perspective on the role of female in peacekeeping mission has additionally affected the obligation of Pakistani women in Africa and some other UN peacekeeping mission. Women peacekeepers from different nations, for example, New Zealand, Israel, Canada, and Australia - where their female peacekeepers have no limitation with regards to serving on the forefront - Pakistani female peacekeepers are deployed to civil issues. This depicts that females have not provided opportunities to demonstrate their potential in conflict resolution. Consequently, progress is necessary to enhance the role of Pakistani peacekeepers in conflict resolution.

The UN should build the profile of female peacekeepers. The UN as of now has better practices in Africa where the Pakistani FET have improved all facets of peace-making and peace-building training, making them able to achieve their set targets. Female peacekeepers need extra training with the goal that they can handle any situation. The UN should share the experience of Pakistani female peacekeepers. The Pakistani female units normally share their encounters with others in Pakistan after a completion of mission, that motivate other female as well.

It is fundamental to analyze the participation of female peacekeepers and their involvement in UN missions, and formulation of policy for mainstreaming of gender balance. Women at present have played their due role in peacemaking and peace-building, plummeting sexual savagery, and effectively achieving their set goal within stipulated time. It is important to lessen sexual violence and victimization in war ridden areas during combat and post-conflict rehabilitation. To get over these, it ought to be obligatory to implement a UN set of accepted rules among the peacekeepers along with zero tolerance approach, and gender balanced peacekeeping team.

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