

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN HIGH LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN MINIMIZING OR
PREVENTING INTERSTATE CONFLICT AND WAR

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ABSTRACT

The role of gender on international security has received a great deal of attention. In crucial political arenas, women are conspicuously absent, and this lack of representation permits male interests to take precedence. In 2017, the global average percentage of women in parliament was only 23.3%, a gain of 6.5% over the previous decade. Does the occurrence of violent conflict change when women become leaders or when their participation in parliament increases? There is a varied range of explanations that supports or contradicts the assertion that women in leadership positions lead to less conflict and war. This research aims to evaluate the conduct of female leaders during crises. It is impossible to prove that female pacifism creates a less conflicted system. However, it does contribute to the notion that a women-only leadership would be just as conflicted as the existing patriarchal institutions, albeit in a different manner.

The study conducted a desk study research method. It aimed to answer specific questions related to primary research. Secondary research was conducted by looking at already existing secondary data. The obtained data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings suggest that women may have distinct gender values than males due to their different social positions.

Women leaders must overcome sex role stereotypes. Women in influential positions may use their experiences as voters and members of society in their policy choices as leaders. The widest gender disparity occurs between men and women in the intellectual core of politics (foreign affairs). This has driven women to favor other paths over foreign policy and war, so we may anticipate female leaders in powerful positions to behave differently than males.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Gender and its influence on international relations has gained interest worldwide. Notably, women today are few in the political scene. Consequently, male interests are dominant. For example, the number of female parliamentarians has increased slightly over the last few decades. Nevertheless, whether women leaders result in less conflict and war remains a question. This thesis evaluates the conduct of women leaders during conflict and war. According to the findings, the answer as to whether women leaders cause less conflict and war is inconclusive. In fact, just like male leaders, women leaders are just as likely to result in more conflict and war. However, women leaders are faced with specific sex-role stereotypes. Moreover, women leaders are more likely to address social issues based on their experiences. These factors may influence female leaders to behave differently than men.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

In recent years, the role of gender on international security has received a great deal of attention, with a particular emphasis on the differences between the influence of socially-constructed gender and biologically-driven “sex” (Blair, 2017). This research paper will investigate whether it is possible to evaluate the traditional view of women's characteristics and conclude that a world dominated by women in leadership positions would be more peaceful or whether it remains the case that "war is a political relationship between states and has nothing to do with the psychology of the individuals involved" (Lombardi, 2017). In crucial political arenas, women are conspicuously absent, and this lack of representation permits male interests to take precedence (Wahman et al., 2021). The crucial issue is whether violent conflict can be seen as a masculine problem or if it is just the outcome of a competitive political structure.

One may argue that the sheer structure of state sovereignty institutionalizes the existing system of male supremacy. The state is unusual in its definition of owning a monopoly on the authorized use of violence (Centeno & Yang, 2019). This fact alone defines the nature of leadership as aggressive and exhibited via hierarchical structure - traits typically associated with males (Centeno & Yang, 2019). The assertion of power over the majority by a minority group concentrates supremacy in the hands of a few (Schattschneider & Pearson, 2017, p.69). Those who exhibit the celebrated masculine characteristics of aggression and dominance thrive under this system; as Young argues, "empirically, states are run by men, defined by men, and advance the interests of men" (Hoffman 2001). It is therefore naive to assume that the appointment of women to positions of power would significantly alter the nature of the state system; of course, the competitive international state system would continue to exist and exert a significant amount

of influence over the actions of those who operate within it, regardless of gender. Moreover, the discourse of security studies is characterized by impersonal language and patriarchal imagery, characteristics that perpetuate the masculine bias and reinforce existing masculine hierarchical structures (Kvarving, 2019), thereby diminishing the likelihood of a fundamental shift in the nature of the power structure.

The theory that the world would be more peaceful if more women occupied critical positions of authority relies heavily on the traditional perception of women as the less aggressive and, hence, more calm and conciliatory sex (Aharoni, 2017). One may debate if these ideals are naturally embedded or whether society has manufactured them as the acceptable way to behave (Cook 1991). By observing the behavior of women who have held significant leadership positions, it may be feasible to conclude that people who are successful in leadership possess typically male traits, allowing us to reject the hypothesis. In reality, the recent aggressive deeds of Thatcher, Meir, and Indira Ghandi indicate that the idea of peaceful female rulers is false (Nye 2012). Even if males stopped to occupy authority positions and the possibility for perceived manly actions of war mongering disappeared, the primary causes of conflict would still exist (Nye, 2012). In recent years, racial tension, resource scarcity, and religious conflict have been the primary drivers of violent conflict (Pomeroy et al., 2016), and removing males from authority will not alleviate these problems. Even if a more conciliatory leadership structure were in place, there would always be social groupings that are economically better off than others. This, along with differences in culture and values, would imply that there would always be conflict from a 'bottom-up' perspective.

The international system is ultimately founded on rivalry and the survival of nations; consequently, Pearce's (1995: 86) assumptions are unrealistic.

Political engagement is often a prerequisite for women to attain leadership positions, including running for state or national parliaments, leading campaigns, and organizing other women to run for office. In 2017, the global average percentage of women in parliament was only 23.3%, a gain of 6.5% over the previous decade (Kumar, 2017). This gain is substantial: A state is five times less likely to use violence when confronted with an international crisis for every 5% increase in the proportion of women in parliament (O'Reilly, 2015) (possibly because women are more likely to use a 'collective or consensual approach' to conflict resolution).

States are also more likely to achieve lasting peace following a conflict if they invite women to the negotiating table (O'Reilly et al., 2015; Paffenholz, 2018). Despite the small number of women involved in peace negotiations (a United Nations study found that only 2.4% of mediators, 9% of negotiators, and 4% of signatories of 31 peace processes are female (Romeri-Lewis et al., 2018)), their participation can make a significant difference (Krause et al., 2018; Paffenholz et al., 2016). According to O'Reilly (2015), peace will likely endure if: Women's participation as negotiators, mediators, and signatories increases the likelihood that a peace agreement will last at least 15 years by 35%.

Women succeed as mediators and negotiators due to traditionally feminine and maternal characteristics (Prasch, 2015). In Northern Ireland, Somalia, and South Africa, female peace process participants gained a reputation for fostering dialogue and engaging all parties (O'Reilly et al., 2015). Because they operate outside formal power structures, they are often viewed as more dependable and less menacing honest brokers (O'Reilly et al., 2015). Nevertheless, despite the impression of suppleness and malleability, their actions are frequently quite the opposite. In 2003, the Liberian peace activist Leymah Gbowee led tens of thousands of Muslim and Christian

women in picketing, praying, and fasting, which contributed to the end of the country's brutal 14-year civil war (Prasch, 2015).

According to the United Nations, women continue to be "disproportionately well-represented" among groups that advocate for peace and employ terms such as warrior, weapons, and revolution (Fischbach, 2019). Women Wage Peace organized demonstrations in Israel to exert pressure on the government to work towards a viable peace agreement (Bennett, 2016). In Argentina, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo 'revolutionized' motherhood by protesting the disappearance of their children during the country's 'dirty war' from 1977 to 1983, transforming motherhood from a passive to an active public role (McFarland, 2018). The militarization of traditional notions of femininity was also a significant aspect of the women's peace camp at Greenham Common in the United Kingdom, which lasted for a decade (Branciforte, 2022). As a protest against the arrival of 96 Tomahawk cruise missiles at the US air base in Berkshire in 1981, the women surrounded and cut the air base's fences, climbed over the barrier dressed as teddy bears, and pinned baby clothes, bottles, teething rings, diapers, and family photographs to the wires (Branciforte, 2022). Their struggle was no less violent than Thatcher's war in the Falkland Islands, yet she dismissed the women as an "eccentricity" (Williams, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

Poet Dorothea Hollins of the Women's Labor League suggested that an unarmed, 1,000-member "Women's Peace Expeditionary Force" traverse Europe "in the teeth of the gunfire" and position itself between the warring armies in the trenches during the early months of World War I (Glausiusz, 2017). The big idea of Hollins did not materialize, but it was not conceived in a vacuum; it was fostered by a century of advocacy mostly based on maternal love (Glausiusz, 2017). Or, as her fellow peace campaigner Helena Swanwick observed, the universal concern is

that in conflict, "women die and watch their children die, but theirs is no glory; nothing but unutterable anguish and disgrace" (Glausiusz, 2017).

Swanwick helped establish the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, a group devoted to eradicating the causes of conflict (Beers. 2015). She wished "a world in the far future without a single soldier" (Beers. 2015). Many campaigners felt women would not embrace war if they had political power (Beers. 2015). However, how accurate is this? Does the occurrence of violent conflict change when women become leaders or when their participation in parliament increases? In what way do women give birth to wars?

If you ask this question aloud, it will not take more than a minute before someone responds with "Margaret Thatcher," the British prime leader whose wildly popular war in the Falklands contributed to her 1983 election triumph (Bruni, 2018). Thatcher is hardly the only female leader lauded for her militarism. Consider Boudicca, who led a popular uprising against the Roman invaders; or Lakshmi Bai, Queen of Jhansi and a leader of the 1857-58 Indian Mutiny against the British; or even Emmeline Pankhurst, who led British suffragettes on a militant campaign of hunger strikes, arson, and window-smashing, then, in 1914 (Glausiusz, 2017).

However, these cases are anecdotal since women leaders have been exceedingly unusual throughout history. According to statistics, between 1950 and 2004, just 48 national leaders across 188 nations, or less than 4% of all leaders, were women (Glausiusz, 2017). There were 18 presidents and 30 prime ministers among them (Glausiusz, 2017). Two nations, Ecuador and Madagascar, according to Glausiusz (2017), had women in charge for just two days each before being replaced by men.

Given the small sample size, is it even reasonable to question if, given authority, women are more or less inclined to conduct wars than men? Some scholars disagree because it implies

leadership is straightforward and perpetuates gender stereotypes. Philosophers such as Stephen Pinker noted in his study of violence throughout history, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, "women have been and will continue to be the pacifying force" (Pinker, 2015.) This presumption is not necessarily anchored in fact. Case in point, ten military crises in the 20th century involved four female leaders, seven of which were handled by Golda Meir, Israel's prime minister, from 1969 to 1974. To evaluate the conduct of female leaders during crises, they argue, large sample size is required, "which history cannot supply."

Purpose of the Study

This research aims to evaluate the conduct of female leaders during crises and, by extension, establish if women in leadership result in fewer conflicts and interstate wars. There is a varied range of explanations in the literature that supports or contradicts the assertion that women in leadership positions lead to less conflict and war. Some arguments support this assertion based on gendered notions between males and females (Post & Sen, 2020). For instance, the actions of female Tamil Tigers illustrate this flawed stereotype of 'feminine' characteristics; the presence of females operating on the front lines of the liberation movement contradicts the culturally-enforced, pacifistic stereotype and calls for a reconsideration of the gendered adjectives aggression and submission (Post & Sen, 2020). The notion that 'masculine' and 'feminine' characteristics are perpetuated by the constructed placement of women within society and its historical reinforcement (Post & Sen, 2020). The assertion that women are excluded from a primary institution that helps codify and constitute citizenship lends credence to the claim that the nature of women is falsely portrayed in the international system (Post & Sen, 2020). Consequently, it is impossible to prove that female pacifism creates a less conflicted system.

In addition, it is possible to counter a separate societal stereotype in which women are represented as cunning and manipulative (Perkins, 2018). While it would be unrealistic to suppose that this preconception would stay constant when projected onto an international scale, it does contribute to the notion that a women-only leadership would be just as conflicted as the existing patriarchal institutions, albeit in a different manner.

There is evidence describing the pacifist character of women when we analyze case studies. The formation of a grassroots movement by Libyan women in an effort to end the Libyan civil war was mostly successful, and one might say that it is a key example of the cooperative, as opposed to hierarchical, approach to political activity that women adopt (Hamada et al., 2020). This also shows the feminine paradigm of authority, which focuses on speech and rejects the use of dominance, coercion, or exploitation (Greene & Kahn, 2020). In light of the fact that historically, women have not occupied the same positions of authority as males, it remains challenging to extrapolate these projections to a global scale. Women have been and will continue to be a pacifying force throughout history.

Scholars have drawn comparisons between nations that fail to empower women and those with the greatest levels of violence and war (Habibov et al., 2017; Cohen & Karim, 2022). This association is further confirmed by the discovery of a considerable correlation between the countries that report the greatest levels of sexual equality and the most peaceful nations on earth (Martela et al., 2020). This suggests that the connection between gender and war is very complicated, notwithstanding the tenuousness of the link and the absence of a clear causal link. In the United States, it has been noticed that a greater degree of education lessens women's inclination towards militarization. Still, surveys indicate that women are no less opposed to war than males, provided there is a valid and reasonable basis for the fight (Sagan & Valentino, 2019;

Shah, 2018). This shift from abstract to specific observations suggests that variations in response to conflict cannot be ascribed only to gender but are heavily influenced by circumstance.

Findings show that women are far less likely than males to favor increases in military expenditure, implying that women are less prone to conflict or, at the very least, more ready to adopt alternative ways of conflict resolution (Karim & Beardsley, 2017, p. 212). Although this does not necessarily entail pacifism, it does suggest that a distinct leadership style might emerge if women controlled authority positions. A greater emphasis on communication and reconciliation over individuality, coupled with the notion that women possess a high level of moral superiority, has the potential to bring a more pacific perspective to foreign policy concerns.

Although it may not be feasible to declare with certainty that a greater number of women in positions of power will result in fewer wars, it may be possible to find some good outcomes. Some scholars argue peace is not characterized merely by the absence of conflict but also by the existence of social equality. In this area, female leaders are often seen as having a higher priority (Davies & True, 2019f). One could also question the relevance of military conflict in the modern international system. The increasing impact of other geopolitical factors such as economic crisis and environmental damage demonstrate the changing nature of the conflict. It is difficult to predict the extent to which changing gender roles will impact this. On the basis of the offered information, one may conclude that a more peaceful society would be built not by a preponderance of women in positions of authority. This forms the basis of the present research.

Research Questions

Countries with relatively strong gender equality and women's political participation records tend to be less prone to conflict than those with weaker records (Gorgolewski , 2020;

Mlambo & Kapingura, 2019; Orisadare, 2019; Venkatesha, 2018). This empirical relationship is quite robust, as demonstrated by recent studies of gender in international relations.

At the time of writing, the number of worldwide wars is rising rapidly. In contrast to the relative tranquillity of the early decades of the 21st century, 2014 was distinguished by a number of very lethal wars and an upsurge in minor conflicts thereafter (PRIO, 2019). It cannot be determined if the rise in conflict after 2014 is transient or must be seen as the new normal (PRIO, 2019). Further trends indicate that although the total death toll and number of interstate wars have been down, the number of conflicts classified as relatively low-level is significantly growing. Myanmar is one of the most conflict-ridden nations and the site of several low-level hostilities (PRIO, 2019). Since the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2014, the number of fatalities has drastically decreased (PRIO, 2019). Less than one hundred fatalities were documented in 2018 (PRIO, 2019). Afghanistan has been a puzzling exception, waging two conflicts that accounted for roughly 49% of all deaths in 2018 (PRIO, 2019).

The number of nations engaging in internationalized wars is increasing on a yearly basis, and as a result, internationalized conflicts are projected to be long-lasting and prolonged. Although it is almost difficult to foresee future patterns in armed conflict, the seriousness of the situation necessitates a comprehensive examination of conflict prevention, management, and conciliation. Based on current developments, this study aims to draw conclusions regarding the impact of women leadership in relation to militarization and armed conflict. Based on this, this research paper seeks to answer the following research question:

Does the increase in the number of high-ranking female officials account for the decline of war?

Significance of the Study

The decrease in armed conflicts is not a mere fact but one of the main trends of modern international affairs (Licklider, 2005; Koehrsen, 2019). The knowledge of the causes of this trend helps to understand various global issues affecting economics, culture, education, and the very society. A low number of armed wars result from many factors, and an increase in women's political representation is probably one of them. Understanding the main causes of the modern decline of war provides insight into modern international relations. Countries maintaining good diplomatic relations with other states promote trade and cooperation between nations, provide their citizens with better opportunities, and are more likely to cope with global issues (Naray, 2011). In addition, understanding current international affairs tendencies intensify cultural exchange and policy development.

Presently, more and more women hold leadership positions: many people's lives depend on their decisions. Modern society admires and denounces prominent businesswomen and female politicians simultaneously, and women still encounter many barriers while pursuing a career in different fields (Hill et al., 2016; Löffler et al., 2020). In any case, many women are naturally empathetic and gentle and, therefore, pay more attention to the needs of their followers. However, the data on gender differences in leadership remain controversial (Thompson, 2000; Huszczo and Endres, 2017; Scott and Brown, 2006; Freeman and Varey, 1997; Madlock, 2008). At present, politics is becoming more and more complicated. The behavior of a leader of a state affects its political regime and position in the global community (Helms, 2012). The results of the proposed study will help to analyze the leadership styles of modern politicians and some political issues.

The proposed study puts forward the question of the correlation between wars and women's political leadership. Answering this question will help us to understand these differences and determine whether some female characteristics affect women's leadership styles. In addition, its confirmation would provide insight into strategies used by politicians in global politics.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

According to O'Reilly et al. (2015), increasing the inclusion of women greatly boosts the prospects of achieving a strong peace settlement. An examination of 40 peace procedures since the end of the Cold War showed that when women have a big impact on discussions, the likelihood of substantially achieving an agreement rose. The presence of women in peace processes raises the possibility of achieving a peace accord lasting for over two years by 20% (UN Women, 2015). (UN Women, 2015). Moreover, the possibility of a peace accord lasting over 15 years rose by 35% when women were included in the peace process. However, it must be highlighted that an increase in female involvement alone is not adequate for successfully influencing discussions and implementations. Any advantages of increasing female engagement only occur when participation implies an active chance to exercise influence. Times have been changing, with a rising number of women gaining highly skilled positions in national and worldwide top corporations and political agencies worldwide. Therefore, the recent growth of women in national legislations can be hopeful in reference to constructing a more peaceful world. The following section provides an exposition of key thematic issues concerning conflict and war regarding women's leadership.

Armed and other types of conflict are pervasive in many regions of the globe and are a reality for men and women in practically every location. As victims of gender-based violence, fighters within armed groups, and peace and rebuilding players, women are disproportionately impacted by armed conflict. Over 80% of displaced individuals are women and children. In addition, women often assume the job of caretaker for the wounded and find themselves as lone parents, carers of the elderly, or home managers. (Randsley de Moura et al., 2018) Women

continue to be grossly underrepresented in positions of power, including defense and international affairs, conflict resolution, and peacekeeping. Meanwhile, renowned worldwide organizations advocate for more women to be included in legislative and conflict resolution initiatives, and the number of women holding seats in national parliaments continues to climb (European Parliament, 2019; United Nations, 2017). As previously stated, the research question is based on the hypothesis that a change in gender balance in higher positions in international relations affects conflict and war decisions. Simultaneously, the discipline of behavioral international relations has been gaining ground in academia during the last two decades (Kertzer & Tingley, 2018). This rapidly emerging scientific topic focuses on human preferences, beliefs, irrationality, and prejudice in international relations decision-making.

Biological differences, differences in the way threats and risks are perceived by men and women, the extent of political mobilization of women, and a stronger preference for consensus in decision-making among women have been attributed to gender differences in attitudes toward international relations (Eichenberg & Read, 2016). In relation to the use of force and conflict, men and women have notably different perspectives. This chapter examines the application of behavioral international relations to gender in political decisions. Following this scientific method, a literature study is conducted on the role of women leaders in decision-making, policy agenda prioritization, conflict, and dispute resolution.

Behavioral International Relations

The scientific subject of international relations has changed significantly throughout the last two decades (Kertzer & Tingley, 2018). In 2001, Goldgeier and Tetlock (2001) wrote a review article on the application of political psychology to international affairs. This analysis is centered on traditional paradigms of international relations, such as realism, constructivism, and

liberal institutionalism, as well as psychological research contributions. Since then, there has been a revival of interest in merging psychology with international relations (Kertzer & Tingley, 2018). 9/11 and the global war on terror, the conflict in the Middle East, Brexit and Trump's victory spurred an increased interest in the psychological processes behind the emergence of extremism, terrorism, public opinion, and perceived leadership. The study of these relationships falls within the discipline of international relations based on behavior.

While international relations theories have always allowed for individual preferences and opinions to vary, there has never been a comprehensive examination of the impact of these differences (Hafner-Burton et al., 2017). Compared to other scientific disciplines, the topic of behavioral international relations is relatively new. However, it seems that concentrating on biases and variability in preferences and decision-making will provide positive results. The study of international relations is comprised of paradigms of rational decision and irrational behavior (Mintz, 2007). For instance, a focus on the heterogeneity of people may aid in elucidating the origins and effects of heterogeneity in the decision-making of highly significant international players. Age, gender, and occupation are heterogeneity's underlying elements, as are reasoning or managerial styles, socialization processes, and emotional states. The study of behavioral international relations focuses on discovering systematic variations in the preferences, attitudes, and decision-making processes that influence strategic issues and options.

Preferences

So far, the so-called behavioral revolution has found three sets of differentiation of rationalist models with respect to preferences. First, the appraisal of risk is inconsistent, with strong risk aversion for possible profits and low-risk aversion for potential losses relative to the status quo (Hafner-Burton et al., 2017). Contrary to what anticipated utility theory assumes, the

outcomes of actions are not valued in absolute terms but rather in terms of the values given to prospective gaining or losing. Standard rational models presume that the judgment of the future remains constant when evaluating costs and benefits for any given time period. In contrast, experimental research has shown that prolonged temporal irregularity has an effect (O'Shea et al., 2020). This resulted in variations in the amount decision-makers consider the shadow of the future in talks and permits a better explanation of international agreement settlements. In public benefit games, cooperation has been seen to be more prevalent than would be anticipated by traditional theory (Doebeli, M. and Hauert, 2005). This tendency helps to explain why self-interested governments join and abide by international organizations even when institutional enforcement is low or insignificant.

Beliefs

In most older rational models, agents are supposed to be all-knowing, not just about their preferences and perspectives but also about others. The idea of bounded rationality was subsequently established, claiming that when misinformation or missing information is present, solutions or judgments are as adequate as feasible rather than optimum (Battaglio et al., 2019). Regarding the literature on war, Philip Tetlock's research of inadequate statistical inference in the predicting skills of foreign policy specialists is the most comprehensive (Hafner-Burton et al., 2017). Tetlock and Gardner contend that even recognized specialists are incapable of generating accurate field-specific forecasts (Roche, 2016). In addition to strategy and opponents, Jervis (2017) contents that misperception also involves one's skills and the existence of overconfidence.

Decision-making Process

When the stakes are high and organizational resources are plentiful, actions in international relations may be argued to represent the achievement of the maximum value

(Hafner-Burton et al., 2017). However, it is suggested that framing processes significantly impact decision-making processes, with political decision-makers valuing the familiar (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Decision-making is influenced by how information is collected, presented, and aligned with existing belief systems (Mintz, 2007). Hermann et al. (2001) discovered that the personal traits of political leaders influence both their foreign policy choices and actions. The expanding study of behavioral international relations lends credence to the significance of understanding heterogeneity and, therefore, gender implications in political decision-making. In accordance with this methodology, this study combines insights from behavioral sciences with findings from international relations and policymaking about decision-making processes. The following subchapters will exemplify this strategy.

Policy Agendas and Women

Results regarding the relationship between gender and policy agendas appear contradictory. Spending on social welfare, child health, and environmental regulations, for instance, is correlated with an increase in the number of female legislators (Atchison & Down, 2019; Chen, 2010; Swiss et al., 2012). According to Little et al.'s (2001) research, female state legislators in the United States have a different policy agenda from their male counterparts. Women support more traditional issues that affect women, like social services, health care, and children's issues (Little et al., 2001). The study's female participants were also less likely to support government spending, public safety, institutional rules, and taxes (Little et al., 2001). Even after adjusting for race, political party, political experience, type of leadership position, and region, effects were still present (Little et al., 2001). This supports the finding of Hicks et al. (2015) that the number of female politicians increases the amount of foreign aid directed at health and education. A rise in the proportion of female politicians was also discovered to be

positively related to the amount of foreign aid, both in absolute numbers and relative to the overall GDP of the respective country, in keeping with the stereotype of "caring" women.

The interrelationships between gender, constituency preferences, and decisions regarding national security issues in America were examined by Bendix and Jeong in 2019. It was discovered that women initially vote in the House and Senate more "dovish" than their male counterparts. Dove decision-makers are those who favor accommodation and conciliation with opponents (Brown, 2017). Furthermore, even when it necessitates giving in and compromising, doves are more likely to end a war through a negotiated settlement (Brown, 2017). However, when the variables were adjusted for constituency preferences, this effect vanished in contrast to the earlier-mentioned studies. The call for milder tactics is not being made in response to the rise in elected women. A more liberal electorate, on the other hand, favors more moderate policies and raises the proportion of liberal lawmakers, including liberal women. In contrast, other studies indicated that women tend to support policies more specifically related to them than men (Lawless, 2015). That is, so-called "women's issues" like gender equality, child care, abortion, part-time work, and minimum wage are likely to be raised by women who have replaced men in the same district. However, Lawless (2015) discovered that partisanship is a trait both men and women share. Political preferences trumped the gender effect in Lawless's (2015) and Bendix's and Jeong's (2019) research.

Cognitive Processes Among Women Regarding Societal Issues

Cognitive science research has shown that men and women interpret incoming information differently (Dykiert et al., 2009; Halpern, 2013). These disparities cannot be attributed only to the social environment but also to genetic variations (Savic et al., 2010). The prefrontal cortex, which is associated with empathy, self-awareness, collaboration, and care, is

significantly more active in women than in men, according to a functional brain imaging study conducted by Amen et al. (2017). This innate female predilection for social concern and empathy is already apparent in newborns and young toddlers (Christov-Moore et al., 2014). Baron-Cohen (2010) asserts that the distinctions between men and women depend on the degree of empathy. In general, women are more concerned with justice, have a greater capacity for empathy, and place a higher value on reciprocal relationships than men. Interestingly, while men's feelings of empathy depend on their perceptions of others' fairness, women's feelings of empathy do not correlate with their perceptions of others' fairness.

Murat Yildirim (2018) investigated the relationship between women's enhanced empathic response to external cues and the policy agendas proposed by women. Reformulated, the relatively low cognitive threshold of urgency for women relative to men was anticipated to outweigh a greater number of societal issues requiring attention. Therefore, it was anticipated that women in parliament would propose more diverse policy agendas than men. Female representatives discuss a broader range of issues in parliament than men. Schmitt and Brant (2019) also analyzed gender and legislative behavior in relation to the size of policy agendas. The findings indicate that when seeking political leadership, women limit the number of issues that can be effectively juggled (Schmitt and Brant, 2019). As a result, it was discovered that women are more active than men in introducing legislation (Schmitt and Brant, 2019). It was also discovered that women were more effective at shepherding proposals through the entire legislative process (Schmitt and Brant, 2019). Additional research has revealed that before making legislative decisions, women are more informed than men (Nownes and Freeman, 2019). In addition, women consider more types and sources of information before making political

decisions (Yuill et al., 2020). This is due to the nature of the information that comes from these sources: women are better at analyzing and synthesizing dense information than men.

These findings have implications for the interpretation of studies in the preceding subchapter titled 'women and policy agendas'. Both Murat Yildirim (2018) and Schmitt and Brant (2019) argue that it is not necessarily true that women care more about 'soft' or 'traditional' issues than men. Rather, women have a higher issue-carrying capacity and thus care about a broader range of issues than men. Therefore, an increase in the proportion of women among national legislators may influence policy issues previously underserved by their male counterparts. This is supported by Clayton and Zetterberg (2018). They discovered a correlation between an increase in female legislators as a result of gender quotas and an increase in spending in the health sector, and a slight decrease in spending for all other sectors, including military expenditure (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). It is also argued that broad interest in a variety of issues results in a better context for decision-making (Murat Yildirim, 2018). Therefore, it was assumed that an increase in female representation in legislatures would result in more productive parliamentary debates. Effectiveness was not defined in this study. Therefore, the characteristics of female leadership are examined in the following section.

Women Leaders

Numerous psychological research has shown gender disparities in leadership and decision-making processes (Jeaong & Harrisson, 2017). In addition to the stated biological distinctions, some of these differences are societal in nature. The role-congruity theory of leadership, described in this subsection, derives and explains these distinctions.

Position-congruity theory contrasts societal expectations of the desired function with expectations of a potential candidate for this role (Eagly, 2018). The argument is that a mismatch

between these expectations puts a candidate for this post at a disadvantage. The notion of role-congruity is best evaluated in relation to the leadership position. It is often assumed that leaders exhibit agentic and individual traits such as ambition, independence, dominance, and confidence (Aronson et al., 2013). Traditionally, these traits are also linked with males. Kindness and consideration are less strongly connected with leadership traits than communal virtues (Hart, 2021). Traditionally, these traits are linked with women (Hart, 2021). According to Saint-Michel (2018), the discrepancy between the societal expectations of leaders (agentic traits) and women (communal characteristics) not only makes it difficult for women to become leaders but also for them to effectively fulfill this function once they get it.

According to research, men and women approach political decision-making differently. For instance, the support for negotiating suggestions depends partly on whether the proposal is offered by a man or a woman. Maoz (2009) discovered that women are often seen to generate worse policies and hence get less support. Atkinson and Windett (2018) discovered that women face much more obstacles than males when running for Congress, such as the perception that they are less capable in crucial areas such as defense and international affairs. Existing preconceptions and attitudes, in which women are seen as warm but inept and men as competent but not warm, partly explain this phenomenon (Heilman, 2012). In addition, women are favored over males for high-level occupations that involve risk, a phenomenon known as the glass cliff. In times of organizational crises, women are favored due to their stereotypically strong social skills and adaptability. Similarly, Randsley de Moura et al. (2018) showed that aggressive women obtain leadership posts more often in uncertain social, economic, or political situations. This raises the likelihood of being viewed as a less effective leader.

Men and women have typically distinct conflict management approaches (Shepherd, 2015). Men are more likely than women to utilize the conflict management techniques of competing (filling one's demands over the other) and evading (neglecting concerns of the other and self by delaying the problem). In turn, women are more cooperative, using collaborative (self- and other-satisfying) and compromise methods (finding middle ground). Cooperation may be very beneficial in the context of international relations. Kuhn and Poole (2000) discovered that organizations with cooperative conflict styles produced more successful choices than those with competitive or avoiding conflict styles, often favoured by males. Cooperative behavior promotes more positive results and strengthens connections between disputing parties. In accordance with this presumption, the traditional leadership position is gradually broadened by the expectation that leaders must be socially adept, which is seen as a characteristic of women (Eagly, 2018).

Violating stereotypes draws social displeasure (Eagly, 2018). Female executives breach preconceptions due to the contradictory demands of their gender and leadership responsibilities. It has been discovered that women whose behavior is dominant and forceful endure retaliation. This is stated in the literature as "negative traits attributed to women demonstrating agentic behavior" (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010, p.924). This phenomenon is widely supported by a meta-analysis conducted by Williams and Tiedens (2016), which demonstrated that women's direct display of dominance in the form of demands elicits hostility and comparable reactions. Yildirim et al. (2019) evaluated the impact of parliamentary speeches on the career prospects of both female and male lawmakers (MPs). Active participation in legislative activities was advantageous for the career prospects of male legislators but not their female colleagues. In contrast, female representatives were less likely to be promoted after participating in

considerable career-enhancing legislative activities. This finding is explained by Yildirim et al. (2019) as a consequence of women becoming "too forceful or agentic" according to societal norms. In addition, when someone has expectations of another person, that person responds appropriately, evoking the desired reaction and making the expectations a reality. This tendency is known as the self-fulfilling prophecy. It may cause women in parliament to act more communally and cooperatively than they would if these initial expectations were not there.

Two premises are drawn from these ideas (Eagly, 2018). First, leadership is aided when an individual belongs to a demographic group whose cultural archetype matches that of leaders. In other words, both men and leaders are believed to possess agentic traits; hence, males are often regarded to be more qualified leaders than women. Second, it is easier to be viewed as a good leader if your qualities fit the group's image and vice versa. The relationship between these two principles might lead to desirable characteristics being interpreted as negative in some settings. Eagly (2018) provides the example of empathy and compassion, normally allocated to women and regarded favorably, being viewed poorly or as improper leadership for a military commander in war.

Gender Quotas and Rising Female Representation in Leadership

In parliamentary democracies, leaders of political parties are the major characters (Cross & Blais, 2012). Political leaders have the greatest control over party positions, serve as the primary spokesman, and exercise the most influence on the career pathways of fellow party members. It is suggested that female presence in these posts reflects gender equality and wider democratic norms (Kittilson, 2011). By increasing the number of female quotas, the path to these highly coveted jobs in the political realm is facilitated. Already in 2016, over 100 nations have implemented gender quotas. In 2020, more than half of the world's nations (126) will utilize

gender quotas for the election of parliamentarians (IDEA, 2020). A study of the consequences of the proportion of women in parliaments would be insufficient without consideration of the background surrounding the change in the gender balance of laws.

Several study findings imply that gender quotas improve the overall quality of politics. For instance, Besley et al. (2017) discovered favorable benefits of party-based gender quotas on men's competence in parliaments as a result of a drive for more competent males to replace less successful male leaders. Another study reveals that women elected under quota systems were at least as qualified as their male counterparts (Weeks & Baldez, 2014). Baltrunaite et al. (2014) discovered a rise in both male and female politicians' levels of education. In addition, Geissel and Hust (2005) discovered that women chosen due to gender quota systems had more political ambition and drive than women elected prior to the implementation of gender quotas for a certain parliament.

Since gender quotas effectively enhance the number of women elected to office, the movement for more women in parliament might be bolstered from inside the political system. O'Brien and Rickne (2016) describe the theory of critical mass. They argue that when a large number of women occupy high political positions, coalitions will be formed that demand cultural, behavioral, and social change both within parties and overall legislation, including an increase in the proportion of women at the top. This is reinforced by Swiss et al. (2012), who found improved performance on child care concerns as the proportion of women in parliament exceeded 20%. Furthermore, nations with a greater number of female MPs in lower levels of parliament are more likely to have a female head of state (Jalalzai, 2013). O'Brien and Rickne (2016) showed that gender quotas boost the number of women in politics but have no influence on the length of time in office. It was also shown that the capacity of women to generate support

for female leaders, in general, helped the observed results. In addition, Schramm and Stark (2020) discovered that in nations with high levels of gender equality and female empowerment, female heads of government are less likely to be questioned about their leadership ability.

It must be highlighted that issues have been made as to whether the implementation of gender quotas causes more damage than good to the credibility of women when combined with the customary connections given to women. As mentioned briefly in the introduction to this study, opponents of gender quotas believe that these types of policies may result in a loss of competence in response to the present need for diversity in companies and political organizations. Whether or not this is true, the possibility of it happening might result in a reaction against women recruited or elected for being trustworthy and capable leaders, regardless of gender. Furthermore, the installation of a gender quota is claimed to be undemocratic since it restricts the public's voting power (IDEA, 2020). Finally, it is maintained that gender quotas undermine the values of liberal democracy and fair opportunity for everyone. Examining the long-term impacts of gender quotas is beyond the scope of the present study. Yet, quotas are very relevant for understanding variations in the gender balance within political institutions.

Women and Conflict

Several studies indicated the percentage of women lawmakers participating in peace-building procedures to have an influence on the results. Generally speaking and possessing extensive scientific backing, women are shown to be very compromising and males highly competitive when confronted with conflict (Dildar & Amjad, 2017). Eichenberg (2016) analyzed the support for the use of force in reference to military assistance in El Salvador and the current conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Libya. It was revealed that women typically exhibit less support for military activities for any objective, any action or for any historical event analyzed as

compared to males. In 2018, Krause et al. found that women's involvement in peace discussions contributes to greater accord, higher agreement implementation rates and peace that lasts longer. The association between peace accords containing women's signatures and peace durability holds after adjusting for political and economic progress, the numbers of women in parliament and gender quotas, among others. Bell (2015) further highlights the significance of involvement by women by noting that peace accords that only speak holistically about women's rights are generally the ones that suffer from implementation difficulties. This is because these agreements tend to be internationalized agreements that do not represent the true agreement between the contending parties. In contrast, the Geneva Graduate Institute's Broadening Participation Process revealed that the engagement of women in the peace process caused peace accords to be nearly always negotiated and more likely to be enforced. It must be highlighted that the sample utilized by Krause et al. (2018) was confined because only 13 peace accords spanning six peace processes contained female signatories.

Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2018) found comparable findings. The researchers investigated the percentage of women in national legislatures from 1945 to 2009 and the association with conflict termination. An increased presence of women inside legislative bodies was shown to improve the chance of conflict termination by negotiated settlement. Effects were larger when gender diversity among legislatures was evident in states with more authoritative legislatures. Bourne et al. (2003) discovered female politicians to be more receptive to conciliation following an opponent's aggressiveness in case a peace treaty was imposed. For males, the outcomes were found to be contrary, with breaking a peace treaty more commonly operating as a justification for violence and retaliation. A study by Shea and Christian (2016) identified an exception, which showed an increase in women lawmakers to enhance the

possibility of a nation engaging in humanitarian military intervention. Research by Eichenberg (2016) supports the conclusion that women are more inclined to favor humanitarian military intervention than males. Moreover, Eichenberg (2016) showed women to be more supportive of peacekeeping missions than males, but gender effects were shown to be minor.

Intervening Factors

Scholars disagree on the causes of armed conflict, and a consistent theory supported by the majority of scholars in the field has yet to be developed. There is always a component of triggering events, government error, or random chance in the initiation of war. Ultimately, war is possible so long as there is a conflict between parties and the availability of fighting weapons (Smith, 2004). What makes war likely is a more complicated issue. Conflict is not the result of a single cause and cannot be explained by a single event. This section, therefore, sheds light on other aspects of armed conflict likely to account for a portion of the variation in armed conflict between and within states. According to Smith (2004), a consensus exists amongst scholars regarding two distinct causes of conflict. Economic development and political systems are regarded as indicators of a nation's well-being, performance, and position in the geopolitical sphere.

Economic Development

Economic factors have been repeatedly evaluated in the research on conflict as reliable predictors of armed conflict (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Hegre & Sambanis). Low-income levels are positively associated with the emergence of armed conflict (Urdal, 2008). In accordance with these results, Rettberg (2020) asserts that conflicts are more prevalent in developing nations. The nations most afflicted by armed conflict are among those with the greatest levels of insecurity, victimization, and worst economic outlooks. Furthermore, countries with a lengthy history of

armed conflict are more prone to future war than other nations. This results from the inflation of military expenditures, which diverts funds from other vital policy areas like health care and education, causing poverty and crime rates to increase (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). These nations are then left with imbalanced government finances and institutional weakness, paving the way for more instability and military intervention. Half of all civil wars begin as a result of economic decline after a conflict (Collier, 2004). Moreover, any favorable circumstances for enhanced development tend to erode for these nations, encouraging the resumption of previous wars and the emergence of new ones (Rettberg, 2020). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called for the relationship between development and peace, and the 16th Sustainable Development Goal called for promoting peaceful and inclusive communities. However, wealth and income disparities do not lead by definition to conflict and insurrection (Willems, 2012). According to Willems, it is important to distinguish between several forms of inequality, as seen below.

Economic Inequality between States

Studies have indicated a high correlation between a country's income and its propensity to participate in civil war. The likelihood of conflict is greater for poorer nations than for wealthier ones. This is explained by Holmqvist (2012), who contends that the recruitment of rebels in impoverished nations is far less expensive than in affluent ones, where governments are more likely to be resilient to rebellions. It has been shown that national wealth is a significant predictor of armed conflict.

Economic Inequality within States

According to Gurr (1970), a disparity between predicted and real economic circumstances may create conflict. According to his theory of relative deprivation, extreme

relative deprivation causes the poor to revolt against the affluent and the rich to defend their holdings by battling the poor. However, the evidence supporting this assertion is minimal. According to Collier and Hoeffler (2008), wealth disparity within nations is inadequate for forecasting violence. Grievances are not a reliable predictor of armed conflict because they do not provide the organization necessary for it to develop.

Political Systems

The relationship between political systems and peace is of paramount importance to conflict studies. The most influential notion is the liberal peace thesis, which asserts that democratic governments are more peaceful than other political systems, domestically and internationally (Paris, 2004). The United Nations has included the liberal peace thesis in the UN Agenda for Peace report, which asserts that it is obligated to assist 'deficient' national government systems and create new democratic institutions via post-conflict reconstruction.

Public Opinion in Democratic Systems

There are a variety of theories for the liberal peace thesis (Hegre, 2014). In democratic regimes that consider the interests of organizations and people, the start of the war is restrained, for instance. The examination of the influence of public opinion on the conduct of war confirmed the assumption that democracies are naturally peaceful and that this effect was helped by the people's morality. Bell and Quek (2018) conducted more research on the impact of public opinion on peace and democracy. Regarding the deployment of armed forces against democracies, the broad consensus of the Chinese populace was analyzed. A poll was conducted about the use of force against a fictitious country with either a democratic or authoritarian government. Despite living in a non-democratic society, the Chinese public has similar sentiments to those of the United States and the United Kingdom about using (excessive)

military force against democratic nations. Moreover, the Chinese public favor military operations against democracies far less than they do against autocracies. In spite of the fact that citizens are generally averse to using military action against democracies, popular opinion alone is insufficient to explain state behavior with respect to the democratic peace, the authors argue.

Face Value in Democratic Systems

Other justifications for the liberal peace theory relate to the significance of the political loss of face in the event of military defeat. The potential loss of face is more significant for democratic political leaders than dictatorial political leaders (Hegre, 2014). Consequently, democratic political leaders are more inclined to fight only conflicts that can be won relatively easily and would mobilize more resources to do so, making them undesirable targets. The most significant source of democratic peace, according to Goldsmith et al. (2015), is the impact of political rivalry on militarized international conflict. It was shown that highly competitive states are unlikely to wage war against democracies. High levels of political competitiveness need that leaders have a persuasive moral case for participating in war since being labeled as fighting an "unjust" war generates high levels of political vulnerability. High-competition states are less likely to attack democracies than autocracies since it is harder to argue the commencement of such war as necessary, winnable, and fair. In the environment of intense institutionalized political rivalry, the norm of avoiding armed confrontation was found to have a larger impact overall.

Militarized Disputes after Democratic Breakdown

Regarding the seeming inviolability of democratic processes, criticism has been raised in the literature on peace and democracy. Tschantret (2020) contends that although democracies are less belligerent than autocracies, there is reason to believe that autocratic states emerging from

democratic collapse will be more belligerent than previous autocratic governments. The author contends that democratic failure prepares the path for impatient political leaders to seize power. Excessive impatience and animosity toward these democratic standards, relative to the viewpoints of other authoritarian leaders, may result in greater rejection of democratic modes of dispute resolution and conciliation. Tschantret (2020) found evidence for the concept that autocracies founded after or during a democratic collapse are more aggressive than other autocracies. For instance, autocracies that came from the collapse of democracy are more prone to engage in confrontation with democracies than other autocracies.

The Wisdom of Crowds

LeVeck and Narang (2017) provided a fourth persuasive case for the liberal peace theory. The writers supported their study about the benefits of collaborative decision-making. It was anticipated that democratic institutions would include a diversity of free-thinking and choosing people. As a result, democratic regimes were anticipated to make fewer mistakes in decision-making than homogeneous or authoritarian nations. The study was based on the so-called "wisdom of the crowds" theory, which states that mistakes are likely to be cancelled out by averaging individual estimations, and a type of collective knowledge is attained. In the same vein, Aronson, Wilson, and Akert (2013) contend that groups make better judgments than individuals when ideas are pooled, and experts are consulted. Therefore, it was anticipated that democracies would have an edge in conducting foreign policy over authoritarian regimes, which often gather information from a smaller and more homogeneous group of people (LeVeck & Narang, 2017). LeVeck and Narang (2017) discovered that negotiating for democratic institutions was more effective than bargaining for authoritarian systems. It was hypothesized that as democracies often collect information and views from a more diverse group of persons,

the likelihood of some of these individuals matching and comprehending adversarial decision-makers rose. In turn, it becomes easier to predict the replies and methods of opponents, which increases the likelihood of establishing mutual agreements. This study demonstrates why it is essential to control for democracy in subsequent analyses.

Likelihood of Female Leaders to Wage War

The impact of gender in leadership has become controversial as the conflict and violence seem to be waged by the male political leaders. Thus the world would likely be a more peaceful place if women held key power roles in the political system. The number of armed conflicts has increased since the 21st century, resulting in increased deaths. Thus, these modern conflicts and wars require a different approach to handling critical situations. Women's interaction in international development has resulted in women's positive impacts on social-economic outcomes. Women's participation in political decision-making has resulted in reducing modern conflict. The changes can be traced through the current invention, where women have contributed to 2% of mediation teams.

However, if the mal leaders cease leadership, the male warm-mongering action would still cause modern war and conflict. Experts and researchers allude to women to the state of being cooperative. During the covid 19 pandemic and its devastating impacts, women categorized among the minority have been primarily impacted. However, women in top leadership positions have proved different leadership styles especially in managing crisis situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Dwiedienawati et al., 2021). Thus, as much as women are viewed as victims of the broken world, their leadership proves otherwise. They can be architects and designers of a better world. As many countries faced COVID-19 pandemic impacts, much has been quoted about the effectiveness of women's leadership, especially in

political facets. About 8% of women have recorded a 40% success rate on COVID-19 response (Sergent and Stajkovic, 2020). Women-led countries have 6% lower death rates than those male leads (Sergent and Stajkovic, 2020). Women's leadership has been different in the political field as they emphasized collaboration and cooperation with other scientists, experts, and role models. Women have recorded positive economic growth in many countries. These have been attributed to their transparency, flexibility, willingness to admit mistakes and support for cooperation and empowerment.

Human Rights Millennium Development Goals in 2000 by UN Sustainable Development have consistently empowered women leadership. Another organization supporting women's leadership in politics are World Bank Women Business. Women have a lower likelihood of waging war (True, 2016). This is because the gender has continuously participated in conflict resolution and prevention at the political level and globally (True, 2016). Women have participated in political leadership roles as guarantors, witnesses, and negotiators (Bouvier, 2016). The political analysis argues that failure to recognize women in the peacemaking process contributed to overlooking potential energy to respond to world threats (Bigio and Vogelstein, 2016). A body of researchers such as Adeji (2019), Krause et al. (2018), Trajano (2020), and Westendorf (2019) determined that women's participation through official negotiation or grassroots efforts contributes to a high level of the peace agreement.

Thus full participation of women in peace and security has increased, affirming the ideology that the inclusion of women in political leadership would help prevent conflict, create peace and sustain security in countries affected by conflict and modern wars. Women in political leadership ten, to prevent violence and provide security. Thus women's empowerment in public leadership is accompanied by peace and stability in the state (Bakken, I.V. and Buhaug, 2021;

Powell, 2016). They have the skills and qualities to resolve conflict without recording violence. Secondly, women's participation is associated with peace prediction. Countries led by women are less likely to anticipate modern war and conflict. Thus gender equality is an indicator of a state of peacefulness.

Case Study of Women Leaders in War

Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi, and Golda Meir were, according to all accounts, including their own, the "best men in their ministries." Each fought and won a major war, enhancing their reputations for strength and firmness. These three prime ministers disprove the concept that all women labor only for peace and lead in a nurturing, empathetic manner. All of these prime ministers exhibited behaviors often associated with masculinity, in part to gain acceptance as "true leaders." Thatcher often used severe methods to achieve her goals (Golder, 2019). She consistently displayed strong nerves and intransigence in the face of resistance, showing disdain for leaders who were less focused and weaker than herself (Salmon, 2016). She infamously reprimanded Ronald Reagan when he seemed poised to "go all wobbly" in pursuit of their shared international objectives. Golda Meir, Indira Gandhi, and Margaret Thatcher were all in office during a period of political conflict or war. They were seen as compromise candidates by their colleagues, who believed they could be easily influenced. According to a new book by Blema Steinberg (2008) on their attitude to power, "as prime ministers, all three women earned a reputation for being strong-willed, uncompromising, and resilient." And "none of them were concerned in displaying cooperative or compassionate leadership approaches."

Diplomacy is a field in which it seems reasonable that women may flourish, but there have been surprisingly few women involved in it on a formal, international basis throughout history. In a male-dominated society, women are often schooled and socialized to be courteous,

diplomatic, and cunning, and sometimes must be so to succeed. The three recent US women secretaries of state, Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Rodham Clinton, had quite distinct personalities and goals while in office. Yet, each was highly successful in her own right. They have not, nonetheless, evaded a searchlight focused on their style and personal attributes due to the fact that they are ladies. As a presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton was criticized for being too masculine when she showed strength and audacity and being too feminine to be commander-in-chief when she displayed nurturing inclinations (Koekkoek, 2017). Many women sympathized with her since this "Catch 22" situation is all too common to us.

Angela Merkel started her career in a ministry devoted to women's affairs and used this position as a stepping stone to greater power. As chancellorship, she "learned to wield 'hard power' to solidify her political position." And her political ambition is beyond dispute. According to analysts, Merkel has guided Germany to a position of considerable power in Europe, in part because she stimulates no envy or competitiveness among the alpha males who lead huge nations, and she inspires no fear among the residents of smaller ones (Hellmann, 2016). According to Gonzales (2021), diplomacy is one of Merkel's finest attributes, and she has outperformed the majority, if not all, of her male counterparts in this arena.

Golda Meir

One week after the beginning of the War of Attrition, Golda Meir assumed leadership in Israel due to the untimely death of Prime Minister Eshkol (Steinberg, 2008). During her administration, many more problems arose, most notably the Yom Kippur War. In this conflict, Israel suffered substantial early casualties due to its sluggish mobilization and Egypt's superior anti-aircraft defense systems. Israel was able to reverse Egypt's early successes with US help. The United States, the Soviet Union, and the UN finally organized a truce. Despite Israel's

military triumph, its perception of invulnerability was shattered. In 1974, Meir chose to withdraw from the government and retire permanently from politics.

Golda Meir was a hawk who refused to negotiate on any foreign policy issue she deemed essential to Israel's survival. According to Steinberg (2008: 134), Meir was seen as a strong negotiator who refused to make concessions to Egypt. Therefore, it is logical to assume that her opinions on foreign policy helped her gain her position in leadership. Nonetheless, does gender influence the formation of these foreign policy preferences? Given that Meir's formative political years did not occur in a stable political environment but rather in a succession of conflicts (first with the British and subsequently with the Arab governments), it is logical to assume that Meir's foreign policy views were a result of these conflicts. According to Steinberg's (2008) examination of Meir's leadership style, the prime minister's primary motivation was ideology, not political survival. This is clear based on how others perceived Meir. Henry Kissinger lauded Meir's tenacious defense of Israel's security and referred to her as a 'tiger' in talks. Even Sadat expressed appreciation for Meir's doggedness in defending Israel's survival (Finklestone, 2013). While Meir's foreign policy inclinations are aggressive, it is essential to consider if the Israeli government's foreign policy plans would have been different under male leadership.

Margaret Thatcher

The faltering Argentine military regime invaded the Falkland Islands on April 2, 1982, to overthrow the area's British authority. On April 5, the United Kingdom sent a naval task force to attack Argentine troops. Since the 1800s, the Falklands have been British territory. Neither nation declared war, yet the fighting lasted 74 days until Argentina capitulated. This chain of events is often mentioned as one of the several tough foreign policy moves taken by Margaret

Thatcher, the "Iron Lady." Although the Argentine military initiated the war, Thatcher chose to fight back despite others questioning whether it was worthwhile.

Even before the invasion, Thatcher showed skepticism about the Argentine Junta and pessimism in the continuing discussions. Since its settlement in 1764, the United Kingdom and Argentina have engaged in intermittent negotiations on the Falklands (Connell-Smith, 2019). In 1981, when Galtieri was elected president of Argentina, he alluded to an invasion of the Falkland Islands, but the British did not take him seriously (Carassai, 2021). Thatcher said during the talks with Galtieri's regime before the invasion that the new Junta maintained negotiations cynically for a few months (Phillips, 2016). Thatcher questioned not only the junta's intent to invade but also their will to negotiate (Phillips, 2016). Thatcher started the discussions with little optimism for a favorable conclusion (Phillips, 2016). She remarked that diplomacy was getting ever more challenging (Phillips, 2016). The Argentinians had shown their willingness to take direct action (Hadfield-Amkhan, 2010, p.146). Thatcher reacted negatively to the invasion due to her concerns about the regime (Phillips, 2016). Although it is unclear if Thatcher drew red lines in response to the Argentine invasion, she demanded that Argentina evacuate from the islands under threat of force. Thatcher concluded her House of Commons speech by stating:

The people of the Falkland Islands, like the people of the United Kingdom, are an island race. Their way of life is British; their allegiance is to the Crown. They are few in number, but they have the right to live in peace, to choose their own way of life and to determine their own allegiance. Their way of life is British; their allegiance is to the Crown. It is the wish of the British people and the duty of Her Majesty's Government to do everything that we can to uphold that right. That will be our hope and our endeavour

and, I believe, the resolve of every Member of the House. (Hadfield-Amkhan, 2010, p.146)

By reiterating her conviction in the "Britishness" of the Falkland Islands and asserting that her government would "do all possible" to safeguard them, Thatcher indicated to the Argentine Junta that she considered the Falkland Islands to be part of the nation's territory. This comment implies that Thatcher wants to treat the Falkland Islands as she would Britain's home island, not as a remote, inconsequential island. This is a coercive strategy since she had openly declared her intent to recapture the islands. This increased the credibility of her threat by holding her response to the press if she fails to safeguard the Falkland Islands' "right" to remain British.

Indira Gandhi

Indira Gandhi, the only child of India's first prime minister (Nehru), was named prime minister in 1966 after the death of her predecessor (Khan & Haider, 2018). The civil war between East and West Pakistan eventually led to Bangladesh's independence and was the most formative foreign policy problem during her administration (Khan & Haider, 2018). Her leadership during the Bangladesh crisis is recognized as the high point of her career. Still, the remainder of her presidency was overshadowed by corruption allegations, food shortages, inflation, and internal conflict (Khan & Haider, 2018). The next years of Gandhi's presidency were more concerned with India's internal coherence than with the competition between India and Pakistan.

Unlike Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi was less ideologically oriented and more concerned with maintaining control over India's government (Steinberg, 2008). We do not witness Gandhi using hardline measures to bolster her credibility with the people. Gandhi opted not to emphasize India's military superiority over Pakistan during the Bangladesh crisis,

demonstrating calm and smart diplomacy. Thus, we find that Gandhi was no more of an international hawk than previous Indian leaders, nor did her gender seem to influence her decision-making or policy opinions. While some Pakistani leadership remarks claim that Gandhi's gender exacerbated the Bangladesh conflict, it is impossible to conceive another policy path that the Pakistani leadership might have pursued without losing both Bangladesh and power positions.

Angela Merkel

Angela Merkel was Germany's eighth chancellor and the de facto leader of the European Union. She exemplified a collaborative international relations and policy approach (Phillips, 2016). The conflict between the European Union, the United States, and Russia exemplifies Merkel's approach to conflict resolution in the international arena (Phillips, 2016). Merkel was pressed into the role of mediator between Russia and the United States owing to Germany's geopolitical position and her strong friendship with Putin (Phillips, 2016). She entered the discussion with a positive attitude (Phillips, 2016). In September 2014, Merkel assumed the lead negotiating position with Putin and the role of mediator between the West and Russia in an effort to reach a diplomatic resolution (Phillips, 2016). The situation persisted and intensified, with fighting erupting after the first cease-fire agreement (Minsk I) was signed and Putin being accused of further inciting violence (Phillips, 2016).

Merkel adopted a multilateral approach to negotiations despite the disarray. Then, in the weeks preceding the February 2015 negotiations, several U.S. lawmakers and NATO's senior military commanders demanded that weaponry and ammunition be sent to the Ukrainian military to help them fight the pro-Russian rebels more effectively. Merkel replied to these demands by rejecting military alternatives stating that she could not conceive of a scenario in which enhanced

weapons for the Ukrainian army would convince President Putin to the point where he felt he would lose militarily. Not only did she reject attempting to intimidate Russia, but she also underlined her conviction in negotiating with Putin. Merkel spent nearly 17 hours negotiating with Russia and France to achieve a cease-fire agreement instead of deploying weapons. Merkel was able to negotiate a cease-fire that stopped a dangerous escalation between the United States and Russia, despite the fact that the accord was not perfect.

Throughout the duration of the conflict, Merkel maintained constant contact with Putin and the West. Merkel outlined her viewpoint in a crystal-clear manner (Phillips, 2016). She categorically ruled out the use of armed force as a reaction to Russia's actions in Crimea (Phillips, 2016). This is a crucial issue because, by removing military alternatives from consideration, she disclosed her stance that she would not back an escalation despite the illegality of Russian military action (Phillips, 2016). This is rare in a militarized conflict negotiation since the threat of force is often used to dissuade or intimidate an opponent from pursuing a certain course of action (Phillips, 2016). Merkel did not contemplate the possibility of deploying force, but she made it quite clear that Russia's actions would not be accepted (Phillips, 2016). Her stance made it obvious to all parties that there would be no military escalation but that Europe would not tolerate a Russia that did not conform to international law.

Leadership Qualities That Are Gender-Dependent.

Gender plays a vital role in defining the quality of leadership. Thus gender influences the strategies that leaders use to handle conflicts. Generally, people's perceptions of gender influence vary depending on demographics, cultural values, and norms. The leadership and gender have a strong connection. Experts illustrate that gender and leadership have positive correlations. However, in other cases, political leadership depends on the leaders' ability to

motivate their subordinates as leadership involves inspiring, guiding, and communicating. Various theories are attributed to the impact gender has on leadership. Attitudinal driver theory states that feminine values are evident in both business and government institutions. The difference between men and women is captured when women's abilities are linked to traditional leadership.

However, the feminine value needs to be maintained to ensure success. Leadership qualities distinguishing female leaders and their counterparts in the political arena constitute four key dimensions: first emotional communication, interpersonal sensitivity, kindness, and empathy. Emotional communication in women involves expressing a voice of affection that reveals the emotional state of women's political leaders (Allen, 2019). This character exposes effective communication that improves women listening skills. Female political leaders better illustrate these skills compared to other male counterparts. They also encourage a perception of truthfulness for the second dimension. For interpersonal sensitivity, nonverbal communication skills expressed by females include highly valued eye contact, increasing credibility, trust, and political personalization (Grebelsky-Lichtman and Katz, 2020). The third dimension that involves kindness incorporates inclusive expression that expresses optimism in the political field. It also expresses a sign of engagement and cooperation. Lastly, the fourth dimension of rationality involves the expression of empathy (Boisserie-Lacroix, C. and Inchingolo, 2021).

Further, it represents the concern for welfare. In addition, the characteristic enhances understanding and mutual agreements. Currently, there is a great deal of ensuring that more women occupy political leadership. There are various leadership qualities that men have copied from women leaders.

Men should learn that understanding their limits is critical. They should learn from women to embrace self-awareness rather than believing in self-belief. Adopting this character helps leaders foresee leadership gaps and realize where they want to be and where they are. Leaders who view themselves most critically do better at preparing for incompetence and underperformance. Motivation through transformation is one of the highly dependable qualities of gender. Women lead through inspiration, transformational attitude, and beliefs. According to political studies, transformation leadership is linked to high engagement performances and high productivity levels. For instance, women tend to prioritize their people's needs and requirements. When focusing on themselves, leaders cannot raise a high-performing team. Women hardly view political leadership as a glorified career (Trimble, 2018). On the other hand, men tend to concentrate on making themselves successful as they're more self-focused than women (Chamorro-Premuzic and Gallop, 2020). Thus there are leadership qualities that are gender-dependent.

Political Contribution of Women Toward War Elevation

Women have contributed to modern war elevation through participation in conflict resolution programs. However, women have been excluded from peacemaking movements. However, between 1992 and 2001, women increased their peacemaking movements. For instance, there are an average of 13 negotiators, six mediators, and six signatories, thus revealing more progress in women's participation. The number of women participating in leadership roles has also been increasing. Thus it is affirmed that women have participated in war evasion through participation. In 2020 peace efforts programs have struggled to include women. For example, Stephanie William is currently acting as a leader in Libya's United Nations Support Mission. Politically, women are taking bold steps toward the peacebuilding process (Okorie,

n.d.). They play critical roles in ensuring that they are ensuring lasting peace (Adepoju et al., 2021); thus, women are the critical peace negotiators.

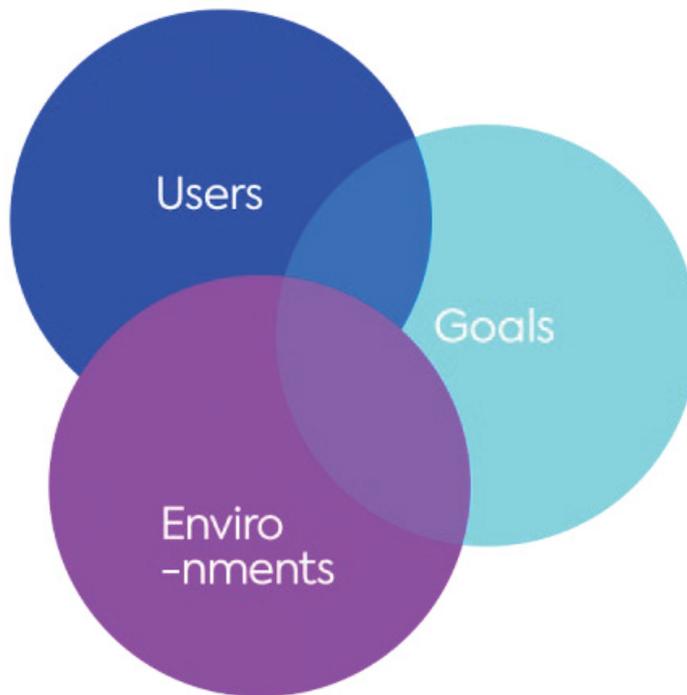
According to political studies, women are core in peacebuilding as they occupy almost half of the society (Tickner & True, 2018). In Somali and Burundi, women have played the observer role. However, when participating in peacebuilding, women have faced several limitations. One of the main reasons is the prevalence of sexual offenses and assaults that instill fear of silencing women's peace movements. Responsibilities roles also have limited women's participation in peacebuilding. Another critical factor is cultural pressures where women are restricted from leadership practices. Likewise, women's participation in politics has resulted from tangible gains in democracy. This is because women play vital roles in representing societal gains and increasing cohesiveness through closing ethnic gaps. Inequality has propelled modern wars and conflicts. Women's engagement in political leadership has played a vital role in ensuring that everybody is equally represented.

On the other hand, women's contribution toward elevating modern war has been funded by various recommendations. For instance, government and non-governmental bodies ensure that women play a crucial role in designing and implementing post-conflict resolutions. The bodies have also supported women's organizations in their peacebuilding practices. They consistently offer financial and technical support to women in their peacebuilding movement. Currently, the world recognizes untapped strength and capabilities in women's leadership.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research was conducted through qualitative design. It involved qualitative methods of data collection that involved no quantitative data. In addition, the qualitative data collection method involves collecting holistic, rich, and accurate data through appropriate and efficient analysis. The study was conducted through the desk study research method. The method was preferred as it aimed to answer specific questions related to primary research. Secondary research was conducted by looking at already existing secondary data. Books, journals, and articles on the research topic were used to obtain the secondary data. The data collection method was elected as it is less costly and time-consuming. To obtain an appropriate result, the mode of searching was done consistently and effectively. To avoid getting overwhelmed on which google site or secondary data source to use, there is a need to come up with the necessary way to sort the data through. For instance, when searching journals and articles on Google, keywords such as *women leadership, modern conflict, women political leadership, peacebuilding, women leadership, and modern war* were used. A Venn diagram was used to understand which obtained information was essential for the research.



The Venn has three circles that overlap. The spot where all the three aspects overlap is the best market research. During the desk study, the research covers the research goals and not the context of the environment. The secondary data sources used were data from books, personal sources, journals, and newspapers. Electronic media and information from the internet were used to augment sources from the library. During the research, unpublished sources were avoided as they were not readily available.

The obtained data were analyzed through thematic analysis. Researchers have recommended thematic analysis as the best method for analyzing qualitative data obtained through secondary sources (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018; Hackett and Strickland, 2018; Kiger and Varpio, 2020). Thematic analysis was used to identify data patterns and improve participant research analysis. To conduct proper thematic research, I needed to familiarize myself with the data fast. This was done by going through the data obtained to understand the meaning of the data set while getting insights into the potential codes to be used. After familiarizing with the

data, codes were created that gave a clear indication of the meaning of the data. The codes were also correlated with supporting data. Lastly, the codes were grouped into themes allowing each theme to have enough supporting data. Lastly, the dataset and correlating themes were illustrated in the results and discussed in the discussion sector.

Rationale for Desk Study Methodology

One technique to explore the role of women in international politics and leadership was to examine the influence of gender on decision-making using a quantitative analysis of a large data set including all female and male leaders. Theoretically, this enabled us to discover gender disparities in leadership style and behavior and make conclusions about interstate war and peace if we had reliable data. It would be feasible to determine the behavior of leaders. Idealistically, this analysis would account for differences in time, political affiliation, geography, and regime type, among other factors.

Unfortunately, this study design is challenging to implement. It is difficult to examine the population of female leaders due to their rarity. Approximately 26 women currently serve as heads of state or government in 24 nations (UN Women, 2021). Nonetheless, just 21% of government ministers/cabinet members are female, and only 14 women have attained 50% participation of women in cabinet positions (UN Women, 2021). As a result, there simply is not a large enough population to analyze meaningfully, as the majority of women who have attained power have served extremely brief periods. This sort of study cannot be conducted until there are large quantities of data to provide population-representative findings. Nonetheless, by case-by-case literature synthesis and analysis, I produce insights that paint a picture of women leaders in war and peace.

Themes

This section outlines and elaborates on the different themes taken into consideration while undertaking a desk study of research materials. These themes formed the foundation for understanding the research question.

Gender and Political Theory

In political science, research on gender differences has focussed on the "nature versus nurture" issue. Historically, theorists have claimed that biological differences render women more suited to domestic responsibilities in order to justify the exclusion of women from public life and leadership. This argument predates political theory itself. Plato and Aristotle believed that all superior kingdoms were controlled by men. Plato used feminine terminology to describe undesirable tendencies in political leadership, whereas Aristotle "assigns women a supporting role" (Asmis, 2019). In the same way that Aristotle observed that women can only ever belong to the ruled portion of society, the patriarchal family of the 17th century, in which women were permanently ruled, was effectively construed as a "natural hierarchy" in order to strengthen the logic of a social contract to the monarchy's hierarchy.

In addition, only men could learn to control their natures and "reason universally in order to contribute to the sovereign general will; women, due to their innate nature, could not be educated sufficiently" to allow them the responsibility of citizenship or to apply their skills and abilities to anything outside of their purview (Sperling, 2022). This permits women to get well-being to provide for the state's children. These political philosophers constitute the foundation of contemporary political science, and their misogynistic views of the state continue to influence political theory. According to Sperling (2022), male theorists have created ideas and ideologies

about women to buttress ostensibly 'neutral' reasons why women should stay obedient and not become complete citizens exerting authority.

Gender Stereotypes

The formation of gender stereotypes is also used to justify ideologies that systematically sustain the uneven distribution of states, resources, and power between the sexes (Risman, 2018). This reinforces gender stereotypes to assist men's access to power while limiting women's access (Risman, 2018). By assigning traits associated with nurturing to women and traits associated with the power to men, a division of labor is created that places men at the apex of power and in the "productive sector" of government, while women have a more difficult time attaining top positions and tend to be concentrated in the "social sector" (Phillips, 2016). In reality, there are fewer women at the highest levels of government leadership, and women are less likely to occupy positions of national security, the economy, etc., at all levels of the hierarchy.

A recurring example of this sort of labor division is the argument over women in the military. Those interested in militarizing a society (military commanders) are concerned with managing women and their positions because they seem to feel that if women cannot be adequately managed, men's involvement in the militarizing enterprise cannot be ensured. This idea motivates military officials to develop programs that foster soldiered masculinity. This entails establishing female roles to promote a masculinity-based hierarchy without challenge. During World War II, for instance, the Imperial Japanese Army subjected Japanese women and girls to sexual servitude as "comfort women" to dissuade discontent soldiers from rebelling (Inuzuka, 2021). During World War II, American authorities attempted to establish racist military prostitution networks by establishing segregated brothels in Hawaii, Germany, Korea, Japan, and even Nazi-occupied France, which American soldiers were freeing (Knaff, 2017). All

housing, curfew, civilian hiring, commercial, prostitution, STD medical, marriage, sexuality, and race policies of militaries must be examined for their gendered intents and consequences, particularly in areas of international security politics where military leaders are more willing to make sacrifices for the sake of security.

The fact that recruiting methods favor men is one of the reasons why so few women attain the status of the president, prime minister, or a comparable position. Women tend to ascend to executive power in a variety of ways, such as via power, as non-participating outsiders rising from inside the political system, or as women who climbed when political and social institutions were weakened by extraordinary events. In other words, fewer female leaders than male leaders are political insiders, indicating that women often rise to power outside of the usual recruiting structure.

The recruiting strategy that excludes women the most is the one that relies on gender stereotypes the most. Feminists such as Ann Tickner contend that the discussion over whether women are more peaceful than men serves to justify the oppression of women and their exclusion from political rights and leadership positions (Tickner & True, 2018). In international relations studies, biological reasons may lead to prejudiced justifications for excluding women. The essay "Women and the Evolution of World Politics" by Francis Fukuyama theorizes a future world ruled by women, in which aggressive male instincts are tamed to promote liberal democracy, based on biological evidence of male chimps being more violent and aggressive (Fukuyama, 1998). Tickner criticizes Fukuyama by stating, "Fukuyama argues that we should not progress toward a more feminine society, regardless of how appealing it may appear; instead, we should maintain the status quo, with strong men at the lead" (Tickner, 1999). Women are incapable of coping with today's risks posed by aggressive leaders. Therefore, Tickner believes

that "preferred futures are not feminized, but rather ones in which women and men engage in decreasing harmful and unjust social hierarchies, such as gender and race" (Tickner, 1999).

Therefore, it is essential to differentiate between gender stereotypes that are too simplistic and the ways in which both men and women may contribute to making the world more peaceful.

Impact of Women

All of this raises the question of whether differences between men and women are significant in international politics. Although there has been less research on world leaders, it is possible to evaluate the impact of women in organizations, whether they are elected political bodies or business corporations. In a groundbreaking study published in 1977, Rosabeth Moss Kanter determined that a critical mass of approximately 35% female representation in a group or organization was required for women to have an impact on culture and organize as a social force (Neely, 2020). In corporations, groups, and organizations with a female population of less than 35%, women became "tokens" identified by a gender stereotype, such as "mother," "iron maiden," "seductress," or "pet," and they were treated differently than men.

Institutions and Behavior

Institutions have a significant influence in shaping the political behavior of newcomers to the political system, but this begs the issue of which comes first: institutions or behavior. Skard (2015) argues:

Suppose women politicians want to succeed in male-dominated political institutions and have a career. In that case, they are usually obliged to accept the dominant male culture and become 'one of the boys'. In particular, the first women to enter such institutions have to adjust their behavior to that of the majority. (72)

Female politicians conform to a male society in order to succeed. In many instances, institutions may alter the first women before they can alter the institution. They embrace the mostly male language, style of thinking, and values. Early female recruits to a male-dominated society are the "kind" of women who self-select into the male-dominating culture, according to one criticism of this viewpoint. Therefore, it is not the institutions that determine their political behavior, but rather the fact that these women are more likely to accept the current method of doing things since it first attracted them. Women who join the political system early tend to be more aligned with the conventional political culture and goals, while women who enter later tend to break from the traditional male culture.

Nonetheless, some academics contend that these socialized or biological gender disparities may have a transformative effect on the state. Ann Tickner noted in her assessment of Morgenthau's "Principles of Political Realism" that women are seldom seen in positions of military leadership or at the top of the foreign policy establishment (Tickner, 2019). This may not be best for the state, as Tickner (2019) demonstrates using Carol Gilligan's criticism of Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development that men prefer to think in an abstract manner while women tend to think contextually and narratively. According to Tickner (2019), in the context of international security, an abstract conception of morality hinders our capacity to tolerate cultural diversity and seek opportunities to develop a community despite these differences. This, according to Tickner (2019), indicates that men tend to think abstractly about pursuing state power and interests, which may justify more aggressive behavior, while women may consider contextually and tolerate differences more, resulting in more peaceful behavior.

Gender and Causes of War

Over the course of International Relations academic history, researchers have sought to comprehend the causes of war. Many have suggested that conflict is rooted in human nature, making it hard to prevent our aggressive inclinations from leading to conflict. The initial argument for this was presented by the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes in his 1651 book *Leviathan*, which remains a significant contribution to the study of conflict (Oakeshott, 2017). In the Hobbesian conception of human nature, individuals are originally trapped in a "state of nature" where life is "nasty, brutish, and short" because men must resort to violence to protect and advance themselves (Bufacchi, 2021). People escape this situation by agreeing to establish *Leviathan*, or a state that will manage, reward, punish, and prevent its citizens from engaging in violence against one another. This argument implies that aggression is both natural and unavoidable, as the State exists to reduce violence. Mind and body research has advanced in recent years, and experts continue to describe human nature as aggressive.

In 1961, Sigmund Freud developed a highly famous argument on sex and aggression in his psychoanalytic theory. Freud contends that the ego attempts to control the id because its demands are innately selfish and aggressive (Ullah et al., 2021). According to Freud, in situations conducive to aggression, when the mental counter-forces (ego) that normally inhibit it are absent, it spontaneously manifests itself and shows man as a savage beast" he says (Ullah et al., 2021). He thinks that the inability to regulate our natural id drives after we have created groups also contributes to group conflict. According to Freud, this is a natural consequence since the advantage that a relatively small cultural group provides by enabling this inclination to express itself via animosity towards outsiders is not to be undervalued. It is always feasible to link

together a large number of individuals in love, so long as there are enough people remaining to accept their aggressive expressions.

In the same vein as hunger, Anthony Storr suggested in 1968 that human aggression must have internal, physiological causes (Midgley, 2021). He asserts that there is no question that men like the energizing impact of anger when they can justify it and that they seek out opponents to attack (Midgley, 2021). Storr argues that rage is a physiological desire that has to be expressed, just like sexual drives (Midgley, 2021). In fact, he claims that "no other animal routinely kills members of its own species" (Midgley, 2021). In the almost 50 years after Freud and Storr's thesis, research into physiology, biology, and genetics has advanced to such a degree that some scientists think war may be ended by eliminating certain genes from human DNA. Interestingly, whenever these experts argue for the intrinsic nature of aggression in humans, they simply state that "man" or "men" are aggressive and violent by nature. It is almost as if they have forgotten that women's physiology should be included in talks of human nature if a correct and true theory is the objective.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

The literature review indicates that women may have distinct gender values separate from males due to their different social positions. This has driven women to favor other paths over foreign policy and war, so we may anticipate female leaders in powerful positions to behave differently than males. On the other hand, the demographic patterns we see do not necessarily apply to the women (or men) who run for elite office. These individuals are distinct from the average citizen; nevertheless, although both men and women are distinct, their routes as political elites vary by gender.

In particular, the road is hampered by the cultural difficulties women leaders encounter while attempting to be elected or nominated to a post. Primarily, women leaders must overcome sex role stereotypes in which they are relegated to the domestic realm or are supposed to possess certain feminine characteristics, while men are engaged in the public arena and possess certain male characteristics. These misconceptions are particularly prevalent when debating foreign policy and leadership choices. As a result of stereotypes, women may behave differently than anticipated.

However, women confront political barriers as well. A female chief executive or defense and foreign policy minister may choose to concentrate on issues other than foreign policy but may be required to accommodate the whims of her political party (Burns & Bowling, 2021). In other words, a leader's gender may not matter as much as their political membership. Furthermore, the country's institutional structure may be significant. It may be the distinctions between presidential and parliamentary systems as opposed to gender. The parts that follow describe the precise characteristics of the decision-maker as determined by the desk research.

Gender Gaps: Sex Differences and Gender Values

There are three primary theories for the differences in gender values that may cause women and men to behave differently in conflict processes. The first explanation centers on structural considerations. These structural issues manifest themselves mostly at the aggregate level. In a 2012 study conducted by Pew Global Studies in 12 nations, for instance, women were much more opposed to the United States' use of drone attacks than males (Zenko, 2012). The ranges varied from a 31-point disparity in Japan to a 13-point disparity in Uganda (Zenko, 2012). Additionally, additional research using the World Values Survey and questions concerning the Gulf War have shown comparable gender disparities (Abduljaber & Kalin, 2021; Lizotte, 2019). In tests conducted in the United States, women were much less supportive of U.S. engagement in the Gulf than males.

We see these variations at the aggregate level because women occupy various places in society owing to education, occupation, and class difficulties. Historically, women have been less likely to be as educated as males. In addition, they occupy vocations such as nursing and teaching, as opposed to industrial jobs. In addition, women have been less likely to cognitively associate with political parties (Holman & Schneider, 2018). Women may find themselves on the outskirts of politics due to structural causes (Micheletti, 2017). According to scholars, the center (upper class, male) tends to express political beliefs more openly than the peripheral (lower class, female). In addition, several studies classify foreign policy issues as core political issues, as opposed to peripheral issues. In other words, women may feel less comfortable discussing foreign affairs; hence they often respond differently to queries than males.

Alternatively, structural variables might accentuate gender inequalities in policy preferences. Instead of focusing on international concerns, women may be more preoccupied

with household matters. According to studies, the widest gender disparity occurs between men and women in the intellectual core of politics (foreign affairs) (Cohen & Karim, 2022). This may be related to the fact that women may pay attention to various political elites, such as feminist organizations or work groups (Kantola & Lombardo, 2019). This is especially affected by structural variables due to the exposure women get via their employment and education. While this may seem to be largely significant at the aggregate level, other research has shown that a number of female presidents were teachers, and four were housewives prior to assuming power (Gerami, 2019). Consequently, it is possible to claim that the distinct experiences women bring to political office are a result of structural reasons. Women in influential positions may use their varied experiences as voters and members of society in their policy choices as leaders.

Situational factors may impact the foreign policy views of women leaders. As moms and spouses, women's major responsibilities lie in the house. This may have an impact on the probability of women engaging in political participation and conversation, as well as the sorts of problems they deem important. Again, women's (lack of) viewpoints on international events might be explained by their domestic responsibilities. Nevertheless, due to their responsibilities as mothers and spouses, women may be less tolerant of the loss of life that happens during the conflict. The results of the Pew Global Attitudes poll on drone strikes may also be explained by a less tolerant attitude to the loss of human life. Women may prefer home expenditures over military expenditures (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). It may be argued that domestic expenditure favors subjects that traditionally interest women more, such as education and child care (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). When a woman goes into government, particularly after a war, she may be more concerned with domestic expenditures and reconstructing society than with the country's international standing or its relationship with the country with whom it

previously battled (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). In fact, this connection may be at its greatest after a disagreement, as opposed to before or during it.

Socialization is the third and final explanation for why female leaders may behave differently from male leaders. Women are taught to be feminine (nurturing, empathetic, weak, and passive) and to stay in the private realm. This explanation is more consistent with social constructivist theories about the origins of gender values. This argument instructs women to be more empathetic, cooperative, and less aggressive. Feminists advocate in the academy for peace studies that downplay the male approach to international politics (Tickner & True, 2018; McLeod & O'Reilly, 2019). Thus, even among women who are more politically involved and knowledgeable about foreign policy issues, peaceful channels are emphasized. Therefore, even women who are eager to make views and whose employment positions them inside the realm of knowledge about foreign policy favor peaceful results.

Whether these characteristics are the result of feminists' intended international goals, socialization, or biology (as some may contend), they all indicate that women favor more peaceful negotiation and procedures for foreign policy. All three arguments, when taken together, assist in explaining why women may see and respond differently to political concerns, particularly in the realm of foreign policy. As a result of structural and sociological variables as well as socialization, we might anticipate that female leaders will be calmer.

Societal Factors: Gender Stereotypes and Sex Roles

There are, however, findings that may indicate that female leaders have factors that may point to the opposite expectation. In particular, political elites differ from regular people only due to the fact that they opted to seek political office. In reality, male and female candidates may have more in common when opting to pursue a political career. However, female leaders who

have come to prominence in a male-dominated and male-defined political environment may need to be more forceful than their male counterparts in times of crisis. Additionally, women may exert more effort to "win" since appearing and acting feminine (and hence weak) would be political death. Women who seek political office often encounter the preconceptions of being compassionate, caring, feminine, family-oriented, and weak. Traditional sex role stereotypes stress differences between the sexes rather than commonalities. I suggest that these sex role preconceptions hinder the route to leadership for women. Women must overcome preconceptions to be regarded seriously as a leader, but males do not encounter and hence do not have to fight prejudices. These preconceptions influence the behavior and policy decisions of women with respect to males. In other words, despite the fact that female and male leaders have greater similarities, their behaviors will vary due to prejudices.

According to Bauer (2020) and Schneider and Boss (2019), the concept of "gender issue ownership" occurs. The authors argue that a candidate's gender functions as a signal to voters, notably that female candidates convey competence on problems such as education expenditures and the poor (Bauer, 2020; Schneider & Boss, 2019). In contrast, male politicians convey to voters their proficiency in tax policy and national security (Bauer, 2020; Schneider & Boss, 2019). A 2008 poll conducted by Pew Research in the United States supports this hypothesis. Participants were asked whether males or women in public office performed better in a variety of areas. Participants believed that women were superior to males in negotiating compromises (42% vs 16%), maintaining the integrity of government (34% versus 10%), and addressing social concerns (52% versus 7%) (Pew Research Center, 2008). However, males were perceived as more adept at addressing crime and public safety (42% vs 12%) and national security and defense (54% against 7%) (Pew Research Center, 2008). A counterargument to this conclusion

might be that these distinctions may fluctuate throughout time and across civilizations. However, there is evidence across nations (Bosak et al., 2018; Breda et al., 2020; Ellemers, 2018) that individuals have stereotypical ideas of feminine and masculine characteristics.

Gender issue ownership even further explains why women are subject to preconceptions while selecting an occupation (Payton & Berki, 2019). In politics, women face greater challenges in an election than males due to the fact that women's prospects are sometimes limited in male-dominated fields. International Relations and Foreign policy are examples of professions that have traditionally been considered male-only occupations (Phull & Ciflikli, 2019). In reality, female academics assert that women are less engaged in foreign policy than males and that men are innately more aggressive than women (Cohen & Karim, 2022). The public's view that women are less qualified than males for foreign policy contributes to the perpetuation of these stereotypes. In the end, women's preconceptions might impede their chances of being seen as competent in foreign policy and alter their policy choices.

As a result of stereotypical bias, women in leadership positions may play the role of the token female. Token women may have a more difficult time influencing politics (Liu, 2018). Women as leaders are scrutinized more than males since they are not the first people who spring to mind when imagining someone in power. Thus, once in power, women confront distinct challenges than males. This might have a significant impact on the attitudes they adopt and the subjects they choose to pursue. In reality, when women achieve positions of authority that are historically controlled by males, they may not alter the way things are conducted to be taken more seriously. In order to be seen as real leaders, these women may behave more aggressively than their male colleagues. Thus, contrary to the theoretical perspective on gender ideals, elite-level women who attain top positions may vary from women in general. However,

misconceptions may benefit women in a post-conflict environment. Stereotypes generate a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the conduct of others is influenced by the expectation generated by the stereotype. Women, especially in developing nations, are often elected after a war has ended because they are different from the males who caused the conflict (Shair-Rosenfield & Wood, 2017). Immediately after a conflict, a number of women have been elected to government because voters feel women reflect the virtues of communication and collaboration. This matches exactly the gender prejudice that women are calmer than males.

In situations when women are elected after a conflict/war, it is assumed that they would play the "role" of mediator and negotiator. In this situation, it is likely that peace will last longer if women are chosen since they will not seek out conflict or behave aggressively. It might also be seen as a sensible move on the side of the lady, even if this is not exactly how the leader would like to operate. If a leader's reasonable decision is to do whatever it takes to remain in power, then she will do what the people desire. In other words, she will act in accordance with the stereotype that got her elected.

Political Factors: Institutional Factors as Mediating Gender Effects

Based on the argument that women and men may have biological or social differences, it may be concluded that women and men have distinct interests. In particular, women may be more invested in education or family leave programs than males. Several studies have shown associations between women's descriptive representation and policy outcomes. Examples of such findings include the correlation between the number of women in parliament and variations in family leave policy, even after allowing for the party's impact (Bailey et al., 2019; Hessami & da Fonseca, 2020; Kantola & Lombardo, 2019; Lubold, 2017). In the United States bureaucracy, senior-level women were more likely to advocate for meaningful representation of women by

pressing for prominent women's concerns. When more affluent women were present, more efforts were made to advocate for women's interests.

To put it another way, a "critical mass" of women may be required for policy preferences to alter significantly. A critical mass would be reached in the national government when a bigger proportion of women are present in parliament with a leader such as the president, prime minister, defense minister, or foreign policy/affairs minister (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Some research suggests that when a greater proportion of women serve in parliament, a nation is less likely to launch an armed war (Barnes & O'Brien, 2018; Krause et al., 2018; Shair-Rosenfield, 2017). Consequently, we may anticipate a critical mass to influence the depiction of women's problems and the activities of female leaders. However, other evidence suggests that boosting women's representation may reduce policy responsiveness (Arnesen & Peters, 2018; Crowder-Meyer & Cooperman, 2018). Increasing women's presence to the point that they are no longer tokens may be detrimental to the representation of their interests. Many of these characteristics are mitigated by the fact that women foreign affairs/policy ministers are also subject to the political party and institutional considerations.

A study indicates that a country's political structure might influence its propensity for violence (Houle, 2016). The gender-moderating impacts of party-centred and candidate-centered systems are distinct. In parliamentary nations with prime ministers, parties have a greater say over who is appointed to key posts. Therefore, if a woman wishes to maintain her place, she must behave in line with the party. Men have the same impact. Both may have foreign policy decision-making limitations. In non-party-centered systems, on the other hand, the candidate may operate more autonomously. In these situations, we may expect women to pursue the topics they choose, but a woman in a strong position will likely not represent "women's concerns" since she has

likely overcome several difficulties. Instead, she may adopt a more hawkish demeanor to defy common preconceptions (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). Political leaders' choices may also be influenced by their political philosophy. According to research, left-leaning governments are less conflict-prone than right-leaning ones (Haynes, 2021; Heffington, 2018; Medeiros et al., 2022). Foreign policy choices may be influenced by political ideology rather than gender, and in this scenario, we would anticipate both men and women on the left to avoid confrontation, as opposed to men and women on the right.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

People often think of Margaret Thatcher, Indira Ghandi, Golda Meir, and Angela Merkel when they consider female leaders. While serving as the country's top leaders, each of these four women encountered some kind of conflict. However, many other women have served as leaders of their nations, and several more have served as defense or foreign policy ministers/secretaries (Burns & Bowling, 2021). The three leaders previously cited seem to demonstrate that women are no less afflicted by conflict than males, despite the prevalent stereotype that women are calmer. To be recognized as a genuine leader in foreign policy, female political elites must adopt a more hawkish stance, despite the fact that women are no less peaceful and may be more brutal during war beginning and escalation (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). This may also explain why women spend more on defense even when there is no armed conflict.

In addition, gender is an essential aspect of leadership that is sometimes neglected when examining political behavior and consequences. Not the gender of the country's top leader, but the proportion of women in parliament is often investigated by experts. Examining the careers of female leaders may offer insight into the role that gender plays in society, particularly as a factor that can impact a country's most important foreign policy decisions. The following section will discuss and synthesize in more detail why female and male leaders choose distinct paths. Primarily, preconceptions cause female leaders to behave more hawkishly in order to be seen as genuine leaders (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). Also, the following section will explore if female leaders experience lengthier wars than male leaders and the role that women leaders may play in peace duration.

Female Foreign Affairs/Policy Leaders and Defense Spending, Conflict Initiation and Escalation

Conflict and Women Leaders

The gender of leaders has been omitted from previous research on the origin and progression of conflict. Despite the fact that this literature does a better job of examining the qualities of those in power than war length, peace durability, or military expenditure, earlier studies often saw the state as a black box in which leaders acted identically in all circumstances (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). This part starts by removing the lid off the state's black box in order to investigate a specific trait of foreign policy leaders, notably gender. While the number of women who have served as leaders of their nation has climbed over the last two decades, it is still far fewer than the number of males who have held the role. However, the sample size grows when female military and foreign affairs/policy secretaries and ministers are included (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Unfortunately, it is more difficult to determine in which nations women serve as a token defense or foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers, but it is worthwhile to investigate their effect as a first step in determining the potential role of gender in conflict processes.

No other quantitative or qualitative research has investigated whether the presence of female military and foreign policy ministers makes a difference (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Findings suggest that female leaders may be more inclined to engage in conflict. Indeed, female presidents are more inclined to raise military expenditure (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). In addition, a number of case studies have examined specific instances of female chief executives and their participation in the conflict, but none have focused on military expenditures (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). No study has exhaustively examined the function of female foreign policy and defense ministers and their cross-national effect (Burns & Bowling, 2021).

Again, it is difficult to determine the extent to which they have a role, but as we saw earlier, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was key in publicly advocating striking Libya.

Ambition, Culture, and Paths

Traditional gender role expectations perpetuate the gendered psyche (Post & Sen, 2020). This mentality fosters an expectation that pulls males into politics and marginalizes women. This gendered mindset may be much subtler (Post & Sen, 2020). Women are often less socialized than males to acquire the skills required in the contemporary political arena, such as confidence, aggressiveness, and self-promotion. At the same time, societal views regarding women political leaders, the expectations of women as caregivers, and the exclusivity of males in politics sometimes imply that it is unsuitable for women to possess the aforementioned characteristics. While women have made considerable achievements in joining formerly male-dominated fields, they still face enormous obstacles in politics. Haraldsson, A. and Wängnerud (2019) contend that political desire is not always a given for female candidates and that this might create a barrier for women in politics.

Nonetheless, this exacerbates the societal hurdles women confront. While there is less stigma associated with female candidates in general, a perception of a lack of desire may undoubtedly impair the public's evaluation of female candidates, particularly those running for top leadership or being assigned to senior national security posts. These limitations serve as additional difficulties for female candidates (and leaders), eventually causing female and male politicians to choose divergent routes while in power. Women who choose to run for the highest position in a nation are not fundamentally different from males who choose to run for the same office, despite cultural hurdles and stigmas associated with assertiveness and other feminine characteristics. In other words, running for prime minister or president is distinct from vying for

a seat in parliament (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Far fewer women decide to seek the highest position, even women who we anticipated would consider running.

Condoleezza Rice presents a significant example. Many regard high-level positions, such as Secretary of State, as stepping stones to the president. However, in an interview on March 13, 2005, she vehemently chastised Tim Russert, thus slamming the door on a future candidacy. People were astonished because they believed she would have the same political motives as a guy. In other words, the political ambition of women who do decide to run for government office is likely comparable to that of males who do so. While the political aspirations of male and female politicians are the same, the cultural beliefs that impact the general public result in distinct routes for these candidates. Female leaders must make concessions to be considered seriously. The general public saw women in government as trustworthy and competent, particularly when it came to education and healthcare, but largely trusted males when it came to national security, crime, and taxation.

This stereotyped picture of women necessitates that they take a more hawkish posture in order to be considered genuine national security leaders (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). In other words, the female leader chooses a plan to combat preconceptions in order to further her career. Foreign policy and military ministers who are women confront comparable challenges and use similar techniques to combat prejudices (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Women's discrimination in the State and Defense Departments of the United States was not contested until the 1970s, and subtler types of discrimination were not challenged until the 1990s. In addition, the ban of women from combat in many nations reinforces their exclusion from key military and defense jobs. In addition, cultural preconceptions impact women's ability to advance in international affairs/policy and defense roles. The conventional perception that security is a

man's domain affects not just who is perceived as competent but also how women perceive their own competence.

Women military and foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers are also influenced by their capacity to influence the political process and whether or not they are token appointments (Burns & Bowling, 2021). We cannot always determine if a female appointment is symbolic, but in many democracies, military and foreign affairs/policy positions are highly sought after. Whether or not a woman is a symbolic appointment, research indicates that women participating in the foreign-policy-making process have the same opinions as males (Smith, 2020). In other words, gender is not a distinguishing feature among those participating.

Institutional Factors

Gender is said to be the main force behind disparities in political behavior; however, other institutional variables may also explain political behavior. Political ideology may have an impact on decision-making. Right-leaning governments are more conflict-prone than left-leaning ones (Haynes, 2021; Heffington, 2018; Medeiros et al., 2022). Rather than gender explaining a female leader's hawkishness, her political philosophy may explain why she is more inclined to initiate and/or escalate the war and increase defense budget (Schram & Stark, 2020; Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). Moreover, candidate-centered systems, such as the United States' single-member district system, as opposed to party-centered systems, such as Europe's proportional representation nations, may impact the probability of conflict. In nations that are candidate-centered, candidates are more likely to be able to pursue their own policy agenda as compared to those that are party-centered. Officeholders in a nation dominated by a single political party will be more inclined to align themselves with the party in order to retain their nominees for the next election. Thus, we may discover that proportional representation systems

have less disagreement since the party has a larger voice, and it might be challenging to persuade a whole party to agree on anything. A female leader's capacity to influence the political process may also be influenced by the proportion of women in lawmaking/parliamentary posts.

This argument continues to support the gender explanation as the primary explanation for policy preferences but calls for a "critical mass." As previously discussed, a critical mass may be required for any significant change to occur. There is some evidence that a nation initiates fewer conflicts when a greater proportion of women serve in positions of representation, lawmaking, and parliament. In these cases, researchers claim that with a critical mass of women in representative positions, female leaders may fight for women's problems without seeming hawkish to obtain credibility (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). In other words, there must be a greater proportion of women in parliament for a female leader to act as she pleases. This is based on the assumption that female leaders may be more pacifist than males but cannot act as such without a greater number of women in government.

Overall, the findings indicate that gender influences decision-making. Female leaders are more likely than male leaders to fall into the categories of the exhibition of force and use of force, and they are more prone to initiate conflict. These data support my contention that female leaders must demonstrate their competence in the national security arena more often than male leaders. The urge to prove oneself may stem not just from the public's perception of them but also from the opinions of other national leaders. Unaccounted for in this research is the possibility that the female leader was provoked into initiating or escalating conflict (Schram & Stark, 2020). Future research may take this into consideration. One explanation may be that other leaders may perceive women as an easy target. Lastly, the sample size is one of the greatest obstacles in determining if gender matters. The ongoing election of women to positions of power

will provide further insight into the link between gender and the decision-making process. As additional data becomes available, we may continue to examine its significance. Inversely, if more and more women are elected, the influence of gender on decision-making may diminish. This might indicate higher cultural and political acceptability of female leaders, making the significance of gender in the decision-making process. However, we have not yet arrived.

Female Foreign Affairs/Policy and Duration of Conflict

Jamila Akbarzi, a co-founder of the Afghan Women's Network, has asserted that males are responsible for war and misery. However, earlier talks indicate that women are responsible for initiating and escalating cross-national conflict (Schram & Stark, 2020). Given that women leaders engage in conflict more often than their male counterparts, is there a difference in the length of these conflicts? Specifically, does the gender of the leader affect the length of a conflict? Are women leaders confronted with lengthier disputes than leaders? Additionally, do female defense and foreign affairs/policy leaders affect the length of conflicts?

Beyond the conventional explanations of regime type or cost-benefit assessments, the individual traits of leaders may have an impact on the length of the conflict. Some research indicates, for instance, that leaders of mixed regimes are more inclined to sustain a conflict than their counterparts in democracies or autocracies (Kertzer et al., 2021). However, individual leader qualities and how they may function within regimes are omitted from this study. This section gives information on the potential influence of individual qualities and gender, as well as any differences in what to anticipate when men and women experience conflict. This part also investigates whether female leaders have longer conflict durations than male leaders. It is vital to determine whether there is a gender gap in the length of combat, mainly since most research on

duration focuses on systemic or state-level features such as relative power, topography, and troop quality.

The length of war may have a variety of implications on leader popularity, regime stability, and war expenses. Military strategy and topography are the most influential factors in determining the duration of a fight. Specifically, maneuver methods shorten conflicts, but punishment strategies lengthen them. The open landscape will result in shorter wars, whereas rugged terrain will result in long wars. When there is an imbalance of power, wars will be shorter. Moreover, high numbers of military troops will prolong the battle since they can continue to provide fuel for the conflict. Domestic elements include government type, repression, and problem prominence. There are no attributes of the individual leaders included. Moreover, the features of regimes characterized by repression and exclusion also impact the longevity of conflicts. Compared to autocracies, democracies have minimal levels of repression and exclusion. Because leaders are more likely to be penalized for bad performance, countries having traits of both democracies and authoritarian regimes will face prolonged conflict. In other words, institutional traits are relevant, but leader attributes are not.

Finally, nations are less likely to abandon their pursuit of absolute victory due to the aforementioned commitment issues. Specifically, governments do not know if they can trust one another despite having access to more information than before the conflict. Rather than agreeing to cease hostilities, one or both parties may strengthen their demands towards the conclusion of a conflict. In this instance, commitment issues prolong battles since both parties prefer absolute victory to concede and perhaps losing everything or risking another war as a result of commitment issues.

Conflict Duration and Gender

Evidence from the previous discussion supports the claim that women leaders are more hawkish than their male counterparts, initiating and escalating conflict at greater rates (Schram & Stark, 2020; Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). This arises because women leaders must adjust for stereotyped beliefs held of them so they would be recognized as more respectable leaders. Following the stages of that logic, war will endure longer under the rule of a female leader for two reasons. The first reason is that the female leader must continue to be hawkish because she confronts a greater degree of scrutiny if she were to seem weak (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). The second reason is that other leaders may see a female leader as more susceptible once conflict has erupted. Specifically, stereotyped, gendered ideas make women look like easier enemies than males (Post & Sen, 2020). These two factors may also be considered cyclical in nature. According to Powel and Mukazhanova-Powell (2019), a female leader may have to behave more hawkish in order for the other belligerent to perceive her as a credible rival.

Stereotypes

There are several reasons why preconceptions remain about a woman's capacity to attain national office. The preceding section of the study examined cultural constraints that affect not just the public's perception (Smith et al., 2017) of female candidates but also an individual woman's belief that she can run for office. In the event of dispute length, preconceptions again influence the female leader's behavior. Female leaders must continually take acts to be recognized as real leaders, despite widespread public perceptions that women are superior at "compassionate" problems and males at national security (Smith et al., 2017). Certainly, male leaders also want to be seen as genuine leaders. However, since "man leader" is the image that

comes to mind for the general public, male leaders are not subject to the same amount of scrutiny as female leaders.

Female leaders are often subjected to more scrutiny while in office since not only is the position very visible, but it is also difficult to reconcile the image of a woman in a position of power. Pew social trends study questioned American residents about why women have not achieved as many gains in politics, and the majority of respondents believed that female politicians are held to higher standards than male politicians (Pew Research Center, 2015). The literature on stereotypes illustrates how this occurs at the national level, but it also occurs at the international level. To be recognized as genuine not only by their people but also by the international community, women leaders are subjected to an increased degree of scrutiny. This legitimacy is not necessarily based on the fact that they are the actual leader of the nation (authority) but rather on their ability to properly use military power.

Moreover, these stereotypes impact the perception of the other disputing nation. This first phase results in a cyclical process including female leaders, conflict, and their opponents. In addition to the possibility of media criticism (similar to their male counterparts), women leaders in times of conflict may also face legitimacy concerns. This assumption is based on the premise that what occurs inside a country may impact its relationships with other nations. In addition, the legitimacy factor is not concerned with whether the female leader is the actual leader but rather with her capacity to make solid military judgments. In addition, once in confrontation with a female leader, the majority of male leaders will not like to seem to have lost to a woman. Although it might be argued that leaders do not want to lose at all, a defeat to a woman is arguably more detrimental to a male leader than a loss to a man.

Men will have less incentive to negotiate with a female leader than with a male leader. For legitimacy considerations in the eyes of the people and the international world, a woman may be compelled to confront an unyielding male leader even if she does not choose to engage in a protracted fight. As a result of the popular belief that women are amenable to compromise, a female leader may not suffer the same legitimacy difficulties throughout the length of a disagreement. Even though she launched the battle, she may benefit by compromising its conclusion. However, by emphasizing the possibility of dialogue, the female leader risks losing credibility in the eyes of her opponent. One worry may be that, regardless of gender, if the state of a male leader is disadvantaged, he is more inclined to bargain rather than accept a defeat. Gender would overrule a leader's efforts to get a better result, yet, male leaders would try more to avoid losing to a female leader. This is not always the case, but there are repercussions a male leader may not want to face if he loses to a woman.

Men will be less inclined to compromise with a female leader and lose; thus, they will be more aggressive in pursuing their objectives. If the female leader insists on negotiations, this might convey a negative message. Since national security is seen as a male domain of politics, it is more difficult for female politicians to obtain public support on matters of national security in the post-9/11 era. This is a significant significance for the emergence of an age dominated by "men's problems" (the war on terrorism being a key example). I contend that if women leaders are disadvantaged when national security dominates the home agenda, this would also be the case on the international stage. The stereotypes about women leaders may influence their capacity to negotiate, so raising the likelihood of misinterpretation and influencing the male leader's desire to "win." Female leaders must exert more effort to "win," whereas male leaders must look "powerful" against a female opponent.

Women as Adversaries and Militarization

War, militarism, and militarization have been seen as the domain of masculinity and males for a very long time (Conway, 2017; Henry, 2017; Wibben, 2018). Militarism is an ideology that highly values war and hence legitimizes governmental aggression (Wegner, 2021). Militarization and militarism are present when any segment of society becomes reliant on the military. The hegemony of hegemonic masculinity is a result of militarism (Connell 1995). Socially and culturally glorified forms of manhood are acknowledged by hegemonic masculinity. While social and cultural elements may vary from nation to country, there is one constant: the superiority of males over women. In addition, hegemonic masculinity perpetuates the notion that males are more competent than women.

In addition, masculinity is accountable for the perception that militarization is "man's labor." For instance, previously, armies were completely comprised of male soldiers. Despite increased opportunities for women to serve in the military each year - for instance, the United States eliminated its prohibition on women in combat specialties in 2013 - there are still obstacles to recognizing women as competent in national security. In addition, it is anticipated that these women would adhere to the conventional military roles created by males. Female military troops must often surpass their male counterparts in order to demonstrate their competence to serve. Success in the military and in battle has historically required traditionally male characteristics. Such characteristics as greater physical strength, male-bonding, heroic risk-taking, severe brutality, and the willingness to sacrifice one's life are indicative of masculinity. Women, on the other hand, are not linked with these characteristics and are often seen to hinder male bonding in the military. Given that it is uncommon for female leaders to have served in the military prior to assuming high office, either because the country forbade women from serving or

because she chose not to, this could influence the other country's perception of her as a competent leader in the area of national security.

However, this is not often expected of men who have not been in the military. Due to hegemonic masculinity and militarism, male leaders are not required to overcome prejudice as often. When a female leader confronts her opponent, and the conflict persists, this might be considered a negotiation failure. Incomplete information is one of three causes of unsuccessful negotiations. In conjunction with the urge to look powerful and the notion that female leaders are less adept in military affairs, the presence of a female opponent reduces the likelihood of negotiation and increases the likelihood of false perceptions of strength. These misconceptions are influenced by the assumption that women cannot wield military authority and power.

Foreign Affairs/Policy and Defense Leaders

Similar arguments may be made about whether defense and foreign policy ministers are taken seriously, but it is simpler to argue whether they can influence the length of a conflict, especially since they are not personally accountable for initiating or terminating a conflict (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Nonetheless, it may be worthwhile to investigate if the presence of a female defense or foreign policy minister will influence the chief executive (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Due to the fact that these foreign policy and defense leaders are less responsible to the public and are less concerned with legitimacy, they may have a moderating effect on the length of a conflict. However, it cannot be determined whether these female foreign affairs and defense secretaries/ministers are symbolic appointments, making this conclusion more difficult to reach (Burns & Bowling, 2021). In any case, analyzing the effect of these defense and foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers may be problematic due to the fact that they may be in symbolic positions.

Domestic and Institutional Constraints

One problem would be that inside democracy, concerns of militaristic masculinity do not play as large of a part and, rather, it is the structure of democracy that might abbreviate conflict. Conversely, militaristic masculinity does survive with democracy, perhaps increasing the possibility of political violence. Even democratic leaders might be burdened by militaristic masculinity and the notions that female leaders are not competent within the sphere of foreign policy. The institutional elements would most fruitfully hold in joint democracies if there is an impact, yet, as research has shown, mixed dyads are more prone to attack one another (Sigurdh, 2021). Democracy is not likely to be as peaceful in this circumstance as some have claimed. In other words, military masculinity may still afflict democratic regimes, and the democratic institution may not decrease the length of the battle.

However, one family setting may alter the possibility for males to be more inclined to compromise with female leaders. In nations where gender equality is strong, male leaders will be more ready to negotiate with a female leader to settle a dispute sooner (Karim & Beardsley, 2017). Individuals who advocate for greater equality between men and women are more in favor of diplomacy and compromise. Countries that have greater levels of gender equality may be quicker to compromise during conflict than those that have lower levels of gender equality. This is, of course, assuming that nations with greater degrees of gender equality are not the same as democracies. Studies have proven that gender equality does not always correspond to excellent levels of democracy (Dalton, 2017). While gender equality does not always represent the opinions of the leader, the thesis here is that all individuals in society are more likely to embrace these equitable views. How else would a leader be elected or put in power if he or she did not embrace the view?

Therefore, preconceptions about women in office serve as obstacles to women's entry into office and their activities; nevertheless, there is little evidence that they influence the length of the conflict. This lack of relevance might be due to a number of factors, including the absence of women in leadership positions or the possibility that gender has no impact on conflict length. It does not seem that previously studied characteristics, such as the percentage of women in parliament, democracy, and gender equality, had a role in mediating the impact. Given the above results, the following part will investigate whether women contribute to a longer period of peace. Continuing the purpose of this thesis is to determine if leader traits, especially gender, influence various conflict processes. In post-conflict circumstances, rather than prejudices working against female leaders, they exploit them to their advantage.

Female Leaders and Peace

Countries around the globe have experienced interstate fighting followed by varying lengths of calm. The leaders and diplomats of these nations expend time and effort in an effort to prevent future conflicts. In fact, according to statistics, states have a 50% likelihood of reentering war within five years after its conclusion (Walter, 2011). A previous study demonstrates that states with greater gender equality are less likely to engage in interstate war (Cohen & Karim, 2022; Mcdermott, 2020). Other researchers have analyzed the duration of peace, saying that the sort of settlement and the results of conflict might affect the length of time peace will continue between nations.

However, none of these women addresses the role that female leader may have in the longevity of peace. Specifically, what effect does a female leader have on the length of peace in a post-conflict society? Does distinction really make a difference? In an effort to integrate research on female leaders and recurring conflict, governments that elect or install female foreign

affairs/policy leaders after the war, or one that brings a country out of conflict, will enjoy longer periods of peace than those that do not. Female leaders and foreign affairs/policy leaders will adopt stereotypical perceptions of the "peaceful" female due to their desire to maintain power.

There have been three major arguments about recurring conflict and peace duration. The first argument focuses on rivalries that endure. The ideas presented here are largely concerned with the conflict of interstate conflict and do not necessarily address the amount of time between wars. There are two explanations for why rivalries develop. Punctuated equilibrium forecasts the emergence and dissolution of rivals. Under this paradigm, system and national-level shocks might impact rivalry. Territorial changes, regime changes, and conflict may have a positive or negative impact on the relationship between two nations. The punctuated equilibrium model does account for regime transition but does not include whether a woman succeeded a male or another woman in government. The evolutionary model proposes that rivalries are the result of evolving interactions between competing states. As the levels of competition progress, so do the number of disagreements between the states.

A second method for studying the longevity of peace is bargaining. All phases of conflict are interconnected, and the resolution of a conflict may affect the length of peace. Specifically, commitment issues may manifest in a variety of ways. First, governments may choose to renegotiate the conditions of a settlement. If there is a change in the power dynamic, this will occur. In addition, the research on bargaining indicates that third-party engagement after a conflict might assist in alleviating some of the tension between two nations. The concern that neither party can trust the other makes it difficult to commit to a settlement. Third parties may give security assurances or act to implement peace accords, thus enhancing post-conflict stability (Fearon 1995; Walter 2002). According to both persistent rivalries and bargaining theorists, the

conclusion of a war, whether it be a decisive victory, a stalemate, or a draw, may affect the duration of peace between two nations.

The third method to the study of peace duration focuses more precisely on the examination of settlements. In other words, these academics investigate whether a conflict was resolved by an enforced settlement, a negotiated settlement, or no settlement at all. Scholars of deterrence think that enforced settlements provide longer and more permanent peace than other settlement types (Khan, 2018). This longer-lasting peace is the result of victors' greater satisfaction with the new post-conflict status quo, which generates a scenario of unilateral deterrence. In such situations, the imposed-upon state may be dissatisfied with the new status quo, but the imposer has no obligation to alter the status quo. In contrast, negotiated agreements produce mutual deterrence periods that are more prone to conflict as a result of rising levels of uncertainty. With the exception of the punctuated equilibrium model, these theories do not include leadership characteristics in their analyses of peace durability and recurring conflict. It is possible that in post-conflict conditions, gender is irrelevant. In many post-conflict scenarios, such as with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in Liberia, however, people chose women to lead precisely because they are women. Consequently, the gender of the leader in a post-conflict context may be significant.

Peace Duration and Gender Stereotypes

The preceding section demonstrated that women candidates and leaders confront stereotypical prejudice. Men and women ascribe mental roles to what a male leader and a female leader are capable of doing, often known as "gender issue ownership." In a war-torn culture, this may work in the favor of women seeking foreign policy roles. The positions of women foreign policy leaders in post-conflict states are impacted by stereotypes as well. I hypothesize that in a

post-conflict scenario, women may be able to profit from stereotypes in order to attain or maintain an office. This varies from the previous two chapters, in which stereotypes may push women leaders to demonstrate their legitimacy by acting more aggressively. Instead, I argue that if women are elected in a post-conflict society, if they are elected to stop a war, or if they remain in power after their own conflict has ended, it would be sensible for them to fulfill the female stereotype of a loving and nurturing leader.

Stereotypes produce a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the conduct of others is influenced by the expectation established by the stereotype. Women, especially in developing nations, are often elected after a conflict has ended because they are different from the men who caused the conflict. Immediately after a conflict, a number of women have been elected to government because voters feel women reflect the virtues of communication and cooperation. This matches exactly the gender stereotype that women are calmer than men. This illustrates that, according to the findings of the 2008 Pew Survey, American residents believed that female leaders would be better at compassion and diplomacy, whilst male leaders would be more suited for crime and national security (Pew Research Center, 2008). However, one possible issue may occur as a result of the facts and comments presented before. Female leaders initiate and escalate conflict more often than their male counterparts (Schram & Stark, 2020). After initiating or exacerbating disputes, there is a strong possibility that some women may attain positions of power. Despite this, they would continue to conform to stereotypes, particularly if the conflict was unpopular or the conclusion was negative.

In women, when women are in office after a conflict, it is thus anticipated that they would perform their "role" as mediator and negotiator. If women are elected, peace should last longer since they will not seek out conflict or behave aggressively. If they were elected after a

conflict, this would be counter to the reason they were elected. Involvement in an unpopular conflict would also run counter to acts that may cause them to lose their seats. Female leaders will not be required to behave more aggressively in order to look genuine. This may also be considered a typical reasonable act. If a leader's reasonable decision is to do whatever it takes to remain in power, then she will do what the people desire. In other words, she will self-fulfill the stereotype that helped her get or maintain her position. It is also worthwhile to examine the role of women in the duration of peace because traditional literature does not emphasize the individual characteristics of leaders in office when a war ends. This leaves room for examining not only whether individual characteristics matter but also whether gender makes a difference.

During post-conflict scenarios, female defense and foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers may also be present (Burns & Bowling, 2021). In accordance with previous discussions herein, since these leaders are not directly responsible to the public, they are not required to overcome certain stereotypes. Before, during, or after a conflict, female military and foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers may push for peace more effectively than female leaders (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Some of the leaders may actually be more hawkish, but it is generally believed that they will serve as mediators for male leaders (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). Female appointments to roles in foreign policy and defense might reflect an embrace of conventional female ideals, if anything.

Political Institutions

In terms of the longevity of peace after a conflict, gender may be a factor, but the political institutions of the nation may also be significant. In other words, it may not be the gender of the leader that leads to more peace but rather the political environment. There are two distinct moderating institutional influences that might have an impact on peace: the percentage of

women in representational, lawmaking, or parliament roles and the political affiliation of the top leader. There may be a moderating impact of the number of women in representative, lawmaking, or parliament posts on the influence of a female foreign affairs/policy or defense leader. As noted earlier, nations with a higher proportion of women in government have fewer conflicts and are more likely to implement laws that directly affect women. Certainly, nations with a higher proportion of women in representative, legislative, or parliamentary roles are more likely to prioritize household expenditure (confirmation of the stereotype) than those with a smaller proportion of women in similar positions. Thus, it is possible that the female leader or foreign affairs/policy leader is not responsible for the durability of peace but that a country that elects more women to parliament would have fewer reasons to be hostile towards other nations.

According to this school of thought, there may be a "critical mass" impact with the number of women in government. Consequently, we may anticipate a critical mass to influence the depiction of women's problems and the activities of female leaders. In other words, the number of women in parliament, and not simply a woman in a significant foreign policy post, may impact the durability of peace. With women concentrating more on domestic matters, they remove the limelight and attention from the international arena, allowing the female leader (or male leader) to concentrate on non-conflict-related issues. Political leaders' choices may also be influenced by their political ideology. A female politician from a left-leaning party is more likely to be linked with peace than one from a right-leaning one, similar to the logic presented in earlier chapters. This is predicated on the assumption that left-leaning governments are less likely to engage in conflict than right-leaning ones (Haynes, 2021; Heffington, 2018; Medeiros et al., 2022). In other words, it may not matter if the top leader is a woman, but whether they are liberal or conservative.

Case Study Analysis of Violeta Chamorro

Violeta Chamorro joined politics after her husband, Pedro Chamorro was assassinated. Chamorro succeeded her husband as editor of La Prensa, a political opposition newspaper (Wille, 2020). Early in her political career, she was a member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) Council of National Reconstruction. However, after becoming aware of the FSLN's skewed socialist representation in the Council of State, she swiftly moved her support to anti-Sandinista movements (Wille, 2020). The National Opposition Union (UNO), a cohesive anti-Sandinista organization, developed in the late 1980s. The fourteen parties that comprised UNO's membership ranged from the extreme left to the far right (Wille, 2020). Chamorro was picked as their presidential contender, and he beat incumbent president Daniel Ortega on April 25, 1990 (Wille, 2020). Chamorro's campaign artwork showed her as a "faithful wife and widow, reconciling mother, and the Virgin Mary" (Wille, 2020). Chamorro was the first woman in the world to unseat an incumbent president and the first woman to become president of Nicaragua. Chamorro's victory represented a hopeful conclusion to the horrendous human rights crimes that happened during Somoza's authoritarian administration and persisted throughout Sandinista communist control.

Anastasio Somoza Debayle's power was overthrown by the FSLN in 1979, after the Nicaraguan Revolution (Wille, 2020). The FSLN conducted campaigns advocating for land reform, literacy, and enhanced safeguards for human rights. In reaction to the FSLN's victory, the U.S. supported the Contras, or counterrevolutionaries, to combat communist rule (Wille, 2020). After the United States ceased providing official (and informal) financing and weapons to the Contras, the Contras resorted to the UNO for financial assistance. Prior to the 1990 elections, the Contras carried out hundreds of killings of FSLN members, becoming the military wing of

UNO (Feinberg, 2018). Beginning in 1981 and concluding in 1989, the conflict between the FSLN and the Contras killed at least 30,000 lives (Wille, 2020). In 1989, Nicaragua's Election Agreement called for free, fair, democratic elections, including provisions for self-government zones for the Contras (Wille, 2020)). Prior to Chamorro's victory in early 1990, the United Nations monitored a peace pact between the Sandinistas and the Contras. Chamorro was elected not merely in response to civil conflict but also to flagrant violations of human rights. She campaigned on a platform of feminine characteristics, in stark contrast to the Contras (Wille, 2020). Important to her victory was the FSLN's recognition of feminist traits.

Early in her leadership, Chamorro attempted to reduce the military state's virility. She lowered the size and power of the military, cancelled the draft, granted amnesty to Sandinistas, and tried to disarm the opposition by implementing programs to purchase firearms (Feinberg, 2018). Chamorro supported the Sandinista's push for agricultural reform, selected Humberto Ortega as her closest counselor, and permitted Daniel Ortega to keep his post as commander-in-chief of the army in an attempt to reduce Sandinista resistance (Feinberg, 2018). During her administration, Chamorro fought for economic reform and implemented IMF and World Bank structural adjustment measures to lower exponential inflation rates and enhance the export of agricultural goods (Feinberg, 2018). The policy recommendations as a whole intended to encourage foreign investment and privatization while decreasing foreign support and foreign debt. Unsurprisingly, the economic reforms failed to contain inflation and exacerbated unemployment and underemployment.

Chamorro restored democracy to Nicaragua and ended decades of internal military conflict, despite her failure to adequately execute economic reform (Feinberg, 2018). In 1994, Contras, who had been ejected after the 1990 election, rearmed and emerged, but Chamorro used

a peace deal to repress the bloodshed. Throughout the duration of Chamorro's administration, the rearmed Contras and Sandinistas conducted high levels of political violence and abduction (Feinberg, 2018). Chamorro, however, continued to encourage reconciliation between anti-Sandinista and Sandinista groups in order to advance Nicaragua toward a pluralist, democratic system. With the exception of the 1994 revival, Chamorro's administration was not marked by high levels of daily violent conflict (Feinberg, 2018). She also advocated for a peace accord and reconciliation rather than a resumption of civil war.

The case study analysis helps illustrate that there are elements that impact female leaders differently than male leaders, while it does not make any broad statements about female leaders in general. Gender has been a major component in arguments about the significance of women's roles at the local, state, and federal levels of domestic politics, as well as in conversations regarding peacekeeping and peace-building missions in post-conflict communities. To have a complete understanding of the role of women in the political sphere, we must not only comprehend their participation in formal and informal peace and post-conflict processes but also determine if women play a unique role in the initiation, creation, and maintenance of peace as foreign policy leaders.

Conclusion

In this part, all knowledge is compiled in order to provide a detailed yet nuanced response to the primary research question. This research, like other research, has both methodological and theoretical limits and strengths. This section will explore these topics. Finally, future research and policy implications are discussed.

Female leaders have not shied away from using force, despite the common perception that war is a man's domain. This thesis investigates whether female leaders in high office,

notably foreign affairs/policy leaders, influence the conflict behavior of the state in which they serve. In analyzing the choices made by female leaders, stereotype prejudice is a crucial component. In order to be seen as legitimate leaders in the field of national security, senior female leaders, such as the president and prime minister, must behave more hawkish to overcome stereotypes (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). Female top leaders confront this challenge both inside their own borders and from foreign leaders. Because they are not directly elected, female defense and foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers are less impacted by stereotypes; yet, the possibility of becoming a token appointment may drive them to conform to that stereotype.

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the many phases of conflict, from initiation and escalation through conflict duration and peace duration. The study of male and female leader qualities that impact leadership behavior in connection to international conflict and war was of special interest. This thesis's key contribution has been to go beyond the concept of "gender neutrality" in relation to the characteristics of leaders and to examine if the gender of leaders matters or impacts conflict. Important consideration must be given to gender while studying war and conflict. Traditional studies often examine levels of analysis other than individual characteristics; nonetheless, the traits of leaders are crucial lenses that need investigation. If we want to have a full understanding of the causes of war's initiation, continuation, and recurrence, we must investigate the elements that may impact a leader's decision-making.

Recap of Major Findings

The findings of desk study research revealed that top female leaders spend more on defense than their male leaders. However, these results were only marginally significant. Female leaders initiate and escalate conflict at a greater rate than their male counterparts, according to

the data (Schram & Stark, 2020). While there seems to be an impact with female defense secretaries/ministers, this effect is due to the fact that certain female top leaders also serve as defense secretaries/ministers throughout their terms in office (Burns & Bowling, 2021). In order to be regarded seriously, it is often necessary for female leaders to appear more hawkish while in office (Powel & Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019). This causes women to begin and escalate conflict at far greater rates than men (Schram & Stark, 2020). In the realms of foreign policy and national security, female leaders are often seen as incompetent.

However, this does not rule out the possibility that some women may inherently want conflict more, and other men may naturally desire conflict less. In investigating the association between female foreign policy leaders and the length of peace, it was discovered that liberal female top leaders were associated with a more permanent peace but that this influence diminished with time. However, there is anecdotal evidence that some women were elected in poor nations because men had led the country into war; thus, women would get them out. In light of the conclusions of this thesis, there are a few significant things worth investigating. Previous studies such as Berry-Waite (2020) and Williams (2017) indicate that top female leaders will be more pacifist when there are more women in representative, legislative, or parliamentary posts.

This is because executive activities are distinct from the representative, lawmaking, and legislative actions. A leader wants to retain power, and part of retaining power includes presenting a powerful image. Margaret Thatcher and Angela Merkel are instances of women who, in the case of Thatcher, enacted policies that were unfriendly to women and, in the case of Merkel, attributed credit for women-friendly policies to other government officials. Passing policies for women when women/female attributes are not valued might be very detrimental to a

leader's reputation. On the other side, a female leader's legitimacy may be maintained via posturing and demonstrating skill in national security.

This thesis' debate focused mainly on stereotypes and legitimacy. Several nations have had female leaders of state, and these women have been recognized as legitimate leaders. However, this does not imply that global obstacles to women in leadership positions have been eliminated. Furthermore, this does not imply that obstacles have been eliminated in nations where women have served as CEOs. With obstacles in place and female politicians' activities being constantly monitored, it follows that their gender will impact their conflict-related decision-making. This link will be shown through research that spans a longer time period and covers all phases of the conflict in which women are present.

Due to two factors, there has been minimal debate about defense and foreign affairs/policy secretaries and ministers (Burns & Bowling, 2021). The first issue is the lack of outcomes. The second and more urgent issue is that it is difficult to determine the roles of defense and foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers in conflict (Burns & Bowling, 2021). Some contend that women are only token appointments and that the actual power resides with the male boss. If this is the case, we would need to determine which women were given token positions and which were not. This information is unavailable and perhaps impossible to get in some situations. However, these two factors are not sufficient to disregard the role that female defense and foreign affairs/policy secretaries and ministers may play in international conflict and peace.

As stated in the introduction, a female foreign policy force in the United States undoubtedly persuaded President Obama to launch airstrikes against Libya. Important to

consider, however, are the effects of a token appointment and the contributions of female foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers to the executive's decision-making.

Direction for Future Research

While some of the research questions have been solved, many remain unanswered and give options for further study. First, more research must be conducted on female foreign affairs/policy leaders. Very little research examines the function that these women perform. Case study research might provide light on whether women may be token appointments and their repercussions. Furthermore, case studies of female foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers may give information on the roles they performed before, during, and after the war. There is an abundance of case study research on top female leaders but very little on defense and foreign affairs/policy secretaries/ministers at the international level.

This thesis indicates potential future study directions on female leaders. First, this argument solely addresses war between states. Future studies must examine the roles of women leaders throughout the civil war, particularly post-conflict. Additionally, it may be worthwhile to examine additional mixed-gender dyad effects. Are women compelled to accept settlements, or do they force settlements on others? Are they more prone to negotiate, resulting in an increase in conflict? In addition, do women initiate and escalate a conflict with other women or men? Does gender matter in this circumstance? When a woman is elected to the position of chief leader, is there a greater possibility that long-standing rivalries will be resolved? This is a potentially crucial issue about the causes of peace and the sustainability of peace after conflict. However, in situations of lasting rivalries, the number of women may be limited.

Beyond conflict, the activities of top female leaders have not been thoroughly examined. Do women join alliances more often than men? Do they observe improved human rights? Are

top female executives sanctioned more frequently? In addition, by examining the speeches and operational codes of female leaders, it is possible to get insight into how they must communicate with their populations and other global leaders. In addition, future studies might evaluate if women are more inclined than men to sign and execute international treaties and accords.

For example, although evidence indicates that women and men leaders implement comparable military expenditure policies, the thesis presented here implies two additional consequences. First, men and women leaders do not always share the same policies. The greater the prevalence of gender stereotypes around a certain problem, the greater the expectation that women leaders would take policy views compatible with male qualities. During leader selection procedures, military expenditure is often a prominent foreign policy topic where leaders may display their 'toughness' on foreign policy (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). Nevertheless, if other foreign policies do not elicit the same degree of gender stereotypes, we may notice significant policy variations between male and female leaders. Men and women leaders vary in their expenditure on health care; nevertheless, future studies should address the differences in their foreign policy policies. Humanitarian operations or foreign assistance may not elicit the same gender stereotypes as military expenditures, so enabling female political leaders more freedom to pursue their own inclinations.

In addition to gender across stereotypes, gender stereotypes may also change across time and geography. As an increasing number of women acquire foreign policy-related jobs, gender stereotypes may diminish in certain governments (Barnes & O'Brien, 2018). Given the absence of governments that have nominated numerous women leaders, we argue that we have not yet reached that stage in leaders of women in leadership and military expenditure (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). However, the changing representation of women suggests that gender stereotypes

about the foreign policy may also evolve. As more women rise to leadership positions, we anticipate that gender stereotypes about foreign policy will diminish, which may result in visible variations in policy outcomes, such as military expenditure (Imamverdiyeva & Shea, 2022). Current data restrictions preclude a comprehensive examination of the likelihood of declining gender stereotypes. Still, these dynamics may and should be investigated in the future, perhaps via text-analysis of media material pertaining to male and female candidates. Existing comparative assessments of women in international relations executive positions are fairly sparse. The most evident cause for this deficiency was the absence of women in managerial positions previously.

The fundamental objective should be to inquire and determine if gender matters. Sometimes it may seem that a subject or circumstance is "gender neutral" or that gender is irrelevant. However, gender is intimately connected institution to other institutions such as the economy and education. It follows that it directly relates to politics and would impact political decision-making processes.

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