

Chapter 14

Women, Peace, and Protection “Myth”: Analyzing the United Nations Security Policies for Women in Conflict

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ABSTRACT

Sierra Leone and Rwanda are countries whose history has been marred by civil war. The civil war in Sierra Leone lasted from 1991 to 2002 and was distinguished for being extremely brutal. Through a comparative comparison, the chapter seeks to determine whether or not female representation can influence how peace and security resolution 1325 is carried out. This will be accomplished by comparing how the resolution was implemented in Rwanda and Sierra Leone. This chapter examines how Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council was implemented in Sierra Leone and Rwanda. If the political presence and equitable representation affect the implementation of the resolution is the subject of this chapter. The various gender distributions in the parliaments of the various nations will show if that is the case. The results have been examined through the implementation theory lens of public policy analysis. This chapter's findings suggest a link between good implementation and a high proportion of female lawmakers.

INTRODUCTION

Describe the UN Security and Peace Resolution 1325 was adopted in 2000 by a unanimous Security Council and is a result of the lobbying work carried out by international women’s organizations over several years (Fröhlich, 2019). The basic framework of the resolution is based on women, peace, and security. It works to increase women’s influence and for women to participate actively in preventing conflicts and reconstructing societies affected by war and conflict. The resolution emphasizes that women are central actors in sustainable peace and security. In addition, the resolution draws attention to the vulnerability of women in conflicts (George & Shepherd, 2016). Resolution 1325 highlights that it is essential that women participate in achieving long-term peace. The UN, therefore, believes that it is of the utmost importance that all member states work in the spirit of the resolution (Tryggestad, 2009). Since adopting the resolution, 63 countries have adopted national action plans, including Sierra Leone and Rwanda, which were adopted in 2010 in Sierra Leone and 2009 in Rwanda (True, 2009). According to Operation1325 (2011), the number of UN resolutions regarding the role of women in peace and security issues has increased in recent years. However, the resolution has been re-debated, and some criticism has been directed at it. Researchers believe that one of the resolution’s problems is that the UN’s resolutions concerning women, peace, and security maintain the traditional gender structures (Martinelli, 2015). According to operation1325 (2011), the reason for this is that the spokespeople for the women’s security agenda have missed an important aspect, namely how the question of how power affects gender should be resolved. The focus has been on how war affects women, which means that this important aspect has been overlooked (Bell & O’Rourke, 2010). If equality integration is to work, a change is required regarding the prevailing power structure between the sexes. However, women’s representation in politics does not function as a guarantee that power structures change. The power structures may remain unchanged, resulting in continued conditions for violence and equality (Barrow, 2016). Aronsson (2021) has, in addition to this, criticized the implementation of the resolution. They believe that more should have happened during these years. One of the problems identified is that the national action plans are not fully implemented (Aronsson, 2021).

Based on this reasoning, questions are raised regarding the possible importance of equal representation, the politics of presence in the implementation of the resolution, and whether the percentage of female parliamentarians de facto affects the implementation. Researchers in the field, such as (Phillips, 1998), emphasize the politics of presence and equal representation as decisive for which issues are prioritized and discussed. If full political inclusion is to be achieved, certain groups cannot be excluded from decision-making (Phillips, 1998). The African countries Sierra Leone and Rwanda can be discussed to make this concrete. The countries are similar in many respects but differ regarding the parliamentary gender distribution. Rwanda excels worldwide regarding female representation in parliament, which Dudman (2014) describes in the article “*Lessons from Rwanda’s female-run institutions.*” The country is thus the first and only country in the world where female parliamentarians are overrepresented more than men (Dudman, 2014). According to Data from The World Bank (1998), the percentage of female parliamentarians in Rwanda measures a whopping 64%, while the female parliamentarians in Sierra Leone hold only 12% of the parliamentary seats (The World Bank, 1998). The question that follows is, therefore, whether the difference in gender distribution in the countries’ parliaments affects how the countries implement resolution 1325.

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