

PROBLEMS OF GENDER EQUALITY WITHIN THE CONDITIONS OF ARMED CONFLICTS

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Abstract. *This article is devoted to the study of the role of gender equality in the context of national security, taking into account modern world trends. We investigate how the implementation of equal opportunities for all gender groups can affect the stability and security of society. Analysis of the impact of gender equality on national security covers various spheres of life – from politics and economics to peacekeeping and the fight against terrorism. Theoretical approaches to defining the essence of the concept of “national security”, which is considered by scientists as a multi-level system of dependencies of various kinds, which are at different levels of perception, have been studied, and the author’s definition of the essence of the concept has been provided. In addition, gender gaps in security and defense are addressed, highlighting the importance of gender-sensitive leadership in peacekeeping missions. It is emphasized that in order to achieve gender equality, it is necessary not only to increase the representation of women, but also to create conditions so that they can effectively perform their duties and overcome possible discrimination. The role of gender-sensitive leadership in peacekeeping missions has been established and it is stated that increasing the number of women in peace-management operations contributes to the fight against the patriarchal environment, which is hostile to the presence of women in such operations. It was established that insufficient consideration of gender aspects in the strategies, policies and procedures of the security and defense sector, gender imbalance at the level of decision-making, professional gender segregation, the infrastructure of the sector does not fully meet the needs of women, the procurement and provision of equipment and uniforms does not take into account gender aspects, Gender challenge have been found, in particular the partial inconsistency of the administrative and economic working conditions of male service members and female service members, as well as recommendations for overcoming gender problems and gaps have been developed. The possibility of reducing conflicts through the involvement of women in decision-making processes, the role of women’s peace initiatives in reducing violence have been analyzed. Proposals were made to improve the regulatory framework of the security and defense sector to ensure gender equality and eliminate differences in the status positions of women and men – military personnel. The impact of stereotypes and inequality on radicalization and terrorism is also explored. Overall, the article highlights the importance of promoting gender equality as a key factor in achieving national security and stability in today’s geopolitical context.*

Keywords: *gender equality, national security, economy, gender-sensitive leadership, peacekeeping missions, Ukraine, UN, security, defense.*

Introduction.

The modern world is experiencing transformations on an unprecedented scale that endanger the national stability and security of the country. The wars of recent decades have

strengthened the awareness of susceptibility in military conflicts. Civilians in every major conflict regularly suffer and are targeted as a form of insidious warfare. Women did not escape this attack. In fact, in many conflicts they become a particular target of attack as the adversary tries to demoralize the other side. At the same time, women hardly participate in political negotiations aimed at ending conflicts. They are also hardly involved in numerous mediation initiatives. As a result, special attention to women's issues is often forgotten in the context of peace settlement, which slows down the processes of reconstruction and reconciliation.

Using the latest research, statistics and examples from different countries, our aim is to reveal the importance of gender equality as a key factor for national security. A focus on gender equality has a significant impact on every aspect of social life, from conflict prevention to sustainable development.

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications.

More generally, the concept of national security is related to the ability of a state to maintain its independent identity and functional integrity against forces it considers hostile (Holmes, 2015, Buzan, 2003). Kosmeider, (2021) provides an even broader view of national security, stating that national security can be understood as a field of knowledge that not only explains the mechanisms of governance to ensure the order and stability of human communities, but also as the art and science of effective survival in time and space. Therefore, in this context, it is important to emphasize the importance of the above-mentioned objective and subjective security. Janushauskene et al. (2017) highlighted several variations in the analysis of possible variants of objective and subjective security relations. The first scenario is a situation where objective and subjective safety intersect, and in both cases, it is safe: a person is and feels safe. The second scenario is a situation where objective and subjective safety do not overlap: objectively it is not safe, but the person feels safe. The third scenario is a situation when objective and subjective safety do not overlap, but it is the opposite of the previous one: objectively it is safe, but the person does not feel safe. The fourth scenario is a situation where objective and subjective safety overlap, and in both cases, it is not safe: the lack of safety is objective, and the person does not feel safe. This is confirmed by Bansik (2018), who argues that security becomes dependent on the subject matter, the perception of threats, the protected values and the measures used to ensure it. When it comes to the concept of security and its impact on society, we inevitably face the negative aspect – threats (Bansik, 2018) that arise for everyone both in the internal and external environment. Notwithstanding, the threat ceases to be associated only with war. Threat and security perceptions cover a much wider range of factors: natural disasters, virus outbreaks, criminal activity, cyber-attacks, health, personal safety, social security, standard of living, etc. In other words, security perception is related to citizens' feelings about the risks associated with security incidents and the extent of their consequences (Chaparro, 2021). Such experiences form an individual's attitude and behavior - a respond to certain situations.

Taking into account the fact that these reactions, behavior or perception of the situation can be completely different for each person and relate to real or imagined threats, the research in this article focuses on the analysis of subjective threat perception. Subjective security researchers note that perceptions of security threats are often determined by personal experiences of everyday life (Bates and Lindt, 2011,): social protection systems provided by family, community, and the welfare state; experience with a range of socio-economic risks, including lack of income and wealth, educational attainment and employment (Ingleheart and Norris, 2012), as well as evaluations of criteria such as government effectiveness, trust in

government and individual security (Ilinykh et al. 2020). According to Wills-Herrera et al. (2011), the perception of danger for a person manifests itself in the form of fears of losing control over one's life, losing property, losing social ties or even life.

Scientists Cherep A. V., Kaliuzhna Yu. V., Cherep O. G., Voronkova V. G. (2022) investigated the role of gender, race and age in corporate social responsibility values of business. Socially responsible business creates tangible and intangible benefits for society, thus influencing GDP, and thus macroeconomic and socio-economic stability. Therefore, the study of gender equality issues is extremely relevant and timely.

The Research Scope is to consider the importance of gender equality as a key factor in ensuring national security and stability. By analyzing aspects of the impact of gender equality on different spheres of society, the article aims to highlight how equal access to opportunities and resources for all gender groups contributes to the improvement of national security and stability.

To achieve the goal, the following tasks are set:

- consider existing challenges related to gender inequality in various aspects of society, such as politics, economy, education, and others, and identify how these inequalities can affect national security;
- reveal the positive impact of gender equality on peacemaking and conflict studies;
- highlight the role of women's leadership and participation in decision-making.

The Target of the Research is the process of gender equality and its impact on national security.

The Research Question is the relationship between gender equality and national security, including the impact of equal access to opportunities and resources for different gender groups on the resilience and security of society.

Statement of Basic Materials.

The concept of "national security" has several aspects and dimensions, the difference between which is revealed in the different approaches from which this subject matter is considered. Even in the availability of certain general agreements regarding the methodology and worldview system, differences in the understanding of the essence and content of national security immediately become visible among specialists from various fields, such as lawyers, military, economists, political scientists and others.

In general, the essence of national security is multi-level and expresses a complex hierarchical structure of reality, a system of mediated dependencies of various kinds and orders, which are at different levels of perception of this concept. That is, national security could be considered both at the ordinary, everyday level of reflection of this phenomenon, and at the theoretical level (Antonov, 2017).

The concept of "national security" was used for the first time at the state level in 1904 in the message of the then US President Theodore Roosevelt to the US Congress, in which he justified the accession of the Panama Canal Zone in the interests of national security. Since then, national security has become the object of research in the field of political science, and later, when this term moved from political usage to the legal sphere, and legal science (Kormych, 2004).

There are quite a few approaches to understanding "national security" and they all differ to some extent (Table 1). In most scientific papers, "national security" is understood as the protection of the vital interests of the individual, society, and the state from external and internal

threats. And the interests of “national security” mean the totality of the security subject’s needs (Kadebska and Lopokha).

Table 1. Approaches to Defining the Concept of “National Security”

Author	Definition
Lipkan V. A.	National security is a kind of sphere of existence of a person, nation, state, culture, traditions, customs, resources, which not only strongly connects people with each other, but also connects them with historical heritage and the environment (Lipkan.yu 2008).
Vlasyuk O. S.	National security of Ukraine is a way of self-preservation of the Ukrainian people, which has reached the level of organization in the form of an independent state. This method enables its free existence and self-development, reliable protection against external and internal threats. The author defines the national security of Ukraine as a system of state-legal and social guarantees of the consistency of life and development of the Ukrainian people in general and each citizen in particular, the protection of their core values and legitimate interests, sources of spiritual and material development from possible real and potential, internal and external threats (Vlasyuk, 2016).
Blystiv T. I., Kolesnyk V. T., Pryhunov P. Ya., Karpova K. V.	It is said that the national security of Ukraine should be considered as a process, and the system of ensuring national security should be considered as providing this process. As a consequence, national security should be defined not as a state, but as a dynamic component of state development (Blystiv et al., 2015).
Cherep A.V., Cherep O. H.	The existing ideology of national security is based on counteracting the system of available threats, which is extremely relevant for Ukraine within the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war. National security can characterize a comprehensive, complete system of viability of the entire object as a whole and can ensure the development and security of all its constituent parts (2022)

Source: compiled by the authors

There are many approaches to understanding national security, and they all differ to some extent.

At the legislative level in Ukraine, certain aspects of national security were first enshrined in the Declaration on State Sovereignty of Ukraine (Chuyko, 2008). In the Law of Ukraine “On the National Security of Ukraine” of June 21, 20018 No. 2469-VIII, the concept of “national security of Ukraine” is defined by the legislator as the protection of state sovereignty, territorial integrity, democratic constitutional system and other national interests of Ukraine from real and potential threats (On the National security of Ukraine).

Having studied the legal framework and the viewpoints of scientists, we consider it expedient to further consider national security as a state of security and protection of the country from external and internal threats, which guarantees the preservation and strengthening of interests, values, territorial integrity and sovereignty. National security takes into account strategies aimed at preventing, responding to and overcoming various types of threats, such as military aggression, terrorism, cyber threats, economic risks and other factors that affect the stability and security of the country.

Furthermore, national security involves preserving the rights and freedoms of citizens: personal, economic, social and medical, cultural and identity security. In general, national security for citizens consists in creating conditions where a person can feel comfortable, safe and able to develop in various aspects of his life.

The Role of Gender-sensitive Leadership in Peacekeeping Missions

The relationship between gender and national security reveals a field of research that examines the impact of gender and sexual identity on a state's national security. For example, women and men may experience different types of discrimination and violence because of their gender, which in turn endangers human security and causes physical, psychological and social consequences.

Historically, women have been underrepresented in politics, defense and peacekeeping missions, but now attention to their contributions is growing. The participation of women in the development of security strategies can lead to a more comprehensive and effective response to threats.

A gender-sensitive approach involves taking into account gender characteristics and needs in the development of security strategies. It emphasizes the importance of gender mainstreaming in the planning and implementation of security measures.

In peacekeeping missions, gender equality plays an important role in maintaining stability and improving conditions for peaceful life. International organizations emphasize the importance of including women in peacekeeping missions.

As noted in the UN strategy for achieving gender equality, many factors prevent the achievement of this equality, including the lack of sustained political will and accountability, the lack of necessary measures and enabling conditions for reforms, and resistance from key actors. Gender-sensitive leadership focuses on some of these barriers, including the roles and perceptions of key stakeholders and leaders. Gender-sensitive leadership goes beyond efforts aimed only at increasing the representation of women in peacekeeping operations. These efforts are often based on assumptions about women's innate abilities, without paying due attention to how to ensure that they can effectively fulfill their responsibilities and overcome the possible discrimination they may face. Recent research has shown that simply increasing the number of women in peacekeeping operations has little effect on countering a patriarchal environment that can be hostile to the presence of women (Nagel et al., 2021). In this environment, women peacekeepers, soldiers and police continue to report problems such as lack of career advancement, taboos and stigmatization (Kumalo et al., 2021).

Gender-sensitive leadership in the context of peacekeeping plays a key role in ensuring national security in the following ways:

- elimination of gender inequalities in the military environment, namely ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in military service and removing restrictions on career growth;
- support for women peacekeepers in conflict zones, namely providing access to some resources, psychological support and protection from violence;
- protection of the rights of women and vulnerable groups;
- implementation of gender-sensitive women's programs and projects aimed at improving gender equality and protecting rights in the field of security.

Gender-sensitive leadership can also counter the negative perception of gender parity strategies that exists in security. Some practitioners in this field criticize such strategies because of the increased risk to women peacekeepers and the possible threat of reduced operational effectiveness if gender equality is emphasized over operational tasks (Gordon et al., 2021). This is partly due to the belief that women hold opportunities based on their gender rather than their skills and qualifications. However, there is evidence that women peacekeepers are not always properly trained or held accountable for roles that match their experience and expertise. For example, there is a widespread belief that women peacekeepers carry with them natural

“feminine” qualities, which may lead to them being assigned to gender-related or protection-related work, even if they do not have relevant experience in these areas. When leaders understand how such gender biases and exposures affect peacekeeping, they can proactively challenge these views. Additionally, gender-sensitive leadership can help reduce the burden of being “gendered” for some women. Women peacekeepers constantly point to the fact that they have to carry a double burden, after which they are perceived as the physical embodiment of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping. Gender-sensitive leadership can challenge the notion that gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of gender equality coordinators and consultants, and not of all staff (Wilén, 2020).

Gender Gaps in Security and Defense and Measures to Overcome Them

In the field of security, there is a significant disparity between men and women, which is reflected in aspects of this field, especially in the representation of women in senior positions. This has a negative impact on the day-to-day work of institutions responsible for security, their reputation before the public, the level of trust of citizens and the status of women working in this field. Regardless of significant changes in the legislative framework of the security and defense, sphere, such as expanding the list of military positions to which women can be appointed and giving girls the opportunity to receive education in military lyceums, there exist significant differences in the status of military personnel depending on their gender (Ivanina and others, 2020). Table 2 shows gender problems and recommendations for overcoming them.

Table 2. Gender Problems and Recommendations for Overcoming Them

Gender problems/gaps	Recommendations for overcoming gender problems and gaps
Insufficient level of gender sensitivity of security and defense strategies, policies and procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integrate gender aspects into security and defense reform measures. – Develop a strategy for implementing gender equality in the security and defense sector and a mechanism for its implementation. – Improve the legal framework of the security and defense sector to ensure gender equality and eliminate differences in the status positions of women and men military personnel.
Gender imbalance at the decision-making level. At the end of 2020, the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine (NSDC) consisted of 18 people, including 2 women. 100% of the staff of the National Security Service of Ukraine are men. During the period of its operation, 14 people, including 1 woman, held the position of Secretary of the Council. (Composition of the National Security and Defense Council in Ukraine).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Include gender issues in various educational programs at military educational institutions. – Inform decision-makers about gender equality through training and coaching according to leadership programs. – Include issues related to ensuring gender equality in the list of job duties of managers at various levels in the field of security and defense.
Professional gender segregation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Eliminate obstacles to the hiring and promotion of persons of the underrepresented gender. – Develop measures to ensure balance between work and private life.
The infrastructure of the industry does not fully meet the needs of women; procurement, provision of inventory and uniforms do not take into account gender aspects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure accessibility and convenience of industry infrastructure in accordance with the needs of women and men. – Create/equip separate and safe utility and sanitary premises (rooms for storing personal belongings,

<p>For servicewoman, there is a partial discrepancy in the administrative and economic working conditions – not all military units and forces are properly equipped for the high-quality performance of service and combat tasks by servicewoman, namely: there are no separate and safe utility and sanitary premises.</p>	<p>changing rooms, washing rooms, shower rooms, separate toilets, etc.). – Conduct a review and gender analysis of the legal framework for procurement, provision of uniforms and inventory in the field of security and defense.</p>
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Source: Guide to Gender-responsive Approach in Selected Areas (Ivanina et al., 2020). [T. Ivanina, O. Kiselyova, M. Kolodiy and others. Guide to the Application of a Gender-oriented Approach in Certain Sectors – Kyiv: Vivario, 2020. – p. 48]

As can be seen from the above, gender-sensitive leadership in peacekeeping missions plays a key role in ensuring the success and effectiveness of such missions. It helps overcome many of the barriers to achieving gender equality, including the lack of political will, accountability and lack of necessary action for reform. Gender-sensitive leadership focuses on the roles and perceptions of key actors in peacekeeping operations, going beyond conventional strategies to increase women’s representation.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, for gender-sensitive leadership to succeed, it is not enough to simply increase the number of women in peacekeeping missions. It is important to consider how to ensure that women can effectively perform their duties and overcome possible discrimination.

Conclusions

In summary, on the basis of the above, we can state that national security has a multi-level character and represents a hierarchical system of mediated dependencies at different levels of perception. The essence of national security includes the protection of the vital interests of the individual, society and the state from external and internal threats.

Gender-sensitive leadership in peacekeeping missions is key to achieving gender equality in national security. It is aimed at overcoming many barriers that prevent the implementation of gender strategies.

In addition, it must be taken into account that simply increasing the number of women in peacekeeping missions is not enough to achieve gender equality. To be successful, it is important to create such conditions that will contribute to the effective performance of one’s duties.

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