

Gender Equality in the Military: Analysing the Opposing Military Conscription Policies of Sweden and Finland

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Authors Declaration

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Abstract

Sweden and Finland are renowned for their egalitarian state models. Despite this, there is a gendered difference between their military conscription policies. Finland conscripts only men into the military compared to Sweden which conscripts on a gender-neutral basis. This thesis explores the reconciliation of conscription policy with a gender equality agenda. It questions why the two states of Sweden and Finland adopted different conscription policies despite both being highly gender equal societies and if notions of gender equality impact state conscription policy.

A critical frame analysis is utilised to find that Sweden has chosen to recruit on a gender-neutral basis to transform the military from a bastion of masculinity. This is based on the notion of the transformative effect of female representation in masculine spaces when paired with other gender mainstreaming policies. Finland has chosen not to conscript women due to its equality of sameness agenda within the military, which does not challenge masculine norms. It does not interpret gender equality as the conscription of women into such as masculine institution, as it would force them to conform to larger patriarchal power structures. These differing interpretations of gender equality explain and justify the diverging policy decisions between the states.

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INTRODUCTION

Sweden and Finland are renowned for their egalitarian models and promotion of gender mainstreaming throughout governance. Despite this, the states have conflicting military conscription policies. Finland conscripts only men into the military compared to Sweden, which conscripts men and women into the military (Persson and Sundevall 2019; Kosonen, Alisa, and Teemu 2019). This thesis explores why the two countries made opposing policy decisions despite their similarities and egalitarian governments. It is proposed that differences in the conception and framing of gender equality and policy implementation of this understanding are attributed to the policy differences between the two states.

This hypothesis presents a research puzzle on how the interpretation of gender equality affects policymakers' decisions when reconciling gender equality agendas in extremely masculine institutions. Why have the two states of Sweden and Finland adopted different approaches to the gendered nature of the military despite both being highly gender-equal societies? Do notions of gender equality impact state conscription policy?

Key academic debates conceptualizing gender equality and the role of women in the military will be explored. Gender and differing interpretations of gender equality and gender equality policy will be explored. It will be found that transformative gender equality can only be achieved through a formal and informal restructuring of patriarchal power structures within the institution, alongside the induction of women into the institution (Sarah Childs, 2022). Only when paired with the aforementioned structural change will the equal recruitment of women and men into such an institution lead to mainstreamed gender equality (Benschop and Verloo 2006). Without such actions, introducing women into masculine institutions will subject them to further patriarchal powers, and the institution will continue prioritizing masculinity.

The contestation between liberal feminists who believe in the right to participate in the protection of the state and those who believe the subjection of women to such a masculine institution is inherently unjust shall be critiqued. The focus of feminist scholars on government institutions over the military will be explored, with the military often framed as too overtly masculine to achieve gender mainstreaming (Duncanson 2017; Cockburn 2010). This shall be contested by establishing the importance of gender mainstreaming throughout all realms of governance, including the military, due to its essential role within the nation-state power structures. Finally, the fields of Swedish and Finnish feminist literature shall be compared to establish fields of areas of similarities and differences (Anette Borchorst et al. 2012; Holli and Kantola 2007).

Analysis will be conducted using a critical frame analysis of three key policy documents in Sweden and Finland, respectively (Verloo 2005). This methodology will allow for an in-depth understanding of the framing and construction of gender equality agendas within each state.

It will be found that the countries have conflicting conscription policies due to differing interpretations of gender equality within the states and the manifestation of this agenda in the policy. Sweden seeks to modernize and equalize the military as an institution through gender mainstreaming. It is achieving this agenda through the equal conscription of women into the military alongside other gender mainstreaming policies (Linehagen 2022). Conversely, while Finland recognizes the importance of gender equality, it does not consider this as placing women within a masculine institution wherein they will have to live up to masculine ideals. Although Finland seeks to create a gender-equal society, it does not envision this as women equally participating in its military, which remains overtly masculine; this would be unequal and unjust.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodology

This research will explore the reconciliation of conscription policy with a gender equality agenda. It will question why Sweden has interpreted equality as sending women into an inherently masculine institution compared to Finland, which despite an egalitarian government outlook, has refrained from doing so. Per Thomas' work, the research purpose is exploratory, as it aims to analyze the differences in military conscription policy despite similar egalitarian agendas of government (2011). The research design is a comparative case study with a similar systems design (Anckar 2008). A critical frame analysis will be utilized to understand the framing and policy implementation of gender equality within each state (MiVerloo 2005).

Case Selection and Design

The research will focus on understanding how understanding gender equality and the subsequent implementation of gender equality policy affects policy outcomes. The specific focus is how this construction of gender equality within the state affects conscription policy. Sweden and Finland were chosen as the case studies due to their relative similarities with juxtaposing conscription policies. Thus the case study is a similar systems design focusing on the difference between Sweden and Finland's military conscription policies.

The two countries have many similarities, as democracies, similar levels of wealth, a military conscription policy in peacetime and development alongside a commitment to gender mainstreaming throughout governance (Anette Borchorst et al. 2012). Despite this, there

remains a gender divide between the states' military conscription policies. Finland only conscripts' men into the military compared to Sweden, which conscripts on a gender-neutral basis (Strand 2023; Kosonen, Alisa, and Teemu, 2019). Despite both states highly egalitarian structure, the differing conscription policies present an empirical puzzle. Why have the two states of Sweden and Finland adopted different approaches to the gendered nature of the military despite both being highly gender-equal societies? Do notions of gender equality impact state conscription policy?

Constructivism as a Theoretical Lens

Due to the constructivist nature of the research, the focus is on the difference in understanding gender equality in Sweden and Finland. Constructivism emphasizes how reality is constructed through the actor's actions (Schwartz-Shea 2014; Falleti and Lynch 2009). Herein, the concept of gender and gender equality differs within and between states. As such, the research aims to understand the definition of gender equality set by each state and how these are interpreted in the military conscription policy. Policymakers bring a strong normative lens into their policymaking context. They read into reality and interpret the solutions. Within the constructivist viewpoint, there is not one problem and solution but meanings that influence what policies are developed (Locher and Prügl 2001). Therefore, the governmental and societal conceptualization of gender equality influences policymaking. In this instance, it is proposed that military conscription policy differs due to alternate understandings of gender equality in each state.

Critical Frame Analysis

The research will be conducted through a critical frame analysis of policy documents to understand norms of gender equality and this manifestation within military conscription policy (Carruthers 1990; Verloo 2005). Critical Frame Analysis assumes multiple interpretations in policymaking and helps identify the dominance and exclusion in policymaking (Verloo and Lombardo 2007). It views policymaking as a political process influenced by the mechanisms of political processes. It will be utilized to understand the policy problem's diagnosis, the policy solution's prognosis, and the voice and roles of actors who are present (or excluded) in policy documents (Verloo 2005). The framing of conscription policy documents and debates will be analyzed to understand gender equality and its relationship to conscription within each respective state. The analysis will create an understanding of the differences in interpretation of gender equality between Finland and Sweden and their subsequent impact on their conscription policies.

Data Analysis

Data analysis will be a comparative analysis of three primary documents in Sweden and Finland. The three documents chosen for analysis are the government action plans for gender equality in government institutions, national action plans in response to the UN Security Council resolution on Women, Peace, and Security, and statements on gender equality by the military. Analysis of these texts shall establish a governmental approach to gender equality within state structures and how this is reflected within the military conscription policies of their

respective states. The framing of equality within these documents will be used to understand each state's approach to gender equality within the scope of the military.

Various documents were considered for analysis. However, the above documents were chosen for their importance in setting and conveying the gender equality agenda and actions on different levels of their respective states. The UN Security Council resolution on Women, Peace, and Security action plans conveys the role of gender within the military and foreign policy and the institutions involved. The government action plans outline the main priorities for gender equality throughout government, key actors, and the importance placed upon gender equality within a broader governmental context. Finally, the statements on gender equality within the military outline the present understanding of gender equality and the role of women within the military. This allows for an in-depth understanding of how gender equality is framed within the state and how this affects military conscription policy.

Articles on the role of gender within the military were not selected for analysis due to the lack of representation of the state's understanding of gender equality. In addition, although heavily gendered, military statements focused on women's sexual harassment and discrimination were discounted due to the focus of the analysis on gender equality framing within the military and not gendered violence within the military.

Ethical Considerations

In line with Central European University's Ethical research policy, various ethical issues in the research have been considered (Central European University 2010). There is no ethical concern for participant safety due to the lack of participants. In addition, as a researcher, I am not personally involved in the military or states researched; as such, there are no conflicts of

interest, and my positionality and reflexivity as a researcher should not adversely affect the research undertaken.

Research should aim to benefit society through its contribution to understanding (Guillemin and Gillam 2004). This research aims to benefit society by elaborating upon research in the field of conscription policy, contributing to a gendered understanding of states' military conscription policies where there is currently a research gap.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This thesis explores how different understandings of gender equality impact the military as an institution. Thus, within the literature review, there will be a focus on the role of gender within institutions. It will be established that gender and gender equality are fluid concepts. Therefore, gender equality and subsequent implementation of gender equality agendas are equally fluid. Three primary understandings of gender equality and policy solutions will be established. The masculine nature of the military as an institution will be examined and the primary debate between scholars on the purpose of gender equality within the military will be reviewed. It shall be found that while the participation of women within institutions is an essential step towards creating gender equality within the institution, the mere placement of women in masculine institutions will not directly correlate to transformative institutional change. This must be paired with broader policy implementation, institutional restructuring, and gender mainstreaming to tackle patriarchal power structures within institutions.

It will be found that although there is a vast literature on the relationship between gender and the military as well as an in-depth understanding of gender equality policy, these are not strongly intertwined. Thus, there is a gap in scholarly understanding of policy regarding states' interpretation and implementation of gender equality agendas and women's participation in the military. This thesis seeks to contribute to this gap in knowledge by intertwining these fields of scholarship to understand if the conceptions of gender equality have contributed to the difference in Swedish and Finnish conscription policy.

Defining Gender

Gender is not a singular defined thing; it has a set of relational and hierarchical meanings (Cavaghan 2017). Gender can instead be defined as how people engage every day (West and Zimmerman 1987). It impacts all moments of life due to the role of patriarchal power structures within culture and society. The manner in which society deals with humans due to their socialized gender has consequences for individual and collective life through the formation of relational and structural patterns constructed of power dynamics.

Interpretations of Gender Equality

Similar to gender, gender equality as a concept is highly contested. Visions of gender equality are often conflicting on multiple boundaries, such as equality of opportunity versus outcome (Bacchi 1999). Therefore, differing gender equality policies are the result of contesting views on how to achieve gender equality and what gender equality as a concept is (Verloo and Lombardo, 2007). Amongst feminist scholars, there are three primary understandings of gender equality: equality of opportunity (equal opportunity policies), equality of difference from the male norm (positive action policy), or equality of transformation away from male norms (gender mainstreaming policy) (Walby 2005). While all three approaches seek to challenge and rid gender inequality, policy outcomes differ due to a different diagnosis of the problem and (policy) solution.

Equality of sameness diagnoses the problem of inequality as the exclusion of women from areas of society. It seeks to include women within spaces from which they have been

excluded and neutralize gender differences, thus removing gender inequality (Squires 2005). This interpretation of gender equality expects the transformation and masculinization of women within the institution to succeed (Verloo and Lombardo 2007). By aiming to achieve gender neutralization, equality of sameness fails to challenge gendered structural imbalances within society.

Equality of difference problematizes the presence of assumed male norms within society.

Equality is explicitly gendered and envisioned as deconstructing the treatment of those with non-hegemonic gendered identities within society. This will make space for a different treatment away from the dominant male norm within society (Squires 2005). Proposed solutions include a positive action policy, which seeks to account for power structures and inequalities. This understanding of gender equality challenges dominant social power structures by creating more accessible pathways (Rees 1998). However, it fails to genuinely challenge the underlying power structures between genders, which have led to inequity in the first place. As such, policies tend to be short-term solutions to ingrained societal problems.

Equality of transformation envisions gender equality as changing gender relations for all genders (Walby 2005). A goal of long-term societal structural transformation drives this approach. Advocates of this understanding of gender equality seek to overhaul current societal gender power structures, as seen in the case of gender mainstreaming (Rees 1998). This approach to equality addresses inequality through transforming institutions and actively gendering spaces to remove the gender inequity built within institutions.

Nordic Feminism and the Institutionalisation of Gender Equality

This thesis aims to understand if the opposing military conscription policies in Sweden and Finland are due to the interpretation of gender equality. As such, it is vital to understand the regional and national understanding and implementation of gender equality and gender equality agendas. Nordic feminism is characterized by state feminism. As such, the state is one of the primary actors in the gender equality movement, providing many policies that further gender equality within the state (Mahon et al. 2012). Herne is primarily viewed as a vital scholar of Nordic feminism. Her work argued that Nordic countries had the ability to be women-friendly welfare states due to the state due to the institutionalization of gender equality by the state alongside broad political mobilization (1987:15-16). Her work situated women's equality and integration into politics and breadwinning as the critical route to gender equality. Nordic states' continuous integration of women into the welfare and political state, institutionalizing gender equality, has realized this vision (Borchorst and Siim 2002). The expansive role of the welfare states provider of care, for which the burden often falls on women, and as an employer of women, who are heavily employed in the public sector, situates the role of the state as a primary gender equality actor (Mustosmäki et al. 2021). While all Nordic states have egalitarian political culture and active participation in social movements, key differences exist between the individual state understanding and policy implementation of gender equality (Siim and Borchorst 2005).

Swedish gender equality model is characterized by a high degree of intuitionism in gender equality and a high degree of participation in social movements (Siim and Borchorst 2005: 100). Sweden's feminist influence is most substantial within its political parties (Borchorst and Siim 2008). As such, significant gender policy changes have been driven by political actors.

Comparatively, Finland has weaker institutionalism of gender equality. It was the last Nordic country to introduce a Gender Equality policy, and the government spends less per capita than its Nordic neighbors on gender equality policy and machinery within the state (Borchorst, Christensen, and Raaum 1999). The cumulative effect of welfare retrenchment, EU accession, and decentralization has led to the de-prioritization of gender equality compared to other policy areas (Holli and Kantola 2007). As such, while Finland continues the Nordic trend of egalitarian political culture and institutions, the institutionalism of gender equality is to a lesser extent than neighboring Sweden.

Gender within Institutions

Gender is present in all aspects of life within institutions on formal and informal levels. Institutions are formal, with rules and procedures created and enforced through official channels, and informal, with socially shared and enforced behaviors enforced outside official channels (Childs 2022). Informal institutions work behind formal institutions to structure the everyday functioning and constructions of gender within everyday formal institutions (Helmke and Levitsky 2012). As outlined above, there are three main interpretations of gender equality: equality of opportunity, equality of difference, and equality of transformation (Squires 2005; Walby 2005). As theorized by Rees, these three interpretations lead to three primary models of policy actions to tackle gender inequality within institutions: tinkering, tailoring, or transforming policy (1998).

Tinkering policy is built on equality of opportunity understanding of gender equality. Policymakers aim to treat women the same as men. Creating gender equality in an institution often evokes policy of this kind which aims to neutralize de-gender and neutralize institutions

(Hearn 2000). Policies include preventing discrimination against women and allowing women's participation on an equal level to men (Benschop and Verloo 2006). However, the implementation of tinkering policy sets the standard of equality as that of men, which creates policies that enforce and reward masculine norms. Moreover, equality of opportunity fails to account for gender inequity in private life, which places additional limitations on women's actions (Rees 1998). As such, it fails to achieve true gender equality

Tailoring policy is based on interpreting equality within institutions as equality of difference. The policy provides for the differences between women in society but often leads to the segregation of women from men within the institution, limiting the scope of equal treatment (Bacchi 2006). Positive action policy is a key example of this, where barriers to entry may be reduced for women. However, policy neglects to challenge the issue of the barrier itself, instead creating secondary routes for marginalized genders (Rees 1998). Tailoring does not force women to conform to the institution. However, it does not force the institution to conform to women (Benschop and Verloo 2006). Herein, the patriarchal power structures of the institution remain.

Transformative policy is built on the concept of equality of transformation. It aims to transform the institution, both formal and informal, through the creation of new social norms and institutional restructuring (Childs, 2022). Gender equality within institutions is the equal visibility, power, and participation of genders within an institution. Herein, only transformative policy, which directly challenges the power structures of the institution, can achieve true gender equality (Rees 1998). Gender mainstreaming is fundamental to the equality of transformation (Walby 2005).

However, gender mainstreaming is an inherently contested process as it does not consist of a singular policy solution. It is continuing integration of gender in an institution through the

utilization policy, challenging the norms that form the very basis of the institution itself (Squires 2005). For this to occur, gender needs to be of high priority to actors within the institution so that it is continuously prioritized over other policy goals.

Unlike the understandings of equality on which tinkering, tailoring, and transformation policy actions are based, the line between different categorizations of gender equality policies can be hard to define. Transformative policy action is built on a variety of policies enacted to challenge the institution in various manners (Benschop and Verloo 2006). Therefore, it comprises a variety of policies, including positive action and anti-discrimination policies, which can be categorized as tinkering or tailoring policy action (Rees 2005). It is vital to critically analyze policy action alongside the broader context of the institution to understand and categorize gender equality policy intervention.

Critiquing Critical Mass Theory

Critical mass theory argues that any significant change in (masculine) institutional culture requires a critical mass of women of about 30% (Dahlerup 1988; Kanter 1977). The participation of a critical mass of women can lead to a fundamental structural change in the patriarchal order of the institution. Under this assumption, institutions fail to serve women due to the lack of women within the institution. However, Kanter does not use an explicitly gendered lens in their analysis, underestimating the role of masculine norms within institutions. Dahlerup extended Kanter's analysis to women yet continued to fail to give importance to the role of institutional structures, such as party bias in women's decision-making process, as barriers to the mobilization of women towards a gender equality goal (Childs and Krook 2006).

Moreover, the clarification in Dahlerup's work of the certain instances in which critical mass is effective, which is further contingent upon individual actions, fails to identify a certainty of the effectiveness of a critical mass as a solution to patriarchal institutions (Dahlerup 1988). The theory is primarily based on the equality of opportunity conception of gender equality and is associated with quota-based policy implementation. Thus, Dahlerup does not effectively address underlying structural inequalities within institutions that prevent gender equality on a broader level.

There is significant evidence that women's identities and interests result from their political identities formed in the political process rather than from their position within a patriarchal society, as Dahlerup theorizes (Borchorst and Siim 2008). Thus, women's identities transform as they become part of these patriarchal powerholding institutions. Lovenduski, Kennedy, and Norri's study of an influx of women into the British parliament under Blair found that a significant increase in the representation of women in parliament was unlikely to lead to radical change. Nevertheless, an increase in women could alter the usual business of parliament due to the differing priorities of women in power (2001). The assumption that a certain number of women in an institution will automatically lead to change is dubious at best. The entry of women into an institution can be associated with mobilization and critical acts but is unlikely to lead to transformative institutional change (Crowley 2004; Childs and Krook 2006). Moreover, the increased presence of women in positions of power correlates with a rise in hostility to feminist agendas (Grey 2006). Thus, a limit within this critical mass theory emerges.

Nonetheless, the presence of women within institutions can lead to opportunities for mobilization. Therefore, while an increase in the representation of women in institutions should not be a defining measure or predictor of gender equality, it is a key part of gender equality policies within institutions.

Masculinity and the Military

The military as an institution remains a bastion of masculinity within the state (Katzenstein 1999). The organization, personnel, activities, and effects of the military are inherently gendered (Carreiras 2017). While women have been marginalized and excluded throughout all institutions of the modern state, the degree of exclusion within the military is especially notable. This exclusion is due to the association of warfare with masculine values of strength and courage, which women are viewed to be lacking (Woodward and Duncanson 2017).

While the military's gender hierarchies are often viewed within the bounds of the military, this construct has a much broader reach than the institution of the military. Masculinity and the military have coexisted together throughout the history of the empire and nation-state (Elshtain 1987: 73-75). Gender has been placed within the center of military purpose, with masculinity bound to the concept of the male protector (Elshtain 1987; Woodward and Duncanson 2017). Gender and the concept of women in need have been weaponized to justify and prolong the conflict, repeating and solidifying patriarchal power in society (Goldstein 2001a: 19-21). The utilization and propagation of these gender roles throughout history has further ingrained patriarchal norms within the state.

Cultural norms of women's perceived mental and physical fragility alongside a need for protection has led to a disregard for women's place within the military, as the participation of women in the military would be a danger to the state. With participation in warfare and reward for said participation primarily limited to men, women have been unable to engage fully with the nation-state (Woodward and Duncanson 2017). To be unable to protect the nation-state through the failure of refusal is akin to womanhood (Kennedy-Pipe 2000). Thus, national

militaries and men's participation in them have aided the construction of patriarchal systems within the workings of the state.

In the post-war period of 1945, there was a liberal feminist push for the 'right to fight' for women in the military on the grounds of unfair discrimination on the basis of sex. Feminist discourse fought against the concept that women were incapable of being good fighters and would disrupt the social cohesion within military units (Kennedy-Pipe 2017). As women's movements grew, a focus on the right to participate in combat also grew due to the importance of military participation within the social hierarchy. Thus, participation could aid women in their fight for equality (Woodward and Duncanson 2017). Feminists focused on the right of women to participate in war, rejecting arguments that the participation of women led to more peaceful outcomes and instead drawing on historical example's participation of women in the military throughout history, eschewing the linkages between the military and masculinity (Kennedy-Pipe 2017). However, there remains a strong link between women's movements and antimilitarism, women's participation in the military is still significantly lower than that of men, and masculinity remains dominant throughout the institution (Goldstein 2001a: 30-45).

Gender Equality Agendas within the Military

Gender equality within the military has long been a fascination for scholars due to how the military attributes meaning to the national identity of the nation-state and the order of the nation-state itself (Strand and Kehl 2019). Butler's notion of performativity demonstrates how the nation-state and national identity are performed within defense discourse and foreign policy (Butler 1990; Strand and Kehl 2019). The definition of gender equality within the state is inherently vital to the understanding of gender dynamics within the military itself. Gender as a concept is relational, and change is inevitable (Butler 1990). The overlapping relationship

between a nation's agendas, cultural norms, and understanding sets the relations for gender within the state. In turn, this is recreated within a military context. Due to the relational relationship between the military and gender, the meaning of gender within the military can transition as the state reframes what gender means within a modern context. Moreover, the reframing of gender within the military context can contribute to a change in the construction of gender norms within the state.

Despite a sustained interest of feminist scholars in increasing gender equity within government institutions such as parliament and courts, this has not transferred to significant interest in military integration (Lowndes 2020; Sarah Childs 2022). There is a tradition within feminist scholarship to view the military as too overtly masculine and tied up in the masculinity of violence, making it impossible to detach from its masculine nature (Duncanson 2017). Antimilitarist scholars believe that as gender is a fundamental component of war, feminist interventions in the military should lead to peace (Cockburn 2010). This critique allows for an in-depth understanding of the masculine nature of the military and larger power structures that created such an overtly male environment that sets patriarchal societal norms. However, it fails to prioritize the inherent value of feminist scholarship in leading to progressive change (Lovenduski 1998). Knowledge of the policy action that can achieve institutional change should be utilized to achieve gender equality within the military regardless of the regressive nature of the military compared to other government institutions.

Conclusion

This literature review has conceptualized gender and gender equality. The equality of sameness, difference, and transformation understandings of gender equality and their relation to tinkering, tailoring, and transformative policy action has been established. It has been found

that transformative gender equality policy action undertaken through gender mainstreaming is the truest form of gender equality. However, gender equality is not the result of one singular policy but multiple interacting policies. Thus, transformative institutional change requires the implementation of a variety of policy actions alongside the implementation of women within the institution.

The dominantly masculine nature of the military has been established, and its connection to the nation-state and the construction of gender roles within the state. The intertwined nature of the military and masculinity has been further utilized to understand the contested nature of women's participation and gender equality agendas from feminists and the institution of the military itself. While there is a wealth of literature on the relationship between gender and the military, strong masculine norms remain. As such, the induction of women on a gender-equal basis into the military, while necessary, cannot be the only solution to the masculine institution and must be paired with more comprehensive policy solutions to tackle the intertwined nature of gendered power structures within institutions. Without such policies, the introduction of the military will condition women to act in a masculine manner instead of evolving the institution to become more gender equal. Such policy action would not adequately implement gender equality within the military.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Background

Swedish Gender Equality Machinery

Sweden and Norway have the strongest institutionalization of gender equality machinery on the policymaking level (Borchorst et al. 2012). Gender equality machinery within the country has been the responsibility of the Ministry of Gender Equality since 1979 and within the Gender Equality Division as of 1982. This division works to improve gender equality policy, prepares legislation, coordinates gender equality work with other ministries, and solely concentrates and gender issues, as there are separate divisions for other inequalities within government. The Gender Equality Council represents political parties, labor organizations, and women's organizations, creating space for input on gender equality policy (Christina Bergqvist, Olsson Blandy, and Sainsbury 2007). The institutionalization of non-governmental organization input within a specific ministry for gender equality demonstrates the importance of the gender equality agenda throughout Swedish governance.

Historical Understanding of Gendered Participation within the Swedish Military

In the summer of 2018, young men and women began their military service, the first gender-equal conscripts in the nation's history. While the introduction of gender-neutral conscription was instated in 2010 when male conscription was removed and replaced with gender-neutral conscription, it was paired with a simultaneous move to de-activate conscription due to peacetime (Persson and Sundevall 2019). The reactivation of conscription in 2018 marked the beginning of active gender-neutral conscription for one of 2 states worldwide (Chakravorty,

2023). Scholars have interpreted the implementation of gender-neutral conscription within Sweden as a more significant attempt to mainstream gender throughout all forms of governance (Persson and Sundevall 2019). The state has been a forerunner in gender equality within the military, opening all parts of the military towards women in 1989, compared to 2015 in the USA and 2016 in the UK (Woodward and Duncanson 2017). The Swedish government framed this as evidence of their forerunner status within gender equality in the military. Sweden's conception of the modern conscript, unhindered by the reality of gender, seeks to personify its imagination as a progressive state which is actively feminist (Strand 2023).

Finnish Gender Equality Machinery

In Finland, gender equality machinery has been a secondary duty of another ministry since its creation in 1977. As part of reforms in 2001, the country created a separate unit for administering gender equality policy, the Gender Equality Unit, with drastically increased resources for Finnish gender equality policy. However, the unit remains within Ministry for Social Affairs and Health and ranks lower than all other ministries (Borchorst et al. 2012). The creation of the gender equality unit co-occurred with the weakening of the independent Gender Equality Council (Borchorst et al. 2012). Political organizations and NGOs have permanent representatives within this council. However, they are only represented indirectly. Despite the reduction in resources, the council remains an influential actor in gender policy in the country. However, the changes have created an institutional dependency on political actors' gender equality agendas rather than the institution (Holli and Kantola 2007). This endangers the institutionalized nature and effect of gender equality policy and action throughout government. The Finnish government's either-or approach to the Gender Equality Unit and Gender Equality Council demonstrates the lack of political support to implement gender equality units

throughout all areas of parliament. This is unlike Sweden, which has both a Ministry for Gender Equality and Gender Equality Council. Moreover, Finland as a government spends less money per capita than its Nordic neighbors on gender equality policy and machinery within the state (Holli and Kantola 2007). The secondary nature of the gender equality unit, and resulting policy, compared to Sweden throughout government, demonstrates the less intrinsic nature of gender equality machinery within Finnish government institutions.

Historical Understanding of Gendered Participation within the Finnish Military

Despite the decision of neighboring Norway and Sweden to conscript on a gender-equal basis into the military, Finland has refrained from doing so. Conscription based on citizenship and civil duties is a fundamental and widely supported concept in Finland. However, half of the citizens are excluded from this process (Kosonen, Alisa, and Teemu 2019). Male conscription has been compulsory since the independence of the country in 1917 (Jukarainen 2012). Finland conscripts' men on a compulsory basis with the option of voluntary service for women. Finnish men can be conscribed from age 18 to 60 (Kosonen, Alisa, and Teemu 2019). This duty to protect has been tied to national identity building, centering the military as a fundamental basis for nation-building beyond an issue of national security (Jukarainen 2012). Women comprise 19% of the Finnish Defence Force, with the majority working in the support sector. Only 3% of conscripts and military officers are women, compared to 9% in Sweden, 11% in Norway, and 7% in Denmark (Kouri 2021).

Understanding the Gender Equality Agenda with the Nation-State

Sweden: Power, Aims, and Authority- Feminist Policy for a Gender-Equal Future

(Government Offices of Sweden 2016)

Sweden does not have a gender equality action plan. Instead, the government produces key documents which outline gender equality goals for the future (European Institute for Gender Equality 2022). The Power, Aims, and Authority- Feminist Policy for a Gender-Equal Future document was given to the national parliament by the cabinet in 2016 and set out the direction of Swedish gender equality policy for the next ten years (Government Offices of Sweden 2016a). As such, this can be interpreted as the action plan for the nation.

Diagnosis

Gender inequality is presented as a result of oppressive gender norms and structures throughout governance and society. Inequality is causing a variety of gender inequities within Sweden, including higher rates of male employment, with horizontal and vertical segregation in the labor market. Norms are focused on throughout the report to an in-depth degree, with policy focusing on behavioral change and norm-setting. For example, an in-depth research-based policy solution is proposed to tackle care-based gender inequalities based on an analysis of population behavioral patterns and outcomes of previous policies. This suggests a highly interventionist and transformative approach to the implementation of gender equality. There is a clear agenda to alter informal power structures in the state through formal mechanisms.

Prognosis

Gender mainstreaming is viewed as the solution to gender inequity and has been since the government launched the strategy in 1990. Government institutions are responsible for gender mainstreaming and can deploy gender-inclusive mechanisms in the governmental process to tackle gender inequity. This is of most significant importance when tackling gender inequality. Gender mainstreaming is defined as "*...gender equality is created where resources are allocated, decisions are made, and norms are created...*" p.45. The precise definition of gender mainstreaming and explanation of how it is enacted in policymaking demonstrates the government's focus on its implementation. Herein it is clear that there is a fundamental belief that gender mainstreaming by the government can set norms of behavior and change the decision-making processes which ingrain gender equality. This demonstrates a transformative gender equality policy outlook within the document.

Voice of Actors/ Role of Actors

The government is the leading voice in this document. They believe it is their responsibility to mainstream gender and set new norms for the nation. This points to the high institutionalization of gender equality agendas within the Swedish government. The Ministry of Gender Equality is repeatedly referenced as the coordinating force behind gender equality and the action plans set by the government's special decisions. However, each Ministry and the Minister in charge is responsible for ensuring a gender equality perspective is integrated within their area of responsibility. Each department has its gender equality coordinator, who reports back and participates in the inter-ministerial working group for gender mainstreaming, coordinated by the gender equality unit. Thus, although the coordinating role of gender equality lies within the Ministry of Gender Equality, responsibility is divided into each department, which is responsible for driving gender equality within its sector. Each policy is assigned to a specific department establishing a high level of formal integration of gender equality policy within each

department and awareness of gender policy. This demonstrates an equality of transformation outlook and transformation policy implementation. There is a clear agenda to tackle informal power structures by substantially transforming formal structures.

Finland: Making Finland a Global Leader in Gender Equality: Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020-2023 (The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2021)

Diagnosis

Gender inequality throughout society and governance is identified as a problem. However, there is little attribution to what is causing the problem. Gender inequality is primarily represented as labor market participation, care work, and male violence against women problem. These are the key areas defined for improvement and minimization of gender differences. The active inclusion of language, such as minimizing differences, denotes an equality of sameness approach to parts of the report. The majority of policy solutions focus on the enactment of laws and prevention of discrimination over changing of behavior/institutions, placing focus on formal institutions over informal norms. This suggests a tinkering/tailoring approach to the gender equality agenda.

Prognosis

The document outlines two key approaches to promoting gender equality: namely, goal setting, implementing and monitoring measures that promote gender equality, and mainstreaming the gender perspective (gender mainstreaming). Mainstreaming is described as "*more favorable*" p.47. However, mainstreaming is not presented as the only solution. It is one of two strategies, notably "*...requiring the exerting of influence at appropriate times*" (p.47). This suggests there is an inappropriate time to mainstream gender within governance. The presentation of a second

option for gender equality as formal goalsetting, implementing, and monitoring measures such as participation can therefore be presumed to be utilized when gender mainstreaming is not of an appropriate nature. This form of goalsetting, implementation, and monitoring primarily focuses on formal aspects of gender equality. It can be interpreted as policies focused on tailoring the institution towards women rather than transforming it.

Voice of Actors/Role of Actors

The report outlines the Government's aim to make Finland a gender equality pioneer, situating the government as the primary actor in promoting gender equality. However, the report notes institutional limitations due to "...*less than ambitious goals and a lack of resources...*" p. 48. The mention of lacking drive and resources within government ministries denotes informal resistance to gender mainstreaming policy, suggestive of set norms of equality of sameness or difference within the institutions themselves. Moreover, formal gender mainstreaming policy is not paired with gender-analyzed data necessary to implement or consider gender equality goals. Gender equality goals are not mainstreamed throughout governance and sit separately from other governmental goals. While there are overarching formal overall goals for a transformative approach to gender equality, there is little implementation and strong informal norms of resistance to transformative policy.

There is a consensus on government responsibility and no centralized and well-funded area to prioritize gender equality and mainstreaming throughout governance. For example, the final goal denotes a policy and actors responsible as "... *Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of the Interior, etc.*" p.65. Herein multiple ministries are listed as responsible for various aspects. There is no clear definition of responsibility or clear list of actors involved. The use of "etc" in the assignment of policy tasks leaves the role of actors in the process unclear.

As such, the policy outcome is more tailored due to the constraints of informal norms and lacking legitimacy of formal policy in changing said norms.

Comparison

Both Finland and Sweden have similar policy goals, such as reducing male violence against women and reducing workplace segregation. However, Sweden's approach is heavily norm focused and aims to transform behavior, basing policy on extensive behavioral research. This indicates an agenda of transforming informal norms through formal policy implementation. Finland's action plan focuses heavily on formal law changes and conducting studies to establish impact. While this is important, it places them a step behind the actions of Sweden. Finland does repeatedly mention an agenda of mainstreaming. However, due to informal resistance within the institutions, legitimized under the stated belief that mainstreaming is not always the appropriate policy action, and poor implementation of the formal policy underlying gender equality, their approach to gender equality in the national action plan can be defined as a tailoring approach.

Understanding the Role of Gender within Foreign Policy and Military Actions

Sweden: Women, Peace & Security: Sweden's National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Councils Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security 2016-2020

(Government Offices of Sweden 2016b)

Diagnosis

The action plan states that there is a gender inequity in women's participation in the field of peace and security. Without women in peace and security processes, peacebuilding and peace agreements are less legitimate and of lower quality. The Swedish priority is to increase the visibility and strength of women's influence and meaningful participation as actors in the peace and security process. The action plan details the cooperation of multiple institutions within the government, including the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Armed Forces, and the Ministry of Justice. The problem is defined as a lack of representation of women in the peacebuilding process and a lack of a gendered lens throughout the peacebuilding process. This is due to systemic gender inequity within the institution. There is a clear aim to further mainstream gender throughout institutions involved in peace and security.

Prognosis

Various policies are to be implemented, focusing on the meaningful inclusion of women in the post-conflict peacebuilding policy process, the implementation of gendered thinking throughout the peacebuilding process, and further measures to increase gender equality and counteract gender-based violence. The intertwined nature of the policies points to a mainstreaming approach to gender equality. It is believed that this will allow for a gendered perspective within the security and peace process leading to better outcomes.

Women's right to participation and influence is placed forefront as a justification for gender mainstreaming in the process. The action plan states, *"When women's right to political participation and influence is not respected, peace agreements and peacebuilding lose legitimacy, quality, and sustainability."* p. 9. This quote demonstrates the belief that there is a loss for all involved without women's inclusion in peace and security processes. There is a fundamental belief placed on the benefit of feminizing the institution denotes equality of transformation understanding and clear transformative equality policy agenda.

The norms underpinning the report are that gender equality is beneficial for all and key to the security and peace process, both within the institutions enacting security and peace policy and those making it. The conceptualization of a different output, when equality is integrated into the process, signifies a transformative equality approach by policymakers.

Voice of Actors/Role of Actors

The Swedish Government is the primary actor in this process, setting out the action plan for gendered change. The action plan continues the government agenda of gender mainstreaming throughout areas of government and policy action. There is an explicit statement of Sweden as a feminist government enacting feminist foreign policy feminism foreign policy. This statement explicitly formalizes their actions as gendered and denotes a gender-mainstreamed approach within the action plan, government, and foreign policy. As such, the underpinning beliefs of equality of transformation are clearly stated for all. The participation of all actors listed as responsible for policy change, including the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, The Swedish Armed Forces, and the Ministry of Justice, in the action plan and discussions legitimizes the promise to further gendered peacekeeping and security work.

Finland: Women, Peace, and Security: Finland's National Action Plan 2023-2027 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2023)

Diagnosis

Gender inequity is the fundamental basis of the problem due to the gendered nature of war. This problem is defined as women's limited access to justice in conflict situations due to the lack of a gender mainstreaming approach within conflict and peace processes and policymaking. There is a need for more gendered peace and security processes alongside the

participation of women within the field of peace and security. Attention is paid to the divided role of women as civilians and men as soldiers and savors in peacekeeping and security narratives. A focus is paid to deconstructing these roles and increasing access for women. This indicates an equality of different understanding for the participation of women within peace and security processes.

Prognosis

The Finnish government and various outlined ministries are responsible for addressing the issue. Gender mainstreaming in policymaking is continuously noted as a solution. However, it is mentioned in limited policy areas rather than a cross-policy approach through all areas of government. This suggests a gender mainstreaming will be enacted in certain institutions but not others. There is a comprehensive discussion of national and international policy sharing to further integrate women into the peace and security processes. However, the focus is mainly on the role of Finland in promoting gender equity in its peace and security roles in international conflict. There is little internal examination of Finland's institutions themselves. As such, it is unlikely that a transformative policy change will be undertaken. Instead, policy sharing is continuously discussed within its role in assisting gender equality policy implementation in other nations states, mainly from a tailoring or tinkering approach with the introduction of women in the process on an equal basis to men, based on equality of sameness and difference principles.

Voice of Actors/Role of Actors

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the primary actor responsible for this process. However, the gender equality unit is notably absent from the report. This delegitimizes claims of gender transformation, as the primary institution responsible for this within the government is not

involved. Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs primary role solidifies the action plans' primary aim as focusing on gender equality internationally rather than nationally.

An external evaluation of the previous 'National Programme of Action on Women, Peace, and Security' found that important gender equality works abroad with multistakeholder cooperation was limited by under-resourcing of staff and budgets and lack of political will, demonstrating the continuation of both formal and informal constraints to gender equality agendas. Moreover, Finland actively refrains from labeling their foreign policy as feminist or stating a feminist outlook. This indicates an unwillingness to formalize gender within government and transform institutions to promote thoroughly gendered approaches to peace and security.

Comparison

Sweden actively announces its feminist government and foreign policy throughout the report and repeatedly emphasizes transformational policy goals within key institutions. This continues to portray a transformative understanding of gender equality and support for gender mainstreaming. Contrary to this, Finland announces itself as a leader in the field but focuses policy primarily on policy sharing internationally, which indicates tailoring or tinkering policy approaches on the international stage. Gender mainstreaming is mentioned as necessary on a national stage, but there are few policy suggestions. Instead, there is a statement of past failures due to lacking resources and political will, which displays institutional resistance to gender equality agendas and strong norms against transformative change. While there is a conceptual understanding of the importance of equality of transformation in security policy, there is lacking policy implementation of transformative policy.

Herein there is a clear divide between Sweden's active mainstreaming on an international and national level compared to Finland's, perhaps more realistic, tinkering and tailoring approach internationally and failing transformative policy implementation nationally.

Understanding Gender Equality within the Military

Sweden: Military Gender Equality and Equity Statement (The Swedish Armed Forces 2023)

Diagnosis

Gender inequality and inequity within the military are diagnosed as the critical issue. Norms of systematic gender inequality within government institutions and in society are responsible. Without systematic institutional gender equality, the force is weaker and less effective. The military must act to set new norms of gender equality within the institution.

Prognosis

Gender mainstreaming is presented as the only solution to gender inequity, demonstrating an explicitly transformative approach to gender equality. The military's responsible for acting on gender equality as assigned by the Discrimination Act and the Work Environment Act. The acts provide formal legitimacy to gender equality policy actions. To reduce gender inequality and inequity, gender analysis is carried out on policy decisions in all areas and levels of the military. This ensures that gender equality is consistently considered when making policy decisions.

Moreover, special attention is paid to preventing discrimination and harassment within the military to promote equal and equitable working conditions. Alone, this policy would suggest a tinkering approach. However, as it is part of multiple-policy solutions, it contributes to a

transformative policy agenda. Other policies include a statement of intent to increase women's representation within the armed forces through policies such as mentoring programs to increase the role of women within the military as a whole. The variety of policies based on analysis of norms demonstrates the transformative approach taken to achieving gender equality in the military and the recognition strength of masculine norms which are being challenged.

Gender equality is presented as vital to the improvement of the military as an institution. There is an in-depth description of how it improves the military's responses in situations which finishes with the statement that *"In short, it makes us stronger" p.1*. This quote is a clear statement of the strength the military gains by becoming gender equal and the need for mainstreaming to improve the organization. It can be interpreted that the transformative effects of gender equality within the institution are a crucial driving force behind gender-neutral conscription and gender equality agendas within the military.

Voice of Actors/Role of Actors

The military is the primary actor and voice within this statement. Gender mainstreaming acts and action plans by the Swedish government are referenced continuously, giving legitimacy to their actions. The responsibility for tackling gender inequality lies within the institution, although they are responsible to broader gender equality bodies and tailor their policy under acts created by the government. The military clearly states that it intends to act on inequity at all levels of the military. This demonstrates the transformative approach taken by the military through the implementation of gender with various policies on all levels. The military itself bears the responsibility, which exhibits accountability and will to undertake the transformation necessary to improve its institution, not just for women but for all.

Finland: Equality and Gender Equality in the Finnish Defence Forces (The Finnish Defence Forces 2023)

Diagnosis

Gender inequality in military participation and treatment is diagnosed as the problem. Norms of hazing culture and gender inequality are mentioned, which speaks to the military's inherently formal and informal masculine culture. The portrayal of gender equality is as beneficial to the individuals within the institution over the institution itself. This demonstrates an equality of sameness approach to gender equality within the military. The concept of a reward for participation in the military speaks to the nationality-building role of the military for Finnish military members. Herein, gender equality is viewed as an opportunity for women rather than an essential for the institution itself. This suggests that gender equality policy will take a tinkering or tailoring approach allowing women to join the military if they wish but not transforming the military to encourage women to join.

Prognosis

Gender equality is portrayed as the responsibility of those within the institution, both units, and individuals. A significant emphasis is paid to the role of individuals to treat all equally. There is a clear equality of sameness and understanding of gender equality. The individual right of conscripts and personnel to be able to serve and train in an equitably equal environment is stated as key. However, there is lacking institutional responsibility taken for inequality. The solutions proposed are not transformative. Instead, they are based on monitoring and ensuring that gendered participation remains at similar levels. Progress is measured with surveys. This is indicative of a tinkering approach to gender equality policy. The defense command and individual FDF administrations have their own equity and gender equality plans which identify equality issues and propose solutions. However, there is no overall institutional guidance on

the matter mentioned. There is no mention of the role of the military in actively recruiting more women to roles to tackle gender inequality of personnel. Therefore, there are no signs of genuine transformative equality policy implementation.

Voice of Actors/Role of Actors

The approach to gender equality relies on the diagnosis of inequality and enaction policy solutions by individuals and units. The military itself is the spokesperson for policy. However, responsibility is primarily devolved to local units and the individual themselves. The statement of responsibility states that "*...each and everyone is to ensure that no one is treated unfairly.*" p.1. This demonstrates the willingness of the military to stand against the idea of gender inequality. Gender inequality is understood as an individual rather than institutional problem. As such, there is no transformative understanding of gender equality within the military. Instead, equality here is represented as equality of sameness. This evidences a tinkering or tailoring approach to gender equality within the military.

Comparison

There is a stark difference in understanding of gender equality within the Swedish and Finnish military. Sweden continues its government agenda of mainstreaming within the military. It explicitly states the intent to mainstream and the benefits of transformative gender equality change to the whole institution and those it serves. This demonstrates the active feminizing of the military and the intent to transform gender relations within the institution. Finland takes a contrasting approach to gender equality within its military, its understanding of gender equality and equality of sameness understanding and focuses on reducing discrimination and ensuring equal treatment of those within the military. Responsibility for

gender equality has little institutional oversight and is devolved to units and individuals who are told to ensure equal treatment. There is a notable tinkering policy approach to gender equality as best tailoring; however, there is no note of positive action policy, so the approach leans towards tinkering. While there is a formalization of gender equality agendas, there is no implementation and no stated desire to challenge the informal norms of the institution, as such military participation of women within Finland would require them to adapt to the informal and formal masculine norms of the institution. Swedish conscripts, however, would be faced with an institution transforming to include women and feminized norms within the institution.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

Sweden actively pushes gender mainstreaming throughout all forms of government with a variety of national action plans as well as checks and balances in place to ensure consistent mainstreaming throughout governance. Policy documents evidenced a formally institutionalized equality of transformation perspective throughout governance which translated to equality of transformation policy on all levels in line with Rees's understanding of transformative policy (1998). As such, it can be understood that Sweden aims to implement gender equality and transform the patriarchal structure of the institution as part of a state-wide renegotiation of gendered norms. This aligns with other scholarly interpretations of Sweden's conscription policy decisions (Strand 2023). It has been established that simply placing women within an institution does not lead to transformation. However, the pairing of integration of women in institutions alongside other gender mainstreaming policies is a fundamental part of transformative institutional change (Kennedy, Norris, and Lovenduski 2001; Childs and Krook 2008). Sweden's decision to conscript women into the military gender neutrally with men can be interpreted as this transformative form of gender equality and gender equality policy.

Women's participation in the military is critical to broader goals of gender transformation which are ongoing in the military. As such, women will not be subject to the dominant masculine norms expected of a military and will actively contribute to changing gendered norms both within and out of the military due to its fundamental attachment to the state (Strand, 2023). By conscripting women and rewriting the formal and informal norms of gender roles within the military, Sweden aims to further transform patriarchal structures within and outside the military by challenging dominant structural behaviours with gender mainstreaming.

Legitimacy is lent to this process through various government acts, repeatedly referenced in gender equality statements as guiding documents. This formalizes the equality process within institutions. Moreover, the government's active feminist stance in its foreign policy, in which the military is included, lends further legitimacy to the process. Gender equality and equity are considered fundamental throughout the state for men, women, and government institutions. This is considered on both a formal and informal basis. This is vital as both are important when considering if it is true gender equality to place women within the military (Lovenduski 1998). The formalization of this policy, and the responsibility taken by the government to institutionalize new norms and reshape the gendered nature of the military, demonstrates a commitment to transforming patriarchal norms throughout the state (Anette Borchorst and Siim 2008). This transformative agenda circumvents the feminist critique of women's inclusion in the military due to the hostile nature of many militaries and institutions to women (Duncanson 2017). As such, the introduction of women in the conscription policy on a gender-neutral basis is appropriate as they are entering an institution that is actively changing to make space for feminine norms.

Finland constructs gender equality and policy solutions to gender inequality differently from Sweden. While gender mainstreaming is highlighted as one of two solutions to gender inequality, it is one of two government gender equality strategies and only to be implemented where appropriate. The government does not view gender mainstreaming as the only solution to gender inequality and suggests that it is unsustainable in some institutions. Military documents analyzed demonstrated a reluctance to place the responsibility for gender inequality with the institution itself, instead placing it with individual units and military members, suggesting a tinkering approach to gender equality within the military. This approach to gender equality relies upon women in the institution to conform to masculine norms to succeed within the institution (Rees 1998). As such, the lack of a gender-neutral conscription policy can be

attributed to an understanding of the Finnish government that conscripting women into the institutions of the military would force them to conform to masculine ideals, which would not be in line with a gender equality agenda.

There is a vision for gender mainstreaming within broader government policy. However, there is no mention of gender mainstreaming within the military itself, which suggests that the military is an area where mainstreaming is not deemed an appropriate strategy. Focus within the military is placed on the equal treatment of those who choose to join. However, there is no mention of intent to increase the representation of women within the military itself. The lack of an active agenda to recruit women into the military is due to the lack of formal institutional support for transformative gender equality within a national security policy, as noted in the Women, Peace, and Security National Action Plan. As such, Finland views introducing women into the military without institutional change, for which there is little support, as inherently unfair and unjust. This stands in defiance of the beliefs of critical mass scholars (Benschop and Verloo 2006; Dahlerup 1988; Kanter 1977). There has been a clear decision by policymakers that it would be unjust to conscript women into the military due to its inherently masculine nature.

This analysis has contributed to understanding the opposing conscription policy within Denmark and Sweden. It has been found that notions of gender equality impact state conscription policy and have impacted the design of conscription policy in Sweden and Finland. The differing conceptions and framings of gender equality and subsequent gender equality agendas of Sweden and Finland have led to juxtaposing military conscription policies.

Sweden has chosen to conscript gender neutrally into the military as part of broader gender mainstreaming agenda which seeks to deconstruct patriarchal gender roles throughout the state. Women's integration into the military is part of the institution's transformation to give power

to feminine values and actions. Thus, the conscription of women into the military can be viewed as a positive policy decision for gender equality within the state.

Conversely, Finland's national conception of gender equality is mainstreaming where appropriate. However, the military is not believed to be an institution where it is appropriate to do so. As such, gender equality policy in the military can primarily be defined as a tinkering policy. It has been established that tinkering policy fails to challenge the institutions and women within institutions that implement tinkering policy must conform to masculine norms to succeed (Benschop and Verloo 2006; Rees 1998). This cannot be understood as gender equality for women within the institution. Herein it is more gender equal to not conscript women into such a masculine institution without other transformative gender policies enacted first. Although this is a differing interpretation of gender equality within the state, it is equally just as it minimizes the patriarchal powers that women must conform to within society.

Each state's respective policy actions are taken with consideration wider gender equality agendas within the military, the strength of masculine norms within the military, and how the subjection of women to these norms would impact them as conscripts. Both policy decisions are the result of differing gender equality agendas based on conceptions of equality and state norms. If in the future Finland did choose to implement transformative gender equality policies within the military, then a change in conscription policy would be justifiable and a positive step towards further gender equality. However, this requires a structural transformation of the institution, as the mere placement of women within masculine institutions does not lead to gender equality and is inherently unjust.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the opposing conscription policies between Sweden and Finland can be attributed to different constructions of gender equality and subsequent gender equality policy in the respective states. Sweden's gender mainstreaming approach across all realms of government is apparent within its military policy. The state aims to transform and mainstream the military through its gender equality policy and the equal conscription of women into the military, deconstructing the typical male soldier archetype. In Finland, mainstreaming is not viewed as the solution to gender inequality in the military and is not prioritized to not ingrained to a similar extent.

Herein, the continued exclusion of women from military conscriptions is based on the underlying belief that conscripting women into the military would not be gender equal, as it would subject them to overtly masculine power structures. Conversely, Sweden's understanding of the importance of transformative gender equality and prioritization of transformative gender equality agendas led to the decision that the conscription of women is a more gender-equal act. Women are entering an institution that is being restructured away from patriarchal norms and, as such, have the right to participate in the military equally as protectors of the state.

Both policy actions were made based on minimizing the gender inequality women faced. However, the policy decisions were based on constructions of gender equality relative to the broader context of the gender equality agendas within the military. The opposing decisions made by policymakers can be attributed to the construction of differing gender equality norms in each state and within the military.

APPENDIX

Sensitizing Questions Utilised in Critical Frame Analysis

Diagnosis

- Who's the problem?
- Who is causing it?
- What mechanisms are present in the norms/identity/legitimization of policy?
- How is the problem defined?
- Is gender inequality represented as part of the problem?
- What other norms are behind the problem definition?
- What is seen as the cause of the inequality?
- What aspects of military conscription policy are of greatest focus? What field: employment, citizenship, intimacy, violence?

Prognosis

- Who should do something about the problem?
- Who should the solution target?
- What should be done?
- What is the rationale for action?
- What mechanisms can be employed to decrease gender inequality?
- What norms underpin the solution? Is gender equality one of them? Or the main one?
- How can gender inequality be addressed?
- What is of greatest importance in gender inequality?

Voice of Actors/ Role of Actors

- Who is speaking?
- What is their perspective on gender inequality?
- What is referenced when discussing this problem?
- Who should be responsible for solving the problem?
- What is the hierarchy of the actors present?
- Who has a voice (legitimized) within the policymaking process?
- Whose beliefs are acted upon?
- How is (non) action legitimized?

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