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What Women Bring to the Fight: An Analysis of Female Leadership in U.S. National Security

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WHAT WOMEN BRING TO THE FIGHT: AN ANALYSIS OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP

IN U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY

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Women have held some of the highest-ranking national security positions in the United States, though the overall number of women in leadership positions has remained relatively small until recently. The Biden Administration has achieved gender parity in their national security leadership positions, with over fifty percent of these positions being held by women. Since this is the first time in U.S. history that women have such a significant presence in the defense field, it is important to analyze and understand the changes that can come as a result.

The purpose of this research is to broadly understand the impact that women in leadership have on national security policymaking. To begin to examine this aim, three questions are posed: What approaches do women take to leadership in the national security field? Is the national security field different when women are in leadership positions? Does having more women in the national security field change outcomes?

This study uses qualitative methods to approach these topics. This study examines ten interviews with women across the national security field, explicitly looking at their careers, experiences, and approaches to leadership. Using initial and focused coding and conceptual category development, I was able to use quotes and themes from interviews to analyze commonalities across all ten interviews. The themes that emerged from the coding process were

assessed for their frequency across all interviews and the importance of the data in answering the research questions. From this process, a few key categories emerged, which included the differing traits between men and women in the field, the culture and attitudes of the field, the evolution of women in national security, and the impact that women have on national security.

Ultimately, the themes and analysis of this research showed that the increase in women in national security leadership did contribute to changes in U.S. national security. The data did not show that women make different national security policy decisions, such as the decision to carry out drone strikes or provide military aid but did show that having equitable representation of women in the national security field can yield changes in the culture of the field as well as create more well-rounded, comprehensive decisions. The data highlighted that women in leadership positions make more collaborative environments and can help create a more flexible work environment to accommodate caregiving responsibilities for both men and women. Increased representation is also important in continuing a strong pipeline of women in the national security field. Because this study has a small sample size, the results may not be generalizable to the entire national security field. A larger study would need to be conducted to yield more generalizable results.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since his election in 2020, President Joe Biden has appointed more women to Senate-confirmed national security positions than any other president. These positions include ambassadors, cabinet members, and other senior national security positions. Over fifty percent of Senate-confirmed political appointments in national security are held by women, forty-six percent of the President's cabinet is female and thirty-six percent of the National Security Council (NSC) is female. For context, the Trump administration's NSC was 14.71% women, and the Obama administration's NSC was 25% women, the second highest number of women appointed behind the Biden administration. The number of women making decisions in the national security field is the highest it has ever been.

This administration has seen new security challenges, including the end of the war in Afghanistan and the start of a war in Ukraine. With new and pressing national security issues facing the United States, a question that arises is: What does this increase in female leadership in the defense sector mean? This paper aims to understand the impact that women have on U.S. national security policy. To begin to examine this aim, three questions are posed: What approaches do women take to leadership in the national security field? Is the national security field different when women are in leadership positions? Does having more women in the national security field change outcomes?

This study examines ten interviews with women across the national security field, explicitly looking at their careers, experiences, and approaches to leadership. These women have held leadership positions in the U.S. military, the Department of Defense, State Department, and National Security Agency, and their careers span decades over the evolution of women in the

field. And because of the institutionalized culture within the national security field, we would expect that their experiences are comparable to women's experiences today. These interviews were analyzed for key themes, which were used as data points for analysis.

This paper particularly focuses on women who have worked in United States national security positions. In this paper, the term "national security position" will refer to jobs that are held within government defense bureaucracies, which include the State Department, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and the United States intelligence community. These government bodies directly contribute to the nation's national security priorities and decisions. The term "national security leadership position", or any variations, refers to the women in this study, who have held leadership positions within these bureaucracies, or describe the leadership positions themselves in reference to an increase in the number of women holding these seats. The use of "national security field" in this paper refers to the government agencies listed above. The terms policymaking and decision-making will be used interchangeably throughout this paper, as both terms describe the outcomes produced by national security leaders. Formal policy decisions will be defined within the text. Because of a limited sample size, this paper focuses on cisgender women. The term "woman" is used to describe the ten female-identifying women in the study. This study does not focus on men or gender non-conforming decisionmakers.

Through a qualitative process, this study explores women's experiences multitasking a career with caregiving, the masculine culture in the national security field, and the impact that and increase of women in leadership can have on national security policy outcomes. The findings of this study suggest that an increase in female leadership can lead to culture changes within the field, leading to more of a work-life balance and more of an ability to balance family

commitments. While it was not found that men and women ultimately have different policy preferences in national security, an increase in female leadership also increases one element of diversity within the field, which can lead to more well-rounded, comprehensive policy outcomes. As the number of women in the national security field grows, it is important to understand how national security policy and process can change. This project highlights some of the experiences that women have had in the field and the changes that can be brought about as a result of female leadership.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH

When examining the topic of gender, leadership and national security, there is a thorough body of research that covers a broad set of important topics including: the numbers of women globally and domestically who hold vital national security positions; whether states become more conflict prone with women in executive positions; and how men and women view national security. This literature review will examine topics including stereotypes, tokenism, women in defense ministries, and women in legislatures.

This paragraph will outline the current figures and statistics highlighting women in political and corporate leadership positions. According to the U.S. Department of Labor data from 2020, women comprise 47% of the labor force, but men hold most leadership positions both corporate and political fields, (Department of Labor, 2020; Center for American Women and Politics, 2022; Catalyst 2022). Women currently hold 6.2% of CEO positions and 30% of Board Director positions at S&P 500 companies, (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022; Catalyst, 2022; Spencer Stuart, 2021). In the political arena, women hold a record number of Congressional seats. Women hold 24% of the seats in the Senate and 27.8% of seats in the House of Representatives, (Center for American Women and Politics). Women also matched a record-high number of governor chairs, holding nine. (Center for American Women and Politics). Looking more into the national security field, women currently make up 18% of all active duty commissioned officers and 15.2% of the enlisted force, (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020). It is important to note that only a select number of military members hold senior level leadership positions, which are Senate-confirmed. The bulk of military positions are not senior leadership positions, but because these ranks serve as the pipeline to senior positions, it is important to note

the gender makeup of the institution. As mentioned earlier in this paper, women hold more national security leadership positions than ever before, particularly Senate-confirmed positions, where candidates are nominated by the president and then vetted and confirmed in a simple majority vote in the Senate. Currently, women hold 54% of national security-related, Senate confirmed positions, (LCWINS, 2022). These positions include those in the Department of Defense, State Department, Department of Homeland Security, and USAID, (LCWINS, 2022; Partnership for Public Service, 2022). Women also hold 38% of ambassadorships, 46% of President Biden's cabinet positions, and 36% of the seats on his National Security Council, (LCWINS, 2022). Understanding the current statistics helps identify where gender parity in leadership positions is lacking, and where there have been improvements. As gender parity is achieved in some national security leadership bodies, it is worth looking at the impact that change can have on the agencies and their policy outcomes. In regard to my initial research question, it is important to examine what this change can mean for national security culture and policy. Seeing where there are growing numbers of women in leadership positions and how their involvement has changed overtime is important to the initial examination of this topic.

This section of the research review will ground this study conceptually in international relations (IR). This will include feminist IR theories, assumptions that are made about male and female decision-makers in this field, and how traditional gender roles appear in the field.

IR theories were developed in the twentieth century as a way to examine the ways that states behave individually and interact with other states. These include realist, liberal, constructivist and feminist theories of IR. True (2017) states that "feminist perspectives on international relations seek to understand existing gender relations – the dominance of masculinities over femininities—in order to transform how they work at all levels of global

social, economic, and political life." Feminist IR theorists have drawn on experiences of women, as well as other marginalized and oppressed people, to challenge the foundations of the IR field, (True 2017).

In her book, "Gender in International Relations", J. Ann Tickner states that women in politics are funneled into certain areas of public policy that are perceived as "women's issues." She postulates that people are socialized into believing that war and power politics are spheres that men have a special talent for. She goes on to say that in the United States and most of the world, it is widely believed – by both men and women—that the military and foreign policy areas of policymaking are the least suited arenas for women. "Strength, power, autonomy, independence, and rationality, all typically associated with men and masculinity, are characteristics we most value in those to whom we entrust the conduct of our foreign policy and the defense of our national interest," (Tickner 1992.) She continues to explain that women's involvement in IR are often branded as naïve and weak, and that values that are commonly associated with 'manliness' are of most importance when we select our president and are the values we associate with good national security leaders, (Tickner 1992.) Tickner elaborates that roles more traditionally assigned to women, in reproduction, in households and in the economy—are generally considered "irrelevant to the traditional construction" of national security and IR, (Tickner, 1992.)

Eagly (2007) argues a similar point to Tickner, stating that highly male dominated roles or roles perceived to be more masculine present challenges to women because of people's expectations of women. Peterson (2004, 39) states that "what the mainstream seem to miss is that "adding women" to existing paradigms also reveals how deeply the analytical frameworks—theories—themselves presuppose male experience and viewpoint." Peterson posits that women

and feminine traits either cannot be added to an institution, and they must behave like men, or they transform these bodies, as adding women as feminine can alter the traditional masculine premise of a particular institution, (Peterson 2004). Peterson argues that adding women forces us to rethink the foundational categories that are biased toward masculine and male-dominated institutions, their experiences, and their knowledge. This rethinking allows for reconstructing theory that has been prevalent in IR, (Peterson 2004.)

The body of research on feminist IR theory lays the groundwork for the following sections. Feminist IR theorists seek to understand how gender-relations play a part in global and domestic spaces. It examines the language that other IR theories use and how the institutions that carry out international interests have historically been gendered, and how men and masculinity have been dominant in the field. As Tickner lays out, the perceptions of how men and women view national security led to biases and stereotypes as to who can successfully work in that field.

This section of research will discuss stereotypes and tokenism in the national security field. As noted in the previous section, simply adding women to a decision-making body may not lead to substantive changes in policy outcomes because change is prevented by institutionalized, gendered power structures and cultures, (David and Guerrina, 2013; Rhode, 2016; Wright, 2017; Barnes and O'Brien, 2018). There are pervasive stereotypes that are ascribed to men and women. Studies note that women are seen as warm, kind and passive, whereas men are viewed as more tough, aggressive, and assertive, (McKee and Sheriffs, 1957; Best and Williams, 1990). In the political realm, women are viewed to be more equipped to work on social welfare policies, like health, education and family leave, and humanitarian issues, while men have been viewed to be more equipped to work on issues like defense and economics. (Dolan 2004; Wilcox 1994; Swers, 2002; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). Similarly, to the perceptions of men's and women's ability

to perform as national security leaders, there have historically been expectations for men and women in larger society. These gender roles are based on the expectations that individuals and societies have of individuals based on their sex. Typically in Western societies, women have been seen as more nurturing than men, and similar gender stereotypes have emerged for women in Western societies, (Blackstone, 2003). One of these expectations for women in society is to serve as the primary family caregiver for both elderly family members and children, (Katz-Wise et al., 2010; Sharma et al., 2016). As the twentieth century went on, it became more acceptable for women to work outside of the home, and today it is likely the case that both parents in a household work. Balancing work life and families is a challenge today for all working parents, but women have been cited to adjust their careers more than men to meet home-life demands, which can impact women's abilities to advance their careers (Parker 2015).

When examining women's roles in defense policy, it is important to understand the effects that identity and background have on defense policy creation and participation. Swers' (2007) research examines defense policy activity in the U.S. Senate, citing that the norms of the Senate allow for wide participation on national security policy for all members. Through a combination of regression analysis of sponsorship activity and an analysis of media sources, Swers found that members with military experience were more likely to have their legislation advanced through the legislative process than others, and women had to overcome issues of partisanship and gender, citing that women in the Democrat party had to overcome "both the double bind of their association with the party that is perceived as weak on defense and the prevalence of gender stereotypes favoring male leadership on defense issues." Similar studies also found that voters who found issues of terrorism, homeland security, and conflict in the

United States were more likely to support male presidential candidates, (Falk and Kenski 2006; Lawless 2004).

Barnes and O'Brien (2018) offer the first study of female defense ministers, identifying the factors that lead to the inclusion and exclusion of women from defense ministries. They posit that women are likely to remain absent from defense posts when there are established beliefs about the masculinity and prominence of the position. They also argue that states with more female legislatures will be more likely to appoint female defense ministers. Their results show that women are more likely to be appointed to these positions when the country's main concerns are less conflict-centered. As stated in this study, militarism and masculinity are inherently connected, and it will be difficult for women to rise into these positions until domestic policy is less focused on conflict.

Similarly, tokenism can play a role in how women in national security are perceived and included. Token theory suggests that an individual's status within an organization is determined by a demographic's representation within a given rank, (Kanter 1977). Kanter defines "tokens" as members of a demographic that comprise 15% or less of a rank or organization. Kanter also explains that tokens experience heightened visibility and scrutiny because of their minority status and left out of hiring and promotional processes (Kanter, 1977; Rhodes, 2006). This theory is important to note when examining the differences between women in the national security field historically and now.

The body of research on stereotypes and national security explains how women are viewed by constituent populations and factors that can lead to the inclusion and exclusion of women from leadership in the field, similar to the findings of Tickner (1992) and others in the feminist IR field.

This section will look at previous research on gender and national security, and different levels of analysis that have been used to analyze the topic. There is a large body of literature that shows that men and women view national security and conflict differently, (Koch and Fulton 2011; Eichenberg 2002; Caprioli 2001; Regan and Paskeviciute 2003). But historically low numbers of women in national security leadership positions can restrict the conclusions that can be drawn about their influence, (Caprioli and Boyer 2001). It has also been noted that simply increasing the number of women in a national security body may not lead to substantive changes in policy outcomes because change is prevented by institutionalized, gendered power structures and cultures, (David and Guerrina 2013; Wright 2017; Barnes and O'Brien 2018).

Several studies have looked at cross-national data to examine gender and conflict (Koch and Fulton 2011; Caprioli 2001; Regan and Paskeviciute 2003). Caprioli (2001) uses quantitative analysis to test the relationship between a state's militarism and domestic gender equality. She finds that as the number of women in the legislature increases, the state becomes less likely to rely on military force to settle interstate conflicts. Regan and Paskeviciute (2003) looked at how women at the societal level, as opposed to the state level, influence the ruling elite to engage in militarized interstate disputes and conflict. They specifically look at how fertility rates are directly and indirectly associated with a state's use of force. They found that countries with lower birthrates are less likely to go to war than countries with higher birthrates. Koch and Fulton found that an increase in female legislatures will lead to a decrease in defense spending and conflict. They found that increases in women's legislative representation decreases conflict behavior and defense spending. Koch and Fulton (2012) also examine women as heads of state, differing from other studies. They found that the presence of women as the executive of a state increases both conflict behavior and defense spending. They note that women in executive

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positions must overcome stereotypes of being "weak" in foreign policy. They found that a greater representation of women in the legislature will make female executives more moderate in their approach to defense spending and conflict.

Another way that researchers have examined gender and national security is in single-country analysis. Studies have shown that once partisanship is controlled for, gender does not have a significant effect on predicting foreign policy outcomes, (Norris, 1996). Norris (1996) found that gendered differences among politicians in the United Kingdom were slight, and that political party was the strongest divider among politicians. Some studies have cited that a 'critical mass' (typically 30%) of women is needed to transform typically male-dominated organizations operating procedures and outcomes, (Kanter 1977; True 2003). This theory has been criticized, noting that the original scholarship on critical mass theory states that "critical acts" by individuals were more important than critical mass (Dahlerup 2006).

Smith (2020) argues for an individual decision-maker level of analysis, using foreign policy analysis. Foreign policy analysis is the examination of how foreign policy decisions are made, specifically looking at how individuals act on their own and in groups, (Hudson and Core 1995). Smith (2020) states that the gender of decision-makers has largely been left out of foreign policy analysis but should be more widely considered.

One study conducted through the Better Life Lab at New America examined gender diversity in the U.S. nuclear security field and analyzed the experiences of women in the nuclear security field. Through qualitative methods, mainly interviews, they found that an increase in women in nuclear policy changed the dynamic of decision-making and found that a critical mass of women involved in the field made it easier for women to build relationships that facilitate

decision-making. They also noted that the nature of the field does not provide a suitable work-life balance for most people, (Hurlburt et. al 2019.)

This body of research broadly considers how defense policy outcomes change with the presence of women in these decision-making bodies. They analyze how women, primarily in the legislature, can affect defense spending and conflict tendencies, but does not touch on other decision-making bodies. We know how female legislatures impact national security globally, and we know what decisions they have historically made. We have also seen how an increase in women specifically in the nuclear security field can create avenues for women to relationship-build and that gender diversity can change the dynamic of decision-making. Though this research does not focus on the overall national security body of a country, and we do not know how female leaders in the larger defense sector impact national security. My research will analyze decision-making on an individual level and will use interviews to further understand what experiences and qualities women can bring to defense policy making. It will also expand to include other national security positions outside of the nuclear field, including the U.S. Military, State Department, and Intelligence Community. This study will focus on female defense leaders across the U.S. national security field because they are actively involved in the defense field and create policy within their field. They are also directly educated and experienced in matters of national security. Though legislatures and executives do create policy related to national security, the day-to-day operation of the national security field is created by those in national security bureaucracy, like the U.S. military, Department of State, and Department of Defense, among others.

This study also takes a qualitative approach to answering the research questions. Previous studies emphasized quantitative methods, including regression analysis and analysis of existing

historical records and documents. By conducting interviews, I was able to explore characteristics and experiences of female national security decision makers. The interview process allowed me to collect data that is not necessarily recorded in written documents or on public record. Intensive interviewing also allowed the interviewees to share their experiences relating to national security, leadership in the field, and culture within these bureaucracies.

Overall, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge by examining female leadership across the national security field and will further examine how gender-diversity impacts defense policy outcomes. It will fill gaps in the current literature by studying a more diverse set of national security bureaucracies and will see if previous understandings of women in national security leadership are applicable to a broader field of female leaders.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODS

This thesis examines the impact that women have on national security leadership and decision-making. Specifically, I want to know: What approaches do women take to developing national security policy? What approaches do they take to leadership in the national security field? How is national security different when women are in leadership positions? Does having more women in the national security field change outcomes? The semi-structured life interview strategy is used to explore experiences and topics pertaining to female leadership in national security. Interviewing allows researchers to collect information that is not necessarily recorded in written documents or on public record. Intensive interviewing also allows the subjects to share their experiences relating to the research topic.

As the body of previous research showed, most research focused on elected leaders and voters, but not defense officials. This study will focus on female defense leaders because they are predominantly the ones informing or creating defense policy at the organizational, executive, and legislative levels and are directly experienced and educated in defense matters.

This study also takes a qualitative approach to answering the research questions. Previous studies emphasized quantitative methods, including regression analysis and analysis of existing historical records and documents. By conducting interviews, I was able to explore characteristics and experiences of female national security decision makers. The interview process allowed me to collect data that is not necessarily recorded in written documents or on public record. Intensive interviewing also allowed the interviewees to share their experiences relating to national security, leadership in the field, and culture within these bureaucracies.

These interviews used standardized, open-ended questions, meaning all interview participants were asked the same questions and given the opportunity to openly answer. Questions were asked in stages, and included initial, intermediate, and ending questions. Due to the nature of intensive interviewing, the exact line of questioning was dependent on the participant and the progression of the conversation. The initial set of open-ended questions can be found in Appendix A. Interviews were conducted via Zoom or over the phone. They lasted for roughly one hour. Interviews were recorded using Zoom when interviews were conducted over the platform, or using a handheld recording device when interviews were held over the phone. Participants in the interviews were recruited using a gatekeeper and snowball sampling methods. Gatekeepers shared information on the study with individuals that they believed would be interested in participating. Participants were also asked if they knew anyone who met the same criteria that would be interested in the study (snowball sampling). The same recruitment process followed in this case.

The data collected through the interviews were analyzed using qualitative methods. This study uses data from interviews and explores how women in a subset of the national security field make decisions and contribute to policy outcomes. This methodology includes initial and focused coding, conceptual category development, and integration of interviews and concept diagramming, (Charmaz, 2014.) Qualitative coding is the process of defining what the data includes and doesn't include and helps to go beyond what was simply said in interviews, allowing for analytic interpretations. Coding also allows common themes and ideas to emerge out of the body of interviews. "Quantitative codes take segments of data apart, name them, and propose an analytic handle to develop abstract ideas for interpreting each segment of data," (Charmaz, 2014).

After transcribing and reading through each transcript, I began the initial coding process. The first step of this was to re-read each transcript individually and free code. During this step, I assigned a brief label to an idea, section, or paragraph of the transcript. This process was done over the course of two weeks, with one transcript being analyzed at a time as to mitigate previous codes and themes prematurely being assigned to other interviews.

Once this step was completed across the ten transcripts, I then pulled out all the assigned codes with identifying labels to track which interview they came from. These initial codes were then grouped together based on the common themes that emerged. This is called focus coding (Charmaz, 2014). Focused codes are more directed and conceptual than the initial free codes. The goal of this step was to create more broad codes that begin to synthesize and explain larger segments of the data. This step required decisions to be made about which initial codes made the most sense to categorize the data. This required looking through each pulled out code and seeing which words or themes were common throughout each interview, but also required me to look and see what was not clear or what was missing.

I went through each transcript again to see if there were any topics that had been glossed over, or if there were more implicit topics that were now more explicit after examining the codes. During this step, these umbrella codes were then applied to the original transcripts, and the quotes pertaining to each code were given an identifier and pulled out into a spreadsheet.

Once each quote was placed under an umbrella code, I began to look for common themes within that code. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. I then went through each umbrella code and read the key quotes to see if there were any similarities or differences, and common themes between the data. If there were differences or key themes that emerged, I placed

those quotes into a subcategory underneath the main umbrella. These codes can be found in Appendix B.

After organizing and cleaning the data in this format, data analysis began. This included looking for common themes within and between categories and beginning to look at how this data begins to answer the research questions. The data results and discussion sections will highlight the collected data, what it can mean, and how it can answer the posed research questions.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND RESULTS

This section will examine the data and results that came out of the interview and coding methods. The following paragraphs will explain the common themes that emerged from the interviews. Broadly, these themes are differing traits and leadership qualities between genders; culture; the evolution of women in the field; and women and policy change. These themes will be discussed in the subsequent subsections. Each subsection will contain a definition for each theme, the data that encapsulates this theme, and examples that support the theme.

<u>Differing Gender Traits and Leadership Qualities</u>

Common themes that emerged throughout the interviews were leadership traits that contributed to the success of women in the field, as well as traits that women possessed that were different from their male counterparts. This section will focus on both themes, as they are closely related. The term "gender traits" will be used to describe the characteristics that interviewees found largely applicable to women during their careers. These traits were often juxtaposed to the traits that men typically showed in the same positions and include personality and physical traits. "Leadership qualities" are specific traits that interviewees felt were vital to their own success and ability to create national security decisions.

Seven women cited that early in their careers, the national security field was not as open to women, particularly the U.S. military. As noted earlier in this paper, women were not allowed into combat positions until the 1990s and faced other barriers in earlier years. During this time, it was also noted that there were few women across the sector, and according to interviews, there were noticeable traits that differed between men and women. Interviews cited that women were more willing to self-censor, felt they had to do more to prove themselves, and were often limited

in the jobs that they could hold. One interviewee said that "it was harder for women to demonstrate their capacities in environments where there were very few of them. So, there's that tendency to maybe self-censor, or think that people are going to look at me funny, like, "who's that woman back there raising her hand?"" Another said she felt that she needed to do more to prove herself. "I think I felt that I had to study harder. When you're the one who's different, you do have to prove yourself a little more. So, I always wanted to not miss that opportunity if I was called on, I wanted to have my act together, and I wanted to be very knowledgeable and add value."

Nine out of ten women noted that the interpersonal skills of being able to collaborate and build relationships with others were their most important leadership qualities. These collaborative skills included collaborating with their own teams, but also collaborating with other interest groups. It was helpful to understand a variety of perspectives and include others in the decision-making process to produce robust and thoughtful policy. It was also noted by three women that being able to work with those you are negotiating against, to understand their wants and needs, was a key to producing lasting policy. "I always wanted to get the input of others understand their concerns and expect where they were able and willing to partner and how we could work together. And then I would use all of that as a basis to create a strategy and build out a plan that I felt would reflect the inputs of others and that others could then buy into."

Within an internal team, it was noted by several women that including and amplifying other's voices and giving them the tools that they needed to succeed created not only successful policy but cohesion within a team.

> I learned this more and more along the way, but it's giving other people what they need to succeed, whether it is your squadron mates, but as you get more senior and particularly as a squadron commander, as a ship commander and even as a fleet commander, it's giving those who work for you, the tools that they need to succeed, and personally,

professionally giving them the training, giving them the opportunity, taking care of their families so that when they're out there on deployment, away from them, they can do their job without having to worry about what's going on back home.

Another noted that "putting yourself in the other person's shoes and treating them the way you would want to be treated, giving them what they need to do their job. It's about communicating. It's about trust. It's about, again, building relationships, whether it is with other services, whether it is with people, from other cultures, other countries, because we're all working together."

It was stated that to be promoted or get ahead in the national security field, a leader needed results and to get things done. While both men and women achieve results in the field, women were said to focus on collaboration and making sure a team was functioning properly to achieve results, while their male counterparts tended to focus more on achieving results. "I think [men] are willing to like step on toes more, and that's a huge advantage to lots of men in this profession, because you get farther in many places when you are throwing elbows and getting done what needs to get done. Whereas the women that I've worked for are team oriented, thinking about how the team can function best to optimize the result." It was also noted that there was a difference in the types of positions that men and women tended to gravitate toward. "The men tend to gravitate toward the functional offices where there are right and wrong answers. So, there's a lot of men in space and cyber and nuclear defense, and ballistic missile defense. And the women tend to gravitate towards the regional offices where it's about building bilateral relationships."

While including other voices was noted as a leadership quality, it was also stated that women's voices in rooms tended to be overlooked or not heard. "I would so often see that

phenomenon where a woman says something, but it's not picked up. And then somebody would say, "well, as Bob said…" when it was actually Sally."

Overall, this data examined leadership and gender characteristics. This theme focuses on what qualities made women good leaders in the field, as well as some differences between men and women in national security. It was found that women tended to emphasize collaboration and took more of a team approach than men. This data, however, does not include information on what made men good or bad leaders in this space. Though it was noted that there were some gender traits that differ in the field, there were few remarks as to what leadership qualities differed between men and women. This data also does not explain what could make women more apt to emphasize collaboration.

<div align="center">Culture</div>

Another theme that was stated throughout the interviews was the culture within the field. The three main subtopics that emerged from the data were caregiving, work-life balance, and masculine culture. Caregiving and work-life balance were similarly defined in these interviews. Being a caregiver was defined in the context of caring for a child, family member, or older adult. Work-life balance was used in the context of being able to have the flexibility within a job to adequately be a caregiver, but also to focus on one's own health and well-being. Masculine culture was used to describe the overall behavior and standard for what was acceptable in an office. Office hierarchies were often explained as a "boys club", or group of men that often meet informally to discuss relevant work issues. These are usually exclusionary to women.

Six women explained their experiences as caregivers. These experiences touched on the difficulties of being a caregiver while working, the overall demand of the work, and how their families have influenced their careers. When interviewees were explaining the difficulties of

balancing work with being a caregiver, they cited that their mostly male colleagues were not able to relate to the fact that they had responsibilities at home. This includes picking kids up from school, staying home when their kids are sick, and attending children's extracurricular activities. When referring to a female colleague, one interviewee stated that "it's not so much she's struggling with what I call the work aspect of it, but they can't relate to the fact she has to go home and has kids. She has to manage all of these other things. Whereas some of them are single or their wives manage it. So, like for them, the work-life balance is completely different than the work-life balance she has, which obviously impacts the way she works."

Other women explained that she would prioritize seeing her kids play sports, but would often have to go back to work, or work longer hours to make up for it. But she also stated that as she came into higher leadership positions, she would be honest about family obligations, and encouraged her co-workers to do the same. "I've always said as much as I loved those 31 years, that no one is going to remember that I didn't make a meeting, but my kid's going to remember that I missed when he made a shot. Or my daughter's going to remember that I missed when she hit a volleyball dig. And so, I tried my best to do both even if it meant leaving work and going to a volleyball game and coming back to work. Yeah. So, trying to do that balance, but being upfront about it and being honest about it."

One interviewee stated that her family responsibilities played a large role in deciding to take a new job or not. She was offered a position in a Central Asian country, while at the time, her family was living in Vienna, Austria, where her children were attending school. "When they first called me up and offered [the job] to me, I said no, because I knew it would mean a separation for my kids…So I turned it down. I told them at dinner that night, and they just said,

"Mom, this is what you've always been working towards...so my husband stayed at his job in Vienna with my boys and I went off to [Asia]".

These women expressed that men in the national security field also had parental and caregiving responsibility, but, especially early in their careers, women were responsible for more of the household efforts. "Everyone expected the woman to be the main caregiver, which probably explains why I never talked about my children…You know, how can you be all in if you're raising children? And so, I think that's hopefully one of the barriers though is just children because you can enter the military fairly young, but assuming you get married and have children there comes a point where one has to choose, and the good news is it is more of an equitable choice now."

Another common sentiment that was expressed was that an increase in women in the field would lead to culture changes regarding caregiving. Six women cited overall that an increase in women would lead to a different work-life balance, which focuses on prioritizing other obligations in addition to the job. "I think if there were more women setting the culture, there would be more emphasis on work life balance. And by work life balance, I mean it being okay to prioritize a medical appointment over a meeting, or to prioritize picking your kids up from school…" Some argued that simply adding women to the field would not change the culture, as it is deeply ingrained in these institutions. Instead, they argue, that an increase in women who are willing to lead by example and create the ability for workers to prioritize family would lead to change in culture. "The culture is so ingrained, and it's so much a part of the military. And how each branch of the military operates are men in leadership positions throughout. And I think that leadership will set the stage for all of those things, but if women are in leadership positions, they also have to feel like it's okay for them to set an example."

The other cultural theme that was emphasized was the existence of a "boys club" and a strong masculine culture. In the early and middle years of their careers, there were not large numbers of women in these institutions, and interviewees were often the only woman in the room. They described having to try to fit into a "hyper-masculine culture," or feel isolated. The feeling of isolation was often tied to caregiving responsibilities. "There's a lot of "Why are you working? You're a mother." Or you weren't able to say, I need to go home because my child is sick. That would've been no. So, there was a sense of being alone. You weren't asked to go golf. You weren't on the weekend outings. But I just learned to not take it personal." One woman said that she had shortened her name to go by her initials in order to avoid some of the unpleasantries that went with being the only woman on naval ships. "When I showed up to teach at surface warfare officer school, they had a staff of 60 officers. They had not had a female officer in nine months, and they had all been forced to go to sensitivity training for my arrival. So, they all hated me because they had had to do that instead of going to the field day and minor league baseball game. It was another eight months before another woman showed up on staff. So, at that point, I ditched my first name and went by my initials."

The masculine culture, marked by stereotypical male traits, in the workplace was described to be driven from the culture of the military.

> Military culture is pervasive. There is nothing wrong with military culture, but it's sort of male dominated. There's an emphasis on masculine culture in military culture. I think that is pervasive throughout the Pentagon and throughout DoD. And I think that that makes people a little less willing to be vulnerable around each other and makes people less willing to challenge authority. It means that things that are inappropriate that happen are not seen as inappropriate in the same way that the rest of the United States is moving, or at least like the rest of Washington D.C., is moving toward thinking more critically about what is and isn't inappropriate in the workplace."

Two women explained situations where inappropriate workplace behavior took place, stemming from the masculine culture of the military and DoD. One explained a situation where she was catching up with a colleague more senior in rank, and "he was getting animated about what we were talking about. And he was mimicking shaking someone into reality. It was like a joke. It was funny, but he grabbed me and shook me, and I was just kind of like, we are out in public, like, no one is looking at this weirdly." Another described a situation where she needed a signature to approve the movement of a war-related unit. "My commander and I were trying to get a signature, and it was very important for the unit to get out. It was war related, and he was doing a bunch of stuff to me. And so, I just basically leaned across his desk and said, "look, we don't have time for that. I need you to sign this." I think pushing back and having the confidence and the focus on the mission, I think that pretty much sums up how I faced what was a male oriented kind of very hypersexual, you know, comments and everything like that is just, "we just don't have time for that." It was stated by interviewees that situations like the aforementioned examples are rather common in these institutions.

An increase in women in recent years was stated to have helped counter some of the masculine culture and provide support networks for women.

> The boys club continued to exist. And when I was reporting directly to the director of NSA, we'd meet regularly as a board. And it was really clear to me when topics had already been discussed by the guys. Right. And so the good news is that in my last couple of years, there were quite a few women sitting in that room. And so we also got to have our meetings and to talk in the ladies room, because it's always the lady's room or the men's room. That's where these little discussions happen generally. And so being able to level the playing field by having representation really does matter, not just one woman or not just one minority, but having a few really, really balances of perspectives of the group.

Four other women also noted that having a support group of women at the same level as themselves was beneficial because they were able to talk to others who could relate to the

struggles or issues that they were having. It was noted that this, overtime, has made small changes in the overall culture of the national security field, but there is still work to be done.

Overall, the culture of the national security field is marked by stereotypically strong male characteristics. It is dominating, competitive, and assertive by nature and carries over elements of military culture. The male dominated culture also perpetuates traditional gender norms. Women have historically taken on most caregiving responsibilities and have had to balance being a caregiver with a career that does not always balance those responsibilities. Until recently, men have mostly held top leadership positions, and there has not been much reason to change the status quo culture. As stated through the interviews, an increase in women who are willing to lead by example can help create a balance between work and other responsibilities. An increase in women has also created support networks where there previously have not been. This has allowed women to discuss relevant topics, career, and family among others, with those who understand their position and struggles.

Evolution of Women in the Field

The next theme that emerged from these interviews was the evolution of women in the field. This section will discuss barriers to entry into leadership positions for women. Barriers to entry are specific characteristics of an institution that have inhibited women from obtaining leadership positions. This section will also discuss how women in leadership positions have evolved overtime.

Slowly over the last 50 years, the national security field opened to women. In the military, women faced restrictions on what positions they could hold. In 1994, women were finally allowed to serve in all military positions except combat positions in 1994, and the combat

restrictions were lifted in 2015. These restrictions made it incredibly difficult for women to hold

leadership positions. In her first naval assignment, one interviewee said that:

> On my first ship, the captain kept saying: "Why is it that all the, my male officers are slugs, and the women are so sharp?" And I [said it is] because the women are here because they want to be. And the men who are good all want to fly F-18s, they want to drive submarines. They want to be on the destroyers. You are on a tender. So, the people you get are the people who graduated at the bottom of their class and got last choice. So, it was a cadre of hard charging, but very bitter women, because there was a very definite glass ceiling because you didn't get command unless you had had cruiser and destroyer experience and the law didn't let you get that.

Another interviewee stated that there was an informal rule in the State Department that

once a woman was married, she resigned. "Up until 1972, you had to leave the service if you

were married, there wasn't even an actual law on the books. It was just the way things were done.

It wasn't until women were challenging that rule, that they dropped it."

There has also been issues of bringing in new talent into national security. "A huge

problem is that they have been unable to bring in new people, that it can only move people

around in policy. In other words, people can like change within it, but it's near impossible to

bring people in." In general, for both men and women, it has been hard to enter bureaucracies.

Historically, defense-related positions have been filled by current and former military

members, which until recently has made it difficult for women to enter civilian leadership posts.

And, since most of the military is made up of men, it has been hard to fill these positions with

women. Coupled with this, there has also been a perceived lack of female civilian experts to fill

defense roles.

> We need do stuff like in the field start compiling lists of women who are experts in the field, because often people would say, "oh yes, we wanted women, but we couldn't find any." Or there was that phenomenon where there's one woman on the panel, but she's the moderator, not there to present her stuff. So, there's, there's still a lot of consciousness raising that's going on. That's very valuable. So, I think sort of looking at how men do it and say, "friends of mine have done really interesting work too in our field" and seeing that it sort of actually tracks sort of who's citing whom.

Two women noted that being the only woman in the room was sometimes an advantage

for them. One woman explained that while she was working as the Commander of Task Force

73, which is the logistics group for U.S. Marine and Naval operations in Singapore:

> I was the first woman in that job, which was interesting because part of my job was running all the bilateral Navy and Marine exercises with all the countries in Southeast Asia. And there were zero women at that level in any of their militaries. So, it was a kind of unique experience for them to be dealing with a woman in that job. But I think it was a tremendous advantage because they all knew me. You weren't going to mistake me for somebody else. And I was not competing with them in any way, shape, or form. They all play golf; I play golf and I'd go everywhere they went. They'd go, "oh, you got to play golf." And I didn't care if I win or lose, it just didn't matter. It was all about building relationships and building trust.

Similar to the previous section, this interviewee was able to adapt to the culture of where

she was and learned how to play golf to fit in and build relationships with her colleagues.

Another woman noted that while she was working as an arms control negotiator in Moscow, she

was often underestimated and gained access to places that her male colleagues did not. "I think I

probably got a lot of entry and access more so than a lot of my male colleagues. So in many

ways that was an advantage; The Russians tended to trust me more. I think I had advantages as a

woman because for the Russians, they always puzzled. 'Why is a nice girl like you interested in

something so serious?' type of thing"

One interviewee discussed how harmful rhetoric and stereotypes can be for women in the

field. Women are often assumed to be better at working on soft-power issues or humanitarian

work, like refugee crises, global women's issues, and healthcare, while men are better at the

harder issues, like security and economics. She explained that if women fit certain stereotypes

can limit people's perception of what they are and are not equipped to work on.

> I don't think that's necessarily helpful. I think men can be just as sympathetic to refugee problems as women. And if you say women are much better on some of these humanitarian issues that implies that they can't make hard decisions on you know, on

some of the, or they can't do as well in some of the harder issues, which is certainly not the case.

Like the previous sections explained, there have been barriers and limitations to women advancing in the national security field. This section has specifically stated the experiences of the ten interviewees during their careers. This section highlights that there were both legal and societal limitations to what positions women in the national security field could hold. The final combat imitations on women in the military were lifted in 2015, when women were fully allowed to participate in combat roles. There were also societal barriers that hindered women in the past from advancing in the field. These included expectations in the State Department that women left their posts if they married. Other barriers included the stereotypes assumed of both men and women, which often impacted the perception of what jobs they would be good at. In some cases, there were advantages to being the only women in a field. Often, these advantages were being underestimated and not being seen as a threat. All women in this study have said that the national security field is much more navigable for woman, and there is more opportunity and understanding that they will do their job well.

Women and Security Policy

This section will examine key findings pertaining to women's impact on defense policy. The key themes that emerged from this section were the importance of diversity in decision-making and how an increase in women can change culture. Based on previous literature, we would expect to see that women have influence on defense outcomes, particularly in decisions to engage in conflict and defense spending (Koch and Fulton 2012). We would also expect to see that an increase in women can change the long-held masculine profile of the national security field and influence its overall culture (Hurlburt et al. 2019).

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In the interviews, all ten women stated that diversity is an important piece of decision

making, and that diversity has a strong impact on defense policymaking. Interviews stated that

individual women may not make different defense decisions than men. Examples of these

decisions include the decision to use targeted drone strikes, intervene in cross-national conflict,

or provide defense capabilities to other nations. One woman noted that these specific defense

outcomes are influenced by the traditional approaches to defense decision-making, and that more

diverse decision-making bodies could contribute to different outcomes.

> In terms of combat decisions, like decisions to go into to have to make strikes or to use
> drones... I'm just thinking about possible things that might be like stereotypically easy for
> men to do. I don't know if that would change a whole lot… There are all kinds of things
> that are set up to make the system what it is that I think are out of the control of
> individual females in leadership positions. But I could see over time, women in
> leadership positions being more willing to have certain conversations and to challenge the
> status quo in ways that maybe we're not experiencing now.

As stated earlier, there have been barriers to women's advancement into leadership

positions. Most women noted that there were obstacles to overcome as they ascended in the field.

The prevalent cultural norms emphasized hierarchical structures, without much room for

collaboration or discussion across the hierarchy. It was also noted that there was a narrow scope

of policy options for each issue, and groupthink was prevalent. One participant explained that in

her experience, she has "seen male leaders be a little bit more willing to go one way or another,

just because so-and-so said so, versus really trying to understand, well, where did that come

from? Or what's behind that or what's the data that goes along with that?" It was stated that more

diverse decision-making rooms led to less groupthink, especially as more women were at the

table. Having more women at the table was noted to make the decision-making process less

hierarchical or competitive and more collaborative. It also erased some of the self-censoring

behaviors women often felt, as described in the gender traits section.

Six other women noted that diversity, both in thought and demographics, contribute to better policy outcomes, as they are more well-rounded. Because people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, genders, religions, and political leanings are included at the decision-making table, policy options and decisions will be more thorough because of the perspectives considered. It was largely held that gender alone was not a determining factor in defense policy decisions, but a combination of factors, including political leaning which three women cited as being more important than gender.

> I firmly believe that allowing having representation from multiple different cultural perspectives allows teams to have better ideas, and better opportunities for success provided everyone's able to contribute. Because then what you get is this diversity of thought, is that there are things that I would never think about that a white male who grew up in Iowa would think about just, it's just a fact, I'm never going to think about that, but he would. And so, I want that white male from Iowa on my team, like I want that guy from the south, who maybe grew up in a prejudice environment. I want him on my team too because he has some thoughts and some contributions that are going to be different than mine. And that's really what you want. That's to me, that's how you make the best of teams is when you can bring in a diversity of opinions and thoughts.

As noted in the culture data section, an increase in women in defense leadership also can impact the culture and priorities of defense institutions. As the number of women in leadership roles increases, there could be more of a balance between work and caregiving responsibilities.

The overall key findings of this study found that female leaders saw the ability to collaborate, relationship build, and see other group's points of view as their strongest leadership traits. Women have had barriers to their entry into defense leadership positions, largely due to their legal exclusion from military posts until the late 90s and 2000s. Since the Department of Defense draws heavily on workers with military experience, the inability of women to hold these positions hindered their ability to lead in civilian jobs. The culture of the national security field has also made it hard for women to be primary caregivers, though it was noted that an increase in

women in the field could challenge the status quo culture. The stereotypical assumptions of women's and men's leadership traits and job ability were harmful to how they were viewed by their co-workers and the general population. Stereotypes often pigeonholed women into working on humanitarian or soft-power issues, while men were seen as equipped for hard issues. These stereotypes assume that men cannot be good at soft-power topics, and women would not be good at defense and economic issues because of their stereotyped abilities. The most notable finding was that diversity helps make better decisions. Every interview noted the fact that more diverse rooms lead to more thorough and well-rounded decisions, as well as more creative solutions. It was also noted that traditional defense options may not change because of more women in leadership.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

As previously stated, the aim of this research is to understand the impact that women have on national security policy. To investigate this aim, a few questions arose: What approaches do women take to leadership in the national security field? How is national security different when women are in leadership positions? Does having more women in the national security field change outcomes?

The previous chapter noted the key data and themes that emerged from the interview process. The key themes that emerged pertained to gender and leadership traits, culture within the national security field, the evolution of women in the field, and women in national security. Every participant viewed diversity as an essential part of national security policy. The inclusion of women in leadership positions can lead to culture changes and more flexibility to be caregivers. And, though there have been drastic improvements in reducing barriers to entry for women in national security, some still exist. The remainder of this section will discuss the implications of these results and how this research fits into the existing body of work. The data suggest that women can create changes in the national security field.

When looking at the approach in terms of leadership traits, the data propose that women overall emphasize collaboration over competition. This data begins to explain some of the posed research questions. This data can help explain how women approach defense policy, and how defense policy is different when women are involved. The data and previous research suggest that the field has a historically competitive, hierarchical, masculine environment. In contrast to the field's historic structure and values, women placed an emphasis on relationship building, understanding all points of view, and supporting other colleagues. The interviews also explained

that an increase in women can create a more collaborative policymaking process, but simply adding women to the national security field will not create changes in culture. Instead, the data suggest that women must lead by example and challenge the current status quo culture. This is consistent with previous research, which explained that simply adding women will not change policy outcomes because change is prevented by institutionalized, gendered power structures and cultures, (David and Guerrina 2013; Rhode 2016; Wright 2017; Barnes and O'Brien 2018). It is not until these power structures are challenged by the increasing number of women in the field that culture change happens.

By emphasizing a change in culture and power structures, some of the more negative traits that were described by women in the field may dissipate. These include the tendency to self-censor or the feeling that one needs to prove their ability to be taken seriously. As the number of women in national security leadership increases, women will more comfortably speak up on issues. As explained by the token theory in previous research (Kanter 1977), when a demographic comprises a small percentage of a decision-making group, they are subject to heightened visibility and scrutiny. This is important to note, as women continue to make inroads to the national security sector, they will be viewed less as tokens. Based on the body of previous literature on critical mass, tokenism and stereotypes, these results seem to depart from Dalherup's (2006) suggestion that a "critical mass" of women is not as important as other factors in ushering in transformative change. The data suggest that a "critical mass" of women can usher in transformation and change within an organization, particularly with culture and representation. As Kanter (1977) and others have suggested, women's positions in male-dominated or masculine institutions will improve if their proportion is increased and their token status eliminated, (Kanter 1977; True 2003). The data suggest that tokenism will decrease as the number of women

increase in the national security field, and that an increase in women is important to create an environment that allows women to produce "critical acts", as Dalherup (2006) states is more important than "critical mass".

The data also suggest that an increase in women who are willing to challenge the current "hyper masculine" culture and discriminatory attitudes toward individuals with family obligations can lead to changes in the work-life balance of all employees. These findings are important in relation to the aims and questions asked in this study. Showing how the culture of these institutions can change as more women are involved begins to address the question of how national security is different when women are involved. As more people in leadership positions prioritize caregiving and other responsibilities, the more flexibility employees will have to combine work and personal responsibilities. As stated previously, the presence of female leadership can dismantle the masculine power structures within these organizations. The increased number of women also created a counter to the "boys club". As more women were in the room, the more women were able to discuss relevant work issues or confide in their colleagues. This eliminated some of the isolation that women felt when they were the only woman in the room.

As noted in the previous chapter, there has been a noticeable evolution of women in the field of national security. Women are allowed to participate in the U.S. military without restrictions; they can remain in the service if they're married; and can be leading experts in their field. But there still are barriers in place, including work as a caregiver which was noted earlier. Previous research noted that stereotypes and tokenism are harmful to both men and women in the field (Dolan 2004; Wilcox 1994; Swers, 2002, Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; McKee and Sheriffs 1957; Best and Williams1990). The findings in this study are consistent with previous research.

As noted by one interview participant, "men can be just as sympathetic to refugee problems as women. And if you say women are much better on some of these humanitarian issues, that implies that they can't make hard decisions, or they can't do as well on some of the harder issues, which is certainly not the case." Stereotypes of gender and leadership traits can pigeonhole men and women into working on issues that their gender is stereotyped to be good at.

Research has shown that stereotypes are a consistent problem within the national security field, and it is important to note this issue when examining the impact that women have on national security. As more women are represented in the national security field, and women are more publicly seen, whether that is in TV interviews, summit meetings, photographs, etc., it will be less of an anomaly to see women in the national security field. This is important in countering stereotypes associated with women in the field, as the more the voices of women are amplified in the national security field, the more accepted it will be that women are able to not only work on defense topics but lead as experts in their field.

This ties into the theme of diversity in the national security field. As the data showed, diversity was the most discussed theme across all interviews. Interviewees stated that diversity was an important piece of decision-making and has a strong impact on policy. It was most noted that diversity of a variety of factors, not just gender, was important to creating well-rounded and thoughtful policy options. This includes diversity in terms of ethnicity and race, gender, religion, and thought, amongst others. This diversity can contribute to different policy outcomes than we have traditionally seen, as more diversity can lead to less groupthink and the willingness to consider policy options that are non-traditional. Having more women present is a piece of this diversity and leads to more innovative thinking and better policy outcomes. Diverse groups can offer a broader range of perspectives and experiences. Though diversity may not contribute to

entirely different or creative policy outcomes, it is still important to the policy process. Including an array of perspectives allows groups to challenge previous assumptions and consider effects of policy that may not have been considered previously. Previous research noted that men and women view national security and conflict differently, (Koch and Fulton 2011; Eichenberg 2002; Caprioli 2001; Regan and Paskeviciute 2003). But departing from these studies, the data from this research cannot conclusively determine that an increase in women in the national security field will lead to different national security policy outcomes. As Koch and Fulton (2012) noted, an increase in women in the legislature led to a decrease in conflict and defense spending. Particulars on how women could change actual policy did not arise out of this research. Instead, participants noted that women in leadership positions can change the overall national security culture and lead to more thoughtful and complete policy decisions stemming from the differing perspectives that men and women can have on policy. It was never noted in these interviews that women were less averse to conflict and that it may be hard to determine if women in the field are more or less prone than men to support military action or conflict. It was noted instead that the preference for these behaviors is up to the individual, and political leaning or other factors may have more of an impact on woman's decisions than gender. This diverges from previous research that states that women are less likely to support military and defense actions than men.

Diversity and representation can also play a key role in what they next generation of policy makers looks like. As more young people see someone who looks like they do discuss issues of national security on television or being photographed overseas in meetings with other foreign ministers, it shows that they can one day do that as well. It furthers the idea of 'if you can see it, you can be it', which is not unique to the national security field. As more young women see other women as national security experts and leaders, it eliminates some of the barriers to

entry for women in the field. As women continue to pave the way in the field, it becomes less difficult for others to follow in their footsteps.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, after performing a qualitative analysis on interview data, the results of this paper imply that women individually may not make different national security policy decisions, such as drone strikes or military aid, but having equitable representation of women in the national security field can yield changes in culture as well as create more well-rounded decisions. The data highlighted that women in leadership make more collaborative environments and can help create a more flexible work environment to accommodate caregiving responsibilities for both men and women.

This paper presents research on women in U.S. national security bureaucracies, where previous research analyzed research on women in legislatures and executive positions. Previous research also focused more on cross-national data whereas this study focused on defense in an individual state.

Ultimately, the themes and analysis of this research showed that the increase in women in national security leadership did contribute to changes in U.S. national security. Perhaps the most important finding from this study was that diversity (including diversity of ethnicity, gender, political leaning, amongst others) in the policymaking room leads to better policymaking processes and, in turn, more well-rounded and robust outcomes that consider a wide range of possibilities outside of the traditional national security policy options. Increased representation is also important in continuing a strong pipeline of women in the national security field. In addition to the importance of diversity, women can impact the culture of the national security field by making it more collaborative and balanced.

There are limitations that arise out of this study. Because there is a very small sample size (ten participants) used in this study, the results may not be generalizable to the entire national security field. Future studies including a larger sample size may be more generalizable to the impact of women on national security policy. There is also the potential for selection bias. Because this study uses a snowball sampling method, there is the potential for participants to suggest close friends in the field who may have similar experiences and perceptions of the national security field, which may not include women who have different experiences of the field and its culture.

Finally, while this research represents a step forward for literature on women's impact on U.S. national security, there are identifiable recommendations for future researchers. It would be particularly useful to examine how U.S. security policy changes over the course of the Biden Administration, as there is an equitable number of men and women. This would provide a comparison between policy decisions, such as defense spending or military use, before and after this administration. Additionally, this research has a small sample size across a large field. Further interviews could be done with more women from a specific government agency to better understand the culture within each governmental body. Further researchers could consider a more in depth set of interview questions, which aim to understand the specific decisions that women made, specific decisions that men made, and how the process and outcomes contrast. Another area to consider is the age of the participants in this study. Most interviewees began their professional careers before the 2000s and faced a myriad of barriers to entry during their careers. In the future, research could be done on women who began their careers in the national security field in an national security field that is more equitable to understand how culture and policy have changed.

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APPENDIX A: List of Interview Questions

Initial open-ended questions

1. What is your current or last occupation?
2. What is your education history?
3. Tell me how you came into the position that you currently work in?
4. What was it like when you first started out in this career?
5. How did you get into the field of defense?
6. How has your understanding of security and policy changed over time?
7. What qualities in yourself do you think contributed to your success? How?

Intermediate questions

1. How, if at all, has the involvement of women in the defense industry changed since you began working?
2. Do you think that women and men have different perspectives or frameworks when they approach defense policy making?
3. Do you believe that your gender has had an impact on how you approach defense policy decisions? If so, why?
4. Can you think of a concrete example where gender or gender roles had a significant impact on a policy decision you were involved with?
5. Do you think that an increase in women in the Department of Defense and in defense-related cabinet positions would contribute to different security decisions?

Ending questions

1. Is there something that you might not have thought about before that occurred to you during this interview?
2. Is there something else you think I should know to understand the role of women in security policy making better?
3. Is there anyone else that you think I should talk to about this?
4. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

APPENDIX B: List of Codes

Traits

a. Collaboration
b. Take criticism
c. Receive criticism
d. Low drama
e. Relate to others
f. Relationship building
g. Communication skills
h. self-doubt
i. Overcompensate faults
j. Care about others
k. Micromanagement
l. More team oriented
m. Want to be taken seriously
n. Personal relationships
o. Language Skills
p. Women were trusted more or viewed as naive
q. Interpersonal skills and relationship building
r. Ask questions
s. Listening
t. Understanding other points of view
u. Women are more analytical
v. Women are more open minded
w. Collaboration
x. Detail oriented
y. Relationship building
z. Resilience
aa. Ambition
bb. Thoughtful
cc. Need to prove worth
dd. Teamwork and collaboration
ee. Thoughtful and intentional
ff. Collaboration
gg. Collaboration
hh. Collaborative
ii. Emotional IQ
jj. Methodical
kk. Want to understand other points of view
ll. Multitasking
mm. More likely to speak up with other women present
nn. Collaboration
oo. Listening
pp. Other points of view

qq. Collaboration
rr. Under stand own weak spots
ss. Listening
tt. Low drama
uu. Need to stick up for self
vv. Need to do more to prove self
ww. Height advantage
xx. Ask Questions

Culture

a. Different work life balance
b. Work life balance
c. Care giving responsibilities
d. Strong military culture
e. Male dominated culture
f. Less vulnerability
g. Workplace culture
h. Generational gaps
i. Work-life balance
j. Support Networks
k. Boys club
l. Work-life balance
m. Women can change culture
n. Culture needs to change
o. Leadership styles need change
p. Women opened doors for eachother
q. Boys club
r. Women couldn't be married
s. Family obligations and flexibility
t. Barrier to entry
u. Women were not as listened to
v. Military culture
w. Work life balance

Evolution of Women in the field

a. Barrier to entry
b. Stall in women's representation in recent years
c. Different treatment for men and women
d. Representation has increased over time
e. Men were confused about women being in the field
f. Stereotypes and rhetoric were harmful to women
g. Women were willing to hold open a door
h. Barrier to entry

i.   Low number of women historically
j.   Evolution of women in combat
k.   Had to make own path
l.   Glass ceiling
m.   First woman in roles
n.   Lacking role models in the field
o.   "Got Lucky" with roles opening to women
p.   No other women early-mid career
q.   Women opened doors and fought the system of inequality
r.   Growth in women over time
s.   Hard for women to demonstrate their capability
t.   Few women and women were afraid to speak up
u.   Tokenism
v.   Barrier to entry
w.   Few women in military leadership
x.   Women can change culture
y.   Work life balance
z.   Toxic culture
aa. No quick fix
bb. Culture

Women and Policy Change

a.   Diversity experiences over gender alone
b.   Change depends on individual not gender
c.   Diversity is key
d.   Importance of diversity
e.   Diversity outside of gender is important
f.   Diverse perspectives, including gender and willingness to amplify female voices
g.   Diverse perspectives
h.   Skill in the field is important, not just gender
i.   Willing to amplify other women's voices
j.   Diversity needs to be a part of decision-making
k.   Diversity

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Alison Tobey was born in El Paso, Texas on August 31, 1999. She was raised in Black Forrest, Colorado and graduated from Palmer Ridge High School in 2017. She attended the University of Maine and graduated in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in Journalism, graduating summa cum laude and phi beta kappa.

The following fall, she began her graduate studies at the University of Maine's School of Policy and International Affairs, studying global policy with a concentration in international security and foreign policy. As an undergraduate student, Alison was a staff writer for the Maine Campus, and worked as a Digital Desk Editor for the Bangor Daily News. As a graduate student, she interned with The Cohen Group, a global strategic advisory firm, headquartered in Washington D.C., during the summer of 2021. Additionally, she was a Fellow for the Leadership Council for Women in National Security, where she worked on a variety of research tasks pertaining to the advancement of women in the national security space.

Alison was a Graduate Assistant for the Office of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School. She worked for the marketing and communications department. During her collegiate career, Alison was a goalkeeper on the UMaine Women's Soccer team. She was a four-time Scholar Athlete Academic Achievement award recipient and America East Presidential Scholar. She also served as the Gender Equity Chairperson on the Student Athlete Advisory Committee. Alison is a candidate for the Master of Arts degree in Global Policy from the University of Maine in May 2022.