Women, Peace, and Security in Professional Military Education

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Chapter Six
Conclusion and Research Recommendations

WPS policy and implementation has fluctuated between a focus on gender balancing and mainstreaming a gender perspective. The recommendations given in this paper focus on the latter and seek to bridge the gap between policy and actual integration of WPS principles into U.S. Army operations. The current evolving nature of war, expanding a wide diversity of conflict ranging from conventional war to urban terrorism and insurgency, demand a greater emphasis on operationalizing and implementing WPS. Gender relations have a profound impact on state security and conflict and a gendered perspective greatly contributes to the examination and understanding of all aspects of a society and further influences the aims of military operations. Gender considerations further clarify the existing threats and violence the military will have to address in and beyond those presented in traditional warfare. Operationalizing WPS is not a silver bullet, but it can contribute to the military’s support of a whole-of-government approach to the United States’s far-reaching political goals of democratization, stabilization, economic growth, and proliferation of respect for human rights and rule of law.\(^{58}\)

Research Recommendations

Structural barriers that hinder the meaningful participation of women in the U.S. Army are a critical focus area for future research related to WPS strategy. During research collection, the cultural issue of military masculinity was often cited as a large barrier to gender mainstreaming. Further research on aspects of military culture that inhibit equity and inclusion and ways to mitigate this is recommended. Lastly, further development of the assessing, monitoring, and evaluation process is necessary to assess progress of the proposed WPS Army strategic implementation plan.

\(^{58}\) Robert Egnell, “Gender Perspectives and Fighting,” Parameters 43, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 41.