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# Unmasking the Gendered Power Play in Feminist Foreign Policy - Why It Is Breaking Boundaries, But Not Chains?

A Comprehensive Analysis of Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy  
through its Arms Exports Industry

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## Abstract

The focus of this research is in the area of feminist foreign policy and arms exports. The purpose of this research was to outline objectives driving feminist foreign policy in light of its arms sector identifying hurdles to successful delivery of the former. The research methods used include qualitative data analysis of the empirical findings of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, and quantitative data analysis of the democratic status of Pakistan, its gender gap index, and gender-based violence rates. The findings from this research provide evidence that Sweden does not align with its feminist foreign policy objectives and goals in the arms exporting sector, showing poor adherence to democratic status of recipient states, and the risk of illicit arms trade and proliferation linked to gender-based violence. The dissertation recommends that further empirical research constituting to links between Sweden's arms exports and gender-based violence in non-democratic states and conflicts.

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## List of Abbreviations

ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
DEU	Declaration by End User
ECC	Export Control Council
EEA	European Economic Area
EIU	Economic Intelligence Unit
EU	European Union
EUC	End Use Certificate
FFP	Feminist Foreign Policy
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IR	International Relations
ISP	Inspectorate for Strategic Products
MEC	Military Equipment for Combat Purposes
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
OME	Other Military Equipment
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
UN	United Nations
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
Sveriges Riksdag	Swedish Parliament
UNPoA	UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WPS	Women Peace and Security

## 1. Introduction

In 2014, the world's very first self-proclaimed feminist government was established in Sweden. In light of this feminist endeavour, Sweden's Social-Democratic Greens adopted the first feminist foreign policy globally and became the strongest promoter in realising the full enjoyment of human rights by all girls and women, and gender equality (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015; p.1). This new, radical and innovative initiative in global politics symbolises a feminist turn with the idea that gender equality is the main focus in foreign policy and security (Aggestam & Rosamond, 2019; p.1). This policy change that symbolizes not only an innovative head-wind gender agenda, but also a readiness to confront traditional ways of political conduct in foreign policy and diplomacy (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2019). On the other hand, Sweden has been ranked among one of the top arms producers and exporters (Acheson, 2020). This discrepancy between feminist foreign policy principles, and arms exports has been subject to research and debate in attempting to comprehend how Sweden can be one of the frontrunners in social policies, but simultaneously being one of the larger arms manufacturers and exporters worldwide.

In attempting to understand this discrepancy, this thesis will be guided by the following research focus, aims and objectives and will be listed underneath:

**Research focus:** to investigate the issues surrounding the implementation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy in their arms sector

**The overall aim of this research** is to advance an understanding of the issues surrounding the implementation of feminist foreign policy to Sweden's arms sector

Central to this research is to answer the following question:

*Is Sweden's arms sector legally and in practice aligned with its feminist foreign policy and accordingly to gender-sensitive lenses?*

1. *Outline* the objectives driving feminist foreign policy, plus the arms sector and the hurdles to the successful delivery of Sweden's feminist foreign policy disarmament guidelines
2. *Determine* the analytical framework of gender-based violence feminism, including its approaches and barriers
3. *Evaluate critically* the risk assessment relevant to supporting gender-sensitive lenses to the export of weapons from Sweden

4. *Explore* data relevant to the democratic status of states, gender equality, and violence against women and girls related to the export of arms, including drivers and barriers to its implementation of the arms regulations and risk assessment.
5. *Formulate* recommendations on feminist foreign policy implementation issues.

The overall aim of this research is to advance an understanding of the issues surrounding the implementation of feminist foreign policy to Sweden's arms sector. In examining different feminist approaches to Sweden's arms export, this thesis will contribute to the literature on feminist foreign policy, with a particular focus of the barriers and tensions of its nature and implementation in male-dominated policy areas. Moreover, where other feminist academics have placed their research of feminist foreign policy in the realm of feminism in international relations (source), qualitative content analysis comparing different ffps (Zhukova et al., 2021) and discourse analysis (source), this thesis is going to take it one step further. Since the feminist nature of feminist foreign policy and feminism in IR have been discussed extensively, this thesis is going to build on that existing scholarship but it is going to analyse its implementation of it in a specific policy area, arms export, linking theory with practice.

Additionally, the justification for choosing Sweden's arms industry are as follows. In this thesis Sweden's arms industry is understood as a significant sector for trade, defence and security purposes, which are policy areas predominantly exercised and governed by men. Sweden is well known to be a significant arms dealer and producer (Bromley & Wezeman, 2013), Sweden's arms industry fits perfectly within the gender debate of linking weapons to men, and the masculine nature of the sector, and the security debate of who is being securitized with that same weaponry. Hence, this thesis differs from other mainstream academic work within the field of arms manufacturing, production and export, applying a feminist approach to its regulations and risks assessment.

The findings of this thesis and research are of the utmost importance to the field of feminism in IR, gender studies, and the ambiguous relationship between feminist foreign policy and arms trade. In addition, this thesis strives to contribute to feminism in the field of international relations by contributing to the ethically inspired and human-security based policy, and how this coincides with market- and security-related strategies and interests. Often, the issue surrounding the arms industry in general, particularly the risk of weaponry being used in gender-based violence, conflicts, and the export of weapons to autocratic states are addressed, but seldom in depth. Also, the correlation between feminism and weapons are discussed as well but barely possible effects and barriers of a feminist policy in the arms sector. Adding to the

work of prominent feminist academics on feminist foreign policy, it could be argued that there is a tensions of feminist foreign policies more generally between ethical and moral aspirations with a feminist touch, in the pursuit of national security and liberal-market interests, usually resulting the former being compromised (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016). Lastly, and following this, this research sets itself apart from other feminist IR scholarship by using and implementing feminist research methodologies according to Hesse-Biber (2017) by devoting parts of the analysis to the personal attachment of the researcher. This latter will be explained later in the Research Methods sections, but what it entails is that the author of this thesis will ask guiding questions whilst writing this thesis through feminist lenses, ending with a personal subjective note with regards to feminist methodologies of incorporating the researcher's personal view of the findings.

## 2. Literature review

This part of the research will outline the theoretical framework forming the literature foundation of this thesis, and the beforementioned research objectives 1 until 4 within the research focus of feminist foreign policy, arms exports, and gender-based violence and further explain the link between the three. Furthermore, it will start with introducing feminism in international relations theory explaining first the distinctions of feminism compared to mainstream IR theory and the importance of gender. The reason why feminism and gender are extra highlighted with their own subsection, is because both components are very complex. In order to prevent confusion feminism in IR theory will first be presented followed with their distinctive research approach. Consequently, gender will be explained in connection to feminism since gender is at the heart of feminist research. Followed with section 2.2 feminist foreign policy and feminism in IR to link feminism in IR to feminist foreign policy highlighting links and connections. After that, with the feminist knowledge in mind, the thesis moves on to the literature of arms export proposing challenges and barriers with the combination of both variables. This in return will serve as the literature foundation after which the theoretical foundation of the research will be outlined, discussed and reviewed in chapter 3.

### 2.1 Feminism in International relations

“How many radical feminists does it take to change a lightbulb?; Thirteen, one to change the lightbulb and twelve to argue over the definition of ‘radical feminist’” (Morgan, 1996; cited in Duriesmith & Meger, 2020; p.5). This satirical quote from Morgan (1996) portrays the difficulty of defining from an external perspective the wide scope of feminism. Similarly, from an internal lens of defining feminist theory, it is equally difficult to uncover a consensus on a



theoretical definition. Moreover, it is then methodologically complex to understand that in spite of a lacking universal definition, it is necessary to investigate further the three feminist elements that confound scholarly efforts to define the concept. On the other hand, this is exactly what makes feminism, feminism. This chapter will explain the main components of feminist theory in IR, and link those components to feminist foreign policy theory serving as the foundation for the theoretical framework explained in chapter 4.

In one breath, feminism shifts away from the mainstream and dominating realist's focus of inter-state (power) relations, and militarism, expanding its approach through the focus on human security (source). Moreover, it is determined to achieve gender equality for women and men, dismantling power relations that construct social and public life to improve life and end subordination that exist on all levels (Abdulsada Ali, 2023; p.4). Feminism advocates for a bottom-up and top-down approach, incorporating all significant players within that approach; non-state and transnational actors, individuals, communities, and the internal operation working methods of institutions. Such an approach is built on the underlying layers of power that construct global politics. The central idea composing the foundational principle for feminism in IR theory is that the dynamics between genders have political implications. This central idea enables the analysis of women's involvement in, but also their exclusion from the dominant elements of IR, which are entrenched in the structural power imbalances between women and men (Duriesmith & Meger, 2020; p.358). The fundamental element in feminism rests on the political nature of relations between sexes and serves as an opening to feminism in international relations (Duriesmith & Meger, 2020; p.358). In other words "the personal is political, and the political is personal" suggesting a direct link between gender and global politics (Enloe, 2014; p. 6). The latter phrase that the overflow of power goes back and forth between the micro-level (private life) and macro-level (public life) that the government relies to be able to conduct their foreign affairs (Enloe, 2014; p.8).

In light of this, feminism research consolidates gender and starts from the significance of the distinction between bodies (biological factors), and genders (socially constructed gendered behaviors) through which the world is organized and shaped in both public and private life: *masculinity*, and *femininity* (Enloe, 2014). For example, and according to Elshtain (1987) people from the West traditionally infer an affinity between men and war, women and peace; a transmitted and culturally constructed tradition of memories and myths (Elshtain, 1987; p.4). In other words, the distinction between men and "masculinity" is centered around the idea of men being the breadwinners, protectors, defenders, and war- and violence-loving fighters,

whereas women and “femininity” are perceived as the warm-hearted non-violent peace-loving nurturers taking care of the children, household, and the people in need (Hutchings, 2014).

Feminism strives to achieve gender equality, which is why it focuses predominantly on women’s and girls’ rights, rights of marginalized groups of people, because those groups have been ignored mostly by politics and political research because both disciplines have been dominated by men (Hutchings, 2014). And in order to do so, gender-based violence should be decreased.

The general assumptions around feminism is that people assume that the discipline has a man-hating nature and is merely interested in women, to which Hutchings (2014) satirically replies “...well at least somebody is” (Hutchings, 2014; Limitations). Nonetheless, the word feminism is misleading due to the word “feminine” in it, but more importantly, this assumption is not entirely correct. Indeed, feminism does bring up women, and other marginalized groups of people, but it also tries to unravel men and masculinity, and feminine and femininity in the cases they analyze because both genders are intertwined and interconnected (Ibid.). Hence, gender is not simply an equivalent for “women problem”, or man-hating elements advocating for women’s rights and those of marginalized groups of people, at the expense of men (Hutchings, 2014).

## 2.2 Feminist foreign policy and feminism in International Relations

This thesis is similarly underpinned with these approaches to an inclusive feminist theory. However, to be able to comprehend the drivers and challenges of feminism in IR, and gender, this subsection of the thesis will continue with outlining contemporary research in the realm of feminist foreign policy, to put feminism and gender in context through highlighting their roles in the previously conducted feminist foreign policy research, after which it will explain the challenges feminist foreign policy is facing with regards to their norm translations of feminism’s main goal of incorporating gender and achieving gender equality.

Notable feminist scholars have become increasingly interested in studying gender mainstreaming in foreign policy (Tickner, 1988; Aggestam & True, 2020; Shepherd, 2010), examining feminism in diplomacy (Aggestam & Towns, 2018), analyzing the feminist and ethical components of feminist foreign policy (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond, 2019; Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2018; Kumskova

& Scheyer, 2019; Thomson, 2020; Bergman-Rosamond, 2020), and the importance of utilizing post-colonial lenses to dismantle the power dynamics in the current patriarchal system accounting for postcolonialism through globalization (Achilleos-Sarll, 2018).

Moreover, several empirical studies have focused on how to analyze the effectiveness of feminist foreign policy on order to understand its meaning and goals better, such as quantitative research regarding the opinions of EU representatives on Sweden's feminist foreign policy (Sundström & Elgström, 2019), and comparative qualitative content analyses between the first four adopted feminist foreign policies (Zhukova et al., 2021; Aggestam & True, 2020). Also, Zhukova et al., (2021) have attempt to conduct qualitative content analysis examining the norm translations of their meaning of feminist foreign policy analyzing Sweden's, Canada's, France's, and Mexico's feminist foreign policy exploring possible overlaps, but also contradictions in order to comprehend feminist foreign policy. These three very insightful studies will be outlined below in understanding the different approaches to feminist foreign policy.

To clarify, Zhukova et all. (2021) theorize strategic narratives combined with norm translation theory, examining how Sweden, Canada, France and Mexico have translated feminist norms to their own strategic advantages internationally, nationally, and issue-based using intersectional, and liberal feminist lenses to focus on the *formation* of the chosen priorities and points of action in the policies, the *projection* of the ffp's projected by the narrators and the public spaces, and *reception* stage of how the policies are received by the concerned states, national and international audiences. Sundström & Elgström (2019), and Sundström et all.'s (2021) provide interesting insights in the reception of Sweden's ffp, forming an interesting starting point for the study of the effectiveness of feminist foreign policy. Moreover, to examine effectiveness through the reception of states and people concerned with Sweden's FFP, such as the international media, and EU members, can provide a valuable image of the effectiveness by the people concerned with the policy. This thesis, on the other hand, will align its research with the *formulation*, and *reception* stages argued by Sundström & Elgström (2019). It will do so through the formulation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy goals, and its military equipment export guidelines understanding the workings of the risk assessment. Also, it links the reception stages to quantitative data presented from the Women Peace and Security Index outlining the consequences for women's violence rates since they are the recipients of Sweden's foreign policy.

Also, in an attempt to comprehend feminist foreign policy from an external point of view Sundström & Elgström (2019), have analyzed the reception of employees working at EU institutions through in-depth interviews and a questionnaire answered by 108 employees from 27 EU member states stationed at Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the EU (COELA), Development Cooperation (CODEV), Western Balkan Region (COWEB), EU working Parties; Human Rights (COHOM) (Sundström & Elgström, 2019). The selection of these groups were based on their assumed knowledge of FFP, because these organization's expertise is to a great extent concerned with gender-related matters. The main goal of the authors are to challenge and examine Sweden's norm entrepreneur's position in gender equality through external perceptions. They determined to examine this notion through the reception of EU member states' diplomatic representatives testing Sweden's effectiveness, legitimacy and coherence methodology. The authors concluded that the overall reception is positive of Sweden's FFP and its improvement of its international image, but it could be said that nothing else would be expected since the EU is overall quite a liberal and progressive institution. However, there are critical notes as well, for some the word "feminist" evokes adverse responses particularly among the conservative, and respondents of Central-, and Eastern-European states. Additionally, critical notes of the respondents include that pursuing with a FFP in a climate where populism and nationalism grow more support is disproportionate. On the other hand, the authors counterargue that adherence to a FFP is vital in a populist and nationalistic climate.

Lastly, and to propose a different approach to studying feminist foreign policy, Sundström et al.'s (2021) shed light on the perceptions of states concerned with or affected by Sweden's ffp. Sundström et al. (2021) examined 34 international newspapers representing 17 states, and argued that a policy's effectiveness is determined by how salient, legitimate, and coherent it is. Based on this theory, the authors concluded that foreign media's news coverage about Sweden's ffp is impacted by [1] a challenging and difficult relationship by many countries with the word and concept "feminism", [2] a missing universally agreed definition of feminist foreign policy, and lastly [3] a discrepancy between the ideology and goals of a ffp on one hand, and liberal market-oriented security concepts in Sweden's ffp on the other hand (Sundström et al., 2021). The latter contributes to the ambiguous relation with Sweden's norm entrepreneur role on one hand, but its significant arms exporting role and potentially guided by profits of feminist principles. This will be further touched in the arms sector subsection.

Moreover, the previous authors make some interesting conclusions that this thesis will bear in mind when analyzing Sweden's feminist foreign policy. Firstly, there is no coherency among the existing feminist foreign policy because there is no universal agreement on the meaning of feminism and its blueprint for a FFP, due to feminism's complex and versatile nature (Rest, 2023). Nevertheless, there seems to be a consensus among current feminist foreign policy noted by Rest (2023), around adopting a gender-sensitive lens in all policy areas of foreign affairs ranging from development cooperation to security (Rest, 2023). Thirdly and finally, FFP lacks a monitoring mechanism keeping track of the efficiency and effectiveness of these policies whether or not it bears any fruit. With this conclusion in mind, the author of this thesis is warned and will keep these flaws in mind during the analysis.

More barriers and challenges to Sweden's feminist foreign policy will be highlighted. Sweden's adoption of its feminist foreign policy was groundbreaking, because according to Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond (2016) feminism in international relations is not a new phenomenon, but its implementation on a state level is a fresh contrast to realist theories traditional dominion, which used to be Realism's arena (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016), which in return opens the debate and scholarship implying the need and curiosity for further research to which this thesis will contribute to. Sweden centers its FFP around the three 'r' approach focusing on rights, representation, and reallocation (of resources) to enable women to achieve the former (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019). Such a FFP publicly shifts away from traditional elite-oriented foreign policy discourses and practices toward a new foreign policy framework that is led by ethical and normative principles, and intersectional relevance (Ibid.). However, such a head-wind agenda can collide with other forms of policies constituted by the Swedish government, or other states that might contrast feminist principles, ethical ideals, and Sweden's norm entrepreneurship (Ibid.). Which is why FFP does not overthrow national interests but attempts to mediate around women and marginalized groups targeted by Sweden's FFP while obtaining consensus in Parliament (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2019).

This tension, however, has been poorly analyzed in feminist foreign policy literature which is where this research will locate its research. To refresh the mind, Sweden's FFP centers around its norm entrepreneur role and commitment to full representation of women, gender equality, full enjoyment of human rights through the decrease of women's and girls' violence light of the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (Sundström & Elgström, 2021). At the same time, gender equality is central to national and international security as well (Aggestam

& Bergman-Rosamond, 2018). In other words, and according to Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond (2019) Sweden attempts to guide its foreign policy by ethical commitments to gender equality, through objectives and method leading to results in particular policy areas (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2019). This is where this thesis will pick up.

This thesis attempts to build on the gender security nexus, and adhere to Sweden's goals of producing results in practice as mentioned before. At the heart of feminist foreign policy is gender equality, which simultaneously has been the focus of national and international security. In other words, and according to Hudson (2012) state security is ultimately linked to security of women (Hudson, 2012 cited in Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; p. 325). This statement is strengthened by the WomenStats Project arguing that through gender equality, the likelihood of women's and girls' violence, militarism and corruption can decrease (Ibid. p.325). That same security can be created or jeopardized through the use of gender-based violence, and weapons (Ibid., p.325). Hence, it could be argued that in order to create gender equality, gender violence needs to decrease, which stands in stark contrast to Sweden's arms sector. Sweden's norm translation of its feminist foreign policy interacts with contemporary international and feminist discourses on human security, which can be threatened through (illicit) arms trade. This thesis will, therefore, continue the literature review outlining and clarifying the ambiguous dilemma of the arms trade sector between ethical feminist principles, and market revenues and profits serving as a starting point for the analysis and synthesis later in this study.

### 2.3 Sweden's arms sector

This section explains Sweden's arms trends, its developments and challenges and explains the link between the protection of liberal markets and revenues at the cost of ethical and feminist principles which serve as the foundation of the arms theory that this thesis will use analyze and the synthesize It will also outline the ambiguous relation between Sweden's significant arms producer and exporter position in relation with its feminist foreign policy, and norm entrepreneur forming the theoretical foundation of the arms sector.

Several empirical studies have focused on the socio-political impasses in the emerging civil security market (Bromley & Wezeman, 2013; Hoijtink, 2014; Larsson, 2020) including these contributions to (European) security and securitization theory (Jeandesboz 2016; Hoijtink, 2014), including the different schools of thought in security studies (Buzan et al., 1998), and

the different contexts in which security is presented through the securitizing actors, and the important roles audiences play in this security providing framework (Balzacq, 2005; McDonald, 2008).

Indeed, security studies, and arms industry have political- and research-related interests. Related in this way, a study analysed by Cooper (2008) theorized an “economy of emergence” in the possibilities of the US’ emergent biotechnology sector and American neoliberalism which has led to elements of interoperability are part of civil markets linking permanent security dilemmas to permanent economic growth, and the greediness for economic boosts to political strategies (Cooper, 2008). Building on this argument, Zedner (2006) confirms that the state is predominantly concerned with the health of the liberal markets guided by business opportunities and profits, than respecting and adhering to ethical ideals such as what security entails, to whom it should be provided for, and to what means and ends (Zedner, 2006). Interestingly, Zedner (2006) constitutes to the debate about the ethical and morality side of securitization, attempting to answer the question who is protecting who (Zedner, 2006). Building on this argument, analysis conducted by Ehrlich (1996) that the security market model is driven by incentives such as revenues, dictated by consumer demand, and less by moral wrongdoing which could potentially harm business (Ehrlich, 1996). Hence armament is not only being produced to protect oneself or to fight wars with, but also to enforce or build liberal peace globally (Buchanan, 2005).

Hence, the knife cuts both ways the arms industry has both economic as well as political interests at stake. However, who is protecting who? This is important to highlight, because the result section regarding Sweden’s arms export will build on this debate. Among these studies, there is consistent evidence to propose that Sweden’s impeccable and significant position in the international arms industry has become ethically and morally questionable with regards to its norm entrepreneur and human rights frontrunner roles. According to Bromley and Wezeman (2013), Sweden change to became one of the top arms producers and exporters in the world highlighting its top 12 position in the ‘60s and ‘70s due to their neutral position in the Cold War era (Bromley & Wezeman, 2013). They argued that remaining neutral during conflict is good for business, legitimacy and self-sufficiency resulting in large investments from the Swedish government into their domestic arms industry, and technology developments, which has kept Sweden among the top arms producers until today (Ibid.). Moreover, there is coherence among the findings that Sweden could potentially masquerade its arms development justifications under the umbrella of innovation and neutrality that it had developed during the cold war period

(Ibid.). Unfortunately, Bromley and Wezeman (Ibid) argue that there is a lack of evidence in whether or not Sweden is covering its notable position in the arms industry and possible consequences to its feminist foreign policy (Ibid). This is an interesting conclusion to which this thesis will adhere to with reference to on research objective 1 outlining the objectives of Sweden's FFP and its arms sector, and therefore, collect quantitative data of Sweden's arms export numbers to its top ten states between 2014-2022 and analyse whether is adhering to their feminist foreign policy objectives, or if Sweden prioritizes liberal-market oriented goals and strategies over feminist goals.

Moreover, justifications for choosing arms production and export are as follows. As argued by Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond (2016) Sweden manages a FFP while simultaneously not only producing and exporting arms, but exporting it to authoritarian regimes where human rights are violated daily, and women and minorities are treated subordinated to the man (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016). Furthermore, according to Wezeman (2014), Sweden used to be very hesitant and ethical in providing authoritarian states, dictators, and human rights violators armaments to assist them to stay in power, however, this has completely changed in reality (Wezeman, 2014 cited in Jackson, 2014). Wezeman (2014) further argues that the reason for this is, is the opening of Sweden's armament and military equipment market internationally, because of high demands which resulted in partial ownership between Swedish government and international companies (Wezeman, 2014). Consequently, Wezeman (ibid.) continues with Sweden turning a blind eye on human rights concerns and negotiating business with states such as Saudi Arabia, which would have been unthinkable in the past (Wezeman, 2014; cited in Jackson, 2014). However, Wezeman (Ibid) does not provide further analysis including proof whether or not Sweden is, indeed, turning a blind eye, which make both a quantitative case study an interesting case for analysis exploring Sweden's arms export recipients verifying Wezeman's theory. Hence, incorporating the risk assessment Sweden incorporates is an interesting case as well for analysis combined with the quantitative data discovering the crux in the arms export chain.

Particularly the socio-political roles and civil security paradox underlying in these developments. For instance, Larsson (2020) theorizes the socio-political and technological roles in the arms industry's shift to civil security, and mentions that Sweden's socio-political façade of maintaining "neutral" and "innovative" with their arms industry disguising arms deals abroad, and an interest in human rights (Larsson, 2020). The arms industry has moved somewhat away from the military demands, to emerging security issues including civil security.



Indeed, the industry benefits significantly from researching, producing and selling weapon systems and arms, but its landscape has somewhat shifted to developing and producing for the demands of emerging security issues. The latter entails the change from government and military demands, to civil society producing for border control related matters and counterterrorism. This shift has not only changed Sweden's arms industry, but Europe's as a whole. Arguably, according to Hoijtink (2014) the emerging security issues shift serves as a crucial impetus for market developments (Hoijtink, 2014), hence crucial through the implementation of a ffp, and the contribution to the social-democratic debate in contrast to liberal developments. Moreover, and

### 3 Theoretical framework

This chapter introduces the analytical groundwork for the thesis, commencing with a definition of gender-based violence, the theoretical framework of Yodanis (2004) of gender-based violence and high status of women which will serve as the theoretical lens for this thesis, and the link between GBV and arms trade.

#### 3.1 Gender-Based Violence feminism

The United Nations has officially recognized that gender-based violence against women is a global concern impacting both development and health (Manuh, 2013). For example, women and girls around the world are affected by different forms of violence, such as physical violence, emotional, societal, domestic, political, economic, psychological, sexual, and digital or online violence, including honor-related violence (UN Women, 2023; Yodanis, 2004; Sutton, 2020; Acheson, 2020; Dekel et al., 2018; Russo & Pirlott, 2006). All of these forms of violence serve as serious barriers for gender equality, which is why Sweden has prioritized ending men's violence towards women and girls among their feminist foreign policy's main goals (Swedish Gender Equality Agency, 2023). For clarity reasons, this thesis will refer to GBV as a collection or umbrella term including the beforementioned forms of violence towards women and girls. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women translate discrimination towards women, hence gender-based violence as follows: "violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately" (Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) & Division for the Advancement of Women Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1992; at 6.). This includes sexual or mental suffering or harm, physical inflicts, and other freedom and rights restrictions (ibid.).

Building on this definition, the UN Women acknowledges that men and boys can be victims of GBV as well, and individuals of the LGBTQI+ community (UN Women, 2023). In other words, gender-based violence is characterized by harmful acts targeting individual or groups because of their gender (Ibid.), that could constitute to crimes of war, crimes against humanity, genocide, femicide, terroristic acts, or violations of (international) humanitarian rights, and laws (International Criminal Court, 2014). It stems from the misuse and abuse of power, gender inequality, and damaging norms and underscores the different forms of violence increasing the vulnerability of women and girls due to existing structural gender-based power disparities (UN Women, 2023). In sum, GBV is a violation of human rights (Acheson, 2020). For contextual reasons, Therefore, this thesis acknowledges the broader definition of GBV directing at all genders, but for clarity purposes it will continue with GBV definition targeting women and girls on a societal level as its theoretical framework used for the analysis and synthesis, which will be discussed down below.

## 4.2 Feminist Gender-Based Violence Typology

“the GBV problem in arms export is the risk of arms or items being used in the commission of serious acts of gender-based violence (GBV) or violence against women and children” (Arms Trade Treaty; art.7.4, 2013 cited in Balga, 2016).

This sub question will discuss Research object 2 of determining the analytical framework of gender-based violence feminism including its approaches and barriers, and change to connect research objective 3 of critically analyzing Sweden’s arms export through GBV-feminist lenses. The feminist approach to gender-based violence feminism (GBVF) analyzes the root causes for GBV on different levels global, national, community, and individual levels (Sutton, 2020; Bograd, 1988). Moreover, it looks at the social, economic, and political, cultural positions of women through intercultural and intersectional approaches determining if poor societal and economic conditions cause for gender-based violence, and the role of men in this process (Yodanis, 2004; Sutton, 2020; Bograd, 1988), and observing from an external point considering cultural, situation, and structural contexts (Russo & Pirlott, 2006). Hence the status of women is a multidimensional and complex concept, but to comprehend Yodanis (2004) proposes a feminist theoretical framework of gender based violence on a societal level, moving away from individual level to propose a different perspective. She does so through the starting point of citing other research that had been conducted prior that agree to the statement of in order to be able to stop gender-based violence on the individual level, the inequality societal dynamics must change (Yodanis, 2004; p.655). Said differently, gender-based violence through feminist

lenses entails according to Bograd (1988) gender inequality on the societal level causes for violence against women on the individual level (Bograd, 1988). Hence, Yodanis (2004) places her research on the societal level within the scholarship incorporating economic and social statuses of women which will be explained below.

Building on this theory, Yodanis (Ibid.) refers to feminist theory clarifying that high levels of inequality and women's violence are heightened by the high percentage of men's occupations at public institutions (societal levels), and their powerful positions at home (economic and social levels) (Ibid., p.655-656). Hence, with the support of prior research and feminist theory, Yodanis (Ibid.) argues that in male-dominated societies, women's status are lower increasing women's fear and violence levels (Ibid., p.655).

In order to support this statement, Yodanis (2004) attempts to explore a possible correlation between a women's occupational and educational status in society to levels of (sexual) violence and fear. She does so through two hypotheses: [1] when economic and social status of women are low, (sexual) violence rates are high, [2] when economic and social status of women are high, (sexual) violence rates are low (Yodanis, 2004; p. 655). She gathers data from 26 different European countries, and the United States placing her analysis in a larger cross-national context strengthening viability. She uses UN statistics and the data of the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) of women who have answered "yes" to having been assaulted physically ranging from unwanted touch, to extremer forms such as rape, added with Yllö's (1983, 1984) Status of Women Index choosing the structural gender inequality measures of structural gender inequality that entail, according to Bradley and Khor (1993) women's political, educational, and occupational status (Bradley & Khor, 1993; cited in Yodanis, 2004) which Yodanis incorporates through the control variables of a state's GDP and percentage of men and women between the age of 20 and 39. This is a very interesting starting point for the analysis of the thesis, where it would link Yodanis' (2004) gender inequality variable, but replace it with the gender equality gap index of the World Economic Forum for the study variable.

The outcomes of the quantitative data analysis support Yodanis' theory confirming that the higher the occupational and educational status of women, the lower the rates of sexual violence. For example and to support her conclusion, Slovenia scored average on educational, and occupational status, and very low in political status of women, but was ranked second highest in reports on women's sexual violence (Ibid.; TABLE 2: Prevalence of Sexual and Physical Violence; p.666; TABLE 4: Ranking of Countries According to the Status of Women; p.668).

Hence, violence against women correlates with male dominated structures, and is not solely limited to a man's individual characteristics.

Yodanis (2004) further argues that feminist empirical studies have not been able to test such a cross-national theory accurately due to the invalid reasoning and justifications for practices of institutions and policies, including the broader range of incorporating the legal systems, universities, workplaces, and religion. This is where this study will pick up the baton analyzing Sweden's FFP, highlighting its risk assessment on the export of military equipment, and its effects in practice through the gender equality gap index, and the states' democratic status.

However, it must be said that this thesis acknowledges, as explained in the literature review, that there is a broad spectrum of gender, the same applies to differences among individuals identifying as "woman", which, as a result, translate to different women from different backgrounds and culture, needing different approaches and solutions as explained prior. Therefore, "woman" should not be perceived as a unitary category, however, it could possibly be a unifying one (Jackson & Jones, 1998), which is why this thesis will continue to use the umbrella terms of "women".

However gaps in gender-based violence data remain. For example, and According to the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime (2022) estimating the amount of gender-related killings of women and girls remains a difficult task, due to remaining data gap. For example, out of approximately 81,100 female homicides reported and recorded in 2021, almost 40% lacked sufficient contextual evidence and information to be listed as gender-related killings/femicide (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2022). More importantly, there is an even bigger lack of data regarding gender-related killings committed in public spaces, which poses challenges to effectively address and formulate efficient prevention policies for such incidents (Ibid.). Hence, in order to adhere to and advocate for a separate women's/feminist perspective, this thesis will focus predominantly on gender-based violence targeted at women. However, it does not wish to homogenize the arguments and results.

Consequently, Sutton (2020) notes that GBV is strongly connected to arms trade due to the fact that there is a correlation between rates of gender violence and the import of arms (Sutton, 2020). However, acknowledging that exported arms do not constitute to GBV per definition, but it does however aggravate it (Green et al., 2013). The link between arms trade and GBV is as follows, Acheson (2020) notes that the widespread proliferation of weapons in the global arms trade can contribute to varied forms of GBV in conflict, and non-conflict-related matters

(Acheson, 2020; p.142). To bring this into perspective, Acheson (2020) continues with an estimation made by the United Nations stating that the majority of the world's approximately 875 million small arms are owned by men, added with the latter being responsible for the predominant use of small arms and for causing the most armed violence (Ibid.). In addition, and according to a study of EIGE, women and children constitute to approximately 80% of displaced people and refugees globally and internally as a results of such armed conflicts (EIGE, 2023). Hence, it could be argued that the latter has the greatest impact on women and children, hence, one could argue that high percentage of arms import can constitute to high rates of gender inequality and gender-based violence (Acheson, 2020; p.141).

The connection made by Sutton (2020) of the direct connection between gender-based violence is an interesting starting point where this research will continue to build on that already existing knowledge. The thesis will place itself in the proliferation of arms context on a societal level, through the content analysis of Sweden's legal framework regulating the risk assessment of Sweden's arms export. In doing so, this research places itself on a state-level with the content analysis, but will further build on Sutton's (2020) link, attempting to find evidence that support Sutton's theory exploring the quantitative data presented later in this research gathered from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, and diving further to the individual level referring to the presented findings of the Women Peace and Security Index outlining the specific forms of violence women suffer in the country. Hence this thesis will eventually operate a multi-level approach in order to justify Sutton's theory.

Hence, according to (Dekel et al., 2018) feminist theory in GBV is an intersectional theory emphasizes the notion and use of power in systems where power, authority, and oppression interact between women and men (Dekel et al., 2018). Therefore, the intersectional part considering multiple approaches. Building on this framework, Russo & Pirlott (2006) propose to add interdisciplinary research on multiple levels to be able to propose critical contributions (Russo & Pirlott, 2006; p.179). They propose that the psychological significance of experiences and actions from the perspective of the victim and perpetrator and those observing from an external point consider cultural, situation, and structural contexts (Ibid.). The analysis of the dynamics underlying GBV should incorporate the cultural discourse that objectifies women, normalized violence with sexual connotations, and rationalizes gender disparities in economic and social status offering multilevel, and complex approaches pointed at men and women (Ibid.).

In sum, this chapter has outlined and explained Yodanis' (2004) framework highlighting the direct link between high levels of gender-based violence are caused by low levels of women's social and economic status in states. It has added Sutton's (2020), and Acheson's (2020) findings that high levels of arms import can constitute in theory to higher levels of violence against women due to risks of illicit arms trade, and because of the fact that the majority of those imported weapons are owned by men. It has also explained through Bromley and Wezeman (2013) Sweden's strategic political façade of becoming one of the largest arms producers and exporters, added with Zedner's (2006) of protecting liberal market profits at the cost of ethical principles. With these findings and theoretical framework in mind, this thesis will turn to the methodology and research methods section to outline the implementation of the theoretical framework of this thesis to the empirical section.

## Chapter 5 Feminist epistemological perspective and research methods

This chapter accounts for the implementation of the theoretical framework of Yodanis (2004), zooming in through feminist lenses on Sweden's potential risks of its arms export on a society-level to violence against women. Subsequently, this chapter will first briefly introduce and explain the meaning of feminist methodology which is crucial in feminist research, followed by a description and justification of the chosen research methods, the data collection, research strategy, analysis, and limitations and hurdles of this research in that particular order.

### 5.1 Epistemological perspectives

The literature review and theoretical framework chapters have emphasized the need for more feminist perspectives in IR (Ackerly et al., 2006), including empirical, and particularly quantitative data in feminist research, such as Bromely and Wezeman's (2013) recommendation of further analysis on Sweden's arms export data (to be encompassed in objective 3 below). To be able to implement all of those elements successfully, the research methods will be explained in this part, but first the importance of feminist "methodology" will be explained because it differs slightly from conventional approaches.

What makes it feminist is that feminism focuses on the relationship between the researcher and the research forcing to examine the researcher's own motives, feelings, enforcing to question throughout the research *why are you researching this, what are your own thoughts and feelings about the subject or results, and how could this be approached or questioned differently?* (Hesse-Biber, 2017).

Nevertheless, feminist research distinguishes itself in the way the researcher approaches the research, with particular attention being paid to the meaning of those results to the researcher (Hutchings, 2014; Hesse-Biber, 2017). Therefore, this chapter accounts for a step-by-step explanation of the main research strategy suitable to meet the all of this thesis' research objectives, added with details on *how* the data will be assembled, including the selection of the chosen case study on Pakistan, and *how* the assembled data will be analysed. Furthermore, this thesis will identify and address the limitations of the research, and potential challenges, but emphasise its validity and importance to the scholarship.

To refresh the mind. The objectives previously mentioned will be summed up underneath.

**Research focus:** to investigate the issues surrounding the implementation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy in their arms sector

**The overall aim of this research** is to advance an understanding of the issues surrounding the implementation of feminist foreign policy to Sweden's arms sector

Central to this research is to answer the following question:

*Is Sweden's arms sector legally and in practice aligned with its feminist foreign policy and accordingly to gender-sensitive lenses?*

6. *Outline* the objectives driving feminist foreign policy, plus the arms sector and the hurdles to the successful delivery of Sweden's feminist foreign policy disarmament guidelines
7. *Determine* the analytical framework of gender-based violence feminism, including its approaches and barriers
8. *Evaluate critically* the risk assessment relevant to supporting gender-sensitive lenses to the export of weapons from Sweden
9. *Explore* data relevant to the democratic status of states, gender equality, and violence against women and girls related to the export of arms, including drivers and barriers to its implementation of the arms regulations and risk assessment.
10. *Formulate* recommendations on feminist foreign policy implementation issues.

However, before diving into the methods section, it must be mentioned first that according to Reinharz & Davidman (1992) there is no universal or singular "feminist way" to do research, including the lack of a single standard for feminist methodological "correctness" (Reinharz & Davidman, 1992; p.243 cited in Tickner, 2006). Building on this argument, Ackerly et al. (2006)

argue that the way of conducting feminist IR research is not academically discussed, which is also why feminist IR methodology is not fully comprehended nor appreciated (Ackerly et al., 2006). However, on the other hand, as Reinharz and Davidman (1992) continues, nor is there a desire to construct a universal feminist way (Ibid.). In short, feminism builds on the already existing knowledge, which is an ongoing process, due to the fact that that already existing knowledge usually centres around man's experiences and lives (Tickner, 2006). Hence, naming this chapter "epistemological perspectives" instead of "methodology" is justified based on feminist research through which the former (epistemological perspectives) indicates that desire to reach the research objectives, but is simultaneously aware of the dynamic environment and unfinished emancipation process in which it places the research in (Reinharz 1992: p.421 cited in Tickner, 2006; p. 21).

In sum, feminist research seek to transform conventional and mainstream frameworks and the already researched knowledge to which they contribute to. They do so with four goals: [1] through the commitment of contributing knowledge as a tool for emancipation, [2] remaining sceptical and continue throughout the research asking "why" questions, [3] the research should be more universal and useful for both men and women, and less biased, [4] the incorporation reflexivity and the subjectivity of the researcher (Tickner, 2006; p.22). Therefore, feminist research seeks to harness the possibility for impacting women's lives with positive outcomes (Epstein Jayaratne & Stewart, 1995).

For all of these reasons, this thesis will remain to the GBV-feminist analytical framework with a particular focus on the universal definition of "women" for clarity purposes. However, in the analysis and synthesis sections, this research will be guided by the feminist "why" questions asking why the data is as it is, and what it is clarifying through GBV-feminist lenses. It will, however, add subjective argumentation based on my own opinion and interpretation of the results and theory in the last paragraph of the results, adhering to feminist research and therefore contributing to both conventional and feminist research (Reinharz, 1992).

## 5.2 Research methods

This subsection will provide the reader with a better interpretation of the hurdles surrounding successful implementation of feminist foreign policy in arms export industry. Through this way, thesis will adhere to the strong voice of feminist researchers advocating for combined research strategies entailing qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Through this way, the



reader will be in a more advantageous position to contribute credible knowledge in relation to gender-based violence in the environment of gender equality and human rights (objective 4).

By outlining the research methods in a detailed, coherent, transparent, and methodological way, allows other scholars and researchers to critically evaluate the validity of this thesis' research methods, inspire future feminist research in the realm of arms export and implementations of feminist foreign policy and, should they wish, reproduce or adjust the research methods.

The empirical chapter of this research will utilize a case study approach to investigate thoroughly the varied elements that construct the life cycle of a that particular entity. Further adding on this notion, the thesis will turn to quantitative data analysis using a specific example case of arms exported from Sweden to Pakistan, incorporating the democratic status of Pakistan, its gender gap, and outlining gender-based violence data gather from the Women Peace and Security index. Additionally, the varied elements focus on the views of gbv-feminist lenses on that particular set of data and examine democratic status and gender equality index in Pakistan as a follow up on the gbv-feminist analysis. Justifications for selecting Pakistan as a case study will be explained in the results section since Pakistan was a result of the quantitative analysis that will be conducted first in this thesis. The reason behind objective number 4 is to “explore” this GBV feminist views to investigate thoroughly.

Moreover, it will examine the contemporary phenomenon feminist foreign policy in the real-life context, the practical side, in the arms export industry. To refresh the mind, the literature reviews had shown evidence of the contemporary nature of it. It is a daunting task to conceptualize feminism in IR particularly the feminist nature of feminist foreign policy, let alone the effectiveness of such a policy due to the complexity of the discipline, as showed in the literature review. Either way, to interpret and comprehend the complexities, this thesis will therefore remain to one approach, which is the gender approach in feminism centring around possible causes and effects for women and girls. This approach aligns with the tools outlined in the research strategy above align with aim of objective 3 and 4 of this thesis.

This thesis also wishes to compare what is outlined and discussed in the literature review, and theoretical framework with the results of the empirical results. As mentioned in the literature review that it is worthwhile to explore new insights of the barriers to successful implementation of feminist foreign policy in male-dominated policy areas based on previous feminist research, which will be contrasting the results of the quantitative data analysis, and, in return, provides new insights and understandings for policymakers, non-governmental organizations, and

researchers concerned with gender-related matters. More importantly, Waring (1988) interestingly argues that the reality we inhabit is partially shaped by women's experiences, if only men's experiences construct that "reality", then political decisions made by political elites would inherently or predominantly be gender unequal, due to the biased research Waring, 1988; p.302 cited in Tickner, 2006; p.37). It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to center around women's life experiences and those of marginalized groups analyzing subjugated knowledge and differences within those experiences and merging that into research, and promoting social policy and change contributing as much as possible to gender equality (Hesse-Biber, 2017).

### 5.2.1 The research strategy

The main research strategy that this thesis will use to conduct the empirical research is a case study on Pakistan. Also, an experimental strategy will be implemented due to the causal relationships between Sweden's FFP, arms sector, and gender equality, democratic status of states. As a result an interpretative strategy will follow combined with the GBV-feminist analysis examining the interpretation of the discovered results. In other words, it could also be said that this research will use both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Feminist research involves a dynamic approach of mixed methods, similar to weaving those methods together, this approach encompasses blending analytical methods, mixing various perspectives, and mixing interpretive methods along the way of your research (Hesse-Biber, 2017).

In summary, empirical data will be obtained from SIPRI involved in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, and for a wider GBV perspective, empirical data regarding gender-based violence, human rights and the gender equality levels in Pakistan to strengthen the discussion will be retrieved from the United Nations gender equality index,

### 5.2.2 Collection of the data

The collection of the data will entail a broad range of data sources that will be described and outlined in this subsection. Moreover, the section will first provide an overview of the data sources and why their data is retrieved and collected. Furthermore, the thesis will first provide information relevant to the research objections in outlining the military legal framework of Sweden's arms export. It will do so through the military equipment acts (1992:1300) and the Ordinance Act (1992:1303), and refer to the Arms Trade Treaty Article 7.4 highlighting the democratic status and risks of illicit arms trade. Consequently, the data source provider for the

quantitative analysis of recipient countries of Sweden's arms will be SIPRI in a time context from 2014 to 2022. Furthermore, based on the findings, it will move over to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) that to gather data on the democracy index scores of Pakistan during the implementation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy. This will serve as evidence to strengthen the argument whether Sweden respects its disarmament guidelines outlined in its feminist foreign policy enforcing stricter export inspections and taking into account the democratic status of the recipient country. Furthermore, to test Sweden's adherence of their gender equality goal through incorporating gender-sensitive lenses to all its operations, hence taking into account possible risks and causes for both men and women, quantitative data will be retrieved from the World Economic Forum for the gender equality data. It should be noted that the data will be portrayed through the size of gender gap between man and women, which constitute to the level of inequality between the two, thus a slight different approach but with the same goal. It will further divide the section between those three quantitative data resources. Lastly, the findings retrieved from the Women Peace and Security Index will be outlined and discussed in a manner to clarify the gender-based violence rates of women in Pakistan. This will, overall, test Sweden's main disarmament and non-proliferation guidelines and goals and whether or not they align with practice.

With that in mind, and to commence with detailed descriptions of the research data collection, it will first outline the data collection of SIPRI. For the background information, SIPRI is an independent international organisation dedicated to gathering research, conduct analyses, and provide recommendations to researchers, policymakers and other interested in the fields of armament, disarmament, conflict, and arms control. It was created in 1966 and has quickly build a reputation for its peace, security, and conflict research resulting one of the most well-respected think tanks globally (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 2019). SIPRI was chosen because it is an independently operating research agency, which means that data is impartial and independent and suitable for this research since it does not wish to retrieve data from sources closely tied to the Swedish government hampering objectivity. Also, the research will gather the data from the years 2014 until 2022. The timing makes sense because it adheres to the periodical scope of the research. Nine number of statistical overviews will be sampled of the years 2014 until 2022, equals nine years. In addition, this will add to reaching the aim of this thesis to explore data relevant to Sweden's arms export recipients. The chosen sampling technique to be used is *purposive sampling* is used to select the top ten countries to who Sweden has been exporting the most weaponry to between 2014-2022. This sampling technique is

suitable to analyse and determine, as a next step in the research of the case study, if non-democratic states are present in those states overviews. This could, in return, align with the research objective 3.

Furthermore, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) is a research company and sister company to The Economic newspaper. Their team consists out of experts in consultancy, policy, specialists, and economist who have been providing independent and impartial data and research ranging from sustainability, national elections, food, security to international trade related matters since 1946 (The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), 2023). Their cliental ranges from academia, government, and non-government, financial, and businesses (Ibid,). ). EIU was chosen because, despite their affiliation with a newspaper, their operations and research are impartial and independent. This is also one of their goals. The research retrieves the data in the period from 2014 until 2022 and will convert it into a table. In addition, this will add to reaching the aim of this thesis to outline the democratic status of the chosen highest receiver of Swedish exported arms to determine, based on the outcome of the results of SIPRI, if Sweden exported weapons to a non-democratic state. If so, which country, and based on that outcome the democratic status will be analysed, justified by EIU. This sampling technique is appropriate because it attributes to the credibility of Sweden's disarmament guidelines and gender equality goals.

Thirdly, the independent and impartial World Economic Forum (WEF) is a non-profit international organization located in Geneva Switzerland. It is dedicated to engage and bring together representatives of the private and public spheres through the organisations of global forums providing impartial and independent data on, particularly, the gender parity, technology, and competition (World Economic Forum , 2023). WEF was chosen because it operates independently offering research in an impartial manner, which is crucial for the viability and credibility for this research. Nine number of statistical overviews will be sampled of the years 2014 until 2022, equals nine years. In addition, this will add to reaching the aim of this thesis to objective 3 and 4. The sampling technique that was chosen is *quota sampling*, to determine, based on the outcome of the results of SIPRI, if Sweden exported weapons to a non-democratic state, and if the gender equality index is either high or low in that particular state contributing to Sweden's gender equality goal. Bluntly said, if Sweden is exporting weapons to a non-democratic state, with high rates of the gender gap (which equals to high rates of gender inequality) then the evidence derived from this case study strengthens the research in answering the research questions whether or not Sweden's arms sector is aligned with its feminist foreign

policy. This sampling technique is appropriate because it attributes to the credibility of Sweden's disarmament guidelines and gender equality goals.

Fourthly, to strengthening the collection of evidence that argue and contest Sweden's risk assessment, the thesis will outline an overview of the granted licenses Pakistan had received during 2014 and 2022. It will also highlight the type of license and the amount of denied licenses. The used data will be retrieved from Sweden's Government Communication annual reports titled "*Strategic Export Control – Military Equipment and Dual-Use Items*" from 2014 until 2022. The reports were selected because they provide, in collaboration with the ISP, the annual information of Sweden's arms exporting industry, including the amount of granted permissions. Data of denied licenses, granted export licences, and licenses for civilian end-use were retrieved and gathered and inserted into a table. This aligns with research objective 3 and 4 and it was done so to provide more evidence that could potentially justify Sweden's insufficient arms export controls by describing, and analysing the amount of granted arms export licenses to Pakistan.

Fifthly, in order to be able to adhere to feminist research offering a multi-level approach, it will in this stage move away from the state-level and dive deeper in Pakistan ending at the individual level of women. In order to strengthen arguments and evidence that link Swedish arms trade to women's and girls' violence in Pakistan would make up for a very firm and strong case. Hence, statistical data was retrieved and gathered from the Women Peace and Security Agenda of their report *Women Peace and Security Index 2021-2022* outlines the current situation for women and girls in Pakistan with regards to civil liberties, political participation, occupational, and the rates of violence they endure. These results in particular will put the beforementioned data set in context outlining, theoretically, links between Sweden's arms trade with Pakistan and Pakistani women's violence.

To move towards Sweden's disarmament guidelines forming the first step of this research. The disarmament section in Sweden's Handbook, *inter alia*, refers to article ATT 7.4 mentioning that signatories need to take into account the democratic status of a country, and preventing as much as possible through risk assessments that exported weaponry does not end up in the wrong hands, and wishes to attribute to gender equality (Sweden's Handbook, 2019; p.72-73). Selecting datasets that respond to these objectives independently, and impartially helps to fill a gap in contemporary and existing research within feminist foreign policy.

The case study is not meant to be a comprehensive study of investigating all non-democratic states to who Sweden is exporting weaponry during the implementation of their FFP, gathering quantitative data based on all guidelines mentioned in Sweden's Handbook about disarmament. Such an examination, would not only be very fruitful in producing meaningful results across a broad range of case studies, but simultaneously very time-consuming that requires a PhD-length type of research, which, consequently, falls beyond the scope of this thesis. Alternatively, the quantitative data from SIPRI will form the basis of this study, and subsequently the Economist Intelligence Unit combined with the World Economic Forum, and the Women Peace and Security Index will serve as extra layers clarifying the issue around the main research question if Sweden is adhering to their guidelines in their arms export industry regarding gender equality, and democratic status of states (Bromley & Wezeman, 2013).

#### 5.2.4 Data collection techniques

The quantitative data from SIPRI, Economist Intelligence Unit, and World Economic Forum will be retrieved from their annual reports between 2014-2022. Specifically, data from SIPRI will be retrieved from their "*Arms Transfer Database*", particularly from their *Importer/exporter TIV tables*, that were filtered to "exports from Sweden", from 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, summarized by recipient/supplier, and generated "on screen". The Economic Intelligence Unit annual reports titled "*Democracy Index*" of which the Democracy Index 2014 up until 2023 were consulted, filtered by "Pakistan". The same flow of steps applies to the annual reports from World Economic Forum titled "*Global Gender Gap Report*", referred to The Global Gender Gap annual reports from 2014 up until 2022 sorted by "Pakistan". However, it must be noted that, there is no annual report on Global Gender Gap 2019 available, hence data can slightly differ or deviate. Nonetheless, this will demonstrate a focused, and an attainable approach allowing the collection of data portray more detailed perspectives on Pakistan's democratic status, and gender equality level.

To gain a broader view Sweden's Handbook's guidelines on disarmament will be summarized concerned arms export serving as the foundation for the policy side. Building on these policy guidelines, the most important domestic and international laws regulating arms export will be outlined to serve as the foundation of the comparative parts whether they correlate with each other.

- Sweden's Handbook Paragraph 5.1.3 Disarmament (p.72-73)

- Military Equipment Law 1993:1300
- Military Ordinance Equipment Law 1993:1303
- ATT article 7.4

This dense view of international arms export regulations will be enhanced through the risk assessment conducted by the Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP), the allocated government agency for implementing ATT Article 7.4 and therefore suitable data source, serving as the qualitative content approach providing an insight that will assist in answering the main research question, whether they are gender-sensitive and appropriate for attributing to gender equality, and decreasing the risk of illicit arms trade.

In summary, this thesis will gather empirical data from SIPRI, Economist Intelligence Unit, as well as the World Economic Forum in the field of arms trade transfer from Sweden to other states, global gender gap, and the democracy index with a specific role in offering a broader insight of one of Sweden's largest non-democratic arms export recipients.

### 5.3.3 Statistical and contextual analysis

Commencing with the data from SIPRI, EIU, and WEF which will be gathered under the themes of arms trade recipient from Sweden, democratic status, and gender gap. These topics accommodate the data analysis and. Figure about how to analyse the data. First, a short background section of Sweden's arms sector will be outlined followed by the most important domestic policies and international agreements regulating Sweden's arms export will be described and interpreted, continued with the risk assessment controlling Sweden's arms export. With the legal basis having set, the second phase can commence analysing the retrieved data from SIPRI determining and interpreting if non-democratic states are among Sweden's top ten recipients, and if so, which one. Based on that analysis, the third phase can start which is gathering the quantitative data from EIU and WEF examining the democratic status levels (high means leaning towards autocratic states, and low means functioning according to democratic norms), and gender gap rates (the lower on the list, the bigger the gender inequality index) that can contradict Sweden's disarmament guidelines in their feminist foreign policy. Also, the gathered data from the Government's communications annual reports, and the data retrieved from the WPS, will be added to the already gathered findings sketching a complete picture of Sweden's arms export from state-level to individual level. The derived data from the analysis will be compared with Sweden's disarmament guidelines and whether these correlate, and a qualitative data analysis will be conducted as well and analysed through gender-based violence

feminist lenses referring the Yodanis' (2004) framework. It is in this stage that, apart from comparing results of the quantitative analysis, relevant literature review and theoretical framework findings will also be compared and contrasted against the case study findings, hence a synthesis of the theory will follow based on the literature review and theoretical framework . In other words, the findings of what the literature review and theoretical framework informed us with the practical side (what the data of the implementation in the field has shared with us). The essence of such a research strategy through the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis suits the approach of feminist research as argued by (Hesse-Biber, 2017),

### 5.3.4 Limitations

There are limitations and barriers to every research, perhaps even more to feminist research due to the radical and non-conventional nature. For this research, there are hurdles in relation to the selected research strategy and GBV-feminist analysis, including some pragmatic barriers. They are listed down below for practicality:

1. It must be noted first that the results of this thesis should not be generalized for the efficacy of Sweden's FFP as a whole, including for the entire disarmament sector. It should serve as an example rather than a generalization.
2. Furthermore, comprehending qualitative data analysis through GBV-feminist lenses is challenging. Not only is understanding qualitative data analysis in general quite challenging, it is especially so through GBV-feminist lenses which includes reflexivity, and intersectionality regarding the focus group. Such a feminist analysis can evoke subjectivity due to the personal perspective intersectionality entails, and biases. Notwithstanding the personal effects the sensitivity of gender-based violence can cause for the researcher.
3. Moreover, the third hurdle can be described by Ackerly et al. (2006) in which they warn that feminist research is very demanding analytically and theoretically, as well as politically and ethically (Ackerly et al., 2006; p.6).
4. With limitation number 2 in mind, the third hurdle can potentially limit this research in a way that by merely adding a gender perspective to feminist research is not enough to encompass the entire frame of feminist research. In other words, to be entirely feminist, one could argue the need of post-colonialism, research focusing on both the experiences of men and women, boys and girls. However, for the sake of the scope, this thesis will refrain from beforementioned components and adhere to GBV-feminist lenses and perspectives.



5. According to Hutchings (2014), feminist research can focus too much on the micro-level (individual), instead of analysing all levels including the macro-level (state-level). This thesis does the opposite and pays more attention to the macro-level, instead of the micro-level which can potentially limit the results and meaning of feminist research. Nonetheless, this thesis is aware of the need for different levels of analysis, but will adhere mostly to the macro-level analysis due to the scope of the thesis.

6. Language barriers regarding the Swedish language can occur as well in official government documents, and the prerequisite for searching in Swedish on official government websites such as the one of the Riksdag.

Nevertheless, this research is not only legitimate, including the beforementioned personal challenges and hurdles, this thesis is also part of feminist research that one can rely on. Every step this thesis takes will be explained in detail throughout the entire research. It will stick to the feminist research strategy, analysis, data collection, case study and synthesis, opening up to inspection and scrutiny which serve as an attempt to be as transparent and reliable as possible. Furthermore, the results retrieved from the empirical data and case study on Pakistan can be of credible relevance to feminist researchers, policymakers, and others interested in the discipline since it attempts to advance understanding of the nature of feminist foreign policy compared to the implementation in male-dominated policy areas such as the arms sector, which has barely been done before in the literature.

## Chapter 6 Sweden's feminist foreign policy

The findings of the thesis will be outlined in this chapter. It will first start with the overall aim of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, followed by its guidelines mentioned on pages 72 and 73 about disarmament and non-proliferation and its norm entrepreneur role serving as background information. Furthermore, it will continue with outlining the most important laws and guidelines followed with an explanation with Sweden's arms export risk assessment of the Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), Sweden's independent government agency overseeing arms control and export in the prevention of illicit arms trade. This will be the starting point for the quantitative data that will be outlined in the next chapter about Sweden's arms export recipients building on Bromley and Wezeman's (2013) note about Sweden's arms export empirical data, and to contribute to research objectives 3 and 4.

## 6.1 Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy Guidelines

Sweden's general statement about gender equality: "Women and men shall have the same power to shape society and their own lives" (Swedish Foreign Service, 2019; p.16). As mentioned before in the literature review, Sweden's Handbook and blueprint for its feminist foreign policy is mainly focused on the three R's: Rights, representation, resources and 'reality' through which it (Ibid; p.6). This reality refers to the current world we live in, hence the three 'r's should be considered in the world, country, and region people live in since this drastically differs constituting to different approaches and solutions. Rights translates to the full enjoyment of human rights, by eradicating discrimination and violence that could hamper women's and girls' freedom (Ibid; p.13). Furthermore, representation entails women being represented in all levels of decision making (Ibid; p.13). Lastly, resources is directly linked to the availability of tools that strengthen equal opportunities and gender equality at large (Ibid; p.13). Through this way, Sweden established a starting point based on research that has proven that gender equality is not a mere women's issue, but benefits the whole of society resulting in higher security, improved health and a vital economy (Ibid; p.7). The first version of the FFP was adopted in 2014 as a response to the systematic subordination and discrimination of girls and women (Ibid.,p.9). Hence, the liberalism undertone which includes subordination as well.

The core of the Swedish Handbook is described as their transformative agenda based on the beforementioned three R's and Reality. Based on the reality in which girls and women live, and *intersectionality* the Swedish Foreign Service will commit itself to bolster girls' and women's rights, resources, and representation. Through this way, the Handbook intends to modify structures and augment visibility of girls and women to counteract inequality and discrimination in all life's contexts and stages (p.11). In order to do so, Sweden has introduced *gender-mainstreaming* obligating the government to incorporate a gender equality lens in policies that concern the conditions of people improving equal lives for girls and boys, women and men (Swedish Foreign Service, 2019; p.17). Interestingly, other feminist scholars propose a different 'r' which is research/reality check, due to the lack of a monitoring mechanism, but this will be discussed later in this section. Every mission and department of Swedish Foreign Service must report annually how they have carried out the feminist foreign policy (Ibid; p.36). Moreover, they must blend the feminist foreign policy in their internal structures and on the work floor as well, incorporating a gender equality perspective and treatments in their business culture at Swedish embassies, and other government branches together with their missions, speeches, social media posts, meetings (Ibid; p.47). Hence embodying the feminist foreign policy on all

levels. Also, Sweden's report checklist for gender equality should entail a gender equality and intersectional perspective in reporting and analysis (Ibid.; p.39)

In other words, Sweden is trying to eliminate violence and discrimination through the full enjoyment of women's and girls' rights, and by representation of women at all levels of policy-/decision-making through the creation of equal opportunities, and gender equality (Sweden's Government Office Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019; p.13).

In order to achieve these ambitions, Sweden has introduced six long-term objectives: “[1] Political participation and influence in all areas of society [2] Full enjoyment of human rights, [3] Freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence, [4] Economic rights and empowerment, [5] Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), [6] Participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding” (Sweden's Government Office Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019; p.19). This thesis will contribute to the testing of objective 2, and 3 since both are intertwined.

Building on these guidelines, particularly objective 2 full enjoyment of human rights, and 3 freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence, this part of the findings will further build on these objectives, incorporating Sweden's disarmament and non-proliferation goals and guidelines which can be found on pages 72 and 73 of Sweden's FFP (Swedish Foreign Service, 2019). This will serve as one part of the comparison between Sweden's FFP guidelines, and the results in practice further discussed in chapter 7. Commencing with Sweden's equality perspective in processes relating to international weapons inspections and disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (Ibid; p.72). Interestingly Sweden acknowledges the direct link between its development sector arguing that freedom from violence is an imperative and a barricade to gender equality, and it acknowledges the direct link between women's and girls' violence to “unchecked division of weapons” (Ibid; p.22). It builds on this notion through the call on exercising stricter control over military weaponry exports from Sweden to other states (Ibid; p.73). Furthermore, it specifically highlights, *inter alia*, article 7.4 of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) which underlines the need to eradicate and prevent the illicit trade in conventional arms in diversion to the illicit market, including the risk of weaponry falling into the hands of unauthorized users or being used for unauthorized means, including acts of terrorism (United Nations, 2014; p.1). Conventional arms refers to all weapons causing damage apart from weapons of mass destruction and include, but are not limited to light weight weapons to battle tanks (Ibid; p.3). Moreover, it also mentions its recognition of legitimate commercial, security, political and economic interests of states in the conventional arms trade sector (Ibid.;

p.1). For these reasons, Sweden argues that it should incorporate gender equality lenses during the strict military weaponry export controls, while at the same time centralizing the condition of the recipient country's democratic state whether or not to grant permission to export (Ibid. p.73). Consequently, it adheres to its norm entrepreneur role, highlighting the importance of building dialogues and alliances with other states to raise awareness of the link between gender-based violence, and illicit proliferation of weapons (Ibid; p.73).

In sum, Sweden centralizes the urge and need to exercise stricter military weaponry export controls through the incorporation of the recipient country's democratic state, because it argues that there is a direct link between illicit trade of weapons and conflict including violence against women and girls. However, it does not clarify three things which are important to bear in mind for the next chapter: [1] Sweden's guidelines do not clarify to what democratic status index it will refer to, nor the criteria of which democratic score is acceptable and which are not. Also, and [2], Sweden does not explain details of what a gender equality perspective during military inspections should entail, and [3] the strict arms export control solely refers to *military* equipment, not *conventional* weapons, of which small arms and light weapons harm women the most, as previous explained in the literature review (Acheson, 2020). This is important to keep in mind for the next chapter, but also the analysis, and synthesis sections.

## 6.2 Sweden's arms sector and norm entrepreneur role

This section will turn to describing domestic and international laws that guide Sweden's disarmament and non-proliferation sector. Although there are plenty of laws regulating arms manufacturing, export, all sorts of heavy and light weight weapons such as the European Common List of Military Equipment and arms export, this thesis will only turn to Sweden's domestic military equipment 1992 law ending with Sweden's disarmament guidelines in its Handbook to form the legal basis of this dissertation. This aligns with the main research question exploring the legal foundation of Sweden's arms sector, and research objectives 2 and 3.

### 6.2.1. Law on Military Equipment Act

Sweden's current national export regulations are built on the Law on Military Equipment Act (1992:1300), and the Law on Military Equipment Ordinance (1992:1303) which serves as an addition to the former. These two subsections will serve as the legal foundation for the risk assessment, highlighting important guidelines and restrictions on permits and licenses to be able to produce, weaponry, and export them. In addition, guidelines surrounding the recipients of

those exported weaponry will be outlined as which contributes to research objective 2 and 3, and to the analysis and synthesis later in the research when the described guidelines will be compared to the quantitative data and discussed through gender-based feminist lenses.

This section is going to present Sweden's well-established arms producer and exporter roles. To begin with, and after the World War II, Sweden had followed as what would be known as "Sweden First" type of policy in which it prioritized arms and larger weapons made on Swedish soil, also to remain neutral during the Cold War. Sweden's core values and policies created right after the Second World War. The reasons for this is that Sweden's "neutrality", and "solidarity" during the Cold War set the cornerstones of its development aid devotions through which it set up missions, which were challenged during the liberal peace period of the 1990's (Bromley & Wezeman, 2013). Consequently, Sweden has invested credibly in its arms production and technology development making Sweden part of the top arms producers worldwide during the Cold War, up until even today (Larsson, 2020).

According to Dillon & Reid (2009) the liberal way of governing and ruling are intertwined with the liberal way of raging war masqueraded by liberal peace; going to war in the name of being, which in their research is referred to as the 'biohuman' (Dillon & Reid, 2009). This is directly related to the change in military discourse in the 1990s in which liberal peace, going to war or build peace in the name of liberal democracy became apparent. In these studies, the liberal doctrine is being analysed through its characteristics of going to war in the name of liberal democracy and humankind creating liberal peace, and the ambiguity within this ambition (Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; Aigus, 2006; Vähämäki, 2017; Schouenborg, 2012). As for arms export, the same notion and underlying is evident in this field as well in which wealthy western states set up peace missions, or give aid to protect human rights, and eradicate poverty, but in reality it is done because of strategic, political and economic interests (Kharas 2009; Pratt, 1991; Williams, 2012). Because of this reason, the ethical elements in this field are challenged, whether or not development aid is conducted through genuine developmental concerns, or through business and economic interests while maintaining colonial relationships at the same time (Williams, 2013; p.58).

As in the case of Sweden, Bergman-Rosamond (2016) explains Sweden's internationalism very well which is based on its social democratic roots but with liberal thoughts and expressions (Bergman-Rosamond, 2016). In this study, Sweden's social democratic doctrine becomes evident, through Sweden's strong commitment to and belief in solidarism and neutrality.

However, this social democratic doctrine is being challenged by centre-right parties in Sweden, highlighting their electoral victories in 2006 and 2010. Even though these ideologies differ, they are both strongly committed to solidarism, peaceful settlements of conflicts domestically and internationally and global justice (Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; p.463). Yet, the centre-right government frames it differently adding entrepreneurial elements and pro-market, and economy provisions pursuing a neoliberal agenda (Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; p.463). Bergman-Rosamond (2016) concludes that this neoliberal shift has created a preference for military internationalism in Sweden's security and foreign policy (Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; p.463).

However, and as a result, the political effects of changes of office, but also the morality and ethical elements are being tested by scholars. Moreover, the efficiency of the management and framework of development aid is being ruled by governments and organizations, and whether or not development aid bears any fruits. Interestingly, Jahn (2018) argues that the extension of liberal principles internationally, impairs liberalism domestically (Jahn, 2018; p.44). The problem lays in the overwhelmingly emphasis on liberal internationalism's successes, rather than its failures. Moreover, liberal internationalism has caused for an extensive expansion of fundamentalist capitalism establishing inequalities in itself (Jahn, 2018; p.58).

### 6.2.2. Law on Military Equipment Act

The Law on Military Equipment Act (1992:1300) was adopted in 1992, and came in to force in 1993 together with the Law on Military Equipment Ordinance. Both came into force, after Sweden's rapidly evolving arms industry Sweden was forced to open up its arms market to the international world, and not limit itself solely to domestic military demands. It needed more financial investments to maintain production capacity and improve arms technology, which could not be politically justified through public aid and the government's investments combined with the increased international demand for heavy arms, allowing foreign investments and ownership of Sweden's prominent arms factories (Bromley & Wezeman, 2013). To put in context, SAAB remains the dominant arms producer and exporter in Sweden's arms market and is for fifty percent owned by foreign companies and investors (Gerome, 2016). Today, the majority of Sweden's arms are exported owning a proximity of 1% of all exports hence shifting from domestic to international demands predominantly (Gerome, 2016). This opening to the international market, demanded new weapon export laws in place regulating the growing arms business for Sweden.

Therefore, the military equipment acts provisions are as follows. Overall, the military equipment act is concerned with provisions in export of technical assistance, the manufacturing of arms, controls, registrations and obligation to present information. Furthermore, the law applies to materials that the Swedish government considers military equipment and are designed for military use and partially technical assistance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1992b). If it does not conflict with Sweden's national and international laws and obligations, including Sweden's foreign policy, and if there are defense or security policy reasons, then permission can be granted. Without a granted permit, weapons may not be produced, sold and exported unless mentioned otherwise in the act. Those exemptions include to exporting to another state within the EEA, questions around transit, if the recipient is part of the armed forces or a government agency, if it is a request submitted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the EU, NATO, or other intergovernmental organizations. This also entails, if the exported weapons are necessary for missions and programs between states that are part of the European Economic Area (EEA). On the other hand, the guidelines surrounding exporting to states outside of the EEA are stricter in a way that the granted permits can be general, individual, or global, but when exporting to a state outside of the EEA general permits may not be used (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1992b).

Regulations surrounding the qualification of a permit, and the barriers are as follows. There are under no circumstances arms exports allowed without a license (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1992b; p.5). Revoking an export permit is a rare occurrence happening in court of law, and usually only occurs in exceptional cases such as the implementation of obligatory sanctions by international bodies and institutions such as the European Commission, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and United Nations (Ibid.; p.5) Moreover the export license will not be permitted and granted for arms export to states with international arms embargo. Apart from that, there do not exist other limitations or requirements of prohibited states as laid out in the Military Equipment Act. More importantly, obstacles for granting permits or arms exports more generally not exist when Sweden exports to Nordic States, or states that are part of the European Union, or the EEA specifically. The reason for this is, that Sweden has aligned its foreign and security policy with the EU in which all EU members have signed the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports (Ericsson, 2008; p.22). This Code of Conduct outlines prerequisites for its signatories to take into account the overall situation of the recipient country. This entails the stability in specific regions of the recipient, the possibility of armed conflicts, and the danger of jeopardizing the recipient's sustainable development through the

exported arms (Ibid). As a result, the ATT was established through the United Nations bringing these serious guidelines to the global level, encouraging all UN Member to sign the Treaty instead of remaining at the European level.

Furthermore, and more importantly, paragraph 7 refers to re-exportation clauses and end-user certificates. This is important to bear in mind, since it concerns the recipients to which this research will turn to later in the empirical section. In order to be able to export complete weapons, the End Use Certificate (EUC) and Declaration by End User (DEU) are required and must be signed by the government of the receiving state accepting that solely its national defence forces will use the purchased arms equipment, and re-exporting the purchased weaponry is prohibited without the consent of the Swedish Government. In more detail, the purchase and exports are accepted solely by government-authorized recipients such as defence industry companies, central government agencies, and governments.

In sum, due to Sweden's opening of its arms market, stricter permit and export laws were needed to regulate Sweden's arms sector accordingly. Arms production and export are under no circumstances allowed without a permit. Furthermore, arms manufacturing and export permits can be granted if it does not conflict with Sweden's foreign and security policies, if the recipient country does not hold an embargo, and if the recipient signs the End Use Certificate and Declaration by End User legally giving permission to its own national defence forces to use the imported weapons, and not re-export them without Sweden's permission. Permits can be revoked when disobeying these regulations. The addition to the Military Equipment Act, the Military Equipment Ordinance act will be explained next because it expands on the current outlined guidelines and regulations.

### 6.2.3 Law on Military Equipment Ordinance

With the first military law outlined, this part of the thesis will turn to the addition of the Military Equipment Ordinance (1992:1303) which adds additional regulations surrounding the arms export permits, the recipient, and allocates extra obligation for the ISP as well. This is important to bear in mind during the analysis and synthesis of the empirical results, since it will refer to the export regulations.

The adjustments, *inter alia*, for the arms export permit and relevant for this thesis research aim are as follows. Export licenses for military material shall only be permitted if the export is deemed essential to fulfil Sweden's defence regulations and requirements, aligns with security policy objectives, and does not contradict the goals and principles of Swedish foreign policy.



Again, to extra highlight, permits are not compulsory when military export has been exported from the Armed Forces of an EEA state. This entails that the law presumes that armed forces are a liable and credibly actor, who do not need granted permission. Furthermore, the criminal records, *inter alia*, are also reviewed when applying for license or permit to export, but also for the recipient to be legally allowed to import Sweden's produced weapons. Also, section 8 of the Ordinance obligate arms producers applying for export permits, that such an application must contain the justification for exporting, type of exported weapon, the recipient to who it will be imported to, the buyer, and also the specific end user to avoid illicit arms trade as much as possible, through such transparency and strict administration (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1992a). In addition, the Ordinance distinguishes military equipment into two categories: [1] Military Equipment for Combat Purposes (MEC), and [2] Other Military Equipment (OME). According to the Ordinance (1992:1303) weaponry categorized as MEC are meant for destruction purposes such as firing, munitions and sight equipment, whereas OME translate to specific components and parts of military equipment, that are not per definition destructive per se when used in conflicts (Ibid). Lastly, the ISP is obliged to check every three years that licenses and permits recipients comply with the regulations and criteria.

To summarize the most important findings, stricter administration regulations are in order implying that arms producers wishing to export arms must mention the type of weapon, justification for exporting, the recipient, the customer, and end user when applying for export grants. Furthermore, it could be said that the Armed Forces of a state that is part of the EEA, including official government bodies of EEA states enjoy flexible regulations and are not obliged to qualify for arms export and import permits. Lastly, the ISP must recheck all its granted permits on a 3-year term. With these guidelines in mind, the thesis will continue with the actual risk assessment operated by the ISP to adhere to the beforementioned guidelines of the Military Equipment Act, and the Military Equipment Ordinance, answering research objective 2 and 3.

### 6.3 Framework of risk assessment: Actors and guidelines

As already briefly addressed in the introduction of this chapter, but will be introduced here again for clarity purposes, the Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP) is the independent government agency overseeing arms control, export and permits. In addition, this part of the thesis will outline and explain the risk assessment of Sweden's arms export conducted with the ISP at heart. It will further outline other important actors in the risk assessment process, and address hurdles with the gender equality objectives of Sweden's FFP in mind. After concluding

this chapter, the reader will be able to have a significant picture of the Sweden's arms export including its regulating guidelines, and most important players. This will, in return, serve as a comparison mirroring Sweden's feminist foreign policy aims and guidelines with the outcome of the empirical data.

However, it must be said first that according to Gerome (2016) there is no access to ISP's risk assessment data of each submission they have reviewed and assessed (Gerome, 2016; p.11). This is because of the Freedom of the Press Act (1949:105), combined with The Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400), which allow limitation of published information under certain circumstances. Those circumstances are if it could jeopardize national security, protection of an individual, supervisory, control or inspection tasks conducted by a public authority, and Sweden's relation with civil society or other countries (Gerome, 2016; p.11). Hence this thesis will continue to refer to Gerome's (2016) research, and outline the most important actors in the risk assessment chain and describe their tasks as part of the risk assessment.

To commence, the important actors regulating Sweden's arms export are as follows. The majority of the assessed arms permit cases have been judged by the Inspectorate Strategic Products government agency (ISP) which has been assigned by the Swedish government for being responsible for granting export licensing permits, the implementation of arms export controls on military equipment, and dual-use items, which are weapons that can be used for both military reasons and civilian means such as hunting or shooting competitions (Ericsson, 2008; p.24). Moreover, it is also responsible for Hence, the ISP is at the heart of Sweden's arms export regulations. Moreover, the ISP operates independently and during their decision-making processes, the Swedish government is not allowed to intervene or influence the process strengthening impartial implementation of Swedish laws, but the Swedish government remains the right to gain insights in all stages of ISP's assessments (Gerome, 2016).

Furthermore, the ISP works closely together with Swedish Customs and the Swedish Policy building strong collaborations, since the former are legally responsible for civilian ammunition and firearms transfers authorizations (Ibid.). Moreover, and more importantly, the ISP works closely together with the parliamentary advisory body the Swedish Export Control Council (ECC) to request for non-binding advice based on request from new possible arms recipients, export permits. For instance, if there is a case involving a non-democratic country, then according to ISP's Director General Ahlstrom in an interview with Gerome (2016) then such a request would be sent to the ECC for deliberation and consideration. The ECC on the other

hand, contains of members of parliament appointed by the government. It must be said that while writing this thesis, there are currently no gender experts present in the body, nor is the Swedish Minister of Gender Equality legally obligated to participate in the assessments. Both the ISP, and ECC can formally ask for advice, but are not obligated to do so. This is extra highlighted, because it brings the gender lenses to the risk assessments, that Sweden so desperately wishes.

In sum, Sweden's risk assessment is not made public due to national security concerns. Nonetheless, this chapter has outlined the most important laws and actors involved in Sweden's arms export with the ISP at heart in collaboration with Sweden's parliamentary body the ECC. However, despite Sweden's FFP regulations in which encourages the ISP to incorporate gender-sensitive lenses during its risk assessments respecting the ATT article 7.4 of the risk of illicit trade, and the risk of exported weapons being used in conflict and in violent acts against women, the results have shown that the democratic status or situation is accurately outlined, nor the an outline of how such a gender-sensitive perspective would further look like during risk assessments. Therefore, with this in mind, the next chapter will outline Sweden's arms export recipients gather from SIPRI Arms Trade Database between 2014 and 2022 to analyse whether Sweden's arms export has been aligned with its feminist foreign policy guidelines, despite the vague and unpublished risk assessment regulations and laws

## Chapter 7 Case Study Findings: Description, Analysis, Synthesis

With having the legal basis outlined, described and discussed, this empirical chapter of the research will encompass objective 3 and 4, and will be mentioned down below to refresh the mind:

3. *Evaluate critically* the risk assessment relevant to supporting gender-sensitive lenses to the export of weapons from Sweden
4. *Explore* data relevant to the democratic status of states, gender equality, and violence against women and girls related to the export of arms, including drivers and barriers to its implementation of the arms regulations and risk assessment.

With that in mind, this chapter will outline with outlining and describing the findings of this thesis. Part of the findings will entail the quantitative data retrieved from SIPRI of the financial spending of the top ten states importing weaponry from Sweden between 2014 and 2022. In that same time period, data will be retrieved from Economist Intelligence Unit regarding the democratic status, and World Economic Forum for the gender equality index in that particular

order. In subsection 4 it will analyse and provide case study, experimentally research, purposive sampling, and quota sampling. Hence, the write up has been outlined and explained before this chapter, the main focus will be on the quantitative data, analysis and synthesis. In the analysis, interceptions of descriptions will follow in between subsections as the results accumulate. In the end the results of the empirical case study will be compared against the GBV-feminist framework and literature review.

**7.1 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute**

To commence with the empirical data gathering, this first subsection will describe and analyse the findings of the quantitative data research based on the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Underneath is an overview of 9 Tables arranged in chronological order ranging from Sweden’s top ten largest recipients of arms export 2014 until 2022. It has done so according to the described research methods through SIPRI’s arms trade database filtering the arms export data coming from ‘Sweden’ filtering to all exporting counties in that same year. Also, for clarification purposes, the term ‘unknown recipients’ are the collective term for the weapons of which SIPRI was unable to locate them.

**Table 1 Sweden’s TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2014**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2014</i>
1	Saudi Arabia	160
2	UAE	58
3	South Korea	29
4	Canada	20
5	US	13
6	Australia	8
7	Finland	8
8	Thailand	8
9	Unknown recipients	8
10	Germany	7
<i>TOTAL</i>		319

*\*Statistical data, also referred to Trend-indicator values*  
*Note. The data was retrieved from SIPRI Arms Transfers Database*  
*Note. Due to the rounding up of numbers the data can deviate slightly*  
*Note. The numbers are indicated in millions in Euro*

**Table 2 Sweden’s TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2015**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2015</i>
1	UAE	66
2	Norway	17
3	US	15
4	Canada	15

5	Thailand	13
6	Finland	10
7	Australia	8
8	Japan	8
9	South Korea	8
10	Germany	7
<i>TOTAL</i>		167

**Table 3 Sweden's TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2016**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2016</i>
1	Algeria	103
2	Germany	29
3	Canada	20
4	US	20
5	Norway	14
6	Thailand	13
7	Hungary	11
8	UAE	11
9	Japan	8
10	Pakistan	8
11	Unknown recipients	8
<i>TOTAL</i>		245

**Table 4 Sweden's TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2017**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2017</i>
1	UK	15
2	US	15
3	UAE	10
4	Japan	8
5	Pakistan	4
6	Poland	4
7	Thailand	4
8	Mexico	3
9	Indonesia	2
10	Latvia	2
<i>TOTAL</i>		67

**Table 5 Sweden's TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2018**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2018</i>
1	US	43
2	Thailand	25
3	Pakistan	16
4	UK	15
5	Norway	14
6	Switzerland	10
7	Japan	8
8	Canada	5
9	Finland	5
10	Poland	4
<i>TOTAL</i>		145

**Table 6 Sweden's TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2019**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2019</i>
1	Pakistan	80
2	US	77
3	Unknown recipients	15
4	Switzerland	10
5	Austria	8
6	Japan	8
7	Denmark	6
8	Singapore	5
9	Poland	4
10	Brazil	2
<i>TOTAL</i>		215

**Table 7 Sweden's TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2020**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2020</i>
1	Pakistan	80
2	UAE	80
3	US	54
4	Brasil	33
5	Switzerland	10
6	Denmark	6
7	Malaysia	5
8	Czechia	3
9	Ireland	3
10	Mexico	3
11	Poland	3
<i>TOTAL</i>		280

**Table 8 Sweden's TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2021**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2021</i>
1	Brasil	127
2	Pakistan	80
3	US	63
4	UAE	40
5	Switzerland	10
6	Czechia	3
7	Denmark	3
8	Mexico	3
9	Poland	3
10	Canada	1
<i>TOTAL</i>		333

**Table 9 Sweden's TIV\* of top ten largest recipients of arms export 2022**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Year 2022</i>
1	US	23
2	Germany	18
3	Philippines	15
4	Indonesia	5
5	Denmark	4
6	Ukraine	2
7	Latvia	1
<i>TOTAL</i>		68

**Table 10 Sweden's TIV\* total recipients overview 2014-2022**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	United States	323
2	Pakistan	268
3	UAE	265
4	Brazil	162
5	Saudi Arabia	160
6	Algeria	103
7	Thailand	63
8	Canada	61
9	Germany	61
10	Norway	45
11	Japan	40
12	Switzerland	40
13	South Korea	37
14	Unknown recipients	31
15	United Kingdom	30
16	Finland	23
17	Denmark	19
18	Poland	18

19	Australia	16
20	Hungary	11
21	Mexico	9
22	Austria	8
23	Indonesia	7
24	Czechia	6
25	Malaysia	5
26	Singapore	5
27	Ireland	3
28	Latvia	3
29	Ukraine	2

Despite the United States scoring the highest, it is succeeded by Pakistan, the United Emirate Arabs, Brazil, Saudia Arabia, Algeria, and Thailand. Based on Sweden’s disarmament guidelines for stricter military export controls that also incorporate the democratic status of the recipient country, one would not expect this outcome, but rather one with, for instance, western countries dominating the top list. However, if Yodanis (2004) methodology would be used for this outcome, one would expect the non-western countries scoring high, because her method explains the correlation between women’s low levels of social and economic status and high levels of women’s violence. Indeed, forming such a direct link between the outcomes above in relation with high levels of gender-based violence is poorly analysed and solely rests on assumptions. However, since feminist research distinguishes itself in the multi-level approach and through the incorporation of the subjective stances of the researcher, this thesis will, therefore, choose Pakistan as an experimental case study for analysis, since Pakistan scores the highest within the assumption of non-democratic countries. For this reason, the next sub sections will turn to Pakistan zooming in on their gender gap indexes, and democratic statuses in an attempt to provide evidence for answering the main question whether or not Sweden aligns with its disarmament and feminist foreign policy guidelines.

## 7.2 Economist Intelligence Unit

With Pakistan in mind, and as explained in the research methods chapter, this part of the findings will provide an overview of Pakistan’s democratic status during the implementation of Sweden’s Feminist Foreign Policy between 2014-2022. It will do so based on the research methods of quantitative data analysis through

Before outlining Pakistan’s democracy index scores, and gender equality gaps, it must be said first that the democracy index numbers are calculates based on 5 control variables: [1] civil liberties, [2] electoral process and pluralism, [3] political culture, [4] functioning of the government, [5] political participation. The indexes below should be read on a scale from 1-10



based on an average score of the 5 control variables. To put into context, and according to the Economist Intelligence Unit the Democracy Index:

- 1. Full democracies score between 8-10
- 2. Flawed democracies score between 6 to 7.9
- 3. Hybrid regimes score between 4 to 5.9
- 4 Authoritarian regimes score below 4

(Economist Intelligence Unit, 2014; p.38)

**Table 11 Pakistan democracy index 2014-2022**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<i>Rank</i>	108	112	111	110	112	108	105	104	102
<i>Democracy Index</i>	4.64	4.40	4.33	4.26	4.17	4.25	4.31	4.31	4.13

*Source: Economist Intelligence Unit annual Democracy Index reports from 2014 to 2022*

Based on the findings in Table 11 with the measuring scale in mind, Pakistan scores “hybrid regime” consistently during Sweden’s FFP implementation between 2014 and 2022. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, hybrid regimes translate to states where elections have substantial irregularities which often jeopardize the free and fair elements. Moreover, pressure from the government on political parties and candidates of the opposition may be common. Also, there is usually pressure on or harassment of journalists, and the judiciary is not independent. Compared to flawed democracies, hybrid regimes’ serious frailty are more prevalent, including political participation, political culture, and the overall functioning of government. Also, civil society is weak, but the rule of law tends to be weak unlike corruption that tends to be ubiquitous (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2014; p.38).

Democratic states on the other hand, have according to the EIU, satisfactory and independent operating government institutions, political freedoms and civil liberties are admired and respected, the judiciary is independent, and overall handles the occasional challenges occurring with the functioning of the democracy (Ibid; p.38). Despite the lack of an officially recognized democratic status measuring mechanism attached to Sweden’s stricter controls of military

equipment export, it could be argued based on the findings and EIU’s definition of hybrid regime, that Pakistan does not constitute to a democratic state.

Furthermore, the next Table clarifies Pakistan’s position on the global gender gap scale between 2014-2022 gathered from the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Global Gender Gap Reports from 2014 until 2022. To elucidate, Pakistan’s score below should be read on a scale from 1-167, because WEF analysed the gender gap of 167 states. The scores are based on an examination between women and men based on four controlling variables/subindexes: political empowerment, survival and health, educational attainment, and economic opportunity and participation (World Economic Forum, 2014; p.5). These subindexes refer to, *inter alia*, percentages of women’s occupations, access to education and sex and reproductive rights and health, political occupation on decision-making levels (Ibid., p.5). Moreover, the gender gap is calculated in a way to analyse a country’s access to opportunities and resources, instead of the available levels of opportunities and resources of that particular country (Ibid., p.5) Through this way, a country’s level of development can be distinguished and measured independently from their gender gap (Ibid., p.3). In other words, the bigger the gender gap, the lower the proximity of gender equality.

**Table 12 Pakistan Global Gender Gap Index 2014-2022**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Gender Gap Index Rank out of 167 states</i>
2014	141
2015	144
2016	143
2017	141
2018	148
2019	-
2020	151
2021	153
2022	145

As seen above, it should be noted first that there was no Global Gender Gap report available from the year 2019. Nevertheless, according to Table 12 Pakistan scores between 141-153 positioning itself in the lower part of the ranking which indicate a closeness to a high score of gender inequality.

Furthermore, if we were to further zoom in on Pakistan, examining the crux in Sweden’s arms export control, a short background of Pakistan will be outlined to put the quantitative data into context. This is necessary to test Sweden’s export control and risk assessment framework which will be used in the analysis. It will particularly reflect on export framework stipulating the country’s overall situation with regards to the possibility of internal conflicts, and it is in lign with its feminist foreign policy prioritizing the democratic status of the recipient, gender-sensitive lenses during ISP’s export control, and more importantly, it reflects the ATT’s 7.4 article of the risk of exported arms being used in conflict, and in matters of gender-based violence.

<i>License</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
<i>Licenses denied</i>		3	-	-		2	1	3	-
<i>Export license</i>	1	4	-	-	3	-	3	3	-
<i>Civilian end- use license</i>	15	3	-	-	21	-	-		-

Before analysing the data is must be mentioned first that, in 2016 no specific data was found on Pakistan with regards to licenses. However, the 2016 communications report does mention that it had received 350 denial notifications of which Pakistan was one of them. Moreover, the report notes that it has exported spare parts, missiles, and training equipment to Pakistan, but exact numbers are not mentioned (Swedish Government, 2017b) p.57). In 2017, the ISP approved 7 licenses to Estonia, Germany, Norway, and Pakistan but did not indicate the exact amount for Pakistan. Also, in 2019 Pakistan did not receive any new licenses, but was, again among the top of recipients of Swedish arms equipment with a particular interest in airborne radar equipment which correlates with the findings of Table 6. Also, please not that while writing this thesis, the “*Strategic Export Controls in 2022 – Military Equipment and Dual-Use Items*” has not been published yet, hence there is no specific license data currently available. For all of these reasons the data is incomplete and no firm statements or confirmations can be made. However, they do give interesting findings portraying Pakistan’s granted and denied licenses and strengthening research objective 4.

Nevertheless, with regards to Sweden's Military Equipments Act (1992:1300) and, Military Ordinance Act (1992:1303), combined with the ATT all setting out the risk assessment for the ISP to grant permission, it could be said that despite Pakistan scoring as "hybrid regimes" low on the Democracy Index, and scoring high on the Gender Gap Index, and after having received several denial requests, there were still 14 export licenses allocated, and 39 civilian end use licenses allocated to Pakistan. If Sweden claims to have such an innovative feminist foreign policy wishing to incorporate gender-sensitive lenses attempting to make arms export controls more strict, bearing in mind the causes of exported weapons for women, one would ask as a logical cause, why has Pakistan still received weapons and licenses? Not just weapons and licenses, Pakistan has been the largest donor to Sweden's arms industry, having contributed the largest amount of payments. However, on the other hand and to support the outcome of the EIU Pakistan has been labelled as a "hybrid regime", hence it does not specifically label it as a non-democratic country despite Pakistan's poor scores. In practice, and as explained prior it would still clash with Sweden's feminist foreign policy guidelines and gender equality goals, but legally it could be argued that hybrid regimes are not fully non-democratic states, and hence Sweden is, in a way, not entirely conflicting with the incorporation of the democratic status. Hence, Sweden's feminist foreign policy does not align with its arms sector guidelines, based on a single case study on Pakistan.

However, if we were to put these data into context, the following logical question would follow: "What were the consequences of Pakistan's arms import to its violence against women rates?"

### 7.3 Women Peace and Security Index

To put all of the above data into context, and according to the Georgetown Institute for Women Peace and Security Index (2022) 32% of women have experienced violence in Pakistan compared to the Women Peace and Security ranking Pakistan among one of the "worst" performers on the WPS index (Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, 2022; p.2). Their justification for this is, that there are discriminatory norms in place, biases, and there is a lack in legislation that counteracts discrimination (Ibid.;p.2). Special attention has been given to the Balochistan region, stating that the region has the highest amount of conflicts, military missions, and political violence related incidents (Ibid.;p67). As a result, the region has a poverty rate of 60%. Furthermore, women's employment rates faltered at a mere 10% in the Balochistan region. Also, access to education was extremely low in the region as well, stating that 10% or less of women had completed high school which constitutes to all provinces in Pakistan (Ibid.; p.67). Women's political representation is also very low, scoring between 17

and 20% on average across all regions. However, assumptions can be made based on this findings, justifying that former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf implemented a regulation that obligates a 17% quota for women in both provincial and national assemblies (Ibid.; p.67). Furthermore, intimate partner violence and organized violence are types of violence are among the most common violence against women. In Pakistan, 35% of women had experienced intimate parent violence in 2021. The justification for this is, is that intimate partner violence increased during the pandemic since women were forced by their husbands to stay at home (Ibid.; p.69). To make matters worse, human rights groups have reported that female honour killings were estimated to have taken place more than 1,000 times last year (Ibid.; p.69). Lastly, and to worsen the description of the situation of women even more, in special regions of Pakistan, which are not considered to be provinces, by the time girls reach the age of 15, 56% of them has experienced gender-based and physical violence, added with adult women accounting for more than 95% of them being convinced that physical abusive husbands are justified and punishments after disobeying or during disagreements are acceptable (Ibid.; p.69).

In sum, the Balochistan region would be ranked among the lowest scoring regions worldwide. In other words, and based on the found data above, it could be argued that being a woman in Pakistan, particularly in the Balochistan region, is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a woman. The next subsection of this thesis will provide a synthesis of the findings overall, referring to Yodanis (2004) gender-based violence feminist framework, and Bromley and Wezeman (2013) arguments of Sweden's strategic norm entrepreneur political façade combined with Zedner's (2006) note of protecting liberal market profits at the cost of ethical principles. This will form the theoretical framework foundation of the discussion, but will incorporate the findings of the result section.

#### 7.4 Synthesis of the Findings compared to Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter will first analyse the findings through Yodanis' (2004) theoretical framework based on the findings of the empirical section.

*Is Sweden's arms sector legally and in practice aligned with its feminist foreign policy and accordingly to gender-sensitive lenses?*

With having outlined the legal framework of Sweden's export industry including its grant permission, and export risk assessment, this part of the thesis will look through the results

through gender-based feminist lenses arguing if it correlates with the lenses highlighting Sweden's feminist foreign policy goals.

To remind the reader, Sweden wishes to achieve gender equality through the full enjoyment of human rights for women and men across the world by eradicating gender-based violence and poverty. This is their overall goal. As for the legal framework for the arms export, it referred to stricter military equipment controls justifying it through the incorporation of gender-sensitive lenses while conducting the inspections, and risk assessments. This correlates with the EU Code of Conduct, and the Arms Trade Treaty with a specific focus on the ATT 7.4 article stating that all signatory states should take into account the risk of illicit trade and proliferation, including the risk of those exported weapons ending into the wrong hands and being used in conflict and in matters related to gender-based violence concerning women and girls.

What stands out first, according to gender-based violence feminist lenses, is that Sweden has come up with a poor definition of "democratic status" or "the situation in the country". As argued by Yodanis (2004) low levels of women's economic and social status equals high levels of physical and sexual violence. With this in mind, added with Sweden's gender equality goal one could argue that such vague terms need to be sharpened. Theoretically, democratic status, or the definition of conflict, or conflict-affected areas can mean anything. Attempts for clarifications could be, for instance, the Democratic Index issued by the Economist Intelligence Unit that this thesis has used for a measuring mechanism concerned with the democratic status of a country. Or official records and democratic statistics and definitions of the United Nations can be called upon since Sweden's feminist foreign policy refers to the United Nations policy in their guidelines, such as the Arms Trade Treaty. A particular layer in the risk assessment of the ISP could be added as well, that solely examines the risk of conflicts in a particular country and weighing the results against the democratic status.

Furthermore, Sweden inadequately described stricter arms control inspections with regards to gender-based violence. It does, however, argue that freedom from violence is an imperative and a barricade to gender equality, and, more importantly, it acknowledges the direct link between women's and girls' violence to "unchecked division of weapons". In other words, gender violence hampers gender equality. However, if Sweden acknowledges this direct link, why does it still export weapons to non-democratic states? Also, what does such a gender equality lens entail? Referring to the described findings on the Military Equipment Act, Military Equipment Ordinance, and the Arms Trade Treaty article 7.4 Sweden strives to encourage the ISP to conduct stricter arms permit and licenses assessments as their arms export industry's

contribution to the decrease in their exported arms being used in gender-based violence matters and in conflicts. However, the ISP does not have gender experts currently positioned in their staff, nor does the Export Control Council. Indeed, the thesis did mention that the Gender Equality Minister can be asked for advice during the assessments, as a way to incorporate gender-sensitive lenses, but such a collaboration is voluntarily and not legally binding or obligated during assessments which could, on the other hand, strengthen gender-sensitive lenses in Sweden's arms export controls.

Moreover, the outlined stricter export guidelines surrounding licenses and permits, such as criminal background checks of the recipient, enforcing to sign the End Use Certificate and Declaration by End User documents, ensuring that the recipient shall not re-export Sweden's imported arms can provide a firm and solid risk assessment since all weapons need to be strictly reported to the ISP, and also the ISP re-evaluates its granted licenses every three years. However, as clarified in the findings, countries from the EU, and the EEA do not seem to be harmed by these regulations since they do not apply to them because of the EU guidelines that align with Sweden's foreign and security policies, and because of the free flow of goods within the European Union. However, in practice this would mean that such exports between Sweden and its fellow EU member states could entail zero to few arms export inspections. If that were the case, then the possibility of illicit trade can be strengthened in practice as well despite legal prohibitions in theory.

Sweden is masquerading its arms production through its norm entrepreneur and frontrunner in social policies. Possible clarifications could be its "neutrality" and "solidarity" norm entrepreneur roles referring to Bormley and Wezeman (2013), Zedner (2006), and Larsson (2020). Arguing that Sweden upholds a political façade on the one hand, through its well-established arms industry, and well-respected role as arms producer and exporter, while filling its own pockets with revenues discarding ethical principles on the other hand masquerading it, perhaps, through the liberal principles of peace highlighting the essence of weaponry in conflict-affected regions to uphold or enforce liberal peace. (Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; Aigus, 2006; Vähämäki, 2017; Schouenborg, 2012). Which, in essence, could be morally acceptable, and justified particularly since Sweden is also a well-respected development aid donor, but on the other hand ethically unjustified since there is still the risk of those weapons ending up in the wrong hands. Also, shortly highlighting the liberal peace notion, it could be argued as well that Sweden is masquerading around, not only its norm entrepreneur roles, but also behind national and foreign security purposes. As mentioned before, the research was unable to conduct proper

and viable research based on the risk assessments, since not all information was made public condoning it under the Freedom of the Press Act (1949:105), and the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400). However, despite this barrier, it could be said as well based on the risk assessments and explained military arms export regulations that it looks like that Sweden is masquerading not just around its norm entrepreneur role, but also around national security. A logical reasoning from this point would be, to what extent should national security flow combined with the notion of liberal peace, in relation to feminist ethical principles. Right now, based on the findings, Sweden can get away with it.

#### 7.4.1. Testing the quantitative data through gender-based feminist lenses

As derived from the quantitative research from SIPRI, overviews of the top ten largest recipients of Swedish exports were clarified between 2014-2022 ending with an overview of all countries that have received Swedish arms exports. Using Yodanis' (2004) typology of looking on a societal- level high rates of gender-based violence constitute to low levels of women's economic and societal position, and low rates of gender-based violence are related to women's high economic and social position. With this in mind, and for starters, what stands out is that, Pakistan was the largest non-democratic recipient of Swedish arms export as clarified in table 10. Through gender-based feminist lenses of Yodanis (2004) this could entail that the export of such weapons, can, constitute to women's and girls' violence, hence justifying that Sweden is not fully aligned with its feminist foreign policy goals of incorporating gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive lenses at all levels of its arms export. If it would, why would Pakistan be at the top of the list. Since this was already previously discussed it will build further on Yodanis' (2004) framework.

Furthermore, the quantitative data retrieved from the Economic Intelligence Unit strengthen the argument that Sweden is not aligned with its feminist foreign policy clarifying the structural low score on the Democracy Index scoring between 4.64 and 4.13 on a scale from 1 to 10 which translates to Pakistan being a hybrid democracy with irregular and partially unfair elections and judiciary. Also civil society tends to be weak which means that in the case of women, they are barely able to seek help. With that in mind and coming back to Yodanis' (2004) fear variable of women, since higher levels of fear have a direct impact on women's and girls' violence since they are too scared to seek help has been confirmed by the above mentioned findings. Moreover, and to refresh the mind, the democracy index was calculated based on those 5 variables: [1] electoral process and pluralism, [2] civil liberties, [3] functioning of the government, [4] political culture, and [5] political participation. Hence such a low democratic score, can further



fuel the fair factor of women, since one would assume a low score on all of those controlling variables. Hence, and for example, the low score in civil liberties and insufficient working of the government strengthens women's fear and violence through a way that human rights and liberties are not respected, and the government not tries its best to represent them.

Furthermore, the quantitative data retrieved from the World Economic Forum based on the global gender gap in Pakistan shows that again Sweden's goals not align with the outcome in its receiving countries of export, or countries affected by their feminist foreign policy. Furthermore, as shown from the quantitative data Pakistan scores low and is located at the lower part of the list scoring during 2014 and 2022, between 141-153 out of 167 examined states. Also, and to bear in mind, these scores were based on the controlling variables of political empowerment, survival and health, educational attainment, and economic opportunity and participation (World Economic Forum, 2014; p.5). Again using Yodanis' (2004) framework one could say that the high score in gender equality gap directly constitutes to women's violence. Referring to the economic status, limited educational access, low economic opportunities and low levels of women's occupation, low political representation and occupation, and particularly low levels of survival and health and reproductive sex and health rights all constitute to the aggravation of women's equality, hence the big gender gap. This stands in direct contrast with women's violence because the beforementioned low variables all constitute to aggravation in women's fear.

Furthermore, and even more shockingly. When the above findings were put into context adding data from the WPS, and the UNFPA that is when matters became crystal clear. The beforementioned quantitative data clarified and justified that Sweden is not entirely aligned with its main feminist foreign policy objectives, clarifying this through the breach of the ISP in its risk assessment, ignoring gender equality perspectives, democratic status. However, besides the acknowledgements of those breaches, Sweden is exporting weapons to Pakistan, while Pakistan's Balochistan has been, argued by this author, to be one of the most dangerous and disrespectful places to be a woman. Hence, one of Sweden's largest arms importers is not just any "hybrid regime", but a hybrid regime with a large gender gap and very high rates of gender violence.

To reflect, and based on Yodanis' (2004) economic and social status variables, the economic situation in the Pakistani Balochi region can be considered very low, since only 10% of the women are employed in the region, and the overall poverty rate in the region was calculated at 60%. On top of that, only 10% or less of women had completed high school which constitutes

to all provinces in Pakistan (Ibid. p.67). On top of that, the gender-based violence data are beyond terrific. Approximately 35% of women had experienced partner violence, in 2021, and 56% of girls until the age of 15 have experienced physical violence. Besides, these hurtful outcomes, what really stands out is that 95% of women in Pakistan believe that physical violence in the form of punishments is justified since women need to obey men. These extreme forms of violence, in return, constitute or explain the quantitative findings of the EIU and WEF. If, this thesis were to reflect on Acheson's (2020) comment of the majority of the weapons worldwide are owned by men, and assuming that the majority of the weapons are in the hands of men in Pakistan as well, then women in Pakistan have a very long road ahead for gender equality, hence gender justice, since there is a direct link between arms exports and gender-based violence.

However, it must be mentioned as well, that this thesis does not wish to attempt to argue that Sweden's exported weapons landed in the conflict area of Balochi in men's hands that have constituted to high levels of women's fear, high levels of gender-based violence, and low levels in women's economic and social status. However, in theory, and reasoning on all of the findings, Sweden does allow arms exports to government officials, such as government representatives, bodies, and agencies, and a government's armed forces. However, Sweden's exported weapons can, in theory, by the recipient government who could deploy such weapons against its own citizens in internal conflicts. In addition, and referring to the liberal peace notion, Sweden's weapons can also end up in such conflicts through different states deploying external peace missions, or even in conflicts. Hence, in theory, because there is no such evidence this thesis has presented to support this, but the theory does allow arguments in favour of Sweden's arms ending up in conflicts and harming women and girls through violence, instead of protection.

To recommend, and to adhere to research objective 5, it will finish the findings chapter with a couple of recommendations. To further build on the reasoning in the previous paragraph serving as a starting point for the need for further empirical research combining qualitative data with quantitative methods according to feminist lenses. Moreover, it refers to notes from Dekel et al., (2018) recommending intersectional approaches to with the goal of dismantling the power system through which gender-based violence can results (Dekel et al., 2018). Moreover and building further on their argument, cultural, discourse should most definitely be taken into account as well, particularly as clarified through Balochistan linking to the honour killings as an example, including views of both the perpetrator and the victims to truly dismantle the power

dynamics in gender inequality. This entails a radical approach to foreign policy and security studies, since it counterargues liberal policies guided by revenues and profit. Moreover, this thesis recommends further research in the feminist foreign policy discipline with the interplay of its affected policy areas, such as the arms export concerning Sweden.

Lastly, a final comment to adhere to Hesse-Biber's notion of feminist research incorporating the personal opinion of the researcher. I am particularly moved by the results from Pakistan considering it to be one of the worst places to be a women barely enjoying civil, political and social rights and being exposed to such high rates of violence at such a young age. For future feminist researchers reading this, I hope your research will be heard by governments in order to challenge the liberal quest over morality and ethical principles. Only then feminist foreign policy can be truly feminist.

## 8. Conclusion

This thesis has examined the interplay between Sweden's feminist foreign policy and its arms exports between its implementation in 2014 until its dismantling in 2022. It has done so through the overall aim of this research which was to advance an understanding of the issues surrounding the implementation of feminist foreign policy to Sweden's arms sector. The research objectives were, stated as follows:

1. *Outline* the objectives driving feminist foreign policy, plus the arms sector and the hurdles to the successful delivery of Sweden's feminist foreign policy disarmament guidelines
2. *Determine* the analytical framework of gender-based violence feminism, including its approaches and barriers
3. *Evaluate critically* the risk assessment relevant to supporting gender-sensitive lenses to the export of weapons from Sweden
4. *Explore* data relevant to the democratic status of states, gender equality, and violence against women and girls related to the export of arms, including drivers and barriers to its implementation of the arms regulations and risk assessment.
5. *Formulate* recommendations on feminist foreign policy implementation issues

This concluding chapter will refer to the above mentioned research objectives, present a summary of the findings, to continue with concluding statements based on each individual research objective. Consequently, and more importantly, it will highlight the relevance and

significance of this research to feminist foreign policy theory. Furthermore, the thesis will end with some concluding marks for further research.

Constituting to research objective 1, the thesis has first outlined, discussed, and reviewed feminist foreign policy and feminist in international relations serving as a background and clarification of gender and feminist in international relations, to continue with the drivers of feminist foreign policy. Main drivers of feminist foreign policy are the incorporation of gender-sensitive lenses to all policy areas, and level in society wishing to achieve gender equality. This thesis notes that the incorporation of intersectionality, reflexivity, and interdisciplinary approaches are vital in understanding the power dynamics that constitute to gender, and global politics since there is a direct link between the two. In doing so, the thesis has identified the ethical hurdles of the feminist nature underlining it with the battle between feminist principles ethical and moral principles on one hand, but with the current masculine political culture on the other hand counteracting the former. Based on this masculinity, the thesis has outlined arms export with regards to feminist foreign policy highlighting the contradiction between the guidance of Sweden's "neutrality" and "solidarity" nature translated to being led by market-oriented profits, instead of feminist principles which serve as the hurdles.

Research objective 2, has been outlined as such determining gender-based violence feminist framework through Yodanis' (2004) gender-based violence feminist theory. It has outlined her theory of high levels of women's economic and social status, constitute to lower levels of gender-based violence, whereas low economic and social status of women constitute to higher levels of gender-based violence. She argues that the fear factor plays a crucial role in this theory, since high levels of fear constitute to higher levels of gender-based violence. The framework in analyzing Sweden's arms export since the literature review has confirmed a direct link between arms export and gender-based violence, due to the risk of those weapons ending in the wrong hands (Sutton, 2020; Acheson; 2020; Yodanis, 2004; Dekel et al., 2018; Russo & Pirlott, 2006). Challenges for this theory were discussed in a way that women is a unitary term, acknowledging that women with different backgrounds have different experiences. Also, the hurdle in gender gap data was explained that could potentially hamper the theory.

With that in mind, the research continued with research objective 3, to critically evaluate the risk assessment outlined in the findings through gender-sensitive lenses to Sweden's arms exports. It did so by first outlining Sweden's feminist foreign policy guidelines concerned with disarmament and nonproliferation emphasizing the need for stricter military equipment export inspections, obeying the Arms Trade Treaty article 7.4 that encourages signatories to take the

risk of illicit arms trade and proliferation into account, as well as gender-based violence for which those exported weapons can be used for. With that in mind, it outlined Sweden's risk assessment describing the role of the Inspectorate of Strategic Products in collaboration with the Export Control Council. Confirming that there are no democratic democracy mechanism set in place, nor is there a justification available to the meaning of incorporating gender-sensitive lenses. Besides, and forming a reference to the fourth objective, Sweden continued to export weapons to non-democratic states despite these principles and risk assessments were set into place.

That brings this concluding chapter to the fourth objective, which was exploring data of the democratic status, gender equality and violence against women rates with regards to Sweden's arms export guidelines and risk assessments. For the democratic status, this theses gathered quantitative data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute constituting to an overview of Sweden's top ten largest arms recipients based on their annual expenditures. As a result, Pakistan scored the highest numbers among the groups of non-democratic states. This stands in stark contrast to Sweden's strict military arms controls, and democratic status measurement. Building on this finding the thesis continued with gathering quantitative data from the Economist Intelligence Unit exploring democratic status data that would support the research question. With a conclusion that Pakistan scored among the lower countries labeling a as hybrid regime. In light of this the research continued to explore data based on gender equality and violence and distinguished between the quantitative data gathered from the World Economic Forum that has shown that, again, Pakistan scored among on of the lowest. Building on this train of thought and reasoning and to adhere to Yodanis' (2004) theory, gender-based violence data was retrieved from the United Nations Population Fund putting all of the above mentioned data into context. This showed a shocking image of high rates of women's and girls' violence, and very low levels of women's occupations, political representation, and civil liberties and rights.

Lastly, and to conclude the summary of the findings, forming recommendations for feminist forming policy is a daunting task since its very nature was contested. However, the research recommended future feminist foreign policy empirical research with regards to the combination of a feminist methodology, and methods and interdisciplinary, and intersectional approaches to enable to dismantle the underlying power dynamics of gender which are at the heart of feminist foreign policy. Therefore, and to put it into a larger context. In October of 2020 the Social Green Left government had been replaced by a liberal-center right government which has expressed

that it wants to restrain from its feminist foreign policy, possibly creating new challenges for the existence of its feminist foreign policy, and its arms and development aid industries. This is confirmed by Rest (2023) and notes that Sweden's FFP abruptly ended in October 2022 with the entry of the new liberal-conservative foreign minister Tobias Billstrom (Rest, 2023). This would be worth studying further with reference to this thesis with possible consequences to feminist foreign policy and arms exports with a new conservative liberal government in place.

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