

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2711866 DCU Charles 67499995
Dissertation Title	Unmasking the Gendered Power Play in Feminist Foreign Policy - Why It Is Breaking Boundaries, But Not Chains?

Word Count:		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark : C3 [12]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Very Good
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Satisfactory
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Good
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Satisfactory
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Good
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Satisfactory
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Good
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Good
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Good
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Good
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required
• <i>Appropriate word count</i>	Yes

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ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The thesis addresses a very important topic and collects a lot of relevant evidence. The choice of the case is also interesting and relevant. However, there are major shortcomings in terms of the actual execution of this analysis. First of all, it relies on poorly defined objectives at the very beginning. Before getting into the topic, the author should have better explained why studying this case is relevant (e.g. references should have immediately been made to the Arms Trade Treaty of which Sweden is a signatory, at least some details of the problematic implications of Sweden's arms exports to Pakistan should have been released with a stronger initial explanation of case selection, including an explanation of why only one case of Sweden's arms transfers was selected and how representative it is to make conclusions about Sweden's feminist policies, an immediate clarification of the selected timeframe of this analysis could be useful as well, etc.). Otherwise, the reader is left on its own collecting the bits and pieces of respective details and explanations across the whole text. Consequently, the structure of the thesis is sometimes confusing too and this is perhaps why the author feels the need to "refresh the mind" of the reader regularly and repeats the research question and steps several times across the text. Another shortcoming lies with the data and the lack of the author's original analysis. The empirical analysis relies primarily on statistics, showing, first, that Sweden exports arms to Pakistan and, second, that Pakistan has poor records in relation to gender equality. More specifics could have been explored through zooming in on the empirical front. The core of the theoretical framework could have focused more on the relationship between arms transfers and gender-based violence, including a more detailed elaboration from the legal perspective, as well as between this nexus and the notion of feminist foreign policy, i.e. bringing the key building blocks together and discussing their theoretical connection, rather than introducing them separately and starting from too far away with a general introduction to feminism. With the lack of a coherent theoretical framework, respective parts of the empirical analysis do not always hang together either (e.g. Chapter 6 details Sweden's feminist policy goals separately, then proceeds to discuss Sweden's arms exports surprisingly without foregrounding the Arms Trade Treaty which could help link these points together, and then proceeds to the mentioned statistics). There could have also been a more nuanced discussion about the relationship between gender inequality (which is a problem of many countries to different degrees) and gender-based violence, which are often used interchangeably by the author.

Reviewer 2

The dissertation aims at analysing Swedish feminist foreign policy in the arm sector. The main question is interesting and related to the program's themes. However, the subquestions are aims and not questions, and the development of the research design is somehow problematic. The theoretical framework does not present the student's formulation of the theoretical/analytical lenses adopted for the analysis, it rather presents part of the literature review finally connecting feminist theories with foreign policy and the arm sector (although in a rather confused way). The thesis is poorly written: there are several errors, typos, unfinished sentences, to the point that it is hard to read and it looks like it has not been checked by the author. The methodological section is also very weak. Many different aspects are mixed and the student states that they will use both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, while only the latter are applied. I also believe that feminist methodologies entail more than just looking in depth at a specific case study: what is the "radical and non-conventional nature" (p.32) of the data analysis provided?



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Overall, I think that the topic could have been developed better and research could have implied more reflections on the connections between arms export and gender violence, in order to achieve the initial aim of the project.