



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Madlene Karimi

Title: Women's role in Conflict Resolution: A comparative study of women's participation in conflict resolution in Kenya and Northern Uganda

Programme/year: Security Studies / 2024

Author of Evaluation (second reader): Jan Ludvik

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	7
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	15
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	23
<i>Total</i>		80	45
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	8
	Style	5	3
	Formal requirements	5	4
<i>Total</i>		20	15
TOTAL		100	60



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis addresses an important and relevant topic: the role of women in conflict resolution, focusing on Kenya and Northern Uganda. This topic is significant in the field of security studies and contributes to ongoing discussions about gender and conflict resolution. As the second reader, I recognize that Madlene faced significant obstacles during the writing process, and she should be commended for her perseverance in completing the thesis. Despite these challenges, she has achieved many learning objectives and demonstrates the ability to write a research thesis. However, there is considerable room for improvement.

- A major issue is the need for integration throughout the thesis. The individual chapters, sections, and even paragraphs often feel disconnected, as if ideas were written down as they came to mind without a clear, logical flow. This affects the overall coherence of the work. Transitions between chapters, particularly between the literature review, theoretical framework, and case studies, could be smoother to enhance readability and continuity.
- The research questions are clearly stated, but the justification for why these specific questions were chosen is weak. It is not fully explained why the selected case studies (Kenya and Northern Uganda) are the most relevant or how they uniquely contribute to answering the research questions. The primary justification provided is that one case is well-known while the other is not, which is insufficient. A stronger rationale would help provide a more solid foundation for the research.
- While the thesis engages with feminist literature, including postcolonial feminism and gender studies, it could benefit from a deeper engagement with key feminist texts, particularly those related to conflict resolution. Expanding on the theoretical foundation with more profound feminist works in peace studies would strengthen the argument. There may be gaps in the coverage of important feminist scholarship, particularly in conflict resolution, that should be addressed.
- The literature review presents a range of sources but lacks integration and synthesis. It tends to summarize the literature rather than critically engage with it, making it difficult to identify gaps in the existing research. Moreover, it is unclear how the thesis intends to address these gaps. The inclusion of three case studies within the literature review section seems out of place and disrupts the flow of the review. The



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literature review could be improved by more critically engaging with the sources and identifying the specific gaps that this thesis seeks to fill.

- The theoretical section does not provide a coherent theoretical framework. Instead, it reads more like an extension of the literature review, summarizing various theories and perspectives without clearly integrating them into a guiding framework for the thesis. This section should be revised to establish a clear theoretical foundation that directly informs the research and analysis.
- The methodology section provides an overview of the research design and methods but lacks sufficient detail on how these methods are applied within the research. Rather than merely describing the selected methods, the methodology should explain how they are used in the context of the specific case studies. This would provide clarity on the relevance and practical implementation of the methods used. Additionally, the lack of the actual content analysis in empirical sections, which was supposed to be a core method, is a significant omission that needs to be addressed.
- The comparison between Kenya and Northern Uganda is not as robust as it could be. More explicit comparative criteria are needed to guide the analysis and strengthen the overall argument. Without clear criteria, the comparison remains superficial and descriptive rather than analytical. The thesis would benefit from a more in-depth comparison that highlights the similarities and differences between the cases and draws meaningful conclusions from them.
- The empirical chapters are largely descriptive, as mentioned. There is limited analysis, and the lack of content analysis is a significant shortcoming. The thesis would be improved by moving beyond description and engaging in a deeper analysis of the data. This is particularly important given that content analysis was supposed to be a central method in the research but is currently absent.

Minor criteria:

- Parts of the thesis are difficult to read due to awkward phrasing and grammar issues, which hampers understanding. In some cases, the text is so unclear that it leads to empirical mistakes, such as the erroneous claim that "there were only interstate conflicts during the Cold War." These readability issues need to be addressed to improve the clarity and accuracy of the thesis.



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- Some sections of the thesis rely too heavily on single sources, which weakens the depth and breadth of the research. For example, the section on pages 26-29 uses only one source. Additionally, there are frequent references to “some scholars” without proper citations, which undermines the academic rigor of the work. A more diverse range of sources and proper citations throughout the thesis would strengthen its credibility.

Assessment of plagiarism:

Based on the anti-plagiarism software checks, it is formally confirmed that the submitted thesis is original and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not, in an ethically unacceptable manner, draw from the works of other authors.

Overall evaluation:

This thesis tackles a meaningful and relevant topic, reflecting the author's effort and perseverance. However, it falls short in critical areas, including coherence and integration across sections, justification for the research questions and case selection, and a limited engagement with feminist literature, particularly in conflict resolution. The literature review and theoretical sections lack critical synthesis and a cohesive framework, while the methodology is not sufficiently detailed in application. Issues with readability, reliance on single sources, and an underdeveloped comparison of cases further weaken the thesis. The empirical chapters are more descriptive than analytical, with content analysis absent. While the thesis is satisfactory and meets the minimum requirements, it does not reach the standard for a higher grade. I suggest it be graded as a D or E.

Suggested grade: D/E

Signature: