



# Gender and Armed Forces: Internalisation of International Norms in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces

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(Degree)

博士 (政治学)

(Date of Degree)

2021-09-15

(Date of Publication)

2024-09-15

(Resource Type)

doctoral thesis

(Report Number)

甲第8123号

(URL)

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14094/D1008123>

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# 博士学位論文

## 論文題目

Gender and Armed Forces: Internalisation of International  
Norms in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces

(ジェンダーと軍事組織：自衛隊による国際規範の内在化)

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提出月日：2021年7月12日

## Abstract

Compliance with international norms relating to gender equality has become a requirement for a legitimate statehood. Although Japan has generally been criticized for lagging behind other developed democracies in this area, gender integration in Japan has steadily advanced even in such rigid and conservative sectors as the national security sector. Japan has adopted international norms relating to gender equality through its post-war Constitution of 1947, the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1985, and the institutionalisation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the late 1990s. Through participation in international peacekeeping operations and other multinational military missions, and entering into partnership agreement with NATO in 2014, Japan has adopted Women, Peace and Security agenda in its own security sector.

This study seeks to introduce a political science perspective in the scarce research about policies toward women in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces (SDF). It argues that factors influencing gender policies of the SDF are not limited to material considerations based on military needs nor on domestic normative context alone. Wider international normative context must not be disregarded when explicating the change of gender policies in the armed forces of Japan. Using *localisation* model of norm internalisation proposed by Acharya, this paper investigates mechanisms through which international norms relating to gender equality have influenced policy-making process in the SDF, and the features of the norm internalisation process. The analysis is based on Japanese and international written sources, both secondary and primary, interviews with relevant actors including the SDF officers, Japanese bureaucrats, politicians and representatives of civil society.

International gender equality norms were internalised in Japan through the process of norm localisation. The content of foreign norms (equal value of men and women, shared family responsibilities, work-life balance, human rights, anti-discrimination, prohibition of violence

against women, gender perspective) was adjusted to local normative priors through congruence processes of framing, grafting and pruning, preserving the domestic normative hierarchy. The paper reveals that the SDF have actively participated in the process of internalisation of international norms relating to gender equality within the organisation, borrowing needed elements from international gender equality norms, and contesting those elements that diverged from the identity, interests and preferences of the SDF and its leadership.

This study proposes to develop Acharya's norm localisation model through concepts of accumulation of enabling factors, norm sedimentation and "phasing out" of norms. Accumulation of enabling factors creates the possibility for local actors to adopt a foreign norm and facilitates localisation process. Norm sedimentation is a process through which local actors familiarise themselves with the content of new norms. Through repetitive use of new language, production of documentation, habitual compliance with new procedures and practices, actors on the level of organisation become acquainted with and used to new tasks, functions and institutions introduced for the purpose of compliance with the adopted norms. Through successful framing, grafting and pruning convergence between new norms and local normative priors can be achieved and entrenchment of a normative status quo avoided. Phasing out is the process through which habitual language, practices and procedures reflective of prior local norms comes into disuse, representing the process of norm displacement.

International norms relating to gender equality influence SDF policies indirectly, through compliance with Japanese government requirements, and directly through borrowing from international normative framework, through socialisation that enables learning, emulation and sharing of experiences with armed forces of other advanced democracies, and creation of shared identity with their peers.

To my mum who has encouraged and supported every dream I have had.

To my dad who has given me a dreamer's heart.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
<i>List of Figures</i> .....	vii
<i>List of Tables and Graphs</i> .....	viii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i> .....	ix
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background .....	1
1.2. The Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.3. Previous studies.....	5
1.4. Contribution of this Dissertation.....	10
1.5. Definitions of Relevant Terminology.....	10
1.6. Methodological Framework.....	13
1.7. The Structure of the Dissertation.....	16
Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework.....	18
2.1. Factors Affecting Female Integration in Armed Forces.....	20
2.2. Relevant Studies on International Norm Diffusion.....	36
2.3. Theoretical Conceptualisation of Relevant Mechanisms of Norm Internalisation....	46
2.3.1 Accumulation of Enabling Factors .....	47
2.3.2 Sedimentation of Norms.....	48
Chapter Three: The Internalisation of International Norms relating to Gender Equality in Japan.....	51
3.1. Categorisation of Norms relating to Gender Equality Relevant for this Study.....	51
3.1.1 International Norms relating to Gender Equality.....	52
3.1.2 International Military Norm of Gender Perspective.....	56

3.1.3 Local Norms relating to Gender Equality.....	59
3.2. The Adoption and Internalisation of International Norms relating to Gender Equality in Japan.....	61
3.2.1 Localisation of the International Norm of Functional Equality as Discriminative Equality in the Post-Second World War Period.....	62
3.2.3 Localisation of the International Norm of Rights Based Equality as Participatory Equality.....	76
Chapter Four: Internalisation of International Norms relating to Gender in the Japanese Self- Defence Forces .....	87
4.1. Gender Policies in the Japanese Armed Forces: Female Integration in the Self-Defence Forces in the period of 1954-2015.....	89
4.1.1. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1954- 1966: “A Woman a Nurse” .....	90
4.1.1.1. Internalisation of Functional Equality and Discriminative Equality in the SDF.....	92
4.1.2. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1967- 1979: Female Integration in General Occupations.....	92
4.1.2.1. Adoption of Statist Functional Equality in the SDF.....	94
4.1.3. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1980- 1992: Institutional Harmonisation with the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.....	97
4.1.3.1 Norm Contestation and Compliance Resistance.....	101
4.1.4. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1993- 2000: Narrowing Female Exclusion.....	102
4.1.5. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 2001-	

2015: From Supplementary Workforce to Integral Part of the Organisation .....	106
4.1.6. Norm Contestation in the SDF – Statist Functional Equality, Participatory Equality and Gender Perspective.....	115
4.1.6.1. Institutionalisation of WPS agenda in Japan: National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2015) .....	121
4.2. Internalisation of Equal Access of Men and Women to Education and Elimination of Sexual Harassment in the Self-Defence Forces.....	125
4.2.1 The Opening of the National Defence Medical College and the National Defence Academy to Women.....	126
4.2.1.1 Policies towards Women in the National Defence Academy since 1992.....	135
4.2.2 Compliance with Human-Rights Based Gender Equality: The Case of Systemic Sexual and Power Harassment in the Self-Defence Forces.....	145
Chapter Five: Conclusion.....	163
Appendix 1: About the Measures Relating to the Issue of Accepting Women in the National Defence Academy.....	171
Appendix 2: List of interviews.....	174
Bibliography.....	175



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1.	Summary of factors affecting female participation in armed forces proposed by Segal's model and its later revisions	21
Figure 2.2.	Model of factors affecting gender policies in armed forces of Japan proposed by this study	35
Figure 2.3.	Norm life cycle	38
Table 4.1	Expansion of job areas available to women in the SDF (1954-1993)	99
Table 4.2	Changes in ratio of ranks occupied by male and female SDF personnel	100
Graph 3.1	The adoption and internalisation of the norm of rights-based equality as participatory equality in Japan	85
Graph 4.1	Increase in the number of female uniformed personnel in the SDF (1973-1993)	98
Graph 4.2.	Proportion of female SDF personnel (1993-2017)	106
Graph 4.3	Numbers of female and male SDF officers (1993-2017)	107

## LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS

Graph 4.1.	Increase in the number of female uniformed personnel in the SDF until 1993	79
Graph 4.2.	Proportion of male SDF personnel in comparison with female SDF personnel by ranks (end of 1992)	80
Table 4.1	Changes in ratio of ranks occupied by male and female SDF personnel until 1992	81
Graph 4.3.	Number of female and male SDF officers in the period of (1993-2017)	82
Graph 4.4.	Proportion of female and male SDF personnel (1993-2017)	83
Graph 4.5.	Female and male SDF personnel proportion by type (1993-2017)	84

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASDF	Air Self-Defence Forces
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women United Nations
CRSGBV	Conflict-Related Sex and Gender Based Violence
DSP	Democratic Social Party
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council United Nations
EEO Act	Equal Employment Opportunities Act
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment (US)
GHQ/SCAP	General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
GSDF	Ground Self-Defence Forces
IJA	Imperial Japanese Army
ILO	International Labour Organization
JDA	Japan Defence Agency
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
JSP	Japanese Socialist Party
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MOD	Japan Ministry of Defence
MSDF	Maritime Self-Defence Forces
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDA	National Defence Academy of Japan
NPA	National Police Agency

PKO	Peacekeeping Operation
RIMPAC	Rim of Pacific Exercise
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SDF	Japanese Self-Defence Forces
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
USFJ	United States Forces Japan
WAC	Women Army Corps
WAF	Women in the Air Force
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

The promotion and protection of basic human rights and the promotion of norms relating to gender equality (international gender equality norms) have been important features in the post-Second World War (hereafter, WW2) period. With the prescription of equality of the sexes in its constitution of 1947, ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1985, and the introduction of anti-discrimination and gender equality laws following the recommendations of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Japan also accepted these norms. The adoption and adherence to the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination and protection of human rights by international society have brought the military and gender, once considered to have little or no relation, in close connection. This connection was deepened through the introduction of the Women, Peace and Security (hereafter, WPS) agenda in the international security sector in 2000. Women's participation in the military is no longer considered as a solely domestic issue. As a result of immense civilian suffering caused by the increased domestic armed conflicts in the post-Cold War era, gender issues have been directly associated with international security.

Demands for equal participation of men and women on all levels of decision making and policy implementation in connection with conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building is incorporated in the wording of a number of the United Nations Security Council (hereafter UNSC) resolutions on women, peace and security since 2000.<sup>1</sup> This includes encouragement for the involvement of women among peace-building and peacekeeping personnel in military roles as well. Japan's armed forces have actively

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Security Council resolutions: 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019).

participated in international military missions since the 1990s, and in 2014 Japan became one of partner countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (hereafter NATO). NATO is actively promoting women, peace and security (hereafter WPS) agenda and gender perspective among armed forces of its member and partners states. Although it has often been pointed out that Japan is significantly lagging behind other advanced democracies when it comes to gender equality, female integration in the armed forces of Japan has been progressing slowly but steadily.<sup>2</sup>

The military holds a special status which permits it exercise powers usually denied other state institutions. It is a rigid and impenetrable institution responsible for the protection of the state's sovereignty. Due to its war-fighting function it enjoys benefits not accorded other government institutions. It is often exempted from the application of various legal provisions regulating relations in the civilian sphere, it is veiled in secrecy, and in a great measure exempted from requirements for transparency of its policies and practices. The Japanese Self-Defence Forces (hereafter, SDF), too, share the above features with armed forces of other countries.<sup>3</sup> However, military sociologists argue that the "armed forces need the support of the wider society to perform [their war-fighting] function and, particularly in democracies, must reflect its prevailing norms and values".<sup>4</sup> Although often not required legally, the military has

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<sup>2</sup> According to the Global Gender Gap Index 2020 ranking, Japan ranks 121 out of 153 countries, way behind other developed democracies. It ranks even further bellow on political empowerment index, occupying rank 144, World Economic Forum, 2020, 9-13.

<sup>3</sup> Under Article 108 of the SDF Law the SDF is exempted from a number of provisions regulating labour relations and employment, Self Defence Forces Law, Law No.165 of 1954.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Dandeker and Mady Wechsler Segal, "Gender Integration in Armed Forces: Recent Policy Developments in the United Kingdom," *Armed Forces & Society* 23 (Fall 1996): 40.

the need to comply with laws concerning non-discrimination, equal employment and career opportunities.

When analysing gender policies in the Japanese armed forces, however, in addition to the above-mentioned characteristics of the military, the particular circumstances in which the SDF operates need to be taken into account. They derive from the SDF's problematic position in Japanese society as an organisation operating on the border of legality, having to negate its military identity, and being compelled continuously to affirm the rationale for its very existence. Historical legacy of militarism, defeat in WW2, and subsequent discrediting of the JIA on the one hand, and the renouncement of war as a sovereign right and of the right to possess any war potential in the post-war constitution resulted in conspicuous alienation of Japan's armed forces from general society.<sup>5</sup> Japanese government has put great efforts into emphasizing non-military and defensive character of the SDF in order to keep it within the constitutional framework and reduce both domestic and regional anxieties about resurgence of Japanese militarism. The leadership of the SDF also emphasized crucial importance of the support by the populace for the successful performance of its defence mission, and the importance of women's support in particular was explicitly recognized in the Self-Defence Forces' early on.

In Japan, socially constructed perceptions of women as homemakers, pacifists and givers of life in need of protection are juxtaposed with the perception of the military as a masculine institution that engages in violence women should eschew. Japanese women's movements mostly denied their very existence of the SDF or rejecting it as unconstitutional. Although they put great efforts in the improvement of women's position in Japanese society, women's

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<sup>5</sup> By the Constitution of Japan of 1947, the Japanese government formally renounced war as its sovereign right, and proscribed settlement of international disputes through the use of force. Article 9, par. 2 of the Constitution also states: "...land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential will never be maintained."

movements have virtually neglected policies of female integration in Japan's armed forces. However, women in Japan have shown interest in and have steadily responded to recruitment demands of the JSDF since its establishment, and their military presence should not be overlooked.<sup>6</sup>

## **1.2 The Objectives of the Study**

Perceptions regarding women's roles in the armed forces of Japan differed in different time periods. Similarly, justifications for women's inclusion or exclusion from specific jobs and occupational areas in armed forces provided by national security policy-makers also changed depending on the observed period. This study argues that policy-changes regarding integration of women in the SDF cannot be explained only by material factors such as economic trends, the need for qualified personnel, impact of technical development, or the need for improving the image of the organisation in wider society to attract young male recruits. Although the SDF recruitment needs were similar in different periods, solutions devised by the decision-makers differed. Considering that rationalist calculations cannot provide full explanation for the change in gender policies in the armed forces of Japan, it is necessary to look for sources of that change elsewhere. This study maintains that international norms relating to gender equality (hereafter, international gender equality norms) are among those factors affecting the SDF policies, as it is armed force of a liberal democratic country embedded in international system.

This dissertation examines how and why international gender equality norms were introduced in the national security sector in Japan while focusing on the following questions. Through which mechanisms were international gender equality norms introduced in the armed

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<sup>6</sup> In 2020, there were 18,259 female uniformed personnel in the SDF, comprising 7.9% of its total uniformed personnel, Ministry of Defence, Statistics, <http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/hyouka/tokei/women.html> (accessed September 2, 2021).



forces of Japan? What were the features of the norm internalisation process? Did domestically adopted international norms undergo changes in the processes of internalisation, and how the internalisation process reflected on the policies of the Self-Defence Forces towards women? Also, this study seeks to identify whether there was significant divergence from the adopted international gender equality norms that led to a hollowing out of those norms in the internalisation process. These issues are addressed in a case study of the Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defence Forces (hereafter, GSDF, MSDF and ASDF).

### **1.3 Previous Studies**

Regarding the influence of international gender equality norms on policies towards women in the SDF, this dissertation relies on the following bodies of literature. The first group deals with factors influencing gender policies in armed forces in general, the second group deals with the topic of gender in the Japanese armed forces, and the third group deals with the influence of social and cultural norms on policy-making in Japan.<sup>7</sup> Previous studies from the first group seek to identify what factors influence women's roles in the armed forces and how. A number of relevant scholars from this group are military sociologists such as Mady W. Segal, Christopher Dandeker, and Darlene Iskra and Gerhard Kümmel and Helena Carreiras (Figure

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<sup>7</sup> The military and militarisation are generally observed in relation with masculinity. Masculinity is described in terms of rationality, strong hierarchy, inclination towards violence, protective function (protection of the state, of the weak, of the women) et cetera, and is considered indispensable in public or the "higher" sphere of politics. On the other hand, femininity is related to notions such as emotionality/irrationality, compassion, forbearance, aversion towards violence, care (for members of the family, of society, male soldiers), it is relegated to private or the "lower" strata of political concerns and is considered antithetical to the military's masculine culture. Among prominent scholars dealing with gender and military issues from this perspective are Cynthia Enloe, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Orna Sasson-Levy.

2).<sup>8</sup> The above group of research is based primarily on the experiences of armed forces of Western European and North American countries.<sup>9</sup> The majority of scholars in this field point out the military need for personnel (and with technological development, the need for qualified personnel) as one of the major factors influencing participation of women in armed forces, and focus primarily on domestic normative factors. The limited studies on gender policies in the SDF also take this perspective. Wright et al. introduce international normative dimension through the study of gender norms in North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (hereafter, NATO) Women, Peace and Security agenda in the international security sector.<sup>10</sup> Wright et al. provide in-depth analysis of female integration in a NATO as a military institution. The above studies will be presented in detail in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

The second body of relevant literature is very limited, and deals with gender in the SDF. It belongs primarily to sociological studies on gender ideologies and identities within the SDF, or studies written by the SDF personnel. Among this literature is Ben-Ari's study that suggests

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<sup>8</sup> Mady Wechsler Segal, "Women's Military Roles Cross-Nationally: Past, Present, and Future," *Gender & Society* 9, no. 6 (1995): 757-775. One revision was made by Darlene Iskra, Stephen Trainor, Marcia Leithauser and Mady Wechsler Segal, "Women's Participation in Armed Forces Cross-Nationally: Expanding Segal's Model," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (2002): 771-797, and the other by Gerhard Kümmel, "When Boy Meets Girl: The "Feminization of the Military – An Introduction Also to be Read as a Postscript," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002): 615-639; Helena Carreiras, *Gender and the Military: Women in the Armed Forces of Western Democracies*. London: Routledge, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Iskra et al. included Mexico, Zimbabwe and Australia in their analysis in the attempt to overcome this bias, Iskra et al. "Women's Participation in Armed Forces Cross-Nationally."

<sup>10</sup> Kathrine A. M. Wright, Matthew Hurley and Jesus Ignacio Gil Ruiz, *NATO, Gender and the Military: Women Organising from Within* (London: Routledge, 2019).

women are used as a tool of the SDF to soften the “hard” masculine image of the SDF in order to broaden the distance from the Imperial Japanese Army’s legacy.<sup>11</sup> Frühstück’s in-depth sociological analysis focused on the construction and reconstruction of male and female SDF personnel’s identities also belongs in this group.<sup>12</sup> However, the silence on the issue of gender and the SDF is conspicuous and might be explained by the anti-military attitude of most Japanese academics engaged in gender studies.

Up to the present, the most comprehensive study on the topic of gender and the Self-Defence Forces is a sociological science study conducted by Fumika Sato.<sup>13</sup> Sato conducted a historical analysis of ideological discourse about gender roles in the SDF, gender policies of the SDF, and the representation of male and female servicemembers. Based on this analysis Sato identified gender ideologies in the SDF, and traced their influence on gender policies of

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<sup>11</sup> Ben-Ari observes women’s participation in the SDF from the perspective of the process of “normalisation” of the SDF. He lifts up three sub-processes connected to the SDF “normalisation”. The first is the SDF distancing itself from the image and legacy of the Imperial Japanese Army, the second are the SDF’s efforts to turn itself into a “natural” and common part of the state, and the third is placing the SDF on global level alongside similar militaries of other industrialised societies, Ben-Ari, “Nihon no jieitai,” 77. On women as a tool for improvement of the SDF image see Ben-Ari, “Nihon no jieitai,” 84.

<sup>12</sup> Frühstück introduces other militaries and participation in international missions as relevant factors in the analysis. However, the analysis primarily focuses on personal experiences of individual service members when facing a model of the US soldier and models of other countries’ soldiers, and the impact such contact has on a SDF soldier’s identity, Sabine Frühstück, *Gender, Memory, and Popular Culture in the Japanese Army* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Fumika Sato, *Gunjisoshiki to jendaa: jieitainoonnatachi* (Gender and the Military: Women in the Japanese Self-Defense Forces) (Keio University Press, 2004).

the SDF during a time span of fifty years.<sup>14</sup> Sato's focus is on domestic normative factors and militarism. During the period she observed, domestic women's movements (and civil society in general) had little interest and little direct impact on gender policies of the armed forces of Japan. One of the contributions of this dissertation is the introduction of a case of civil society's involvement with the SDF policies towards female personnel in the area of the prevention of sexual harassment. In this instance, involvement of civil society had a significant influence on compliance of the Ministry of Defence and the SDF with locally adopted gender equality norms.

Among the third group of previous studies this dissertation relies on are studies that deal with the influence of norms on policy-making in Japan. Specifically, Katzenstein's study on the influence of social and cultural norms on policies in Japan's internal and external security sector (the police and the SDF), and Flower's study on the impact of international norms and international law on domestic policy change.<sup>15</sup> According to Katzenstein, in the domestic political context, social norms such as procedural consultations, bureaucratic informalism and economic security are institutionalised in media, judicial system and the bureaucracy. Social norms are more potent than legal norms and they inform interpretations of legal norms embedded within them. In contrast, in the international society, the strength of legal norms which are often institutionalised in treaties is emphasised. Katzenstein argues that this difference in approach to legal and social norms frustrates Japan's political participation in the international society. Construction and reconstruction of domestic norms is described as a long

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<sup>14</sup> Sato's categorisation is based on positive or negative values of attitudes and beliefs of actors involved in shaping and reshaping of gender ideology towards: "Equality", "Difference", and "Military", Sato, *Gunjisoshiki to jendā* 83.

<sup>15</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Petrice R. Flowers, *Refugees, Women, and Weapons: International Norm Adoption and compliance in Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

political process accompanied by intense domestic debate. In contrast, Katzenstein maintains that Japan involves little in the processes of development of international norms, and regards international law as a “product [...] of the international society to which it has to adjust”.<sup>16</sup>

Flowers analyses domestic compliance with international norms based on the interaction of three variables – state desire for legitimacy, strength of domestic advocates, and degree of conflict between international norms and domestic norms/identity.<sup>17</sup> The desire for legitimacy by the state with an identity of a responsible member of international society was proposed by Flowers as the most salient explanation for domestic compliance with international norms, even when those norms significantly conflict with domestic normative priors. Flowers points out the lack of relevant negative effects on the state’s identity if the treaty related to women’s rights was not adopted. According to Flowers this led to only medium level of compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereafter, the CEDAW).

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<sup>16</sup> Katzenstein reasons that this is a consequence of Japan’s economic approach to international relations in which relations are interest-based and not built on commonly shared social norms, *Ibid.*, 46, 179.

<sup>17</sup> Petrice R. Flowers, *Refugees, Women, and Weapons*, 9. Flowers focuses on three issue areas in which various degrees of conflict between international and Japanese domestic norms can be identified – refugee policy, women’s employment, and antipersonnel land mines (AP mines), Flowers, *Refugees, Women, and Weapons*, 7. Three international treaties are included in Flowers’ case analysis: the International Treaty Concerning Status of Refugees and the Optional Protocol (ratified by Japan in 1981), the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Violence against Women (ratified by Japan in 1985) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (ratified by Japan in 1998), Flowers, *Refugees, Women, and Weapons*, 1.

#### **1.4 Contribution of this Dissertation**

This dissertation is meaningful in several aspects. Firstly, it seeks to complement the scarce literature on the topic of gender and the Self-Defence Forces. Secondly, the few previous studies on gender and the SDF are mostly conducted in the field of sociology. However, this study focuses on factors that influence the political decision-making process and aims to contribute to political science research on the above topic. The issue of gender and the military has been covered extensively by many prominent feminist scholars such as Cynthia Enloe, Jean Bethke Elsthtain, Sandra Whitworth and Sato Fumika. However, the focus of these authors are primarily issues of militarisation of the individual and society, the combat exclusion principle for women, issues relating to sexuality and sexual orientation in the military, citizenship and its relation to military participation, as well as the construction of masculinities and femininities within the military.

This dissertation, however, seeks to explicate the role international gender equality norms play in the political process of national gender policy formulation. Through the analysis conducted within this dissertation, some hypothesis proposed by previous studies regarding factors affecting female integration in armed forces will be tested. In addition, an attempt will be made to contribute to constructivist scholarship on norm diffusion by proposing additional mechanisms at work in norm internalisation process. Finally, though the sector of national security is generally considered to be guided by notions of material power and interests, this study seeks to strengthen the arguments of those IR scholars who claim that norms matter in the national security sector as well, by shedding light on *how* norms matter.

#### **1.5 Definitions of Relevant Terminology**

In order to justify the need to introduce an international perspective and gender perspective to the analysis of policy-making on a domestic level, it is necessary to emphasize that states do not exist independently from the international society in which they act. Ideas, norms and

institutions at any given time influence their interests and identities. Krook and True paraphrase Wiener in the following terms: “international norms are typically defined as ideas of varying degrees of abstraction and specification with respect to fundamental values, organizing principles or standardised procedures that resonate across many states and global actors, having gained support in multiple forums including official policies, laws, treaties or agreements.”<sup>18</sup> Those norms are often but not necessarily embodied in treaties, declarations and recommendations of international organisations.<sup>19</sup>

Unlike biological sex that includes physiological characteristics that define men and women, gender is a social construct. *Gender* refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours and activities that are considered appropriate for men and women in a particular society.<sup>20</sup> These social constructs are learnt through the process of socialisation, and are context and time-specific and changeable. “Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities.”<sup>21</sup> *Gender equality* has become a central subject to the

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<sup>18</sup> Mona Lena Krook and Jacqui True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms: The United Nations and the Global Promotion of Gender Equality,” *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 1 (2010): 103-104.

<sup>19</sup> Jacqui True and Michael Mintrom, “Transnational Networks and Policy Diffusion: The Case of Gender Mainstreaming,” *International Studies Quarterly* 45, no. 1. (March 2001): 40.

<sup>20</sup> World Health Organization (WHO), under *Health Topics*, <http://www.who.int/topics/gender/en/> (accessed January 6, 2012).

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), under *Concepts and Definitions*, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm> (accessed September 2, 2021).

international norm-setting process and part of the requirements for a legitimate statehood.<sup>22</sup> The UN Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women) defines gender equality as “the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and boys and girls”.<sup>23</sup>

The term *gender policies* used in this paper refers primarily to policies relating to female integration in the SDF, as the introduction of policies targeting both men and women commenced only after the year 2000. Female integration in armed forces refers to both quantitative and qualitative aspects of women’s inclusion into structures and hierarchies of the armed forces. Two terms that indicate the national institution responsible for national defence and security are used in this study: *armed forces* and *the military*. The term “armed forces” is used in a broader sense than “the military” which is traditionally defined in the western concepts of warfare and military organization.

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<sup>22</sup> Christiane Gernet, “Translating Global Norms into Domestic Policies: The Introduction of Gender Quotas and Domestic Violence Laws in Latin America” (Paper prepared for presentation at the 3rd ECPR Conference, Budapest, September 8-10, 2005): 5.

<sup>23</sup> “Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men [...]. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development,” the UN Women, under *Concepts and Definitions*, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm> (accessed September 2, 2021).



## 1.6 Methodological Framework

In international relations literature, “Asia is understood as a region where international norms and law are least influential”.<sup>24</sup> In the case of Japan, long ruling LDP relied on conservative values. Furthermore, the national security sector is regarded as one of the most conservative sectors, and material security concerns are considered to be a primary factor in decision-making. Establishing a causal relationship between international gender equality norms and gender policies in the Japanese armed forces will provide a strong test for the hypothesis of this study that such a causative relation exists.

This study relies on the constructivist analytical framework of evolution and domestic influence of international norms, proposed by Finnemore and Sikkink, Acharya, and Checkel.<sup>25</sup> The contribution of a theory of internal and external dynamic of norms proposed by Krook and True when analysing gender equality norms on international and national levels is of great significance for this study.<sup>26</sup> These studies will be presented in detail in Chapter Two of this dissertation. Qualitative research analysis based on a single case-study of Japan’s armed forces will be conducted. In this study “introduction” of international gender equality norms corresponds to domestic legal and administrative institutionalisation of those norms. The legal aspect of the institutionalisation process involves codification of the principles of political, legal and civic equality between men and women, while the administrative aspect of

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<sup>24</sup> Flowers, *Refugees, Women, and Weapons*, 1.

<sup>25</sup> Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 887-917, Jeffrey T. Checkel, “Why Comply?: Social Learning and European Identity Change,” *International Organization* 55, no. 3 (2001): 553-588, and Amitav Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism,” *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 239-275.

<sup>26</sup> Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles.”

institutionalisation represents creation of administrative structures responsible for the advancement and monitoring of the implementation of these principles.

A qualitative research analysis based on a single case-study of Japanese armed forces in the period 1954-2015 will be conducted and the process-tracing method will be applied.<sup>27</sup> Three levels of analysis are identified by this study: international, domestic, and organizational. On the international level of analysis, the focus is primarily on the United Nations and, when it comes to the operationalisation of the Women Peace and Security in armed forces, on NATO. On the domestic level of analysis, the focus will be on Japanese government, while the role of domestic civil society and major newspaper media will also be taken into consideration. The organisational level refers primarily to the Japan Defence Agency (since January 2007 Ministry of Defence), the Japanese Self-Defence Forces, the National Defence Academy and the National Defence College. The SDF is not a homogeneous body. However, due to limited resources and difficulties in accessing material necessary to conduct in-depth analysis of the SDF as a heterogeneous actor, this dissertation will focus on the agency of the top military and political leadership involved in security policy making.

The empirical part of this study is based on both primary and secondary sources. Among the primary sources are Diet committee records, interviews with relevant actors, international and national legal and policy documents relating to the advancement of gender equality, national and international official documents and statistics, memoirs of key persons, and major Japanese newspaper media reports. MAXQDA 2020 software for qualitative data analysis was used in the analysis of newspaper media account.

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<sup>27</sup> Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, MIT Press: Cambridge, 2005.

Formal and informal in-depth interviews with relevant actors were conducted in the period 2014-2016. Interviewees were chosen based on their involvement with gender policies of the Government of Japan, gender policies in the SDF and recruitment, education and training policies in the SDF. Formal interviews were conducted with a professor of the National Defence Academy, a former senior officer of the Maritime Self-Defence Force, and with Japanese politicians and bureaucrats involved in policy-making processes relating to government's gender policies, national security policies as well as recruitment, education and training policies in the Self-Defence Forces.<sup>28</sup> Informal interviews were conducted with three GSDF officers and MOD bureaucrats responsible for or familiar with the recruitment, education and training policies in the SDF. Telephone interviews were conducted with Ministry of Defence's Chief of Section for the Promotion of Gender Equality and a leading legal representative of the plaintiff in a landmark case of a female SDF servicemember v Government of Japan.

Both formal and informal interviews were semi-structured interviews. They also included an element of focused interview, with the objective to overcome possible preconceptions held by the interviewer and to enable interviewees to answer questions from their own frames of reference and give their own perspective about events and relationships that are the subject of this research.<sup>29</sup> A group interview conducted with female SDF officers familiar with policies towards women in the Ground Self-Defence forces provided different

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<sup>28</sup> A request in 2014 upon the recommendation from MP Kuniko Inoguchi for a formal interview with Chief of Section for the Promotion of Gender Equality, Ministry of Defence was not accepted, and only a telephone conversation was conducted.

<sup>29</sup> Tim May, *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Processes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2011, p. 136.

perspectives on the issue, and a valuable insight into change of processes, policies, procedures and attitudes relating to gender equality and female integration in the SDF over time.

This study revealed that international gender equality norms were not taken for granted in the internalisation process in Japan and domestic ruling elites actively employed localisation. Regarding the SDF, it was an active contestator of norm content in the process of internalisation of localised domestic norms. The organisation borrowed directly from the content of international gender equality norms, those elements congruent with its identity and preferences not available in domestic normative content such as female military participation. On the other hand, it resisted compliance with locally adopted normative elements that challenged prevalent normative order within the organisation, such as providing equal education for men and women in National Defence Academy. However, for the most part of the observed period, SDF policies were formulated and revised to fit with formally adopted international gender equality norms under guidance or pressures from the government of Japan, and in a lesser extent from the civil society. This study revealed that international gender equality norms that were localised domestically underwent a hollowing out in the process of internalisation.

### **1.7 The Structure of the Dissertation**

The following chapter, Chapter Two, of this dissertation will give an overview of theoretical models relating to factors affecting female participation in the armed forces in general and the SDF in specific. It is followed by an overview of the models of international norm diffusion introduced in the text above. Finally, theoretical conceptualisation of concepts of *accumulation of enabling factors*, *norm sedimentation* and *phasing out* of displaced norms in the process of norm internalisation will be made.

Chapter Three will give definitions of norms relating to gender equality on three levels of analysis, and their core normative elements that were identified. The second section of this chapter will give a historical overview of the adoption of international norms relating to gender

equality and the process of their institutionalisation in Japan. First section of Chapter Four will give a historical overview of policies towards women in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the period between 1954 and 2015. The analysis of how and why international norms relating to gender equality were internalised in the armed forces of Japan will be provided. The second section of this chapter will provide the analysis of internalisation of two specific normative elements based on two within-case studies. Namely, the study of internalisation of equal access to education of men and women, and prevention of sexual harassment of women. Chapter Five provides conclusions based on the findings of this study.

## CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analytical framework of this research builds upon two groups of theoretical literature – literature on factors affecting female integration in armed forces on the one hand, and literature on international norm diffusion on the other hand. The group that is presented in the first section of this chapter comprises studies relating to factors that affect female participation in armed forces cross-nationally. A theoretical model proposed by a military sociologist Mady Segal, followed by its subsequent revisions by Iskra et al. and Gerhard Kümmel will be presented.<sup>30</sup> With the exception of considerations for international geopolitical environment, the above body of theoretical literature focuses in a systematic fashion only on domestic factors. Helena Carreiras made an attempt to address various weaknesses of the above models by, among other methods, introducing a macro perspective into the analysis of women’s military participation in the armed forces of NATO member states.<sup>31</sup> Specifically, Carreiras included a global political-institutional context for social participation of women, and strategic and organisational configuration of armed forces in her analysis. Nevertheless, no theoretical model presented above included armed forces of Asian countries. Regarding studies on the Self-Defence Forces in specific, they also focus on domestic factors, indicating the importance of “public opinion” on policies towards women in the Japanese armed forces. Fumika Sato especially points out this factor as a crucial one. However, the inclusion of international normative factors is necessary for a comprehensive analysis of shaping of the Japanese security policy decision-makers’ interests and preferences, and their consequent policy choices. Studies

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<sup>30</sup> Segal, “Women’s Military Roles Cross-Nationally. One revision was made by Iskra et al., “Women’s Participation in Armed Forces Cross-Nationally,” and the other by Gerhard Kümmel, “When Boy Meets Girl.”

<sup>31</sup> Helena Carreiras, *Gender and the Military*.

of gender norms in armed forces of NATO countries conducted by Wright et al. will be relied upon to explicate the influence of international gender norms in armed forces that emerged as a result of the adoption of WPS agenda in the international security sector.<sup>32</sup> This dissertation maintains that international norms on gender equality in both civilian and military sectors need to be included as an independent variable in a theoretical model of factors affecting female integration policies in the armed forces of Japan if a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of those policies is to be acquired.

In the second section of this chapter relevant theoretical literature on international norm diffusion will be presented. This dissertation primarily builds on works of scholars who adopt a constructivist approach in the analysis of international relations (IR). Localisation model proposed by Amitav Acharya will be applied to the process of domestic internalisation of international norms in Japan.<sup>33</sup> For the purposes of this dissertation it is further necessary to incorporate a theory of norm dynamics proposed by Krook and True who discard the static conception of norms and view the evolution of norms as an ongoing and dynamic process.<sup>34</sup> In addition, a theory on domestic norm compliance put forward by Jeffrey Checkel will be used to draw the attention to the influence of domestic institutional and historical context on compliance with international norms.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Wright et al., *NATO, Gender and the Military*.

<sup>33</sup> Amitav Acharya, "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism," *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 239-275.

<sup>34</sup> Mona Lena Krook and Jacqui True, "Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms: The United Nations and the Global Promotion of Gender Equality," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 1 (2010): 103-127.

<sup>35</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Why Comply?: Social Learning and European Identity Change," *International Organization* 55, no. 3 (2001): 553-588.

Stability/instability of core elements of relevant gender equality norms identified in this dissertation was not constant through processes of adoption and internalisation of international norms. Therefore, *accumulation of enabling factors*, *norm sedimentation* and *phasing out* of norms will be used as temporal concepts to explicate enabling mechanisms leading to the adoption of new norms, internalisation of the adopted norms through the process of norm localisation and the replacement of obsolete norms respectively. The concept of *norm sedimentation* in specific has been conceptually underdeveloped, and only marginally and spuriously used in the theory of international relations. These processes will be presented in the third section of this chapter. It is the aim of this study to contribute to theoretical literature relating to international norm diffusion by defining and conceptualising *norm sedimentation* in the final section of this chapter, distinguishing it from the concepts of “accumulation” and norm “entrenchment”.

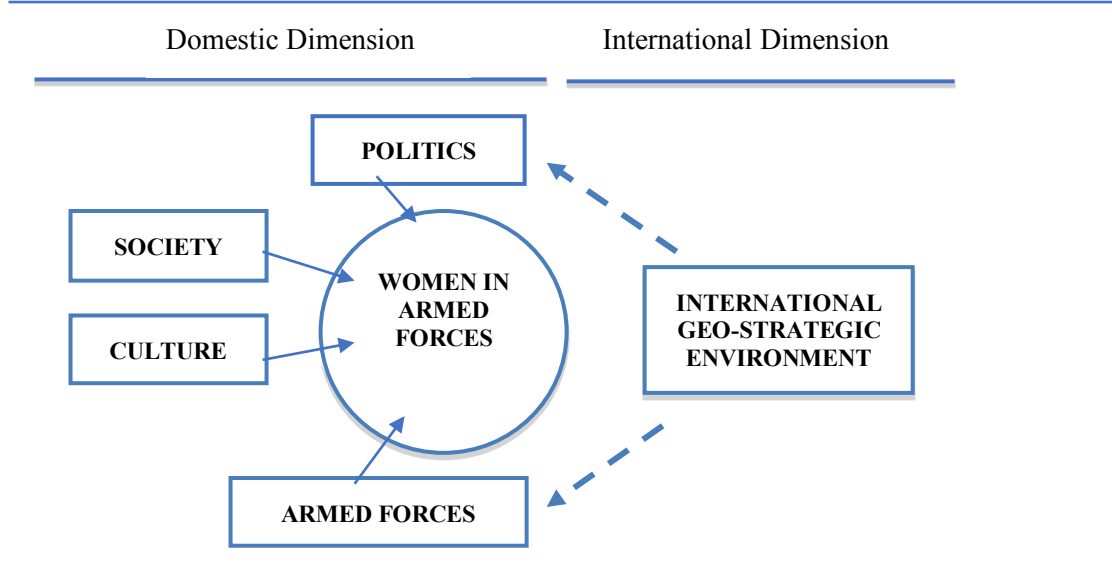
### **2.1.Factors Affecting Female Integration in Armed Forces**

In this section, the abovementioned studies about factors affecting female integration in armed forces will be presented (see Figure 2.1). Various factors influence policies relating to women in armed forces. Some of them are domestic, such as the structure of labour market force, economic trends and culturally conditioned social construction of women’s family roles, while some are international, such as security threats coming from external environment. Some factors are material, and more direct, such as the transformation of military organisations as a response to strategic changes in international relations and technological development. Others factors are normative, deriving from social and culturally conditioned social construction of gender relations and men’s and women’s family roles. They are related to identity and perceptions of gender roles of men and women in society and at work at a deeper level, setting up conditions for the formulation of gender policies in armed forces on the one hand. On the



other hand, they are related to particular culture of armed forces that is considered an “extreme case” of gendered organisation.<sup>36</sup>

**Figure 2.1.** Summary of factors affecting female participation in armed forces proposed by Segal’s model and its later revisions



Sources: Segal M. (1995), Iskra et al. (2002), Kümmel (2002), created by the author

As a starting point in the analysis of the influence of international norms relating to gender equality on the SDF policies, the theoretical model of factors that influence “the degree and nature” of women’s participation in the military cross-nationally and through history proposed by Mady Segal will be presented.<sup>37</sup> This study is valuable as it was a first attempt to make a comprehensive empirical model of factors affecting female integration in armed forces internationally. Segal divides independent variables affecting women’s military participation into three main broad categories: *military*, *social structure* and *culture*.<sup>38</sup> She proposes a number of explanatory variables from these three categories, and suggests hypothesis about

<sup>36</sup> Carreiras, “Gender and the Military,” 40.

<sup>37</sup> Segal, “Women’s Military Roles,” 758.

<sup>38</sup> Segal, “Women’s Military Roles,” 758.

their influence on women's military participation relying on empirically evidence drawn from armed forces of Western democracies. Segal identifies some causal relations between a number of independent variables, as well as circumstances under which their interaction may lead to one outcome or another. However, this theoretical part that is of great significance for identifying causal processes and mechanisms of change in dependent variable remained undeveloped.

Segal maintains that both military culture, which is inherently masculine in nature, and women's military roles are socially constructed. Her main arguments are that participation of women is likely to increase in the military in three cases. First, when the mission and culture of the military is perceived by policymakers and the populace to be transforming to make it more compatible with how women are or are perceived to be. Second, when women are perceived to be changing in ways that make them more suited to military service. Third, when national security situation is perceived as so dire as to require extreme responses such as the military support of all citizens.<sup>39</sup>

Segal posits that the primary impetus of female participation in the military is the military's need for personnel. However, she argues that in peacetime the level of egalitarianism in wider society is positively correlated with female military participation.<sup>40</sup> Segal maintains that the military personnel needs – specifically the ability or inability to acquire a necessary number of men – are a crucial determinant for numbers of women recruited, whereas roles of women in the military depend on cultural values.

Among *military variables* Segal includes national security situation, military technology, combat to support ratio, force structure and military accession policies. "National security

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<sup>39</sup> Segal, "Women's Military Roles," 758; Iskra et al., "Women's Participation in Armed Forces," 773.

<sup>40</sup> Segal, "Women's Military Roles," 769.

situation” as presented as a variable of major importance. Female military participation increases in societies which are exposed to a very high or imminent threat, or in societies with a low military threat. According to Segal, medium military threat has a negative effect on female participation in the military. In cases when a country is exposed to high military threat, however, after the crisis subsides women usually return to their pre-crisis positions in the society. On the other hand, she suggests at the possibility that the countries with low likelihood of a war being fought on their own soil increase opportunities for women in combat military jobs in those countries that embrace cultural values supportive of gender equality. Segal posits that the nature of military missions also affects women’s military participation. Specifically, transition from traditional (war-fighting) to non-traditional missions (PKO, disaster relief activities and operations similar to domestic police functions) may lead to an increase in female participation. Although women sometimes assume combat roles, women’s engagement in combat occupations is limited in a majority of countries. Therefore, there is a tendency for women to cluster in support occupations. On the one hand Segal posits that women’s involvement in military operations is negatively affected by the proportion of combat jobs. On the other hand, she posits that foreign deployments and peacekeeping operations require more support personnel due to the lack of civilian infrastructure that would be available at home.<sup>41</sup> When it comes to international missions, Segal seems to focus on military support functions in general and do not make explicit hypothesis regarding female participation in international missions.

In armed forces with developed military technology, personnel qualification requirements shift from bodily strength to brainpower. Technologically advanced militaries move towards job specialisation in which specific technical skills similar to those in civil societies are

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<sup>41</sup> Segal, “Women’s Military Roles,” 764.

emphasised more than physical strength. Segal hypothesises that the advancement in military technology may have a positive impact on female participation, if women have access to the means to acquire necessary technical skills in the civilian labour market. Segal maintains that military technology to a great extent influences the “combat to support ratio” variable as well. Advanced military technology requires more emphasis to be put on support functions which are open to women in many countries. Regarding military structure, Segal posits that voluntary accession policies in the military, in contrast to a conscription system, greatly contribute to women’s participation in armed forces. According to her, women who are already in the military also may affect female integration through pressures on the leadership for improvement of their position and treatment.<sup>42</sup>

*Social structure* variables proposed by Segal include: demographic patterns, labour force characteristics, economic factors and family structure. Military and civilian sectors of the labour market are partially affected by the same factors such as a lacking male labour force due to demographic or economic trends, or changed cultural, social and legal norms relating to gender equality. Greater female labour participation brings such structural and cultural changes in society that make the exclusion of women from military service more difficult to justify. Thusly, Segal posits that the increase of women in the labour market in general leads to the increase of women in the military as well. In contrast, gender segregation in the civilian labour market may negatively affect women’s military participation. Notable exceptions are occupations that are dominated by women in civilian sector, such as nursing. Another relevant hypothesis in this category, supported by majority of researchers in this field, is that high unemployment rates among men during periods of economic downturn (and thus ready supply

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<sup>42</sup> Christopher Dandeker and Mady Wechsler Segal, “Gender Integration in Armed Forces: Recent Policy Developments in the United Kingdom,” *Armed Forces & Society* 23 (Fall 1996): 40.

of men for the military personnel needs) reduce employment opportunities for women in the military and vice versa. “Family structure” is a variable that is considered to have a great influence on female participation in the labour market in general, and in the military even more so. Both family and the military are identified as “greedy” societal institutions, imposing great demands for commitment on an individual.<sup>43</sup> The more family responsibility in average women have, the less they are represented in the armed forces.

The focus of *culture*-related variables is on social construction and values regarding gender roles, family and gender-based division of labour. Considering that gender roles are socially constructed, Segal places focus on the discourse surrounding gender, the importance attached to gender differences, and the implications of the cultural interpretation of gender on women’s roles. She supports earlier claims that gender-based division of labour does not serve as important function as it did in “earlier times”.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, cultural ascription by gender leads to limited military roles on the one hand, while egalitarian social values regarding gender lead to greater women’s participation in the military. Further, the more the variable of “social construction of family and social values about family” move away from traditional family forms in which women tend to be perceived as primary caretakers for the family, the greater female participation in the military is.<sup>45</sup>

Iskra et al. attempted to address some limitations of Segal’s theoretical model through the revision of categories of independent variables and the verification of existing hypotheses on

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<sup>43</sup> Segal, Mady Wechsler, “The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions,” *Armed Forces and Society* 13, no. 1 (Fall 1986): 9-38.

<sup>44</sup> Segal, “Women’s Military Roles,” 168.

<sup>45</sup> The variable “other cultural issues” is relevant in specific national contexts and may be related to religion (Israel), language (Canada) or race (the US), Segal, “Women’s Military Roles,” 70-72.

cases beyond armed forces of Western democratic countries.<sup>46</sup> Their revision adds new independent variables, and proposes new hypothesis about the impact of different variables and their relations on outcomes relating to women's participation in armed forces. Iskra et al. incorporate a fourth category of variables – *political variables*, transferring the “national security situation” variable into this new category. They argue that the security situation is primarily interpreted and defined by political decision-makers. The *military* variable was renamed to the *armed forces* variable in order to better reflect the reality of diversified conflicts in the post-Cold War period.<sup>47</sup>

The *armed forces* dimension was expanded with variables such as “purpose/function of the armed forces”, “ideology of the armed forces subculture”, and “organizational structure”. Iskra et al. posit that factors that contribute to the greater participation of women in the armed forces are more defensive military function, younger forces (and leadership) with more egalitarian gender ideology, and more combined and ‘joint force’ oriented armed forces. In contrast to Segal's hypothesis, they maintain that military engagement in direct action against the society negatively affect female participation in armed forces. The elitist and warrior-like views held by service members, or bureaucratic and hierarchical structures have likewise effect.

*Political* variables include “national security situation”, “civil-military relations”, “political ideology of those in power”, and “sources of change other than armed conflict”. Female participation in armed forces is greater in societies with regimes that are perceived as legitimate and non-oppressive with strong civilian leadership and stable civil-military relations. Liberal ideology of political leadership as well as egalitarian public policy initiatives (for example available childcare institutions) of the ruling elite have favourable influence on

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<sup>46</sup> Iskra et al., “Women's Participation in Armed Forces,” 771-797.

<sup>47</sup> Iskra et al., “Women's Participation in Armed Forces,” 787.

women's military participation. However, according to this revised Segal's model, the availability of diverse methods of non-violent social change (e.g. activities through domestic NGOs) has a negative impact on female participation in armed forces in historically patriarchal and discriminatory societies.<sup>48</sup>

Iskra et al. find that the *social structure* dimension of the model seems to be the most stable across cultures. The importance of the *cultural* dimension is stressed, as it constitutes foundations through which social relations and social values are created. Both internal and external emphasis on power, authoritarianism, hierarchy and conformity all limit women's participation in armed forces. However, in societies where principles of egalitarianism took strong root (as is the case for Australia), although the military continues to be a gendered institution "the general sense in the society confirms a commitment of equality for all" and therefore female participation in armed forces is quite high.<sup>49</sup>

Although both of the above presented models are domestically-oriented, Iskra et al. build on Segal's suggestion relating to positive correlation between women's military participation and foreign deployments. They hypothesise that increased participation in non-traditional and coalition-based military operations will lead to "broader international pressures to equalise women's participation" in countries that participate in such operations.<sup>50</sup>

Another relevant revision of Segal's original model of factors affecting female participation in armed forces and its subsequent revision by Iskra et al. was proposed by Gerhard Kümmel.<sup>51</sup> The main contribution of this revision is the introduction of international

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<sup>48</sup> Iskra et al., "Women's Participation in Armed Forces," 792.

<sup>49</sup> Iskra et al., "Women's Participation in Armed Forces," 787.

<sup>50</sup> Iskra et al., "Women's Participation in Armed Forces," 793.

<sup>51</sup> Gerhard Kümmel, "When Boy Meets Girl: The "Feminization of the Military – An Introduction Also to be Read as a Postscript," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002): 615-639.

dimension into the model. Domestic (national) dimension in this revision basically follows previous models (political, social and cultural categories of factors affecting female participation in armed forces). Regarding international factors, he proposes the introduction of a fifth category of independent variables – *international environment*. Kümmel’s primary focus when it comes to the international environment is how this category affects national perceptions of security threats.<sup>52</sup> Kümmel gives general features of causal mechanisms through which international environment may lead to changes in armed forces. On the one hand, changes in the security, political and strategic military environments (such as the end of East-West confrontation, globalisation, and “complex interdependence”) may lead to change in states’ perception of a threat. This, in extension, may affect the structure of armed forces requiring rationalisation and modernisation, and lead to changes in the recruitment policies of armed forces. He raises two examples of the influence of strategic environment on women’s roles in the military. Those are expansion of female military participation in war and downsizing due to the imperatives of military efficiency.<sup>53</sup> What is of relevance from the perspective of this dissertation is Kümmel’s hypothesis that the increasingly prominent characteristic of the military as a reflective, learning organisation leads military (and political) elites to study other armed forces and their relations with their respective societies. Armed forces learn about each other through joint warfare, alliances, coalitions, and multinational military cooperation in general. Kümmel makes a short reference to the constructivist approach to learning, stating that “in a sense, international demonstration, socialisation, diffusion and dissemination” may be taking place.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Kümmel, “When Boy Meets Girl,” 651-639.

<sup>53</sup> Kümmel, “When Boy Meets Girl,” 626.

<sup>54</sup> Kümmel, “When Boy Meets Girl,” 628.



The study by Helena Carreiras builds on the above models when analysing factors that affect women's military participation.<sup>55</sup> In her study she attempts to address theoretical and empirical limitations of the above three models. Firstly, Carreiras introduces three levels of analysis: ideological-cultural dimension of gender relations, global political-institutional context for the social participation of women, and the strategic and organisational configuration of the armed forces.<sup>56</sup> Carreiras uses the term "global" not in a meaning of a world-level, but in a meaning of the overall cultural, social and political trends on the national level.

Carreiras proposes to revise and refocus the original Segal's model and its subsequent revisions to reflect theoretical perspective on gender relations as a background to the analysis of all other factors. While asserting that culture represents another level of analysis that affects the other three levels she identifies in her analytical framework, she keeps *culture* as a separate category of independent variables to be used in a case-study method. The explanation she provides for this choice is that values regarding gender affect all other categories, that they should not only be viewed as general conceptions of masculinities and femininities but observed in a specific gender regime of the military, and that there is a difficulty of obtaining necessary data for cross-cultural and comparative analysis.

Carreiras stresses the need to distinguish between direct and indirect effects of independent variables, in this case the effects of "internal" (military) and "external" (societal) factors. Carreiras posits that military factors have a major impact because they have a direct impact on military structures and on policies on female military participation. They serve as a "filter" for external influences. She defines military factors as organisational structure, military structure and strategic orientations. Carreiras includes a division of militaries into "paleomodern",

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<sup>55</sup> Helena Carreiras, *Gender and the Military: Women in the Armed Forces of Western Democracies*, (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>56</sup> Carreiras, "Gender and the Military," 2.

“modern” and “postmodern” as an indicator of relations between society and the military, hypothesising that the more divergent the organisational model of armed forces is, military variables will have greater impact. Conversely, the more open to and dependent on the society the military is, it will be more susceptible to external economic and political pressures regarding women’s military participation. Carreiras also emphasises the need to introduce a new political variable, “level of women’s social and political participation”, hypothesising that the higher qualified presence of women in society can facilitate recruitment decision and removal of women’s access to military positions and job.

From the comparative analysis of the cases of Portugal and the Netherlands, Carreiras discovered that together with occupational structure, the existence of specific policies aiming at gender integration is a factor that has the greatest influence on female military participation. However, neither of the above presented models gives much attention to how and why those policies were formulated, nor do they deal with question of how socio-cultural and political norms that condition those policies come to be constructed and reconstructed. They use historical and empirical data to test effects of various variables within a framework in which structures and actors’ preferences and interests are taken as given. What are the underlying forces behind the change in domestic cultural and social values regarding gender roles that influence gender policies? How does a society or armed forces as an organisation become more or less egalitarian? How do beliefs and attitudes of ruling political and military elites change? How do women influence the shaping of gender policies in the armed forces of their respective societies? What logic of action lies behind the integration of women in the armed forces? These questions cannot be answered within the above presented theoretical framework. It is therefore necessary to introduce a constructivist approach in order to clarify how different variables proposed by the above authors come to influence gender policies of armed forces.

Another significant limitation of the above models is their neglect to include in a systematic way factors deriving from a wider regional and international normative environment into either case study or large N analysis. As empirical findings of the studies presented above indicate as well, democratic states and societies in specific do not exist in isolation from the international normative environment. The identities and preferences of domestic political, social and military actors, that enable, force or constrain specific policy choices are influenced not only by domestic cultural norms, values and structures, but by changing international normative environment they are a part of. The more embedded in that environment security actors are, the more susceptible to its influence they are as well. It is obvious from empirical findings in the above studies that regional and international anti-discrimination legislation played a significant role in hampering discriminative policies and practices towards women in armed forces. International legal norms outright proscribed such policies and practices, or made them difficult if not even impossible to justify. This put pressures on armed forces to abandon discriminatory policies and practices – at least formally.

All the above studies are domestically-oriented, overlooking how international normative factors relating to gender equality influenced shaping of a specific society's socio-cultural, political and military norms and values that affect women's military participation. They make regular yet generalised references to "international trends" towards egalitarianism or gender equality, treat international normative factors as given, and do not include them as essential phenomena in their proposed analytical models. This is especially surprising in the case of Carreiras' study that does not develop Kümmel's suggestion regarding the role of NATO as a forum for socialisation, where processes of learning and teaching can take place. The explanation for this may lay in the fact that NATO was rarely an object of systematic feminist analysis until recent years, despite the fact that Cynthia Enloe already in 1981 developed a

theoretical conception of NATO as a “teaching machine” that shares lessons on the integration of women in NATO militaries.<sup>57</sup>

A major departure from such approach to the study of female integration in armed forces is the study of integration of gender in NATO conducted by Wright et al.<sup>58</sup> This is a comprehensive study about how NATO as an institution has engaged with gender issues throughout its history, how it has engaged with the Women, Peace and Security (hereafter, WPS) agenda, and how gender has been incorporated within the institution in relation to its core tasks of collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. The study uses feminist perspective in the analysis of NATO as an institution of international hegemonic masculinity, specifically those examining the effects of the dominance of male bodies in global politics. The study posits that NATO constructs, reconstructs and reproduces gender norms on global scale, presenting them within the masculine protection logic in interactions with member and partner states, in order to avoid potentially disruptive effects of international demands for gender equality in military institutions, specifically those deriving from the WPS agenda.

Wright et al. find that NATO may be a “teaching machine” but it is not solely that. It is also a venue that state and non-state actors can use to make a normative impact using their own agenda. The study shows that partner states and civil society were critical actors in NATO’s engagement with the WPS. NATO’s response to the need to incorporate WPS agenda within the alliance was the adoption of a vaguely defined “gender perspective” on institutional and operational level. Gender perspective was framed as a necessary element for the achievement of military effectiveness in the future. However, according to the findings of this study it can be deduced that NATO endeavours to remove from gender perspective those elements (such

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<sup>57</sup> Cynthia Enloe, “NATO’s Interest in Women: The Lesson Machine,” in *Loaded Questions: Women in the Military*, ed. Wendy Chapkis (Amsterdam: Transnational Institute, 1981), 65-71.

<sup>58</sup> Wright et al., *NATO, Gender and the Military*.

as human rights) that have transformative and thusly disrupting potential on gendered structures in the area of national and international security. Further, the study conducted by Wright et al. makes it possible to observe how operational effectiveness, once used as a principle for the exclusion of women from job, is being reframed into a rationale for further female integration in armed forces.

Wright et al. maintain that NATO has engaged with gender issues in relation to its core tasks, which today are collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security, and include in the analysis Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (hereafter, CRSGBV) as a cross-cutting issue of its core tasks. According to these authors, with respect to the first core task of collective defence, the primary factor that influences female integration are personnel needs. In this sense, women in NATO forces are conceived as an operational asset that provides “added value”. Regarding the second core task of crisis management, building on the experiences from Afghanistan where gender played a major frame for the understanding of this country, women came to be considered as essential operational asset. The call was made for greater military involvement of women as “force multipliers”. Through its third core task of cooperative security NATO became more closely involved with a wide range of diverse state actors globally. It is the partner states that pushed for the WPS agenda and gender issues within NATO. Through its various programs NATO serves as an actor in and a venue for socialisation and sharing of lessons and knowledge about best practices. Being a non-controversial issue for certain partner states, WPS has been central to the collective security as it supports the creation of otherwise little plausible security communities, enabling convergence of “interests, values and meanings” among unlikely actors.<sup>59</sup>

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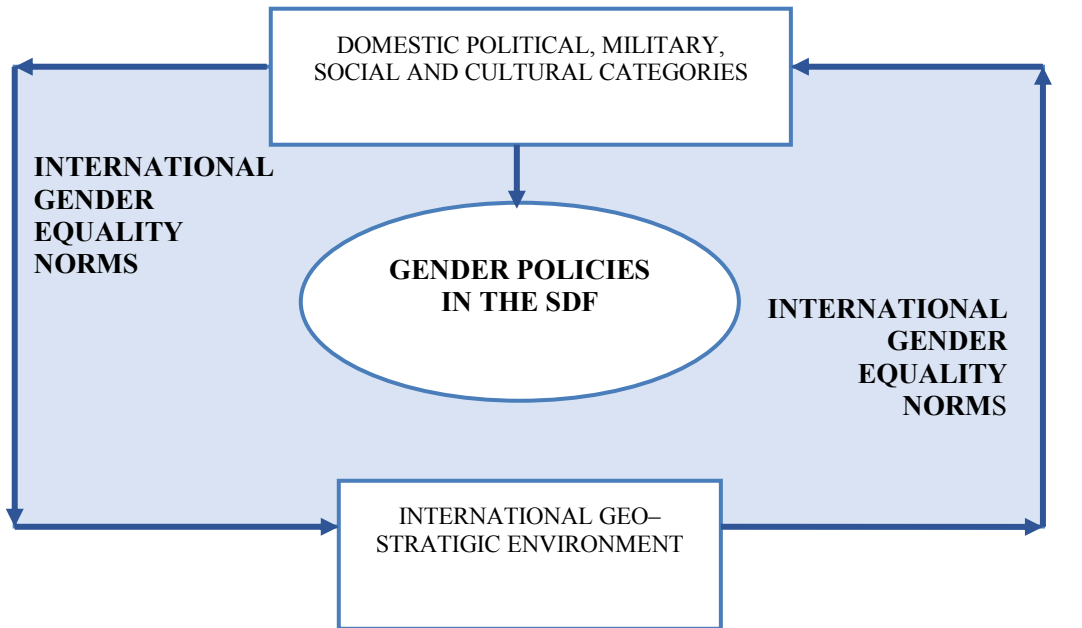
<sup>59</sup> Wright et al., *NATO, Gender and the Military*, 122.

Wright et al., however, maintain that there is a limit to transformative impact of WPS agenda on NATO and its ally forces because WPS agenda, though presented as a prominent issue in NATO is effectively positioned somewhat externally to the alliance as a tool that serves to enhance collective defence. They also find that NATO puts responsibility for incorporation of WPS agenda primarily on the shoulders of member and partner states. WPS ultimately serves to support existing working practices of NATO as an institution of international hegemonic masculinity. However, authors consider that through CRSGBV process NATO will face the need to genuinely address gender issues as CRSGBV to all NATO's operations. CRSGBV has come to be understood as an impediment to sustainable peace and has an impact beyond NATO member states, considering significant support partner states provide to NATO missions. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse committed by members of armed forces participating in NATO missions disproportionately affects women and girls and undermines NATO's credibility and reputation. Considering it is conceived as a structural problem deriving from institutional inequalities rather than acts committed by individual members participating in NATO missions, it may affect NATO's own forces and organisational structures as it is not an issue that can be externalised.

Based on findings of the above presented studies, it necessary to complement the existing framework for the analysis of factors that influence female participation in the armed forces by introducing a new category of "international gender equality norms" (see Figure 2.2). This model is limited to developed democratic countries embedded international society. According to this model, international norms relating to gender equality cannot be bracketed like the other categories proposed by previous studies. The argument of this dissertation is that international norms relating to gender equality influence international, domestic and organisational factors influencing policies relating to gender equality in armed forces in general, and female participation in armed forces in specific. This assertion is limited to democratic states that are

embedded in international society in which norms relating to gender equality are institutionalised.

**Figure 2.2.** Model of Factors Affecting Gender Policies in Armed Forces of Japan  
Ninić, Master Thesis (2012)



The armed forces of Japan are selected as a case study for this research with the aim to provide a strong test for the hypothesis of this dissertation that, next to material and domestic factors, international gender equality norms play a significant role in the shaping of policies towards women in armed forces of developed democracies. In some instances, they provide a more salient explanation for policy change from the previous two category of factors, as will be shown in the analysis of the case study of the Self-Defence Forces in subsequent chapters.

NATO's engagement with WPS is of special relevance in the analysis of recent gender policies in the Self-Defence Forces, because WPS was defined as a priority area in the partnership agreement between NATO and Japan. Since its involvement in ISAF mission in Afghanistan, relations between Japan and NATO have been deepening. It is therefore relevant to include NATO's engagement with the WPS and gender perspective in the analysis of gender

policies in the Self-Defence Forces in order to identify possible policy implications of this factor for armed forces of Japan. The study by Wright et al. departs from previous studies relating to factors affecting female participation in armed forces as it is not limited to the analysis of variables influencing female integration in a military institution. It also includes identification of relevant actors and strategies they adopt in processes of agenda setting, issue framing and policy formulation. It further addresses the question of how actors' values, interests and preferences are constructed, how this affects their policy choices and identifies mechanisms through which international factors affect policy change. Considering it incorporates detailed analysis of how gender norms are constructed, reconstructed, internalised and reproduced on international level it represents a study that incorporates both main bodies of theoretical literature included in this chapter of the dissertation. The following section will turn to the literature on international norm diffusion and internalisation, introducing studies most relevant for the analysis of gender policies and policies of female integration in the armed forces of Japan to be undertaken in the following chapters of this dissertation.

## **2.2.Relevant Studies on International Norms Diffusion**

Considering that this dissertation analyses domestic internalisation of international norms, it is necessary to rely on theoretical models that consider norms on both international and national or local level. Finnemore and Sikkink offer a model of evolution of international norms that is well applicable to norms relating to gender equality (Figure 2.3). According to this model international norms evolve in a pattern that consists of three stages: norm emergence, broad norm acceptance/norm cascade, and norm internalisation. Each stage differs with respect to the actors involved, motives that drive them, and mechanisms of their influence.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics," 895.



In the stage of *norm emergence* the emphasis is placed on the role of “norm entrepreneurs” who, out of motives such as ideational commitment, promote certain norms through persuasion of relevant actors – states. International organisations, as organisation platforms for norm entrepreneurs, may influence norm content to a significant extent.<sup>61</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink maintain that on the level of norm emergence domestic movements often play a significant role, as it is the domestic level from which the need for a normative change is voiced. The second stage of the norm life cycle is the *norm cascade*. This stage is conditioned by a norm reaching a threshold or *tipping point*. The tipping point is reached when a critical mass of states adopts a new norm and become norm leaders.<sup>62</sup> In addition, frequently a norm “must become institutionalised in specific sets of international rules and organisations” in order to enter the norm cascade stage.<sup>63</sup> However, institutionalisation may also take place only after the norm had entered the cascade stage.

Finnemore and Sikkink assert that in the second phase of the norm life cycle domestic pressures are not as relevant as in the norm emergence phase because the main mechanism behind norm cascade is socialisation. Agents of socialisation are identified as states, networks of norm entrepreneurs and IOs. Socialisation is identified as a mechanism in which norm

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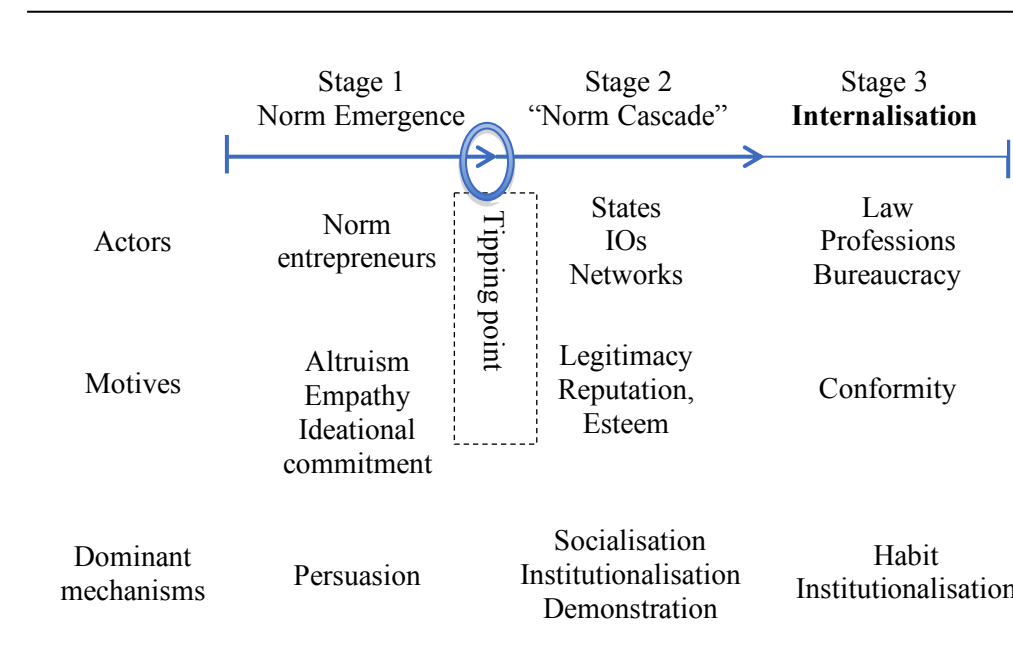
<sup>61</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 899.

<sup>62</sup> The authors hypothesize that critical mass can be defined as approximately one-third of total states in the system on the one hand, and norm acceptance by “critical states” (that is states which are crucial for norm adoption) on the other. Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that the adoption of women’s suffrage by 20 states by 1930 makes this year a tipping point for this norm. Regarding critical states, one of the examples they bring up was a crucial support that landmine producing countries such as England and France provided to the ban of AP mines, Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 901.

<sup>63</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 900.

leaders persuade other states to adopt and comply with cascading norms (“peer pressure”).<sup>64</sup> This mechanism is based on state’s identity as a member of international society, and may be motivated by legitimacy, conformity, and esteem. International legitimation is connected to such notions as reputation, trust and credibility in the international society and also contributes to the domestic legitimacy of state elites.

**FIGURE 2.3.** Norm Life Cycle



*Source:* Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), created by the author

The last stage of the norm “life cycle” is norm *internalisation*. Finnemore and Sikkink place it at the “far end of a norm cascade” where norms “acquire taken-for-granted quality” and are no longer challenged.<sup>65</sup> According to this model of norm evolution, internalised norms have a tendency towards global harmonisation, which may be driven by professions, and

<sup>64</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 903.

<sup>65</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 895.

iterated behaviour and habit.<sup>66</sup> According to this model, conditions under which international norms may be influential are legitimation (when states are insecure about their international status or reputation), prominence (norms are held by culturally, economically and militarily prominent states), and intrinsic characteristics of the norm (clear formulation, and content with universalistic claims).<sup>67</sup> In addition, the “fit” with the existing norms is also raised as an important factor in norm internalisation. However, Finnemore and Sikkink focus primarily on the “fit” actively constructed by norm entrepreneurs through framing between norms on the international level.<sup>68</sup>

The *Life cycle* model of norm diffusion does not take into consideration diversity of norms and values held by international norm adopters who may have had little power to influence the formulation of international norms they are adopting. Furthermore, the hypothesis that norm adoption motivated by legitimacy, conformity, and esteem among international peers contribute to legitimacy of state elites on domestic level is based on the assumption that international and domestic norms, values and interests converge. Had the possibility of the existence of a more or less significant divergence of adopters’ normative priors from the

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<sup>66</sup> The authors suggest the importance in political decision-making of professionals who come to embrace certain normative biases through active socialization enabled by professional training. They also suggest that procedural changes brought about by frequent interaction between actors can lead to “indirect and evolutionary normative, ideational and political convergence” as may be seen in the case of European integration, Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 905.

<sup>67</sup> Norms with universal claims are often of Western origin, Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 906.

<sup>68</sup> International legal norms, which have to be observed in connection to international organisations only, are brought up as an example of norms with potential for powerful effects on the behaviour of states, Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 916.

adopted international norms been taken into consideration, the authors may have had anticipated another cycle of norm contestation in the internalisation phase.

The focus on the international level and oversimplification of the norm internalisation process is a major weak point of the norm “life cycle” model. The “fit” between international norms and prior domestic norms is not brought into question as the norm content considers to be taken for granted by domestic actors. Specifically, the authors suggest that norms related to gender belong to such well-localised strong norms.<sup>69</sup> However, this overlooks the level of contestation between international gender norms and domestic normative priors, and the possibility of variations in the content of internalized norms in different states and state bodies. The *life cycle* model can be used well for the explanation of norm emergence and “cascade”, but we need to rely on other theoretical models to discover what actually takes place between domestic adoption of an international norm, and the point where internalised norm becomes taken for granted – if such point is ever reached. Acharya’s *norm localisation* model amends this omission.

Acharya maintains that global norms are contested on the local level, and that local actors choose how to respond to foreign ideas based on their cognitive priors and identities. He disagrees with the approach where the local agency is reduced to either norm-rejecters or passive recipients of norms as ready-made and uncontested international products. Acharya proposes conceptual tools for the analysis of local actors’ behaviour whereby local actors use localisation to achieve congruence between foreign and prior local norms and/or to preserve their autonomy respectively.

*Localisation* is defined as “the active construction (through discourse, framing, grafting, and cultural selection) of foreign ideas by local actors, which results in the former developing

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<sup>69</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics,” 894.

significant congruence with local beliefs and practices”.<sup>70</sup> Acharya asserts that the acceptance of foreign norms is conditioned by the ability of local actors to reconstruct those norms, and the potential of the localised norm to “enhance the appeal of some of their prior beliefs and institutions”.<sup>71</sup> Acharya suggests three types of responses of local actors to foreign norms: resistance, localisation and norm displacement. Resistance to foreign norms implies failure of norm transmission due to the resistance of local actors. Norm displacement occurs when prior normative claims on local actors’ behaviour have already been discredited on the domestic level.

In localisation process, local actors are regarded as active norm borrowers and localisers. They incorporate new norms that diverge from domestic cognitive priors in a way that does not upset the existing normative order. New institutional tasks and instruments are created which, nevertheless, do not affect the existing norm hierarchy and institutional model. However, importantly, Acharya posits that localisation may be an initial response to new norms that enables local actors to get familiar with new ideas, tasks and institutions, and weaken the resistance to new norms. Localisation creates the possibility for a fundamental change in norm hierarchy or norm displacement “at the far end” of the process.<sup>72</sup> The long timespan analysed in this dissertation enabled verification of this specific claim and identified some conditions under which localisation may result in norm displacement.

In IR literature the need for normative change is often viewed in connection with catalytic events such as a major security or economic crisis (war, depression), systemic changes (the end of the Cold War), domestic political changes, as well as regional demonstration effects that can lead to norm borrowing (through emulation, imitation, contagion). According to Acharya’s

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<sup>70</sup> Acharya, “How Ideas Spread?” 245.

<sup>71</sup> Acharya, “How Ideas Spread?” 239.

<sup>72</sup> Acharya, “How Ideas Spread?” 253.

theoretical model, such need for normative change is likely to result in localisation of new norms in several cases. Localisation is likely when local actors consider that new norms can serve to enhance their legitimacy and authority. It is likely when prior local norms are strong and when credible local actors (“insider proponents”)<sup>73</sup> are available to countervail international norm entrepreneurs.<sup>74</sup> It is also likely when local actors’ identity includes a sense of uniqueness.

The importance of compatibility between foreign and local norms for a success of localisation is emphasised in localisation model. Such compatibility provides room for local actors to frame and graft new norms to achieve congruence between international norms and local beliefs and practices without jeopardising the existing normative order or altogether rejecting the new norm. Grafting represents connecting elements of a new international norm with similar elements of prior local norms in certain issue areas. New norms are also subject to pruning, which refers to local agents’ selective choice/rejection of those elements of new norms which are more/less compatible with the pre-existing normative structures. However, prior local norms (which also include previously institutionalised norms) are reshaped by the new norms as well. The author asserts that external and local norms are hence mutually constitutive.<sup>75</sup>

Considering that international gender equality norms are institutionalised at the international level, it is necessary to supplement the above models of norm diffusion and internalisation with theorising about factors that influence the process of domestic actors’ compliance with new norms after the initial adoption. The aim is to identify how local actors

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<sup>73</sup> “Insider proponents” can be individuals, regionally based epistemic communities or nongovernmental organizations, Acharya, “How Ideas Spread?” 249.

<sup>74</sup> Acharya, “How Ideas Spread?” 248.

<sup>75</sup> Acharya, “How Ideas Spread?” 252.

undertake or eschew compliance with new gender norms through localisation process. Checkel proposes a synthetic approach to the analysis of norm compliance which includes both rational instrumental choices (rationalists) and social learning (constructivists).<sup>76</sup> Whereas the rationalists focus on material cost/benefit calculations for compliance choices of actors with given preferences, constructivists emphasise social protest/mobilisation and social learning as compliance decisions by elites. However, many constructive scholars on social movements emphasise what Checkel terms “social sanctioning” (such as NGO shaming) as a coercive mechanism directed at cost/benefit calculating elites to force them to comply with new norms.<sup>77</sup>

According to Checkel, compliance is rarely driven by persuasion. Generally, it results from mutual learning (complex social learning) in a dynamic environment of social interaction. This may lead to a change of agent’s preferences, and reshaping of their interests and identities through non-instrumental choice mechanisms.<sup>78</sup> Checkel emphasises the importance of social interaction in the process of learning that leads to the agents’ change of preferences and compliance with new norms. Specifically, he focuses on the roles of *argumentative persuasion* and complex *social learning* mechanisms.<sup>79</sup> The author further stresses the crucial role of domestic politics (institutional and historical context) in defining which of the two means will have causal effect on the agents’ decision regarding compliance.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Checkel, “Why Comply?” 553-588.

<sup>77</sup> Checkel, “Why Comply?” 558.

<sup>78</sup> Checkel, “Why Comply?” 560.

<sup>79</sup> *Argumentative persuasion* he defines as “a social process of interaction that involves changing attitudes about cause and effect in the absence of overt coercion” and further as “the process of *convincing* someone through argument and principled debate” to change their preferences., Checkel, “Why Comply?” 562.

<sup>80</sup> Checkel, “Why Comply?” 553.

However, Checkel identifies two significant factors in the area of domestic politics that hinder compliance. One is the existence of historically constructed domestic identity norms which conflict with regional/systemic ones and create barriers to the learning process. This is especially the case if these domestic norms are deeply bureaucratically and legally institutionalised (codified, embedded in organizations). The other factor is institutional context which involves pluralism, publicity and social input, in which possibility for private interaction is reduced.<sup>81</sup> He also draws attention to another effect of institutional factors, the “involuntary noncompliance”. This is a noncompliance that results from institutional limitations.

The final category of literature on international norm dynamic focuses on norms themselves. The above presented theoretical models have inclination towards linear norm diffusion on the one hand, and represent norms as relatively static on the other hand. When it comes to the content of norms, the norm *life cycle* model refers to norms as created, promoted, contested, accepted and internalised.<sup>82</sup> In the localisation process, a foreign norm is taken, borrowed, reconstituted to “fit” and incorporated among the *existing* local norms.<sup>83</sup> Finally, in Checkel’s study, dynamic processes of social interaction that influence compliance are viewed as dynamic, whereas both prior and diffusing norms are considered to *exist* in their respective normative contexts and their content is perceived as static.<sup>84</sup> Krook and True are among the

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<sup>81</sup> Checkel proposes five conditions in which argumentative persuasion is more likely to be effective: uncertainty – novel persuadee, uncertain environment (new issue, crisis, policy failure), the persuadee with few local normative priors, the persuader with high authority, absence of “lecturing” on the part of the persuader, interaction in more insulated, private setting, Checkel, “Why Comply?,” 563.

<sup>82</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics.”

<sup>83</sup> Acharya, “How Ideas Spread?”

<sup>84</sup> Checkel, “Why Comply?”



scholars who attempt to address the constructivist focus on the dynamism of agency and norm diffusion and implementation processes whilst overlooking the dynamism of norm content.

Krook and True introduce a theory of norm dynamics which suggests that norms should be viewed as ongoing processes and not as fixed notions.<sup>85</sup> The authors criticize the main constructivist approaches to norm diffusion where dynamism of norm content is neglected after a norm exits the creation/emerging stage. They assert that internationally diffusing norms “tend to be vague” “work-in-progress” entities, arguing that this makes it possible for “their content to be filled in many ways and thereby to be appropriated for a variety of different purposes”.<sup>86</sup> Krook and True maintain that even when norms are embedded in institutional practices across the international system they continue to be contested. The authors apply a discursive approach in the constructivist analysis of creation and evolution of global gender equality norms (gender-balanced decision-making and gender mainstreaming).<sup>87</sup> The discursive approach highlights the role of *power* in the social construction process. Meanings are created through a discursive process in which different voices are attributed different values, and in which some issues are given more prominence than others in the process of norm internalisation.

According to Krook and True there are internal and external sources of norm creation and evolution. “Internal” dynamism of norms comes from their potential for competing meanings, whereas “external” dynamism comes from the interaction with the external normative environment that consists of other norms-in-processes. In *internal dynamism* of norms, the

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<sup>85</sup> Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles,” 1-25.

<sup>86</sup> Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles,”2.

<sup>87</sup> Krook and True point out the importance a discursive approach can have in constructivist analysis of norm diffusion. The authors consider that such approach enables researchers to view norms as “anchored in language and revealed by repeated speech acts, leading to a semblance of permanence or institutionalization”, Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles,”3.

focus is on conflicting definitions of norms which may lead to an expansion or deepening of a norm, to its ignoring or misunderstanding, and to reversal or hollowing of the norm content. As a consequence, norms may be revised or take a new form. In the specific case of international norms, vagueness and imprecision in norm content contribute to norm adoption by increasing the possibility for consensus as it provides room for local agents to instil local meanings into the international norm. *External dynamism* of norms places emphasis on normative environment and the “opportunities for inspiration, alignments and conflicts” that this environment provides.<sup>88</sup> Norms can be framed to “fit” normative priors, they can be associated with other widely accepted norms, or they can be framed to serve goals of other norms.

The authors also emphasise the importance of domestic norm advocates for successful implementation of norms. Specifically, the authors find that norms of gender-balanced decision-making and gender mainstreaming had less effect because they were detached from women in the society and the discourse about their meaning was primarily controlled by state bureaucrats and government officials.<sup>89</sup>

### **2.3.Theoretical Conceptualisation of Relevant Mechanisms of Norm Internalisation**

Acharya’s assertion that localisation may lead to a fundamental change or norm displacement at the far end of the process as local actors familiarise themselves with the new norms has been verified in the case of Japan. The contribution of this dissertation is to propose some mechanisms through which this change comes about by using the concepts of accumulation of enabling factors, norm sedimentation and phasing out of local normative priors. These mechanisms are identified in and based on the in-depth analysis of norm

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<sup>88</sup> Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles,” 8.

<sup>89</sup> Krook and True, “Rethinking the Life Cycles,”15.

internalisation in Japan and in Japanese armed forces. The long timespan covered by this study enables a rich within-case analysis.

### **2.3.1. Accumulation of Enabling Factors**

*Accumulation of enabling factors* represents building up over time of factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of successful adoption and internalisation of new norms. *Accumulation of enabling factors* can be observed on all levels of analysis a specific researcher chooses – in the case of this dissertation on international, national and organisational levels. Enabling factors may accumulate internally, within the observed institution, and externally, on other levels where independent variables are observed. In the case of Japanese armed forces, the process of internal accumulation of enabling factors takes place within three services of the Self-Defence Forces (Ground, Maritime and Air), line ministry (Agency of Defence and, after 2007 reform, Ministry of Defence), connected schools and academies (such as National Defence Academy, National Defence Medical College, Officer Candidate Schools).<sup>90</sup> The process of external accumulation of enabling factors develops in security and other international and regional organisations Japan is a member of or cooperates with (such as the UN and NATO), armed forces of other countries, in Japanese government, and in society in which the organisation is embedded. The presence and interaction of specific factors may enable or facilitate domestic adoption and/or internalisation of a foreign norm, particularly when internal and external accumulation of enabling factors are combined.

*Accumulation of enabling factors* is the process that weakens relevant elements of prevalent local norms. In the long term, accumulation of enabling factors may have an undermining effect on core elements of local norms. As enabling factors accumulate, normative

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<sup>90</sup> Whether accumulation of enabling factors is observed as internal or external phenomenon depends on the level of analysis a researcher focuses on. For example, in the within-case analysis of the NDA in Chapter 4, normative trends in the MOD/SDF are observed as “external” to the Academy.

power of core elements of existing prevalent norm to influence policy choices weakens, and the need for normative change arises. In the case of Japan, local political ruling elites (particularly the LDP leadership) were a decisive actor in tipping the point towards normative change or maintenance of normative status quo. Acharya posits that one of ultimate result of localisation may be norm displacement. Norm displacement is a process in itself, a process that is usually long-term, as it requires gradual *phasing out* of contested core elements of local normative priors, even after a new norm is adopted, institutionalised and complied with. When it comes to gender norms, this stands true even when there are sudden disruptions within the system, because gender inequalities are based on beliefs and values that are entrenched in all structures, on all levels and in all aspects of the society.

### **2.3.2. *Sedimentation of Norms***

This dissertation is attempts to address an underlying weakness in Acharya's localisation model, namely the treatment of "local normative priors" as given. Localisation model does not provide an answer to the question how local normative priors are constructed or how a norm acquires the quality of a "local normative prior". In the present study, this problem is addressed by using the concept of *norm sedimentation*. *Norm sedimentation* may be understood as a process through which norms "acquire taken-for-granted quality".<sup>91</sup> To borrow Acharya's words, it is a process through which local actors develop "greater familiarity and experience with the new ideas, functions and instruments."<sup>92</sup> *Norm sedimentation* occurs through compliance with new legal, administrative and functional requirements, production of documents, familiarisation with and repetition of language (reflective of the relevant norm content) and procedures, and other habitual activities adjusted to a new normative content that

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<sup>91</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics," 895.

<sup>92</sup> Acharya, "How Ideas Spread?" 15.

is no longer perceived as threatening for values, beliefs and interests of local actors. Sedimented norms subsequently assume the position of local normative priors.

Once a new norm is adopted, and new tasks, institutional structures and mechanism formally established, the contestation between different elements of new norms and local normative priors is at its high. Depending on strategic ability of local actors to create convergence between new and prior normative claims without jeopardising strongly held core elements of local normative priors, the contestation process may be overcome with a relative ease and in shorter time. However, if local elites for the lack of strategic skills or lack of awareness about the strength of normative priors fail to create widely acceptable fit between adopted and existing norms, this may not only result in a strong norm resistance but also to the entrenchment of normative status quo. In the case of norm entrenchment, normative stand-off between new and prior norms becomes institutionalised, and norm entrepreneurs have strategic and tactical advantage in this situation.<sup>93</sup>

There is a need to clarify the difference between Bloomfield's norm entrenchment and *norm sedimentation* process proposed by this study. Entrenchment is a condition of a norm in which that norm is formally institutionalised or firmly rooted in practice.<sup>94</sup> *Norm sedimentation* is a process that follows usually a dynamic phase of norm contestation and represents a mechanism of norm compliance. Bloomfield conceives of norms as static and fixed, whereas in this study norms are conceived as dynamic, comprising of various normative elements that can be used for reframing, grafting or pruning to achieve convergence with even strong contesting norms. Considering that in Japan localisation was used in the process of internalisation of adopted international norms, the subsequent institutionalisation of new norms

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<sup>93</sup> Alan Bloomfield, 'Norm Entrepreneurs and Theorising Resistance to Normative Change', *Review of International Studies* 42 (2016): 311.

<sup>94</sup> Bloomfield, "Norm Entrepreneurs," 321.

did not lead to major disruptions in normative hierarchy. In the case of gender equality norms, compliance with new normative requirements was in a great measure formulated as voluntary, weakening resistance to new normative elements and promoting voluntary compliance. To provide empirical support for the above theoretical concepts, several cases of norm adoption and internalisation in Japan will be illustrated.

## **CHAPTER THREE: THE INTERNALISATION OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS RELATING TO GENDER EQUALITY IN JAPAN**

This chapter gives a historical overview of the adoption and internalisation of international norms relating to gender equality (hereafter gender equality norms) in Japan. First section of this chapter provides categorisation of international norms relevant for this study, and defines these norms through identifying their core elements. Norms relevant for this study are divided in three groups: international norms, international military norms and local (domestic) norms. Second section of this chapter describes the establishment and content of relevant domestic normative priors in modern Japan. The later part of the second section describes internalisation of *functional equality* in post-WW2 period. This study found that *functional equality* was internalised through norm localisation process as *discriminative equality*. Third section of this chapter describes accumulation of enabling conditions that led to the adoption of international norm of *full equality* in the 1980s and subsequent localisation of this norm as *functional equality*. Fourth section of this chapter describes the adoption of human rights-based gender equality and the on-going internalisation process of this norm in Japan. Aforementioned norms of *military effectiveness, women, peace and security* and *gender perspective* that are relevant specifically for gender equality in international and national security sector will be described in Chapter Four. This study found that international gender equality norms were internalised through norm localisation process, and that localised norms throughout the observed period include the element of *statism* that is absent from international gender equality norms in civilian sector.

### **3.1 Categorisation of Norms Relating to Gender Equality Relevant for this Study**

Although this study conceives of norms as dynamic, contested, and changing, temporal stability of certain core elements in the content of gender equality norms can be identified during the 70-year-long period observed by this study. This makes the categorisation of gender

equality norms necessary for the analytical purposes of this study possible. In the first section of this chapter relevant norms relating to gender equality on international, national and organisational level will be defined. Namely, international norms of *functional equality*, *full equality* and *rights-based equality*; military norm of *gender perspective*; local norms of *discriminative equality*, *statist functional equality* and *participatory equality*.

### **3.1.1 International Norms Relating to Gender Equality**

On the international level, the principle of equality between men and women was spelled out in 1945 in the Charter of the United Nations and subsequently reaffirmed in a number of other international documents related to human rights in general, to equal civil and political rights of men and women, and equal rights to economic participation. In the post-WW2 period gender equality was constructed as the *functional equality* and this norm diffused internationally.<sup>95</sup> In 1979, the norm of *full equality* was institutionalised on international level through the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (hereafter CEDAW) replacing *functional equality*. The *rights-based gender equality* was constructed between 1993 and 1995, when women's rights were reframed as human rights. It was institutionalised through the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.<sup>96</sup> These international norms were adopted by Japan within several years from international adoption. However, this study found they were not taken for granted, but internalised through localisation by Japan's ruling elites. The objective of localisation was to preserve local norm hierarchies, while strengthening the

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<sup>95</sup> Yasuko Yamashita, *Josei sabetsu Teppai Jouyaku to Nihon* (Japan and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), (Tokyo: Shogakusha, 2010).

<sup>96</sup> Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, 27 October 1995, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3dde04324.html> (accessed July 29, 2020).



state – and in that extension the power of ruling elites. The pattern of norm internalisation through localisation can be identified within the armed forces as well.

“*Functional equality*” is based on the belief that men and women have equal value but perform different functions in society.<sup>97</sup> The *functional equality* implies that each unit of society contributes to a stable functioning of the whole society by performing specific functions.<sup>98</sup> It can be expressed as: “Men at work, women at home and at work.” This norm is characterised by the acknowledgement of women’s basic political, legal and economic rights on the one hand, and gender-based division of labour on the other hand. Emphasising women’s family roles, proponents of the *functional equality* acknowledged and encouraged women’s economic and political participation, inasmuch these activities did not hamper women’s duties towards the family. Women in international security discourse in the period when the *functional equality* was prevalent were perceived as passive victims of war and objects in need of protection, placed in a category today often referred to as “womeandchildren”. Only men were acknowledged the agency in armed conflict, whether as perpetrators of violence against “womeandchildren” or providers of their security. During the 1970s, in the final decade before the *functional equality* displaced, the element of women’s indirect contribution to international peace and security was acknowledged. This contribution was identified as active participation in economic development, and participation in peace promotion activities nationally and internationally.<sup>99</sup> The acknowledgement was based on the perception of women as inherently peaceful.

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<sup>97</sup> Yasuko Yamashita, *Josei sabetsu teppai jouyaku*, 29.

<sup>98</sup> Linda L. Lindsey, *Gender Roles: A sociological Perspective*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. St. Louis: Marville University Press, 2005.

<sup>99</sup> The Programme of Concerted International Action for the Advancement of Women by the Commission of the Status of Women adopted by the UNGA resolution 2716 (XXV) 15 December 1970

The “*full equality*” acknowledges the same value of men and women as individual and independent human beings and rejects gender-based division of roles. The core elements of this norm are equal rights and responsibilities of men and women in all spheres of life, extension to women of the economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights enjoyed by men, and the elimination of discrimination against women. Economic empowerment of women is emphasised. Gender equality is framed as both a means for the strengthening of international peace and development, and an objective in itself. The *full equality* introduces direct female agency in the sphere of peace and security through equal participation with men in decision-making processes and peace initiatives.<sup>100</sup> Within the armed conflict, the primary perception

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builds connection between women and peace/security by framing women as beneficiaries of and contributors to economic and social development that is hampered by armed conflict. The Programme does not mention women’s family roles, and includes a new normative element of “female leadership” by encouraging the promotion of women to middle and higher managerial positions in administration and public sector, as well as appointment of women to executive and policy making levels. The language of the Programme indicates the departure from *functional equality* and accumulation of normative elements constitutive of *full equality* on the international level. This language is further strengthened in subsequent documents adopted by international organisations through the 1970s, such as the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict (proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 3318 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974), the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace and the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women’s Year (both adopted at the World Conference of the International Women’s Year, 2 July 1975). Language is both reflective and constitutive of the processes of accumulation of enabling factors leading to the adoption of international norms and phasing out of norms undergoing displacement.

<sup>100</sup> Even when international instruments that institutionalise the *full equality* do not emphasize directly that women’s nature is inherently peaceful, the term “women” in the context of female agency is used

of women is that of victims and objects in need of protection. Women are viewed separately from the category of “women and children”. The norm of *full equality* contains inherent inconsistency from the perspective of female participation in armed forces. On the one hand it prescribes equal participation of men and women in all spheres of life. On the other hand, it conceives of women as inherently peaceful. These normative elements are in conflict when it comes to equal participation of men and women in armed forces and similar institutions whose mandate includes engaging in various forms of violence (such as war).

The “*rights-based equality*” prescribes respect of human rights of women and the girls, proscribes discrimination against women. Proscribing all forms of violence against women is one of core element of this norm. Substantive equality (equitable outcomes and equal opportunities – elimination of discrimination) as the principle for women’s rights that characterises the *full equality* is replaced by respect for women’s human rights – respect of an individual.<sup>101</sup> The *rights-based equality* adopts gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality.<sup>102</sup> The significance of “power” in shaping and making decisions is

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with the term “peace”. Such language indicates that *full equality* does not fundamentally depart from this perception of women’s nature; for example, CEDAW, Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation (adopted by UN General Assembly, 37<sup>th</sup> sess., 1983), the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (adopted by the World Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held in Nairobi, Kenya, 15-26 July 1985).

<sup>101</sup> Miyoko Tsujimura, *Jendā to jinken* (Gender and Human Rights): 6.

<sup>102</sup> Gender mainstreaming is “the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination.” European

acknowledged, as well as the crucial role of men in achieving gender equality. Sharing and partnership conditioned the inclusion of work-life-balance element in this norm. In the sphere of peace and security, the *rights-based equality* introduces the element of women's direct involvement in conflict prevention and conflict resolution at decision-making levels. Nevertheless, women are conceived of as victims of violence (including sexual violence) in armed conflicts, and often subsumed in "womenandchildren" category. The Beijing Platform for Action mentions female combatants. However, female combatants are only acknowledged as "girls... abducted or recruited, in violation of international law, into situation of armed conflict".<sup>103</sup>

### **3.1.2 International Military Norm of Gender Perspective**

Violence against women came into spotlight as a consequence of large-scale humanitarian crisis in armed conflicts that erupted after the end of the Cold War. The widespread use of rape and other forms of sex- and gender-based violence (hereafter SGBV) led to recognising those acts as weapons and tactics of war. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action emphasised disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and girls and the necessity to address this issue globally. Women, Peace and Security (hereafter WPS) agenda builds on the outcomes of the Beijing Conference and calls for the integration of a gender perspective in peace processes, including peacekeeping operations. WPS agenda that focuses on international peace and security as gendered issues, was put on the global agenda through the adoption of Resolution 1325 by the UN Security Council in 2000. International commitment to WPS was subsequently reconfirmed and strengthened through 10 other UN Security Council Resolutions

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institute for gender equality (available at <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>, accessed on June 29, 2021).

<sup>103</sup> Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Further Actions and Initiatives to Implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Chapter II E, Women and Armed Conflict, point 16.

to date.<sup>104</sup> Regional security institutions such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (hereafter, NATO) and a number of UN member states have committed to WPS agenda and adopted the norm of *gender perspective*. Japan, too, has committed to WPS through participation in UN peacekeeping and other international missions, signing of partnership accord with NATO in 2014, and the adoption of a national action plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in 2015.

To have a gender perspective means being aware of differences regarding socially constructed characteristics of men and women [...], relationships, norms and expectations of and between groups of men and women, and observing, analysing, understanding, and taking into account the limitations and possibilities of *all* the diverse social roles individuals have in different cultures and societies.<sup>105</sup> The norm of *gender perspective* is a vague norm in the process of construction. Its vagueness makes it possible for various actors to fill the content of the norm in ways that correspond with their normative values, beliefs and/or interests (such as civil society, governments of individual states, regional security institutions, leadership of armed forces). Based on the analysis of resolutions relating to WPS, the following elements are core elements of the *gender perspective*. Sexual- and gender-based violence are recognised as a weapon and tactic of war; “womenandchildren”, specifically women and girls, suffer disproportionate impact of conflict – women as victims in need of protection; women must be

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<sup>104</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolutions S/RES/1325 (2000), S/RES/1820 (2008), S/RES/1888 (2009), S/RES/1889 (2009), S/RES/1960 (2010), S/RES/2106 (2013), S/RES/2122 (2013), S/RES/2242 (2015), S/RES/2467 (2019) and S/RES/2493 (2019) (available at UNSCR Search Engine for the United Nations Security Council, <http://unscr.com>. Accessed June 30, 2021).

<sup>105</sup> Lena P. Kvarving and Rachel Grimes, "Why and how gender is vital to military operations" in PfPC SSRWG and EDWG, *Handbook on Teaching Gender in the Military* (Geneva: DCAF and PfPC, 2016).

included in all aspects and on all stages of peace processes, including deployment of women in peace operations – women as agents; all personnel participating in peace processes, including military leadership and troops, need to be provided with gender training; mechanisms for implementation include introducing gender experts in the capacity of advisors on all levels of mission planning, implementation and evaluation; adopts “naming and shaming” as a strategy for ensuring compliance; integrated approach to ensuring sustainable peace; peace processes need to be undertaken in cooperation with civil society.<sup>106</sup>

How to operationalise the *gender perspective* within armed forces is raised as the greatest challenge for armed forces. The *gender perspective* has a transformative potential that is perceived as a threat for a security sector that is “dominated by male bodies”.<sup>107</sup> NATO made attempts to control disruptive effects of this norm, framing its adoption as a decision based on rationalist calculations. Namely, the alliance reinterpreted *gender perspective* as “a tool to increase operational effectiveness.”<sup>108</sup> WPS agenda problematise organisational structures and operational practices of NATO, as it addresses “victimisation of women (and girls) and their exclusion from conflict resolution and peacebuilding, as well as the *underrepresentation* [emphasis in the original] of women within the military forces of the alliance.”<sup>109</sup> In response,

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<sup>106</sup> “... sustainable peace requires an integrated approach based on coherence between political, security, development, human rights, including gender equality, and rule of law and justice activities...”, S/RES/2122 (2013).

<sup>107</sup> Wright, *NATO, Gender and the Military*: xxx.

<sup>108</sup> NATO, Bi-Strategic Command Directive (Bi-SCD) 40-1, Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspective into the NATO Command Structure, 2012: 3.

<sup>109</sup> Wright, *NATO, Gender and the Military*: 130-131.

NATO adopted a framework used by the UN of “Protection, Participation and Prevention”.<sup>110</sup> NATO includes men and boys into a group of victims to be protected, however, does not problematise men’s disproportionate access to and enjoyment of power. The alliance used its engagement with WPS to strengthen its power and legitimacy as a responsible international security actor.

The final part of this section turns to relevant local norms relating to gender equality, providing definition of norms relevant for this study.

### ***3.1.3 Local Norms Relating to Gender Equality***

In her study on policies towards women in the Self-Defence Forces Ninić defines the local norm of *discriminative equality* as a domestic norm that is characterised by the acknowledgement of women’s basic political and civil rights, functional division of gender roles, and belief that women are physically, intellectually and morally inferiority to men.<sup>111</sup> *Discriminative equality* is comprised of two contesting value and belief systems. One is stemming from local normative prior of the *ryōsai kenbo* (“good wife, wise mother”), and another from the *danson jōhi* (male superior to female).<sup>112</sup> Equal responsibility of men and women to contribute to the development of the state and society on the one hand (the element of *statism*), and the belief in women’s inherent inferiority in relation to men on the other. Women are juxtaposed with minors. It can be expressed as “man at work, women at home.” One of the core elements of this norm is the element of antimilitarism, and female participation

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<sup>110</sup> In 2018, NATO made a shift towards different framework of “integration, inclusiveness and integrity”. However, the future direction is still unclear, Wright, NATO, Gender and the Military: 131.

<sup>111</sup> Slavica Ninić, “The Introduction of International Norms Relating to Gender Equality in the Japanese Armed Forces in the Period of 1954-1979,” *Graduate School of Law, Kobe University Rokkodai*, no. 48 (2014): 34.

<sup>112</sup> These elements will be described in more details in the following section.

in armed forces is strongly rejected. Women are perceived as inherently peaceful and, in situation of armed conflict, as victims.

The *statist functional equality* is a local norm that comprises core elements of the international norm of *functional equality* defined above, namely equal values of men and women and gender-based division of roles. Women are separate from the category of minors. However, it also includes some elements of the *full equality* such as female empowerment and antidiscrimination. This norm is constructed by grafting elements of *full equality* on the local normative prior of the *ryōsai kenbo*. As the *discriminative equality* before it, the *statist functional equality* includes conflicting elements. The balance is achieved by female limiting the scope of female empowerment and elimination of discrimination in those areas of life considered appropriate for women. The objective of gender equality in the case of the *statist functional equality* is to contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of the country's economy, which is defined as one of Japan's pillars of state security (*statist* element). This local norm also comprises the element of antimilitarism. Women are perceived as inherently peaceful, and victims in the situations of armed conflict.

The *participatory equality* is a local norm that is still in the process of construction/reconstruction, contestation and sedimentation. This makes it difficult to define conclusively its core elements. Thus far, it is possible to discern as the core elements shared and equal participation of men and women in all spheres of life, and shared participation in decision-making processes; men and women have the same value as constituent members of society; substantive equality (equality of outcomes and opportunities); elimination of violence against women and antidiscrimination.<sup>113</sup> Although the element of rights of men and women was

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<sup>113</sup>Based on the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society, Act No. 78 of 1999.



repeatedly used in documents and language of domestic human rights advocates, it was strongly contested as incongruent with Japanese culture. As compliance with human rights norms in Japan is very limited, this element is considered as part of *accumulation of enabling factors* for a future gender equality norm than as part of *participatory equality*. Work-life-balance element was acknowledged, as well as men as beneficiaries of measures for equality. From the above, it is discernible that *participatory equality* includes some core elements of *full equality* and some core elements of *rights-based equality*. *Participatory equality* was strongly contested until *statist* element was introduced through “womenomics” of Abe’s second administration. *Participatory equality* was reframed from objective in itself into a crucial strategy for economic growth of Japan, and a coping strategy for low birth rates and immigrant labour – both framed as dire societal threats. The element of “human rights”, one of the most contested elements included in this norm, has gained salience.

### **3.2 The Adoption and Internalisation of International Norms relating to Gender Equality in Japan**

This section describes the adoption and internalisation of international norms of gender equality. This study found that international norms were internalised through the process of localisation. International norms were reconstructed to fit domestic normative priors, pruning those elements that jeopardised the legitimacy and power of conservative Liberal Democratic Party (hereafter, LDP) ruling elites. Foreign elements of gender equality norms were grafted on local normative priors, one of the most resilient one being the norm of *ryōsai kenbo*. Localised foreign gender equality norms assumed the status of local normative priors during the internalisation phase termed in this study as *sedimentation*. The power of the conservative

LDP and its long political dominance were founded on economic success.<sup>114</sup> The most powerful local elites in Japan were concentrated in the LDP – a party that that was “politically pragmatic and opportunistic but also ideologically nationalistic, harbouring antiliberal (antiwestern) views about society.”<sup>115</sup> Only when female empowerment and gender equality were framed as essential for the country’s economy (and security) was it possible to ensure compliance with adopted international norms. Therefore, *statist* element was a core element of localised gender equality norms. Although numerous scholars maintain that Japan’s primary goal was pursuing of international status, this factor alone (without economic perspective) was not sufficient condition for norm compliance.

### ***3.2.1 Localisation of the International Norm of Functional Equality as Discriminative Equality in the Post-Second World War Period***

In the post-WW2 period, international gender equality norms were internalised in Japan through the process of localisation, and *functional equality* was re-constructed as *discriminative equality*. *Functional equality* was grafted on local normative priors, namely, the Meiji era norm of *ryōsai kenbo* (“good wife, wise mother”) and the emerging Taisho era norms of women’s rights to political and economic participation and maternity protection. Discriminative elements in the post-war gender equality norms were based on the long established and strong local gender norms deriving from the ideas and values of *ie* (the family) and *danson jōhi* (“respect for the male, contempt for the female”). The first part of this section describes how international norms relating to gender equality were reconstructed in modern Japan, and transformed from contested foreign norms into sedimented local normative priors

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<sup>114</sup> Haruko Sato, “Legitimacy Deficit in Japan: The Road to True Popular Sovereignty,” *Politics and Polic* 38, 3 (2010): 572.

<sup>115</sup> Sato, “Legitimacy Deficit in Japan”, 572.

for the post-WW2 gender equality norms in Japan. In its later part this section analyses how and why was *functional equality* localised as *discriminative equality*.

Meiji Japan established “*ie*” (the family) as a fundamental unit of Japanese society and, by extension, of a strong and prosperous nation. One of the main features of the *ie* family system was that it was headed by a male member of the family who had absolute authority over other family members and property. The control of husband over wife was codified as well.<sup>116</sup> The family was not viewed as a “private” sphere but as an important element of a deeply militarized state. The focus of Japan’s modern state elites was to identify the roles of members comprising Japanese society that would best serve the strengthening of the state, and in that extension the strengthening of the position of ruling elites. The predominant Confucian beliefs of feudal Japan defined women as “foolish”, inferior beings who belonged in private sphere, performing family roles of procreation and service to their husbands and in-laws.<sup>117</sup> The perception of women as “foolish”, morally and intellectually inferior is a core element of *danson jōhi*, a norm that is still present in contemporary Japan and still impacts the position of women in Self-Defence Forces.

Initial elements of the norm of *ryōsai kenbo* (“good wife wise mother”), entered Japan with the ideas of Western Enlightenment during the period of the creation of the modern Japanese state in Meiji era (1868-1912). This norm was developed over the span of 40 years through the process of localisation of gender norms of the Enlightenment period. Congruence was built between the 19<sup>th</sup> century Western values and norms regarding nuclear family and

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<sup>116</sup> According to the Meiji Civil Code of 1896 women were denied any legal rights and were completely subjugated to the head of the household. The Constitution of the Empire of Japan (the Meiji Constitution) of 1889 denied women the right to vote.

<sup>117</sup> Shizuko Koyama, *Ryōsai kenbo toiu kihan (The Norm of Good Wife Wise Mother)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 2010), 4.

women's social roles, and local cognitive priors derived from Confucian beliefs regarding women and their appropriate behaviour. The idea of equality of men and women that came with the Enlightenment was grafted on prior Confucian ideas regarding women's family roles. The transformative element in the international norm localisation process was the acknowledgment of women's intellectual and moral capacity to provide basic education for their children. However, the element of individual rights was pruned, and women's educational role in the family was spelled out as a duty, in accordance with Confucianism. Whereas women's primary duty in the pre- and early Meiji period was that of a wife and a daughter-in-law, by the late Meiji period woman's childrearing role took over the precedence. The institutionalisation of the norm of *ryōsai kenbo* finished by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By Taishō era this was a sedimented local norm whose core elements were still strong in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Japan.

The Meiji Japan provided women with a form of citizenship that expanded their service from private to public sphere. That service involved an indirect contribution to the state through birth and education of boys, future soldiers and labour force in the service of state, and girls, future mothers of soldiers and workers in the service of state. On the other hand, male citizens of modern Japan were expected to provide direct service to the state through their economic, military and political activities. Each group, in their own capacity, were attributed inherent value as citizens and were allocated specific functions aimed at achieving the common goal of strengthening of the state. In accordance with Acharya's model of norm localisation, the local norm re-construction process resulted in new gender norms contributed that served to contribute to the objectives of domestic ruling elites, strengthening their power and legitimacy. The military element was pruned from gender equality norms constructed in Japan after WW2. However, the *statist* element was maintained and is a characteristic that separates this and later

Japanese norms relating to gender equality from international norms that are based on individual rights.

In Taisho era (1912-1926) new normative elements started entering gender equality norms in Japan. The most relevant elements for this study are women's right to higher education and direct economic participation. "Maternity protection" was also introduced as an issue of contestation, and push for women's right to political participation significantly strengthened. Normative change during Taisho era was conditioned by new social and economic realities – the growth of middle-class size, the change of family structure (from extended to nuclear family) and growing female labour force participation, as well as changes brought by the First World War in the Western world. Numerous news from Europe about women's ability to perform with competence roles in civilian and military spheres that had previously been performed by men came as a shock for Japan, both for its ruling elite and society as a whole. It became obvious that prevalent norms and beliefs in Japan no longer corresponded with international reality. In Taisho era, Japan entered a heated political and social debates on the possibility and appropriateness of women's direct contribution to the state through their economic participation. Japanese military elites for the first time showed formal interest in women's direct wartime contribution to the state, conducting a study of roles women played in major warring European countries – both in civilian and military sectors.<sup>118</sup>

During this period known as the Taisho Democracy, political, economic, social and cultural factors have sufficiently accumulated to enable the reconstruction of prevalent domestic gender equality. In the late part of 1920-s, however, democratisation movement and the movement for the advancement of the position of women in Japanese society, as well as a

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<sup>118</sup> Provisional Military Study Council, Ministry of the Army, *Oshusen to kosen kakkoku fujin (Women in Europe and the Belligerent States)*, (May, 1917).

further normative change, were given a decapitating blow by full-fledged embracing of militarism, accompanied by punitiveness and conservatism. The military gradually took over the control of every sphere of public and private life, and the adoption and internalisation of the abovementioned novel and contesting normative elements was halted until the end of WW2 and the establishment of GHQ/SCAPs.

The defeat of Japan in WW2 triggered profound political, legal, economic, social and cultural changes in Japanese society, which proceeded under an overwhelming foreign pressure for democratization of the country.<sup>119</sup> The post-war occupation policies drastically changed political, economic and social position of women in Japan. A significant level of overt coercion by the General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (hereafter, GHQ/SCAP) was exercised on the Japanese government to adopt a new liberal constitution that established the principle of gender equality.<sup>120</sup> Through the imposed constitutional changes, some of the strongest legal barriers to achieving gender equality in Japanese society were toppled. In 1947 a number of legal and institutional measures for the equality of men and women were put in place. Civil Code of 1896 was amended to abolish the “*ie*” family system, equal pay for men and women was prescribed by the Labour Standards Act and the Fundamental Law on Education established equal opportunities in education of all levels. The

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<sup>119</sup> The analysis below is based on the master thesis “Gender and National Security: The Introduction of International Norms related to Gender Equality in the Japanese Self-Defense Forces” submitted by Slavica Ninić to Kobe University in 2012.

<sup>120</sup> The Constitution was promulgated on November 3, 1946 and came into effect on May 3, 1947; Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers Gen. MacArthur who headed the General Headquarters (GHQ/SCAP) and had absolute powers vested in him to implement policies set in the Potsdam Declaration is considered as one of the most influential individuals in the 1946-1948 period of occupation.

same year, structural institutional foundations for the advancement of the position of women was laid through the establishment of the Women's and Young Workers' Bureau within the new Ministry of Labour. The main task of the bureau was to perform activities relating to the protection of women workers.<sup>121</sup>

Due to the constraints of financial and human resources in the GHQ/SCAP the occupation authorities had to rely on domestic actors to institutionalise new principles proclaimed by the constitution. As most of the political and military elites were purged after the surrender, pre-war bureaucrats were the main force behind the implementation of the occupation reforms.<sup>122</sup> The conservative bureaucratic elites took the responsibility for further institutionalisation of international gender equality norms. Empirical findings show that compliance with foreign norms was not automatic and that local ruling elites actively worked to establish convergence between new foreign and prior domestic gender norms. A notable example is the reinterpretation of the phrase “*essential*” *equality of sexes* codified in the constitution.<sup>123</sup> Local elites interpreted “*essential*” *equality* as an equality of men and women who are different in terms of their nature (biologically, psychologically) and the roles they fulfil.<sup>124</sup>

During the post-WW2 norm internalisation process, a differential approach to toward men and women was taken. Women were placed in the same category as young workers, which place them in a category of a less-than-adult entity. Extensive protective measures for women

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<sup>121</sup> Kanzaki, *Sengo nihon josei seisaku shi*, 71.

<sup>122</sup> Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press: 26.

<sup>123</sup> Article 24, Paragraph 2 of the Constitution.

<sup>124</sup> Kanzaki, *Sengo nihon josei seisaku shi*, 171.

were incorporated into the new Labour Standards Law, a decision based on the above described reinterpretation of the meaning of “essential” equality of sexes.<sup>125</sup>

The involvement of GHQ/SCAP in the drafting process of the law regulating labour and employment was minor and of a consultative nature. The initial purpose of the new law was to “protect” workers in the labour market. However, it changed to “standard-setting” during the drafting process in order to reflect stipulations of the new constitution with the rationale that “protection” labels workers as “the weak” and is “against the spirit of the new constitution”.<sup>126</sup> Yet, this criticism did not extend to female workers, and men were taken as a referent point in standard-setting process. Differential approach was rationalised based on the need for health and maternity protection for women and found to be in accordance with the constitution. The GHQ/SCAP staff that participated in the advisory capacity in the drafting of the Labour Standards Act warned that such an approach may have negative effects on women in the labour market in the future. The final decision, however, was left to Japanese legislators, who disregarded this warning.<sup>127</sup> The only provision that incorporated a gender equality perspective in the Labour Standards Act was the establishment of the principle of equal wage for men and women in Article 4. Although there was some disagreement within the legislative group about

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<sup>125</sup> Among protective measures targeting women were forbidding belowground work for women, severely limiting work on jobs identified as dangerous and injurious which may affect women’s childbearing functions, providing childcare time for nursing mothers, providing menstruation leave, limiting night-labor and overtime work for women.

<sup>126</sup> Kanzaki, *Sengo nihon josei seisaku shi*, 101. Another rationale for this change of course was found in international standards. The welfare of workers was conceived as one of the crucial factors for achieving democracy and peace in the international society Japan strived to return to, Kanzaki, *Sengo nihon josei seisaku shi*, 83.

<sup>127</sup> Kanzaki, *Sengo nihon josei seisaku shi*, 84.



omission of “sex” from the provision of Article 3 of the law on equality of treatment with respect to “nationality, creed or social status”, “sex” was finally not included in this provision. The rationale for this decision was that the establishment of a general gender equality principle by the Constitution sufficed.<sup>128</sup> This had a lasting negative effect on women’s position in the labour market, as Japanese courts avoided using stipulations of the constitution as the ground for their decisions in matters of gender-based discrimination and relied on the Meiji era civil code.

Juxtaposing “women” and “minors” as objects of protection and the extensive protective measures had lasting negative consequences for Japanese women. Through local agency, international gender equality norms were reconstructed in a way that enabled discriminative treatment of women not only in its intended “protective” manner but in a negative way that relegated women to an inferior position in society, and hampered their economic and political activity for decades to come. In contrast to labour and employment sphere, women’s access to education remarkably improved. Equal access of men and women to education was grafted on the element of educated and educating mother in the Meiji norm of *ryōsai kenbo*. The war defeat and devastation of the country brought about strong antimilitary sentiments in Japanese society, and a new political-military culture of antimilitarism emerged.<sup>129</sup> Consequently, the women’s military contribution was pruned from the *statist* element of the *ryōsai kenbo*. Women were conceived of as peaceful, and any form of participation of women in armed forces was rejected. The norm of *ryōsai kenbo* was reconstructed to include antimilitarism as one of its core elements.

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<sup>128</sup> Kanzaki, *Sengo nihon josei seisaku shi*: 85, 96, 100.

<sup>129</sup> Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*: 207.

Rapid expansion of economy in the mid-1960s was accompanied by marked increase in demand for workforce. Female economic participation was rapidly increasing, and young women with higher educational level and qualifications were demanding job opportunities in wider areas, including occupational areas considered traditionally male. However, women were subjected to intense discrimination in terms of recruitment, wage, occupational training and advancement, and retirement. Companies had separate career tracks for men and women and women established in companies' practices and wage gap between men and women was close to double. Since the mid-1960s Japanese women have increasingly resorted to litigation as a means to fight job discrimination.<sup>130</sup> Japanese courts used the legal principle of *kōjo ryōzoku* ("public order and decency") to discourage discriminatory practices towards female workers. This principle that dates from Meiji Japan is codified in Article 90 of the Japanese Civil Code. Article 90 states that "juristic act with any purpose which is against public order and decency is void."<sup>131</sup> The Working Women's Welfare Act was enacted in 1972 as an attempt to address some of the problems facing female workers.<sup>132</sup> While it incorporated an antidiscrimination clause, the law was of recommendatory character only.

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<sup>130</sup> Satoko Kanzaki, *Sengo nihon josei seisaku shi: sengo minshuka seisaku kara danjo kyōudō sankaku shakai kihon hou made* (Japanese Women's Policies for the Promotion of Gender Equality in the Latter Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Development from a Series of Post-war Policies for Promoting Democracy Under Occupation to the Enactment of the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society of 1999) (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2009)189.

<sup>131</sup> Civil Code, Act No. 89 of 1896, Amendment of Act No. 78 of 2006.

<sup>132</sup> *Kinrou fujin fukushi hou*. Law No. 113, 1972. The Japanese word "*fujin*" used to indicate women at the time also implies a meaning of an adult, married woman. This law was a result of personal efforts of the head of the Women's and Minor's Bureau who viewed this law as her legacy for welfare of

### ***3.2.2 Localisation of International Norm of Full Equality as the Statist Functional Equality in the 1980s***

Between the mid-1970s and 1979 gender equality norms were renegotiated on the international level and “full equality” was institutionalized in the convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereafter, CEDAW).<sup>133</sup> Japan signed and ratified the CEDAW convention in 1979 and 1985 respectively. *Discriminative equality* was formally displaced through the process of the signing and ratification of CEDAW and subsequent institutional harmonisation with the treaty. Japan’s ruling elites sought to increase the country’s international status as a way to increase the legitimacy of its rule.<sup>134</sup> In the beginning of the 1970s, Japan reached the position as the second biggest economy in the world, which made it more embedded in international society and consequently more susceptible to international normative pressures.

However, the LDP government based the party strength on its economic policies and conservative nationalist values. Therefore, it was resistant to the adoption of new international norm that required liberal political, economic, cultural and social changes. Japanese government’s decision to sign the CEDAW was made under pressures from women’s groups, and against the background of the state’s desire for international legitimacy as a responsible member of the international community.<sup>135</sup>

The signing of the CEDAW in 1980 and its ratification in 1985 were the result of intense pressures from domestic women’s groups advocates, their ability to unify despite of their

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working women with family responsibilities (interview with Akamatsu Ryoko, Tokyo, Japan, February 7, 2016).

<sup>133</sup> Yamashita, “*CEDAW and Japan*.”: ??.

<sup>134</sup> Sato, *Legitimacy Deficit in Japan*: 586.

<sup>135</sup> Flowers, *Refugees, Women, and Weapons*, 94.

diverse values, develop successful norm framing strategy, and their readiness to make difficult compromises in order to achieve the overarching goal of the CEDAW adoption. Their success, however, was enabled by the accumulation of factors working in favour of domestic normative change. The 1970s were characterised by more egalitarian social, economic and political environment that was brought about and strengthened under the influence of international movement for the advancement of the position of women. Although the *discriminative equality* assigned lesser value to women than to men, women were able to acquire education and professional skills, to participate in political processes and started entering male-dominated occupational areas. These developments enabled women to gain access to power and to exert some influence in decision-making.

In the mid 1970s, women's organisations in partnership with individual women with access to power (politicians, journalists, academics, bureaucrats) exerted great pressures on the government to implement the objectives of the International Women's Year (1975), such as establishing government structures for the promotion of the position of women and creating the national plan of action for the implementation of the above objectives.<sup>136</sup> In 1975 the Headquarters for the Promotion and Planning of Policies related to Women was established, headed by Prime Minister as president and Director General of the Prime Minister's Office as vice president. A ten-year Domestic Plan of Action that established a basis for comprehensive gender policy planning for the first time in the Japanese government was produced in 1977.<sup>137</sup>

Empirical findings regarding the content of the gender equality norm that was internalised domestically through public discourse and institutional structures show that the

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<sup>136</sup> These objectives were stated in *the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace* adopted at the World Conference of International Women's Year in Mexico City, Mexico, June 19-July 2, 1975.

<sup>137</sup> Flowers, *Refugees, Women, and Weapons*, 82.

elements of internalised norm included encouragement of women's engagement in economic and political activity on the one hand, and gender-based division of labour and emphasis on women's family roles on the other. Antidiscrimination legislation that diffused internationally as a mechanism for implementation of *full equality* was not introduced in Japan. A number of institutional measures that discouraged full-time female economic participation were either kept or introduced. The core element of the *full equality* – equal responsibility of men and women for the family – was pruned. In 1985, then Prime Minister Nakasone acknowledged women's increasing contribution to the society, young women's economic contribution and praised Japanese women's dedication to family. He expressed his support for the change of a Japanese woman from an isolated housewife into a "good mother of social nature".<sup>138</sup>

Japan signed the CEDAW in 1980 and set passing of a law on equal employment opportunities as a condition for the ratification of the CEDAW in 1985. The law commonly referred to as the Equal Employment Opportunities Act (hereafter, the EEO Act) was promulgated in June, 1985 (entered into force on April 1, 1986), and the CEDAW was ratified later that month.<sup>139</sup> The ruling LDP elites chose not to create a new law, but to revise the 1972 Welfare Act and Labour Standards Act of 1947. Basic principles of the Welfare Act were preserved, namely maternity protection and support for working women with family responsibility. Discrimination against women was proscribed with respect to retirement age,

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<sup>138</sup> Debate about institutional harmonisation with the CEDAW 102<sup>nd</sup> session of the House of Representatives, the Budget Committee meeting no. 8, March 16, 1985.

<sup>139</sup> EEO Act is actually a revised Working Women's Welfare Act of 1972. Its full title is the *Kouyou no bun'ya ni okeru danjo no kintou na kikai oyobi taiguu no kakuhotou joshi roudousha no fukushi zoushin ni kan suru houritsu* (the Law Related to Securing, Etc. of Equal Opportunities and Treatment between Men and Women in Employment and the Advancement of Welfare of Female Workers), Law No. 113 of 1972, amended by Law No. 45 of 1985.

dismissal, and, to a certain extent, vocational training. Provisions relating to other parts of employment process, such as recruitment, job placement, promotion were voluntary in character.

Compliance with equal employment opportunities for men and women was formulated as voluntary, and no sanctions accompanied non-compliance with normative elements that contested conservative values and discriminatory practices. This was a difficult strategic choice made by female legislators and bureaucrats, as insistence on penalties for non-compliers threatened to cause too much domestic resistance and jeopardise ratification of the CEDAW that was considered a priority.<sup>140</sup> A number of institutional measures discouraging women with families from full time employment were put in place. Specifically, taxation and pension systems were designed in a way that encouraged full-time employment of one family member of a nuclear family. As gender wage gap in Japan was the highest among developed countries, this system encouraged women to stay at home or work in low-paid part-time jobs to enjoy family benefits of the system.

Despite the above drawbacks, institutional harmonisation with the CEDAW provisions led to marked widening of women's access to jobs and occupational areas up to then unavailable to women. Category of women was separated from the category of minors. Women were reconstructed as full adults, which is symbolised by the establishment of a separate Bureau for Women in the Ministry of Labour in 1984. Education was another area that required significant adjustments to respond to the provisions of the CEDAW. Educational reform led to widening of education for women, including opening of schools within the jurisdiction of government institutions responsible for national security, such as Japan Defence Agency (hereafter, JDA).

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<sup>140</sup> Ryoko Akamatsu, a long-term Japanese bureaucrat responsible for policies for improvement of working position of women and the principal actor in the development of the Equal Employment Opportunities Act (interview by the author, Tokyo, Japan, February 7, 2016).

Reforms of the 1980s opened women's access to traditionally male occupational and educational fields.

In the beginning of the 1980s Japanese government adopted a comprehensive security policy, that established economy as one of pillars of national security.<sup>141</sup> Japanese economy relied on life-long employment, seniority promotion system, and gender-based division of labour. Japanese companies and business in general could be characterised as “greedy” institutions, as they place high demands on individuals in terms of voluntary commitments, loyalty, time and energy.<sup>142</sup> In the process of institutional harmonisation with the CEDAW, ruling political, bureaucratic and business elites were not able to prune out all threatening foreign normative elements. Instead, they weakened those elements (such as antidiscrimination, equal participation in family responsibilities, women's rights) by retaining old or establishing new institutional structures supportive of functional division of gender roles, effectively hollowing out the adopted norm of *full equality*. The adopted norm was reconstructed in a way that would strengthened country's economic system, contribute to national security, and in that extension strengthened the power of local ruling elites (*statist* element). The *ryōsai kenbo* retained its high position in local normative hierarchy. Based on the above findings, a conclusion can be made that the international norm of *full equality* as institutionalised in the CEDAW was institutionalised in Japan through localisation as the *statist functional equality*.

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<sup>141</sup> Hidekazu Sakai, “The End of Comprehensive Security? The Evolution of Japanese Security Policy in the post-September 11-Terrorism World 1,” *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs* 16, no. 1/2 (June and December 2003): 73.

<sup>142</sup> Mady Wechsler Segal applied theory on greedy institutions developed by Lewis Coser in her study on intersection of military and family as social institutions, “The Military and Family as Greedy Institutions,” *Armed Forces and Society*, 13, no. 1 (fall 1986):9; Lewis A. Coser, *Greedy Institutions: Patterns of Undivided Commitment*, New York: The Free Press, 1974.

The next section describes the adoption of the international norm of *rights-based equality* in the 1990s and its internalisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 3.2.3 *Localisation of International Norm of Rights Based Equality as the Participatory Equality*

Japan adopted *rights-based equality* through legal and institutional changes at the end of the 1990s. This gender equality norm was internalised in Japan as *participatory equality*.<sup>143</sup> Even though language of human rights was adopted in basic laws and plans for gender-equal society, the human rights element, which is the core element of the international norm, was and still is strongly contested in the subsequent internalisation process. The norm of *participatory equality* is still in the process of construction/reconstruction, and in the process of contestation with the *statist functional equality*. It is not yet clear what shape it will finally acquire. Empirical findings indicate that the *participatory equality* until 2013 corresponded closely to the international norm of *full equality*. It is of relevance to note that core elements of *rights-based equality* such as elimination of violence against women and work-life-balance strengthened over time, despite significant domestic contestation and non-compliance. In recent years the human rights element has been strengthening as well, although its future as part of local gender equality norms remains unclear.

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<sup>143</sup> “Gender equality” is translated in Japanese as *danjo kyōdō sankaku* – joint participation of men and women. Rationale for this is that “gender” does not have its equivalent in Japanese language, and using a foreign term will not resonate domestically. On the other hand, Japanese equivalent for “equality” – *byōdō* – is purposefully avoided as it is considered as a concept of Western liberalism and individualism that is not congruent with Japanese cultural values. Nevertheless, English translation of *danjo kyōdō sankaku* is “gender equality” or “gender-equal”, which obscures potential divergence between domestic and international norms.



Almost immediately after its institutionalisation, contestation of the *statist functional equality* started. Domestic women's movements were not satisfied with actual results of reforms undertaken by the Japanese government with the objective of domestic institutional harmonisation with the CEDAW. Their power to action and influence was strengthened as a result of the CEDAW ratification. With the ratification of this instrument, Japanese government became more susceptible to international normative pressures. Japan assumed a number of responsibilities, including the obligation of reporting to the UN on country's progress on the implementation of the CEDAW (i.e. on measures for the advancement of the position of women).<sup>144</sup> In 1985 the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women were adopted by the third world conference on women. This document provided specific measures to be taken by states members of international community committed to the advancement of women and the elimination of gender-based discrimination for the period 1986-2000.<sup>145</sup> In response, Japanese government led by Prime Minister Nakasone adopted in 1987 the new National Plan of Action Toward the Year 2000. This plan called for the establishment of a society in which women and men participate together as members of equal status in all spheres of life. The concept of participation was changed in 1991 from participation through joining some endeavour (*sanka*) to participation in some endeavour from the very planning phase (*sankaku*).<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> CEDAW, Part V, Article 18.

<sup>145</sup> Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace: 6.

<sup>146</sup> While calling for equal participation of men and women in all spheres of life corresponds with the *full equality*, equal participation of men and women in all stages of decision-making processes from the planning stage is a core element of the *rights-based equality*. Answering the question whether this

In 1990, Japan experienced the “1.57” shock.<sup>147</sup> In 1991, Japan experienced the trauma of international criticism for its “too little too late” response to the Gulf War crisis. In 1992, Japan’s economic bubble burst and government measures failed to lead to the expected economic recovery. Japan’s international standing was damaged. In 1993, the conservative LDP lost power for the first time since 1955. In 1994, LDP returned to power in coalition with its nemesis – Social Democratic Party, and New Party Sakigake. Both leaders of later coalition parties were female. To switch from opposition to ruling party, Social Democratic Party agreed to acknowledge the constitutionality of the Self-Defence Forces.

In 1990, recommendations arising from the first review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women was adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Japan responded by making its first set of revisions to the New National Plan of Action toward the Year 2000 (First Revision) in 1991 and by promoting measures in line with that plan. Under this first revision, the plan outlined basic policies for the period from FY1987 to FY2000 and concrete measures for the period from FY1991 to FY1995, and calls for the formulation of further concrete measures from FY1996.

In the new and turbulent post-Cold War period, Japan proceeded with the implementation of the CEDAW, developing new and strengthening the existing legal and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women. Particularly genuine efforts to promote gender equality in Japan were undertaken by Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro’s cabinet (January 11, 1996 – July 30, 1998).<sup>148</sup> In the UN, issue areas of concern relating to the advancement of

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reinterpretation of “participation” was developed locally, or was learned through socialisation with international women’s movements is beyond the scope of this study.

<sup>147</sup> In 1990 Japan recorded the lowest birth rate in its history, which shocked the nation.

<sup>148</sup> Mari Osawa, “Japanese Government Approaches to Gender Equality since the Mid-1990s,” *Ssian Perspective* 29, no. 1 (2005): 158.

women was broadening to include issues such as violence against women and women's reproductive health. Japanese government could no longer rely on the Ministry of Labour to be the principal leader in responding to international expectations regarding empowerment of women in Japan. In 1994 the Headquarters for Gender Equality was set up within the Cabinet Office. The office for Gender Equality was established in the Prime Minister's Office, as well as the Council for Gender Equality as an advisory body to the prime minister.<sup>149</sup> Cooperation with NGOs and civil society was formalised through the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Egalite Network) that was formed in 1996. This year, formulation of a basic law on gender equality started. Nevertheless, the 1996 white paper on women states: "The division of female and male roles into, 'A man's place is at work, while a woman's place is in the home,' [*discriminative equality*] is fading. Roles are now viewed somewhat differently: 'A man's place is at work, and a woman's place is at work and in the home' [*functional equality*]."<sup>150</sup> This statement is a clear indication that by 1996, the process of sedimentation of the *statist functional equality* advanced to the extent that this norm assumed the status of a local normative prior.

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<sup>149</sup> Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, (available at [https://www.gender.go.jp/english\\_contents/about\\_danjo/toward/progress/index.html](https://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/about_danjo/toward/progress/index.html), accessed on July 4, 2021).

<sup>150</sup> Office for Gender Equality, Prime Minister's Office, Advances Made by Japanese Women During the 50 Years Since the End of the War, The Present Status of Women and Measures, Fifth Report on the Implementation of the New National Plan of Action Toward the Year 2000 (February 26, 1996) (Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office website, [https://www.gender.go.jp/english\\_contents/about\\_danjo/whitepaper/plan2000/e01.html](https://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/about_danjo/whitepaper/plan2000/e01.html), accessed September 23, 2019). Text in brackets added by the author.

In 1997, EEO Act was revised to make compliance with provisions on antidiscrimination obligatory for employers, and discrimination of women was proscribed throughout the employment process. This law is also the first law to address sexual harassment in the workplace. In 1999, the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society was enacted.<sup>151</sup> Through this law, Japanese government formally adopted the international norm of *rights-based equality*.

The beginning of the new century brought further strengthening of institutional mechanisms for gender equality based on the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society. The first five-year Basic Plan for Gender Equality was formulated in 2000, focusing on general government policies for gender equality. In 2001, the Council for Gender Equality and the Gender Equality Bureau were established in the Cabinet Office by law, significantly strengthening their position. In 2001 Prime Minister Koizumi appointed a record number of female ministerial positions (5 out of 17 ministers), including minister of foreign affairs. In 2005, the Second Basic Plan on Gender Equality was formulated. This plan set an ambitious target of increasing proportion of women in leadership positions to 30% by 2020. There was a general belief that this target was not unreachable in public sector. The Third Basic Plan on Gender on Gender Equality formulated in 2010 introduced gender equality for men and children as a priority field.

Violations of women's human rights in Japan are still dealt with in the court of law by invoking the principle of *public order and decency* (*kōjo ryōzoku*). This principle is vague, deeply embedded in Japanese legal practice, and upheld by the powerful structures of the

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<sup>151</sup> The Basic Act for Gender Equal Society (Law no. 78 of 1999). The law was enacted its current form in great extent because of the support from Prime Minister Obuchi and Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiromu Nonaka (Haniwa Natori, former Director of the Office for Gender Equality of the Prime Minister's Office and former Director General of Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office, interview by author, Tokyo, June 13, 2014).

Japanese juridical system enables its continued normative robustness. It is high in the local normative hierarchy. Although respect for human rights was institutionalised in legislation and policies, and Japanese government's dedication to this principle repeatedly stated in government documents, respect for human rights as a legal principle did not to present a challenge for "*public order and decency*" throughout the period observed by this study.

At the turn of centuries, gender equality and antidiscrimination legislation were adopted, and debates about the necessity to advance economic and political empowerment of women intensified in Japanese political discourse. This, however, provoked a strong backlash from conservative elites that resulted in significant setbacks for internalisation of the adopted international norm, particularly on compliance level. This backlash inflicted significant setbacks on the implementation of policies and plans developed in consistency with the norm of *participatory equality*. Many among the conservative ruling LDP elites believed that the problem of declining birth rates was a consequence of women's empowerment. For that reason, they believed that the low birth rate would increase if women withdrew from workforce and focused on family. This attitude was strong among LDP elites in the first half of the 2000s. In 2005, however, a report on social environment that affected total fertility rate and women's labour force participation rates in 24 high-income OECD member countries in the period 1970-2000 was published.<sup>152</sup> Research showed that OECD member countries that responded to the problem of declining birth rates by introducing policies for women to balance work and family life, providing support for childrearing and offering diversity of lifestyle choices were successful in increasing birth rates. Findings published in this report provided strong arguments

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<sup>152</sup> Government of Japan Cabinet Office, Council for Gender Equality, Specialist Committee on the Declining Birthrate and Gender-Equal Participation, "International Comparison of the Social Environment regarding the Declining Birthrates and Gender-Equality," Summary Report, 2005, [https://www.gender.go.jp/english\\_contents/pr\\_act/pub/pdf/english-1.pdf](https://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/pr_act/pub/pdf/english-1.pdf) (accessed September 2, 2021).

in favour of proponents of female empowerment. Japan, which had least advanced in the area of female empowerment among the OECD countries, continued to record birth rate decline.

The lack of compliance with newly adopted foreign norms can be explained as a consequence of the failure of norm entrepreneurs in the late 1990s – who as part of international intellectual elite took the principle of respect for human rights for granted – to recognise the resilience of conflicting local norms. Norm entrepreneurs of this period lacked strategic approach to norm internalisation because they underestimated the strength of domestic norm entrepreneurs and their supporters. Backlash that followed the adoption of *rights-based equality* resulted in grave setbacks for gender equality in Japan, and led to contestation of and non-compliance with the adopted norm throughout the government, business world and society during the 2000s. During this period the *statist functional equality* showed signs of being entrenched. Although it was no longer beneficial for Japan's economic growth, and exacerbated societal problem of falling birth rate, this norm firmly resisted the competing new norm of *participatory equality*. The impasse was broken by Prime Minister Abe Shinzo who successfully reframed *participatory equality* to fit local normative priors.

As a principal actor in backlash against the *participatory equality* in the 2000s, Abe used conservative rhetoric to frame female empowerment as a threat to long-term survival of Japanese culture, society and nation. Female empowerment was represented as a foreign idea that threatened Japanese conservative cultural values. Female empowerment was represented as a cause of birth rate decline, making it simultaneously an economic and national security threat in long-term. This normative frame led to the entrenchment of the *statist functional equality* in the first half of the 2000s. However, during Abe's second cabinet, female empowerment was reframed as a desperately needed solution for the country's flailing economic growth. Women's economic participation would relieve the problem of rapidly shrinking workforce, providing companies with skilled labour on the one hand, and on the other

hand reducing the need for reliance on immigrant labour that was perceived as threat in a nation that presents itself as homogenous. Female empowerment was expected to lead to birth rate increase (in accordance with the findings of the abovementioned OECD study). Thusly it would contribute to economic security of Japan, as economy that was defined as one of the pillars of Japan's comprehensive security policy was threatened by declining birth rate. This would contribute to reducing long-term societal threats accompanying failure of a society to ensure generational replacement. After *statist* element was introduced – namely, after female empowerment (and gender equality) was re-framed not as an objective in itself but a means necessary to ensure societal, economic and national security – it was possible to overcome the normative status quo and proceed with internalisation of *participatory equality*.<sup>153</sup>

The norm of *statist functional equality* was firmly institutionalised in Japan, and the conservative LDP's economic, welfare, educational and other policies were formulated based on this norm. Japan's economic system relied on gender-based division of labour throughout the period covered by this study, and workplace in Japan generally displayed strongly characteristics of a "greedy institution". Bloomfield argues that such institutional context needs to be taken in to account as "antipreneurs enjoy special strategic and tactical advantage when defending entrenched norms."<sup>154</sup> The successful backlash against compliance with the adopted international norm of *rights-based equality* confirms this Bloomfield's hypothesis. In addition to institutional context, Bloomfield raises the relevance of temporal context because

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<sup>153</sup> The language Abe used for framing of female empowerment as a threat, and later reframing it as a solution to threats, is reflective of the language of securitisation and desecuritisation. This study proposes the introduction of a concept of "soft securitisation", which refers to securitisation/desecuritisation relating to indirect threats to long-term survival of a nation, society and/or community.

<sup>154</sup> Bloomfield, "Norm Antipreneurs," 312.

“exogenous events or contingencies such as shifts in the [...] distribution of power or crises affect the roles actors play and how they play them.”<sup>155</sup> In 2009, the LDP lost power to the Democratic Party of Japan (hereafter, DPJ) who recorded overwhelming victory. The message from voters was clear – they no longer supported conservative LDP leadership as it failed to respond effectively to economic and social crisis since the beginning of the 1990s.

The third Basic Plan for Gender Equality that was formulated and adopted under DPJ government is more comprehensive on the one hand, and more specific in terms of measures and targets to be achieved on the other hand than its predecessors. The plan defines basic direction of policy of gender equality to be pursued by 2020 by defining 15 priority fields with 82 performance objectives for the evaluation of the plan implementation (in comparison to 42 in the Second Basic Plan). The plan fully reflected *rights-based equality*, and for the first time identifies men as a target of gender policies in systematic way. Focus of the policy of gender equality was placed on equality for men and children, poverty reduction, promotion of social diversity, gender equality in science and technology and academic fields, and in the fields of regional development, disaster prevention, environment et cetera.

LDP regained power in 2012, with Abe Shinzo at the helm. Abe administration focused on strengthening political power by focusing on economic recovery and national security. In 2013, based on rationalist calculations Abe chose female empowerment as a strategic tool for economic recovery, whereas in the area of national security female empowerment was assumed as international obligations. The governing conservative elites grafted the elements of new norms of women’s economic and political participation to the strong normative prior of economic security. This enabled the government to resolve the entrenchment of normative priors and adopt gender policies and measures that previously would have been unacceptable.

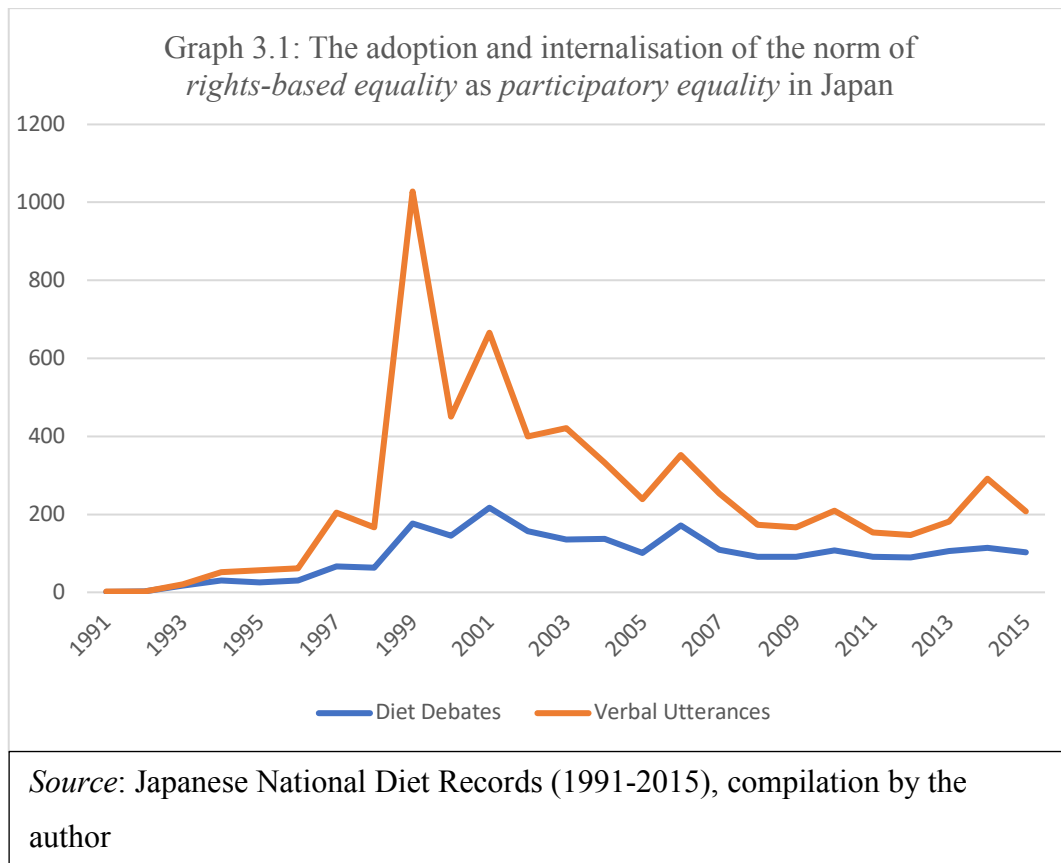
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<sup>155</sup> Bloomfield, “Norm Antipreneurs,” 312.



Temporal context explains Abe’s dramatic normative shift. Factors supportive of *participatory equality* accumulated, and Abe removed the greatest obstacle on the level of compliance with this norm by incorporating *statist* element into this norm.

Graph 3.1 below shows frequency of use of the term *danjo kyōudō sankaku* (participatory equality) in the Japanese National Diet from its first mention until 2015. Statistical data indicate



that debates relating to a specific norm intensify at the point of its adoption and institutionalization. Until 2010 the norm is debated in the periods of adoption of five-year basic plans on gender equality. The exemption are years 2013/2014, when normative debate was revived after Prime Minister Abe announced his policy of female empowerment, with the focus on economic empowerment (“womenomics”). With Prime Minister Abe’s campaign and policy for the “creation of society in which all women can shine” institutionalisation and internalisation of *participatory equality* made a significant breakthrough. The downward or flattening line in both number of utterances and sessions where this norm was debated may

indicate either that the adopted competing norm retreated due to backlash, that a norm is not being contested, or that a norm is in sedimentation process. The above puzzle can be answered through in-depth qualitative analysis of political discourse in that period that is beyond the scope of this study.

This chapter provided a description and the analysis of the processes of adoption and internalisation of international norms relating to gender equality in Japan. The findings of this chapter are that international norms were reconstructed in Japan to fit local normative priors. The international norm of *functional equality* was localised as *discriminative equality* in the post-WW2 period. *Full equality* that was adopted through the signing and the ratification of CEDAW was localised as *statist functional equality*. Finally, *rights-based equality* that was adopted at the end of the 1990s was localised as *participatory equality*. In cases when norm entrepreneurs failed to successfully build congruence with local normative priors through framing, grafting and pruning, norm antipreneurs successfully hampered compliance with the adopted norms. This was the case of *rights-based equality/participatory equality* in the 2000. In contrast, women's movements in 1980s made strategic choice to frame female empowerment as domestic issue in the interest of Japan's economic and social development and subsequently avoided backlash. Norms are dynamic processes, and there are various normative elements among from which powerful local political actors in Japan chose. Actors chose specific elements based on their own beliefs and values, as well as based on rationalist calculations. The following chapter turns towards internalisation of international norms relating to gender equality on organisational level – in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces.

## CHAPTER FOUR: INTERNALISATION OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS RELATING TO GENDER EQUALITY IN THE JAPANESE SELF-DEFENCE FORCES

This chapter provides empirical study of internalisation of international, as well as local norms relating to gender equality in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the period 1954-2015. The SDF was an active agent in the internalisation of international gender equality norms. The organisation contested those elements of local gender equality norms that diverged from its interests, preferences and identity, and borrowed from international normative content those elements congruent with them. On the other hand, it resisted compliance with those elements that were perceived incompatible with the identity and interests of the organisation. Based on Berger's findings regarding cultures of antimilitarism in Japan and Germany, antimilitarism was one of the strongest normative elements in Japan in the post-WW2 period. This was also a core element of local norm of *discriminative equality* and *statist functional equality*. This normative element needed to be pruned from prevalent gender equality norms in the SDF. The stated purpose of the SDF was to ensure security of Japan, which meant that the primary purpose of all members in the organisation was to give their contribution to the objective of national security. Thusly, *statism* was a core normative element constitutive of the identity of Japanese armed forces.

In the first section of this chapter historical overview of gender policies in the SDF will be described. This section is divided in five subsections that reflect periods of gender policy change in the SDF. Based on studies by Sato and Ninić, historical account of gender policies in the SDF between 1954 and 2015 presented in five subsections of section one is divided in five

periods.<sup>156</sup> This division aims to reflect points of major changes in the direction of gender policies in the SDF, as well as change in gender equality norms upon which policy choices were made. Each subsection consists of two parts. Whereas first part of each subsection provides historical overview of gender policies in the SDF, second part of each subsection provides the analysis of internalisation process of gender equality norms in the SDF. Until the year 2000, “gender policies” refer to female integration in the SDF because men were not included as a target category for gender equality policies until that year. However, the focus of this study even after the year 2000 is on female integration in the SDF.<sup>157</sup>

The first subsection covers the period since the establishment of the SDF in 1954 until 1966 during which women were only recruited as nurses. The second subsection covers the period from 1967 when recruitment of women in general occupations started in the GSDF until 1979. The third subsection of section one provides description and the analysis of the process of policy harmonisation with CEDAW in the period between 1980 when the CEDAW was signed until the opening of the NDA for women in 1992. The fourth subsection examines female integration in the SDF in the period 1993-2000, in the changed normative and strategic environment of the post-Cold War period. The final subsection of section one covers the period between 2001 and 2015, during which female personnel was transformed from supplementary workforce to the integral part of the SDF.

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<sup>156</sup> Sato, *Gunji soshiki to jendā*, 2004; Slavica Ninić, “Gender and National Security: The Introduction of International Norms related to Gender Equality in the Japanese Self-Defense Forces,” Master’s Thesis, Kobe University, 2012.

<sup>157</sup> This study unfortunately could not completely escape a pitfall of converging “women” and “gender”. However, studies of policies towards women and after 2000 towards men are few. It is the hope of the author of this dissertation that this study will be a building block for future analysis of gender issues in the SDF.

Section two of this chapter comprises two subsections in which two within-case studies on norm internalisation and compliance will be presented. The first subsection provides the analysis of internalisation process of the element of equal access to education using the case of the National Defence Academy. The second subsection provides the analysis of internalisation of the element of elimination of sexual harassment in *participatory equality*. These two cases represent two types of non-compliance with locally adopted international norms. In the case of exclusion of women from the NDA, non-compliance was primarily a result of antipreneurs' agency. Non-compliance with the prevention of sexual harassment in the SDF, however, seem to have been primarily the case of involuntary non-compliance due to lack of awareness in a conservative organisation with restricted resources. In both cases, external pressures forced the organisation to change its policies to comply with local and adopted gender equality norms.

#### **4.1. Gender Policies in the Japanese Armed Forces: Female Integration in the Self-Defence Forces in the period of 1954-2015**

The Self-Defence Forces were established in 1954 with separate land sea and air forces. All SDF personnel had a status of "special civil servants". The Japanese Defence Agency was established within the Prime Minister's Office to supervise and head the SDF. The JDA was elevated to the status of ministry in 2007. The SDF started as "an isolated, only quasi legitimate military establishment".<sup>158</sup> The construction of the post-WW2 identity of the Self-Defence Forces is closely related to its socially constructed perception in Japanese society as an illegitimate successor of the discredited Japanese Imperial Army (hereafter, JIA), as well as the objective of its political and military leadership to gain legitimacy for the organisation. The SDF military and political leadership endeavoured to construct and establish the identity and image of the Self-Defence Forces as a modern armed force of a country of the democratic block.

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<sup>158</sup> Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*: 83.

The SDF was also influenced by the overwhelming presence of the US military in Japan after which it was modelled.<sup>159</sup> Women were recruited by the SDF since its inception.

#### **4.1.1. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1954-1966: “A Woman a Nurse”**

Women have participated in the Japanese armed forces since their re-establishment in the 1950s. Initially, 10 female civilian nurses were recruited by the National Police Reserve. In 1952, 57 female nurses were given regular service status within the ground forces of the National Safety Forces.<sup>160</sup> The ranks they occupied were all above the equivalent of sergeant major, while the highest rank was the equivalent of major. In 1954 the SDF started recruitment of nurses, offering women better employment conditions than hospitals in civilian sector. Armed forces of Western liberal democracies, and particularly the US military, served as a model for gender policies in the SDF. After WW2 women were integrated into the US military through the Armed Forces Women’s Integration Act of 1948. Female integration commenced after heated debates in the House Military Affairs Committee.<sup>161</sup> The US military adopted restrictive service policies including a 2 percent limit on women’s proportion in the military, rank restriction to lieutenant colonel and restriction of jobs other than nursing, communications,

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<sup>159</sup> The structure, organization, training methods, strategic planning, armament (save nuclear armament), and even military terminology of armed forces of Japan reflects that of US military forces (Katzenstein, 1996; Ben-Ari, 2007; Frühstück, 2007).

<sup>160</sup> Sato, *Gunjisoshiki to jendaa*, 104, Hitoshi Doi, “Fujin jieikan seido to boudai joshi gakusei saiyou no mondai: kakkoku no jijou to no hikaku” (The System of Female Self-Defence Forces Personnel and Problems Related to the Recruitment of Women at the National Defence Academy: International Circumstances and Comparison), *Shinbouei ronsyuu* 16, no. 3 (December 1988): 66.

<sup>161</sup> Lorry M. Fenner, “Either You Need These Women or You Do Not: Informing the Debate on Military Service and Citizenship,” *Gender Issues* 16, no. 3 (summer 1998): 10.

and clerical jobs.<sup>162</sup> The SDF, however, did not adopt a number of discriminative policies that applied to female service members of the US. On the other hand it restricted women's access to occupations other than nursing, the policy that continued until 1966. The SDF nurses performed their job with high competence. In 1966, the number of nurses in the Self-Defence Forces was 417.<sup>163</sup>

The SDF was a socially marginalized organization with limited budget, limited advancement prospects and early retirement schemes in a country with the system of life-long employment. It acutely felt shortages of workforce supply in a rapidly expanding economy. Facing the above problems, the SDF started considering to recruitment of women in general occupations such as communications, accounting and general affairs. These areas were perceived as suitable for women to perform with sufficient competency.<sup>164</sup> In 1963 the Ground Self-Defence Forces commenced a four-year study about the possibility of establishing a program of recruitment of female uniformed personnel in occupations other than nursing. A study group consisting of four Self-Defence Forces nurses was sent to conduct research on the integration of women in the US Women's Army Corps. The first objective of the program was to "open the way for all citizens who wish so to, irrespective of sex, participate directly in the defence of the country."<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Ninić, Master Thesis, 81.

<sup>163</sup> National Diet, House of Councilors, Cabinet Affairs Committee Meeting no. 29. 1967/7/19. 55<sup>th</sup> session, Yutaka Shimada (JDA Head of Bureau of Defense Policy).

<sup>164</sup> The 46<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Cabinet Affairs Committee Meeting no. 48, June 22, 1964, Tokuyasu Fukuda (JDA Director General, LDP).

<sup>165</sup> The second objective was to recruit women in *occupations appropriate for women* in order to redistribute male service members to frontline units. The third objective was *to increase the understanding of the SDF* among the population, especially among women in general, GSDF Woman

#### *4.1.1.1. Internalisation of Functional Equality and Discriminative Equality in the SDF*

The SDF borrowed from the element of female participation in armed forces of Western democratic countries that was acknowledged by *functional equality*. The element of equal treatment (namely, equal status, pay and benefits) was borrowed from international normative framework institutionalised through the UN and International Labour Organisation. On the other hand, restriction of women's participation to nursing was in accordance with local norm of *discriminative equality*. Domestically, nursing jobs in civilian economy were performed by women, and this type of occupation was perceived as suitable to women's caring nature. There is insufficient historical material for this study to give a definite conclusion about the logic behind restriction of women in nursing jobs. However, it is my assumption that the SDF leadership's policy choice was constrained by domestic culture of antimilitarism, and recent memory of women's suffering under pre-WW2 military rule. Based on the identity of top SDF leadership that was young, internationally oriented, and did not come from JIA, they would have adopted functional equality from the beginning had there not been for the strong antimilitarist sentiment among populace. Despite these differences, gender policies of the SDF in the period 1954-1966 did not significantly diverge from the local norm of *discriminative equality*.

#### **4.1.2. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1967-1979:**

##### **Female Integration in General Occupations**

In 1967, the program of recruitment of female uniformed personnel in occupations other than nursing was established, and the recruitment of women in the GSDF commenced in 1968. Among the basic guidelines for placement of women to jobs other than nursing was to distribute

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Army Corps Training Unit, "Fujin jieikan sanju shunen kinenshi: Future Present Past (Thirty-year Anniversary of Female Uniformed Personnel in the SDF: Future, Present, Past )," (Tokyo: 1998), 71.



them to job areas that were considered to be “appropriate for women” and “womanly/feminine”.<sup>166</sup> In 1970, JDA Director General Nakasone Yasuhiro (1970-1971) proposed a plan for defence build-up that included considerable expansion of female roles in the SDF as a solution for the anticipated recruitment difficulties. Nakasone argued that “women could be used” in a wide range of jobs in communications, supply, medical corps, recruitment, public relations, office administration and similar jobs not accompanied by physical strength requirements.<sup>167</sup> He proposed quantitative increase in the number of female servicemembers from the present 500-600 up to 6000. His proposal was met with strong resistance and was significantly toned down in the Fourth Defence Build-up Plan (1972-1976). Nevertheless, the SDF policies during 1970s proceeded in the spirit of Nakasone’s proposal.

Female integration in the SDF from the mid-1970s proceeded in the environment of intensive international and national campaign towards the advancement of the position of women. In the first half the 1970s the SDF had and an image as an organisation with successful policies of “equal treatment” of men and women that should be used as a model by other government ministries and agencies facing workforce shortages.<sup>168</sup> Female uniformed personnel were praised by the leadership of armed forces for their reliability and high performance. However, there was no clear and comprehensive policy regarding female integration in the SDF and this process advanced slowly.

In 1974, Maritime Self-Defence Forces and the Air Self-Defence Forces introduced the program of recruitment of women in general occupations. During 1970s the GSDF suffered

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<sup>166</sup> Fujin jieikan kyouiku tai, 1998: 71.

<sup>167</sup> The 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Cabinet Affairs Committee meeting no. 17, May 12, 1970, statement by Nakasone Yasuhiro (JDA Director General, LDP)

<sup>168</sup> The 65<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Communications Committee meeting no. 3, February 18, 1971, Keisuke Shiode (Komeito).

grave recruitment difficulties, recording personnel fill-rates that fell even below 70%. Throughout the decade, qualitative as well as quantitative improvements in the SDF continued, and closer cooperation with the US military was institutionalised. Number of SDF personnel increased in the beginning of the decade, but was kept steady after 1973. In the meantime, number of female servicemembers increased from 1,197 in 1973 to 1,500 in 1975, and in 1979 reached 2,782.<sup>169</sup> The principle of military effectiveness was invoked when justifying women's exclusion from specific occupations and positions. In 1979, women comprised slightly more than one percent of total SDF uniformed personnel.

Over time, perception regarding what job areas were “appropriate for women” incrementally expanded. Since 1975 the JDA/SDF were encouraged to consider recruitment of women as doctors and dentists, which was implemented in 1978.<sup>170</sup> In 1979 the request from politicians to consider opening the National Defence Academy and the National Defence Medical College (hereafter, NDMC) for female students was put before the leadership of the JDA/SDF.<sup>171</sup>

#### *4.1.2.1. Adoption of Statist Functional Equality in the SDF*

The example of the US military showed that recruitment of women in supporting roles successfully relieved qualified men for more effective use in combat related tasks. In addition to contributing to the SDF military effectiveness and personnel fill-rates, Nakasone argued that increasing women's participation in the SDF would allow women to “exercise their abilities in

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<sup>169</sup> National Diet, House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no 13. 1979/3/23. 87<sup>th</sup> session, Genri Yamashita (JDA Director General, LDP).

<sup>170</sup> National Diet, House of Representatives, Cabinet Affairs Committee Meeting no. 6. 1975/11/20. 76<sup>th</sup> session, Yozo Kato (LDP).

<sup>171</sup> National Diet, House of Councilors, Budget Committee Meeting no. 13. 1979/3/23. 87<sup>th</sup> session, Aiko Shimura (LDP).

public sphere”.<sup>172</sup> Nakasone’s proposal was based on rationalist calculations, but his normative beliefs enabled him this policy choice. Nakasone’s memoirs indicate that his personal values regarding gender roles were based on local normative prior of *ryosai kenbo* and international norm of *functional equality* that included the element of *statism*. He emphasised kind and wise nature of a woman as supportive mother and wife on the one hand. On the other hand, he conceived of women as a valuable asset of the state and society that could be used a supporting, auxiliary force in the case of necessity.<sup>173</sup> The above findings indicate that Nakasone was a proponent of *statist functional equality* in the period when *discriminative equality* was prevalent local norm.

There are two normative explanations why Nakasone’s proposal relating to the expansion of female integration was rejected. It was rejected because it was part of wider policy proposal that significantly diverged from the norm of antimilitarism. Nakasone was a “hawk” in security policy, a constitutional revisionist, he had military background and participated in Japan’s military administration in Asia. His defence build-up proposal was unpopular and strongly criticised because its objective was the strengthening of Japan’s autonomous defence. Another normative explanation is that the proposal for female integration diverged significantly from the local norm of *discriminative equality*. In 1970 women’s roles in the civilian labour market were very limited and women were perceived as peaceful and pacifist in intensely antimilitaristic society. Although Nakasone’s proposal was formally rejected, female integration in the SDF proceeded in the beginning of the 1970s following the logic of his proposal. This indicates that the SDF leadership adopted the norm of *statist functional equality*

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<sup>172</sup> The 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Cabinet Affairs Committee meeting no. 31, October 28, 1970, statement by Nakasone Yasuhiro (LDP, JDA Director General).

<sup>173</sup> Yasuhiro Nakasone, *Seiji to jinsei: Nakasone Yasuhiro kaikoroku* (Politics and Life: The Memoirs of Yasuhiro Nakasone) (Tokyo: Kodansha Publishers, 1992), 70, 91.

for the organisation earlier than some civilian government bodies, and that this norm started formally replacing *discriminative equality* in the SDF in the first half of the 1970s.

In the first part of the period covered in this subsection the SDF leadership challenged elements of local norm of *discriminative equality* that limited women's participation in armed forces. Policy of female integration at the end of the 1960s in the GSDF was based primarily on rationalist calculations, as a solution for recruitment shortages. However, choice to integrate women in general occupations was enabled by *statist functional equality* the leadership of the SDF held. On the other hand, the MSDF, and especially ASDF did not suffer recruitment difficulties as the GSDF, and they were not pressed to start female integration in 1974. Therefore, material factors cannot be used to explain policy change in the MSDF and the ASDF in 1974. Instead, the answer can be found in normative factors that accumulated and enabled this change. Policy change in the MSDF and the ASDF was a result of institutional harmonisation of gender policies across, i.e. a result of compliance with the formally adopted *statist functional equality*. Frequent reference to practices of the US military where female military integration picked up the pace after the US military switched to all-volunteer recruitment system indicate at emulation of policies of armed forces of other countries. Finally, policy change in the MSDF and ASDF was made as a response to international trends towards female empowerment by an organisation that emphasised the element of internationalism in its identity.

*Functional equality* did not represent a challenge for armed forces in this period as its core elements matched well with recruitment needs of the SDF without challenging male leadership power. Young women would work until marriage or childbirth, contributing to the personnel turnover. They were considered specifically suited for lowest echelons of SDF personnel – a short-term service as enlisted lower personnel – private 2<sup>nd</sup> class, seamen and airman 2<sup>nd</sup> class (hereafter *shi*). On the other hand, the identity of the SDF as an armed force of a country that

was a member of democratic camp of Western developed countries placed normative pressures on the leadership to reflect prevalent norms in Western armed forces. Towards the end of the 1970s, however, egalitarian trends experienced retreat. The norm of *full equality* represented a genuine challenge for the organisation and its power structures.

#### **4.1.3. *Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1980-1992:***

##### **Institutional Harmonisation with the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

During the 1980s the expansion of occupations available for women proceeded within the context of harmonisation with the CEDAW. The SDF is exempted from a number of regulations relating to labour and employment.<sup>174</sup> Despite these exemptions, as a government body it had to respond to international obligations assumed in 1980. This is confirmed by a statement from JDA Director General Kōichi Katō in 1985, “In the recent context of the Women’s International Year and the like, as well as with respect to the issue of equality between men and women in employment, we also are wracking our heads a bit.”<sup>175</sup> Legislative reforms undertaken in areas other than national security directly affected policies of female exclusion in the SDF. This resulted in the narrowing of exclusion of female uniformed personnel from a number of occupational areas. For example, in 1984 the Mariners Act was revised to respond to the CEDAW recommendations relating to equal employment opportunities.<sup>176</sup> As a result, female SDF personnel was assigned to duties on board transport

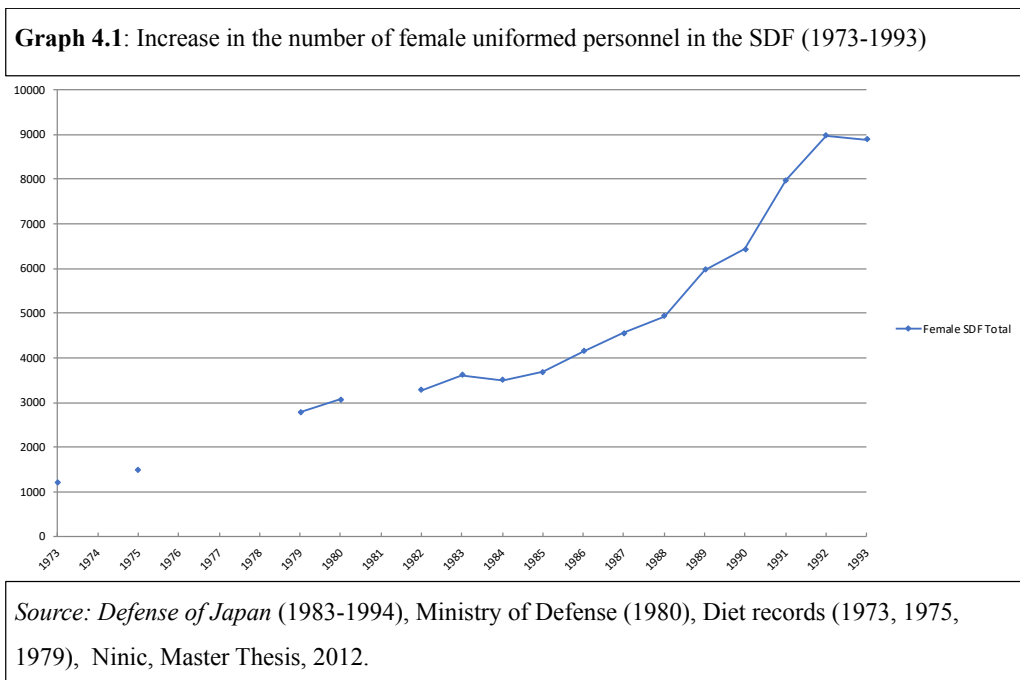
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<sup>174</sup> Article 108 of the SDF Law.

<sup>175</sup> The 102<sup>nd</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Budget Committee meeting no. 4, April 19, 1985.

<sup>176</sup> *Senin hou* (Mariners Act), Act No. 100 of September 1, 1947.

ships, tugboat operations and other logistic services from 1985.<sup>177</sup> The steady increase of female SDF personnel continued throughout the 1980s (see Graph 4.1)



As part of Prime Minister Nakasone’s administrative reforms of the 1980s, the Defence Reform and Review Committee was established in the JDA in 1986. A subcommittee on issues relating to recruitment, education and training of the SDF personnel was undertaken a study on further female integration in the SDF. As a result of that study, decision was made to increase the number of female uniformed personnel to 5000, and expand occupations available to them

<sup>177</sup> Japanese Defence Agency, *Defence of Japan: White Paper on Defence*, September 1991: 137. A year earlier, JDA stated that the SDF is exempted from compliance with the revised Mariners Act in this respect. In 1984 the SDF did not plan to allow women to serve on board a ship due to maternity protection and combat function of military vessels, exchange between Tsuneto Kobayashi (JSP) and Masataka Suzuki (JDA Bureau of Personnel, Head of the Second Personnel Division), the 101<sup>st</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Committee on Transportation meeting no. 18, July 27, 1984.

from the previous 39 percent to 77 percent of all job areas in the SDF (see Table 4.1).<sup>178</sup> General standards for female exclusion from specific jobs were defined in this period as well. Namely, exclusion of women from combat units, combat-support units, and occupations that were physically demanding to a considerable extent.<sup>179</sup> Since the end of the 1980s, principles of privacy protection and maternal protection replaced the principle of military effectiveness as the basis for *de facto* exclusion of women from specific jobs within the SDF.

<b>Table 4.1:</b> Expansion of job areas available to women in the SDF (1954-1993)		
Observed Period	Female SDF Personnel (percentage in total SDF)	Job areas available
1954-1966	0.2%	Nurse
1967-1985	1.5%	39%
1986-1991	2.7%	80%
1992-1993	3.8%	No restrictions
<i>Source:</i> Diet records, Ministry of Defence (Agency of Defence), Defence of Japan (1993), author Ninić, Master Thesis, 2012.		
<i>Note:</i> Figures show the situation at the end of the observed periods		

In 1980, education for female officers, including senior commanding officers and staff officers commenced as well. The NDA started to admit female students in 1992 – 13 years after the issue had been placed on the political agenda. In the beginning of the 1990s, the need for female integration was framed primarily as a measure to respond to recruitment difficulties.

<sup>178</sup> The 107<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Cabinet Affairs Committee meeting no. 4, October 28, 1986; the 108<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no 15. May 19, 1987 statement, person; Doi, *Bōudai joshi gakusei saiyō*, 67.

<sup>179</sup> Fujin jieikan kyōiku tai, 1998:72.

In 1992, the JDA announced it would revise its policy of exclusion of women from combat units.<sup>180</sup> In 1993, a formal decision was made to open all occupations in the SDF to women.

. <b>Table 4.2:</b> Changes in ratio of ranks occupied by male and female SDF personnel						
Year	1983		1987		1992	
Rank	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Officers	16.74	15.04	16.34	13.18	16.88	9.03
Warrant officer	2.09	0	1.93	0	2.21	0.01
Enlisted (Upper)	51.50	16.64	51.38	17.36	54.09	15.06
Enlisted (Lower) Non-fixed term	1.60	10.80	1.55	8.64	4.44	6.93
Enlisted (Lower) fixed term	28.07	57.52	28.79	60.82	22.39	68.97
<i>Source:</i> Defence of Japan (1984, 1988 and 1992), author Ninić, Master Thesis (2012)						
<i>Note:</i> Data for 1983 represent data for FY 1983, data for 1987 and 1992 represent data for the end of the year.						

The number of the SDF personnel in general steadily increased in this period. On the other hand, proportion of female SDF officers considerably decreased, whereas the proportion of male SDF officers displayed a slight increase (see Table 4.2 above). In addition, according to the 1982 data, 69.87 percent of female officers were assigned to medical-related occupations.<sup>181</sup> In 1985 the highest rank occupied by a female SDF officer was colonel

<sup>180</sup> “Fujin jieikan no sentō butai haichi wo kentō – Bōeichō (Defence Agency Considering Placement of Female SDF Personnel in Combat Units),” *Mainichi Daily News*, December 18, 1992.

<sup>181</sup> Data about the structure of women officers were available only for the year 1982 (May 31), Ministry of Defence, *Nihon no bōuei* 1982, 208.



(*issa*).<sup>182</sup> In 1992, this was still the highest rank female SDF officers. At the end of this period female officers were concentrated in female-dominated occupational areas.<sup>183</sup>

#### 4.1.3.1. Norm Contestation and Compliance Resistance

In 1970s the SDF, along with the National Police Agency and the Coast Guard, was raised as an example of successful integration of women other (civilian) government authorities should look upon. However, in 1980s the SDF leadership acted reactively to normative change of the 1980s, showing a cautious and moderate stance towards female integration. The pace of normative change domestically surpassed the pace of change in the organisation. The Diet records reveal that the SDF was increasingly criticised towards the end of the 1980s for lagging behind other developed countries in female integration, especially behind the US. The SDF was criticised for falling behind both in quantitative and qualitative aspects of female integration.<sup>184</sup> The resistance to the new norms in the process of internalisation may be explained by a number of factors. In the 1980s, recruitment situation for the SDF improved, as well as the image of the organisation, reducing the need to rely on women. The age of political leadership may have been a relevant factor as well, in combination with conservative normative beliefs of Japanese ruling elite. Conservative political leaders such as Prime Minister Nakasone, who was at the helm of change towards more egalitarian policies around 1970, were resistant to change that was informed by *full equality*. The SDF uniformed leadership was reluctant to

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<sup>182</sup> Reported by Tsuyoshi Ozawa (JDA Bureau of Personnel, Head of the Second Personnel Division), the 108<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councillors, Security Subcommittee on Foreign Policy and Comprehensive Security meeting no. 1, May 15, 1987.

<sup>183</sup> A Director of Nursing Department (GSDF hospital) and a medical officer (GSDF) were raised as examples. Defence of Japan 1992, 138.

<sup>184</sup> For example, see Tetsuya Tabuchi (DSP), the 118<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Cabinet Affairs Committee meeting no. 8, June 14, 1990.

adopt policies that diverged from *statist functional equality* as well. This claim is corroborated by strong resistance to open the NDA to women.

The prevalent gender equality norm in the SDF in this period was *statist functional equality*, whereas values deriving from *discriminative equality* still posed a challenge for policy change. Female military participation that was adopted from international normative framework in the 1950s was a sedimented element in the organisation. Policies of female integration designed in accordance with *statist functional equality* proceeded, whereas challenge was being posed by locally adopted norm of *full equality*. Women were placed in female-dominated occupations and recruited disproportionately for the lowest positions in military hierarchy. They were still expected to leave the SDF after marriage or childbirth. However, adopted international norms required enabling women the access to decision-making positions, which was a significant challenge for the established normative hierarchy. Processes of *phasing out of discriminative equality*, *accumulation of enabling factors for participatory equality*, as well as *sedimentation of statist functional equality* in the organisation were incrementally intensifying throughout the 1980s.

#### **4.1.4. Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 1993-2000:**

##### **Narrowing Female Exclusion**

In the post-Cold War period, the SDF too struggled to adjust to new domestic and international environment. The end of the Cold War generated the belief that time of big wars had past, which brought into question the very purpose and mission of national institutionalised armed forces. Debates on integration of women, as well as other gender issues in armed forces internationally proceeded with renewed intensity after 1993, resulting in creation of more egalitarian policies in armed forces. This was a result of a successful performance of thousands of women deployed within troops of the US and Great Britain. The Gulf War showed that it was no longer possible to clearly distinguish between front line and support military functions,

and that female participation did not affect military effectiveness. These findings struck incapacitating blow to the principle of military effectiveness that had long been used as the basis of female exclusion. The SDF as well faced the need to respond to international and domestic normative requirements in greater measure in order to preserve its legitimacy and ensure support of the populace.

Female integration in the SDF in this period proceeded primarily as accumulation of *ad hoc* decisions as a response to government's gender equality policies, recruitment needs and within the context of contribution to international efforts. It is not possible to discern comprehensive policy of female integration in the 1990s. Female integration proceeded based on both normative and material considerations on the part of the JDA/SDF leadership. From normative perspective, policy changes were made to create convergence between the reality of the SDF and its identity as modern armed force of a democratic country. At the same time, female integration was used for the objective of improving the image of the SDF among populace, and ensuring that recruitment needs in the lower echelons of troops were satisfied as much as possible.

In 1993, the JDA established a committee on securing human resources whose objective was to study measures for improvement of working conditions in the SDF.<sup>185</sup> The same year the decision was made to open all occupational areas in the SDF to women, framed within the context of domestic social advancement of women.<sup>186</sup> Although policy of female exclusion was formally scrapped, in reality very few occupations were actually open to women

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<sup>185</sup> "Mataniti seifuku mo tsukurimasu – Jin'in fusoku, jieitai ga josei kakuho sakusen (We Will also Make Maternity Clothes – the SDF Facing Personnel Shortages Thinking up a Strategy to Attract Women), *Mainichi Daily News*, September 5, 1993.

<sup>186</sup> Defence of Japan 1994, 164.

after that decision.<sup>187</sup> Official policy for “use/utilisation” of women in the SDF was established: 1) utilisation of female uniformed personnel not based on their sex, but based on their abilities and skills, 2) providing equal treatment and opportunities with respect to career advancement etc., while taking into concern maternity protection.<sup>188</sup> Maternity and privacy protection were set as official principles for exclusion of women from specific occupations.<sup>189</sup>

In the beginning of this period female exclusion was extensive, but relaxation of rules incrementally proceeded. In 1993, with relaxation of rules regarding female exclusion from combat and combat-related units, the MSDF and the ASDF started accepting female aviation cadets. The GSDF took this step two years later, in 1995. Also in 1995, the SDF started accepting female reserves in occupations other than nursing. The first female pilot finished her training in the beginning of 1994.<sup>190</sup> In 1997 the first helicopter pilot finished her training, with the ambition to become a helicopter instructor.<sup>191</sup> This is a representative example of *ad hoc* decision-making in the 1990s. A pharmacist in the SDF was contacted by superiors and asked if she were interested to become a helicopter pilot. This suggestion came directly from the superiors who held her in high esteem. She accepted the offer, went through (re)training program, and subsequently became the first helicopter pilot in the SDF. This case also speaks

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<sup>187</sup> Interview with Hiromi Takashima, Retired Vice Admiral, Maritime Self-Defence Force, interview by author, Tokyo, December 12, 2014.

<sup>188</sup> Fujin jieikan kyouiku tai, 1998, 74.

<sup>189</sup> Sato, *Gunji soshiki to jenda*, 95.

<sup>190</sup> At this point there were no other women in pilot training program, “Jieitai shono josei pairotto – 25sai Miyamoto Noriko ‘Kicho mezashimasu’ (The First Female SDF Pilot – 25-Year Old Miyamoto Noriko says ‘I’m Aiming to be a Captain’),” *Mainichi Daily News*, January 21, 1994.

<sup>191</sup> “Josei jieikan sho no herikoputaa pairottoga tanjo (The First Female SDF Helicopter Pilot Appears),” *Mainichi Daily News*, September 5, 1997.

against rationalist argument that availability of women with necessary technical skills decides female inclusion in or exclusion from specific jobs. However, invalidity of this argument can be asserted only in the case of armed forces such as the SDF, in which number of women was limited so that necessary (re)training resources could be allocated. In the 1990s, a general trend was established to place women who acquired education and training in male-dominated jobs into education and training units.

With the opening of the NDA to women in 1992 and scrapping female exclusion policy in 1993 the SDF formally adopted the norm of *full equality*. The post-Cold War changes in international security environment led to the strengthening of liberal normative aspect in international cooperation in general, and security field in specific. Domestic response to these changes resulted in acceleration of *accumulation of enabling factors* for normative change towards *participatory equality*. In 1995 a new National Defence Program Guidelines (hereafter, NDPG) was adopted by the government of Japan. The previous NDPG focused on activities of traditionally military character, defining prevention of armed invasion and counter aggression (response to indirect aggression) as basic purpose of the SDF. The 1995 NDPG introduced two novel elements into the SDF purpose – response to large-scale disasters and contribution to international peace and security. This was a formal step towards potential transformation of the SDF into a postmodern organisation. Specifically, it was a change that corresponds with third and fourth change in military purpose that is characteristic of the postmodern military proposed by Moskos et al. Namely, the change from war-fighting to non-traditional missions, and participation in missions under international auspices (such as peacekeeping and humanitarian missions).<sup>192</sup> Since 1987 Japan has been involved in international disaster relief operations and

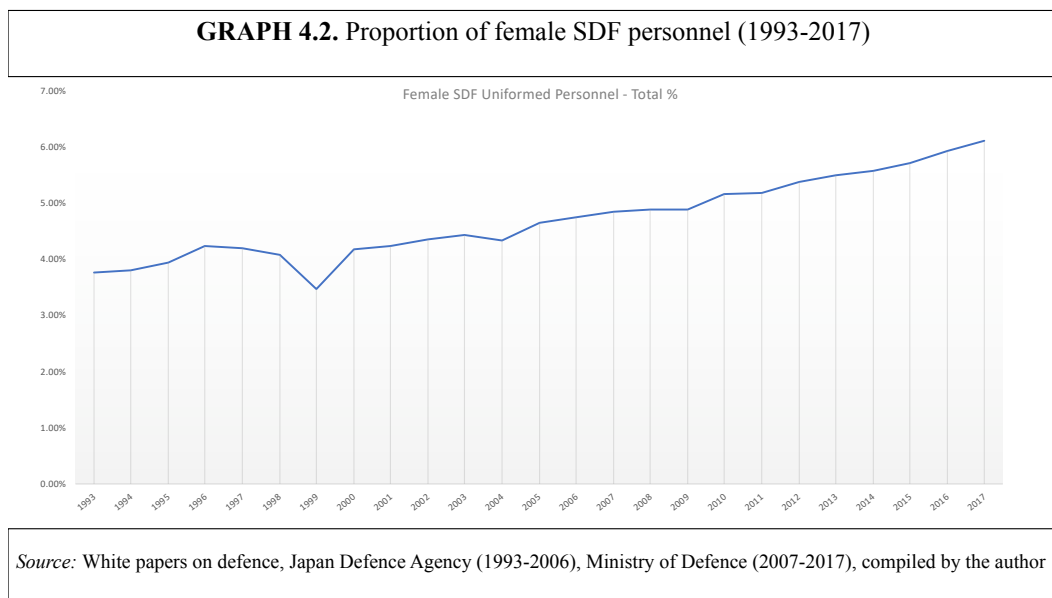
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<sup>192</sup> Charles Moskos et al., *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 275.

since 1992 it has been deployed overseas on peacekeeping operations (hereafter, PKO) under the auspices of the UN, and participation of female SDF personnel in troops that would be deployed abroad was thought of as a given in the beginning of the 1990s.<sup>193</sup> However, female SDF personnel soon disappeared from the context of international missions, even though no relevant outcry against female participation in PKO missions can be found either in Diet records or in media of the early 1990s. This finding indicates that direct influence of international gender equality norms on the SDF policies is limited. Female foreign deployment was postponed until enabling factors accumulated domestically in a sufficient measure to lead to policy change in a different normative environment of the 2000s.

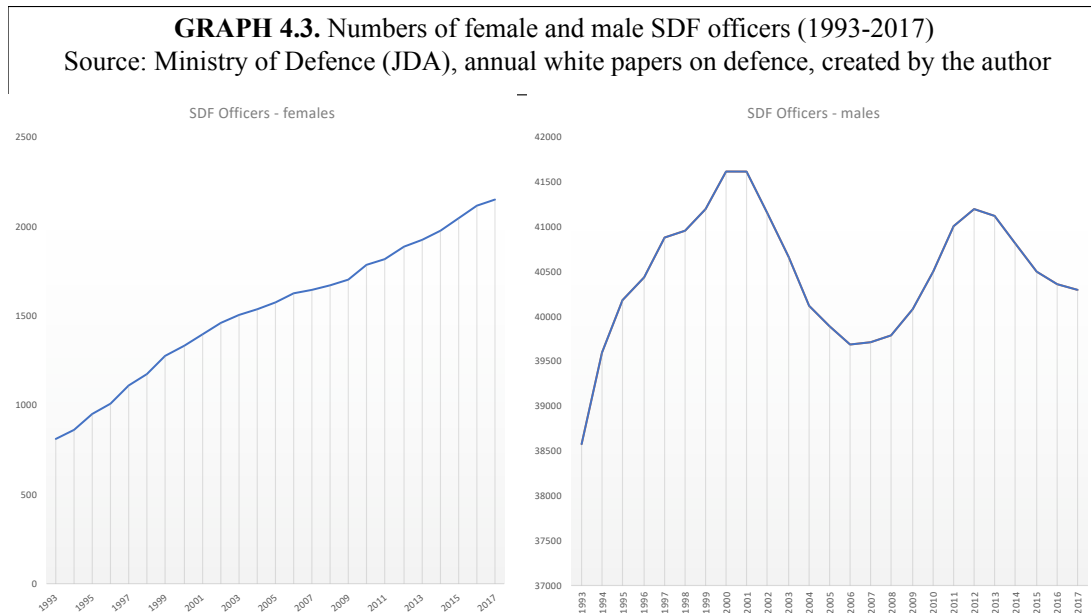
#### 4.1.5. *Gender policies in the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in the Period of 2001-2015: From Supplementary Workforce to Integral Part of the Organisation*

During this period quantitative integration of women in the SDF steadily increased (see Graph 4.2).



<sup>193</sup> For example, “Bōeicho wa kokonoka madeni Kanbojia de kokuren PKO ni sankā shite iru (Japan Defence Agency Participates in PKO Mission in Cambodia until the 9<sup>th</sup>),” *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* (morning edition), December 10, 1992.

Promotion of women in leadership positions also proceeded incrementally, which can be seen from statistical data relating to female SDF officers. Comparison between female and male officer trends indicates that a consistent policy existed in the SDF relating increase in number of female officers (see Graph 4.3)



In the beginning of the 2000s, all government bodies faced the need to harmonise with the newly institutionalised norm of *participatory equality*. With purpose of achieving the objectives of the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society, the Defence Agency Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality was established in June 2001. That year a number of policy changes relating to gender equality was made in the JDA/SDF. Specifically, the SDF started accepting men as nurses and student nurses.<sup>194</sup> For the first time a woman reached the rank of rear admiral in the MSDF (albeit in medical field). The JDA decided to include female personnel in the SDF medical team that was sent to India as part of the Japan Disaster Relief

<sup>194</sup> Sato, Sato, *Gunji soshiki to jenda*, 95.

Team.<sup>195</sup> At the end of 2001 a decision was made to include non-medical female personnel in PKO and seven women were deployed in April 2002 as part of the SDF PKO team in East Timor.<sup>196</sup> This breakthrough happened ten years after Japan started participating in international missions. In 2002 the JDA Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality adopted a plan to increase number of female SDF personnel to 10,000 by 2005.<sup>197</sup> Another breakthrough in female integration came with the decision in 2004 to include female personnel among troops dispatched to Iraq, which was a country still in a de-facto state of war. The following 2005, 19 women were among crew members of a supply ship the MSDF dispatched to the Indian Ocean.<sup>198</sup> One of the female crew members stated that “it is a matter of course for me that women are sent to foreign missions. However, since we will be viewed as pioneers, I

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<sup>195</sup> “Indo seibu jisin jieitai iryou chiimuni, shono josei sanko – Boueicho ga houshin (The JDA Plans to Include Women in the SDF’s Gujarat Earthquake Medical Relief Team),” *Mainichi Daily News*, February 2, 2001.

<sup>196</sup> “Josei jieikan 7nin, shinninmu ni iyoku – Higashi Timoru PKO (Seven Female SDF Personnel Members Show Strong Will to Perform Their New Duty – PKO Assignment in East Timor),” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo Edition), April 12, 2002.

<sup>197</sup> At the point when this target was set, the number of female SDF personnel was already over 10,000, for see data on SDF uniformed personnel in 2002 see Defense of Japan 2002, English Edition, Urban Connections, 2002: p.411.

<sup>198</sup> Vice Admiral Takeshima (ret.) who was the chief of the MSDF personnel department in 2005 does not remember the context in which the decision on foreign deployment of female crew members was made. Usual practice is to dispatch a ship with its original crew members. He assumes that before 2005 female crew members were purposefully removed from supply vessels dispatched abroad. Vice Admiral Takeshima commanded a supply ship dispatched to the Indian Ocean in 2001, interview by author, Tokyo, December 12, 2014.



intend to do my best.”<sup>199</sup> During the first half of the 2000s qualitative female integration proceeded the furthest in medical, and education and training fields.

In 2006 the Defence Agency Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality adopted the Basic Plan for Gender Equality in the Ministry of Defence (hereafter, basic plan). The plan established basic principles for gender equality in the SDF, namely, respect of men and women for each other’s human rights, balance between work and family life, and considerations for gender equality in disaster relief and PKO missions. According to the 2007 white paper on defence, plan included policies and measures relating to female integration, work-life balance and adaptation of the SDF facilities and vessels to accommodate female SDF personnel.<sup>200</sup> Maritime armed forces are considered as most conservative among three services (ground, maritime, air). This applies to the maritime forces of the SDF as well. However, female integration in MSDF gradually advanced. One of the major areas for improvement the MSDF leadership identified was female personnel quitting service after marriage and childbirth. Other two services also shared this problem. In an attempt to retain female personnel long-term, MSDF introduced in 2007 a system of replacement for female MSDF personnel on childcare leave by temporary re-employing former female personnel who retired from MSDF for various reasons (including childbirth and childrearing).<sup>201</sup>

Renewed engagement with gender equality in the JDA/SDF is reflected in the 2006 white paper on defence and the Diet debates as well. In 2006 the MOD established a study committee on fundamental reform of personnel policy in the SDF. Future “utilisation” of female SDF

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<sup>199</sup> “Kaijo jietai: saidai/saishinei no hokyukan “Oumi”, Sasebo kichi ni haibi (MSDF: The Biggest and Most Advanced Supply Ship “Oumi” Deployed to Sasebo Base),” *Mainichi Daily News*, March 9, 2005.

<sup>200</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Defense of Japan 2007 (White Paper)*, Tokyo: Intergroup, 2007, p. 583

<sup>201</sup> Vice-Admiral Takashima (ret.), interview by author, Tokyo, December 12, 2014.

personnel was one of the study topics. The committee issued a report the following year arguing for the need for a personnel reform from a rationalist perspective. Fundamental personnel reform was framed as a response to expansion of the SDF roles, internationalisation and technological development. It was also framed as a response to projected recruitment difficulties in an ageing society with low birth rates and a prolonged period of education of the young target population.<sup>202</sup> Female integration in the SDF was framed as one of the response tools to the above pressures for change. Regarding the integration of uniformed female personnel, it was recommended to further revise restrictions on the service of women in the SDF, and to utilise more women in disaster relief and PKO missions.<sup>203</sup> This report also comprised follow-up information on the implementation of the 2006 Basic Plan on Gender Equality and included numerical targets and deadlines for implementation of some measures. Specifically, it reported on occupational areas opened for women since 2003, and raised the armed forces of Great Britain as a reference for future SDF policy; quantitative increase of female personnel (0.54%); decision on introduction of a mentoring system in 2010; set target of 33 percent of female members in councils and similar bodies also by 2010 et cetera. What remained undefined and a subject of “further study” until 2010 was a quantitative target relating to the number of female personnel.<sup>204</sup> This study repeated the need for awareness-raising activities relating to gender equality. No specific measures relating to female integration in disaster relief and PKO missions were included in the report, whereas the focus was on support to female servicemembers to balance work and family

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<sup>202</sup> Government of Japan, Ministry of Defence, Study Committee on Fundamental Reform of Personnel Dimension of Defence Capabilities, “Bouei-yoku no jinteki sokumen ni tuiteno bapponteki kaikaku – Houkoku (Report on Fundamental Reform of Personnel Dimension of Defence Capabilities),” June 28, 2007.

<sup>203</sup> Ministry of Defence, “Report on Fundamental Reform of Personnel,” 46.

<sup>204</sup> Ministry of Defence, “Report on Fundamental Reform of Personnel,” 50.

responsibilities. In 2009 Democratic Party of Japan came into power instead of the LDP. However, the new government accepted LDP's policy guidelines, and female integration in the SDF proceeded in accordance with recommendations of the committee established under LDP. Towards 2010 and especially after this year, female integration in male dominated areas expanded, including integration of female officers.

In January 2007 the JDA was elevated to the level of ministry. In this reform, the Defence Agency Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality was elevated from an agency unit to a ministerial unit, which strengthened its status. The same year (2007), the first female minister of defence was appointed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.<sup>205</sup> Following government guidelines of 2008, in 2009 the MOD published a follow-up report on the implementation of the Basic Plan in the SDF. The sole focus of this report was the decision to establish day-care centres for children of the SDF uniformed personnel.<sup>206</sup> The focus of measures for female integration continued to be the balance of work and family responsibilities.

In 2008, policies of restriction on women serving on three duty posts including escort ships and patrol helicopters was abolished.<sup>207</sup> In media this decision was framed as a MSDF response to “recruitment difficulties due to expansion of the SDF roles and other reasons.”<sup>208</sup> In 2009, 17 women were posted on the MSDF escort ship “Hyuga”, at the time the latest class

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<sup>205</sup> Yuriko Koike, LDP, was appointed on July 4, 2007, but resigned after only 54 days in office.

<sup>206</sup> Budget was being allocated for three day-care centers to be established in 2010, 2011 and 2013, Ministry of Defence, Headquarters for Gender Equality, “Basic Plan on Gender Equality in the Ministry of Defence,” adopted July, 12, 2006, revised December 28, 2006 and September 9, 2008.

<sup>207</sup> Escort ship in Japanese corresponds to destroyer in English.

<sup>208</sup> “Josei jieikan no haichi seigen, goeikan nado kaijo kettei (Restriction of Posting Women on Escort Ships and alike Lifted),” *Mainichi Daily News*, September 23, 2008.

helicopter carrier, that involved the possibility of foreign deployment.<sup>209</sup> In 2010 a 53-year old Colonel Kashiwara was promoted to the position of a base commanding officer in ASDF. During 2000s the SDF was continuously faced with sexual harassment incidents gone public, including several high-profile incidents. In July 2010, a female ASDF plaintiff won on all accounts a three-year long, high-profile lawsuit against the government of Japan (MOD) for sexual harassment at workplace. This year, prevention of sexual harassment was introduced in education seminars for SDF officers on all levels. It consisted of one PPT slide among other educational material.

In 2011 Japan was hit by a devastating triple disaster, a mega-earthquake followed by tsunami and nuclear crisis. The SDF played the major role in disaster response in 2011, which resulted in increase in popularity and trust of the Japanese population towards the organization. This was the biggest emergency operation of the SDF that revealed a number of negative impacts of its gender policies on military effectiveness. Namely, there were no measures for childcare support for the SDF personnel in case of emergency deployment.<sup>210</sup> Many commanders removed female SDF personnel from their units before deployment, possibly following at this point supposedly obsolete principle of exclusion of women from jobs accompanied by danger. This large-scale disaster relief operation made it obvious to the SDF military leadership that female personnel is necessary if the SDF was to respond effectively to the needs of disaster victims. Consequently, the decision was made on additional deployments of female SDF personnel, as well as female reserves to the disaster-hit area. Increased

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<sup>209</sup> “Kaijo jieitai: saidai no goeikan ‘Hyuga’, Kanagawa/Yokosuka kou ni haibi (MSDF dispatch its Biggest Escort Ship ‘Hyuga’ to Kanawaga and Yokosuka Ports),” *Mainichi Daily News*, March 3, 2009.

<sup>210</sup> This problem was exacerbated because there is a tendency of the SDF personnel to marry within the organisation, as a greedy nature of the organisation limits their spousal choices.

popularity of the SDF as a result of their disaster relief activities reflected in spiking of interest of young women in career in armed forces in 2012.<sup>211</sup> The Great East Japan Earthquake influenced the change of gender policies from within the organisation. For example, until 2011 only needs of the organization were taken into account when deciding on transfer of spouses both of whom were service members. Since 2011, MSDF leadership included the convenience of the SDF spouses in decisions relating to personnel transfer.

End March 2011, the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality in the Ministry of Defence was adopted for the period 2011-2015 based on the national Basic Plan of 2010. Basic principles from the first Basic Plan were reiterated, and the wording relating to human rights was unchanged: “Men and women, respecting each other’s human rights [...]”. The responsibility of the organisation to respect human rights was omitted. On the other hand, the 2011 Basic Plan was more balanced as it does not place extensive focus on specific measures for childcare support. Five focus areas for integration of female uniformed personnel in 2011-2015 period were defined: improvement of education and training environment of female cadets in the National Defence Academy, introduction of responsibility of each service to justify female exclusion based on the principle of maternity protection and other principles, ensure participation of women in planning activities on unit level, prioritising of further female integration, further qualitative and quantitative female integration, prioritisation of female integration in the implementation of fundamental personnel policy reform, and further female integration in disaster relief and PKO missions in accordance with future needs of the UN and other international organisations. Measures to address work-life balance were given high importance, a plan was made to further develop mentor system based on trial results, and

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<sup>211</sup> Statistical data on recruitment in the SDF indicate that women’s interest in serving in the SDF is influenced by ideational factors, whereas men’s interest is based on economic factors.

measures for awareness rising relating to gender-equal society were specified. The 2011 Basic Plan also introduced measures to encourage women's career development, namely identifying and introducing role models for female servicemembers, who were mostly isolated throughout organisation.

In 2013 National Institute for Defence Studies conducted a study on policies of female military integration in foreign armed forces including the US, Australia, Canada, Great Britain. In the knowledge of the author of this dissertation, this was the first comprehensive study of female integration in armed forces abroad since the attempt undertaken by the JIA in 1920. The year 2013 marked further breakthroughs in female integration in the SDF. Two female MSDF officers, both first class female cadets in the National Defence Academy who graduated in 1996, were appointed as captains of training ships (equipped with missile weapons and rapidfire guns). Although still in the field of education and training, women's leadership roles were expanding in areas traditionally perceived as male. In December 2013 new National Defence Program Outline for FY 2014 and beyond and Mid-Term Defence Program FY2014-FY2018 were adopted. Effective "use/utilisation" of female servicemembers was identified as a measure for effective use of personnel that was the objective of personnel management system reform.

In May 2014 Prime Minister Abe signed partnership agreement with NATO, in which Japan committed to mainstream a WPS perspective in peace missions as one of priority areas for cooperation. In December the same year, a female GSDF officer, Lieutenant Colonel (at the time) Chizu Kurita was appointed as the first representative of Japan in NATO Headquarter. served in the capacity of an adviser to NATO Special Representative for WPS in the office of

the Secretary General.<sup>212</sup> National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security (hereafter, NAP UNSCR 1325 or NAP) was adopted by the Japanese government in September 2015. More accurately, after delays and impasse with NGOs regarding the NAP content, it was pushed through the Diet by Prime Minister Abe. Detailed analysis about Japan's NAP UNSCR 1325 will be given in subsection below.

#### *4.1.6. Norm Contestation in the SDF – Statist Functional Equality, Participatory Equality and Gender Perspective*

Since 2001 white paper on defence regularly included information about gender equality in the SDF. However, there was no discernible comprehensive policy of female integration or gender equality in the SDF the first half of 2000. This is reflected in white papers on defence that the JDA/MOD publish annually. After reporting in more extent about specific policies relating adopted in 2001, the content relating to gender equality until 2006 is a shortened repetition of the same or similar information with little new content. Records of parliamentary proceedings show a similar trend. In 2001 the JDA Director General commented on the need to improve working conditions for SDF personnel. He stated that, as part of measures for the improvement of working environment for female personnel the SDF is considering child-care support measures, such as the introduction of parental leave and establishment of day-care centres for children of the uniformed personnel.<sup>213</sup> After 2001 until 2007, female SDF personnel were mentioned in the Diet only few times in the context of overseas deployment to East Timor in 2002 and Iraq in 2004. Deploying female personnel was framed as a contribution

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<sup>212</sup> She was described as a very competent person who actively and constructively participated in NATO activities relating to WPS, interview with SDF officers, interview by the author, Tokyo, April 4, 2016.

<sup>213</sup> The 151<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee meeting no. 6, March 22, 2001, JDA Director General Toshitsugu Satō (LDP).

to military effectiveness, reflecting NATO's construction of *gender perspective* that aims to avoid potentially transformative effects of WPS on armed forces. Quantitative target set in 2002 was a target that had already been achieved. Based on the above findings, data in Graph 3.1 from Chapter 3 for the period 2002-2005 can be interpreted to reflect lack of compliance on organisational level with *participatory equality* that was adopted by the organisation in 2001. This study argues that norm contestation between *statist functional equality* and newly adopted international norm of *rights-based equality* that lacked congruence with local normative priors in the first half of the 2000s enabled lack of compliance with adopted norms in the SDF as it strengthened the position of norm antipreneurs.

One of the major policy changes relating to female integration in the first part of the 2000s – deployment of female SDF personnel to East Timor in 2001, illustrates that some policy changes in the area of gender equality in the SDF were made in an *ad hoc* manner in the first part of the 2000s as well. Foreign deployment of female personnel was a rather sudden decision, and probability that it was made upon direct request from the Prime Minister Koizumi's administration is high. Female officers selected to participate in the mission were hand-picked by the SDF military leaders, bypassing standard SDF procedures.<sup>214</sup> Another example is deployment of female personnel to Iraq in 2004. Little was clear about who would be selected and how many women would be deployed until close to the departure of the troops. In debates about integration of women in the SDF teams deployed abroad, the greatest concern was safety of women. The SDF leadership believed that any accident involving female SDF personnel would gravely affect domestic image of the SDF, and have negative effects on its increasing participation in international cooperation activities. Both these decisions were made as a response to international normative requirements relating to WPS, most probably under

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<sup>214</sup> Informal interview with a GSDF officer, interview by author, Tokyo, June 6, 2013.



direct pressures from Prime Minister Koizumi. Internationalisation of Japan in Koizumi era, and especially in the context of the 9/11 terrorist attack, put domestic political pressures on the SDF to act in compliance with the international norm of *gender perspective*. Decision-making process regarding female integration in international missions indicates that the SDF leadership acted responsively to its environment rather than proactively. Policy change in the SDF was a consequence of direct pressures from the government, pressures that were the result of the government of Japan's response to the internationally diffusing norm of *gender perspective*.

Female integration policy as formulated in the 2006 Basic Plan was framed within the expansion of the SDF roles, internationalisation and technological development. The plan reconfirms maternity protection as a principle for female exclusion, and calls for studies relating to female integration policy, quantitative targets for female integration and introduction of mentoring system to be conducted by the end of 2010.<sup>215</sup> Specific measures in the first Basic Plan for the achievement of gender equality in the SDF that are related to improvement of work environment. They focused on persons with childcare and elderly care responsibilities. The plan also includes specific measures for men, namely, the increase of the percentage of male SDF personnel using parental leave. With the adoption of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality in the Ministry of Defence, documents for operationalisation of principles of the Basic Act on Gender Equality become more concrete, and foundations for a comprehensive strategy for gender equality was set. This study argues that the beginning of sedimentation process is reflected in the start of regular production of relevant documents that are reflective of the norm the organisation is internalising. Therefore, it may be inferred that the process of sedimentation of *participatory equality* within the SDF started in 2006.

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<sup>215</sup> Ministry of Defence, Headquarters for Gender Equality, "Basic Plan on Gender Equality in the Ministry of Defence," adopted July, 12, 2006, revised December 28, 2006 and September 9, 2008.

Domestic compliance with participatory equality intensified after 2010, and this process was reflected in the SDF as well. However, slow process of female integration and implementation of gender equality measures reflect that resistance within MOD and the SDF to *participatory equality* was strong. For example, senior MOD official stated that not long ago “one of my staff members came and asked if he could take childcare leave. I said, no problem, and immediately approved his leave. My colleagues from other departments were virtually shocked and objected vehemently. ‘You gave him childcare leave just like that?!’ What is wrong with that, I don’t understand.”<sup>216</sup> This episode shows the contestation between norms of *participatory equality* and *statist functional equality* within institutions were contested, as there is a diversity in normative beliefs and values held by individuals in leadership positions in the MOD/SDF.

In 2011-2013 MOD conducted a study on personnel system reform. In 2013, the proponents of further female integration in the SDF argued that it would be in the interest of the SDF to significantly accelerate female integration in job areas traditionally considered appropriate for women, such as logistics, transportation, communications and finance. This is in accordance with *statist functional equality*. They also argued in favour of increasing the number of female educators in the National Defence Academy and technical schools affiliated to the SDF. A proponent of *participatory equality* involved in the study stated that the opponents argued against policy change using almost exclusively the argument that “women marry and quit.” He then added, “However, I am not sure if they actually mean it, or if they are just repeating what they heard from others.”<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Interview with MOD official, interview by author, Tokyo, March 13, 2014.

<sup>217</sup> It is not clear from the interview who made this suggestion. Interview with a MOD official, interview by author, Tokyo, Japan, March 13, 2014.

Internalisation of *participatory equality* within the SDF was accelerated after 2013, through strengthening of apparatus for the promotion of gender equality. In the first half of the 2010s, different bodies on gender equality were established within MOD/SDF, but they were not allocated any staff or budget. Consequently, they existed on paper only and performed no function.<sup>218</sup> The Office for Gender Equality established in the Joint Staff Headquarters for each service branch that was given a task to work on issues relating to female integration in the SDF was understaffed (only one person was allocated to the office). The office activities in 2013 were described as follows: “[The Office has enough financial resources now for female integration, so they can’t say budget is the problem. But they do not have skills necessary to formulate projects and write budget requests [to actually use the available resources].”<sup>219</sup> Persons responsible for gender equality measures in the Office for Gender Equality changed on two-year basis, based on staff rotation system that exists in Japanese public administration. This led to disruption in know-how transmission and loss of valuable knowledge and experience. Another negative aspect of focusing gender-related activities in one specialised administrative unit that was identified in the SDF was isolation of gender issues within this understaffed office through delegation of responsibility. “They [Joint Staff senior officers] don’t genuinely engage with gender issues because they consider that is the job of the Office for Gender Equality.”<sup>220</sup> In 2015 the office was strengthened when the SDF allocated additional staff to support the head of the Office, and skills and competences, as well as the scope activities expanded of the Office expanded. This is another indication of that compliance with *participatory equality* in the SDF increased in 2015.

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<sup>218</sup> Interview with MOD official, interview by the author, Tokyo, March 13, 2014.

<sup>219</sup> Interview with MOD official, interview by the author, Tokyo, March 13, 2014.

<sup>220</sup> Interview with SDF officers, interview by the author, Tokyo, March 14, 2014.

According to Moskos et al., postmodern armed forces are more susceptible to societal normative pressures. Holmberg and Alvinus identify seven transformation processes armed forces need to respond to in the postmodern era. Namely: globalisation/internationalisation (active use of military means; demands for interoperability; harmonisation with other countries), new norms in relation to the use of military force (responsibility to protect other than territory, broadened use of military means), technological development (specialisation, increased costs for defence equipment, war at a distance), professionalisation (specialisation; academisation; demands for legitimacy), value changes (individualism; focus on post-material values – self-fulfilment instead of materialism), social acceleration (great information flows; perceived increase in daily pace and demands, reactive actions dominate), normalisation (less exclusivity for the military organization, the same demands are posed on military organisations as on other organisations).<sup>221</sup> Based on the above transformation processes, they identify three types of pressures for change that postmodern armed forces face. Namely, armed forces need to respond to structural, normative and functional pressures for change that derive. Hollberg and Alvinus include pressures for gender equality among the normative pressure category.

White papers on defence, as well as the Diet deliberations reveal that security policy makers in Japan increasingly discussed staffing policies in the SDF general, and gender policies in specific, within the framework of the above transformation processes in the last period analysed in this dissertation. The SDF demonstrates characteristics of postmodern armed force that, based on Moskos et al. theory should make it more susceptible to both internal and external pressures to promote gender equality. Integration of the SDF in activities for the promotion of international peace and security gradually increased since 1993, and partnership agreement

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<sup>221</sup> Arita Holmberg and Aida Alvinus, “How Pressure for Change Challenge Military Organisational Characteristics,” *Defence Studies* 19, no. 2 (2019), 132.

with NATO solidified the position of the SDF as a member embedded in international security community. These developments strengthened the position of proponents of gender equality, and proponents of female integration within the SDF, and weakened the position of norm entrepreneurs, as international normative environment in both civilian and military spheres was becoming more egalitarian. The following subpart of this section gives the analysis of formulation and internalisation of *gender perspective* through institutionalisation of WPS in Japan and in the SDF.

#### *4.1.6.1. Institutionalisation of WPS agenda in Japan: National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2015)*

Japan formally adopted and institutionalised the norm of *gender perspective* through signing partnership agreement with NATO in 2014 and adopting NAP UNSCR 1325 in September 2015. The period between 2000 and 2013 was a period of accumulation of enabling factors for the adoption of *gender perspective* in security sector. The SDF, however, was at loss how to operationalise *gender perspective* in its operations. Passive attitude of the SDF leadership towards institutionalisation of gender perspective in missions was that the SDF units deployed abroad were mostly engineering units that include few – if any – female servicemembers.<sup>222</sup> This finding indicates that SDF leadership was not able to, or purposefully avoided to make connection between *participatory equality* and *gender perspective*, and ended up having/opted for separate approaches to the internalisation of these two norms. *Participatory equality* was being internalised in the SDF as a norm internal to the organisation, whereas *gender perspective* was internalised as a norm external to the organisation, and only in connection to overseas missions. This approach of SDF leadership to *gender perspective* reflects the NATO's approach as described by Wright et al.

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<sup>222</sup> Interview with MOD official, interview by author, Tokyo, June 13, 2014.

Discussions in the government and MOD about formulation of NAP started in 2013.<sup>223</sup> In 2014 MOD identified introduction of gender education the SDF as a tool for implementation of future NAP. Study material created by MOD Personnel Department in September 2014 gives guidelines for introduction and expansion of gender education in MOD/SDF and justify its necessity in the following words: “In relation to UNSCR 1325, in 2014 National Plan for the Implementation of WPS was formulated in Japan. From 2015 we will be in obligation to implement this plan. We are studying about basic guidelines for the implementation of that plan, through including the content of the plan in MOD/SDF education.”<sup>224</sup> Three reasons were given for the introduction of gender education: the necessity to respond to NAP trends, the necessity to respond to international standards, and the necessity to acquire trust in the SDF operations. The first necessity derives from the fact that gender mainstreaming will be introduced in decision-making processes relating to foreign and security policies, and it is expected that female participation in these processes will increase. The second necessity to respond to international critique of Japan’s involvement with WPS coming from the UN. It was stated that Japan and Russia were the only among G8 countries that did not have NAP, and that “it is unfortunate that japan is on not on the list of countries that have adopted NAP. [...] As a developed country we are expected to respond [in the same way as other countries].” The final necessity derives from demands for personnel participating in international PKO and other missions to have gender awareness in order to avoid incidents of SGBSV committed by individual SDF personnel members deployed in those missions.

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<sup>223</sup> Interview with a MOD official, interview by the author, Tokyo, June 13, 2014.

<sup>224</sup> Ministry of Defence, Personnel Department, “Boueishou/Jieitai ni okeru jendaa kyōiku no shindounyuu/kakujuu ni tsuite (Relating to the Introduction and Expansion of Gender Education in the Ministry of Defence and Self-Defence Forces), September 24, 2014.

It was noted that the current “one time per person” gender training for officers and personnel participating in international missions was insufficient. Therefore, gender education and training was to be introduced on all levels of education for officers (e.g. National Defence Academy, Officer Candidate School of each service branch, Joint Staff College), including high-ranking military leadership, as their role would be to further educate personnel under their command. Gender education was to be introduced in all educational institutions for officers within MOD/SDF jurisdiction using group-work based, participatory approach instead of lectures. The problem of the lack of educators was to be solved by establishing training for trainers, and budget for external educators was to be allocated for this purpose starting with 2016.

Until 2015 education relating to gender equality was conducted once annually for officers and officer candidates. The content relating to gender equality included one PPT slide on the prevention of sexual harassment in the SDF and one slide relating to work-life balance. Educators had to proceed cautiously, as there was resistance towards education relating to female integration, especially among senior military leadership. “They did not consider it relevant and grudgingly claimed that the content about prevention of sexual harassment was sufficient.”<sup>225</sup> The education content relating to female integration had to be framed not from the perspective of gender equality, but from the perspective of military effectiveness in order to reduce the resistance from the SDF commanding officers. During a year, one seminar on gender equality were organised in one of SDF bases across the country. The content of the material was dedicated to work-life balance and career opportunities for women in the SDF with concrete examples of role models. Only female personnel participated in these seminars. In National Defence Academy only female cadets participated in gender education seminars as

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<sup>225</sup> Interview with SDF officers, interview by the author, Tokyo, March 13, 2014.

well.<sup>226</sup> Therefore, until 2014 the content of these seminars was not gender education in accordance with international standards, but dissemination of information aimed at promotion of female integration in the SDF in accordance with the MOD/SDF 2011 Basic Plan for Gender Equality.

After the adoption of NAP UNSCR 1325, frequency and target audience for seminars on gender equality changed significantly, in accordance with the above cited document on the introduction and expansion of gender education in the SDF. Seminars on work-life balance expanded to include male cadets, male officer candidates and male servicemembers in bases across Japan. Instead of one seminar per base per year with female only participants, number of bases significantly expanded, and all SDF personnel were participated in those seminars.<sup>227</sup> Therefore, it may be concluded that the process of sedimentation of *gender perspective* started immediately after the adoption of NAP UNSCR 1325. However, framing female integration from the military efficiency perspective was preserved, reflecting resistance within armed forces of Japan comply with either *rights-based equality* or *participatory equality*.

Whereas civil society was instrumental actor in framing, adoption and promotion of WPS agenda internationally, domestic NGOs and other civil society groups did not play a major role in the process of internalisation of WPS in Japan. NGOs got involved in NAP UNSCR 1325 formulation process upon the invitation from the Japanese government. During discussions, there were disagreements between NGOs and government representatives, as well as among NGOs, on the content of NAP UNSCR 1325. Particularly contentious was the issue of wartime military slavery that some NGO representatives insisted on including in the NAP. Conservative LDP government was adamantly against this, which brought the NAP formulation to impasse.

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<sup>226</sup> Interview with SDF officers, interview by author, Tokyo, March 13, 2014.

<sup>227</sup> Interview with SDF officers, interview by author, Tokyo, April 4, 2014.



The process of the NAP UNSCR 1325 formulation was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it is notable that MOD/SDF representatives were not involved in this process in the beginning. Despite that the attitude of women's movements towards the SDF had historically been rife with tension and hostility, it is NGO representatives who suggested that MOD/SDF should be involved in this process. Subsequently, MOD/SDF representatives were included in the NAP UNSCR 1325 formulation process in the capacity of observers.<sup>228</sup> Formulation of Japan's NAP UNSCR 1325 was not only a result of partnership with NATO, however, without Prime Minister Abe's prioritisation of cooperation with NATO, the adoption of Japan's NAP would have been postponed.

#### **4.2 Internalisation of Equal Access of Men and Women to Education and Elimination of Sexual Harassment in the Self-Defence Forces**

This subsection consists of two subparts. The first part of this subsection describes the process of access of women to the National Defence Medical College and National Defence Academy. Later below, female integration in the NDA is described. Equal access to education became sedimented normative element in Japan by the end of the 1980s, and the case of the NDA confirms this assertion. The second subsection presents the analysis of a case of sexual harassment in the SDF. This case reveals lack of compliance in the organisation with the norm of *participatory equality* that includes elimination of violence against women among its core elements. It also shows that involvement of civil society with gender issues in the SDF can contribute to the organisation's compliance with international gender equality norms.

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<sup>228</sup> Informal interview with a MOD official, interview by author, Tokyo, April 4, 2016.

#### *4.2.1 The Opening of the National Defence Medical College and the National Defence Academy to Women*

External domestic pressures to open the National Defence Academy and the National Defence Medical College to women can be reliably traced at least to the mid 1970s. The requests came from bureaucrats inside the government administration as well as from politicians. Since the beginning of the 1960s, the SDF faced severe difficulties in acquiring higher medical cadres such as doctors and dentists. An idea to introduce medical education as a way to ameliorate the SDF's acute problem of acquiring sufficient numbers of medical staff had been contemplated in the second half of the 1960s already. The NDMC was finally established in 1974, accepting only male students. In the 1970s these shortages became even graver because jobs in civilian medical sector were plentiful and far more lucrative for the NDMC graduates. Many of them would opt out of the SDF and choose jobs in civilian sector instead. At least since 1975 politicians encouraged the JDA/SDF leadership to consider recruitment of women as doctors and dentist, which came to be implemented in 1978.<sup>229</sup> The decision to open the Academy to women was made after a long-term debate between the opponents and the proponents of the inclusion of women in this educational institution. The decision was not based on rationalist considerations such as technological advancement, securing and retention of qualified military personnel or military effectiveness in general, as some might assume. It came as a result of the Japanese government's efforts to harmonise national laws and policies with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and in that context, as a response to domestic normative

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<sup>229</sup> The 76<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Cabinet Affairs Committee meeting no. 6, November 20, 1975, suggestion by Yohzoh Kato (LDP).

pressures on educational institutions to revise their discriminative practices and provide both men and women with equal access to education.

The account of Ryoko Akamatsu, a Japanese bureaucrat who was directly engaged in the devising and implementation of government policies for the advancement of women since the early 1970s, sheds light on mechanisms of internalisation of international gender equality norms in Japan before those norms were institutionalised in an international treaty.<sup>230</sup> There were 14 occupational categories in which women were not allowed to take examination. These categories covered a wide range of jobs in civil service, rendering those jobs by default inaccessible to women. As previously stated, when the examination restrictions were put in place after the conclusion of the Second World War, they were justified as necessary for the protection of women in the post-war volatile circumstances. However, by the 1970s normative and material environment in Japan have significantly changed (public safety, working conditions, women's education level, perceptions and values regarding women et cetera). The exclusion of women from specific jobs in these changed circumstances was increasingly difficult to justify and maintain.

After assuming the position of Head of the Headquarters for the Advancement of Women in March 1978, Akamatsu undertook the initiative to persuade heads of government agencies and ministries to offer access to jobs and positions within their jurisdiction that were otherwise unavailable to women. As exclusionary measures were still firmly in place, Akamatsu's strategy was to identify jobs areas in different categories for which exclusion of women could be challenged on rational grounds, and to persuade leadership of relevant ministries and agencies to rescind their exclusionary policies. Akamatsu used her personal contacts among

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<sup>230</sup> Ryoko Akamatsu, chairperson of the Japan Committee for UNICEF, interview by author, Tokyo, February 7, 2016.

politicians and bureaucrats to promote her case. She used various tactics such as encouragement, persuasion and shaming. Among skillset areas Akamatsu focused on were those jobs available to graduates of the NDMC and the NDA, both of which were under the jurisdiction of the JDA.

Akamatsu raised this issue with her superior, Asao Mihara, the vice president of the Headquarters for the Advancement of Women.<sup>231</sup> Although she raised both educational institutions in the negotiations, Akamatsu made a strategic choice to focus primarily on the NDMC as this request was easier to rationalise. Education for doctors and dentists was very costly in regular Japanese universities, whereas the NDMC provided this education for free. Exclusion of women from the NDMC meant that only men could acquire free education for what were two high income occupations, a practice Akamatsu believed could no longer be justified. Soon after the meeting in which she presented her case, she got a positive reply regarding the opening of the NDMC to women – that they will “get on to it immediately”.<sup>232</sup> The NDMC commenced the study about the adequacy of accepting women in 1979 and in 1982 the decision was made to scrap exclusion policies for women in 1985. The first 6 female students were enrolled in the NDMC in 1986.<sup>233</sup> In 1980, the NDA Graduate School of Science and Engineering started accepting female students, also preparing them for future leadership

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<sup>231</sup> Mihara, who served as Director-General of the Prime Minister’s Office and in that extension as vice president of the Headquarters for the Advancement of Women (1978-1979), was formerly JDA Director General (1976-1977).

<sup>232</sup> Ryoko Akamatsu, interview by author, Tokyo, Japan, February 7, 2016.

<sup>233</sup> Hitoshi Doi, “Fujin jieikan seido,” 67.

roles in the SDF.<sup>234</sup> In 1986, the SDF Officer Candidate School accepted first female officer candidates as well. Institutionalised system of education for female officers, including senior commanding officers and staff officers thus commenced.

Despite strong antimilitary culture in Japanese society, the relative ease with which the NDMC was opened to women can be explained by the absence of conflict between the new policy and the norm of *functional equality* that was gradually displacing the prior norm of *discriminative equality* in wider Japanese society. In addition to education and labour, medical field was one of the main work fields perceived as appropriate for women, both domestically and internationally.<sup>235</sup> Adoption and institutionalisation of leadership education for women during the 1980s, although a major policy turn, did not cause a conservative backlash because it was very limited. Female qualitative integration was confined to female-dominated occupational areas in the civilian labour market, and the number of women included was negligible. It is notable, however, that the element of female leadership is an element of the gender norm of *full equality*, and in the case of female leadership in armed forces is an element of the later international norms of *human rights-based equality* and *gender perspective*. These empirical findings indicate that the process of accumulation of enabling factors leading to future adoption and institutionalisation of *full equality* was under way, and that factors for *gender perspective* started accumulating as well. However, the doors of the NDA whose objective was to produce officers to lead the SDF still remained firmly closed to women.

Pressures to open the NDA arose within the political circles as well. At first those pressures arose from male MPs and were based on rationalist logic. The NDA was criticised

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<sup>234</sup> National Defence Academy, *Bōeidaigakkō gojuu nen shi* (National Defence Academy – Fifty Years of History), (Yokosuka: National Defence Academy, 2004) 217. This publication does not give reasons for the decision to integrate women in the graduate course of the NDA.

<sup>235</sup> Ninić, “The Introduction of International Norms,” 41.

for lagging behind other similar domestic institutions such as the Japanese National Police Academy, as well as the US elite military schools where female students exhibited high scores.<sup>236</sup> In 1979, Prime Minister Ohira informally prompted the JDA leadership to consider opening NDA to women.<sup>237</sup> In 1979 when the CEDAW was about to be adopted by the UN General Assembly, clearly stating the responsibility of states to provide equal educational opportunities and curricula for female and male students on all levels of education, requests to consider opening the NDA and the NDMC to female students started coming from female LDP politicians as well.<sup>238</sup> After the signing of the CEDAW in 1980, requests for the opening of the NDA were framed in the context of domestically accepted responsibility toward the implementation of international recommendations with respect to gender equality on national level. The basic arguments in favour of strict exclusion policies towards women in the NDA was that the academy trained cadres to lead combat units, which involved hard training and living conditions conventionally not appropriate for women.

In addition to these arguments, it needs to be noted that military academies are considered the “last bastion” of resistance to egalitarian policies. The NDA produces future officers who will assume commanding roles over uniformed SDF personnel. Considering the limited size of the SDF, opportunities for advancement were limited as well, making career in the SDF less attractive for men. Opening the NDA to female cadets also meant that part of those leading positions would be allocated to women, further reducing advancement possibilities for men. It is logical to assume that opponents of female integration in the NDA whose normative values

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<sup>236</sup> The 87<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no. 13, March 23, 1979, question by Aiko Shimura (LDP), answer by Ganri Yamashita (JDA Director General, LDP).

<sup>237</sup> Sato, *Gunjisoshiki to jendā*, 2004.

<sup>238</sup> The 87<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no. 13, March 23, 1979, question by Aiko Shimura (LDP), answer by Ganri Yamashita (JDA Director General, LDP).

were in line with *discriminative* and *statist functional equality* would have this rationalist concern. Two other rationalist concerns that presented a significant obstacle to the commencement of female integration in the NDA were based on normative and ideational factors. One was scepticism about women's ability to assume leadership in male dominated sectors, and the other one was the belief that male uniformed personnel would have difficulty accepting commands from female officers. Both the above concerns indicate that political and military leadership perceived normative reality of *discriminative equality*, as actual reality based on which rational policy decisions were made. In 1979 the JDA commenced a study of enhancement of job opportunities for women in the SDF. The conclusion of the final report of that study in 1987 was that the issue of acceptance of female students in the NDA needed to be "studied further".<sup>239</sup> Under these circumstances the policy of female exclusion in the NDA continued into the 1990s. Nevertheless, in accordance with the 1990 announcement and the decision of 1991 the NDA accepted its first female cadets in 1992.

According to Mainichi Daily News article of March 6, 1990, the National Defence Agency decided on March 5<sup>th</sup> to enable women to take entrance exam to the National Defence Academy (hereafter the NDA or the Academy) starting from 1992. The percentage of women admitted was to be within 10 percent of total admitted students.<sup>240</sup> The article further informs that the main reason for the reluctance to open the Academy to women was up until that point was because the NDA trained cadres for fight on the front line, which was not considered fit for women. As to the reasons for the policy change, the article raises advancement of women in the society, increase of female servicemembers and successful performance of female cadets

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<sup>239</sup> NDA, *Bōeidaigakkō 50 Nenshi*, 217.

<sup>240</sup> "Joshi no Boei Daigakko Juken wo Mitomeru Hoshin – Boeicho (The Policy of Accepting Female Applicants in the National Defence Academy – National Defence Agency)," *Mainichi Daily News*, March 6, 1990.

in military academies of other countries. Asahi Daily News reports the same year that access to the Academy by women is part of the JDA's strategy to compensate for increasing numbers of the NDA male graduates opting out of joining the SDF.<sup>241</sup> According to Asahi Daily News, in 1991 record 19% of male NDA graduates chose not to join the SDF primarily due to availability of jobs in civilian economy and the lack of attractiveness of employment in the SDF.<sup>242</sup> The publication *National Defence Academy: Fifty Years of History*, states social normative change as the background for this policy change, placing it within the frame of harmonisation of the JDA policies with the 1987 national plan for the implementation of the CEDAW.<sup>243</sup>

The response of young female applicants with good qualifications was higher than expected. Their competition rate in 1991 was 49.9 in comparison to 22.7 of their male counterparts, and their exam scores in general were higher than that of male applicants.<sup>244</sup> This general trend regarding female and male competition rates has remained unchanged. The first

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<sup>241</sup> For example, “Hageshisona Bodai no Jukensei Atsume, Miryoku Uchidasu Mae ni Gyakukaze? (Kaigai gaken wo Tou) (Harsh Reality of Acquiring Applicants for the Defence Academy, Adverse Winds before Coming Up with Ways to Make [the SDF] Attractive? (The Question of Foreign Deployment))”, *Asahi Shimbun*, October 28, 1990.

<sup>242</sup> “Ninkan Kyohi 19% de mata Shinkiroku – Riyu no 3warikyo ‘Miryoku nai’ Bodaisotsusei (New Record – 19% Opts Out of the SDF, more than 30% Says ‘[the SDF is] Not Attractive),” *Asahi Shimbun*, March 25, 1991.

<sup>243</sup> NDA, *Bōeidaigakkō 50 Nenshi*, 217.

<sup>244</sup> In the case of general examination, gender gap in competition was even wider – 70.3 and 25.8 respectively in total, and particularly wide in humanities 129.3 and 46.6 respectively (*Defence of Japan 1993*, The Japan Times, Ltd. Japan, July 1993: 317). While figures have fluctuated since 1991, the above gender gap trend has been constant.



class of female cadets was admitted to the National Defence Academy on April 1, 1992. Forty years after the establishment of the NDA, 39 young women took an oath alongside 431 male cadets.<sup>245</sup>

An internal JDA document in its part “About Future Measures Regarding the Enrolment of Girls in the National Defence Academy” articulates the decision to abolish the policy of restriction for women. As the primary reason for this policy change the document states the necessity to comply with the government’s policy of gender equality in education.

1) The Defence Agency, too, is in the position where it has to contribute to the realisation of the target “to endeavour to abolish all occupational examination restrictions for women by FY 1990” that is spelled out in the *National Plan of Action toward the Year 2000*, the document that provides guidelines for national measures relating to women.<sup>246</sup>

The above JDA document repeatedly expresses that the decision to open the Academy to women cannot be made based on strategic military considerations because, even after more than a decade, the debate between the opponents and the proponents of the inclusion of women in the Academy has neither brought nor was showing signs of bringing about any conclusion from this perspective.<sup>247</sup> The main arguments against the inclusion of women in the Academy were that: the Academy educates and trains officers for the front line units in which women are not allowed; the increase in the number of female service members would lead to the deterioration of unit cohesion; the NDA training program requirements are not appropriate for

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<sup>245</sup> “Joshi Gakusei Fukume Nyukōshiki – Boeidaigakkō (National Defence Academy Entrance Ceremony Including Women),” *Asahi Shimbun*, April 5, 1992.

<sup>246</sup> Japan Defence Agency, “Bōeidaigakkō e no joshi nyugaku mondai ni kansuru sochi hōkō ni tsuite”, (1990): 3. Available parts of the document are provided in full in the Appendix 1.

<sup>247</sup> Japan Defence Agency, “Bōeidaigakkō e no joshi nyugaku,” 2.

women; the inclusion of female cadets would require the allocation of extensive financial resources.

However, in the socio-political normative climate of the time, the JDA council concluded in 1990 that it was difficult to continue justifying the Academy's female exclusion policy based on "assertive and rational grounds" due to the following reasons: not all the graduates of the NDA are assigned to combat positions; other countries that do not allow women in combat units have started accepting girls in their military academies; unit cohesion in the SDF can be preserved by assigning "optimal numbers" of the NDA female graduates to those positions in which female service members can be expected to perform successfully (such as aircraft maintenance, marine meteorology, accounting, communications and alike); it is believed that female cadets can meet the majority of the NDA program requirements. Regarding concerns about cost-effectiveness of female inclusion in the NDA, the JDA acknowledged that "a certain amount of loss" had to be allowed for, considering that that policy followed basic government guidelines for active promotion of equality for men and women in education. The fact that the Officer Candidate School and the Japan Coast Guard Academy had been accepting a small number of women was raised as a factor further weakening cost-effectiveness argument in favour of the exclusion of women from the NDA.<sup>248</sup>

While discarding strategic considerations as a ground for the decision on policy change, the JDA leadership clearly expressed concerns about domestic criticism that keeping this practice might incur.

- c) [...] the only restriction on women in the national civil service examination system remains the entrance exam for the National Defence Academy, and we

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<sup>248</sup> NDA, *Bōeidaigakkō 50 Nenshi*, 217-218.

can anticipate that the issue of enrolment of girls in the NDA will now be the sole target [of criticism], especially after the deadline of FY 1992.<sup>249</sup>

At the time of the signing of the CEDAW convention in 1980, there were 14 occupational categories in the national civil servant examination system that were restricted for women. By 1990, however, the Academy was the only remaining educational institution in the country that kept those restrictions. Considering the normative climate of the time that was strongly supportive of equal access to education,<sup>250</sup> the above concerns of the defence leadership about the impending criticism being directed at the JDA and the NDA were not unfounded. By allowing access to the Academy by women, the NDA formally adopted the international norm of *full equality*. Contestation within the institution between elements of the newly adopted norm and those of prior norms of *discriminative* and *functional equality* ensued in a new, post-Cold War environment that favoured more egalitarian policies.

#### 4.2.1.1 Policies towards Women in the National Defence Academy since 1992

The following part of this subsection will provide quantitative and qualitative account and analysis of female integration in the NDA since 1992. In 1991, the NDA decided to allocate 7% of available places to female applicants at the point when percentage of women in the SDF in total was 2.4%, and the percentage of female officers slightly below 2%.<sup>251</sup> Newspaper media announced in 1993 that the JDA planned to increase the number of female students, and significantly expand appointment of NDA graduates to officer positions in the situation of rapid

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<sup>249</sup> Japan Defence Agency, “Bōeidaigakkō e no joshi nyugaku,” 2.

<sup>250</sup> NDA, *Bōeidaigakkō 50 Nenshi*, 217.

<sup>251</sup> “Jieitai mo josei ga tayori!? Bōeidai nado monko kaiho 91 nendo boshu keikaku (Self-Defence Forces too Relying on Young Women!? Opening Institutions Like National Defence Academy – Plan for FY1991),” *Asahi Shimbun*, March 24, 1991; data on the structure of the SDF uniformed personnel *Defence of Japan 1991*, The Japan Times, Ltd. Japan.

decline of young population eligible to serve in the SDF.<sup>252</sup> However, the following two decades show that those early plans of quantitative female integration in the NDA were not translated into reality. Although no official quota was adopted, the percentage of women admitted in the academy had been kept relatively steady – within 7-9 percentage points – until 2015.<sup>253</sup> This indicates that after the initial optimistic uncertainty, the consensus within the institution regarding “optimal number” of female students was established after 1993 on a conservative side. Considering that quantitative integration of women in the SDF in general continuously lagged behind the NDA, it may be inferred that a stagnation of quantitative female integration in the Academy was also due to the absence of *accumulation of enabling factors* in the defence sector in general in a sufficient extent that would allow for policy change. This consensus persisted until 2015 when the percentage of female students was increased to around 13 percent.

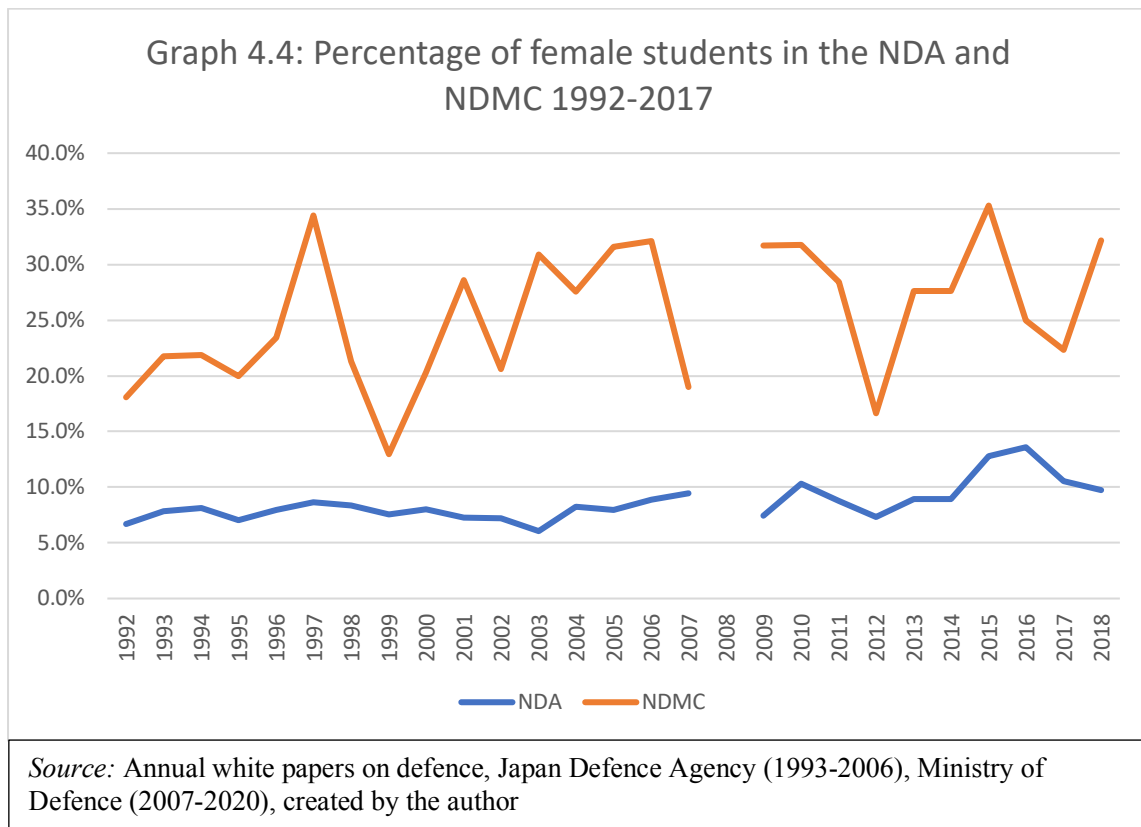
What prompted this change in the NDA admission policy for female students in 2015? Between August 2011 and 2013, the MOD conducted a study relating to reform of personnel system. The reform was placed within the frame of declining birth-rates and shrinking of the size of the population eligible to serve in the SDF. A reform of the National Defence Academy was included in this study as well. As a result of the study, it was agreed that the NDA will admit “*jakkan*” (“some/a number of”) female students through integrated selection and general entrance examination 2<sup>nd</sup> term.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> “Bōei daigaku, joshi gōkakusha 82 ni (National Defence Academy Admits 82 Female Students),” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo evening edition), February 16, 1993.

<sup>253</sup> In 2003 percentage of female students fell to the low of 6.05%, and in 2010 reached the high if 10.3% (Defence of Japan 2004 and 2011 respectively).

<sup>254</sup> Hitoshi Kawano, Professor, National Defence Academy, interview by author, Yokosuka, December 15, 2015.



The ambiguous term “*jakkan*” (“some/a number of”) was adopted as a consequence of the lack of agreement within the NDA regarding how to proceed. Such language enabled the NDA to avoid going clearly against the reformative trends in the government, while making no specific commitment to change. When faced with external pressures for change, the institution with sedimented norms and practices displayed resistance to contesting norms and interests deriving from external environment. Ambiguous language in policy documents enables actors to avoid making commitments in circumstances of normative uncertainty on the one hand, and avoid future accountability on the other. Ambiguous language relating to gender equality is an indicator that there was a conflict between new and prior norms and interests within an organisation, a conflict between norms and interests of a resisting organisation and those of its wider institutional, social and political environment, or both of the above.

According to a MOD official who participated in this study, Hitoshi Kawano, a civilian professor in the NDA was a very strong proponent of further female integration in the SDF, as

well as of the increase of the number of female students in the NDA. However, uniformed academic staff was strongly opposed to any significant increase of the number of female students.<sup>255</sup> “They were all satisfied with the current number. I gave a suggestion to just double the number of female cadets to 80. But, they were all absolutely against it.”<sup>256</sup> According to the same MOD official, the main argument against the quantitative increase of female cadets was that they would marry and quit several years after the graduation, making their education a wasted investment. “They say, what is the point of increasing their [female students] number when they will quit anyway.”<sup>257</sup> What is notable is that, according to this interviewee, it was not the leadership of the Academy that was against the policy change as much as young uniformed NDA teaching staff. If true, this finding goes against the assumption proposed by Iskra et. al that youth of leadership and members of armed forces in itself leads to the advancement of female integration in armed forces. The case may be that “youth” of leadership and uniformed personnel in the case of Japan’s armed forces functions as a facilitating factor in combination with other factors proposed by previous and this study, specifically more egalitarian social and political environment, under the condition that the top leadership of the organisation embraces and actively promotes egalitarian norms.

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<sup>255</sup> MOD official involved with the SDF personnel policy planning, interview by author, Tokyo, March 13, 2014.

<sup>256</sup> MOD official, interview by the author, Tokyo, Japan, March 13, 2014. Based on responses acquired during the interview, normative beliefs and values this interviewee held may be classified as *human rights-based equality*. Policy choices available and acceptable for an actor whose identity was shaped by this gender equality norm were perceived as inappropriate or even unacceptable from the perspective of actors whose identity is shaped by other types of gender equality norms, namely *statist functional* and *full equality*.

<sup>257</sup> MOD official, interview by the author, Tokyo, Japan, March 13, 2014.

Yet another interviewee closely familiar with the NDA admission policies stated that the willingness to change did exist in the NDA, and that they have support from civilian part of the MOD. According to this source, it is uniformed SDF leadership on the Joint Chief of Staff level that is resistant to change. “Ultimately, the personnel departments of GSDF, MSDF and ASDF primarily decide the percentage of female uniformed personnel they want to have, and [based on that the Academy] calculates the proportion of female students. The National Defence Academy cannot make the decision to increase [the number of female students] independently.”<sup>258</sup> The SDF statistical data on female recruitment and advancement speak in favour of this opinion. The percentage of female SDF uniformed personnel increased from below 3 percent in 1991 to only 5.71 percent in 2015 (below 3 percent increase over 24 years), and the percentage of female officers was still below 5 percent in 2015. Both figures are below the NDA average. The assumption that the uniformed SDF leadership discouraged quantitative female integration in the NDA is not without merits.

According to professor Kawano, the NDA would change its admission policy for women only with authorisation from the Ministry of Defence.<sup>259</sup> Considering the impasse following the 2011-2013 study on the NDA reform, policy change that led to the breaking of the established 7-9 percentage of female students in 2015 was the result of a direct involvement from the government in relation to the implementation of the NATO-Japan partnership agreement of 2014.<sup>260</sup> As Graph 4.5 shows, the percentage increase of 2015 was not stable as

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<sup>258</sup> National defence specialist, informal interview by author, Tokyo, Japan, June 28, 2014.

<sup>259</sup> Hitoshi Kawano, Professor, National Defence Academy, interview by author, Yokosuka, Japan, December 15, 2015.

<sup>260</sup> The Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) between Japan and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was signed on May 6, 2014. One of priority areas for Japanese cooperation with NATO is “mainstreaming a women, peace and security perspective in peace missions”. Japanese

it dropped for two consecutive years to 9.8 percent in 2018. This quantitative wavering speaks in favour of the assumption that, while the NDA admission policy is being challenged both internally and externally, that opponents of change within and/or without the institution are strong.

The NDA leadership faced a number of factors that encouraged the endorsement of gender policy changes in the NDA on the one hand, and encouraged retaining status quo on the other. Namely, economic factors provided material environment that worked in favour of the opponents of policy change. In earlier periods, a significant number of the NDA graduates opted out of the SDF and chose jobs in the civilian sector. However, in the prolonged period of economic downturn, the competition from civilian sector was not very high and few NDA graduates rejected career in the SDF in favour of civilian jobs. Conversely, successful academic performance and satisfactory results of physical training that female cadets had achieved over the span of more than two decades added to the internal accumulation of enabling factors for female integration. Declining birth-rates and the availability of high-quality female candidates will be used as a rationale for the policy change, once the decision departing significantly from the current admission quotas for women will have been made. However, they have existed throughout the period observed by this study and do not appear to be crucial factors for policy change.

Normative environment the NDA found itself in changed significantly during the observed period. Prevalent gender equality norms on domestic and organisational levels have been actively contested in the post-Cold War period. Japanese government's adoption of *rights-based equality* and international military norm of *gender perspective* challenged prior gender

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government identified "education" as one of the main tools for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Japan.



norms on organisational level, as the government's demands for compliance rose. Either way, lessons from the NDA history and accounts of other interviewees confirm professor Kawano's opinion that resolute decision regarding significant quantitative increase of female students in the NDA needs to be decided externally and instituted through the line ministry.

Unlike quantitative integration that was kept relatively unchanged, qualitative female integration in the NDA gradually proceeded throughout the observed period. The opening of the Academy to women had another positive effect on female integration in the SDF in general. It created the need for female teaching staff and led to the expansion of leadership positions for women in military education and training. Introduction of gender integrated training in 1996 was one of major changes towards female integration in the NDA. Programs for studying abroad, namely in military academies in the US and other Western liberal democratic countries were significantly expanded. Expansion of international exchange programs is another enabling factor as it increases possibility for learning through socialisation. By 2013 even the position of Cadet-Corps Commander, the highest position a student can achieve in the NDA, was available to female cadets.

The first class of female cadets graduated in March 1996 and 26 of them proceeded to Officer Candidate School in order to be appointed to officer positions in the SDF after one-year officer training.<sup>261</sup> Female and male cadets were provided with the same education and training program from the start. Training itself, however, was gender segregated, conducted separately for men and women until 1996. Separate physical standards were introduced for

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<sup>261</sup> Of the initial 39 who enrolled the NDA in 1992, 12 dropped out and 27 successfully graduated. One female graduate had to retire due to injury upon graduation, "Bōshi kaburu takasa mo danshi ni makenai wa Bōeidai sho no joshi 27nin ga sotsugyō (Even the Hight of their Hats the Same as Men's! The First Class of 27 Female Students Graduates from the National Defence Academy)," *Asahi Shimbun*, Morning Edition, March 18, 1996.

female cadets due to inferiority of their “muscle strength, and jumping and suspension power” in comparison with their male counterparts.<sup>262</sup>

In October 1996, the NDA established the Female Cadet Policy Study Committee.<sup>263</sup> Three months later this committee produced an evaluation study of the NDA measures towards female cadets taken thus far. The findings of the study showed that the admitted female cadets had higher academic achievements than their male counterparts. Their physical strength upon the admission was higher than the national average, and during the course of 4-year education in the NDA they showed marked development in this respect in comparison to male cadets. The study raised concerns regarding the findings that, while physical military training for female cadets made a certain success, female cadets had not produced results equal to their male counterparts. The above trends with respect to intellectual and physical male and female achievements were constant through the observed period and are a common feature for military academies internationally.

Standards set for the NDA cadets showed gender bias favouring men. The abovementioned evaluation study voices concern about female cadets not reaching physical achievements in alignment with standards set for male cadets. On the other hand, the same concerns were not voiced regarding lower intellectual performance of male cadets in comparison to their female counterparts. Therefore, increasing intellectual standards for male cadets based on female cadets’ achievements was not considered. The advancement in military technologies and the way modern warfare was conducted increasingly favoured “brain over brawn”, and using men for standard-setting was an issue of gender bias rather than considerations of military effectiveness. As stated in Chapter 3, using men as a model for setting standards of

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<sup>262</sup> NDA, *Bōeidaigakkō 50 Nenshi*, 221.

<sup>263</sup> NDA, *Bōeidaigakkō 50 Nenshi*, 226. The publication does not specify whether this was an *ad hoc* or a standing committee.

achievements and benefits for women was a core element of international gender equality norms until it was challenged by *rights-based equality* in the 1990s.

Further, both the NDA and the SDF in some parts applied so-called reverse quota system in the case of female candidates.<sup>264</sup> The NDA set a ceiling on percentage of female cadets in total student body at 7-9 percent in general, regardless of competition rates or the quality of applicants.<sup>265</sup> In order to meet gender aspect of admission policy objectives, higher qualification standards were applied to female applicants and lower standards to male applicants. In other words, the NDA applied to male applicants *de facto* positive action measures throughout the observed period.

The first generations of female cadets experienced various types of gender discrimination from teaching staff and fellow male students. All female officers who entered the Academy in the early period of female recruitment recalled during the interviews incidents of discrimination, disrespect and blatant violation of military hierarchy and seniority rules by male students. On the other hand, female officers who entered the Academy in later years, when all their senior and junior male fellow students had studied alongside female students throughout their education, as well as participated in gender integrated training, reported they had no experience of such gender discrimination. This finding indicates that the norm of *discriminative equality*

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<sup>264</sup> National defence specialist, informal interview by the author, Tokyo, Japan, June 28, 2014.

<sup>265</sup> With the exception of 1991, the competition rate for female candidates was always above 70, with the high of 140.3 in 1994 as a result of internationalisation of the SDF's mission, and 129.5 in 2011 as a result of the role the SDF played in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami disaster of March 11 the same year. In comparison, male competition rate fluctuated between the low 22.5 in 2008 and 35.5 in 1995. Male competition rate may be reflective of economic trends rather than any ideational factors as was the case for female applicants (Defence of Japan 1992-2016, data for the year 2007 not available).

was still widely held in the NDA until the second half of the 1990s. The resistance to newly adopted norms and practices deriving from this norm was initially strong. However, as the norm of female military participation continued and sedimented in the NDA, gender discrimination towards female students significantly decreased. This finding indicates that the norm of *participatory equality* started replacing *discriminative equality* in the NDA in the second half of the 1990s.

In the later part of 2000s, incidents of sexual harassment of female cadets by their male counterparts and teaching staff were reported in the media. While such reports are disturbing in themselves, they may be interpreted as an indication of the NDA leadership's readiness to face violence against women perpetrated within the institution in a more systemic fashion. Widespread sexual harassment towards women is the reality of Japanese society, Japanese education system and Japanese workplace. The assumption that the NDA was an exemption from this general rule would be counterintuitive. Providing young women with the ability to express their plight, and openly punishing perpetrators in otherwise closed and secretive institution is as a significant step towards improving the position of female cadets in the Academy, and it may gain public trust for the institution in long term. Long-term benefits of institutional transparency would overweight short-term consequences of negative public image in a society that is moving towards more egalitarian values. In this respect, the NDA should consider adopting the strategy of honesty and openness that the JDA attempted in the early 1990s in order to gain trust of young generations.

In the 1990s, the NDA proceeded with the education of future female SDF officers while reassuring the public that female students would not be assigned to combat-related jobs upon

graduation.<sup>266</sup> These reassurances were not explicitly stated in the subsequent news reports about female students in the NDA, leading to the assumption that female integration in the NDA gained a “taken-for-granted” quality – in other words, entered the process of sedimentation after successful graduation of the first class of female cadets in 1996.

While uniformed faculty staff may be more reluctant to change than civilians, there is a general trend towards gradual increase of support for further female integration in the NDA.<sup>267</sup> Increase in the number of proponents of change represents accumulation of enabling factors internally, within the institution. When this internal trend combines with the accumulation of enabling factors externally (such as demographic trends, more egalitarian domestic gender policies and most importantly Japan’s embeddedness in institutions of international and regional security), it is reasonable to expect weaker resistance to and higher compliance with new norms and policies once they will have been adopted.

#### **4.2.2 Compliance with Human-Rights Based Gender Equality: The Case of Systemic Sexual and Power Harassment in the Self-Defence Forces**

In 1993, in its period of “honne” policy (policy of honestly showing true feelings), the SDF published a seven-page article on sexual harassment of female servicemembers in its public-relations magazine.<sup>268</sup> Numerous sexual harassment incidents in the SDF were reported in the newspaper media throughout the 1990s, increasing in frequency towards the turn of centuries. Analysis of Mainichi Daily News articles in the period 1990-1999 show that 10 percent articles covered the topic of sexual misconduct in connection to female SDF personnel. In the same period, the first position was occupied by articles on female integration (37.5%).

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<sup>266</sup> “Jieitai mo josei ga tayori!?”, *Asahi Daily News*, March 24, 1991; “Bōshi kaburu takasa mo danshi ni makenai wa,” *Asahi Daily News* (Morning Edition), March 18, 1996.

<sup>267</sup> National defence specialist, informal interview by author, Tokyo, Japan, June 28, 2014.

<sup>268</sup> “Harassment in Japan’s forces,” *The Gazette* (Final Edition), Montreal, Quebec, April 12, 1993.

In comparison, since the beginning of and through the 2000s, majority of newspaper articles concerning women in the SDF were reports about sexual harassment. In the period 2000-2010, the topic that was most reported on in connection to women in the SDF was sexual misconduct (25.8%).

In 1998 National Personnel Authority (hereafter, NPA) established NPA Rule 10-10 (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) that entered into force on April 1, 1999. Article 4 of NPA Rule 10-10 puts obligation on heads of all government ministries and agencies to take necessary measures to ensure the prevention and eradication of sexual harassment at workplace, and to take “swift and appropriate” measures in cases when sexual harassment does occur. The same year, NPA issued guidelines and manual for the prevention of sexual harassment of public employees and assistance to victims of sexual harassment.<sup>269</sup> In the spring of 1998, the JDA conducted a survey on sexual harassment in the SDF among 2000 servicemembers, and published the survey results on January 14 the following year.<sup>270</sup> The results of this survey drew international media attention that reported on “widespread sexual harassment” in the

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<sup>269</sup> National Personnel Agency, *Sexual Prevention Guidelines and Manual for the Implementation of Rule 10-10 (Prevention of Sexual Harassment)*, 1998.

<sup>270</sup> “Sekuhara ni sonae wa? Bōeichō de sho no chōsa (What Provisions against Sexual Harassment are There? The First Survey in the Japan Defence Agency),” *Mainichi Daily News* (Hokkaido Morning Edition), January 15, 1999.

SDF.<sup>271</sup> In March 1999, the JDA adopted a ministerial directive on the prevention of sexual harassment along with the implementation guidelines.<sup>272</sup>

According to law, responsibility for measures for the prevention of sexual harassment, awareness rising education, dissemination of information and instructions throughout the SDF falls on the shoulders of Minister of Defence (before January 9, 2007 JDA Director General). In accordance with the 1999 ministerial directive on the prevention of sexual harassment, JDA Director General issued guidelines for the implementation of the directive (Guidelines about Issues the Employees Have to be Aware of in order to Eradicate Sexual Harassment). According to the guidelines, it was the responsibility of the head of each part of the organisation to disseminate this information throughout the organisation. The chief of staff for each branch (GSDF, MSDF, ASDF) issued a notification to their subordinate units to disseminate knowledge about the guidelines for the prevention of sexual harassment. Responsibility for the dissemination of guidelines among each servicemember lied with commanding officers of each unit. At the point of May 2007, depending on the commanding officer, the information about prevention of sexual harassment was disseminated among troops via notice boards, communicated orally or the notice from the chief of staff itself was distributed.<sup>273</sup> Despite these initial measures that JDA/SDF took at the end of the 1990s as a response to legislation for the prevention of sexual harassment at workplace, the process of compliance with locally adopted

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<sup>271</sup> “Study; Harassment of Women Widespread in Japan’s Military,” *Chicago Tribune*, Chicagoland Edition, January 17, 1999.

<sup>272</sup> Directive on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (Japan Defence Agency Directive No 29 of 1999), Guidelines for the Implementation of Directive on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (Japan Defence Agency Bureau of Personnel and Education no. 1-1889 (March 31, 1999)).

<sup>273</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Committee on Security meeting no. 11, May 18, 2007, SDF Director General of the Bureau of Personnel and Education Kōhei Masuda.

norm of prevention of violence against women did not significantly advance during the 2000s. A significant change on the level of norm internalisation within the organisation followed a high-profile sexual harassment lawsuit against Japanese government, and a number of high profile sexual harassment incidents in educational institutions affiliated to the MOD/SDF.

On May 8, 2007, a female ASDF servicemember filed a lawsuit against the government of Japan for the violation of her human rights, claiming damages in the amount of 11 million yen.<sup>274</sup> The ground for the lawsuit was that, in addition to being raped by a male colleague, she was being harassed into resigning after reporting the sexual assault to her superiors. After a rough and uncertain process, the trial ended on July 29, 2010 with the decision by the Sapporo Regional Court in favour of the plaintiff on all accounts. The government was eventually ordered to pay the plaintiff ¥2 million in damages for distress inflicted by sexual assault and ¥3 million for distress inflicted by subsequent unlawful treatment.<sup>275</sup> Japanese newspaper media reported that the government of Japan was in the end forced to pay ¥5.8 million in damages.<sup>276</sup> The government decided not to appeal the verdict. Considering the relevance of this case, details of the incident are given below, before proceeding with the analysis of relevant actors, their attitudes and possible impact of the case on the SDF.

Around 2:30 am in the ASDF base in Hokkaido a male Staff Sergeant (age 31) ordered by internal phonenumber a subordinate female Airmen First Class (age 20) to go to the boiler room. Already drunk, he forced her to drink with him, inappropriately touched her, and finally raped her in the early morning hours. Upon parting with her in the morning he told her “I’ll call you

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<sup>274</sup> Around 91.5 thousand dollars based on JPN-USD exchange rate at the time.

<sup>275</sup> Sapporo Regional Court, Summary of the Verdict in the Case No. 1205-2007(Wa), July 29, 2010.

<sup>276</sup> “A Former Female SDF Servicemember Wins Lawsuit, Regional Court Recognised Rape and Constructive Dismissal, Order to Pay Damages,” *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* (morning edition), July 30, 2010.



again next time when I stay overnight, so join me.” She reported the assault to her superior officer in the afternoon that day. However, not only did her superior officer take no measures to address the report, he made it impossible for her to have a medical check-up by demanding that she visit the gynaecologist in the company of her assaulter, himself and other male SDF personnel.<sup>277</sup> He further engaged in various forms of harassment against the victim of assault. Her attempts to consult with other superiors again resulted in no measures to address the sexual assault or the added harassment problem. It only led to wider and more pressuring power harassment. She was clearly informed by her superiors that if they had to choose between him as a man and her as a woman “the Self-Defence Forces will choose the man”. She was forced to continue working in close proximity with her assaulter and pressed by her superiors in various and no uncertain ways to quit her job. Due to stress, she was hospitalised with functional dyspepsia. After consultations with a lawyer, she decided to stay in the armed forces, and to file a lawsuit with the aim to “retrieve my human rights and my dignity as a woman” and to create working environment in the SDF where [everyone] can safely work.<sup>278</sup>

The trial revealed longstanding systemic problems with respect to how the issue of sexual harassment towards female service members was treated in the SDF. This high-profile

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<sup>277</sup> “Kuuji sekuhara soshō: seiteki bōkō wo nintei, Taishoku kyōyuu mo, Kuni ni baishō meirei – Sapporo saiban (Sexual Harassment Lawsuit against ASDF: Sapporo Regional Court Recognised Sexual Assault, Constructive Dismissal Too, Order to the State to Pay Damages” *Mainichi Daily News* (Hokkaido morning edition), July 30, 2010; “Human Rights Trial – Female SDF Servicemember,” *News for the People of Japan*, <http://www.news-pj.net/old/request/joseijieikanjinken/index.html> (accessed July 6, 2021).

<sup>278</sup> Details about the trial available on the website of the Japan Institute of Constitutional Law, *Lawsuit for Human Rights of Female Self-Defence Force Servicemember* (<http://www.jicl.jp/old/now/saiban/backnumber/womansoldier.html>, accessed July 3, 2020)

case was crucial for later introduction of a number of measures for the prevention of sexual harassment in the SDF, improvement of treatment of victims, harsher punishments for perpetrators, as well as higher accountability of those in the position of power whose responsibility is to react to harassment complaints. This case also served as a window – perchance a small window but a window nonetheless – through which the issue of human rights was further forced into armed forces of Japan. It is notable that one of few politicians who faced the MOD and the SDF representatives regarding the sexual harassment incident before the National Diet was a female opposition MP, who was also the only female member of the Committee on Security of the House of Representatives. Yet another significance of this case is that it was one instance of strong and constructive engagement of Japanese civil society with the position and treatment of women working in the SDF. Their efforts were crucial for the successful outcome of the trial, and in that connection later changes undertaken by the MOD/SDF to improve measures for the prevention of sexual harassment among the troops. What is notable, however, is that this case attracted relatively little attention by major Japanese media, notably the left leaning media.

In the Diet deliberation, the incident was first brought up in the meeting of the House of Representatives Committee on Security on May 18, 2007 by the opposition MP Kiyomi Tsujimoto. Firstly, she framed sexual harassment as a problem of discipline in the SDF, calling the treatment of the female SDF servicemember who filed the lawsuit “outrageous”.<sup>279</sup> She noted this was not the first case of sexual harassment in the SDF that had come to her knowledge. During this committee deliberations MP Tsujimoto repeatedly stressed the gravity of the issue, and that the MOD/SDF should treat it seriously. She raised several international

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<sup>279</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Committee on Security meeting no. 11, May 18, 2007, Kiyomi Tsujimoto (Social Democratic Party/ Citizen’s Federation).

examples of sexual harassment cases in Japanese companies to communicate how harshly such actions had been dealt with in the US civilian sector.<sup>280</sup> She also used the example of measures the US military had taken to respond to reports of sexual harassment of female troops by their male fellow soldiers in Iraq, emphasising transparency of the process. Rather than the tactic of shaming, these comments by MP Tsujimoto can be read as a suggestion for the MOD/SDF to look up to the American ally as a model for action. In this session she repeatedly notified the representatives of the MOD/SDF that she planned to pursue the issue further during the meeting of the Committee on Security scheduled to take place the following week.

Through her engagement with this sexual harassment incident, MP Tsujimoto sent an explicit message to the MOD/SDF that the issue drew the eyes of politicians, that the response to the incident will be followed up, and that politicians were actively acquiring insight into what was happening behind the scene in connection to sexual harassment in this governmental institution. In the House of Representatives Security Committee meeting that took place the following week, MP Tujimoto stated that she intended to “continue carefully monitoring this.”<sup>281</sup> She informed the MOD/SDF representatives that she was aware that, due to the lawsuit, not only was the plaintiff exposed to power harassment at work, but that female SDF servicemembers as a group were being targets of a backlash in the SDF. MP Tsujimoto issued a clear warning that, if not tackled, this would become a widespread institutional problem, putting both the SDF and the State into a disadvantaged position. Regarding specific measures

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<sup>280</sup> MP Tsujimoto raised examples of 1996 class action lawsuit against Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America for sexual harassment of 300 female workers (resolved by \$34 million settlement in 1998) and the 2006 sexual harassment lawsuit that forced the president and chief executive of Toyota Motor North America Inc. to resign.

<sup>281</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Committee on Security meeting no. 12, May 24, 2007, Kiyomi Tsujimoto (Social Democratic Party/ Citizen’s Federation).

for the prevention of sexual harassment at workplace she placed a great emphasis on the failure of the MOD/SDF to conduct follow-up survey on the awareness about sexual harassment at workplace.

Responses by the MOD/SDF representatives to MP Tsujimoto's remarks during Committee on Security deliberations will be given in detail below. Discourse analysis reveals the change in attitudes of the MOD/SDF leadership about the issue of sexual harassment. It also gives insight compliance with the norm of sexual harassment prevention beyond the initial institutionalisation of the norm in the organisation following the adoption of national legislation and guidelines in 1999. Firstly, the background information regarding the survey on sexual harassment at workplace in public sector will be given. This will be followed by deliberations in the Diet, with the focus on MOD/SDF responses to the critique regarding sexual harassment in the SDF.

The guidelines on Article 7 of NPA Rule 10-10 state that, among other measures aimed at "increasing the awareness and knowledge of the employees" about sexual harassment, all ministries and agencies should conduct survey(s) of attitudes and perceptions about sexual harassment.<sup>282</sup> With the exception of JDA (after January 2007 MOD), all government ministries and agencies conducted the survey twice. The first survey had been conducted prior to the establishment of NPA Rule 10-10 in order to identify perceptions, attitudes and actual situation with respect to sexual harassment at workplace in public sector at the time. The second survey was a follow-up survey conducted after the establishment of the NPA Rule 10-10 in order to determine if necessary steps for the prevention of sexual harassment that had been

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<sup>282</sup> The Japanese language does not distinguish grammatical number (no distinction between plural and singular).

taken showed results. Namely, if there had been a change in the awareness, perceptions, attitudes about and exposure to sexual harassment at workplace in public sector.

MOD was the only ministry (formerly Agency) that conducted this survey only once, in 1998, prior to the implementation of the guidelines, without conducting the follow-up survey, even though results of the first survey showed that there was place for concern in the SDF regarding sexual harassment. MP Tsujimoto challenged the MOD/SDF members of the Security Committee saying, “It is far too odd that you have conducted this survey only once.”<sup>283</sup> She continued to press the survey issue, considering that the initial survey revealed rather discouraging situation when it came to safety of female SDF servicemembers and their experiences regarding sexual harassment at workplace in the SDF. To the repeated requests of MP Tsujimoto for the MOD/SDF to address the problems of discipline in the SDF that result in such sexual harassment incidents, and the request to instantly conduct a fact-finding investigation, the MOD and the SDF representatives gave the following response:

“Firstly, regarding sexual harassment, in the case of our country, there are many instances when a man himself acts under perception that something is not sexual harassment, but that actually turns out to be sexual harassment, so, from that point of view, I think we have to start properly from basic education [...]” (Minister of Defence Fumio Kyuma)<sup>284</sup>

To the inquiry from another female opposition MP Tomoko Kami (Japan Communist Party) later that month why the follow-up survey on sexual harassment had not been conducted by the MOD/SDF, the SDF representative gave the following response:

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<sup>283</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Committee on Security meeting no. 12, May 24, 2007, Kiyomi Tsujimoto (Social Democratic Party/ Citizen’s Federation).

<sup>284</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> Session of the House of Representatives, Council on Security meeting no. 12, May 24, 2007, Minister of Defence Fumio Kyuma (Liberal Democratic Party).

“As MP has pointed out, [the survey] among regular civil servants was conducted twice, before and after the implementation [of measures for the prevention of sexual harassment]. But as I have said, we conducted the survey once at that point in order to study measures for the prevention of sexual harassment.” (SDF Director General of the Bureau of Personnel and Education Kōhei Masuda)<sup>285</sup>

Both the above statements indicate that there was lack of awareness among the leadership of the MOD (former JDA) and the SDF regarding sexual harassment as a relevant issue in the SDF. uniformed personnel in the Diet during the 1990s. The 2007 sexual harassment lawsuit against the government caught the MOD/SDF leadership unprepared. The analysis of the Diet deliberations reveals that, rather than non-compliance due to internal resistance by antipreneurs, the lack of compliance was a result of involuntary non-compliance by a conservative organisation with limited financial and human resources. As the debate unfolded, there is a change of tone that indicates increasing awareness about the importance of sexual harassment prevention and willingness of the MOD/SDF leadership to implement in mechanisms for compliance with the international norm that had been adopted and institutionalised by the government. The following statement by Defence Minister reflects this change in leadership awareness, “I have come to realise that, unlike in the past, the number of female uniformed personnel has been increasing recently and therefore we also do need to change our way of thinking a bit, and start proactively dealing with [sexual harassment] problems within the armed forces. I cannot say it will be the same as for regular civil servants, though.”<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no. 10, May 28, 2007, SDF Director General of the Bureau of Personnel and Education Kōhei Masuda.

<sup>286</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no. 10, May 28, 2007, Minister of Defence Fumio Kyuma (a response to Tomoko Kami of the Japan Communist Party).

Later statement by Minister of Defence became more decisive, indicating the increasing awareness of the SDF leadership that sexual harassment problem may deep one that needed to be addressed. “As [MP Kami] said earlier, a case like that now may be going beyond just the problem of sexual harassment. From now on we have to keep an eye on the future processes regarding such incidents. In any case, we intend to proceed dealing with the question what to do to eliminate things like this in the future, including conducting the survey [on sexual harassment].”<sup>287</sup>

According to the first survey on sexual harassment in the SDF conducted in 1998 following the NPA methodology, sexual coercion was experienced by 18.7% respondents<sup>288</sup> (compared to 17.0% in the NPA survey for other government ministries and agencies). Among respondents, 18.2% reported being followed and experiencing intrusions into their personal lives (NPA results 16.9%), and 27.8% of respondents reported being objects of sexual rumours (NPA results 23.9%). While the survey figures were only somewhat higher than in other governmental institutions, the media seemed to have considered them too high for the SDF as a supposedly “strict institution”. The survey also revealed that the situation for the JDA/SDF employees was better than for other civil servants in some aspects. For example, inappropriate touching was reported by 59.8% of respondents (in comparison to 67.3% among regular civil servants from the NPA survey), and being treated as tea and cleaning ladies because of their gender by 52.5% respondents (NPA results 66.2%). Problems specific to armed forces were reported as well, such as the lack of sex-segregated changing rooms, toilets or showers during

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<sup>287</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no. 10, May 28, 2007, Minister of Defence Fumio Kyuma (in response to Tomoko Kami of the Japan Communist Party).

<sup>288</sup> This figure includes 7.8% of women who reported suffering successful or attempted rape and/or sexual assault (The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no. 10, May 28, 2007, Tomoko Kami (Japan Communist Party)).

training or inspection of locker rooms by male SDF personnel (in groups or in a quick succession).<sup>289</sup> Nevertheless, the above figures show that sexual harassment in public sector in Japan was widespread, affecting the majority of both regular and “special” female civil servants.

In the period between 1999 and 2005, there were 380 complaints about sexual harassment in the SDF. Disciplinary measures were taken against 23 officers and 23 warrant officers and enlisted personnel. Regarding disciplinary measures against perpetrators of sexual and power harassment, the MOD/SDF representatives considered them sufficient. MP Tomoko Kami raised an example of a lax response to sexual harassment complaint in which sexual assault had been committed against a young female SDF servicemember by her senior male colleague (who had been drunk while on duty). She quit the SDF after being hospitalized for one month due to psychological distress at workplace following the assault. The perpetrator of the assault received a one-day suspension with pay, whereas her superior officer was given a warning about neglect to perform his duty. This deliberation reveals discrepancy in perceptions regarding appropriate punishment for perpetrators of violence against women between politicians (civilian sector) and the SDF. The response of the SDF representative was that,

“Even though it is only one day, taking into consideration [that it is the strictest disciplinary measure], from your perspective it may look too light, but from our perspective we consider it to be a severe punishment.”<sup>290</sup> MP Tsujimoto also maintained that the internal response to sexual harassment complaints was lax and that it “must be called embarrassing

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<sup>289</sup> “Danjo tomo ooini fuman – Bōeichō ga sekuhara sho chōsa (Both Men and Women Greatly Dissatisfied – Defence Agency Conducts the First Survey on Sexual Harassment),” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo morning edition), January 15, 1999.

<sup>290</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Councilors, Budget Committee meeting no. 10, May 28, 2007, SDF Director General of the Bureau of Personnel and Education Kōhei Masuda.



from international perspective as well”.<sup>291</sup> In this case MP Tsujimoto clearly used a tactic of shaming the MOD/SDF into compliance with norms institutionalised domestically as a result of the 1990s international movements for the criminalisation of violence against women.

Although initial responses during the Diet committee deliberations given by the MOD/SDF representatives were ambiguous, the follow-up survey on sexual harassment in the MOD/SDF started already in August 2007, and results were made public the following year. From the Diet records of 2008 we can learn that MP Tsujimoto actually received assurances from the MOD/SDF that they would conduct the follow-up survey promptly.<sup>292</sup> Based on this it is possible to conclude that, although official diet records show no further discussions on this topic until the following year, MP Tsujimoto did continue to engage in the issue of sexual harassment in the SDF with the MOD/SDF leadership through unofficial or classified communication. This is a representative case of a departure from the way female politicians interacted with the SDF leadership in connection to issues relating to female uniformed personnel in the SDF at least until the early 1990s.

The diet records show that for decades those interactions were short-termed and spurious, focused on a narrow problematic issue that went against already established gender norms, such as the exclusion of women from the NDA. Around the mid-1990s a number of female politicians, bureaucrats and professionals participated in committees and study groups

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<sup>291</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Committee on Security meeting no. 5, April 11, 2008, Kiyomi Tsujimoto (Social Democratic Party/ Citizen’s Federation).

<sup>292</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Committee on Security meeting no. 5, April 11, 2008, Kiyomi Tsujimoto (Social Democratic Party/ Citizen’s Federation). The author of this dissertation was not able to find on which occasion(s) those assurances were first given. It can be surmised they were given in the period between the May committee deliberations and when the commencement of the survey process in August 2007.

established by the Japanese government and prime ministers of that period to discussions policies of female integration in the SDF. However, female integration in the SDF during the 1990s was viewed as an integral part of wider studies about the SDF personnel reform, prompted by the country's birth-rate decline and unfavourable recruitment situation. The author of this dissertation could not identify actual contribution of those women to the development of subsequent policies of female integration in the SDF due to the lack of available data on committee deliberations and the absence of open debate about female uniformed personnel in the SDF.

MP Tsujimoto raised another aspect of sexual harassment in the SDF important from the perspective of internalisation of international norms. She emphasised that the lawsuit was not only another scandal or a question of sexual harassment either. It was also a question of violation of human rights – an issue about which international standards had become very strict. In that connection MP Tsujimoto continues: “Although [our party] opposes it, considering that the SDF has a plan to continue to engage in international missions, you should be aware that this trial is not about whether you will win or lose, it is about you handling this issue in a proper way.”<sup>293</sup> In this instance, rather than shaming, MP Tsujimoto again used a tactic of constructive engagement with the SDF by encouraging its leadership to comply with gender norms of international community – considering that it strives to be an active member of that community. During the May Diet committee deliberations, she successfully included *statist* component in her statements as she switched between the role of an outsider criticising the SDF and the role of a fellow compatriot who shared with the Japanese armed forces common interests and a common goal of achieving what is best for the country.

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<sup>293</sup> The 166<sup>th</sup> session of the House of Representatives, Committee on Security meeting no. 12, May 24, 2007, Kiyomi Tsujimoto (Social Democratic Party/ Citizen's Federation).

This case shows, in relation to internalisation of and compliance with adopted international norms in the SDF, active and constructive participation of women in the National Diet committees, specifically committees dealing with security issues is of a great importance. It is of no small importance that the person who showed the greatest concern and exerted the greatest pressure in the Diet on the MOD/SDF to improve their efforts in the area of prevention of sexual harassment in the SDF was the only female member of the Committee on Security. However, the author of this dissertation strongly agrees with a great number of both scholars and practitioners who have warned against the “add women and steer” approach. It should be noted that MP Tsujimoto was not only a female MP, but a person who had been deeply involved in the enactment of legislations concerning domestic violence and gender equality in Japan, and actively worked for the promotion of gender equality throughout her political career. She was also involved in issues relating to the SDF throughout her career as well. The above sexual harassment case in the SDF indicates that it was this type of female legislators and politicians – equipped with wide and deep knowledge about gender issues, and ready to engage in a constructive dialogue with their counterparts from armed forces – who were needed to bring necessary policy changes if the position of both men and women in the SDF was to be improved. Professional women who are willing and able to give a meaningful contribution to identifying, spotlighting and pushing towards the improvement of discriminative institutional practices in self-proclaimed “gender neutral” but in reality “gender-blind” institutions – in this case, the overwhelmingly male-dominated armed forces of Japan.

There is another reason why the 2007 sexual harassment lawsuit against the state is significant. It gathered an unprecedented involvement of civil society in an issue concerning women in the SDF. Lawyers, members of women’s movements, groups for the promotion of women’s and human rights rallied around the young woman who filed the lawsuit. Various groups and individuals established the Association Supporting the Trial for the Protection of

Human Rights of Female Self-Defence a Force Servicemember (Josei Jieikan no Jinken Saiban wo Shien Suru Kai, hereafter the Association).<sup>294</sup> They organised press conferences, symposiums and public lectures across the country. They conducted fundraising activities, and the team of lawyers representing the plaintiff took a significant amount of financial burden of the trial on themselves. They collected petitions and overwhelmed the SDF and the Ministry of Defence by E-mails, letters and telephone calls of protest. The movement gathered 20,000 signatures on the petition for the support of this female servicemember.<sup>295</sup> On December 27, 2007 the Sapporo Regional Court decided on non-institution of prosecution due to “the lack of evidence”. The very next day both the team of lawyers representing the plaintiff and the Association issued declarations of protest about the court decision. Lawyers pressed the court to accept their appeal for re-examination of the case due to inappropriate handling of the investigation by the military police and public prosecutor.

“The public prosecutor, as the representative of public interest[sic.], has the duty to reveal the truth before the open court, and to thoroughly pursue especially such actions of institutional concealment of crime as conducted by this [SDF] unit. Otherwise, it would be impossible for individuals to protect their basic human rights against such overwhelming institutional power.” (Declaration of the Team of Lawyers, December 28, 2007)

The legal representative of the plaintiff was quoted in the newspaper media saying that the SDF was not taking seriously internal investigations of sexual harassment, that they were

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<sup>294</sup> The source of information relating to the activities of civil society presented in the text below is the website of News for the People of Japan’s “Human Rights Trial – Female SDF Servicemember” page (<http://www.news-pj.net/old/request/joseijieikanjinken/index.html>, accessed on July 6, 2007), unless specified differently.

<sup>295</sup> “Jieitai sekuhara soshō (Sexual Harassment Lawsuit against the Self-Defence Forces),” *Asahi Shimbun* (evening edition), October 29, 2010.

using words like “strength/vigour” as a logic based on which to restrict individual human rights of their servicemembers. The legal representative emphasized that it was necessary to start thinking about human rights of the SDF servicemembers considering that overseas deployments have become one of their primary duties.<sup>296</sup> Civil society effectively mobilized to pressure the government and the SDF to change their praxis concerning sexual harassment throughout the three-year period of the court trial. They pushed for the acknowledgement of human rights by the SDF, and pressured the leadership of Japanese armed forces to comply with international normative standards emphasising they were members of the international community that upholds those standards.

After the verdict was delivered by the Sapporo Regional Court on July 29, 2010, the Association submitted a petition to the MOD requesting the government not to appeal the decision. The involvement of human rights advocates and civil society in this lawsuit had been instrumental for its successful resolution. However, while members of civil society framed this case as an issue of human rights towards wider public audience, in the court of law the local normative prior of *koujo ryouzoku* (public order and decency) was used as the ground for the lawsuit. The reason for this is that the Japanese court discourages the use of human rights and any lawsuit based on the violation of human rights can hardly be won.<sup>297</sup> Although human rights are institutionalised in laws, regulations and government plans as the basic principles of gender equality and antidiscrimination, on the compliance level they are trumped by other

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<sup>296</sup> “Jieitai sekuhara, shien wo yobikake, Bengoshira ga hokokusyuukai – Nagoya Naka-ku (Sexual Harassment in the Self-Defence Forces, Calls for Support – Reporting Meeting Held by Attorneys in Naka Ward Nagoya” *Asahi Shimbun* (Aichi edition), February 5, 2008.

<sup>297</sup> Hirofumi Sato, human rights lawyer, head of the team of lawyers representing the plaintiff in the case No. 1205-2007(Wa) (SDF Servicemember v State), informal telephone interview by the author, conducted on July 8, 2020.

longstanding and strong local normative priors. The perception of human rights as something foreign that goes against Japanese collective culture had been nurtured by conservative politicians, and human rights thusly still held weak foothold among general population. Human rights are based on liberal ideas of individual rights and serve to protect the freedoms of the individual. Therefore, they are a threat to domestic norm hierarchy. *Koujoryouzoku* (public order and decency) is a norm that can be classified as entrenched and supported by the strong conservative structure of Japanese court. Only through the in-depth analysis of a specific case can we identify such elements in the norm internalisation processes. Compliance with international norm of human-rights based gender equality was still only formal throughout the observed period, and used as a strategy to avoid negative effects on a democratic country's international standing.

Based on the above case, non-compliance with this element of *participatory equality* was not a result of active resistance from the SDF leadership. It was a result of non-voluntary compliance by actors who lacked awareness, or “gender blindness” of leadership, that the SDF needed to comply with this element of locally adopted norms. After 2011, newspaper media reports on sexual misconduct in the SDF significantly decreased. Considering that in the era of social media it has become difficult to control leakage of information, this may be an indication that the organisation is complying with the norm of *participatory equality* with respect to the element of the prevention of sexual violence against women.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION**

Internalisation of international norms relating to gender equality in the SDF was a complex process. Internalisation of gender norms within the organisation is more complex than internalisation on national level because it is on organisational level that norms acquire their most concrete manifestation. They need to be sufficiently operationalised in order to govern individual behaviour of members within the organisation. The more specific a norm is, the richer the pool of contesting normative elements that decision-makers can choose from is. Decision-makers in the SDF chose contesting elements that fit their interests, preferences and identity from both domestic and international framework. The objective of this selection was to preserve normative hierarchy within the organisation, as the SDF leadership perceived this hierarchy as a condition of survival of the organisation and preservation of its ability to fulfil its stated mission.

In the period between 1954 and 1974, the SDF adopted international gender equality norms through direct borrowing, and internalisation of those norms proceeded primarily via internal incentive. This study challenges claims of previous studies that recruitment and treatment of women at the inception was based primarily on rationalist calculations. Namely, creating an image that was distinct from its discredited predecessor, and the satisfaction of recruitment needs. These objectives could have been satisfied by giving SDF nurses significantly better treatment than they were given in civilian labour market, without actually granting them regular SDF status or equal pay and benefits. Policies towards women that were in certain aspects more egalitarian than in armed forces of other countries of liberal democratic block were based on norms that were being constructed on the international level by organisations such as ILO. This makes the SDF the forerunner in the adoption and internalisation of international gender equality norm. These pioneering policies were enabled by the strong liberal and international

elements in norms the young SDF leadership embraced for the organisation in the post-WW2 period.

The opening of general occupations in the GSDF in 1967 despite the resistance from the political opposition or lack of pressures from the ruling LDP can be explained by material factors, namely, grave lack of recruitment candidates. However, as stated in Chapter 4, this explanation is not satisfactory in the case of the MSDF and the ASDF. Harmonisation of policies of female integration across the organisation can be used to explain the policy change in the MSDF and the ASDF in 1974. However, the question remains about the seven-year gap in the policy harmonisation process. A plausible explanation to account for this gap is that the SDF leadership proactively responded to international and domestic developments relating to female empowerment in the period prior to the International Women's Year.

In the second part of the 1970s the SDF started losing traction as one of leaders in female integration among government agencies. As the Diet records and the account of Ryoko Akamatsu show, female integration in the SDF was prompted by informal pressures from women within the SDF and from within the government. In contrast, in the 1980s, female integration in the SDF proceeded as part of formal process of institutional harmonisation with the CEDAW. However, during this period the SDF showed signs of regression with respect to internalisation of international gender equality norms. Based on *functional equality*, women occupied auxiliary position in the labour market. However, the CEDAW required normative change that would enable women to occupy leadership positions. Resistance to open the NDA to women was a case of non-compliance with normative element of equal educational opportunities. However, it is also an example of resistance towards internationally required transition of women from auxiliary to leadership roles.

The primary mechanism through which international norms influenced gender policies in the SDF was indirectly, through the government of Japan. The condition for this mechanism to



work was formal adoption of international norms and their institutionalisation in domestic administrative and legal structures. Based on the findings of this study it may be concluded that institutionalisation of international gender equality norms in domestic legislation and establishment of administrative mechanisms for the advancement of the position of women in society contributed to gender equality in the Japanese armed forces in a great extent. Overcoming of the resistance to and compliance with adopted norms was achieved by incorporating *statist* element into domestic gender equality norms that corresponded well with the mission of armed forces – self-sacrifice for defence of the country and protection of the population from threat. Membership in international and regional security institutions significantly increased the likelihood of compliance with norms upheld by that institution. In addition to formal obligations to comply with requirements of international institutions in whose missions the SDF participated in, there was a desire in the SDF leadership to be perceived and accepted as an equal. It should be noted that the SDF leadership endeavours to control the influence of such normative pressures by reconstructing those norms as external to the organisation. At least such response was possible until the adoption of *gender perspective* in NAP UNSCR 1325. Gender perspective has even greater transformative potential in case of national armed force than in case of NATO, because NATO deals with WPS by delegating operationalisation of *gender perspective* to individual member and partners states. There is a high possibility that the SDF leadership learned from international partners that the principle of military effectiveness can be used to control transformative influence of *gender perspective*.

Secondary mechanism of internalisation of international norms was through direct borrowing. The SDF directly borrowed from international normative framework those normative elements that fit with interests, preferences and identity of the organisation. Specifically, it borrowed from norms institutionalised through international organisations such as the UN and ILO. An example of this is partial adoption of the element of equal treatment in

employment. It also borrowed normative elements from armed forces of other countries, specifically the US, Great Britain, Canada and in recent years Australia. The very acknowledgement of female participation in armed forces was thusly borrowed. This borrowing process was enabled by the identity the SDF leadership constructed for the organisation early on – armed force of a developed country of democratic block. The more embedded the organisation was in cooperation relating to international peace and security, the more norms of other armed forces influenced the SDF gender policies through socialisation and emulation.

This was the case with the adoption in 1967 of core elements of *functional equality*. *Functional equality* served best purposes of a modern armed force. It provided wider policy choices with respect to measures for acquiring necessary workforce. On the other hand, it did not challenge male-centered decision-making structures within the organisation. The resistance to *statist functional equality* in the 1980s was a consequence of the SDF leadership's uncertainty regarding future implications of the new norm on the organisation. Empirical evidence suggests that the SDF has existed in such uncertainty regarding concrete implications of normative change ever since the 1980s. In the situation of uncertainty, the SDF acts reactively rather than proactively, and external pressure is necessary to force significant policy change. Although the SDF in post-Cold War era was gradually developing characteristics of a postmodern military, this was an ongoing process, and *functional equality* remained an attractive normative framework for the SDF leadership for formulation of gender policies. This is the reason that some proponents of female integration look up to Israel for ideas regarding gender policies applicable in the SDF.

This dissertation was also an attempt to conceptualise theoretically some processes within norm internalisation, most specifically the process of norm sedimentation. The process of sedimentation can be identified when empirical observations show regular production of policy

documents, documents with specific measures and targets and meaningful follow up reports on the implementation of documents that include language reflective of a specific norm. Sedimentation process differs from compliance as it is the process that norms undergo, whereas compliance is an act that actors in norm internalisation engage in. During the observed period, discriminative equality was the only norm that was displaced. The process of phasing out of this norm enveloped simultaneously with the process of accumulation of enabling factors for the adoption of *full equality* in the first half of the 1980s. The obsolete norm was phased by the mid-1980s. The reason why discriminative equality was phased out at the point of the adoption of a new norm (through ratification of CEDAW) and not later as should be expected, can be found in a Japan's specific approach to the ratification of international treaties. While general practice is to ratify international instrument and then later implement it, general practice in Japan is to first prepare in advance the environment in which the government will be able to implement international obligations with certainty. Similar situation was identified in the case of NAP UNSCR 1325, when the SDF already started the process of compliance with a document that was to be adopted in the future.

There are certain normative elements that are fairly recent, and it is difficult to discern if they are elements of *participatory equality*, or if they are a harbinger of a new gender equality norm under construction on international level. Namely, new socially constructed perceptions about men's roles, and systematic inclusion of men and boys into gender equality – men as beneficiaries of measures for gender equality (such as work-life-balance measures, access to female dominated education and occupational areas etc.), elimination of violence against men and boys; new perceptions of women – women as perpetrators of violence, women as combatants; abandoning of the approach of “revising” current standards in all spheres of life that are based on men's experiences and male bodies, and instead creating a new approach to

standard-setting that will reflect experiences and bodies not only of men and women, but of all members of society in all their diversity.

Regarding variables that influence gender policies in armed forces, with respect to the SDF, Segal's hypothesis that the primary impetus of female participation in the military is the military's need for personnel was not confirmed. Quantitative integration of women in the SDF was conditioned by normative values of the SDF leadership that constrained or allowed specific policy choices. In the case of the SDF both number of women and roles they played in armed forces depended on normative framework the SDF leadership supported or needed to respond to. Participation in international missions after adoption of WPS on international level had a direct positive influence on gender equality in the SDF. However, women's concentration in support function does not have a direct influence on their participation in international missions in case of the SDF, because female participation in international missions is closely controlled. Technological advancements may have influence on gender policies in the SDF. However, examples of ad hoc training to equip female SDF with necessary skills when the need arise require further specification of this variable. In case of the SDF quantitative participation of women is still very low, and the quality of female applicants is very high quality. Nevertheless, female recruitment was limited and male candidates with lower qualifications were accepted over women with higher skills.

Hypotheses relating to social structure variables were confirmed for the major part in the case of the SDF. Demographic patterns, labour force characteristics, economic factors and family structure all influenced the SDF policies. However, there is further need for verification of variables within this dimension. AS was seen in the case of low birth rates on domestic level, depending on how the problem was constructed by the government based on their normative values resulted in two opposite policy choices before 2005 and after 2005. Female labour

participation in Japan was at its high in the 1970s, and yet that had only limited effect on female participation until normative change toward more egalitarian norms.

The “purpose/function of the armed forces” variables was verified in the case of the SDF. When the SDF purpose was revised and disaster relief and PKO mission were included in its mission, this created avenue for advancement of gender equality in the SDF. Youth of leadership with more egalitarian values may be a factor of relevance in the SDF. Around 2025 it is expected that older senior officers, some of whom still hold values deriving from *discriminative equality*, will retire. After this period the SDF leadership will in great extent be comprised of men who have only experienced the SDF and the NDA with female colleagues by their side both during education and training. In other words, they have experienced the environment that broke with male only tradition. Personal beliefs of such leaders may have positive influence on gender equality in the SDF. If this is taken as an assumption, then Iskra et al. “youth” variable in the SDF case needs to be considered not only in connection with more egalitarian social and political environment, but also with a break of tradition within the organisation at the point when future leaders were young.

One of domestic variables that has been raised as an important factor concerning female recruitment in the Self-Defence Forces is the position of armed forces in the society. The position of the Self-Defence Forces in Japan has been legally ambiguous and socially weak due to the constitutional proscription on the military, its historical connection to the unpopular Japanese Imperial Army, and culture of antimilitarism in Japan. Sociologists Sato and Ben-Ari posit that the Self-Defence Forces use recruitment of women primarily as a strategy to improve the public image of armed forces domestically and to distance themselves from their predecessor’s legacy. Sato provides empirical evidence that support these claims. However, it is the opinion of the author of this dissertation that the “public image” variable may have been overestimated and further verification is needed to avoid bias in causal inference.

This dissertation was an attempt to provide empirical evidence that international norms had influence on armed forces of Japan, a country whose conservative government had resistance towards Western liberal ideas. It was further an attempt to identify mechanisms through which international norms influence policies in armed forces of Japan, as well as actors involved in the process of norm adoption and internalisation in the SDF. The observed span was very long and a lot of relevant information had to be omitted. A future study should incorporate constructivist and rationalist approaches in the analysis of gender policies in the SDF.

## **Appendix 1**

### **“About the Measures relating to the Issue of Accepting Women in the National Defence Academy”**

Provisional translation by the author of the Japanese Defence Agency’s internal document (1990):

Regarding the issue of enrolment of girls in the NDA, the debate has been going back and forth without any conclusion for more than ten years now. However, taking into comprehensive consideration the reasons (1) listed below, we believe it is better to earlier abolish the policy of exclusion of women in order to have a free-hand regarding numbers to be admitted et cetera later when the enrolment starts. Therefore, we decide on measures (2) listed below, and plan to advance necessary preparations accordingly.

#### (1) Reasons

a) Currently, the National Plan of Action toward the Year 2000, the document that provides guidelines for measures relating to women calls for abolishing of all restrictions for women in national examination system by FY 1990.

b) The only remaining examination restriction imposed on women in regular service category – Postal Service B – was abolished in 1989, resulting in zero occupations in regular service category being restricted for women.<sup>298</sup>

c) Following b) above, the only restriction on women in the national civil service examination system remains the entrance exam for the National Defence Academy, and it can be anticipated that the issue of enrolment of girls in the NDA will now be the sole target [of criticism], especially after the deadline of FY 1992.

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<sup>298</sup> Postal Office Exam B belonged to the 3<sup>rd</sup> service category under the old examination system and was necessary for postal jobs that included all-night work, work that required exposure to elements and alike.

d) It is unlikely that those who argue that female officers graduating from the NDA are necessary from the perspective of the JSDF's personnel strategy will be able to provide decisive arguments in favour of this hypothesis no matter how much more time is put into this debate.

e) On the other hand, it is unlikely that those who argue that female officers graduating from the NDA will be absolutely unnecessary from the perspective of the JSDF's personnel strategy will be able to provide decisive arguments in favour of this hypothesis no matter how much more time is put into this debate.

f) Since FY 1967 the aim of female recruitment in general occupations was to gradually increase their number (the target is about 5000 women, comprising about 2% of the total uniformed personnel), and it is expected that this objective of about 5000 women (about 2% of the total uniformed personnel) will be achieved in FY 1996-1998.

g) In FY 1986 it was decided to expand general occupations available to female JSDF. Currently we have reached the figure of 356 specialties open for women, which comprise about 77% of the total number of occupational specialties (462).

- 2 -

## (2) Future Measures

a) The Defence Agency's reasons for the decision to abolish the examination restriction for women.

Having in mind that we do not acknowledge the assigning of women to combat units and similar concerns, we have been studiously examining the issue of the admittance of female cadets in the NDA. However, taking into consideration the following

1. The Defence Agency as well has to achieve the target "to endeavour to abolish all occupational examination restrictions on women in by FY 1990" set in the National Plan of Action toward the Year 2000 or the New National Action Plan, a document that provides government guidelines for measures relating to women.



2. On the other hand, the Defence Agency has been investing efforts to increase the number of female JSDF personnel in general occupations (the initial target is about 5000 persons) and to expand general occupations available to women. Regarding the number of female personnel, the initial target of about 5000 persons will be achieved in the period FY 1996-1998, and regarding the occupations available for women, the target of 77% (356 specialties) of the total specialties (462) will be achieved in the same period.
3. In addition to this, the National Defence Medical College has admitted female students since April 1985 and the first class is now in their fifth year. The education and training has been carried out without any particular problems, and in general female students have shown good performance.

we decide to abolish the examination restriction on women in the National Defence Academy.

- 3 -

## **Appendix 2**

### **LIST OF INTERVIEWS**

Hokkaido Godo Law Office, Hirofumi Sato, Attorney at Law.

Japan Committee for UNICEF, Ryoko Akamatsu, Chairperson, former bureaucrat, former Minister of Education.

Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, Asahiko Mihara, House of Representatives (Member).

Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, Voice of the People, Kuniko Inoguchi, House of Councillors (Member), Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, House of Councillors (Director), former Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs.

Ministry of Defence, interview with a senior bureaucrat responsible for recruitment, education and training policy in the Self-Defence Forces.

National Defence Academy, Hitoshi Kawano, Professor.

National Federation of Business and Professional Women, Haniwa Natori, Director, former Director of the Office for Gender Equality of the Prime Minister's Office and former Director of the Office of Gender Equality, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan.

National security experts, informal interviews with two experts in Japanese national security.

Self-Defence Forces, informal interviews with two officers responsible for personnel recruitment, education and training, and an informal interview with a female officer Ground Self-Defence Force.

Self-Defence Forces, Hiromi Takashima, Retired Vice Admiral, Maritime Self-Defence Force.

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