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AFRICAN WOMEN'S JOURNEY TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION:

ROLE OF WOMEN IN PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN BARAGOI, SAMBURU COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

The international community has long recognized the importance of women's full and effective participation in peace efforts, and to the maintenance and promotion of lasting peace and security. Since the UN Security Council's unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, States, regional organisations, UN agencies and civil society organisations have made firm commitments to support women's decision-making, leadership and participation in conflict resolution, peace processes and post-conflict peace building and state building. Key peace building and State-building principles emphasize the importance of women's participation in governance as critical to legitimate and inclusive political processes, which in turn is critical to the prevention of relapse into violence. More recently, Agenda 2030 and in particular Sustainable Development Goal 16 recognize the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in building just, peaceful and inclusive societies. This study focused on African women's journey towards gender equality and social transformation; role of women in peace building and conflict resolution in Baragoi, Samburu County. For the sake of analysis, this study employed an exploratory design. This study was conducted in Baragoi, Samburu County. The study included the quantification and evaluation of the concept's existence. A descriptive technique was also used to clarify patterns extensively by using direct quotes and selected remarks from informants. The results of the study showed that many organizations active in brokering peace between women in Baragoi acknowledged the important role women played in building peace in contrast to a culture which did not recognize the role of women in building peace. The study results also showed that women were very creative and self-driven in their own initiative in peace building or conflict resolution as demonstrated by their own skills in peace building or conflict resolution. The study concluded that the transmission of a culture of peace involves a multifaceted approach, such as culture, formal education, advice and social networking

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BACKGROUND

The role played by women in conflict prevention and resolution, peace building, peace-making and reconciliation cannot be understated. That is because, in addition to caring for, giving birth and raising people as mothers, women also have the ability to engage in activities that are oriented towards peaceful dispute resolution and peace building (Jeong, 2017). Women are also at the forefront of attempts to create peace worldwide. In the communities they live, women are also the stabilizing factor. This definitely holds true in post-conflict environments where women basically constitute the backbone of reconciliation and recovery, the reintegration of former fighters and the reintegration of fundamental economic activities in a war-torn society after peace has been reached (Ramsbotham et al, 2011).

They had been very active in such activities long before acknowledging the role of women in the peacebuilding process. Women have been appropriately described as pro-peace as a social community. Women have been widely visible in nonviolence and peace campaigns around the world. Women typically take on the role of pacificators in families, communities and societies, although they are also victims.

Women were at the forefront of peace building efforts in countries worldwide. Women have come in many instances to peace talks unified between various groups, classes and ethnic differences. Their solidarity and commitment to peace could come from their daily experiences and concerns: protecting children; seeking food, clean water or shelter, protecting themselves against violence and, in particular, sexual and gender-specific violence linked to conflict (McEvoy, 2009).

To illustrate the importance of women in peace-building On 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325, on women, peace and security. This Resolution highlighted the importance of taking the gender perspective to the center of UN efforts to avoid and resolve conflicts, create stability, preserve peace, rehabilitate and rebuild. This resolution came about as a result of the invitation of the UN Secretary-General to research the implications of conflicts for women, children, women's role in building peace and the gender aspects of the peace processes and resolution of conflicts. In accordance with the aforementioned UN resolution, the African Heads of States agreed to ensure the complete and efficient involvement and representation of women in a peace process, including prevention, resolution, and management of conflict and post conflict reconstruction in Africa, in a solemn declaration of equality of sex adopted by the African Heads of Government on 6 July 2004. (Columbia, 2015).

Following the adoption of UN Resolution 1325 (2000), some progress has been recorded, although limited in recognizing the role of women in resolving conflicts and building peace after conflicts, and in incorporating women into the decision-making level of peace policies and processes. According to tryggstad (2009) the Kigali Declaration of 1997 had enhanced women's positive and active positions in peace-building and peace-building, their respectful attitudes and their passion, before UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000 was adopted. The Declaration acknowledges the traditional roles women play in peace making and their right to equal participation in all peace initiatives, including early warning systems and rapid national, regional and international responses (Kigali Declaration, 1997).

Many researchers have defined conflict in all human relationships as an unavoidable phenomenon. It was a basic question that the scholars of conflict resolution unanswered, as conflict resolution in theory means a sense of intent. There is no consensus between scholars on the concept of conflict, because every scholar defines the term conflict on the basis of his own viewpoint, since it seems similar that all scholars think conflict happens whenever there is a situation of struggle, disagreement, incompatibility, intervention, difference between interests, friction, interaction and interdependence (Willett, 2010). According to Boulding (1989), since time immemorial, humans as social creatures have often been interested in temporary and continuing conflicts and mutual failures. This comes in the form of individuals against citizens, families against families, kingdoms against kingdoms, and countries against countries more contemporary.

Deutsch et al (2011) defines the term conflict as perceived difference of interest or a conviction that the current expectations of the Group cannot be attained through incremental interactions among the parties at the same time. Bercovitch (2002) suggests, however, that disputes are essentially the direct product of certain ties and interactions between the species, thus creating, in one way or another, tension and resentment in the family, creating perceived injustices and the resulting tension and agitation.

Pratt and Richter (2011) argues that conflict resolution is typically conceptualized as a tool and mechanism that seeks to settle or end conflict peacefully. Conflict resolution is required to fix and resolve deep-rooted causes of war, and actions no longer be aggressive, or the behaviors are more hostile and the conflict structure modified. In the same way, conflict resolution is often seen by some academics to be the consequence of successfully resolving problems in an ongoing conflict, by a mutually satisfactory settlement for the parties and self-sustaining a long-term and fruitful new positive relationship among the parties previously hostile to the conflict. It is often a mechanism or procedure by which such a result is obtained.

Women's value as agents of peace and their position as mothers have made it possible to kill a woman even if she is armed during the war. This is because women were the male combatants' wives. And if a woman is falsely killed during battle, the land must be appeased. Women's respect in wars, which is rooted in traditional African society and is extended to a global arena which provides both conventional and non-conventional warfare for women's security (Pratt & Richter, 2011).

Women have a unique role in reconciliation in different societies and their place in society enables them to promote dialog between disputing parties. Women are overwhelmingly affected by war and are different from men. Furthermore, while women may bear a greater burden than men in conflict times, their perceptions, views and abilities in the resolution of conflicts are often underestimated and underused. As a result, women remain underrepresented in leadership roles worldwide. In the future, international organizations must seek to eliminate this gap of representation, and when planning peace through legal action that addresses women's needs, organizations must take account of gender (Tryggestad 2009).

In the past, control parties have ignored or removed women from the bargaining table and women also face open sexism while seeking to influence the resolution of armed conflicts. Unfortunately, however, during armed wars, women and children are frequently used as weapons of war in international conflict as rape, sexual exploitation and other types of sexual abuse (Matavire 2012). Furthermore, women in post-conflict societies are disproportionately dependent due to the deaths of husbands and fathers in the conflict, which further illustrates the effect of armed conflicts on women. This devastating effect on women and girls highlights the need for peacemakers to involve women in attempts to stop and avoid war (Behfar et al, 2008). In addition, any efforts to address the negative experiences of women as a result of armed conflict must involve women's role in peace processes.

Problem Statement

Ideally, men and women should be at the forefront of Peace and Security Forums and Packages of conflict management and peacebuilding. However, women rarely engage in standards and are not explicitly seen to be involved but are only included in their peripheral positions. This is in spite of the passage a decade ago of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women's peace and security. To date there have been inadequate progress to increase women's involvement in conflict prevention, peace processes and the recovery from conflicts. In 21 peace processes reviewed since 1992, women who have signed the peace agreements account for under 2.4%, and the United Nations still needs to name a woman as the lead mediator (UNIFEM, 2009).

Women's position in armed conflict and war has been regarded internationally as marginal to the safeguarding of human security. War reports, news, government propaganda, novels, cinema and other media seek to depict men as the peacemakers and women as passive, innocent victims. In Africa, wars are almost the same, but the

tales of men's valor as warriors overshadow the active role women played during the war as peacemakers (UNIFEM 2009).

The more widespread emphasis on women's inclusion in this structured process must be unpacked. The structural and political factors that impact on how women engage in the peace building and conflict management processes in Kenya need to be understood. There is a need to know what it means for women to engage in the content of peace talks and to discuss women's and gender issues.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to give a global perspective on the role of women in peace building and conflict resolution. The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- To establish whether women participate in peace building and conflict management
- To determine the factors that affect participation of women in peace building and conflict management
- To assess the role played by women in peace building and conflict management

LITERATURE REVIEW

A general notion remains that women are more instinctively inclined towards peace than their male counterparts. Is a feminine virtue moral supremacy. Women are historically considered to be motherly, caring and gentle. However, men are generally regarded as prone to aggression and belligerence (Moore, 2014). Women tend to speak about their issues, whereas men tend to physically solve their problems, which require a means of natural violence. If abuse committed by women occurs, it is viewed as unnatural or aberrant. This binary notion of sex is intensified by socio-cultural stereotyping.

Regardless of the validity of this view, there is strong support for the underlying assumptions. Clearly, women need to engage in post-conflict leadership if they are better at making and preserving peace. However, the inclusion of women in reconciliation efforts requires a properly gendered perspective of women's contributions. The recent rise in representation of women within the government, as in Rwanda after the genocide, is an exemplary trend that can help efforts to avoid conflicts. However, women should be reconsidered and possible hazards removed in order to be the case (Shepherd & Haynie, 2009).

Sex is an important subject of interest in any academic or professional discipline. However, it is also not particularly helpful to discuss this as an analysis of distinction, as it also perpetuates patriarchal foundations. Within the theory of conflict resolution, Kolb (2000) points to two expressions of the gender-specific discrepancies model. Both models are the model of deficit and the model of benefit disparity. The most popular view of the deficit model is on men's and women's skills. On the other hand, the valuation gap model considers the insights of women who previously went unnoticed or unarticulated. This latter model is beneficial to a certain degree, but there remains a fundamental defect in the expression of various thoughts. Both the model of deficit and the model of disparity in values are responsible for the essentialisation of women. From a gender point of view, the explanations of distinction are also based on basic and set characteristics. This is particularly troubling as it is apparent that stereotypically male or female characteristics, if any, are of no equal benefit to society (Kolb & Collidge, 1991).

Sex alone is not equal to both men and women in terms of sex. An understanding that is more detailed and beneficial does not treat identities as defined categories, but rather is a shift towards the collaborative bargaining process or dispute resolution. Sex can be seen as contextualized and interactively socially constructed. Interaction reflects on the smoothness, versatility and variability of sexual behavior (Mayer, 2010). When gender is over, new insights emerge that can advance the ultimate purpose of conflict resolution. Sex is not a fixed category, but a type of negotiation itself. To avoid violent clashes, men and women must participate fully and openly.

Gender Roles and Conflict Resolution

In recent years, scientists have promoted the creation of gender neutrality conflict resolution mechanisms. This activism stems from the idea that women have to think and behave like men in the same area as men. Although gender is a relevant factor in understanding negotiating behaviour, new science and a growing literature question the presumption that women and men behave differently in a number of contexts for negotiation and settlement. Although the feminist understanding of gender as a social category might clash with women's involvement in understanding biologically defined gender differences, this distinction must instead be taken into account (De-Silva & De-Alwis, 2013). Increased women's political and public engagement is not only economic, but also substantive, and the diversity of women's viewpoints strengthens national security. Men and women usually have different forms of conflict management.

The key forms of conflict management are five: to compete in order to fulfill one's concern at the cost of one's concern; to balance the need for one's own concern for others' sake; to prevent, that is, to ignore one's concerns by postponing a conflict issue; to work together in order to find a solution that satisfies the two sides' concerns; and to compromise the two sites' interests. Different studies have shown that women are more likely to use cooperative forms of conflict management, such as cooperation, compromise or avoidance, whereas men are more likely to use competitively or prevent tactics in conflict situations. In the context of international disputes, it may be of great benefit to follow a collaborative or compromise approach rather than a competitive one. Greater cooperation yields more positive results for the parties to the conflict, and compromise activity guarantees harmonious, sustainable relations.

At the same time, it can burn bridges and reduce the possibility of achieving an agreement for the best possible outcome. The emphasis is on establishing friendly long-term relations, in the sense of international conflict, so that the style of conflict management will play an important part in resolving a dispute (Deutsch et al, 2011). For example, while violence can often lead a party to provide better services, this may prevent the parties from reaching an agreement if the best interest of the parties needs an agreement. In the international context of war, complex negotiation can be socially expensive, because innocent lives are always on the line. As a result, the traditional women's approach to cooperation could be more fruitful and competitive than the traditional men's tendency to hard bargaining. Furthermore, women are more likely to succeed in delicate disputes affecting potential interactions provided the real or perceived objectives of women's long term, social harmony and susceptibility to interpersonal responses. These gender differences must be understood and used in the settlement of disputes. Armed conflicts are not a gender-neutral occurrence and, thus, the armed conflict resolution process should not be gender-neutral.

The essentialistic model assumes a separate feminine universe in which women are distinct from men by nature. In this way, women are so entirely different in nature from men that we have a different reality. This viewpoint focuses on the loving, cooperative and peaceful characteristics of women. Some of these studies concentrate on the capacity of women to shape our positions as careers and pacificators (Greer, Jehn & Mannix, 2008).

In general, the role of gender in conflict resolution has two entirely different gender paradigms. The first paradigm rejects the assumptions that women and men are essential. Indeed, it denies the basic existence of everything. Post-modern feminism focuses on the exchange between the social construction of people and the constitution of the person. By concentrating on language, images, alternative discourses, and context, post-modern feminism explores how social power is exerted and the transformation of the social relationship of gender, class, and race. This does not exclude the unique existence of women's interactions and their distinctions from men, because women have varying access to the informal sector under the patriarchy.

Patriarchy is distinguished at the social level by historical inequality and oppression of institutions and ideologies. Male dominance theory pervades human reasoning and systems. The life experiences on which the

arguments of the prevailing ideologies have been centered were the experiences of men rather than women. Women and men are socialized in the binary perceptions of gender. These distortions are replicated in principles, rules and laws by entities such as the Church, the family and the law. Women have been politically, socially and culturally subjugated traditionally. This institutional structure of inequality and injustice explicitly causes conflicts, sustains and intensifies more conflicts and invades other interactions between people (Amanatullah & Morris 2010).

There are a variety of studies at the interactional level. Sex can arise in conflicts in the manner in which the parties perceive the conflict and mean it. Patricia Gwartney-Gibbs explored how the causes, mechanisms and effects of workplace conflicts influence gender. Research by Gwartney-Gibbs found discrepancies in the origins of men's and women's conflicts. The social construction of the workplace defines how women articulate their complaints and how superiors translate them. While both men and women had workplace issues associated with interpersonal relationships, women identified and tended to be more susceptible to personality conflicts than men. Women have also witnessed more gender stereotypes disputes. Gender stereotypes trigger difficulties if the stereotype has nothing to do with work requirements.

Mechanisms for resolving conflicts were also influenced by gender. The conflict settlement procedures for women were less successful than for men. Instead of settling the conflict, women were, for example, most frequently moved laterally. The effects of the processes were different for men as well as for women. Women's disputes seldom come under the deal, so that they got more individual replies to their disputes. Since women were moved laterally more frequently, women's earnings were directly influenced in the work place. This research project reveals that women have different workplace disputes, that their disputes are viewed differently than men and that the findings of the two classes are different. This research is significant because it specifically compares the gender disparities in the causes, mechanisms and consequences of conflicts at work with trends of job discrimination.

Terrell Northrup and Marshall Segall contrasted men and women's interactions with group mediation in the context of the conflict resolution institutions. Their research examined variations in the feelings of insecurity and empowerment between women and men. The researchers assumed that women, particularly men, feel insecure in their day-to-day relationships. In conflict circumstances, the sense of insecurity of women will be especially prominent because hostility and abuse are probable. The researchers found that women expressed fear or insecurity more frequently than men. Women were much more vulnerable in conflicts with men than in conflicts with other women. Women were more likely to be fearful of normal disputes and victims of aggression or crime. Women have stated that child concerns, identification and status have contributed to their conflict vulnerability. The lack of support from significant others and the lack of faith in the other person have strengthened insecurity feelings.

The ways women and men spoke of their conflicts also varied. Women spoke widely and widely about the context of the conflict, in particular about their role in the partnership with the other side. Men spoke their disputes in more logical, linear and legalistic language. Women spoke about equity in a way that integrated both their material interests and the conflict network.

Contrary to what the researchers predicted, the women used more dispute resolution techniques and strategies than men. In addition, women were surprisingly no more concerned than men with maintaining positive ties with the other group. Finally, women, like men, were concerned with addressing the specific problem. Women feel more insecure, but their insecurity does not seem to interfere with their ability to manage conflicts aggressively. However, women spoke extensively of the impression that they are powerless and disadvantaged to cope with their conflicts. Northrup reflects on how the conflict can be understood differently by men and women, and therefore handled differently.

Women Place at Peace and Conflict Resolution Process

Women have a long tradition in international organization for global peace and security. Women's attempts to foster peace often take place beyond traditional frameworks of military decision making and the settlement of international conflicts. If, however, peacekeepers are to tackle many of the post-conflict problems that are greatly affecting women, they must be put on the peace table literally and have a hand in drafting, interpreting and implementing the rule of law generated during the peace transition (Charlesworth, 2008). The process starts with overcoming the gender stereotypes underlying the design of post-conflict dispute resolution processes and moving towards more formal and informal inclusion of women. Finally, the terms for successful peace resolutions should include substantive women's political involvement, mediation mechanisms that provide an insight into the role of women in conflict history as well as women's role in building society post-conflicts (Pratt, 2013).

In general, armed conflict resolution theories usually differentiate between formal and informal methods. The informal mechanism takes place wholly outside of formal governmental or intergovernmental organizations and includes agreements involving NGOs or private citizens. The formal process includes statehood-seeker interactions among states or political groups aimed at legally binding results through a cease fire agreement or a more substantive settlement (Gibbins, 2011). As long as war is a characteristic of human lives, these informal mechanisms take several forms, from smaller group acts to systematic incidents, women engaged in the informal peace process. Women were activists outside of the institutional system before the war began and after the war healed the wounds. This form of grassroots activism has helped create relationships and mutual understanding across cultures.

The Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace showed one of the most impressive examples of the power of women in the informal process to effect progress. The First and Second Liberian Civil War cost Liberia more than 150,000 lives. Almost 40 percent of war fighters were children and, as in many conflicts, sexual harassment was a tactic used against many Liberian women. Women started uniting in the hope of helping Liberia's peace process (Fuest, 2009). The movement originated as prayer and worship meetings of the Christian and Muslim women of Monrovia, but became a political activist movement that promoted peace. These resilient women jointly ended the war and restored stability in the region, which led to the 2005 peaceful democratic elections and the first women to be elected President of an African State.

While women have traditionally made a difference in informal processes, there is a danger that indulgence or overemphasis on involvement in informal processes may be detrimental for women's long-term interests. Women miss the ability to share their opinions within formal structures in which permanent and long term decisions are taken when relying on informal processes. Women's experiences in Liberia have shown that the official settings of peace talks and peace agreements, despite their attempts to promote their cause, do not listen to women's voices or consider their contributions (Paffenholz et al, 2016). Women need to be included in formal processes in numbers sufficiently large to transform the emphasis on women's problems, otherwise society will continue to relegate women to informal processes. To avoid this marginalization, an increase in women's involvement in a variety of structured institutional position plays a role in avoiding, shortening or resolving military conflicts (Olonisakin, Barnes & Ikpe 2010). Women may therefore be attributed mainly as instrumental in getting parties to the table. Women's engagement must go beyond informal mechanisms to guarantee true progress and sustainable peace.

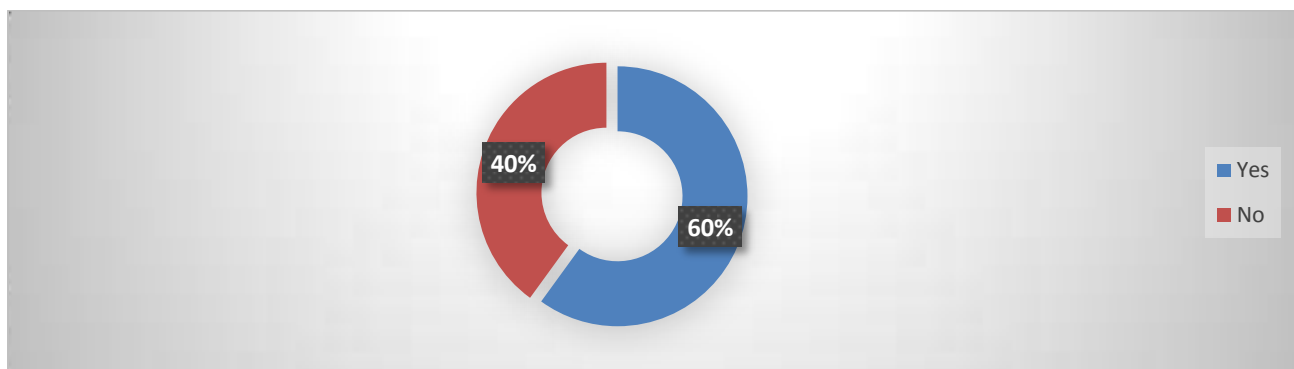
Their job is to encourage women who are used to transmit a culture of peace to girls, such as those who do not adhere to non-beneficial cultural practices such as FGM and early marriages (30 per cent), who teach them the importance of peace (25 per cent), educate them at official schools (25 per cent), or advise them on building peace (25 per cent) daily. This conclusion means that the transmission of a culture of peace involves a multifaceted approach, such as culture, formal education, advice and social networking.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Baragoi, Samburu County. The County of Samburu is one of Kenya's 47 administrative counties. This study employed an exploratory design for analysis. The research was performed in two stages, each complementing the other in order to ensure high data collection efficiency. The first phase included extensive interviews while the second phase included interviews with main informants with managers. The study thematically examined qualitative data from main informant interviews and in-depth interviews. A separate code sheet was established for each data set in order to define and interpret the patterns and relationships of the observations. This analysis is a type of content analysis, according to Ngulube (2003) that systematically collects and organizes information in a standard format, allowing analysts to draw conclusions on the characteristics and meaning of the recorded material. The study included the quantification and evaluation of the concept's existence. A descriptive technique was also used to clarify patterns extensively by using direct quotes and selected remarks from informants.

FINDINGS

According to the report, the majority (65%) of women had peacebuilding or conflict resolution training, while 35% had no peace built or conflict resolution training. The results were close to those of the main informants who attested that there was training of women in peace building or conflict resolution in the region to improve efforts to establish peace. This indicated that the training they engaged in the peace building strongly enhances the effectiveness of women in peace building.



The results showed that the majority of women (60 percent) participated in peace-building committees. The peace-building committees in which they participated included; the Ngilai Peace Committee, Amani, women for peace, the CJPC, the Divisional / Head Barazar, the Loosuk women's self-group, the IMC and the world view. This showed that many organizations active in brokering peace between women in Baragori acknowledged the important role women played in building peace in contrast to a culture which still did not recognize the role of women in building peace.

The study showed that the ways in which women have their skills in peace building and conflict resolution included: through peers (60 percent), experience (40%), peacekeeping participation (30%), barazas (30 percent), school leadership (25%), maendeleo ya wanawake (25%), seminars (25 percent), reading the term. The study shows that women were very creative and self-driven in their own initiative in peace building or conflict resolution as demonstrated by their own skills in peace building or conflict resolution.

The study also showed that in the manner in which women convey a culture of peace to their young girls (35%) do not prevent them from adhering to unprofitable cultural practices such as FGM and early marriages (30%), teaching them peace (25%), and teaching them about formal school education (25%) and counseling them in the field of peace. This conclusion meant that the transmission of a culture of peace involves a multifaceted approach, such as culture, formal education, advice and social networking.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From traditional times to modern times, only women were fully described as victims of rape and other sexual atrocities in times of war. This has recently changed somewhat with Resolution 1325 which has a major and symbolic influence on women all over the world, making women an active participant in peacebuilding, peace keeping and bargaining. This move acknowledges the importance women can bring to a settlement of international conflicts. Meanwhile, it is not a leap, but a step in the right direction that Resolution 1325, which promotes participation of women at all levels in conflict prevention, conflict management and resolution and supports local women's peace initiatives and indigenous mechanisms for conflict resolution, is. Progress towards including women's concerns in peace negotiations and the preservation of women's rights in the new post-conflict constitutions is calculated.

Nevertheless, none of these formal progresses can be made without local and international feminist peace and human rights organizations' informal initiatives that have motivated and supported those employed in the formal phase. However, Resolution 1325 declaration required women to participate in the formal process of decision-making to establish a strong connection with women's grassroots movements. Given the benefits of women's involvement in dispute resolution, women's participation remains largely informal. Precisely since certain conflicts are not generally neutral, so dispute resolution aimed at resolving those conflicts should not be gender neutral. Although women must be present at the negotiating table and their voices must be heard and considered throughout the conflict resolution process, it should also be noted that women should not be left to engage alone in conflict resolution.

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